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*THE WITCHERY
OF JANE SHORE*



BY C. J. S. THOMPSON





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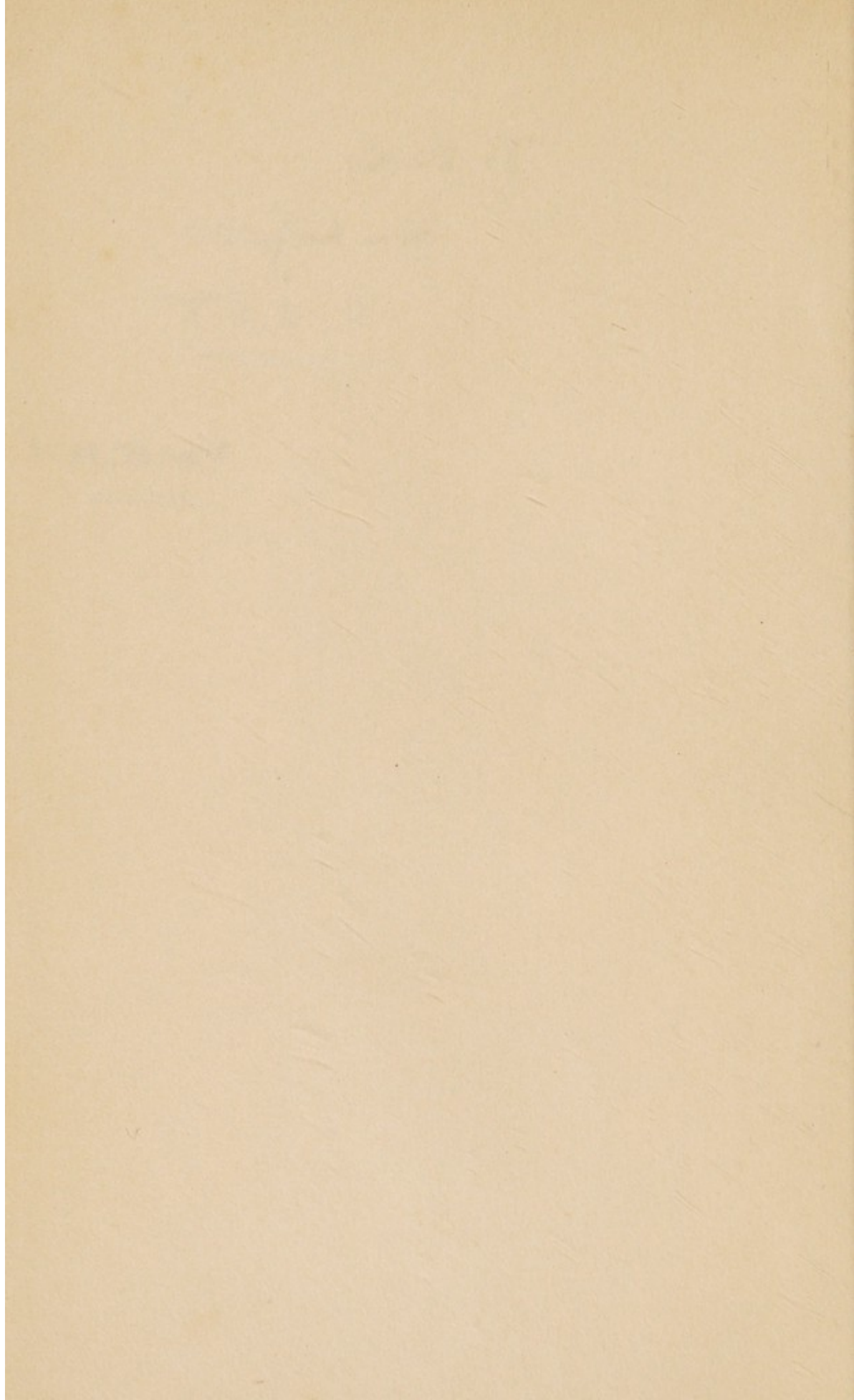
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To Paolo

from his father

C. J. S. T

Nov 15. 1933



THE WITCHERY
OF JANE SHORE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE MYSTERY AND ROMANCE OF ALCHEMY
AND PHARMACY

POISON MYSTERIES

THE MYSTERY AND LURE OF PERFUME

THE MYSTERIES AND SECRETS OF MAGIC

MYSTERIES OF HISTORY

THE QUACKS OF OLD LONDON

THE MYSTERY AND ART OF THE APOTHE-
CARY

THE MYSTERY AND ROMANCE OF ASTRO-
LOGY

THE MYSTERY AND LORE OF APPARITIONS

THE MYSTERY AND LORE OF MONSTERS

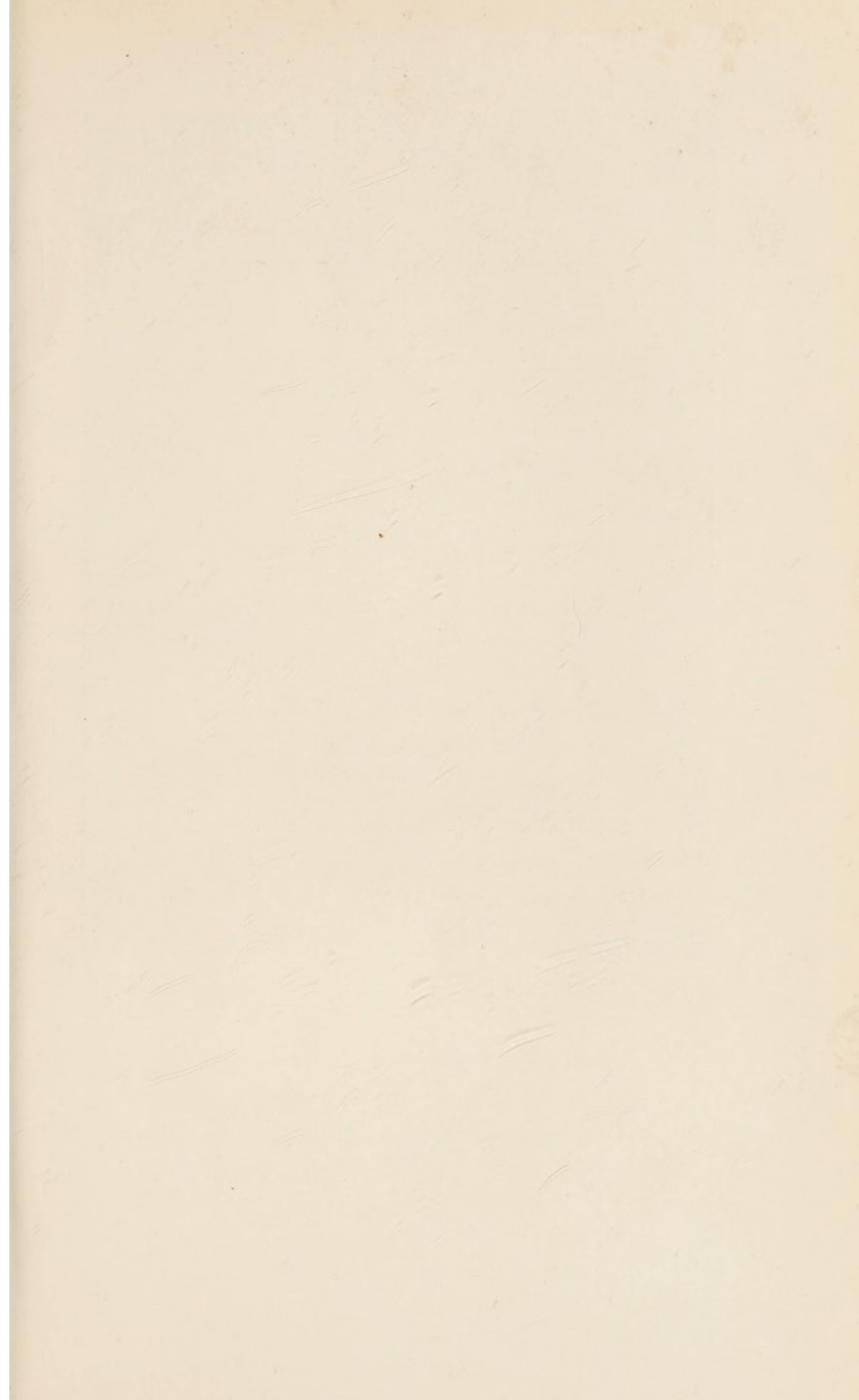
POISONS AND POISONERS

THE LURE AND ROMANCE OF ALCHEMY

THE HAND OF DESTINY

—

ZORASTRO—A ROMANCE





JANE SHORE

From a picture in the Royal Collection.

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[See page 281]

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

The Rose of London

THE ROMANCE OF A ROYAL MISTRESS

BY

C. J. S. THOMPSON

GRAYSON & GRAYSON
CURZON STREET
MAYFAIR LONDON

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TO
CAIREEN FAWCETT
to whose assistance I am indebted

1897

THE END OF THE WORLD

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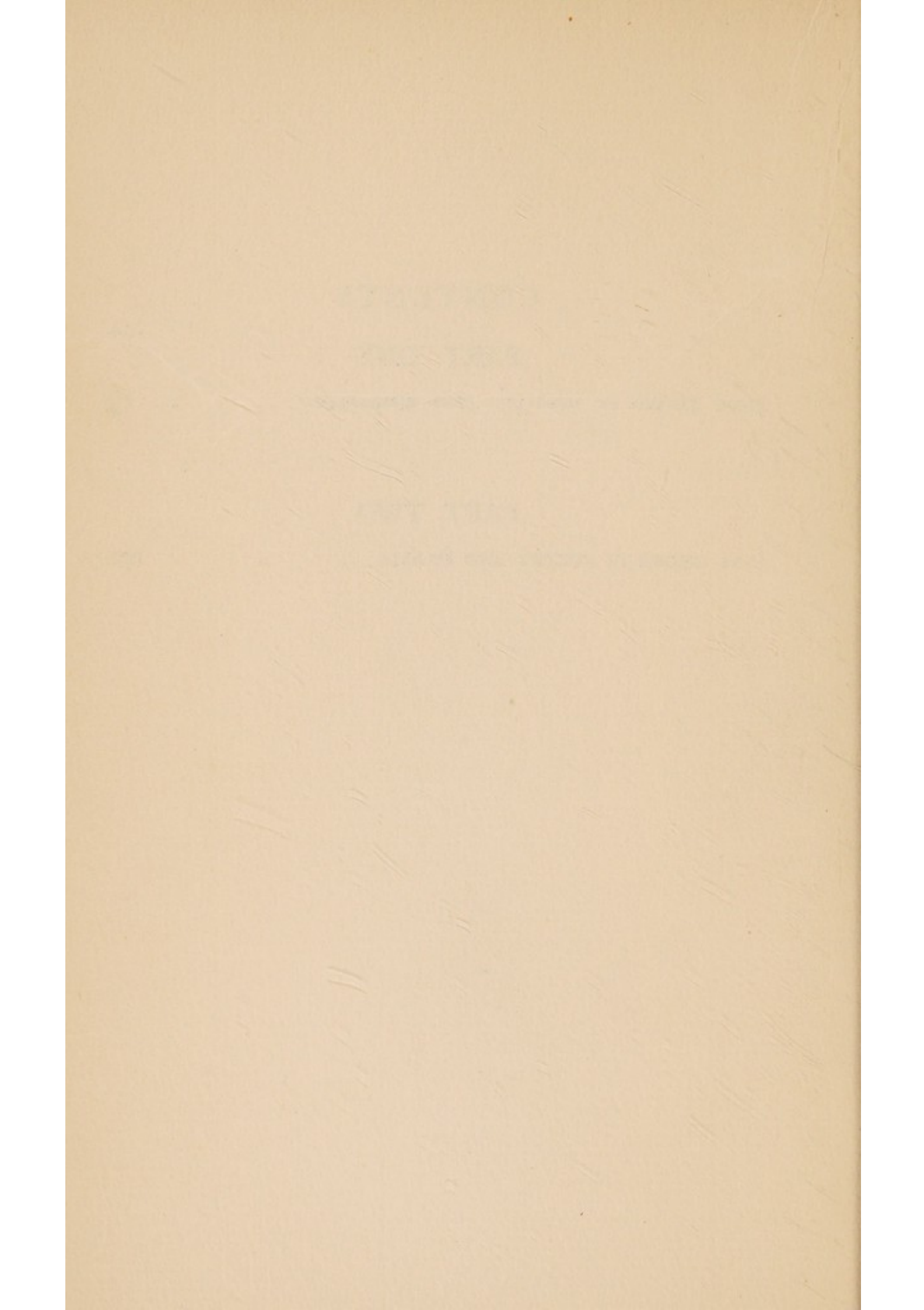
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FOREWORD

THE story of the romantic career of Jane Shore, who became the favourite mistress of King Edward IV, is now almost forgotten. For over two centuries it appears to have been overlooked by historians and writers, although it has not been neglected by dramatists, for whose efforts, however, historical accuracy cannot be claimed. Yet this woman, whose beauty and irresistible charm cast an enchantment over some of the most distinguished men of her time, deserves a niche in history.

Sir Thomas More deemed her story worthy of his pen, and we owe to him a detailed and precise description of her person and character. We know that he regarded her as more worthy of a place in history than many whose fame had resounded throughout the centuries. Other authentic accounts of her life are few, and only the briefest records are to be found in the State Papers, Wardrobe Accounts, and other historical documents of the time.

The dry facts I have gleaned, I have endeavoured to blend with some of the more interesting traditions concerning her which have been preserved in poems, ballads and tracts that have come down to us from the sixteenth century. Thus, in a series of episodes, I have tried to portray Jane Shore and present some idea of her personality rather than write a history of her time.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

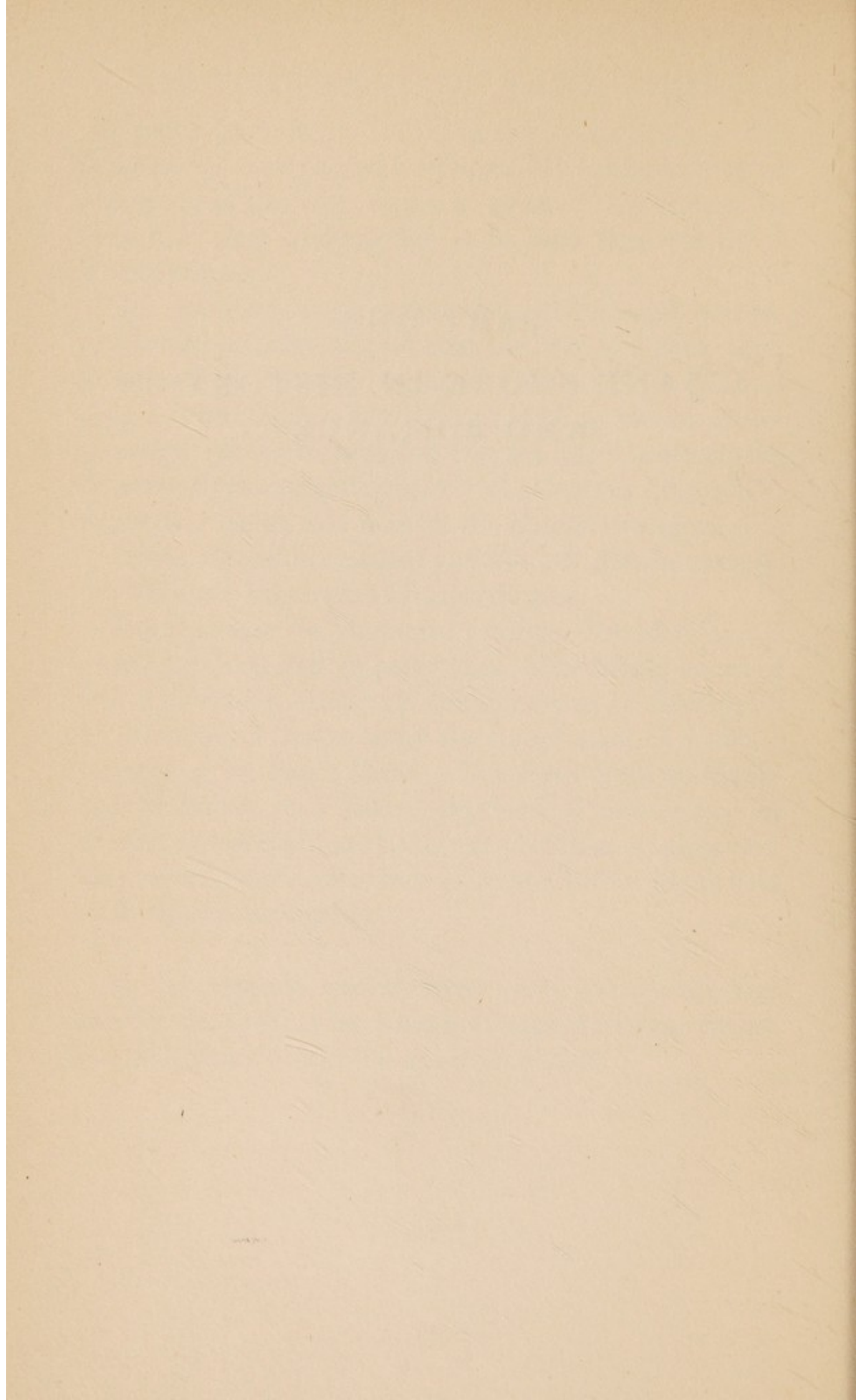
I make no attempt to excuse her delinquency. The fact that she wronged her husband and left him to become a mistress of the king cannot be gainsaid, but it must be conceded, after studying her story, that Jane was not a mere courtesan.

She was an unmoral rather than an immoral woman, and it must be remembered that she lived at a time when licentiousness was the common failing of the highest people in the land. Yet she had sterling merits in her character, for in the period of over ten years in which she occupied a place of great power at the Court of Edward IV, it is to her credit, and here all the chroniclers agree, that she never abused her exalted position, nor did she exercise her influence other than in a good cause.

The Protector, in vindictive revenge, despoiled her of wealth, position and property, then, after falsely accusing her of practising witchcraft and sorcery in an attempt on his life, caused her to suffer the humiliation of a public penance at St. Paul's Cross. Cast forth from surroundings of luxury in a palace, deprived of money and of friends, it was the fate of this once brilliant mistress of a king to drag out a miserable existence within the dismal walls of a debtor's prison.

In the extracts quoted from early documents and records, the spelling has been modernized to some extent, but otherwise the text has not been altered.

PART ONE
JANE SHORE IN HISTORY
AND ROMANCE



ONE

IN the spring of the year 1464, there came a lull in the strife and clash of arms between the houses of York and Lancaster, which had so long resounded throughout England and rent the country in twain. Henry VI had been signally defeated and put to flight at Hexham, and the cause of the Lancastrians was completely crushed. Fortune seemed to smile at last on the house of York, and the people longed for peace and a time of prosperity.

England now needed a strong ruler and found one in King Edward IV. On April 30th, he left London to go to York with the object of creating Lord Montague, the victor at Hexham, Earl of Northumberland. On returning, he was received with acclamation in all the towns through which he passed, for the recent victories had greatly enhanced his popularity. The citizens of London in particular looked forward to greeting the victorious monarch, the hero of many battles, and determined to give him a right royal welcome.

Cheapside, then the chief centre of the city's trade, consisted of a long, straggling street, stretching from the south side of the Strand to terminate near the site where the Mansion House now stands.

The high gabled houses, with their half-timbered fronts and projecting balconies, had been gaily decorated; the

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shops were chiefly occupied by mercers, who had vied one with another in making a brave display. Wreaths of flowers hung from window to window, and banners, blazoned with fanciful devices, fluttered in the breeze. Many of the balconies contained plants and bright flowers of varied hues, while rich tapestries and costly fabrics had been draped over their balustrades. Rare brocades and velvets from Genoa hung in massive folds from some of the windows; others gleamed with finer textured silks from Venice or brilliantly spangled gauzes from the looms of Italy.

In Lombard Street, the quarter of the gold and silver-smiths, and those who carried on business in bullion and jewels, there was not so much outward display, for the dealers in these objects of value looked more to security from depredation in the construction of their dwellings. Here, above the doorways, from long brackets, swung sign-boards bearing various devices; the narrow windows were protected by strong iron bars, behind which glimpses could be obtained of massive plate and other valuable specimens of the goldsmith's craft.

On the day the king was expected, when Cheapside was thronged with people of all classes, and when Court gallants in rich attire jostled shoulders with sober citizens in their doublets of grey cloth or with their apprentices in still more humble garb, one house at the upper end of the thoroughfare attracted special attention on account of the beauty of its decorations. The doorposts, of massive oak curiously carved, supported two large projecting balconies above. Across the back of the window hung a curtain of white silk to which roses had been so skilfully

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attached that it had the appearance of a piece of beautiful embroidery. The lower balcony was gay with blooms, and from the balustrade hung brilliant banners and streamers, which had been chosen with skill and taste.

Inside the low-ceiled shop, which was below the level of the street, the walls were lined with shelves laden with rolls of cloth, taffetas and velvets; and a long oak table or counter, stacked with silks and finer fabrics, could be seen. Outside, above the door, swung a sign-board bearing on one side the picture of a lamb and on the other that of an angel; this betokened the shop of Thomas Wainstead the mercer. The door was closed, for the royal progress was anticipated, and the crowd grew so great that only with difficulty could anyone proceed westward.

The blare of trumpets and beat of drums in the distance, heard above the murmur of the people, heralded the approach of the procession; it drew nearer, and entered Cheapside at the east end; and presently a company of men with staves cleared a passage through the throng. Then, as the bells crashed out a merry peal, the cavalcade appeared, and the people broke into lusty cheers. At the head rode the young king, his cap in hand, smiling, with sparkling eyes. Tall and perfectly proportioned, his proudly poised, handsome head was covered with dark brown hair which curled to his shoulders. He was but twenty-two years of age and in the flower of physical vigour. His full, firm mouth proclaimed an ardent and beauty-loving nature, but the cast of his fine features indicated resolution and unusual power of will. As he guided his richly caparisoned horse through the crowd, a majestic and kingly figure, shouts of "York! York!"

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"Long live the King!" went up from the throats of the delighted citizens. Renewed acclamations greeted the Marquis of Hastings, the king's companion in many battles; close behind rode a great company of nobles—the Earls of Essex, Arundel and Northumberland, with other knights attached to the king's person. The glittering procession was followed by the mayor, his aldermen arrayed in their scarlet robes, and some two hundred craftsmen clad in blue, with members of the city guilds who had come to escort the king through the city.

Leaning over the upper balcony of the mercer's house a girl stood and waved her hand, as she recognized her father. Her charming face was framed in the golden hair which fell like a flood of sunshine over her shoulders; her blue eyes sparkled and her dimpled cheeks broke into a smile when he glanced up and saw her.

"Look," cried one apprentice to another in the street below, "there's our Jane—God bless her!" He doffed his cap and threw it into the air while he cheered again.

"York! York!" shouted the other, and, plucking a white rose from his doublet, he tossed it up to her.

TWO

EDWARD IV, the first monarch of the house of York to ascend the English throne, was a man who may be said to have possessed every attribute of a king.

In stature over six feet three inches, with broad shoulders and well-knit frame, he had a majestic and commanding presence, and his charming, gracious manner endeared him to all. His hair, which added to the attractiveness of his face, was nearly black; his eyes were small but bright and glistening. His valour and dauntless courage, proved on many battlefields, made him beloved by his people, and notwithstanding his high position he was as much at home among the citizens of London as among his courtiers at Westminster.

He was an ardent sportsman and delighted in hunting and tilting. Pageantry, music and dancing he revelled in, while beauty and colour appealed to him in any form. Although he was easy of access and fond of a jest, he knew how to preserve his dignity when required. We are told that his naturally pleasant manner with its gay vivacity was tempered with resolution. His strong, active body, hardened and disciplined by exercises in the field, showed at every movement the natural vigour of his constitution.

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Born in Rouen on April 28th, 1442, he was hailed as a symbol of the reunion of England and Normandy, and, on account of his birthplace, the popular ballads of London acclaimed him as the "Rose of Rouen." One of these, sung about the time of his coronation, ran as follows:

*"Now is the Rose of Rouen grown to great honour,
Therefore sing we every one y- blessed be that flower.
I warn ye every one that ye shall understand,
There sprang a rose in Rouen that spread to England;
Had not the Rose of Rouen been, all England had been
dour,
Y- blessed be the time God ever spread that flower.*

*The Rose came to London, full royally riding,
Two archbishops of England they crowned the Rose
king.
Almighty Lord! Save the Rose and give him thy
blessing
And all the realm of England joy of his corowning,
That we may bless the time God ever spread that
flower."*

Two authentic and interesting descriptions of Edward have come down to us, both written about 1471, when the brave, easy-going boy of nineteen had become the virile man of twenty-nine.

During his adventurous life his good fortune had been wonderful, and he had proved, when unhampered by the will and power of Warwick, to be the greatest soldier of his day.



KING EDWARD IV

From an ancient painting in the Royal Collection.



THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

His personality is thus described by writers of the period. Philippe de Comines, who was at his Court and knew him at that time, tells us that "the figure of his person was the most elegant and finished of any that age produced. He was not a man of any great management or foresight but of an invincible courage, and the most beautiful prince my eyes ever beheld.

"His thoughts were wholly employed upon the ladies, hunting and dressing. Indeed, his humour and person were so well tuned for love intrigues as any prince I ever saw in my life, for he was young and the most beautiful man of his time."

We have another description of Edward written by Polydore Vergil, an Italian born in the latter half of the fifteenth century and sent to England by Pope Alexander VI. He settled in this country as rector of Church Langton in Leicestershire during the king's reign. He was "very tall of personage," he writes, "exceeding the stature almost of all others, of comely visage, pleasant look, broad breasted, his body even to his feet proportionately correspondent. He had a sharp wit, high courage and retentive memory touching those things which he had once conceived. Diligent in doing his affairs, ready in perils, earnest and horrible to the enemy, but bountiful to his friends and acquaintances, and most fortunate in his wars."

For women generally he appears to have had an irresistible attraction, and for those on whom he set his heart he had the advantage of the complete lover. All the chroniclers agree that he gained such applause from the feminine sex as few men ever had the good fortune

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to enjoy, for "he had naturally abundance of humanity, and knew so well how to improve that easy condescension that he seldom fell into a familiarity without a design. He was a master of much gallantry and address, and by a little conversation soon understood what form to assume to make himself the most agreeable, and whatever he did take upon him he made it all of a piece and acted up to the height of his character. There was hardly any humour so difficult that he could not please, any virtue so stubborn that he could not bend to a compliance, or any appetite so fickle that he had not the art of fixing."

Michael Drayton observes, in the notes to his "Heroicall Epistles," that "although Edward was by nature very chivalrous, he was also very amorous, and applied his sweet, amiable aspect to attain his wanton appetite." Certainly the amatory passion burned fiercely in the young king, and from the time he came to the throne he showed himself a general adorer of the fair sex. "To the ladies, who have also their share in the motion of States," writes Habington, "he applied a general courtship which, used by a prince of so amiable a personage, made them, usually the idols of others, idolators of him."

A proof of the share he obtained in the affection of his female subjects is seen in the fact that after his escape from Middleham Castle in Yorkshire, where he had been held a prisoner by the Earl of Warwick, he made the best of his way to London. This hastening to the city is said to have been caused through the general affection on the part of the merchants' wives, who, having command over their husbands, urged them on to side with the prince and espouse his cause.

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Philippe de Comines also alludes to the influence exerted by the women, who rallied to his support when he regained the crown; he declares that "a great many women of quality and rich merchants' wives, with whom in times past he had been familiar, persuaded their husbands to incline to him."

"Concerning this democratic action of the king," remarks Bayle, "other kings in other countries would have lost their crowns for being too great with the wives of their subjects, but here is one who recovered it by that very means."

The grace of his person and the gallantry of his behaviour were charms the city ladies could not resist, and their husbands could but give their hearts to a king who so readily gave his both to them and their wives. A king of this disposition was bound to be very popular with them. When he was in want of money, a matter of frequent occurrence, he appealed to the wealthy city merchants with whom he was on good terms, and not without success.

There is a story that when he was asking the London citizens to finance his expedition to France in 1473, he so enchanted the widow of a merchant who had already contributed freely and out of all proportion to her estate, that on being solicited by the king in person, she gave him twenty pounds more on the promise that he would give her a kiss, "which," says the chronicler, "was so extraordinary a favour to a widow declined in years, she was so overjoyed that she doubled the sum."

Polydore Vergil says: "He was one who quickly fastened the eye upon anything that appeared beautiful,

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and was captivated at the first view of an agreeable object with such a complexion for love, with such powers to charm was this prince adorned; so many were there who sought to be admired by him, such numbers he was inclined to admire."

Orleans declared that "his love was sometimes fixed, sometimes upon the ramble, attacking all women through a loose inclination and engaging in a constant humour with others."

Edward's reputation as a conqueror of the fair sex was not confined to England, for when Louis XI invited him to France, an invitation which the king himself had suggested, the French monarch postponed the visit "for fear the ladies of his Court should become enamoured with the beauty and address of so heroic a prince, and he should therefore make it longer than consisted with good politics."

Comines records that Louis called to him after King Edward's departure and said: "By the peace of God, the King of England is an Amorous and Fair Prince, he, at the first Beck wou'd gladlie see Paris where he might fortune to find such pleasant and talkative Dames, which with fair words and pleasant Pastimes might so allure him to their fancies, that it might breed occasion in him to come over the sea again, which I would not gladly see for his Progenitors have been too long and too often both in Paris and Normandy."

When the Earl of Warwick was at the height of his power, knowing the young king's propensities he used all his influence to induce him to sue for the hand of the Princess Bona of Savoy, the sister of the Queen of France.

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When, however, the matter was discussed at the State Council, Edward astonished those present by telling them that he was married already, for five months previously he had espoused the Lady Elizabeth Grey, the young widow of Sir John Grey of Groby, a Lancastrian, who had fallen at the second battle of St. Albans. It subsequently transpired that while on his way to York in April, 1464, he had stopped at Stony Stratford, stolen away with two of his companions, and ridden off to Grafton Castle where Lady Elizabeth was staying. They were married there on May morning in the presence of her mother, Jacquet, Duchess of Bedford, his two friends and "a young man to help the priest to sing."

The secrecy of his marriage was destined to have far-reaching effects in later years, when the legitimacy of Edward's children came to be challenged by Richard, Duke of Gloucester. The Duchess of Bedford also became involved after the marriage became known, for it was commonly reported that she had influenced the young king to marry her daughter by means of "witchcraft, sorcery and love-potions," an accusation which we shall refer to again.

There is a tradition that Edward first met the fair young widow when he was hunting in the forest of Whittlebury, in the neighbourhood of her mother's dower castle at Grafton.

While staying there on a visit, hearing that the king was close by, Elizabeth lay in wait for him one day between Grafton and Whittlebury. Standing under a noble tree, which for centuries afterwards was known as the "Queen's Oak," and holding her two boys by their hands, she

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awaited his coming, and knelt at his feet as he passed, pleading earnestly for the restoration of Bradgate, the inheritance of her children, which had been estreated to the Crown. As she knelt, her eyes dimmed with tears, Edward, fascinated by her charms, dismounted, and with kind words raised her to her feet, promising to consider her petition.

Elizabeth Grey was a very beautiful woman, with a perfect oval face and regular features, but her eyes were sad and her expression grave, for she had passed through times of great trouble and sorrow. Her quiet manner and demeanour betokened her strong religious character.

Edward, with his natural impulsiveness, fell in love with her at first sight, and determined to add her to the rest of his conquests. He soon made an excuse to pay a visit to the duchess at her castle, where Elizabeth was still staying.

Shortly after his arrival, he met her in the great hall; taking her by the hand, he led her to a small chamber close by, where he pleaded his love. Elizabeth, however, did not prove as pliant as he expected. She was well aware of some of his previous intrigues, and failed to be carried away by his ardent protestations. She must have known of his liaison with Elizabeth Lucy, a gentle girl of whom Edward had been enamoured, and who, under promise of marriage, had become intimate with him. So, after patiently listening to the king's proposal, she gravely shook her head and calmly repulsed his advances.

But this attitude on her part only served to inflame Edward's desire the more, and, faithfully promising to restore her late husband's estates, he continued to woo her.

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At length, influenced by his persistent attentions, and with thoughts of his previous love-affairs in mind, she said: "My liege, I know I am not good enough to be your wife, but I am far too good to become your mistress."

The king was so moved by her remark, and so lost in the admiration of her beauty, that he at once gave his promise to marry her, and that without delay.

When the news of the proposed alliance came to the ears of the king's mother, the Duchess of York, she endeavoured to dissuade him from carrying it out, and chided him with the fact that the Lady Elizabeth was a widow with two children, and five years his senior.

"If she is a widow and already has children," exclaimed the king, "by God's Blessed Lady, I am a bachelor and have some too, and so each of us is proof that neither is like to be barren."

"But what of your promise to marry the Lady Elizabeth Lucy?" the duchess continued.

"As for the bigamy," replied the king with a laugh, "let the bishops hardly lay it in my way when I come to take orders, for I understand it is forbidden a priest, but I never wist it yet that it was forbidden a prince." However, in the event of further objections being raised to the union, he sent for Elizabeth Lucy and begged her to come and see him.

Before complying with his request, she first saw the Duchess of York, who told her of the king's proposed marriage and besought her to swear if there was any truth in the report that she was already married to the king.

"We have never been married," replied Lady Elizabeth gently. "I do not blame Edward, as he has always been

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loving and gentle to me, but I did truly hope that he would have married me, and had it not been for his kind words and promise I would never have let him kindle me with child."

There is no record that she ever saw the king afterwards, but later, when a son was born to her, he is said to have been known as Arthur Plantagenet Viscount Lisle. He lived for fifty years after his father's death, and married the daughter of the famous Dudley.

There is little doubt that the king would have done the Lady Elizabeth Grey the same kind office if she had not seen that he was so charmed with her that she might do what she pleased with him; therefore she would not surrender, except on honourable terms.

The Duchess of Bedford was delighted that her daughter should make so brilliant an alliance, and did all she could to facilitate the marriage, which was eventually carried out secretly. When Edward told his friends later and was asked why he had chosen so grave a lady, he replied: "By my faith! I have married her because she is the most virtuous woman I have ever known." Once the public knew of the marriage it had to be duly acknowledged, and the Lady Elizabeth Grey was crowned Queen of England at Westminster on Whit Sunday, May 26th, 1465.

But marriage did not put an end to the young king's amorous adventures for his gracious manner and disposition led him into many other intrigues. The common allurements of position, wealth, and the promises of greatness which he knew were in his power to grant contributed, as we can easily imagine, to his success. To these we may

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add the charm of flattery, which is ever most pleasing when it comes from one of higher station. Edward had this at his command, and there can be no great wonder at the general compliance with which the fair sex met his advances.

We need not enlarge on the licentiousness common among the higher classes of the period. The best that can be said for Edward is that he was no worse than many of the nobles at his Court. But despite his failings he had many good qualities, for he is said to have been generous-hearted and chivalrous to a degree, and amiable and genial to all. To his friends he was the most lovable prince of his time, and he had a charm that few could resist, either man or woman.

All the chroniclers agree that he was wise in council, and his penetrating wit and keen insight were quick to detect any flaws in the arguments of his opponents. In war, he was fierce and resolute; in the field, active and valiant, never venturesome beyond reason nor forward beyond discretion. In peace, he was just and merciful and endowed with great sagacity and wisdom. In his councils, always judicious, he adjusted matters of importance with little difficulty, for his understanding was clear and he was dexterous in dissolving doubts.

As a soldier, he had great judgment in leading his armies, and personal courage in fighting with his own hand. As a commander, he inspired his followers with confidence and showed great bravery and daring. In civil life, King Edward was deeply interested in the arts and sciences of his time. He gave encouragement to printing and other crafts; he had a passion for alchemy, astrology,

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

divination and medicine, and created the Company of Barber-Surgeons of London in 1462.

He loved magnificence in living, delighting in jousts, tournaments and pageants, and may indeed be deemed one of the most splendid figures that ever sat on the English throne.

THREE

THE shop of Thomas Wainstead stood at the east end of Cheapside and, with its warehouse at the back, was larger and more capacious than its neighbours. Wainstead was regarded as the leading mercer in the city and was highly respected as one of its foremost citizens. He had acquired considerable wealth and numbered many of the great ladies of the Court among his customers.

The interior of his establishment was dark and mysterious, for little light filtered through the small windows in front. A door at the back led into a bright parlour facing green hedges and trees that led down to the river. This room, comfortably furnished, had a large table for the display of wares, and here at her embroidery-frame usually worked Wainstead's daughter Jane, whose bright and smiling face, framed in golden curls, attracted many customers. At the age of fifteen she gave promise of developing into a very beautiful woman, and her amiability and charm of manner made her a favourite with all who came to the shop.

Being an only child, her parents had lavished their love upon Jane and had brought her up with care, without undue indulgence. She was highly intelligent, and quick

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at learning, so her father determined that her education should not be restricted, consequently she learned many accomplishments that were not usually acquired by girls of her class.

It may be well, perhaps, to explain here how instruction in such arts as music and dancing, as well as reading and writing, was obtained in England at this period. About the middle of the fifteenth century, a new era had opened in knowledge and education, and it was largely due to the interest of the wealthier families of the mercantile class that the foundations of learning came to be laid. The first steps in advance were made by the establishment of grammar schools in different parts of the country, several of which early foundations are still in existence.

The merchant guilds, by which many of these were established, about this time began to assume a greater degree of importance and combined with the ecclesiastical foundations in performing services for the souls of their members. These schools were in some degree the answer to an appeal which came deeply from the mass of the people, for about this period there arose a great spontaneous eagerness for learning, both for the sake of the learning itself and in the belief that it was a way to distinction which till then had not been open to the majority of the people, except through the Church. Reading and writing, hitherto rare accomplishments among women, became more general, for until the fifteenth century few ladies, even among the upper class, were able to do either with facility.

In 1461, when the era of the printed book began, a great impetus was given to learning, and romances, poems

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and stories which previously could only be read in manuscript were multiplied and became extensively used.

William Caxton had set up his printing press at Westminster and within a period of three years had found a public who could buy editions of no fewer than thirty different books, including the "Canterbury Tales" and the "English Chronicle."

King Edward did what he could to encourage the pioneers in printing by his patronage and gifts of money, while many men of position, such as Humphrey of Gloucester and the Earls of Arundel and Essex, began to buy books and add to the manuscripts they already treasured. Thus the foundations of many of the great libraries in this country were laid.

Caxton was a favourite at the Court and both Anthony, Earl Rivers, the queen's brother, and the Earl of Worcester, were his intimate friends and translated several books for his press. It was the former who produced the "Dictes or Sayings of the Philosophers," the first book printed in London, which he and Caxton laid before the king in 1477.

Just as some of the monastic establishments formed centres of learning for boys, so the nuns became the instructors of the girls, and taught them reading, writing and music. In many of these institutions were ladies from France and Italy who had entered English religious houses; they taught the pupils French, needlework and the embroidery of tapestries.

Girls of good families were sometimes sent to the castles of the great nobles to learn polite manners or deportment, and it was a matter of pride to their ladies

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to be surrounded by a train of young maids in their households.

In the houses of the mercantile families who lived at their places of business, the parlour was the centre for living and entertaining. Dancing, which was popular among all classes, was taught chiefly by French and Italians, often refugees, who had settled in some of the larger towns or cities, more especially in London. It was the favourite amusement after supper, which was usually taken at six o'clock. Dancing, and games such as chess, cards, dice and clasheys or ninepins, were the chief diversions of the family after the last meal, which was called the rere-supper or banquet.

Jane Wainstead, according to our information, possessed unusual talents, and by the time she had reached the age of fifteen she could play several instruments and was proficient in singing and music. She had proved an apt pupil, and had also a knowledge of Norman-French. In her father's shop she often came in contact with ladies of rank and position, and from them doubtless acquired an air of good breeding and deportment more often found among girls of higher station. At this time she is said to have had the sweetest of features, a perfect complexion and symmetry of form. Her invariable good humour and merry laughter made her a general favourite. Her beauty turned the heads of most of the city apprentices, but she treated their rough pleasantries and flattery with disdain and kept them at a distance. Nevertheless they were always ready to do her service, and she became known among them as the "Rose of London." She often accompanied her father to the

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jousts that were sometimes held on an open space between Cheapside and Wood Street, where stands were erected to accommodate over a thousand people, to view the contests which were popular with all classes.

As she grew up and developed, the fame of Jane's unusual beauty spread beyond the bounds of the city, and she numbered among her admirers several young noblemen of the Court, many of whom were only too eager to pay their attentions to her.

At that period, the seduction and abduction of a desirable girl was considered an achievement and one of the proudest boasts among many of the young men of the higher class. Jane was by no means exempt from such a danger, and scarcely a day passed without some pert page calling at the shop to deliver a message to her making an assignation. When her father became aware of this, his fears were aroused, and in order to free her from the ardent solicitations of her admirers, and being concerned about her reputation, he decided to send her on a long visit to his sister who lived in Northampton. So Jane was sent off in charge of a trusted servant into the country, and there she remained for some months. The quiet of a provincial town, however, soon had a depressing effect on a girl who had been used to life in London, and she began to pine to return home. Her father, perturbed on learning that his daughter, of whom he was so fond, was unhappy, journeyed to see her. On his arrival he was so struck by the change in his usually cheerful Jane that he came to the conclusion that the effects of country life on her were worse than the dangers of the city, and decided to take her back with him to London.

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Jane, overjoyed when she heard his decision, bade good-bye to Northampton and her aunt with little regret, and rode back with her father to town.

The news of her return home was soon known in the city, and it was not long before several of her former admirers sought her out and renewed their importunities. Foremost among them was the young and gay Lord Hastings, a trusted and confidential friend of the king, and one of the handsomest men at Court. He had a great love for dress and fine costumes, and being wealthy was able to gratify his tastes. According to report, he was the companion of the king in many amatory adventures, and for this reason the queen regarded him with disfavour. Her jealousy of his attachment to the king, over whom she believed he had a bad influence, continued throughout his life, and she never showed any friendship towards him, in spite of the important position he held at Court and the popularity he shared with his royal master.



JANE SHORE WITH HER FATHER AND MOTHER
(from a woodcut of the XVII Century.)

FOUR

WILLIAM DE HASTINGS, afterwards Baron Hastings of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, an ardent admirer of Jane Shore from her girlhood, was born about 1430. He was the eldest son of Sir Leonard de Hastings, steward to Henry II and a retainer of Richard, Duke of York. In 1455 he was made sheriff of the counties of Warwick and Leicester and appointed Ranger of Were Forest.

He became on terms of friendship with the Duke's son Edward, and when Edward came to the throne, was appointed Grand Chamberlain of the Royal Household, a position of great power. He was present at the king's coronation in 1461, accompanied him on his expedition to the north, and shared his many vicissitudes. There is a record that in 1464 he entered into an agreement with Dame Elizabeth, widow of Sir John Grey, who eventually became the wife of King Edward, that he should have the wardship of her son Thomas, afterwards Marquis of Dorset, on whose part it was stipulated that he should afterwards marry the eldest daughter of Lord Hastings that might be living.

Such ante-nuptial agreements were not uncommon among the noble families of the time, who by such means sought to keep both wealth and power in their hands. This agreement, however, was never carried out though,

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strangely enough, later on the Marquis of Dorset, like his guardian, became enamoured with Jane Shore.

In 1465 Hastings accompanied Richard, Earl of Warwick on a mission to conclude a league of amity between King Edward and Charles, Duke of Burgundy, and in the following year was again employed on a diplomatic errand to negotiate peace with the ambassador of King Louis XI of France. He was also commissioned to confer with Charles of Burgundy regarding the duke's contemplated marriage with Margaret, King Edward's sister.

At the conclusion of his mission to France, when Louis distributed rewards to the King of England's servants, Hastings for a time rejected the French monarch's proposal to grant him a pension. After some correspondence, however, and on the persuasion of de Comines, he consented to accept two thousand crowns a year, but refused to give any acknowledgment of the first payment. When the gold was offered to him he remarked: "Put it here into my sleeve, for other acknowledgment you get none of me, for no man shall say that King Edward's Lord Chamberlain hath been pensioner to the French king, nor that my acquittance be found in his Chamberlain's accounts."

His enemies afterwards charged him with being in the pay of the King of France, but could bring no proof of their accusation. As a matter of fact, acceptance of rewards of this kind were regarded as neither suspicious nor degrading at that period, and Lord Howard, as well as many other nobles, participated openly in such transactions.

When Hastings returned to England he took a

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prominent place at Court and was constantly at the king's side. Later on, when the adherents of Henry VI, reinforced by the levies of the Earl of Warwick, rendered it expedient for Edward to leave the country, it was he who wisely urged the necessity, and arranged for the king's flight to Holland, accompanying him across the sea.

Although he had married Warwick's sister, he stood firm in his allegiance to the king, and on his return to England in 1471 was given command of the third division of the royal army. At the great battle fought near Barnet on April 14th in that year, he had three thousand cavalry under his command, and in the bitter conflict in which Warwick was slain and his army put to flight, Hastings remained at the king's side until the victorious end. After the decisive action at Tewkesbury the king showered many honours on his friend and comrade, and made him Captain of Calais, as well as Chamberlain of the Exchequer.

The queen grudged the king's favourite this great honour, for it is said that she had promised to obtain the post for her brother, Earl Rivers. She also disliked Hastings for other reasons; gifts, for instance, received by him that, in her view, ought to have come to members of her family for all of whom she was very ambitious.

The Duke of Clarence appointed Lord Hastings chief steward of the honour of the High Peak and of Tutbury; he was also made chief ranger of all the parks and chases belonging thereto, with a fee of fifty pounds for life. Some idea of the importance of his position and the state in which he lived may be gathered from the fact that he had "two lords, nine knights, fifty-eight esquires and

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twenty gentlemen of note retained by indenture during their lives to take his part against all persons within the realm, their allegiance to the king only excepted."

Hastings in many respects resembled the king in character and temperament. Of fine presence, tall and handsome in appearance, with a gracious and pleasing manner, he was generally liked at Court and popular among the citizens of London. Philippe de Comines,¹ who knew him personally, describes him as "a man of singular wisdom and virtue, in great authority with his master, not without cause, as he had served him faithfully." He was one of the most courteous and gallant knights of his time, to whom the king himself set an example in politeness and chivalry, in valour, accomplishments and the graces of his person; and it was largely to him that Edward owed his restoration to the throne.

All the chroniclers agree with Sir Thomas More that "he was an honourable man, a good knight and true, and a gentle of great authority with his prince." The shrewd old historian, however, admits that "in living he was somewhat dissolute, plain and open to his enemy but sweet to his friends; easy to be beguiled as he that (of good heart and courage) forestudied his peril. He was a loving man and passing well beloved, very faithful and trusty and trusting too much."

His enemies declared, and the queen apparently believed, that he was instrumental in introducing many fair ladies to his master, and pandered to the king's weakness in that direction. This appears to be more than probable, as there seems little doubt that it was he who

¹ "Les Mémoires," by Philippe de Comines, 1559.

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fanned the flame of the king's passion for the woman who afterwards became his favourite mistress.

That Hastings gave rein to sex indulgence is not surprising, considering the period in which he lived and his position as first among the favourites of a gay and gallant king. But whatever he may have been in private life, it must be admitted that he stood pre-eminent in his time for national service, both in council and in the field, and that he was a loyal and faithful subject, as well as a devoted and confidential friend, of his sovereign Edward IV.

FIVE

*“In summer time when leaves grow green
And blossoms bedecke the tree,
King Edward would a hunting ryde
Some pastime for to see.*

*Our king he would a hunting ryde
By eight o'clock of the day,
With hawkes and houndes he made him bowne,
With horne and eke with bowe.”*

*—King Edward IV and the
Miller of Tamworth, 1600.*

AND so, one bright summer morning in early June, a gay cavalcade might have been seen riding through Aldgate, on its way to a royal hunt in Epping Forest.

The company included the mayor, aldermen, and some of the common councillors of the city with their ladies, all of whom had been invited by the king to participate in the entertainment he had provided for their amusement. Near the head rode the mayoress, a portly dame on a steady palfrey, accompanied by several of her maids-of-honour; among them was Jane Wainstead, who presented a charming figure dressed in a riding-costume of rose-coloured cloth laced with gold, and a jaunty little

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cap with a feather. The ride had brought a flush to her cheeks that emphasized her freshness and beauty.

Stout aldermen in scarlet cloaks jogged along by the side of their equally fat spouses arrayed in rich velvets or taffetas, holding tightly to the reins of their steeds. Other guests who hoped to join in the chase carried bows, or had short swords hanging across their backs.

After leaving the city gate the green fields were soon reached, and skirting the marshes of Hackney the way through Chingford, towards the forest, was taken.

An old ballad thus describes the scene :

*"Next once a year into Essex a hunting they go,
To see 'em pass along, O 'tis a most pretty show,
Through Cheapside and Fenchurch and so to Aldgate
pump,
Each one with 's spurs in 's horse's sides and his back
sword across his rump."*

King Edward, anxious to cultivate the goodwill of the loyal citizens of London, thought it politic to treat them with great liberality, and so occasionally entertained them right royally, inviting the leading merchants and their wives to some of his hunting expeditions, and always taking care to send venison to the mayoress and the aldermen's ladies, after the sport had concluded.

On entering the leafy glades of the forest the company were met by foresters, who guided them to a clearing surrounded by great trees, whose spreading branches formed a protection from the sun. Here, on the green-sward, a large pavilion or trest had been erected and covered with boughs. Within stretched long tables

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formed by boards resting on wood logs; these were laden with platters and dishes of varied food, great venison pasties, roasted birds, huge rounds of beef, and cakes of bread, all ready for the feast.

In groups round about the pavilion stood a brilliant gathering of the nobles and their ladies of the Court. Prominent among them for his great height was the king, his stalwart figure set off by his hunting costume of russet leather. His long, pointed leather boots reached to his thighs, and he wore a small cap decorated with an eagle's feather. His horn was slung over one shoulder, while from the other hung his bow and a quiver of arrows. Near him were Lord Hastings, the Earl of Essex, Lord Howard, and many other knights attached to his personal retinue. Some of the ladies were dressed for the chase in riding-skirts of varied colours, over which they wore smocks, and their heads were surmounted by round, closely fitting caps. The many bright costumes stood out in brave array against the background formed by the verdant green of the surrounding trees and the short-cropped turf which carpeted the ground.

At the far end of the pavilion stood the Master of the Game and his foresters, holding in leash, in couples, the impatient staghounds ready for the winding of the horn and the opening of the hunt. When the king hunted in the forest it was customary to have the game previously enclosed within a fence-work of netting, supported by posts driven into the ground, ready for release when the signal to begin was sounded by the Master.

For the ladies who wished to take part, and for spectators, temporary stands had been set up at certain

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points, past which the game was driven, so that those armed with bows might shoot their arrows at the animals as they went by. Others were at liberty to follow the pursuit, either mounted or on foot, after the hounds had passed. As the company of guests from the city approached across the grassy space, the king went forward to receive them, and smilingly greeted each in turn. When they had been welcomed he moved about freely among the assembly, setting all at ease, exchanging a pleasant word with one and a jest with another. To the ladies he made himself especially agreeable, delighting them all by his cordiality and *bonhomie*.

He approached the mayoress and her maids, doffed his cap and, bidding them welcome, his quick eye fell on Jane's dainty figure.

"And whom have we here?" he asked, as he took a step towards her.

"This is Mistress Jane, whom we call our Rose," replied the mayoress with a smile.

"A rose indeed," murmured the king, as with his finger he tilted Jane's face. "And a rose of what kind, child?" he asked her laughingly.

"Of York, Sire," replied Jane demurely, as a blush suffused her cheeks.

"A right pretty answer, truly," said the king; "but I trow much too fair to bloom in the city. What say you, William?" He turned to Lord Hastings who stood close behind him.

"I quite agree, my liege," replied the Lord Chamberlain. He tried to catch Jane's eye, without success, while the king passed on.

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His greetings completed, he led the way to the pavilion, the company being requested to follow, and soon the tables were surrounded by the guests, all ready to feast on the choice food set before them. Casks of fine malmsey had been broached, and this, with clary or beer for those who preferred it, was passed round in horns or cups.

The king refused to partake of anything himself until he had seen all his guests served, and before withdrawing gave orders to the noblemen in attendance to be sure that all were well regaled. For a time conviviality and laughter reigned, then, after a while, when all had eaten of the good fare, the sound of a horn was heard. The hunters soon assembled on the green, where the grooms stood ready with the horses. The ladies and guests were led off to their stands, and when they had seated themselves, and the king and his companions had mounted, three long blasts from the Master's horn gave the signal for the hounds to be uncoupled and the game released. Dogs and hunters followed hotly in pursuit.

The sport proved good; at the finish, the foresters returned with a number of deer, red as well as fallow, some of which had fallen to the king's own arrows, and all were laid in front of the pavilion. Here, as customary when all had reassembled, the king selected the parts of the killed game for distribution. He presented the mayor with "two stags, and ordered six bucks to be divided between the Mayoress and the Aldermen's wives." These, together with a tun of wine, he commanded should be sent to the Drapers' Hall, where the festivities were to be kept up, so that all might make merry that night.

Drinking horns were refilled and handed round by the

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attendant foresters, until all were satisfied. Then, as the sun was beginning to set and shed a golden radiance through the spreading branches of the trees, the guests again mounted their steeds and set out on their return to London.

SIX

WHERE and when Lord Hastings first met Jane and fell a victim to her charms there is no evidence to show. It may have been at one of the entertainments to which the king had bidden the citizens and their families; or he may have seen her in her father's shop, for she must have been known by repute to many of the courtiers. There is little doubt, however, that he fell in love with her before her marriage, and we know that his affection for her remained throughout his life; this he proved in later years by affording her friendship and protection in the time of her adversity. One ancient chronicler remarks: "They say that he knew her in her youth, and even in the king's days albeit he was sore enamoured of her."

But his love for her does not appear to have been reciprocated. Jane was not dazzled by his high position, his wealth or the magnificence of his person, for she gently repulsed his attentions. As Lord Chamberlain he had a fine house at Westminster, richly furnished with everything the genius of the age could provide. Valuable and beautiful tapestries covered the walls, and many of the windows were filled with rich stained glass of varied hues. The low-ceiled rooms were furnished with massive oak finely carved, and the floors were strewn with rushes and fragrant herbs.

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All this he offered, but Jane steadfastly refused to leave her home. His love for her was only increased by her repeated refusals and the obstacles she raised in order to thwart his desire. Every day he became more importunate, and his passion seemed to absorb all his faculties.

At length, after he received what he thought to be his final dismissal, his patience became exhausted, and he resolved to devote all his energies to making Jane his, if not by consent, by carrying her off in spite of her opposition. He thought of many plans by which he might get possession of her, and eventually decided to bribe a maid of Wainstead's household, inducing her, if possible, to persuade her young mistress to walk by the riverside one evening. There he would await her and make a last appeal to overcome her scruples.

Like other noblemen, Hastings kept a splendid barge, manned by his liveried servants, always on the river, ready to convey him when required from Westminster to the city.

One evening, after carefully disguising himself, he took his way to Cheapside and waylaid the maid as she left the mercer's shop. She was a comely wench; nothing loath for company on her errand, she showed no reluctance to the tall stranger when he joined her.

Hastings was well used to such adventures, and by cajolery and flattery was soon on terms with her which rendered his scheme an easy matter. He gave her to understand that he wished to see her mistress alone on an affair of great importance, and if she could prevail upon Jane to take a little walk by the riverside, soon after dark on the next night, he would be there, and she could

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remain with her mistress to accompany her back. The girl, seeing no harm in his suggestion, consented, provided that he gave his solemn assurance that no hurt would be done to her mistress, of whom she was very fond. Hastings swore that no harm should befall her, and pressing some money into the maid's hand, promised to give her a bag of gold if she was successful in carrying out his wish. He left her as she approached her master's door, well pleased with the success of his idea.

That night, at bedtime, the simple girl became uneasy when she thought over the strange man's proposal. She could not sleep; she was obsessed by the idea that she might be doing wrong; and by the morning she was fully convinced that some ill boded her young mistress. If any harm befell from the meeting she felt she could never forgive herself. Who could this man be, who spoke so gently and gave her money, and what could he want with Mistress Jane, by the river at night, where she had been forbidden to go?

Eventually she came to the decision that no amount of gold would induce her to carry out the man's request, and she resolved to tell her master, to put him on guard. Later on, she sought out Master Wainstead when he was alone in the parlour and told him the story of the preceding night.

The cautious old mercer saw at once that some kind of plot threatened his daughter, and resolved to take steps to circumvent it. Early in the evening he forbade Jane or her maid to leave the house, and asked a neighbour in to stay with them. Just after dark had fallen, muffled in a thick cloak, he took a lantern and a stout staff and made



JANE SHORE

Engraved from a picture formerly belonging to Dr. Peckard, Magdalen College,
Cambridge.

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his way by one of the narrow lanes down to the riverside. Here all was quiet and lonely, save for the sound of the water lapping against the little landing-stage close by. The night was very dark and still. Presently he heard the splash of oars, and out of the darkness loomed a long barge, in the bows of which stood a tall figure heavily cloaked.

As the barge came nearer, the man prepared to spring ashore, but apparently changed his mind on observing the solitary figure of Wainstead standing there, lantern in hand. He gave a sharp order to the oarsmen; the barge turned quickly round, and was soon lost in the darkness.

The old mercer failed to recognize the livery of the bargemen, which might have given him a clue, but he had a shrewd idea of the identity of the owner, and felt that he had frustrated his schemes, whatever they may have been. In his own mind there was little doubt that some outrage against his daughter's person had been planned, and thus, deeply pondering over the matter, he retraced his way to his house.

SEVEN

JANE'S father at length became convinced that nothing but a speedy marriage would save his daughter's reputation and honour. Moved by this belief, he began to look for a suitable husband, who would shield and protect her from the importunities of her numerous admirers.

Among the friends who occasionally visited his house was William Shore, a goldsmith and banker of Lombard Street, a man of substance and integrity, generally respected in the city, and born of a wealthy family. There is record of a Matthew Shore also a goldsmith in the same street, and Richard Shore, probably a relative, who was an alderman of London in 1505.

Shore was about thirty years of age, and some fourteen or fifteen years older than Jane. He was by no means attractive in person, for his face, which habitually wore a solemn expression, bore the disfiguring marks of small-pox. He was staid in manner, and of a reticent and reserved disposition, and not in any way a suitable husband and companion for a bright and intelligent girl. When visiting Wainstead's house he had been a frequent butt for Jane's raillery. Provoked by his solemn manner she had tried to arouse his stolidity without avail, and could rarely make him smile. Wainstead, however,

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decided to approach him on the subject of a marriage with his daughter, being anxious for her future and worried by the temptations which her beauty invited.

The proposition of marriage to such a beautiful girl was received by Shore with favour; making up his mind to try to gain Jane's love and esteem, he consented to her father's suggestion.

The future husband selected, Wainstead spoke to his daughter, and enlarged on the dangers to which she was subjected by her admirers. He pleaded that he was getting an old man, and that she needed a husband to protect her. He commended to her William Shore, who was respected as straightforward and upright, and was rich enough to keep her in the comforts she had always enjoyed. He told her that he did not wish to force her into marriage, but wanted to see her the wife of a man whom she could rely upon for protection in all circumstances.

Jane was at first astounded at her father's suggestion, declaring that she did not wish to be married, least of all to William Shore, who was too old and staid, and more like an elder brother than a lover. Shore, meanwhile, roused from his usual stolidity, did all he could to ingratiate himself with the girl he proposed to make his wife, and after a time, doubtless flattered by the attentions he paid her and the presents of splendid and valuable jewels he constantly brought, Jane began to relent. It was not in her nature to be ungrateful, or to remain unresponsive to kindness, and at length, touched by Shore's modest and unobtrusive ways, she began to tolerate his addresses, then to receive them with a show

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of some affection. She was not in love with him, and felt she never would be, but strongly influenced by her father's wish, and anxious to put his mind at rest, she at last consented to the marriage.

Wainstead hurried on the event. The day being fixed, invitations were sent out to the friends of both families, for the mercer had resolved to spare no expense in giving his daughter a wedding fit for a nobleman's daughter.

The marriage took place with great splendour in one of the city churches, and a magnificent banquet followed the ceremony, at which many gentlemen and ladies of the Court were present, as well as the leading merchants. We are told by a chronicler that "many noblemen and their ladies were present at the marriage feast in their most sumptuous attire, and that Shore spared neither gold nor jewels to bespangle his wife." The Wainsteads kept open house, and the rejoicings lasted several days.

After the marriage, Shore and his wife took up their residence in Lombard Street, where so many of his craft carried on business. In the time of Henry VII there were as many as fifty-two goldsmiths in the locality, numbers of whom were also bankers. Some of the houses occupied by the goldsmiths were remarkable for their gilded and carved frontages, and above the doorways swung great sign-boards emblazoned with heraldic designs, or ornamented with figures of animals and birds. In the rooms on the ground floor costly plate and jewellery were displayed, but most of the objects of great value were kept out of sight and were only brought out to show to customers.

Not much is known concerning the first few years of

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Jane's married life. She had no children, and only the duties of a housewife occupied her time. She had little in common with her husband, but it is probable that in spite of the disparity of their ages she tried to make him a good wife. Sir Thomas More tells us that "For as much as they were coupled ere she were well ripe, she was not very fervently loved for whom she never longed."

Being naturally a girl of a lively and happy temperament, the fact that she was tied to a man of a sulky and jealous disposition made her long for greater pleasure and a more exciting life. There is little doubt that her husband treated her with kindness and denied her nothing that he could supply, for "he clothed her in rich attire and adorned her with jewels"; but she was given few opportunities to wear them in public, for they rarely entertained or went abroad. Jane was hungry for love, and so was ready to welcome attentions other than those offered by her husband, for a starved affection knows no ties or loyalties.

Lord Hastings was still under Jane's enchantment, and his admiration for her appears to have been in no way diminished by her marriage. On the contrary, his love for her had increased when he realized that the object of his affection had passed into the possession of another. After a while he resolved to renew his friendship with her, thinking that in the lapse of time she might have become disillusioned with matrimony, and would now be more likely to listen to his appeals. With this object in view, he paid a visit to Shore's house on the excuse of inspecting some jewellery. He made several purchases, and after repeated visits became on friendly

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terms with the goldsmith, who, doubtless flattered by the patronage of so influential a nobleman, made him welcome to the shop.

One day he was invited into the parlour where Jane was sitting, and was introduced to her by her husband, who little knew that they had met before. Jane did not enlighten him, but received the distinguished customer with grave courtesy.

Hastings, quietly amused at the turn of events, treated her with great deference and respect, but showed his delight in her witty talk and conversation. Since her marriage Jane had developed both in beauty and charm; naturally this made her appear more desirable than ever, and he had to exercise great restraint in her husband's presence in order to keep his admiration within bounds. She knew his object by intuition, but affected ignorance, and by the exercise of her wit and a happy vein of irony, contrived to keep their talk from dangerous channels.

Hastings entertained her, and she accepted from him several valuable gifts, until at last her husband's jealousy began to be aroused. He gave them few opportunities to be together, and warned Jane of her danger, but she treated his caution lightly, telling Shore that she was quite able to take care of herself, and that the noble lord meant her no harm. One evening, however, when Shore happened to be called away and the two were alone, Hastings, suddenly carried away by his passion, embraced Jane ardently, and covered her face with kisses. Thoroughly alarmed at his violence, Jane tore herself free from his arms and rushed to the door, calling loudly for her husband. Shore burst into the room not knowing

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what had actually happened, and confronted the nobleman in a threatening attitude, but Hastings brushed him aside.

"Fool!" he exclaimed. "Your wife has been frightened. No harm has been done."

Speechless with rage, and knowing he would have a dangerous foe in so powerful a man, Shore strode to the front door, and throwing it open, cried hoarsely: "Begone! Never enter here again."

Hastings smiled grimly, and with a shrug of his shoulders turned and left the shop.

EIGHT

BAFFLED and chagrined by his ignominious dismissal by a mere city merchant, Hastings brooded over this rebuff as he took his way towards Westminster, maddened by the thought that his own impetuosity had ruined his last chance of success with Jane. Arrived at his house, he sat down to consider how he might best revenge himself on the Shores. It was an easy matter for a man of his position and power to crush them. But though his love for Jane was temporarily eclipsed, it was not dead, and he could not entertain the idea of hurting her.

In the belief that he had lost her completely, he at length thought of a plan whereby Shore could at least be wounded in a way he would feel acutely. Suppose, he pondered, he were to send a rival whom neither the husband's authority nor the wife's chastity should be able to resist? Knowing full well the king's amorous disposition, it would be easy to paint Jane's beauty and charms in such glowing colours that Edward would never rest until he saw her. He knew he would have little difficulty in inflaming the passion of his impetuous master, and that when Jane saw the king he might so dazzle her senses that she would eventually yield to him. That accomplished, Hastings would have freed Jane from the thralldom of her marriage, and also revenged himself upon Shore.

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On this project he decided, and resolved to carry it out as soon as possible.

The opportunity occurred on his next visit to the palace, where he had an audience with the king in his private chamber. After their business was finished, seeing that the king was in a good humour, Hastings turned the conversation on women and their beauty.

"I saw one the other day so fair that her face will haunt me as long as I live," he remarked. "She was indeed perfection itself and a paragon of loveliness."

"And who is this fair one?" asked the king, smiling at his Chamberlain's fervour. "Where did you see this miracle of perfection?"

"In the city, Sire."

"And was she maid or wife?"

"She is a wife, but such exquisite beauty . . ."

"Tush, man!" cried the king impatiently. "Whose wife? Be more explicit."

"Her name is Mistress Jane Shore, and her husband is a goldsmith in Lombard Street."

"And so thou hast found a Venus among the bourgeoisie, eh?" said the king with a laugh. "But tell me more of her."

"When she was but a child she was forced by an ambitious old father into marriage with the wealthy goldsmith, a morose, surly fellow, much her senior and furiously jealous."

"I believe, William, you have fallen in love with her yourself," rejoined the king, still smiling.

"No, Sire, I do protest," replied Hastings warmly. "I but know the general gossip about her, for Jane's beauty

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is well known. They call her the 'Rose of London,' and rightly she deserves the name."

"The 'Rose of London,'" echoed the king. "Methinks we have heard of her."

"Her father's name is Wainstead, a mercer in the Cheap, and she is his only child. Perchance you may have heard of him?"

"I do remember now," remarked the king after a while. "I saw and spoke to her at one of our hunts, I think at Epping, some years ago. I mark her well, for she looked like some beautiful angelic child, and her sweet, bewitching face has dwelt in my memory like the spirit of a heavenly dream."

Hastings could scarcely conceal his satisfaction when he saw the king so deeply interested.

"And you tell me she is a wife?" continued the king, musing over his memory.

"Aye, and an unhappy one, alas, Sire, for she is ill-mated with this dull merchant with a dour face from whom she never hears a merry word. She should have had some happier destiny than to be tied all her life to such a man, whom she must hate."

"Mention this to no one, William." The king rose from his chair. "It would be no ill act to rescue this fair creature from such a fate."

"A most saintly act, my liege," rejoined Hastings, now assured that his plan was going to succeed.

"I would that I could see her again; but how can it be managed?" asked Edward dubiously.

"It can be done, Sire," rejoined Hastings, "and I know a way whereby it may be carried out."

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"But mark you, I must be unknown."

"Most certainly. Now what think you of this plan?" Hastings asked after a few moments. "Disguised as a merchant you might well pay a visit to the goldsmith's shop under the pretence of making some purchases. You may then perchance see Jane and have speech with her, for one meeting may lead to another."

"It seems a safe and easy way. But you must also don a disguise and accompany me thither."

"I could come with you to the shop, but it would not be well for me to enter as Shore's suspicions would surely be aroused. I could wait nearby and rejoin you afterwards."

"Good. We will carry this out. Be here at the hour of eight to-morrow night." With this, the king dismissed his Chamberlain.

Hastings left the palace, well-pleased with the result of his visit. He knew that he had fully succeeded in arousing Edward to a sense of Jane's beauty, and that the king would know no peace until he had seen her. If she yielded, and came to the Court, he himself might still have some chance of gaining her affection, or at least her gratitude. Then his sense of honour reminded him that he had been acting in a spirit of revenge towards the woman he loved.

Had she deserved this? he wondered. But he comforted himself with the thought that if she accepted the king's wooing, instead of having revenged himself on her for his repulse, he would have been instrumental in raising her to the height of power and greatness, and doubtless to a happier future.

NINE

FROM the time of the Conquest, the palace of Westminster, which adjoined St. Peter's Abbey, had been the chief residence of the kings of England. This great, grey edifice, a splendid specimen of Norman architecture, had been originally two distinct buildings, one dating from an earlier period than the other, but when the later one was erected the two were joined together.

The new palace lay to the north, and was surrounded on that side and towards the west by a wall, forming a spacious courtyard. On the east, or river side, was a large garden, partly laid out with paths and lawns, the remainder planted with young trees or thickets, extending to the edge of the Thames. The south side was bounded by the outer wall of the older part of the palace, but the buildings in the enclosed court were few. The new palace which occupied the north-east side comprised the great hall, and two chambers occupied by the Exchequer. Beyond this, at the south-east angle of the great hall, stood a square tower, which in early times had been connected with the defence of the river-gate, but in the fifteenth century was used as the official residence in connection with the Exchequer House and the royal chapel.

The old palace lay within a separate enclosure to the

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south of the principal apartments, thus forming an irregular line on the east side of the courtyard, and from it a long wing extended as far as the precincts of the abbey. The walls of this courtyard on the north and west were embattled; on the south side the buildings were defended by an outer palisade, which surmounted the banks of the swift stream that flowed into the Thames at Millbank.

The old palace was purposely built by the Confessor close to the abbey, to which it originally lay open on the west. The great hall forming part of it, abutting on the south end of the hall of Rufus, had several smaller chambers connected with it, used by court officials. The suite of apartments on the first floor of the palace, built over a series of low-vaulted cellars, was occupied by the great officers of State, such as the butler-larderer and others, containing as well accommodation for the nobles resident at Court. In the south wing were the kitchens and other offices, which extended in an irregular line westward as far as the abbey, and eastward to the river.

An interesting picture of court life in the time of Edward IV has been drawn for us by Hall. The king lived at Westminster in great magnificence and splendour. He usually dined in the hall of the old palace, the upper end being screened off from the smaller chamber in which he transacted important business of State. Here Edward sat alone or accompanied by those of his household ministers with whom he might want to confer. The walls of this chamber were hung with canvas dyed a deep crimson and emblazoned here and there with the Royal Arms; the floor was strewn with dried rushes. At the

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upper end stood the royal chair, the arms and legs of which were of carved ivory, the seat draped with a scarlet cloth. The window recesses on either side had benches of oak on which were scattered hawking gear, musical instruments, great viols and harps, or manuscripts of chronicles or the early classic authors. Here in the morning the courtiers stood about in groups conversing in low tones, until the cry of "The King" echoed through the chamber and hushed the conversation.

The majestic figure of the king would then emerge from an inner door, which was guarded by sergeants of the chamber. Although of great stature, Edward was symmetrically built; moving with an easy grace among his nobles, he exchanged a jest with one, gave a covert rebuke to another, or paused for a brief consultation with a minister, before taking his seat on his chair of State.

We have also a glimpse of the domestic side of life at the Court in the record of Bluemantle Pursuivant, who describes how King Edward entertained the Lord of Grutuyse, ambassador of the Duke of Burgundy, who came to England on a mission in September, 1472. He tells us that the king loved music, and that dinner was followed by dancing, and after the dancing the king's "singing men" sang to the company. The King's Minstrels, who comprised both vocal and instrumental performers, were licensed to form a guild of music, under Walter Haliday, in April, 1469, and wherever the monarch went, we are told, he was accompanied by his minstrels, in order to beguile his leisure and "divert him with their sweet strains."

On the occasion of the ambassador's visit, after supper,

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the king took his guest to the queen's apartments, where she sat with her ladies playing the game of morteaulx, which resembled bowls, while some of her women were engaged at clasheys, a game similar to ninepins, in which small, thick, ivory sticks standing on the floor were knocked over by a ball. Others were dancing or taking part in other diversions, "which sight was full pleasant to the visitor." The king then danced with the Lady Elizabeth, his eldest daughter. About nine of the clock, the king and queen and the ladies and gentlemen brought the Lord of Grutuyse to his chamber, and then departed for the night.

The Ambassador's chamber was all hanged with white silk and linen cloth the floors being covered with carpets. There was a bed for himself of good down sheets of raynes (fine linen from Rennes) fine fustyan (blankets) and the counterpane was cloth of gold furred with ermine. The canopy and the hangings were of shining cloth of gold, the curtains of white sarsenette and also his bedsheet and pillows which were of the Queen's ordnance.

On parting, the king gave his guest a cup of gold garnished with pearls. "In the midst of the cup was a great piece of unicorn's horn some seven inches long in compass and on the cover of the cup a great sapphire."

The unicorn's horn was believed to be an antidote to any poison that might be mixed with the wine, and great faith was placed in its virtues.

Thus King Edward lodged and entertained, in the year 1472, the distinguished visitor and ambassador from his cousin, the Duke of Burgundy.

TEN

DUSK had just fallen when two tall men, swathed in dark cloaks, emerged from a small side door of the palace of Westminster and took their way on foot towards London. A crescent moon peeped through the river-mist, and a few of the brighter stars had already appeared.

Each man carried a stout staff, and they spoke but little as they picked their way along the rough and uneven road of the Strand. Entering the city through the Lud Gate, and skirting the great church of St. Paul, sombre and dark against the night sky, they passed into Cheap. Glimmers of light shone here and there from latticed windows, but most of the shops were closed, and the men walked carefully over the indistinct roadway.

When they reached the corner of Lombard Street, the taller of the two whispered to his companion :

“Await me here. I will now go on alone.”

“Look for the sign of the Three Crowns, which hangs on a shield above the door, on the left-hand side.”

The tall man assented with a gesture, and slipping a mask on, and pulling his flat cap well over his face, proceeded to grope his way down the middle of the street, scanning the swinging sign-boards. At length he descried one bearing representations of three gold crowns.

The house was in darkness except for a dim light that

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shone between the heavy bars of a narrow window on the ground floor. The massive oak door was shut, so he knocked several times with his staff. Some moments elapsed before he heard bolts being withdrawn; the door was opened a little, and a man's head appeared in the opening.

"Are you Master Shore?" the visitor asked.

"I am, good sir." The man threw the door open, revealing by the light of the lantern he carried a short, thick-set figure with stooping shoulders. His pock-marked face was thin, and his chin and head were sparsely covered by sandy hair.

"The hour is late for business, I fear, but I have come some distance to see you, as I am shortly travelling across the sea and require some plate."

"Will you be pleased to enter and I will secure the door, so we shall not be disturbed."

The visitor stepped into the shop and glanced around. Against the oak-panelled walls on either side stood large cupboards, some with doors of iron; from others, glass-fronted, a glittering array of bowls, platters, flagons, cups and other plate of gold and silver gleamed. Upon a long table across the back of the shop, a desk lighted by candles, was topped by a ponderous ledger. Behind was a curtained door which evidently opened into a parlour. Several heavy chests clamped with massive iron bands and secured with great locks rested on the floor.

Proffering a finely carved chair to his caller, Shore began to unlock the doors of the cupboards and display his wares. Besides showing the plate on their shelves, he opened many drawers lined with velvet, on which lay

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exquisite specimens of the goldsmith's art. Diamonds sparkled, rubies and emeralds gleamed from their settings in necklaces, belts and rings. Pendants studded with lustrous pearls, pomanders of rich enamel, finely jewelled, and gems of great beauty, flashed and glowed in the candlelight.

"You have some valuable articles, I see," said the visitor as he rose to examine the collection more closely.

"Aye, Sir," replied Shore in lugubrious tones. "And some of it once belonged to very ancient and honourable families in better days."

"Thus their wealth and splendour finds its way to the shop of the merchant," came the dry comment.

"Even so. At times they are sold to ransom a member of some family, or to pay the debts of another. Many have had to sell to carry on the strife that has impoverished and brought them down these past years."

Meanwhile the visitor was examining several pieces of plate and jewellery which Shore had placed on the table before him. After selecting some fine specimens, he said: "I should like to have these if we can agree about price."

"I am not a hard man," rejoined Shore, rubbing his hands when he saw the nature of the articles that had been put on one side. "I am sure we shall be able to agree."

"I will pay now for what I have chosen, and send a trusty messenger for them later," said the visitor. The bargain was soon concluded, and producing a bag of money, he counted out the sum required, much to Shore's satisfaction.

The customer, however, appeared in no hurry to leave, and prolonged the conversation by discussing all kinds of



JANE SHORE

An engraving by F. Bartolozzi, R.A., from a drawing by S. Harding.

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topics, in the hope that Jane would make an appearance, but the lady failed to come. Almost at his wit's end, he broached at length the subject of matrimony, and commiserated with Shore on having no mistress to look after his fine house.

"I give you my thanks, Sir," said Shore, "but I have a wife whom I am sure would be glad of your civility. Perchance you will drink a cup of wine with us?"

"I will with pleasure." The response was immediate and hearty.

"She is alone and we will join her." Shore drew the curtain aside and ushered the stranger into the parlour, where Jane, who had been sitting at a table, rose from her chair and made a low curtsy as they entered.

The walls of the small room were hung with fine tapestries, and the soft light from groups of candles, which stood in silver candelabra on the table, fell on the radiant figure of the lovely girl. In spite of her praises sung by Hastings, and his own expectations, her actual presence came upon the king as a revelation. Her beauty almost took his breath away.

She appeared to him a very queen among women; a peerless jewel, excelling any other he had ever met. The wonder of her left him momentarily dazed.

She was dressed in a gown of pale blue silk, flowered with gold and embroidered with pearls; her fair hair was crowned with a little close cap of cream lace, from the edge of which some golden curls escaped. About her neck she wore several rows of fine pearls with a sapphire pendant of dark blue.

The visitor stood for a moment as if transfixed by her

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beauty, and then with a low bow, he murmured: "Pray pardon me, I did not expect to see so fair a vision."

Jane smiled and gently bade him be seated, while her husband busied himself in bringing cups and a flagon of wine.

"You have shown me some of your splendid jewels, Sir, but methinks you have kept the most precious of them all to the last." The newcomer fixed his eyes in admiration on Jane.

Shore nodded his head, and then, as if desirous of changing the subject of the conversation, said to his wife: "Our friend is shortly going across the seas."

"Alas, Sir, I envy you," said Jane as she gazed on the masked face.

"You find your life here somewhat dull, perchance?"

"Sometimes I do long for brightness, for I love music, and flowers—of which we see but few in the city."

"I pray you pledge us, Sir," Shore broke in, raising his cup.

"But you have some roses in the city, Mistress," said the visitor, looking into her eyes. "'Tis a pity the fairest of flowers should sometimes bloom in seclusion," he continued, "and I raise my cup to one who is called the Rose of London."

A deep flush suffused Jane's cheeks as she smiled in response and bowed to him.

Meanwhile Shore, who was aware of the fascinations of his wife, began to grow uneasy. The business finished, he did not wish to prolong the interview. Jane took the obvious hint he gave, and, after bidding them good night, with a curtesy she withdrew.

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Shore ushered his customer to the door, thanking him, and promising to have his purchases ready for the messenger on the morrow, lighted him to the street.

The king soon rejoined Hastings, whom he found awaiting him at the corner, and together they began to retrace their way towards Westminster.

“She is most beautiful, William,” remarked the king after a while.

“She is indeed, Sire.”

“More lovely than any woman I have ever seen. She is perfect,” Edward continued with enthusiasm. “Such a wonderful flower cannot and shall not be lost in a jealous citizen’s house. She must grace our Court. I am resolved on that.”

“You are right, Sire. She is indeed a glorious sunbeam, and I never saw her peer,” rejoined Hastings, delighted that his idea had succeeded and that the king was now fully alive to Jane’s charms.

“She is discontented and unhappy, I could see. How could she be otherwise with that surly fellow? I must have her, William, cost what it may, and you must think well how it can be managed.”

“Doubtless she will be present at the Masque next week,” replied Hastings. “I will take care she is invited, and by then we may be able to form some plan. I know of a woman who lives in Bird-in-hand Court, near the Shores’ house. She often brings lace to the palace, and I could communicate with Jane through her.”

“That is well. Take steps that Mistress Shore is present at the Masque; I charge you.”

Hastings left the king at the small door at the side of

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the palace and walked to his own house. His mind was distraught with conflicting thoughts; was he losing Jane for ever, he asked himself? But the die had been cast and he could not draw back now. The king had seen her and had fallen a willing victim to her charms. His own love had been rejected, so there was no hope for him. The king had charged him—and the king should have her if she consented.

After the door had been bolted for the night, Jane rejoined her husband.

“Who was he?” she asked with curiosity.

“He said he was a merchant, but I know him not,” replied Shore indifferently.

“Ah!” said Jane, thoughtfully. “I should have taken him for some great lord. Perhaps the king himself in disguise.”

“Tush!” grunted Shore. “Let’s to bed.”



THE KING'S VISIT TO SHORE'S SHOP
(from a woodcut of the XVII Century.)

ELEVEN

WITH his fondness for gaiety and pleasure, King Edward occasionally gave a masque in the gardens of the palace of Westminster, to which he would bid the leading citizens with their wives, and others who had rendered him loyal services.

Such festivities, invariably carried out in lavish style, naturally made him popular with the people, and the news, therefore, that another was to be held, on a scale of great magnificence, excited great interest in the city. The tailors, robe-makers, mercers and other artificers were kept busy for weeks beforehand in preparation for the event.

The spacious gardens of the old palace with their green lawns, shady paths and shrubberies were admirably adapted for the purpose. On the south side they extended to the water's edge, where from a handsome flight of stone steps embarkation and disembarkation was easy for those who came by river. The gates of the palace were also thrown open to the invited guests, and they might wander at will through the grounds. Wonderful confections, pies, fruit, and wine, were laid out on tables in the courtyard under the arches in the lower part of the building, and on the greensward the King's Minstrels with their instruments provided music for dancing and the amusement of the guests. On benches placed round the lawns the older visitors might sit and watch the frolics.

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At these functions, which usually began at noon and ended at sunset, there was no formal reception, and all the guests were supposed to appear masked, or disguised in some fancy or outlandish costume. It was generally understood that the king must on no account be recognized. He was always presumed to be mingling with his people, and it would have been considered a gross breach of good manners to affect to know him, or to endeavour to penetrate his disguise.

William Shore and his wife had been invited, and Jane was eagerly looking forward to the entertainment, for she had received what amounted to a command from the Lord Chamberlain to be present. Her husband, who disliked festivities, declared he could not go, but in order not to disappoint his wife, he had obtained permission for her to accompany Lady Knevett, the wife of a former mayor of the city.

The long-looked-for day at length arrived, and Jane, dressed in an exquisite gown which enhanced the beauty of her face and figure, accompanied by her chaperon, set out for the palace. After adjusting their masks they entered the gates and joined the crowds thronging the paths and lawns. Some were clad in motley costumes, others in costly silks, velvets and brocades, while others had donned extravagant fancy garb. A few had wrapped themselves in bear or tiger-skins to create diversion. One impersonated a huge dragon with gaping mouth and long, flexible tail which wagged continuously, to the amusement of the onlookers. Some of the nobles wore the dress common to the city apprentices, and appeared in duffle grey and jaunty caps. Others were arrayed in costumes

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of great magnificence, rich coloured velvets and satins, ornamented with gold embroideries and girt with belts studded with precious stones, which flashed and glittered in the sunlight.

After a while, when most of the guests had drifted towards the large lawn, the minstrels began to play. Jane and her companion stood with others on the edge of the greensward to watch the dancing. Presently a tall, masked man, splendidly dressed, made his way towards them, and approaching Jane, with great dignity besought her to dance. With a glance at her companion, who nodded her approval, Jane, blushing and trembling, was led out by her partner.

"I do not think I dare," she murmured, looking up at him.

"Of a certes you dare," he said smilingly. "Forget the king is here. Only think you are here alone with me." His eyes gleamed with pleasure as he looked down into her face; and Jane was so light of foot, so naturally graceful, that his confidence gave her courage.

Together they danced the *courante*, a court dance introduced from France, performed on tiptoe with slightly jumping steps and many bows and curtseys, which they carried out with such success and grace that they gained the applause of the spectators.

"Who can he be?" Jane asked herself again and again; and though she did not know his voice, something in his manner convinced her that they had met before. Then suddenly memory aided her recognition, and she felt sure that her partner was none other than the mysterious tall man who had visited them in Lombard Street.

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When the music ceased and the dance was finished, he led her back to Lady Knevett, and as he bowed over her hand and thanked her, he managed to slip a note between her fingers. Quickly retiring, his tall figure was soon lost in the throng.

Jane at once hid the paper in her bosom. Although consumed with curiosity to read its contents, she saw that an opportunity could hardly be found until her return to the city. Shortly afterwards, however, Lady Knevett complained of being fatigued, and Jane being nothing loath to go, they left the scene.

At Lombard Street Jane lost no time in retiring to her chamber to read the contents of the paper that her mysterious partner had pressed into her hand.

She unfolded it quickly with trembling fingers, and her eyes sparkled as she read the lines :

“ Fairest of women!

“ Your beauty has enthralled my heart. It is your king who is your suppliant, and begs you would be kind to him. He that can command is willing to entreat, and therefore surely you will not prove inexorable.

“ If you will take pity on your king send one kind word to him which he will receive with greater joy than if another crown was offered him, for he esteems your beauty and good humour far above all the shining ladies of the Court.

“ Whatever you leave for my sake you shall have no cause to repent it.

“ Send but one word by the lace-woman, for I would have you come willingly, and I will send horses and

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a trusty guard to her lodging to bring you to the palace.

"I wait impatiently for the word 'coming.'"

"Edward Rex."

Jane's heart beat wildly as she read these words. What should she do? Her husband, with his sullen temper, black looks and jealous disposition, had become repugnant to her. She had never loved him, and they had nothing in common; yet he had treated her well and given her his protection.

The temptation was great, and for a time her emotions almost overwhelmed her; but in the end she resolved to give herself time to think. Perchance the morrow would bring clearer vision and help her to decide what course to take.



KING EDWARD DANCING WITH JANE SHORE AT THE MASQUE
(from a woodcut of the XVII Century.)

TWELVE

JANE passed a sleepless night, for her mind was distracted by conflicting thoughts. She resolved to come to no rash decision, and she carefully weighed the consequences of the action she might take.

On one hand, she foresaw little or no happiness in the normal life that lay before her. She had no children, and no ties beyond those of a housewife. On the other, the dazzling splendour of the Court attracted her, and strongly appealed to her nature. She had often envied the great ladies who had frequented her father's shop, and was ambitious of shining in a higher sphere.

The king, the highest in the land, was at her feet, and had declared his love for her. She believed him just and generous to a fault; and unlike Hastings, he had never importuned her, but had left her to decide her own fate. She knew of his fickle nature, and that he had more than one mistress already, as well as his queen. Could she hold his affection, she wondered, or would he tire of her and abandon her to a dreadful fate?

No. She felt he would not fail her. She could trust the king. That night she made up her mind to risk all and accede to his desire. Having made her plans, the next day she hastened to the lace-woman's house, and, finding her in, besought her to carry a note to Lord

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Hastings, who would reward her for her service. The note contained the word the king desired. She would come that night. She told the woman that the only reply she expected would be sent to Lombard Street, by a messenger.

The hours dragged slowly till evening, but no message arrived. Then, as she sat at supper with her husband, there came a knock at the door. She hastily opened it and saw a boy standing outside, who pointed to the end of the street and, without a word, ran off. Returning to the parlour, and telling Shore that a message had come saying that her father was suddenly taken ill and wished to see her at once, she quickly threw on a cloak. Her husband wanted to accompany her, but yielded to her hurried persuasions to stay and her assurance that she would speedily come back. Jane took a small bag she had made ready and quickly left the house.

It was only a short distance to Bird-in-hand Court, where the lace-woman lived and there, outside the door, two horses were standing, with a man wearing a crimson cloak holding the reins. Helping her into the saddle, he mounted the second horse, and together they rode off to Westminster.

Shore waited anxiously for his wife's return, and after some hours had elapsed, thinking that some ill had befallen her, he took his way to Wainstead's house. Here he saw her father, and learned that no message had been sent, and that she had never arrived there. His fears now thoroughly aroused, he went from the house of one friend to another, but could find no trace or tidings of his wife. He spent the following day in his search without avail,

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and not until some time afterwards did news come to him that Jane had been seen at the palace, in the company of the king. He felt powerless to act, and could see no hope of inducing her to return.

After a time he began to realize what had happened; but what could he do, he asked himself, in the face of the powerful influences that would be aroused against him? In the end he decided to make no further efforts to get his wife back; bowing to fate, he abandoned her to her royal lover.

THIRTEEN

THE king received Jane with great kindness and distinction, and she was lodged in royal style in a magnificent suite of apartments which had been allotted to her by the Lord Chamberlain.

A new and very different life now dawned for her. She basked in the royal favour, for the king was so enchanted with his new mistress that he gave up all other pleasures for the time, in order that he might enjoy her society. He lavished valuable gifts upon her, decked her with jewels, and insisted that she should be clad in the richest attire. He was ready to grant her anything she might request.

Jane soon realized her influence with him and felt that all the magnificence of the Court was within her reach. Her power over her royal lover was complete; her witchery had enslaved him; and all this she had effected apparently without art, or effort.

Each day Edward showed her more and more affection, and openly favoured her society before that of the queen. He delighted in her merry quips and lively conversation, while at other times she was ready to beguile him with the music he loved. Her position was soon apparent to those at Court, and it began to be known that her power for good or evil was boundless. As his favourite mistress, she was

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sought by all who wished to gain the ear of the sovereign. Her good offices were solicited by both rich and poor, for Jane's amiable and tender nature could not bear to look on distress without trying to afford relief. She was always ready to intercede for the down-trodden and oppressed, and by her tact and good humour she knew how to soften the king's heart, so that he would grant forgiveness to those who had offended him and lay under his displeasure. It is said that in this way she saved many a man's life, and that through her intercession many a captive who had long lain in prison unjustly was set at liberty. "If the world was as grateful as it is revengeful, and as apt to remember good as ill turns, it would ever think of gentle Jane Shore, but the former write in dust and the other in marble," observes Sir Thomas More.

But although Jane realized her power, she never abused it, for all the chroniclers agree that she never employed her great interest with the king to hurt anyone, or to serve herself in any act of spleen or revenge. Surely no higher tribute could be paid to her character. Further, we learn that she was never known to accept bribes, or to sell her favours; all she accomplished was done in a truly noble and generous spirit. If she ever accepted a gift as a token of gratitude, it was insignificant, and never anything costly.

She was always too proud to show how much the royal favour was at her disposal, and regarded wealth no more highly than as subservient to her pleasures.

One recorded instance of her beneficence may perhaps be taken as typical of her sympathetic and charitable nature.

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One day an old woman, bent with years, craved speech with her. As she approached she was so overcome with grief and sorrow that she could scarcely utter a word, but handed Jane a letter.

"Whom do you bring this from, my good dame?" asked Jane kindly.

"From the noble Lord Hastings, Mistress, who bade me give it into your own hands," the woman answered.

Jane read the letter, which begged her interest on behalf of the bearer's son, who had been arrested and lodged in prison.

"And what is it you desire of me? Tell me your story."

"I had seven sons, Mistress," sobbed the old dame, "but they all died in the service of the king save one, and he has been found in the company of some conspirators and thrown into prison. I know not even if he be guilty, for they will not let me see him. If he suffers death, then I am indeed alone and desolate. There is nothing but beggary before me."

"He supported you?" asked Jane.

"He did, and was my only help. If I lose him I shall never know happiness again."

Touched by the story, Jane decided to inquire into its truthfulness, and bidding the woman be of good cheer and return to her home, dismissed her. She related the incident to the king, who stayed the execution of the man until his case had been strictly investigated. In the end the man obtained a free pardon, and his old mother, on Jane's intercession, was given a grant for the loss of her other sons who had been killed in the king's service.

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By such acts as this Jane became generally beloved, and the king, trusting her judgment, rarely refused her a favour; for he had never known her ask one without good reason. Her influence was even sought on certain important matters by the nobles, who knew that she was always ready to try to right the wrong. Her kindliness and generosity were in marked contrast to the selfishness of the queen.

While the king loved her, Jane knew her influence was paramount, and perhaps he too was charmed with this constant exercise of discreet power, and by the fact that her ruling motive was a love of acts of charity, goodness and mercy, for he himself, as we have seen, was warm-hearted and generous.

According to Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte,¹ no direct evidence can be adduced in support of the tradition that Jane pleaded the cause of Eton College when the king was considering the appropriation of its revenues. On the other hand, the fact that pictures of her have been preserved both at Eton and Cambridge for centuries, gives some support to the tradition that Jane exerted herself to induce Edward to forgo that intention. Henry Bost, who was Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, and Master of King's Hall, Cambridge, is said to have been confessor to Jane Shore, hence the connection with the latter city.

A picture of her at Eton College was seen and described by Michael Drayton about 1669, and the painting preserved at King's College, Cambridge, is mentioned in an inventory of goods taken in 1660.

Jane's popularity naturally inspired jealousies in the

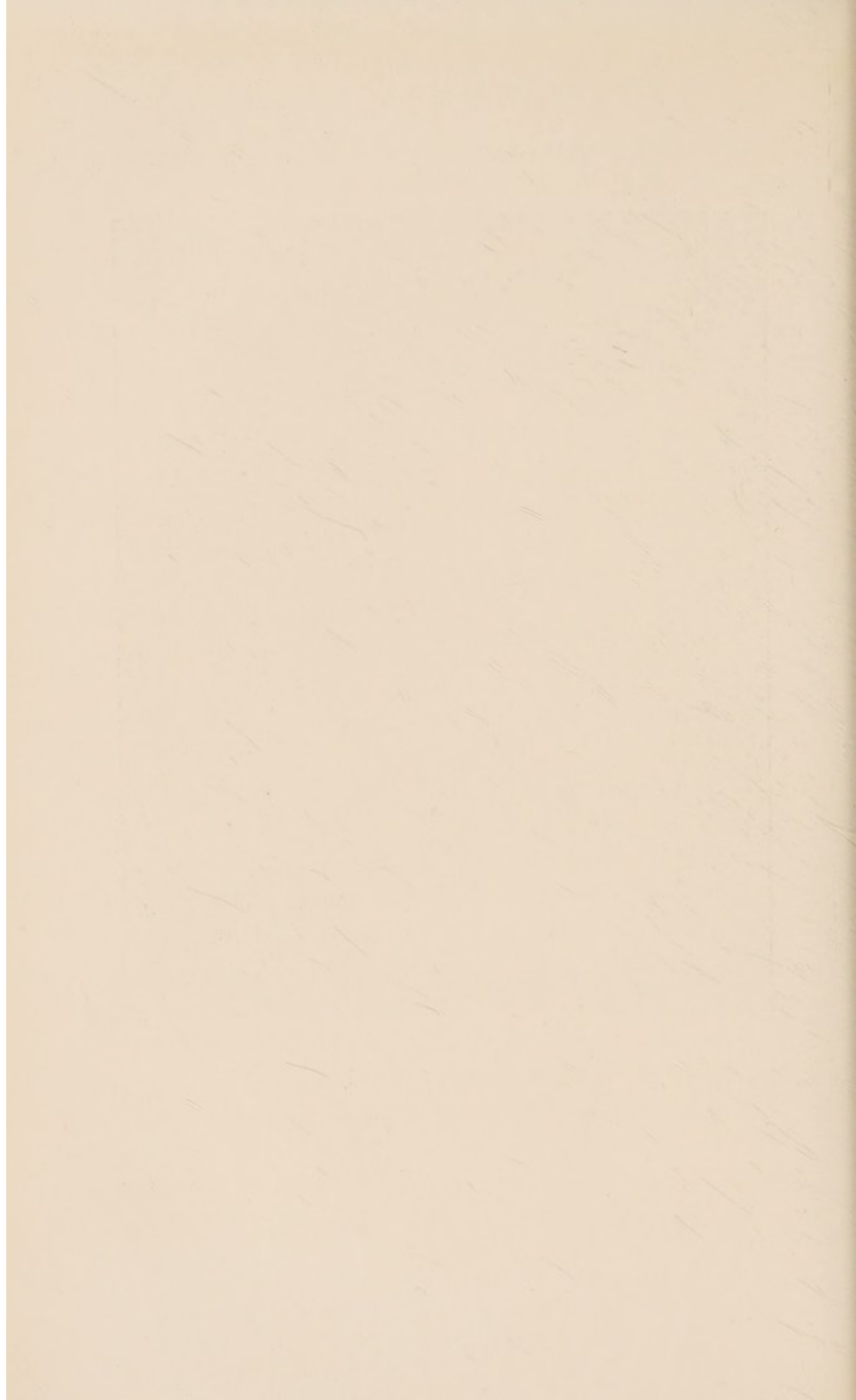
¹ "History of Eton College," by Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte.



JANE SHORE

From the picture at Eton College.

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hearts of those at Court who had not been so fortunate, but she ignored their innuendoes and turned their malicious remarks with her wit and humour. Those who knew the changeability of the king's disposition prophesied her early downfall; even Hastings, who knew his master's fickle nature only too well, was surprised at his constancy. But as time went on, it became obvious to all at the palace that Jane had established herself firmly as the king's favourite, since his affection seemed only to increase with the passing of the days. Nothing was wanting that he could bestow, save those rights which would have made her the queen in name, which she was in power.

Edward, who had of all men the greatest opportunities and facilities for being inconstant and gratifying his passions, appeared to be completely fascinated by his charming mistress; her witchery held him captive, and he sought no other. He delighted to retire to her apartments, and there pass hours in her company. Many wondered why he should have been more faithful in his love for Jane than for his other mistresses, or for some of the high-born beauties at the Court, who were considered more likely in many ways to enchain his fancy. The answer was not far to seek. Jane, with remarkable intuition, studied Edward's foibles, and by her intelligent talk could charm away his cares. She never wearied him with inanities when he came to her for distraction from State affairs, for she knew how to banish his troubles and restore his good humour.

Lord Hastings' attitude to her was one of indifference and respect. He realized that he still loved her, but, as a

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man of honour, he held himself in restraint. Out of fidelity to his master he resolved never to show his affection for her while the king lived, and that resolution he kept. Jane, on her part, was careful to give him no encouragement, for she saw the dangers that might arise. Hastings had expected that she would share the fate of other mistresses, and that he would then have his chance to gain her favour, but, contrary to his expectations, the king continued to maintain the same appearance of tenderness towards her, while Jane was content with having captivated the heart of the handsomest and bravest man of the time.

Among other noblemen at Court who enjoyed Jane's friendship, and numbered himself among her admirers, was the king's stepson, the young Marquis of Dorset, a man of considerable ability and ambition, but impulsive and at constant variance with Hastings, who did not trust him. He possessed great charm of manner, and he, too, yielded to Jane's witchery, and often sought her company; but he took care at the same time not to arouse the jealousy of his sovereign.

There appears little doubt that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, also visited the Court at times when he was not engaged on his incursions in the north. He must have met and known Jane, and probably, as did others, conceived a passion for so beautiful a woman.

Richard had been deformed from birth, and appears to have suffered from what is now called Pott's curvature of the spine. His head was sunk in his shoulders, one of which was higher than the other, and his left arm was withered and shrunk. Jane was scarcely likely to

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receive his advances with favour, for his sinister face and misshapen body would only have repelled her, and she doubtless scorned his attentions. By nature he was malicious, vindictive and revengeful, and it is reasonable to suppose that the malevolence and hatred he showed towards her in after years was due to her indifference to his advances.

In spite of all intrigues and predictions of her downfall, Jane continued to tread her even course, and remained constant and faithful to her royal lover for over ten years. It is stated that the king used to say that he had three concubines, each of which excelled in her own way. "One the merriest, another the wittiest, and the third the holiest harlot in his realm, as one whom no man could get out of the church easily to any place, except it were his bed." "The other two," says the chronicler, "were somewhat greater personages and nevertheless of their humility content to be nameless, and so forbear the praise of those properties, but the merriest of all was the gentle Jane Shore in whom he took special pleasure. For many he had, but her he loved."

FOURTEEN

ALTHOUGH chroniclers tell us so little of Jane Shore's life, there is probably no character in history whose person has been more perfectly delineated. Two intensely interesting portraits, drawn by masterly pens, have come down to us, in which her features, face, and form, as well as her character, are faithfully and precisely described.

At the time Jane became the king's mistress she was about twenty years of age, and her beauty was at its zenith. Sir Thomas More, whose accuracy cannot be doubted, and who actually saw her before she died, tells us that "those who knew her in her youth say she was both beautiful and fair, and though short in stature there was nothing in her body that you would have changed but if you had wished her a little taller. Yet men delighted not so much in her beauty as in her pleasant behaviour, for she had a proper wit and could both read well and write. She was merry in company, ready and quick of answer; neither mute nor full of babble; somewhat taunting without displeasure and not without disport." From More's account of her character as reflected in the glare of a resplendent court, she owed much of her popularity to her fairness and generosity, while her happy disposition and delightful humour made

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her a favourite with all. "The king," he continues, "therefore took special pleasure in her, whose favour, to say the truth, she never abused to any man's hurt but to many a man's comfort and relief. Where the king took displeasure she would mitigate and appease his mind; were men out of favour, she would bring them in her grace."

No doubt many sought her advice and good offices as a means of currying favour with the king, but she never abused her position, difficult as it must have been. Her aid and influence were sought by suppliants with whom the king was displeased, as well as by those who were in trouble, for they knew Jane was just as well as generous. Thus we are told that "for many that had highly offended she obtained pardon. Of great forfeitures she got men remission and finally in many suits she stood many men in great stead." In such acts she never sought for any reward, for "she was either content with the deed itself well done or for that she had delighted to be said unto and to show that she was able to do with the king or to prove that wanton women and wealthy be not always covetous." "Then," says More, writing as if he had dwelt too long on Jane's good character, "I doubt not some shall think this woman too slight a thing to be written of and set among the remembrance of great matters which they shall specially think that happily shall esteem her only by that they now see her." Thus he did not deem the part Jane played in the history of her time too unimportant to be transmitted by him to posterity.

We owe to Michael Drayton, the Elizabethan poet, a more detailed description of Jane's face and person; this,

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though brief, helps us to visualize her appearance. In the notes to his "Heroicall Epistles" from Jane to her royal lover, he tells us that "her stature was but of moderate height. Her hair a dark yellow; her face full and oval. Her eyes grey but quick and piercing. Her complexion of a due mixture, neither inclined to pale nor too florid. The proportions of every part exact and harmonious. Her body inclined to be fat for she was full bosomed, and her skin smooth and white. Her countenance was always enlivened with an air of mirth and cheerfulness, and agreeable to a woman who wanted nothing and had it in her power to command everything."

From this final observation we may conclude that Jane had become a happy and contented woman, and as yet had seen no cause to regret her decision to yield to the king's desire.

Drayton further says: "I remember seeing a portrait of her in the library at Eton, where they have good reason to preserve it in respect to her memory, for that College being founded by Henry VI, Edward, who deposed him, had a design of alienating the revenues to another and had done so, if Jane Shore had not interposed and saved the better part of them to the use that the religious Prince first dedicated them." Drayton corroborates More's statement that Jane always used the king's favour with prudence and moderation, and wisely endeavoured to lessen the scandal of her incontinency by raising her reputation on the foundation of other virtues.

During the life of the king she continued to live in state and affluence, without much care for her future provision, perhaps relying on the beauty of her person,

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or the assistance of the friends her prosperity had made, to secure her from want in her latter days. But alas, all these failed her when the time of adversity came.

It is to the poet also that we owe the account of the king's visit to Shore's shop, for he states that, "hearing of the rare and wonderful beauty of Mistress Jane Shore, he cometh himself disguised to London to see her, when after he had once beheld her, he robbed her husband of his dearest jewel."

Thus we have two descriptions of Jane, the one written by an historian who lived in her time, and the other by a poet who flourished in the century in which she died. To these might well be added a comment made by a later writer, who thus extols her charm: "She shone most conspicuously in circles graced by her royal paramour, but her courtly manner and facetious conversation and ready wit were even more attractive than her personal charms."

Jane Shore must indeed have been a woman of great loveliness. From a perfect oval face her grey eyes looked out with an expression of frankness and sincerity which appeared to crown the beauty and dignity of her whole appearance. Her small, sensitive mouth appeared ever ready to break into a smile at once bright and alluring, indicating the amiability of her disposition. Her skin was a creamy white, for she had naturally little colour, while her hair was fair with a wonderful glint of gold; this we know from a lock of it which was once in the possession of the Duchess of Montague and is said to have appeared "as if it had been powdered with gold dust." But Jane's charm, which captivated the hearts of

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three of the most distinguished men of her time, was not due to her physical beauty alone. The sincerity and goodness of her character was one of the real secrets of her success, and, together with a sympathetic and equable temperament, this gave her an irresistible attraction. A simplicity of manner seemed to go with these attributes, which gave her the dignity of ease and a lack of self-consciousness. It was said by some that the goodwill that radiated from her face composed its chief beauty. She was as sensible as she was kind, and there is no evidence in her history that she was ruled by passion and had otherwise than a loyal and loving nature. Even her traducers could not charge her with being unfaithful to her lovers, and although she delighted in rich adornments of her person, she was neither selfish nor avaricious.

Jane possessed a keen sense of humour, was quick at repartee, and ready to appreciate a jest. She conversed with intelligence and understanding on subjects of which women of her time knew little, but she kept aloof from political intrigues. She held the men who loved her in thrall by her marvellous witchery, and kept them captive as long as their lives lasted, but with all this, her modesty of demeanour and kindliness of heart earned for her the name of "gentle Mistress Shore," by which she was known to the day of her death.

FIFTEEN

ON the great bed with its crimson canopy, that stood in the State bed-chamber of the palace at Westminster, the king lay propped up with pillows, his face flushed and hot. He was suffering from an intermittent fever.

His physicians at first thought that he had contracted plague. He held to his nose a pomander composed of labdanum, calamint, myrrh, amber, musk, and rose leaves with oil of bay which they had specially devised for him, believing it to be a sure prophylactic against pestilence.

A rumour had spread that he had been poisoned, for his illness had developed suddenly, although his general health had been failing for some time past. He had much changed, and instead of his usual open-handed generosity and good humour, avarice and irritation had gained the upper hand. The last few years of his life had been passed in repose and luxury, and without the hard exercise to which he had been accustomed. He had lost his passion for the joust and the chase, and had become very stout and unwieldy. There seems little doubt that he was feeling the effects of his early debaucheries, for his vitality had been sapped by years of self-indulgence.

His physicians, William Hatcliffe and William Hobbs,

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Roger Marchell, his sergeant-surgeon, and Dominic de Serigo, his astrologer, had been called in consultation. They had "let" his blood, which reduced the fever for a while, but now dropsy had set in and they were alarmed because his legs had become greatly swollen.

On the evening of April 9th, 1483, his condition became serious, and Hatcliffe and Marchell, fearing the worst, asked Dominic to consult the stars once more and cast a horoscope. The astrologer left the chamber and proceeded to a room in the tower which he used as an observatory. Here he made his observations, using the silver astrolabe which the king had given him. After verifying his calculations and drawing up the result, he shook his head, slowly descended the staircase, and retraced his way towards the sick-chamber. Drawing the curtain on one side, he beckoned to his colleagues to come into the ante-chamber, looked at them ominously as they approached, and speaking in a whisper, said: "It bodes ill. Mercury is in the sixth house of Scorpio, and the Moon is in opposition to Mercury. Nought could be worse."

Hastings, who was anxiously waiting, came up and as, with grave faces, they told him of the danger, was deeply affected. In the bed-chamber, Jane, who had not left the palace since the king's illness, stood alone, silent and motionless. Bending over the sick man, she held his hand tenderly. She had long taken the queen's place in his affections, and Elizabeth had apparently accepted the situation without demur. The king's eyes were closed as if he were dozing, but suddenly he roused, and pressing Jane's hand, he drew her to him and kissed her lips.

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"Bid them come," he murmured.

Jane glided swiftly to the ante-chamber where Hastings and other nobles stood conversing in subdued tones.

"He is conscious," she said quietly. "He asks for the queen and his children." Then, stricken with grief, she burst into tears and fled to her own apartments.

Hastings crossed to the king's closet where were gathered the queen, the Princess Elizabeth and the young prince, together with the Marquis of Dorset, Lord Stanley and other nobles, and summoned them to the bed-chamber. Quietly they entered and stood round the great bed by the dying monarch. Edward motioned the queen to come nearer; taking her hand, he raised it to his lips. Then in a firm voice he said: "Hastings and Stanley, I charge you both to vow allegiance to the queen and her children. Protect my sons."

Beckoning to Dorset and Hastings, he bade them shake hands. "My lords," he said, "I beseech you be friends and not foes. Live in peace." Motioning Hastings to raise him up, he cried: "I beg you for the love I have for you all, for the love of your own souls and that of the blessed Saviour, to forget all discontents and to bury all unkindnesses. Let all grudges be forgotten and buried. Let each of you be bound in friendship, and live in love one to another."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, who stood at the foot of the bed with the king's confessor, held up a crucifix, while his lips moved in prayer, and no sound was heard except the sobbing of the young Princess Elizabeth.

The king, taking Hastings by the hand and drawing him closer, whispered: "William, I commend Jane to

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your care. Look to her safety." Unable to speak more, he sank back, turning his eyes towards his children; and "by his countenance expressing how desirous he was to have that which he had imparted unto them imprinted on their memories, he breathed his last."

So passed, at the age of forty-two, one of the bravest and most gallant princes who ever sat on the English throne.

"The next day," says Sandford, "his body with the face, arms and breast uncovered was laid out on a board for nine hours and all the nobility, the mayor and aldermen of London sent for to recognize it and testify that he was really dead. Afterwards, he was robed and clad royally, the whole Psalter was read over his body and it was watched by bannerets and knights in long black gowns and hoods.

"On Wednesday, the sixteenth day after his death, his body was conveyed to the Abbey, borne by knights and squires.

"It was covered with a large cloth of gold, above which was a rich canopy of Imperial cloth, fringed with gold and blue silk.

"It was borne by four knights and at every corner a banner; the first of the Trinity, the second, Our Lady, the third, St. George, and the fourth, St. Edward, each of which was carried by a knight.

"Lord Howard bore the king's banner next before the body. Then came the Archbishops and Bishops. Following them came the Marquis of Dorset, Lord Stanley, the Earl of Huntington and Viscount Barkley. The Lord

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Hastings, King's Chancellor, and Lord Dacre, the Queen's Chancellor, together came next.

"The body was placed on a worthy hearse and about the body and the cloth of gold there was a personage like the simulator of the king in royal habit crowned with the crown on his head, holding in one hand a sceptre and in the other a ball of silver and gilt with a cross pate.

"Offerings were made by the Bishops, the Mayor of London, the Judges, Knights of the king's house, Barons of Exchequer and the Aldermen. Then when mass had been said and the lords were ready to ride, there was ordered a royal chair covered with black velvet having above that a black cloth of gold with a white cross of gold; under that a black magestie cloth of sarsenet drawn with six coursers draped with black velvet with certain escutcheons thereon.

"On the four horses sat chariot-men and on either side of them, knights and squires, some leading the horses as they passed the towns. When they came to Charing, the lords took their horses and so proceeded to Syon that night. On the morning they proceeded to Windsor to the Castle.

"There was kept a great watch that night and the next day the king's body was interred with great pomp and state in the Chapel of St. George."

SIXTEEN

AFTER the king's death, the Court began to be filled with intrigues; dissensions broke out among the nobles, and confusion reigned.

Jane had at once retired to her own house, the locality of which is uncertain. According to one chronicler, it was known as Tottenham Court, situated about two miles from Westminster; others state it was at Hackney. Concerning this, Lysons, in his "Environs of London," remarks that "in Hackney there was an ancient mansion called by Stowe 'Shoreditch-place,' but since his time it has been called Shore-place, and a tradition prevailed that it was once the residence of Jane Shore, to support which a portrait said to be hers was shown there."

Dr. Percy, however, rejects the story and says: "The idea of it being Jane Shore's residence is preposterous. Her father was never able to live in such a house previous to her marriage to Shore, when she was probably not more than sixteen. She lived with him seven years, then left him for King Edward, when no doubt she removed to or near Westminster, perhaps having apartments in the palace itself. When stripped of all her possessions by command of Richard III, far from owning or renting a mansion, she lived upon alms until her death."

That Edward had given her a house which was splen-

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didly furnished there is no doubt, for authentic record exists of the value of its contents.

Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who was engaged in the north on the Scottish border, when he heard of his brother's death at once caused the young Prince Edward, who was but twelve years of age, to be proclaimed at York as King Edward V, and wrote a letter of condolence to the queen. Prince Edward had been sent to Ludlow Castle and was living under the care of his uncle, Earl Rivers.

At the first meeting of the State Council held after the king's death the queen presided and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was appointed Protector. At this meeting it was proposed that the young king should be escorted to London by a powerful army, a suggestion which was favoured by the queen, but Lord Hastings strongly opposed it. He had never been on friendly terms with her, and was always suspicious of her motives. For years she had been manœuvring for places of power and position for her relatives, who formed the Woodville party, but Hastings little thought that a greater danger threatened from another source. He declared to the Council that he would retire from the Court altogether if the young king was brought to London surrounded by soldiers. The other councillors, seeing that his mind was so firmly set, eventually agreed, and it was decided to instruct Earl Rivers to bring the king to London with only his personal attendants. This news must have been immediately conveyed to the Duke of Gloucester, for he at once set out with the Duke of Buckingham and a strong armed force and intercepted the Earl and his charge while

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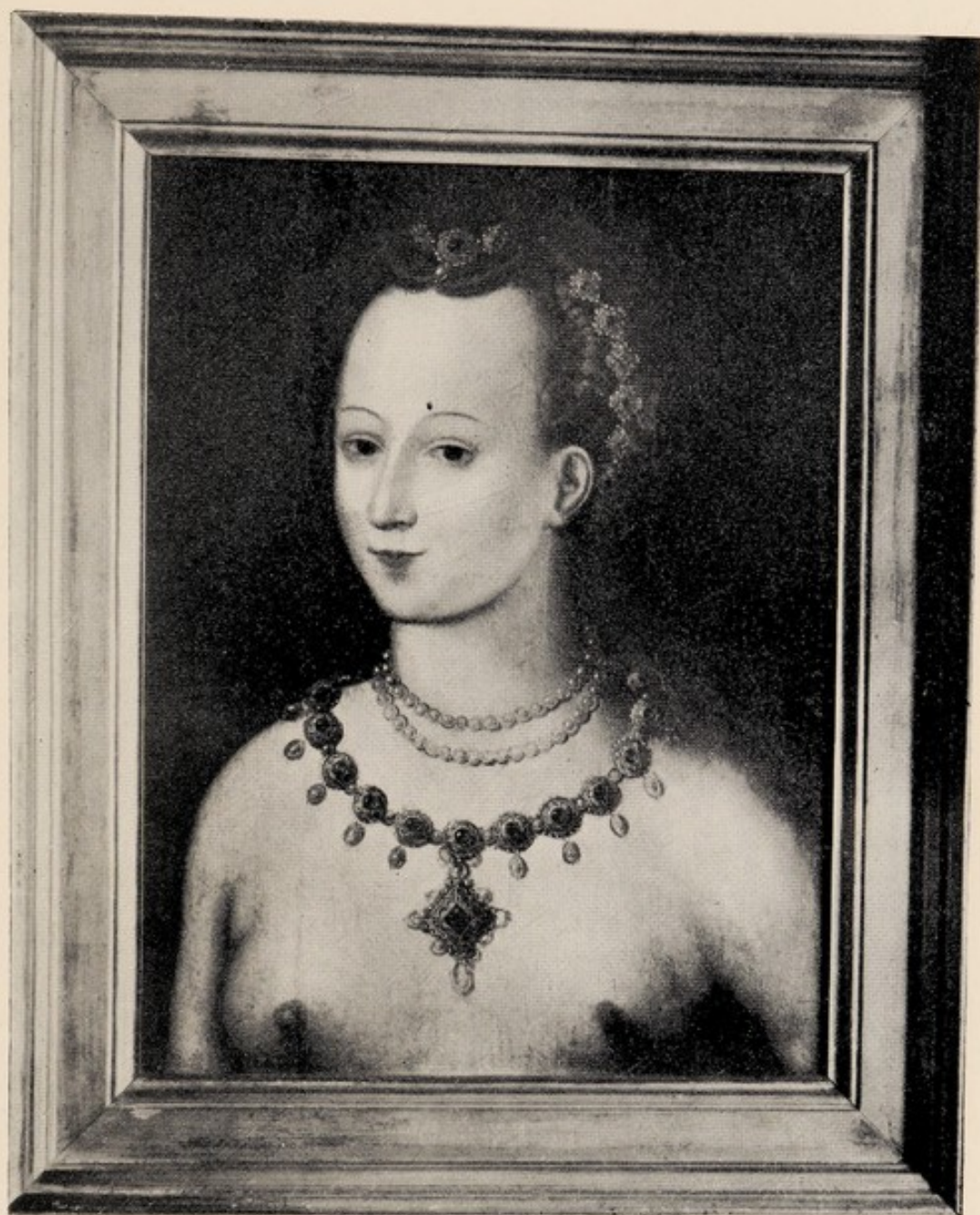
on the way. He seized the young king, and both Earl Rivers and Lord Richard Grey, who accompanied him, were made prisoners, and sent under guard to Pontefract Castle.

The queen and Hastings were astounded and dismayed when they heard of the Protector's outrageous action, for neither of them appeared to be aware of his ambitions and villainous designs. The seizure of the king filled the queen with the greatest alarm and, in terror of what might threaten her younger son the Duke of York and her daughter Elizabeth, she hurriedly left the palace and took refuge in the sanctuary at the "abbot's place" in Westminster, where they would be under his care and protection. Here she was soon joined by her eldest son, the Marquis of Dorset, who also evidently anticipated danger.

The State Council had fixed the time for the king's coronation, and it was arranged to take place on May 4th, but all the plans were upset when it was learned that he would not reach London by that date. When he did arrive, some days later, he entered the city surrounded by officers of the Duke of Gloucester's guard.

At the head of this strange procession rode the Protector, attired in a costume of black cloth, holding his cap in one hand and pointing to the young king, who wore a royal mantle of purple velvet, with the other. And so they rode through the streets, to the wonder of the citizens who had gathered to see them pass by.

The king was first taken to the palace of the Bishop of Ely, which stood in what is now called Ely Place, Holborn; but he was soon transferred to the Tower, under the



JANE SHORE

From the picture at King's College, Cambridge.

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pretence that he would be closer at hand for his coronation.

The Protector's object was now becoming apparent. He had resolved to ruthlessly sweep every obstacle from his path that should stand in the way of his obtaining the crown. The king and his brother must also be sacrificed to his ambition, with all others who were likely to oppose him. Merciless, utterly unprincipled and unscrupulous, Richard was ready to plot the foulest murders in order to achieve his object.

His next move was to obtain possession of the little Duke of York, who was in sanctuary at Westminster with his mother, the queen. To this end he called a meeting of the lords temporal and spiritual at the Star Chamber, close to their lodging at the abbot's place. After a long and stormy discussion, it was agreed that children could not claim the privilege of sanctuary, and therefore nothing could prevent the Protector from obtaining possession of his nephew, even by force, if he so desired. As there was some diversity of opinion about this, the Archbishop of Canterbury asked to be allowed to act as mediator, offering to see the queen, and endeavour to persuade her to surrender the boy. His request was granted, and he at once went to seek an interview, but although he used every conceivable argument, she refused to part with her son. The Archbishop then pleaded that the young king, now alone in the Tower, much needed the companionship of his brother, and the queen at length gave way, and sending for the boy, handed him over to the Archbishop, although fearful for his safety.

"I shall deliver him and his brother's life with him

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into your hands, and of you I shall require them before God and man," she cried with great emotion. Taking the child into her arms she pressed him to her breast. "Farewell, mine own sweet. God send you good keeping. Let me kiss you once ere you go, for God knoweth when we shall kiss together again," she sobbed, the tears falling fast.

The Archbishop took the boy by the hand and led him to the waiting Council, then, without a word, passed him over to his uncle, the Protector.

A gleam of triumph flashed from Richard's eyes as he left the chamber with the little prince, who went with him gladly when assured that he was going to see his brother.

He was first taken to the Bishop of London's palace at St. Paul's, and from thence to the Tower to join the young king, who embraced him with delight. Their arms entwined, the two boys looked from the narrow windows on the grim walls surrounding their prison, from which, they little knew, they were never to emerge alive.

SEVENTEEN

THE Protector was very anxious to ascertain what support he could count upon from the lords in carrying out his plans, so his next step was to find out who were his enemies and who were his friends. Knowing the popularity and influence possessed by Lord Hastings, he greatly wished to win him over, although he had always disliked him. To this end he employed Sir William Catesby, a treacherous and unscrupulous man, as his tool, and instructed him to ingratiate himself with the Lord Chamberlain, in order to discover his views, and if by any means he could be persuaded to espouse Richard's cause.

Hastings, knowing the character of the man who approached him, refused to listen to any of his specious arguments, but was emphatic in expressing his opinions. He was firmly and absolutely loyal to the late king's children, and told Catesby frankly that he would rather see the death and destruction of both the Protector and his friend, the Duke of Buckingham, than the young king deposed from the throne.

On hearing this, the Protector's dislike intensified to a deadly hatred, and he resolved that Hastings should speedily be put out of the way. Together with Buckingham, who had been one of the first to throw in his lot with him, plans were made to carry this out.

Almost immediately after King Edward's death,

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Hastings had taken Jane under his protection. All his old love for her now revived, for she had ever held him enthralled, and still fascinated him. On her part, the uncertainty of the future and the fear of what might befall her made her consent to his pleadings.

The queen, now fully alive to the intrigues surrounding the throne, and knowing the Protector's enmity towards her family, saw that her best policy was to enlist and secure the Lord Chamberlain's sympathy and support, little as she cared for him. He had openly declared his resolve to stand by her sons, if their succession to the crown should be endangered, but she wished to be fully assured of his friendship. Owing to the long-standing dislike between them, she felt diffident in approaching Hastings directly, but knowing Jane's influence and her close intimacy with him, she decided to ask her aid, sure that she would find here a willing helper, as she knew that Jane, too, loathed the Protector. Jane had loved the young princes and often romped with them in the gardens at Westminster.

In spite of his distrust of the Protector, and the fact that his friend, Lord Stanley, had warned him of his duplicity, Hastings found it difficult to believe that he had serious intentions on the throne. In his belief, Gloucester would content himself with the dominant position of Protector to the young King Edward V, to which he had been duly appointed by the State Council. Hastings certainly never realized the danger in which he stood from Richard's hatred of him, a hatred which was probably sharpened by the knowledge that Jane was now living under his protection.

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Meanwhile, preparations went on day and night at the palace of Westminster and the Abbey for the coronation of the king, and only the day remained to be fixed. With the ostensible object of making the final arrangements, the Protector called an extraordinary meeting of the State Council at the Tower, for the 13th of June.

Lord Stanley, now firmly convinced that the king's party, and Hastings in particular, was threatened by some great danger, sent a trusted messenger at midnight, before the meeting, who besought Hastings to dress at once and ride away with him into Kent. His master had bade him say that he had had a dreadful dream, in which "he saw a boar with his tusks had raised them both by the heads and that the blood ran about their shoulders, and as the boar was the Protector's cognizance, he believed it must be he." The dream had made such an impression upon Stanley that he determined to tarry no longer in London and had his horse ready, if the Lord Chamberlain would go with him.

Hastings laughed when he heard the message. "Tell your master it is but plain witchcraft to believe in such dreams," he told the man. "He need have no fear, but must be of good cheer. I will meet him in the morning."

When he arose the following morning, Jane came to him looking much distressed, and told him that she had had a terrible dream in the night, in which she saw him attacked by a boar, and that his blood had flowed in streams from the wounds.

"What, another boar?" he cried, smiling, as he drew her into his arms and kissed her. "You are but thinking of Stanley's dream we heard of last night."

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But Jane was full of foreboding, and putting her hands on his shoulders, she said tearfully :

“It may be, William; but Gloucester is more cunning and dangerous than any animal. I am afraid of him.”

“Have no fear, dear heart, and heed not these old wives’ tales,” he replied, soothing her.

“Do not go,” she pleaded, her eyes still glistening with tears as she clung to him.

“I must needs be present, Jane. Believe me, all will be well. No ill can befall me, for Stanley and other friends will be there also. The Lord Chamberlain must not be absent from the Council.”

With reluctance Jane went with him to the door where his horse was waiting. At the same moment Lord Howard, a friend and supporter of the Protector, drew up, saying he was riding to the Tower and had come to accompany Hastings thither. They rode together, and on their way a priest whom they met called to Hastings, and he pulled up his horse to speak with him. Their conversation, however, was interrupted by Howard, who, growing impatient, urged Hastings to come on, and asked why he talked so long.

“You have no need of a priest yet,” he remarked significantly with a laugh.

Hastings gave no heed, and together they rode through the gates of the Tower, from which he was never again to pass alive.

EIGHTEEN

*"Look how I am bewitch'd; behold mine arm
Is like a blasted sapling withered up;
And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch,
Consorted with that harlot strumpet Shore,
That by their witchcraft thus have marked me."*

—King Richard III, Act III, Sc. 4.

THE morning sun filtered through the windows in their deep embrasures, casting its beams across the great Council Chamber that occupied the topmost floor of the White Tower.

This vast apartment consisted of a larger and smaller chamber, with five Norman arches on either side, which formed a passage cut in the thickness of the massive walls. It was entered by a door at the north end; a second door for exit, on the east side, gave access to the triforium of the ancient chapel of St. John, on the floor below. To the west of the large Council Chamber the windows looked out over Tower Green, on the verge of which stood the old church dedicated to St. Peter.

It was Friday, the 13th of June, 1483, a day memorable in the annals of England, for a special meeting of the State Council had been convoked by the Protector to make the final arrangements for the coronation of

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King Edward V, which had been so long delayed. For some time preparations had been completed, and the details of the pageant had been arranged, while even the food had been made ready for the great banquet, though owing to the delay some of it had had to be thrown away. Now, only the day remained to be fixed.

It was yet early, but some of the lords had already arrived, and seated at the long oak table that occupied the centre of the chamber were the Lord Chamberlain, richly attired in a costume of velvet and silk, the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Howard, and Lord Stanley. At one end the spiritual lords in their sombre robes of black and white had clustered, forming a striking contrast to the bright colours worn by the nobles. There were Thomas Bouchier, Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York, and John Morton, Bishop of Ely; John Russell, Bishop of Lincoln, was absent, having been commanded by the Protector to appear at Westminster Hall. A deep gloom settled on the faces of all, for the news had just been received that Earl Rivers, the queen's brother, and Lord Richard Grey had been executed at Pontefract Castle, where they had been held prisoners by the Protector.

What did this forebode, some wondered?

Meanwhile, in the smaller chamber, groups of scriveners and servants who had attended on their lords stood waiting. Only a low murmur of conversation could be heard, and all waited for the coming of the Protector, whose chair still remained vacant at the head of the table.

Shortly after nine o'clock the short, spare figure of Richard entered the chamber. His sinister face was

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twisted into a sour smile as he looked right and left, saluting the councillors. Seating himself in the vacant chair, he remarked affably, as if in excuse for keeping them waiting:

“I overslept myself this morning.”

All then awaited the opening of the meeting, but he still held silence, until with a nonchalant air he turned to the Bishop of Ely, who sat near him, and said: “My lord, you have some very good strawberries at your garden in Holborn. I pray you let me have a dish of them.”

“Gladly, my lord,” replied the Bishop, who was proud of his horticulture; “would God I had some better thing as ready for your pleasure as that.” Whereupon, calling to his servant, he at once dispatched the man to obtain the strawberries.

The Lord Chamberlain then called attention to the business in hand, and to all questions the Protector affected to consent; but his complaisance was so unusual that most of the others began to suspect that his pleasantries masked some malicious design. While the matters concerning the coronation were under consideration he remained silent, moving restlessly in his chair, and nothing was fixed. Presently, he rose suddenly, and begging the lords to excuse him for a short time and to proceed with their business, he left the chamber, quickly followed by the Duke of Buckingham. The members of the Council exchanged significant glances as the two departed, wondering what this meant. They all knew that Richard was a deep dissembler, and most dangerous when he assumed an air of affability, which he usually did when he wished to hide some evil plan.

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Hastings looked uneasy, obviously annoyed at the interruption of the proceedings; he tried to carry on with the business, but the other lords were preoccupied with their own thoughts. They little surmised that the Protector had gone to issue an order for the gates of the Tower to be closed and strictly guarded. An hour passed, and not until nearly eleven o'clock did Richard, followed by Buckingham, again enter the chamber.

All eyes turned towards them, for it was at once apparent that something was wrong. The Protector's appearance had completely altered. His face was distorted by anger; his brows knitted, and he was frowning and biting his lower lip, as was his habit when agitated. He pushed back his chair and silently took his seat, while all the lords, now much dismayed, exchanged glances, wondering what had caused the sudden change, what had happened to upset him. For a few moments a complete silence reigned in the chamber; then he sprang to his feet and with a menacing gesture cried out in a shrill voice:

"Tell me, what punishment do those deserve who plot my death and compass my destruction? I who am so near of blood unto the king and protector of his royal person and realm?"

This extraordinary question, so unexpected, startled all present and caused general consternation. For a time the tense stillness continued; then Hastings, little thinking that he was pronouncing his own death-sentence, broke it by suddenly exclaiming: "My lord! They certainly deserve to be punished as heinous traitors whosoever they are. But who are the delinquents?"

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“Why, it is that old sorceress, my brother’s widow, and her partner, that common strumpet, Jane Shore, that have by incantation conspired to take my life,” shouted the Protector, his face livid with rage, as he shook his fist at Hastings. “I will show you in what great danger of death I have stood for the past few days. I cannot rest day or night, neither drink nor eat, wherefore my blood little by little decreaseth, and my strength faileth me. My breath is shortened, and all the parts of my body, as you may see, falleth away.” As he said this, he pulled up the sleeve of his doublet to the elbow and held his left arm aloft. It was the withered limb they all knew he had had from his birth. “This mischief, I verily say, proceeds from that sorceress Elizabeth, the queen, who with Jane Shore with their witchcraft have so enchanted me that I am near destroyed.”

His listeners were astounded by the absurdity of the accusation, for they knew that the queen was far too wise to attempt any such folly; least of all was she likely to have acted in concert with Jane Shore. Hastings, on his part, remained unperturbed by the allegation against the queen, but he was stung to the quick when he heard the charge made against Jane, the woman he loved. He, however, restrained himself while Richard continued:

“Had I not by God’s great mercy discovered their practices and found out their villainous plot, I should have perished. Yet you see I have not escaped free from their malice. See how they have caused this dear limb of mine to wither and grow useless! And so all my body would have suffered, if they had had their will a little longer.”

Richard’s superstitious fears were well known; he is

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said always to have lived in mortal dread of the "evil eye," probably on account of its association with his crooked back.

Hastings, who had remained calm in spite of his resentment at the accusations he knew to be false, thinking he might remove the aspersion cast on Jane, said quietly:

"If the queen conspired, and . . ." But before he could finish, the Protector, in a furious rage, cried out in a voice which rose to a scream, and echoed through the chamber:

"What, dost thou answer me with 'ifs' and 'ands'? I tell thee, William, none but they have done it! Thou thyself art not only acquainted with but are a partaker of their villainy, and that I will make good on thy body. Traitor!" He brought his clenched fist down on the table with a loud crash.

The shout aroused some of the men gathered in the outer room, who at once set up a loud cry of "Treason! Treason!" This was a signal for a number of the Protector's armed retainers to rush into the Council Chamber, as if they had been called on to guard him. One man, armed with a pole-axe, ran forward and aimed a blow at Lord Stanley that would have split his skull; but to avoid the stroke he stepped backward and fell beneath the table, his face streaming with blood.

The chamber was now filled with armed men, and for a few minutes all was noise and confusion. The Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Ely were seized, and Lord Stanley was dragged out and hurried away. Meanwhile, the Protector, striding towards Hastings, who was

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already in the grasp of Richard's men, cried out: "I arrest thee, traitor!"

"Me?" demanded Hastings incredulously.

"Yea, thee," replied Richard quickly. "Make haste, my lord, and make your shrift with speed, for by St. Paul, I will not touch bread or drink until I have your head from your shoulders."

What thoughts must have flashed through the mind of Hastings as he was hurried by his captors towards the door leading to St. John's Chapel, in search of a priest! Did he recall Stanley's warning of the previous night, and Jane's pleadings that morning, begging him not to trust the "boar"? "Was this to be the end?" he asked himself. He saw no chance of escape. He was disarmed and surrounded by Richard's guard. He knew he was to die, and that quickly.

"It boted him not to ask why," says Sir Thomas More, who describes the scene and what took place, from an eyewitness. "Heavily he took a priest at venture and made a short shrift, for a longer would not be suffered, the Protector made so much haste to dinner which he might not go till this was done for saving of his oath."

It is probable that a priest was found in the Chapel, and there the unfortunate Hastings knelt for a few brief minutes in prayer. Then he was hurried by his guards down the staircase and brought out to the Green. Near the front of St. Peter's lay some heavy logs of timber, which had been placed there for repairs about to be carried out to the building. He was pushed forward by the men towards them; then dragged to his knees and forced down, so that his neck lay across a baulk. One

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then stepped forward, and with a sword hacked his head from the body.

Thus, by foul murder, ended the brave and gallant Lord Hastings, "a good knight and gentle; of great authority with his prince; of living somewhat dissolute; plain and open to his enemy and sure and secret to his friend. Easy to beguile as he that of good heart and courage; foresaw no perils; a loving man and passing well-beloved; very faithful and trusty enough but trusting too much was his destruction."

Such is the tribute to his memory paid by Sir Thomas More.

*"O bloody Richard!—miserable England!
I prophesy the fearfullest time to thee,
That ever wretched age hath looked upon.*

*. . . Bear him my head;
They smile at me, who shortly shall be dead."*

—King Richard III, Act III, Sc. 4.

NINETEEN

EVENTS moved rapidly on that fateful day. Directly after the execution of Lord Hastings had been carried out, the Protector, the Duke of Buckingham and their fellow-conspirators, conferred together to decide on the next step, so that they might consolidate their position.

The murder of a nobleman so popular and beloved, as well for his loyalty to the house of York as for his constant regard for the common good, was likely, they realized, to give rise to serious trouble. The first and most important thing, therefore, was to appease the anger of the citizens, also to anticipate the censure of the other nobles. To this end, a messenger was dispatched to summon the mayor, the sheriffs, and the leading men to the Tower, to satisfy them of the justice of the act, and to ascertain what forces and powers could be counted upon.

Shortly after noon the mayor and his supporters arrived in hot haste. The Protector and Buckingham received them in the Council Chamber, and in order to give the impression that they had been in great peril owing to the treasonable plot contrived by Hastings, both had hastily donned some rusty old armour they had found in the Tower.

When the company had assembled, the Protector addressed them and retold his false story of how "Lord

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Hastings, by the contrivance and at the instigation of the queen and Jane Shore, had nearly entrapped both his good cousin, Buckingham, and himself."

"Suddenly they resolved to destroy us, as we sat this morning at the Council," he declared, as if greatly perturbed. "But notwithstanding this unhappy discovery, yet the uncertainty of the number or quality of the confederates enforced me to prevent the mischief and preserve the king's safety to run an unusual but not unlawful course against Lord Hastings. Considering the imminent danger we were in, and without ordering trial, which was needless, in regard to the way he was taken, and also that he would probably have been rescued if execution had been deferred, I resolved to have him instantly beheaded." He concluded this amazing statement by thanking the mayor and the citizens present for their great love and the pains they had taken to enable him to crush this plot!

He then dismissed them, but sent at the same time a Herald-at-Arms with a proclamation, which he ordered was to be read at once in the presence of the mayor and sheriffs, in all the usual places in the city. This extraordinary document, which had evidently been drawn up before the supposed conspiracy, and before Lord Hastings' connection with it had even been suspected, was published a few hours after his death, and proves that the Protector had planned his murder long previously. The proclamation involved Jane Shore in the alleged treasonable plot, and went on to state that Lord Hastings, "with divers other wicked conspirators had traitorously contrived the same day to have slain the Protector and the Duke of Buckingham, sitting in Council, with a purpose and

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design to take upon him the government of the king and the kingdom and rule all things at his pleasure, hoping that when they were dead they should meet no opposition in their designs." It alleged that Lord Hastings by his ill-advice had "enticed the king's father to many things redounding to his dishonour, leading him into debauchery by his exemplary wickedness and procuring lewd and ungracious persons to gratify his lusts and particularly SHORE'S WIFE who was one of his secret council in the treason, by which lewd living the said king not only shortened his days, but also was forced to oppress and tax his people that he might have sufficient money to gratify his desires.

"Since the death of the king," it further stated, "Lord Hastings had lived in continual incontinency with SHORE'S WIFE and lay nightly with her and particularly the very night before his death, so that it was no marvel if his ungracious life brought him to so unhappy a death which he was put to by THE SPECIAL COMMAND OF THE KING'S HIGHNESS! "

Richard's jealousy of Hastings and his connection with Jane is obvious from the last paragraph. But the indictment made in the proclamation was not easily swallowed by the citizens of London, for many began to suspect that there were other reasons for the sudden execution without trial of the Lord Chamberlain. He had always been well liked in the city, and some believed that the Protector's action had been solely actuated by malice and jealousy, and that it had been too foul to receive any extenuation.

Public opinion having been dealt with, the Protector determined that Jane should not escape his vengeance, for

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he was afraid she might betray his plans. If she was not guilty, neither was Hastings, and if he had deserved to die, so did she; therefore by jointly accusing Jane, he thought he could destroy her also. Jane then was his next quarry, and he at once obtained an order of Council to arrest her and seize her goods. With this in hand, Lord Howard and two sheriffs' officers, named William White and John Matthews, both creatures of the Protector, were dispatched to her house. They ransacked the place thoroughly and took away jewels, plate, money, furniture, and everything of worth they could find, to the value of from two to three thousand marks (equivalent to over £20,000), all of which was "seized in the king's name and use and put into safe custody."

When and where the news of the murder of Hastings and the accusations brought against her was carried to Jane, we do not know. She was probably at his house in Westminster, where he had left her in the morning. She knew the Protector to be ruthless, and no doubt would at once conclude that, after her accusation and the death of Hastings, ruin if not death itself awaited her. Her misfortunes fell upon her like an avalanche. With the end of Hastings and the seizure of her money and property, she was beggared and without a friend.

Her arrest followed quickly; she was taken by Lord Howard and his men and lodged in the Tower. Here, stricken with grief and stunned by the heavy blows which had so suddenly fallen upon her, the unhappy woman lay in misery.

Richard knew well that the charges he had brought against Jane were among the most terrible that could be



*Jane Shore from an Original Picture in the Provost's
Lodge at King's College Cambridge.*

JANE SHORE

Etched by the Rev. Michael Tyson from the picture at King's College, Cambridge.

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levelled at a woman, and that death was often the penalty. Could he prove them? Most of the nobles and bishops of the State Council who now remained had declared themselves in his favour, but could he trust them to find her guilty?

The Council was again hastily summoned, and Jane was brought before it for examination. The Protector personally accused her of the sorceries against himself, by which he declared that his limb and body had been wasted. The charges as laid were that "Jane Shore had endeavoured his ruin and destruction several ways and particularly by witchcraft had decayed his body and had with Lord Hastings conspired to assassinate him."

No record of Jane's trial exists, but it is stated that the members of the Council had a difficulty in listening to the questions put to her, for they all knew them to be false. The Protector could bring no proof that Jane had ever practised sorcery, or had been in league with sorcerers. Further, the allegation that she had conspired with Lord Hastings was found to be without truth. One chronicler states that "the charges were known to have been procured by the Protector more upon old malice than new matter," but all agreed that Jane's defence against all these baseless accusations was so good that they had to admit she was not guilty.

Much to the Protector's chagrin, she was found guiltless; the gates of the Tower were thrown open, and she was set free.

TWENTY

DURING the fifteenth century, the charge of witchcraft and sorcery, of which Richard, Duke of Gloucester, had accused the queen and Jane Shore, had been brought against several women of high station, including the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Bedford, and others of royal rank whose conduct afforded no other mark of calumny. As the charge of sorcery, in particular, was regarded as a very serious one, and the penalty was sometimes death, it may be well to explain what the word implied and what sorcery meant.

The sorcerer, as distinct from the necromancer and other practitioner of magic, was supposed to be one who had acquired a supernatural knowledge by the use of enchantments and a pact with the devil, which gave him or her command over evil spirits. No one, from the highest to the lowest, was safe from the charge after once being denounced.

The method usually employed by the sorcerer to work ill or destruction on a victim was to make an image of the person, in wax or clay, with the greatest secrecy. This having been done, a bird was sometimes killed and the heart extracted and placed under the right arm of the image, while the liver of the bird was put under the left arm. The figure was then pricked all over with new

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pins, each prick being accompanied by an incantation and imprecations against the victim. If the figure had been modelled in wax, it was then placed before a low fire and allowed to melt slowly away; as it did so, it was believed that a limb or the whole of the body of the victim would waste away or decay in a like manner.

Sometimes such figures were modelled in copper, lead or brass, but the metal was always mixed with wax. Figures modelled in clay were deemed more effective when mixed with earth taken from a graveyard, or with powdered human bones.

The accusation of practising sorcery whereby his arm had wasted, brought by the Protector against the queen and Jane Shore, could only have been substantiated if he had been able to prove that they had employed such methods.

Until the fourteenth century, sorcery and witchcraft were dealt with in the secular courts, but in the fifteenth century, when such charges became more frequent, we find them not infrequently investigated by ecclesiastical commissioners. This is instanced in the case of the Duchess of Gloucester, who was arrested on suspicion of treason and of practising sorcery in 1441. Roger Bolingbroke, an astrologer, alleged to have been her confederate, was first apprehended on a charge of "werchyre and sorcerie against the king." It was declared that he had cast the horoscope of the duchess with a view to ascertaining her chances of succeeding to the throne. This he had plotted to secure for her, "by bewitching King Henry VI to death according to the method of melting a waxen image of that monarch." Several others

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were implicated with the duchess and Bolingbroke, and these included Thomas Southwell, a canon of St. Stephens, Sir John Hume or Hum, and William Wodham.

Margery Jourdain, a reputed witch, was also arrested and charged, but given short shrift, for she was condemned and burnt in Smithfield on October 27th, 1441.

On November 18th, Bolingbroke was found guilty, and was condemned first to ask pardon at St. Paul's Cross, then to be hanged at Tyburn, and afterwards to be beheaded and quartered. Meanwhile, Thomas Southwell had died in prison. The duchess was brought before a Commission of Ecclesiastics and closely examined by Robert Gilbert, Bishop of London; William of Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln; and Thomas Brown, Bishop of Norwich. Although they acquitted her of the charge of treason, they found her guilty of sorcery, and she was condemned to do public penance through the streets of London on three separate days. Afterwards she was sent to Chester, and from there, it is said, to the Isle of Man, where she was imprisoned in Peel Castle.

Some years after Edward IV came to the throne, a charge of sorcery and witchcraft was made against Jacquet, Duchess of Bedford, the mother of Elizabeth his queen, which was to have far-reaching results. She was accused of having by witchcraft and enchantments "fixed the love of the king on her daughter Elizabeth." Apparently the accusation consisted of rumours spread abroad in the Midlands, for we hear nothing of it until the duchess presented a petition to the Privy Council in 1470, demanding that the charges be investigated. In it she complains of certain rumours that she was a witch,

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and by her enchantments had "fascinated the King, causing him to dote on her daughter Elizabeth whom he made his Queen, although he had been betrothed to Eleanor Butler, daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury." She accuses one Thomas Wake of having declared that she had used witchcraft and sorcery, and having brought to Warwick, when Edward was there, an image made of lead like a man-at-arms, saying that it had been made by the duchess to use with witchcraft and sorcery.

The Privy Council investigated her complaint, and their decision is recorded in the Rolls of Parliament, IX, Edward IV.

This record is especially interesting in view of the accusations made by Richard against King Edward after the latter's death. It is addressed by "Edward, by the Grace of God King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland, to the Reverend father-in-God, Bishop of Bathe and Wells, our Chancellor." It goes on to state that "in the Chamber of the Great Council called the Parliament Chamber within the King's Palace at Westminster, the X day of February, the IX year of the reign of our sovereign Lord King Edward IV, a written supplication addressed unto our said sovereign lord, on the behalf of the high and noble Princess Jacquet, Duchess of Bedford."

The petition reads as follows:

"To the King, our sovereign lord showeth and lamentably complaineth unto your highness, your humble and true liegewoman Jacquet, duchess of Bedford, late the wife of your true and faithful knight and liegeman, Richard late

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Earl of Rivers, that where she, at all times hath and yet doth truly believe on God according to the faith of Holy Church as a true christian woman oweth to do, yet Thomas Wake, Squire, contrary to the law of God, law of this land and all reason and good conscience, of his malicious disposition towards your said oratrice of long time continued, intending not only to hurt and apaire her good name and fame, but also purposed the final destruction of her person and to that effect caused her to be brought into common noise and disclaundre of wycheecraft throughout a great part of this your realm, surmising that she should have used wycheecraft and sorcerie, insomuch as the said Wake caused to be brought to Warwick at your last being there sovereign lord, to divers of the lords there being present, 'a image of lead made like a man-of-armes containing the length of a man's finger and broken in the midst and made fast with a wyre,' saying, that it was made by your said oratrice to use with the said wycheecraft and sorcerie, where she, ne noon for her, ne be her, ever saw it God knoweth.

"And over this, the said Wake, for the performing of his malicious intent entreated John Daunger, parish clerk of Stoke Brewerne in the county of Northampton and have said there were two more images made by your said oratrice, one for you, sovereign lord and another for our sovereign lady the queen, whereunto the said John Daunger neither could nor would be entreted to say."

The duchess goes on to demand that Wake and Daunger should be commanded to attend the Bishop of Carlisle, the Earl of Northumberland, Lord Hastings and

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Mountjoye, and Master Roger Radclyff to be examined. Later on, the two men, Thomas Wake and John Daunger, were brought before a commission, and a record of their statements still exists which throws an interesting light on the social conditions in the country at the time.

Thomas Wake, described as "Squire," was probably a man of some substance in the county and lived at Stoke. He declared that this little image of lead, shaped like a man-at-arms, was brought to Stoke and left with the parish clerk, John Daunger, who showed it to the parson and other neighbours in the village; it was afterwards shown to many people in the district, and brought to him by his bailiff, Thomas Kymbell. Beyond this, he knew nothing. John Daunger, who was next examined, said that Wake sent Thomas Kymbell to him asking for the image of lead he had in his possession, and that he gave it to him, but he had never heard of any mention of witchcraft in connection with the Duchess of Bedford.

So far, both men denied the charges, but a note is added to the record of their statements which mentions another person named Harry Kyngeston, who also lived at Stoke, and Daunger afterwards swore that the image was given to him by Harry, who had found it in his own house. He also declared that Wake had told him to say that there were two other images, one being intended for the king and the other for the queen.

These men were examined by a commission consisting of the Lord Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Chancellor of England, together with the bishops of Ely, Rochester, London, Durham and Carlisle. With them sat

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the earls of Warwick, Essex, Northumberland, Shrewsbury, and Kent, and the lords Hastings, Lyle, Cromwell, Scrope, and Saye. This august assembly had no difficulty in clearing the duchess of the charges, but, as certain lords were absent, she petitioned that the king should command that the judgment might always remain there on record, and that she might be exemplified under the Great Seal.

This case discloses a petty conspiracy that had been made against the duchess by the three men, whether from malice towards her personally or ill-will to her family it is impossible to say. Superstition was never more rife in England than at this period, especially in rural districts. Charges of witchcraft were frequent in the villages; mainly owing their origin to feelings of ill-will to some particular person; the difficulty was to disprove them when the rumour was once started. The squire and the parish clerk were the most likely persons to spread the gossip and talk of the countryside.

No doubt the king's visit to Grafton, and his secret marriage to the Lady Elizabeth Grey, the daughter of the duchess, had excited the curiosity and wonder of the county. Why should the king have so suddenly fallen in love and married her, they wondered? It must have been due to "enchantments," surely, they concluded, and some sorcery had been worked by her mother, who wanted her daughter to be queen. And so the gossip had grown, and eventually the production of a little image that might have been used in working witchcraft brought the matter to the ears of the indignant duchess.

Unimportant as it may have seemed at the time, yet

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this imbroglio was destined to be instrumental in altering the succession to the Crown of England, for the Protector, after he had seized the throne, made use of the charges that had been made against the Duchess of Bedford to further his own ends.

In the "Act for the settlement of the Crown upon the King and his issue with a re-capitulation of his Title," brought in by Richard III, it is stated that the "pretended marriage of Edward IV and Elizabeth Grey made without the consent of the lords was also made by *sorcery and witchcraft*."

There are several interesting clauses in this Act, in which the name of another lady is introduced, who is said to have played a part in Edward's amours. The Act¹ contends that:

"After the ungracious, pretended marriage as all England hath cause to say, made between King Edward and Elizabeth sometime wife of Sir John Grey late naming herself and many years Queen of England, the order of all politic rule was perverted, the laws of God and God's Church and the laws of nature and of England broken.

"The pretended marriage between King Edward and Elizabeth Grey was made of great presumption without the knowledge and assent of the lords of this land and also by sorcery and witchcraft committed by Elizabeth and her mother, Jacquet Duchess of Bedford, as the common opinion of the people and the public voice through all this land.

"The pretended marriage was made privately and

¹ Rolls of Parliament, Vol. VI, p. 240, A.D. 1483.

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secretly without banns in a private chamber, a profane place and not openly in the face of the Church after the law of God's Church, but on the contrary.

"At the time of the contract of this pretended marriage and before and long after, King Edward was married and trothplight to Dame Eleanor Butteler (Butler) daughter of the old Earl of Shrewsbury, with whom the king had made a pre-contract of marriage before the pretended marriage with Elizabeth Grey.

"This being true, as is very true, it appeareth and followeth evidently that King Edward during his life and Elizabeth, lived together sinfully and damnably in adultery against the law of God and his Church.

"It followeth that all the issue and children of King Edward be bastards and unable to inherit by the law and custom of England."

It was on these grounds, we know from Doctor Shaw's sermon and the Duke of Buckingham's speech later, that the Protector laid claim to the throne. He had long made his plans, and when he charged the queen and Jane Shore with sorcery and witchcraft, he had hoped to sweep them also from his path.

Whether King Edward was ever betrothed to Dame Eleanor Butler, or whether she was the third of his mistresses to whom he used to allude, there is no direct evidence to prove. It is possible that the introduction of her name was an error or a pure invention on Richard's part, for both Shaw and Buckingham were made to state that the Lady Elizabeth Lucy was King Edward's lawful wife.

TWENTY-ONE

BAFFLED for a time in carrying out his plans, and feeling that he had not yet secured the wholehearted support of the citizens of London, the Protector again carefully considered how this could best be brought about.

His strongest supporter was the Duke of Buckingham, who, though he had but little influence in the city, had succeeded in gaining to his side Sir Edward Shaw the Mayor, Doctor Shaw his brother, and Penker, the provincial of the Grey Friars. The two latter were famous preachers, to whose sermons many people thronged.

Richard therefore determined to make use of these men, and calling them together, gave them instructions to prepare discourses, the main arguments of which were to be directed to the deposing of the young king, then lodged in the Tower with his brother, on the grounds that both princes, sons of Edward IV, were bastards, and so were unable to inherit the Imperial crown of the realm. He further told them that he and his colleagues intended to announce King Edward IV himself as a bastard, also knowing full well that this charge would bring the scandal of adultery on the queen, and that the whole royal family would be defamed by it.

Doctor Shaw was told to declare to his congregation that King Edward had previously promised marriage to

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Lady Elizabeth Lucy, by whom he had had a child, and that the Duchess of York, his mother, had informed Richard that King Edward had been Elizabeth Lucy's husband before God. His children by the queen therefore were bastards. The Protector forbade Shaw to mention King Edward's illegitimacy unless he found his reflections on the queen's children were not being received well by the people.

Doctor Shaw, on his part, professed himself ready not only to speak what the Protector would have him, but to turn his whole discourse against the legitimacy of the young king and his brother, if desired. This being arranged, it was duly announced that Doctor Shaw would deliver a sermon at St. Paul's Cross on Sunday morning, June 22nd.

A large concourse of people had assembled when he ascended the steps of the Cross, many no doubt having come out of curiosity, to hear what he had to say on the affairs of the day. He took for his text "*Spuria vitilamina non agen radicis altas*" (Bastard plants shall never take root), and began his discourse by mentioning examples of the unhappiness of children born out of wedlock, thus endeavouring to show a reason why men should fear that the reign of the present king would be unfortunate. He then enlarged on the advantages that they might hope for from the government of a prince like the Protector, and, thinking that it was now time to shoot his bolt, he concluded by declaring that King Edward IV had never been legally married to the queen, as he was husband "before God" of the Lady Elizabeth Lucy. Therefore, the young princes were not legitimate, but



From an original Drawing

in the Pepysian Library Cambridge

"PAULS CROSS and

Preaching there"

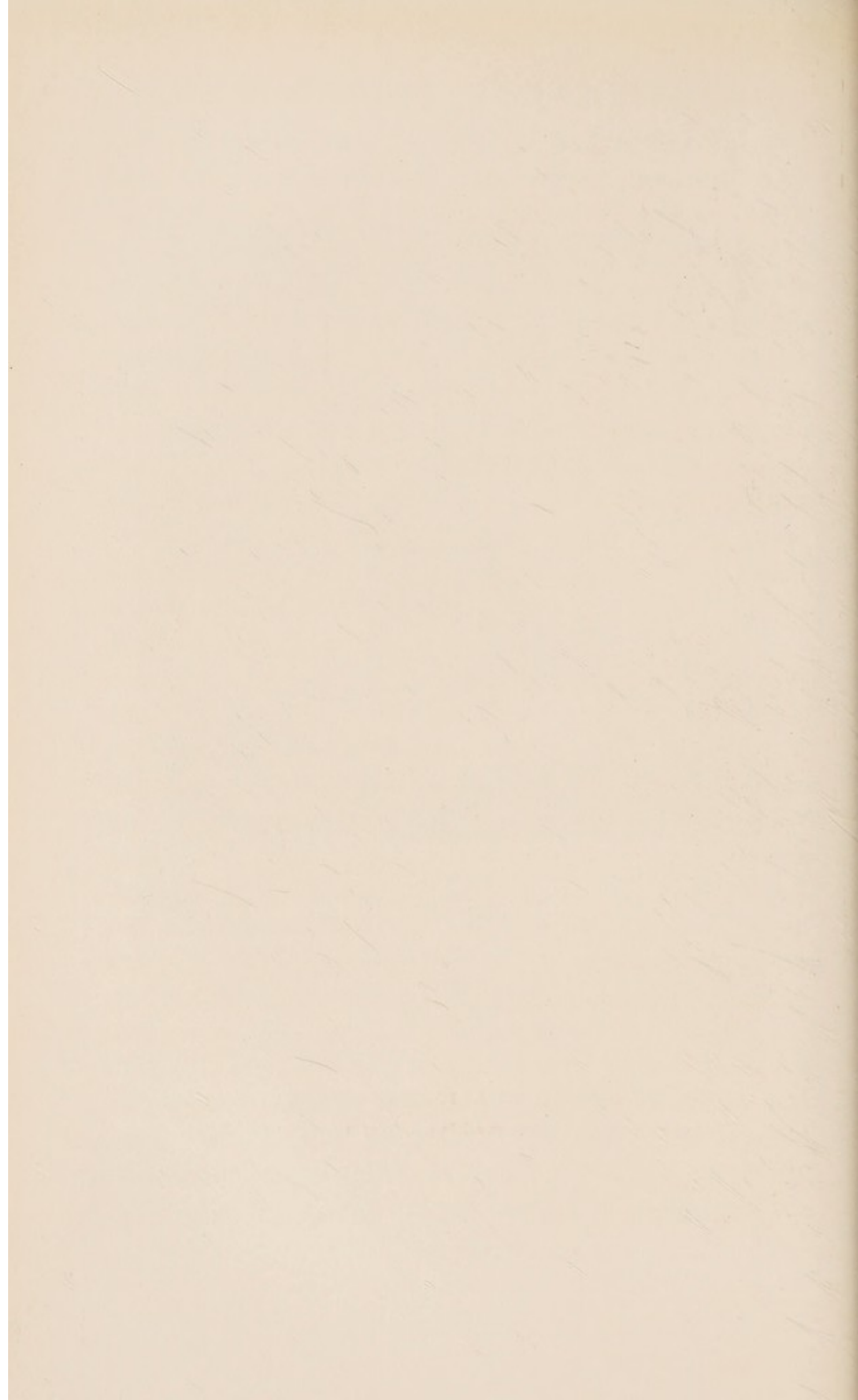
*Pauls Cross or preaching place, was erected in the
by Thomas Kempe, then Bishop of London, on the
troved by an earthquake in 1382. Its name first
the Mayor of London to oblige all the city youth
at Pauls Cross, to him and his heirs. From this
every purpose political, as well as ecclesiastical,
troved by the Lord Mayor of London, Isaac Pen-
in the year*



*form it appears in the plate, about the year 1449.
site of a more antient cross, which had been des-
occurs in the year 1259, when Hen. III. commanded
of a certain age to take the oath of allegiance
period it was, for several centuries, used for almost
and is continually noticed in history. It was des-
nington, in consequence of a vote of Parliament,
1643.*

ST. PAUL'S CROSS AS IT APPEARED IN 1449

From an engraving taken from an original drawing in the Pepysian Library.



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“my lord Protector, that very noble prince, the pattern of all heroic deeds, represented the very face and mind of the great duke, his father.”

At this point it had been arranged that Richard himself should appear on the scene, and the conspirators hoped that the people, taking Doctor Shaw's words as coming from the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, would hail him with the cry: “God save King Richard!” But the Protector failed to make his appearance at the right moment, greatly disconcerting the preacher, who, to gain time, went on repeating his sentences over again in confusion, much to the amazement of the congregation.

When at last Richard was seen pushing his way through the throng accompanied by Buckingham, the people, so far from saluting him, were struck dumb by Shaw's words of flattery and treason; and, seeing their attitude, Shaw abruptly closed his sermon and descended the steps. He was immediately followed by Penker, who began his address; but he had not proceeded far before he lost his voice and was forced to stop; and so the proceedings came to an end.

The congregation began to melt away, some disappointed and others angry at what they had heard. What was the meaning of it all, many asked? No one believed that the young princes were bastards. They had loved King Edward, and knew his good qualities as well as his failings, but Richard had never won their hearts, and what they had heard was unlikely to make him either popular or beloved.

TWENTY-TWO

THE Protector, disappointed and angered at the failure of Doctor Shaw, on whose sermon he had counted so much, slipped away with Buckingham to discuss the next move. He was afraid to appeal to the bishops for their support, and the nobles he numbered among his friends were few, but Buckingham stepped into the breach by offering to make another appeal to the people, if a meeting could be called in the city.

Richard hailed this suggestion with delight. He was still on good terms with the Mayor, and at once sought him, to arrange for the gathering. The decision being made that it should take place on Tuesday, the 24th of June, it was duly cried that at eleven o'clock on that day the Duke of Buckingham would deliver an address to the citizens on matters of State importance, outside the Guildhall. A platform was erected in the courtyard, and thither at the appointed hour the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the city assembled, and a small crowd of people began to collect.

The duke arrived attended by a retinue of servants, and as he mounted the platform silence was commanded in the name of the Lord Protector. Speaking in a loud voice, he addressed the people thus:

“Worshipful Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens: Out of

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

the zeal and sincere affection we have for your persons and interests, we have come to acquaint you with a matter of high importance equally pleasing to God and profitable to the commonwealth, but to none more than you, the citizens of this famous and honourable city.

“The very thing which we believe you have a long while waited and wished for; what you would have purchased at any rate and gone far to fetch, we are come hither to bring without any labour, trouble or peril to yourselves.

“What can this be but your own safety, the peace of your wives and daughters, the security of your goods and estates, all of which have been in danger until now? Who of you could call what he has his own? There were so many snares laid to deceive you; so many fines and forfeitures, taxes and impositions, of which there were no end, and for which there was often no necessity. But, even if there was, it was occasioned by riots and unreasonable waste, rather than just and lawful charges for the defence or honour of the State.

“Your leading citizens have been plundered and their wealth squandered, and your goods taken from you by Commissioners, much against your will.

“King Edward, gaining the crown by conquest, those that were in any way related to the other side were his enemies and lay under the charge of treason. Thus, half the kingdom at once became traitors. But he is dead and gone, God forgive his soul. We shall in honour to the memory of one who was our sovereign, forbear to mention who were the persons on whom he lavished his favours, but it is well known that those who deserved them most

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had the least. Was not SHORE'S WIFE his chief minister? Was there not more court paid to her than to all the lords of England, except those who were the strumpet's favourites? Though she, poor woman, was herself chaste and of good reputation, till he deluded her to his lust and tempted her from her husband, an honest, substantial man whom you all knew. Indeed, I am ashamed to say it, the king's appetite in that respect was insatiable and intolerable. No woman could escape him, young or old, rich or poor, wife or virgin, but all fell victims to his lust, and through it, the most honourable houses were defiled and the most honest families corrupted.

"You, of this renowned city, suffered most; you, who deserved most from him for your readiness to serve the house of York with your lives and fortunes, which, though ill-requited, there is one of that house who by God's grace shall reward you better.

"I shall not enlarge on this subject. You have heard it from one whom you will hearken to more than to me; a man so wise and pious that he would not utter a thing in the pulpit, especially, which he did not but firmly believe it was his duty to declare. You remember, no doubt, how he set forth last Sunday the right of the most excellent Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester, unto the crown of this realm, for as he proved to you, the children of King Edward IV were never lawfully begotten, the king leaving his lawful wife, the Lady Lucy, to contract an illegal marriage with the queen.

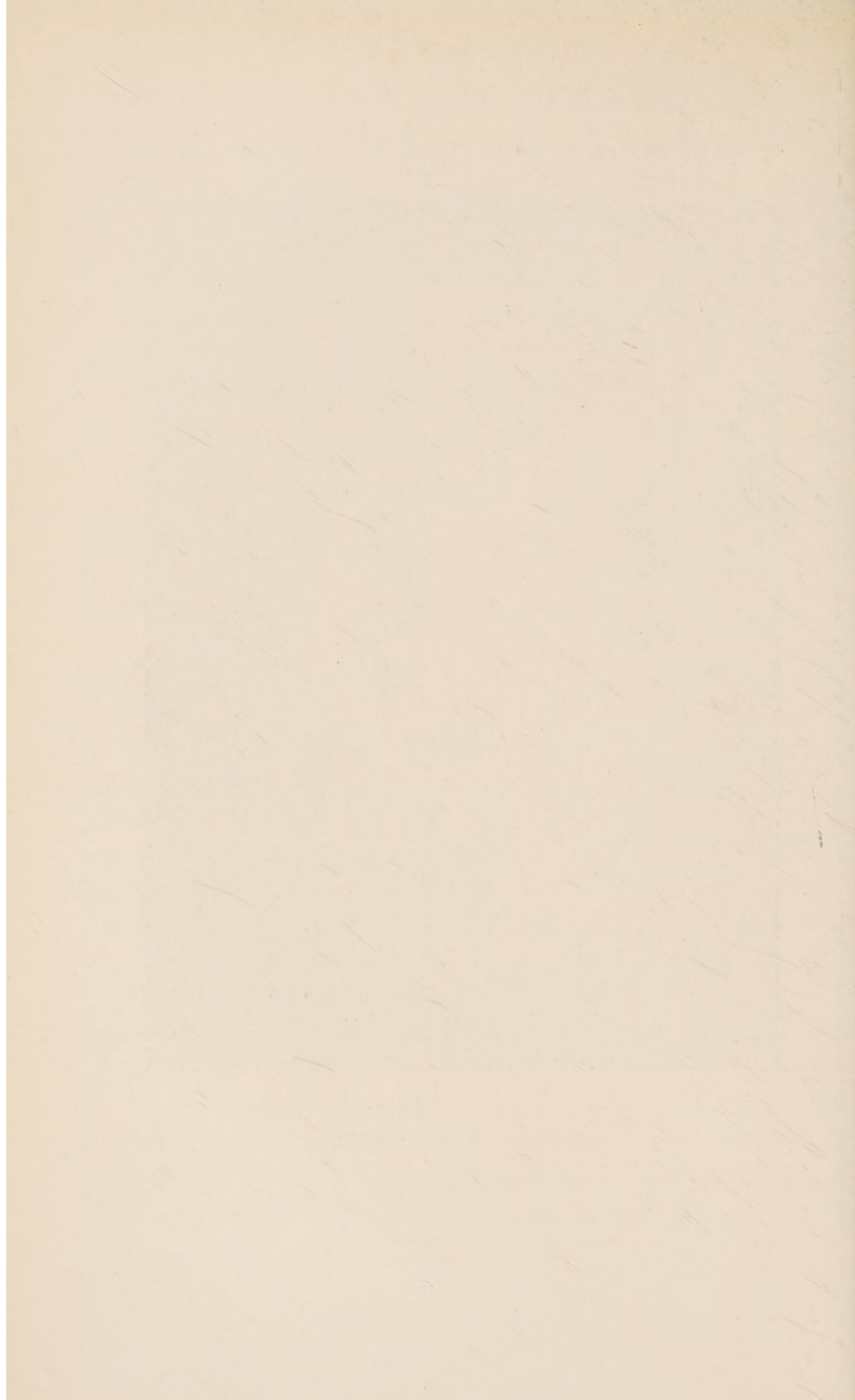
"My noble lord the Protector's reverence for the duchess, his mother, will not permit me to say anything further concerning what the worthy doctor alleged by her



JANE SHORE

From a picture at Eton College.

[See page 282]



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familiarity with others, besides her husband. Though for these causes the Crown of England is devolved to the most excellent Prince, the Lord Protector, as the only lawfully begotten son of the right noble Duke of York. This, and the consideration of his many high qualities, has prevailed with the Lords and Commons of England, of the northern counties especially. Though he is unwilling to take the government upon himself, yet the petition of the lords and gentlemen will meet with the more favourable acceptance if you, the worshipful citizens of the metropolis of the kingdom, will join with us in our request.

“I therefore require you in the name of myself and those lords, to show us plainly your minds and intentions.”

The duke paused here for a while, fully expecting that his audience would have responded to his appeal by crying out: “God save King Richard!” But complete silence reigned, and no one uttered a word.

Buckingham showed his surprise, and, drawing the Mayor with some of the others on one side, asked in a quiet voice: “How is it the people are so still?”

“My lord,” said the Mayor, “it may be perchance they have not understood you well.”

The duke then stepped forward again and repeated his speech with a little variation, “with such grace and eloquence,” says a chronicler, “that never so ill a subject was handled with so much oratory.”

Notwithstanding this, the crowd still remained silent. The Mayor then whispered to the duke: “The citizens have not been accustomed to hear anyone speak here but

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the Recorder, who is the mouth of the city. Perchance they will take the thing better from him." The duke nodded in reply, and the Mayor spoke to the Recorder Fitz-William, who reluctantly came forward and said a few words in support of the duke's speech. Still there was no response from the people.

The duke for a time was nonplussed; frowning, he muttered to those who stood by him: "They are wonderfully obstinate in their silence." Then as a final effort he determined to try persuasion.

"Dear friends," he said, "we came to acquaint you with a thing which we need not have done had it not been for the affection we bear you. I tell you, that the Lords and the Commons could have determined the matter without you, but would gladly have you join with us for your own honour and profit. You do not seem to realize this, but we do require you to give your answer one way or the other. Are you willing, as the Lords are, to have the most excellent Prince, the Lord Protector, as your king, or not?"

A sound of murmuring was then heard from the crowd, and at last some of the Protector's followers, who were among them, raised a cry of "King Richard!" This was taken up by the city apprentices and the rabble who stood on the fringe of the throng, who threw their caps in the air with shouts of "King Richard! King Richard!"

Although Buckingham well knew where the shouts came from and by whom they were made, he stepped forward and, raising his hand for silence, cried: "It is a goodly and joyful cry to hear, every man with one voice agreeing to it and no one saying nay. Since, then,

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dear friends, we see you are all as one man inclined to have this noble Prince to be your king, we shall report the matter directly to him. We shall require you to attend us to-morrow with our joint petition to his Grace."

The duke and his friends then left the platform and the people dispersed, "most of them with weeping eyes and aching hearts," says a chronicler, "though they were forced to hide their tears for fear of giving offence."

Buckingham's address was both subtle and cunning, and his specious arguments were cleverly phrased to appeal to the people. His resentment to Jane Shore's power and influence at Court is shown in the contemptuous allusion to her as the "king's chief minister." Yet the "poor" woman excited his pity and commiseration! But it is noteworthy that the duke could not bring any charge against her of having abused her position, or of having made any use of it for wrong purposes.

Buckingham was made the mouthpiece for the Protector's vile insinuation that his mother, the Duchess of York, had been an adulteress, and that his own brother Edward had been illegitimate. In support of the allegation that King Edward's children were also bastards, the only evidence he could adduce was a rumour current many years previously that the king was legally married to Lady Elizabeth Lucy, before he was espoused to Lady Elizabeth Grey, an assertion which had been denied by Lady Lucy herself.

The next day the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors, together with some of the leading citizens, proceeded to Baynard's Castle, where the Protector was then lodged.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

After two messages had been sent in, Richard at length appeared, accompanied by Buckingham, who thereupon told him of the propositions made at the meeting at the Guildhall, "which the representatives of the city and the people had now come to offer him."

The scene had been well rehearsed and was acted with skill. The Protector's saturnine face bore a grave expression as with well-feigned surprise he replied: "With regard to the things alleged, I know them to be true, but I loved the Lord King Edward and his children above any crown, therefore I cannot consent to your proposal."

Buckingham affected to be greatly disappointed at the reply, and exclaimed in a loud voice:

"We have all agreed not to have any of King Edward's line to reign over us, and we have gone too far to turn back."

Then Richard, after a few moments, with a pretence of reluctance, said that he would agree to their request to become their king; on which a shout went up: "God save King Richard!"

Thus Richard, Duke of Gloucester, achieved his ambition to mount the throne, to which he had waded through blood. His way was now clear. The young king and his brother were prisoners in the Tower, Hastings, Rivers, and Gray and his other opponents had been done to death. There was none left to oppose him.

The next day he went to Westminster and took a seat in the Court of King's Bench. Rising with some show of modesty, he made a speech to those present and promised them "halcyon days from the beginning of his reign."

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“From this mock-election in June,” says Sir Thomas More, “he commenced his reign, and was crowned King of England in July.”

A few weeks afterwards, Richard left London to make a progress through the Midlands with the object of ingratiating himself with the people. It was whilst on this journey that he completed his final plans for the murder of the young princes and dispatched a secret messenger to the Tower authorizing the foul deed to be carried out.

Between the 7th and 14th of August, 1483, the two innocent boys, Edward and Richard, were smothered in their beds at dead of night and secretly buried by their ruffianly assassins under a staircase in the Tower.

This crowning act of Richard's brutalities covered his name with shame and disgrace and lost him many of his former supporters.

TWENTY-THREE

*“Submissive, sad and lowly was her look;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders carelessly confus’d,
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung;
Upon her cheek a faintish flush was spread;
Feeble she seemed and sore smit with pain,
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were mark’d with blood;
Yet silent still she pass’d and unrepining;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,
To Heav’n she seem’d in fervent zeal to raise,
And beg that mercy man denied her here.”*

—Nicholas Rowe.

NOTWITHSTANDING the turmoil of the time, Richard did not forget Jane Shore, but, inhuman tyrant that he was, continued to pursue her with unrelenting hate.

Her acquittal by the State Council on the charge of sorcery and witchcraft only increased his enmity, and he determined to crush her completely. Although he had not hitherto hesitated at murder, he held back from taking Jane’s life, preferring to see her suffer every

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ignominy it was possible for him to put upon her. Not content with despoiling her of her property and wealth, he again sought how best he could revenge himself on the unfortunate woman now left at his mercy. He was afraid to pursue his charges against the queen, but, Hastings now disposed of, he was able to wreak his vengeance on Jane and resolved that she should not escape him. Within a short time of her liberation from the Tower, she was again arrested by his orders and lodged in Lud Gate prison, to await his next decision. In a few days she was handed over to the authority of the Bishop of London, to be charged before an ecclesiastical court with living "in open and scandalous harlotry."

The charge of harlotry, at that period, was dealt with by the Church, and the usual penalty was a public penance which had to be carried out at a specified place in the city.

Richard no doubt thought that any influence Jane might have left could not survive such a public humiliation, and reduced to beggary as she would be, he need have no further fear from her. He knew the charge of harlotry could not be denied, as, since the death of King Edward, it was well known that she had been living under the protection of Lord Hastings.

No doubt Dr. Thomas Kempe, Bishop of London, had received his instructions, for Jane was soon brought before him, found guilty, and sentenced to do public penance for her incontinence at St. Paul's on the following Sunday morning.

When the Duchess of Gloucester had been condemned to do public penance in 1441, it was carried out three

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times on three different days. On each occasion she had to proceed by her barge from Westminster and land in various parts of the city. At each of the places of disembarkation she was met by an assemblage, headed by the mayor and sheriffs. On the first day she had to walk, hoodless, carrying a lighted taper in her hand, from Temple Bar to St. Paul's. On the second day, the procession was formed at "The Swan," in Thames Street, and went by way of Bridge Street, Gracechurch Street and Leadenhall to Christ Church, Newgate Street. On the third day they traversed the streets from Queenhithe¹ to St. Michael's, Cornhill.

In the accounts they give of Jane's penance the chroniclers vary as to the distance she was obliged to walk. Some state that she passed through Cheapside and Lombard Street, but Holinshed and others, who are probably more accurate, say that she only walked from the Bishop's Palace adjoining St. Paul's, to the Cross.

By the Sunday morning following her sentence, it was known throughout the city that the penance was to take place, and at the hour appointed a great crowd of people had gathered in the open space round St. Paul's, all anxious to catch a glimpse of Jane, the once favoured and almost royal Jane, now fallen and about to be humiliated.

One can picture the scene outside St. Paul's on this quiet summer morning. In the still air no sound could be heard save the low murmur which came from the people, eager and expectant, as they elbowed their way

¹ Queenhithe was a dock or indentation in the Thames bank in Upper Thames Street. It was large enough to float the small craft in mediaeval London.

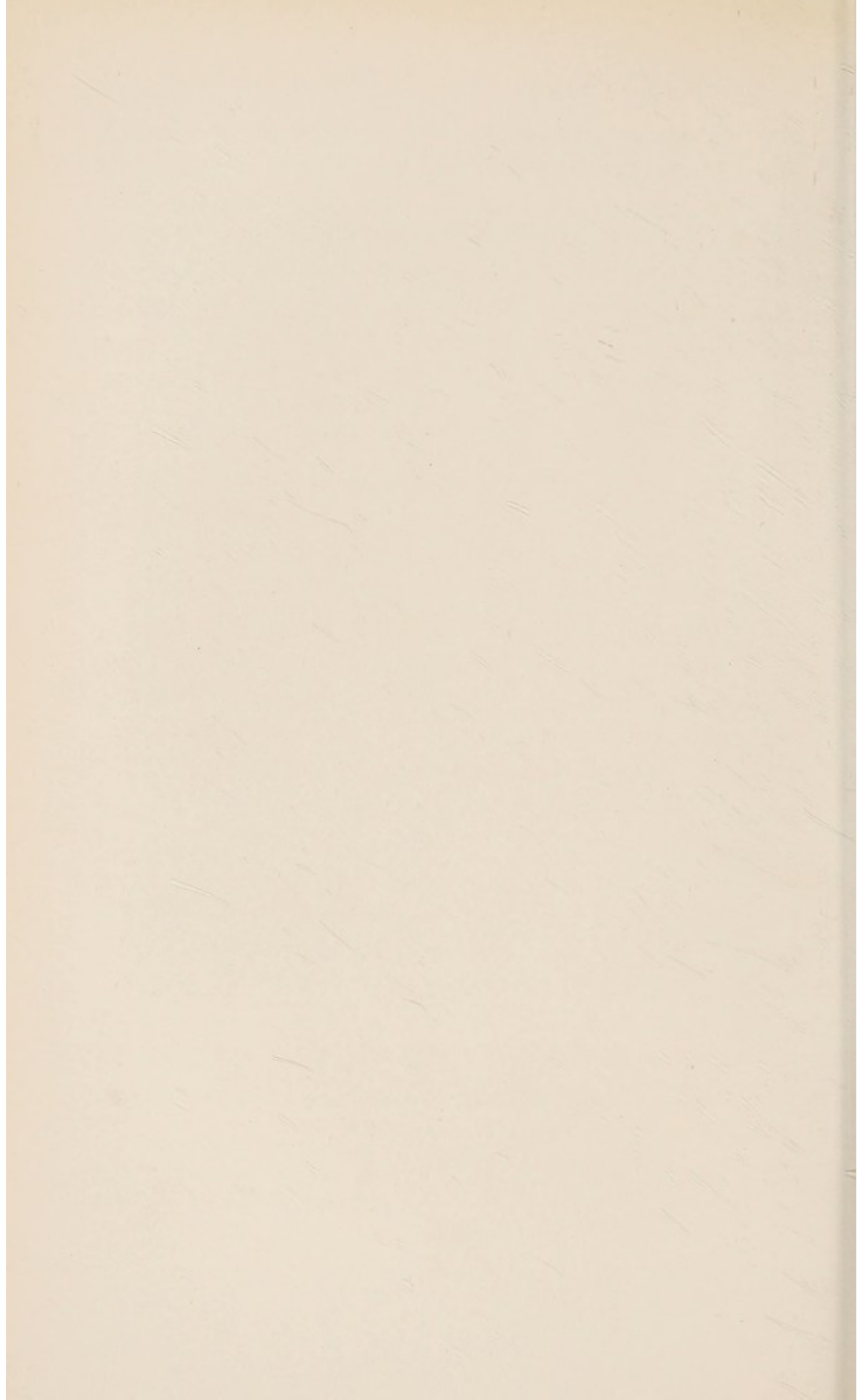


JANE SHORE DOING PENANCE

From a drawing by W. S. Lethbridge after an original picture
in the possession of the Hastings family.

Engraved by Edward Scriven.

[See page 283]



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here and there in order to get a good view. From the windows of the tall houses facing the Cross, heads were thrust and necks craned, all waiting to see the woman who had been the best-loved mistress of a king. Down below, the people stood patiently, for they all pitied her, afraid to express their sympathy for fear of offending the friends of the Protector, many of whom mingled with the crowd.

"Gloucester has done this from spite," said a tall, bearded man in a low voice to his neighbour.

"Or more likely to try and make us think that he really believes her to be a witch," was the reply.

"The only witchery about her is her beautiful face, which has been her ruin," remarked the other.

"Anyway," said a woman, who appeared like a mercer's dame, "Jane was never proud. She was always ready to help those of us who needed it."

"That's true enough," responded another woman. "She didn't deserve this. Poor thing! Poor thing!"

"But some say that she did bewitch the Protector," said a girl who was standing near.

"He didn't need bewitching!" hissed the mercer's dame at her.

But now a sudden hush fell on the crowd, and all eyes were turned to the figure of a woman in white, who had emerged from a door by the palace and stood motionless and alone, her only garment the short kirtle which revealed her feet, bare and uncovered. Still lovely and enchanting, with her beautiful hair flowing over her shoulders like a golden cloud, and her eyes downcast, Jane stood for a few moments in view of all.

A lighted candle weighing three and a half pounds was

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placed in her hand. Then a servitor carrying a cross took up his place in front of her, and with two priests, one on either side, the little procession set out and slowly wound its way through the lane of people towards St. Paul's Cross.

A soft flush suffused Jane's face, but she never raised her eyes. No jeers greeted her, and but for murmurs of pity and sympathy, she passed with faltering footsteps, in silence. Many of the onlookers had known her from childhood and remembered her as a bright and merry girl when she had been the pride of the city, and had been called "The Rose of London."

"Poor soul! God keep her," were the words uttered by a sad-faced woman as she plucked a rose from her bosom and flung it in Jane's path.

Jane trod on the crimson petals scattered at her feet, which were now bleeding from the sharp stones. Slowly the little company, after circling the Cross, entered the great church. After traversing the nave, Jane was led to the choir, where, after offering her candle at the High Altar, she was halted directly in front of the preacher, who stood in the pulpit.

After he had admonished her in a set form of words, she had to confess her misdoings and declare her repentance.

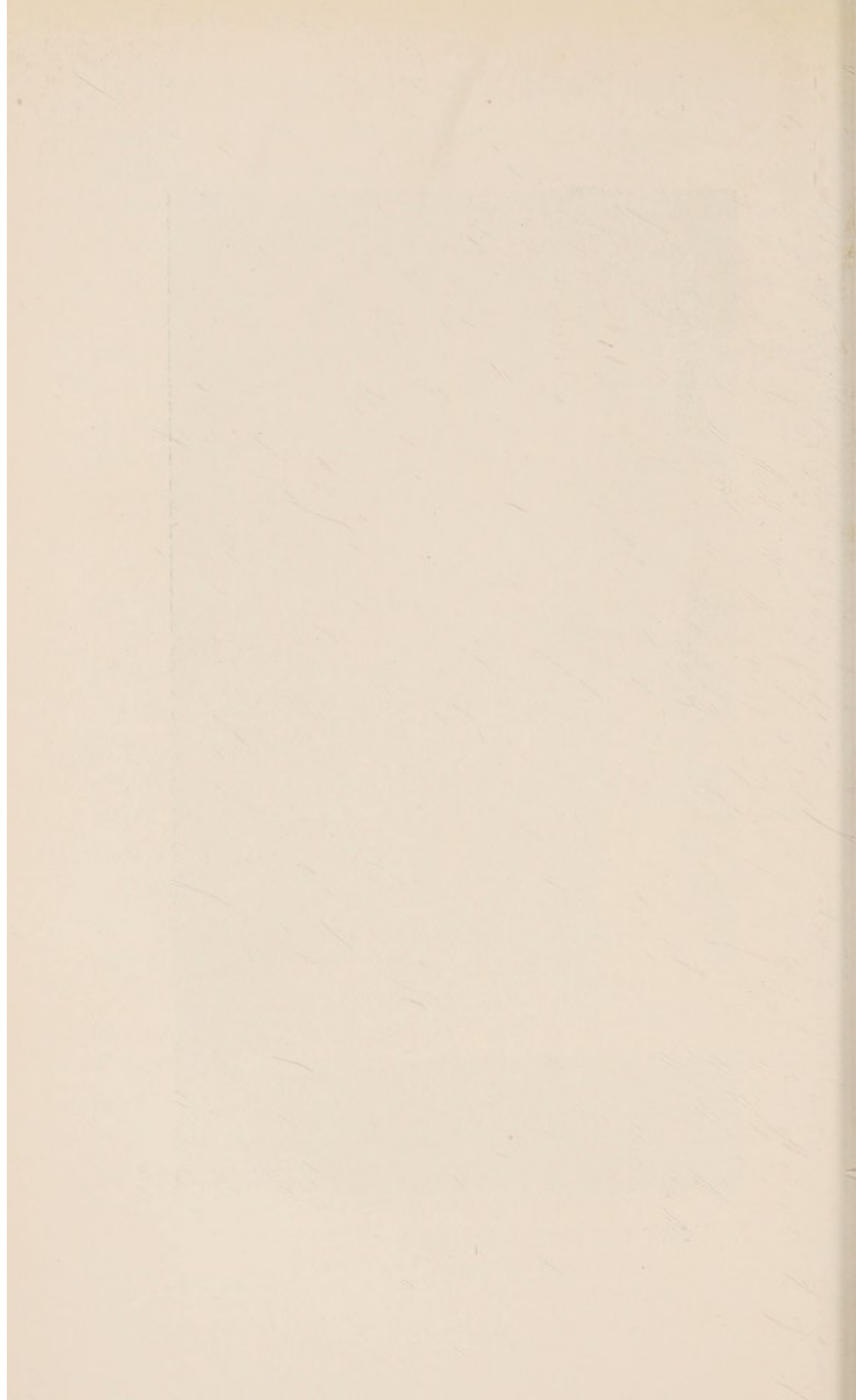
Her sin expiated, Jane was turned from the church into the streets without money or home. Yet she was not without sympathizers for it is said that by this penance the Protector, instead of debasing her, actually raised her in the estimation of the people. This was the opinion of Sir Thomas More, who thus quaintly describes the scene at St. Paul's on the day of her humiliation:



JANE SHORE'S PENANCE IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

From an engraving by Lud. Du Guernier.

[See page 283]



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“So she went in Countenance and pace demure. So womanly and albeit she were out of all array save her kirtle only, yet went she so fair and lovely, namely while the wondering of the people cast a comely red in her cheeks of which before she had most missed, that her great shame won her much praise among those that were more amorous of her body than curious of her soul. And many good folks that also hated her living and glad were to see her sin corrected, yet pitied they more her penance than rejoiced there at, when they considered that the Protector procured it more of a corrupt intent than any virtuous intention.

“In all this action she behaved herself with so much modesty and decency, that such as respected her beauty more than her fault never were in greater admiration of than now.”

TWENTY-FOUR

WE have it on the authority of Gairdner that after the death of Hastings, and when Jane had performed her penance, she found a friend and protector for a time in the young Marquis of Dorset, the queen's son by her first marriage. He was about her own age, and must have known her well when she was at the palace and at the height of her prosperity.

Dorset was one of the most popular and dashing young noblemen at the court and had probably, like others, admired Jane's beauty. He, however, had held himself in check while Hastings was alive. He knew how Jane had been persecuted by Richard since the murder of Hastings, and his sympathy for her was aroused when he heard of her cruel punishment. He was well aware that he had an implacable enemy in Richard, and was himself in peril, so he could not interfere, but he was apparently not afraid to offer her his protection at a time when she most needed it.

His mother, the queen, after what had happened to Jane, was also in fear for her personal safety, and had removed her chests, coffers, and furniture from the palace into the sanctuary where she still remained. This had to be carried out by night so hurriedly that her servants broke down the walls which separated the palace from the

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sanctuary, in order to facilitate the removal of the heavy loads.

On his mother's marriage to King Edward in 1464, Thomas Grey, afterwards Marquis of Dorset, had been created Earl of Huntingdon, and had fought with the king at Tewkesbury; later he served under him in expeditions to France. For a brief period after his stepfather's death he became Constable of the Tower, but when Richard seized the crown, fearing for his own safety, he joined the queen for a time at Westminster. Here, together with other survivors of the Woodville party, he planned an insurrection which was timed to break out in the north on October 18th, 1483. He left Jane to proceed to Yorkshire, where the party had many followers whom he hoped to assemble, and march with them on London. But they were betrayed; Richard was informed of the plot and took immediate action. He had always been antagonistic to Dorset and regarded him with enmity, so was not slow to plan a revenge; he at once issued a proclamation in Leicester offering a reward of a thousand marks in money or a hundred marks a year in land "if anyone would take Thomas, late Marquis of Dorset, who not having the fear of God nor the salvation of his own soul before his eyes, had damnably debauched and defiled many maids, widows and wives and lived in actual adultery with JANE SHORE."

This extraordinary proclamation, which bears the sanctified title of "Reformation of Manners," read as follows:

"For as much as the King, our Sovereign Lord, remem-

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bering his solemn profession made at the time of his coronation to mercy and justice, and following the same in deed, first began at mercy in giving unto all manner of persons his full and general pardon, trusting thereby to have caused all his subjects to be surely determined unto him according to the duty of their allegiance and his grace in his own person; as is well known, hath dressed himself and divers parties of this his Realm for the indifferent administration of justice to every person, having full confidence and trust that all oppressors and extortioners of his subjects, horrible adulterers and bawds, provoking the high indignation and displeasure of God, should have to be reconciled and reduced to the way of truth and virtue with the abiding in good disposition.

“This yet notwithstanding, Thomas Dorset late Marques Dorset, which not fearing God nor the peril of his Soul hath many and sundry maids, widows and wives, damnably and without shame, devoured, deflowered and defouled, holding the unshameful and mischievous woman called SHORE’S WIFE to adultery.

“Sir William Noreys, Sir William Knevet, Sir William Bourghchild, of Barnes, Sir George Browne, Knights and John Cheyne, John Noreys, Walter Hungerford, John Rush and John Harcourt of Staunton with others unto them traitorously associated without the king’s authority have assembled and gathered his people by the comfort of his great rebel and traitor the late Duke of Buckingham and Bishops of Ely and Salisbury, intending not only the destruction of the royal person of our said Sovereign Lord and other his true subjects, the breach of his peace, tranquillity and common weal of this his realm but also in letting of virtue and sin, as they have done in times past



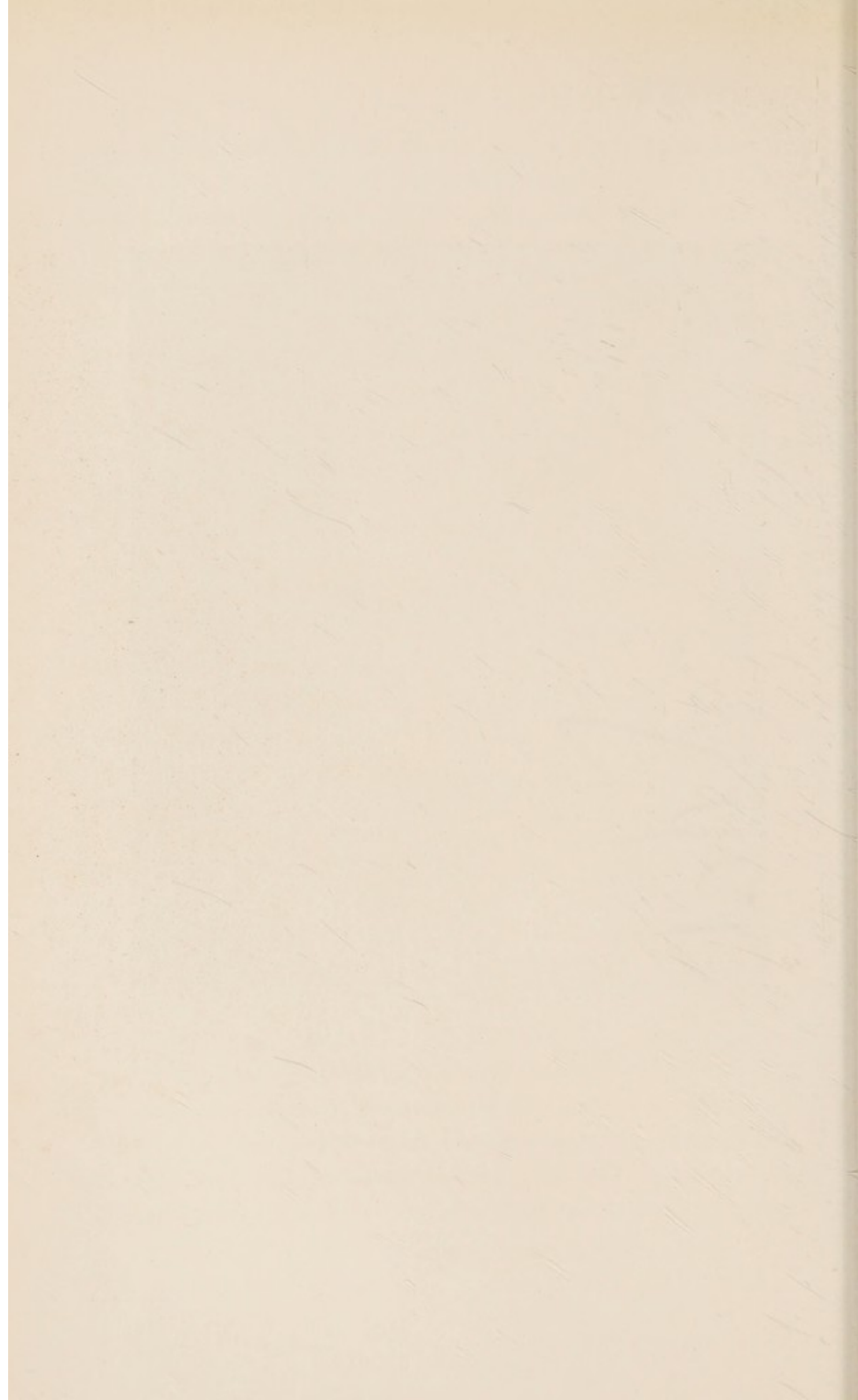
M^{rs} JANE SHORE.

Done from the Original Picture in Eaton Coll.

JANE SHORE

From a mezzotint by J. Faber, Senr.

[See page 283]



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to the great displeasure of God and evil example of all Christian people.

“Wherefore the king’s highness of his tender and loving disposition that he hath and beareth unto the Commonwealth of his Realm and putting down and rebuking vices, granteth that no yeoman nor commoner thus abased and blinded by these traitors, adulterers, and bawds or any of them shall not be hurt in their bodies nor goods if they withdraw themselves from their company and meddle no farther with them.

“And over this our Sovereign Lord granteth that whosoever put him in devoier and taketh the said Duke and bringeth him unto his highness shall have in money M.C. or C.C. in land and for every of the said bishops and Marques, a M. marks in money or XLL. in land reward and that now every true subject and lover of virtue and peace put his hand in resisting the malicious intent of the traitors and punishing of the great and damnable vices of the said traitors, adulterers, and bawds, so that by their true and faithful assistance, virtue may be lifted up and praised in the realm to the Honour and Pleasure of God and vice utterly rebuked and damned, to the surety and comfort of all the true and good commons of this realm.

“And over this the King’s grace well that it be known, that all those that in anywise hide, comfort or assist the said Duke, Bishops and Marques or any of the King’s rebels and traitors aforesaid after this Proclamation other with goods, vitells or otherwise be reputed and taken for his traitors.

ET HOC SUB FIDE AND LIGEANTIA TUIS NULLATENUS OMITTAS.
TESTE REGE APUD LEYCEST VICESSIMO TERTIO DIE OCTOBRIS.

PERIPSUM REGEM.”

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This proclamation is consistent with Richard's hypocritical character. He who had been guilty of the murder of his nearest relatives and friends now posed as a moral reformer, and thus piously declaimed against incontinence and adultery. The indictment of Dorset betrays Richard's malice against him, and Jane is singled out for special condemnation. Unable to accuse Dorset of treason, he trumped up a charge of general debauchery, as he was anxious to take the marquis prisoner. He was thus ready to make use of any unscrupulous lie to give him an excuse for Dorset's capture and to separate him from Jane.

Richard had quarrelled bitterly with his old friend and supporter Buckingham, who was then fomenting a rebellion in the provinces, but Dorset was not with him, so could not be coupled with the duke as a traitor. The chief object of his proclamation therefore was to make Buckingham and his friends odious to the people.

Walpole was of the opinion that Jane's connection with Dorset drew upon her the further resentment of Richard, for he apparently believed that she was plotting against him, in confederacy with the marquis. The proclamation tends to prove that her friendship with Dorset did not begin until after the death of Hastings, in spite of all that was said to the contrary, in the charge of harlotry brought against her.

In 1484 Dorset joined in Buckingham's rising, but on its failure succeeded in escaping to France, where another plot was on foot, headed by the Earl of Richmond.

Richard's next move was to authorize his Chancellor, the Bishop of Lincoln, to issue a proclamation against Dorset and other nobles who had fled to France.

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The following is extracted from the letter he wrote to the Chancellor :

“ By the King:—

“ Right Reverend Father in God, right trusty and well-beloved we greet you well and would charge you that under our great Seal being in your keeping ye do make out as many Proclamations after the form following as ye shall think expedient to be delivered to the sheriffs of our counties within this our Realm. For as much as the King our Sovereign Lord hath certain knowledge that Piers, Bishop of Exeter, THOMAS GREY, late MARQUIS OF DORSET, Jasper late Earl of Pembroke, John late Earl of Oxenford and Sir Edward Widevile with other divers his rebels and traytors disabled and attainted by authorities of the High Court Of Parliament of whom many are known for open murders, adventurers and extortioners contrary to truth, honour and nature have forsaken their natural countrie taking them first to be under the obeisance of the Duke of Britaigne and unto him promised certain things which by him and his council were thought things to greatly unnatural and abominable for them to grant, observe, keep and perform. And therefore the same utterly refused they seeing that the said Duke and his Council would not aid and succour them nor follow their ways, privily departed out of his country into France there taking them to be under the obeissaunce of the King's most anncient enemy Charles calling himself King of France, and to abuse and blind the commons of this said realm the said rebels and traytors have chosen to be their Captain, Harry late calling himself Earl of Rich-

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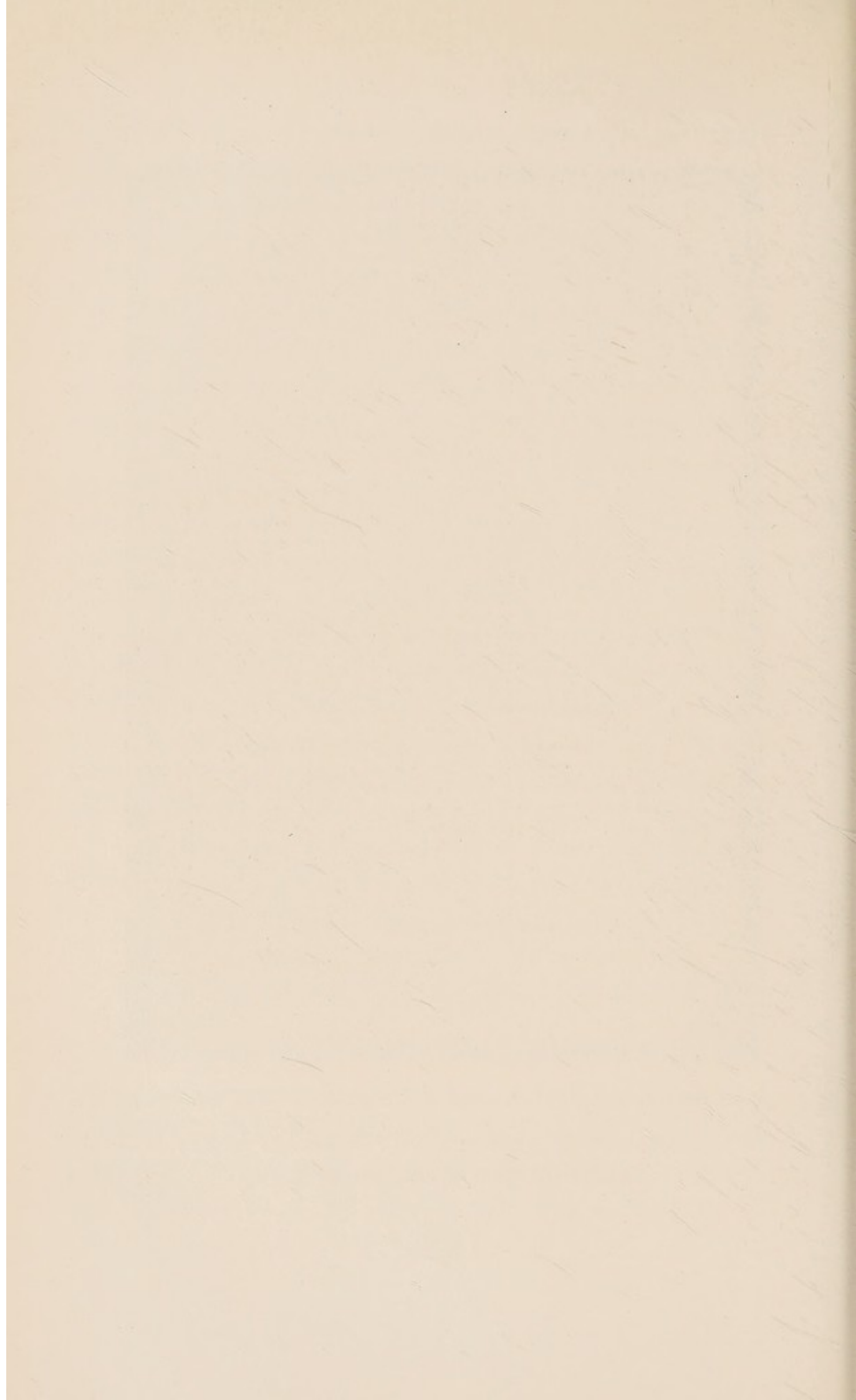
mond which of his ambitious and insatiable covertance stirred and excited by the confederacie of the kings said rebells and traytors encrocheth upon him the name and title of Royal estate of this realm of England.

“The king our Sovereign Lord desireth, willeth and chargeth all and every of his subjects of this his Realm to call the promises to their mind and like good and true Englishmen to endeavour themselves at all their powers for the defence of themselves, their wives, children, goods and inheritances, against the said malicious purposes and conspiracies which the ancient enemy of this land have made with the kings and rebells for the final destruction of the same land as aforesaid. And our said Sovereign Lord as a well-willed diligent and courageous prince will put his most royal person to all labour and pain necessary in this behalf for the resistance and subduing of his said enemies rebells and traytors to the most comfort well and surety of all and singular his true and faithful liegemen and subjects.

“And these our letters shall be therein your warrant given under our signet at our Palace of Westminster the VII day of December, the IId year of our Reign.

“To the right reverend father in God our right trusty and well beloved the Bishop of Lincoln our Chancellor.”

Richard then introduced a bill into Parliament penalizing the bishops of Ely, Salisbury, and Exeter, “For their presenced malices and traitorous entent against justice and fidelity due to the Crown and Royal Majesty of



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England, confedered and conspired together as well with *Thomas, Marques of Dorset*, as with other great rebels and traitors to our Sovereign Lord, King Richard the Third, imagining and compassing falsely and traitorously the destruction of his Royal person, to deprive them of their offices, goods and lands."

In 1485, the queen, after patching up a reconciliation with Richard, wrote to her son Dorset, urging him to return to England, but although he left Paris, where he was then living, he was intercepted at Compiègne and prevailed upon to abandon the journey and to remain in France while Richard was alive.

After the battle of Bosworth, his safety secured, he was recalled to England by Henry VII, and his attainder was recovered, for we find in 1486 he received back his titles. But his troubles were not yet at an end, for in the following year he again came under suspicion and was committed to the Tower, and although released he was not taken into favour again until after the battle of Stoke.

The remainder of his life appears to have been passed in fighting, for from 1492 he took part in the expedition to assist Maximilian against the French, and five years later he held a command in the royal forces which were sent to suppress the insurrection in Cornwall. He died soon afterwards in 1501.

He married twice, his first wife being Anne, a daughter of the Duke of Exeter; and after her death he married Cicely, daughter of William Bouville, Lord of Harington.

There is no evidence to show that he ever saw Jane Shore after he returned from France.

TWENTY-FIVE

AFTER Dorset had left Jane to go north to lead the insurrection, she was again homeless and reduced to penury. It is said that for a time she was obliged to wander the streets and fields round London, hungry and destitute, until at last, at the end of her resources, she found a refuge in Lud Gate, where she was again kept by King Richard's command.

Lud Gate, the sixth and principal gate of the old city, is believed to have been originally built by King Lud, a traditional British monarch who flourished about sixty-six years before the Christian era. It was rebuilt and restored in 1215, and in the time of Henry III was decorated with sculptured figures representing King Lud and other early rulers. In the first year of the reign of Richard II, it was used as a free-debtors' prison, and in 1463, when Edward IV was on the throne, it was again restored and enlarged through the benefaction of the widow of Stephen Forster, mayor of London in 1454.

The enlargement of the building on the south-east side formed a quadrant thirty-eight feet long by twenty-nine feet wide, and above the rooms, on a flat leaden roof, the inmates were allowed to take exercise. Both lodging and water were supplied to them free of charge.

It came under the general jurisdiction of the sheriffs of

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London, and Strype tells us that those who lodged in Lud Gate were chiefly merchants and tradesmen who had been driven to want by losses at sea.

But although it was regarded as a prison in the time of Richard III, such was the fatherly care exercised in the treatment of the debtors who lodged there, that it was more like a shelter or alms-house for the poor and destitute than a place of detention. Roger Ascham alludes to it as "not a dungeon for the wicked but a place of detention for the wretched." As late as 1664, the inmates were allowed to solicit alms by the alms-seekers of the prison, who perambulated the streets with baskets on their backs and a sealed money-box in their hands, collecting money or food.

In this grim and dismal building, with scarcely a pallet on which to rest, Jane was forced to live.

But in spite of the depths to which she had fallen, romance had not yet forsaken Jane's life. Her personal charm and beauty still remained, and her power of fascination had not deserted her, for about a year after she had been in Lud Gate she received an offer of marriage from Thomas Lynom, who held the important post of solicitor to the king. Of his personality we have no account, nor do we know how this staid, middle-aged man of the law, whose life had probably been spent among musty rolls and parchments and in the Courts of Justice at Westminster, fell under the glamour of Jane's fascination. He was not a courtier, so it is scarcely likely that he knew her in the days of her prosperity, but he must have known of her sufferings, which may have excited in him that pity which is akin to love. We can only surmise that it

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was for this reason that he sought her out in the miserable surroundings of her prison home. The fact remains to his credit that he was honourable enough to make Jane a formal offer of marriage. One can imagine how the unfortunate woman must have welcomed such a chance to escape from her misery, and there is little doubt that she accepted his offer.

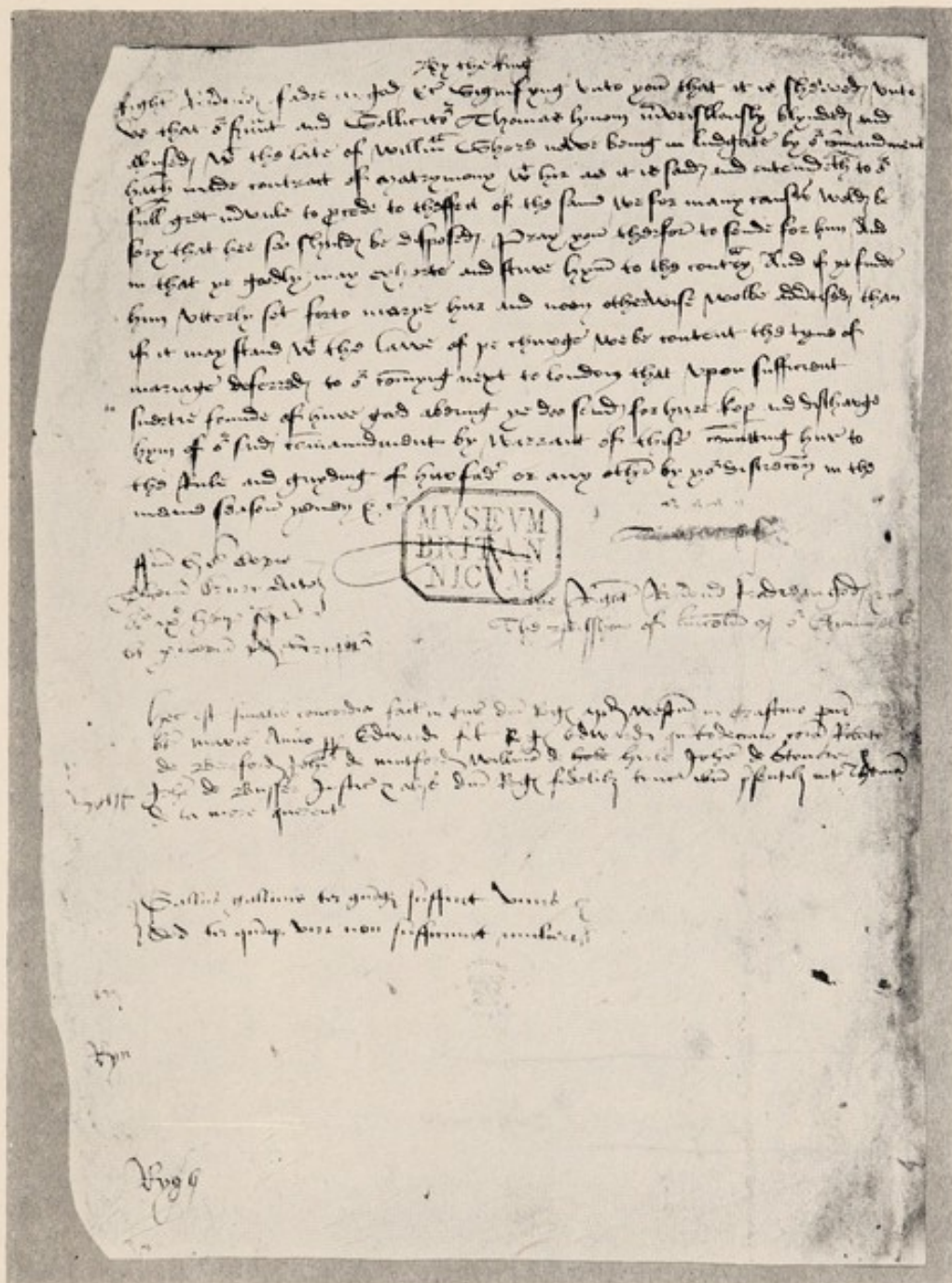
That he was a person of substance, and in favour with the king, is evident from a document still extant, which states that "King Richard granted to Thomas Lynom the office of King's Solicitor and also the Manor of Colmework Com. Bedf. to him and his heirs male."

But the cup of happiness which he offered Jane was destined to be dashed from her lips through the malevolence of King Richard, still determined to continue his persecution to the end. Although he was away in the country, by some means he heard of Lynom's intention, and at once caused the following letter to be dispatched to his Chancellor, the Bishop of Lincoln.

"By the King:—

"Right Reverend Father in God, etc. Signifying unto you that it is shewed unto us that our servant and solicitor, Thomas Lynom, Marvellously blinded and abused with the late wife of William Shore now being in Lud Gate by our commandment, hath made contract of matrimony with her, as it is said, and intendeth to our marvel to proceed to effect the same.

"We, for many causes, would be sorry that he should so be disposed, pray you, therefore to send for him, and in that ye godly may exhort and stir him to the contrary.



LETTER FROM KING RICHARD III TO HIS CHANCELLOR, THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN, WITH REFERENCE TO THOMAS LYNOM'S OFFER OF MARRIAGE TO JANE SHORE

From a manuscript in the British Museum (Harl 433).



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“ And if you find him utterly set for to marry her and none otherwise would be advertised, then, if it may stand with the law of the Church, we be content (the time of marriage being deferred to our coming next to London) that upon sufficient surety found of her good abearing, ye do send for her keeper and discharge him of our commandment by warrant of these, committing her to the rule and guiding of her father or any other by your discretion in the mean season.

“ Given etc, to the Right Reverend Father in God etc. the Bishop of Lincoln our Chancellor.”

There is no date to this letter, but we know that Doctor John Russell was Bishop of Lincoln from 1480 to 1495, and Jane was committed to Lud Gate about 1484. The document is especially interesting from several points of view. Richard was evidently incensed that Lynom, one of his servants, should have fallen in love, or, as he phrases it, become “ blinded ” with Jane, and he was determined to thwart him. It is natural that he should have been sorry “ for many causes ” to see such an alliance, and he determined it should not take place if he could prevent it. In any case it is apparent that he forbade any marriage to be entered into until his return to London.

The words “ late wife ” might be taken to mean that either William Shore was dead and Jane was a widow, or that he had divorced her. If she was a widow, there could have been nothing to prevent her marriage according to the laws of the Church; on the other hand if Shore was still alive and her marriage had not been absolved, she was in the position of a wife, living apart from her

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husband, who had committed adultery. Lynom, as a lawyer, must have known the position when he contracted to marry Jane, so we may surmise she was free.

From the latter part of the letter it is apparent that Thomas Wainstead, Jane's father, was alive at this time, although he had apparently done nothing to help her in her misfortunes. It is therefore probable that she had been cast off by her family. There seems little doubt that the Chancellor sent for Lynom and put "the fear of the Lord" into him for daring to love Jane, and succeeded in "stirring him to the contrary"; for either owing to fear of the king's displeasure and its consequences, or the Bishop's exhortation, he failed to carry out his contract of marriage. Nothing more is heard of it, and we know that Jane, to the time of her death, retained the name of Mistress Shore.

TWENTY-SIX

KING RICHARD'S actions were frequently influenced by superstition. From two interesting documents that have come to light one is led to wonder whether, in fear of retribution for some of his misdeeds or other reason, he was constrained to make some reparation afterwards to those whom he had wronged.

Certainly he never attempted to redress the wrongs he had done to Jane Shore, yet from a covenant dated July, 1483, there is evidence that he wished to make some reparation to the family of Lord Hastings, whom he had so foully murdered as recently as the thirteenth of the previous month.

In this document he obliges himself "to protect Lady Katherine Hastings and her children in all their possessions and other just rights. To suffer none to wrong them and to assist them on all occasions as their good and gracious Lord."

This covenant was executed at Reading under his hand on July 23rd, the first year of his reign.

The following is a transcription.

"To the Lady Hastings:—

"Richard etc. First we agree and grant to be good and gracious Sovereign Lord to the said Katheryn (Hastings) and to her children and servants and to protect and defend

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the same Katheryn as our well beloved cousin and widow and her children in their right, not suffering them to be wronged nor entreated contrary to our laws in their lands nor goods. And that the said William (Hastings) shall not hereafter be attainted but that his heir or heirs shall have and continually enjoy such name prominence, interest, rights, possessions and inheritances as be descended from the same William without let of us or of any other by our assent. And that we shall remit and pardon the same Katheryn and the executors, heirs and feoffes of the same William all offences and other things done by the said William to us or our progenitors and all forfeitures pains and demands that we may have against them or any of them by reason of the same William except accounts for Calais and Guysnes.

“Also that we agree that the said Katheryn and such persons which were seased or enfeoffed of any castles, manors, lands, tenements or other inheritences to those of the said William the day of his death have and enjoy same according to the will of the said William except the Manor of Lughburgh in the county of Leicester which to us and our dearest wife in her right belongeth.

“Also we grant that we shall aid and help the same Katheryn and her co-executors of the said William’s testament to have and attain the goods, cattles and debts to the same William the day of his death due or belonging as well at Calais or elsewhere in whose hands soever they be to perform therewith his will.

“Also we agree to make the said Katheryn or to her executors sufficient grants of the ward and keeping of all the manors, lands and possessions descended or grown

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or that hereafter shall grow or descend to Edward son and heir of the said William during his nonnage (minority) by the death of any person, to have and hold during the nonnage of the same Edward and so from heir to heir without anything therefore to us paying or yielding.

“In witness thereof to this present writing signed with our hand we have set our signet.

“Given at our Town of Reading the XXIII day of July the first year of our Reign.”¹

The other document, which is relative to Elizabeth, King Edward's queen, is not so difficult to reconcile with Richard's character. We know that he had long hated her, and since the king's death had done his best to rob her of any power. He had deprived her of her young sons, and had made her, with Jane Shore, the scapegoat for his malice. It is probable that he would have seized her and placed her in the Tower, had she not been forewarned and immediately taken refuge in the sanctuary at Westminster, where she knew he could not touch her.

She knew how he had treated Jane, with whom she had been jointly charged with practising witchcraft and sorcery, and wisely decided to remain in her safe retreat.

From the following document, however, it is evident that Richard wished to entice her from her place of refuge, for it will be noticed that he makes “oath and promise to Dame Elizabeth Gray, late calling herself Queen of England, touching her and her children, as to their protection, sustenance, marriage etc. if they would come to him out of the Sanctuary of Westminster.”

¹ Harleian MS. 433.

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The covenant reads :

“ Richard by the Grace of God, King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland in ye presence of you my lords spiritual and temporal and you Mayor and Alderman of my city of London, promise and swear verbo Regis and upon these holy evangelies of God by me personally touched, yet, if the daughters of Dame Elizabeth Gray late calling herself Queen of England that is to wit Elizabeth, Cecil, Anne, Katheryn and Bridget, will come unto me out of the Sanctuary of Westminster and be guided rules and demeaned after me, then I shall see that they shall be in surety of their lives and also not suffer any manner hurt by any person or persons to them or any of them or any of them in their bodies and persons to be done by any way of ravishment or defouling contrary their wills, nor them or any of them imprisoned within ye Tower of London or other prison, but (I will) put them in honest places of good name and fame and them honestly and courteously see that them to be founded and to have all things requisite and necessary for their exhibition and findings as my kinswoman. And if I shall do marry such of them as now be marriageable to gentlemen born and enrich them give in marriage lands and tenements to ye yearly value of C C marks for terms of their lives. And in likewise to the other daughters when they come to iawful age of marriage if they live, and such gentlemen as shall hap to marry them. I shall straightly charge from time to time lovingly to love and entreat them as their wives and my kinswomen as they will avoid and eschew my displeasure.

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“And over this I shall yearly from henceforth content and pay or cause to be contented or paid for the exhibition and finding of ye said Dame Elizabeth Gray during her natural life at IIII terms of the year to John Nesfelde one of the squires for my body for his finding to attend upon her, ye sum of DCC marks of lawful money of England by even portions. And moreover I promise to them if any surmise or evil report be made to me of them by any person or persons, that then I shall not give thereunto faith nor credence nor therefore put them to any manner of punishment before that they or any of them so accused may be at their lawful defence and answer.

“In witness whereof to this writing of my oath and promise aforesaid in your said presences made, I have set my sign manual the first of March, the first year of my reign.”¹

¹ Harleian MS. 433.

TWENTY-SEVEN

HISTORY has drawn a veil over the sufferings and privations which Jane Shore must have undergone during the latter part of her life. King Richard never relaxed his enmity towards her, or attempted to make any restitution. He was content that his revengeful tyranny had brought her to want, and he left her to languish in prison.

His treatment of her was beneath the majesty of a monarch, for it was the meanest revenge. He had nursed his hatred for years, and it is difficult to account for his continued persecution of a defenceless woman, unless it be that at some former time she had spurned his advances and wounded his pride. It has been said that hell holds no fury like a thwarted passion, and with a man of his vindictive character this was the most probable cause of his implacable hatred towards her.

Within two years, he had not only stripped her of her wealth and property, but degraded her in the eyes of the whole city of London. Even those who had stooped to ask favours from her in former years apparently made no effort to repay her by any kindness or liberality, afraid, or possibly ashamed, to own their obligations to a fallen royal mistress. Thus, deserted by ungrateful friends and neglected by all her old acquaintances, who had once

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thought it an honour to wait upon her and esteemed her smiles a blessing, Jane was left abandoned and desolate.

Edward's queen, Elizabeth, who had doubtless a natural dislike to her, had no power, for she was impoverished and was herself in jeopardy while Richard lived.

When Henry VII came to the throne after Richard's death, he might have restored the property of which Jane had been robbed, but he was avaricious and grasping, while his queen had little influence and was indifferent. It was indeed unlikely that the mistress of a Yorkist king could be a person of political importance to a Tudor monarch.

Lord Orford, in commenting on Jane's misfortunes, says: "Did either of the succeeding kings, Henry VII or Henry VIII ever redress her wrongs? Certainly not, yet I think they are exculpated from blame. They did not receive what Richard III had unjustly taken from her, unless you will say the former obtained the tyrant's treasure, but I believe this was of no great importance. Jane had sown her good deeds, her good offices, her alms, her charities, in a Court; not one took root, nor did the ungrateful soil repay her a grain of relief in her penury and comfortless old age."

As time went on, Jane must have outlived all those who would have been likely to befriend her, and except for the miserable lodging in Lud Gate, where it is supposed she was still living in the time of Henry VII, she was destitute. Only the pitiful alms collected by her fellow-prisoners, of which she may have received a share, saved her from starvation.

A tradition is related in one of the little tracts of the

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seventeenth century, which profess to tell her career, that one day Jane was passing the shop of a certain baker whom she had once befriended and whose life she had saved, after he had been condemned to death for being concerned in a city riot. Seeing her pass looking worn and hungry, he took a penny loaf and trundled it up the street after her. She seized it thankfully and blessed him with tears in her eyes. The neighbours, however, informed against him, and he was arrested and suffered death.

Although the story may be fictitious, it is not improbable, for it is said that she walked the streets until she became exhausted and at length sank on a doorstep and became insensible to her misery. Once a beautiful, lovely girl, now a pale, sallow, haggard woman, whom age and wretchedness had come to mark for their own, Jane, who had been brought up in comfort and affluence, and who had lived amidst the luxury of a splendid court, was indeed ill able to contend with such hardships. Thrown from a palace to a prison, she was reduced to the lowest state of reproach. It was well she did not know her destiny. Age and privation wrought such a change in the once enchanting Jane that those who knew her only in the evening of her days could hardly conceive that she had ever been lovely.

We owe to Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England in the time of Henry VIII, and historian of Richard III, who actually saw Jane Shore about 1527, a poignant picture of her at that time.

"Some that now see her (for yet she lives)," he writes, "would not believe that she had ever been beautiful.

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Whose judgement to me like as though men should guess the beauty of one long departed by her skull taken out of the tomb, for now is she old, lean, withered and dried up, nothing left but wrinkled skin and hard bone.

“And yet being even so, those who look on her face may imagine and divine those parts when filled would make it a fair face. I doubt not,” he says, as if in apology for the great interest he took in her story, “that someone will think that this woman is too slight a thing to be written about and set among the remembrance of great matters, which they shall specially think that happily shall esteem her only by what they now see. But it seemeth to me, she is so much more worthy to be remembered when we consider the condition she now is, beggared, unfriended and worn out of acquaintance, after having lived in affluence and in great favour with the Prince, after as great state and seeking to with all those that those days had business to speed, as many other men were in their times, which be now famous only by the infamy of their ill-deeds. Her doings were not much less, albeit they be much less remembered because they were not so evil.

“For men use, if they have an evil turn, to write in marble and who so doth as a good turn we write it in dust, which is not worst proved by her, for at this day she beggeth of many at this day living that at this day had begged if she had not been.”

Thus the wise old chancellor describes Jane when he saw her living by seeking alms from those who, but for her, might have been in the same plight.

Jane's wrongs greatly outweighed her offences, and she must be regarded as an object of compassion rather than

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one of reproach. True, she had wronged her husband, but we know she had never loved him, and had been hurried into marriage by her father when she was little more than a child. Few had so many palliative virtues, few underwent so many and such bitter reverses of fortune, and far fewer have borne them with so much fortitude and humility.

What was the secret of this remarkable woman's charm, in whose character so much to admire was found? The fascination she exercised over men of noble birth and high position was due to something more than her physical beauty, and she must have possessed other qualities besides her wit and humour to have enthralled such men as King Edward and Lord Hastings. Even in later years, during her troubles, she so enchanted a learned man of the law that he sought her hand in marriage. Jane surely possessed that natural charm which inspires love in others, and which, combined with a generous and warm-hearted disposition, often compels admiration.

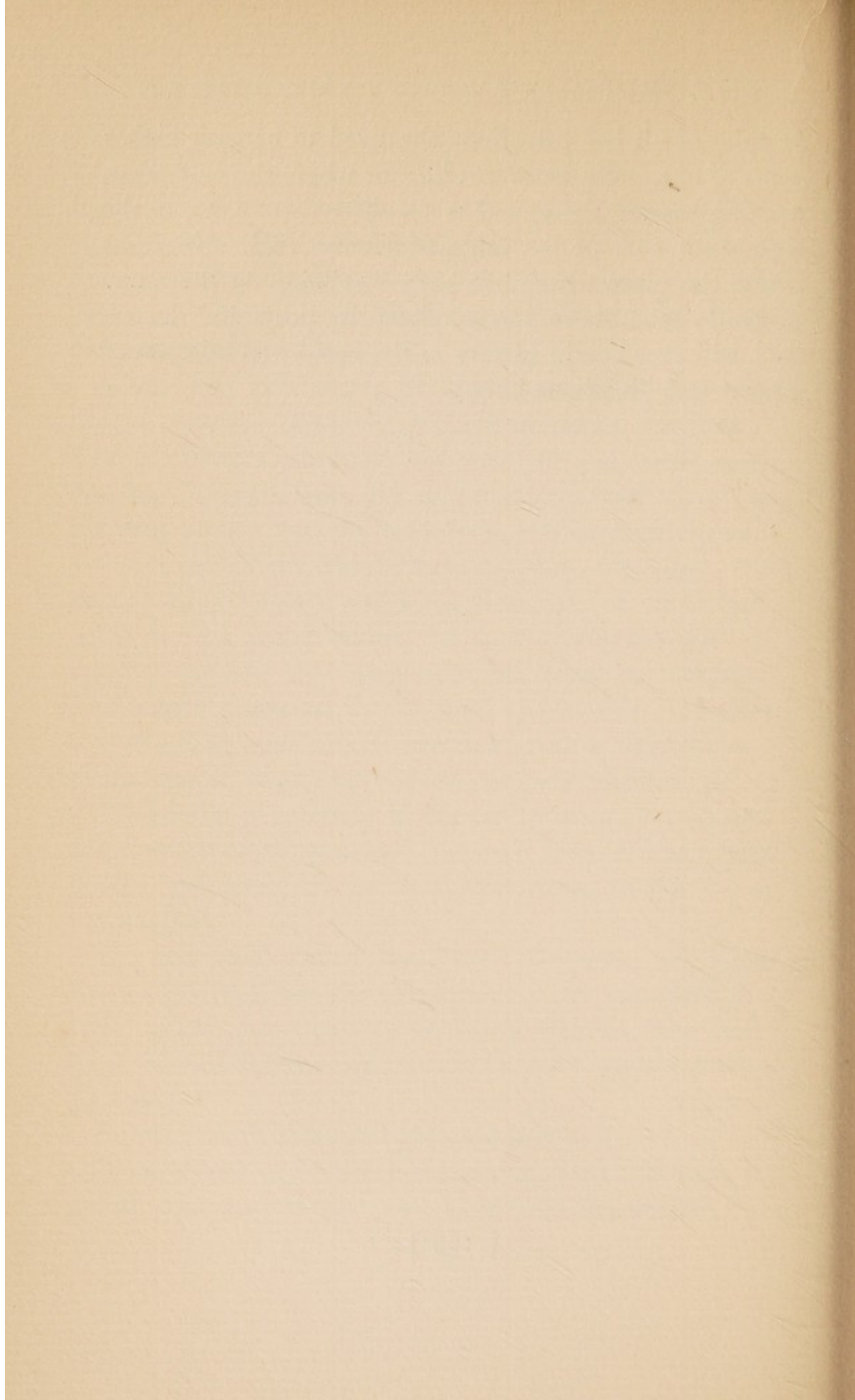
Those who were ready to detract from her merits and traduce her, were disarmed by their own weapons and malice, and could do no more than point to her moral indiscretion.

She has been called the "Nell Gwynne" of King Edward's Court, but the comparison is not complete, for Jane, unlike the favourite of King Charles, was both accomplished and intelligent, while avarice was not among her faults.

Youth, cheerfulness and gladness lost, and nothing but sadness, sorrow and misery remaining, Jane had little to live for; yet her vitality must have been remarkable, for

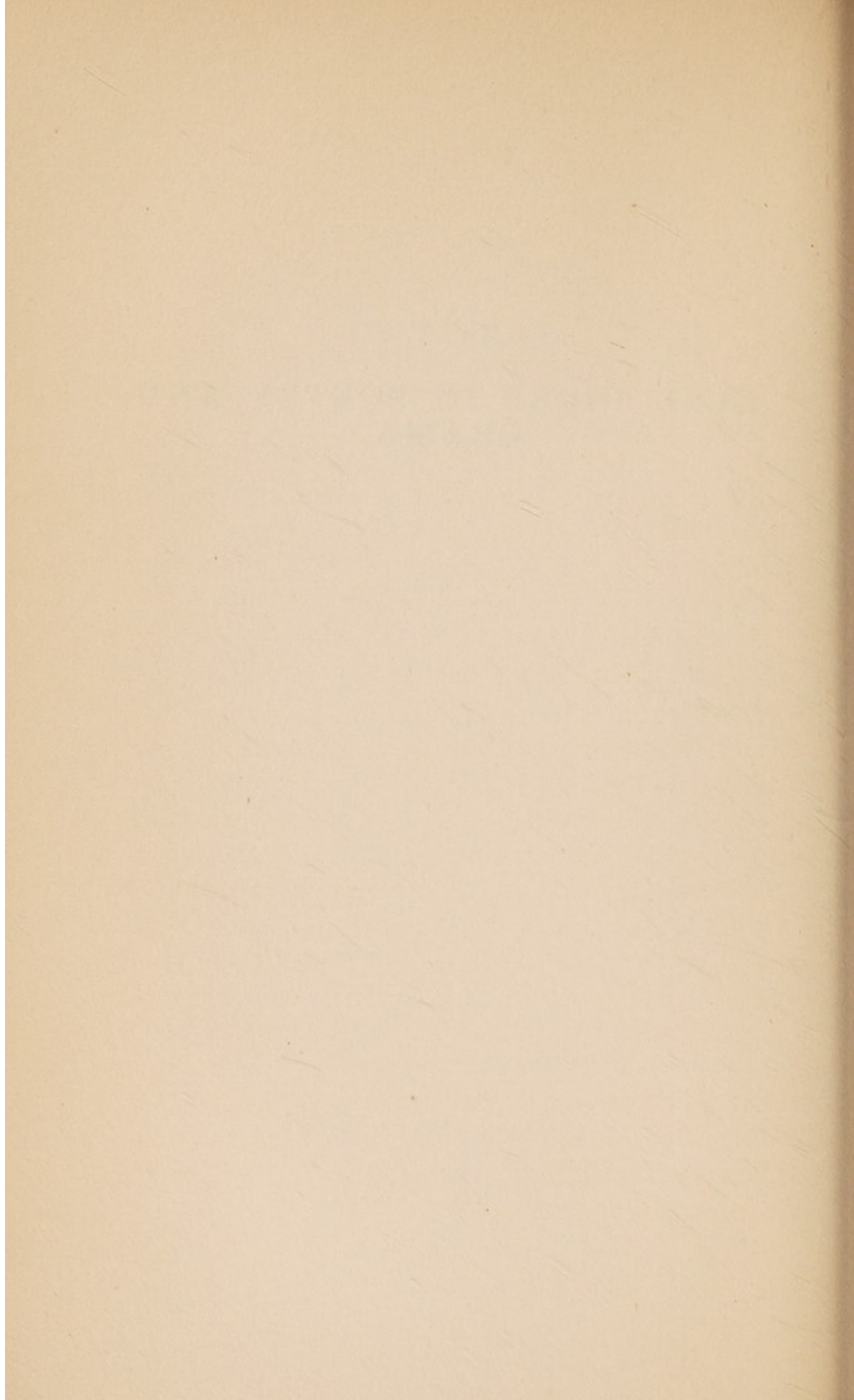
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in spite of all her privations she lived to be over eighty years of age. We know not how or where the end came, nothing beyond the fact that she died about 1532, in the eighteenth year of the reign of Henry VIII. No stone marks the place where her body was laid, yet the name of gentle Jane Shore, immortalized by poets and dramatists, will ever live in history as the best-loved mistress of a great and illustrious king.



PART TWO

JANE SHORE IN POETRY AND
DRAMA



ONE

FROM a period of some thirty years after her death—in the time of Henry VIII until the nineteenth century, the romantic career of Jane Shore has inspired poets and dramatists. Her tragic story was woven into poetry, sung in popular ballads and enacted on the stage. Michael Drayton embodied her romance in his "Heroicall Epistles," and Nicholas Rowe dramatized her story, which was played by the greatest actors of his time.

The majority of the poems are little known, and while some soar to lofty heights, others sink to the level of mere doggerel. Most of those printed in the sixteenth century are now bibliographical rarities and almost unobtainable, therefore it may be well to reproduce some extracts from those least known, which although mostly fictional, are interesting in connection with the story of her life.

The first that seems worthy of notice is a poem by Thomas Churchyard, which is included in John Higgin's collection, entitled, "Many foreign Stories, chiefly Romaine and Italike, from Bocas, translated by Dan Lidgate; to those are added a brief Memoriall of Sundry unfortunate Englishmen and also one at least English-woman, with a preface to these by William Baldwine. Imprinted at London by Henry Marsh, being the assigne of Thomas Marsh, near to Saint Dunstane's Church in Fleete streete, 1587."

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William Baldwine, M.A., a clergyman and school-master, was the author of "The Myrrour for Magistrates," with which the story of "Shore's Wife" was first published in 1563. He died in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Thomas Churchyard, the author of the poem, was born at Shrewsbury about 1520, some twelve years before Jane's death. He began his literary career in the time of Edward VI, his poem being written about 1562. He died in 1604 and was buried in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster.

William Baldwine in his preface, following the quaint custom of the period, makes Jane's ghost his mouthpiece, and thus begins:

"The open brute of Princes fallies and such as have sway in this Realme, made once poore haplesse woman (though once in great place) persume to show myselfe among that unfortunate flock.

"And making more haste than good speede I appeared first to one Baldwine, a minister and a preacher, whose function and calling disdaynes to looke so lone as to search the secrets of wanton women (though commonly a Preacher with sufferance may rebuke vice.) Wherefore I have better bethought me and so do soddenly appeste and appeare to some marshall men who hath more experience both in defending women's honour and knowes more of theyr conditions and qualities and the other, because my tragedy was in question among some that would not spare due commendation to the author thereof. I now appear to hym that first set me forth, a writer of good continuance and one that daily is exercised to set out both

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

matter tragicall and other prophane histories and verses, whose name is Churchyard. He shall not only have the fame of his own work (which no man can deny), but shall likewise have all the glory I can give him if he lend me the hearing of my woeful tale; a matter scarce fit for woman's shamefastness to betray.

"But since without blushing I have been so long a talkative wench (whose words a world hath delighted in) I shall now go on boldly with my audacious manner and so step I and on the stage in my shrouding sheete as I was buried."

The poem bears the title :

"How Shore's wife, King Edward the Fourth's concubine, was by King Richard despoyled of all her goods and forced to doe open penance."

*Among the rest by Fortune over throwne
I am not least, that most may wayle her fate;
My fame and brute, abroad the world is blowne,
Who can forget a thing thus done so late.
My great mischance, my fall and heavy state,
Is such a marke, whereat each tongue doth shoot,
That my good name is pluckt up by the roote.*

*This wandereing world bewitched me with wyles,
And won my wits, with wanton sugared joyes,
In Fortune's frekes, who trustes her when she smiles,
Shall find her false and full of fickle toyes,
Her triumphs all but fill our eares with noyse,
Her flattering gifts are pleasures mixt with payne,
Yea, all her wordes are thunders threatening rayne.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*The fond desire that we in glory set,
Doth thirte our hearts to hope in slipper hap,
A blaste of pompe is all the fruit we get
And under that lies coil'd a sudden clap,
In seeking rest, unawares we fall in trap,
In groping flowers, with nettles stung we are,
In labring long we reap the crop of care.*

*Oh dark deceit, with painted face for show,
Oh poisoned bait that make us eager still,
Oh fayned friend deceiving people so,
Oh world of thee we cannot speak too ill,
Yet fools we are that bend so to thy skill.
The plague and scourge that thousands daily feel
Should warn the wise to shun thy whirling wheel.*

*But who can stop the stream that runs full swift?
Or quench the fire that is crept in straw?
The thirsty drinks there is no other shift
Perforce in such, that need obeys no law,
Thus bound we are in worldly yokes to draw,
Nor cannot stay, nor turn again in time,
Nor learn of those that sought too high to climb.*

*My self for proof, lo here I now appear,
In woman's weed with weeping water'd eyes,
That bought her youth and her delights full dear,
Whose loud reproach doth sound unto the skies,
And bids my corse out of the grave to rise,
As one that may no longer hide her face,
But needs must come and shew her piteous case.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*The sheet of shame wherein I shrouded was,
Did more me oft to playne before this day,
And in mine ears did ring the trumpe of brass,
Which is defame that doth each thing betray;
Yea though full dead and low in earth I lay,
I heard the voice of me what people said,
But then to speak alas I was afraid.*

*And now a time for me I see prepared,
I hear the lines and falls of many wights,
My tale therefore the better may be heard,
For at the torch the little candle lights,
Where pageants be small things fill out the sight,
Wherefore give ear, good Churchyard do thy best,
My tragedy to place among the rest.*

*Because the truth shall witness well with thee,
I will rehearse in order as it fell,
My life, my death, my doleful destiny,
My wealth, my woe, my doing every deal,
My bitter bliss wherein I long did dwell;
A whole discourse by me, Shore's wife by name,
Now shalt thou hear as thou hadst seen the same.*

*Of noble blood I cannot boast my birth,
For I was made out of the meanest mould,
Mine heritage but seven foot of th' earth,
Fortune ne'r gave to me the gifts of gold,
But I could brag of nature if I would,
Who filled my face with favour fresh and fair,
Whose beauty shone like Phœbus in the air.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*My shape some said was seemly to each sight,
My countenance did show a sober grace,
Mine eyes in looks were never proved light,
My tongue in words was chaste in every case,
Mine ears were deaf and would no lover's place,
Save that alas a Prince did blot my brow,
Lo there the strong did make the weak to bow.*

*The majesty that Kings to people bear,
The stately port, the awful cheer they show,
Doth make the mean to shrink and couch for fear,
Like as the hound that doth his master know,
What then? Since I was made unto the bowe,
There is no cloak can serve to hide my fault
For I agreed the fort he should assault.*

*The eagle's force subdues each bird that flies,
What metal may resist the flaming fire?
Doth not the sun dazzle the clearest eyes,
And melt the ice and make the frost retire?
Who can withstand a puissaunt king's desire?
The stiffeast stones are pierced through with tools,
The wisest are with Princes made but fools.*

*If kind had wrought my form in common frame,
And set me forth in colours black and brown,
Or beauty had been perched in Phœbus' flames,
Or shamefast ways had pluckt my feathers down,
Then I had kept my fame and good renown;
For Nature's gifts were curse of all my grief,
A pleasant prey enticeth many a thief.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Thus woe to thee that wrought my peacock's pride
By clothing me with Nature's tapestry.*

*Woe worth the hue wherein my face was dyed,
Which made me think and pleased every eye,
Like as the stars make men behold the sky,
So beauty's show doth make the wise full fond,
And brings free hearts full oft to endless bond.*

*But clear from blame my friends cannot be found,
Before my time my youth they did abuse;
For marriage apprentice was I bound;
The that mere love I knew not how to use,
But welaway that cannot me excuse,
The harm is mine though they devised my care,
And I must smart and sit in slanderous snare.*

*Yet give me leave to plead my cause at large,
If that the horse do run beyond his race,
Or anything that keepers have in charge,
Do break their course where rulers may take place,
Or meat be set before the hungry's face.
Who is in fault? th' offender, yea or no,
Or they that are the cause of all this woe.*

*Note well what strife this forced marriage makes,
What loathed lives or come where love doth lack,
What scratching briars do grow upon each bank,
What common weales by it are brought to wrack,
What heavy load is put on patient backs,
What strange delights this branch of vice doth breed,
And marks what grain springs out of such a seed.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Compel the hawk to sit his wont unmande,
Or make the hound untaught to draw the deer,
Or bring the free against his will in bond
Or move the sad a pleasant tale to hear,
Your time is lost and you no wit the nere;
So love ne learns of force the knot to knit,
She serves but those that feel sweet fancies fit.*

*The least defame redounds to my dispraise,
I was entiched by traynes and trapt by trust;
Though in my power remained yeas and nays
Unto my friends yet needs consent I must,
In everything yea lawful or unjust,
They brake the bowes and shaken the tree sleyst
And bent the wand that might have grown full straight.*

*What help in this the pale thus broke down,
The deer must need in danger run astray,
At me therefore why should the world so frown,
My weakness made my youth a Prince's prey,
Though wisdom should the course of nature stay,
Yet try my case who list and they shall prove,
The ripest wits are soonest thralles in love.*

*What need I more to clear myself so much;
A King me wan and had me at his call,
His royal state, his princely grace was such,
The hope of will that women seek for all,
The ease and wealth, the gifts that were not small,
Besieged me so strongly round about,
My power was weak, I could not hold him out.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Duke Hannibal in all his conquests great,
Of Cæsar yet whose triumphs did exceed,
Of all their spoils which made them toil and sweat
Were not so glad to have so rich a meed,
As was this Prince when I to him agreed,
And yielded me a prisoner willingly,
As one that knew no way away to fly.*

*The nightingale for all his merry voice,
Nor yet the lark that still delights to sing,
Did never make the hearers so rejoice,
As I with words have made this worthy King,
I never jarred, in tune was every string,
I tempered so my tongue to please his ear,
That what I said was current everywhere.*

*I joynd my talk, my gestures and my grace
In witty frames that long might last and stand,
So that I brought the King in such a case,
That to his death I was his chiefest hand.
I governed him that ruled all this land,
I bare the sword though he did wear the Crown,
I strake the stroke that threw the mighty down.*

*If justice said that judgment was but death,
With my sweet words I could the King persuade
And make him pause and take therein a breath,
Till I with suit, the suitor's peace had made,
I knew what way to use him in his trade,
I had the art to make the lion meek,
There was no point wherein I was to seek.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*If I did frown, who then did look awry?
If I did smile, who would not laugh outright?
If I but spake, who durst my words deny?
If I persuade, who would forsake the flight?
I mean my power was known to every wight.
On such a height good hap had built my bower
As though my sweet should nere have turned to sour.*

*My husband, then, as one that knew his good,
Refused to keep a Prince's concubine,
For seeing th' end and mischief as it stood,
Against the King did never much repine,
He saw the grape, whereof he drank the wine,
Though inward thought his heart did still torment,
Yet outwardly, he seemed he was content.*

*To purchase praise and win the people's zeal,
Yea rather bent of kind to do some good,
I ever did uphold the common weale,
I had delight to save the guiltless blood;
Each suitor's cause when that I understood,
I did prefer as it had been mine own,
And help them up that might have been orethrone.*

*My power was prest to right the poor man's wrong,
My hands were free to give where need required;
To watch for grace I never thought it long,
To do men good, I need not be desired,
Nor yet with gifts my heart was never hired.
But when the ball was at my foot to guide,
I played to those that Fortune did abide.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*My want was wealth, my woe was ease at will,
My robes were rich, and braver than the sun;
My Fortune then was far above my skill,
My state was great, my glass did overrun,
My fatal thread so happily was spun,
That when I sat in earthly pleasures clad,
And for a time a Goddess place I had.*

*But I had not so soon this life possess
But my good hap began to slip aside;
And Fortune then did me so sore molest,
That unto plaints was turned all my pride,
It booted not to row against the tide.
Mine oars were weak, my heart and strength did fail,
The wind was rough, I durst not bear a sail.*

*What steps of strife belong to high estate?
The climbing up is doubtful to endure,
The seat itself doth purchase privy hate,
And honours Fame is fickle and unsure,
And all she brings is flowers that be unpure,
Which fall as fast as they do sprout and spring
And cannot last they are so vain a thing.*

*We count no care to catch that we do wish,
But what we win is long to us unknown;
Till present pain be served in our dish,
We scarce perceive whereon our grief hath grown,
What grain proves well that so rashly sown?
If that a mean did measure all our deeds,
Instead of corn we should not gather weeds.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*The settled mind is free from Fortune's power,
They need not fear who look not up aloft,
But they that climb are careful every hour,
For where they fall they light not very soft,
Examples hath the wisest warned oft,
That where the trees the smallest branches bear,
The storms do blow and have most rigour there.*

*Where is it strong but near the ground and root?
Where is it weak but on the highest sprays?
Where may a man so surely set his foot,
But on those bows that groweth low always
The little twigs are but unsteadfast stays,
If they break not they bend with every blast,
Who trusts to them shall never stand full fast.*

*The wind is great upon the highest hills,
The quiet life is in the dale below,
Who treads on ice shall slide against their wills,
They want not cares that curious arts would know,
Who lives at ease and can content him so,
In perfect wise and sets us all to school,
Who hates this lore may well be called a fool.*

*What greater grief may come to any life,
Then after sweet to taste the bitter sour?
Or after peace to fall at war and strife,
Or after myrrh to have a cause to lower?
Under such props false Fortune builds her bower,
In sudden change her flittering frames be set,
Where is no way for to escape the net.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*The hasty smart that Fortune sends in spite,
Is hard to brook when gladness we embrace,
She threatens not but suddenly doth smite,
Where joy is most there doth she sorrow place,
But sure I think, this is too strange a case,
For us to feel such grief amid our game,
And know not why until we taste the same.*

*As erst I said my bliss was turned to bale
I had good cause to weep and wring my hands,
And show sad cheer with countenance full pale,
For I was brought in sorrows woful bands,
A pirry came and set my ship on sands,
What should I hide or colour care and 'noy?
King Edward died in whom was all my joy.*

*And when the earth received had his corse,
And that in tomb this worthy Prince was laid,
The world on me began to show his force,
Of troubles then, my part I long assayed,
For they of whom I never was afraid.
Undid me most and wrought me such despite,
That they bereft me from my pleasure quite,*

*As long as life remained in Edward's breast,
Who was but I? Who had such friends at call?
His body was no sooner put in chest,
But well was he that could procure my fall;
His brother was mine enemy most of all,
Protector then, whose vice did still abound,
From ill to worse till death did him confound.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*He falsely fained that I of counsel was
To poison him, which thing I never meant,
But he could set thereon a face of brass,
To bring to pass his lewd and false intent,
To such mischief this tyrant's heart was bent
To God nor man he never stood in awe,
For in his wrath he made his will a law.*

*Lord Hastings blood for vengeance on him cries,
And many more that were too long to name;
But most of all and in most woeful wise,
I had good cause this wretched man to blame,
Before the world I suffered open shame,
Where people were as thick as is the sand,
A penance took with taper in my hand.*

*Each eye did stare and look me in the face,
As I past by the rumours on me ran,
But patience then had lent me such a grace,
My quiet looks were praised of every man,
The shamefast blood brought me such contour than,
That thousands said which saw my solire chere,
It is great ruth to see this woman here.*

*But what prevailed the people's pity there,
This raging wolf would spare no guiltless blood.
Oh wicked womb that such illfruit did bear,
Oh cursed earth that yieldeth forth such mud,
The hell consume all things that did thee good.
The heavens shut their gates against thy spreet,
The world tread down thy glory under feet.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*I ask of God a vengeance on thy bones,
Thy stinking corps no earthly wight bemoans,
For in thy life thy works were hated so,
That every man did wish thy overthrow;
Wherefore I may though partial now I am,
Curse every cause whereof thy body came.*

*Woe worth the man that fathered such a child,
Woe worth the hour wherein thou wast begat
Woe worth the breasts that have the word beguile,
To nourish thee that all the world did hate,
Woe worth the gods that gave thee such a fate,
To live so long that death deserve so oft,
Woe worth the chance that set thee up aloft.*

*Ye Princes all and rulers every one
In punishment beware of hatred's ire,
Restore your scourge, take heed, look well thereon,
In wraths ill will if malice kindle fire,
Your hearts will burn in such a hot desire,
That in those flames the smoke shall dim your sight,
Ye shall forget to join your justice right.*

*You should not judge till things be well discerned,
Your charge is still to maintain upright laws,
In conscience rules ye should be thoroughly learned,
Where clemency bids wrath and rashness pause,
And further saith strike not without a cause,
And when ye smite, do it for justice sake,
Then in good part each man your scourge will take.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*If that such zeal had moved this tyrant's mind,
To make my plague a warrant for the rest,
I had small cause such fault in him to find,
Such punishment is used for the best,
But by illwill and power I was opprest.
He spoiled my goods and left me bare and poor,
And caused me to beg from door to door.*

*What fall was this to come from Prince's fare,
To watch for crumbs among the blind and lame,
When alms were dealt I had an hungry share
Because I knew not how to ask for shame,
Till force and need had brought me in such fame,
That starve I must or learn to beg an alms
Which book in hand to say St. David's Psalms.*

*Where I was wont the golden chains to wear,
A pair of beads about my neck was wound,
A linen cloth was lapt about my hair,
A ragged gown that trailed me to the ground,
A dish that clapt and gave a heavy sound,
A staying staff and wallet therewithal,
I bare about as witness of my fall.*

*I had no house wherein to hide my head,
The open street my lodging was perforce,
Full oft I went all hungry to my bed,
My flesh consumed, I looked like a corse;
Yet in that plight who had on me remorse,
O God thou knowest my friends forsook me then.
Not one helped me that succured many a man.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*They frowned on me that fawned on me before,
And fled from me that followed me full fast,
They hated me by whom I set much store,
They knew full well my Fortune did not last,
In every place I was condemned and cast,
To plead my cause at bar it was no boot,
For every man did tread me underfoot.*

*Thus long I lived all weary of my life,
Till death approached and rid me from that woe,
Example take, by me both maid and wife,
Beware, take heed, fall not to folly so,
A mirrour make by grace to overthrow,
Defy the world and all his wanton ways,
Beware by me that spent so ill her days."*



JANE SHORE

*(from a woodcut illustrating a
ballad of the XVII Century.)*

TWO

CONTEMPORARY with Thomas Churchyard was Anthony Chute, who in 1593 published a poem entitled "Beawtie Dishonoured," which he describes as "the first invention of my beginning muse." The date of his birth is unknown, but he is said to have died in 1593, the year in which his poem was printed by John Wolfe. It is dedicated to the "Right Worshipfull Sir Edward Winckfield, knight," and consists of one hundred and ninety-seven six-line stanzas, in which is told, "through the mouth of her wronged ghost," the romantic story of Jane Shore. There is little doubt that it was inspired by Churchyard's poem, for on its publication he charged Chute with plagiarism, and in self-defence reprinted his "Shore's Wife" in "Challenge" in 1593.

This reprint is dedicated to Lady Mount Eagle and Compton, and in the preface Churchyard complains that "some malicious person had spread the report that he had not written the poem," and declares that if he had been a younger man, he would have "challenged his detractors to open combat."

Anthony Chute's poem is as follows:

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

BEAWTIE DISHONoured OR SHORE'S WIFE

*Sigh, sad mused accents of my funeral verse,
In lamentable groans (wrought from true piety)
Sing you the wept song on her wronged hearse,
In grateful obsequie to her mortal deity,
Sigh; O Sing actually the beauty pained
With beauty's wonder honourable stained.*

*Bleed pen in black tears, dumb yet pity moving
The weeping elegies to the worthiest fair,
Weep pen in warm blood to the world approving,
How fair, how good, how dear, old age did way her,
Bleed tears. Weep blood pen, sing, sigh on her hearse,
Her grateful obsequies in a funeral verse.*

*Careless, so sleep our Loethe drinking eyes,
In present beauties deemed divinely rare,
Neglecting the ancient wonder time did prize
For such a trophy as had no compare,
That now she seems as if she had been never,
Whom even eternity said should live for ever.*

*The high mused period of the story reader,
(Wondering or war or matter causing terror)
Omits her fortune, to her fates arreader,
(Precisely censuring beauty by her error)
So she that even the fairest she surmounted
Now of the fairest is the foulest counted.*

*So variable divers in her willing
When vulgar rumour feeds on base suspect,
Impeaching jealousy the best worth yeling
Augmenst the matter of the least defect,
And bad suggestions secretly invected
Give wild dishonour to the thing suspected.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*For whilst not privileged from monster fame,
The beauty (of the not so fair invied)
Lies subject to dishonourable name,
With hate and emulous surmises eyed,
We find it daily true amongst the best,
He's most invied most exceeds the rest.*

*Hence haps her fortune to be held so much,
Whom fourth King Edward excellently prized
And hence it haps, because there was none such,
SHORE'S WIFE, most fair, the most foul is surmised,
And hence it haps, that dead to all disdain her,
Her wronged ghost surveyeth to complain her.*

*Who whilst she lived the subject of impiety,
Ground of a thousand voices disagreeing,
The matter of unhallowed fames variety
(Which from her good hap had unworthy being)
Eve on her dying bed divinely sorry,
Pensive in heart she weeps forth her story.*

*But when back flying from her paled cheek,
Bashful Aurora did recall her red,
And white-locked Hyems on her face did seek,
His ivory mantle doubting she were dead,
When red fled white, white red, and both had left her,
And wan appearance of her fair had rest her.*

*When sinking down weakness dissolved her eyes,
From vital spirits actually moving,
To waterish heaviness dimmed in drooping wise,
In slow neglecting looks their end approving
And with their often opening toward heaven,
Seemed of their virtue and their power bereaven.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*When through her oft and soft expiring breath,
(That still re-entering mov'd her panting breath)
She seemed with every sigh to draw in death,
That willing gasps held her eternal rest,
The when her head heavy did lean awry,
Seeming even she could not do but die.*

*First tears, divining speech, denouncing passion,
That meet in greatness of their several motions,
Fall from her eyes in that unwilling fashion,
Argued her heart's grief and her griefs commotions,
Tears, the heart's dumb pleas (word with grief
restrained)*

Like loath departing pearls her eyes down rained.

*Then through transparence of the white was left her,
Freshly peers secret glory of her blood,
When even that death of life that would have rest her,
With fear and reverence amazed stood.
Doubting, though at the last gasp she did lie,
A beauty so divine could never die.*

*When tears the mother issue of griefs restraint
(Bound in the greatness of their own condition)
Passive in action had performed complaint,
In seen not heard plea of hearts contrition,
When eyes were dim, when panting she lay wan,
Tears having played their part her tongue began.*

*Ah whence shall I, quoth she (she wept again
Opening her eyes, opening her hands to heaven)
Produce the story of my lives remain,
My life of hap; I of my life bereaven,
Or why should I unto the world complain me,
If all the world for my mishap disdain me.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Then where from silver Isis lying,
Silent in swans and quiet in her brooks
Forsaken Thames, into herself back flying,
With muddy countenance and unwilling looks,
As discontent doth make her sad resort
As far as now decaying Cæsar's fort.*

*There records witness of mine education,
And vulgar parents of a mean degree
To whom my dying day hath just relation,
Yet was this mean a happy mean to me,
That living fairest far above the best,
Hapless in life, in death I might be blest.*

*But madding thoughts, ambitious of promotions,
Nurst in suspect of ages alteration,
As swollen with fury of the minds commotions
Deems all things doubtful, breeds not contention
And this did discontent their minds did guide me,
That being young, there were too many eyed me.*

*For look how matter admirably rare,
Draws musing thoughts to studying contemplation;
And time not able to produce compare,
Confirms the wonder with more admiration,
So such was my beauty's quaint compare,
Wonder itself did make me more than rare.*

*Yet humble, honourable, chaste and divine,
True looking, pure and bashfully reflecting,
Were all the honours of my maiden eye,
In perfect act true modesty affecting;
And this decorum I did ever seek,
To grace my beauty with a blushing cheek.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Mine eye ne'er look no wanton wink affected,
(The false fair notes of syren incantations,)
No rash gaze of immodesty detected,
My chaste mind bent to wandering alterations,
And yet, nor coy, nor proud my looks were weighed,
But purely such as might befit a maid.*

*Strange gestures used not I, nor quaint behaving,
Such as the seeming loath-to-look do practise,
With faint denial absolutely craving
(The outward fault wherein dishonest lack lies)
To these I left the light behaviour leaning
As modern subtleties of immodest meaning.*

*But in my looks civility and cheer,
Bashful and decent did impart a pureness,
And where my beauty brightest did appear,
A low regard argued a perfect sureness;
That even the graces seem'd to say with me,
If I were not, themselves could never be.*

*Angel aspects of gazing window wonders,
Angling at eyes with beauty in the air,
Beauties that nature from appearance sunders
With stolen shame of imaginary fair,
These like to monsters ever I esteemed,
Worship their own selves for a beauty deemed.*

*I looked; and in my decency precise,
(Yet women look, one, to envy another)
I found that even the ancient wholly wise,
Their young conceits yet in their age did smother,
And even the crooked old should now despair
At least do hold themselves pure aged fair.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*And infant younglings sucking from their mother,
Self-like-dregs of unwomanly surmises,
Add boldness to the malice envious other,
For even the young begins as beauty rises,
And this peculiar to their sex did see,
Both old and young and all would fairest be.*

*Which when myself in more judicial measure,
(Grown to conceit upon mine own perfection)
Saw held of men ye earths eternal treasure,
And of the most n'er worse than sweet subjection
Disposed to virtue, chastity did will me,
Leave self conceit for self conceit did ill me.*

*When entertaining to my beauty's honour,
The true instructions chastity did teach me,
Noting what hap, what heaven did wait upon her,
Whilst no dishonouring blemish did impeach me,
By nature and desire to this disposed
Soon had my will my thoughts thereto imposed.*

*I saw myself was absolutely fair,
Yet altered not that virtue to a sin,
I knew a small fault quickly would impair,
The purest beauty that should fall therein,
I saw the sin and saw that most had done it,
And yet I had the grace to know and shun it.*

*My thoughts that then were bashful, pure and true,
Clean from impiety, from ill, from stain,
Of nature wise had reason to eschew,
The thing my nature did so much disdain,
I saw both beauty and the good that blest it,
Yet by seducting error I have missed it.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*For lo, those eyes, whom jealousy had framed,
To false suggestions of mine unstain'd youth,
What they misdeemed, divinely they blam'd
Fearing suspect might after turn to truth
When seeing myself (clean in thought and deed)
Unworthy blam'd my heart began to bleed.*

*Then waxed I wanton as I grew to see,
Doting suspect dishonour me so much,
Myself, yet chaste and pure, defam'd to be,
And to be deemed false though I were not such,
And this was even the first cause that I wrought fail
That though I were yet true, yet I was thought false.*

*Such hap they have, have such attending eyes,
Needlessly careful of the non-transgressing
But careful parents do the worst surmise
In doubted error secretly redressing;
Yet oft we see, so careful some do prove,
They kill their car'd for with their too much love.*

*Which proof confirm'd in me was lov'd too much,
Whose beauty then when in her April grace,
It stood unequal'd fellowed with none such,
As might the excellancy of my fair abase,
Lo then began my beauty first to weane
When first my beauty 'gan to be extreme.*

*My father's house obscure and I not known,
But cloister'd up to secrecy and sadness,
My friends misdoubting that as I was grown
Tempting desire might win my will to badness
Wise—indiscreet, perforce they me constrained,
To wed myself to one that I disdained.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*The holy rites of matrimony vowed,
I sold my beauty and myself unwilling,
To him, to whom I and my beauty bowed,
Not for his love but for his mind's fulfilling;
For though in birth my match did equal me,
My beauty was unfit for such as he.*

*And I that scorning tributary love,
Should have enjoined me to an after duty,
Fearing his unrespect of me might prove,
Th' incapable tyrant of my subject beauty,
Before our contract came into conclusion,
I knew his love would be my lives confusion.*

*Yet miser avarice (doting aim of promotion)
Gaping at rich showers of a golden age,
At such proud vultures by the winds commotions,
Act monster wonders in a wealth rage,
Careless to what accompt the fair be wed,
Nor forcing discord of a loathed bed.*

*Who sees the secrets of that widow thought,
The silent musings and the discontent,
Moving impatience in her mind hath wrought,
Whose beauty's subject to inforced content,
Or how may be think she her passion brooks,
That dares not speak but plead her grief in looks.*

*Disending unity of a discord bed,
Burning in vapours of suggestions quite
Strain'd concord of th' unfortunately wed,
Dissembling love and framing wonders by it,
Who seeth this may quickly judge the ill,
That mind endures is wed against her will.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*In her veins jealousy full of a self suspect,
Deeming all eyes as doubting as her own,
Fearing herself, her own self might detect,
(For she think what to her to all is known)
And this is still peculiar to her vain,
To hate the thing she fears may doubt again.
Which haps from hence that she suspecteth ever,
That adverse jealousy will come and see,
The close wrought act her secrecies endeavour,
And act again, 'gainst her as close as she,
And though no fault nor any deed detects her,
Yet will she hate the thing she fears suspects her.
Thus waking to herself and watching all
Discontentious union in herself discording,
Fearing the fortune worthy may befall,
Only in a divers sympathy according.
By fear and doubt unto her worst hap led,
Thus does she work still in th' unwilling bed.
She shrynes her grief up in a secret fashion,
(Which musing silence agonies increase)
And ever dumb in discontented passion,
She shakes her head and sighs and holds her peace.
Her grief and fear is such she cannot say it,
Till her complaining eyes in tears betray it.
Look how discountnanst in her eyes slow moving,
(The wakefull residence of a discontent)
Heavenly sighted sad quiet sits approving,
The awed condition of enforced content,
And how her drooping notes her mind's disguise
To be so great she seems down wayed by it.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Mark how the downcast looks her eyes reflect,
Argues her life sequestered from her minds ease
And every gesture secretly detect,
The note of silent passion never finds ease,
And though she seems unwilling to betray it,
Yet in that seeming so she seems to say it.*

*She sits and hears, even passionately attentive,
How better fortunes joy the happy wed,
When in a sudden thought heartily pensive,
She casts her eyes up and she shakes her head,
Whilst many thoughts concurring all in one
Makes her grieved soul yield forth a deadly groan.*

*Lo so united to a discontent,
Departed from myself to live t' unkindness,
Too soon my ill-bestowed youth did repent,
My parents avarice and disaster blindness,
That could not see the loathing that is bred,
In discording of an unkind bed.*

*And what is worse; o' this is interdicting
The fellow joyings of a true met love,
More than her own ill this is still inflicting
Which never did the willing bridegroom prove,
That loves but one and gains such good thereby,
He's lov'd again and so doth live and die.*

*But some had suitor eyes with privy look,
Noted the loathing that I bare unto him,
And Mov'd by this they quickly undertook
Or shame, or some dishonourable acts to drive him
And that this might better performed be,
They seem'd to malice him and pity me.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*As sung the Syrens to the wandering knight,
Th' elusive stanzas of their charming song
Pleasing the attentive ear with sweet delight,
But hateful actors of intended wrong;
So sweetly sang the songs of love to me,
They seem'd or Syrens or more sweet to be.*

*For look how in a solitary guise
The virgin chorister of the listning night,
Chants her sweet descant in a flattering wife,
To gain her little freedom if she might,
And sings the sweeter by how much the more
She minds the liberty she had before.*

*So when imprisoned in precise constraint,
Mine eye kept watch and my brow tyrannized,
Those that their free enlargement did await,
In arguing prattle sweetly subtleized,
And as in their passion did increase in fear,
It pleased so much the more my strangers ear,
And so much more as doth the churlish rich,
Keep gold the safer as the colours pure,
So much the more my beauty did bewitch,
Them to continuance as they were more sure;
And these I knew so well to entertain,
They would not leave love to be free again.*

*For liveth that philosophy precise,
Whom documents have quite restrain'd from this?
Liveth that ancient old and aged wife,
Whom years have known to make to hate their bliss?
Then blame not youth if want only wooes,
Since doting old and bookwise cannot choose.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Nor let my beauty be impeacht with this,
That I was womanlike, though angel fair,
For him doth purity fortunately bliss,
That is not blemisht with some black impare,
For this we see almost in things divine,
T' is quickly stained is the purest fine.*

*Never did flock to old Ulysses Queen,
In weary absence of her straying knight,
Never more woers in her Court were seen,
(Although perhaps more worthy persons might)
Then there were suitors still importun'd me
For I presume I was as fair as she.*

*Nor could my seeming true to him I chose,
Give answer to their often suites renewing,
My fained love to this, fained hate to those,
Could be no obstacle to their ever suing,
And I not knowing quaintly to disdain them
Through want of art was forced to entertain them.*

*When oft entreaties breeding emulation,
In corresponding thoughts of fellow lovers,
Wrought quite chang'd being and strange alteration,
As oftener vows their constancy discovers,
For that will issue to her full perfection,
Hath grounded being by the minds affection.*

*Then equal in my thoughts making compare,
T' wixt old forlorn and personally young,
I quickly saw the abuse my beauty bare,
And my heart's grief sat fresh upon my tongue,
When noting this my heart began to cry,
And I exclaimed against a doting eye.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*What sympathy of love (quoth I) can be,
T' wixt crooked old and excellently fair,
Discording years will ever disagree,
As different age to grave doth make repair,
And this to old men proper still doth prove,
To sigh they are so old they cannot love.*

*Such one was herest my youth of her bliss,
He could no more of love, his days were done,
Crook't old and cold his years denied him this
And therefore grieved he had so soon begun,
O' ist not grief that age should so defame,
The reverent title of so grave a name.*

*But how can I, how can all women brook this
Decrepit years from pleasure should restrain them,
Ne'er liv'd they happy day that undertook this,
But of their fortune after did complain them,
For what is dotage that we should affect it,
Or moody age that women should respect it,
Old, quite forlorn and over worne with years,
He makes an infant humour of his age,
And in his lined brows dotage appears,
A witless baby in a loving rage;
And such a humour in his senses reign
And being old he's made a child again.*

*He calls his Kate and she must come and kiss him,
Doting his madded love upon her face,
He thinks her smile hath wherewithal to bliss him,
Thus frantics his love to the fair's disgrace
Which not withstood she dares not say him no,
O' ist not pity beauty's used so.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*But do not therefore blame the tripping fair,
For even the fairest hath her imperfection?
Let not precise respect the lighter way her,
For even the maiden seeming hath affection,
And nowadays the chaste devout will show love,
That having learn'd they may the better know love.*

*Let th' ancient doting therefore be precise,
The quick-eyed young will have a time to wink it,
Outward appearance can deceive his eyes,
And she play wanton when he doth not think it,
For this as sure as self truth shall ensue,
If age be jealous, youth must be untrue.*

*Suggesting fear shall make the newly wed,
Befalse, because she fears she is suspected,
And fear by art to faining shall be led,
To double closely with the false affected,
For what is their armed fortune better noting
Then double act t' express their privy doting.*

*So may a marriage-bed a love betray,
Is saying true and fearfully rebellious,
Whom after age in time to come shall say,
Is doting old and cold and foolish jealous,
And let this tittle from his name n'er sunder,
He's love's head monster and his armed wonder.*

*But leaving this an ordinary shame,
To that grave being of a reverent age,
Whos age grave decense it doth defame,
With madding matter of an idle rage,
As made her monster by her childish folly,
Is reverent old and honourable wholly.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Of oft entreating suitors I will say,
Whose often vows tempt me to further sin,
And hoping time my frailty might betray,
They are all art to teach me to begin,
Yet though I lov'd not him that I had chose,
I knew not how to condescend to those.*

*But hence grew hate for now I grew admired,
And by degrees began to learn to sin,
Then when I saw I was so much desired,
I seemed transformed as I had never been,
And self opinion wrought so strong effect,
As now I grew to leave all chaste respect.*

*For chastity by wiles grew to be cold,
My modest beauty 'gan to alter wanton,
I that from me, myself, my self had sold,
Found this hard fortune for my heart to pant on,
I now began to exercise mine eye,
And gaze on all would gaze as well as I.*

*My speech from humble, decent, pure and true,
That had no secrecy in a plainly meaning,
To court-like, wanton, pleasant did issue,
I left my nature to my follies weaning,
And I by practise learn'd the worst so well,
In wanton art the best I could excel.*

*Thus I both wild and absolutely fair,
Charm'd with my beauty with my wiles allured,
My want of shame mine honour did impair,
As long as I myself to sin inured,
Which if I sinned or did with sin dispense,
My life must say (to whom I was offence).*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Yet not defam'd for other fault than those,
The wanton city-dwelling count their grace,
But every tongue upon suspect did glose,
And being apt new made reports t' embrace
I now was fam'd the fairest she was ever,
(Which fame in that age was extinguished never).*

*For sooner had no motives of desire
Taught me to exercise my wit and beauty,
But my conceit could set delight on fire,
And wanton looks imprivilege all duty,
And I grew fairer and the oftener named,
As quaint conceit me for delightful famed.*

*When lo; (for who lives so obscure,
So secret from the world, remote from eyeing,
As holds himself of doubtful talk so sure,
But fame into his fortunes will be prying?)
Even then when we of obscure life do boast,
It proves at last that when w'are known the most.*

*For then pronouncing from uncertain thought,
Th' ungrounded stories of a liar muse,
What secrecy from subtle eyes had wrought,
Uncertain fame with falsehood will abuse,
Fame secret witness to the guilt conceal'd,
Mads all in fury till it be reveal'd.*

*Mindful rememberer of a secret will,
(If secret may import worthy dishonour)
The perjured counsellor of the close wrought ill,
False testimony of a hope, relying on her,
Both truth and falsehood in one period bounding,
Contrary to herself, herself confounding.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*False glosing tongue credulities rely,
Error of nature bad seed of base sedition,
Suspects false daughter, never born to die,
Nurse of Erinnis and of false suspicion,
Prov'd all the world's plague and inured to sin,
Happy had I liv'd hadst thou never been.*

*For till thou first with thine unhappy story,
Echoing relations of my worth and me,
Entitledst my name to my beauty's glory,
Though not performed in so royal measure,
Yet then I joy'd a life of gayest pleasure.*

*So fares th' unfortunate whom monster fame,
Glosing, ambitious, false mused makes her subject,
Enjoined by praise to bide eternal shame,
And rest the world's dishonourable object,
Such fate had I, that was so highly famed,
First to be held fair after ever shamed.*

*For now ambitious in her sabling humour,
Unto my King my beauty she dispenses,
To whom she imparts a wonder-working rumour,
In speech authentical to charm his senses,
With act his eyes, his ears, with words she won,
His heart, his love, his soul ere she had done.*

*She seemed sober, hearty and precise,
Framing her false looks to a pleading fitness,
T' unthought on truth she adapts her humbled eyes,
And every act seem'd her tales truth to witness,
And what she thought could win the King she wrought
on.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*She told him, now my beauty's April bud,
Fresh bloom'd in honour of my flow'ring prime,
In high degrees of excellence stood,
Ages admire and wonderment of time,
Amongst the best, so far exceeding many,
As it were never seconded by any.*

*To this she adds (o' strange impiety)
Virtuous enticements of alluring sin,
And with licentious words, altering variety,
She drowns her senses and himself therein;
So well the Syren knew her song to sing,
She soon had lulled asleep the willing King.*

*And that she might the better bring to pass,
Shame to my Lord and shame to me,
She adds how wanton, buxom, young I was,
Fit comfort with his younger years to be,
And when at length she had discourst her fill,
Away she flies, abominable ill.*

*But he that stands enchanted with the wonders,
By secret stealth dishonourable sin,
Him from his sense, his sense from virtues sunders,
And now in madding love lust doth begin.
And that foul stain his fury is incensed with,
By majesty (saith he) shall be dispensed with.*

*Then to mine ears (diving my misfortune)
Secret reports came whispering stranger wonders.
And with their oratory please mine ears importune,
Whilst blind conceit me from my good hap sunders,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*With charming profers still my King salutes me,
As one for absolutest fair reputes me.*

*And those to whom he secretly commands,
The inquisition of my beauty's being,
Those my attract, my change of fortune tended
My beauty's worth and excellence seeing,
Report my beauty's to be so divine,
As now he prayed none so much as mine.*

*And soon had gifts, soon had my Lord's desire,
My soul from chastity, myself from me,
With often presents taught how to retire,
Tasting the profers of a high degree;
And then methought though I n'er proved before,
A king's embrace was even a heaven or more.*

*Lo then to Court unto my King I came,
Monarch aspect of my recusant eye,
Mine eye, the matter of my bodies shame,
As long as shame or sin were nursed thereby,
With niggard favour at the first did seem,
As one that held his crown scarce worth esteem.*

*For now I saw, when equally precise,
He saw the honour was due worth my beauty,
My brows recusancy 'gan tyrannise,
And of my kind exact a tribute duty,
And if he proffered love, I would forsake it,
For women first say no, and then they take it.*

*I wrought so well, my face did seem to say,
I prized chastity and even too much,
My apt fram'd countenance seem'd to betray,
A purposed firmness to my seeming such,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*And my pretext working so before,
Was but to make him love me so much more.*

*But he that could command thee, made thee sin,
Yet that is no privilege, no shield to thee,
Now thou thyself, hast drowned thyself therein,
Thou art defam'd thyself and so is he;
And though that King's commands have wonders
wrought,
Yet King's commands could never hinder thought.*

*Lo, too secure of variable rumour,
I gave myself to pleasing disposition;
Love charming wantonness and delightful humour,
Forced now no longer peevish eyed suspicion,
And I thought none could testify my fault,
Because I thought there was not any saw't.*

*And though My life had stain, yet this did mend it,
That I was sorry such an one to be,
My pity, my respect did still commend it,
And this was commendably praised in me,
That suitor wrongs myself to right would bring,
If right might be procured from the King.*

*And now so deemed so highly was I prized,
No honour was too good, too great for me,
I could command whatever thought desired,
Delight to sense or joys to mind to be;
And whilst I sat seated alone so high,
The King could but command and so could I.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*But long my fortune had not traded so,
In doubtful highness of prosperity,
Ere murder, death had fram'd a woarser woe
A true example unto all posterity
That those that mount so high so far and fast,
In tract of time come headlong down at last.
For now as the doomsday of my fortune's ne'er,
The day, the doom, peculiar unto all,
Now in a death unthought on doth appear,
My beauty's ruin and mine honours fall,
Such sights are these unto the pleased eye,
As are not sooner seen than they do die.
So when for his drown'd son pensively sorry,
Three times in black, three times his golden urn,
The saddest eye of heaven's restrained glory,
In black and heavy secrets did burn;
And moody by restraining so his light,
In three days absence bought a triple night.
So now, eternal night, now desolation,
Divining horror to the nighted land,
Issues to all by sudden alteration,
That of a tyrant ill-suspected stand,
But I of whom this imported most of any,
Where all had but one fear, I one, had many.
Ah, death, old father of our common end,
Nursed of the mother night, and discontent,
Envyng hatreds never pleased friend,
Uncertain accident and unknown event,
In what so much have I offended thee,
That by my King's death thou shouldst murder me.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Did my face fear thee from thy murdering will,
That being young, thou lettest me live so long?
Or having such a beauty at thy will,
Thoughtest thou the rape would be esteem'd a wrong?
O if thou didst, withall thou wilt that I,
Should live so long that I should shame to die.*

*It was the avarice of thy lust to kill,
Founded my downfall on my King's decease,
Such is thy nature and so much so ill,
One murder with a second to increase,
But thus we see who on a King relies,
Finds death alive whilst living yet he dies.*

*Then what might I do, wherewithall to save,
Me from confusion, that I might not die,
Now when dead sleeping careless in his grave,
My King was gone, on whom I did rely,
What rests for me, a poor distressed woman,
But hold me patient at my fortunes summon.*

*T' is now that I should weep a thousand tears,
Now, when my stars in fixed opposition,
Denounces sorrow to my grieving ears,
And tells me I must change my life's condition,
And trust to favouring destiny no more,
For I must beg my bread from door to door.*

*For now reigned tyranny in ambitious throne,
A true-born-infant-blood-spilling murderer;
Usurping monster, yet controlled of now,
Foul guilts appeal and mischiefs furtherer,
Proud Richard Gloster, in his pride I saw,
Act all things at his will; for will was law.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*He says (and then he shews a withered arm,
Dried at his birth-day, lame and useless still)
Quoth he t' was thou by charms wrought me this arm,
And therefore dooms me to his tyrant will,
For never is th' offended mighty armless,
To wreak his fury on the hated harmless.*

*Bear hence quoth he (and therewithall reflected,
Fire sparkling fury from incensed eyes,
Whose madding threat his lunacy detected,
And told me he was taught to tyrannise)
And then again in more incensed rage,
He cries, bear hence this monster of her age.*

*When lo the servant sworne performeth on me,
The unwilling office of a grieved sorry;
And whilst he yet lays forced hands upon me,
Noting my beauty and my beauty's glory
He does his duty yet his looks do show,
He craveth pardon for his doing so.*

*Posterity shall know mine act (quoth he)
And then he bids my attire be rent,
And terms the habit unbefitting me,
A sorcerer-witch full of foul intent,
And that which words for anger could not say
A furious act in gesture did betray.*

*When I, reft of my habit and attire,
Stood yet modest as a maid should be,
Bashfully feared with the new admire,
Of this base tyrants ravishing of me,
Who not content with this commands that I,
Be turn'd into the streets and beg or die.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Even as an angry bull incenst with ire,
Bellowing his menaces with a hollow roar,
Impatient, mad, wanting his lusts desire,
Augments his madded fierceness more and more,
And yet no quiet any murder brings,
Although he preys upon a thousand things.
So unappeased, unquiet, mad and irefull,
Rages the insatiate fury of his will,
And in his look, fierce, wan and pale and direfull,
He seems impatient, moody, madded, still,
And not content with this disgrace to grieve me,
He says that all shall die (that dare relieve me).
(Then from the Court, the martyedom of me)
All solitary, alone, forlorn, I went
Thither where discontentment I did see,
Threatening my misery ere my days were spent,
And needy want as naked as was, I
Told me that thus perplexed I should die.
When I unapt to frame a liar tale,
Unapt to crave my bread with beggar prayer,
My poor discountanst look all wan and pale,
Through hunger's nature wayned from her fail,
I could not o' shame would not then that I,
Should beg at all but rather choose to die.
And yet necessity did urge constraint,
To brook the impatience of her proper will,
Whilst silence breaking out to no complaint,
In secret passion hid her sorrow still;
And shame with fearfull blush all griev'd did cry,
And wished she did but know but how to die.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*I must (quoth she) address myself to death,
And therewithall, clasping her hands in one,
And wresting oft sighs with a deep fetched breath,
She panteth forth a poor complaining groan,
When closing fast her eyes (first ope to heaven)
She now seems both of speech and life bereaven.*

*For even as looketh at the sun's late setting,
A wither'd lily, dried and sapless quite,
And in her weakened leaves, inwardly knitting,
Seems dead; and yet, retains a perfect white.
So seem'd her face, when now her fair did fall
That death still fear'd she would not die at all.*

*Yet would they part the remnant of her being,
Her body went to death; her fame to life,
Thus life and death in unity agreeing
Dated the tenor of their sonderie strife,
Death vowed her body should be eyed never,
Yet life hath vowed her fame should live for ever.*

THREE

THE first play into which the story of Jane Shore is woven was written by John Heywood in the last decade of the sixteenth century, and is entitled: "The first and second parts of King Edward the fourth, containing his merry pastime with the Tanner of Tamworth as also his love to faire Mistress Shore, her first promotion, fall and misery and lastly the lamentable death of both her and her husband." Printed in London in 1600, it is described as "a play that hath been publickly acted."

In the following extracts, selected from "Part One," Jane and her husband play prominent parts.

The scene is laid at the time of the rebellion headed by Falconbridge, who, in the king's absence, marches on London to besiege the city.

Shore, the Mayor, the Recorder and other civic dignitaries, are arranging for its defence, and on the appearance of the rebels at the gates, Shore thus parleys with the rebel leader.

"My name is Shore," he declaims, "a goldsmith by my trade."

"What, not Shore that hath the dainty wife? Shore's wife, the flower of London for her beauty?" asks Falconbridge.

"Yes, rebel, even the very same," Shore replies.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

After the rebels have been repulsed, Shore thus reassures his wife that the danger is passed.

SHORE. *Be not afraid (sweetheart) the worst is past.
God have the praise, the victory is ours.
We have prevailed, the rebels are repulsed,
And every street of London soundeth joy.
Canst thou then (gentle Jane) be sad alone?*

JANE. *I am not sad now you are here with me,
My joy, my hope, my comfort and my love,
My dear, dear husband, kindest Mathew Shore.
But when these arms the circle of my soul,
Were in the fight so forward as I heard,
How could I chose, sweetheart, but be afraid?*

SHORE. *Why dost thou tremble now when perils past?*

JANE. *I think upon the horror of the time.
But tell me why you fought so desperately?*

SHORE. *First to maintain King Edward's royalty.
Next to defend the city's liberty,
But chiefly Jane to keep thee from the soil,
Of him that to my face did vow thy spoil.
Had he prevailed, where then had been our
lives?*

*Dishonoured our daughters, ravished our fair
wives.*

*Possessed our goods and set our servants free,
Yet all is nothing to the loss of thee.*

JANE. *Of me sweetheart? Why how should I be lost,
Were I by thousand storms of fortune tost,
And should endure the poorest wretched life,
Yet Jane will be thy honest loyal wife.
The greatest Prince the Sun did ever see,
Shall never make me prove untrue to thee.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

According to the play, King Edward first sees Jane at a banquet given in his honour by the Mayor of London to welcome his return to the city after the crushing of the rebellion. In the absence of a mayoress at the feast, Jane is asked to act in her place, and the Mayor thus introduces her to his royal guest:

THE MAYOR. *Had she but lived to see this blessed day,
But in her stead this gentlewoman here,
My cousin's wife, that office will supply.
How say you Mistress Shore?*

THE KING. *How? Mistress Shore? What not his wife
That did refuse his knighthood at our
hand?*

THE MAYOR. *The very same, my Lord, and here he is.*

After Jane has bade the king welcome he turns to Lord Howard and Sellenger who are seated by him.

THE KING. *Tell me cousin Howard and Tom Sellenger,
Had ever citizen so fair a wife?*

HOWARD. *Of flesh and blood I never did behold
A woman everyway so absolute.*

SELLENGER. *Nor I, my Liege; were Sellenger a king,
He could afford Shore's wife to be a queen.*

In a later scene, which is laid in Shore's shop, the king enters in disguise and finds Jane sitting at a table sewing.

THE KING. *Good Mistress Shore, this doth your love
procure,
This shape is secret and I hope 'tis sure;
The watermen that daily use the Court,
And see me often, know me not in this,
At Lyon-quay I landed in their view,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

Yet none of them took knowledge of the king.

JANE. *What would you buy, Sir, that you look in here?*

THE KING. *Your fairest jewel be it not too dear.*

Jane then offers several pieces of jewellery for his inspection, but his eyes are only for her, and at length he tells her that he saw her at the Mayor's banquet and reveals his identity.

JANE. *Now, I beseech you let this strange disguise
Excuse my boldness to your majesty.
Whatever we possess is all your Highnesses;
Only mine honour which I cannot grant.*

THE KING. *Only my love (bright angel) Edward craves,
For which I thus adventured to see thee.*

Shore then enters, and looking earnestly at the customer, recognizes the king, who thereupon leaves the shop.

JANE. *Why lookest thou? Knowest thou the
gentleman?
Alas, what ails thee that thou lookest so
pale?*

SHORE. *Nay, nothing Jane. Know you the gentleman?*

JANE. *Not I, sweetheart, alas why do you ask?
Is he mine enemy?*

SHORE. *I cannot tell. What came he here to cheap
at our shop?*

JANE. *This jewel, love.*

SHORE. *Well, I pray God he came for nothing else.*

The king, again muffled in his cloak, pays another visit

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

to the goldsmith's shop, and Shore on learning of it becomes suspicious; his jealousy is aroused. Jane, however, reassures him, and tells him he is deceived in believing the customer to be the king. The king then arranges to communicate with Jane by letters, which he causes to be carried to her secretly by a lace-woman who frequents the Court whom the author calls "Mistress Blague."

JANE. *Was never a poor soul so importuned.
Here is another letter from the king.*

MISTRESS BLAGUE. *But will no answer serve?*

JANE. *No, Mistress Blague, no answer will suffice,
He, he it is that with violent siege
Labours to break into my plighted faith.
Oh, what am I—he should so much forget
His Royal state and his high Majesty?
Still doth he come disguised to my house,
And in most humble terms betrays his love.
My husband grieves; alas, how can he
choose
Fearing the dispossession of his Jane?
Then council me what I were best to do.*

MISTRESS BLAGUE. *True I confess, a private life is good,
Nor would I otherwise be understood;
To be a goldsmith's wife is some content,
But days in Court more pleasantly are
spent;
A household government deserves renown;
But what is companion to a Crown.*

Later on, when Jane has yielded to the king's persuasions and left her husband for the palace, she shows her

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

sympathy with the oppressed by visiting the prisons: in the Marshalsea she again meets her husband, who had been taken prisoner on a French prize and is under sentence of death.

After King Edward's death, Jane flees the palace to take refuge with Mistress Blague, bringing her jewels with her. But the lace-woman refuses her shelter, and as she is leaving the house she is arrested by the officers sent by the Sheriff who thus address her:

*Mistress Shore, our errand is to you,
This day it is commanded by the king,
You must be stripped out of your rich attire
And in a white sheet go from Temple-bar,
Until you come to Aldgate barefooted,
Your hair about your ears and in your hand
A burning taper. Therefore go with us.
Mistress Blague you'll hardly answer it
When it is known we find her in your
house:*

It seems you do not fear to harbour her.

MISTRESS BLAGUE. *I harbour her? Out on the strumpet
quean!*

*She pressed upon me where I would or no.
I'll see her hang'd ere I will harbour her.*

So her jewels and her gold are mine.

*And I am made at least four thousand
pounds*

*Wealthier by this match than I was before;
And what can be objected for the same?*

*That once I loved her; well perhaps I did,
But now I am of another humour.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

CATESBY (*who is present*). Now Sheriffs of London do
your office;

*Attach this rebel to his Majesty,
And having stript her to her petticoat,
Turn her out of doors with this condition,
That no man harbour her, that durst
presume*

*To harbour that lewd courtezan Shore's
wife*

*Against the straight commandment of the
king.*

In the end, Shore, who has meanwhile escaped from prison and is wandering the streets in disguise, meets Jane and comes to her relief.

SHORE. *Alack, poor Jane,
How I compassionate thy woeful case?
Whereas we lived together, man and wife,
Oft on her humble stool by the fireside
Sat she contented, when as my high heat
Would chide her for it. But what would
she say?*

*Husband, we both must lower sit one day,
When I dare swear she never dream'd of
this;*

But see, good God, what prophesying is.

On the charge of giving succour and relief to Jane, Shore is arrested and brought before King Richard, who pardons him, and Jane and her husband are reconciled.

The "Mistress Blague" introduced by Heywood into his play was a name he gave to the lace-woman. Two

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

lace-women are mentioned in the Wardrobe Accounts of the queen, but no names are recorded. Although the name of Mistress Blague was used afterwards by several writers, there is no evidence to show that she ever existed.



Woodcut of the XVII Century illustrating a ballad on Jane Shore, originally intended to represent Queen Elizabeth with face obliterated.

FOUR

SHAKESPEARE'S allusions to Jane Shore occur in his "Life and Death of King Richard III," the characters in which include many of the personages prominent in her time.

Among the *dramatis personæ* we have King Edward IV and his queen, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Lord Hastings, the Marquis of Dorset, the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Stanley and others who play a part in Jane's story. The scene at the State Council in the Tower is described, where Richard makes his charges against the queen and Jane Shore, also the murder of Hastings.

In Act I, Gloucester, addressing Sir Robert Brackenbury, is made to observe :

*We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,
A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue;
And that the Queen's kindred are made gentlefolks;
How say you Sir? Can you deny all this?*

BRACKENBURY. *With this, my Lord, myself have nought
to do.*

GLOUCESTER. *Naught to do with mistress Shore? I
tell thee fellow,
He that doth naught with her excepting
one,
Were best to do it secretly alone.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

In Act III, Scene 1, Gloucester, who is in conference with Buckingham the night before the meeting of the Council, when dispatching Catesby to sound Hastings bids him—*Make William, Lord of Hastings of our mind.*

BUCKINGHAM.

Go gentle, Catesby.

And as it were far off, sound thou Lord Hastings,

How he doth stand affected to our purpose;

And summon him to-morrow to the Tower,

To sit about the coronation.

GLOUCESTER. *Commend me to Lord William; tell him, Catesby,*

His ancient knot of dangerous adversaries To-morrow are let blood at Pomfret Castle,

And bid my Lord, for joy of this good news,

Give mistress Shore one gentle kiss the more.

When describing the dramatic scene at the meeting of the Council in the Tower, Shakespeare keeps close to the historical facts as recorded by Sir Thomas More, and in some places actually uses his words.

In Act III, Scene 4, when Gloucester and Buckingham re-enter the chamber after their absence, the former exclaims:

*I pray you all, tell me what they deserve,
That do conspire my death with devilish plots*

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*Of damnèd witchcraft, and that have prevail'd
Upon my body with their hellish charms?*

HASTINGS. *The tender love I bear your grace, my
lord,*

*Makes me most forward in this princely
presence*

*To doom th' offenders; whoso'er they be,
I say, my lord, they have deserved death.*

GLOUCESTER. *Then be your eyes the witness of their
evil;*

*Look how I am bewitch'd; behold mine
arm*

*Is like a blasted sapling wither'd up
And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous
witch*

*Consorted with that harlot strumpet
Shore,*

*That by their witchcraft thus have
marked me.*

HASTINGS. *If they have done this deed, my noble
lord——*

GLOUCESTER. *If! thou protector of this damned
strumpet,*

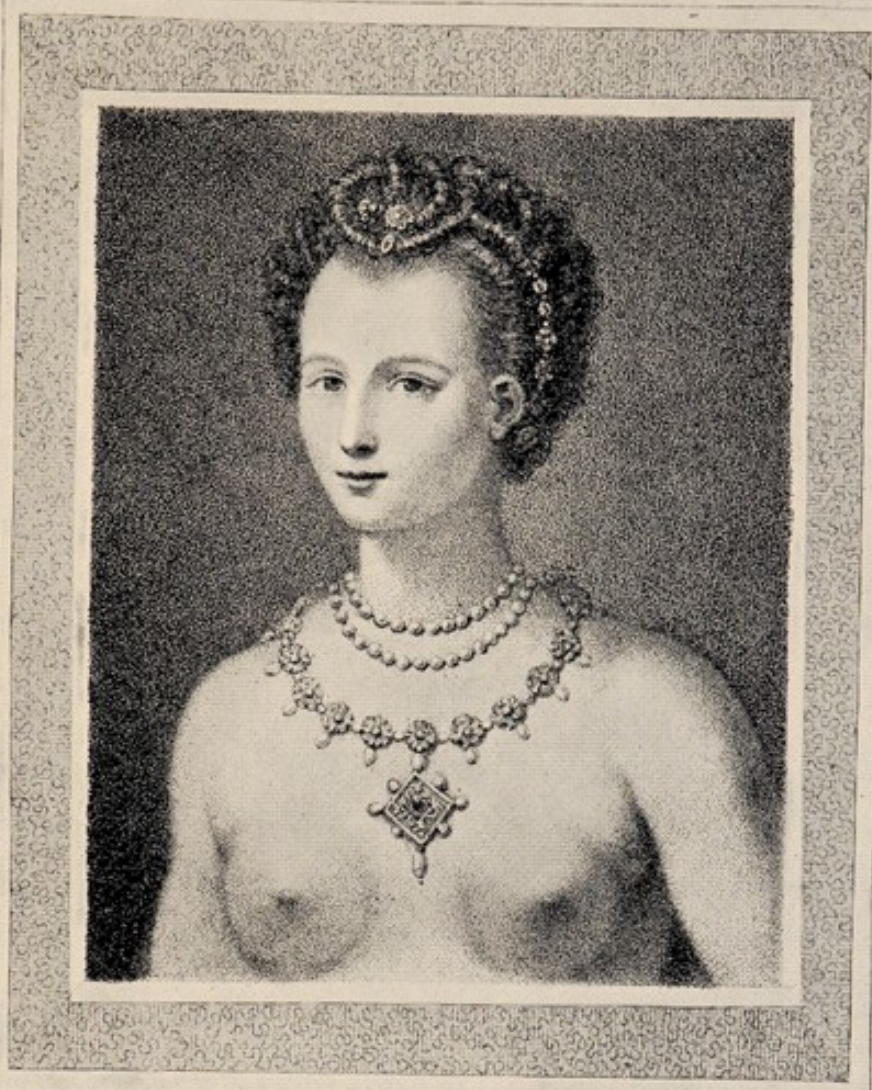
*Talk'st thou me of "ifs"? Thou art a
traitor;—*

*Off with his head!—Now by Saint Paul I
swear,*

I will not dine until I see the same.

Lovel and Ratcliff, look that it be done;—

HASTINGS. *Woe, woe, for England! not a whit for me;
For I, too fond might have prevented this.*



F. Bartolozzi R.A. sculpt.

JANE SHORE,

Give gentle mistress Shore one gentle kiss the more.

King Rich.^d III. Act 3. Sc. 1.

JANE SHORE

From an engraving by F. Bartolozzi, R.A.

[See page 283]



THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Stanley did dream the boar did raze his
helm;*

And I did scorn it, and disdain'd to fly.

In Scene 5, on the Tower walls, where Gloucester and Buckingham are awaiting the arrival of the Mayor and citizens, the head of Hastings is brought by Lovel and Ratcliff. On seeing it, Gloucester observes:

*So smooth he daub'd his vice with show of virtue,
That, his apparent open guilt omitted—
I mean, his conversation with Shore's wife—
He liv'd from all attainder of suspect.*

THE MAYOR. *Now, fair befall you! he deserv'd his
death;*

*And your good graces both have well
proceeded*

*To warn false traitors from the like
attempts.*

*I never look'd for better at his hands,
After he once fell in with mistress Shore.*

That Shakespeare must have been cognizant of King Richard's superstitious fears is shown by the introduction of the ghosts of his victims, who are made to appear to him in his dream the night before Bosworth field, and the words he puts into the mouth of the apparition of Hastings:

*Bloody and guilty, guiltily awake,
And in a bloody battle end thy days.
Think of Lord Hastings! and despair and die!*

FIVE

MICHAEL DRAYTON, the Elizabethan poet, who was born in 1563, immortalized the romantic story of Jane Shore in his work entitled "England's Heroicall Epistles," which was printed in 1597. The book, which is modelled on Ovid's "Heroides," passed through four editions before 1602, and remained popular during the seventeenth century, even after the publication in 1613 of his better-known work, "Poly-Olbion."

Among the "Epistles" he includes two which are supposed to have been written by King Edward IV and Jane Shore. They are prefaced by the following lines:

ARGUMENT

*Edward the Fourth, bewitch'd with the report
Of Mistress Shore, resounded through his Court,
Steals to the city in a strange disguise,
To view that beauty, whose transpiercing eyes
Had shot so many; which did so content
The amorous king, that instantly he sent
These lines to her, whose graces did allure him;
Whose answer back doth of her love assure him.*

EDWARD THE FOURTH TO JANE SHORE

*To thee the fair'st that ever breath'd this air,
From ENGLISH EDWARD, to thee fairest fair;*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Ah, would to God thy Title were no more,
That no remembrance might remain of SHORE,
To countermand a Monarch's high desire,
And barr mine Eyes of what they most admire!
Oh! why should fortune make the city proud!
To give that more, than in the Court allow'd?
Where they (like wretches) hoard it up to spare
And to ingross it as they do their ware.
When Fame first blaz'd thy Beauty here in Court,
Mine Ears repuls'd it as a light report;
But when mine Eyes saw what mine Ear had heard,
They thought report too niggardly had spar'd;
And stricken dumb with wonder, did but mutter,
Concerning more than it had words to utter.
Then think of what thy husband is possest,
When I malign the wealth wherewith he's blest,
When much abundance makes the needy mad,
Who having all, yet knows not what is had;
Into Fools Bosoms this good fortune creeps,
And summs come in, whilst the base miser sleeps.
If now thy Beauty be of such esteem,
Which all of so rare excellency deem;
What would it be and prized at what rate,
Were it adorned with Kingly State?
Which being now but in so mean a Bed,
Is like an uncut diamond in Lead,
Ere it be set in some high-prized ring,
Or garnished with rich enamelling;
We see the beauty of the stone is spilt,
Wanting the gracious ornament of gilt.
When first attracted by thy heavenly Eyes,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*I came to see thee in a strange disguise,
Passing thy shop, thy husband call'd me back,
Demanding what rare jewel I did lack,
I want (thought I) one that I dare not crave,
And one, I fear, thou wilt not let me have,
He calls for caskets forth, and shows me store,
But yet I knew he had one Jewel more,
And deadly cursed him, that he did deny it,
That I might not for Love or Money buy it.
O, might I come a Diamond to buy,
That had but such a lustre as thine Eye,
Would not my Treasure serve, my Crown should go,
If any Jewel could be prized so!
An Agate, branched with thy BLUSHING STRAINS,
A SAPPHIRE, but so AZURE'D as they VEINS;
My Kingly Sceptre only should redeem it,
At such a price if judgement could esteem it.
How fond and senseless be those strangers then
Who bring in Toys to please the English men?
I smile to think how fond th' Italians are,
To judge their artificial Gardens rare;
When London in thy cheeks can shew them here,
Roses and Lilies growing all the year;
The Portugal, that only hopes to win,
By bringing Stones from farthest INDIA in;
When happy SHORE can bring them forth a Girl,
Whose lips be Rubies and her teeth be Pearl.
How silly is the Polander and Dane,
To bring us crystal from the frozen main?
When thy clear skin's transparence doth surpass
Their crystal, as the diamond doth glass.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*The foolish French, which bring in trash and toys,
To turn our women, men and boys,
When with what tire thou dost thyself adorn,
That for a Fashion only shall be worn;
Which though it were a garment but of Hair,
More rich than Robe that ever Empress wear.
Methinks thy husband takes his mark awry,
To set his plate to sale when thou art by,
When they which do thy angel-looks behold,
As the base Dross do but respect his gold.
And with one Hair before that massy heap,
And but one lock before the wealth of Cheap;
And for no cause else hold we gold so dear,
But that it is like unto thy Hair.
And sure I think, SHORE cannot choose but flout
Such as would find the great Elixir out.
And laugh to see the Alchymists, that choke
Themselves with Fumes and waste their wealth in
Smoke;
When if thy Hand but touch't the grossest mold,
It is converted to refined Gold.
When their's is bartered at an easy rate,
Well known to all, to be adulterate;
And is no more, when it by thine is set,
Than paltry Bangle or light-prized Jet.
Let others wear Perfumes for thee unmeet,
If there were none, thou couldst make all things sweet.
Thou comfort'st ev'ry sense with sweet repast,
To hear, to see, to feel, to smell, to taste,
Like a rich Ship whose very refuse ware,
Aromaticks and precious Odours are.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*If thou but please to walk into the Pawn,
To buy thee cambrick, callico and lawn,
If thou the whiteness of the same wouldst prove,
From thy more white hand pluck off thy glove,
And those which buy as the beholders stand,
Will take thy hand for lawn, lawn for thy hand.
A thousand eyes clos'd up by envious night,
Do wish for day but to enjoy thy sight;
And when they once have blest their eyes with thee,
Scorn ev'ry object else, what ere they see.
So, like a goddess, Beauty still controls,
And hath such pow'rful working in our souls,
The merchant, which in Traffic spends his life,
Yet loves at home to have a handsome wife;
The blunt-spoke cynic, poring on his book,
Sometimes (aside) at Beauty loves to look,
The churchman by whose teaching we are led,
Allow what keeps love in the marriage bed.
The bloody soldier spent in dang'rous broils
With Beauty yet content to share his spoils,
The busy lawyer wrangling in his pleas,
Findeth that Beauty gives his labour ease;
The toiling tradesman and the sweating clown,
Would have his wench fair though his bread be brown.
So much in Beauty pleasing unto all,
That Prince and Peasant equally doth call
Nor ever yet did any man dispise it,
Except too dear and that he could not prize it.
Unlearn'd is learning artless be all Arts,
If not employ'd to praise thy sev'ral parts;
Poor plodding School-men they are far too low,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Which by probations, rules and axioms go;
He must be still familiar with the skies,
Which notes the revolutions of thine Eyes;
And by that skill which measures Sea and Land,
See beauties All, thy waist, thy foot, thy hand.
Where he may find the more that he doth view,
Such rare delights as are both strange and new,
And other worlds of Beauty, more and more,
Which never were discovered before;
And to thy rare proportion, to apply
The Lines and Circles in Geometry;
Using alone Arithmeticks strong ground
And bring the virtues that in thee are found.
And when these all have done what they can do,
For my perfections, all too little too.
When from the East the Dawn hath gotten out,
And gone to seek thee all this world about,
Within thy chamber hath she fixed her Light,
Where, but that place the world hath all been night.
Then is it fair that ev'ry vulgar eye
Should see Love banquet in her Majesty?
We deem those things our sight do most frequent,
To be but mean, although most excellent;
For strangers still the streets are swept and strow'd
Few look on such as daily come abroad,
Things much restrain'd do make us much desire them,
And Beauties seldom seen makes us most admire them.
Nor is it fit a city shop should hide,
The World's delight and Nature's only Pride.
But in a Prince's sumptuous gallery
Hung all with tissue, flowered with tapestry*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Where thou shalt sit and from thy State shall see,
The Tilts and Triumphs that are done for thee.
Then know the difference (if thou lost to prove)
Betwixt a vulgar and a knightly Love;
And when thou find'st, as now thou doubt'st the truth,
Be thou thy self impartial Judge of both,
Where hearts be knit what helps if not enjoy?
Delay breeds doubts, no cunning to be coy;
Whilst lazy Time his turn by tarriance serves,
Love still grows sickly and Hope daily starves;
Meanwhile, receive that Warrant by these lines,
Which Princely Rule and Sov'raignty resigns;
Till when these papers, by their Lord's command,
By me shall kiss thy sweet and lovely Hand.*

THE EPISTLE OF MISTRESS SHORE TO KING EDWARD THE FOURTH

*As the weak child that from the mother's wing,
Is taught the Lute's delicious fingering,
At ev'ry string's soft touch is mov'd with fear,
Noting his master's curious list'ning ear;
Whose trembling hand at ev'ry strain betrays,
In what doubt he his new-set lesson plays;
As this poor child, so sit I to indite,
At ev'ry word still quaking as I write.
Would I had led a humble shepherd's life
Nor know the name of SHORE'S admired wife,
And liv'd with them in country fields that range,
Nor seen the golden CHEAP, nor glittering CHANGE.
Here like a Comet gaz'd at in the skies,
Subject to all tongues, object to all eyes;*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Oft have I heard my Beauty praised of many,
But never yet so much admired of any;
A Prince's Eagle-eye to find out that,
Which common men do seldom wonder at,
Makes me to think affection flatters sight
Or in the object something exquisite.
To housed Beauty seldom stoops Report,
Fame must attend on that which lives at Court.
What Swan of bright Apollo's brood doth sing,
To vulgar Love in Courtly sonneting?
Or what immortal poets sacred pen,
Attends the glory of a citizen?
Oft have I wondered what should blind your eye
Or what so far seduced Majesty,
That having choice of beauties so divine,
Amongst the most to choose this least of mine?
More glorious Suns adorn fair London's pride,
Then all rich England's continent beside,
That who t' account their multitudes would wish,
Might number Romney's flowers or Isis fish.
Who doth frequent our Temples, Walks and Streets,
Noting the sundry beauties that he meets.
Thinks not that Nature left the wide world poor,
And made this place the Chequer of her store.
As Heav'n and Earth had lately fall'n at jars,
And grown to using wonders, dropping stars,
That if but some one Beauty should incite,
Some sacred Muse, some ravishe'd Spirit write,
Here might he fetch the true Promethian fire,
That after-ages should his Lines admire;
Gathering the Honey from the choicest Flow'rs,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Scorning the wither'd weeds in country bow'rs.
Here in this Garden (only) springs the Rose,
In ev'ry common hedge the bramble grows;
Nor are we so turn'd Neapolitan,
That might incite some foul-mouthed Mantuan;
To all the world to lay out our defects,
And have just cause to rail upon our sex,
To prank old wrinkles up in new attire,
To alter Nature's course, prove time a liar,
To abuse Fate, and Heav'ns just doom reverse,
On Beauties grave to set a crimson hearse;
With a deceitful foil to lay a ground,
To make a glass to seem a diamond.
Nor cannot without hazard of our name,
In fashion follow the Venetian Dame.
Nor the fantastick French to imitate,
Attir'd half Spanish, half Italianate;
With waist, nor curl, body nor brow adorn,
That is in Florence or in Genoa born,
But with vain boasts how witless found am I,
Thus do draw on mine own indignity?
And what though married when I was but young,
Before I knew what did to Love belong;
Yet he who now's possessed of the room,
Crop'd Beauty's flower when it was in the bloom,
And goes away enriched with the store,
Whilst others glean where he hath reap'd before;
And he dares swear that I am true and just,
And shall I then deceive his honest trust?
Or what strange hope should make you assail,
When the strongest battrey never could prevail,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Belike you think that I repuls'd the rest,
To leave a King the conquest of my breast,
And have thus long preserv'd my life from all,
To have a Monarch glory in my fall;
Yet rather let me die the vilest death,
Than live to draw that sin-poluted breath,
But our kind hearts, men's tears cannot abide,
And we least angry oft, when must we chide,
Too well know men what our creation made us,
And Nature too well taught them to invade us;
They but too well know how, what, when, and while,
To write, to speak, to sue, and to forbear,
When vows should serve, when oaths, when smiles,
when prayers.*

*What one delight our humours most doth move,
Only in that you make us nourish Love,
If any natural blemish blot our face,
You do protest, it gives our Beauty grace;
And what attire we most are us'd to wear,
That, of all other, excellent'st you swear,
And if we walk, or sit, or stand, or lie,
It must resemble some one Deity.*

*And what you know we take delight to hear,
That are you ever sounding in our ear.
And yet so shameless, when you tempt us thus,
To lay the fault on Beauty and on us.*

*ROME'S wanton OVID did those rules impart,
O, that your Nature should be help'd with Art!
Who would have thought a King that cares to reign,
Enforced by Love, so Poet-like should feign?
To say that Beauty, Times stern rage to shun,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*In my cheeks (lilies) hid her from the Sun;
And when she meant to triumph in her May,
Made that her East and here she broke the Day.
And that fair Summer's still is in my sight,
And but where I am, all the World is night;
As though the fair'st ere since the world began,
To me, a Sun-burnt Egyptian.
But yet I know more than I mean to tell,
(O would to God you knew it not too well!)
That women oft their most admirer's raise,
Though publickly not flat'ring their own praise.
Our churlish husbands, which our youth enjoy'd
Who with our dainties have their stomachs cloy'd,
Do loath, our smooth hands with their lips to feel,
T' enrich our favours by our beds to kneel,
At our command to wait, to send, to go,
As ev'ry hour our amorous servants do,
Which makes a stolen kiss often we bestow,
In earnest of a greater good we owe.
When he all day torments us with a frown,
Yet sports with Venus in a bed of down;
Whose rude embracement but too ill beseems,
Her span-broad waist, her white and dainty limbs;
And yet still preaching abstinence of meat,
When he himself of ev'ry dish will eat.
Blame you our husbands then, if they deny
Our publick walking, our loose Liberty?
If with exception still they us debar,
The circuit of the publick Theatre
To hear the Poet in a comick strain,
Able t'infect with his lascivious scene,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*And the young wanton wits, when they applaud,
The sly persuasion of some subtle bawd.
Or passionate Tragedian, in his rage
Acting a love-sick passion on the Stage,
When though abroad restraining us to roam,
They very hardly keep us safe at home;
And oft are touch'd with fear and inward grief,
Knowing which prizes soonest tempt a thief.
What sports have we, wherein our minds to set?
Our dog, our parrot, or our marmozet;
Or once a week to walk into the field;
Small is the pleasure that these Toys do yield,
But to this grief a medicine you apply,
To cure restraint with that sweet Liberty;
And Sovereignty (O that bewitching thing)
Yet made more great by promise of a king.
And more, that Honour which doth most entice,
The holiest nun and she that's ne'er so nice;
Thus still we strive, yet overcome at length,
For men want mercy and poor women strength.
Yet grant that we could meaner men resist,
When kings once come, they conquer as they list.
Thou art the cause, SHORE pleaseth not my sight
That his embraces give me no delight,
Thou art the cause, I to myself am strange,
Long winter nights be minutes, if thou'rt here;
Short minutes, if thou absent, be a year.
And thus by strength thou art become my fate,
And mak'st me love e'en in the midst of hate.*

SIX

A NOTHER poem in the form of a letter from Jane Shore to the Duke of Gloucester, by an anonymous author, was published in 1749, entitled:

*JANE SHORE TO THE DUKE OF GLOSTER
AN EPISTLE*

This was printed by R. Dodsley at Tully's Head in Pall Mall, and sold by M. Cooper in Paternoster Row.

*Just when emerging from that gloomy shade,
Which late your frown o'er all my soul had spread,
Just when fair peace unveil'd her smiling mien,
When heart-felt comfort dawn'd upon the scene
Again you frown, against misfortunes low'r,
Peace veils her smile and comfort dawns no more.*

*Hard-hearted GLOSTER! why resolve to rise
Supreme in rage, sublime in cruelties?
Why was I taught to think each mischief fled?
Why lay thy wrath as for a moment dead?
Ah! thou hast mark'd the dismal calms that sleep,
O'er the black bosom of th' unruffled deep;*

*While hid in clouds recruiting lightnings lie,
While the storm pauses thro' the noiseless sky,
Hence has thy vengeance catch'd the dreadful art,
To sooth, then rend, my unsuspecting heart;*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*While fondly fearless of th' impending blow,
I feel, ere dread, the sudden burst of woe.*

*Late, very late, you drag'd these guiltless feet,
To where stern justice holds her awful seat,
Good heav'ns! the black tribunal still appears!
Still rings the dismal charge in fancy's ears
Still pause the solemn judges—horrid pause!
Yet then did truth defend my righteous cause;
Yet then did innocence diffuse her rays,
And dazzled falsehood fled the powerful blaze,
She fled amaz'd, abash'd—a virtuous breast,
Smiles ev'n in tears and is in misery blest.*

*Hea'vns, what a change! now, how my bosom bleeds!
Guilt, horrid guilt to innocence succeeds!
That guilt with pow'r too amply vengeful fraught,
With anguish dwells each sadly-rising thought,
Why then proceed to punish the dire flame?
Ah! why proceed to punish whom you name,
For at the word grief bursts my flowing eyes,
I'm all dread sorrow and eternal sighs.
Fair-handed hope, soft beaming grace are fled;
No more these guests their saintly lustre shed;
But feel remorse, that lives on sorrowing tears;
The baleful glooms a wounded conscience wears;
The false deceits that tim'rous fancy feigns
To realm imaginary pains;
These, these distract with ever-during woes,
These wing the shafts that murders my repose.
Now contrite pray'rs my lifted soul employ,
Now rebel nature pants with lawless joy.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*And grace and guilt, with doubtful strife contest;
And Hea'vn and EDWARD share my parted breast,
Ah wretched state that guilty lovers prove,
By hea'vn forsaken and undone by love!*

*Why then still longer draw this hateful breath?
Come GLOSTER come, I welcome thee and death.
Unsheath the poniard quick and let me die,
For length of days is length of misery.
I was thy brother's mistress—ah that thought
Forbids the impious wish—forgive my fault;
Let me not die—ah shield my EDWARD'S fame;
Think how my death will wake that EDWARD'S
shame;*

*Spare then our mutual crime, we both did join;
Alas! his shame is ever linked with mine;
Tell but the tale, his shame to mine succeeds,
When glows my guilt, then, then his mem'ry bleeds.*

*Spare then my EDWARD; GLOSTER, prince, forbear;
Let thy fell rage the voice of nature hear;
Just hea'vns! is this the kind fraternal love,
That GLOSTER'S brother must from GLOSTER
prove?*

*Egregious hatred! what in death pursue,
Your brother's shame? Would EDWARD thus to you?
Ah no, his soul from ev'ry passion free,
Perhaps this moment pours its pray'rs for thee;
Perhaps e'vn now 'tis doomed his happy lot,
(Each passion purify'd each crime forgot)
To rove with angels in some radiant sphere,
Where virtue blooms, where starts no guilty tear,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Ah! canst thou call him from that glorious scene,
To see his crime not yet forgiv'n by men?
Yet, yet relent, ere his dear injur'd shade
Vindictive hovers o'er thy barb'rous head;
Ere the hea'vns open on the unnatural shame,
With which a brother wounds a brother's name.*

*Think, think on this and let his mem'ry find,
Some milder treatment from thy yielding mind.
If not thy love, ah let not hate pursue,
If not thy praise some cold regard is due.
Thou know'st what tender passions shar'd his mind,
Gen'rous as nature, friend to all mankind;
Cheered by his bounty, grief forgot to sigh;
And comfort gladden'd in the orphan's eye.
Him wretches lov'd whose souls he lived to save,
Him sick'ning age, just tott'ring on the grave.
He bade yon awful dome¹ majestic rise,
Mid Windsor's turrets, to the op'ning skies,
The humbled knee in suppliant plight to bow
The sky-wrapt soul to breathe the holy vow.
There where gay Nature fix'd her beauteous reign,
He bade devotion sanctify the scene,
Transported she surveys the blest abodes,
And hymns with warm strains the God of Gods.*

*But while these acts of purest virtue rise,
To claim the praises of the good and wise,
My guilty soul applauds the weaker part,
The lover, not the christian, charms my heart.*

¹ The chapel at Windsor built by Edward IV.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*E'vn now when penitential tears should flow,
His dear remembrance wakes th' unhallowed glow;
Still will fond fancy rose o'er all his face,
Counts ev'ry smile and image ev'ry grace;
Echo the music of each am'rous sigh,
And paint the liquid languish of his eye.*

*Such as when first I saw the monarch move,
In all the entendered majesty of love.
Ah what a bloom thro' ev'ry feature glow'd!
From those fair lips what honied transports show'd!
Who saw those smiles but melted with desire,
Gazed on those eyes but felt her soul on fire?
Yes, EDWARD, when those eyes their radiance lent,
Each yielding virgin sigh'd a soft assent,
Nor vestal chastity her glance forbore,
Indiff'rance lov'd, that never lov'd before.
Happy the prince whose charms all hearts employ'd;
Happier the woman who those charms enjoy'd;
And once that lot was mine—estatic state!
Yet see, ah see, the dire reverse of fate!
See EDWARD dies—stream, stream thou swelling eye,
And heave thou lab'ring breast th' eternal sigh!*

*Ah no—that graceful form be all forgot;
Perish desire, and fly each guilty thought!
False fleeting joys by wild intemp'rance bred
Children of lust and innocence betrayed,
Ye dire delusions, ah how deeply gain'd!
Lost on the very moment you're obtain'd.
Now, now in all your guilty horrors rise,
Set my wrong'd husband full before my eyes.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*His tears, my shame, his love, my broken vow,
And plunge my soul in agonies of woe.*

*Relentless hea'vn whose partial mandates bind
In cruel chains the freedom of the mind!
Stern fates! whom neither tears nor pray'rs can move,
Ye stubborn foes to happiness and love!
If 'tis your will that lawless passion fires,
Why blame mankind, if slaves to their desires?
Oh! if our passions such an empire boast,
That those who yield to them are surely lost;
Avert it hea'vn, avert their cruel sway,
Life pass in joyless apathy away;
Fond hope, gay love, and ev'ry dear desire,
All, all in frozen chastity expire,
Ye hours with dull lethargic pace drawl on,
'Tis better not to be than be undone.*

*Rash thought! why charge on hea'vn my impious fall?
Heav'n lends its blooming offspring grace to all;
Yet does that grace with mildest influence blest,
Gently assist, not force the free-born breast.
If passion wars, or hostile vice invades,
Grace ne'er obtrudes her salutary aids,
But waits for reason's call; then heav'nly kind,
She whelms the foe and frees the captive mind.
But ah! I ne'er invoked her sacred pow'r,
My reason slept at that disastrous hour;
When passion raged I took that passions part;
Clasped the dear foe and gave up all my heart,
Wretch that I was! for had I nobly strove,
And quench'd the kindling spark of guilty love;*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Then had these streaming eyes no sorrow known,
Now veiled forever in misfortune's frown.*

*The Hymen's flames had burnt serenely bright
Th' unsullied constant source of pure delight!*

*My tender parents seen their offspring blest,
And sunk with peace to everlasting rest.*

*But ah what ties of duty could restrain,
EDWARD appeared, and ev'ry tie was vain.*

*In vain did honour chide, in vain I strove,
He smil'd and ev'ry virtue languished into love.*

*Ah potent beauty! thou alone canst bind,
Those silken bonds that fasten mind to mind.*

*Else if a breast with ev'ry virtue fraught,
Each candid sentiment, each gen'rous thought,
If kind observance, tend'rest care could move;
If gratitude could melt the soul to love;
When SHORE had charm'd—but ah no nameless grace,
No roseate smile soft-wanton'd o'er his face;*

*No glance resistless, tangling ev'ry eye,
Attempt'd gentlest love with dignity;
He was not EDWARD—ah how changed the scene,
Since first I gazed on that enchanting mien.*

*All on a bank in Nature's liv'ry gay,
Propt on one arm, the blooming monarch lay.
O'er him a vine its slender foliage spread,
Mix't and supported with an alder's shade.*

*Close at his foot a rill ran plaintive by,
Soothed his fond soul and murmur'd sigh for sigh,
As I drew near my pulse disorder'd beat,
My heaving heart glow'd with unusual heat;*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*My eyes grew dim, each sense began to fail,
My slack hand dropt my loosen'd veil.
He starts, I fly, yet hear him as I move,
"Why flies my fair, when EDWARD pants with love?
"Oh yet return, let love each fear destroy,
"Sink on my breast and loosen unto joy,"*

*He said, and glowing with celestial charms,
The youthful hero sprang into my arms,
Alas! no more—yet ah till mem'ry fail,
Here must thy dear idea ever dwell;
Here till life's latest gasp shalt thou remain,
Here ev'ry joy be mix't with ev'ry pain;
Here fancy still re-call each scene of love,
Nor grief, nor GLOSTER can this bliss remove.*

*But whither would my restless phrenzy run,
I rage, I rave, I love and am undone.
O pardon GLOSTER, if o'erwhelmed with grief,
From horrors gloom I snatch some short relief
Yes I have err'd but how can I re-call
The curst, the fatal hour, that saw my fall?
Yet did you know the agonizing smart,
The ceaseless pangs that prey upon my heart,
Feel the full wretchedness in which I live,
You'd hate the crime, but oh you wou'd forgive!*

*Ah think what woes the morrow's dawn await,
How low'r the horrors of impending fate!
Oh, yet for pity grant my humble pray'r,
Ere justice drags me to that awful bar.
Canst thou behold me trembling as I pass,
Tear-falling anguish sad'ning o'er my face?*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*See the stern judges, barb'rous as thou art,
Wring the curs'd secret from my throbbing heart?
Mock my past joys, unveil my blushing shame,
Blaze forth my guilt and murder EDWARD'S fame?
Canst thou behold and will no pitying sigh,
No rising drop stand trembling in thy eye?
Thou canst not sure; one tender trickling tear,
Spite of thyself, shall start at my despair.
Ah then too late shall soft-ey'd pity flow,
Too late thy rigour soften at my woe;
When from their throne the angry judges rise,
And point at me, their destin'd sacrifice.
Hark, the loud hiss re-echoes thro' the throng!
EDWARD and SHORE are tossed from tongue to
tongue!
Me, wretched me, they drag to endless shame,
Lo, this was she who murdered EDWARD'S fame!
Oh! ere that word be spoke, that hour shall come,
Some secret ruffian send to seal my doom,
Pleas'd will I die, if death my crime atone,
For what is life, when fame, when honours gone?
Snatch'd from the joyless world, ah let me lie
Far from the sneer of ignominy's eye.
Where moulder'ring damps the dismal dungeon bound;
Where not the print of human step is found,
There let these relicts rest, unseen, unknown,
Mixt with their kindred earth and mouldering stone.
May one kind friend, 'tis all I shall request,
Close my dim eye and hail my ghost to rest;
On the cold urn her pious tribute pour,
Then sadly sigh, "Here lies the wretched SHORE!"*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Yet should these lines thy ebbing rage control,
And draw forgiveness from thy yielding soul,
Ah then for ever from the smile of day,
To some convents gloom I'd burst away,
There, veil'd in cloister'd sadness make my moan,
Call fellow sighs from each relenting stone,
Ev'n thou shalt sympathise to see me lie,
My sad soul weeping in my lifted eye;
Yet will I ask no respite from my care,
Be tears and pray'rs my only comfort there.*

*But ah! when humbled at devotions shrine,
When hope and grace in streams of glory shine,
Ev'n then, amid the altar's solemn light,
Should EDWARD'S picture catch my wander'ng sight,
At each stol'n glance fond love will heave a sigh,
One tender tear, stern virtue scarce can disapprove;
Ev'n heav'n with pity shall behold my love.*

*'Tis all I can, thou dear departed shade,
'Tis all I can, and that is freely paid—
Thou, GLOSTER, too, my pious vows shall have,
And share the blessings which thy mercy gave;
When the stern fates hang hov'ring o'er my head,
Their shears just op'd to cut thy vital thread,
Then shall my fervent pray'rs and grateful sighs
Call dove-winged comfort from the op'ning skies;
And white robed bliss in pure effulgence drest,
To smooth thy passage to eternal rest.*

SEVEN

THE story of Jane Shore formed a favourite theme for the writers of popular ballads. One of the earliest of these is to be found in the Bagford Collection.¹ It was probably printed in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and is reproduced by Percy in his "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," where it is said to have been taken from a rare tract in the Pepy's Collection. It is entitled:

THE WOEFULL LAMENTATION OF JANE SHORE

A GOLDSMITH'S WIFE IN LONDON, SOME TIME
KING EDWARD IV HIS CONCUBINE

It is to be sung to the tune of "Live with me," etc.

*If Rosamonde that was so fair,
Had come her sorrows to declare,
Then let Jane Shore with sorrow sing,
That was beloved of a King.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*In maiden years my beauty bright,
Was loved dear of lord and knight;
But yet the love that they requir'd
It was not as my friends desir'd.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.*

¹ Bagford Collection, C.40, M.10.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*My parents they, for thirst of gain,
A husband for me did obtain,
And I, then pleasure to fulfill,
Was forced to wed against my will.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.*

*To Matthew¹ Shore I was a wife,
Till lust brought ruin to my life,
And then my life I lewdly spent,
Which makes my soul to lament.
Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*In Lombard street I once did dwell,
As London yet can witness well,
Where many gallants did behold,
My beauty in a shop of gold.
Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*I spred my plumes as wantons do,
Some sweet and secret friend to woo,
Because chaste love I did not find
Agreeing to my wanton mind.
The maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*At last my name in Court did ring
Into the ears of England's King,*

¹ That the Christian name of Jane Shore's husband was William, is proved from the letter of King Richard to the Bishop of Lincoln (see page 156). The name of Matthew is a common error in some of the old ballads and chap-books.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Who came and lik'd and love requir'd,
But I made coy what he desir'd.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Yet Mistress Blague, a neighbour near,
Whose friendship I esteemed dear,
Did say, it was a gallant thing
To be beloved of a King.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.*

*By her persuasions I was led
For to defile my marriage bed,
And wronged my wedded husband Shore,
Whom I had married years before.*

*The maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*In heart and mind I did rejoice,
That I had made so sweet a choice,
And therefore did my state resign,
To be King Edward's concubine.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*From city then to Court I went,
To reap the pleasures of content,
There had the joys that love could bring,
And knew the secrets of a King.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*When I was thus advanc'd on high,
Commanding Edward with mine eye,
For Mistress Blague I in short space,
Obtained a living from his grace.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*No friend I had but in short time,
I made unto promotion climb,
But yet for all this costly pride,
My husband could not me abide.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*His bed though wrong'd by a King
His heart with deadly grief did sting;
From England then he goes away,
To end his life beyond the sea.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*He could not live to see his name
Impaired by my wanton shame,
Although a Prince of peerless might,
Did reap the pleasure of his right.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Long time I lived in the Court,
With lords and ladies of great sort,
And when I smil'd all men were glad,
But when I frown'd my Prince grew sad.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*But yet a gentle mind I bore,
To helpless people that were poor,
I still redrest the orphan's cry,
And sav'd their lives condemn'd to die.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*I still had ruth on widows tears,
I succour'd babes of tender years,
And never look'd for other gain
But love and thanks for all my pain.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*At last my royal King did die,
And then my days of woe grew nigh,
When crook-back Richard gat the Crown,
King Edward's friends were soon put down.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.*

*I then was punish't for my sin,
That I so long had liv'd in,
Yea, every one that was his friend,
This tyrant brought to shameful end.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Then for my lewd and wanton life,
That made a strumpet of a wife,
I penance did in Lombard street,
In shameful manner in a sheet.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Where many thousands did me view,
Who late in Court my credit knew,
Which made the tears run down my face,
To think upon my foul disgrace.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Not thus content they took from me,
My goods, my livings, and my fee,
And charg'd that none should me relieve,
Nor any succour to me give.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Then unto Mistress Blague I went,
To whom my jewels I had sent,
In hope thereby to ease my want,
When riches failed and love grew scant.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*But she denied to me the same,
When in my need for them I came,
To recompense my former love,
Out of her doors she did me shove.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*So love did vanish with my state,
Which now my soul repents too late,
Therefore example take by me,
For friendship parts in poverty.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*But yet one friend among the rest,
Whom I before had seen distrest,
And sav'd his life condemn'd to die,
Did give me food to succour me.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*For which by law it was decreed,
That he was hanged for that deed,
His death did grieve me so much more,
Than had I died myself therefore.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Then those to whom I had done good,
Durst not afford me any food,
Whereby I begged all the day,
And still in streets by night I lay.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*My gowns beset with pearl and gold,
Were turn'd to simple garments old;
My chains and gems and golden rings,
To filthy rags and loathsome things.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Thus was I scorn'd by maid and wife,
For leading such a wicked life,
Both sucking babes and children small,
Did make their pastime at my fall.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*I could not get one bit of bread,
Whereby my hunger might be fed,
Nor drink, but such as channels yield,
Or stinking ditches in the field.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*Thus weary of my life at length,
I yielded up my vital strength,
Within a ditch of loathsome scent,
Where carrion dogs did much frequent.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*The which now since my dying day,
Is Shore ditch call'd as writer's say,¹
Which is a witness of my sin,
For being concubine to a King.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*You wanton wives that fall to lust,
Be you assur'd that God is just;
Whoredom shall not escape his hand,
Nor pride unpunish'd in this land.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

¹ The tradition of the origin of the word Shoreditch was an erroneous one, common in the chap-books and tracts. Stowe says "it was called from a wealthy and worshipful family. Sir John Shoreditch was lord of a manor called Shoreditch long before Mistress Jane Shore was born. Shoreditch Church was in this manor and has its name from it." Strype's edition of Stowe, Vol. II, p. 796.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*If God to me such shame did bring,
That yielded only to a King,
How shall 'scape that daily run,
To practise sin with everyone.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*

*You husbands, match not but for love,
Lest some disliking after prove;
Women, be warn'd when you are wives,
What plagues are due to sinful lives.*

*Then maids and wives in time amend
For love and beauty will have end.*



EIGHT

ANOTHER ballad of the seventeenth century, a copy of which is to be found in the Bagford Collection,¹ is entitled :

WOEFUL LAMENTATION

THE SECOND PART OF JANE SHORE, WHEREIN HER HUSBAND
BEWAILS HER WANTONNESS THE WRONG OF MARRIAGE AND
THE FALL OF PRIDE

*If she that was fair London's Pride,
For beauty fam'd both far and wide,
With swanlike-song in sadness told,
Her deep distresses manifold,
Then in the same let me also,
Now bear a part of such like woe.
Kind Matthew Shore, men called me,
A goldsmith once of good degree,
And might have lived long therein,
Had not my wife been wed to sin;
Ah gentle Jane, thy wanton race,
Hath brought me to this foul disgrace.
Thou hadst all things at wish and will,
Thy wanton fancy to fulfil,
No London dame nor merchant's wife,
Did lead so sweet and pleasant life.*

¹ Bagford Ballads, No. 29.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Then gentle Jane, the truth report,
Why left'st thou me to live in Court?
Thou hadst both gold and silver store,
No wife in London then had more;
And once a week to walk in field,
And see what pleasure it would yield,
But woe to me that Liberty,
Hath brought me to this misery.
I married thee whilst thou wert young,
Before thou knewest what did belong,
To husband's love or marriage state,
Which now my soul repents too late,
Thus wanton Pride made thee unjust,
And so deceived was my trust,
But when the King possest my room
And cropt my rosie gallant Bloom,
Fair London's blossom and my joy,
My heart was drown'd in deep annoy.
To think how unto public shame,
Thy wicked life brought my good name,
And then I thought each man and wife,
In jesting sore accused my Life.
And every one to the other said,
That Shore's fair wife the wanton played,
Thereby in mind I grew to change
My dwelling in some country strange.
My lands and goods I sold away,
And so from England went to sea;
Opprest with grief and woful mind,
But left my cause of grief behind,
My loving wife whom I once thought,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Would never be to lewdness brought.
But women now I well espy
Are subject to inconstancy,
And few there be so true of Love,
But by long suit will wanton prove.
For flesh is frail and woman weak,
When kings for love long suit do make.
But yet from England my depart,
Was with a sad and heavy heart,
Whereat when as my leave I took,
I sent back many a heavy look.
Desiring God if it might be,
To send one sigh sweet Jane to thee.
For if thou had'st but constant been,
These days of woe I ne'er had seen,
But yet I mourn and grieve full sore,
To think what plagues are left in store.
For such as careless tread away,
The modest path of constancy,
Ah! gentle Jane if thou didst know,
The uncouth paths I daily go,
And woful tears for thee I shed
For wronging thus my marriage bed.
Then sure I am thou wouldst confess,
My love was sure though a distress.
Both Flanders, France and Spain I past,
And came to Turkey at the last,
And there within that mighty Court,
I lived long in honest cost,
Desiring God that sits in heav'n,
That lover's sins might be forgiven.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*And then advanc'd thy loving name,
Of living wights the fairest Dame;
The praise of England's beauty stain,
All which thy husband did maintain.
And set the picture there in gold,
For kings and princes to behold.
For when I thought upon the sin,
Thy wanton thoughts delighted in,
I griev'd that such a comely face,
Should hold true honour in disgrace.
And counteth it a luckless day,
When as thou first didst go astray,
Desiring then some news to hear,
Of her my soul did love so dear,
My secrets then I did impart,
To one well-skilled in magic art.
Who in a glass did truly show,
Such things as I desir'd to know.
I there did see thy Courtly state,
Thy pomp, thy pride, the glory great,
I likewise there I did behold,
My Jane in Edward's arms enfold.
Thy secret love I there espied,
Thy rise, thy fall, and how thy died,
Thy naked body in the street,
I saw do penance in a sheet.
Barefoot before the Beadle's wand,
With burning taper in thy hand,
And bodies not having use of tongue,
Stand pointing as thou went'st along.
Thus ended was the shame of thine,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Though God gave yet no end to mine,
When I supposed my name forgot,
And time had wash'd away my blot,
And in another Prince's reign,
I came to England back again.
But staying there my friends decay'd
My Prince's laws I disobeyed
And by true justice judged to die,
For clipping gold in secrecy;
By gold was my best living made,
And so by gold my life decayed.
Thus have you heard the woful strife,
That came by my unconstant wife.
Her fall, my death wherein is shew'd
The story of a strumpet lewd.
In hope thereby some women may,
Take heed how they at wanton play.*

NINE

AMONG the ballads popular in the Restoration period was one entitled:

A NEW BALLAD OF KING EDWARD AND JANE SHORE

To the tune of "St. George for England and the Dragon."
Printed in London, 1671.

A copy of this ribald effusion is still preserved among the Roxburgh Ballads:

*Why should we boast of Lais and his Knights?
Knowing such champions entrapt by whorish lights,
Or why should we speak of Thais curled locks,
Or Rudophe that gave so many men the pox,
Read old stories and there you shall find,
How Jane Shore, Jane Shore, she pleas'd King Edward's
mind.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,
Honi soit qui mal y pence.*

*To speak of the Amazons it were too long to tell,
And likewise of the Thracian Girls how far they did
excel,
Those with Scythian Lads, engag'd in several fights,
And in the brave Venetion Wars did foil adventurous
knights,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Marsaline and Julia were vessels wondrous brittle,
But Jane Shore, Jane Shore, took down King Edward's
mettle.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,
Honi soit qui mal y pence.*

*Thallestis of Thormydon she was a doubly weight,
She conquer'd Pallas King in the exercise of night,
Hercules slew the Draggon, whose teeth were all of
brass,*

*Yet he himself became a slave unto the Lydian Lass,
The Theban Semule lay with Jove not dreading all his
thunder,*

*But Jane Shore overcame King Edward although he had
her under.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,
Honi soit qui mal y pence.*

*Helen of Greece, she came of Spartan blood,
Agricola and Cressida they were brave whores and good;
Queen Clytemnestra boldly slew old Arthur's mighty
son,*

*And fair Harcyon pull'd down the strength of Tallamon,
Those were the ladies that caus'd the Trojan sack,
But Jane Shore, Jane Shore she spoil'd King Edward's
back,*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,
Honi soit qui mal y pence.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*For this the ancient Fathers did, great Venus deifie,
Because with her own Father Jove she fear'd not to lie,
Hence Cupid came who afterward reveng'd his loving
Mother,*

*And made kind Biblis do the like with Cornus her own
Brother.*

*And afterwards the goddess kept Adonis for reserve,
But Jane Shore, Jane Shore she strecht King Edward's
nerve.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,
Honi soit qui mal y pence.*

*The Colchean Dame, Mædea, her father did betray,
And taught her lover Jason how the vigilant Bull to slay;
And after thence convey'd her Father's golden fleece,
She with her lover sail'd away in Argus ship to Greece;
But finding Jason false, she burnt his wife and Court,
But Jane Shore, Jane Shore, she show'd King Edward
sport.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,
Honi soit qui mal y pence.*

*Romix of Saxoni the Welsh state overthrew,
Igraeyn of Cornwall, Pendragon did subdue,
Queen Quinever with Arthur fought singly hand to
hand,*

*In bed, though afterward she made horns on his head
to stand,*

And to Sir Mordred pictish Prince a paramore became,

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*But Jane Shore, Jane Shore, she made King Edward
tame.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.

*Marosia of Italy, see how the stoutly copes,
With Jesuits Priest and Cardinals and triple crown'd
Popes,*

*And with King Henry, Rosamond spent many a dally-
ing hour,*

*Till lastly poyson'd by the Queen in Woodstock's fatal
bower,*

*And Joan of Arc plaid in ye dark with ye Knights of
Languidock,*

*But Jane Shore met King Edward and gave him knock
for knock.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.

*Pasipha we know played feats with the Cretan Bull,
And Proserpine though so divine became black Plutoe's
Trul,*

*The Spanish bawd her strumpets taught to lay their
legs astride,*

*But these and all the curtezans Jane Shore she did
deride.*

*Pope Joan was right, although she did the Papal sceptre
wield,*

*But Jane Shore, Jane Shore she made King Edward
yield.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.

*Agathoclya and Æanthe did govern Egypt's King,
The witty wench of Andover she was a pretty thing,
She freely took her ladies place and with great Edgar
dally'd,*

*And with main force she soyl'd him quite although he
often rally'd*

*For which brave act he that her rackt gave her his
Ladies land.*

But Jane Shore, Jane Shore, King Edward did command.

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.

*Of Phryne and Lamva historians have related,
How their illustrious beauties, two Generals captivated,
And they that in the days of yore kill'd men and sack'd
their cities,*

*In honour of their Mistresses composed amorous Ditties.
Let Flora gay, with Romans play and be a goddess call'd,
But Jane Shore, Jane Shore, King Edward she enthral'd.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.

*The jolly Tanner's Daughter, Harlot of Normandy,
She only had the happiness to please Duke Robert's eye,
And Roxoliana, though a slave and born a Grecian
Could with a nod, command and rule grand Seignior
Sollyman,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*And Naples Joan, would make them groan yet ardently
did lov'er,*

*But Jane Shore, Jane Shore, King Edward he did
shov'er.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.

Aspatia doth of the Persian brothers boast,

*Though Scinthya joy in ye Lamphean boy, Jane Shore
shall rule the roast,*

*Cleopatra lov'd Mark Anthony and Brownal she did
feats,*

*But compar'd to our virago they were but merely
cheats.*

*Brave carpet Knights in Cupid's sights their milk-white
rapiers drew,*

But Jane Shore, Jane Shore, King Edward did subdue.

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.

*Hamlet's incestuous mother was Gartherred, Denmark's
Queen,*

*And Circe that enchanting witch the like was scarcely
seen,*

Warlike Penthasillia was an Amazonian whore,

*To Hector and young Troyalus both which did her
adore,*

*But brave King Edward who before had gain'd nine
victories*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Was like a bon' slave fetter'd with Jane Shore's all-
conquering thighs.*

*Jane Shore she was for England, Queen Fredrick was
for France,*

Honi soit qui mal y pence.



TEN

IN the early years of the eighteenth century, fresh interest was aroused in the story of Jane Shore by the production of a play by Nicholas Rowe, which proved a great success. "The Tragedy of Jane Shore" was declared by the critics to be superior in every respect to the dramatist's earlier works. Although Rowe drew largely on Sir Thomas More's account of her career, he introduces several fictitious characters, and his story is by no means historically correct.

The play was first produced on February 2nd, 1714, at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and its run was nearly a record one. Special music was written for the occasion, and Cibber's account for his charges in connection with it, signed by himself, Booth and Wilks, is still in existence.

It is as follows:

<i>For writering the musick</i>	}	o 14 o
<i>In ye Tragedy of Jane Shore</i>		
<i>and for paper and covers</i>		

Charges

<i>For going to Kingston</i>	}	o 10 o
<i>for the tunes on Sunday</i>		
<i>and return on Monday.</i>		

One pound four

(signed) C. CIBBER
B. BOOTH
ROB. WILKS

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

The author was given three benefit-nights, and one was set apart for Mrs. Oldfield, who created the title rôle.

The cast was as follows:

<i>Duke of Gloster</i>	.	.	<i>Mr Cibber</i>
<i>Lord Hastings</i>	.	.	<i>Mr Booth</i>
<i>Catesby</i>	.	.	<i>Mr Husbands</i>
<i>Sir Richard Ratcliffe</i>	.	.	<i>Mr Bowman</i>
<i>Bellmour</i>	.	.	<i>Mr Mills</i>
<i>Dumont</i>	.	.	<i>Mr Wilks</i>
<i>Alicia</i>	.	.	<i>Mrs Porter</i>
<i>JANE SHORE</i>	.	.	<i>MRS OLDFIELD.</i>

The play was printed by Bernard Lintott at the "Cross Keys" between the two Temple Gates in Fleet Street, London, in 1714, and is dedicated to his Grace the Duke of Queensberry and Dover, Marquis of Beverley.

It is entitled:

THE TRAGEDY OF JANE SHORE

written in imitation of Shakespeare's style

by

N. ROWE ESQ.

The prologue was spoken by Mr. Wilks and the epilogue by Mrs. Oldfield.

The period is after the death of King Edward, when Gloster had been made Protector. The play begins with the following speech:

GLOSTER. *Thus far success attends upon our Councils,
And each event has answered to my wish,
The Queen and all her upstart Race are
quell'd;*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Dorset is banished, and her brother Rivers
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.*

Later on, Jane Shore, who is an ardent supporter of the two young princes kept prisoners in the Tower by the Protector, pleads with him for their rights. Gloster receives her petition with scorn, and determines to rid himself of her. He thus calls for Catesby, Ratcliffe and his attendants to take her away :

Go some of you and turn this strumpet forth,
Spurn her into the street, there let her perish,
And rot upon a Dunghill. Thro' the city
See it proclaimed that none on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food or harbour;
Who ministers the smallest comfort dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
The purchase of her loose, luxurious life
We seize on for the profit of the State.
Away! Be gone!

In the scene at the Council Chamber at the Tower,
Gloster thus declaims:

*What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,
Who shall with Potions, Charms and Witching Drugs,
Practise against our Person and our Life.
Behold my arm thus blasted, dry and wither'd
 (pulling up his sleeve)
Shrunk like a foul abortion and decay'd
Like some untimely product of the Seasons,
Rob'd of its Properties of strength and office.
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Who in conjunction with that Harlot Shore,
And other like confederate midnight Haggs,
By force of potent Spells of bloody character,
And conjurations horrible to hear,
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning Deep,
And set the ministers of Hell at work,
To torture and despoil my life.*

HASTINGS. *If they have done this deed—*

GLOSTER. *If they have done it?*

*Talk'st thou to me of Ifs! audacious Traitor!
Thou art that strumpet-witch's chief abettor,
The patron and comploter of her mischiefs
And join'd in this contrivance for my death.
Nay. Start not, Lords—What hoa! a guard
there Sirs!*

*Lord Hastings I arrest thee of High Treason.
Seize him, and bear him instantly away.
He sha' not live an hour, By Holy Paul!
I will not dine before his Head be brought
to me.*

In Act V, the scene is laid in a city street. Shore meets Bellmour, who has been among the spectators at Jane's penance, and thus questions him:

SHORE. *You saw her then?*

BELLMOUR. *I met her as returning
In solemn Penance from the publick Cross.
Before her, certain Rascal Officers,
Slaves in authority, the Knaves of Justice
Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*On either side her march'd an ill-looking
Priest*

*Who with severe, with horrid haggard eyes,
Did ever and anon by turns upbraid her
And thunder in her trembling ear Damna-
tion.*

*Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd
Should'ring each other, crowding for a view.
Gaping and gazing, Taunting and Reviling;
Some pitying, but those alas! how few!
The most such Iron hearts we are, and such
The base barbarity of human kind,
With insolence and lewd reproach pursued
her,*

*Hooting and Railing and with villainous
hands
Gathering the filth from out the common
ways,
To hurl upon her head.*

SHORE. *Inhuman dogs!*

How did she bear it?

BELLMOUR. *With the gentlest patience.*

*Submissive, sad and lowly was her look;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders carelessly confus'd
With loose neglect her lovely tresses hung;
Upon her cheek a faintish flush was spread.
Feeble she seem'd and sorely smit with
pain,
While bare-foot as she trod the flinty pave-
ment,*

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

*Her footsteps all along were mark'd with
blood.*

*Yet silent still she pass'd and unrepining;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow
To Heaven, she seem'd in fervent zeal to
raise,
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.*

The play concludes with a meeting between Jane and her husband and their reconciliation; but while Shore is in the act of befriending her and giving her food, he is arrested by Catesby with a guard and conveyed to prison.

Jane, exhausted, weak and tottering, tries to follow them, but her strength gives way and she falls and dies in the street.

The pathos of the last act, when Jane wanders up and down the city streets, destitute and famished, was praised by the critics, and Mrs. Oldfield's marvellous acting is said to have held the house enthralled.

The epilogue, spoken by Mrs. Oldfield, concluded with the following lines :

*Her Lover was a King, she Flesh and Blood,
And since she has dearly paid the sinful Score,
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.*

Mrs. Siddons revived the play at Bath in 1777, where she took the part of Alicia, and reproduced it at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in 1785. It was translated into French in 1797.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

The story of Jane Shore formed the theme of several other popular plays produced during the nineteenth century, the most recent being the work of W. G. Wills, which was produced at the Princess's Theatre in 1876. According to a critic, "it was rendered a success by means of a snow scene, but it was a tedious and inartistic play."



JANE SHORE DOING PENANCE
(from a woodcut of the XVII Century.)

ELEVEN

THE revival of interest in the life of Jane Shore caused by Nicholas Rowe's play brought forth numerous little tracts and chap-books about 1714, which met with a ready sale. The majority of them consisted of garbled accounts of her life and career and were mainly fictitious. One little book is interesting on account of its dedication to Mrs. Oldfield. It is entitled :

THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF JANE SHORE
collected from our best historians, chiefly from the
writings of Sir Thomas More, her contemporary and
personally knew her. Humbly offer'd to the Readers
and Spectators of Her Tragedy written by Mr. Rowe.
Inscrib'd to Mrs. Oldfield.

Printed and sold by J. MORPHEW. LONDON.
MDCCXIV.

The dedication is as follows :

"To the Incomparable Representative of Jane Shore.

MRS. OLDFIELD

"Madam,

"The great encomium which your Merits extort from
everybody is, That you Act your Parts extreamly well.
This wins you the Praise and esteem of Poets and

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

Spectators and all that belong to your profession. I wish we could all do the like; we should then be worthy, gallant people indeed. Many of us are daily kickt off the Stage and ruin ourselves; many more we put into Disorder and Confusion by not acting our parts as we might and ought to do.

My Business at present, is only to light up candles for the Tragedy of Jane Shore. A very small Matter! and yet what can be done without it? Where are either Actors or Spectators without light? We cannot heartily commiserate your unfortunate lady nor applaud you for appearing very like her, unless we are first acquainted with her true story and know from good authority that she really suffer'd the Hardships you complain of.

I presume Madam, to borrow Reputation to this Life and Character from your name, who will ever have Mrs. Shore's wit and good humour, but will I hope carry her misfortunes no further than the stage."

TWELVE

ICONOGRAPHY

AT the period in which Jane Shore lived, portraiture as an art had scarcely begun in England, therefore it is not to be wondered that there are no authentic portraits of her known. Those that we have, are imaginary pictures dating from about the middle of the sixteenth century, and none of them can be said to correspond with the descriptions of her face, features, and hair recorded by contemporary writers.

Besides those we reproduce, there were others, described by early writers, which have disappeared in the course of time and cannot be traced. Among these is the portrait of Jane Shore which Michael Drayton says he saw at Eton College, presumably in the early seventeenth century. He states: "The picture that I have seen of her was such as she rose out of her bed in a morning, having nothing on but a rich mantle cast under one arm over her shoulder, sitting on a chair on which her naked arm did lie." Neither of the two portraits now at Eton College supposed to represent Jane Shore answers to Drayton's description.

Aubrey, in his "Miscellanies" (1696), mentions that "Lady Southcot sister of Sir John Suckling had at her house in Bishopsgate Street a rare picture viz. of that

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

pretty creature Mrs Jane Shore, an original." This picture also has unfortunately disappeared.

Thomas Hearne declares in his "Notes" (1710) that "there are several pictures of Jane Shore one of which I have seen in the hands of a very ingenious gentleman at Christ Church in Oxford, but not that which is mentioned by the antiquarian poet" (Michael Drayton). Another portrait is described by the Rev. Mark Noble. Writing in 1813, he says: "I remember seeing when a young man in an old family mansion near Coventry, let for a kind of Vauxhall, some ancient paintings. Amongst them, on board, was a portrait in oil of her (Jane Shore) to the waist, without clothing or ornament, except jewels in her hair and a necklace also of jewels. It is quite like that at Eton." He further remarks that "on a copy of the picture at Eton College there was an MS date 1483."

The oil paintings at present known, supposed to represent Jane Shore, are as follows:

1. Picture of Jane Shore belonging to His Majesty the King in the Royal Collection at Hampton Court Palace.

A three-quarter-length figure, painted on panel 3 ft. 3 in. by 2 ft. 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. Inscribed along the top

BAKERS (BANKERS) WIFE . . . MISTRIS TO A KING

She is represented with fair hair and brown eyes, wearing a closely fitting cap of large pearls. A black hat with high crown and a band ornamented with pearls.

Thin lace ruff round the neck. Bodice of dress, dark orange brocaded with black, and over it a full cape

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

of brown cloth edged with black brocade. The skirt is of dark olive green brocade. A twisted gold bracelet on each wrist.

Mr. C. H. Collins Baker, the Surveyor of the King's Pictures, is of the opinion that "the picture is not contemporary with Jane Shore, and can only be very dubiously connected with some earlier portrait." Judging from the costume, it was painted about the latter half of the sixteenth century.

2. At the Provost's Lodge, Eton College.

Head and bust undraped, with jewels in the hair and a heavy jewelled necklace with pendant across the shoulders. Two rows of pearls around the neck. Painted on panel probably in the late sixteenth century.

3. Half-length figure with slight gauzy drapery from the waist, held by one hand and brought partly over the head. Marble bath with carved pediment in foreground. Painted on canvas probably by a French artist about the end of the seventeenth century.

4. At the Provost's Lodge, King's College, Cambridge.

Head and bust undraped, with jewels in the hair, necklace and pearls. Obviously a copy of the picture No. 2 at Eton College. It is thought by some to represent Diane de Poitiers.

5. Picture of Jane Shore by Joseph Nicholas Robert Fleury (*circa* 1830) formerly in Musée du Luxembourg, Paris.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

Engravings

1. Mezzotint by J. Faber, inscribed:

MRS. JANE SHORE

Done from the original picture in Eaton College.

The engraver has taken considerable licence with the picture by elaborating the hair and partially draping the bust.

2. Etching by the Rev. Michael Tyson, inscribed:

JANE SHORE

From an original picture in the Provost's Lodge at King's College, Cambridge.

3. Engraving from a picture said to have belonged to Dr. Peckard of Magdalen College, Cambridge.
4. Engraving by F. Bartolozzi, R.A., inscribed:

JANE SHORE

"Give gentle Mistress Shore one gentle kiss the more."

King Richard III, Act III, Sc. 1.

This is also taken from the picture (No. 2) at Eton College.

5. Engraving by F. Bartolozzi, R.A., from a drawing by S. Harding. An imaginary portrait.
6. Engraving by Edward Scriven from a drawing by W. S. Lethbridge, inscribed:

JANE SHORE

From a drawing by W. S. Lethbridge, after an original picture in the possession of the Noble Family of Hastings.

7. Jane Shore doing penance in St. Paul's. Drawn and engraved by Lud. du Guernier.

THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE

Picture of Mrs. Siddons and Edmund Keen in "Jane Shore." 66 by 60 in. Painted by William Hamilton, R.A. In the possession of F. J. Nettlefold, Esq.

The author's thanks are due to F. Gordon Roe, Esq., editor of The Connoisseur, for his valued assistance in the iconography.

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