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SAMUEL WRIGHT, Editor and Proprietor.

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Selections.

English Sovereigns.

In spite of his firm tramp, brawny arm and stalwart frame, the Norman conqueror was at length conquered, and retired from the field of battle to succumb to the last enemy in the monastery of St. Gervais at Rouen, the church of which is now reputed to be the oldest structure in the city. The closing scene was a melancholy spectacle.—Robert, his first-born, to whom he bequeathed Normandy, was away prosecuting crusading adventures. William, the second son, staid only to hear himself nominated to the crown of England, and then left his father to get through his last agony as he could, galloping off to the coast, eager to secure his prize. Henry, the third son, lingered sulky and grumbling till his record money was declared, when he departed likewise, hurried to the treasury, carefully weighed the silver, and placed it under iron locks and bindings. No sooner did the fatal event occur, about sunrise, on a September day, than nobles, knights and priests decamped to look after their own interests, while servants set to work to plunder; and the body of the once potent monarch lay stripped and deserted, till the charity of an obscure individual provided for its conveyance to a resting-place at Caen, according to the wish of the deceased. But there was some difficulty in effecting the funeral, as one of the bystanders, a man of low degree, claimed property in the site of the grave; and the service for the dead was not allowed to proceed till sixty sous had been paid down as an instalment of his rights. A plain gray marble slab before the high altar in the church of St Stephen now marks the sepulchre of William the Conqueror; but not an atom of him lies beneath it. In 1542 the tomb was opened by the Bishop of Bayeux, when the body was found in good preservation, justifying by its appearance the reports of chronicles respecting his tall stature. But thirty years later it was violated during an insurrection, when the coffin was dug up and emptied of its contents, which, however, the care of a monk preserved in his chamber. Here they continued till a subsequent insurrection, when the whole abbey was plundered, and the remains were lost, except one of the thigh-bones, which was reinterred, and a monument raised over it in 1642. Even this relic has disappeared, for the revolutionists of 1793 rifled the spot, and disposed of the fragment as if the last vestige of a dog. The furious democrats were not wise in their generation, for the fleshless remnant of the limb might have been preserved as an impressive memorial of the fate of royalty; and a veritable thigh bone of the dreaded conqueror would now fetch a handsome price in the London market, where all things odd and rare are readily disposed of to collectors who have more cash than brains.

As a hunter gay, William the Red King entered the New Forest on a bright August morning. He had slept the previous night at a lodge within its precincts.

> "The Red King lies in Malwood keep
> To drive the deer o'er lawn and steep;
> He's bound him with the morn,
> His steeds are swift his hounds are good;
> The like in covert, or high wood,
> Were never cheered with horn."

None more rigorously enforced the laws of the chase than he, or more cruelly punished an infringement of them. It was consolation to the poor Saxons contemptuously to style him "a wood-keeper and no king;" at the same time firmly believing that their oppressors were not always allowed to disport themselves with impunity, the Evil One sometimes interrupting their recreations in the hunting grounds, and marring revelry with sore disaster. The event of the day strengthened this popular superstition, for the lifeless body of the Red King was soon stretched on the greensward by the chance arrow of an attendant.—Henry, his brother, left him to his fate, and, putting spurs to his horse, rode off to Winchester to seize the royal treasury. The involuntary author of the deed fled, fearing the consequences; and the barons each departed to his residence to put it in a posture of defence, as the succession might have to be decided by the sword. Towards evening a man named Purkiss, on returning home through the forest from his daily occupation of charcoal-burning, found the abandoned corpse lying on the turf, which was saturated with blood. Ignorant of its quality, he placed the slaughtered man in his cart, and conveyed him to Winchester. Rufus found a grave in the cathedral, and was interred in the centre of the choir, with little ceremony, none grieving. The fall of a tower in the following year, which covered his tomb with its ruins, was commonly interpreted as a sign of the displeasure of Heaven that he had received Christian burial.—Speed relates that his bones were afterwards taken up, and, being laid in a coffin along with those of Canute, were replaced. A plain monumental stone now marks the spot. It is singular that, after the lapse of eight centuries, cottagers of the name of the charcoal-burner still reside in the New Forest, and that a wheel of the identical cart descended, to a recent date, as an heirloom from father to son, till used for fuel during an inclement winter.

Henry I., like his father the Conqueror, died abroad, on a December midnight, of a disease brought on by his fondness for lampreys. This was at Lions-la-Foret, now a small town approached through the remains of a forest in the vicinity of Rouen. His remains were interred in the abbey of Reading, Berkshire, one of his foundations, a structure which has passed away, and no man knoweth of his sepulchre. Stephen terminated his troubled reign at Dover, and found a resting place by the side of his queen and son at the monastery of Faversham, in Kent, which he had founded. There his corpse remained until the dissolution of the abbeys, when, for the possession of the leaden coffin, it was exhumed, and its contents thrown into the sea.

The restless and fiery Henry II. breathed his last at the castle of Chinon, the French Windsor of the Plantagenet kings, now an imposing ruin, on a commanding height, near the junction of the Vienne with the Loire. Courtiers, who had trembled at his word, took a hurried departure, and personal retainers followed the example of their superiors; but not before they had stripped the dead man of every rag, and the apartment of every article of value. After some delay, charity found a winding-sheet for the body, and it was removed for interment to the neighboring abbey of Fontevraud, then one of the wealthiest ecclesiastical establishments in France, situated at the head of a little retired and wooded valley. Here, previous to the funeral, the corpse was laid in the church, when, according to legendary story, it shuddered convulsively at the approach of Richard, an undutiful son, as if condemning and abhorring his unnatural conduct. Richard I., the conqueror of Saladin and hero of a hundred fights, received his death-wound before the castle of Chalus in the Limousin, the petty fortress of a vassal, and was laid by the side of his father at Fontevraud, where also reposed his mother, Queen Eleanor of Guienne, and afterwards Isabella d'Angouleme, the queen of his brother John. Recumbent effigies of these personages, were placed upon the tombs—one of the earliest instances we have of this interesting sepulchral relic of the middle ages. The abbey remains, but it has been converted into a prison—*Maison Centrale de Detention*—one of the largest in France. The church is also entire as to the outside, but the interior is wholly changed. Nor are the royal tombs in their original position. They were torn up and rifled by the Vandals of the Revolution, who signalized their hatred of royalty by scattering the ashes of the dead, and mutilating the statues, which are now stowed away in a dark corner of the south transept. The effigies, though sadly defaced, still retain some of the coloring with which they were ornamented, and are of great interest from the evident marks they bear of being portraits. Both kings are represented in royal robes, without armor. Cœur de Lion's figure is remarkable for its broad forehead and tall stature, six feet and a half. It has been frequently suggested that application should be made to have these monuments of the first Plantagenets transferred to Westminster Abbey as a fitting asylum, now that no fragment of the dead remains in connection with them—a concession which would doubtless be immediately granted by the French government, in return for having received the body of Napoleon from St. Helena, and his will from Doctors' Commons.

The worthless John was seized with mortal sickness in the fens of Lincolnshire, after seeing the sumpter-horses that carried his money drowned in the marshes, and taking an immoderate quantity of peaches or pears and new cider to console himself under the misfortune. With great difficulty he successfully reached the castles of Sleaford and Newark, in the last of which he ended a disgraceful career, and was re-moved at his own desire to be buried in Worcester Cathedral. His tomb there, in the centre of the choir, has a full recumbent effigy, the first memorial of the kind executed in England for an English monarch. It was opened in 1796, when the corpse was found nearly entire, after an interment of five hundred and eighty years. His son, the feeble Henry III., died at Westminster, and was the first of our sovereigns interred in its Abbey-church since the Saxon times, an edifice which he rebuilt from its foundation. The Pell Records contain an entry of payment to two chaplains for divine service being performed at the hermitage of Charing on the occasion of his decease, at present one of the busiest sites in the metropolis—forcibly reminding us of the different character of the spot in the thirteenth century. The tomb exhibits his effigy, finely executed in brass, and cast at the same time as the adjoining effigy of Queen Eleanor. Edward I. expired at the village of Burgh-upon Sands, near Carlisle, within sight of the Scotland which he had vowed to subdue.—But although he is said to have left express orders for his bones to be carried at the head of the army till the purpose was accomplished, they were quickly deposited in Westminster Abbey by an unwarlike son, where the body was found comparatively undecayed in 1774. It was arrayed in royal robes, with crown and sceptre, and measured six feet two inches; hence the *soubriquet* of Longshanks was not inaptly bestowed. The obsequies are said to have been performed with great splendor. In the accounts of his executors we have, among other entries, one of £100 paid "for horses purchased for knights to ride in the king's armor before his body, between the church of the Holy Trinity, London, and Westminster."

The effeminate and deposed Edward II., foully murdered in Berkley Castle, Gloucestershire, by order of Mortimer, the infamous paramour of his infamous queen, was hurriedly conveyed to a grave in Gloucester Cathedral. Deplorable degradation marked the last hours of Edward III., at Sheen Palace, afterwards called Richmond, for the practice of abandoning royalty in the article of death was adopted in his case. Before the old man's breath left him, ministers and courtiers went off to his successor; the vile hag whom he had cherished deserted him likewise, after stealing the ring from his helpless finger; and his other personal attendants quitted the chamber to plunder the house. The ashes of the mighty victor at Crecy repose in the same tomb with those of his wife, in the Confessor's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, according to her request on her death-bed.

The dethroned Richard II. perished violently in Pontefract Castle, Yorkshire; but a more than usual degree of mystery rests upon the horrid transaction. "How Richard died," says Froissart, "and by what means, I could not tell when I wrote this chronicle." He then, in a naive and touching manner, contrasts his former splendor and miserable fall: "for never, says he, had king of England spent so much money in keeping up a stately household. And I, John Froissart, canon and treasurer of Chimay, saw it and considered it; and I lived in it a quarter of a year, and good cheer did he give me; and when I departed from him, (it was at Windsor,) on my leave-taking, he gave me a silver goblet, gilt, and having within one hundred nobles, therefore am I much bound to pray God for him."—Richard was most probably dispatched by starvation.

> "Close by the regal chair,
> Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
> A baleful smile upon their baffled guest."

The corpse of the unhappy king was brought to London, and exhibited in St. Paul's as a public certificate of death, which was doubted by some, then removed to Langley in Hertfordshire for interment, and finally to Westminster Abbey. His supplanter, and perhaps murderer, Henry IV., met a long expected death in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was entombed in Canterbury Cathedral, by the side of his first wife, the only English sovereign buried in that city. Henry V. expired at Vincennes, near Paris, and was brought with mournful pomp to his native country for the last rites. Bishops in pontifical attire, mitred abbots, and a vast multitude of all ranks, met the body, as it approached the capital. The church men chanted the service for the dead as it passed over London bridge and through the streets of the city; the obsequies were performed at St. Paul's in presence of the whole Parliament, and the remains were interred in state in Westminster Abbey. A headless and otherwise mutilated figure of the king, carved in oak, and originally covered with silver, marks the tomb, above which are the saddle, helmet, and shield, supposed to have been used at Agincourt.

The imbecile Henry VI. died a captive in the Tower, probably by violent means, and was first interred at Chertsey Abbey, Surrey, then removed to Windsor by order of Richard III. His successor, Edward IV., ended his days of pleasure and profligacy at Westminster, and was exposed on a board after death, naked from the waist upwards, in order that the people might see he had not been murdered—an act strikingly illustrative of turbulent times. He was then buried in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, the exquisitely beautiful edifice which he founded. A steel tomb, executed by Quintin Matsys, marks the spot. The body was found undecayed, the dress nearly perfect, as were the lineaments of the face, in 1789, after a period of three hundred and six years. The boy-king, Edward V., and his younger brother, the Duke of York, atrociously murdered in the Tower, were privately buried within its walls by the assassins, at a spot which long remained unknown. But in the reign of Charles II., while some alterations were making near the White Tower, the workmen found, about ten feet in the ground, the remains of two striplings, which, on examination, appeared to be those of two boys of the ages of the princes, thirteen and eleven years. They were in a wooden chest, and were re-interred in a marble urn in Henry VII.'s Chapel, Westminster Abbey. A Latin inscription gives the commonly received account of the sad tragedy: "Here lie the relics of Edward V., King of England, and Richard, Duke of York, who, being confined in the Tower, and there stifled with pillows, were privately and meanly buried, by order of their perfidious uncle, Richard, the usurper. Their bones, long inquired after and wished for, after lying one hundred and ninety-one years in the rubbish of the stairs, were, on the 17th of July, 1674, by undoubted proofs, discovered, being buried deep in that place. Charles II., pitying their unhappy late, ordered these unfortunate princes to be laid among the relics of their predecessors, in 1678, and the thirteenth of his reign." Richard III., the author of this foul deed, slain in the battle of Bosworth Field, was unceremoniously thrown across a horse, and conveyed behind a pursuivant-at-arms to Leicester. There the corpse was buried in the church of St. Mary's, belonging to a monastry of the Gray Friars. His conqueror placed over him a tomb adorned with his statue in alabaster, where it remained till the dissolution of the Abbeys, when the monument was utterly destroyed, the grave rifled, and its human remains ignominiously cast out. The stone coffin was made a drinking-trough for horses, at the White Horse Inn, Leicester.

The first of the Tudors, Henry VII., died at Richmond Palace, and was laid in the magnificent chapel which he had built, and which bears his name appended to Westminster Abbey. The tomb of black marble stands in the centre, inclosed in an admirably executed chantry of cast brass, ornamented with statues. The brutal Henry VIII. went to his account at Westminster, not aware, till the last moment came, of his true condition, none caring to tell him, as several persons had been put to death at various times for saying that the king was dying, or likely to die. He found a grave under the choir of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, where a leaden coffin was observed, supposed to be his, upon the vault being opened in the year 1813. It measured nearly seven feet in length, and appeared to have been beaten in by violence about the middle, as there was a considerable opening in that part of it, exposing a mere skeleton of the inmate. Some beard remained upon the chin, but there was nothing to discriminate the person, and no exterior inscription. The four next sovereigns—Edward VI., who died at Greenwich Palace; Mary, at St. James's; Elizabeth, at Richmond, and James I. at Theobald's in Herts—were all committed to the earth in Westminster Abbey. A stately monument marks the grave of Elizabeth, the last of our monarchs to whose resting-place such a memorial has been given.

The axe of the executioner terminated the troubled career of Charles I. on the scaffold before Whitehall. A universal groan burst from the multitude assembled upon the sad occasion, at the fatal stroke. A rush was made to dip handkerchiefs in the royal blood as a memento; but the troops put themselves in motion, cleared the streets, and dismal tragedy ended. This is the testimony of Philip Henry, father of Matthew Henry, the commentator, who was present. The remains were interred at Windsor, in the same vault with those of Henry VIII. and Jane Seymour. A few devoted cavaliers attended the ceremony, and noticed the coincidence between the coronation and the funeral of their master.

On the former occasion the king chose to appear in a white robe, though this was opposed by his friends as contrary to the practice of his predecessors and to popular ideas, for purple was considered the color appropriate to sovereignty. He was superstitiously reminded that, of two exceptions to the rule—Richard II. and Henry VI., who wore white satin at their coronations—both had come to a violent end. But Charles persisted in his purpose; the third "white king" was crowned; and he went to the grave in his favorite color. The snow fell heavily at the time, so as to cover the black velvet pall with a silvery mantle, on the passage of the bier from the Castle to St. George's Chapel. All knowledge of the precise place of interment was afterwards lost, till the year 1813, when, in the course of making some repairs, the workmen accidentally opened the vault; and, to clear up a doubtful point in history, its contents were examined in the presence of the Prince Regent, Sir Henry Halford, and others. There was a plain leaden coffin discovered, with two more. The corner bore the inscription, in large legible characters, on a scroll of lead encircling it, "King Charles, 1548." It contained a wooden coffin, very much decayed, in which was the body, carefully wrapped up in cerecloth. Upon disclosing the face, the skin was found dark and discolored; the forehead and temples had lost little or nothing of their muscular substance; the cartilage of the nose was gone; the left eye was open and full, in the first moment of exposure, though it vanished almost immediately; and the pointed beard, so characteristic of the period, was perfect. The shape of the face was a long oval; and its strong resemblance was instantly recognized to the coins, busts, and especially the pictures of Vandyke, by which it has been made familiar to us. When the head had had been entirely disengaged from the attachments which confined it, it was found to be loose, and without any difficulty was taken up and held to view. It bore evident marks of having been severed by a heavy blow, inflicted with a very sharp instrument. The hair at the back was thick, but short, contrary to the prevailing fashion of the time; and had probably been cut off for the convenience of the executioner, or after death, to furnish friends with relics.

Oliver Cromwell departed this life at Whitehall, on the anniversary of the battles of Dunbar and Worcester, two of his great-est victories. A fearful storm raged in England and over nearly the whole of Europe on the preceding night and morn. The unchained winds disturbed the waters from the Baltic to the Bosphorus; the seas were strewed with wrecks from the coast of Norway to those of Italy and Spain; while towns and forests suffered by the hurricane, from the Grampians to the Apennines. The Protector had a state funeral in Westminster Abbey, the cost of which his representatives were afterwards called upon to pay; and, contrary to the maxim that "English vengeance wars not with the dead," his corpse was disgracefully disinterred, for the purpose of being treated with indignity.—Contemporary accounts state that the heads of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, were exposed on the roof of Westminster Hall, and that the bodies were thrown into a neighboring hole, after being suspended on the gallows at Tyburn; but a tradition formerly existed among the inhabitants of Red Lion Square that they were interred in the centre of that particular locality. It is probably true, and not at all at variance with the other relations, for the gallows was frequently erected at the Holborn end of Fetter Lane, within a short distance of Red Lion Square. Most likely, therefore, the Protector slumbers his last sleep in the locality mentioned. But though discarded from the mausoleum of royalty, and ignominiously treated, his name lives in history with far greater honor than that of his spiteful antagonists; and none of the legitimate sovereigns have, like him, been panegyrized by four such eminent contemporaries as were Milton, Waller, Dryden, and Locke. Richard Cromwell, his son, and his successor for little more than seven months, after a long expatriation spent his last days under a feigned name, at Cheshunt, where he died peacefully, in the reign of Queen Anne.

The dissolute life and disgraceful reign of Charles II. ended suddenly at Whitehall, and was justly followed by a neglected funeral. "The King," says Evelyn, chronicling the event, "was this night buried very obscurely in a vault, under Henry VII.'s Chapel, without any manner of pomp, and soon forgotten"—an apt commentary upon the wise man's observation: "So I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done." James II., a king for twelve years after his expatriation only in name, surrendered his nominal sovereignty at St. Germain's, near Paris. Vicissitudes, as strange in death as in life, seem to have attended this misguided man. He left his heart to the Dames de St. Marie, at Challiot. He bequeathed his brains to the old Scotch College in the Rue des Fosses St. Victor, in the chapel of which, now leased to a private school, there is a marble monument to his memory. An urn of bronze-gilt, containing the king's brains, formerly stood on the crown of this monument; but it was smashed, and the contents scattered over the ground, during the French Revolution. The body itself was interred in the monastery of English Benedictine Monks, in the Rue du Faubourg St. Jacques. Upon the destruction of this building, it was exhumed, and, after being kept for some years in a temporary tomb in the neighborhood, it was transported to the parish church of St. Germain's where a monument was placed over it by George IV.

William III, and Anne both died at Kensington Palace, and repose in Westminster Abbey. George I., arrested by the hand of death while traveling abroad, expired at Osnaburgh, on the very same bed on which he was born, and was laid by the side of his ancestors in a vault beneath the Schloss-kirche, at Hanover. George II. departed this life at Kensington, and, under circumstances of some interest, was laid in Westminster Abbey. As a proof of his respect for his consort, Queen Caroline, who had preceded him to the grave, he left directions for their remains to be mingled together. The order was obeyed, by the two coffins being placed in a large stone sarcophagus, when the sides of the wooden coffins nearest each other were withdrawn. This was a tradition merely at the Abbey, till confirmed in the year 1837. At that time the vault was opened, under authority of a Secretary of State's warrant, in order to remove a child of the Duke of Cumberland's, late king of Hanover, which had been buried in it, to Windsor. Dr. Milman superintended the disinterment, which took place by night. In the middle of the vault, towards one end, the large stone sarcophagus was seen, with the two sides of the coffins, which had been withdrawn, standing up against the wall.

Windsor was the scene of the death and burial of the three next sovereigns—George III., George IV., and William IV. They lie in the Royal Dormitory, to the east of St. George's Chapel, where all the members of the reigning family, deceased in England have been placed, since its application to the purpose of a mausoleum, with the exception of the Duke of Sussex, buried by his own desire in Kensal Green Cemetery, and the unhappy wife of George IV., who was removed to New Brunswick. These reminiscences of royalty in its ruins emphatically suggest the moral of the poet:

> "The glories of our blood and state
> Are shadows, not substantial things."

Laird Nicky.

Laird Nicky, about forty years ago, was a conspicuous inhabitant of the village of Half-Starvlet, in a mountainous district of Scotland. A most indefatigable wrestler with the difficulties of this life, was the Laird; a mere day-laborer in his calling, but one so diligent and so ingenious in turning all things to account, that before he was past middle life he had realised enough of money to purchase a field in his neighborhood, for which reason he had obtained an appellation which, in Scotland, is denied to no possessor of land, however small its extent. Nicky was a bulky man, always dressed in the meanest of attire. He had a cottage, with various accommodations for an old horse, a cow, a pig, and some poultry. To anything by which money could be made, he was ready to turn his hand. He even swept chimneys, reserving, however, for that duty, Saturday, for the prudent reason that that was the last day of his weekly shirt. While doing day work for others he was sure to have several half-hours out of every four-and-twenty to devote to delving and dibbling in his own garden, to repairing his hen-house and piggery, or driving out dung to his own land. Sometimes he would be seen mending the thatch of his house, invested in a woman's petticoat, to protect his clothes, albeit one would have thought them little worthy of such care. At another time you would see him driving home a load of some country stuff, of which he was going to make a merchandise. Long before any learned agricultural society pointed out the thing, Nickey had found it to his advantage to lay a set of old doors over his dung-heap to save it from evaporation, and had learned to drain it into a little hole, which he kept carefully covered over with a large slate. He had a wife in delicate health, and many small bairns, and was rather hard to them all, his iron will leaving him no sympathies for the weaknesses of others. Poor Nelly wished much to be allowed the little luxury of tea; but had to take it standing at a cupboard, which she was ready to shut up if her husband should come in. She has been known, occasionally, in his presence, to take it as a medicine in a cup sprinkled with meal. At dinner, he sat with the potato-pot between his knees, taking care, in the distribution of the contents, that the hunger of the bread-winner of the family should be amply satisfied, come of the others what might. He was a healthy man under all his hard work, until the establishment of a Friendly Society, in the village, after which he generally had an illness of several weeks in the dead of winter, especially if the usual labors of such men as he were interrupted by snow. Nicky would then mount an old plaid and poly-chromatic night-cap, and taking up a position by the fire-side, become entitled to an allowance of five shillings a week from "the Box." There was a scandalous story of the inspector or visitor of the society having found him one day engaged in the mending of his thatch; but strict justice obliges us to record that, on the visitor expressing his gratification at seeing him well again, he received the reply, "Weel! I'm far frae weel. D'ye no see, man, I've a man working at the back o' the house, here, and I was just showing him what was to be done." It must also be remembered in Nicky's favor, that, amidst all his worldly prosperity, he was a man who never forgot that he was mortal. In his walk and conversation, he was rather noted for seriousness, well as a constant readiness to testify to the infirmity of poor human nature. "It was just grand," his neighbors declared, "to hear him expounding points by the fireside in the gloaming; and at a death-bed he was nearly as po'orfu' as the minister himsel'."

In the younger days of Laird Nicky, game was a thing little thought of in the north. Men now and then went out with fowling-pieces, and spent a forenoon in the turnip-fields seeking for partridges, or in the moors looking for grouse, and next day were at their usual avocations. No country gentleman as yet thought of deriving a revenue from the wild animals on his estate. No man dreampt of going to live a month at a time in the wilderness merely to amuse himself by the slaughter of the fowls of the air. But, by-and-by, it became customary for English gentlemen of fortune to take large tracts of Scottish moorland on lease, with a view to the exclusive privilege of shooting on these grounds; thus establishing a kind of rent for such property, often not much less than the first. Many rich Southrons bought hyperborean estates for the sake of the sport they could afford. It was, of course, essential to this system that the game should be encouraged and protected as much as possible, so that there really might be birds to shoot; for to go with all the proper apparatus and ample provision for a month's living at a particular place, and, after all, scarcely start a single wing, was a solecism not to be submitted to if it could be at all avoided.

Laird Nickey marked the revolution which was going on, and could not but observe with profound interest how, since the game had begun to be protected by means of keepers and shepherds, there had been such an increase in the quantity which his unpretending neighbors were able to send by the carrier to be sold in Edinburgh. He heard of the high prices which grouse realized, and longed to take a part in the traffic. It occurred to him, however, that merely to pick up an occasional brace in the course of a country ramble, and commit them to Jock Jaffray next day as he came past with his cart, in the hope of getting three or four shillings returned from the poulterer in the ensuing week, was poor work, not worthy of a man of any genius. He soared a higher flight. He announced his intention of taking out the license for game, like his more wealthy neighbors.

People thought Nicky had gone mad. Pride in his little field, recently purchased, had evidently turned his brain. And many were the moral reflections on the subject. "Eh, dear sake, to think on the world's gear haeing sic an effeck! What's the guid o't, if he canna guide it? Eh, ay. Eh, we're puir frail creature, and hae mickle need to pray for strength to keep us out o' vanities." Nickey said nothing, giving no reply even to questions which were merrily put to him, as to the moor he designed to take for the season, the friends he intended to invite to his box, and so forth. When the longed for Twelfth arrived, he remained at home as usual, very busy, however, in erecting a curious, many sided hut or lodge at the corner of his field, apparently designed as a kind of summer-house. It was also remarked that he spent a good deal of time in taking down and doing up a number of old fowling-pieces which he had lately purchased. He seemed so much engaged in these pursuits as to have forgot his harvest. There was his crop of oats, fully ripe and regularly "stocked," but no word of Nicky taking it in. What could it all mean? Some weeks elapsed, and the labors of autumn were everywhere at an end. The october frosts were setting in, and still there were Nicky's oat-stocks standing out in the field! Why, the very birds from the neighboring moors—Sir George Telfair's particularly—were begining to come down to eat the neglected grain, it was evident that in a very little while they would make an end of it. All his usual thrift had certainly deserted him.

One forenoon the quiet of the village was disturbed by a quick series of sharp loud sounds, not unlike a *feu de joie*, and most of the people were immediately astir to see what had happened. On due examination it was found that the sound had proceeded from the queer looking hut, or summer house in Nicky's field, and was produced by a set of fowling-pieces which that mysterious person had arranged there on a frame to go off together on the setting fire of a train, and which had actually at this first shot killed about a score of grouse and partridges. Nicky was now coolly gathering up his many victims in a large sack. It appeared that he had taken his idea from the machine of the regicide Fieschi, only exing his pieces that one bore directly upon each of the six or seven heaps into which he had collected his crop. Having prepared everything in the most careful manner, he had set himself down to wait until a considerable number of birds were gathered to the spot; when, firing the train, he had dealt sudden destruction amongst them, with the result which has been stated. His neighbors were lost in wonder at what they saw, and it was some time before they thoroughly comprehended the drift of the whole affair. When at length they understood Nicky's plan and its effects, they readily yielded him the admiration due to his superior genius. "Guid faith, Nicky kens what he's about. I'se warrant he's an auld nae. Eh, wha would hae thought it!"

When Nicky had got his machine reloaded, he found it necessary to warn his admiring neighbors away from the premises. "Ye see, my friends, this is a solitary business o' mine. The birds winna come unless they see a clear field. Let every man, then, gang hame to his ain house, and come as little this way as possible. I hope to get another shot afore dinner time." They readily obeyed him; and in a couple of hours or so he did get a second shot, and an effective one, nearly the same number of birds being slaughtered. In short, Nicky was able to send forty brace of birds into Edinburgh next morning by the hands of Jock Jaffray; thus, as he said, clearing the license the first day, besides a "wee thing owre." It was not a game to be played at too much, for in that case he would have soon created a general impression among the bird population of the district to the effect that Nicky's field was dangerous ground. Too knowing for this, he abstained from firing for three days, during which, however, he left a single stack exposed, just to keep up the connection. Then he once more exposed the whole of his crop, and taking up his position in the summer-house, made due preparations for what he called another field-day. The birds came in nearly as great numbers as before, and by superior marking he was not less successful than he had been at first. He generally bagged from six to ten brace at a shot, and before the evening he was generally in a condition to send a good load of game to town. By this second day's proceedings his profits could not well be less than five pounds.

The intelligence being quickly spread over the district, there was a degree of fury inspired in the breasts of the gentlemen of the adjacent moors such as had no parallel in the annals of sporting. The first impression everywhere was that Nicky was a poacher, alike without government license and permission of landlord, so that there could be no difficulty in suppressing and punishing him. But it soon became known that Nicky did possess a license, and only