

"I can conceive that, sooner than lose his hunters, he would give up his nephew."

"His nephew, nieces, sons—daughters, if he had them, and whole generation," said Diana;—"therefore trust not to him, even for a single moment, but make the best of your way before they can serve the warrant."

"That I shall certainly do; but it shall be to the house of this Squire Inglewood—Which way does it lie?"

"About five miles off, in the low ground, behind yonder plantations—you may see the tower of the clock-house."

"I will be there in a few minutes," said I, putting my horse in motion.

"And I will go with you, and show you the way," said Diana, putting her palfrey also to the trot.

"Do not think of it, Miss Vernon," I replied. "It is not—permit me the freedom of a friend—it is not proper, scarcely even delicate, in you to go with me on such an errand as I am now upon."

"I understand your meaning," said Miss Vernon, a slight blush crossing her haughty brow;—"it is plainly spoken;" and after a moment's pause she added, "and I believe kindly meant."

"It is indeed, Miss Vernon. Can you think me insensible of the interest you show me, or ungrateful for it?" said I, with even more earnestness than I could have wished to express. "Yours is meant for true kindness, shown best at the hour of need. But I must not, for your own sake—for the chance of misconstruction—suffer you to pursue the dictates of your generosity; this is so public an occasion—it is almost like venturing into an open court of justice."

"And if it were not almost, but altogether entering into an open court of justice, do you think I would not go there if I thought it right and wished to protect a friend? You have no one to stand by you—you are a stranger; and here, in the outskirts of the kingdom, country justices do odd things. My uncle has no desire to embroil himself in your affair; Rashleigh is absent, and were he here, there is no knowing which side he might take; the rest are all more stupid and brutal one than another. I will go with you, and I do not fear being able to serve you. I am no fine lady, to be terrified to death with law-books, hard words, or big wigs."

"But my dear Miss Vernon!"

"But my dear Mr. Francis, be patient and quiet, and let me take my own way; for when I take the bit between my teeth, there is no bridle will stop me."

Flattered with the interest so lovely a creature seemed to take in my fate, yet vexed at the ridiculous appearance I should make, by carrying a girl of eighteen along with me as an advocate, and

eighteenth century, the horses of the Catholics were often seized upon, as they were always supposed to be on the eve of rising in rebellion.

seriously concerned for the misconstruction to which her motives might be exposed, I endeavored to combat her resolution to accompany me to Squire Inglewood's. The self-willed girl told me roundly, that my dissuasions were absolutely in vain; that she was a true Vernon, whom no consideration, not even that of being able to do but little to assist him, should induce to abandon a friend in distress; and that all I could say on the subject might be very well for pretty, well-educated, well-behaved misses from a town boarding-school, but did not apply to her, who was accustomed to mind nobody's opinion but her own.

While she spoke thus, we were advancing hastily towards Inglewood Place, while, as if to divert me from the task of further remonstrance, she drew a ludicrous picture of the magistrate and his clerk.—Inglewood was—according to her description—a white-washed Jacobite; that is one who having been long a non-juror, like most of the other gentlemen of the country, had lately qualified himself to act as a justice, by taking the oaths to Government. "He had done, so," she said, "in compliance with the urgent request of most of his brother squires, who saw, with regret, that the palladium of sylvan sport, the gamelaws, were likely to fall into disuse for want of a magistrate who would enforce them; the nearest acting justice being the Mayor of Newcastle, and he, as being rather inclined to the consumption of the game when properly dressed, than to its preservation when alive, was more partial, of course, to the cause of the poacher than of the sportsman. Resolving, therefore, that it was expedient some one of their number should sacrifice the scruples of Jacobitical loyalty to the good of the community, the Northumbrian country gentlemen imposed the duty on Inglewood, who, being very inert in most of his feelings and sentiments, might, they thought, comply with any political creed without much repugnance. Having thus procured the body of justice, they proceeded," continued Miss Vernon, "to attach to it a clerk, by way of soul, to direct and animate its movements. Accordingly they got a sharp Newcastle attorney, called Jobson, who, to vary my metaphor, finds it a good thing enough to retail justice at the sign of Squire Inglewood, and, as his own emoluments depend on the quantity of business which he transacts, he hooks in his principal for a great deal more employment in the justice line than the honest squire had ever bargained for; so that no apple-wife within the circuit of ten miles can settle her account with a costermonger without an audience of the reluctant Justice and his alert clerk, Mr. Joseph Jobson. But the most ridiculous scenes occur when affairs come before him, like our business of to-day, having any coloring of politics. Mr. Joseph Jobson (for which, no doubt, he has his own very sufficient reasons) is a prodigious zealot for the Protestant religion, and a great friend to the present establishment in church and state. Now, his princi-

pal, retaining a sort of instinctive attachment to the opinions which he professed openly, until he relaxed his political creed with the patriotic view of enforcing the law against unathorized destroyers of black-game, grouse, partridges, and hares, is peculiarly embarrassed when the zeal of his assistant involves him in judicial proceedings connected with his earlier faith; and, instead of seconding his zeal, he seldom fails to oppose to it a double dose of indolence and lack of exertion. And this inactivity does not by any means arise from actual stupidity. On the contrary, for one whose principal delight is in eating and drinking, he is an alert, joyous, and lively old soul, which makes his assumed dulness the more diverting. So you may see Jobson on such occasions, like a bit of a broken-down blood-tit condemned to drag an overloaded cart, puffing, strutting and spluttering, to get the justice put in motion, while, though the wheels groan, creak, and revolve slowly, the great and preponderating weight of the vehicle fairly frustrates the efforts of the willing quadruped, and prevents its being brought into a state of actual progression. Nay more, the unfortunate pony, I understand, has been heard to complain that this same car of justice, which he finds it so hard to put in motion on some occasions, can on others run fast enough down hill of its own accord, dragging his reluctant self backwards along with it, when anything can be done of service to Squire Inglewood's quondam friends. And then Mr. Jobson talks big about reporting his principal to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if it were not for his particular regard and friendship for Mr. Inglewood and his family."

As Miss Vernon concluded this whimsical description, we found ourselves in front of Inglewood Place, a handsome, though old-fashioned building, which showed the consequence of the family.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Sir," quoth the Lawyer, "not to flatter ye,
You have as good and fair a battery
As heart could wish, and need not shame
The proudest man alive to claim."

BUTLER.

Our horses were taken by a servant in Sir Hildebrand's livery, whom we found in the courtyard, and we entered the house. In the entrance-hall I was somewhat surprised, and my fair companion still more so, when we met Rashleigh Osbaldistone, who could not help showing equal wonder at our rencontre.

"Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon, without giving him time to ask any question, "you have heard of Mr. Francis Osbaldistone's affair, and you have been talking to the Justice about it?"

"Certainly," said Rashleigh, composedly—"it has been my business here.—I have been endeavoring," he said, with a bow to me, "to render my cousin what service I can. But I am sorry to meet him here."

"As a friend and relation, Mr. Osbaldistone, you ought to have been sorry to have met me anywhere else, at a time when the charge of my reputation required me to be on the spot as soon as possible."

"True; but judging from what my father said, I should have supposed a short retreat into Scotland—just till matters should be smoothed over in a quiet way"—

I answered with warmth, "That I had no prudential measures to observe, and desired to have nothing smoothed over;—on the contrary, I was come to inquire into a rascally calumny, which I was determined to probe to the bottom."

"Mr. Francis Osbaldistone is an innocent man, Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon, "and he demands an investigation of the charge against him, and I intend to support him in it."

"You do, my pretty cousin—I should think, now, Mr. Francis Osbaldistone was likely to be as effectually, and rather more delicately, supported by my presence than by yours."

"Oh, certainly; but two heads are better than one, you know."

"Especially such a head as yours, my pretty Die," advancing and taking her hand with a familiar fondness, which made me think him fifty times uglier than nature had made him. She led him, however, a few steps aside; they conversed in an under voice, and she appeared to insist upon some request which he was unwilling or unable to comply with. I never saw so strong a contrast betwixt the expression of two faces. Miss Vernon's from being earnest, became angry; her eyes and cheeks became more animated, her color mounted, she clenched her little hand, and stamping on the ground with her tiny foot, seemed to listen with a mixture of contempt and indignation to the apologies, which, from his look of civil deference, his composed and respectful smile, his body rather drawing back than advanced, and other signs of look and person, I concluded him to be pouring out at her feet. At length she flung away from him, with "I will have it so."

"It is not in my power—there is no possibility of it.—Would you think it, Mr. Osbaldistone?" said he, addressing me—

"You are not mad?" said she, interrupting him.

"Would you think it?" said he, without attending to her hint—"Miss Vernon insists, not only that I know your innocence (of which, indeed, it is impossible for any one to be more convinced), but that I must also be acquainted with the real perpetrators of the outrage on this fellow—if indeed such an outrage has been committed. Is this reasonable, Mr. Osbaldistone?"

"I will not allow any appeal to Mr. Osbaldistone, Rashleigh," said the young lady; "he does not know, as I do, the incredible extent and accuracy of your information on all points."

"As I am a gentleman, you do me more honor than I deserve."

"Justice, Rashleigh—only justice;—and it is only justice which I expect at your hands."

"You are a tyrant, Diana," he answered, with a sort of sigh—"a capricious tyrant, and rule your friends with a rod of iron. Still, however, it shall be as you desire. But you ought not to be here—you know you ought not;—you must return with me."

Then turning from Diana, who seemed to stand undecided, he came up to me in the most friendly manner, and said, "Do not doubt my interest in what regards you, Mr. Osbaldistone. If I leave you just at this moment, it is only to act for your advantage. But you must use your influence with your cousin to return; her presence cannot serve you, and must prejudice herself."

"I assure you, sir," I replied, "you cannot be more convinced of this than I; I have urged Miss Vernon's return as anxiously as she would permit me to do."

"I have thought on it," said Miss Vernon, after a pause, "and I will not go till I see you safe out of the hands of the Philistines. Cousin Rashleigh, I dare say, means well; but he and I know each other well. Rashleigh, I will not go;—I know," she added, in a more soothing tone, "my being here will give you more motive for speed and exertion."

"Stay then, rash, obstinate girl," said Rashleigh; "you know but too well to whom you trust;" and hastening out of the hall, we heard his horse's feet a minute afterwards in rapid motion.

"Thank Heaven he is gone!" said Diana. "And now let us seek out the Justice."

"Had we not better call a servant?"

"Oh, by no means; I know the way to his den—we must burst on him suddenly—follow me."

I did follow her accordingly, as she tripped up a few gloomy steps, traversed a twilight passage, and entered a sort of ante-room, hung round with old maps, architectural elevations, and genealogical trees. A pair of folding-doors opened from this into Mr. Inglewood's sitting-apartment, from which was heard the fag-end of an old ditty, chanted by a voice which had been in its day fit for a jolly bottle-song.

"O, in Skipton-in-Craven
Is never a haven,
But many a day foul weather;
And he that would say
A pretty girl nay,
I wish for his cravat a tether."

"Heyday!" said Miss Vernon, "the genial Justice must have dined already—I did not think it had been so late."

It was even so. Mr. Inglewood's appetite having been sharpened by his official investigations, he had antedated his meridian repast, having dined at twelve instead of one o'clock, then the general dining-hour in England. The various occurrences of the morning occasioned our arriving some time after this hour, to the Justice the most

important of the four-and-twenty, and he had not neglected the interval.

"Stay you here," said Diana. "I know the house, and I will call a servant; your sudden appearance might startle the old gentleman even to choking;" and she escaped from me, leaving me uncertain whether I ought to advance or retreat. It was impossible for me not to hear some part of what passed within the dinner-apartment, and particularly several apologies for declining to sing, expressed in a dejected croaking voice, the tones of which, I conceived, were not entirely new to me.

"Not sing, sir? by our Lady! but you must—What! you have cracked my silver-mounted cocoa-nut of sack, and tell me that you cannot sing!—Sir, sack will make a cat sing, and speak too; so up with a merry stave, or trundle yourself out of my doors!—Do you think you are to take up all my valuable time with your d—d declarations, and then tell me you cannot sing?"

"Your worship is perfectly in rule," said another voice, which, from its pert conceited accent, might be that of the clerk, "and the party must be conformable; he hath *caned*, written on his face in court hand."

"Up with it, then," said the Justice, "or, by St. Christopher, you shall crack the cocoa-nut full of salt-and-water, according to the statute for such effect made and provided."

Thus exhorted and threatened, my quondam fellow-traveller, for I could no longer doubt that he was the recusant in question, uplifted, with a voice similar to that of a criminal singing his last psalm on the scaffold, a most doleful stave to the following effect:—

"Good people all, I pray give ear,
A woful story you shall hear,
'Tis of a robber as stout as ever
Bade a true man stand and deliver,
With his foodle doo fa loodle loo.
"This knave most worthy of a cord,
Being armed with pistol and with sword,
'Twixt Kensington and Brentford then
Did boldly stop six honest men,
With his foodle doo, &c.
"These honest men did at Brentford dine,
Having drank each man his pint of wine,
When this bold thief, with many curses,
Did say, You dogs, your lives or purses,
With his foodle doo, &c."

I question if the honest men, whose misfortune is commemorated in this pathetic ditty, were more startled at the appearance of the bold thief, than the songster was at mine; for, tired of waiting for some one to announce me, and finding my situation as a listener rather awkward, I presented myself to the company just as my friend Mr. Morris, for such, it seems, was his name, was uplifting the fifth stave of his doleful ballad. The high tone with which the tune started, died away in a quaver of consternation, on finding himself so near one whose character he supposed to be little less suspicious than that of the hero of his madrigal, and he remained silent, with a mouth

gaping as if I had brought the Gorgon's head in my hand.

The Justice, whose eyes had closed under the influence of the somniferous lullaby of the song, started up in his chair as it suddenly ceased, and stared with wonder at the unexpected addition which the company had received, while his organs of sight were in abeyance. The clerk, as I conjectured him to be from his appearance, was also commoved; for, sitting opposite to Mr. Morris, that honest gentleman's terror communicated itself to him, though he wotted not why.

I broke the silence of surprise occasioned by my abrupt entrance.—"My name, Mr. Inglewood, is Francis Osbaldistone; I understand that some scoundrel has brought a complaint before you, charging me with being concerned in a loss which he says he has sustained."

"Sir," said the Justice, somewhat peevishly, "these are matters I never enter upon after dinner;—there is a time for everything, and a justice of peace must eat as well as other folks."

The goodly person of Mr. Inglewood, by the way, seemed by no means to have suffered by any fasts, whether in the service of the law or of religion.

"I beg pardon for an ill-timed visit, sir; but as my reputation is concerned, and as the dinner appears to be concluded"—

"It is not concluded, sir," replied the magistrate; "man requires digestion as well as food, and I protest I cannot have benefit from my victuals, unless I am allowed two hours of quiet leisure, intermixed with harmless mirth, and a moderate circulation of the bottle."

"If your honor will forgive me," said Mr. Jobson, who had produced and arranged his writing implements in the brief space that our conversation afforded; "as this is a case of felony, and the gentleman seems something impatient, the charge is *contra pacem domini regis*"—

"D—n *dominæ regis!*" said the impatient Justice—"I hope it's no treason to say so; but it's enough to make one mad to be worried in this way. Have I a moment of my life quiet, for warrants, orders, directions, acts, hails, bonds, and recognisances?—I pronounce to you, Mr. Jobson, that I shall send you and the justice-ship to the devil one of these days."

"Your honor will consider the dignity of the office—one of the quorum and custos rotulorum, an office of which Sir Edward Coke wisely saith, The whole Christian world hath not the like of it, so it be duly executed."

"Well," said the Justice, partly reconciled by this eulogium on the dignity of his situation, and gulping down the rest of his dissatisfaction in a huge bumper of claret, "let us to this gear then, and get rid of it as fast as we can.—Here you, sir—you, Morris—you, knight of the sorrowful countenance—is this Mr. Francis Osbaldistone the gentleman whom you charge with being art and part of felony?"

"I, sir?" replied Morris, whose scattered wits

had hardly yet re-assembled themselves; "I charge nothing—I say nothing against the gentleman."

"Then we dismiss your complaint, sir, that's all, and a good riddance—Push about the bottle—Mr. Osbaldistone, help yourself."

Jobson, however, was determined that Morris should not back out of the scrape so easily. "What do you mean, Mr. Morris?—Here is your own declaration—the ink scarce dried—and you would retract it in this scandalous manner!"

"How do I know," whispered the other, in a tremulous tone, "how many rogues are in the house to back him? I have read of such things in Johnson's Lives of the Highwaymen. I protest the door opens"—

And it did open, and Diana Vernon entered—"You keep fine order here, Justice—not a servant to be seen or heard of."

"Ah!" said the Justice, starting up with an alacrity which showed that he was not so engrossed by his devotions to Themis, or Comus, as to forget what was due to beauty—"Ah, ha! Die Vernon, the heath-bell of Cheviot, and the blossom of the Border, come to see how the old bachelor keeps house? Art welcome, girl, as flowers in May."

"A fine, open, hospitable house you do keep, Justice, that must be allowed—not a soul to answer a visitor."

"Ah, the knaves! they reckoned themselves secure of me for a couple of hours—But why did you not come earlier?—Your cousin Rashleigh dined here, and ran away like a poltroon after the first bottle was out—But you have not dined—we'll have something nice and ladylike—sweet and pretty like yourself, tossed up in a trice."

"I may eat a crust in the ante-room before I set out," answered Miss Vernon—"I have had a long ride this morning; but I can't stay long, Justice—I came with my cousin, Frank Osbaldistone, there, and I must show him the way back again to the Hall, or he'll lose himself in the wolds."

"Whew! sits the wind in that quarter?" inquired the Justice—

"She showed him the way, she showed him the way,
She showed him the way to woo."

What! no luck for old fellows, then, my sweet bud of the wilderness?"

"None whatever, Squire Inglewood; but if you will be a good kind Justice, and despatch young Frank's business, and let us canter home again, I'll bring my uncle to dine with you next week, and we'll expect merry doings."

"And you shall find them, my pearl of the Tyne—Zookers, lass, I never envy these young fellows their rides and scampers, unless when you come across me. But I must not keep you just now, I suppose?—I am quite satisfied with Mr. Francis Osbaldistone's explanation—here has been some mistake, which can be cleared at greater leisure."

"Pardon me, sir," said I, "but I have not heard the nature of the accusation yet."

"Yes, sir," said the clerk, who, at the appearance of Miss Vernon, had given up the matter in despair, but who picked up courage to press farther investigation, on finding himself supported from a quarter whence assuredly he expected no backing—"Yes, sir, and Dalton saith, That he who is apprehended as a felon shall not be discharged upon any man's discretion, but shall be held either to bail or commitment, paying to the clerk of the peace the usual fees for recognisance or commitment."

The Justice, thus goaded on, gave me at length a few words of explanation.

It seems the tricks which I had played to this man, Morris, had made a strong impression on his imagination; for I found they had been arrayed against me in his evidence, with all the exaggerations which a timorous and heated imagination could suggest. It appeared also, that on the day he parted from me, he had been stopped on a solitary spot, and eased of his beloved travelling companion, the portmanteau, by two men, well mounted and armed, having their faces covered with vizards.

One of them, he conceived, had much of my shape and air, and in a whispering conversation which took place betwixt the freebooters, he heard the other apply to him the name of Osbaldistone. The declaration farther set forth, that upon inquiring into the principles of the family so named, he, the said declarant, was informed that they were of the worst description, the family, in all its members, having been Papists and Jacobites, as he was given to understand by the dissenting clergyman at whose house he stopped after his rencontre, since the days of William the Conqueror.

Upon all and each of these weighty reasons, he charged me with being accessory to the felony committed upon his person; he, the said declarant, then travelling in the special employment of Government, and having charge of certain important papers, and also a large sum in specie, to be paid over, according to his instructions, to certain persons of official trust and importance in Scotland.

Having heard this extraordinary accusation I replied to it, that the circumstances on which it was founded were such as could warrant no justice, or magistrate, in any attempt on my personal liberty. I admitted that I had practised a little upon the terrors of Mr. Morris, while we travelled together, but in such trifling particulars as could have excited apprehension in no one who was one whit less timorous and jealous than himself. But I added, that I had never seen him since we parted, and if that which he feared had really come upon him, I was in nowise accessory to an action so unworthy of my character and station in life. That one of the robbers was called Osbaldistone, or that such a name was mentioned in the course of the conversation be-

twixt them, was a trifling circumstance, to which no weight was due. And concerning the disaffection alleged against me, I was willing to prove, to the satisfaction of the Justice, the clerk, and even the witness himself, that I was of the same persuasion as his friend the dissenting clergyman; had been educated as a good subject in the principles of the Revolution, and as such now demanded the personal protection of the laws which had been assured by that great event.

The Justice fidgeted, took snuff, and seemed considerably embarrassed, while Mr. Attorney Jobson, with all the volubility of his profession, ran over the statute of the 34 Edward III., by which justices of the peace are allowed to arrest all those whom they find by indictment or suspicion, and to put them into prison. The rogue even turned my own admissions against me, alleging, "that since I had confessedly, upon my own showing, assumed the bearing or deportment of a robber or malefactor, I had voluntarily subjected myself to the suspicions of which I complained, and brought myself within the compass of the act, having wilfully clothed my conduct with all the color and livery of guilt."

I combated both his arguments and his jargon with much indignation and scorn, and observed, "That I should, if necessary, produce the bail of my relations, which I conceived could not be refused, without subjecting the magistrate in a misdemeanor."

"Pardon me, my good sir—pardon me," said the insatiable clerk; "this is a case in which neither bail nor mainprize can be received, the felon who is liable to be committed on heavy grounds of suspicion, not being replevisable under the statute of the 3d of King Edward, there being in that act an express exception of such as be charged of commandment, or force, and aid of felony done;" and he hinted that his worship would do well to remember that such were no way replevisable by common writ nor without writ.

At this period of the conversation a servant entered, and delivered a letter to Mr. Jobson. He had no sooner run it hastily over, than he exclaimed, with the air of one who wished to appear much vexed at the interruption, and felt the consequence attached to a man of multifarious avocations—"Good God!—why, at this rate, I shall have neither time to attend to the public concerns nor my own—no rest—no quiet—I wish to Heaven another gentleman in our line would settle here!"

"God forbid!" said the Justice in a tone of *sotto-voce* deprecation; "some of us have enough of one of the tribe."

"This is a matter of life and death, if your worship pleases."

"In God's name! no more justice business, I hope," said the alarmed magistrate.

"No—no," replied Mr. Jobson, very consequentially; "old Gaffer Rutledge of Grime's Hill is subpoena'd for the next world; he has sent an

express for Dr. Killdown to put in bail—another for me to arrange his worldly affairs."

"Away with you, then," said Mr. Inglewood, hastily, "his may not be a replevisable case under the statute, you know, or Mr. Justice Death may not like the doctor for a *main pernor*, or bailman."

"And yet," said Jobson, lingering as he moved towards the door, "if my presence here be necessary—I could make out the warrant for committal in a moment, and the constable is below—And you have heard," he said, lowering his voice, "Mr. Rashleigh's opinion"—the rest was lost in a whisper.

The Justice replied aloud, "I tell thee no, man, no—we'll do nought till thou return, man; 'tis but a four-mile ride—Come push the bottle, Mr. Morris—Don't be cast down, Mr. Osbaldistone—And you, my rose of the wilderness—one cup of claret to refresh the bloom of your cheeks."

Diana started, as if from a reverie, in which she appeared to have been plunged while we held this discussion. "No, Justice—I should be afraid of transferring the bloom to a part of my face where it would show to little advantage; but I will pledge you in a cooler beverage;" and filling a glass with water, she drank it hastily, while her hurried manner belied her assumed gaiety.

I had not much leisure to make remarks upon her demeanor, however, being full of vexation at the interference of fresh obstacles to an instant examination of the disgraceful and impertinent charge which was brought against me. But there was no moving the Justice to take the matter up in absence of his clerk, an incident which gave him apparently as much pleasure as a holiday to a schoolboy. He persisted in his endeavors to inspire jollity into a company, the individuals of which, whether considered with reference to each other, or to their respective situations, were by no means inclined to mirth. "Come, Master Morris, you're not the first man that's been robbed, I trow—grieving ne'er brought back loss, man. And you, Mr. Frank Osbaldistone, are not the first bully boy that has said stand to a true man. There was Jack Winterfield, in my young days, kept the best company in the land—at horse-races and cock-fights who but he—hand and glove was I with Jack. Push the bottle, Mr. Morris, it's dry talking—Many quart bumpers have I cracked, and thrown many a merry main with poor Jack—good family—ready wit—quick eye—as honest a fellow, barring the deed he died for—we'll drink to his memory, gentlemen—Poor Jack Winterfield—And since we talk of him, and of those sort of things, and since that d-d clerk of mine has taken his gibberish elsewhere, and since we're snug among ourselves, Mr. Osbaldistone, if you will have my best advice, I would take up this matter—the law's hard—very severe—hanged poor Jack Winterfield at York, despite family connexions and great interest, all for easing a fat west-country grazier of the price of a few beasts—Now, here is honest Mr. Morris, has been fright-

ened, and so forth—D—n it, man, let the poor fellow have back his portmanteau, and end the frolic at once."

Morris's eyes brightened up at this suggestion, and he began to hesitate forth an assurance that he thirsted for no man's blood, when I cut the proposed accommodation short, by resenting the Justice's suggestion as an insult, that went directly to suppose me guilty of the very crime which I had come to his house with the express intention of disavowing. We were in this awkward predicament when a servant, opening the door, announced, "A strange gentleman to wait upon his honor;" and the party whom he thus described entered the room without farther ceremony.

CHAPTER IX.

One of the thieves come back again! I'll stand close.
He dares not wrong me now, so near the house,
And call in vain 'tis, till I see him offer it.

THE WIDOW.

"A STRANGER!" echoed the Justice—"not upon business, I trust, for I'll be"—

His protestation was cut short by the answer of the man himself. "My business is of a nature somewhat onerous and particular," said my acquaintance, Mr. Campbell—for it was he, the very Scotchman whom I had seen at Northallerton—"and I must solicit your honor to give instant and heedful consideration to it, I believe, Mr. Morris," he added, fixing his eye on that person with a look of peculiar firmness and almost ferocity—"I believe ye ken bravely what I am—I believe ye cannot have forgotten what passed at our last meeting on the road?" Morris's jaw dropped—his countenance became the color of fallow—his teeth chattered, and he gave visible signs of the utmost consternation. "Take heart of grace, man," said Campbell, "and dinna sit clattering your jaws there like a pair of castanets! I think there can be nae difficulty in your telling Mr. Justice, that ye have seen me of yore, and ken me to be a cavalier of fortune and a man of honor. Ye ken fu' weel ye will be some time resident in my vicinity, when I may have the power, as I will possess the inclination, to do you as good a turn."

"Sir—sir—I believe you to be a man of honor, and, as you say, a man of fortune. Yes, Mr. Inglewood," he added, clearing his voice, "I really believe this gentleman to be so."

"And what are this gentleman's commands with me?" said the Justice, somewhat peevishly. "One man introduces another, like the rhymes in the 'house that Jack built,' and I get company without either peace or conversation!" "Both shall be yours, sir," answered Campbell, "in a brief period of time. I come to release your mind from a piece of troublesome duty, not to make increment to it."

"Body o' me! then you are welcome as ever Scot was to England, and that's not saying much

Bat got on, man—let's hear what you have got to say at once."

"I presume this gentleman," continued the North Briton, "told you there was a person of the name of Campbell with him, when he had the mischance to lose his valise."

"He has not mentioned such a name, from beginning to end of the matter," said the Justice.

"Ah! I conceive—I conceive," replied Mr. Campbell;—"Mr. Morris was kindly afraid of committing a stranger into collision wi' the judicial forms of the country; but as I understand my evidence is necessary to the compurgation of an honest gentleman here, Mr. Francis Osbaldistone, who has been most unjustly suspected, I will dispense with the precaution. Ye will therefore" (he added, addressing Morris with the same determined look and accent) "please tell Mr. Justice Inglewood, whether we did not travel several miles together on the road, in consequence of your anxious request and suggestion, reiterated once and again, baith on the evening that we were at Northallerton, and there declined by me, but afterwards accepted, when I overtook ye on the road near Clobberly Allers, and was prevailed on by you to resign my ain intentions of proceeding to Rothbury; and, for my misfortune, to accompany you on your proposed route."

"It's a melancholy truth," answered Morris, holding down his head, as he gave this general assent to the long and leading question which Campbell put to him, and seemed to acquiesce in the statement it contained with rueful docility.

"And I presume you can also asseverate to his worship, that no man is better qualified than I am to bear testimony in this case, seeing that I was by you, and near you, constantly during the whole occurrence."

"No man better qualified, certainly," said Morris, with a deep and embarrassed sigh.

"And why the devil did you not assist him, then," said the Justice, "since, by Mr. Morris's account, there were but two robbers; so you were two to two, and you are both stout likely men?"

"Sir, if it please your worship," said Campbell, "I have been all my life a man of peace and quietness, nowadays given to broils and batteries. Mr. Morris, who belongs, as I understand, or hath belonged, to his Majesty's army, might have used his pleasure in resistance, he travelling, as I also understand, with a great charge of treasure; but, for me, who had but my own small peculiar to defend, and who am, moreover, a man of a pacific occupation, I was unwilling to commit myself to hazard in the matter."

I looked at Campbell as he muttered these words, and never recollect to have seen a more singular contrast than that between the strong daring sternness expressed in his harsh features, and the air of composed meekness and simplicity which his language assumed. There was even a slight ironical smile lurking about the corners of his mouth, which seemed, involuntarily as it were,

to intimate his disdain of the quiet and peaceful character which he thought proper to assume, and which led me to entertain strange suspicions that his concern in the violence done to Morris had been something very different from that of a fellow-sufferer, or even of a mere spectator.

Perhaps some suspicions crossed the Justice's mind at the moment, for he exclaimed, as if by way of ejaculation, "Body o' me! but this is a strange story."

The North Briton seemed to guess at what was passing in his mind; for he went on, with a change of manner and tone, dismissing from his countenance some part of the hypocritical affectation of humility which had made him obnoxious to suspicion, and saying, with a more frank and unconstrained air, "To say the truth, I am just aye o' those canny folks who care not to fight but when they hae gotten something to fight for, which did not chance to be my predicament when I fell in wi' these loons. But that your worship may know that I am a person of good fame and character, please to cast your eye over that billet."

Mr. Inglewood took the paper from his hands, and read, half aloud, "These are to certify, that the bearer, Robert Campbell of—of some place which I cannot pronounce," interjected the Justice—"is a person of good lineage, and peaceable demeanor, travelling towards England on his own proper affairs, &c., &c., &c. Given under our hand, at our Castle of Inver-Invera—rara—Argyle."

"A slight testimonial, sir, which I thought fit to impetrate from that worthy nobleman" (here he raised his hand to his head, as if to touch his hat), "MacCallum More."

"MacCallum who, sir?" said the Justice.

"Whom the Southern call the Duke of Argyle."

"I know the Duke of Argyle very well to be a nobleman of great worth and distinction, and a true lover of his country. I was one of those that stood by him in 1714, when he unhorsed the Duke of Marlborough out of his command. I wish we had more noblemen like him. He was an honest Tory in those days, and hand and glove with Ormond. And he has acceded to the present Government, as I have done myself, for the peace and quiet of his country; for I cannot presume that great man to have been actuated, as violent folks pretend, with the fear of losing his places and regiment. His testimonial, as you call it, Mr. Campbell, is perfectly satisfactory; and now, what have you got to say to this matter of the robbery?"

"Briefly this, if it please your worship—that Mr. Morris might as weel charge it against the babe yet to be born, or against myself even, as against this young gentleman, Mr. Osbaldistone; for I am not only free to depone that the person for whom he took him was a shorter man and a thicker man, but also, for I chanced to obtain a glist of his visage, as his fause-face slipped aside, that he was a man of other features and complex-

ion than those of this young gentleman, Mr. Osbaldistone. And I believe," he added, turning round with a natural, yet somewhat sterner air, to Mr. Morris, "that the gentleman will allow I had better opportunity to take cognizance who were present on that occasion than he, being, I believe, much the cooler o' the twa."

"I agree to it, sir—I agree to it perfectly," said Morris, shrinking back as Campbell moved his chair towards him to fortify his appeal—"And I incline, sir," he added, addressing Mr. Inglewood, "to retract my information as to Mr. Osbaldistone; and I request, sir, you will permit him, sir, to go about his business, and me to go about mine also; your worship may have business to settle with Mr. Campbell, and I am rather in haste to be gone."

"Then, there go the declarations," said the Justice, throwing them into the fire—"And now you are at perfect liberty, Mr. Osbaldistone. And you, Mr. Morris, are set quite at your ease."

"Ay," said Campbell, eyeing Morris as he assented with a rueful grin to the Justice's observations, "much like the case of a toad under a pair of harrows—But fear nothing, Mr. Morris; you and I maun leave the house together. I will see you safe—I hope you will not doubt my honor, when I say sae—to the next highway, and then we part company; and if we do not meet as friends in Scotland, it will be your ain fault."

With such a lingering look of terror as the condemned criminal throws, when he is informed that the cart awaits him, Morris arose; but when on his legs appeared to hesitate. "I tell thee, man, fear nothing," reiterated Campbell; "I will keep my word with you—Why, thou sheep's heart, how do ye ken but we may can pick up some speerings of your valise, if ye will be amenable to gude counsel?—Our horses are ready. Bid the Justice farewell, man, and show your Southern breeding."

Morris, thus exhorted and encouraged, took his leave, under the escort of Mr. Campbell; but, apparently, new scruples and terrors had struck him before they left the house, for I heard Campbell reiterating assurances of safety and protection as they left the ante-room—"By the soul of my body, man, thou'rt as safe as in thy father's kail-yard—Zounds! that a chield wi' sic a black beard, should hae nae mair heart than a hen-partridge!—Come on wi' ye, like a frank fellow, anes and for aye."

The voices died away, and the subsequent trampling of their horses announced to us that they had left the mansion of Justice Inglewood.

The joy which that worthy magistrate received at this easy conclusion of a matter which threatened him with some trouble in his judicial capacity, was somewhat damped by reflection on what his clerk's views of the transaction might be at his return. "Now, I shall have Jobson on my shoulders about these d—d papers—I doubt I should not have destroyed them, after all—But hang it! it is only paying his fees, and that will

make all smooth—And now, Miss Die Vernon, though I have liberated all the others, I intend to sign a writ for committing you to the custody of Mother Blakes, my old housekeeper, for the evening, and we will send for my neighbor Mrs. Musgrave, and the Miss Dawkins, and your cousins, and have old Cobs the fiddler, and be as merry as the maids; and Frank Osbaldistone and I will have a carouse that will make us fit company for you in half an hour."

"Thanks, most worshipful," returned Miss Vernon; "but as matters stand, we must return instantly to Osbaldistone Hall, where they do not know what has become of us, and relieve my uncle of his anxiety on my cousin's account, which is just the same as if one of his own sons were concerned."

"I believe it truly," said the Justice; "for when his eldest son, Archie, came to a bad end, in that unlucky affair of Sir John Fenwick's, old Hildebrand used to hollow out his name as readily as any of the remaining six, and then complain that he could not recollect which of his sons had been hanged. So, pray hasten home, and relieve his paternal solicitude, since go you must. But hark thee hither, heath-blossom," he said, pulling her towards him by the hand, and in a good-humored tone of admonition, "another time let the law take its course, without putting your pretty finger into her old musty pie, all full of fragments of law gibberish—French and dog-Latin—And, Die, my beauty, let young fellows show each other the way through the moors, in case you should lose your own road, while you are pointing out theirs, my pretty Will o' the Wisp."

With this admonition, he saluted and dismissed Miss Vernon, and took an equally kind farewell of me.

"Thou seems to be a good tight lad, Mr. Frank, and I remember thy father too—he was my play-fellow at school. Hark thee, lad,—ride early at night, and don't swagger with chance passengers on the king's highway. What, man! all the king's liege subjects are not bound to understand joking, and it's ill cracking jests on matters of felony. And here's poor Die Vernon too—in a manner alone and deserted on the face of this wide earth, and left to ride, and run, and scamper, at her own silly pleasure. Thou must be careful of Die, or, egad, I will turn a young fellow again on purpose, and fight thee myself, although I must own it would be a great deal of trouble. And now, get ye both gone, and leave me to my pipe of tobacco, and my meditations; for what says the song—

The Indian leaf doth briefly burn;
So doth man's strength to weakness turn;—
The fire of youth extinguished quite,
Come age, like embers, dry and white,
Think of this as you take tobacco."

I was much pleased with the gleams of senso and feeling which escaped from the Justice through the vapors of sloth and self-indulgence, assured him of my respect to his admonitions,

and took a friendly farewell of the honest magistrate and his hospitable mansion.

We found a repast prepared for us in the ante-room, which we partook of slightly, and rejoined the same servant of Sir Hildebrand who had taken our horses at our entrance, and who had been directed, as he informed Miss Vernon, by Mr. Rashleigh, to wait and attend upon us home. We rode a little way in silence, for, to say truth, my mind was too much bewildered with the events of the morning, to permit me to be the first to break it. At length Miss Vernon exclaimed, as if giving vent to her own reflections, "Well, Rashleigh is a man to be feared and wondered at, and all but loved; he does whatever he pleases, and makes all others his puppets—has a player ready to perform every part which he imagines, and an invention and readiness which supply expedients for every emergency."

"You think, then," said I, answering rather to her meaning, than to the express words she made use of, "that this Mr. Campbell, whose appearance was so opportune, and who trussed up and carried off my accuser as a falcon trusses a partridge, was an agent of Mr. Rashleigh Osbaldistone's?"

"I do guess as much," replied Diana; "and shrewdly suspect moreover, that he would hardly have appeared so very much in the nick of time, if I had not happened to meet Rashleigh in the hall at the Justice's."

"In that case, my thanks are chiefly due to you, my fair preserver."

"To be sure they are," returned Diana; "and pray, suppose them paid, and accepted with a gracious smile, for I do not care to be troubled with hearing them in good earnest, and am much more likely to yawn than to behave becoming. In short, Mr. Frank, I wished to serve you, and I have fortunately been able to do so, and have only one favor to ask in return, and that is, that you will say no more about it.—But who comes here to meet us, 'bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste?' It is the subordinate man of law, I think—no less than Mr. Joseph Jobson."

And Mr. Joseph Jobson it proved to be, in great haste, and, as it speedily appeared, in most extreme bad humor. He came up to us, and stopped his horse, as we were about to pass with a slight salutation.

"So, sir—so, Miss Vernon—ay, I see well enough how it is—bail put in during my absence, I suppose—I should like to know who drew the recognisance, that's all. If his worship uses this form of procedure often, I advise him to get another clerk, that's all, for I shall certainly demit."

"Or suppose he get this present clerk stitched to his sleeve, Mr. Jobson," said Diana; "would not that do as well? And pray, how does Farmer Rutledge, Mr. Jobson? I hope you found him able to sign, seal, and deliver?"

This question seemed greatly to increase the wrath of the man of law. He looked at Miss Vernon with such an air of spite and resentment, as laid me under a strong temptation to knock

him off his horse with the butt end of my whip, which I only suppressed in consideration of his insignificance.

"Farmer Rutledge, ma'am?" said the clerk, so soon as his indignation permitted him to articulate, "Farmer Rutledge is in as handsome enjoyment of his health as you are—it's all a bam, ma'am—all a bamboozle and a bite, that affair of his illness; and if you did not know as much before, you know it now, ma'am."

"La you there now!" replied Miss Vernon, with an affectation of extreme and simple wonder, "sure you don't say so, Mr. Jobson?"

"But I do say so, ma'am," rejoined the incensed scribe; "and moreover I say, that the old miserly clod-breaker called me pettifogger—pettifogger, ma'am—and said I came to hunt for a job, ma'am—which I have no more right to have said to me than any other gentleman of my profession, ma'am—especially as I am clerk to the peace, having and holding said office under *Trigesimo Septimo Henrici Octavi et Primo Gulielmi*, the first of King William, ma'am, of glorious and immortal memory—our immortal deliverer from papists and pretenders, and wooden shoes and warming-pans, Miss Vernon."

"Sad things, these wooden shoes and warming-pans," retorted the young lady, who seemed to take pleasure in augmenting his wrath;—"and it is a comfort you don't seem to want a warming-pan at present, Mr. Jobson. I am afraid Gaffer Rutledge has not confined his incivility to language—are you sure he did not give you a beating?"

"Beating, ma'am!—no"—(very shortly)—"no man alive shall beat me, I promise you, ma'am."

"That is according as you happen to merit, sir," said I; "for your mode of speaking to this young lady is so unbecoming, that, if you do not change your tone, I shall think it worth while to chastise you myself."

"Chastise, sir? and—me, sir?—Do you know whom you speak to, sir?"

"Yes, sir," I replied; "you say yourself you are clerk of peace to the county; and Gaffer Rutledge says you are a pettifogger; and in neither capacity are you entitled to be impertinent to a young lady of fashion."

Miss Vernon laid her hand on my arm, and exclaimed, "Come, Mr. Osbaldistone, I will have no assaults and battery on Mr. Jobson: I am not in sufficient charity with him to permit a single touch of your whip—why, he would live on it for a term at least. Besides, you have already hurt his feelings sufficiently—you have called him impertinent."

"I don't value his language, Miss," said the clerk, somewhat crest-fallen; "besides, impertinent is not an actionable word; but pettifogger is slander in the highest degree, and that I will make Gaffer Rutledge know to his cost, and all who maliciously repeat the same, to the breach of the public peace, and the taking away of my private good name."

"Never mind that, Mr. Jobson," said Miss Vernon; "you know, where there is nothing, your own law allows that the king himself must lose his rights; and, for the taking away of your good name, I pity the poor fellow who gets it, and wish you joy of losing it with all my heart."

"Very well, ma'am—good-evening, ma'am—I have no more to say—only there are laws against papists, which it would be well for the land were they better executed. There's third and fourth Edward VI., of antiphoners, missals, gralles, processions, manuals, legends, pies, portuasses, and those that have such trinkets in their possession, Miss Vernon—and there's summoning of papists to take the oaths—and there are popish recusant convicts under the first of his present Majesty—ay, and there are penalties for hearing mass.—See twenty-third of Queen Elizabeth, and third James First, chapter twenty-fifth. And there are estates to be registered, and deeds and wills to be enrolled, and double taxes to be made, according to the acts in that case made and provided"—

"See the new edition of the Statutes at Large, published under the careful revision of Joseph Jobson, Gent., Clerk of the Peace," said Miss Vernon.

"Also, and above all," continued Jobson,—"for I speak to your warning—you, Diana Vernon, spinstress, not being a *femme couverte*, and being a convict popish recusant, are bound to repair to your own dwelling, and that by the nearest way, under penalty of being held felon to the king—and diligently to seek for passage at common ferries, and to tarry there but one ebb and flood; and unless you can have it in such places, to walk every day into the water up to the knees, assaying to pass over."

"A sort of Protestant penance for my Catholic errors, I suppose," said Miss Vernon, laughing.—"Well, I thank you for the information, Mr. Jobson, and will hie me home as fast as I can, and be a better housekeeper in time coming. Good-night, my dear Mr. Jobson, thou mirror of clerical courtesy."

"Good-night, ma'am, and remember the law is not to be trifled with."

And we rode on our separate ways.

"There he goes for a troublesome, mischief-making tool," said Miss Vernon, as she gave a glance after him; "it is hard that persons of birth and rank and estate should be subjected to the official impertinence of such a paltry pickthank as that, merely for believing as the whole world believed not much above a hundred years ago—for certainly our Catholic faith has the advantage of antiquity at least."

"I was much tempted to have broken the rascal's head," I replied.

"You would have acted very like a hasty young man," said Miss Vernon; "and yet had my own hand been an ounce heavier than it is, I think I should have laid its weight upon him. Well, it does not signify complaining, but there are three

things for which I am much to be pitied, if any one thought it worth while to waste any compassion upon me."

"And what are these three things, Miss Vernon, may I ask?"

"Will you promise me your deepest sympathy, if I tell you?"

"Certainly;—can you doubt it?" I replied, closing my horse nearer to hers as I spoke, with an expression of interest which I did not attempt to disguise.

"Well, it is very seducing to be pitied, after all; so here are my three grievances: In the first place, I am a girl, and not a young fellow, and would be shut up in a mad-house, if I did half the things that I have a mind to;—and that, if I had your happy prerogative of acting as you list, would make all the world mad with imitating and applauding me."

"I can't quite afford you the sympathy you expect upon this score," I replied; "the misfortune is so general, that it belongs to one half of the species; and the other half"—

"Are so much better cared for, that they are jealous of their prerogatives," interrupted Miss Vernon—"I forgot you were a party interested. Nay," said she, as I was going to speak, "that soft smile is intended to be the preface of a very pretty compliment respecting the peculiar advantages which Die Vernon's friends and kinsmen enjoy, by her being born one of their Helots; but spare me the utterance, my good friend, and let us try whether we shall agree better on the second count of my indictment against fortune, as that quill-driving puppy would call it. I belong to an oppressed sect and antiquated religion, and, instead of getting credit for my devotion, as is due to all good girls beside, my kind friend, Justice Inglewood, may send me to the house of correction, merely for worshipping God in the way of my ancestors, and say, as old Pembroke did to the Abbess of Wilton,* when he usurped her convent and establishment, 'Go spin, you jade,—Go spin.'"

"This is not a cureless evil," said I gravely. "Consult some of our learned divines, or consult your own excellent understanding, Miss Vernon; and surely the particulars in which our religious creed differs from that in which you have been educated"—

"Hush!" said Diana, placing her fore-finger on her mouth,—"Hush! no more of that. For—"

"Hush!" said Diana, placing her fore-finger on her mouth,—"Hush! no more of that. For—"

* The nunnery of Wilton was granted to the Earl of Pembroke upon its dissolution, by the magisterial authority of Henry VIII., or his son Edward VI. On the accession of Queen Mary, of Catholic memory, the Earl found it necessary to reinstate the Abbess and her fair recluses, which he did with many expressions of his remorse, kneeling humbly to the vestals, and inducting them into the convent and possessions from which he had expelled them. With the accession of Elizabeth, the accommodating Earl again resumed his Protestant faith, and a second time drove the nuns from their sanctuary. The remonstrances of the Abbess, who reminded him of his penitent expressions on the former occasion, could ring from him no other answer than that in the text—"Go spin, you jade!—Go spin!"

sake the faith of my gallant fathers! I would as soon, were I a man, forsake their banner when the tide of battle pressed hardest against it, and turn, like a hireling recreant, to join the victorious enemy."

"I honor your spirit, Miss Vernon; and as to the inconveniences to which it exposes you, I can only say, that wounds sustained for the sake of conscience carry their own balsam with the blow."

"Ay; but they are fretful and irritating, for all that. But I see, hard of heart as you are, my chance of beating hemp, or drawing out flax into marvellous coarse thread, affects you as little as my condemnation to coil and pinners, instead of beaver and cockade; so I will spare myself the fruitless pains of telling my third cause of vexation."

"Nay, my dear Miss Vernon, do not withdraw your confidence, and I will promise you, that the threefold sympathy due to your very unusual causes of distress shall be all duly and truly paid to account of the third, providing you assure me, that it is one which you neither share with all womankind, nor even with every Catholic in England, who, God bless you, are still a sect more numerous than we Protestants, in our zeal for church and state, would desire them to be."

"It is indeed," said Diana, with a manner greatly altered, and more serious than I had yet seen her assume, "a misfortune that well merits compassion. I am by nature, as you may easily observe, of a frank and unreserved disposition—a plain true-hearted girl, who would willingly act openly and honestly by the whole world, and yet fate has involved me in such a series of nets, and toils, and entanglements, that I dare hardly speak a word for fear of consequences—not to myself, but to others."

"That is indeed a misfortune, Miss Vernon, which I do most sincerely compassionate, but which I should hardly have anticipated."

"O, Mr. Osbaldistone, if you but knew—if any one knew, what difficulty I sometimes find in hiding an aching heart with a smooth brow, you would indeed pity me. I do wrong, perhaps, in speaking to you even thus far on my own situation; but you are a young man of sense and penetration—you cannot but long to ask me a hundred questions on the events of this day—on the share which Rashleigh has in your deliverance from this petty scrape—upon many other points which cannot but excite your attention; and I cannot bring myself to answer with the necessary falsehood and finesse—I should do it awkwardly, and lose your good opinion, if I have any share of it, as well as my own. It is best to say at once, Ask me no questions,—I have it not in my power to reply to them."

Miss Vernon spoke these words with a tone of feeling which could not but make a corresponding impression upon me. I assured her she had neither to fear my urging her with impertinent questions, nor my misconstruing her declining to

answer those which might in themselves be reasonable, or at least natural.

"I was too much obliged," I said, "by the interest she had taken in my affairs, to misuse the opportunity her goodness had afforded me of prying into hers—I only trusted and entreated, that if my services could at any time be useful, she would command them without doubt or hesitation."

"Thank you—thank you," she replied; "your voice does not ring the cuckoo chime of compliment, but speaks like that of one who knows to what he pledges himself. If—but it is impossible—but yet, if an opportunity should occur, I will ask you if you remember this promise; and I assure you, I shall not be angry if I find you have forgotten it, for it is enough that you are sincere in your intentions just now—much may occur to alter them ere I call upon you, should that moment ever come, to assist Die Vernon, as if you were Die Vernon's brother."

"And if I were Die Vernon's brother," said I, "there could not be less chance that I should refuse my assistance—And now I am afraid I must not ask whether Rashleigh was willingly accessory to my deliverance?"

"Not of me; but you may ask it of himself, and depend upon it, he will say *yes*; for rather than any good action should walk through the world like an unappropriated adjective in an ill-arranged sentence, he is always willing to stand noun substantive to it himself."

"And I must not ask whether this Campbell be himself the party who eased Mr. Morris of his portmanteau,—or whether the letter, which our friend the attorney received, was not a finesse to withdraw him from the scene of action, lest he should have marred the happy event of my deliverance? And I must not ask"—

"You must ask nothing of me," said Miss Vernon; "so it is quite in vain to go on putting cases. You are to think just as well of me as if I had answered all these queries, and twenty others besides, as glibly as Rashleigh could have done; and observe, whenever I touch my chin just so, it is a sign that I cannot speak upon the topic which happens to occupy your attention. I must settle signals of correspondence with you, because you are to be my confidant and my counselor, only you are to know nothing whatever of my affairs."

"Nothing can be more reasonable," I replied, laughing; "and the extent of your confidence will, you may rely upon it, only be equalled by the sagacity of my counsels."

This sort of conversation brought us, in the highest good-humor with each other, to Osbaldistone Hall, where we found the family far advanced in the revels of the evening.

"Get some dinner for Mr. Osbaldistone and me in the library," said Miss Vernon to a servant.—"I must have some compassion upon you," she added, turning to me, "and provide against your starving in this mansion of brutal abundance;

otherwise I am not sure that I should show you my private haunts. This same library is my den—the only corner of the Hall-house where I am safe from the Ourang-Outangs, my cousins. They never venture there, I suppose, for fear the folios should fall down and crack their skulls; for they will never affect their heads in any other way—So follow me."

And I followed through hall and bower, vaulted passage and winding stair, until we reached the room where she had ordered our refreshments.

CHAPTER X.

In the wide pile, by others heeded not,
Hers was one sacred solitary spot,
Whose gloomy aisles and bending shelves contain
For moral hunger food, and cures for moral pain.
ANONYMOUS.

THE library at Osbaldistone Hall was a gloomy room, whose antique oaken shelves bent beneath the weight of the ponderous folios so dear to the seventeenth century, from which, under favor be it spoken, we have distilled matter for our quartos and octavos, and which, once more subjected to the alembic, may, should our sons be yet more frivolous than ourselves, be still farther reduced into duodecimos and pamphlets. The collection was chiefly of the classics, as well foreign as ancient history, and, above all, divinity. It was in wretched order. The priests, who in succession had acted as chaplains at the Hall, were, for many years, the only persons who entered its precincts, until Rashleigh's thirst for reading had led him to disturb the venerable spiders, who had muffled the fronts of the presses with their tapestry. His destination for the church rendered his conduct less absurd in his father's eyes, than if any of his other descendants had betrayed so strange a propensity, and Sir Hildebrand acquiesced in the library receiving some repairs, so as to fit it for a sitting-room. Still an air of dilapidation, as obvious as it was uncomfortable, pervaded the large apartment, and announced the neglect from which the knowledge which its walls contained had not been able to exempt it. The tattered tapestry, the worm-eaten shelves, the huge and clumsy, yet tottering, tables, desks, and chairs, the rusty grate, seldom gladdened by either sea-coal or fagots, intimated the contempt of the lords of Osbaldistone Hall for learning, and for the volumes which record its treasures.

"You think this place somewhat disconsolate, I suppose?" said Diana, as I glanced my eye round the forlorn apartment; "but to me it seems like a little paradise, for I call it my own, and fear no intrusion. Rashleigh was joint proprietor with me, while we were friends."

"And are you no longer so?" was my natural question.

Her fore finger immediately touched her dimpled chin, with an arch look of prohibition.

"We are still *allies*," she continued, "bound, like other confederate powers, by circumstances

of mutual interest; but I am afraid, as will happen in other cases, the treaty of alliance has survived the amicable dispositions in which it had its origin. At any rate, we live less together; and when he comes through that door there, I vanish through this door here; and so, having made the discovery that we two were one too many for this apartment, as large as it seems, Rashleigh, whose occasions frequently call him elsewhere, has generously made a cession of his rights in my favor; so that I now endeavor to prosecute alone the studies in which he used formerly to be my guide."

"And what are those studies, if I may presume to ask?"

"Indeed, you may, without the least fear of seeing my fore-finger raised to my chin. Science and history are my principal favorites; but I also study poetry and the classics."

"And the classics? Do you read them in the original?"

"Unquestionably. Rashleigh, who is no contemptible scholar, taught me Greek and Latin, as well as most of the languages of modern Europe. I assure you there has been some pains taken in my education, although I can neither sew a tucker, nor work cross-stitch, nor make a pudding, nor—as the vicar's fat wife, with as much truth as elegance, good-will, and politeness, was pleased to say in my behalf—do any other useful thing in the varsal world."

"And was this selection of studies Rashleigh's choice, or your own, Miss Vernon?" I asked.

"Um!" said she, as if hesitating to answer my question,—"it's not worth while lifting my finger about, after all. Why, partly his and partly mine. As I learned out of doors to ride a horse, and bridle and saddle him in case of necessity, and to clear a five-barred gate, and fire a gun without winking, and all other of those masculine accomplishments that my brute cousins run mad after, I wanted, like my rational cousin, to read Greek and Latin within doors, and make my complete approach to the tree of knowledge, which you men-scholars would engross to yourselves, in revenge, I suppose, for our common mother's share in the great original transgression."

"And Rashleigh indulged your propensity to learning?"

"Why, he wished to have me for his scholar, and he could but teach me that which he knew himself—he was not likely to instruct me in the mysteries of washing lace-ruffles, or hemming cambric-handkerchiefs, I suppose."

"I admit the temptation of getting such a scholar, and have no doubt that it made a weighty consideration on the tutor's part."

"Oh, if you begin to investigate Rashleigh's motives, my finger touches my chin once more. I can only be frank where my own are inquired into. But to resume—he has resigned the library in my favor, and never enters without leave had and obtained; and so I have taken the liberty to make it the place of deposit for some of my own

goods and chattels, as you may see by looking round you."

"I beg pardon, Miss Vernon, but I really see nothing around these walls which I can distinguish as likely to claim you as mistress."

"That is, I suppose, because you neither see a shepherd or shepherdess wrought in worsted, and handsomely framed in black ebony, or a stuffed parrot,—or a breeding-cage, full of canary-birds,—or a housewife-case, brodered with tarnished silver,—or a toilette-table with a nest of japanned boxes, with as many angles as Christmas mince-pies,—or a broken-backed spinet,—or a lute with three strings,—or rock-work,—or shell-work,—or needle-work, or work of any kind,—or a lap-dog with a litter of blind puppies—None of these treasures do I possess," she continued, after a pause, in order to recover the breath she had lost in enumerating them—"But there stands the sword of my ancestor Sir Richard Vernon, slain at Shrewsbury, and sorely slandered by a sad fellow called Will Shakespeare, whose Lancastrian partialities, and a certain knack at embodying them, has turned history upside down or rather inside out;—and by that redoubted weapon hangs the mail of the still older Vernon, squire to the Black Prince, whose fate is the reverse of his descendant's, since he is more indebted to the bard who took the trouble to celebrate him, for good-will than for talents,—

Amidst the route you might discern one
Brave knight, with pipes on shield, ycleped Vernon;
Like a borne fend along the plain he thundered,
Prest to be carving throtes, while others plundered.

Then there is a model of a new martingale, which I invented myself—a great improvement on the Duke of Newcastle's; and there are the hood and bells of my falcon Cheviot, who spitted himself on a heron's bill at Horseley-moss—poor Cheviot, there is not a bird on the perches below, but are kites and rifiers compared to him; and there is my own light fowling-piece, with an improved fire-lock; with twenty other treasures, each more valuable than another—And there, that speaks for itself."

She pointed to the carved oak frame of a full-length portrait by Vandike, on which were inscribed, in Gothic letters, the words *Vernon semper vivet*. I looked at her for explanation. "Do you not know," said she, with some surprise, "our motto—the Vernon motto, where,

Like the solemn vice, iniquity,
We moralize two meanings in one word!

And do you not know our cognizance, the pipes?" pointing to the armorial bearings sculptured on the oaken scutcheon, around which the legend was displayed.

"Pipes!—they look more like penny-whistles—But, pray, do not be angry with my ignorance," I continued, observing the color mount to her cheeks, "I can mean no affront to your armorial bearings, for I do not even know my own."

"You an Osbaldistone, and confess so much!" she exclaimed. "Why, Percie, Thornie, John,

Dickon—Wilfred himself, might be your instructor. Even ignorance itself is a plummet over you."

"With shame I confess it, my dear Miss Vernon, the mysteries conched under the grim hieroglyphics of heraldry are to me as unintelligible as those of the pyramids of Egypt."

"What! is it possible?—Why, even my uncle reads Gwilym sometimes of a winter night—Not know the figures of heraldry!—of what could your father be thinking?"

"Of the figures of arithmetic," I answered; "the most insignificant unit of which he holds more highly than all the blazonry of chivalry. But, though I am ignorant to this inexpressible degree, I have knowledge and taste enough to admire that splendid picture, in which I think I can discover a family likeness to you. What ease and dignity in the attitude—what richness of coloring—what breadth and depth of shade!"

"Is it really a fine painting?" she asked. "I have seen many works of the renowned artist," I replied, "but never beheld one more to my liking."

"Well, I know as little of pictures as you do of heraldry," replied Miss Vernon; "yet I have the advantage of you, because I have always admired the painting without understanding its value."

"While I have neglected pipes and tabors, and all the whimsical combinations of chivalry, still I am informed that they floated in the fields of ancient fame. But you will allow their exterior appearance is not so peculiarly interesting to the uninformed spectator as that of a fine painting.—Who is the person here represented?"

"My grandfather. He shared the misfortunes of Charles I., and, I am sorry to add, the excesses of his son. Our patrimonial estate was greatly impaired by his prodigality, and was altogether lost by his successor, my unfortunate father. But peace be with them who have got it!—it was lost in the cause of loyalty."

"Your father, I presume, suffered in the political dissensions of the period?"

"He did indeed;—he lost his all. And hence is his child a dependent orphan—eating the bread of others—subjected to their caprices, and compelled to study their inclinations; yet prouder of having had such a father, than if, playing a more prudent but less upright part, he had left me possessor of all the rich and fair baronies which his family once possessed."

As she thus spoke, the entrance of the servants with dinner cut off all conversation but that of a general nature.

When our hasty meal was concluded, and the wine placed on the table, the domestic informed us, "that Mr. Rashleigh had desired to be told when our dinner was removed."

"Tell him," said Miss Vernon, "we shall be happy to see him if he will step this way—place another wine-glass and chair, and leave the room.—You must retire with him when he goes away,"

she continued, addressing herself to me; "even my liberality cannot spare a gentleman above eight hours out of the twenty-four; and I think we have been together for at least that length of time."

"The old scythe-man has moved so rapidly," I answered, "that I could not count his strides."

"Hush!" said Miss Vernon. "Here comes Rashleigh;" and she drew off her chair, to which I had approached mine rather closely, so as to place a greater distance between us.

A modest tap at the door,—a gentle manner of opening when invited to enter,—a studied softness and humility of step and deportment, announced that the education of Rashleigh Osbaldistone at the College of St. Omers accorded well with the ideas I entertained of the manners of an accomplished Jesuit. I need not add, that, as a sound Protestant, these ideas were not the most favorable. "Why should you use the ceremony of knocking," said Miss Vernon, "when you knew that I was not alone?"

This was spoken with a burst of impatience, as if she had felt that Rashleigh's air of caution and reserve covered some insinuation of impertinent suspicion. "You have taught me the form of knocking at this door so perfectly, my fair cousin," answered Rashleigh, without change of voice or manner, "that habit has become a second nature."

"I prize sincerity more than courtesy, sir, and you know I do," was Miss Vernon's reply.

"Courtesy is a gallant gay, a courtier by name and by profession," replied Rashleigh, "and therefore most fit for a lady's bowser."

"But Sincerity is the true knight," retorted Miss Vernon, "and therefore much more welcome, cousin. But to end a debate not over amusing to your stranger kinsman, sit down, Rashleigh, and give Mr. Francis Osbaldistone your countenance to his glass of wine. I have done the honors of the dinner, for the credit of Osbaldistone Hall."

Rashleigh sat down, and filled his glass, glancing his eye from Diana to me, with an embarrassment which his utmost efforts could not entirely disguise. I thought he appeared to be uncertain concerning the extent of confidence she might have reposed in me, and hastened to lead the conversation into a channel which should sweep away his suspicion that Diana might have betrayed any secrets which rested between them. "Miss Vernon," I said, "Mr. Rashleigh, has recommended me to return my thanks to you for my speedy disengagement from the ridiculous accusation of Morris; and, unjustly fearing my gratitude might not be warm enough to remind me of this duty, she has put my curiosity on its side, by referring me to you for an account, or rather explanation, of the events of the day."

"Indeed?" answered Rashleigh; "I should have thought" (looking keenly at Miss Vernon) "that the lady herself might have stood interpreter;" and his eye, reverting from her face,

sought mine, as if to search, from the expression of my features, whether Diana's communication had been as narrowly limited as my words had intimated. Miss Vernon retorted his inquisitorial glance with one of decided scorn; while I, uncertain whether to deprecate or resent his obvious suspicion, replied, "If it is your pleasure, Mr. Rashleigh, as it has been Miss Vernon's, to leave me in ignorance, I must necessarily submit; but, pray, do not withhold your information from me, on the ground of imagining that I have already obtained any on the subject. For I tell you as a man of honor, I am as ignorant as that picture of anything relating to the events I have witnessed to-day, excepting that I understand from Miss Vernon, that you have been kindly active in my favor."

"Miss Vernon has overrated my humble efforts," said Rashleigh, "though I claim full credit for my zeal. The truth is, that as I galloped back to get some one of our family to join me in becoming your bail, which was the most obvious, or, indeed, I may say, the only way of serving you which occurred to my stupidity, I met the man Cawmil—Colville—Campbell, or whatsoever they call him. I had understood from Morris that he was present when the robbery took place, and had the good fortune to prevail on him (with some difficulty, I confess) to tender his evidence in your exculpation—which I presume was the means of your being released from an unpleasant situation."

"Indeed?—I am much your debtor for procuring such a reasonable evidence in my behalf. But I cannot see why (having been, as he said, a fellow-sufferer with Morris) it should have required much trouble to persuade him to step forth and bear evidence, whether to convict the actual robber, or free an innocent person."

"You do not know the genius of that man's country, sir," answered Rashleigh;—"discretion, prudence, and foresight, are their leading qualities; these are only modified by a narrow-spirited, but yet ardent patriotism, which forms as it were the outmost of the concentric bulwarks with which a Scotchman fortifies himself against all the attacks of a generous philanthropical principle. Surmount this mound, you find an inner and still dearer barrier—the love of his province, his village, or, most probably, his clan; storm this second obstacle, you have a third—his attachment to his own family—his father, mother, sons, daughters, uncles, aunts, and cousins, to the ninth generation. It is within these limits that a Scotchman's social affection expands itself, never reaching those which are outermost, till all means of discharging itself in the interior circles have been exhausted. It is within these circles that his heart throbs, each pulsation being fainter and fainter, till beyond the widest boundary, it is almost unfelt. And what is worst of all, could you surmount all these concentric outworks, you have an inner citadel, deeper, higher, and more efficient than them all—a Scotchman's love for himself."