

withstanding, I believe that as yet I am better acquainted with them than any other man who lives,—I shall soon introduce you to my jocund friend, Mr. John Ballantyne of Trinity Grove, whom you will find warm from his match at singiestick with a brother Publisher.\* Peace to

\* In consequence of the pseudo Tales of My Landlord printed in London, as aresay mentioned, the late Mr. John Ballantyne,

their differences! It is a wrathful trade, and the *irritable genus* comprehends the bookselling as well as the book-writing species.—Once more adieu!

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

the author's publisher, had a controversy with the interfering biblioplist, each insisting that his Jedediah Cleishbotham was the real Simon Pure.

## THE MONASTERY

### CHAPTER I.

Cay! the Monks, the Monks, they did the mischief!  
Theirs all the grossness, all the superstition  
Of a most gross and superstitious age—  
May He be praised that sent the healthful tempest  
And scatter'd all these pestilential vapors!  
But that we owed them *all* to yonder Harlot  
Throned on the seven hills with her cup of gold,  
I will as soon believe, with kind Sir Roger,  
That old Moll White took wing with cat and broomstick,  
And raised the last night's thunder.

OLD PLAY.

THE village described in the Benedictine's manuscript by the name of Kennaquhair, bears the same Celtic termination which occurs in Traquhair, Caquhair, and other compounds. The learned Chalmers derives this word Quhair, from the winding course of a stream; a definition which coincides, in a remarkable degree, with the serpentine turns of the river Tweed near the village of which we speak. It has been long famous for the splendid monastery of Saint Mary, founded by David the First of Scotland, in whose reign were formed, in the same county, the no less splendid establishments of Melrose, Jedburgh, and Kelso. The donations of land with which the King endowed these wealthy fraternities procured him from the Monkish historians the epithet of Saint, and from one of his impoverished descendants the splenetic censure, "that he had been a sore saint for the Crown."

It seems probable, notwithstanding, that David, who was a wise as well as a pious monarch, was not moved solely by religious motives to those great acts of munificence to the church, but annexed political views to his pious generosity. His possessions in Northumberland and Cumberland became precarious after the loss of the Battle of the Standard; and since the comparatively fertile valley of Teviotdale was likely to become the frontier of his kingdom, it is probable he wished to secure at least a part of these valuable possessions by placing them in the hands of the monks, whose property was for a long time respected, even amidst the rage of a frontier war. In this manner alone had the King some chance of ensuring protection and security to the cultivators of the soil; and, in fact, for several ages the possessions of these Abbeyes were each a sort of Goshen, enjoying the calm light of peace and immunity, while the rest of the country, occupied by wild clans and marauding barons, was one dark scene of confusion, blood, and unremitted outrage.

But these immunities did not continue down

to the union of the crowns. Long before that period, the wars betwixt England and Scotland had lost their original character of international hostilities, and had become on the part of the English a struggle for subjugation, on that of the Scots a desperate and infuriated defence of their liberties. This introduced on both sides a degree of fury and animosity unknown to the earlier period of their history; and as religious scruples soon gave way to national hatred spurred by a love of plunder, the patrimony of the Church was no longer sacred from incursions on either side. Still, however, the tenants and vassals of the great Abbeyes had many advantages over those of the lay barons, who were harassed by constant military duty, until they became desperate, and lost all relish for the arts of peace. The vassals of the Church, on the other hand, were only liable to be called to arms on general occasions, and at other times were permitted in comparative quiet to possess their farms and feus.\* They of course exhibited superior skill in everything that related to the cultivation of the soil, and were therefore both wealthier and better informed than the military retainers of the restless chiefs and nobles in their neighborhood.

The residence of these church vassals was usually in a small village or hamlet, where, for the sake of mutual aid and protection, some thirty or forty families dwelt together. This was called the Town, and the land belonging to the various families by whom the Town was inhabited, was called the Township. They usually possessed the land in common, though in various proportions, according to their several grants. The part of the Township properly arable, and kept as such continually under the plough, was called *in-field*. Here the use of quantities of manure supplied in some degree the exhaustion of the soil, and the feuars raised tolerable oats and bear,† usually sowed on alternate ridges, on which the labor of the whole community was bestowed without distinction, the produce being divided after harvest, agreeably to their respective interests.

There was, besides, *out-field* land, from which it was thought possible to extract a crop now and then, after which it was abandoned to the "skiey influences," until the exhausted powers of vege-

\* Small possessions conferred upon vassals and their heirs, held for a small quitrent, or a moderate proportion of the produce. This was a favorite manner, by which the churchmen peopled the patrimony of their convents; and many descendants of such *feuars*, as they are called, are still to be found in possession of their family inheritances in the neighborhood of the great Monasteries of Scotland.

† Or bigg, a kind of coarse barley.

tation were restored. These out-field spots were selected by any feuar at his own choice, amongst the sheep-walks and hills which were always annexed to the Township, to serve as pasturage to the community. The trouble of cultivating these patches of out-field, and the precarious chance that the crop would pay the labor, were considered as giving a right to any feuar, who chose to undertake the adventure, to the produce which might result from it.

There remained the pasturage of extensive moors, where the valleys often afforded good grass, and upon which the whole cattle belonging to the community fed indiscriminately during the summer, under the charge of the Town-herd, who regularly drove them out to pasture in the morning, and brought them back at night, without which precaution they would have fallen a speedy prey to some of the Snatchers in the neighborhood. These are things to make modern agriculturists hold up their hands and stare; but the same mode of cultivation is not yet entirely in desuetude in some distant parts of North Britain, and may be witnessed in full force and exercise in the Zetland Archipelago.

The inhabitants of the church-feuars were not less primitive than their agriculture. In each village or town were several small towers, having battlements projecting over the side walls, and usually an advanced angle or two with shot-holes for flanking the door-way, which was always defended by a strong door of oak, studded with nails, and often by an exterior grated door of iron. These small peel-houses were ordinarily inhabited by the principal feuars and their families; but, upon the alarm of approaching danger, the whole inhabitants thronged from their own miserable cottages, which were situated around, to garrison these points of defence. It was then no easy matter for a hostile party to penetrate into the village, for the men were habituated to the use of bows and fire-arms, and the towers being generally so placed, that the discharge from one crossed that of another, it was impossible to assault any of them individually.

The interior of these houses was usually sufficiently wretched, for it would have been folly to have furnished them in a manner which could excite the avarice of their lawless neighbors. Yet the families themselves exhibited in their appearance a degree of comfort, information, and independence, which could hardly have been expected. Their in-field supplied them with bread and home-brewed ale, their herds and flocks with beef and mutton (the extravagance of killing lambs or calves was never thought of). Each family killed a mart, or fat bullock, in November, which was salted up for winter use, to which the goodwife could, upon great occasions, add a dish of pigeons, or a fat capon,—the ill-cultivated gardens afforded "lang-cale," and the river gave salmon to serve as a relish during the season of Lent.

Of fuel they had plenty, for the bogs afforded turf; and the remains of the abused woods con-

tinned to give them logs for burning, as well as timber for the usual domestic purposes. In addition to these comforts the goodman would now and then sally forth to the greenwood, and mark down a buck of season with his gun or his cross-bow; and the Father Confessor seldom refused him absolution for the trespass, if duly invited to take his share of the smoking haunch. Some, still bolder, made, either with their own domestics, or by associating themselves with the moss-troopers, in the language of shepherds, "a start and overloup;" and the golden ornaments and silken head-gear worn by the females of one or two families of note, were viduously traced by their neighbors to such successful excursions. This, however, was a more inexpiable crime in the eyes of the Abbot and Community of Saint Mary's than the borrowing one of the "gude king's deer;" and they failed not to discountenance and punish, by every means in their power, offences which were sure to lead to severe retaliation upon the property of the church, and which tended to alter the character of their peaceful vassalage.

As for the information possessed by those dependents of the Abbacies, they might have been truly said to be better fed than taught, even though their fare had been worse than it was. Still, however, they enjoyed opportunities of knowledge from which others were excluded. The monks were in general well acquainted with their vassals and tenants, and familiar in the families of the better class among them, where they were sure to be received with the respect due to their twofold character of spiritual father and secular landlord. Thus it often happened, when a boy displayed talents and inclination for study, one of the brethren, with a view to his being bred to the church, or out of good-nature, in order to pass away his own idle time, if he had no better motive, initiated him into the mysteries of reading and writing, and imparted to him such other knowledge as he himself possessed. And the heads of these allied families, having more time for reflection, and more skill, as well as stronger motives for improving their small properties, bore amongst their neighbors the character of shrewd, intelligent men, who claimed respect on account of their comparative wealth, even while they were despised for a less warlike and enterprising turn than the other Borderers. They lived as much as they well could amongst themselves, avoiding the company of others, and dreading nothing more than to be involved in the deadly feuds and ceaseless contentions of the secular landholders.

Such is a general picture of these communities. During the fatal wars in the commencement of Queen Mary's reign, they had suffered dreadfully by the hostile invasions. For the English, now a Protestant people, were so far from sparing the church-lands, that they forayed them with more unrelenting severity than even the possessions of the laity. But the peace of

1550 had restored some degree of tranquillity to those distracted and harassed regions, and matters began again gradually to settle upon the former footing. The monks repaired their ravaged shrines—the feuar again roofed his small fortalice which the enemy had ruined—the poor laborer rebuilt his cottage—an easy task, where a few sods, stones, and some pieces of wood from the next copse, furnished all the materials necessary. The cattle, lastly, were driven out of the wastes and thickets in which the remnant of them had been secreted; and the mighty bull moved at the head of his seraglio and their followers, to take possession of their wonted pastures. There ensued peace and quiet, the state of the age and nation considered, to the Monastery of Saint Mary, and its dependencies, for several tranquil years.

## CHAPTER II.

In yon lone vale his early youth was bred,  
Not solitary then—the bugle-horn  
Of fell Aleo often waked its windings,  
From where the brook joins the majestic river,  
To the wild northern bog, the curlew's haunt,  
Where oozes forth its first and feeble streamlet.

OLD PLAY.

We have said that most of the feuars dwelt in the village belonging to their townships. This was not, however, universally the case. A lonely tower, to which the reader must now be introduced, was at least one exception to the general rule.

It was of small dimensions, yet larger than those which occurred in the village, as intimating that, in case of assault, the proprietor would have to rely upon his own unassisted strength. Two or three miserable huts, at the foot of the fortalice, held the bondsmen and tenants of the feuar. The site was a beautiful green knoll, which started up suddenly in the very throat of a wild and narrow glen, and which, being surrounded, except on one side, by the winding of a small stream, afforded a position of considerable strength.

But the great security of Glendearg, for so the place was called, lay in its secluded, and almost hidden situation. To reach the tower, it was necessary to travel three miles up the glen, crossing about twenty times the little stream, which, winding through the narrow valley, encountered at every hundred yards the opposition of a rock or precipitous bank on the one side, which altered its course, and caused it to shoot off in an oblique direction to the other. The hills which ascend on each side of this glen are very steep, and rise boldly over the stream, which is thus imprisoned within their barriers. The sides of the glen are impracticable for horse, and are only to be traversed by means of the sheep-paths which lie along their sides. It would not be readily supposed that a road so hopeless and so difficult could lead to any habitation more important than the summer shealing of a shepherd.

Yet the glen, though lonely, nearly inaccessible, and sterile, was not then absolutely void of

beauty. The turf which covered the small portion of level ground on the sides of the stream, was as close and verdant as if it had occupied the scythes of a hundred gardeners once a fortnight; and it was garnished with an embroidery of daisies and wild flowers, which the scythes would certainly have destroyed. The little brook, now confined betwixt closer limits, now left at large to choose its course through the narrow valley, danced carelessly on from stream to pool, light and unturbid, as that better class of spirits who pass their way through life, yielding to insurmountable obstacles, but as far from being subdued by them as the sailor who meets by chance with an unfavorable wind, and shapes his course so as to be driven back as little as possible.

The mountains, as they would have been called in England, *Scottish* the steep *braes*, rose abruptly over the little glen, here presenting the gray face of a rock, from which the turf had been peeled by the torrents, and there displaying patches of wood and copse, which had escaped the waste of the cattle and the sheep of the feuars, and which, feathering naturally up the beds of empty torrents, or occupying the concave recesses of the bank, gave at once beauty and variety to the landscape. Above these scattered woods rose the hill, in barren, but purple majesty; the dark rich hue, particularly in autumn, contrasting beautifully with the thickets of oak and birch the mountain ashes and thorns, the alders and quivering aspens, which chequered and varied the descent, and not less with the dark-green and velvet turf, which composed the level part of the narrow glen.

Yet, though thus embellished, the scene could neither be strictly termed sublime nor beautiful, and scarcely even picturesque or striking. But its extreme solitude pressed on the heart; the traveller felt that uncertainty whether he was going, or in what so wild a path was to terminate, which, at times, strikes more on the imagination than the grand features of a show-scene, when you know the exact distance of the inn where your dinner is bespoke, and at the moment preparing. These are ideas, however, of a far later age; for at the time we treat of, the picturesque, the beautiful, the sublime, and all their intermediate shades, were ideas absolutely unknown to the inhabitants and occasional visitors of Glendearg.

These had, however, attached to the scene feelings fitting the time. Its name, signifying the Red Valley, seems to have been derived, not only from the purple color of the heath, with which the upper part of the rising banks was profusely clothed, but also from the dark red color of the rocks, and of the precipitous earthen banks, which in that country are called *scours*. Another glen, about the head of Ettrick, has acquired the same name from similar circumstances; and there are probably more in Scotland to which it has been given.

As our Glendearg did not abound in mortal

visitants, superstition, that it might not be absolutely destitute of inhabitants, had peopled its recesses with beings belonging to another world. The savage and capricious Brown Man of the Moors, a being which seems the genuine descendant of the northern dwarfs, was supposed to be seen there frequently, especially after the autumnal equinox, when the fogs were thick, and objects not easily distinguished. The Scottish fairies, too, a whimsical, irritable, and mischievous tribe, who, though at times capriciously benevolent, were more frequently adverse to mortals, were also supposed to have formed a residence in a particularly wild recess of the glen, of which the real name was, in allusion to that circumstance, *Corrie nan Shian*, which, in corrupted Celtic, signifies the Hollow of the Fairies. But the neighbors were more cautious in speaking about this place, and avoided giving it a name, from an idea common then throughout all the British and Celtic provinces of Scotland, and still retained in many places, that to speak either good or ill of this capricious race of imaginary beings, is to provoke their resentment, and that secrecy and silence is what they chiefly desire from those who may intrude upon their revels, or discover their haunts.

A mysterious terror was thus attached to the dale, which afforded access from the broad valley of the Tweed, up the little glen we have described, to the fortalice called the Tower of Glendearg. Beyond the knoll where, as we have said, the tower was situated, the hills grew more steep, and narrowed on the slender brook, so as scarce to leave a footpath; and there the glen terminated in a wild waterfall, where a slender thread of water dashed in a precipitous line of foam over two or three precipices. Yet farther in the same direction, and above these successive cataracts, lay a wild and extensive morass, frequented only by waterfowl, wide, waste, apparently almost inextinguishable, and serving in a great measure to separate the inhabitants of the glen from those who lived to the northward.

To restless and indefatigable moss-troopers, indeed, these morasses were well known, and sometimes afforded a retreat. They often rode down the glen—called at this tower—asked and received hospitality—but still with a sort of reserve on the part of its more peaceful inhabitants, who entertained them as a party of North-American Indians might be received by a new European settler, as much out of fear as hospitality, while the uppermost wish of the landlord is the speedy departure of the savage guests.

This had not always been the current of feeling in the little valley and its tower. Simon Glendinning, its former inhabitant, boasted his connexion by blood to that ancient family of Glendonwyne, on the western border. He used to narrate, at his fireside, in the autumn evenings, the feats of the family to which he belonged, one of whom fell by the side of the brave Earl of Douglas at Otterbourne. On these occasions

Simon usually held upon his knee an ancient broadsword, which had belonged to his ancestors before any of the family had consented to accept a fief under the peaceful dominion of the Monks of Saint Mary's. In modern days, Simon might have lived at ease on his own estate, and quietly murmured against the fate that had doomed him to dwell there, and cut off his access to martial renown. But so many opportunities, nay, so many calls there were for him, who in those days spoke big, to make good his words by his actions, that Simon Glendinning was soon under the necessity of marching with the men of the Halldome, as it was called, of Saint Mary's, in that disastrous campaign which was concluded by the battle of Pinkie.

The Catholic clergy were deeply interested in that national quarrel, the principal object of which was, to prevent the union of the infant Queen Mary, with the son of the heretical Henry VIII. The Monks had called out their vassals, under an experienced leader. Many of themselves had taken arms, and marched to the field, under a banner representing a female, supposed to personify the Scottish Church, kneeling in the attitude of prayer, with the legend, *Afflicta Sponsa ne obliviscaris*.\*

The Scots, however, in all their wars, had more occasion for good and cautious generals, than for excitation, whether political or enthusiastic. Their headlong and impatient courage uniformly induced them to rush into action without duly weighing either their own situation, or that of their enemies, and the inevitable consequence was frequent defeat. With the dolorous slaughter of Pinkie, we have nothing to do, excepting that, among ten thousand men of low and high degree, Simon Glendinning, of the Tower of Glendearg, bit the dust, no way disparaging in his death that ancient race from which he claimed his descent.

When the doleful news, which spread terror and mourning through the whole of Scotland, reached the Tower of Glendearg, the widow of Simon, Elspeth Brydone by her family name, was alone in that desolate habitation, excepting a hind or two, alike past martial and agricultural labor, and the helpless widows and families of those who had fallen with their master. The feeling of desolation was universal;—but what availed it? The monks, their patrons and protectors, were driven from their Abbey by the English forces, who now overran the country, and enforced at least an appearance of submission on the part of the inhabitants. The Protector, Somerset, formed a strong camp among the ruins of the ancient Castle of Roxburgh, and compelled the neighboring country to come in, pay tribute, and take assurance from him, as the phrase then went. Indeed, there was no power of resistance remaining; and the few barons, whose high spirit disdained even the appearance of surrender, could

\* Forget not the afflicted spouse.

only retreat into the wildest fastnesses of the country, leaving their houses and property to the wrath of the English, who detached parties everywhere to distress, by military exaction, those whose chiefs had not made their submission. The Abbot and his community having retreated beyond the Forth, their lands were severely forayed, as their sentiments were held peculiarly inimical to the alliance with England.

Amongst the troops detached on this service was a small party, commanded by Stawarth Bolton, a captain in the English army, and full of the blunt and unpretending gallantry and generosity which has so often distinguished that nation. Resistance was in vain. Elspeth Brydone, when she descried a dozen of horsemen threading their way up the glen, with a man at their head, whose scarlet cloak, bright armor, and dancing plume, proclaimed him a leader, saw no better protection for herself than to issue from the iron grate, covered with a long mourning veil, and holding one of her two sons in each hand, to meet the Englishman—state her deserted condition—place the little tower at his command—and beg for his mercy. She stated, in a few brief words, her intention, and added, "I submit, because I have nae means of resistance."

"And I do not ask your submission, mistress, for the same reason," replied the Englishman. "To be satisfied of your peaceful intentions is all I ask; and, from what you tell me, there is no reason to doubt them."

"At least, sir," said Elspeth Brydone, "take share of what our speech and our garners afford. Your horses are tired—your folk want refreshment."

"Not a whit—not a whit," answered the honest Englishman; "it shall never be said we disturbed by carousal the widow of a brave soldier, while she was mourning for her husband.—Comrades, face about.—Yet, stay," he added, checking his war-horse, "my parties are out in every direction; they must have some token that your family are under my assurance of safety.—Here, my little fellow," said he, speaking to the eldest boy, who might be about nine or ten years old, "lend me thy bonnet."

The child reddened, looked sulky, and hesitated, while the mother with an *fy*e and *nay pshaw*, and such sarsenet chidings as tender mothers give to spoiled children, at length succeeded in snatching the bonnet from him, and handing it to the English leader.

Stawarth Bolton took his embroidered red cross from his barret-cap, and putting it into the loop of the boy's bonnet, said to the mistress (for the title of lady was not given to dames of her degree), "By this token, which all my people will respect, you will be freed from any importunity on the part of our forayers." \* He placed it on the boy's

\* As gallantry of all times and nations has the same mode of thinking and acting, so it often expresses itself by the same symbols. In the civil war 1745-6, a party of Highlanders, under a Chief of rank, came to Rose Castle, the seat of the Bishop

head; but it was no sooner there, than the little fellow, his veins swelling, and his eyes shooting fire through tears, snatched the bonnet from his head, and ere his mother could interfere, skimmed it into the brook. The other boy ran instantly to fish it out again, threw it back to his brother, first taking out the cross, which, with great veneration, he kissed and put into his bosom. The Englishman was half diverted, half surprised with the scene.

"What mean ye by throwing away Saint George's red cross?" said he to the elder boy, in a tone betwixt jest and earnest.

"Because Saint George is a southern saint," said the child, sulkily.

"Good"—said Stawarth Bolton.—"And what did you mean by taking it out of the brook again, my little fellow?" he demanded of the younger.

"Because the priest says it is the common sign of salvation to all good Christians."

"Why, good again!" said the honest soldier. "I protest unto you, mistress, I envy you these boys. Are they both yours?"

Stawarth Bolton had reason to put the question, for Halbert Glendinning, the elder of the two, had hair as dark as the raven's plumage, black eyes, large, bold and sparkling, that glittered under eyebrows of the same complexion; a skin deep embrowned, though it could not be termed swarthy, and an air of activity, frankness, and determination, far beyond his age. On the other hand, Edward, the younger brother, was light-haired, blue-eyed, and of fairer complexion, in countenance rather pale, and not exhibiting that rosy hue which colors the sanguine cheek of robust health. Yet the boy had nothing sickly or ill-conditioned in his look, but was, on the contrary, a fair and handsome child, with a smiling face, and mild, yet cheerful eye.

The mother glanced a proud motherly glance, first at the one, and then at the other, ere she answered the Englishman, "Surely, sir, they are both my children."

"And by the same father, mistress?" said Stawarth; but, seeing a blush of displeasure arise on her brow, he instantly added, "Nay, I mean no offence; I would have asked the same question

of Carlisle, but then occupied by the family of Squire Dacre of Cumberland. They demanded quarters, which of course were not to be refused to armed men of a strange attire and unknown language. But the domestic represented to the captain of the mountaineers, that the lady of the mansion had been just delivered of a daughter, and expressed her hope, that, under these circumstances, his party would give as little trouble as possible. "God forbid," said the gallant chief, "that I or mine should be the means of adding to a lady's inconvenience at such a time. May I request to see the infant?" The child was brought, and the Highlander, taking his cockade out of his bonnet, and pinning it on the child's breast, "That will be a token," he said, "to any of our people who may come hither, that Donald McDonald of Kinloch-Moldart, has taken the family of Rose Castle under his protection." The lady who received in infancy this gage of Highland protection, is now Mary, Lady Clerk of Pennycuik; and on the 10th of June still wears the cockade which was pinned on her breast, with a white rose as a kindred decoration.

at any of my gossips in merry Lincoln.—Well, dame, you have two fair boys; I would I could borrow one, for Dame Bolton and I live childless in our old hall.—Come, little fellows, which of you will go with me?"

The trembling mother, half-fearing as he spoke, drew the children towards her, one with either hand, while they both answered the stranger. "I will not go with you," said Halbert, boldly, "for you are a false-hearted Southern; and the Southern killed my father; and I will war on you to the death, when I can draw my father's sword."

"God-a-mercy, my little levin-bolt," said Stawarth, "the goodly custom of deadly feud will never go down in thy day, I presume.—And you, my fine white-head, will you not go with me, to ride a cock-horse?"

"No," said Edward, demurely, "for you are a heretic."

"Why, God-a-mercy still!" said Stawarth Bolton. "Well, dame, I see I shall find no recruits for my troop from you; and yet I do envy you these two little chubby knaves." He sighed a moment, as was visible, in spite of gorget and corselet, and then added, "And yet, my dame and I would but quarrel which of the knaves we should like best; for I should wish for the black-eyed rogne—and she, I warrant me, for that blue-eyed, fair-haired darling. Natheless, we must brook our solitary wedlock, and wish joy to those that are more fortunate. Sergeant Britton, do thou remain here till recalled—protect this family, as under assurance—do them no wrong, and suffer no wrong to be done to them, as thou wilt answer it.—Dame, Britton is a married man, old and steady; feed him on what you will, but give him not over much liquor."

Dame Glendinning again offered refreshments, but with a faltering voice, and an obvious desire her invitation should not be accepted. The fact was, that, supposing her boys as precious in the eyes of the Englishman as in her own (the most ordinary of parental errors), she was half afraid that the admiration he expressed of them in his blunt manner might end in his actually carrying off one or other of the little darlings whom he appeared to covet so much. She kept hold of their hands, therefore, as if her feeble strength could have been of service, had any violence been intended, and saw with joy she could not disguise, the little party of horse countermarch, in order to descend the glen. Her feelings did not escape Stawarth Bolton: "I forgive you, dame," he said, "for being suspicious that an English falcon was hovering over your Scottish moorbrood. But fear not—those who have fewest children have fewest cares; nor does a wise man covet those of another household. Adieu, dame; when the black-eyed rogne is able to drive a foray from England, teach him to spare women and children, for the sake of Stawarth Bolton."

"God be with you, gallant Southern!" said Elspeth Glendinning, but not till he was out of hearing, spurring on his good horse to regain the

head of his party, whose plumage and armor were now glancing and gradually disappearing in the distance, as they wended down the glen.

"Mother," said the elder boy, "I will not say amen to a prayer for a Southern."

"Mother," said the younger, more reverentially, "is it right to pray for a heretic?"

"The God to whom I pray only knows," answered poor Elspeth; "but these two words, Southern and heretic, have already cost Scotland ten thousand of her best and bravest, and me a husband, and you a father; and, whether blessing or banning, I never wish to hear them more.—Follow me to the Place, sir," she said to Britton, "and such as we have to offer you shall be at your disposal."

### CHAPTER III.

They lighted down on Tweed water,  
And blew their coals sea bet,  
And fired the March and Teviotdale,  
All in an evening late.

AULD MAITLAND.

THE report soon spread through the patrimony of Saint Mary's and its vicinity, that the Mistress of Glendearg had received assurance from the English Captain, and that her cattle were not to be driven off, or her corn burned. Among others who heard this report, it reached the ears of a lady, who, once much higher in rank than Elspeth Glendinning, was now by the same calamity reduced to even greater misfortune.

She was the widow of a brave soldier, Walter Avenel, descended of a very ancient Border family, who once possessed immense estates in Eskdale. These had long since passed from them into other hands, but they still enjoyed an ancient Barony of considerable extent, not very far from the patrimony of Saint Mary's, and lying upon the same side of the river with the narrow vale of Glendearg, at the head of which was the little tower of the Glendinnings. Here they had lived, bearing a respectable rank amongst the gentry of their province, though neither wealthy nor powerful. This general regard had been much augmented by the skill, courage, and enterprise which had been displayed by Walter Avenel, the last Baron.

When Scotland began to recover from the dreadful shock she had sustained after the battle of Pinkie-Cleuch, Avenel was one of the first who, assembling a small force, set an example in those bloody and unsparring skirmishes, which showed that a nation, though conquered and overrun by invaders, may yet wage against them such a war of detail as shall in the end become fatal to the foreigners. In one of these, however, Walter Avenel fell, and the news which came to the house of his fathers was followed by the distracting intelligence, that a party of Englishmen were coming to plunder the mansion and lands of his widow, in order, by this act of terror, to prevent

others from following the example of the deceased.

The unfortunate lady had no better refuge than the miserable cottage of a shepherd among the hills, to which she was hastily removed, scarce conscious where or for what purpose her terrified attendants were removing her and her infant daughter from her own house. Here she was tended with all the duteous service of ancient times by the shepherd's wife, Tibb Tacket, who in better days had been her own bowerwoman. For a time the lady was unconscious of her misery; but when the first stunning effect of grief was so far passed away that she could form an estimate of her own situation, the widow of Avenel had cause to envy the lot of her husband in his dark and silent abode. The domestics who had guided her to her place of refuge, were presently obliged to disperse for their own safety, or to seek for necessary subsistence; and the shepherd and his wife, whose poor cottage she shared, were soon after deprived of the means of affording their late mistress even that coarse sustenance which they had gladly shared with her. Some of the English forayers had discovered and driven off the few sheep which had escaped the first researches of their avarice. Two cows shared the fate of the remnant of their stock; they had afforded the family almost their sole support; and now famine appeared to stare them in the face.

"We are broken and beggared now, out and out," said old Martin the shepherd—and he wrung his hands in the bitterness of agony, "the thieves, the harrying thieves! not a cloot left of the hail hirsel!"

"And to see poor Grizzy and Crumbe," said his wife, "turning back their necks to the byre, and routing while the stony-hearted villains were brogging them on wi' their lances!"

"There were but four of them," said Martin, "and I have seen the day forty wad not have ventured this length. But our strength and manhood is gane with our puir maister."

"For the sake of the holy rood, whisht, man," said the gudewife, "our leddy is half gane already, as ye may see by that feichtering of the ee-lid—a word mair, and she's dead outright."

"I could almost wish," said Martin, "we were a' gane, for what to do passes my puir wit. I care little for mysell, or you, Tib,—we can make a fend—work or want—we can do baith, but she can do neither."

They canvassed their situation thus openly before the lady, convinced by the paleness of her look, her quivering lip, and dead-set eye, that she neither heard nor understood what they were saying.

"There is a way," said the shepherd, "but I kenma if she could bring her heart to it,—there's Simon Glendinning's widow of the glen yonder, has had assurance from the southern loons, and nae soldier to steer them for one cause or other. Now, if the lady could bow her mind to take quarters with Elspeth Glendinning, till better days

cast up, nae doubt it wad be doing an honor to the like of her, but—"

"An honor," answered Tibb, "ay, by my word, sic an honor as wad be pride to her kin mony a lang year after her banes were in the mould. Oh! gudeman, to hear ye even the Lady of Avenel to seeking quarters wi' a Kirkvassal's widow!"

"Loath should I be to wish her to it," said Martin; "but what may we do?—to stay here is mere starvation; and where to go, I'm sure I ken nae mair than ony tup I ever herded."

"Speak no more of it," said the widow of Avenel, suddenly joining in the conversation, "I will go to the tower.—Dame Elspeth is of good folk, a widow, and the mother of orphans,—she will give us house-room until something be thought upon. These evil showers make the low bush better than no bield."

"See there, see there," said Martin, "you see the leddy has twice our sense."

"And natural it is," said Tibb, "seeing that she is convent-bred, and can lay silk broidery, for by white-seam and shell-work."

"Do you not think," said the lady to Martin, still clasping her child to her bosom, and making it clear from what motives she desired the refuge, "that Dame Glendinning will make us welcome?"

"Blithely welcome, blithely welcome, my leddy," answered Martin, cheerily, "and we shall deserve a welcome at her hand. Men are scarce, now, my leddy, with these wars; and gie me a thought of time to it, I can do as good a day's darg as ever I did in my life, and Tibb can sort cows with ony living woman."

"And muckle mair could I do," said Tibb, "were it ony feasible house; but there will be neither pearlins to mend, nor pinners to busk up, in Elspeth Glendinning's."

"Whisht wi' your pride, woman," said the shepherd; "enough ye can do, baith outside and inside, an ye set your mind to it; and hard it is if we twa canna work for three folks' meat, forly my dainty wee leddy there. Come awa, come awa, nae use in staying here langer; we have five Scots miles over moss and muir, and that is nae easy walk for a leddy born and bred."

Household stuff there was little or none to remove or care for; an old pony which had escaped the plunderers, owing partly to its pitiful appearance, partly from the reluctance which it showed to be caught by strangers, was employed to carry the few blankets and other trifles which they possessed. When Shagram came to his master's well-known whistle, he was surprised to find the poor thing had been wounded, though slightly, by an arrow, which one of the forayers had shot off in anger after he had long chased it in vain.

"Ay, Shagram," said the old man, as he applied something to the wound, "must you rue the lang-bow as weel as all of us?"

"What corner in Scotland rues it not?" said the Lady of Avenel.

"Ay, ay, madam," said Martin, "God keep the kindly Scot from the cloth-yard shaft, and he will keep himself from the handy stroke. But let us go our way; the trash that is left I can come back for. There is nae ane to stir it but the good neighbors, and they—"

"For the love of God, goodman," said his wife, in a remonstrating tone, "hand your peace! Think what ye're saying, and we has sae muckle wild land to go over before we win to the girth-gate."

The husband nodded acquiescence; for it was deemed highly imprudent to speak of the fairies, either by their title of *good neighbors* or by any other, especially when about to pass the places which they were supposed to haunt.\*

They set forward on their pilgrimage on the last day of October. "This is thy birth-day, my sweet Mary," said the mother, as a sting of bitter recollection crossed her mind. "Oh, who could have believed that the head, which, a few years since, was cradled amongst so many rejoicing friends, may perhaps this night seek a cover in vain!"

The exiled family then set forward.—Mary Avenel, a lovely girl between five and six years old, riding gipsy fashion upon Shagram, betwixt two bundles of bedding; the Lady of Avenel walking by the animal's side; Tibb leading the

\* This superstition continues to prevail, though one would suppose it must now be antiquated. It is only a year or two since an itinerant puppet showman, who, disdaining to acknowledge the profession of Gines de Passamonté, called himself an artist from Vauxhall, brought a complaint of a singular nature before the author, as Sheriff of Selkirkshire. The singular dexterity with which the showman had exhibited the machinery of his little stage, had, upon a Selkirk fair-day, excited the eager curiosity of some mechanics of Galashiels. These men, from no worse motive that could be discovered than a thirst after knowledge beyond their sphere, committed a burglary upon the barn in which the puppets had been consigned to repose, and carried them off in the nook of their plaids, when returning from Selkirk to their own village.

"But with the morning cool reflection came."

The party found, however, they could not make Punch dance, and that the whole troop were equally intractable; they had also, perhaps, some apprehensions of the Rhadamanth of the district; and, willing to be quit of their booty, they left the puppets seated in a grove by the side of the Ettrick, where they were sure to be touched by the first beams of the rising sun. Here a shepherd, who was on foot with sunrise to pen his master's sheep on a field of turnips, to his utter astonishment, saw this train, profusely gay, sitting in the little grotto. His examination proceeded thus:

Sheriff.—You saw these gay-looking things? what did you think they were?

Shepherd.—O, I am no that free to say what I might think they were.

Sheriff.—Come, lad, I must have a direct answer—who did you think they were?

Shepherd.—O, sir, troth I am no that free to say that I mind wha I might think they were.

Sheriff.—Come, come, sir! I ask you distinctly, did you think they were the fairies you saw?

Shepherd.—Indeed, sir, and I winna say but I might think it was the Good Neighbors.

Thus unwillingly was he brought to allude to the irritable and sceptical inhabitants of fairy-land.

bridle, and old Martin walking a little before looking anxiously around him to explore the way.

Martin's task as guide, after two or three miles' walking, became more difficult than he himself had expected, or than he was willing to avow. It happened that the extensive range of pasturage, with which he was conversant, lay to the west, and to get into the little valley of Glendearg he had to proceed easterly. In the wilder districts of Scotland, the passage from one vale to another, otherwise than by descending that which you leave, and reascending the other, is often very difficult.—Heights and hollows, mosses and rocks intervene, and all those local impediments which throw a traveller out of his course. So that Martin, however sure of his general direction, became conscious, and at length was forced reluctantly to admit, that he had missed the direct road to Glendearg, though he insisted they must be very near it. "If we can but win across this wide bog," he said, "I shall warrant ye are on the top of the tower."

But to get across the bog was a point of no small difficulty. The farther they ventured into it, though proceeding with all the caution which Martin's experience recommended, the more un-sound the ground became, until, after they had passed some places of great peril, their best argument for going forward came to be, that they had to encounter equal danger in returning.

The Lady of Avenel had been tenderly nurtured, but what will not a woman endure when her child is in danger? Complaining less of the dangers of the road than her attendants, who had been inured to such from their infancy, she kept herself close by the side of the pony, watching its every footstep, and ready, if it should flounder in the morass, to snatch her little Mary from its back. At length they came to a place where the guide greatly hesitated, for all around him were broken lumps of heath, divided from each other by deep sloughs of black tenacious mire. After great consideration, Martin, selecting what he thought the safest path, began himself to lead forward Shagram, in order to afford greater security to the child. But Shagram snorted, laid his ears back, stretched his two feet forward, and drew his hind feet under him, so as to adopt the best possible posture for obstinate resistance, and refused to move one yard in the direction indicated. Old Martin, much puzzled, now hesitated whether to exert his absolute authority, or to defer to the contumacious obstinacy of Shagram, and was not greatly comforted by his wife's observation, who, seeing Shagram stare with his eyes, distend his nostrils, and tremble with terror, hinted that "he surely saw more than they could see."

In this dilemma, the child suddenly exclaimed—"Bonny ledly signs to us to come yon gate." They all looked in the direction where the child pointed, but saw nothing, save a wreath of rising mist, which fancy might form into a human figure; but which afforded to Martin only the sor-

rowful conviction, that the danger of their situation was about to be increased by a heavy fog. He once more essayed to lead forward Shagram; but the animal was inflexible in its determination not to move in the direction Martin recommended. "Take your awn way for it, then," said Martin, "and let us see what you can do for us."

Shagram, abandoned to the discretion of his own free-will, set off boldly in the direction the child had pointed. There was nothing wonderful in this, nor in its bringing them safe to the other side of the dangerous morass; for the instinct of these animals in traversing bogs is one of the most curious parts of their nature, and is a fact generally established. But it was remarkable, that the child more than once mentioned the beautiful lady and her signals, and that Shagram seemed to be in the secret, always moving in the same direction which she indicated. The Lady of Avenel took little notice at the time, her mind being probably occupied by the instant danger; but her attendants exchanged expressive looks with each other more than once.

"All-Hallow Eve!" said Tibb, in a whisper to Martin.

"For the mercy of Our Lady, not a word of that now!" said Martin in reply. "Tell your beads, woman, if you cannot be silent."

When they got once more on firm ground, Martin recognised certain land-marks, or cairns, on the tops of the neighboring hills, by which he was enabled to guide his course, and ere long they arrived at the tower of Glendearg.

It was at the sight of this little fortalice that the misery of her lot pressed hard on the poor Lady of Avenel. When by any accident they had met at church, market, or other place of public resort, she remembered the distant and respectful air with which the wife of the warlike baron was addressed by the spouse of the humble fear. And now, so much was her pride humbled, that she was to ask to share the precarious safety of the same fear's widow, and her pittance of food, which might perhaps be yet more precarious. Martin probably guessed what was passing in her mind, for he looked at her with a wistful glance, as if to deprecate any change of resolution; and answering to his looks, rather than his words, she said, while the sparkle of subdued pride once more glanced from her eye, "If it were for myself alone, I could but die—but for this infant—the last pledge of Avenel—"

"True, my lady," said Martin, hastily; and, as if to prevent the possibility of her retracting, he added, "I will step on and see Dame Elspeth—I kend her husband weel, and have bought and sold with him, for as great a man as he was."

Martin's tale was soon told, and met all acceptance from her companion in misfortune. The Lady of Avenel had been meek and courteous in her prosperity; in adversity, therefore, she met with the greatest sympathy. Besides, there was a point of pride in sheltering and supporting a woman of such superior birth and rank; and, not

to do Elspeth Glendinning injustice, she felt sympathy for one whose fate resembled her own in so many points, yet was so much more severe. Every species of hospitality was gladly and respectfully extended to the distressed travellers, and they were kindly requested to stay as long at Glendearg as their circumstances rendered necessary, or their inclination prompted.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Ne'er be I found by thee unawed,  
On that thrice hallow'd eve abroad,  
When goblins haunt from flood and fen  
The steps of men.  
Collins's *Ode to Fear*.

As the country became more settled, the Lady of Avenel would have willingly returned to her husband's mansion. But that was no longer in her power. It was a reign of minority, when the strongest had the best right, and when acts of usurpation were frequent amongst those who had much power and little conscience.

Julian Avenel, the younger brother of the deceased Walter, was a person of this description. He hesitated not to seize upon his brother's house and lands, so soon as the retreat of the English permitted him. At first, he occupied the property in the name of his niece; but when the lady proposed to return with her child to the mansion of its fathers, he gave her to understand, that Avenel, being a male fief, descended to the brother, instead of the daughter, of the last possessor. The ancient philosopher declined a dispute with the emperor who commanded twenty legions, and the widow of Walter Avenel was in no condition to maintain a contest with the leader of twenty moss-troopers. Julian was also a man of service, who could back a friend in case of need, and was sure, therefore, to find protectors among the ruling powers. In short, however clear the little Mary's right to the possessions of her father, her mother saw the necessity of giving way, at least for the time, to the usurpation of her uncle.

Her patience and forbearance were so far attended with advantage, that Julian, for very shame's sake, could no longer suffer her to be absolutely dependent on the charity of Elspeth Glendinning. A drove of cattle and a bull (which were probably missed by some English farmer) were driven to the pasturage of Glendearg; presents of raiment and household stuff were sent liberally, and some little money, though with a more sparing hand: for those in the situation of Julian Avenel could come more easily by the goods, than the representing medium of value, and made their payments chiefly in kind.

In the meantime, the widows of Walter Avenel and Simon Glendinning had become habituated to each other's society, and were unwilling to part. The lady could hope no more secret and secure residence than in the Tower of Glendearg, and she was now in a condition to support her share of the mutual housekeeping. Elspeth, on

the other hand, felt pride, as well as pleasure, in the society of a guest of such distinction, and was at all times willing to pay much greater deference than the Lady of Walter Avenel could be prevailed on to accept.

Martin and his wife diligently served the united family in their several vocations, and yielded obedience to both mistresses, though always considering themselves as the especial servants of the Lady of Avenel. This distinction sometimes occasioned a slight degree of difference between Dame Elspeth and Tibb; the former being jealous of her own consequence, and the latter apt to lay too much stress upon the rank and family of her mistress. But both were alike desirous to conceal such petty squabbles from the lady, her hostess scarce yielding to her old domestic in respect for her person. Neither did the difference exist in such a degree as to interrupt the general harmony of the family, for the one wisely gave way as she saw the other become warm; and Tibb, though she often gave the first provocation, had generally the sense to be the first in relinquishing the argument.

The world which lay beyond was gradually forgotten by the inhabitants of this sequestered glen, and unless when she attended mass at the Monastery Church upon some high holiday, Alice of Avenel almost forgot that she once held an equal rank with the proud wives of the neighboring barons and nobles who on such occasions crowded to the solemnity. The recollection gave her little pain. She loved her husband for himself, and in his inestimable loss all lesser subjects of regret had ceased to interest her. At times, indeed, she thought of claiming protection of the Queen Regent (Mary of Guise) for her little orphan, but the fear of Julian Avenel always came between. She was sensible that he would have neither scruple nor difficulty in spiriting away the child (if he did not proceed farther), should he once consider its existence as formidable to his interest. Besides, he led a wild and unsettled life, mingling in all feuds and forays wherever there was a spear to be broken; he evinced no purpose of marrying, and the fate which he continually was braving might at length remove him from his usurped inheritance. Alice of Avenel, therefore, judged it wise to check all ambitious thoughts for the present, and remain quiet in the rude, but peaceable retreat, to which Providence had conducted her.

It was upon an All-Hallow's Eve, when the family had resided together for the space of three years, that the domestic circle was assembled round the blazing turf-fire, in the old narrow hall of the Tower of Glendearg. The idea of the master or mistress of the mansion feeding or living apart from their domestics, was at this period never entertained. The highest end of the board, the most commodious settle by the fire,—these were the only marks of distinction; and the servants mingled, with deference indeed, but unimproved and with freedom, in whatever conver-

sation was going forward. But the two or three domestics, kept merely for agricultural purposes, had retired to their own cottages without, and with them a couple of wenches, usually employed within doors, the daughters of one of the hinds.

After their departure, Martin locked, first, the iron grate; and, secondly, the inner door of the tower, when the domestic circle was thus arranged. Dame Elspeth sate pulling the thread from her distaff; Tibb watched the progress of scalding the whey, which hung in a large pot upon the *crook*, a chain terminated by a hook, which was suspended in the chimney to serve the purpose of the modern crane. Martin, while busied in repairing some of the household articles (for every man in those days was his own carpenter and smith, as well as his own tailor and shoemaker), kept from time to time a watchful eye upon the three children.

They were allowed, however, to exercise their juvenile restlessness by running up and down the hall, behind the seats of the elder members of the family, with the privilege of occasionally making excursions into one or two small apartments which opened from it, and gave excellent opportunity to play at hide-and-seek. This night, however, the children seemed not disposed to avail themselves of their privilege of visiting these dark regions, but preferred carrying on their gambols in the vicinity of the light.

In the meanwhile, Alice of Avenel, sitting close to an iron candlestick, which supported a misshapen torch of domestic manufacture, read small detached passages from a thick clasped volume, which she preserved with the greatest care. The art of reading the lady had acquired by her residence in a nunnery during her youth, but she seldom, of late years, put it to any other use than perusing this little volume, which formed her whole library. The family listened to the portions which she selected, as to some good thing which there was a merit in hearing with respect, whether it was fully understood or no. To her daughter, Alice of Avenel had determined to impart their mystery more fully, but the knowledge was at that period attended with personal danger, and was not rashly to be trusted to a child.

The noise of the romping children interrupted, from time to time, the voice of the lady, and drew on the noisy culprits the rebuke of Elspeth.

"Could they not go farther a-field, if they behoved to make such a din, and disturb the lady's good words?" And this command was backed with the threat of sending the whole party to bed if it was not attended to punctually. Acting under the injunction, the children first played at a greater distance from the party, and more quietly, and then began to stray into the adjacent apartments, as they became impatient of the restraint to which they were subjected. But, all at once, the two boys came open-mouthed into the hall, to tell that there was an armed man in the spence.

"It must be Christie of Clinthill," said Martin, rising; "what can have brought him here at this time?"

"Or how came he in?" said Elspeth.

"Alas! what can he seek?" said the Lady of Avenel, to whom this man, a retainer of her husband's brother, and who sometimes executed his commission at Glendearg, was an object of secret apprehension and suspicion. "Gracious Heavens!" she added, rising up, "where is my child?" All rushed to the spence, Halbert Glendinning first arming himself with a rusty sword, and the younger seizing upon the lady's book. They hastened to the spence, and were relieved of a part of their anxiety by meeting Mary at the door of the apartment. She did not seem in the slightest degree alarmed, or disturbed. They rushed into the spence (a sort of interior apartment in which the family ate their victuals in the summer season), but there was no one there.

"Where is Christie of Clinthill?" said Martin.

"I do not know," said little Mary; "I never saw him."

"And what made you, ye misleard loons," said Dame Elspeth to her two boys, "come yon gate into the ha', roaring like bullsegs, to frighten the leddy, and her far frae strong?" The boys looked at each other in silence and confusion, and their mother proceeded with her lecture. "Could ye find nae night for daffin but Hallowe'en, and nae time but when the leddy was reading to us about the holy Saints? May ne'er be in my fingers, if I dinna sort ye baith for it!" The eldest boy bent his eyes on the ground, the younger began to weep, but neither spoke; and the mother would have proceeded to extremities, but for the interposition of the little maiden.

"Dame Elspeth, it was *my* fault—I did say to them, that I saw a man in the spence."

"And what made you do so, child," said her mother, "to startle us all thus?"

"Because," said Mary, lowering her voice, "I could not help it."

"Not help it, Mary!—you occasioned all this idle noise, and you could not help it? How mean you by that, minion?"

"There really was an armed man in this spence," said Mary; "and because I was surprised to see him, I cried out to Halbert and Edward—"

"She has told it herself," said Halbert Glendinning, "or it had never been told by me."

"Nor by me neither," said Edward, emulously.

"Mistress Mary," said Elspeth, "you never told us anything before that was not true; tell us if this was a Hallowe'en cantrip, and make an end of it." The Lady of Avenel looked as if she would have interfered, but knew not how; and Elspeth, who was too eagerly curious to regard any distant hint, persevered in her inquiries. "Was it Christie of the Clinthill?—I would not

for a mark that he were about the house, and a body no ken whare."

"It was not Christie," said Mary; "it was—it was a gentleman—a gentleman with a bright breastplate, like what I hae seen langsyne, when we dwelt at Avenel—"

"What like was he?" continued Tibb, who now took share in the investigation.

"Black-haired, black-eyed, with a peaked beard," said the child, "and many a fold of pearling round his neck, and hanging down his breast ower his breastplate; and he had a beautiful hawk, with silver bells, standing on his left hand, with a crimson silk hood upon its head—"

"Ask her no more questions, for the love of God," said the anxious mental to Elspeth, "but look to my leddy!" But the Lady of Avenel, taking Mary in her hand, turned hastily away, and walking into the hall, gave them no opportunity of remarking in what manner she received the child's communication, which she thus cut short. What Tibb thought of it appeared from her crossing herself repeatedly, and whispering into Elspeth's ear, "Saint Mary preserve us!—the lassie has seen her father!"

When they reached the hall, they found the lady holding her daughter on her knee, and kissing her repeatedly. When they entered, and walking arose, as if to shun observation, and retired to the little apartment where her child and she occupied the same bed.

The boys were also sent to their cabin, and no one remained by the hall fire save the faithful Tibb and Dame Elspeth, excellent persons both, and as thorough gossips as ever wagged a tongue.

It was but natural that they should instantly resume the subject of the supernatural appearance, for such they deemed it, which had this night alarmed the family.

"I could hae wished it had been the deil himself—be good to and preserve us!—rather than Christie o' the Clinthill," said the matron of the mansion, "for the word runs rife in the country, that he is one of the maist masterfu' thieves ever lap on horse."

"Hout-tout, Dame Elspeth," said Tibb, "fear ye naething frae Christie; tods keep their ain holes clean. Yon kirk-folk make sic a fasherie about men shifting a wee bit for their living! Our Border-lairds would ride with few men at their back, if a' the light-handed lads were out o' gate."

"Better they rade wi' nane than distress the country-side the gate they do," said Dame Elspeth.

"But wha is to hand back the Southron, then," said Tibb, "if ye take away the lances and broadswords? I trow we and wives couldna do that wi' rock and wheel, and as little the monks wi' bell and book."

"And sae weel as the lances and broadswords hae kept them back, I trow!—I was mair beholden to ae Southron, and that was Stawarth Bolton, than to a' the border-riders that ever wore St. Andrew's cross—I reckon their skelping back and forward,