

"The Zetland girl stays a long time with this pirate fellow," said one. "I wish they have not more to speak about than the ransom of her father."

"Ay, truly," answered another, "the wenches will have more sympathy with a handsome young pirate, than an old bed-ridden burgher."

Their discourse was here interrupted by her of whom they were speaking; and, as if taken in the manner, they pulled off their hats, made their awkward obeisances, and looked not a little embarrassed and confused.

Minna returned to the house where she lodged, much affected, yet, on the whole, pleased with the result of her expedition, which seemed to put her father out of danger, and assured her at once of the escape of Cleveland, and of the safety of young Mordaunt. She hastened to communicate both pieces of intelligence to Brenda, who joined her in thankfulness to Heaven, and was herself well-nigh persuaded to believe in Norna's supernatural pretensions, so much was she pleased with the manner in which they had been employed. Some time was spent in exchanging their mutual congratulations, and mingling tears of hope, mixed with apprehension; when, at a late hour in the evening, they were interrupted by Claud Halcro, who, full of a fidgeting sort of importance, not unmingled with fear, came to acquaint them, that the prisoner, Cleveland, had disappeared from the Cathedral, in which he had been permitted to walk, and that the Provost, having been informed that Minna was accessory to his flight, was coming, in a mighty quandary, to make inquiry into the circumstances.

When the worthy Magistrate arrived, Minna did not conceal from him her own wish that Cleveland should make his escape, as the only means which she saw of redeeming her father from imminent danger. But that she had any actual accession to his flight, she positively denied; and stated, "that she had parted from Cleveland in the Cathedral, more than two hours since, and then left him in company with a third person, whose name she did not conceive herself obliged to communicate."

"It is not needful, Miss Minna Troil," answered Provost Torfe; "for, although no person but this Captain Cleveland and yourself was seen to enter the Kirk of Saint Magnus this day, we know well enough that your cousin, old Ulla Troil, whom you Zetlanders call Norna of Fitfulhead, has been cruising up and down, upon sea and land, and air, for what I know, in boats and on ponies, and it may be on broomsticks; and here has been her dumb Drow, too, coming and going, and playing the spy on every one—and a good spy he is, for he can hear every thing, and tells nothing again, unless to his mistress. And we know besides, that she can enter the Kirk when all the doors are fast, and has been seen there more than once, God save us from the Evil One!—and so, without farther questions asked, I conclude it was old Norna whom you left in

the Kirk with this slashing blade—and, if so they may catch them again that can.—I cannot but say, however, pretty Mistress Minna, that you Zetland folks seem to forget both law and gospel, when you use the help of witchcraft to fetch delinquents out of a legal prison; and the least that you, or your cousin, or your father, can do, is to use influence with this wild fellow to go away as soon as possible, without hurting the town or trade, and then there will be little harm in what has chanced; for, Heaven knows, I did not seek the poor lad's life, so I could get my hands free of him without blame; and far less did I wish, that, through his imprisonment, any harm should come to worthy Magnus Troil of Burgh-Westra."

"I see where the shoe pinches you, Mr. Provost," said Claud Halcro, "and I am sure I can answer for my friend Mr. Troil, as well as for myself, that we will say and do all in our power with this man, Captain Cleveland, to make him leave the coast directly."

"And I," said Minna, "am so convinced that what you recommend is best for all parties, that my sister and I will set off early to-morrow morning to the House of Stennis, if Mr. Halcro will give us his escort, to receive my father when he comes ashore, that we may acquaint him with your wish, and to use every influence to induce this unhappy man to leave the country."

Provost Torfe looked upon her with some surprise. "It is not every young woman," he said, "would wish to move eight miles nearer to a band of pirates."

"We run no risk," said Claud Halcro, interfering. "The House of Stennis is strong; and my cousin, whom it belongs to, has men and arms within it. The young ladies are as safe there as in Kirkwall; and much good may arise from an early communication between Magnus Troil and his daughters. And happy am I to see, that in your case, my good old friend,—as glorious John says,—

— "After much debate,
The man prevails above the magistrate."

The Provost smiled, nodded his head, and indicated, as far as he thought he could do so with decency, how happy he should be if the Fortune's Favorite, and her disorderly crew, would leave Orkney without further interference, or violence on either side. He could not authorize their being supplied from the shore, he said; but, either for fear or favor, they were certain to get provisions at Stromness. This pacific magistrate then took leave of Halcro and the two ladies, who proposed, the next morning, to transfer their residence to the House of Stennis, situated upon the banks of the salt-water lake of the same name, and about four miles by water from the Road of Stromness, where the Rover's vessel was lying.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Fly, Flance, fly!—Thou mayst escape.

MACBETH.

It was one branch of the various arts by which Norna endeavored to maintain her pretensions to supernatural powers, that she made herself familiarly and practically acquainted with all the secret passes and recesses, whether natural or artificial, which she could hear of, whether by tradition or otherwise, and was, by such knowledge, often enabled to perform feats which were otherwise unaccountable. Thus, when she escaped from the tabernacle at Burgh-Westra, it was by a sliding-board which covered a secret passage in the wall, known to none but herself and Magnus, who, she was well assured, would not betray her. The profusion, also, with which she lavished a considerable income, otherwise of no use to her, enabled her to procure the earliest intelligence respecting whatever she desired to know, and, at the same time, to secure all other assistance necessary to carry her plans into effect. Cleveland, upon the present occasion, had reason to admire both her sagacity and her resources.

Upon her applying a little forcible pressure, a door which was concealed under some rich wooden sculpture in the screen which divides the eastern aisle from the rest of the Cathedral, opened, and disclosed a dark narrow winding passage, into which she entered, telling Cleveland, in a whisper, to follow, and be sure he shut the door behind him. He obeyed, and followed her in darkness and silence, sometimes descending steps, of the number of which she always apprized him, sometimes ascending, and often turning at short angles. The air was more free than he could have expected, the passage being ventilated at different parts by unseen and ingeniously contrived spiracles, which communicated with the open air. At length their long course ended, by Norna drawing aside a sliding panel, which, opening behind a wooden, or box-bed, as it is called in Scotland, admitted them into an ancient, but very mean apartment, having a latticed window and a groined roof. The furniture was much dilapidated; and its only ornaments were, on the one side of the wall, a garland of faded ribbons, such as are used to decorate whale-vessels; and, on the other, an escutcheon, bearing an Earl's arms and coronet, surrounded with the usual emblems of mortality. The mattock and spade, which lay in one corner, together with the appearance of an old man, who, in a rusty black coat, and slouched hat, sat reading by a table, announced that they were in the habitation of the church-beadle, or sexton, and in the presence of that respectable functionary.

When his attention was attracted by the noise of the sliding panel, he arose, and testifying much respect, but no surprise, took his shadowy hat from his thin gray locks, and stood uncovered in the presence of Norna, with an air of profound humility.

"Be faithful," said Norna to the old man, "and beware you show not any living mortal the secret path to the Sanctuary."

The old man bowed in token of obedience and of thanks, for she put money in his hand as she spoke. With a faltering voice, he expressed his hope that she would remember his son, who was on the Greenland voyage, that he might return fortunate and safe, as he had done last year, when he brought back the garland, pointing to that upon the wall.

"My cauldron shall boil, and my rhyme shall be said, in his behalf," answered Norna. "Waits Pacolet without with the horses?"

The old Sexton assented, and the Pythoness, commanding Cleveland to follow her, went through a back door of the apartment into a small garden, corresponding, in its desolate appearance, to the habitation they had just quitted. The low and broken wall easily permitted them to pass into another and larger garden, though not much better kept, and a gate, which was upon the latch, let them into a long and winding lane, through which, Norna having whispered to her companion that it was the only dangerous place on their road, they walked with a hasty pace. It was now nearly dark, and the inhabitants of the poor dwellings, on either hand, had betaken themselves to their houses. They saw only one woman, who was looking from her door, but blessed herself and retired into her house with precipitation, when she saw the tall figure of Norna stalk past her with long strides. The lane conducted them into the country, where the dumb dwarf waited with three horses, ensconced behind the wall of a deserted shed. On one of these Norna instantly seated herself, Cleveland mounted another, and, followed by Pacolet on the third, they moved sharply on through the darkness; the active and spirited animals on which they rode being of a breed rather taller than those reared in Zetland.

After more than an hour's smart riding, in which Norna acted as guide, they stopped before a hovel, so utterly desolate in appearance, that it resembled rather a cattle-shed than a cottage.

"Here you must remain till dawn, when your signal can be seen from your vessel," said Norna, consigning the horses to the care of Pacolet, and leading the way into the wretched hovel, which she presently illuminated by lighting the small iron lamp which she usually carried along with her. "It is a poor," she said, "but a safe place of refuge; for were we pursued hither, the earth would yawn and admit us into its recesses ere you were taken. For know that this ground is sacred to the gods of old Valhalla.—And now say, man of mischief and of blood, are you friend or foe to Norna, the sole priestess of these disowned deities?"

"How is it possible for me to be your enemy?" said Cleveland.—"Common gratitude—"

"Common gratitude," said Norna, interrupting him, "is a common word—and words are the

common pay which fools accept at the hands of knaves; but Norna must be requited by actions—by sacrifices."

"Well, mother, name your request."

"That you never seek to see Minna Troil again, and that you leave this coast in twenty-four hours," answered Norna.

"It is impossible," said the Captain; "I cannot be soon enough found in the sea-stores which the sloop must have."

"You can. I will take care you are fully supplied; and Caithness and the Hebrides are not far distant—you can depart if you will."

"And why should I," said Cleveland, "if I will not?"

"Because your stay endangers others," said Norna, "and will prove your own destruction. Hear me with attention. From the first moment I saw you lying senseless on the sand beneath the cliffs of Sumburgh, I read that in your countenance which linked you with me, and those who were dear to me; but whether for good or evil, was hidden from mine eyes. I aided in saving your life, in preserving your property. I aided in doing so, the very youth whom you have crossed in his dearest affections—crossed by tale-bearing and slander."

"Islander Merton!" exclaimed the Captain. "By Heaven, I scarce mentioned his name at Burgh-Westra, if it is that which you mean. The peddling fellow Bryce, meaning, I believe, to be my friend, because he found something could be made by me, did, I have since heard, carry tattle, or truth, I know not which, to the old man, which was confirmed by the report of the whole island. But, for me, I scarce thought of him as a rival; else, I had taken a more honorable way to rid myself of him."

"Was the point of your double-edged knife, directed to the bosom of an unarmed man, intended to carve out that more honorable way?" said Norna, sternly.

Cleveland was conscience-struck, and remained silent for an instant, ere he replied, "There, indeed, I was wrong; but he is, I thank Heaven, recovered, and welcome to an honorable satisfaction."

"Cleveland," said the Pythoness, "no! The fiend who employs you as his implement is powerful; but with me he shall not strive. You are of that temperament which the dark Influences desire as the tools of their agency; bold, haughty, and undaunted, unrestrained by principle, and having only in its room a wild sense of indomitable pride, which such men call honor. Such you are, and as such your course through life has been—onward and unrestrained, bloody and tempestuous. By me, however, it shall be controlled," she concluded, stretching out her staff, as if in the attitude of determined authority—"ay, even although the demon who presides over it should even now arise in his terrors."

Cleveland laughed scornfully. "Good mother," he said, "reserve such language for the rude

sailor that implores you to bestow him fair wind, or the poor fisherman that asks success to his nets and lines. I have been long inaccessible both to fear and to superstition. Call forth your demon, if you command one, and place him before me. The man that has spent years in company with incarnate devils, can scarce dread the presence of a disembodied fiend."

This was said with a careless and desperate bitterness of spirit, which proved too powerfully energetic even for the delusions of Norna's insanity; and it was with a hollow and tremulous voice that she asked Cleveland—"For what, then, do you hold me, if you deny the power I have bought so dearly?"

"You have wisdom, mother," said Cleveland; "at least you have art, and art is power. I hold you for one who knows how to steer upon the current of events, but I deny your power to change its course. Do not, therefore, waste words in quoting terrors for which I have no feeling, but tell me at once, wherefore you would have me depart?"

"Because I will have you see Minna no more," answered Norna—"Because Minna is the destined bride of him whom men call Mordaunt Merton—Because if you depart not within twenty-four hours, utter destruction awaits you. In these plain words there is no metaphysical delusion—Answer me as plainly."

"In as plain words, then," answered Cleveland, "I will not leave these islands—not, at least, till I have seen Minna Troil; and never shall your Mordaunt possess her while I live."

"Hear him," said Norna—"hear a mortal man spurn at the means of prolonging his life!—hear a sinful—a most sinful being, refuse the time which fate yet affords for repentance, and for the salvation of an immortal soul!—Behold him how he stands erect, bold and confident in his youthful strength and courage! My eyes, unused to tears—even my eyes, which have so little cause to weep for him, are blinded with sorrow, to think what so fair a form will be ere the second sun set!"

"Mother," said Cleveland, firmly, yet with some touch of sorrow in his voice, "I in part understand your threats. You know more than we do of the course of the Halcyon—perhaps have the means (for I acknowledge you have shown wonderful skill of combination in such affairs) of directing her cruise our way. Be it so,—I will not depart from my purpose for that risk. If the frigate comes hither, we have still our shoal water to trust to; and I think they will scarce cut us out with boats, as if we were a Spanish xebec. I am therefore resolved I will hoist once more the flag under which I have cruised, avail ourselves of the thousand chances which have helped us in greater odds, and, at the worst, fight the vessel to the very last; and, when mortal man can do no more, it is but snapping a pistol in the powder room, and, as we have lived, so will we die."

There was a dead pause as Cleveland ended

and it was broken by his resuming, in a softer tone—"You have heard my answer, mother; let us debate it no farther, but part in peace. I would willingly leave you a remembrance, that you may not forget a poor fellow to whom your services have been useful, and who parts with you in no unkindness, however unfriendly you are to his dearest interests.—Nay, do not shun to accept such a trifle," he said, forcing upon Norna the little silver enchased box which had been once the subject of strife betwixt Merton and him; "it is not for the sake of the metal, which I know you value not, but simply as a memorial that you have met him of whom many a strange tale will hereafter be told in the seas which he has traversed."

"I accept your gift," said Norna, "in token that, if I have in aught been necessary to your fate, it was as the involuntary and grieving agent of other powers. Well did you say we direct not the current of the events which hurry us forward, and render our utmost efforts unavailing; even as the wells of Tuffiloe* can wheel the stoutest vessel round and round, in despite of either sail or steering.—Pacolet!" she exclaimed, in a louder voice, "what, ho! Pacolet!"

A large stone, which lay at the side of the wall of the hovel, fell as she spoke, and to Cleveland's surprise, if not somewhat to his fear, the misshapen form of the dwarf was seen, like some overgrown reptile, extricating himself out of a subterranean passage, the entrance to which the stone had covered.

Norna, as if impressed by what Cleveland had said on the subject of her supernatural pretensions, was so far from endeavoring to avail herself of this opportunity to enforce them, that she hastened to explain the phenomenon he had witnessed.

"Such passages," she said, "to which the entrances are carefully concealed, are frequently found in these islands—the places of retreat of the ancient inhabitants, where they sought refuge from the rage of the Normans, the pirates of that day. It was that you might avail yourself of this, in case of need, that I brought you hither. Should you observe signs of pursuit, you may either lurk in the bowels of the earth until it has passed by, or escape, if you will, through the farther entrance near the lake, by which Pacolet entered but now. And now farewell! Think on what I have said; for as sure as you now move and breathe a living man, so surely is your doom fixed and sealed, unless, within four-and-twenty hours, you have doubled the Burgh-head."

"Farewell, mother!" said Cleveland, as she departed, bending a look upon him, in which, as

he could perceive by the lamp, sorrow was mingled with displeasure.

The interview, which thus concluded, left a strong effect even upon the mind of Cleveland, accustomed as he was to imminent dangers and to hair-breadth escapes. He in vain attempted to shake off the impression left by the words of Norna, which he felt the more powerful, because they were in a great measure divested of her wonted mystical tone, which he contemned. A thousand times he regretted that he had from time to time delayed the resolution, which he had long adopted, to quit his dreadful and dangerous trade; and as often he firmly determined, that, could he but see Minna Troil once more, were it but for a last farewell, he would leave the sloop, as soon as his comrades were extricated from their perilous situation, endeavor to obtain the benefit of the King's pardon, and distinguish himself, if possible, in some more honorable course of warfare.

This resolution, to which he again and again pledged himself, had at length a sedative effect on his mental perturbation, and, wrapped in his cloak, he enjoyed, for a time, that imperfect repose which exhausted nature demands as her tribute, even from those who are situated on the verge of the most imminent danger. But, how far soever the guilty may satisfy his own mind, and stupefy the feelings of remorse, by such a conditional repentance, we may well question whether it is not, in the sight of Heaven, rather a presumptuous aggravation, than an expiation of his sins.

When Cleveland awoke, the gray dawn was already mingling with the twilight of an Orcadian night. He found himself on the verge of a beautiful sheet of water, which, close by the place where he had rested, was nearly divided by two tongues of land that approach each other from the opposing sides of the lake, and are in some degree united by the Bridge of Broisgar, a long causeway, containing openings to permit the flow and reflux of the tide. Behind him, and fronting to the bridge, stood that remarkable semicircle of huge upright stones, which has no rival in Britain, excepting the inimitable monument at Stonehenge. These immense blocks of stone, all of them above twelve feet, and several being even fourteen or fifteen feet in height, stood around the pirate in the gray light of the dawning, like the phantom forms of antediluvian giants, who, shrouded in the habiliments of the dead, came to revisit, by this pale light, the earth which they had plagued by their oppression and polluted by their sins, till they brought down upon it the vengeance of long-suffering Heaven.*

* The Standing Stones of Stennis, as by a little pleonasm this remarkable monument is termed, furnishes an irresistible refutation of the opinion of such antiquaries as hold that the circles usually called Druidical, were peculiar to that race of priests. There is every reason to believe that the custom was as prevalent in Scandinavia as in Gaul or Britain, and as common to the mythology of Odin as to Druidical superstition. There is every reason to think, that the Druids never occupied any part of the Orkneys, and tradition, as well as history

* A well, in the language of those seas, denotes one of the whirlpools, or circular eddies, which wheel and boil with astonishing strength, and are very dangerous. Hence the distinction, in old English, between wells and waves, the latter signifying the direct onward course of the tide, and the former the smooth, glassy, oily-looking whirlpools, whose strength seems to the eye almost irresistible.

Cleveland was less interested by this singular monument of antiquity, than by the distant view of Stromness, which he could as yet scarce discover. He lost no time in striking a light, by the assistance of one of his pistols, and some wet fern supplied him with fuel sufficient to make the appointed signal. It had been earnestly watched for on board the sloop; for Goffe's incapacity became daily more apparent; and even his most steady adherents agreed that it would be best to submit to Cleveland's command till they got back to the West Indies.

Bunce, who came with the boat to bring off his favorite commander, danced, cursed, shouted, and sported for joy, when he saw him once more at freedom. "They had already," he said, "made some progress in victualling the sloop, and they might have made more, but for that drunken old swab Goffe, who minded nothing but splicing the main-brace."

The boat's crew were inspired with the same enthusiasm, and rowed so hard, that, although the tide was against them, and the air of wind failed, they soon placed Cleveland once more on the quarter-deck of the vessel which it was his misfortune to command.

The first exercise of the Captain's power was to make known to Magnus Troil that he was at full freedom to depart—that he was willing to make him any compensation in his power, for the interruption of his voyage to Kirkwall; and that Captain Cleveland was desirous, if agreeable to Mr. Troil, to pay his respects to him on board his brig—thank him for former favors, and apologize for the circumstances attending his detention.

To Bunce, who as the most civilized of the

ascribes the Stones of Stennis to the Scandinavians. Two large sheets of water, communicating with the sea, are connected by a causeway, with openings permitting the tide to rise and recede, which is called the Bridge of Broisgar. Upon the eastern tongue of land appear the Standing Stones, arranged in the form of a half circle, or rather a horse-shoe, the height of the pillars being fifteen feet and upwards. Within this circle lies a stone, probably sacrificial. One of the pillars, a little to the westward is perforated with a circular hole, through which loving couples are wont to join hands when they take the *Promise of Odin*, as has been repeatedly mentioned in the text. The enclosure is surrounded by barrows, and on the opposite isthmus, advancing towards the Bridge of Broisgar, there is another monument of Standing Stones, which, in this case, is completely circular. They are less in size than those on the eastern side of the lake, their height running only from ten or twelve to fourteen feet. This western circle is surrounded by a deep trench drawn on the outside of the pillars; and I remarked four tumuli, or mounds of earth, regularly disposed around it. Stonehenge excels this Oradian monument; but that of Stennis is, I conceive, the only one in Britain which can be said to approach it in consequence. All the northern nations marked by those huge enclosures the places of popular meeting, either for religious worship, or the transaction of public business of a temporal nature. The Northern Popular Antiquities contain, in an abstract of the Eyrbyggja Saga, a particular account of the manner in which the Helga Fels, or Holy Rock, was set apart by the Pontiff Thorolf for solemn occasions.

I need only add, that, different from the monument on Salisbury Plain, the stones which were used in the Oradian circle seem to have been raised from a quarry upon the spot, of which the marks are visible.

crew, Cleveland had intrusted this message, the old plain-dealing Udaller made the following answer:—"Tell your Captain that I should be glad to think he had never stopped any one upon the high sea, save such as have suffered as little as I have. Say, too, that if we are to continue friends, we shall be most so at a distance; for I like the sound of his cannon-balls as little by sea, as he would like the whistle of a bullet by land from his rifle-gun. Say, in a word, that I am sorry I was mistaken in him, and that he would have done better to have reserved for the Spaniard the usage he is bestowing on his countrymen."

"And so that is your message, old Snapcholer-ick?" said Bunce—"Now stap my vitals if I have not a mind to do your errand for you over the left shoulder, and teach you more respect for gentlemen of fortune! But I won't, and chiefly for the sake of your two pretty wenches, not to mention my old friend Claud Halcro, the very visage of whom brought back all the old days of scene-shifting and candle snuffing. So good-morrow to you, Gafer Seal's-cap, and all is said that need pass between us."

No sooner did the boat put off with the pirates, who left the brig, and now returned to their own vessel, than Magnus, in order to avoid reposing unnecessary confidence in the honor of these gentlemen of fortune, as they called themselves, got his brig under way; and, the wind coming favorably round, and increasing as the sun rose, he crowded all sail for Scalpaflow, intending there to disembark and go by land to Kirkwall, where he expected to meet his daughters and his friend Claud Halcro.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Now, Emma, now the last reflection make,
What thou wouldst follow, what thou must forsake.
By our ill-omen'd stars and adverse Heaven,
No middle object to thy choice is given.

HENRY AND EMMA.

The sun was high in heaven; the boats were busily fetching off from the shore the promised supply of provisions and water, which, as many fishing-skiffs were employed in the service, were got on board with unexpected speed, and stowed away by the crew of the sloop, with equal despatch. All worked with good will; for all, save Cleveland himself, were weary of a coast, where every moment increased their danger, and where, which they esteemed a worse misfortune, there was no booty to be won. Bunce and Derrick took the immediate direction of this duty, while Cleveland, walking the deck alone, and in silence, only interfered from time to time, to give some order which circumstances required, and then relapsed into his own sad reflections.

There are two sorts of men whom situations of guilt and terror, and commotion, bring forward as prominent agents. The first are spirits so naturally moulded and fitted for deeds of horror, that they stalk forth from their lurking-places like

actua demons, to work in their native element, as the hideous apparition of the Bearded Man came forth at Versailles, on the memorable 6th October, 1789, the delighted executioner of the victims delivered up to him by a bloodthirsty rabble. But Cleveland belonged to the second class of these unfortunate beings, who are involved in evil rather by the concurrence of external circumstances than by natural inclination, being, indeed, one in whom his first engaging in this lawless mode of life, as the follower of his father, nay, perhaps, even his pursuing it as his father's avenger, carried with it something of mitigation and apology;—one also who often considered his guilty situation with horror, and had made repeated, though ineffectual efforts, to escape from it.

Such thoughts of remorse were now rolling in his mind, and he may be forgiven, if recollections of Minna mingled with and aided them. He looked around, too, on his mates, and, profligate and hardened as he knew them to be, he could not think of their paying the penalty of his obstinacy. "We shall be ready to sail with the ebb tide," he said to himself—"why should I endanger these men, by detaining them till the hour of danger, predicted by that singular woman, shall arrive? Her intelligence, howsoever acquired, has been always strangely accurate; and her warning was as solemn as if a mother were to apprise an erring son of his crimes, and of his approaching punishment. Besides, what chance is there that I can again see Minna? She is at Kirkwall, doubtless, and to hold my course thither would be to steer right upon the rocks. No, I will not endanger these poor fellows—I will sail with the ebb tide. On the desolate Hebrides, or on the north-west coast of Ireland, I will leave the vessel, and return hither in some disguise—yet, why should I return, since it will perhaps be only to see Minna the bride of Mordaunt? No—let the vessel sail with this ebb tide without me. I will abide and take my fate."

His meditations were here interrupted by Jack Bunce, who, hailing him noble Captain, said they were ready to sail when he pleased.

"When you please, Bunce; for I shall leave the command with you, and go ashore at Stromness," said Cleveland.

"You shall do no such matter, by Heaven!" answered Bunce. "The command with me, truly! and how the devil am I to get the crew to obey me? Why, even Dick Fletcher rides rusty on me now and then. You know well enough that, without you, we shall be all at each other's throats in half an hour; and, if you desert us, what a rope's end does it signify whether we are destroyed by the king's cruisers, or by each other? Come, come, noble Captain, there are black-eyed girls enough in the world, but, where will you find so tight a sea-boat as the little Favorite here, manned as she is with a set of tearing lads,

"Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when 'tis wildest!"

"You are a precious fool, Jack Bunce," said Cleveland, half angry, and in despite of himself,

half diverted by the false tones and exaggerated gesture of the stage-struck pirate.

"It may be so, noble Captain," answered Bunce, "and it may be that I have my comrades in my folly. Here are you, now, going to play All for Love, and the World well Lost, and yet you cannot bear a harmless bounce in blank-verse—Well, I can talk prose for the matter, for I have news enough to tell—and strange news, too—and stirring news to boot."

"Well, prithee deliver them (to speak thy own cant) like a man of this world."

"The Stromness fishers will accept nothing for their provisions and trouble," said Bunce—"there is a wonder for you!"

"And for what reason, I pray?" said Cleveland; "it is the first time I have ever heard of cash being refused at a sea-port."

"True—they commonly lay the charges on as thick as if they were caulking. But here is the matter. The owner of the brig yonder, the father of your fair Imoinda, stands paymaster, by way of thanks for the civility with which we treated his daughters, and that we may not meet our due, as he calls it, on these shores."

"It is like the frank-hearted old Udaller!" said Cleveland; "but is he then at Stromness? I thought he was to have crossed the island for Kirkwall."

"He did so purpose," said Bunce; "but more folks than King Duncan change the course of their voyage. He was no sooner ashore than he was met with by a meddling old witch of these parts, who has her finger in every man's pie, and by her counsel he changed his purpose of going to Kirkwall, and lies at anchor for the present in yonder white house, that you may see with your glass up the lake yonder. I am told the old woman clubbed also to pay for the sloop's stores. Why she should shell out the boards I cannot conceive an idea, except that she is said to be a witch, and may befriend us as so many devils."

"But who told you all this?" said Cleveland, without using his spy-glass, or seeming so much interested in the news as his comrade had expected.

"Why," replied Bunce, "I made a trip ashore this morning to the village, and had a can with an old acquaintance, who had been sent by Master Troil to look after matters, and I fished it all out of him, and more too, than I am desirous of telling you, noble Captain."

"And who is your intelligencer?" said Cleveland; "has he got no name?"

"Why, he is an old, fiddling, foppish acquaintance of mine, called Halcro, if you must know," said Bunce.

"Halcro!" echoed Cleveland, his eyes sparkling with surprise—"Claud Halcro?—why, he went ashore at Iuganess, with Minna and her sister—Where are they?"

"Why, that is just what I did not want to tell you," replied the confidant—"yet hang me if I can help it, for I cannot baulk a fine situation.—That

start had a fine effect—Oh, ay, and the spy-glass is turned on the House of Stennis now!—Well, yonder they are, it must be confessed—indifferently well guarded, too. Some of the old witch's people are come over from that mountain of an island—Hoy, as they call it; and the old gentleman has got some fellows under arms himself. But what of all that, noble Captain!—give you but the word, and we snap up the wenches to-night—clap them under hatches—man the capstern by day-break—up top-sails—and sail with the morning tide.”

“You sicken me with your villainy,” said Cleveland, turning away from him.

“Umph!—villainy, and sicken you!” said Bunce—“Now, pray, what have I said but what has been done a thousand times by gentlemen of fortune like ourselves?”

“Mention it not again,” said Cleveland; then took a turn along the deck, in deep meditation, and, coming back to Bunce, took him by the hand, and said, “Jack, I will see her once more.”

“With all my heart,” said Bunce, sullenly.

“Once more will I see her, and it may be to abjure at her feet this cursed trade, and expiate my offences—”

“At the gallows!” said Bunce, completing the sentence—“With all my heart!—confess—and be hanged is a most reverend proverb.”

“Nay—but, dear Jack!” said Cleveland.

“Dear Jack!” answered Bunce, in the same sullen tone—“a dear sight you have been to dear Jack. But hold your own course—I have done with caring for you for ever—I should but sicken you with my villainous counsels.”

“Now must I soothe this silly fellow as if he were a spoiled child,” said Cleveland, speaking at Bunce, but not to him; “and yet he has sense enough, and bravery enough, too; and one would think, kindness enough to know that men don't pick their words during a gale of wind.”

“Why, that's true, Clement,” said Bunce, “and there is my hand upon it—And, now I think upon't, you shall have your last interview, for it's out of my line to prevent a parting scene; and what signifies a tide—we can sail by to-morrow's ebb as well as by this.”

Cleveland sighed, for Norna's prediction rushed on his mind; but the opportunity of a last meeting with Minna was too tempting to be resigned either for presentiment or prediction.

“I will go presently ashore to the place where they all are,” said Bunce; “and the payment of these stores shall serve me for a pretext; and I will carry any letters or message from you to Minna with the dexterity of a valet de chambre.”

“But they have armed men—you may be in danger,” said Cleveland.

“Not a whit—not a whit,” replied Bunce. “I protected the wenches when they were in my power; I warrant their father will neither wrong me, nor see me wronged.”

“You say true,” said Cleveland, “it is not in his nature. I will instantly write a note to Minna.” And he ran down to the cabin for that pur-

pose, where he wasted much paper, ore, with a trembling hand, and throbbing heart, he achieved such a letter as he hoped might prevail on Minna to permit him a farewell meeting on the succeeding morning.

“His adherent, Bunce, in the mean while, sought out Fletcher, of whose support to second any motion whatever, he accounted himself perfectly sure; and followed by this trusty satellite, he intruded himself on the awful presence of Hawkins the boatswain, and Derrick the quarter-master, who were regaling themselves with a can of rumbo, after the fatiguing duty of the day.

“Here comes he can tell us,” said Derrick.—“So, Master Lieutenant, for so we must call you now, I think, let us have a peep into our counsels—When will the anchor be a-trip?”

“When it pleases Heaven, Master Quarter-Master,” answered Bunce, “for I know no more than the stern-post.”

“Why, d—n my buttons,” said Derrick, “do we not weigh this tide?”

“Or to-morrow's tide, at farthest?” said the Boatswain—“Why, what have we been slaving the whole company for, to get all these stores aboard?”

“Gentlemen,” said Bunce, “you are to know that Cupid has laid our Captain on board, carried the vessel, and nailed down his wits under hatches.”

“What sort of play-stuff is all this?” said the Boatswain, gruffly. “If you have any thing to tell us, say it in a word, like a man.”

“Howsomdever,” said Fletcher, “I always think Jack Bunce speaks like a man, and acts like a man too—and so, d'ye see—”

“Hold your peace, dear Dick, best of bully-backs, be silent,” said Bunce—“Gentlemen, in one word, the Captain is in love.”

“Why, now only think of that!” said the Boatswain; “not but that I have been in love as often as any man, when the ship was laid up.”

“Well, but,” continued Bunce, “Captain Cleveland is in love—Yes—Prince Volscius is in love; and, though that's the cure for laughing on the stage, it is no laughing matter here. He expects to meet the girl to-morrow, for the last time; and that, we all know, leads to another meeting, and another, and so on till the Halcyon is down on us, and then we may look for more kicks than halfpence.”

“By—” said Boatswain, with a sounding oath, “we'll have a mutiny, and not allow him to go ashore,—eh, Derrick?”

“And the best way, too,” said Derrick.

“What d'ye think of it, Jack Bunce?” said Fletcher, in whose ears this counsel sounded very sagely, but who still bent a wistful look upon his companion.

“Why look ye, gentlemen,” said Bunce, “I will mutiny none, and stap my vitals if any of you shall!”

“Why, then, I won't for one,” said Fletcher; “but what are we to do, since howsomdever—”

“Stopper your jaw, Dick, will you?” said Bunce.—“Now, Boatswain, I am partly of your mind, that the Captain must be brought to reason by a little wholesome force. But you all know he has the spirit of a lion, and will do nothing unless he is allowed to hold on his own course. Well, I'll go ashore and make this appointment. The girl comes to the rendezvous in the morning, and the Captain goes ashore—we take a good boat's crew with us, to row, against tide and current, and we will be ready at the signal, to jump ashore and bring off the Captain and the girl, whether they will or no. The pet-child will not quarrel with us, since we bring off his whirlingig alongst with him; and if he is still fractious, why, we will weigh anchor without his orders, and let him come to his senses at leisure, and know his friends another time.”

“Why, this has a face with it, Master Derrick,” said Hawkins.

“Jack Bunce is always right,” said Fletcher; “howsomdever, the Captain will shoot some of us, that is certain.”

“Hold your jaw, Dick,” said Bunce; “pray, who the devil cares, do you think, whether you are shot or hanged?”

“Why, it don't much argify for the matter of that,” replied Dick; “howsomdever—”

“Be quiet, I tell you,” said his inexorable patron, “and hear me out.—We will take him at unawares, so that he shall neither have time to use cutlass nor pops; and I myself, for the dear love I bear him, will be the first to lay him on his back. There is a nice tight-going bit of a pinance, that is a consort of this chase of the Captain's—if I have an opportunity, I'll snap her up on my own account.”

“Yes, yes,” said Derrick, “let you alone for keeping on the look-out for your own comforts.”

“Faith, nay,” said Bunce, “I only snatch at them when they come fairly in my way, or are purchased by dint of my own wit; and none of you could have fallen on such a plan as this. We shall have the Captain with us, head, hand, and heart, and all, besides making a scene fit to finish a comedy. So I will go ashore to make the appointment, and do you possess some of the gentlemen who are still sober, and fit to be trusted, with the knowledge of our intentions.”

Bunce, with his friend Fletcher, departed accordingly, and the two veteran pirates remained looking at each other in silence, until the Boatswain spoke at last. “Blow me, Derrick, if I like these two daffadandilly young fellows; they are not the true breed. Why, they are no more like the rovers I have known, than this sloop is to a first-rate. Why, there was old Sharpe that read prayers to his ship's company every Sunday, what would he have said to have heard it proposed to bring two wenches on board?”

“And what would tough old Black Beard have said,” answered his companion, “if they had expected to keep them to themselves? They deserve

to be made to walk the plank for their impudence; or to be tied back to back and set a-diving, and I care not how soon.”

“Ay, but who is to command the ship, then?” said Hawkins.

“Why, what ails you at old Goffe?” answered Derrick.

“Why, he has sucked the monkey so long and so often,” said the Boatswain, “that the best of him is buffed. He is little better than an old woman when he is sober, and he is roaring mad when he is drunk—we have had enough of Goffe.”

“Why, then, what d'ye say to yourself, or to me, Boatswain?” demanded the Quarter-master. “I am content to toss up for it.”

“Rot it, no,” answered the Boatswain, after a moment's consideration; “if we were within reach of the trade-winds, we might either of us make a shift; but it will take all Cleveland's navigation to get us there; and so, I think, there is nothing like Bunce's project for the present. Hark, he calls for the boat—I must go on deck and have her lowered for his honor, d—n his eyes.”

The boat was lowered accordingly, made its voyage up the lake with safety, and landed Bunce within a few hundred yards of the old mansion-house of Stennis. Upon arriving in front of the house, he found that hasty measures had been taken to put it in a state of defence, the lower windows being barricaded, with places left for use of musketry, and a ship-gun being placed so as to command the entrance, which was besides guarded by two sentinels. Bunce demanded admission at the gate, which was briefly and unceremoniously refused to him, with an exhortation to him, at the same time, to be gone about his business before worse came of it. As he continued, however, importunately to insist on seeing some one of the family, and stated his business to be of the most urgent nature, Claud Halcro at length appeared, and, with more peevishness than belonged to his usual manner, that admirer of glorious John expostulated with his old acquaintance upon his pertinacious folly.

“You are,” he said, “like foolish moths fluttering about a candle, which is sure at last to consume you.”

“And you,” said Bunce, “are a set of stingless drones, whom we can smoke out of your defences at our pleasure, with half-a-dozen of hand-grenades.”

“Smoke a fool's head!” said Halcro; “take my advice, and mind your own matters, or there will be those upon you will smoke you to purpose. Either be gone, or tell me in two words what you want; for you are like to receive no welcome here save from a blunderbuss. We are men enough of ourselves; and here is young Mordaunt Mertoun come from Hoy, whom your Captain so nearly murdered.”

“Tush, man,” said Bunce, “he did but let out a little malapert blood.”

“We want no such phlebotomy here,” said Claud Halcro; “and, besides, your patient turns

but to be nearer allied to us than either you or we thought of; so you may think how little welcome the Captain or any of his crew are like to be here."

"Well; but what if I bring money for the stores sent on board?"

"Keep it till it is asked of you," said Halcro. "There are two bad paymasters—he that pays too soon, and he that does not pay at all."

"Well, then, let me at least give our thanks to the donor," said Bunce.

"Keep them too till they are asked for," answered the poet.

"So this is all the welcome I have of you for old acquaintance' sake?" said Bunce.

"Why, what can I do for you, Master Altamont?" said Halcro, somewhat moved.—"If young Mordaunt had had his own will, he would have welcomed you with the red Burgundy, Number a thousand.' For God's sake begone, else the stage direction will be, Enter guard, and seize Altamont."

"I will not give you the trouble," said Bunce, "but will make my exit instantly.—Stay a moment—I had almost forgot that I have a slip of paper for the tallest of your girls there—Minna, ay, Minna is her name. It is a farewell from Captain Cleveland—you cannot refuse to give it her."

"Ah, poor, fellow!" said Halcro—"I comprehend—I comprehend—Farewell fair Armida—

*'Mid pikes and 'mid bullets, 'mid tempests and fire,
The danger is less than in hopeless desire.'*

Tell me but this—is there poetry in it?"

"Chokeful to the seal, with song, sonnet, and elegy," answered Bunce; "but let her have it cautiously and secretly."

"Tush, man!—teach me to deliver a billet-doux!—me, who have been in the Wits' Coffee-house, and have seen all the toast of the Kit-Cat Club!—Minna shall have it, then, for old acquaintance' sake, Mr. Altamont, and for your Captain's sake, too, who has less of the core of devil about him, than his trade requires. There can be no harm in a farewell letter."

"Farewell, then, old boy, for ever and a day!" said Bunce; and seizing the poet's hand, gave it so hearty a gripe, that he left him roaring, and shaking his fist, like a dog when a hot cinder has fallen on his foot.

Leaving the rover to return on board the vessel, we remain with the family of Magnus Troil, assembled at their kinsman's mansion of Stennis, where they maintained a constant and careful watch against surprise.

Mordaunt Mertoun had been received with much kindness by Magnus Troil, when he came to his assistance, with a small party of Norna's dependants, placed by her under his command. The Udaller was easily satisfied that the reports instilled into his ears by the Jagger, zealous to augment his favor towards his more profitable customer, Cleveland, by diminishing that of Mertoun, were without foundation. They had, indeed, been confirmed by the good Lady Glowrowrum, and by

common fame, both of whom were pleased to represent Mordaunt Mertoun as an arrogant pretender to the favor of the sisters of Burgh-Westra, who only hesitated, sultan-like, on whom he should bestow the handkerchief. But common fame, Magnus considered, was a common liar, and he was sometimes disposed (where scandal was concerned) to regard the good Lady Glowrowrum as rather an uncommon specimen of the same genus. He therefore received Mordaunt once more into full favor, listened with much surprise to the claim which Norna laid to the young man's duty, and with no less interest to her intention of surrendering to him the considerable property which she had inherited from her father. Nay, it is even probable that, though he gave no immediate answer to her hints concerning an union betwixt his eldest daughter and her heir, he might think such an alliance recommended, as well by the young man's personal merits, as by the chance it gave of reuniting the very large estate which had been divided betwixt his own father and that of Norna. At all events, the Udaller received his young friend with much kindness, and he and the proprietor of the mansion joined in intrusting to him, as the youngest and most active of the party, the charge of commanding the night-watch, and relieving the sentinels around the House of Stennis.

CHAPTER XL.

*Of an outlawe, this is the lawe—
That men him take and bind,
Without pite hang'd to be,
And waive with the wind.*

THE BALLAD OF THE NET-BROWN MAID.

MORDAUNT had caused the sentinels who had been on duty since midnight to be relieved ere the peep of day, and having given directions that the guard should be again changed at sunrise, he had retired to a small parlor, and, placing his arms beside him, was slumbering in an easy chair, when he felt himself pulled by the watch-cloak in which he was enveloped.

"Is it sunrise," said he, "already?" as, starting up, he discovered the first beams lying level upon the horizon.

"Mordaunt!" said a voice, every note of which thrilled to his heart.

He turned his eyes on the speaker, and Brenda Troil, to his joyful astonishment, stood before him. As he was about to address her eagerly, he was checked by observing the signs of sorrow and discomposure in her pale cheeks, trembling lips, and brimful eyes.

"Mordaunt," she said, "you must do Minna and me a favor—you must allow us to leave the house quietly, and without alarming any one, in order to go on as far as the Standing Stones of Stennis."

"What freak can this be, dearest Brenda?" said Mordaunt, much amazed at the request—"some Orcadian observance of superstition, perhaps; but the time is too dangerous, and my

charge from your father too strict, that I should permit you to pass without his consent. Consider, dearest Brenda, I am a soldier on duty, and must obey orders."

"Mordaunt," said Brenda, "this is no jesting matter—Minna's reason, nay, Minna's life, depends on your giving us this permission."

"And for what purpose?" said Mordaunt; "let me at least know that."

"For a wild and a desperate purpose," replied Brenda—"It is that she may meet Cleveland."

"Cleveland!" said Mordaunt—"Should the villain come ashore, he shall be welcomed with a shower of rifle-balls. Let me within a hundred yards of him," he added, grasping his piece, "and all the mischief he has done me shall be balanced with an ounce bullet!"

"His death will drive Minna frantic," said Brenda; "and he who injures Minna, Brenda will never again look upon."

"This is madness—raving madness!" said Mordaunt—"Consider your honor—consider your duty."

"I can consider nothing but Minna's danger," said Brenda, breaking into a flood of tears; "her former illness was nothing to the state she has been in all night. She holds in her hand his letter, written in characters of fire, rather than of ink, imploring her to see him, for a last farewell, as she would save a mortal body and an immortal soul; pledging himself for her safety; and declaring no power shall force him from the coast till he has seen her.—You *must* let us pass."

"It is impossible!" replied Mordaunt, in great perplexity—"this ruffian has imprecations enough, doubtless, at his fingers, ends—but what better pledge has he to offer? I cannot permit Minna to go."

"I suppose," said Brenda, somewhat reproachfully, while she dried her tears, yet still continued sobbing, "that there is something in what Norna spoke of betwixt Minna and you; and that you are too jealous of this poor wretch, to allow him even to speak with her an instant before his departure."

"You are unjust," said Mordaunt, hurt, and yet somewhat flattered by her suspicions,—"you are as unjust as you are imprudent. You know—you cannot but know—that Minna is chiefly dear to me as *your* sister. Tell me, Brenda—and tell me truly—if I aid you in this folly, have you no suspicion of the Pirate's faith?"

"No, none," said Brenda, "if I had any, do you think I would urge you thus? He is wild and unhappy, but I think we may in this trust him."

"Is the appointed place the Standing Stones, and the time daybreak?" again demanded Mordaunt.

"It is, and the time is come," said Brenda.—"for Heaven's sake let us depart!"

"I will myself," said Mordaunt, "relieve the sentinel at the front door for a few minutes, and suffer you to pass.—You will not protract this interview, so full of danger?"

"We will not," said Brenda; "and you, on your part, will not avail yourself of this unhappy man's venturing hither, to harm or to seize him?"

"Rely on my honor," said Mordaunt—"He shall have no harm, unless he offers any."

"Then I go to call my sister," said Brenda, and quickly left the apartment.

Mordaunt considered the matter for an instant, and then going to the sentinel at the front door, he desired him to run instantly to the main-guard, and order the whole to turn out with their arms—to see the order obeyed, and to return when they were in readiness. Meantime, he himself, he said, would remain upon the post.

During the interval of the sentinel's absence, the front door was slowly opened, and Minna and Brenda appeared, muffled in their mantles. The former leaned on her sister, and kept her face bent on the ground as one who felt ashamed of the step she was about to take. Brenda also passed her lover in silence, but threw back upon him a look of gratitude and affection, which doubled, if possible, his anxiety for her safety.

The sisters in the meanwhile passed out of sight of the house; when Minna, whose step, till that time, had been faint and feeble, began to erect her person, and to walk with a pace so firm and so swift, that Brenda, who had some difficulty to keep up with her, could not forbear remonstrating on the imprudence of hurrying her spirits, and exhausting her force, by such unnecessary haste.

"Fear not my dearest sister," said Minna; "the spirit which I now feel well, and must, sustain me through the dreadful interview. I could not but move with a drooping head, and a dejected pace, while I was in view of one who must necessarily deem me deserving of his pity, or his scorn. But you know, my dearest Brenda, and Mordaunt shall also know, that the love I bore to that unhappy man, was as pure as the rays of that sun, that is now reflected on the waves. And I dare attest that glorious sun, and yonder blue heaven, to bear me witness, that, but to urge him to change his unhappy course of life, I had not, for all the temptations this round world holds, ever consented to see him more."

As she spoke thus, in a tone which afforded much confidence to Brenda, the sisters attained the summit of a rising ground, whence they commanded a full view of the Orcadian Stonehenge, consisting of a huge circle and semicircle of the Standing Stones, as they are called, which already glimmered a grayish white in the rising sun, and projected far to the westward their long gigantic shadows. At another time, the scene would have operated powerfully on the imaginative mind of Minna, and interested the curiosity at least of her less sensitive sister. But, at this moment,

neither was at leisure to receive the impressions which this stupendous monument of antiquity is so well calculated to impress on the feelings of those who behold it; for they saw in the lower lake, beneath what is termed the Bridge of Brols-

gar, a boat well manned and armed, which had disembarked one of its crew, who advanced alone, and wrapped in a naval cloak, towards that monumental circle which they themselves were about to reach from another quarter.

"They are many, and they are armed," said the startled Brenda, in a whisper to her sister.

"It is for precaution's sake," answered Minna, "which, alas! their condition renders but too necessary. Fear no treachery from him—that, at least, is not his vice."

As she spoke, or shortly afterwards, she attained the centre of the circle, on which, in the midst of the tall erect pillars of rude stone that are raised around, lies one flat and prostrate, supported by short stone-pillars, of which some relics are still visible, that had once served, perhaps, the purpose of an altar.

"Here," she said, "in heathen times (if we may believe legends, which have cost me but too dear) our ancestors offered sacrifices to heathen deities—and here will I, from my soul, renounce, abjure, and offer up to a better and a more merciful God than was known to them, the vain ideas with which my youthful imagination has been seduced."

She stood by the prostrate table of stone, and saw Cleveland advance towards her, with a timid pace, and a downcast look, as different from his usual character and bearing, as Minna's high air, and lofty demeanor and calm contemplative posture, were distant from those of the love-lorn and broken-hearted maiden, whose weight had almost bore down the support of her sister as she left the House of Stennis. If the belief of those is true, who assign these singular monuments exclusively to the Druids, Minna might have seemed the Haxa, or high priestess of the order, from whom some champion of the tribe expected inauguration. Or, if we hold the circles of Gothic and Scandinavian origin, she might have seemed a descended Vision of Freya, the spouse of the Thundering Deity, before whom some bold Sea King or champion bent with an awe, which no mere mortal terror could have inflicted upon him. Brenda, overwhelmed with inexpressible fear and doubt, remained a pace or two behind, anxiously observing the motion of Cleveland, and attending to nothing around, save to him and to her sister.

Cleveland approached within two yards of Minna, and bent his head to the ground. There was a dead pause, until Minna said, in a firm but melancholy tone, "Unhappy man, why didst thou seek this aggravation of our woe? Depart in peace, and may Heaven direct thee to a better course than that which thy life has yet held!"

"Heaven will not aid me," said Cleveland, "excepting by your voice. I came hither rude and wild, scarce knowing that my trade, my desperate trade, was more criminal in the sight of man or of Heaven, than that of those privy-vendors whom your law acknowledges. I was bred

in it, and, but for the wishes you have encouraged me to form, I should have perhaps died in it, desperate and impenitent. Oh, do not throw me from you! let me do something to redeem what I have done amiss, and do not leave your own work half-finished!"

"Cleveland," said Minna, "I will not reproach you with abusing my inexperience, or with availing yourself of those delusions which the credulity of early youth had flung around me, and which led me to confound your fatal course of life with the deeds of our ancient heroes. Alas! when I saw your followers, that illusion was no more!—but I do not upbraid you with its having existed. Go, Cleveland, detach yourself from those miserable wretches with whom you are associated, and believe me, that if Heaven yet grants you the means of distinguishing your name by one good or glorious action, there are eyes left in these lonely islands, that will weep as much for joy, as—as—they must now do for sorrow."

"And is this all?" said Cleveland; "and may not I hope, that if I extricate myself from my present associates—if I can gain my pardon by being as bold in the right, as I have been too often in the wrong cause—if, after a term, I care not how long—but still a term which may have an end, I can boast of having redeemed my fame—may I not—may I not hope that Minna may forgive what my God and my country shall have pardoned?"

"Never, Cleveland, never," said Minna, with the utmost firmness; "on this spot we part, and part for ever, and part without longer indulgence. Think of me as of one dead, if you continue as you now are; but if, which may Heaven grant, you change your fatal course, think of me then as one, whose morning and evening prayers will be for your happiness, though she has lost her own.—Farewell, Cleveland!"

He knelt, overpowered by his own bitter feelings, to take the hand which she held out to him, and in that instant, his confidant Bunce, starting from behind one of the large upright pillars, his eyes wet with tears, exclaimed—

"Never saw such a parting scene on any stage! But I'll be d—d if you make your exit as you expect!"

And so saying, ere Cleveland could employ either remonstrance or resistance, and indeed before he could get upon his feet, he easily secured him by pulling him down on his back, so that two or three of the boat's crew seized him by the arms and legs, and began to hurry him towards the lake. Minna and Brenda shrieked, and attempted to fly; but Derrick snatched up the former with as much ease as a falcon pounces on a pigeon, while Bunce, with an oath or two which were intended to be of a consolatory nature, seized on Brenda; and the whole party, with two or three of the other pirates, who, stealing from the water-side, had accompanied them on the ambuscade, began hastily to run towards the boat, which was left in charge of two of their number. Their course, however was unexpect-

edly interrupted, and their criminal purpose entirely frustrated.

When Mordaunt Mertoun had turned out his guard in arms, it was with the natural purpose of watching over the safety of the two sisters. They had accordingly closely observed the motions of the pirates, and when they saw so many of them leave the boat and steal towards the place of rendezvous assigned to Cleveland, they naturally suspected treachery, and by cover of an old hollow way or trench, which perhaps had anciently been connected with the monumental circle, they had thrown themselves unperceived between the pirates and their boat. At the cries of the sisters, they started up and placed themselves in the way of the ruffians, presenting their pieces, which, notwithstanding, they dared not fire, for fear of hurting the young ladies, secured as they were in the rude grasp of the marauders. Mordaunt, however, advanced with the speed of a wild deer on Bunce, who, loath to quit his prey, yet unable to defend himself otherwise, turned to this side and that alternately, exposing Brenda to the blows which Mordaunt offered at him. This defence, however, proved in vain against a youth, possessed of the lightest foot and most active hand ever known in Zetland, and after a feint or two, Mordaunt brought the pirate to the ground with a stroke from the butt of the carbine, which he dared not use otherwise. At the same time fire-arms were discharged on either side by those who were liable to no such cause of forbearance, and the pirates who had hold of Cleveland, dropped him, naturally enough, to provide for their own defence or retreat. But they only added to the numbers of their enemies; for Cleveland perceiving Minna in the arms of Derrick, snatched her from the ruffian with one hand, and with the other shot him dead on the spot. Two or three more of the pirates fell or were taken, the rest fled to their boat, pushed off, then turned their broadside to the shore, and fired repeatedly on the Orcadian party, which they returned, with little injury on either side. Meanwhile Mordaunt having first seen that the sisters were at liberty and in full flight towards the house, advanced on Cleveland with his cutlass drawn. The pirate presented a pistol, and calling out at the same time,—"Mordaunt, I never missed my aim," he fired into the air, and threw it into the lake; then drew his cutlass, brandished it round his head, and flung that also as far as his arm could send it, in the same direction. Yet such was the universal belief of his personal strength and resources, that Mordaunt still used precaution, as, advancing on Cleveland, he asked if he surrendered?"

"I surrender to no man," said the Pirate Captain; "but you may see I have thrown away my weapons."

He was immediately seized by some of the Orcadians without his offering any resistance; but the instant interference of Mordaunt prevented his being roughly treated, or bound. The victors conducted him to a well-secured upper apart-

ment in the House of Stennis, and placed a sentinel at the door. Bunce and Fletcher, both of whom had been stretched on the field during the skirmish, were lodged in the same chamber; and two prisoners, who appeared of lower rank, were confined in a vault belonging to the mansion.

Without pretending to describe the joy of Magnus Troil, who, when awakened by the noise and firing, found his daughters safe, and his enemy a prisoner, we shall only say, it was so great, that he forgot, for the time at least, to inquire what circumstances were those which had placed them in danger; and that he hugged Mordaunt to his breast a thousand times, as their preserver; and swore as often by the bones of his sainted namesake, that if he had a thousand daughters, so tight a lad, and so true a friend, should have the choice of them, let Lady Glowrowrum say what she would.

A very different scene was passing in the prison-chamber of the unfortunate Cleveland and his associates. The Captain sat by the window, his eyes bent on the prospect of the sea which it presented, and was seemingly so intent on it, as to be insensible of the presence of the others. Jack Bunce stood meditating some ends of verse, in order to make his advances towards a reconciliation with Cleveland; for he began to be sensible, from the consequences, that the part he had played towards his Captain, however well intended, was neither lucky in its issue, nor likely to be well taken. His admirer and adherent Fletcher lay half asleep as it seemed, on a trundle-bed in the room, without the least attempt to interfere in the conversation which ensued.

"Nay, but speak to me, Clement," said the penitent Lieutenant, "if it be but to swear at me for my stupidity,—

"What! not an oath!—Nay, then the world goes hard, if Clifford cannot spare his friends an oath."

"I prithee peace, and begone!" said Cleveland; "I have one bosom friend left yet, and you will make me bestow its contents on you, or on myself."

"I have it," said Bunce, "I have it!" and on he went in the vein of Jaffier—

"Then, by the hell I merit, I'll not leave thee, Till to thyself at least thou'rt reconciled, However thy resentment deal with me!"

"I pray you once more to be silent," said Cleveland—"Is it not enough that you have undone me with your treachery, but you must stun me with your silly buffoonery?—I would not have believed you would have lifted a finger against me, Jack, of any man or devil in yonder unhappy ship."

"Who, I?" exclaimed Bunce, "I lift a finger against you!—and if I did it was in pure love, and to make you the happiest fellow that ever trode a deck, with your mistress beside you, and fifty fine fellows at your command. Here is Dick Fletcher can bear witness I did all for the best, if he would but speak, instead of lolloping there