

such idle fears," said Isabella; but the increasing agitation of her bosom belied the affected courage which her words expressed.

"Ho! ho!" said the Dwarf, "thou vankest thyself a philosopher? Yet, shouldst thou not have thought of the danger of intrusting thyself, young and beautiful, in the power of one so spited against humanity, as to place his chief pleasure in defacing, destroying, and degrading her fairest works?"

Isabella, much alarmed, continued to answer with firmness, "Whatever injuries you may have sustained in the world, you are incapable of revenging them on one who never wronged you, nor, wilfully, any other."

"Ay, but maiden," he continued, his dark eyes flashing with an expression of malignity which communicated itself to his wild and distorted features, "revenge is the hungry wolf, which asks only to tear flesh and lap blood. Think you the lamb's plea of innocence would be listened to by him?"

"Man!" said Isabella, rising, and expressing herself with much dignity, "I fear not the horrible ideas with which you would impress me. I cast them from me with disdain. Be you mortal or fiend, you would not offer injury to one who sought you as a suppliant in her utmost need. You would not—you durst not."

"Thou say'st truly, maiden," rejoined the Solitary; "I dare not—I would not. Begone to thy dwelling. Fear nothing with which they threaten thee. Thou hast asked my protection—thou shalt find it effectual."

"But, father, this very night I have consented to wed the very man that I abhor, or I must put the seal to my father's ruin."

"This night?—at what hour?"

"Ere midnight?"

"And twilight," said the Dwarf, "has already passed away. But fear nothing, there is ample time to protect thee."

"And my father?" continued Isabella, in a suppliant tone.

"Thy father," replied the Dwarf, "has been, and is, my most bitter enemy. But fear not; thy virtue shall save him. And now, begone; were I to keep thee longer by me, I might again fall into the stupid dreams concerning human worth from which I have been so fearfully awakened. But fear nothing—at the very foot of the altar I will redeem thee. Adieu, time presses, and I must act!"

He led her to the door of the hut, which he opened for her departure. She remounted her horse, which had been feeding in the outer enclosure, and pressed him forward by the light of the moon, which was now rising, to the spot where she had left Ratcliffe.

"Have you succeeded?" was his first eager question.

"I have obtained promises from him to whom you sent me; but how can he possibly accomplish them?"

"Thank God!" said Ratcliffe, "doubt not his power to fulfil his promise."

At this moment a shrill whistle was heard to resound along the heath.

"Hark!" said Ratcliffe, "he calls me—Miss Vere, return home, and leave unbolted the postern-door of the garden; to that which opens on the back stairs I have a private key."

A second whistle was heard, yet more shrill and prolonged than the first.

"I come, I come," said Ratcliffe; and setting spurs to his horse, rode over the heath in the direction of the Recluse's hut. Miss Vere returned to the Castle, the mettle of the animal on which she rode, and her own anxiety of mind, combining to accelerate her journey.

She obeyed Ratcliffe's directions, though without well apprehending their purpose, and leaving her horse at large in a paddock near the garden, hurried to her own apartment, which she reached without observation. She now unbolted her door, and rang her bell for lights. Her father appeared along with the servant who answered her summons.

"He had been twice," he said, "listening at her door during the two hours that had elapsed since he left her, and, not hearing her speak, had become apprehensive that she was taken ill."

"And now, my dear father," she said, "permit me to claim the promise you so kindly gave; let the last moments of freedom which I am to enjoy be mine without interruption: and protract to the last moment the respite which is allowed me."

"I will," said her father; "nor shall you be again interrupted. But this disordered dress—this dishevelled hair—do not let me find you thus when I call on you again; the sacrifice, to be beneficial, must be voluntary."

"Must it be so?" she replied; "then fear not, my father! the victim shall be adorned."

#### CHAPTER XVII.

This looks not like a nuptial.  
MUCH AND ABOUT NOTHING.

The chapel in the castle of Ellieslaw, destined to be the scene of this ill-omened union, was a building of much older date than the castle itself, though that claimed considerable antiquity. Before the wars between England and Scotland had become so common and of such long duration, that the buildings along both sides of the Border were chiefly dedicated to warlike purposes, there had been a small settlement of monks at Ellieslaw, a dependency, it is believed by antiquaries, on the rich Abbey of Jedburgh. Their possessions had long passed away under the changes introduced by war and mutual ravage. A feudal castle had arisen on the ruin of their cells, and their chapel was included in its precincts.

The edifice, in its round arches and massive pillars, the simplicity of which referred their date to what has been called the Saxon architecture,



presented at all times a dark and sombre appearance, and been frequently used as the cemetery of the family of the feudal lords, as well as formerly of the monastic brethren. But it looked doubly gloomy by the effect of the few and smoky torches which were used to enlighten it on the present occasion, and which, spreading a glare of yellow light in their immediate vicinity, were surrounded beyond by a red and purple halo reflected from their own smoke, and beyond that again by a zone of darkness which magnified the extent of the chapel, while it rendered it impossible for the eye to ascertain its limits. Some injudicious ornaments, adopted in haste for the occasion, rather added to the dreariness of the scene. Old fragments of tapestry, torn from the walls of other apartments, had been hastily and partially disposed around those of the chapel, and mingled inconsistently with scutcheons and funeral emblems of the dead, which they elsewhere exhibited. On each side of the stone altar was a monument, the appearance of which formed an equally strange contrast. On the one was the figure, in stone, of some grim hermit, or monk, who had died in the odor of sanctity; he was represented as recumbent, in his cowl and scapulaire, with his face turned upward as in the act of devotion, and his hands folded, from which his string of beads was dependent. On the other side was a tomb, in the Italian taste, composed of the most beautiful statuary marble, and accounted a model of modern art. It was erected to the memory of Isabella's mother, the late Mrs. Vere of Ellieslaw, who was represented as in a dying posture, while a weeping cherub, with eyes averted, seemed in the act of extinguishing a dying lamp as emblematic of her speedy dissolution. It was, indeed, a masterpiece of art, but misplaced in the rude vault to which it had been consigned. Many were surprised, and even scandalized, that Ellieslaw, not remarkable for attention to his lady while alive, should erect after her death such a costly mausoleum in affected sorrow; others cleared him from the imputation of hypocrisy, and averred that the monument had been constructed under the direction and at the sole expense of Mr. Ratcliffe.

Before these monuments the wedding guests were assembled. They were few in number; for many had left the castle to prepare for the ensuing political explosion, and Ellieslaw was, in the circumstances of the case, far from being desirous to extend invitations farther than to those near relations whose presence the custom of the country rendered indispensable. Next to the altar stood Sir Frederick Langley, dark, moody, and thoughtful, even beyond his wont; and near him, Mareschal, who was to play the part of bridesman, as it was called. The thoughtless humor of this young gentleman, on which he never deigned to place the least restraint, added to the cloud which overhung the brow of the bridegroom.

"The bride is not yet come out of her chamber," he whispered to Sir Frederick; "I trust

that we must not have recourse to the violent expedients of the Romans which I read of in Col lege. It would be hard upon my pretty cousin to be run away with twice in two days, though I know none better worth such a violent compliment."

Sir Frederick attempted to turn a deaf ear to this discourse, humming a tune, and looking another way, but Mareschal proceeded in the same wild manner.

"This delay is hard upon Dr. Hobbler, who was disturbed to accelerate preparations for this joyful event when he had successfully extracted the cork of his third bottle. I hope you will keep him free of the censure of his superiors, for I take it this is beyond canonical hours.—But here comes Ellieslaw and my pretty cousin—prettier than ever, I think, were it not she seems so faint and so deadly pale—Hark ye, Sir Knight, if she says not yes with right good-will, it shall be no wedding, for all that has come and gone yet."

"No wedding, sir?" returned Sir Frederick, in a loud whisper, the tone of which indicated that his angry feelings were suppressed with difficulty.

"No—no marriage," replied Mareschal, "there's my hand and glove on't."

Sir Frederick Langley took his hand, and as he wrung it hard, said in a lower whisper, "Mareschal, you shall answer this," and then flung his hand from him.

"That I will readily do," said Mareschal, "for never word escaped my lips that my hand was not ready to guarantee. So, speak up, my pretty cousin, and tell me if it be your free will and unbiassed resolution to accept of this gallant knight for your lord and husband; for if you have the tenth part of a scruple upon the subject, fall back, fall edge, he shall not have you."

"Are you mad, Mr. Mareschal?" asked Ellieslaw, who, having been this young man's guardian during his minority, often employed a tone of authority to him. "Do you suppose I would drag my daughter to the foot of the altar, were it not her own choice?"

"Tut, Ellieslaw," retorted the young gentleman, "never tell me of the contrary; her eyes are full of tears, and her cheeks are whiter than her white dress. I must insist, in the name of common humanity, that the ceremony be adjourned till to-morrow."

"She shall tell you herself, thou incorrigible intermeddler in what concerns thee not, that it is her wish the ceremony should go on—Is it not, Isabella, my dear?"

"It is," said Isabella, half fainting—"since there is no help either in God or man."

The first word alone was distinctly audible. Mareschal shrugged up his shoulders and stepped back. Ellieslaw led, or rather supported, his daughter to the altar. Sir Frederick moved forward and placed himself by her side. The clergyman opened his prayer-book, and looked to Mr. Vere for the signal to commence the service.

"Proceed," said the latter.

But a voice, as if issuing from the tomb of his deceased wife, called, in such loud and harsh accents as awakened every echo in the vaulted chapel, "Forbear!"

All were mute and motionless, till a distant rustle, and the clash of swords, or something resembling it, was heard from the remote apartments. It ceased almost instantly.

"What new device is this?" said Sir Frederick, fiercely, eyeing Ellieslaw and Mareschal with a glance of malignant suspicion.

"It can be but the frolic of some intemperate guest," said Ellieslaw, though greatly confounded; "we must make large allowances for the excess of this evening's festivity. Proceed with the service."

Before the clergyman could obey, the same prohibition which they had before heard was repeated from the same spot. The female attendants screamed, and fled from the chapel; the gentlemen laid their hands on their swords. Ere the first moment of surprise had passed by, the Dwarf stepped from behind the monument, and placed himself full in front of Mr. Vere. The effect of so strange and hideous an apparition in such a place and in such circumstances, appalled all present, but seemed to annihilate the Laird of Ellieslaw, who, dropping his daughter's arm, staggered against the nearest pillar, and clasp ing it with his hands as if for support, laid his brow against the column.

"Who is this fellow," said Sir Frederick; "and what does he mean by this intrusion?"

"It is one who comes to tell you," said the Dwarf, with the peculiar acrimony which usually marked his manner, "that, in marrying that young lady, you wed neither the heiress of Ellieslaw, nor of Mauley Hall, nor of Polverton, nor of one furrow of land, unless she marries with my consent; and to thee that consent shall never be given. Down—down on thy knees, and thank Heaven that thou art prevented from wedding qualities with which thou hast no concern—portionless truth, virtue, and innocence. And thou, base ingrate," he continued, addressing himself to Ellieslaw, "what is thy wretched subterfuge now? Thou, who wouldst sell thy daughter to relieve thee from danger, as in famine thou wouldst have slain and devoured her to preserve thy own vile life! Ay, hide thy face with thy hands; well mayest thou blush to look on him whose body thou didst consign to chains, his hand to guilt, and his soul to misery. Saved once more by the virtue of her who calls you father, go hence, and may the pardon and benefits I confer on thee prove literal coals of fire, till thy brain is seared and scorched like mine!"

Ellieslaw left the chapel with a gesture of mute despair.

"Follow him, Hubert Ratcliffe," said the Dwarf, "and inform him of his destiny. He will rejoice—for to breathe air and to handle gold is to him happiness."

"I understand nothing of all this," said Sir Frederick Langley; "but we are here a body of gentlemen in arms and authority for King James; and whether you really, sir, be that Sir Edward Mauley, who has been so long supposed dead in confinement, or whether you be an impostor assuming his name and title, we will use the freedom of detaining you, till your appearance here, at this moment, is better accounted for; we will have no spies among us. Seize on him, my friends."

But the domestics shrunk back in doubt and alarm. Sir Frederick himself stepped forward towards the Recluse, as if to lay hands on his person, when his progress was suddenly stopped by the glittering point of a partisan, which the sturdy hand of Hobbie Elliot presented against his bosom.

"I'll gar day-light shine through ye, if you offer to steer him!" said the stout Borderer; "stand back, or I'll strike ye through! Naebody shall lay a finger on Elshie; he's a canny neighborly man, aye ready to make a friend help; and, though ye may think him a lamiter, yet, grippie for grippie, friend, I'll wad a wether he'll make the bluid spin frae under your nails. He's a tough carle, Elshie! he grips like a smith's vice."

"What has brought you here, Elliot?" said Mareschal; "who called on you for interference?"

"Troth, Mareschal-Wells," answered Hobbie, "I am just come here, wi' twenty or threety mair o' us, in my ain name and the King's—or Queen's, ca' they her? and Canny Elshie's into the bargain, to keep the peace, and pay back some ill usage Ellieslaw has gien me. A bonny breakfast the loons gae me the ither morning, and him at the bottom on't; and trow ye I wasna ready to supper him up? Ye needna lay your hands on your swords, gentlemen, the house is ours wi' little din; for the doors were open, and there had been ower muckle punch amang your folk; we took their swords and pistols as easily as ye wad shiel peacocks."

Mareschal rushed out, and immediately reentered the chapel.

"By Heaven! it is true, Sir Frederick; the house is filled with armed men, and our drunken beasts are all disarmed. Draw, and let us fight our way."

"Binna rash—binna rash," exclaimed Hobbie; "hear me a bit. We mean ye nae harm; but, as ye are in arms for King James, as ye ca' him, and the prelates, we thought it right to keep up the auld neighbor war, and stand up for the t'other ane and the Kirk; but we'll no hurt a hair o' your heads, if ye like to gang hame quietly. And it will be your best way, for there's sure news come frae Loudoun, that him they ca' Bang, or Byng, or what it's, has bang'd the French ships and the new king aff the coast however: sae ye had best bide content wi' auld Nause for want of a better Queen."



Ratcliffe, who at this moment entered, confirmed these accounts so unfavorable to the Jacobite interest. Sir Frederick, almost instantly, and without taking leave of any one, left the castle, with such of his attendants as were able to follow him.

"And what will you do, Mr. Mareschal?" said Ratcliffe.

"Why, faith," answered he, smiling, "I hardly know; my spirit is too great, and my fortune too small, for me to follow the example of the doughty bridegroom. It is not in my nature, and and it is hardly worth my while."

"Well, then, disperse your men, and remain quiet, and this will be overlooked, as there has been no overt act."

"Hont, ay," said Elliot, "just let bygones be bygones, and a' friends again; deil ane I bear malice at but Westburnflat, and I hae gien him baith a het skin and a cauld ane. I hadna changed three blows of the broadsword w' him before he lap the window into the castle-moat, and swattered through it like a wild-duck. He's a clever fallow, indeed! maun kilt awa w' ae bonny lass in the morning, and another at night, less wadna serve him! but if he disna kilt himself out o' the country, I'se kilt him w' a tow, for the Castleton meeting's clean blawn over; his friends will no countenance him."

During the general confusion, Isabella had thrown herself at the feet of her kinsman, Sir Edward Mauley, for so we must now call the Solitary, to express at once her gratitude, and to beseech forgiveness for her father. The eyes of all began to be fixed on them, as soon as their own agitation and the bustle of the attendants had somewhat abated. Miss Vere kneeled beside the tomb of her mother, to whose statue her features exhibited a marked resemblance. She held the hand of the Dwarf, which she kissed repeatedly and bathed with tears. He stood fixed and motionless, excepting that his eyes glanced alternately on the marble figure and the living suppliant. At length, the large drops which gathered on his eye-lashes compelled him to draw his hand across them.

"I thought," he said, "that tears and I had done; but we shed them at our birth, and their spring dries not until we are in our graves. But no melting of the heart shall dissolve my resolution. I part here, at once, and for ever, with all of which the memory" (looking to the tomb), "or the presence" (he pressed Isabella's hand), "is dear to me. Speak not to me! attempt not to thwart my determination! it will avail nothing; you will hear of and see this lump of deformity no more. To you I shall be dead ere I am actually in my grave, and you will think of me as of a friend disencumbered from the toils and crimes of existence."

He kissed Isabella on the forehead, impressed another kiss on the brow of the statue by which she knelt, and left the chapel followed by Ratcliffe. Isabella, almost exhausted by the emo-

tions of the day, was carried to her apartment by her women. Most of the other guests dispersed after having separately endeavored to impress on all who would listen to them their disapprobation of the plots formed against the Government, or their regret for having engaged in them. Hobbie Elliot assumed the command of the castle for the night, and mounted a regular guard. He boasted not a little of the alacrity with which his friends and he had obeyed a hasty summons received from Elshie through the faithful Ratcliffe. And it was a lucky chance, he said, that on that very day they had got notice that Westburnflat did not intend to keep his tryste at Castleton, but to hold them at defiance; so that a considerable party had assembled at the Hough-foot, with the intention of paying a visit to the robber's tower on the ensuing morning, and their course was easily directed to Ellieslaw Castle.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

— Last scene of all,  
To close this strange eventful history.  
As YOU LIKE IT.

ON the next morning, Mr. Ratcliffe presented Miss Vere with a letter from her father, of which the following is the tenor:—

"MY DEAREST CHILD,

"The malice of a persecuting government will compel me, for my own safety, to retreat abroad, and to remain for some time in foreign parts. I do not ask you to accompany, or follow me; you will attend to my interest and your own more effectually by remaining where you are. It is unnecessary to enter into a minute detail concerning the causes of the strange events which yesterday took place. I think I have reason to complain of the usage I have received from Sir Edward Mauley, who is your nearest kinsman by the mother's side; but as he has declared you his heir, and is to put you in immediate possession of a large part of his fortune, I account it a full atonement. I am aware he has never forgiven the preference which your mother gave to my addresses, instead of complying with the terms of a sort of family compact, which absurdly and tyrannically destined her to wed her deformed relative. The shock was even sufficient to unsettle his wits (which, indeed, were never over well arranged), and I had, as the husband of his nearest kinswoman and heir, the delicate task of taking care of his person and property, until he was reinstated in the management of the latter by those who, no doubt, thought they were doing him justice; although if some parts of his subsequent conduct be examined, it will appear that he ought, for his own sake, to have been left under the influence of a mild and salutary restraint.

"In one particular, however, he shewed a sense of the ties of blood, as well as of his own frailty; for while he sequestered himself closely

from the world, under various names and disguises, and insisted on spreading a report of his own death (in which to gratify him I willingly acquiesced), he left at my disposal the rents of a great proportion of his estates, and especially all those, which, having belonged to your mother, reverted to him as a male fief. In this he may have thought that he was acting with extreme generosity, while, in the opinion of all impartial men, he will only be considered as having fulfilled a natural obligation, seeing that, in justice, if not in strict law, you must be considered as the heir of your mother, and I as your legal administrator. Instead, therefore, of considering myself as loaded with obligations to Sir Edward on this account, I think I had reason to complain that these remittances were only doled out to me at the pleasure of Mr. Ratcliffe, who, moreover, exacted from me mortgages over my paternal estate of Ellieslaw for any sums which I required as an extra advance; and thus may be said to have insinuated himself into the absolute management and control of my property. Or, if all this seeming friendship was employed by Sir Edward for the purpose of obtaining a complete command of my affairs, and acquiring the power of ruining me at his pleasure, I feel myself, I must repeat, still less bound by the alleged obligation.

"About the autumn of last year, as I understand, either his own crazed imagination, or the accomplishment of some such scheme as I have hinted, brought him down to this country. His alleged motive, it seems, was a desire of seeing a monument which he had directed to be raised in the chapel over the tomb of your mother. Mr. Ratcliffe, who at this time had done me the honor to make my house his own, had the complaisance to introduce him secretly into the chapel. The consequence, as he informs me, was a frenzy of several hours, during which he fled into the neighboring moors, in one of the wildest spots of which he chose, when he was somewhat recovered, to fix his mansion, and set up for a sort of country empiric, a character which, even in his best days, he was fond of assuming. It is remarkable, that, instead of informing me of these circumstances, that I might have had the relative of my late wife taken such care of as his calamitous condition required, Mr. Ratcliffe seems to have had such culpable indulgence for his irregular plans as to promise and even swear secrecy concerning them. He visited Sir Edward often, and assisted in the fantastic task he had taken upon him of constructing a hermitage. Nothing they appear to have dreaded more than a discovery of their intercourse.

"The ground was open in every direction around, and a small subterranean cave, probably sepulchral, which their researches had detected near the great granite pillar, served to conceal Ratcliffe, when any one approached his master. I think you will be of opinion, my love, that this secrecy must have had some strong motive. It is also remarkable, that while I thought my unhappy friend was residing among the Monks of La Trappe, he

should have been actually living, for many months, in this bizarre disguise, within five miles of my house, and obtaining regular information of my most private movements, either by Ratcliffe, or through Westburnflat or others, whom he had the means to bribe to any extent. He makes it a crime against me that I endeavored to establish your marriage with Sir Frederick. I acted for the best; but if Sir Edward Mauley thought otherwise, why did he not step manfully forward, express his own purpose of becoming a party to the settlements, and take that interest which he is entitled to claim in you as heir to his great property?

"Even now, though your rash and eccentric relation is somewhat tardy in announcing his purpose, I am far from opposing my authority against his wishes, although the person he desires you to regard as your future husband be young Earnscliff, the very last whom I should have thought likely to be acceptable to him, considering a certain fatal event. But I give my free and hearty consent, providing the settlements are drawn in such an irrevocable form as may secure my child from suffering by that state of dependence, and that sudden and causeless revocation of allowances, of which I have so much reason to complain. Of Sir Frederick Langley, I augur, you will hear no more. He is not likely to claim the hand of a dowryless maiden. I therefore commit you, my dear Isabella, to the wisdom of Providence and to your own prudence, begging you to lose no time in securing those advantages, which the fickleness of your kinsman has withdrawn from me to shower upon you.

"Mr. Ratcliffe mentioned Sir Edward's intention to settle a considerable sum upon me yearly, for my maintenance in foreign parts; but this my heart is too proud to accept from him. I told him I had a dear child, who, while in affluence herself, would never suffer me to be in poverty. I thought it right to intimate this to him pretty roundly, that whatever increase be settled upon you, it may be calculated so as to cover this necessary and natural encumbrance. I shall willingly settle upon you the castle and manor of Ellieslaw, to shew my parental affection and disinterested zeal for promoting your settlement in life. The annual interest of debts charged on the estate somewhat exceeds the income, even after a reasonable rent has been put upon the mansion and mains. But as all the debts are in the person of Mr. Ratcliffe, as your kinsman's trustee, he will not be a troublesome creditor. And here I must make you aware, that though I have to complain of Mr. Ratcliffe's conduct to me personally, I, nevertheless, believe him a just and upright man, with whom you may safely consult on your affairs, not to mention that to cherish his good opinion will be the best way to retain that of your kinsman. Remember me to Marchie—I hope he will not be troubled on account of late matters. I will write more fully from the Continent. Meanwhile, I rest your loving father,  
RICHARD VEE.



The above letter throws the only additional light which we have been able to procure upon the earlier part of our story. It was Hobbie's opinion, and may be that of most of our readers, that the Recluse of Mucklestane-Moor had but a kind of gloaming, or twilight understanding; and that he had neither very clear views as to what he himself wanted, nor was apt to pursue his ends by the clearest and most direct means: so that to seek the clew of his conduct, was likened, by Hobbie, to looking for a straight path through a common, over which are a hundred devious tracks, but not one distinct line of road.

When Isabella had perused the letter, her first inquiry was after her father. He had left the castle, she was informed, early in the morning, after a long interview with Mr. Ratcliffe, and was already far on his way to the next port, where he might expect to find shipping for the Continent.

"Where was Sir Edward Manley?"

No one had seen the dwarf since the eventful scene of the preceding evening.

"Odd, if ony thing has befa'en puir Elshie," said Hobbie Elliot, "I wad rather I were harried over again."

He immediately rode to his dwelling, and the remaining she-goat came bleating to meet him, for her milking-time was long past. The Solitary was nowhere to be seen; his door, contrary to wont, was open, his fire extinguished, and the whole hut was left in the state which it exhibited on Isabella's visit to him. It was pretty clear that the means of conveyance which had brought the Dwarf to Ellieslaw on the preceding evening, had removed him from it to some other place of abode. Hobbie returned disconsolate to the castle.

"I am doubting we hae lost Canny Elshie for gude an' a'."

"You have indeed," said Ratcliffe, producing a paper, which he put into Hobbie's hands; "but read that, and you will perceive you have been no loser by having known him."

It was a short deed of gift, by which "Sir Edward Manley, otherwise called Elshender the Recluse, endowed Halbert or Hobbie Elliot, and Grace Armstrong, in full property, with a considerable sum borrowed by Elliot from him."

Hobbie's joy was mingled with feelings which brought tears down his rough cheeks.

"It's a queer thing," he said; "but I canna joy in the gear, unless I kend the puir body was happy that gave it me."

"Next to enjoying happiness ourselves," said Ratcliffe, "is the consciousness of having bestowed it on others. Had all my master's benefits been conferred like the present, what a different return would they have produced! But the indiscriminate profusion that would glut avarice, or supply prodigality, neither does good, nor is rewarded by gratitude. It is sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind."

"And that wad be a light har'st," said Hobbie; "but, wi' my young leddie's leave, I wad

fain take down Elshie's skeps o' bees, and set them in Grace's bit flower yard at the Hough-foot—they shall ne'er be smeckit by ony o' huz. And the puir goat, she would be negleckit about a great toun like this; and she could feed bonnily on our Illy lea by the burn side, and the hounds wad ken her in a day's time, and never fash her, and Grace wad milk her ilka morning wi' her ain hand, for Elshie's sake; for though he was thravn and cankered in his converse, he liket dumb creatures weel."

Hobbie's requests were readily granted, not without some wonder at the natural delicacy of feeling which pointed out to him this mode of displaying his gratitude. He was delighted when Ratcliffe informed him that his benefactor should not remain ignorant of the care which he took of his favorite.

"And mind be sure and tell him that grannie and the titties, and, abune a', Grace and mysel, are weel and thriving, and that it's a' his doing—that canna but please him, ane wad think."

And Elliot and the family at Hough-foot were, and continued to be, as fortunate and happy as his undaunted honesty, tenderness, and gallantry, so well merited.

All bar between the marriage of Earnscliff and Isabella was now removed, and the settlements which Ratcliffe produced on the part of Sir Edward Manley, might have satisfied the cupidity of Ellieslaw himself. But Miss Vere and Ratcliffe thought it unnecessary to mention to Earnscliff that one great motive of Sir Edward in thus loading the young pair with benefits, was to expiate his having, many years before, shed the blood of his father in a hasty brawl. If it be true, as Ratcliffe asserted, that the Dwarf's extreme misanthropy seemed to relax somewhat, under the consciousness of having diffused happiness among so many, the recollection of this circumstance might probably be one of his chief motives for refusing obstinately ever to witness their state of contentment.

Mareschal hunted, shot, and drank claret—tired of the country, went abroad, served three campaigns, came home, and married Lucy Ilderton.

Years fled over the heads of Earnscliff and his wife, and found and left them contented and happy. The scheming ambition of Sir Frederick Langley engaged him in the unfortunate insurrection of 1715. He was made prisoner at Preston, in Lancashire, with the Earl of Derwentwater, and others. His defence, and the dying speech which he made at his execution, may be found in the State Trials. Mr. Vere, supplied by his daughter with an ample income, continued to reside abroad, engaged deeply in the affair of Law's bank during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, and was at one time supposed to be immensely rich. But, on the bursting of that famous bubble, he was so much chagrined at being again reduced to a moderate annuity (although he saw thousands of his companions in misfortune abso-

lutely starving), that vexation of mind brought on a paralytic stroke, of which he died, after lingering under its effects a few weeks.

Willie of Westburnflat fled from the wrath of Hobbie Elliot, as his betters did from the pursuit of the law. His patriotism urged him to serve his country abroad, while his reluctance to leave his native soil pressed him rather to remain in the beloved island, and collect purses, watches, and rings on the highroads at home. Fortunately for him, the first impulse prevailed, and he joined the army under Marlborough; obtained a commission, to which he was recommended by his services in collecting cattle for the commissariat; returned home after many years, with some money (how come by Heaven only knows),—demolished the peel-house at Westburnflat, and built, in its stead, a high narrow *onstead*, of three stories, with a chimney at each end—drank brandy with the neighbors, whom, in his younger days, he had plundered—died in his bed, and is recorded upon his tombstone at Kirkwhistle (still extant), as having played all the parts of a brave soldier, a discreet neighbor, and a sincere Christian.

Mr. Ratcliffe resided usually with the family at Ellieslaw, but regularly every spring and autumn he absented himself for about a month. On the direction and purpose of his periodical journey he remained steadily silent; but it was well understood that he was then in attendance on his unfortunate patron. At length, on his return from one of these visits, his grave countenance, and deep mourning dress, announced to the Ellieslaw family that their benefactor was no

more. Sir Edward's death made no addition to their fortune, for he had divested himself of his property during his lifetime, and chiefly in their favor. Ratcliffe, his sole confidant, died at a good old age, but without ever naming the place to which his master had finally retired, or the manner of his death, or the place of his burial. It was supposed that on all these particulars his patron had enjoined him strict secrecy.

The sudden disappearance of Elshie from his extraordinary hermitage corroborated the reports which the common people had spread concerning him. Many believed that, having ventured to enter a consecrated building, contrary to his paction with the Evil One, he had been bodily carried off while on his return to his cottage; but most are of opinion that he only disappeared for a season, and continues to be seen from time to time among the hills. And retaining, according to custom, a more vivid recollection of his wild and desperate language, than of the benevolent tendency of most of his actions, he is usually identified with the malignant demon called the Man of the Moors, whose feats were quoted by Mrs. Elliot to her grandsons; and, accordingly, is generally represented as bewitching the sheep, causing the ewes to *keb*, that is, to cast their lambs, or seen loosening the impending wreath of snow to precipitate its weight on such as take shelter, during the storm, beneath the bank of a torrent, or under the shelter of a deep glen. In short, the evils most dreaded and deprecated by the inhabitants of that pastoral country, are ascribed to the agency of the BLACK DWARF.



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