

wiping his brow with a snow-white handkerchief with one hand, while another was abandoned to the homage of his vassals; and then signing the cross with his outstretched arm, and exclaiming, "Bless ye—bless ye, my children!" he hastened into the house and murmured not a little at the darkness and steepness of the rugged winding stair, whereby he at length scaled the spence destined for his entertainment, and, overcome with fatigue, threw himself, I do not say into an easy chair, but into the easiest the apartment afforded.

CHAPTER XVI.

A courtier extraordinary, who by diet
Of meats and drinks, his temperate exercise,
Choice music, frequent bath, his horary shifts
Of shirts and waistcoats, means to immortalize
Mortality itself, and makes the essence
Of his whole happiness the trim of court.

Magnetic Lady.

WHEN the Lord Abbot had suddenly and superciliously vanished from the eyes of his expectant vassals, the Sub-Prior made amends for the negligence of his principal, by the kind and affectionate greeting which he gave to all the members of the family, but especially to Dame Elspeth, her foster-daughter, and her son Edward. "Where," he even condescended to inquire, "is that naughty Nimrod, Halbert?—He hath not yet, I trust, turned, like his great prototype, his hunting-spear against man?"

"O no, an it please your reverence," said Dame Glendinning, "Halbert is up the glen to get some venison, or surely he would not have been absent when such a day of honour dawned upon me and mine"

"O, to get savoury meat such as our soul loveth," muttered the Sub-Prior, "it has been at times an acceptable gift.—I bid you good morrow, my good dame, as I must attend upon his lordship the Father Abbot."

"And O, reverend sir," said the good widow, detaining him, "if it might be your pleasure to take part with us if there is any thing wrong; and if there is any thing wanted, to say that it is just coming, or to make some excuses your learning best knows how. Every bit of vassail and silver work have we been spoiled of since Pinkie Cleuch, when I lost poor Simon Glendinning, that was the warst of a'."

"Never mind—never fear," said the Sub-Prior, gently extricating his garment from the anxious grasp of Dame Elspeth, "the Refectioner has with him the Abbot's plate and drinking cups; and I pray you to believe that whatever is short in your entertainment will be deemed amply made up in your good-will."

So saying, he escaped from her and went into the spence, where such preparations as haste permitted were making for the noon collation of the Abbot and the English knight. Here he found the Lord Abbot, for whom a cushion, composed of all the plaids in the house, had been unable to render Simon's huge elbow-chair a soft or comfortable place of rest.

"Benedicite!" said Abbot Boniface, "now marry fie upon these hard benches with all my heart—they are as uneasy as the *scabella* of our novices. Saint Jude be with us, Sir Knight, how have you contrived to pass over the night in this dungeon? An your bed was no softer than your seat, you might as well have slept on the stone couch of Saint Pacomius. After trotting a full ten miles, a man needs a softer seat than has fallen to my hard lot."

With sympathizing faces, the Sacristan and the Refectioner ran to raise the Lord Abbot, and to adjust his seat to his mind, which was at length accomplished in some sort, although he continued alternately to bewail his fatigue, and to exult in the conscious sense of having discharged an arduous duty. "You errant cavaliers,

said he, addressing the knight, "may now perceive that others have their travail and their toils to undergo as well as your honoured faculty. And this I will say for myself and the soldiers of Saint Mary, among whom I may be termed captain, that it is not our wont to flinch from the heat of the service, or to withdraw from the good fight. No, by Saint Mary!—no sooner did I learn that you were here, and dared not, for certain reasons, come to the Monastery, where, with as good will, and with more convenience, we might have given you a better reception, than, striking the table with my hammer, I called a brother—Timothy, said I, let them saddle Benedict—let them saddle my black palfrey, and bid the Sub-Prior and some half-score of attendants be in readiness to-morrow after matins—we would ride to Glendearg.—Brother Timothy stared, thinking, I imagine, that his ears had scarce done him justice—but I repeated my commands, and said, Let the Kitchener and Refectioner go before, to aid the poor vassals to whom the place belongs, in making a suitable collation. So that you will consider, good Sir Piercie, our mutual incommodities, and forgive whatever you may find amiss."

"By my faith," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "there is nothing to forgive—If you spiritual warriors have to submit to the grievous incommodities which your lordship narrates, it would ill become me, a sinful and secular man, to complain of a bed as hard as a board, of broth which relished as if made of burnt wool, of flesh which, in its sable and singed shape, seemed to put me on a level with Richard Cœur-de-Lion, when he eat up the head of a Moor carbonadoed, and of other viands savouring rather of the rusticity of this northern region."

"By the good saints, sir," said the Abbot, somewhat touched in point of his character for hospitality, of which he was in truth a most faithful and zealous professor, "it grieves me to the heart that you have found our vassals no better provided for your reception—Yet I crave leave to observe, that if Sir Piercie Shafton's affairs had permitted him to honour with his company our poor house

of St. Mary's, he might have had less to complain of in respect of easements."

"To give your lordship the reasons," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "why I could not, at this present time, approach your dwelling, or avail myself of its well-known and undoubted hospitality, craves either some delay, or," looking around him, "a limited audience."

The Lord Abbot immediately issued his mandate to the Refectioner: "Hie thee to the kitchen, brother Hilarius, and there make inquiry of our brother the Kitchener, within what time he opines that our collation may be prepared, since sin and sorrow it were, considering the hardships of this noble and gallant knight, no whit mentioning or weighing those we ourselves have endured, if we were now either to advance or retard the hour of refection beyond the time when the viands are fit to be set before us."

Brother Hilarius parted with an eager alertness to execute the will of his superior, and returned with the assurance, that punctually at one after noon would the collation be ready.

"Before that time," said the accurate Refectioner, "the wafers, flamms, and pastry-meat will scarce have had the just degree of fire, which learned pottingers prescribe as fittest for the body; and if it should be past one o'clock, were it but ten minutes, our brother the Kitchener opines, that the haunch of venison would suffer, in spite of the skill of the little turn-broche whom he has recommended to your holiness by his praises."

"How!" said the Abbot, "a haunch of venison!—from whence comes that dainty? I remember not thou didst intimate its presence in thy hamper of vivers."

"So please your holiness and lordship," said the Refectioner; "he is a son of the woman of the house who hath shot it and sent it in—killed but now; yet, as the animal-heat hath not left the body, the Kitchener undertakes it shall eat as tender as a young chicken—and this youth hath a special gift in shooting deer, and never

misses the heart or the brain ; so that the blood is not driven through the flesh, as happens too often with us. It is a hart of grease—your holiness has seldom seen such a haunch.”

“ Silence, Brother Hilarius,” said the Abbot, wiping his mouth, “ it is not beseeming our order to talk of food so earnestly, especially as we must oft have our animal powers exhausted by fasting, and be accessible (as being ever mere mortals) to those signs of longing (he again wiped his mouth) which arise on the mention of victuals to an hungry man.—Minute down, however, the name of that youth—it is fitting merit should be rewarded, and he shall hereafter be a *frater ad succurrendum* in the kitchen and buttery.”

“ Alas ! reverend Father, and my good lord,” replied the Refectioner, “ I did inquire after the youth, and I learn he is one who prefers the casque to the cowl, and the sword of the flesh to the weapons of the spirit.”

“ And if it be so,” said the Abbot, “ see that thou retain him as a deputy-keeper and man-at-arms, and not as a lay brother of the Monastery—for old Tallboy, our forester, waxes dim-eyed, and hath twice spoiled a noble buck, by hitting him unwarily on the haunch. Ah ! ’tis a foul fault, the abusing by evil-killing, evil-dressing, evil-appetite, or otherwise, the good creatures indulged to us for our use. Wherefore, secure us the service of this youth, Brother Hilarius, in the way that may best suit him. And now, Sir Piercie Shafton, since the fates have assigned us a space of well nigh an hour, ere we dare hope to enjoy more than the vapour or savour of our repast, may I pray you, of your courtesy, to tell me the cause of this visit ; and, above all, to inform us, why you will not approach our more pleasant and better furnished *hospitium* ?”

“ Reverend Father, and my very good lord,” said Sir Piercie Shafton, “ it is well known to your wisdom, that there are stone walls which have ears, and that secrecy is to be looked to in matters which concern a man’s head.”

The Abbot signed to his attendants, excepting the Sub-Prior, to leave the room, and then said, “ Your valour, Sir Piercie, may freely unburden yourself before our faithful friend and counsellor, Father Eustace, the benefits of whose advice we may too soon lose, inasmuch as his merits will speedily recommend him to an higher station, in which, we trust, he may find the blessing of a friend and adviser as valuable as himself, since I may say of him, as our claustral rhyme goeth,*

‘ Dixit Abbas ad prioris,
Tu es homo boni moris,
Quia semper sanioris
Mibi das concilia.’

Indeed,” he added, “ the office of Sub-Prior is altogether beneath our dear brother ; nor can we elevate him unto that of Prior, which, for certain reasons, is at present kept vacant amongst us. Howbeit, Father Eustace is fully possessed of my confidence, and worthy of yours, and well may it be said of him, *Intravit in secretis nostris.*”

Sir Piercie Shafton bowed to the reverend brethren, and, heaving a sigh, as if he would have burst his steel-cuirass, he thus commenced his speech.

“ Certes, reverend sirs, I may well heave such a suspiration, who have, as it were, exchanged heaven for purgatory, leaving the lightsome sphere of the royal court of England, for a remote nook in this inaccessible desert—quitting the tilt-yard, where I was ever ready among my compeers to splinter a lance, either for the love of honour, or for the honour of love, in order to couch my knightly spear against base and pilfering besognios and marauders—exchanging the lighted halls, wherein I used nimbly to pace the swift coranto, or to move with a loftier grace in the stately galliard, for this rugged and decayed

* The rest of this doggerel rhyme may be found in Fosbrooke’s learned work on British Monachism.

dungeon of rusty-coloured stone—quitting the gay theatre, for the solitary chimney-nook of a Scottish dog-house—bartering the sounds of the soul-ravishing lute, and the love-awakening viol-de-gamba, for the discordant squeak of a northern bagpipe—above all, exchanging the smiles of those beauties, who form a galaxy around the throne of England, for the cold courtesy of an untaught damsel, and the bewildered stare of a miller's maiden. More might I say, of the exchange of the conversation of gallant knights and gay courtiers of mine own order and capacity, whose conceits are bright and vivid as the lightning, for that of monks and churchmen—but it were discourteous to urge that topic.”

The Abbot listened to this list of complaints with great round eyes, which evinced no exact intelligence of the orator's meaning; and when the knight paused to take breath, he looked with a doubtful and inquiring eye at the Sub-Prior, not well knowing in what tone he should reply to an exordium so extraordinary. The Sub-Prior accordingly stepped in to the relief of his principal.

“We deeply sympathize with you, Sir Knight, in the several mortifications and hardships to which fate has subjected you, particularly in that which has thrown you into the society of those, who, as they were conscious they deserved not such an honour, so neither did they at all desire it. But all this goes little way to expound the cause of this train of disasters, or, in plainer words, the reason which has compelled you into a situation having so few charms for you.”

“Gentle and reverend sir,” replied the knight, “forgive an unhappy person, who, in giving a history of his miseries, dilateth upon them extremely, even as he who, having fallen from a precipice, looketh upward to measure the height from which he hath been precipitated.”

“Yea, but,” said Father Eustace, “methinks it were wiser in him to tell those who come to lift him up, which of his bones have been broken.”

“You, reverend sir,” said the knight, “have, in the encounter of our wits made a fair *attaint*;* whereas I may be said in some sort to have broken my staff across. Pardon me, grave sir, that I speak the language of the tilt-yard, which is doubtless strange to your reverend ears.—Ah! brave resort of the noble, the fair, and the gay!—Ah! throne of love, and citadel of honour!—Ah! celestial beauties, by whose bright eyes it is graced! Never more shall Piercie Shafton advance, as the centre of your radiant glances, couch his lance, and spur his horse at the sound of the spirit-stirring trumpets, nobly called the voice of war—never more shall he baffle his adversary's encounter boldly, break his spear dexterously, and ambling around the lovely circle, receive the rewards with which beauty honours chivalry!”

Here he paused, wrung his hands, looked upwards, and seemed lost in contemplation of his own fallen fortunes.

“Mad, very mad,” whispered the Abbot to the Sub-Prior; “I would we were fairly rid of him, for of a truth, I expect he will proceed from raving to mischief—Were it not better to call up the rest of the brethren?”

But the Sub-Prior knew better than his Superior how to distinguish the jargon of affectation from the ravings of insanity; and, although the extremity of the knight's passion seemed altogether fantastic, yet he was not ignorant to what extravagances the fashion of the day can conduct its votaries.

Allowing, therefore, two minutes space, to permit the knight's enthusiastic feelings to exhaust themselves, he again gravely reminded him that the Lord Abbot had taken a journey, unwonted to his age and habits, solely to learn in what he could serve Sir Piercie Shafton—that it was altogether impossible he could do so, without his receiving distinct information of the situation in

* *Attaint* was a term of tilting used to express the champion's having attained his mark, or, in other words, struck his lance straight and fair against the helmet, or breast of his adversary. Whereas to break the lance across, intimated a total failure in directing the point of the weapon on the object of his aim.

which he had now sought refuge in Scotland—"The day wore on," he observed, looking at the window; "and if the Abbot should be obliged to return to the Monastery, without obtaining the necessary intelligence, the regret might be mutual, but the inconvenience was like to be all on Sir Piercie's own side."

The hint was not thrown away.

"O, goddess of courtesy!" said the knight, "can I have so far forgotten thy behests as to make this good Prelate's ease and time a sacrifice to my vain complaints! Know, then, most worthy, and not less worshipful, that I, your poor visiter and guest, am by birth nearly bound to the Piercie of Northumberland, whose fame is so widely blown through all parts of the world where English worth hath been known. Now this present Earl of Northumberland, of whom I propose to give you the brief history"—

"It is altogether unnecessary," said the Abbot; "we know him to be a good and true nobleman, and a sworn upholder of our Catholic faith, in spite of the heretical woman who now sits upon the throne of England. And it is specially as his kinsman, and as knowing that ye partake with him in such devout and faithful belief and adherence to our holy mother church, that we say to you, Sir Piercie Shafton, that ye be heartily welcome to us, and that an we wist how, we would labour to do you good service in your extremity."

"For such kind offer I rest your most humble debtor," said Sir Piercie; "nor need I, at this moment, say more than that my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland, having devised with me and some others, the choice and picked spirits of the age, how and by what means the worship of God, according to the Catholic church, might be again introduced into this distracted kingdom of England, (even as one deviseth, by the assistance of his friend, to catch and to bridle a runaway steed,) it pleased him so deeply to intrust me in those communications, that my personal safety becomes, as it were, entwined or complicated therewith. Natheless, as we have

had sudden reason to believe, this Princess Elizabeth, who maintaineth around her a sort of counsellors, skilful in tracking whatever schemes may be pursued for bringing her title into challenge, or for erecting again the discipline of the Catholic church, has obtained certain knowledge of the trains which we had laid, before we could give fire unto them. Wherefore my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland, thinking it best belike that one man should take both blame and shame for the whole, did lay the burden of all this trafficking upon my back; which load I am the rather content to bear, in that he hath always shown himself my kind and honourable kinsman, as well as that my estate, I wot not how, hath of late been somewhat insufficient to maintain the expense of those braveries, wherewith it is incumbent on us, who are chosen and selected spirits, to distinguish ourselves from the vulgar."

"So that possibly," said the Sub-Prior, "your private affairs rendered a foreign journey less incommodious to you than it might have been to the noble earl, your right worthy cousin?"

"You are right, reverend sir," answered the courtier; "*rem acu*—you have touched the point with a needle—My cost and expenses had been indeed somewhat lavish at the late triumphs and tourneys, and the flat-capped citizens had shown themselves unwilling to furnish my pocket for new gallantries for the honour of the nation, as well as for mine own peculiar glory—and, to speak truth, it was in some part the hope of seeing these matters amended that led me to desire a new world in England."

"So that the miscarriage of your public enterprize, with the derangement of your own private affairs," said the Sub-Prior, "have induced you to seek Scotland as a place of refuge?"

"*Rem acu*, once again," said Sir Piercie; "and not without good cause, since my neck, if I remained, might have been brought within the circumstances of an halter—and so speedy was my journey northward, that I had but time to exchange my peach-coloured doublet of

Genoa velvet, thickly laid over with goldsmith's work, for this cuirass, which was made by Bonamico of Milan, and travelled northward with all speed, judging that I might do well to visit my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland at one of his numerous castles. But as I posted towards Alwick, even with the speed of a star, which, darting from its native sphere, shoots wildly downwards, I was met at Northallerton by one Henry Vaughan, a servant of my right honourable kinsman, who showed me, that as then I might not with safety come to his presence, seeing that, in obedience to orders from his court, he was obliged to issue out letters for my incarceration."

"This," said the Abbot, "seems but hard measure on the part of your honourable kinsman."

"It might be so judged, my lord," replied Sir Piercie; "nevertheless I will stand to the death for the honour of my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland. Also, Henry Vaughan gave me, from my said cousin, a good horse, and a purse of gold, with two Border-prickers, as they are called, for my guides, who conducted me, by such roads and by-paths as have never been seen since the days of Sir Lancelot and Sir Tristrem, into this kingdom of Scotland, and to the house of a certain baron, or one who holds the style of such, called Julian Avenel, with whom I found such reception as the place and party could afford."

"And that," said the Abbot, "must have been right wretched; for, to judge from the appetite which Julian showeth when abroad, he hath not, I judge, over-abundant provision at home."

"You are right, sir—your reverence is in the right," continued Sir Piercie; "we had but lenten fare, and, what was worse, a score to clear at the departure; for though this Julian Avenel called us to no reckoning, yet he did so extravagantly admire the fashion of my poniard—the *poignet* being of silver exquisitely hatched, and indeed the weapon being altogether a piece of exceeding rare device and beauty—that in faith I could not for very shame's sake but pray his acceptance of it; words which he gave me not the

trouble of repeating twice, before he had stuck it into his greasy buff-belt, where, credit me, reverend sir, it showed more like a butcher's knife than a gentleman's dagger."

"So goodly a gift might at least have purchased you a few days hospitality," said Father Eustace.

"Reverend sir," said Sir Piercie, "had I abidden with him, I should have been complimented out of every remnant of my wardrobe—actually flayed, by the hospitable gods I swear it! Sir, he secured my spare doublet, and had a pluck at my galligaskins—I was enforced to beat a retreat before I was altogether unrigged. That Border knave, his serving-man had a pluck at me too, and usurped a scarlet cassock and steel cuirass belonging to the page of my body, whom I was fain to leave behind me. In good time I received a letter from my right honourable cousin, showing me that he had written to you in my behalf, and sent to your charge two mails filled with wearing apparel—namely, my rich crimson silk doublet, slashed out and lined with cloth of gold, which I wore at the last revels, with baldric and trimmings to correspond—also two pair black silk slops, with hanging garters of carnation silk—also the flesh-coloured silken doublet, with the trimmings of fur, in which I danced the salvage man at the Gray's-Inn mummerly—also"—

"Sir Knight," said the Sub-Prior, "I pray you to spare the further inventory of your wardrobe. The monks of Saint Mary's are no free-booting barons, and whatever part of your vestments arrived at our house, have been this day faithfully brought hither, with the mails which contained them. I may presume from what has been said, as we have indeed been given to understand by the Earl of Northumberland, that your desire is to remain for the present as unknown and as unnoticed, as may be consistent with your high worth and distinction?"

"Alas, reverend father!" replied the courtier, "a blade when it is in the scabbard cannot give lustre, a diamond when it is in the casket cannot give light, and worth, when it is compelled by circumstances to obscure

itself, cannot draw observation—my retreat can only attract the admiration of those few to whom circumstances permit its displaying itself.”

“I conceive now, my venerable father and lord,” said the Sub-Prior, “that your wisdom will assign such a course of conduct to this noble knight, as may be alike consistent with his safety, and with the weal of the community. For you wot well, that perilous strides have been made in these audacious days, to the destruction of all ecclesiastical foundations, and that our holy community has been repeatedly menaced. Hitherto they have found no flaw in our raiment; but a party friendly as well to the Queen of England, as to the heretical doctrines of the schismatical church, or even to worse and wilder forms of heresy, prevails now at the court of our sovereign, who dare not yield to her suffering clergy the protection she would gladly extend to them.”

“My lord, and reverend sir,” said the knight, “I will gladly relieve ye of my presence while ye canvass this matter at your freedom; and to speak truly, I am desirous to see in what case the chamberlain of my noble kinsman hath found my wardrobe, and how he hath packed the same, and whether it has suffered from the journey—there are four suits of as pure and elegant device as ever the fancy of a fair lady doated upon, every one having a treble and appropriate change of ribands, trimmings, and fringes, which in case of need, may as it were renew each of them, and multiply the four into twelve.—There is also my sad-coloured riding-suit, and three cut-work shirts with falling bands—I pray you, pardon me—I must needs see how matters stand with them without farther dallying.”

Thus speaking, he left the room; and the Sub-Prior, looking after him significantly, added, “Where the treasure is will the heart be also.”

“Saint Mary preserve our wits!” said the Abbot, stunned with the knight’s abundance of words; “were man’s brains ever so stuffed with silk and broad-cloth, cut-work, and I wot not what besides! And what could

move the Earl of Northumberland to assume for his bosom counsellor, in matters of depth and danger, such a feather-brained coxcomb as this!”

“Had he been other than what he is, venerable father,” said the Sub-Prior, “he had been less fitted for the part of scape-goat, to which his right honourable cousin had probably destined him from the commencement in case of their plot failing. I know something of this Piercie Shafton. The legitimacy of his mother’s descent from the Piercie family, the point on which he is most jealous, hath been called in question. If hair-brained courage, and an outrageous spirit of gallantry, can make good his pretensions to the high lineage he claims, these qualities have never been denied him. For the rest, he is one of the ruffling gallants of the time, like Rowland Yorke, Stukely,¹⁴ and others, who wear out their fortunes, and endanger their lives, in idle braveries, in order that they may be esteemed the only choice gallants of the time; and afterwards endeavour to repair their estate, by engaging in the desperate plots and conspiracies which wiser heads have devised. To use one of his own conceited similitudes, such courageous fools resemble hawks, which the wiser conspirator keeps hooded and blindfolded on his wrist until the quarry is on the wing, and who are then flown at them.”

“Saint Mary,” said the Abbot, “he were an evil guest to introduce into our quiet household. Our young monks make bustle enough, and more than is beseeching God’s servants, about their outward attire already—this knight were enough to turn their brains, from the *Vestiarium* down to the very scullion boy.”

“A worse evil might follow,” said the Sub-Prior: “In these bad days, the patrimony of the church is bought and sold, forfeited and distrained, as if it were the unhallowed soil appertaining to a secular baron. Think what penalty awaits us, were we convicted of harbouring a rebel to her whom they call the Queen of England! There would neither be wanting Scottish parasites to beg the lands of the foundation, nor an

army from England to burn and harry the Halidome. The men of Scotland were once Scotsmen, firm and united in their love of their country, and throwing every other consideration aside when the frontier was menaced—now they are—what shall I call them—the one part French, the other part English, considering their dear native country merely as a prize-fighting stage, upon which foreigners are welcome to decide their quarrels.”

“Benedicite!” replied the Abbot, “they are indeed slippery and evil times.”

“And therefore,” said Father Eustace, “we must walk warily—we must not, for example, bring this man—this Sir Piercie Shafton, to our house of Saint Mary’s.”

“But how then shall we dispose of him?” replied the Abbot; “bethink thee that he is a sufferer for Holy Church’s sake—that his patron, the Earl of Northumberland, hath been our friend, and that, lying so near us, he may work us weal or woe according as we deal with his kinsman.”

“And, accordingly,” said the Sub-Prior, “for these reasons, as well as for discharge of the great duty of Christian charity, I would protect and relieve this man. Let him not go back to Julian Avenel—that unconscionable baron would not stick to plunder the exiled stranger—Let him remain here—the spot is secluded, and if the accommodation be beneath his quality, discovery will become the less likely. We will make such means for his convenience as we can devise.”

“Will he be persuaded, thinkest thou?” said the Abbot; “I will leave my own travelling bed for his repose, and send up a suitable easy-chair.”

“With such easements,” said the Sub-Prior, “he must not complain; and then if threatened by any sudden danger, he can soon come down to the sanctuary, where we will harbour him in secret until means can be devised of dismissing him in safety.”

“Were we not better,” said the Abbot, “send him on to the court, and get rid of him at once?”

“Ay, but at the expense of our friends—this butterfly may fold his wings, and lie under cover in the cold air of Glendearg; but were he at Holyrood, he would, did his life depend on it, expand his spangled drapery in the eyes of the queen and court.—Rather than fail of distinction, he would sue for love to our gracious sovereign—the eyes of all men would be on him in the course of three short days, and the international peace of the two ends of the island endangered for a creature, who, like a silly moth, cannot abstain from fluttering round a light.”

“Thou hast prevailed with me, Father Eustace,” said the Abbot, “and it will go hard but I improve on thy plan—I will send up in secret, not only household stuff, but wine and wassell-bread. There is a young swankie here who shoots venison well. I will give him directions to see that the knight lacks none.”

“Whatever accommodation he can have, which infers not a risk of discovery,” said the Sub-Prior, “it is our duty to afford him.”

“Nay,” said the Abbot, “we will do more, and will instantly despatch a servant express to the keeper of our revestiary to send us such things as he may want, even this night. See it done, good father.”

“I will,” answered Father Eustace; “but I hear the gull clamorous for some one to truss his points.* He will be fortunate if he lights on any one here, who can do him the office of groom of the chamber.”

“I would he would appear,” said the Abbot, “for here comes the Refectioner with the collation—By my faith, the ride hath given me a sharp appetite!”

* The points were the strings of cord or riband, (so called, because pointed with metal like the laces of women’s stays,) which attached the doublet to the hose. They were very numerous, and required assistance to tie them properly, which was called *trussing*.