

WAVERLEY NOVELS.

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**THE MONASTERY;**

A ROMANCE.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

II.

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PARKER'S EDITION,

REVISED AND CORRECTED, WITH A GENERAL PREFACE, AN  
INTRODUCTION TO EACH NOVEL, AND NOTES,  
HISTORICAL AND ILLUSTRATIVE, BY

THE AUTHOR.

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## THE MONASTERY.

### CHAPTER I.

Now choose thee, gallant, betwixt wealth and honour;  
There lies the pelf, in sum to bear thee through  
The dance of youth, and the turmoil of manhood,  
Yet leave enough for age's chimney-corner;  
But an thou grasp to it, farewell ambition,  
Farewell each hope of bettering thy condition,  
And raising thy low rank above the churls  
That till the earth for bread.

*Old Play.*

It is necessary to dwell for some brief space on the appearance and demeanour of young Glendinning, ere we proceed to describe his interview with the Abbot of Saint Mary's, at this momentous crisis of his life.

Halbert was now about nineteen years old, tall and active rather than strong, yet of that hardy confirmation of limb and sinew, which promises great strength when the growth shall be complete and the system confirmed. He was perfectly well made, and, like most men who have that advantage, possessed a grace and natural ease of manner and carriage, which prevented his height from being the distinguished part of his external appearance. It was not until you had compared his stature with that of those amongst or near to whom he stood, that you became sensible that the young Glendinning was upwards of six feet high. In the combination of unusual height, with perfect symmetry, ease, and grace of carriage, the young heir of Glendearg, notwithstanding his rustic birth and education, had greatly the advantage even of Sir

with so proper a subject of promotion, than to indulge any other feeling. Father Eustace enjoyed the pleasure which a well-constituted mind derives from seeing a benefit light on a deserving object; for as he had not seen Halbert since circumstances had made so material a change in his manner and feelings, he scarce doubted that the proffered appointment would, notwithstanding his mother's uncertainty, suit the disposition of a youth who had appeared devoted to woodland sports, and a foe alike to sedentary or settled occupation of any kind. The Refectioner and Kitchener were so well pleased with Halbert's prepossessing appearance, that they seemed to think that the salary, emoluments, and perquisites, the dole, the grazing, the gown, and the galligaskins, could scarce be better bestowed than on the active and graceful figure before them.

Sir Piercie Shafton, whether from being more deeply engaged in his own cogitations, or that the subject was unworthy of his notice, did not seem to partake of the general feeling of approbation excited by the young man's presence. He sat with his eyes half shut, and his arms folded, appearing to be wrapped in contemplations of a nature deeper than those arising out of the scene before him. But, notwithstanding his seeming abstraction and absence of mind, there was a flutter of vanity in Sir Piercie's very handsome countenance, an occasional change of posture from one striking attitude (or what he conceived to be such,) to another, and an occasional stolen glance at the female part of the company, to spy how far he succeeded in rivetting their attention, which gave a marked advantage, in comparison, to the less regular and more harsh features of Halbert Glendinning, with their composed, manly, and deliberate expression of mental fortitude.

Of the females belonging to the family of Glendearg, the Miller's daughter alone had her mind sufficiently at leisure to admire, from time to time, the graceful attitudes of Sir Piercie Shafton; for both Mary Avenel and Dame Glendinning were waiting in anxiety and ap-

prehension, the answer which Halbert was to return to the Abbot's proposal, and fearfully anticipating the consequences of his probable refusal. The conduct of his brother Edward, for a lad constitutionally shy, respectful, and even timid, was at once affectionate and noble. This younger son of Dame Elspeth had stood unnoticed, in a corner, after the Abbot, at the request of the Sub-Prior, had honoured him with some passing notice, and asked him a few common-place questions about his progress in Donatus, and in the *Promptuarium Parvulorum*, without waiting for the answers. From his corner he now glided round to his brother's side, and, keeping a little behind him, slid his right hand into the huntsman's left, and by a gentle pressure, which Halbert instantly and ardently returned, expressed at once his interest in his situation, and his resolution to share his fate.

The group was thus arranged, when, after the pause of two or three minutes, which he employed in slowly sipping his cup of wine, in order that he might enter on his proposal with due and deliberate dignity, the Abbot at length expressed himself thus:

"My son—we your lawful superior, and the Abbot, under God's favour, of the community of Saint Mary's, have heard of your manifold good gifts—a-hem—especially touching woodcraft—and the huntsman-like fashion in which you strike your game, truly and as a yeoman should, not abusing Heaven's good benefits by spoiling the flesh, as is too often seen in careless rangers—a-hem." He made here a pause; but observing that Glendinning only replied to his compliment by a bow, he proceeded,—“My son, we commend your modesty; nevertheless, we will that thou shouldst speak freely to us touching that which we have premeditated for thine advancement, meaning to confer on thee the office of bow-bearer and ranger, as well over the chases and forests wherein our house hath privilege by the gifts of pious kings and nobles, whose souls now enjoy the fruits of their bounties to the church, as to those which belong to us in exclusive right of property and perpetuity. Thy

knee, my son—that we may, with our own hand, and without loss of time, induct thee into office.”

“Kneel down,” said the Kitchener, on the one side; and “Kneel down,” said the Refectioner, on the other.

But Halbert Glendinning remained standing.

“Were it to show gratitude and good-will for your reverend lordship’s noble offer, I could not,” he said, “kneel low enough, or remain long enough kneeling. But I may not kneel to take investiture of your noble gift, my Lord Abbot, being a man determined to seek my fortune otherwise.”

“How is that, sir?” said the Abbot, knitting his brows; “do I hear you speak aright? and do you, a born vassal of the Halidome, at the moment when I am destining to you such a noble expression of my good-will, propose exchanging my service for that of any other?”

“My lord,” said Halbert Glendinning, “it grieves me to think you hold me capable of undervaluing your gracious offer, or of exchanging your service for another. But your noble proffer doth but hasten the execution of a determination which I have long since formed.”

“Ay, my son,” said the Abbot, “is it indeed so?—right early have you learned to form resolutions without consulting those on whom you naturally depend. But what may it be, this sagacious resolution, if I may so far pray you?”

“To yield up to my brother and mother,” answered Halbert, “mine interest in the fief at Glendearg, lately possessed by my father, Simon Glendinning: and having prayed your lordship to be the same kind and generous master to them, that your predecessors, the venerable Abbots of Saint Mary’s, have been to my fathers in time past; for myself, I am determined to seek my fortune where I may best find it.”

Dame Glendinning here ventured, emboldened by maternal anxiety, to break silence with an exclamation of “O my son!” Edward, clinging to his brother’s side, half spoke, half whispered a similar ejaculation, of “Brother! brother!”

The Sub-Prior took up the matter in a tone of grave reprehension, which, as he conceived, the interest he had always taken in the family of Glendearg required at his hand.

“Wilful young man,” he said, “what folly can urge thee to push back the hand that is stretched out to aid thee? What visionary aim hast thou before thee, that can compensate for the decent and sufficient independence which thou art now rejecting with scorn?”

“Four marks by the year, duly and truly,” said the Kitchener.

“Cow’s-grass, doublet, and galligaskins,” responded the Refectioner.

“Peace, my brethren,” said the Sub-Prior; “and may it please your lordship, venerable father, upon my petition, to allow this headstrong youth a day for consideration, and it shall be my part so to indoctrinate him, as to convince him what is due on this occasion to your lordship, and to his family, and to himself.”

“Your kindness, reverend father,” said the youth, “craves my dearest thanks—it is the continuance of a long train of benevolence towards me, for which I give you my gratitude, for I have nothing else to offer. It is my mishap, not your fault, that your intentions have been frustrated. But my present resolution is fixed and unalterable. I cannot accept the generous offer of the Lord Abbot; my fate calls me elsewhere, to scenes where I shall end it or mend it.”

“By Our Lady,” said the Abbot, “I think the youth be mad indeed—or that you, Sir Piercie, judged of him most truly, when you prophesied that he would prove unfit for the promotion we designed him—it may be you knew something of this wayward humour before?”

“By the mass, not I,” answered Sir Piercie Shafton, with his usual indifference. “I but judged of him by his birth and breeding; for seldom doth a good hawk come out of a kite’s egg.”

“Thou art thyself a kite, and kestrel to boot,” replied Halbert Glendinning, without a moment’s hesitation.

"This in our presence, and to a man of worship!" said the Abbot, the blood rushing to his face.

"Yes, my lord," answered the youth; "even in your presence I return to this gay man's face, the causeless dishonour which he has flung on my name. My brave father, who fell in the cause of his country, demands that justice at the hands of his son!"

"Unmannered boy!" said the Abbot.

"Nay, my good lord," said the knight, "praying pardon for the coarse interruption, let me intreat you not to be wroth with this rustical—Credit me, the north wind shall as soon puff one of your rocks from its basis, as aught which I hold so slight and inconsiderate as the churlish speech of an untaught churl, shall move the spleen of Piercie Shafton."

"Proud as you are, Sir Knight," said Halbert, "in your imagined superiority, be not too confident that you cannot be moved."

"Faith, by nothing that thou canst urge," said Sir Piercie.

"Knowest thou then this token?" said young Glendinning, offering to him the silver bodkin which he had received from the White Lady.

Never was such an instant change, from the most contemptuous serenity to the most furious state of passion, as that which Sir Piercie Shafton exhibited. It was the difference between a cannon laying quiet in its embrasure, and the same gun when touched by the linstock. He started up, every limb quivering with rage, and his features so inflamed and agitated by passion, that he more resembled a demoniac, than a man under the regulation of reason. He clenched both his fists, and thrusting them forward, offered them furiously at the face of Glendinning, who was even himself startled at the frantic state of excitation which his action had occasioned. The next moment he withdrew them, struck his open palm against his own forehead, and rushed out of the room in a state of indescribable agitation. The

whole matter had been so sudden, that no person present had time to interfere.

When Sir Piercie Shafton had left the apartment, there was a moment's pause of astonishment; and then a general demand that Halbert Glendinning should instantly explain by what means he had produced such a violent change in the deportment of the English cavalier.

"I did nought to him," answered Halbert Glendinning, "but what you all saw—am I to answer for his fantastic freaks of humour?"

"Boy," said the Abbot, in his most authoritative manner, "these subterfuges shall not avail thee. This is not a man to be driven from his temperament without some sufficient cause. That cause was given by thee, and must have been known to thee. I command thee, as thou wilt save thyself from worse measure, to explain to me by what means thou hast moved our friend thus—We choose not that our vassals shall drive our guests mad in our very presence, and we remain ignorant of the means whereby that purpose is effected."

"So may it please your reverence, I did but show him this token," said Halbert Glendinning, delivering it at the same time to the Abbot, who looked at it with much attention, and then, shaking his head, gravely delivered it to the Sub-Prior, without speaking a word.

Father Eustace looked at the mysterious token with some attention; and then addressing Halbert in a stern and severe voice, said, "Young man, if thou wouldst not have us suspect thee of some strange double-dealing in this matter, let us instantly know whence thou hadst this token, and how it possesses an influence on Sir Piercie Shafton?"—It would have been extremely difficult for Halbert, thus hard pressed, to have either evaded or answered so puzzling a question. To have avowed the truth, might, in those times, have occasioned his being burnt at a stake, although, in ours, his confession would have only gained for him the credit of a liar beyond all rational credibility. He was fortunately relieved by the

return of Sir Piercie Shafton himself, whose ear caught, as he entered, the sound of the Sub-Prior's question.

Without waiting until Halbert Glendinning replied, he came forward whispering to him as he passed, "Be secret—thou shalt have the satisfaction thou hast dared to seek for."

When he returned to his place, there were still marks of discomposure on his brow; but, becoming apparently collected and calm, he looked around him, and apologized for the indecorum of which he had been guilty, which he ascribed to sudden and severe indisposition. All were silent, and looked on each other with some surprise.

The Lord Abbot gave orders for all to retire from the apartment, save himself, Sir Piercie Shafton, and the Sub-Prior. "And have an eye," he added, "on that bold youth, that he escape not; for if he hath practised by charm, or otherwise, on the health of our worshipful guest, I swear by the alb and mitre which I wear, that his punishment shall be most exemplary."

"My lord and venerable father," said Halbert, bowing respectfully, "fear not but that I will abide my doom. I think you will best learn from the worshipful knight himself, what is the cause of his distemperature, and how slight my share in it has been."

"Be assured," said the knight, without looking up, however, while he spoke, "I will satisfy the Lord Abbot."

With these words the company retired, and with them young Glendinning.

When the Abbot, the Sub-Prior, and the English knight, were left alone, Father Eustace, contrary to his custom, could not help speaking the first. "Expound unto us, noble sir," he said, "by what mysterious means the production of this simple toy could so far move your spirit, and overcome your patience, after you had shown yourself proof to all the provocation offered by this self-sufficient and singular youth?"

The Knight took the silver bodkin from the good father's hand, looked at it with great composure, and having examined it all over, returned it to the Sub-Prior, saying at the same time, "In truth, venerable father, I cannot but marvel, that the wisdom implied alike in your silver hairs, and in your eminent rank, should, like a babbling hound, (excuse the similitude) open thus loudly on a false scent. I were, indeed, more slight to be moved than the leaves of the aspen-tree, which wag at the least breath of heaven, could I be touched by such a trifle as this, which in no way concerns me more than if the same quantity of silver were stricken into so many groats. Truth is, that from my youth upward, I have been subjected to such a malady as you saw me visited with even now—a cruel and searching pain, which goeth through nerve and bone, even as a good brand in the hands of a brave soldier sheers through limb and sinew—but it passes away speedily, as you yourselves may judge."

"Still," said the Sub-Prior, "this will not account for the youth offering to you this piece of silver, as a token by which you were to understand something, and, as we must needs conjecture, something disagreeable."

"Your reverence is to conjecture what you will," said Sir Piercie; "but I cannot pretend to lay your judgment on the right scent when I see it at fault. I hope I am not liable to be called upon to account for the foolish actions of a malapert boy?"

"Assuredly," said the Sub-Prior, "we shall prosecute no inquiry which is disagreeable to our guest. Nevertheless," said he, looking to his Superior, "this chance may, in some sort, alter the plan your lordship had formed for your worshipful guest's residence for a brief term in this tower, as a place alike of secrecy and of security; both of which, in the terms which we now stand on with England, are circumstances to be desired."

"In truth," said the Abbot, "and the doubt is well thought on, were it as well removed; for I scarce know in the Halidome so fitting a place of refuge, yet see I

not how to recommend it to our worshipful guest, considering the unrestrained petulance of this headstrong youth."

"Tush! reverend sirs,—what would you make of me?" said Sir Piercie Shafton. "I protest, by mine honour, I would abide in this house were I to choose. What! I take no exceptions at the youth for showing a flash of spirit, though the spark may light on mine own head. I honour the lad for it. I protest I will abide here, and he shall aid me in striking down a deer. I must needs be friends with him, an he be such a shot; and we will speedily send down to my Lord Abbot a buck of the first head, killed so artificially as shall satisfy even the reverend Kitchener."

This was said with such apparent ease and good-humour, that the Abbot made no further observation on what had passed, but proceeded to acquaint his guest with the details of furniture, hangings, provisions, and so forth, which he proposed to send up to the Tower of Glendearg for his accommodation. This discourse, seasoned with a cup or two of wine, served to prolong the time until the reverend Abbot ordered his cavalcade to prepare for their return to the Monastery.

"As we have," he said, "in the course of this our toilsome journey, lost our meridian,\* indulgence shall be given to those of our attendants who shall, from very weariness, be unable to attend the duty at prime,† and this by way of misericord or *indulgentia*."‡

Having benevolently intimated a boon to his faithful followers, which he probably judged would be far from unacceptable, the good Abbot seeing all ready for his

\* The hour of repose at noon, which, in the middle ages was employed in slumber, and which the monastic rules of nocturnal vigils rendered necessary.

† *Prime* was the midnight service of the Monks.

‡ *Misericord*, according to the learned work of Fosbrooke on British Monachism, meant not only an indulgence, or exoneration from particular duties, but also a particular apartment in a Convent, where the Monks assembled to enjoy such indulgences or allowances as were granted beyond the rule.

journey, bestowed his blessing on the assembled household—gave his hand to be kissed by Dame Glendinning—himself kissed the cheek of Mary Avenel, and even of the Miller's maiden, when they approached to render him the same homage—commanded Halbert to rule his temper, and to be aiding and obedient in all things to the English knight—admonished Edward to be *discipulus impiger atque strenuus*—then took a courteous farewell of Sir Piercie Shafton, advising him to lie close, for fear of the English Borderers, who might be employed to kidnap him; and having discharged these various offices of courtesy, moved forth to the court-yard, followed by the whole establishment. Here, with a heavy sigh approaching to a groan, the venerable father heaved himself upon his palfrey, whose dark purple housings swept the ground; and, greatly comforted that the discretion of the animal's pace would be no longer disturbed by the gambadoes of Sir Piercie and his prancing war-horse, he set forth at a sober and steady trot upon his return to the Monastery.

When the Sub-Prior had mounted to accompany his principal, his eye sought out Halbert, who, partly hidden by a projection of the outward wall of the court, stood apart from, and gazing upon the departing cavalcade, and the group which assembled around them. Unsatisfied with the explanation he had received concerning the mysterious transaction of the silver bodkin, yet interesting himself in the youth, of whose character he had formed a favourable idea, the worthy Monk resolved to take an early opportunity of investigating that matter. In the meanwhile, he looked upon Halbert with a serious and warning aspect, and held up his finger to him as he signed farewell. He then joined the rest of the churchmen, and followed his Superior down the valley.