

## CHAPTER XI.

————— Sure he cannot  
Be so unmanly as to leave me here ;  
If he do, maids will not so easily  
Trust men again.

*The Two Noble Kinsmen.*

THE Knight continued to keep the good horse at a pace as quick as the road permitted, until they had cleared the valley of Glendearg, and entered upon the broad dale of the Tweed, which now rolled before them in crystal beauty, displaying on its opposite bank the huge grey Monastery of St. Mary's, whose towers and pinnacles were scarce yet touched by the newly-risen sun, so deeply the edifice lies shrouded under the mountains which rise to the southward.

Turning to the left, the Knight continued his road down the northern bank of the river, until they arrived nearly opposite to the weir, or dam-dyke, where Father Philip concluded his extraordinary aquatic excursion.

Sir Piercie Shafton, whose brain seldom admitted more than one idea at a time, had hitherto pushed forward, without very distinctly considering where he was going. But the sight of the Monastery so near to him, reminded him that he was still on dangerous ground, and that he must necessarily provide for his safety by choosing some settled plan of escape. The situation of his guide and deliverer also occurred to him ; for he was far from being either selfish or ungrateful. He listened, and discovered that the Miller's daughter was sobbing and weeping bitterly as she rested her head on his shoulder.

"What ails thee," he said, "my generous Molinara ? —is there aught that Piercie Shafton can do, which may show his gratitude to his deliverer ?" Mysie pointed with her finger across the river, but ventured not to turn her eyes in that direction. "Nay, but speak plain, most

generous damsel," said the Knight, who, for once, was puzzled as much as his own elegance of speech was wont to puzzle others, "for I swear to you that I comprehend nought by the extension of thy fair digit."

"Yonder is my father's house," said Mysie, in a voice interrupted by the increased burst of her sorrow.

"And I was carrying thee discourteously to a distance from thy habitation ?" said Shafton, imagining he had found out the source of her grief. "Woe worth the hour that Piercie Shafton, in attention to his own safety, neglected the accommodation of any female, far less of his most beneficent liberatrice ! Dismount, then, O lovely Molinara, unless thou wouldst rather that I should transport thee on horseback to the house of thy molendinary father, which, if thou sayest the word, I am prompt to do, defying all dangers which may arise to me personally, whether by monk or miller."

Mysie suppressed her sobs, and with considerable difficulty muttered her desire to alight, and take her fortune by herself. Sir Piercie Shafton, too devoted a squire of dames to consider the most lowly as exempted from a respectful attention, independent of the claims which the Miller's maiden possessed over him, dismounted instantly from his horse, and received in his arms the poor girl, who still wept bitterly, and, when placed on the ground, seemed scarce able to support herself, or at least still clung, though, as it appeared, unconsciously, to the support he had afforded. He carried her weeping to a birch-tree, which grew on the greensward bank around which the road winded, and, placing her on the ground beneath it, exhorted her to compose herself. A strong touch of natural feeling struggled with, and half overcame his acquired affectation, while he said, "Credit me, most generous damsel, the service you have done to Piercie Shafton he would have deemed too dearly bought, had he foreseen it was to cost you these tears and singults. Show me the cause of your grief, and if I can do aught to remove it, believe that the rights you have acquired over me will make your commands sacred as those of an empress. Speak, then, fair Molinara, and command him

whom fortune hath rendered at once your debtor and your champion. What are your orders?"

"Only that you will fly and save yourself," said Mysie mustering up her utmost efforts to utter these few words.

"Yet," said the Knight, "let me not leave you without some token of remembrance." Mysie would have said there needed none, and most truly would she have spoken, could she have spoken for weeping. "Piercie Shafton is poor," he continued, "but let this chain testify he is not ungrateful to his deliverer."

He took from his neck the rich chain and medallion we have formerly mentioned, and put it into the powerless hand of the poor maiden, who neither received nor rejected it, but, occupied with more intense feelings, seemed scarce aware of what he was doing.

"We shall meet again," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "at least I trust so; meanwhile, weep no more, fair Molinara, an thou lovest me."

The phrase of conjuration was but used as an ordinary common-place expression of the time, but bore a deeper sense to poor Mysie's ear. She dried her tears; and when the Knight, in all kind and chivalrous courtesy, stooped to embrace her at their parting, she rose humbly up to receive the proffered honour in a posture of more deference, and meekly and gratefully accepted the offered salute. Sir Piercie Shafton mounted his horse, and began to ride off, but curiosity, or perhaps a stronger feeling, soon induced him to look back, when he beheld the Miller's daughter standing still motionless on the spot where they had parted, her eyes turned after him, and the unheeded chain hanging from her hand.

It was at this moment that a glimpse of the real state of Mysie's affections and of the motive from which she had acted in the whole matter, glanced on Sir Piercie Shafton's mind. The gallants of that age, disinterested, aspiring, and lofty-minded, even in their coxcombry, were strangers to those degrading and mischievous pursuits which are usually termed low amours. They did not "chase the humble maidens of the plain," or degrade

their own rank, to deprive rural innocence of peace and virtue. It followed of course, that as conquests in this class were no part of their ambition, they were in most cases totally overlooked and unsuspected, left unimproved, as a modern would call it, where, as on the present occasion, they were casually made. The companion of Astrophel, and flower of the tilt-yard of Feliciana, had no more idea that his graces and good parts could attach the love of Mysie Happer, than a first-rate beauty in the boxes dreams of the fatal wound which her charms may inflict on some attorney's romantic apprentice in the pit. I suppose, in any ordinary case, the pride of rank and distinction would have pronounced on the humble admirer the doom which Beau Fielding denounced against the whole female world, "Let them look and die;" but the obligations under which he lay to the enamoured maiden, Miller's daughter as she was, precluded the possibility of Sir Piercie's treating the matter *en cavalier*, and, much embarrassed, yet a little flattered at the same time, he rode back to try what could be done for the damsel's relief. The innate modesty of poor Mysie could not prevent her showing too obvious signs of joy at Sir Piercie Shafton's return. She was betrayed by the sparkle of the rekindling eye, and a caress, which, however timidly bestowed, she could not help giving to the neck of the horse which brought back the beloved rider.

"What farther can I do for you, kind Molinara?" said Sir Piercie Shafton, himself hesitating and blushing; for, to the grace of Queen Bess's age be it spoken, her courtiers wore more iron on their breasts than brass on their foreheads, and even amid their vanities preserved still the decaying spirit of chivalry, which inspired of yore the very gentle Knight of Chaucer,

"Who in his port was modest as a maid."

Mysie blushed deeply, with her eyes fixed on the ground, and Sir Piercie proceeded in the same tone of embarrassed kindness. "Are you afraid to return home

alone my kind Molinara?—would you that I should accompany you?"

"Alas!" said Mysie, looking up, and her cheek changing from scarlet to pale, "I have no home left!"

"How! no home?" said Shafton; "says my generous Molinara she hath no home, when yonder stands the house of her father, and but a crystal stream between?"

"Alas!" answered the Miller's maiden, "I have no longer either home or father. He is a devoted servant to the Abbey—I have offended the Abbot, and if I return home my father will kill me."

"He dare not injure thee, by heaven!" said Sir Piercie; "I swear to thee by my honour and knight-hood, that the forces of my cousin of Northumberland shall lay the Monastery so flat, that a horse shall not stumble as he rides over it, if they should dare to injure a hair of your head! Therefore be hopeful and content, kind Mysinda, and know you have obliged one who can and will avenge the slightest wrong offered to you."

He sprung from his horse as he spoke, and in the animation of his argument, grasped the willing hand of Mysie, (or Mysinda as he had now christened her.) He gazed too upon full black eyes, fixed upon his own with an expression which, however subdued by maidenly shame, it was impossible to mistake, on cheeks where something like hope began to restore the natural colour, and on two lips which, like double rosebuds, were kept a little apart by expectation, and showed within a line of teeth as white as pearl. All this was dangerous to look upon, and Sir Piercie Shafton, after repeating with less and less force his request that the fair Mysinda would allow him to carry her to her father's, ended by asking the fair Mysinda to go along with him—"At least," he added, "until I shall be able to conduct you to a place of safety."

Mysie Happer made no answer; but, blushing scarlet betwixt joy and shame, mutely expressed her willingness to accompany the Southron Knight, by knitting her

bundle closer, and preparing to resume her seat *en croupe*. "And what is your pleasure that I should do with this?" she said, holding up the chain as if she had been for the first time aware that it was in her hand.

"Keep it, fairest Mysinda, for my sake," said the Knight.

"Not so, sir," answered Mysie, gravely; "the maidens of my country take no such gifts from their superiors, and I need no token to remind me of this morning."

Most earnestly and courteously did the Knight urge her acceptance of the proposed guerdon, but on this point Mysie was resolute; feeling perhaps, that to accept of any thing bearing the appearance of reward, would be to place the service she had rendered him on a mercenary footing. In short, she would only agree to conceal the chain, lest it might prove the means of detecting the owner, until Sir Piercie should be placed in perfect safety.

They mounted and resumed their journey, of which Mysie, as bold and sharp-witted in some points as she was simple and susceptible in others, now took in some degree the direction, having only inquired its general destination, and learned that Sir Piercie Shafton desired to go to Edinburgh, where he hoped to find friends and protection. Possessed of this information, Mysie availed herself of her local knowledge to get as soon as possible out of the bounds of the Halidome, and into those of a temporal baron, supposed to be addicted to the reformed doctrines, and upon whose limits, at least, she thought their pursuers would not attempt to hazard any violence. She was not indeed very apprehensive of a pursuit, reckoning with some confidence that the inhabitants of the Tower of Glendearg would find it a matter of difficulty to surmount the obstacles arising from their own bolts and bars, with which she had carefully secured them before setting forth on the retreat.

They journeyed on, therefore, in tolerable security, and Sir Piercie Shafton found leisure to amuse the time in high-flown speeches and long anecdotes of the court

of Feliciana, to which Mysie bent an ear not a whit less attentive, that she did not understand one word out of three which was uttered by her fellow-traveller. She listened, however, and admired upon trust, as many a wise man has been contented to treat the conversation of a handsome but silly mistress. As for Sir Piercie, he was in his element; and well assured of the interest and full approbation of his auditor, he went on spouting Euphuism of more than usual obscurity, and at more than usual length. Thus passed the morning, and noon brought them within sight of a winding stream, on the side of which arose an ancient baronial castle, surrounded by some large trees. At a small distance from the gate of the mansion, extended, as in those days was usual, a straggling hamlet, having a church in the centre.

"There are two hostelries in this Kirktown," said Mysie, "but the worst is best for our purpose; for it stands apart from the other houses, and I ken the man weel, for he has dealt with my father for malt."

This *causa scientiæ*, to use a lawyer's phrase, was ill chosen for Mysie's purpose; for Sir Piercie Shafton had, by dint of his own loquacity, been talking himself all this while into a high esteem for his fellow-traveller, and, pleased with the gracious reception which she afforded to his powers of conversation, had well nigh forgotten that she was not herself one of those high-born beauties of whom he was recounting so many stories, when this unlucky speech at once placed the most disadvantageous circumstances attending her lineage under his immediate recollection. He said nothing, however. What indeed could he say? Nothing was so natural as that a miller's daughter should be acquainted with publicans who dealt with her father for malt, and all that was to be wondered at was the concurrence of events which had rendered such a female the companion and guide of Sir Piercie Shafton of Wilverton, kinsman of the great Earl of Northumberland, whom princes and sovereigns them-

selves termed cousin, because of the Piercie blood.\* He felt the disgrace of strolling through the country with a miller's maiden on the crupper behind him, and was even ungrateful enough to feel some emotions of shame, when he halted his horse at the door of the little inn.

But the alert intelligence of Mysie Happer spared him farther sense of derogation, by instantly springing from the horse, and cramming the ears of mine host, who came out with his mouth agape to receive a guest of the Knight's appearance, with an imagined tale, in which circumstance on circumstance were huddled so fast, as to astonish Sir Piercie Shafton, whose own invention was none of the most brilliant. She explained to the publican that this was a great English knight travelling from the Monastery to the Court of Scotland, after having paid his vows to Saint Mary, and that she had been directed to conduct him so far on the road; and that Ball, her palfrey, had fallen by the way, because he had been over-wrought with carrying home the last melder of meal to the portioner of Langhope; and that she had turned in Ball to graze in the Tasker's park near Cripplecross, for he had stood as still as Lot's wife with very weariness; and that the Knight had courteously insisted she should ride behind him, and that she had brought him to her kene friend's hostelry rather than to proud Peter Peddie's, who got his malt at the Mellerstane mills; and that he must get the best that the house afforded, and that he must get it ready in a moment of time, and that she was ready to help in the kitchen.

All this ran glibly off the tongue without pause on the part of Mysie Happer, or doubt on that of the landlord. The guest's horse was conducted to the stable, and he himself installed in the cleanest corner and best seat which the place afforded. Mysie, ever active and officious, was at once engaged in preparing food, in spread-

\* Froissart tells us somewhere (the readers of romances are indifferent to accurate reference) that the King of France called one of the Piercies cousin, because of the blood of Northumberland.

ing the table, and in making all the better arrangements which her experience could suggest, for the honour and comfort of her companion. He would fain have resisted this; for while it was impossible not to be gratified with the eager and alert kindness which was so active in his service, he felt an undefinable pain in seeing Mysinda engaged in these menial services, and discharging them, moreover, as one to whom they were but too familiar. Yet this jarring feeling was mixed with, and perhaps balanced by, the extreme grace with which the neat-handed maiden executed these tasks, however mean in themselves, and gave to the wretched corner of a miserable inn of the period, the air of a bower, in which an enamoured fairy, or at least a shepherdess of Arcadia, was displaying, with unavailing solicitude, her designs on the heart of some knight, destined by fortune to higher thoughts, and a more splendid union.

The lightness and grace with which Mysie covered the little round table with a snow-white cloth, and arranged upon it the hastily-roasted capon, with its accompanying stoup of Bourdeaux, were but plebeian graces in themselves; but yet there were very flattering ideas excited by each glance. She was so very well made, agile at once and graceful, with her hand and arm as white as snow, and her face in which a smile contended with a blush, and her eyes which looked ever at Shafton when he looked elsewhere, and were dropt at once when they encountered his, that she was irresistible! In fine, the affectionate delicacy of her whole demeanour, joined to the promptitude and boldness she had so lately evinced, tended to ennoble the services she had rendered, as if some

————— sweet engaging Grace  
Put on some clothes to come abroad,  
And took a waiter's place.

But, on the other hand, came the damning reflection, that these duties were not taught her by Love, to serve the beloved only, but arose from the ordinary and natural

habits of a miller's daughter, accustomed, doubtless, to render the same service to every wealthier churl who frequented her father's mill. This stopped the mouth of vanity, and of the love which vanity had been hatching, as effectually as a peck of literal flour would have done.

Amidst this variety of emotions, Sir Piercie Shafton forgot not to ask the object of them to sit down and partake the good cheer which she had been so anxious to provide and to place in order. He expected that this invitation would have been bashfully, perhaps, but certainly most thankfully, accepted; but he was partly flattered and partly piqued, by the mixture of deference and resolution with which Mysie declined his invitation. Immediately after, she vanished from the apartment, leaving the Euphuist to consider whether he was most gratified or displeased by her disappearance.

In fact, this was a point on which he would have found it difficult to make up his mind, had there been any necessity for it. As there was none, he drank a few cups of claret, and sang (to himself) a strophe or two of the canzonettes of the divine Astrophel. But in spite both of wine and of Sir Philip Sidney, the connexion in which he now stood, and that which he was in future to hold, with the lovely Molinara, or Mysinda, as he had been pleased to denominate Mysie Happer, recurred to his mind. The fashion of the times (as we have already noticed) fortunately coincided with his own natural generosity of disposition, which indeed amounted almost to extravagance, in prohibiting, as a deadly sin, alike against gallantry, chivalry, and morality, his rewarding the good offices he had received from this poor maiden, by abusing any of the advantages which her confidence in his honour had afforded. To do Sir Piercie justice, it was an idea which never entered into his head; and he would probably have dealt the most scientific *imbrocata, stoccata, or punto reverso*, which the school of Vincent Saviola had taught him, to any man who had dared to suggest to him such selfish and ungrateful meanness. On the other hand, he was a man, and foresaw various circumstances

which might render their journey together in this intimate fashion a scandal and a snare. Moreover, he was a coxcomb and a courtier, and felt there was something ridiculous in travelling the land with a miller's daughter behind his saddle, giving rise to suspicions not very creditable to either, and to ludicrous constructions, so far as he himself was concerned.

"I would," he said half aloud, "that, if such might be done without harm or discredit to the too-ambitious, yet too-well-distinguishing Molinara, she and I were fairly severed, and bound on our different courses; even as we see the goodly vessel bound for the distant seas hoist sails and bear away into the deep, while the humble fly-boat carries to shore those friends, who, with wounded hearts and watery eyes, have committed to their higher destinies the more daring adventurers by whom the fair frigate is manned."

He had scarce uttered the wish when it was gratified; for the host entered to say that his worshipful knight-hood's horse was ready to be brought forth as he had desired; and on his inquiry for "the—the—damsel—that is—the young woman"—

"Mysie Happer," said the landlord, "has returned to her father's; but she bade me say, you could not miss the road for Edinburgh, in respect it was neither far way nor foul gate."

It is seldom we are exactly blessed with the precise fulfilment of our wishes at the moment when we utter them; perhaps because Heaven wisely withholds what, if granted, would be often received with ingratitude. So at least it chanced in the present instance; for when mine host said that Mysie was returned homeward, the knight was tempted to reply, with an ejaculation of surprise and vexation, and a hasty demand, whither and when she had departed? The first emotions his prudence suppressed, the second found utterance.

"Where is she gane?" said the host, gazing on him, and repeating his question—"She is gane hame to her father's, it is like—and she gaed just when she gave

orders about your worship's horse, and saw it weel fed, (she might have trusted me, but millers and millers' kin think a' body as thief-like as themselves) an' she's three miles on the gate by this time."

"Is she gone, then?" muttered Sir Piercie, making two or three hasty strides through the narrow apartment—"Is she gone?—Well, then, let her go. She could have had but disgrace by abiding by me, and I little credit by her society. That I should have thought there was such difficulty in shaking her off! I warrant she is by this time laughing with some clown she has encountered; and my rich chain will prove a good dowry.—And ought it not to prove so? and has she not deserved it, were it ten times more valuable?—Piercie Shafton! Piercie Shafton! dost thou grudge thy deliverer the guerdon she hath so dearly won? The selfish air of this northern land hath infected thee, Piercie Shafton, and blighted the blossoms of thy generosity, even as it is said to shrivel the flowers of the mulberry.—Yet I thought," he added, after a moment's pause, "that she would not so easily and voluntarily have parted from me. But it skills not thinking of it.—Cast my reckoning, mine host, and let your groom lead forth my nag."

The good host seemed also to have some mental point to discuss, for he answered not instantly, debating perhaps whether his conscience would bear a double charge for the same guests. Apparently his conscience replied in the negative, though not without hesitation, for he at length replied—"It's daffing to lee; it winna deny that the lawing is clean paid. Ne'ertheless, if your worshipful knighthood pleases to give aught for increase of trouble"—

"How!" said the Knight; "the reckoning paid? and by whom, I pray you?"

"E'en by Mysie Happer, if truth maun be spoken, as I said before," answered the honest landlord, with as many compunctious visitings for telling the verity as another might have felt for making a lie in the circum-

stances—"And out of the moneys supplied for your honour's journey by the Abbot, as she tauld to me. And laith were I to surcharge any gentleman that darkens my doors." He added, in the confidence of honesty which his frank avowal entitled him to entertain, "Nevertheless, as I said before, if it pleases your knighthood of free good-will to consider extraordinary trouble"—

The Knight cut short his argument, by throwing the landlord a rose-noble, which probably doubled the value of a Scottish reckoning, though it would have defrayed but a half one at the Three Cranes or the Vintry. The bounty so much delighted mine host, that he ran to fill the stirrup-cup (for which no charge was ever made) from a butt yet charier than that which he had pierced for the former stoup. The Knight paced slowly to horse, partook of his courtesy, and thanked him with the stiff condescension of the court of Elizabeth; then mounted and followed the northern path, which was pointed out as the nearest to Edinburgh, and which, though very unlike a modern highway, bore yet so distinct a resemblance to a public and frequented road as not to be easily mistaken.

"I shall not need her guidance it seems," said he to himself, as he rode slowly onward; "and I suppose that was one reason of her abrupt departure, so different from what one might have expected.—Well, I am well rid of her. Do we not pray to be liberated from temptation? Yet that she should have erred so much in estimation of her own situation and mine, as to think of defraying the reckoning! I would I saw her once more, but to explain to her the solecism of which her inexperience hath rendered her guilty. And I fear," he added, as he emerged from some straggling trees, and looked out upon a wild moorish country, composed of a succession of swelling lumpish hills, "I fear I shall soon want the aid of this Ariadne, who might afford me a clue through the recesses of yonder mountainous labyrinth."

As the Knight thus communed with himself, his attention was caught by the sound of a horse's footsteps; and

a lad, mounted on a little grey Scottish nag, about fourteen hands high, coming along a path which led from behind the trees, joined him on the high-road, if it could be termed such.

The dress of the lad was completely in village fashion, yet neat and handsome in appearance. He had a jerkin of grey cloth slashed and trimmed, with black hose of the same, with deer-skin rullions or sandals, and handsome silver spurs. A cloak of a dark mulberry colour was closely drawn round the upper part of his person, and the cape in part muffled his face, which was also obscured by his bonnet of black velvet cloth and its little plume of feathers.

Sir Piercie Shafton, fond of society, desirous also to have a guide, and, moreover, prepossessed in favour of so handsome a youth, failed not to ask him whence he came, and whither he was going. The youth looked another way, as he answered, that he was going to Edinburgh, "to seek service in some nobleman's family."

"I fear me you have run away from your last master," said Sir Piercie, "since you dare not look me in the face, while you answer my question."

"Indeed, sir, I have not," answered the lad bashfully, while, as if with reluctance, he turned round his face, and instantly withdrew it. It was a glance, but the discovery was complete. There was no mistaking the dark full eye, the cheek in which much embarrassment could not altogether disguise an expression of comic humour, and the whole figure at once betrayed, under her metamorphosis, the Maid of the Mill. The recognition was joyful, and Sir Piercie Shafton was too much pleased to have regained his companion, to remember the various good reasons which had consoled him for losing her.

To his questions respecting her dress she answered, that she had obtained it in the Kirk-town from a friend; it was the holiday suit of a son of her's, who had taken the field with his liege-lord, the baron of the land. She had borrowed the suit under pretence she meant to play in some mumming or rural masquerade. She had left,

she said, her own apparel in exchange, which was better worth ten crowns than this was worth four.

"And the nag, my ingenious Molinara," said Sir Piercie, "whence comes the nag?"

"I borrowed him from our host at the Gled's Nest," she replied; and added, half stifling a laugh, "he has sent to get, instead of it, our Ball, which I left in the Tasker's park at Cripplecross. He will be lucky if he find it there."

"But then the poor man will lose his horse, most argute Mysinda," said Sir Piercie Shafton, whose English notions of property were a little startled at a mode of acquisition more congenial to the ideas of a miller's daughter (and he a Border miller to boot) than with those of an English person of quality.

"And if he does lose his horse," said Mysie, laughing, "surely he is not the first man on the marches who has had such a mischance? But he will be no loser, for I warrant he will stop the value out of moneys which he has owed my father this many a day."

"But then your father will be the loser," objected yet again the pertinacious uprightness of Sir Piercie Shafton.

"What signifies it now to talk of my father?" said the damsel pettishly; then instantly changing to a tone of deep feeling, she added, "My father has this day lost that, which will make him hold light the loss of all the gear he has left."

Struck with the accents of remorseful sorrow in which his companion uttered these few words, the English Knight felt himself bound both in honor and conscience to expostulate with her as strongly as he could, on the risk of the step which she had now taken, and on the propriety of her returning to her father's house. The matter of his discourse, though adorned with many unnecessary flourishes, was honourable both to his head and heart.

The Maid of the Mill listened to his flowing periods with her head sunk on her bosom as she rode, like one in deep thought or deeper sorrow. When he had finished, she raised up her countenance, looked full on the

Knight, and replied with great firmness—"If you are weary of my company, Sir Piercie Shafton, you have but to say so, and the miller's daughter will be no farther cumber to you. And do not think I will be a burden to you, if we travel together to Edinburgh; I have wit enough and pride enough to be a willing burden to no man. But if you reject not my company at present, and fear not it will be burdensome to you hereafter, speak no more to me of returning back. All that you can say to me I have said to myself; and that I am now here, is a sign that I have said it to no purpose. Let this subject, therefore, be for ever ended betwixt us. I have already, in some small fashion, been useful to you, and the time may come I may be more so; for this is not your land of England, where men say justice is done with little fear or favour to great and to small; but it is a land where men do by the strong hand, and defend by the ready wit, and I know better than you the perils you are exposed to."

Sir Piercie Shafton was somewhat mortified to find that the damsel conceived her presence useful to him as a protectress as well as guide, and said something of seeking protection from nought save his own arm and his good sword. Mysie answered very quietly, that she nothing doubted his bravery; but it was that very quality of bravery which was most likely to involve him in danger. Sir Piercie Shafton, whose head never kept very long in any continued train of thinking, acquiesced without much reply; resolving in his own mind that the maiden only used this apology to disguise her real motive of affection to his person. The romance of the situation flattered his vanity and elevated his imagination, as placing him in the situation of one of those romantic heroes of whom he had read the histories, where similar transformations made a distinguished figure.

He took many a sidelong glance at his page, whose habits of country sport and country exercise had rendered her quite adequate to sustain the character she



had assumed. She managed the little nag with dexterity, and even with grace ; nor did any thing appear which could have betrayed her disguise, except when a bashful consciousness of her companion's eyes being fixed on her, gave her an appearance of temporary embarrassment, which greatly added to her beauty.

The couple rode forward as in the morning, pleased with themselves and with each other, until they arrived at the village where they were to repose for the night, and where all the inhabitants of the little inn, both male and female, joined in extolling the good grace and handsome countenance of the English knight, and the uncommon beauty of his youthful attendant.

It was here that Mysie Happer first made Sir Piercie Shaston sensible of the reserved manner in which she proposed to live with him. She announced him as her master, and, waiting upon him with the reverend demeanour of an actual domestic, permitted not the least approach to familiarity, not even such as the Knight might with the utmost innocence have ventured upon. For example, Sir Piercie, who, as we know, was a great connoisseur in dress, was detailing to her the advantageous change which he proposed to make in her attire so soon as they should reach Edinburgh, by arraying her in his own colours of pink and carnation. Mysie Happer listened with great complacency to the unctious with which he dilated upon wels, laces, slashes, and trimmings, until carried away by the enthusiasm with which he was asserting the superiority of the falling band over the Spanish ruff, he approached his hand, in the way of illustration, towards the collar of his page's doublet. She instantly stepped back, and gravely reminded him that she was alone and under his protection.

"You cannot but remember the cause which has brought me here," she continued ; "make the least approach to any familiarity which you would not offer to a princess surrounded by her court, and you have seen the last of the miller's daughter—She will vanish as the chaff

disappears from the shieling-hill,\* when the west wind blows."

"I do protest, fair Molinara," said Sir Piercie Shaston—but the fair Molinara had disappeared before his protest could be uttered. "A most singular wench," said he to himself ; "and by this hand as discreet as she is fair-featured—Certes, shame it were to offer her scathe or dishonour ! She makes similes, too, though somewhat savouring of her condition. Had she but read Euphues, and forgotten that accursed mill and shieling-hill, it is my thought that her converse would be broidered with as many and as choice pearls of compliment, as that of the most rhetorical lady in the Court of Feliciana. I trust she means to return to bear me company ?

But that was no part of Mysie's prudential scheme. It was then drawing to dusk, and he saw her not again until the next morning, when the horses were brought to the door that they might prosecute their journey.

But our story here necessarily leaves the English knight and his page, to return to the tower of Glendearg.

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## CHAPTER XII.

You call it an ill angel—it may be so ;  
But sure I am, among the ranks which fell,  
'Tis the first fiend ere counsell'd man to rise,  
And win the bliss the sprite himself had forfeited.  
*Old Play.*

WE must resume our narrative at the period when Mary Avenel was conveyed to the apartment which had been formerly occupied by the two Glendinnings, and when her faithful attendant Tibbie had exhausted herself

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\* The place where corn was winnowed, while that operation was performed by the hand, was called in Scotland the shieling-hill.