

They were those of a huntsman within point-blank shot of a noble stag, who is yet too much struck with his majesty of front and of antler to take aim at him. They were those of a fowler, who, levelling his gun at a magnificent eagle, is yet reluctant to use his advantage when he sees the noble sovereign of the birds pruning himself in proud defiance of whatever may be attempted against him. The heart of the Sub-Prior (bigoted as he was) relented, and he doubted if he ought to purchase by a rigorous discharge of what he deemed his duty, the remorse he might afterwards feel for the death of one so nobly independent in thought and character, the friend, besides, of his own happiest years, during which they had, side by side, striven in the noble race of knowledge, and indulged their intervals of repose in the lighter studies of classical and general letters.

The Sub-Prior's hand pressed his half-o'ershadowed cheek, and his eye, more completely obscured, was bent on the ground, as if to hide the workings of his relenting nature.

"Were but Edward safe from the infection," he thought to himself—"Edward, whose eager and enthusiastic mind presses forward in the chase of all that hath even the shadow of knowledge, I might trust this enthusiast with the women, after due caution to them that they cannot, without guilt, attend to his reveries."

As the Sub-Prior revolved these thoughts, and delayed the definitive order which was to determine the fate of the prisoner, a sudden noise at the entrance of the tower diverted his attention for an instant, and, his cheek and brow inflamed with all the glow of heat and determination, Edward Glendinning rushed into the room.

CHAPTER XIV.

Then in my gown of sober gray
Along the mountain path I'll wander,
And wind my solitary way
To the sad shrine that courts me yonder.

There, in the calm monastic shade,
All injuries may be forgiven ;
And there for thee, obdurate maid,
My orisons shall rise to heaven.

The Cruel Lady of the Mountains.

THE first words which Edward uttered were,—“My brother is safe, reverend father—he is safe, thank God, and lives !—There is not in Corrinan-shian a grave, nor a vestige of a grave. The turf around the fountain has neither been disturbed by pick-axe, spade, or mattock, since the deer's-hair first sprang there. He lives as surely as I live !”

The earnestness of the youth—the vivacity with which he looked and moved—the springy step, outstretched hand, and ardent eye, reminded Henry Warden of Halbert, so lately his guide.

The brothers had indeed a strong family resemblance, though Halbert was far more athletic and active in his person, taller and better knit in the limbs, and though Edward had, on ordinary occasions, a look of more habitual acuteness and more profound reflection. The preacher was interested as well as the Sub-Prior.

“Of whom do you speak, my son ?” he said, in a tone as unconcerned as if his own fate had not been at the same instant trembling in the balance, and as if a dungeon and death did not appear to be his instant doom—“Of whom, I say, speak you ? If of a youth somewhat older than you seem to be—brown-haired, open-featured, taller and stronger than you appear, yet having much of

of clay, whom the blessed Tishbite invoked, when, stung by the reproach of the Shunamite woman, he prayed that her son's soul might come into him again."

"It was by his intercession, however," repeated the Sub-Prior; "for what says the Vulgate? Thus is it written: '*Et exaudivit Dominus vocem Helie; et reversa est anima pueri intra eum, et revixit;*'—and thinkest thou the intercession of a glorified saint is more feeble than when he walks on earth, shrouded in a tabernacle of clay, and seeing but with the eye of flesh?"

During this controversy Edward Glendinning appeared restless and impatient, agitated by some strong internal feeling, but whether of joy, grief, or expectation, his countenance did not expressly declare. He took now the unusual freedom to break in upon the discourse of the Sub-Prior, who, notwithstanding his resolution to the contrary, was obviously kindling in the spirit of controversy, which Edward diverted by conjuring his reverence to allow him to speak a few words with him in private.

"Remove the prisoner," said the Sub-Prior to Christie; "look to him carefully that he escape not; but for thy life do him no injury."

His commands being obeyed, Edward and the Monk were left alone, when the Sub-Prior thus addressed him.

"What hath come over thee, Edward, that thy eye kindles so wildly, and thy cheek is thus changing from scarlet to pale? Why didst thou break in so hastily and unadvisedly upon the argument with which I was prostrating yonder heretic? And wherefore dost thou not tell thy mother that her son is restored to her by the intercession, as Holy Church well warrants us to believe, of blessed Saint Benedict, the patron of our Order? For if ever my prayers were put forth to him with zeal, it hath been in behalf of this house, and thine eyes have seen the result—go tell it to thy mother."

"I must tell her then," said Edward, "that if she has regained one son, another is lost to her."

"What meanest thou, Edward? what language is this?" said the Sub-Prior.

"Father," said the youth, kneeling down to him, "my sin and my shame shall be told thee, and thou shalt witness my penance with thine own eyes."

"I comprehend thee not," said the Sub-Prior. "What canst thou have done to deserve such self-accusation?—Hast thou too listened," he added, knitting his brows, "to the demon of heresy, ever most effectual tempter of those, who, like yonder unhappy man, are distinguished by their love of knowledge?"

"I am guiltless in that matter," answered Glendinning, "nor have presumed to think otherwise than thou, my kind father, hast taught me, and than the church allows."

"And what is it then, my son," said the Sub-Prior, kindly, "which thus afflicts thy conscience? speak it to me, that I may answer thee in the words of comfort; for the Church's mercy is great to those obedient children who doubt not her power."

"My confession will require her mercy," replied Edward. "My brother Halbert—so kind, so brave, so gentle, who spoke not, thought not, acted not, but in love to me, whose hand had aided me in every difficulty, whose eye watched over me like the eagle's over her nestlings, when they prove their first flight from the eyry—this brother, so kind, so gentle, so affectionate—I heard of his sudden, his bloody, his violent death, and I rejoiced—I heard of his unexpected restoration, and I sorrowed!"

"Edward," said the father, "thou art beside thyself—what could urge thee to such odious ingratitude?—in your hurry of spirits you have mistaken the confused tenor of your feelings.—Go, my son, pray and compose thy mind—we will speak of this another time."

"No, father, no," said Edward vehemently, "now, or never!—I will find the means to tame this rebellious heart of mine, or I will tear it out of my bosom—Mistake its passions?—No, father, grief can ill be mistaken for joy—All wept, all shrieked around me—my mother—the menials—she, too, the cause of my crime—all wept—

and I—I could hardly disguise my brutal and insane joy, under the appearance of revenge—Brother, I said, I cannot give thee tears, but I will give thee blood—Yes, father, as I counted hour after hour, while I kept watch upon the English prisoner, and said, I am an hour nearer to hope and to happiness’—

“I understand thee not, Edward,” said the Monk, “nor can I conceive in what way thy brother’s supposed murder should have affected thee with such unnatural joy—Surely the sordid desire to succeed him in his small possessions”——

“Perish the paltry trash!” said Edward with the same emotion. “No, father, it was rivalry—it was jealous rage—it was the love of Mary Avenel that rendered me the unnatural wretch I confess myself!”

“Of Mary Avenel!” said the priest—“of a lady so high above either of you in name and in rank? How dared Halbert—how dared you, presume to lift your eye to her but in honour and respect, as to a superior of another degree from yours?”

“When did love wait for the sanction of heraldry?” replied Edward; “and in what but a line of dead ancestors was Mary, our mother’s guest and foster-child, different from us, with whom she was brought up?—Enough, we loved—we both loved her! But the passion of Halbert was requited. He knew it not, he saw it not—but I was sharper-eyed. I saw that even when I was more approved, Halbert was more beloved. With me she would sit for hours at our common task with the cold simplicity and indifference of a sister, but with Halbert she trusted not herself. She changed colour, she was fluttered when he approached her; and when he left her, she was sad, pensive, and solitary. I bore all this—I saw my rival’s advancing progress in her affections—I bore it, father, and yet I hated him not—I could not hate him!”

“And well for thee that thou didst not,” said the father; “wild and headstrong as thou art, wouldst thou hate thy brother for partaking in thine own folly?”

“Father,” replied Edward, “the world esteems thee wise, and holds thy knowledge of mankind high; but thy question shows that thou hast never loved. It was by an effort that I saved myself from hating my kind and affectionate brother, who, all unsuspecting of my rivalry, was perpetually loading me with kindness. Nay, there were moods of my mind, in which I could return that kindness for a time with energetic enthusiasm. Never did I feel this so strongly as on the night which parted us. But I could not help rejoicing when he was swept from my track—could not help sorrowing when he was again restored to be a stumbling-block in my paths.”

“May God be gracious to thee, my son!” said the Monk; “this is an awful state of mind. Even in such evil mood did the first murderer rise up against his brother, because Abel’s was the more acceptable sacrifice.”

“I will wrestle with the demon which has haunted me, father,” replied the youth, firmly—“I will wrestle with him, and I will subdue him. But first I must remove from the scenes which are to follow here. I cannot endure that I should see Mary Avenel’s eyes again flash with joy at the restoration of her lover. It were a sight to make indeed a second Cain of me! My fierce, turbid, and transitory joy discharged itself in a thirst to commit homicide, and how can I estimate the frenzy of my despair?”

“Madman!” said the Sub-Prior, “at what dreadful crime does thy fury drive?”

“My lot is determined, father,” said Edward, in a resolute tone; “I will embrace the spiritual state which you have so oft recommended. It is my purpose to return with you to Saint Mary’s, and with the permission of the Holy Virgin and of Saint Benedict, to offer my profession to the Abbot.”

“Not now, my son,” said the Sub-Prior, “not in this distemperature of mind. The wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of: and shall we make our offer-

ings to wisdom and to goodness itself with less of solemn resolution and deep devotion of mind, than is necessary to make them acceptable to our own frail companions in this valley of darkness? This I say to thee my son, not as meaning to deter thee from the good path thou art now inclined to prefer, but that thou may'st make thy vocation and thine election sure."

"There are actions, father," returned Edward, "which brook no delay, and this is one. It must be done this very *now*, or it may never be done. Let me go with you; let me not behold the return of Halbert into this house. Shame, and the sense of the injustice I have already done him, will join with these dreadful passions which urge me to do him yet farther wrong. Let me then go with you."

"With me, my son," said the Sub-Prior, "thou shalt surely go; but our rule, as well as reason and good order, require that you should dwell a space with us as a probationer or novice, before taking upon thee those final vows, which, sequestering thee for ever from the world, dedicate thee to the service of Heaven."

"And when shall we set forth, father?" said the youth, as eagerly as if the journey which he was now undertaking led to the pleasures of a summer holiday.

"Even now, if thou wilt," said the Sub-Prior, yielding to his impetuosity—"go, then, and command them to prepare for our departure.—"Yet stay," he said, as Edward, with all the awakened enthusiasm of his character, hastened from his presence; "come hither, my son, and kneel down."

Edward obeyed, and kneeled down before him. Notwithstanding his slight figure and thin features, the Sub-Prior could, from the energy of his tone, and the earnestness of his devotional manner, impress his pupils and his penitents with no ordinary feelings of personal reverence. His heart always was, as well as seemed to be, in the duty, which he was immediately performing; and the spiritual guide who thus shows a deep conviction of the importance of his office, seldom fails to impress a similar

feeling upon his hearers. Upon such occasions as the present, his puny body seemed to assume more majestic stature—his spare and emaciated countenance bore a bolder, loftier, and more commanding port—his voice, always beautiful, trembled as labouring under the immediate impulse of the Divinity—and his whole demeanour seemed to bespeak, not the mere ordinary man, but the organ of the Church in which she had vested her high power for delivering sinners from their load of iniquity.

"Hast thou, my fair son," said he, "faithfully recounted the circumstances which have thus suddenly determined thee to a religious life?"

"The sins I have confessed, my father," answered Edward, "but I have not yet told of a strange appearance, which, acting on my mind, hath, I think, aided to determine my resolution."

"Tell it then, now," returned the Sub-Prior; "it is thy duty to leave me uninstructed in nought, so that thereby I may understand the temptation that besets thee."

"I tell it with unwillingness," said Edward; "for although, God wot, I speak but the mere truth, yet even while my tongue speaks it as truth, my own ears receive it as fable."

"Yet say the whole," said Father Eustace; "neither fear rebuke from me, seeing I may know reasons for receiving as true that which others might regard as fabulous."

"Know, then, father," replied Edward, "that, betwixt hope and despair—and, heavens! what a hope!—the hope to find the corpse mangled and crushed hastily in amongst the bloody clay which the foot of the scornful victor had trod down upon my good, my gentle, my courageous brother,—I sped to the glen called Corrinanshian; but, as your reverence has been already informed, neither the grave, which my unhallowed wishes had in spite of my better self longed to see, nor any appearance of the earth having been opened, was visible in the soli-

tary spot where Martin had, at morning yesterday, seen the fatal hillock. You know our dales-men, father. The place hath an evil name, and this deception of the sight inclined them to leave it. My companions became affrighted, and hastened down the glen as men caught in trespass. My hopes were too much blighted, my mind too much agitated, to fear either the living or the dead. I descended the glen more slowly than they, often looking back, and not ill pleased with the poltroonery of my companions, which left me to my own perplexed and moody humour, and induced them to hasten into the broader dale. They were already out of sight, and lost amongst the windings of the glen, when, looking back, I saw a female form standing beside the fountain"—

"How, my fair son?" said the Sub-Prior, "beware you jest not with your present situation!"

"I jest not, father," answered the youth; "it may be I shall never jest again—surely not for many a day. I saw, I say, the form of a female clad in white, such—such as the Spirit which haunts the house of Avenel is supposed to be. Believe me, my father, for, by heaven and earth, I say nought but what I saw with these eyes!"

"I believe thee, my son," said the Monk; "proceed in thy strange story."

"The apparition," said Edward Glendinning, "sung, and thus run her lay; for strange as it may seem to you, her words abide by my remembrance as if they had been sung to me from infancy upward:

'Thou who seek'st my fountain lone,
With thoughts and hopes thou darest not own;
Whose heart within leap'd wildly glad
When most his brow seem'd dark and sad;
Hie thee back, thou find'st not here
Corpse or coffin, grave or bier;
The Dead Alive is gone and fled—
Go thou, and join the Living Dead!

'The Living Dead, whose sober brow
Oft shrouds such thoughts as thou hast now,

Whose hearts within are seldom cured
Of passions by their vows abjured;
Where, under sad and solemn show,
Vain hopes are nursed, wild wishes glow.
Seek the convent's vaulted room,
Prayer and vigil be thy doom;
Doff the green, and don the grey,
To the cloister hence away!"

"'Tis a wild lay," said the Sub-Prior, "and chanted, I fear me, with no good end. But we have power to turn the machinations of Satan to his shame. Edward, thou shalt go with me as thou desirest; thou shalt prove the life for which I have long thought thee best fitted—thou shalt aid, my son, this trembling hand of mine to sustain the Holy Ark, which bold unhallowed men press rashly forward to touch and to profane.—Wilt thou not first see thy mother?"

"I will see no one," said Edward hastily; "I will risk nothing that may shake the purpose of my heart. From Saint Mary's they shall learn my destination—all of them shall learn it. My mother—Mary Avenel—my restored and happy brother—they shall all know that Edward lives no longer to the world to be a clog on their happiness. Mary shall no longer need to constrain her looks and expressions to coldness because I am nigh. She shall no longer"—

"My son," said the Sub-Prior, interrupting him, "it is not by looking back on the vanities and vexations of this world, that we fit ourselves for the discharge of duties which are not of it. Go, get our horses ready, and as we descend the glen together, I will teach thee the truths through which the fathers and wise men of old had that precious alchemy, which can convert suffering into happiness."

the same air and of the same tone of voice—if such a one is the brother whom you seek, it may be I can tell you news of him.”

“Speak, then, for Heaven’s sake,” said Edward—“life or death lies on thy tongue.”

The Sub-Prior joined eagerly in the same request, and without waiting to be urged, the preacher gave a minute account of the circumstances under which he met the elder Glendinning, with so exact a description of his person, that there remained no doubt as to his identity. When he mentioned that Halbert Glendinning had conducted him to the dell in which they found the grass bloody, and a grave newly closed, and told how the youth accused himself of the slaughter of Sir Piercie Shafton, the Sub-Prior looked on Edward with astonishment.

“Didst thou not say, even now,” he said, “that there was no vestige of a grave in that spot?”

“No more vestige of the earth having been removed than if the turf had grown there since the days of Adam,” replied Edward Glendinning. “It is true,” he added, “that the adjacent grass was trampled and bloody.”

“These are delusions of the enemy,” said the Sub-Prior, crossing himself.—“Christian men may no longer doubt of it.”

“But an’ it be so,” said Warden, “Christian men might better guard themselves by the sword of prayer than by the idle form of a cabalistical spell.”

“The badge of our salvation,” said the Sub-Prior, “cannot be so termed—the sign of the cross disarmeth all evil spirits.”

“Ay,” answered Henry Warden, apt and armed for controversy; “but it should be borne in the heart, not scored with the fingers in the air. That very impassive air, through which your hand passes, shall as soon bear the imprint of your action, as the external action shall avail the fond bigot who substitutes vain motions of the body, idle genuflections, and signs of the cross, for the living and heart-born duties of faith and good works.”

“I pity thee,” said the Sub-Prior, as actively ready for polemics as himself,—“I pity thee, Henry, and reply not to thee. Thou mayst as well winnow forth and measure the ocean with a sieve, as mete out the power of holy words, deeds, and signs, by the erring gauge of thine own reason.

“Not by mine own reason would I mete them,” said Warden; “but by His Holy Word, that unfading and unerring lamp of our paths, compared to which human reason is but as a glimmering and fading taper, and your boasted tradition only a misleading wild-fire. Show me your Scripture warrant for ascribing virtue to such vain signs and motions?”

“I offered thee a fair field of debate,” said the Sub-Prior, “which thou didst refuse. I will not at present resume the controversy.”

“Were these my last accents,” said the Reformer, “and were they uttered at the stake, half-choked with smoke, and as the faggots kindled into a blaze around me, with that last utterance I would testify against the superstitious devices of Rome.”

The Sub-Prior suppressed with pain the controversial answer which arose to his lips, and turning to Edward Glendinning, he said, “there could be now no doubt that his mother ought presently to be informed that her son lived.”

“I told you that two hours since,” said Christie of the Clint-hill, “an you would have believed me. But it seems you are more willing to take the word of an old grey sornor, whose life has been spent in pattering heresy, than mine, though I never rode a foray in my life without duly saying my pater-noster.”

“Go, then,” said Father Eustace to Edward; “let thy sorrowing mother know that her son is restored to her from the grave, like the child of the widow of Zarephath; at the intercession,” he added, looking at Henry Warden, “of the blessed Saint whom I invoked in his behalf.”

“Deceived thyself,” said Warden, instantly, “thou art a deceiver of others. It was no dead man, no creature