

"that will be when we shall see two suns in one heaven!"

"Do not think so," replied the Queen; "we are well assured of our sister's good faith. Elizabeth loves fame—and not all that she has won by her power and her wisdom will equal that which she will acquire by extending her hospitality to a distressed sister!—not all that she may hereafter do of good, wise, and great, would blot out the reproach of abusing our confidence.—Farewell, my page—now my knight—farewell for a brief season. I will dry the tears of Catherine, or I will weep with her till neither of us can weep longer." She held out her hand to Roland, who, flinging himself on his knees, kissed it with much emotion. He was about to render the same homage to Catherine, when the Queen, assuming an air of sprightliness, said, "Her lips, thou foolish boy! and, Catherine, coy it not—these English gentlemen should see, that, even in our cold clime, Beauty knows how to reward Bravery and Fidelity!"

"We are not now to learn the force of Scottish beauty, or the mettle of Scottish valor," said the Sheriff of Cumberland, courteously—"I would it were in my power to bid these attendants upon her who is herself the mistress of Scottish beauty, as welcome to England as my poor cares would make them. But our Queen's orders are positive in case of such an emergency, and they must not be disputed by her subject.—May I remind your Majesty that the tide ebbs fast?"

The Sheriff took the Queen's hand, and she had already placed her foot on the gangway, by which she was to enter the skiff, when the Abbot, starting from a trance of grief and astonishment at the words of the Sheriff, rushed into the water, and seized upon her mantle.*

"She foresaw it!—She foresaw it!"—he exclaimed—"she foresaw your flight into her realm; and, foreseeing it, gave orders you should be thus received. Blinded, deceived, doomed Princess! your fate is sealed when you quit this strand.—Queen of Scotland, thou shalt not leave thine heritage!" he continued, holding a still firmer grasp upon her mantle; "true men shall turn rebels to thy will, that they may save thee from captivity or death. Fear not the bills and bows whom that gay man has at his beck—we will withstand him by force. Oh, for the arm of my warlike brother!—Roland Avenel, draw thy sword!"

The Queen stood irresolute and frightened: one foot upon the plank, the other on the sand of her native shore, which she was quitting for ever.

"What needs this violence, Sir Priest?" said the Sheriff of Cumberland; "I came hither at your Queen's command, to do her service; and I will depart at her least order, if she rejects such aid as I can offer. No marvel is it if our Queen's wisdom foresaw that such chance as this might happen amidst the turmoils of your unsettled State; and, while willing to afford fair hospitality

to her Royal Sister, deemed it wise to prohibit the entrance of a broken army of her followers into the English frontier."

"You hear," said Queen Mary, gently unloosing her robe from the Abbot's grasp, "that we exercise full liberty of choice in leaving this shore; and, questionless, the choice will remain free to us in going to France, or returning to our own dominions, as we shall determine.—Besides, it is too late.—Your blessing, Father, and God speed thee!"

"May He have mercy on thee, Princess, and speed thee also!" said the Abbot, retreating. "But my soul tells me I look on thee for the last time!"

The sails were hoisted, the oars were plied, the vessel went freshly on her way through the frith, which divides the shores of Cumberland from those of Galloway; but not till the vessel diminished to the size of a child's frigate, did the doubtful, and dejected, and dismissed followers of the Queen cease to linger on the sands; and long, long could they discern the kirk of Mary, as she waved the oft-repeated signal of adieu to her faithful adherents, and to the shores of Scotland.

If good tidings of a private nature could have consoled Roland for parting with his mistress, and for the distresses of his sovereign, he received such comfort some days subsequent to the Queen's leaving Dundrennan. A breathless post—no other than Adam Woodcock—brought despatches from Sir Halbert Glendinning to the Abbot, whom he found with Roland, still residing at Dundrennan, and in vain torturing Boniface with fresh interrogations. The packet bore an earnest invitation to his brother to make Avenel Castle for a time his residence. "The clemency of the Regent," said the writer, "has extended pardon both to Roland and to you, upon condition of your remaining a time under my wardship. And I have that to communicate respecting the parentage of Roland, which not only you will willingly listen to, but which will be also found to afford me, as the husband of his nearest relative, some interest in the future course of his life."

The Abbot read this letter, and paused, as if considering what were best for him to do. Meanwhile, Woodcock took Roland aside, and addressed him as follows:—"Now, look, Mr. Roland, that you do not let any papistrie nonsense lure either the priest or you from the right quarry. See you, you ever bore yourself as a bit of a gentleman. Read that, and thank God that threw old Abbot Boniface in our way, as two of the Seyton's men were conveying him towards Dundrennan here.—We searched him for intelligence concerning that fair exploit of yours at Lochleven, that has cost many a man his life, and me a set of sore bones—and we found what is better for your purpose than ours."

The paper which he gave, was, indeed, an attestation by Father Philip, subscribing himself

an unworthy Sacristan, and brother of the House of Saint Mary's, stating, "that under a vow of secrecy he had united, in the holy sacrament of marriage, Julian Avenel and Catherine Grème; but that Julian having repented of his union, he, Father Philip, had been sinfully prevailed on by him to conceal and disguise the same, according to a complot devised betwixt him and the said Julian Avenel, whereby the poor damsel was induced to believe that the ceremony had been performed by one not in holy orders, and having no authority to that effect. Which sinful concealment the undersigned conceived to be the cause why he was abandoned to the misguiding of a water-fiend, whereby he had been under a spell, which obliged him to answer every question, even touching the most solemn matters, with idle snatches of old songs, besides being sorely afflicted with rheumatic pains ever after. Wherefore he had deposited this testimonial and confession, with the day and date of the said marriage, with his lawful superior Boniface, Abbot of Saint Mary's, *sub sigillo confessionis*."

It appeared by a letter from Julian, folded carefully up with the certificate, that the Abbot Boniface had, in effect, bestirred himself in the affair, and obtained from the Baron a promise to avow his marriage; but the death of both Julian and his injured bride, together with the Abbot's resignation, his ignorance of the fate of their unhappy offspring, and above all, the good father's listless and inactive disposition, had suffered the matter to become totally forgotten, until it was recalled by some accidental conversation with the Abbot Ambrosius concerning the fortunes of the Avenel family. At the request of his successor, the quondam Abbot made search for it; but as he would receive no assistance in looking among the few records of spiritual experiences and important confessions, which he had conscientiously treasured, it might have remained for ever hidden amongst them, but for the more active researches of Sir Halbert Glendinning.

"So that you are like to be heir of Avenel at last, Master Roland, after my lord and lady have gone to their place," said Adam; "and as I have but one boon to ask, I trust you will not nick me with nay."

"Not if it be in my power to say yes, my trusty friend."

"Why then, I must needs, if I live to see that day, keep on feeding the eyases with unwashed flesh," said Woodcock, sturdily, yet as if doubting the reception that his request might meet with.

"Thou shalt feed them with what you list for me," said Roland, laughing; "I am not many months older than when I left the Castle, but I trust I have gathered wit enough to cross no man of skill in his own vocation."

"Then I would not change places with the King's falconer," said Adam Woodcock, "nor with the Queen's neither—but they say she will be mewed up and never need one.—I see it grieves you to think of it, and I could grieve for com-

pany; but what help for it?—Fortune will fly her own flight, let a man holla himself hoarse."

The Abbot and Roland journeyed to Avenel, where the former was tenderly received by his brother, while the lady wept for joy to find that in her favorite orphan she had protected the sole surviving branch of her own family. Sir Halbert Glendinning and his household were not a little surprised at the change which a brief acquaintance with the world had produced in their former inmate, and rejoiced to find, in the pettish, spoiled, and presuming page, a modest and unassuming young man, too much acquainted with his own expectations and character, to be hot or petulant in demanding the consideration which was readily and voluntarily yielded to him. The old Major Domo Wingate was the first to sing his praises, to which Mistress Lillias bore a loud echo, always hoping that God would teach him the true gospel.

To the true gospel the heart of Roland had secretly long inclined, and the departure of the good Abbot for France, with the purpose of entering into some house of his order in that kingdom, removed his chief objection to renouncing the Catholic faith. Another might have existed in the duty which he owed to Magdalen Grème, both by birth and by gratitude. But he learned, ere he had been long a resident in Avenel, that his grandmother had died at Cologne, in the performance of a penance too severe for her age, which she had taken upon herself in behalf of the Queen and Church of Scotland, so soon as she heard of the defeat at Langside. The zeal of the Abbot Ambrosius was more regulated; but he retired into the Scottish convent of —, and so lived there, that the fraternity were inclined to claim for him the honors of canonization. But he guessed their purpose, and prayed them, on his death-bed, to do no honors to the body of one as sinful as themselves; but to send his body and his heart to be buried in Avenel burial-aisle, in the monastery of Saint Mary's, that the last Abbot of that celebrated house of devotion might sleep among its ruins.*

Long before that period arrived, Roland Avenel

* This was not the explanation of the incident of searching for the heart, mentioned in the introduction to the tale, which the author originally intended. It was designed to refer to the heart of Robert Bruce. It is generally known that that great monarch, being on his death-bed, bequeathed to the good Lord James of Douglas, the task of carrying his heart to the Holy Land, to fulfil in a certain degree his own desire to perform a crusade. Upon Douglas's death, fighting against the Moors in Spain, a sort of military *hors d'œuvre* to which he could have pleaded no regular call of duty, his followers brought back the Bruce's heart, and deposited it in the Abbey church of Melrose, the Kennahair of the tale.

This Abbey has been always particularly favored by the Bruce. We have already seen his extreme anxiety that each of the reverend brethren should be daily supplied with a service of boiled almonds, rice and milk, pease, or the like, to be called the King's mess, and that without the ordinary service of their table being either disturbed in quantity or quality. But this was not the only mark of the benignity of good King Robert towards the monks of Melrose, since, by a charter of the date

was wedded to Catherine Seyton, who, after two years' residence with her unhappy mistress, was dismissed upon her being subjected to closer restraint than had been at first exercised. She returned to her father's house, and as Roland was acknowledged for the successor and lawful heir of the ancient house of Avenel, greatly increased as the estate was by the providence of Sir Halbert Glendinning, there occurred no objections to the match on the part of her family. Her mother was recently dead when she first entered the convent; and her father, in the unsettled times which

29th May, 1326, he conferred on the Abbot of Melrose the sum of two thousand pounds sterling, for rebuilding the church of Saint Mary's, ruined by the English; and there is little or no doubt that the principal part of the remains which now display such exquisite specimens of Gothic architecture, at its very purest period, had their origin in this munificent donation. The money was to be paid out of crown lands, estates forfeited to the King, and other property or domains of the crown.

A very curious letter written to his son about three weeks before his death, has been pointed out to me by my friend Mr. Thomas Thomson, Deputy-Register for Scotland. It enlarges so much on the love of the royal writer to the community of Melrose, that it is well worthy of being inserted in a work connected in some degree with Scottish History.

LITERA DOMINI REGIS ROBERTI AD FILIUM SUUM DAVID.

"Robertus dei gratia Rex Scottorum, David precordialissimo filio suo, ac ceteris successoribus suis; Salutem, et sic ejus precepta tenere, ut cum sua benedictione possint regnare. Fili carissime, digne censi videtur filius, qui, paternos in bonis mores imitans, plam ejus nititur exequi voluntatem nec proprie sibi sumit nomen heredis, qui salubribus predecessoris affectibus non adheret: Cupientes igitur, ut plam affectionem et sinceram dilectionem, quam erga monasterium de Melros, ubi cor nostrum ex speciali devotione disposuimus tumulandum, et erga Religiosos ibidem Deo servientes, ipsorum vita sanctissima nos ad hoc excitante, concepimus; Tu ceterique successores nostri pia sinceritate prosequamini, ut, ex vestre dilectionis affectu dictis Religiosis nostri causa post mortem nostram ostendo, ipsi pro nobis ad orandum ferventius et fortius animentur: Vobis precipimus quantum possumus, Instantur supplicamus, et ex toto corde injungimus, Quatinus assignacionibus quoniam eisdem

followed Queen Mary's flight to England, was not averse to an alliance with a youth, who, himself loyal to Queen Mary, still held some influence, through means of Sir Halbert Glendinning, with the party in power.

Roland and Catherine, therefore, were united, spite of their differing faiths; and the White Lady, whose apparition had been infrequent when the house of Avenel seemed verging to extinction, was seen to sport by her haunted well, with a zone of gold around her bosom as broad as the baldric of an Earl.

viris Religiosis et fabrica Ecclesie sue de novo fecimus ac eadem omnibus aliis donacionibus nostris, ipsos libere gaudere permit- tentes, Easdem potius si necesse fuerit augmentantes quam diminuentes, ipsorum petitiones auribus benevolis admittentes, ac ipsos contra suos invasores et emulos pia defensione prote- gentes. Hanc autem exhortacionem supplicacionem et precep- tum tu, fili ceterique successores nostri, prestanti animo com- plere curetis, si nostram benedictionem habere vultis, una cum benedictione filii summi Regis, qui filios docuit patrum volun- tates in bono perficere, asserens in mundum se venire non ut suam voluntatem faceret sed paternam. In testimonium autem nostre devotionis erga locum predictum sic a nobis dilectum et electum conceptu, presentem litteram Religiosis predictis dimit- timus, nostris successoribus in posterum ostendendam. Data apud Cardros, undecimo die Maij, Anno Regni nostri vicesimo quarto."

If this charter be altogether genuine, and there is no appear- ance of forgery, it gives rise to a curious doubt in Scottish his- tory. The letter announces that the King had already desti- ned his heart to be deposited at Melrose. The resolution to send it to Palestine, under the charge of Douglas, must have been adopted betwixt 11th May, 1329, the date of the letter, and 7th June of the same year, when the Bruce died; or else we must suppose that the commission of Douglas extended not only to taking the Bruce's heart to Palestine, but to bring it safe back to its final place of deposit in the Abbey of Melrose.

It would not be worth inquiring by what caprice the author was induced to throw the incident of the Bruce's heart entirely out of the story, save merely to say, that he found him- self unable to fill up the canvas he had sketched, and indisposed to prosecute the management of the supernatural machinery with which his plan, when it was first rough-hewn, was connected and combined.

THE END.

THE BETROTHED,

AND

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.



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