

I wussed to her wash it in St. Anthony's Well, and that will cleanse if anything can—But they say bluid never bleaches out o' linen claiht—Deacon Sanders's new cleansing draps winna do't—I tried them mysell on a bit rag we hae at hame that was mailed w' the bluid of a bit skirling wean that was hurt some gate, but out it winna come—Weel, ye'll say that's queer; but I will bring it out to St. Anthony's blessed Well some brow night just like this, and I'll cry up Allie Muschat, and she and I will hae a grand bouking-washing, and bleach our claihts in the beams of the bonny Lady Moon, that's far pleasanter to me than the sun—the sun's ower het, and ken ye, cummers, my brains are het enough already. But the moon, and the dew, and the night-wind, they are just like a callar kailblade laid on my brow; and whiles I think the moon just shines on purpose to pleasure me, when nabody sees her but mysell."

This raving discourse she continued with prodigious volubility, walking on at a great pace, and dragging Ratcliffe along with her, while he endeavored, in appearance at least, if not in reality, to induce her to moderate her voice.

All at once, she stopped short upon the top of a little hillock, gazed upward fixedly, and said not one word for the space of five minutes. "What the devil is the matter with her now?" said Sharpitlaw to Ratcliffe—"Can you not get her forward?"

"Ye maun just take a grain o' patience w' her, sir," said Ratcliffe. "She'll no gae a foot faster than she likes hersell."

"D—n her," said Sharpitlaw, "I'll take care she has her time in Bedlam or Bridewell, or both, for she's both mad and mischievous."

In the meanwhile, Madge, who had looked very pensive when she first stopped, suddenly burst into a vehement fit of laughter, then paused and sighed bitterly,—then was seized with a second fit of laughter—then, fixing her eyes on the moon, lifted up her voice and sung,—

"Good-even, good fair moon, good-even to thee;
I prithee, dear moon, now show to me
The form and the features, the speech and degree,
Of the man that true lover of mine shall be.

But I need not ask that of the bonny Lady Moon—I ken that weel enough mysell—*true-love* though he wasna—But nabody shall see that I ever tauld a word about the matter—But whiles I wish the bairn had lived—Weel, God guide us, there's a heaven aboon us a'—(here she sighed bitterly), "and a bonny moon, and sterna in it forby" (and here she laughed once more).

"Are we to stand here all night?" said Sharpitlaw, very impatiently. "Drag her forward."

"Ay, sir," said Ratcliffe, "if we kend whilk way to drag her, that would settle it at ance.—Come, Madge, hinny," addressing her, "we'll no be in time to see Nichol and his wife, unless ye show us the road."

"In troth and that I will, Ratton," said she, seizing him by the arm, and resuming her route

with huge strides, considering it was a female who took them. "And I'll tell ye, Ratton, blithe will Nichol Muschat be to see ye, for he says he kens weel there isna sic a villain out o' hell as ye are, and he wad be ravished to hae a crack w' you—like to like, ye ken—it's a proverb never fails—and ye are baith a pair o' the devil's peats I trow—hard to ken whilk deserves the hottest corner o' his ingleside."

Ratcliffe was conscience-struck, and could not forbear making an involuntary protest against this classification. "I never shed blood," he replied.

"But ye hae sauld it, Ratton—ye hae sauld blood mony a time. Folk kill w' the tongue as weel as w' the hand—w' the word as weel as w' the gulley!"

It is the bonny butcher lad,
That wears the sleeves of blue,
He sells the flesh on Saturday,
On Friday that he slew."

"And what is that I am doing now?" thought Ratcliffe. "But I'll hae nae wyte of Robertson's young bluid, if I can help it;" then speaking apart to Madge, he asked her, "Whether she did not remember ony o' her auld sangs?"

"Mony a dainty ane," said Madge; "and blithely can I sing them, for lightsome sangs make merry gate." And she sang,—

"When the glade's in the blue cloud,
The lavrock lies still;
When the bound's in the green-wood,
The hind keeps the hill."

"Silence her cursed noise, if you should throtle her," said Sharpitlaw; "I see somebody yonder.—Keep close, my boys, and creep round the shoulder of the height. George Poinder, stay you with Ratcliffe and that mad yelling bitch; and you other two, come with me round under the shadow of the brae."

And he crept forward with the stealthy pace of an Indian savage, who leads his band to surprise an unsuspecting party of some hostile tribe. Ratcliffe saw them glide off, avoiding the moonlight, and keeping as much in the shade as possible. "Robertson's done up," said he to himself; "these young lads are aye sae thoughtless. What devil could he hae to say to Jeanie Deans, or to ony woman on earth, that he suld gang awa and get his neck raxed for her? And this mad quean, after cracking like a pen-gun, and skirling like a pea-hen for the hail night, behaves just to hae hadden her tongue when her clavers might have done some gude! But it's aye the way w' women; if they ever haud their tongues awa', ye may swear it's for mischief. I wish I could set her on again without this blood-sucker kenning what I am doing. But he's as gleg as MacKeachan's elshin, that ran through sax plies of bendleather and half an inch into the king's heel."

He then began to hum, but in a very low and suppressed tone, the first stanza of a favorite ballad of Wildfire's, the words of which bore some distant analogy with the situation of Robertson

trusting that the power of association would not fail to bring the rest to her mind:

"There's a bloodhound ranging Tinwald wood,
There's harness glancing shoon:
There's a maiden sits on Tinwald brae,
And she sings loud between."

Madge had no sooner received the catch-word, than she vindicated Ratcliffe's sagacity by setting off at score with the song:—

"O sleep ye sound, Sir James, she said,
When ye suld rise and ride!
There's twenty men, w' bow and blade,
Are seeking where ye hide."

Though Ratcliffe was at a considerable distance from the spot called Muschat's Cairn, yet his eyes, practised like those of a cat to penetrate darkness, could mark that Robertson had caught the alarm. George Poinder, less keen of sight, or less attentive, was not aware of his flight any more than Sharpitlaw and his assistants, whose view, though they were considerably nearer to the cairn, was intercepted by the broken nature of the ground under which they were screening themselves. At length, however, after the interval of five or six minutes, they also perceived that Robertson had fled, and rushed hastily towards the place, while Sharpitlaw called out aloud, in the harsh tones of a voice which resembled a saw-mill at work, "Chase, lads—chase—haud the brae—I see him on the edge of the hill!" Then hollowing back to the rear guard of his detachment, he issued his farther orders: "Ratcliffe, come here, and detain the woman—George, run and keep the stile at the Duke's Walk—Ratcliffe, come here directly—but first knock out that mad bitch's brains!"

"Ye had better rin for it, Madge," said Ratcliffe, "for it's ill dealing w' an angry man."

Madge Wildfire was not so absolutely void of common sense as not to understand this innuendo; and while Ratcliffe, in seemingly anxious haste of obedience, hastened to the spot where Sharpitlaw waited to deliver up Jeanie Deans to his custody, she fled with all the despatch she could exert in an opposite direction. Thus the whole party were separated, and in rapid motion of flight or pursuit, excepting Ratcliffe and Jeanie, whom, although making no attempt to escape, he held fast by the cloak, and who remained standing by Muschat's Cairn.

CHAPTER XVIII.

You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

JEANIE DEANS,—for here our story unites itself with that part of the narrative which broke off at the end of the fifteenth chapter,—while she waited, in terror and amazement, the hasty advance of three or four men towards her, was yet more startled at their suddenly breaking asunder, and giving chase in different directions to the late object of her terror, who became at that moment, though she could not well assign a reasonable

cause, rather the cause of her interest. One of the party (it was Sharpitlaw) came straight up to her, and saying, "Your name is Jeanie Deans, and you are my prisoner," immediately added, "but if you will tell me which way he ran I will let you go."

"I dinna ken, sir," was all the poor girl could utter; and, indeed, it is the phrase which rises most readily to the lips of any person in her rank, as the readiest reply to any embarrassing question.

"But," said Sharpitlaw, "ye ken wha it was ye were speaking w', my leddy, on the hill side, and midnight sae near; ye surely ken *that*, my bonny woman?"

"I dinna ken, sir," again iterated Jeanie, who really did not comprehend in her terror the nature of the questions which were so hastily put to her in this moment of surprise.

"We will try to mend your memory by and by, hinny," said sharpitlaw, and shouted, as we have already told the reader, to Ratcliffe, to come up and take charge of her, while he himself directed the chase after Robertson, which he still hoped might be successful. As Ratcliffe approached, Sharpitlaw pushed the young woman towards him with some rudeness, and betaking himself to the more important object of his quest, began to scale crags and scramble up steep banks, with an agility of which his profession and his general gravity of demeanor would previously have argued him incapable. In a few minutes there was no one within sight, and only a distant halloo from one of the pursuers to the other, faintly heard on the side of the hill, argued that there was any one within hearing. Jeanie Deans was left in the clear moonlight, standing under the guard of a person of whom she knew nothing, and, what was worse, concerning whom, as the reader is well aware, she could have learned nothing that would not have increased her terror.

When all in the distance was silent, Ratcliffe for the first time addressed her, and it was in that cold, sarcastic, indifferent tone familiar to habitual depravity, whose crimes are instigated by custom rather than by passion. "This is a brow night for ye, dearie," he said, attempting to pass his arm across her shoulder, "to be on the green hill w' your jo." Jeanie extricated herself from his grasp, but did not make any reply. "I think lads and lasses," continued the ruffian, "dinna meet at Muschat's Cairn at midnight to crack nuts," and he again attempted to take hold of her.

"If ye are an officer of justice, sir," said Jeanie, again eluding his attempt to seize her, "ye deserve to have your coat stripped from your back."

"Very true, hinny," said he, succeeding forcibly in his attempt to get hold of her, "but suppose I should strip your cloak off first?"

"Ye are more a man, I am sure, than to hurt me, sir," said Jeanie; "for God's sake have pity on a half-distracted creature!"

"Come, come," said Ratcliffe, "you're a good-looking wench, and should not be cross-grained. I was going to be an honest man—but the devil has this very day flung first a lawyer, and then a woman, in my gate. I'll tell you what, Jeanie, they are out on the hill-side—if you'll be guided by me, I'll carry you to a wee bit corner in the Pleasance, that I ken o' in an auld wife's, that a' the prokitors o' Scotland wot naething o', and we'll send Robertson word to meet us in Yorkshire, for there is a set o' braw lads about the midland counties, that I hae dune business wi' before now, and sae we'll leave Mr. Sharpitlaw to whistle on his thumb."

It was fortunate for Jeanie, in an emergency like the present, that she possessed presence of mind and courage, so soon as the first hurry of surprise had enabled her to rally her recollection. She saw the risk she was in from a ruffian, who not only was such by profession, but had that evening been stupefying, by means of strong liquors, the internal aversion which he felt at the business on which Sharpitlaw had resolved to employ him.

"Dinna speak sae loud," said she, in a low voice; "he's up yonder."

"Who?—Robertson?" said Ratcliffe, eagerly.

"Ay," replied Jeanie; "up yonder," and she pointed to the ruins of the hermitage and chapel.

"By G—d, then," said Ratcliffe, "I'll make my ain of him, either one way or other—wait for me here."

But no sooner had he set off, as fast as he could run, towards the chapel, than Jeanie started in an opposite direction, over high and low, on the nearest path homeward. Her juvenile exercise as a herdsman had put "life and mettle" in her heels, and never had she followed Dustie-foot, when the cows were in the corn, with half so much speed as she now cleared the distance betwixt Muschat's Cairn and her father's cottage at Saint Leonard's. To lift the latch—to enter—to shut, bolt, and double bolt the door—to draw against it a heavy article of furniture (which she could not have moved in a moment of less energy), so as to make yet farther provision against violence, was almost the work of a moment, yet done with such silence as equalled the celerity.

Her next anxiety was upon her father's account, and she drew silently to the door of his apartment, in order to satisfy herself whether he had been disturbed by her return. He was awake, probably had slept but little; but the constant presence of his own sorrows, the distance of his apartment from the outer-door of the house, and the precautions which Jeanie had taken to conceal her departure and return, had prevented him from being sensible of either. He was engaged in his devotions, and Jeanie could distinctly hear him use these words:—"And for the other child thou hast given me to be a comfort and stay to my old age, may her days be long in the land, according

to the promise thou hast given to those who shal honor father and mother; may all her purchased and promised blessings be multiplied upon her; keep her in the watches of the night, and in the uprising of the morning, that all in this land may know that thou hast not utterly hid thy face from those that seek thee in truth and in sincerity." He was silent, but probably continued his petition in the strong fervency of mental devotion.

His daughter retired to her apartment, comforted, that while she was exposed to danger, her head had been covered by the prayers of the just as by an helmet, and under the strong confidence, that while she walked worthy of the protection of Heaven, she would experience its countenance. It was in that moment that a vague idea first darted across her mind, that something might yet be achieved for her sister's safety, conscious as she now was of her innocence of the unnatural murder with which she stood charged. It came, as she described it, on her mind, like a sun-blink on a stormy sea; and although it instantly vanished, yet she felt a degree of composure which she had not experienced for many days, and could not help being strongly persuaded, that, by some means or other, she would be called upon, and directed, to work out her sister's deliverance. She went to bed, not forgetting her usual devotions, the more fervently made on account of her late deliverance, and she slept soundly in spite of her agitation.

We must return to Ratcliffe, who had started, like a greyhound from the slips when the sportsman cries halloo, as soon as Jeanie had pointed to the ruins. Whether he meant to aid Robertson's escape, or to assist his pursuers, may be very doubtful; perhaps he did not himself know, but had resolved to be guided by circumstances. He had no opportunity, however, of doing either; for he had no sooner surmounted the steep ascent, and entered under the broken arches of the ruins, than a pistol was presented at his head, and a harsh voice commanded him in the king's name, to surrender himself prisoner. "Mr. Sharpitlaw!" said Ratcliffe, surprised, "is this your honor?"

"Is it only you, and be d—d to you?" answered the fiscal, still more disappointed—"what made you leave the woman?"

"She told me she saw Robertson go into the ruins, so I made what haste I could to cleck the callant."

"It's all over now," said Sharpitlaw; "we shall see no more of him to-night; but he shall hide himself in a bean-hool, if he remains on Scottish ground without my finding him. Call back the people, Ratcliffe."

Ratcliffe hollowed to the dispersed officers, who willingly obeyed the signal; for probably there was no individual among them who would have been much desirous of a rencontre, hand to hand, and at a distance from his comrades, with such an active and desperate fellow as Robertson.

"And where are the two women?" said Sharpitlaw.

"Both made their heels serve them, I suspect," replied Ratcliffe, and he hummed the end of the old song—

"Then hey play up the rin-awa bride,
For she has taen the gee."

"One woman," said Sharpitlaw,—for, like all rogues, he was a great calumniator of the fair sex,*—"one woman is enough to dark the fairest ploy that ever was planned; and how could I be such an ass as to expect to carry through a job that had two in it? But we know how to come by them both, if they are wanted, that's one good thing."

Accordingly, like a defeated general, sad and sulky, he led back his discomfited forces to the metropolis, and dismissed them for the night.

The next morning early, he was under the necessity of making his report to the sitting magistrate of the day. The gentleman who occupied the chair of office on this occasion (for the bailies, *Anglicæ*, aldermen, take it by rotation) chanced to be the same by whom Butler was committed, a person very generally respected among his fellow-citizens. Something he was of a humorist, and rather deficient in general education; but acute, patient, and upright, possessed of a fortune acquired by honest industry, which made him perfectly independent; and, in short, very happily qualified to support the respectability of the office which he held.

Mr. Middleburgh had just taken his seat, and was debating in an animated manner, with one of his colleagues, the doubtful chances of a game at golf which they had played the day before, when a letter was delivered to him, addressed "For Bailie Middleburgh; These: to be forwarded with speed." It contained these words:—

"SIR,—I know you to be a sensible and a considerate magistrate, and one who, as such, will be content to worship God, though the devil bid you. I therefore expect that, notwithstanding the signature of this letter acknowledges my share in an action, which, in a proper time and place, I would not fear either to avow or to justify, you will not on that account reject what evidence I place before you. The clergyman, Butler, is innocent of all but involuntary presence at an

* The Journal of Graves, a Bow Street officer, despatched to Holland to obtain the surrender of the unfortunate William Brodie, bears a reflection on the ladies somewhat like that put in the mouth of the police-officer Sharpitlaw. It had been found difficult to identify the unhappy criminal; and when a Scotch gentleman of respectability had seemed disposed to give evidence on the point required, his son-in-law, a clergyman in Amsterdam, and his daughter, were suspected by Graves to have used arguments with the witness to dissuade him from giving his testimony. On which subject the journal of the Bow Street officer proceeds thus:—

"Saw then a manifest reluctance in Mr. —, and had no doubt the daughter and parson would endeavor to persuade him to decline troubling himself in the matter, but judged he could not go back from what he had said to Mr. Rich.—NOTA BENNE. No mischief but a woman or a priest in it—here both."

action which he wanted spilt to approve of, and from which he endeavored, with his best set phrases, to dissuade us. But it was not for him that it is my hint to speak. There is a woman in your jail, fallen under the edge of a law so cruel, that it has hung by the wall, like unscoured armor, for twenty years, and is now brought down and whetted to spill the blood of the most beautiful and most innocent creature whom the walls of a prison ever girdled in. Her sister knows of her innocence, as she communicated to her that she was betrayed by a villain.—O that high Heaven

'Would put in every honest hand a whip,
To scourge me such a villain through the world!'

"I write distractedly—But this girl—this Jeanie Deans, is a peevish puritan, superstitious and scrupulous after the manner of her sect; and I pray your honor, for so my phrase must go, to press upon her, that her sister's life depends upon her testimony. But though she should remain silent, do not dare to think that the young woman is guilty—far less to permit her execution. Remember the death of Wilson was fearfully avenged; and those yet live who can compel you to drink the dregs of your poisoned chalice.—I say, remember Porteous,—and say that you had good counsel from

"ONE OF HIS SLAYERS."

The magistrate read over this extraordinary letter twice or thrice. At first he was tempted to throw it aside as the production of a madman, so little did the "scraps from play-books," as he termed the poetical quotation, resemble the correspondence of a rational being. On a re-perusal, however, he thought that, amid its incoherence, he could discover something like a tone of awakened passion, though expressed in a manner quaint and unusual.

"It is a cruelly severe statute," said the magistrate to his assistant, "and I wish the girl could be taken from under the letter of it. A child may have been born, and it may have been conveyed away while the mother was insensible, or it may have perished for want of that relief which the poor creature herself—helpless, terrified, distracted, despairing, and exhausted—may have been unable to afford it. And yet it is certain, if the woman is found guilty under the statute, execution will follow. The crime has been too common, and examples are necessary."

"But if this other wench," said the city-clerk, "can speak to her sister communicating her situation, it will make the case from under the statute."

"Very true," replied the Bailie; "and I will walk out one of these days to St. Leonard's, and examine the girl myself. I know something of their father Deans—an old true-blue Cameronian, who would see house and family go to wreck ere he would disgrace his testimony by a sinful complying with the defections of the times; and such he will probably uphold the taking an oath before a civil magistrate. If they are to go on and flourish with their bull-headed obstinacy, the legisla-

ture must pass an act to take their affirmations, as in the case of Quakers. But surely neither a father nor a sister will scruple in a case of this kind. As I said before, I will go speak with them myself, when the hurry of this Porteous investigation is somewhat over; their pride and spirit of contradiction will be far less alarmed, than if they were called into a court of justice at once."

"And I suppose Butler is to remain incarcerated?" said the city clerk.

"For the present, certainly," said the magistrate. "But I hope soon to set him at liberty upon bail."

"Do you rest upon the testimony of that light-headed letter?" asked the clerk.

"Not very much," answered the Bailie; "and yet there is something striking about it too—it seems the letter of a man beside himself, either from great agitation, or some great sense of guilt."

"Yes," said the town-clerk, "it is very like the letter of a mad strolling play-actor, who deserves to be hanged with all the rest of his gang, as your honor justly observes."

"I was not quite so bloodthirsty," continued the magistrate. "But to the point, Butler's private character is excellent; and I am given to understand, by some inquiries I have been making this morning, that he did actually arrive in town only the day before yesterday, so that it was impossible he could have been concerned in any previous machinations of these unhappy rioters, and it is not likely that he should have joined them on a suddenty."

"There's no saying anent that—zeal catches fire at a slight spark as fast as a brunstone match," observed the secretary. "I hae kend a minister wad be fair gude-day and fair good-e'en wi' ilka man in the parochine, and hing just as quiet as a rocket on a stick, till ye mentioned the word abjuration-oath, or patronage, or siclike, and then, whiz, he was off, and up in the air an hundred miles beyond common manners, common sense, and common comprehension."

"I do not understand," answered the burgher-magistrate, "that the young man Butler's zeal is of so inflammable a character. But I will make farther investigation. What other business is there before us?"

And they proceeded to minute investigations concerning the affair of Porteous's death, and other affairs through which this history has no occasion to trace them.

In the course of their business they were interrupted by an old woman of the lower rank, extremely haggard in look, and wretched in her appearance, who thrust herself into the council-room.

"What do you want, gudewife?—Who are you?" said Bailie Middleburgh.

"What do I want!" replied she, in a sulky tone—"I want my bairn, or I want naething fra nane o' ye, for as grand's ye are." And she went on muttering to herself with the wayward spitefulness of age—"They maun hae lordships and

honors, nae doubt—set them up, the gutter bloods! and deil a gentleman among them."—Then again addressing the sitting magistrate, "Will *your honor* gie me back my puir crazy bairn?—*His honor!* I hae kend the day when less wad ser'd him, the oe of a Campvere skipper."

"Good woman," said the magistrate, to this shrewish supplicant,— "tell us what it is you want, and do not interrupt the court."

"That's as muckle as till say, Bark, Bawtie, and be dune wi't!—I tell ye," raising her termagant voice, "I want my bairn! is na that braid Scots?"

"Who are you?—who is your bairn?" demanded the magistrate.

"Wha am I?—wha suld I be, but Meg Murdockson, and wha suld my bairn be but Magdalen Murdockson?—Your guard soldiers, and your constables, and your officers, ken us weel enough when they rive the bits o' duds aff our backs, and take what penny o' siller we hae, and harle us to the Correction-house in Leith Wynd, and pettle us up wi' bread and water, and siclike sunkets."

"Who is she?" said the magistrate, looking round to some of his people.

"Other than a gude ane, sir," said one of the city officers, shrugging his shoulders, and smiling.

"Will ye say sae?" said the termagant, her eye gleaming with impotent fury; "an I had ye among the Frigate-Whins, wadna I set my ten talents in your wuzzent face for that very word?" and she suited the word to the action, by spreading out a set of claws resembling those of St. George's dragon on a country sign-post.

"What does she want here?" said the impatient magistrate—"Can she not tell her business, or go away?"

"It's my bairn!—it's Magdalen Murdockson I'm wantin'," answered the beldam, screaming at the highest pitch of her cracked and mistuned voice—"havena I been tellin' ye sae this half-hour? And if ye are deaf, what needs ye sit cockit up there, and keep folk scraughin t'ye this gate?"

"She wants her daughter, sir," said the same officer whose interference had given the hag such offence before—"her daughter, who was taken up last night—Madge Wildfire, as they ca' her."

"Madge HELLFIRE, as they ca' her!" echoed the beldam; "and what business has a black-guard like you to ca' an honest woman's bairn out o' her ain name!"

"An honest woman's bairn, Maggie?" answered the peace-officer, smiling and shaking his head with an ironical emphasis on the adjective, and a calmness calculated to provoke to madness the furious old shrew.

"If I am no honest now, I was honest ance."

she replied; "and that's mair than ye can say, ye born and bred thief, that never kend ither folk's gear fra your ain since the day ye was cleckit Honest, say ye?—ye pykit your mother's pouch o' twalpenies Scots when ye were five year

auld, just as she was taking leave o' your father at the fit o' the gallows."

"She has you there, George," said the assistants, and there was a general laugh; for the wit was fitted for the meridian of the place where it was uttered. This general applause somewhat gratified the passions of the old hag; the "grim feature" smiled, and even laughed—but it was a laugh of bitter scorn. She condescended, however, as if appeased by the success of her sally, to explain her business more distinctly, when the magistrate, commanding silence, again desired her either to speak out her errand, or to leave the place.

"Her bairn," she said, "was her bairn, and she came to fetch her out of ill haft and waur guiding. If she wasna sae wise as ither folk, few ither folk had suffered as muckle as she had done; forby that she could fend the waur for hersell within the four wa's of a jail. She could prove by fifty witnesses, and fifty to that, that her daughter had never seen Jock Porteous, alive or dead, since he had ghen her a lounderin wi' his cane, the neger that he was! for driving a dead cat at the provost's wig on the Elector of Hanover's birth-day."

Notwithstanding the wretched appearance and violent demeanor of this woman, the magistrate felt the justice of her argument, that her child might be as dear to her as to a more fortunate and more amiable mother. He proceeded to investigate the circumstances which had led to Madge Murdockson's (or Wildfire's) arrest, and as it was clearly shown that she had not been engaged in the riot, he contented himself with directing that an eye should be kept upon her by the police, but that for the present she should be allowed to return home with her mother. During the interval of fetching Madge from the jail, the magistrate endeavored to discover whether her mother had been privy to the change of dress betwixt that young woman and Robertson. But on this point he could obtain no light. She persisted in declaring, that she had never seen Robertson since his remarkable escape during service-time; and that, if her daughter had changed clothes with him, it must have been during her absence at a hamlet about two miles out of town, called Duddingstone, where she could prove that she passed that eventful night. And, in fact, one of the town-officers, who had been searching for stolen linen at the cottage of a washerwoman in that village, gave his evidence, that he had seen Maggie Murdockson there, whose presence had considerably increased his suspicion of the house in which she was a visitor, in respect that he considered her as a person of no good reputation.

"I tauld ye sae," said the hag; "see now what it is to hae a character, gude or bad!—Now, maybe, after a', I could tell ye something about Porteous that you council-chamber bodies never could find out, for as muckle stir as ye mak."

All eyes were turned towards her—all ears were alert. "Speak out!" said the magistrate.

"It will be for your ain gude," insinuated the town-clerk.

"Dinna keep the Bailie waiting," urged the assistants.

She remained doggedly silent for two or three minutes, casting around a malignant and sulky glance, that seemed to enjoy the anxious suspense with which they waited her answer. And then she broke forth at once,— "A' that I ken about him is, that he was neither soldier nor gentleman, but just a thief and a blackguard, like maist o' yoursells, dears—What will ye gie me for that news, now?—He wad hae served the gude town lang or provost or bailie wad hae fund that out, my jo!"

While these matters were in discussion, Madge Wildfire entered, and her first exclamation was, "Eh! see if there isna our auld ne'er-do-weel deevil's-buckie o' a mither—Heh, sirs! but we are a hopeful family, to be twa o' us in the Guard at ance—But there were better days wi' us ance—were there na, mither?"

Old Maggie's eyes had glistened with something like an expression of pleasure when she saw her daughter set at liberty. But either her natural affection, like that of the tigress, could not be displayed without a strain of ferocity, or there was something in the ideas which Madge's speech awakened, that again stirred her cross and savage temper. "What signifies what we were, ye street-raking limmer!" she exclaimed, pushing her daughter before her to the door, with no gentle degree of violence. "I see tell thee what thou is now—thou's a crazed hellicat Bess o' Bedlam, that salt taste naething but bread and water for a fortnight, to serve ye for the plague ye hae ghen me—and ower gude for ye, ye idle taupie!"

Madge, however, escaped from her mother at the door, ran back to the foot of the table, dropped a very low and fantastic courtesy to the judge, and said, with a giggling laugh,— "Our minnie's sair mis-set, after her ordinar, sir—She'll hae had some quarrel wi' her auld gudeman—that's Satan, ye ken, sirs." This explanatory note she gave in a low confidential tone, and the spectators of that credulous generation did not hear it without an involuntary shudder. "The gudeman and her disna aye gree weel, and then I maun pay the piper; but my back's broad enough to bear a'—an' if she hae nae havings, that's nae reason why wiser folk shouldna hae some." Here another deep courtesy, when the ungracious voice of her mother was heard.

"Madge, ye limmer! If I come to fetch ye!"

"Hear till her," said Madge. "But I'll wun out a gliff the night for a' that, to dance in the moonlight, when her and the gudeman will be whirring through the blue lift on a broomshank, to see Jean Jap, that they hae putten intill the Kircaldy Tolbooth—ay, they will hae a merry sail ower Inchkeith, and ower a' the bits o' bonny waves that are popping and plashing against the rocks in the gowden glimmer o' the moon, ye ken."

"I'm coming, mother—I'm coming," she concluded, on hearing a scuffle at the door betwixt the beldam and the officers, who were endeavoring to prevent her re-entrance. Madge then waved her hand wildly towards the ceiling, and sang, at the topmost pitch of her voice,—

"Up in the air,
On my bonny grey mare,
And I see, and I see, and I see her yet;"

and with a hop, skip, and jump, sprung out of the room, as the witches of Macbeth used, in less refined days, to seem to fly upwards from the stage.

Some weeks intervened before Mr. Middleburgh, agreeably to his benevolent resolution, found an opportunity of taking a walk towards St. Leonard's, in order to discover whether it might be possible to obtain the evidence hinted at in the anonymous letter respecting Effie Deans.

In fact, the anxious perquisitions made to discover the murderers of Porteous occupied the attention of all concerned with the administration of justice.

In the course of these inquiries, two circumstances happened material to our story. Butler, after a close investigation of his conduct, was declared innocent of accession to the death of Porteous; but, as having been present during the whole transaction, was obliged to find bail not to quit his usual residence at Libberton, that he might appear as a witness when called upon. The other incident regarded the disappearance of Madge Wildfire and her mother from Edinburgh. When they were sought, with the purpose of subjecting them to some farther interrogatories, it was discovered by Mr. Sharpitlaw that they had eluded the observation of the police, and left the city so soon as dismissed from the council-chamber. No efforts could trace the place of their retreat.

In the meanwhile the excessive indignation of the Council of Regency, at the slight put upon their authority by the murder of Porteous, had dictated measures, in which their own extreme desire of detecting the actors in that conspiracy were consulted, in preference to the temper of the people and the character of their churchmen. An act of parliament was hastily passed, offering two hundred pounds reward to those who should inform against any person concerned in the deed, and the penalty of death, by a very unusual and severe enactment, was denounced against those who should harbor the guilty. But what was chiefly accounted exceptionable, was a clause, appointing the act to be read in churches by the officiating clergyman, on the first Sunday of every month, for a certain period, immediately before the sermon. The ministers who should refuse to comply with this injunction were declared, for the first offence, incapable of sitting or voting in any church judicature, and for the second, incapable of holding any ecclesiastical preferment in Scotland.

This last order united in a common cause those who might privately rejoice in Porteous's death,

though they dared not vindicate the manner of it, with the more scrupulous presbyterians, who held that even the pronouncing the name of the "Lords Spiritual" in a Scottish pulpit was, *quodammodo*, an acknowledgment of prelacy, and that the injunction of the legislature was an interference of the civil government with the *ius divinum* of presbytery, since to the General Assembly alone, as representing the invisible head of the kirk, belonged the sole and exclusive right of regulating whatever pertained to public worship. Very many also, of different political or religious sentiments, and therefore not much moved by these considerations, thought they saw, in so violent an act of parliament, a more vindictive spirit than became the legislature of a great country, and something like an attempt to trample upon the rights and independence of Scotland. The various steps adopted for punishing the city of Edinburgh, by taking away her charter and liberties, for what a violent and overmastering mob had done within her walls, were resented by many, who thought a pretext was too hastily taken for degrading the ancient metropolis of Scotland. In short, there was much heart-burning, discontent, and disaffection, occasioned by these ill-considered measures.*

Amidst these heats and dissensions, the trial of Effie Deans, after she had been many weeks imprisoned, was at length about to be brought forward, and Mr. Middleburgh found leisure to inquire into the evidence concerning her. For this purpose, he chose a fine day for his walk towards her father's house.

The excursion into the country was somewhat distant, in the opinion of a burgher of those days, although many of the present inhabit suburban villas considerably beyond the spot to which we allude. Three quarters of an hour's walk, however, even at a pace of magisterial gravity, conducted our benevolent office-bearer to the Crags of St. Leonard's, and the humble mansion of David Deans.

The old man was seated on the deas, or turf-seat, at the end of his cottage, busied in mending his cart-harness with his own hands; for in those days any sort of labor which required a little more skill than usual fell to the share of the goodman himself, and that even when he was well to pass in the world. With stern and austere gravity he persevered in his task, after having just raised his head to notice the advance of the stranger. It would have been impossible to have discovered, from his countenance and manner, the internal

* The magistrates were closely interrogated before the House of Peers, concerning the particulars of the Porteous Mob, at the points in which these functionaries made their answers, sounded strange in the ears of the southern nobles. The Duke of Newcastle having demanded to know with what kind of shot the guard which Porteous commanded had loaded their muskets, was answered, naively, "Ow, just sic as aye shoots *dukes* and *fools* with." This reply was considered as a contempt of the House of Lords, and the Provost would have suffered accordingly, but that the Duke of Argyll explained, that the expression properly rendered into English, meant *ducks* and *waterfowls*.

feelings of agony with which he contended. Mr. Middleburgh waited an instant, expecting Deans would in some measure acknowledge his presence, and lead into conversation; but, as he seemed determined to remain silent, he was himself obliged to speak first.

"My name is Middleburgh—Mr. James Middleburgh, one of the present magistrates of the city of Edinburgh."

"It may be sae," answered Deans laconically, and without interrupting his labor.

"You must understand," he continued, "that the duty of a magistrate is sometimes an unpleasant one."

"It may be sae," replied David; "I hae naething to say in the contrair;" and he was doggedly silent.

"You must be aware," pursued the magistrate, "that persons in my situation are often obliged to make painful and disagreeable inquiries of individuals, merely because it is their bounden duty."

"It may be sae," again replied Deans; "I hae naething to say anent it, either the tae way or t'other. But I do ken there was ance in a day a just and God-fearing magistracy in yon town o' Edinburgh, that did not bear the sword in vain, but were a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to such as kept the path. In the glorious days of auld worthy faithfu' Provost Dick,* when there was a true and faithfu' General Assembly of the Kirk, walking hand in hand with the real noble Scottish-hearted barons, and with the magistrates of this and other towns, gentles, burghesses, and commons of all ranks, seeing with one eye, hearing with one ear, and upholding the ark with

* This gentleman formed a striking example of the instability of human prosperity. He was once the wealthiest man of his time in Scotland, a merchant in an extensive line of commerce, and a farmer of the public revenue; inasmuch that, about 1640, he estimated his fortune at two hundred thousand pounds sterling. Sir William Dick was a zealous Covenanter; and in the memorable year 1641, he lent the Scottish Convention of Estates one hundred thousand merks at once, and thereby enabled them to support and pay their army, which must otherwise have broken to pieces. He afterwards advanced £20,000 for the service of King Charles, during the usurpation; and having, by owing the royal cause, provoked the displeasure of the ruling party, he was fleeced of more money, amounting in all to £65,000 sterling.

Being in this manner reduced to indigence, he went to London to try to recover some part of the sums which had been lent on government security. Instead of receiving any satisfaction, the Scottish Crosses was thrown into prison, in which he died, 19th December, 1655. It is said his death was hastened by the want of common necessities. But this statement is somewhat exaggerated, if it be true, as is commonly said, that though he was not supplied with bread, he had plenty of pie-crust, thence called "Sir William Dick's necessity."

The changes of fortune are commemorated in a folio pamphlet, entitled, "The Lamentable State of the deceased Sir William Dick." It contains several copper-plates, one representing Sir William on horseback, and attended with guards as Lord Provost of Edinburgh, superintending the unloading of one of his rich argosies. A second exhibiting him as arrested, and in the hands of the bailiffs. A third presents him dead in prison. The tract is esteemed highly valuable by collectors of prints. The only copy I ever saw upon sale, was rated at £30.

their united strength—And then folk might see men deliver up their silver to the state's use, as if it had been as muckle slate stanes. My father saw them toom the sacks of dollars out o' Provost Dick's window intill the carts that carried them to the army at Dunse Law; and if ye winna believe his testimony, there is the window itself still standing in the Lickenbooths—I think it's a clath-merchant's booth the day*—at the airn stanchells, five doors abune Gossford's Close.—But now we haena sic spirit amang us; we think mair about the warst wally-draige in our ain byre, than about the blessing which the angel of the covenant gave to the Patriarch even at Peniel and Mahanaim, or the binding obligation of our national vows; and we wad rather gie a pund Scots to buy an unguent to clear out auld rannell-trees and our beds o' the English bugs as they ca' them, than we wad gie a plack to rid the land of the swarm of Arminian caterpillars, Socinian pismires, and deistical Miss Kates, that have ascended out of the bottomless pit, to plague this perverse, insidious, and lukewarm generation."

It happened to Davie Deans on this occasion, as it has done to many other habitual orators; when once he became embarked on his favorite subject, the stream of his own enthusiasm carried him forward in spite of his mental distress, while his well-exercised memory supplied him amply with all the types and tropes of rhetoric peculiar to his sect and cause.

Mr. Middleburgh contented himself with answering—"All this may be very true, my friend; but, as you said just now, I have nothing to say to it at present, either one way or other.—You have two daughters, I think, Mr. Deans?"

The old man winced, as one whose smarting sore is suddenly galled; but instantly composed himself, resumed the work which, in the heat of his declamation, he had laid down, and answered with sullen resolution, "Ae daughter, sir—only ane."

"I understand you," said Mr. Middleburgh; "you have only one daughter here at home with you—but this unfortunate girl who is a prisoner—she is, I think, your youngest daughter?"

The presbyterian sternly raised his eyes. "After the world, and according to the flesh, she is my daughter; but when she became a child of Belial, and a company-keeper, and a trader in guilt and iniquity, she ceased to be a bairn of mine."

"Alas, Mr. Deans," said Middleburgh, sitting down by him, and endeavoring to take his hand, which the old man proudly withdrew, "we are ourselves all sinners; and the errors of our offspring, as they ought not to surprise us, being the portion which they derive of a common portion of corruption inherited through us, so they do not entitle us to cast them off because they have lost themselves."

"Sir," said Deans impatiently, "I ken a' that

* I think so too—But if the reader be curious, he may consult Mr. Chambers's Traditions of Edinburgh.

as weel as—I mean to say,” he resumed, checking the irritation he felt at being schooled,—a discipline of the mind, which those most ready to bestow it on others, do themselves most reluctantly submit to receive.—“I mean to say, that what ye observe may be just and reasonable.—But I hae nae freedom to enter into my ain private affairs w^l strangers—And now, in this great national emergency, when there’s the Porteous’ Act has come down frae London, that is a deeper blow to this poor sinfu’ kingdom and suffering kirk, than ony that has been heard of since the foul and fatal Test—at a time like this—”

“But, goodman,” interrupted Mr. Middleburgh, “you must think of your own household first, or else you are worse even than the infidels.”

“I tell ye, Bailie Middleburgh,” retorted David Deans, “if ye be a bailie, as there is little honor in being ane in these evil days—I tell ye, I heard the gracious Saunders Peden—I wotna whan it was; but it was in killing time, when the plowers were drawing along their furrows on the back of the Kirk of Scotland—I heard him tell his hearers, gude and waled Christians they were too, that some o’ them wad greet mair for a bit drowned calf or stirk, than for a’ the defections and oppressions of the day; and that they were some o’ them thinking o’ ae thing, some o’ anither, and there was Lady Hundleslope thinking o’ greeting Jock at the fire-side! And the lady confessed in my hearing, that a drow of anxiety had come ower her for her son that she had left at hame weak of a decay*—And what wad he hae said of me, if I had ceased to think of the gude cause for a castaway—a—It kills me to think of what she is!—”

“But the life of your child, goodman—think of that—if her life could be saved,” said Middleburgh.

“Her life!” exclaimed David—“I wadna gie ane o’ my grey hairs for her life, if her gude name be gane—And yet,” said he, relenting and retracting as he spoke, “I wad make the niffer, Mr. Middleburgh—I wad gie a’ these grey hairs that she has brought to shame and sorrow—I wad gie the auld head they grow on for her life, and that she might hae time to amend and return, for what hae the wicked beyond the breath of their nostrils?—but I’ll never see her mair.—No!—that—that I am determined in—I’ll never see her mair!” His lips continued to move for a minute after his voice ceased to be heard, as if he were repeating the same vow internally.

“Well, sir,” said Mr. Middleburgh, “I speak to you as a man of sense; if you would save your daughter’s life, you must use human means.”

“I understand what you mean; but Mr. Novit, who is the procurator and doer of an honorable person the Laird of Dumbiedikes, is to do what carnal wisdom can do for her in the circumstances. Mysell am not clear to trinquet and traffic w^l courts o’ justice, as they are now constituted; I

* See Life of Peden, p. 111.

have a tenderness and scruple in my mind about them.”

“That is to say,” said Middleburgh, “that you are a Cameronian, and do not acknowledge the authority of our courts of judicature, or present government?”

“Sir, under your favor,” replied David, who was too proud of his own polemical knowledge, to call himself the follower of any one, “ye take me up before I fall down. I canna see why I suld be termed a Cameronian, especially now that ye hae given the name of that famous and savory sufferer, not only until a regimental band of soldiers, whereof I am told many can now curse, swear, and use profane language, as fast as ever Richard Cameron could preach or pray; but also because ye have, in as far as it is in your power, rendered that martyr’s name vain and contemptible, by pipes, drums, and fifes, playing the vain carnal spring, called the Cameronian Rant, which too many professors of religion dance to—a practice maist unbecoming a professor to dance to any tune whatsoever, more especially promiscuously, that is, with the female sex.* A brutish fashion it is whilk is the beginning of defection with many, as I may hae as muckle cause as maist folk to testify.”

“Well, but, Mr. Deans,” replied Mr. Middleburgh, “I only meant to say that you were a Cameronian, or MacMillanite, one of the society people, in short, who think it inconsistent to take oaths under a government where the Covenant is not ratified.”

“Sir,” replied the controversialist, who forgot even his present distress in such discussions as these, “you cannot fickle me sae easily as you do opine. I am *not* a MacMillanite, or a Russellite, or a Hamiltonian, or a Harleyleite, or a Howdenite†—I will be led by the nose by none—I take my name as a Christian from no vessel of clay. I have my own principles and practice to answer for, and am an humble pleader for the gude old cause in a legal way.”

“That is to say, Mr. Deans,” said Middleburgh, “that you are a *Deansite*, and have opinions peculiar to yourself.”

“It may please you to say sae,” said David Deans: “but I have maintained my testimony before as great folk, and in sharper times; and though I will neither exalt myself nor pull down others, I wish every man and woman in this land had kept the true testimony, and the middle and straight path, as it were, on the ridge of a hill, where wind and water shears, avoiding right-hand snares and extremes, and left-hand way-slidings, as weel as Johnny Dodds of Farthing’s Acre, and ae man mair that shall be nameless.”

“I suppose,” replied the magistrate, “that is as much as to say, that Johnny Dodds of Farthing’s Acre, and David Deans of St. Leonard’s, constitute the only members of the true, real, unsophisticated Kirk of Scotland?”

* See Note, Peter Walker, p. 50.

† All various species of the great genus Cameronian.

“God forbid that I suld make sic a vain-glorious speech, when there are sae many professing Christians!” answered David; “but this I maun say, that all men act according to their gifts and their grace, sae that it is nae marvel that—”

“That is all very fine,” interrupted Mr. Middleburgh; “but I have no time to spend in hearing it. The matter in hand is this—I have directed a citation to be lodged in your daughter’s hands—If she appears on the day of trial and gives evidence, there is reason to hope she may save her sister’s life—if, from any constrained scruples about the legality of her performing the office of an affectionate sister and a good subject, by appearing in a court held under the authority of the law and government, you become the means of deterring her from the discharge of this duty, I must say, though the truth may sound harsh in your ears, that you, who gave life to this unhappy girl, will become the means of her losing it by a premature and violent death.”

So saying, Mr. Middleburgh turned to leave him.

“Bide awee—bide awee, Mr. Middleburgh,” said Deans, in great perplexity and distress of mind; but the Bailie, who was probably sensible that protracted discussion might diminish the effect of his best and most forcible argument, took a hasty leave, and declined entering farther into the controversy.

Deans sunk down upon his seat, stunned with a variety of conflicting emotions. It had been a great source of controversy among those holding his opinions in religious matters, how far the government which succeeded the Revolution could be, without sin, acknowledged by true presbyterians, seeing that it did not recognise the great national testimony of the Solemn League and Covenant? And latterly, those agreeing in this general doctrine, and assuming the sounding title of the anti-popish, anti-prelatic, anti-erastian, anti-sectarian, true presbyterian remnant, were divided into many petty sects among themselves, even as to the extent of submission to the existing laws and rulers, which constituted such an acknowledgment as amounted to sin.

At a very stormy and tumultuous meeting, held in 1682, to discuss these important and delicate points, the testimonies of the faithful few were found utterly inconsistent with each other.* The place where this conference took place was remarkably well adapted for such an assembly. It was a wild and very sequestered dell in Tweeddale, surrounded by high hills, and far remote from human habitation. A small river or rather a mountain torrent, called the Talla, breaks down

* This remarkable convocation took place upon 15th June, 1682, and an account of its confused and divisive proceedings may be found in Michael Shield’s “Faithful Contendings Displayed,” Glasgow, 1780, p. 21. It affords a singular and melancholy example how much a metaphysical and polemical spirit had crept in amongst these unhappy sufferers, since amid so many real injuries which they had to sustain, they were disposed to add disagreement and dissension concerning the character and extent of such as were only imaginary.

the glen with great fury, dashing successively over a number of small cascades, which has procured the spot the name of Talla-Linns. Here the leaders among the scattered adherents to the Covenant, men who, in their banishment from human society, and in the recollection of the severities to which they had been exposed, had become at once sullen in their tempers, and fantastic in their religious opinions, met with arms in their hands, and by the side of the torrent discussed, with a turbulence which the noise of the stream could not drown, points of controversy as empty and unsubstantial as its foam.

It was the fixed judgment of most of the meeting, that all payment of cess or tribute to the existing government was utterly unlawful, and a sacrificing to idols. About other impositions and degrees of submission there were various opinions; and perhaps it is the best illustration of the spirit of those military fathers of the church to say, that while all allowed it was impious to pay the cess employed for maintaining the standing army and militia, there was a fierce controversy on the lawfulness of paying the duties levied at ports and bridges for maintaining roads and other necessary purposes; that there were some who, repugnant to these imposts for turnpikes and postages, were, nevertheless, free in conscience to make payment of the usual freight at public ferries, and that a person of exceeding and punctilious zeal, James Russel, one of the slayers of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, had given his testimony with great warmth even against this last faint shade of subjection to constituted authority. This ardent and enlightened person and his followers had also great scruples about the lawfulness of bestowing the ordinary names upon the days of the week and the months of the year, which savored in their nostrils so strongly of paganism, that at length they arrived at the conclusion that they who owned such names as Monday, Tuesday, January, February, and so forth, “served themselves heirs to the same, if not greater punishment, than had been denounced against the idolaters of old.”

David Deans had been present on this memorable occasion, although too young to be a speaker among the polemical combatants. His brain, however, had been thoroughly heated by the noise, clamor, and metaphysical ingenuity of the discussion, and it was a controversy to which his mind had often returned; and though he carefully disguised his vacillation from others, and perhaps from himself, he had never been able to come to any precise line of decision on the subject. In fact, his natural sense had acted as a counterpoise to his controversial zeal. He was by no means pleased with the quiet and indifferent manner in which King William’s government slurred over the errors of the times, when, far from restoring the presbyterian kirk to its former supremacy, they passed an act of oblivion even to those who had been its persecutors, and bestowed on many of them titles, favors, and employments. What

In the first General Assembly which succeeded the Revolution, an overture was made for the revival of the League and Covenant, it was with horror that Douce David heard the proposal eluded by the men of carnal wit and policy, as he called them, as being inapplicable to the present times, and not falling under the modern model of the church. The reign of Queen Anne had increased his conviction, that the Revolution government was not one of the true presbyterian complexion. But then, more sensible than the bigots of his sect, he did not confound the moderation and tolerance of these two reigns with the active tyranny and oppression exercised in those of Charles II. and James II. The presbyterian form of religion, though deprived of the weight formerly attached to its sentences of excommunication, and compelled to tolerate the co-existence of episcopacy, and of sects of various descriptions, was still the National Church; and though the glory of the second temple was far inferior to that which had flourished from 1639 till the battle of Dunbar, still it was a structure that, wanting the strength and the terrors, retained at least the form and symmetry, of the original model. Then came the insurrection in 1715, and David Deans's horror for the revival of the popish and prelatical faction reconciled him greatly to the government of King George, although he grieved that that monarch might be suspected of a leaning unto Erastianism. In short, moved by so many different considerations, he had shifted his ground at different times concerning the degree of freedom which he felt in adopting any act of immediate acknowledgment or submission to the present government, which, however mild and paternal, was still uncovenanted, and now he felt himself called upon by the most powerful motive conceivable, to authorize his daughter's giving testimony in a court of justice, which all who have been since called Cameronians accounted a step of lamentable and direct defection. The voice of nature, however, exclaimed loud in his bosom against the dictates of fanaticism; and his imagination, fertile in the solution of polemical difficulties, devised an expedient for extricating himself from the fearful dilemma, in which he saw, on the one side, a falling off from principle, and, on the other, a scene from which a father's thoughts could not but turn in shuddering horror.

"I have been constant and unchanged in my testimony," said David Deans; "but then who has said it of me, that I have judged my neighbor over closely, because he hath had more freedom in his walk than I have found in mine? I never was a separatist, nor for quarrelling with tender souls about mint, cumlin, or other the lesser tithes. My daughter Jean may have a light in this subject that is hid frae my auld een—it is laid on her conscience, and not on mine—If she hath freedom to gang before this judicatory, and hold up her hand for this poor castaway, surely I will not say she steppeth over her bounds; and if not."—He paused in his mental argument, with a pang of

unutterable anguish convulsed his features, yet, shaking it off, he firmly resumed the strain of his reasoning—"And it is not—God forbid that she should go into defection at bidding of mine. I wunna fret the tender conscience of one bairn—no, not to save the life of the other."

A Roman would have devoted his daughter to death from different feelings and motives, but not upon a more heroic principle of duty.

CHAPTER XIX.

To man, in this his trial state,
The privilege is given,
When lost by tides of human fate,
To anchor fast on heaven.

WATTS'S *Hymns*.

It was with a firm step that Deans sought his daughter's apartment, determined to leave her to the light of her own conscience in the dubious point of casuistry in which he supposed her to be placed.

The little room had been the sleeping apartment of both sisters, and there still stood there a small occasional bed, which had been made for Effie's accommodation, when, complaining of illness, she had declined to share, as in happier times, her sister's pillow. The eyes of Deans rested involuntarily, on entering the room, upon this little couch, with its dark-green coarse curtains, and the ideas connected with it rose so thick upon his soul as almost to incapacitate him from opening his errand to his daughter. Her occupation broke the ice. He found her gazing on a slip of paper, which contained a citation to her to appear as a witness upon her sister's trial, in behalf of the accused. For the worthy magistrate determined to omit no chance of doing Effie justice, and to leave her sister no apology for not giving the evidence which she was supposed to possess, had caused the ordinary citation, or *subpoena*, of the Scottish criminal court, to be served upon her by an officer during his conference with David.

This precaution was so far favorable to Deans, that it saved him the pain of entering upon a formal explanation with his daughter; he only said, with a hollow and tremulous voice, "I perceive ye are aware of the matter."

"O father, we are cruelly stee'd between God's laws and man's laws—What shall we do?—What can we do?"

Jeanie, it must be observed, had no hesitation whatever about the mere act of appearing in a court of justice. She might have heard the point discussed by her father more than once; but we have already noticed, that she was accustomed to listen with reverence to much which she was in capable of understanding, and that subtle arguments of casuistry found her a patient, but unedified hearer. Upon receiving the citation, therefore, her thoughts did not turn upon the chimerical scruples which alarmed her father's mind, but to the language which had been held to her by the stranger at Muschat's Cairn. In a word, she never doubted but she was to be dragged forward

into the court of justice, in order to place her in the cruel position of either sacrificing her sister by telling the truth, or committing perjury in order to save her life. And so strongly did her thoughts run in this channel, that she applied her father's words, "Ye are aware of the matter," to his acquaintance with the advice that had been so fearfully enforced upon her. She looked up with anxious surprise, not unmingled with a cast of horror, which his next words, as she interpreted and applied them, were not qualified to remove.

"Daughter," said David, "it has ever been my mind, that in things of an doubtful and controversial nature, ilk Christian's conscience sould be his aid guide—Wherefore descend into yourself, try your ain mind with sufficiency of soul exercise, and as you sall finally find yourself clear to do in this matter—even so be it."

"But, father," said Jeanie, whose mind revolted at the construction which she naturally put upon his language, "can this—this be a doubtful or controversial matter?—Mind, father, the ninth command—'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.'"

David Deans paused; for, still applying her speech to his preconceived difficulties, it seemed entitled to be scrupulous upon this occasion, where *he*, a man, exercised in the testimonies of that testifying period, had given indirect countenance to her following what must have been the natural dictates of her own feelings. But he kept firm his purpose, until his eyes involuntarily rested upon the little settle-bed, and recalled the form of the child of his old age, as she sat upon it, pale, emaciated, and broken-hearted. His mind, as the picture arose before him, involuntarily conceived, and his tongue involuntarily uttered—but in a tone how different from his usual dogmatical precision!—arguments for the course of conduct likely to ensure his child's safety.

"Daughter," he said, "I did not say that your path was free from stumbling—and, questionless, this act may be in the opinion of some a transgression, since he who beareth witness unlawfully, and against his conscience, doth in some sort bear false witness against his neighbor. Yet in matters of compliance, the guilt lieth not in the compliance *sae* muckle, as in the mind and conscience of him that doth comply; and, therefore, although my testimony hath not been spared upon public defections, I haena felt freedom to separate myself from the communion of many who have been clear to hear those ministers who have taken the fatal indulgence because they might get good of them, though I could not."

When David had proceeded thus far, his conscience reproved him, that he might be indirectly undermining the purity of his daughter's faith, and smoothing the way for her falling off from strictness of principle. He therefore suddenly stopped, and changed his tone:—"Jeanie, I perceive that our vile affections,—so I call them in respect of doing the will of our Father,—cling too

heavily to me in this hour of trying sorrow, to permit me to keep sight of my ain duty, or to airt you to yours. I will speak nae mair anent this over-trying matter.—Jeanie, if ye can, wi' God and gude conscience, speak in favor of this puir unhappy"—(here his voice faltered)—"She is your sister in the flesh—worthless and cast-away as she is, she is the daughter of a saint in heaven, that was a mother to you, Jeanie, in place of your ain—but if ye arena free of conscience to speak for her in the court of judicature, follow your conscience, Jeanie, and let God's will be done.' After this adjuration he left the apartment, and his daughter remained in a state of great distress and perplexity.

It would have been no small addition to the sorrows of David Deans, even in this extremity of suffering, had he known that his daughter was applying the casuistical arguments which he had been using, not in the sense of a permission to follow her own opinion on a dubious and disputed point of controversy, but rather as an encouragement to transgress one of those divine commandments which Christians of all sects and denominations unite in holding most sacred.

"Can this be?" said Jeanie, as the door closed on her father—"Can these be his words that I have heard, or has the Enemy taken his voice and features to give weight unto the counsel which causeth to perish?—A sister's life, and a father pointing out how to save it!—O God, deliver me!—this is a fearful temptation."

Roaming from thought to thought, she at one time imagined her father understood the ninth commandment literally, as prohibiting false witness *against* our neighbor, without extending the denunciation against falsehood uttered *in favor* of the criminal. But her clear and unsophisticated power of discriminating between good and evil, instantly rejected an interpretation so limited, and so unworthy of the Author of the law. She remained in a state of the most agitating terror and uncertainty—afraid to communicate her thoughts freely to her father, lest she should draw forth an opinion with which she could not comply,—wrung with distress on her sister's account, rendered the more acute by reflecting that the means of saving her were in her power, but were such as her conscience prohibited her from using,—tossed, in short, like a vessel in an open roadstead during a storm, and, like that vessel, resting on one only sure cable and anchor,—faith in Providence, and a resolution to discharge her duty.

Butler's affection and strong sense of religion would have been her principal support in these distressing circumstances, but he was still under restraint, which did not permit him to come to St. Leonard's Crags; and her distresses were of a nature, which, with her indifferent habits of scholarship, she found it impossible to express in writing. She was therefore compelled to trust for guidance to her own unassisted sense of what was right or wrong. It was not the least of

Jeanie's distresses, that, although she hoped and believed her sister to be innocent, she had not the means of receiving that assurance from her own mouth.

The double-dealing of Ratcliffe in the matter of Robertson had not prevented his being rewarded, as double-dealers frequently have been, with favor and preferment. Sharpitlaw, who found in him something of a kindred genius, had been intercessor in his behalf with the magistrates, and the circumstance of his having voluntarily remained in the prison, when the doors were forced by the mob, would have made it a hard measure to take the life which he had such easy means of saving. He received a full pardon; and soon afterwards, James Ratcliffe, the greatest thief and housebreaker in Scotland, was, upon the faith, perhaps, of an ancient proverb, selected as a person to be intrusted with the custody of other delinquents.

When Ratcliffe was thus placed in a confidential situation, he was repeatedly applied to by the sapient Saddletree and others, who took some interest in the Deans family, to procure an interview between the sisters; but the magistrates, who were extremely anxious for the apprehension of Robertson, had given strict orders to the contrary, hoping that, by keeping them separate, they might, from the one or the other, extract some information respecting that fugitive. On this subject Jeanie had nothing to tell them. She informed Mr. Middleburgh, that she knew nothing of Robertson, except having met him that night by appointment to give her some advice respecting her sister's concern, the purport of which, she said, was betwixt God and her conscience. Of his motions, purposes, or plans, past, present, or future, she knew nothing, and so had nothing to communicate.

Effie was equally silent though from a different cause. It was in vain that they offered a commutation and alleviation of her punishment, and even a free pardon, if she would confess what she knew of her lover. She answered only with tears; unless, when at times driven into pettish sulkiness by the persecution of the interrogators, she made them abrupt and disrespectful answers.

At length, after her trial had been delayed for many weeks, in hopes she might be induced to speak out on a subject infinitely more interesting to the magistracy than her own guilt or innocence, their patience was worn out, and even Mr. Middleburgh finding no ear lent to farther intercession in her behalf, the day was fixed for the trial to proceed.

It was now, and not sooner, that Sharpitlaw, recollecting his promise to Effie Deans, or rather being dinned into compliance by the unceasing remonstrances of Mrs. Saddletree, who was his next-door neighbor, and who declared it was heathen cruelty to keep the two broken-hearted creatures separate, issued the important mandate, permitting them to see each other.

On the evening which preceded the eventful

day of trial, Jeanie was permitted to see her sister—an awful interview, and occurring at a most distressing crisis. This, however, formed a part of the bitter cup which she was doomed to drink, to atone for crimes and follies to which she had no accession; and at twelve o'clock noon, being the time appointed for admission to the jail, she went to meet, for the first time for several months, her guilty, erring, and most miserable sister, in that abode of guilt, error, and utter misery.

CHAPTER XX.

—Sweet sister, let me live!
What sin you do to save a brother's life,
Nature dispenses with the deed so far,
That it becomes a virtue.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

JEANIE DEANS was admitted into the jail by Ratcliffe. This fellow, as void of shame as of honesty, as he opened the now trebly secured door, asked her, with a leer which made her shudder, "whether she remembered him?"

A half-pronounced and timid "No," was her answer.

"What! not remember moonlight, and Muschat's Cairn, and Rob and Rat?" said he, with the same sneer;—"Your memory needs redding up, my jo."

If Jeanie's distresses had admitted of aggravation, it must have been to find her sister under the charge of such a profligate as this man. He was not, indeed, without something of good to balance so much that was evil in his character and habits. In his misdemeanors he had never been bloodthirsty or cruel; and in his present occupation, he had shown himself, in a certain degree, accessible to touches of humanity. But these good qualities were unknown to Jeanie, who, remembering the scene at Muschat's Cairn, could scarce find voice to acquaint him, that she had an order from Bailie Middleburgh, permitting her to see her sister.

"I ken that fu' weel, my bonny doo; mair by token, I have a special charge to stay in the ward with you a' the time ye are thegither."

"Must that be sae?" asked Jeanie, with an imploring voice.

"Hout, ay, hinny," replied the turnkey; "and what the waur will you and your tittie be of Jim Ratcliffe hearing what ye hae to say to ilk other?—Deil a word ye'll say that will gar him ken your kittle sex better than he kens them already; and another thing is, that if ye dinna speak o' breaking the Tolbooth, deil a word will I tell ower, either to do ye good or ill."

Thus saying, Ratcliffe marshalled her the way to the apartment where Effie was confined.

Shame, fear, and grief, had contended for mastery in the poor prisoner's bosom during the whole morning, while she had looked forward to this meeting; but when the door opened, all gave way to a confused and strange feeling that had a tinge of joy in it, as, throwing herself on her sis-

ter's neck, she ejaculated, "My dear Jeanie!—my dear Jeanie! it's lang since I hae seen ye." Jeanie returned the embrace with an earnestness that partook almost of rapture, but it was only a fitting emotion, like a sunbeam unexpectedly penetrating betwixt the clouds of a tempest, and obscured almost as soon as visible. The sisters walked together to the side of the pallet bed, and sate down side by side, took hold of each other's hands, and looked each other in the face, but without speaking a word. In this posture they remained for a minute, while the gleam of joy gradually faded from their features, and gave way to the most intense expression, first of melancholy, and then of agony, till, throwing themselves again into each other's arms, they, to use the language of Scripture, lifted up their voices, and wept bitterly.

Even the hard-hearted turnkey, who had spent his life in scenes calculated to stifle both conscience and feeling, could not witness this scene without a touch of human sympathy. It was shown in a trifling action, but which had more delicacy in it than seemed to belong to Ratcliffe's character and station. The unglazed window of the miserable chamber was open, and the beams of a bright sun fell right upon the bed where the sufferers were seated. With a gentleness that had something of reverence in it, Ratcliffe partly closed the shutter, and seemed thus to throw a veil over a scene so sorrowful.

"Ye are ill, Effie," were the first words Jeanie could utter; "ye are very ill."

"O, what wad I gie to be ten times waur, Jeanie!" was the reply—"what wad I gie to be cauld dead afore the ten o'clock bell the morn! And our father—but I am his bairn, nae langer now—O, I hae nae friend left in the world!—O, that I were lying dead at my mother's side, in Newbattle kirk-yard!"

"Hout, lassie," said Ratcliffe, willing to show the interest which he absolutely felt, "dinna be sae dooms doon-hearted as a' that; there's mony a tod hunted that's no killed. Advocate Langtale has brought folk through waur snappers than a' this, and there's no a cleverer agent than Nichil Novit e'er drew a bill of suspension. Hanged or unhanged, they are weel aff has sic an agent and counsel; ane's sure o' fair play. Ye are a bonny lass, too, an ye wad busk up your cockernonie a bit; and a bonny lass will find favor wi' judge and jury, when they would strap up a grewsome carle like me for the fifteenth part of a flea's hide and tallow, d—n them."

To this homely strain of consolation the mourners returned no answer; indeed, they were so much lost in their own sorrows as to have become insensible of Ratcliffe's presence. "O Effie," said her elder sister, "how could you conceal your situation from me? O woman, had I deserved this at your hand?—had ye spoke but ae word—sorry we might hae been, and shamed we might hae been, but this awfu' dispensation had never come ower us."

"And what gude wad that hae done?" answered the prisoner. "Na, na, Jeanie, a' was ower when ance I forgot what I promised when I faulded down the leaf of my Bible. See," she said, producing the sacred volume, "the book opens aye at the place o' itsell. O see, Jeanie, what a fearfu' Scripture!"

Jeanie took her sister's Bible, and found that the fatal mark was made at this impressive text in the book of Job: "He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone. And mine hope hath he removed like a tree."

"Isna that ower true a doctrine?" said the prisoner—"Isna my crown, my honor removed? And what am I but a poor wasted, wan-thriven tree, dug up by the roots, and flung out to waste in the highway, that man and beast may tread it under foot? I thought o' the bonny bit thorn that our father rooted out o' the yard last May, when it had a' the flush o' blossoms on it; and then it lay in the court till the beasts had trod them a' to pieces wi' their feet. I little thought, when I was wae for the bit silly green bush and its flowers, that I was to gang the same gate mysell."

"O, if ye had spoken ae word," again sobbed Jeanie—"If I were free to swear that ye had said but ae word of how it stude wi' ye, they couldna hae touched your life this day."

"Could they na?" said Effie, with something like awakened interest—for life is dear even to those who feel it is a burden—"Wha tauld ye that, Jeanie?"

"It was ane that kend what he was saying weel enough," replied Jeanie, who had a natural reluctance at mentioning even the name of her sister's seducer.

"Wha was it?—I conjure you to tell me," said Effie, seating herself upright—"Wha could tak interest in sic a cast-by as I am now?—Was it—was it him?"

"Hout," said Ratcliffe, "what signifies keeping the poor lassie in a swither? I see uphaid it's been Robertson that learned ye that doctrine when ye saw him at Muschat's Cairn."

"Was it him?" said Effie, catching eagerly at his words—"was it him, Jeanie, indeed?—O, I see it was him—poor lad, and I was thinking his heart was as hard as the nether millstone—and him in sic danger on his ain part—puir George!"

Somewhat indignant at this burst of tender feeling towards the author of her misery, Jeanie could not help exclaiming—"O Effie, how can ye speak that gane of sic a man as that?"

"We mann forgie our enemies, ye ken," said poor Effie, with a timid look and a subdued voice; for her conscience told her what a different character the feelings with which she regarded her seducer bore, compared with the Christian charity under which she attempted to veil it.

"And ye hae suffered a' this for him, and ye