

vert, if possible, Henry the Smith from his too frequent use of arms, even though he felt some pride in being connected with one who wielded with such superior excellence those weapons, which in that warlike age it was the boast of all men to manage with spirit. But when he heard his daughter recommend, as the readiest road to this pacific state of mind, that her lover should renounce the gainful trade in which he was held unrivalled, and which, from the constant private differences and public wars of the time, was sure to afford him a large income, he could withhold his wrath no longer. The daughter had scarce recommended to her lover the fabrication of the implements of husbandry, than, feeling the certainty of being right, of which, in the earlier part of their debate he had been somewhat doubtful, the father broke in with—

“Locks and bars, plough-graith and harrow-teeth!—and why not grates and fire-prongs, and Culross girdles,* and an ass to carry the merchandise through the country—and then for another ass to lead it by the halter?—Why, Catharine, girl, has sense altogether forsaken thee, or dost thou think that in these hard and iron days, men will give ready silver for anything save that which can defend their own life, or enable them to take that of their enemy? We want swords to protect ourselves every moment now, thou silly wench, and not ploughs to dress the ground for the grain we may never see rise. As for the matter of our daily bread, those who are strong seize it, and live; those who are weak yield it, and die of hunger. Happy is the man who, like my worthy son, has means of obtaining his living otherwise than by the point of the sword which he makes. Preach peace to him as much as thou wilt—I will never be he will say thee nay; but as for bidding the first armorer in Scotland forego the forging of swords, curtal-axes, and harness, it is enough to drive patience itself mad—Out from my sight!—and next morning I prithee remember, that shouldst thou have the luck to see Henry the Smith, which is more than thy usage of him has deserved, you see a man who has not his match in Scotland at the use of broadsword and battle-axe, and who can work for five hundred marks a year, without breaking a holiday.”

The daughter, on hearing her father speak thus peremptorily, made a low obeisance, and, without further good-night, withdrew to the chamber which was her usual sleeping apartment.

CHAPTER III.

Whence cometh *Smith*, be he knight, lord, or squire,
But from the smith that forged in the fire!

VERSTEGAN.

THE armorer's heart swelled big with various and contending sensations, so that it seemed as

* The *girdle* is the thin plate of iron used for the manufacture of the staple luxury of Scotland, the oaten cake. The towns of Culross was long celebrated for its girdles.

if it would burst the leathern doublet under which it was shrouded. He arose—turned away his head, and extended his hand towards the Glover, while he averted his face, as if desirous that his emotion should not be read upon his countenance.

“Nay, hang me if I bid you farewell, man,” said Simon, striking the flat of his hand against that which the armorer expanded towards him. “I will shake no hands with you for an hour to come at least. Tarry but a moment, man, and I will explain all this; and surely a few drops of blood from a scratch, and a few silly words from a foolish wench's lip, are not to part father and son, when they have been so long without meeting? Stay, then, man, if ever you would wish for a father's blessing and St. Valentine's, whose blessed eve this chances to be.”

The Glover was soon heard loudly summoning Dorothy, and, after some clanking of keys and tramping up and down stairs, Dorothy appeared bearing three large rummer cups of green glass, which were then esteemed a great and precious curiosity, and the Glover followed with a huge bottle, equal at least to three quarts of these degenerate days.—“Here is a cup of wine, Henry, older by half than I am myself; my father had it in a gift from stout old Crabbe the Flemish engineer, who defended Perth so stoutly in the minority of David the Second. We glovers could always do something in war, though our connexion with it was less than yours who work in steel and iron. And my father had pleased old Crabbe—some other day I will tell you how, and also how long these bottles were concealed under ground, to save them from the reiving Southron. So I will empty a cup to the soul's health of my honored father—May his sins be forgiven him! Dorothy, thou shalt drink this pledge, and then be gone to thy cockloft. I know thine ears are itching, girl, but I have that to say which no one must hear save Henry Smith, the son of mine adoption.”

Dorothy did not venture to remonstrate, but taking off her glass, or rather her goblet, with good courage, retired to her sleeping apartment, according to her master's commands. The two friends were left alone.

“It grieves me, friend Henry,” said Simon, filling at the same time his own glass and his guest's, “it grieves me, from my soul, that my daughter retains this silly humor; but also, methinks, thou might'st mend it. Why wouldst thou come hither clattering with thy sword and dagger, when the girl is so silly that she cannot bear the sight of these? Dost thou not remember that thou hadst a sort of quarrel with her even before thy last departure from Perth, because thou wouldst not go like other honest quiet burghers, but must be ever armed, like one of the rascally jack-men* that wait on the nobility? Sure it is time enough for decent burghesses to

* Men wearing jacks, or armor.

arm at the tolling of the common bell, which calls us out bodin in effer of war.”*

“Why my good father, that was not my fault; but I had no sooner quitted my nag than I run hither to tell you of my return, thinking, if it were your will to permit me, that I would get your advice about being Mistress Catharine's Valentine for the year; and then I heard from Mrs. Dorothy that you were gone to hear mass at the Black Friars. So I thought I would follow thither; partly to hear the same mass with you, and partly—Our Lady and Saint Valentine forgive me!—to look upon one who thinks little enough of me—And, as you entered the church, methought I saw two or three dangerous looking men holding counsel together, and gazing at you and at her, and in especial Sir John Ramorny, whom I knew well enough, for all his disguise, and the velvet patch over his eye, and his cloak so like a serving-man's;—so methought, father Simon, that as you were old, and yonder slip of a Highlander something too young to do battle, I would even walk quietly after you, not doubting, with the tools I had about me, to bring any one to reason that might disturb you in your way home. You know that yourself discovered me, and drew me into the house, whether I would or no; otherwise, I promise you, I would not have seen your daughter till I had donned the new jerkin which was made at Berwick after the latest cut; nor would I have appeared before her with these weapons, which she dislikes so much. Although, to say truth, so many are at deadly feud with me for one unhappy chance or another, that it is as needful for me as for any man in Scotland to go by night with weapons about me.”

“The silly wench never thinks of that,” said Simon Glover. “She never has sense to consider, that in our dear native land of Scotland every man deems it his privilege and duty to avenge his own wrong. But, Harry, my boy, thou art to blame for taking her talk so much to heart. I have seen thee bold enough with other wenches—wherefore so still and tongue-tied with her?”

“Because she is something different from other maidens, father Glover—because she is not only more beautiful, but wiser, higher, holier, and seems to me as if she were made of better clay than we that approach her. I can hold my head high enough with the rest of the lasses round the Maypole; but somehow, when I approach Catharine, I feel myself an earthly, coarse, ferocious creature, scarce worthy to look on her, much less to contradict the precepts which she expounds to me.”

“You are an imprudent merchant, Harry Smith,” replied Simon; “and rate too high the goods you wish to purchase. Catharine is a good girl, and my daughter; but if you make her a conceited ape by your bashfulness and your

* That is, not in dread of war, but in the guise which *effairs*, or belongs, to war; in arms, namely, offensive and defensive. * Bodin in feir of war,” a frequent term in old Scottish history and muniments, means, arrayed in warlike guise.

flattery, neither you nor I will see our wishes accomplished.”

“I often fear it, my good father,” said the Smith; “for I feel how little I am deserving of Catharine.”

“Feel a thread's end!” said the Glover; “feel for me, friend Smith, for Catharine and me. Think how the poor thing is beset from morning to night, and by what sort of persons, even though windows be down and doors shut. We were accosted to-day by one too powerful to be named,—ay, and he showed his displeasure openly, because I would not permit him to gallant my daughter in the church itself, when the priest was saying mass. There are others scarce less reasonable. I sometimes wish that Catharine were some degrees less fair, that she might not catch that dangerous sort of admiration; or somewhat less holy, that she might sit down like an honest woman, contented with stout Henry Smith, who could protect his wife against every sprig of chivalry in the Court of Scotland.”

“And if I did not,” said Henry, thrusting out a hand and arm which might have belonged to a giant for bone and muscle, “I would I may never bring hammer upon anvil again! Ay, an it were come but that length, my fair Catharine should see that there is no harm in a man having the trick of defence. But I believe she thinks the world is one great minster-church, and that all who live in it should behave as if they were at an eternal mass.”

“Nay, in truth,” said the father, “she has strange influence over those who approach her—the Highland lad, Conachar, with whom I have been troubled for these two or three years, although you may see he has the natural spirit of his people, obeys the least sign which Catharine makes him, and, indeed, will hardly be ruled by any one else in the house. She takes much pains with him to bring him from his rude Highland habits.”

Here Harry Smith became uneasy in his chair, lifted the flagon, set it down, and at length exclaimed, “The devil take the young Highland whelp and his whole kindred? What has Catharine to do to instruct such a fellow as he? He will be just like the wolf-cub that I was fool enough to train to the offices of a dog, and every one thought him reclaimed, till, in an ill hour, I went to walk on the hill of Montcreiff, when he broke loose on the laird's flock, and made a havoc that I might well have rued, had the laird not wanted a harness at the time. And I marvel that you, being a sensible man, father Glover, will keep this Highland young fellow—a likely one, I promise you—so nigh to Catharine, as if there were no other than your daughter to serve him for a schoolmistress.”

“Fie, my son, fie—now, you are jealous,” said Simon, “of a poor young fellow, who, to tell you the truth, resides here, because he may not so well live on the other side of the hill.”

"Ay, ay, father Simon," retorted the Smith, who had all the narrow-minded feelings of the burghers of his time, "an it were not for fear of offence, I would say that you have even too much packing and peeling with yonder loons out of burgh."

"I must get my deer-hides, buck-skins, kid-skins, and so forth, somewhere, my good Harry, —and Highlandmen give good bargains."

"They can afford them," replied Henry, dryly; "for they sell nothing but stolen gear."

"Well, well,—be that as it may, it is not my business where they get the bestial, so I get the hides. But, as I was saying, there are certain considerations why I am willing to oblige the father of this young man, by keeping him here. And he is but half a Highlander neither, and wants a thought of the dour spirit of a Glunemachie; * after all, I have seldom seen him so fierce as he showed himself but now."

"You could not, unless he had killed his man," replied the Smith, in the same dry tone.

"Nevertheless, if you wish it, Harry, I'll set all other respects aside, and send the land-louper to seek other quarters to-morrow morning."

"Nay, father," said the Smith, "you cannot suppose that Harry Gow cares the value of a smithy-dander † for such a cub as yonder cat-a-mountain? I care little, I promise you, though all his clan were coming down the Shoegate ‡ with slogan crying, and pipes playing; I would find fifty blades and bucklers would send them back faster than they came. But, to speak truth—though it is a fool's speech, too—I care not to see the fellow so much with Catharine. Remember, father Glover, your trade keeps your eyes and hands close employed, and must have your heedful care, even if this lazy lurdane wrought at it, which you know yourself he seldom does."

"And that is true," said Simon; "he cuts all his gloves out for the right hand, and never could finish a pair in his life."

"No doubt, his notions of skin-cutting are rather different," said Henry. "But, with your leave, father, I would only say, that work he, or be he idle, he has no bleared eyes,—no hands seared with the hot iron, and welked by the use of the fore-hammer,—no hair rusted in the smoke, and singed in the furnace, like the hide of a badger, rather than what is fit to be covered with a Christian bonnet. Now, let Catharine be as good a wench as ever lived, and I will uphold

* This word has been one of the torments of the lexicographers. There is no doubt that in Perthshire, and wherever the Highlanders and the Lowlanders bordered on each other, it was a common term whereby, whether in scorn or honor, the Gaelic race used to be designated. Whether the *etymon* be, as Celtic scholars say, *Glunemach*, i. e., the *Gartered* (and certainly the garter has always been a marking feature in "the Garb of old Gaul"), or, as Dr. Jamieson seems to insinuate, the word originally means *black cattle*, and had been contemptuously applied by the Sassenach to the herdsman, as on an intellectual level with his herd, I shall not pretend to say more than that *adhuc sub iudice est*.

† Cinder.

‡ A principal street in Perth.

her to be the best in Perth, yet she must see and know that these things make a difference betwixt man and man, and that the difference is not in my favor."

"Here is to thee, with all my heart, son Harry," said the old man, filling a brimmer to his companion, and another to himself; "I see, that good smith as thou art, thou ken'st not the mettle that women are made of. Thou must be bold, Henry; and bear thyself not as if thou wert going to the gallow-lee, but like a gay young fellow, who knows his own worth, and will not be slighted by the best grandchild Eve ever had. Catharine is a woman like her mother; and thou thinkest foolishly to suppose they are all set on what pleases the eye. Their ear must be pleased too, man; they must know that he whom they favor is bold and buxom, and might have the love of twenty, though he is suing for theirs. Believe an old man, women walk more by what others think than by what they think themselves; and when she asks for the boldest man in Perth, whom shall she hear named but Harry Burn-the-wind?—The best armorer that ever fashioned weapon on anvil? why, Harry Smith again!—The tightest dancer at the Maypole? why, the lusty smith!—The gayest troller of ballads? why, who but Harry Gow?—The best wrestler, sword-and-buckler player—the king of the weapon-shawing—the breaker of mad horses—the tamer of wild Highlandmen?—ever more it is thee—thee—no one but thee.—And shall Catharine prefer yonder slip of a Highland boy to thee?—Pshaw! she might as well make a steel-gauntlet out of kid's leather. I tell thee, Conchar is nothing to her, but so far as she would fain prevent the devil having his due of him as of other Highlandmen—God bless her, poor thing! she would bring all mankind to better thoughts if she could."

"In which she will fail to a certainty,"—said the Smith, who, as the reader may have noticed, had no good-will to the Highland race. "I will wager on Old Nick, of whom I should know something, he being indeed a worker in the same element with myself, against Catharine on that debate—the devil will have the tartan; that is sure enough."

"Ay, but Catharine," replied the Glover, "hath a second thou knowest little of.—Father Clement has taken the young reiver in hand, and he fears a hundred devils as little as I do a flock of geese."

"Father Clement?" said the Smith; "you are always making some new saint in this godly city of Saint Johnston. Pray, who, for a devil's drubber, may he be?—One of your hermits that is trained for the work like a wrestler for the ring, and brings himself to trim by fasting and penance—is he not?"

"No, that is the marvel of it," said Simon; "Father Clement eats, drinks, and lives much like other folk—all the rules of the Church, nevertheless, strictly observed."

"Oh, I comprehend!—a buxom priest, that

thinks more of good living than of good life—tipples a can on Fastern's Eve, to enable him to face Lent—has a pleasant *in principio*—and confesses all the prettiest women about the town?"

"You are on the bow-hand still, Smith. I tell you, my daughter and I could nose out either a fasting hypocrite or a full one. But Father Clement is neither the one nor the other."

"But what is he then, in Heaven's name?"

"One who is either greatly better than half his brethren of St. Johnston put together, or so much worse than the worst of them, that it is sin and shame that he is suffered to abide in the country."

"Methinks it were easy to tell whether he be the one or the other," said the Smith.

"Content you, my friend," said Simon, "with knowing, that if you judge Father Clement by what you see him do and hear him say, you will think of him as the best and kindest man in the world—with a comfort for every man's grief, a counsel for every man's difficulty, the rich man's surest guide, and the poor man's best friend. But if you listen to what the Dominicans say of him, he is—Benedicite!"—(here the Glover crossed himself on brow and bosom)—"a foul heretic, who ought, by means of earthly flames, to be sent to those which burn eternally."

The Smith also crossed himself and exclaimed,— "Saint Mary! father Simon, and do you, who are so good and prudent that you have been called the Wise Glover of Perth, let your daughter attend the ministry of one who—the Saints preserve us!—may be in league with the foul Fiend himself? Why, was it not a priest who raised the devil in the Meal Vennel, when Hodge Jackson's house was blown down in the great wind?—did not the devil appear in the midst of the Tay, dressed in a priest's scapular, gambolling like a pellach amongst the waves, the morning when our stately bridge was swept away?"

"I cannot tell whether he did or no," said the Glover; "I only know I saw him not. As to Catharine, she cannot be said to use Father Clement's ministry, seeing her confessor is old Father Francis the Dominican, from whom she had her shrift to-day. But women will sometimes be wilful, and sure enough she consults with Father Clement more than I could wish; and yet when I have spoken with him myself, I have thought him so good and holy a man, that I could have trusted my own salvation with him. There are bad reports of him among the Dominicans, that is certain. But what have we laymen to do with such things, my son? Let us pay Mother Church her dues, give our alms, confess and do our penances duly, and the saints will bear us out."

"Ay, truly; and they will have consideration," said the Smith, "for any rash and unhappy blow that a man may deal in a fight, when his party was on defence, and standing up to him; and that's the only creed a man can live upon in

Scotland, let your daughter think what she pleases. Marry, a man must know his fence, or have a short lease of his life, in any place where blows are going so rife. Five nobles to our altar have cleared me for the best man I ever had misfortune with."

"Let us finish our flask, then," said the old Glover; "for I reckon the Dominican tower is tolling midnight. And hark thee, son Henry; be at the lattice window on our east gable by the very peep of dawn, and make me aware thou art come by whistling the Smith's call gently. I will contrive that Catharine shall look out at the window, and thus thou wilt have all the privileges of being a gallant Valentine through the rest of the year; which if thou canst not use to thine own advantage, I shall be led to think, that, for all thou be'st covered with the Lion's hide, Nature has left on thee the long ears of the ass."

"Amen, father," said the armorer; "a hearty good-night to you; and God's blessing on your roof-tree, and those whom it covers. You shall hear the Smith's call sound by cock-crowing; I warrant I put Sir Chanticleer to shame."

So saying, he took his leave; and, though completely undaunted, moved through the deserted streets like one upon his guard, to his own dwelling, which was situated in the Mill Wynd, at the western end of Perth.

CHAPTER IV.

What's all this turmoil cramm'd into our parts?
Faith, but the pit-a-pat of poor young hearts.

DRYDEN.

THE sturdy armorer was not, it may be believed, slack in keeping the appointment assigned by his intended father-in-law. He went through the process of his toilet with more than ordinary care, throwing, as far as he could, those points which had a military air into the shade. He was far too noted a person to venture to go entirely unarmed in a town where he had indeed many friends, but also, from the character of many of his former exploits, several deadly enemies, at whose hands, should they take him at advantage, he knew he had little mercy to expect. He therefore wore under his jerkin a *secret*, or coat of chain-mail, made so light and flexible that it interfered as little with his movements as a modern under-waistcoat, yet of such proof as he might safely depend upon, every ring of it having been wrought and joined by his own hands. Above this he wore, like others of his age and degree, the Flemish hose and doublet, which, in honor of the holy tide, were of the best superfine English broadcloth, light blue in color, slashed out with black satin, and passamented (jaced, that is) with embroidery of black silk. His walking boots were of cordovan leather; his cloak of good Scottish gray, which served to conceal a whinger, or *couteau de chasse*, that hung at his belt, and was his only offensive weapon, for

be carried in his hand but a rod of holly. His black velvet bonnet was lined with steel, quilted between the metal and his head, and thus constituted a means of defence which might safely be trusted to.

Upon the whole, Henry had the appearance, to which he was well entitled, of a burgher of wealth and consideration, assuming in his dress as much consequence as he could display, without stepping beyond his own rank, and encroaching on that of the gentry. Neither did his frank and manly deportment, though indicating a total indifference to danger, bear the least resemblance to that of the bravo or swash-bucklers of the day, amongst whom Henry was sometimes unjustly ranked by those who imputed the frays, in which he was so often engaged, to a quarrelsome and violent temper, resting upon a consciousness of his personal strength and knowledge of his weapon. On the contrary, every feature bore the easy and good-humored expression of one who neither thought of inflicting mischief, nor dreaded it from others.

Having attired himself in his best, the honest armorer next placed nearest to his heart (which throbbd at its touch) a little gift which he had long provided for Catharine Glover, and which his quality of Valentine would presently give him the title to present, and her to receive, without regard to maidenly scruples. It was a small ruby cut into the form of a heart, transfixed with a golden arrow, and was enclosed in a small purse made of links of the finest work in steel, as if it had been designed for a hauberk to a king. Round the verge of the purse were these words—

Love's darts
Cleave hearts
Through mail-shirts.

This device had cost the armorer some thought, and he was much satisfied with his composition, because it seemed to imply that his skill could defend all hearts saving his own. He wrapped himself in his cloak, and hastened through the still silent streets, determined to appear at the window appointed a little before dawn.

With this purpose, he passed up the High Street,* and turned down the opening where Saint John's Church now stands, in order to proceed to Curfew Street,† when it occurred to him,

* The two following notes are furnished by a gentleman well versed in the antiquities of bonnie St. Johnston:

“Some confusion occasionally occurs in the historical records of Perth, from there having been two high or principal streets in that city: the North High Street, still called the High Street, and the South High Street, now known only as the South Street, or Shoe-gate. An instance of this occurs in the evidence of one of the witnesses on the Gowrie Conspiracy, who deponed, that the Earl of Gowrie ran in from ‘the High Street;’ whereas the Earl's house stood in that part of the town now known as the South Street. This circumstance will explain how the Smith had to pass St. Anne's Chapel and St. John's Church on his way from the High Street to Curfew Row, which edifices he would not have approached if his morning walk had been taken through the more northerly of the two principal streets.”

† “Curfew Street, or Row, must, at a period not much earlier

from the appearance of the sky, that he was at least an hour too early for his purpose, and that it would be better not to appear at the place of rendezvous till nearer the time assigned. Other gallants were not unlikely to be on the watch as well as himself, about the house of the Fair Maid of Perth; and he knew his own foible so well, as to be sensible of the great chance of a scuffle arising betwixt them. “I have the advantage,” he thought, “by my father Simon's friendship; and why should I stain my fingers with the blood of the poor creatures that are not worthy my notice, since they are so much less fortunate than myself? No, no; I will be wise for once, and keep at a distance from all temptation to a broil. They shall have no more time to quarrel with me than just what it may require for me to give the signal, and for my father Simon to answer it. I wonder how the old man will contrive to bring her to the window? I fear, if she knew his purpose, he would find it difficult to carry it into execution.”

While these lover-like thoughts were passing through his brain, the armorer loitered in his pace, often turning his eyes eastward, and eyeing the firmament, in which no slight shades of gray were beginning to flicker, to announce the approach of dawn, however distant, which, to the impatience of the stout armorer, seemed on that morning to abstain longer than usual from occupying her eastern barbican. He was now passing slowly under the wall of Saint Anne's Chapel (not failing to cross himself and say an *ave*, as he trode the consecrated ground), when a voice, which seemed to come from behind one of the flying buttresses of the chapel, said, “He lingers that has need to run.”

“Who speaks?” said the armorer, looking around him, somewhat startled at an address so unexpected, both in its tone and tenor.

“No matter who speaks,” answered the same voice. “Do thou make great speed, or thou wilt scarce make good speed. Bandy not words, but begone.”

“Saint or sinner, angel or devil,” said Henry, crossing himself, “your advice touches me but

than that of the story, have formed part of the suburbs of Perth. It was the Wynd or Row immediately surrounding the Castle Yard, and had probably been built, in part at least, soon after the Castle was razed, and its most filled up, by Robert Bruce. There is every probability that in the days of Robert the Third it was of greater extent than at present,—the *Castle Gable*, which now terminates it to the eastward, having then run in a line with the Skinnergate, as the ruins of some walls still bear witness. The shops, as well as the houses of the Glovers, were then, as the name implies, chiefly in the Skinnergate; but the charters in possession of the incorporation show that the members had considerable property in or adjacent to the Curfew Row, consisting not only of fields and gardens, but of dwelling-houses.

“In the wall of the corner house of the Curfew Row, adjacent to Blackfriars' Vennel, there is still to be seen a niche in the wall where the Curfew bell hung. This house formed at one time a part of a chapel dedicated to Saint Bartholomew, and in it at no very distant period the members of the Glover incorporation held their meetings.”

too dearly to be neglected. Saint Valentine be my speed!”

So saying, he instantly changed his loitering pace to one with which few people could have kept up, and in an instant was in Convrefew Street. He had not made three steps towards Simon Glover's, which stood in the midst of the narrow street, when two men started from under the houses on different sides, and advanced, as it were by concert, to intercept his passage. The imperfect light only permitted him to discern that they wore the Highland mantle.

“Clear the way, catheran,” said the armorer, in the deep stern voice which corresponded with the breadth of his chest.

They did not answer, at least intelligibly; but he could see that they drew their swords, with the purpose of withstanding him by violence. Conjecturing some evil, but of what kind he could not anticipate, Henry instantly determined to make his way through whatever odds, and defend his mistress, or at least die at her feet. He cast his cloak over his left arm as a buckler, and advanced rapidly and steadily to the two men. The nearest made a thrust at him; but Henry Smith, parrying the blow with his cloak, dashed his arm in the man's face, and tripping him at the same time, gave him a severe fall on the causeway; while almost at the same instant he struck a blow with his whinger at the fellow who was upon his right hand, so severely applied, that he also lay prostrate by his associate. Meanwhile the armorer pushed forward in alarm, for which the circumstance of the street being guarded or defended by strangers, who conducted themselves with such violence, afforded sufficient reason. He heard a suppressed whisper and a bustle under the Glover's windows—those very windows from which he had expected to be hailed by Catharine as her Valentine. He kept to the opposite side of the street, that he might reconnoitre their number and purpose. But one of the party, who were beneath the window, observing or hearing him, crossed the street also, and taking him doubtless for one of the sentinels, asked, in a whisper, “What noise was yonder, Kenneth? why gave you not the signal?”

“Villain!” said Henry, “you are discovered, and you shall die the death!”

As he spoke thus, he dealt the stranger a blow with his weapon, which would probably have made his words good, had not the man, raising his arm, received on his hand the blow meant for his head. The wound must have been a severe one, for he staggered and fell with a deep groan. Without noticing him farther, Henry Smith sprung forward upon a party of men who seemed engaged in placing a ladder against the lattice window in the gable. Henry did not stop either to count their numbers, or to ascertain their purpose. But crying the alarm-word of the town, and giving the signal at which the burghers were wont to collect, he rushed on the night-walkers, one of whom was in the act of ascending the lad-

der. The Smith seized it by the rounds, threw it down on the pavement, and placing his foot on the body of the man who had been mounting, prevented him from regaining his feet. His accomplices struck fiercely at Henry, to extricate their companion. But his mail-coat stood him in good stead, and he repaid their blows with interest, shouting aloud, “Help, help, for bonnie St. Johnston!—Bows and blades, brave citizens! bows and blades!—they break into our houses under cloud of night!”

These words, which resounded far through the streets, were accompanied by as many fierce blows, dealt with good effect among those whom the armorer assailed. In the meantime, the inhabitants of the district began to awaken and appear on the street in their shirts, with swords and targets, and some of them with torches. The assailants now endeavored to make their escape, which all of them effected excepting the man who had been thrown down along with the ladder. Him the intrepid armorer had caught by the throat in the scuffle, and held as fast as the greyhound holds the hare. The other wounded men were borne off by their comrades.

“Here are a sort of knaves breaking peace within burgh,” said Henry to the neighbors who began to assemble; “make after the rogues. They cannot all get off, for I have maimed some of them; the blood will guide you to them.”

“Some Highland catherans,” said the citizens, —“up, and chase, neighbors!”

“Ay, chase—chase,—leave me to manage this fellow,” continued the armorer.

The assistants dispersed in different directions, their lights flashing, and their cries resounding through the whole adjacent district.

In the meantime the armorer's captive entreated for freedom, using both promises and threats to obtain it. “As thou art a gentleman,” he said, “let me go, and what is past shall be forgiven.”

“I am no gentleman,” said Henry—“I am Hal of the Wynd, a burgher of Perth; and I have done nothing to need forgiveness.”

“Villain, thou hast done thou knowest not what! But let me go, and I will fill thy bonnet with gold pieces.”

“I shall fill thy bonnet with a cloven head presently,” said the armorer, “unless thou stand still as a true prisoner.”

“What is the matter, my son Harry?” said Simon, who now appeared at the window.—“I hear thy voice in another tone than I expected.—What is all this noise; and why are the neighbors gathering to the airay?”

“There have been a proper set of limmers about to scale your windows, father Simon; but I am like to prove godfather to one of them, whom I hold here, as fast as ever vice held iron.”

“Hear me, Simon Glover,” said the prisoner; “let me but speak one word with you in private, and rescue me from the gripe of this iron-fisted and leaden-pated clown, and I will show thee,

that no harm was designed to thee or thine; and, moreover, tell thee what will much advantage thee."

"I should know that voice," said Simon Glover, who now came to the door with a dark-lantern in his hand. "Son Smith, let this young man speak with me. There is no danger in him, I promise you. Stay but an instant where you are, and let no one enter the house, either to attack or defend. I will be answerable that this galliard meant but some Saint Valentine's jest."

So saying, the old man pulled in the prisoner and shut the door, leaving Henry a little surprised at the unexpected light in which his father-in-law had viewed the affray. "A jest!" he said; "it might have been a strange jest if they had got into the maiden's sleeping room!—And they would have done so, had it not been for the honest friendly voice from betwixt the butresses, which, if it were not that of the blessed Saint (though what am I that the holy person should speak to me?) could not sound in that place without her permission and assent, and for which I will promise her a wax candle at her shrine, as long as my whinger,—and I would I had had my two-handed broadsword in stead, both for the sake of St. Johnston and of the rogues—for of a certain, those whingers are pretty toys, but more fit for a boy's hand than a man's. Oh, my old two-handed Trojan, hadst thou been in my hands, as thou hang'st presently at the tester of my bed, the legs of those rogues had not carried their bodies so clean off the field. But there come lighted torches and drawn swords.—So ho—stand!—Are you for Saint Johnston?—If friends to the bonnie burgh, you are well come."

"We have been but bootless hunters," said the townsmen. "We followed by the tracks of the blood into the Dominican burial-ground, and we started two fellows from amongst the tombs, supporting betwixt them a third, who had probably got some of your marks about him, Harry. They got to the postern gate before we could overtake them, and rang the sanctuary bell—the gate opened, and in went they. So they are safe in girth and sanctuary, and we may go to our cold beds and warm us."

"Ay," said one of the party, "the good Dominicans have always some devout brother of their convent sitting up to open the gate of the sanctuary to any poor soul that is in trouble, and desires shelter in the church."

"Yes, if the poor hunted soul can pay for it," said another; "but, truly, if he be poor in purse as well as in spirit, he may stand on the outside till the hounds come up with him."

A third, who had been poring for a few minutes upon the ground by advantage of his torch, now looked upwards and spoke. He was a brisk, forward, rather corpulent little man, called Oliver Proudfoot, reasonably wealthy, and a leading man in his craft, which was that of bonnet-makers; he therefore spoke as one in authority.—"Canst tell us, jolly Smith,"—for they recognised

each other by the lights which were brought into the streets,—"what manner of fellows they were who raised up this fray within burgh?"

"The two that I first saw," answered the armorer, "seemed to me, as well as I could observe them, to have Highland plaids about them."

"Like enough—like enough," answered another citizen, shaking his head. "It's a shame the breaches in our walls are not repaired, and that these land-louping Highland scoundrels are left at liberty to take honest men and women out of their beds any night that is dark enough."

"But look here, neighbors," said Oliver Proudfoot, showing a bloody hand which he had picked up from the ground; "when did such a hand as this tie a Highlandman's brogues? It is large, indeed, and bony, but as fine as a lady's, with a ring that sparkles like a gleaming candle. Simon Glover has made gloves for this hand before now, if I am not much mistaken, for he works for all the courtiers." The spectators here began to gaze on the bloody token with various comments.

"If that is the case," said one, "Harry Smith had best show a clean pair of heels for it, since the Justiciar will scarce think the protecting a burgess's house an excuse for cutting off a gentleman's hand. There be hard laws against mutilation."

"Fie upon you, that you will say so, Michael Wabster," answered the bonnet-maker; "are we not representatives and successors of the stout old Romans, who built Perth as like to their own city as they could? And have we not charters from all our noble kings and progenitors, as being their loving liegemen? And would you have us now yield up our rights, privileges, and immunities, our outfang, and infang, our hand-habend, our back-bearand, and our blood-suits and amerciements, escheats, and commodities, and suffer an honest burgess's house to be assaulted without seeking for redress? No—brave citizens, craftsmen, and burgesses, the Tay shall flow back to Dunkeld before we submit to such injustice!"

"And how can we help it?" said a grave old man, who stood leaning on a two-handed sword—"What would you have us do?"

"Marry, Bailie Craigdallie, I wonder that you, of all men, ask the question. I would have you pass like true men from this very place to the King's Grace's presence, raise him from his royal rest, and presenting to him the piteous case of our being called forth from our beds at this season, with little better covering than these shirts, I would show him this bloody token, and know from his Grace's own royal lips, whether it is just and honest that his loving lieges should be thus treated by the knights and nobles of his deboshed court. And this I call pushing our cause warmly."

"Warmly, sayest thou?" replied the old burgess; "why, so warmly, that we shall all die of cold, man, before the porter turn a key to let us

into the royal presence.—Come, friends, the night is bitter—we have kept our watch and ward like men, and our jolly Smith hath given a warning to those that would wrong us, which shall be worth twenty proclamations of the King. To-morrow is a new day; we will consult on this matter on this self-same spot, and consider what measures should be taken for discovery and pursuit of the villains. And therefore let us dismiss before the heart's blood freeze in our veins."

"Bravo, bravo, neighbor Craigdallie—St. Johnston for ever!"

Oliver Proudfoot would still have spoken; for he was one of those pitiless orators who think that their eloquence can overcome all inconveniences in time, place, and circumstances. But no one would listen; and the citizens dispersed to their own houses by the light of the dawn, which began now to streak the horizon.

They were scarce gone ere the door of the Glover's house opened, and seizing the Smith by the hand, the old man pulled him in.

"Where is the prisoner?" demanded the armorer.

"He is gone—escaped—fled—what do I know of him?" said the Glover. "He got out at the back door, and so through the little garden.—Think not of him, but come and see the Valentine, whose honor and life you have saved this morning."

"Let me but sheathe my weapon," said the Smith—"let me but wash my hands."

"There is not an instant to lose, she is up and almost dressed.—Come on, man. She shall see thee with thy good weapon in thy hand, and with villain's blood on thy fingers, that she may know what is the value of a true man's service. She has stopped my mouth over long with her pruderies and her scruples. I will have her know what a brave man's love is worth, and a bold burgess's to boot."

CHAPTER V.

Up! lady fair, and braid thy hair,
And rouse thee in the breezy air,
Up! quit thy bower, late wears the hour,
Long have the rooks caw'd round the tower

JOANNA BAILLIE.

STARTLED from her repose by the noise of the affray, the Fair Maid of Perth had listened in breathless terror to the sounds of violence and outcry which arose from the street. She had sunk on her knees to pray for assistance, and when she distinguished the voices of neighbors and friends collected for her protection, she remained in the same posture to return thanks. She was still kneeling when her father almost thrust her champion, Henry Smith, into her apartment; the bashful lover hanging back at first, as if afraid to give offence, and, on observing her posture, from respect to her devotion.

"Father," said the armorer, "she prays—I dare no more speak to her than to a bishop when he says mass."

"Now, go thy ways, for a right valiant and courageous blockhead," said her father; and then speaking to his daughter, he added,—"Heaven is best thanked, my daughter, by gratitude shown to our fellow-creatures. Here comes the instrument by whom God has rescued thee from death, or perhaps from dishonor worse than death. Receive him, Catharine, as thy true Valentine, and him whom I desire to see my affectionate son."

"Not thus—father," replied Catharine. "I can see—can speak to no one now. I am not ungrateful—perhaps I am too thankful to the instrument of our safety; but let me thank the guardian Saint who sent me this timely relief, and give me but a moment to don my kirtle."

"Nay, God-a-mercy, wench, it were hard to deny thee time to busk thy body-clothes, since the request is the only words like a woman that thou hast uttered for these ten days.—Truly, son Harry, I would my daughter would put off being entirely a saint, till the time comes for her being canonized for Saint Catharine the second."

"Nay, jest not, father; for I will swear she has at least one sincere adorer already, who hath devoted himself to her pleasure, so far as sinful man may.—Fare-thee-well then, for the moment, fair maiden," he concluded, raising his voice, "and Heaven send thee dreams as peaceful as thy waking thoughts. I go to watch thy slumbers, and woe with him that shall intrude on them!"

"Nay, good and brave Henry, whose warm heart is at such variance with thy reckless hand, thrust thyself into no farther quarrels to-night; but take the kindest thanks, and with these, try to assume the peaceful thoughts which you assign to me. To-morrow we will meet, that I may assure you of my gratitude.—Farewell!"

"And farewell, lady and light of my heart!" said the armorer; and descending the stair which led to Catharine's apartment, was about to sally forth into the street, when the Glover caught him by the arm.

"I shall like the ruffle of to-night," said he, "better than I ever thought to do the clashing of steel, if it brings my daughter to her senses Harry, and teaches her what thou art worth. By St. Macgrider! * I even love these roysterers, and am sorry for that lover who will never wear right-handed chevron again. Ay! he has lost that which he will miss all the days of his life, especially when he goes to pull on his gloves,—ay, he will pay but half a fee to my craft in future.—Nay, not a step from this house to-night," he continued. "Thou dost not leave us, I promise thee, my son."

"I do not mean it. But I will, with your permission, watch in the street. The attack may be renewed."

"And if it be," said Simon, "thou wilt have

* A place called vulgarly Ecclesmagirdle (Ecclesia Macgirdle), not far from Perth, still preserves the memory of this old Gaelic saint from utter Letha.

better access to drive them back, having the vantage of the house. It is the way of fighting which suits us burghers best—that of resisting from behind stone walls. Our duty of watch and ward teaches us that trick; besides, enough are awake and astir to ensure us peace and quiet till morning. So come in this way."

So saying, he drew Henry, nothing loath, into the same apartment where they had supped, and where the old woman, who was on foot, disturbed as others had been by the nocturnal affray, soon roused up the fire.

"And now, my doughty son," said the Glover, "what liquor wilt thou pledge thy father in?"

Henry Smith had suffered himself to sink mechanically upon a seat of old black oak, and now gazed on the fire, that flashed back a ruddy light over his manly features. He muttered to himself half audibly—"Good Henry—brave Henry—Ah! had she but said dear Henry!"

"What liquors be these?" said the old Glover, laughing. "My cellar holds none such; but if sack, or rhenish, or wine of Gascony can serve, why, say the word, and the flagon foams—that is all."

"The kindest thanks," said the armorer, still musing, "that's more than she ever said to me before—the kindest thanks—what may that stretch to?"

"It shall stretch like kid's leather, man," said the Glover, "if thou wilt but be ruled, and say what thou wilt take for thy morning's draught."

"Whatever thou wilt, father," answered the armorer, carelessly, and relapsed into the analysis of Catharine's speech to him. "She spoke of my warm heart; but she also spoke of my reckless hand. What earthly thing can I do to get rid of this fighting fancy? Certainly I were best strike my right hand off, and nail it to the door of a church, that it may never do me discredit more."

"You have chopped off hands enough for one night," said his friend, setting a flagon of wine on the table. "Why dost thou vex thyself, man? She would love thee twice as well did she not see how thou doatest upon her. But it becomes serious now. I am not to have the risk of my booth being broken, and my house plundered, by the hell-raking followers of the nobles, because she is called the Fair Maid of Perth, and please ye. No, she shall know I am her father, and will have that obedience to which law and gospel give me right. I will have her thy wife, Henry, my heart of gold—thy wife, my man of mettle, and that before many weeks are over. Come, come, here is to thy merry bridal, jolly Smith."

The father quaffed a large cup, and filled it to his adopted son, who raised it slowly to his head; then, ere it had reached his lips, replaced it suddenly on the table, and shook his head.

"Nay, if thou wilt not pledge me to such a health, I know no one who will," said Simon.

"What carst thou mean, thou foolish lad? Here has a chance happened, which in a manner places her in thy power, since from one end of the city to the other, all would cry fie on her if she should say thee nay. Here am I, her father, not only consenting to the cutting out of the match, but willing to see you two as closely united together, as ever needle stitched buckskin. And with all this on thy side—fortune, father, and all—thou lookest like a distracted lover in a ballad, more like to pitch thyself into the Tay, than to woo a lass that may be had for the asking, if you can but choose the lucky minute."

"Ay, but that lucky minute, father. I question much if Catharine ever has such a moment to glance on earth and its inhabitants, as might lead her to listen to a coarse, ignorant, borrel man like me. I cannot tell how it is, father; elsewhere I can hold up my head like another man, but with your saintly daughter I lose heart and courage, and I cannot help thinking that it would be well-nigh robbing a holy shrine, if I could succeed in surprising her affections. Her thoughts are too much fitted for heaven to be wasted on such a one as I am."

"E'en as you like, Henry," answered the Glover. "My daughter is not courting you any more than I am—a fair offer is no cause of feud;—only if you think that I will give into her foolish notions of a convent, take it with you that I will never listen to them. I love and honor the Church," he said, crossing himself. "I pay her rights duly and cheerfully; tithes and alms, wine and wax, I pay them as justly. I say, as any man in Perth of my means doth; but I cannot afford the Church my only and single ewe-lamb, that I have in the world. Her mother was dear to me on earth, and is now an angel in heaven. Catharine is all I have to remind me of her I have lost; and if she goes to the cloister, it shall be when these old eyes are closed for ever, and not sooner.—But as for you, friend Gow, I pray you will act according to your own best liking. I want to force no wife on you, I promise you."

"Nay, now, you beat the iron twice over," said Henry. "It is thus we always end, father, by your being testy with me for not doing that thing in the world which would make me happiest, were I to have it in my power. Why, father, I would the keenest dirk I ever forged were sticking in my heart at this moment, if there is one single particle in it that is not more your daughter's property than my own. But what can I do? I cannot think less of her, or more of myself, than we both deserve; and what seems to you so easy and certain, is to me as difficult as it would be to work a steel hauberk out of hards of flax. But here is to you, father," he added, in a more cheerful tone; "and here is to my fair Saint, and Valentine, as I hope your Catharine will be mine for the season. And let me not keep your old head longer from

the pillow, but make interest with your feather-bed till daybreak; and then you must be my guide to your daughter's chamber-door, and my apology for entering it, to bid her good-morrow, for the brightest that the sun will awaken in the city, or for miles round it!"

"No bad advice, my son," said the honest Glover. "But you, what will you do? will you lie down beside me, or take a part of Conachar's bed?"

"Neither," answered Harry Gow; "I should but prevent your rest; and for me this easy-chair is worth a down bed, and I will sleep like a sentinel, with my graith about me."

As he spoke, he laid his hand on his sword.

"Nay, Heaven send us no more need of weapons.—Good-night, or rather, good-morrow, till day-peep—and the first who wakes calls up the other."

Thus parted the two burghers. The Glover retired to his bed, and, it is to be supposed, to rest. The lover was not so fortunate. His bodily frame easily bore the fatigue which he had encountered in the course of the night, but his mind was of a different and more delicate mould. In one point of view, he was but the stout burgher of his period, proud alike of his art in making weapons, and wielding them when made; his professional jealousy, personal strength, and skill in the use of arms, brought him into many quarrels, which had made him generally feared, and in some instances disliked. But with these qualities were united the simple good-nature of a child, and at the same time an imaginative and enthusiastic temper, which seemed little to correspond with his labors at the forge, or his combats in the field. Perhaps a little of the hare-brained and ardent feeling which he had picked out of old ballads, or from the metrical romances which were his sole source of information or knowledge, may have been the means of pricking him on to some of his achievements, which had often a rude strain of chivalry in them; at least, it was certain that his love to the fair Catharine had in it a delicacy such as might have become the squire of low degree, who was honored, if song speaks truth, with the smiles of the King of Hungary's daughter. His sentiments towards her were certainly as exalted as if they had been fixed upon an actual angel, which made old Simon, and others who watched his conduct, think that his passion was too high and devotional to be successful with maiden of mortal mould. They were mistaken, however. Catharine, coy and reserved as she was, had a heart which could feel and understand the nature and depth of the armorer's passion; and whether she was able to repay it or not, she had as much secret pride in the attachment of the redoubted Henry Gow, as a lady of romance may be supposed to have in the company of a tame lion, who follows to provide for and defend her. It was with sentiments of the most sincere gratitude that she recollected, as she awoke at dawn, the services of Henry dur-

ing the course of the eventful night; and the first thought which she dwelt upon, was the means of making him understand her feelings.

Arising hastily from bed, and half blushing at her own purpose—"I have been cold to him, and perhaps, unjust; I will not be ungrateful," she said to herself, "though I cannot yield to his suit; I will not wait till my father compels me to receive him as my Valentine for the year; I will seek him out, and choose him myself. I have thought other girls bold, when they did something like this; but I shall thus best please my father, and but discharge the rites due to good Saint Valentine by showing my gratitude to this brave man."

Hastily slipping on her dress, which, nevertheless, was left a good deal more disordered than usual, she tripped down-stairs and opened the door of the chamber, in which, as she had guessed, her lover had passed the hours after the fray. Catharine paused at the door, and became half afraid of executing her purpose, which not only permitted but enjoined the Valentines of the year to begin their connection with a kiss of affection. It was looked upon as a peculiarly propitious omen, if the one party could find the other asleep, and awaken him or her by performance of this interesting ceremony.

Never was a fairer opportunity offered for commencing this mystic tie, than that which now presented itself to Catharine. After many and various thoughts, sleep had at length overcome the stout armorer in the chair in which he had deposited himself. His features in repose had a more firm and manly cast than Catharine had thought, who, having generally seen them fluctuating between shamefacedness and apprehension of her displeasure, had been used to connect with them some idea of imbecility.

"He looks very stern," she said; "if he should be angry—and then when he awakes—we are alone—if I should call Dorothy—if I should wake my father—but no!—it is a thing of custom, and done in all maidenly and sisterly love and honor. I will not suppose that Henry can misconstrue it, and I will not let childish bashfulness put my gratitude to sleep."

So saying, she tripped along the floor of the apartment with a light, though hesitating step, and a cheek crimsoned at her own purpose; and gliding to the chair of the sleeper, dropped a kiss upon his lips as light as if a roseleaf had fallen on them. The slumbers must have been slight which such a touch could dispel, and the dreams of the sleeper must needs have been connected with the cause of the interruption, since Henry, instantly starting up, caught the maiden in his arms, and attempted to return in ecstasy the salute which had broken his repose. But Catharine struggled in his embrace; and as her efforts implied alarmed modesty, rather than maidenly coyness, her bashful lover suffered her to escape a grasp, from which twenty times her strength could not have extricated her.

"Nay, be not angry, good Henry," said Catharine, in the kindest tone, to her surprised lover, "I have paid my vows to Saint Valentine, to show how I value the mate which he has sent me for the year. Let but my father be present, and I will not dare to refuse thee the revenge you may claim for a broken sleep."

"Let not that be a hindrance," said the old Glover, rushing in ecstasy into the room—"to her, Smith—to her—strike while the iron is hot, and teach her what it is not to let sleeping dogs lie still."

Thus encouraged, Henry, though perhaps with less alarming vivacity, again seized the blushing maiden in his arms, who submitted with tolerable grace to receive repayment of her salute a dozen times repeated, and with an energy very different from that which had provoked such severe retaliation. At length she again extricated herself from her lover's arms, and, as if frightened and repenting what she had done, threw herself into a seat, and covered her face with her hands.

"Cheer up, thou silly girl," said her father, "and be not ashamed that thou hast made the two happiest men in Perth, since thy old father is one of them. Never was kiss so well bestowed, and meet it is that it should be suitably returned. Look up, my darling! look up, and let me see thee give but one smile. By my honest word, the sun that now rises over our fair city shows no sight that can give me greater pleasure. —What," he continued, in a jocose tone, "thou thoughtest thou hadst Jamie Keddie's * ring, and couldst walk invisible? but not so, my fairy of the dawning. Just as I was about to rise, I heard thy chamber door open, and watched thee down-stairs—not to protect thee against this sleepy-headed Henry, but to see with my own delighted eyes, my beloved girl do that which her father most wished.—Come, put down these foolish hands, and though thou blushest a little, it will only the better grace St. Valentine's morn, when blushest best become a maiden's cheek."

As Simon Glover spoke, he pulled away, with gentle violence, the hands which hid his daughter's face. She blushed deeply indeed, but there was more than maiden's shame in her face, and her eyes were fast filling with tears.

"What! weeping, love?" continued her father—"nay, nay, this is more than need—Henry, help me to comfort this little fool."

Catharine made an effort to collect herself and to smile, but the smile was of a melancholy and serious cast.

"I only meant to say, father," said the Fair Maid of Perth, with continued exertion, "that in choosing Henry Gow for my Valentine, and rendering to him the rights and greeting of the morning, according to wonted custom, I meant but to show my gratitude to him for his manly and faith-

* There is a tradition that one Keddie, a tailor, found in ancient days a ring, possessing the properties of that of Gyges, in a cavern of the romantic hill of Kinnoull, near Perth.

ful service, and my obedience to you—But do not lead him to think—and, oh, dearest father, do not yourself entertain an idea, that I meant more than what the promise to be his faithful and affectionate Valentine through the year requires of me."

"Ay—ay—ay—ay—we understand it all," said Simon in the soothing tone which nurses apply to children—"we understand what the meaning is; enough for once; enough for once. Thou shalt not be frightened or hurried.—Loving, true, and faithful Valentines are ye, and the rest as Heaven and opportunity shall permit. Come, prithee, have done—wring not thy tiny hands, nor fear farther persecution now. Thou hast done bravely, excellently.—And now, away to Dorothy, and call up the old sluggard; we must have a substantial breakfast, after a night of confusion and a morning of joy, and thy hand will be needed to prepare for us some of those delicate cakes, which no one can make but thyself; and well hast thou a right to the secret, seeing who taught it thee.—Ah, I health to the soul of thy dearest mother," he added, with a sigh, "how blithe would she have been to see this happy Saint Valentine's morning!"

Catharine took the opportunity of escape which was thus given her, and glided from the room. To Henry it seemed as if the sun had disappeared from the heaven at mid-day, and left the world in sudden obscurity. Even the high-swelled hopes with which the late incident had filled him, began to quail, as he reflected upon her altered demeanor—the tears in her eyes—the obvious fear which occupied her features—and the pains she had taken to show, as plainly as delicacy would permit, that the advances which she had made to him were limited to the character with which the rites of the day had invested him. Her father looked on his fallen countenance with something like surprise and displeasure.

"In the name of good Saint John, what has befallen you, that makes you look as grave as an owl, when a lad of your spirit, having really such a fancy for this poor girl as you pretend, ought to be as lively as a lark?"

"Alas, father!" replied the crestfallen lover, "there is that written on her brow, which says she loves me well enough to be my Valentine, especially since you wish it,—but not well enough to be my wife."

"Now, a plague on thee for a cold, down-hearted goose-cap," answered the father. "I can read a woman's brow as well, and better than thou; and I can see no such matter on hers. What, the foul fiend, man! there thou wast lying like a lord in thy elbow-chair, as sound asleep as a judge, when, hadst thou been a lover of any spirit, thou wouldst have been watching the east for the first ray of the sun. But there thou layest snoring I warrant, thinking nought about her, or any thing else; and the poor girl rises at peep of day, lest any one else should pick up her most precious and vigilant Valentine, and wakes thee with a grace, which—so help me, St. Macgrider!

CHAPTER VI.

Never to man shall Catharine give her hand.

TAMING OF THE SREW.

The breakfast was served, and the thin soft cakes, made of flour and honey according to the family receipt, were not only commended with all the partiality of a father and a lover, but done liberal justice to in the mode which is best proof of cake as well as pudding. They talked, jested, and laughed. Catharine too, had recovered her equanimity where the dames and damsels of the period were apt to lose theirs—in the kitchen, namely, and in the superintendence of household affairs in which she was an adept. I question much if the perusal of Seneca for as long a period, would have had equal effect in composing her mind.

Old Dorothy sat down at the board-end, as was the homespun fashion of the period; and so much were the two men amused with their own conversation,—and Catharine occupied either in attending to them, or with her own reflections,—that the old woman was the first who observed the absence of the boy Conacher.

"It is true," said the Master Glover; "go call him, the idle Highland loon. He was not seen last night, during the fray neither, at least I saw him not. Did any of you observe him?"

The reply was negative; and Henry's observation followed.—

"There are times when Highlanders can couch like their own deer,—ay, and run from danger too as fast. I have seen them do so myself, for the matter of that."

"—And there are times," replied Simon, "when King Arthur and his Round Table could not make stand against them. I wish, Henry, you would speak more reverently of the Highlanders. They are often in Perth, both alone and in numbers; and you ought to keep peace with them, so long as they will keep peace with you."

An answer of defiance rose to Henry's lips, but he prudently suppressed it.

"Why, thou knowest, father," he said, smiling, "that we handicrafts best love the folk we live by; now my craft provides for valiant and noble knights, gentle squires and pages, stout men-at-arms, and others that wear the weapons which we make. It is natural I should like the Ruthvens, the Lindsays, the Ogilvys, the Olyphants, and so many others of our brave and noble neighbors, who are sheathed in steel of my making, like so many Paladins, better than those naked, snatching mountaineers, who are ever doing us wrong, especially since no five of each clan have a rusty shirt of mail as old as their *brattach*,* and that is but the work of the clumsy clan-smith after all, who is no member of our honorable mystery, but simply works at the anvil, where his father wrought before him. I say, such people can have no favor in the eyes of an honest craftsman."

"Well, well," answered Simon; "I prithee

* Standard.

—would have put life in an anvil; and thou awakest to hone, and pine, and moan, as if she had drawn a hot iron across thy lips! I would to St. John she had sent old Dorothy on the errand, and bound thee for thy Valentine-service to that bundle of dry bones, with never a tooth in her head. She were fittest Valentine in Perth, forso craven a wooer."

"As to craven, father," answered the Smith, "there are twenty good cocks, whose combs I have plucked, can tell thee if I am craven or no. And Heaven knows, that I would give my good land, held by burgess' tenure, with smithy, bellows, tongs, anvil, and all, providing it would make your view of the matter the true one. But it is not of her coyness, or her blushes, that I speak; it is of the paleness which so soon followed the red, and chased it from her cheeks; and it is of the tears which succeeded. It was like the April shower stealing upon, and obscuring the fairest dawning that ever beamed over the Tay."

"Tutti taitti," replied the Glover; "neither Rome nor Perth were built in a day. Thou hast fished salmon a thousand times, and mightest have taken a lesson. When the fish has taken the fly, to pull a hard strain on the line would snap the tackle to pieces, were it made of wire. Ease your hand, man, and let him run; take leisure, and, in half-an-hour, thou layest him on the bank.—There is a beginning, as fair as you could wish, unless you expect the poor wench to come to thy bedside, as she did to thy chair; and that is not the fashion of modest maidens. But observe me; after we have had our breakfast, I will take care thou hast an opportunity to speak thy mind; only beware thou be neither too backward, nor press her too hard. Give her line enough; but do not slack too fast, and my life for yours upon the issue."

"Do what I can, father," answered Henry, "you will always lay the blame on me; either that I give too much head, or that I strain the tackle. I would give the best habergeon I ever wrought, that the difficulty, in truth, rested with me; for there were then the better chance of its being removed. I own, however, I am but an ass in the trick of bringing about such discourse as is to the purpose for the occasion."

"Come into the booth with me, my son, and I will furnish thee with a fitting theme. Thou knowest the maiden who ventures to kiss a sleeping man, wins of him a pair of gloves. Come to my booth; thou shalt have a pair of delicate kid-skin, that will exactly suit her hand and arm.—I was thinking of her poor mother when I shaped them," added honest Simon, with a sigh; "and except Catharine, I know not the woman in Scotland whom they would fit, though I have measured most of the high beauties of the court. Come with me, I say, and thou shalt be provided with a theme to wag thy tongue upon, providing thou hast courage and caution to stand by thee in thy wooing."