

The citizens of the town, or, as they loved better to call it, the Fair City of Perth, had for several generations found a protector and Provost of this kind in the knightly family of Charteris, Lords of Kinfauns, in the neighborhood of the burgh. It was scarce a century (in the time of Robert III.) since the first of this distinguished family had settled in the strong castle which now belonged to them, with the picturesque and fertile scenes adjoining to it. But the history of the first settler, chivalrous and romantic in itself, was calculated to facilitate the settlement of an alien in the land in which his lot was cast. We relate it as it is given by an ancient and uniform tradition, which carries in it great indications of truth, and is warrant enough, perhaps, for its insertion in graver histories than the present.

During the brief career of the celebrated patriot Sir William Wallace, and when his arms had for a time expelled the English invaders from his native country, he is said to have undertaken a voyage to France, with a small band of trusty friends, to try what his presence (for he was respected through all countries for his prowess) might do to induce the French monarch to send to Scotland a body of auxiliary forces, or other assistance, to aid the Scots in regaining their independence.

The Scottish champion was on board a small vessel, and steering for the port of Dieppe, when a sail appeared in the distance, which the mariners regarded, first with doubt and apprehension, and at last with confusion and dismay. Wallace demanded to know what was the cause of their alarm. The captain of the ship informed him, that the tall vessel which was bearing down, with the purpose of boarding that which he commanded, was the ship of a celebrated rover, equally famed for his courage, strength of body, and successful piracies. It was commanded by a gentleman named Thomas de Longueville, a Frenchman by birth, but by practice one of those pirates who called themselves friends to the sea, and enemies to all who sailed upon that element. He attacked and plundered vessels of all nations, like one of the ancient Norse Sea-kings, as they were termed, whose dominion was upon the mountain waves. The master added, that no vessel could escape the rover by flight, so speedy was the bark he commanded; and that no crew, however hardy, could hope to resist him, when, as was his usual mode of combat, he threw himself on board at the head of his followers.

Wallace smiled sternly, while the master of the ship, with alarm in his countenance, and tears in his eyes, described to him the certainty of their being captured by the Red Rover, a name given to De Longueville, because he usually displayed the blood-red flag, which he had now hoisted.

"I will clear the narrow seas of this rover," said Wallace.

Then calling together some ten or twelve of

his own followers, Boyd, Kerlie, Seton and others, to whom the dust of the most desperate battle was like the breath of life, he commanded them to arm themselves, and lie flat upon the deck, so as to be out of sight. He ordered the mariners below, excepting such as were absolutely necessary to manage the vessel; and he gave the master instructions, upon pain of death, so to steer, as that while the vessel had the appearance of attempting to fly, he should in fact permit the Red Rover to come up with them and do his worst. Wallace himself then lay down on the deck, that nothing might be seen which could intimate any purpose of resistance. In a quarter of an hour De Longueville's vessel ran on board that of the Champion, and the Red Rover, casting out grappling irons to make sure of his prize, jumped on the deck in complete armor, followed by his men, who gave a terrible shout, as if victory had been already secured. But the armed Scots started up at once, and the Rover found himself unexpectedly engaged with men accustomed to consider victory as secure, when they were only opposed as one to two or three. Wallace himself rushed on the pirate captain, and a dreadful strife began betwixt them with such fury, that the others suspended their own battle to look on, and seemed by common consent to refer the issue of the strife to the fate of the combat between the two chiefs. The pirate fought as well as man could do; but Wallace's strength was beyond that of ordinary mortals. He dashed the sword from the Rover's hand, and placed him in such peril, that, to avoid being cut down, he was fain to close with the Scottish Champion, in hopes of overpowering him in the grapple. In this also he was foiled. They fell on the deck, locked in each other's arms, but the Frenchman fell undermost, and Wallace fixing his grasp upon his gorget, compressed it so closely, notwithstanding it was made of the finest steel, that the blood gushed from his eyes, nose, and mouth, and he was only able to ask for quarter by signs. His men threw down their weapons and begged for mercy, when they saw their leader thus severely handled. The victor granted them all their lives, but took possession of their vessel, and detained them prisoners.

When he came in sight of the French harbor, Wallace alarmed the place by displaying the Rover's colors, as if De Longueville was coming to pillage the town. The bells were rung backward; horns were blown, and the citizens were hurrying to arms, when the scene changed. The Scottish Lion on his shield of gold was raised above the piratical flag, and announced that the Champion of Scotland was approaching, like a falcon with his prey in his clutch. He landed with his prisoner, and carried him to the court of France, where, at Wallace's request, the robberies which the pirate had committed were forgiven, and the King even conferred the honor of knighthood on Sir Thomas de Longueville, and offered to take him into his service. But the Rover had

CHAPTER VIII.

Within the bounds of Annandale,
The gentle Johnstones ride;
They have been there a thousand years,
A thousand more they'll bide.

OLD BALLAD.

THE character and quality of Sir Patrick Charteris, the Provost of Perth, being such as we have sketched in the last chapter, let us now return to the deputation which was in the act of rendezvousing at the East Port,* in order to wait upon that dignitary with their complaints, at Kinfauns.

And first appeared Simon Glover, on a pacing palfrey, which had sometimes enjoyed the honor of bearing the fairer person as well as the lighter weight of his beautiful daughter. His cloak was muffled round the lower part of his face, as a sign to his friends not to interrupt him by any questions while he passed through the streets, and partly, perhaps, on account of the coldness of the weather. The deepest anxiety was seated on his brow, as if the more he meditated on the matter he was engaged in, the more difficult and perilous it appeared. He only greeted by silent gestures his friends as they came to the rendezvous.

A strong black horse, of the old Galloway breed, of an under size, and not exceeding fourteen hands, but high-shouldered, strong-limbed, well-coupled, and round-barrelled, bore to the East Port the gallant Smith. A judge of the animal might see in his eye a spark of that vicious temper which is frequently the accompaniment of the form that is most vigorous and enduring; but the weight, the hand, and the seat of the rider,

* The following is extracted from a kind communication of the well-known antiquary, Mr. Morison of Perth:—

"The port at which the deputation for Kinfauns must have met, was a strongly fortified gate at the east end of the High Street, opening to the Bridge. On the north side of the street adjoining the gate, stood the Chapel of the Virgin, from which the monks had access to the river by a flight of steps, still called 'Our Lady's Stairs.' Some remains of this chapel are yet extant, and one of the towers is in a style of architecture which most antiquaries consider peculiar to the age of Robert III. Immediately opposite, on the south side of the street, a staircase is still to be seen, evidently of great antiquity, which is said to have formed part of 'Gowrie's Palace.' But as Gowrie House stood at the other end of the Watergate—as most of the houses of the nobility were situated between the staircase we now refer to and Gowrie House; and as, singularly enough, this stair is built upon ground, which, although in the middle of the town, is not within the burgh lands, some of the local antiquaries do not hesitate to say that it formed part of the Royal Palace in which the Kings of Scotland resided, until they found more secluded, and probably more comfortable lodging in the Blackfriars' Monastery. Leaving the determination of this question to those who have more leisure for solving it, thus far is certain, that the place of rendezvous for the hero of the tale and his companions was one of some consequence in the town, where their bearing was not likely to pass unobserved. The bridge to which they passed through the gate, was a very stately edifice. Major calls it, 'Pontem Sancti Joannis ingentem apud Perth.' The date of its erection is not known, but it was extensively repaired by Robert Bruce, in whose reign it suffered by the repeated sieges to which Perth was subjected, as well as by some of those inundations of the Tay to which it was frequently exposed, and one of which eventually swept it away in 1621."

contracted such a friendship for his generous victor, that he insisted on uniting his fortunes with those of Wallace, with whom he returned to Scotland, and fought by his side in many a bloody battle, where the prowess of Sir Thomas de Longueville was remarked as inferior to that of none, save of his heroic conqueror. His fate also was more fortunate than that of his patron. Being distinguished by the beauty as well as strength of his person, he rendered himself so acceptable to a young lady, heiress of the ancient family of Charteris, that she chose him for her husband, bestowing on him with her hand the fair baronial Castle of Kinfauns, and the domains annexed to it. Their descendants took the name of Charteris, as connecting themselves with their maternal ancestors, the ancient proprietors of the property, though the name of Thomas de Longueville was equally honored amongst them; and the large two-handed sword with which he mowed the ranks of war, was, and is still, preserved among the family muniments. Another account is, that the family name of De Longueville himself was Charteris. The estate afterwards passed to a family of Blairs, and is now the property of Lord Gray.

These Barons of Kinfauns,* from father to son, held, for several generations, the office of Provost of Perth; the vicinity of the castle and town rendering it a very convenient arrangement for mutual support. The Sir Patrick of this history had more than once led out the men of Perth to battles and skirmishes with the restless Highland depredators, and with other enemies, foreign and domestic. True it is, he used sometimes to be weary of the slight and frivolous complaints unnecessarily brought before him, and in which he was requested to interest himself. Hence he had sometimes incurred the charge of being too proud as a nobleman, or too indolent as a man of wealth, and one who was too much addicted to the pleasures of the field, and the exercise of fental hospitality, to bestir himself upon all and every occasion when the Fair Town would have desired his active interference. But notwithstanding that this occasioned some slight murmuring, the citizens, upon any serious cause of alarm, were wont to rally around their Provost, and were warmly supported by him both in council and action.

* It is generally believed that the ancient Barons of Kinfauns are now represented in the male line by a once powerful branch of the name, the Charterises of Amisfield, in Dumfriesshire. The remains of the castle, close to which is their modern residence, attest the former extent of their resources. The name of Sir Thomas Longueville, Bart., of Prostatin, stood on the Nova Scotia list within these twenty years, and he and his family claimed to be the true progeny of the Red Rover.

added to the late regular exercise of a long journey, had subdued his stubbornness for the present. He was accompanied by the honest Bonnet-maker, who being, as the reader is aware, a little round man, and what is vulgarly called duck-legged, had planted himself like a red pincushion (for he was wrapped in a scarlet cloak, over which he had slung a hawking-ponch) on the top of a great saddle, which he might be said rather to be perched upon than to bestride. The saddle and the man were girthed on the ridge-bone of a great trampling Flemish mare, with a nose turned up in the air like a camel, a huge fleece of hair at each foot, and every hoof full as large in circumference as a frying pan. The contrast between the beast and the rider was so extremely extraordinary, that whilst chance passengers contented themselves with wondering how he got up, his friends were anticipating with sorrow the perils which must attend his coming down again; for the high-seated horseman's feet did not by any means come beneath the laps of the saddle. He had associated himself to the Smith, whose motions he had watched for the purpose of joining him; for it was Oliver Proudfoote's opinion, that men of action showed to most advantage when beside each other; and he was delighted when some wag of the lower class had gravity enough to cry out, without laughing outright, "There goes the pride of Perth—there go the slashing craftsmen, the jolly Smith of the Wynd, and the bold Bonnet-maker!"

It is true, the fellow who gave this all-hail thrust his tongue in his cheek to some scapegraces like himself; but as the Bonnet-maker did not see this by-play, he generously threw him a silver penny to encourage his respect for martialists. This munificence occasioned their being followed by a crowd of boys, laughing and hallooing, until Henry Smith, turning back, threatened to switch the foremost of them; a resolution which they did not wait to see put in execution.

"Here are we the witnesses," said the little man on the large horse, as they joined Simon Glover at the East Port; "but where are they that should back us? Ah, brother Henry! authority is a load for an ass rather than a spirited horse; it would but clog the motions of such young fellows as you and me."

"I could well wish to see you bear ever so little of that same weight, worthy Master Proudfoote," replied Henry Gow, "were it but to keep you firm in the saddle; for you bounce about as if you were dancing a jig on your seat, without any help from your legs."

"Ay, ay; I raise myself in my stirrups to avoid the jolting. She is cruelly hard set this mare of mine; but she has carried me in field and forest, and through some passages that were something perilous; so Jezabel and I part not—I call her Jezabel, after the Princess of Castile."

"Isabel, I suppose you mean," answered the Smith.

"Ay—Isabel, or Jezabel,—all the same, you

know. But here comes Bailie Craigdallie at last, with that poor, creeping, cowardly creature the Pottingar. They have brought two town-officers with their partisans, to guard their fair persons, I suppose.—If there is one thing I hate more than another, it is such a sneaking varlet as that Dwining!"

"Have a care he does not hear you say so," said the Smith. "I tell thee, Bonnet-maker, that there is more danger in yonder slight, wasted anatomy, than in twenty stout fellows like yourself."

"Pshaw! Bully Smith, you are but jesting with me," said Oliver,—softening his voice, however, and looking towards the Pottingar, as if to discover in what limb or lineament of his wasted face and form lay any appearance of the menaced danger; and his examination reassuring him, he answered boldly, "Blades and bucklers, man, I would stand the feud of a dozen such as Dwining. What could he do to any man with blood in his veins?"

"He could give him a dose of physic," answered the Smith dryly.

They had no time for further colloquy, for Bailie Craigdallie called them to take the road to Kinfauns, and himself showed the example. As they advanced at a leisurely pace, the discourse turned on the reception which they were to expect from their Provost, and the interest which he was likely to take in the aggression which they complained of. The Glover seemed particularly desponding, and talked more than once, in a manner which implied a wish that they would yet consent to let the matter rest. He did not speak out very plainly, however, fearful, perhaps, of the malignant interpretation which might be derived from any appearance of his flinching from the assertion of his daughter's reputation. Dwining seemed to agree with him in opinion, but spoke more cautiously than in the morning.

"After all," said the Bailie, "when I think of all the propines and good gifts which have passed from the good town to my Lord Provost's, I cannot think he will be backward to show himself. More than one lusty boat, laden with Bordeaux wine, has left the South Shore to discharge its burden under the Castle of Kinfauns. I have some right to speak of that, who was the merchant importer."

"And," said Dwining, with his squeaking voice, "I could speak of delicate confections, curious comfits, loaves of wastel bread, and even cakes of that rare and delicious condiment which men call sugar, that have gone thither to help out a bridal banquet, or a kirstening feast, or such like. But alack, Bailie Craigdallie wine is drunk, comfits are eaten, and the gift is forgotten when the flavor is past away. Alas, neighbor! the banquet of last Christmas is gone like the last year's snow."

"But there have been gloves full of gold pieces," said the Magistrate.

"I should know that who wrought them," said Simon, whose professional recollections still mingled with whatever else might occupy his mind. "One was a hawking-glove for my lady. I made it something wide. Her ladyship found no fault, in consideration of the intended lining."

"Well, go to," said Bailie Craigdallie, "the less I lie; and if these are not to the fore, it is the Provost's fault, and not the town's; they could neither be eat nor drunk in the shape in which he got them."

"I could speak of a brave armor too," said the Smith; "but, *cogan na schie!** as John Highlandman says,—I think the knight of Kinfauns will do his devil by the burgh in peace or war; and it is needless to be reckoning the town's good deeds, till we see him thankless for them."

"So say I," cried our friend Proudfoote, from the top of his mare. "We roystering blades never bear so base a mind as to count for wine and walnuts with a friend like Sir Patrick Charteris. Nay, trust me, a good woodsman like Sir Patrick will prize the right of hunting and sporting over the lands of the burgh as a high privilege, and one which, his Majesty the King's Grace excepted, is neither granted to lord nor loon save to our Provost alone."

As the Bonnet-maker spoke, there was heard on the left hand, the cry of, "*So so—waw waw—haw!*" being the shout of a falconer to his hawk.

"Methinks yonder is a fellow using the privilege you mention, who, from his appearance, is neither King nor Provost," said the Smith.

"Ay, marry, I see him," said the Bonnet-maker, who imagined the occasion presented a prime opportunity to win honor. "Thou and I, jolly Smith, will prick towards him and put him to the question."

"Have with you, then," cried the Smith; and his companion spurred his mare and went off, never doubting that Gow was at his heels.

But Craigdallie caught Henry's horse by the reins. "Stand fast by the standard," he said; "let us see the luck of our light horseman. If he procures himself a broken pate, he will be quieter for the rest of the day."

"From what I already see," said the Smith, "he may easily come by such a boon. Yonder fellow who stops so impudently to look at us, as if he were engaged in the most lawful sport in the world—I guess him, by his trotting hobble, his rusty headpiece with the cock's feather, and long two-handed sword, to be the follower or some of the southland lords—men who live so near the Southron, that the black jack is never off their backs, and who are as free of their blows as they are light in their fingers."

Whilst they were thus speculating on the issue of the rencounter, the valiant Bonnet-maker began to pull up Jezabel, in order that the

Smith, who he still concluded was close behind, might overtake him, and either advance first, or at least abreast of himself. But when he saw him at a hundred yards' distance, standing composedly with the rest of the group, the flesh of the champion, like that of the old Spanish general, began to tremble, in anticipation of the dangers into which his own venturesome spirit was about to involve it. Yet the consciousness of being countenanced by the neighborhood of so many friends; the hopes that the appearance of such odds must intimidate the single intruder, and the shame of abandoning an enterprise in which he had volunteered, and when so many persons must witness his disgrace, surmounted the strong inclination which prompted him to wheel Jezabel to the right about, and return to the friends whose protection he had quitted, as fast as her legs could carry them. He accordingly continued his direction towards the stranger, who increased his alarm considerably, by putting his little nag in motion, and riding to meet him at a brisk trot. On observing this apparently offensive movement, our hero looked over his left shoulder more than once, as if reconnoitring the ground for a retreat, and in the meanwhile came to a decided halt. But the Philistine was upon him ere the Bonnet-maker could decide whether to fight or fly, and a very ominous-looking Philistine he was. His figure was gaunt and lathy, his visage marked by two or three ill-favored scars, and the whole man had much the air of one accustomed to say, "Stand and deliver," to a true man.

This individual began the discourse, by exclaiming, in tones as sinister as his looks,— "The devil catch you for a cuckoo, why do you ride across the moor to spoil my sport?"

"Worthy stranger," said our friend, in a tone of pacific remonstrance, "I am Oliver Proudfoote, a burgher of Perth, and a man of substance; and yonder is the worshipful Adam Craigdallie, the oldest Bailie of the burgh, with the fighting Smith of the Wynd, and three or four armed men more, who desire to know your name, and how you come to take your pleasure over these lands belonging to the burgh of Perth—although, natheless, I will answer for them, it is not their wish to quarrel with a gentleman, or stranger, for any accidental trespass; only it is their use and wont not to grant such leave, unless it is duly asked; and—therefore I desire to know your name, worthy sir."

The grim and loathly aspect with which the falconer had regarded Oliver Proudfoote during his harangue, had greatly disconcerted him, and altogether altered the character of the inquiry which, with Henry Gow to back him, he would probably have thought most fitting for the occasion.

The stranger replied to it, modified as it was, with a most inauspicious grin, which the scars of his visage made appear still more repulsive. "You want to know my name?—my name is

* "Peace or war, I care not."

the Devil's Dick of Hellgarth, well known in Annandale for a gentle Johnstone. I follow the stout Laird of Wamphray, who rides with his kinsman, the redoubted Lord of Johnstone, who is banded with the doughty Earl of Douglas; and the Earl and the Lord, and the Laird and I the Esquire, fly our hawks where we find our game, and ask no man whose ground we ride over.*

"I will do your message, sir," replied Oliver Proudfoot, meekly enough; for he began to be very desirous to get free of the embassy which he had so rashly undertaken, and was in the act of turning his horse's head, when the Annandale man added,—

"And take you this to boot, to keep you in mind that you met the Devil's Dick, and to teach you another time to beware how you spoil the sport of any one who wears the flying spur on his shoulder."

With these words he applied two or three smart blows of his riding-rod upon the luckless Bonnet-maker's head and person. Some of them lighted upon Jezabel, who, turning sharply round, laid her rider upon the moor, and galloped back towards the party of citizens.

Proudfoot, thus overthrown, began to cry for assistance in no very manly voice, and almost in the same breath to whimper for mercy; for his antagonist, dismounting almost as soon as he fell, offered a whinger, or large wood-knife, to his throat, while he rifled the pockets of the unlucky citizen, and even examined his hawking-bag, swearing two or three grisly oaths, that he would have what it contained, since the wearer had interrupted his sport. He pulled the belt rudely off, terrifying the prostrate Bonnet-maker still more by the regardless violence which he used, as, instead of taking the pains to unbuckle the strap, he drew till the fastening gave way. But apparently it contained nothing to his mind. He threw it carelessly from him, and at the same time suffered the dismounted cavalier to rise, while he himself remounted his hobble, and looked towards the rest of Oliver's party, who were now advancing.

When they had seen their delegate overthrown, there was some laughter; so much had the vaunting humor of the Bonnet-maker prepared his friends to rejoice, when, as Henry Smith termed it, they saw their Oliver meet with a Rowland. But when the Bonnet-maker's adversary was seen to bestride him, and handle him in the manner described, the armorer could hold out no longer. "Please you, good Master Baillie, I cannot endure to see our townsman beaten and rifled, and like to be murdered before

* Every Scotchman must regret that the name of Johnstone should have disappeared from the peerage, and hope that ere long some one of the many claimants for the minor honors at least of the house of Annandale may make out a case to the satisfaction of the House of Lords. The great estates of the family are still nearly entire, and in worthy hands; they have passed to a younger branch of the noble house of Hopetoun, one of the claimants of the elder titles.

us all. It reflects upon the Fair Town; and if it is neighbor Proudfoot's misfortune, it is our shame. I must to his rescue."

"We will all go to his rescue," answered Baillie Craigdallie; "but let no man strike without order from me. We have more feuds on our hands, it is to be feared, than we have strength to bring to good end. And therefore I charge you all, more especially you Henry of the Wynd, in the name of the Fair City, that you make no stroke but in self defence." They all advanced, therefore, in a body; and the appearance of such a number drove the plunderer from his booty. He stood at gaze, however, at some distance, like the wolf, which, though it retreats before the dogs, cannot be brought to absolute flight.

Henry seeing this state of things, spurred his horse and advanced far before the rest of the party, up towards the scene of Oliver Proudfoot's misfortune. His first task was to catch Jezabel by the flowing rein, and his next to lead her to meet her discomfited master, who was crippling towards him, his clothes much soiled with his fall, his eyes streaming with tears, from pain as well as mortification, and altogether exhibiting an aspect so unlike the spruce and dapper importance of his ordinary appearance, that the honest Smith felt compassion for the little man, and some remorse at having left him exposed to such disgrace. All men, I believe, enjoy an ill-natured joke. The difference is, that an ill-natured person can drink out to very dregs the amusement which it affords, while the better moulded mind soon loses the sense of the ridiculous in sympathy for the pain of the sufferer.

"Let me pitch you up to your saddle again, neighbor," said the Smith, dismounting at the same time, and assisting Oliver to scramble into his war-saddle, as a monkey might have done.

"May God forgive you, neighbor Smith, for not backing of me! I would not have believed in it, though fifty credible witnesses had sworn it of you."

Such were the first words, spoken in sorrow more than anger, by which the dismayed Oliver vented his feelings.

"The Baillie kept hold of my horse by the bridle; and besides," Henry continued, with a smile, which even his compassion could not suppress, "I thought you would have accused me of diminishing your honor, if I brought you aid against a single man. But cheer up! the villain took foul odds of you, your horse not being well at command."

"That is true—that is true," said Oliver, eagerly catching at the apology.

"And yonder stands the faitour, rejoicing at the mischief he has done, and triumphing in your overthrow, like the King in the romance, who played upon the fiddle whilst a city was burning. Come thou with me, and thou shalt see how we will handle him—Nay, fear not that I will desert thee this time."

So saying, he caught Jezabel by the rein, and galloping alongside of her, without giving Oliver time to express a negative, he rushed towards the Devil's Dick, who had halted on the top of a rising ground at some distance. The gentle Johnstone, however, either that he thought the contest unequal, or that he had fought enough for the day, snapping his fingers, and throwing his hand out with an air of defiance, spurred his horse into a neighboring bog, through which he seemed to flutter like a wild-duck, swinging his lure round his head, and whistling to his hawk all the while, though any other horse and rider must have been instantly bogged up to the saddle-girths.

"There goes a thorough-bred moss-trooper," said the Smith. "That fellow will fight or flee as suits his humor, and there is no use to pursue him, any more than to hunt a wild-geese. He has got your purse, I doubt me, for they seldom leave off till they are full-handed."

"Ye—ye—yes," said Proudfoot, in a melancholy tone; "he has got my purse—but there is less matter, since he hath left the hawking-bag."

"Nay, the hawking-bag had been an emblem of personal victory, to be sure—a trophy as the minstrels call it."

"There is more in it than that, friend," said Oliver, significantly.

"Why, that is well, neighbor; I love to hear you speak in your own scholarly tone again. Cheer up, you have seen the villain's back, and regained the trophies you had lost when taken at advantage."

"Ah, Henry Gow—Henry Gow!" said the Bonnet-maker, and stopped short with a deep sigh, nearly amounting to a groan.

"What is the matter?" asked his friend; "what is it you vex yourself about now?"

"I have some suspicion, my dearest friend, Henry Smith, that the villain fled for fear of you, not of me!"

"Do not think so," replied the armorer; "he saw two men and fled, and who can tell whether he fled for one or the other? Besides, he knows by experience your strength and activity; we all saw how you kicked and struggled when you were on the ground."

"Did I?" said poor Proudfoot; "I do not remember it—but I know it is my best point—I am a strong dog in the loins. But did they all see it?"

"All as much as I," said the Smith, smothering an inclination to laughter.

"But thou wilt remind them of it?"

"Be assured I will," answered Henry, "and of thy desperate rally even now. Mark what I say to Baillie Craigdallie, and make the best of it."

"It is not that I require any evidence in my favor, for I am as brave by nature as most men in Perth—but only—" Here the man of valor paused.

"But only what?" inquired the stout armorer.

"But only I am afraid of being killed. To leave my pretty wife, and my young family, you know, would be a sad change, Smith. You will know this when it is your own case, and will feel abated in courage."

"It is like that I may," said the armorer, musing.

"Then I am so accustomed to the use of arms, and so well breathed, that few men can match me. It's all here," said the little man, expanding his breast like a trussed fowl, and patting himself with his hands; "here is room for all the wind machinery."

"I dare say you are long-breathed—long-winded—at least your speech be wry—"

"My speech?—You are a wag—but I have got the stern post of a dromond brought up the river from Dundee."

"The stern post of a Drummond!" exclaimed the armorer; "conscience, man, it will put you in feud with the whole clan—not the least wrathful in the country, as I take it."

"Saint Andrew, man, you put me out!—I mean a dromond, that is, a large ship. I have fixed this post in my yard, and had it painted and carved, something like a Soldan or Saracen, and with him I breathe myself, and will wield my two-handed sword against him, thrust or point, for an hour together."

"That must make you familiar with the use of your weapon," said the Smith.

"Ay, marry does it—and sometimes I will place you a bonnet (an old one most likely) on my Soldan's head, and cleave it with such a downright blow, that, in troth, the infidel has but little of his skull remaining to hit at."

"That is unlucky, for you will lose your practice," said Henry.—"But how say you, Bonnet-maker? I will put on my head-piece and corslet one day, and you shall hew at me, allowing me my broadsword to parry and pay back! Eh, what say you?"

"By no manner of means, my dear friend. I should do you too much evil;—besides, to tell you the truth, I strike far more freely at a helmet or bonnet, when it is set on my wooden Soldan—then I am sure to fetch it down. But when there is a plume of feathers in it that nod, and two eyes gleaming fiercely from under the shadow of the visor, and when the whole is dancing about here and there, I acknowledge it puts out my hand of fence."

"So, if men would but stand stock still like your Soldan, you would play the tyrant with them, Master Proudfoot?"

"In time, and with practice, I conclude I might," answered Oliver.—"But here we come up with the rest of them; Baillie Craigdallie looks angry—but it is not his kind of anger that frightens me."

You are to recollect, gentle reader, that as soon as the Baillie, and those who attended him,

saw that the Smith had come up to the forlorn Bonnet-maker, and that the stranger had retreated, they gave themselves no trouble about advancing further to his assistance, which they regarded as quite insured by the presence of the redoubted Henry Gow. They had resumed their straight road to Kinfauns, desirous that nothing should delay the execution of their mission. As some time had elapsed ere the Bonnet-maker and the Smith rejoined the party, Baillie Craigdallie asked them, and Henry Smith in particular, what they meant by dallying away precious time by riding up-hill after the falconer.

"By the mass, it was not my fault, Master Baillie," replied the Smith. "If ye will couple up an ordinary Low-country greyhound with a Highland wolf-dog, you must not blame the first of them for taking the direction in which it pleases the last to drag him on. It was so, and not otherwise, with my neighbor Oliver Proudfoot. He no sooner got up from the ground, but he mounted his mare like a flash of lightning, and, enraged at the unknighly advantage which yonder rascal had taken of his stumbling horse, he flew after him like a dromedary. I could not but follow, both to prevent a second stumble, and secure our over-bold friend and champion from the chance of some ambush at the top of the hill. But the villain, who is a follower of some Lord of the Marches, and wears a winged spur for his cognizance, fled from our neighbor like fire from flint."

The senior Baillie of Perth listened with surprise to the legend which it had pleased Gow to circulate: for, though not much caring for the matter, he had always doubted the Bonnet-maker's romancing account of his own exploits, which hereafter he must hold as in some degree orthodox. The shrewd old Glover looked closer into the matter.

"You will drive the poor Bonnet-maker mad," he whispered to Henry, "and set him a-ringing his clapper, as if he were a town-bell on a rejoicing day, when for order and decency it were better he were silent."

"O, by our Lady, father," replied the Smith, "I love the poor little braggadocio, and could not think of his sitting rueful and silent in the Provost's hall, while all the rest of them, and in especial that venomous Pottingar, were telling their mind."

"Thou art even too good-natured a fellow, Henry," answered Simon. "But mark the difference betwixt these two men. The harmless little bonnet-maker assumes the airs of a dragon, to disguise his natural cowardice; while the Pottingar wilfully desires to show himself timid, poor-spirited, and humble, to conceal the danger of his temper. The adder is not the less deadly that he creeps under a stone. I tell thee, son Henry, that for all his sneaking looks, and timorous talking, this wretched anatomy loves mischief more than he fears danger.—But here we stand in front of the Provost's castle; and a

lordly place is Kinfauns, and a credit to the city it is, to have the owner of such a gallant castle for its chief magistrate."

"A goodly fortalice, indeed," said the Smith, looking at the broad winding Tay, as it swept under the bank on which the castle stood, like its modern successor, and seemed the queen of the valley, although, on the opposite side of the river, the strong walls of Elcho appeared to dispute the pre-eminence. Elcho, however, was in that age a peaceful nunnery, and the walls with which it was surrounded were the barriers of secluded vestals, not the bulwarks of an armed garrison. "'Tis a brave castle," said the armorer, again looking at the towers of Kinfauns, "and the breastplate and target of the bonnie course of the Tay. It were worth lipping* a good blade, before wrong were offered to it."

The porter of Kinfauns, who knew from a distance the persons and characters of the party, had already opened the court-yard gate for their entrance, and sent notice to Sir Patrick Charteris, that the eldest Baillie of Perth, with some other good citizens, were approaching the castle. The good knight, who was getting ready for a hawking party, heard the intimation, with pretty much the same feelings that the modern representative of a burgh hears of the menaced visitation of a party of his worthy electors, at a time rather unseasonable for their reception. That is, he internally devoted the intruders to Mahound and Tormagant, and outwardly gave orders to receive them with all decorum and civility; commanded the sewers to bring hot venison steaks and cold baked meats into the knightly hall with all dispatch, and the butler to broach his casks, and do his duty; for if the Fair City of Perth sometimes filled his cellar, her citizens were always equally ready to assist at emptying his flagons.

The good burghers were reverently marshalled into the hall, where the knight, who was in a riding habit, and booted up to the middle of his thighs, received them with a mixture of courtesy and patronizing condescension; wishing them all the while at the bottom of the Tay, on account of the interruption their arrival gave to his proposed amusement of the morning. He met them in the midst of the hall, with bare head and bonnet in hand, and some such salutation as the following:—"Ha! My Master Eldest Baillie, and you, worthy Simon Glover, fathers of the Fair City;—and you, my learned Pottingar;—and you, stout Smith;—and my slashing Bonnet-maker too, who cracks more skulls than he covers, how come I to have the pleasure of seeing so many friends so early? I was thinking to see my hawks fly, and your company will make the sport more pleasant.—(Aside, I trust in Our Lady they may break their necks!)—that is, always, unless the city have any commands to lay on me.—Butler Gilbert, dispatch, thou knave.—But I hope you have no more grave errand than to try if the malvoisie holds its flavor?"

* *Lipping*, i. e., making notches in a sword or knife.

The city delegates answered to their Provost's civilities by inclinations and congees, more or less characteristic, of which the Pottingar's bow was the lowest, and the Smith's the least ceremonious. Probably he knew his own value as a fighting man upon occasion. To the general compliment the elder Baillie replied.

"Sir Patrick Charteris, and our noble Lord Provost," said Craigdallie, gravely, "had our errand been to enjoy the hospitality with which we have been often regaled here, our manners would have taught us to tarry till your lordship had invited us, as on other occasions. And as to hawking, we have had enough on't for one morning; since a wild fellow, who was flying a falcon hard by on the moor, unhorsed and cudgelled our worthy friend Oliver Bonnet-maker, or Proudfoot, as some men call him, merely because he questioned him, in your honor's name, and the town of Perth's, who or what he was that took so much upon him."

"And what account gave he of himself?" said the Provost. "By St. John! I will teach him to forestall my sport!"

"So please your lordship," said the Bonnet-maker, "he did take me at disadvantage. But I got on horseback again afterwards, and pricked after him gallantly. He calls himself Richard the Devil."

"How, man? he that rhymes and romances are made on?" said the Provost. "I thought that smaik's name had been Robert."

"I trow they be different, my lord; I only graced this fellow with the full title, for indeed he called himself the Devil's Dick, and said he was a Johnstone, and a follower of the lord of that name. But I put him back into the bog, and recovered my hawking-bag, which he had taken when I was at disadvantage."

Sir Patrick paused for an instant.—"We have heard," said he, "of the Lord of Johnstone, and of his followers. Little is to be had by meddling with them.—Smith, tell me, did you endure this?"

"Ay, faith did I, Sir Patrick; having command from my betters not to help."

"Well, if thou sat'st down with it," said the Provost, "I see not why we should rise up; especially as Master Oliver Proudfoot, though taken at advantage at first, has, as he has told us, recovered his reputation and that of the burgh. But here comes the wine at length. Fill round to my good friends and guests till the wine leap over the cup. Prosperity to St. Johnston, and a merry welcome to you all, my honest friends! And now sit you to eat a morsel, for the sun is high up, and it must be long since you thrifty men have broken your fast."

"Before we eat, my Lord Provost," said the Baillie, "let us tell you the pressing cause of our coming, which as yet we have not touched upon."

"Nay, prithee, Baillie," said the Provost, "put it off till thou hast eaten. Some complaint against the rascally jackmen and retainers of the nobles,

for playing at football on the streets of the burgh, or some such goodly matter."

"No, my lord," said Craigdallie, stoutly and firmly. "It is the jackmen's masters of whom we complain, for playing at football with the honor of our families, and using as little ceremony with our daughters' sleeping chambers, as if they were in a bordel at Paris. A party of roving night-walkers,—courtiers, and men of rank, as there is but too much reason to believe, attempted to scale the windows of Simon Glover's house last night; they stood in their defence with drawn weapons when they were interrupted by Henry Smith, and fought till they were driven off by the rising of the citizens."

"How?" said Sir Patrick, setting down the cup which he was about to raise to his head. "Cocksbody, make that manifest to me, and by the soul of Thomas of Longueville, I will see you righted with my best power, were it to cost me life and land. Who attests this;—Simon Glover, you are held an honest and a cautious man—do you take the truth of this charge upon your conscience?"

"My lord," said Simon, "understand I am no willing complainer in this weighty matter. No damage has arisen, save to the breakers of the peace themselves. I fear only great power could have encouraged such lawless audacity; and I were unwilling to put feud between my native town and some powerful nobleman on my account. But it has been said, that if I hang back in prosecuting this complaint, it will be as much as admitting that my daughter expected such a visit, which is a direct falsehood. Therefore, my lord, I will tell your lordship what happened, so far as I know, and leave further proceeding to your wisdom." He then told, from point to point, all that he had seen of the attack.

Sir Patrick Charteris, listening with much attention, seemed particularly struck with the escape of the man who had been made prisoner. "Strange," he said, "that you did not secure him when you had him. Did you not look at him so as to know him again?"

"I had but the light of a lantern, my Lord Provost; and as to suffering him to escape, I was alone," said the Glover, "and old. But yet I might have kept him, had I not heard my daughter shriek in the upper room; and ere I had returned from her chamber, the man had escaped through the garden."

"Now, armorer, as a true man, and a good soldier," said Sir Patrick, "tell me what you know of this matter."

Henry Gow, in his own decided style, gave a brief but clear narrative of the whole affair.

Honest Proudfoot being next called upon, began his statement with an air of more importance. "Touching this awful and astounding tumult within the burgh, I cannot altogether, it is true, say with Henry Gow, that I saw the very beginning. But it will not be denied that I beheld a great part of the latter end, and especially

that I procured the evidence most effectual to convict the knaves."

"And what is it, man?" said Sir Patrick Charteris. "Never lose time fumbling and prating about it. What is it?"

"I have brought your lordship, in this pouch, what one of the rogues left behind him," said the little man. "It is a trophy which, in good faith and honest truth, I do confess I won not by the blade, but I claim the credit of securing it with that presence of mind which few men possess amidst flashing torches and clashing weapons. I secured it, my lord, and here it is."

So saying, he produced, from the hawking-pouch already mentioned, the stiffened hand which had been found on the scene of the skirmish.

"Nay, Bonnet-maker," said the Provost, "I'll warrant thee man enough to secure a rogue's hand after it is cut from the body.—What do you look so busily for in your bag?"

"There should have been—there was—a ring, my lord, which was on the knave's finger. I fear I have been forgetful, and left it at home, for I took it off to show to my wife, as she cared not to look upon the dead hand, as women love not such sights. But yet I thought I had put it on the finger again. Nevertheless, it must, I bethink me, be at home. I will ride back for it, and Henry Smith will trot along with me."

"We will all trot with thee," said Sir Patrick Charteris, "since I am for Perth myself. Look you, honest burghers and good neighbors of Perth. You may have thought me unapt to be moved by light complaints and trivial breaches of your privileges, such as small trespasses on your game, the barons' followers playing football in the street, and such like. But by the soul of Thomas of Longneville, you shall not find Patrick Charteris slothful in a matter of this importance.—This hand," he continued, holding up the severed joint, "belongs to one who hath worked no drudgery. We will put it in a way to be known and claimed of the owner, if his comrades of the revel have but one spark of honor in them.—Hark you, Gerard—get me some half-score of good men instantly to horse, and let them take jack and spear. Meanwhile, neighbors, if feud arise out of this, as is most likely, we must come to each other's support. If my poor house be attacked, how many men will you bring to my support?"

The burghers looked at Henry Gow, to whom they instinctively turned when such matters were discussed. "I will answer," said he, "for fifty good fellows to be assembled ere the common bell has rung ten minutes; for a thousand, in the space of an hour."

"It is well," answered the gallant Provost; "and in the case of need, I will come to aid the Fair City with such men as I can make. And now, good friends, let us to horse."

CHAPTER IX.

If I know how to manage these affairs,
Thus thrust disorderly upon my hands—
Never believe me—

RICHARD II.

It was early in the afternoon of St. Valentine's Day that the Prior of the Dominicans was engaged in discharge of his duties as Confessor to a penitent of no small importance. This was an elderly man, of a goodly presence, a florid and healthful cheek, the under part of which was shaded by a venerable white beard, which descended over his bosom. The large and clear blue eyes, with the broad expanse of brow, expressed dignity; but it was of a character which seemed more accustomed to receive honors voluntarily paid, than to enforce them when they were refused. The good-nature of the expression was so great as to approach to defenceless simplicity or weakness of character, unfit, it might be inferred, to repel intrusion, or subdue resistance. Amongst the gray locks of this personage was placed a small circlet or coronet of gold, upon a blue fillet. His beads, which were large and conspicuous, were of native gold, rudely enough wrought, but ornamented with Scottish pearls, of rare size and beauty. These were his only ornaments; and a long crimson robe of silk, tied by a sash of the same color, formed his attire. His shirt being finished, he arose heavily from the embroidered cushion upon which he kneeled during his confession, and, by the assistance of a crutch-headed staff of ebony, moved, lame and ungracefully, and with apparent pain, to a chair of state, which, surmounted by a canopy, was placed for his accommodation by the chimney of the lofty and large apartment.

This was Robert, third of that name, and the second of the ill-fated family of Stewart, who filled the throne of Scotland. He had many virtues, and was not without talent; but it was his great misfortune, that, like others of his devoted line, his merits were not of a kind suited to the part which he was called upon to perform in life. The King of so fierce a people as the Scots then were, ought to have been warlike, prompt, and active, liberal in rewarding services, strict in punishing crimes; one whose conduct should make him feared as well as beloved. The qualities of Robert the Third were the reverse of all these. In youth he had, indeed, seen battles; but, without incurring disgrace, he had never manifested the chivalrous love of war and peril, or the eager desire to distinguish himself by dangerous achievements which that age expected from all who were of noble birth, and had claims to authority.

Besides, his military career was very short. Amidst the tumult of a tournament, the young Earl of Carrick, such was then his title, received a kick from the horse of Sir James Douglas of Dalkeith; in consequence of which he was lame for the rest of his life, and absolutely disabled

from taking share either in warfare, or in the military sports and tournaments which were its image. As Robert had never testified much predilection for violent exertion, he did not probably much regret the incapacities which exempted him from these active scenes. But his misfortune, or rather its consequences, lowered him in the eyes of a fierce nobility and warlike people. He was obliged to repose the principal charge of his affairs now in one member, now in another, of his family; sometimes with the actual rank, and always with the power, of Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. His paternal affection would have induced him to use the assistance of his eldest son, a young man of spirit and talent, whom in fondness he had created Duke of Rothsay, in order to give him the present possession of a dignity next to that of the throne.* But the young Prince's head was too giddy, and his hand too feeble, to wield with dignity the delegated sceptre. However fond of power, pleasure was the Prince's favorite pursuit; and the court was disturbed, and the country scandalized, by the number of fugitive amours, and extravagant revels, practised by him who should have set an example of order and regularity to the youth of the kingdom.

The license and impropriety of the Duke of Rothsay's conduct, was the more reprehensible in the public view, that he was a married person; although some, over whom his youth, gaiety, grace, and good temper, had obtained influence, were of opinion, than an excuse for his libertinism might be found in the circumstances of the marriage itself. They reminded each other that his nuptials were entirely conducted by his uncle, the Duke of Albany, by whose counsels the infirm and timid King was much governed at the time, and who had the character of managing the temper of his brother and sovereign, so as might be most injurious to the interests and prospects of the young heir. By Albany's machinations, the hand of the heir-apparent was in a manner put up to sale, as it was understood publicly that the nobleman in Scotland who should give the largest dower to his daughter, might aspire to raise her to the bed of the Duke of Rothsay.

In the contest for preference which ensued, George, Earl of Dunbar and March, who possessed, by himself or his vassals, a great part of the eastern frontier, was preferred to other competitors; and his daughter was, with the mutual good-will of the young couple, actually contracted to the Duke of Rothsay.

But there remained a third party to be con-

* This creation, and that of the Dukedom of Albany, in favor of the King's brother, were the first instances of ducal rank in Scotland. Buchanan mentions the innovation in terms which may be considered as showing that even he partook in the general prejudice with which that title was viewed in Scotland down to a much later period. It had, indeed, been in almost every case united with heavy misfortunes—not rarely with tragic crimes.

sulted, and that was no other than the tremendous Archibald, Earl of Douglas, terrible alike from the extent of his lands, from the numerous offices and jurisdictions with which he was invested, and from his personal qualities of wisdom and valor, mingled with indomitable pride, and more than the feudal love of vengeance. The Earl was also nearly related to the throne, having married the eldest daughter of the reigning Monarch.

After the espousals of the Duke of Rothsay with the Earl of March's daughter, Douglas, as if he had postponed his share in the negotiation to show that it could not be concluded with any one but himself, entered the lists to break off the contract. He tendered a larger dower with his daughter Marjory than the Earl of March had proffered; and, secured by his own cupidity and fear of the Douglas, Albany exerted his influence with the timid Monarch till he was prevailed upon to break the contract with the Earl of March, and wed his son to Marjory Douglas, a woman whom Rothsay could not love. No apology was offered to the Earl of March, excepting that the espousals betwixt the Prince and Elizabeth of Dunbar had not been approved by the States of Parliament, and that till such ratification, the contract was liable to be broken off. The Earl deeply resented the wrong done to himself and his daughter, and was generally understood to study revenge, which his great influence on the English frontier was likely to place within his power.

In the meantime, the Duke of Rothsay, incensed at the sacrifice of his hand and his inclinations to this state intrigue, took his own mode of venting his displeasure, by neglecting his wife, contemning his formidable and dangerous father-in-law, and showing little respect to the authority of the King himself, and none whatever to the remonstrances of Albany, his uncle, whom he looked upon as his confirmed enemy.

Amid these internal dissensions of his family, which extended themselves through his councils and administration, introducing everywhere the baneful effects of uncertainty and disunion, the feeble Monarch had for some time been supported by the counsels of his Queen Annabella, a daughter of the noble house of Drummond, gifted with a depth of sagacity and firmness of mind, which exercised some restraint over the levities of a son who respected her, and sustained on many occasions the wavering resolution of her royal husband.—But after her death the imbecile Sovereign resembled nothing so much as a vessel drifted from her anchors, and tossed about amidst contending currents. Abstractedly considered, Robert might be said to doat upon his son,—to entertain respect and awe for the character of his brother Albany, so much more decisive than his own,—to fear the Douglas with a terror which was almost instinctive, and to suspect the constancy of the bold but fickle Earl of March. But his feelings towards these various characters

were so mixed and complicated, that from time to time they showed entirely different from what they really were; and according to the interest which had been last exerted over his flexible mind, the King would change from an indulgent, to a strict and even cruel father—from a confiding to a jealous brother—or from a benignant and bountiful, to a grasping and encroaching Sovereign. Like the chameleon, his feeble mind reflected the color of that firmer character upon which at the time he reposed for counsel and assistance. And when he disused the advice of one of his family, and employed the counsel of another, it was no unwonted thing to see a total change of measures, equally disreputable to the character of the King, and dangerous to the safety of the state.

It followed as a matter of course, that the clergy of the Catholic Church acquired influence over a man whose intentions were so excellent, but whose resolutions were so infirm. Robert was haunted, not only with a due sense of the errors he had really committed, but with the tormenting apprehensions of those peccadilloes which beset a superstitious and timid mind. It is scarcely necessary, therefore, to add that the churchmen of various descriptions had no small influence over this easy-tempered prince, though, indeed, theirs was, at that period, an influence from which few or none escaped, however resolute and firm of purpose in affairs of a temporal character.—We now return from this long digression, without which what we have to relate could not perhaps have been well understood.

The King had moved with ungraceful difficulty to the cushioned chair, which, under a state or canopy, stood prepared for his accommodation, and upon which he sank down with enjoyment, like an indolent man, who had been for some time confined to a constrained position. When seated, the gentle and venerable looks of the good old man showed benevolence. The Prior, who now remained standing opposite to the royal seat, with an air of deep deference which cloaked the natural haughtiness of his carriage, was a man betwixt forty and fifty years of age, but every one of whose hairs still retained their natural black color. Acute features, and a penetrating look, attested the talents by which the venerable father had acquired his high station in the community over which he presided; and, we may add, in the councils of the kingdom in whose service they were often exercised. The chief objects which his education and habits taught him to keep in view, were the extension of the dominion and the wealth of the Church, and the suppression of heresy, both of which he endeavored to accomplish by all the means which his situation afforded him. But he honored his religion by the sincerity of his own belief, and by the morality which guided his conduct in all ordinary situations. The faults of the Prior Anselm, though they led him into grievous error, and even cruelty, were perhaps rather those of his

age and profession—his virtues were his own.

“These things done,” said the King, “and the lands I have mentioned secured by my gift to this monastery, you are of opinion, Father, that I stand as much in the good graces of our Holy Mother Church, as to term myself her dutiful son?”

“Surely, my liege,” said the Prior: “would to God that all her children brought to the efficacious sacrament of confession as deep a sense of their errors, and as much will to make amends for them. But I speak these comforting words, my liege, not to Robert King of Scotland, but only to my humble and devout penitent, Robert Stewart of Carrick.”

“You surprise me, Father,” answered the King; “I have little check on my conscience for aught that I have done in my kingly office, seeing that I use therein less mine own opinion than the advice of the most wise counsellors.”

“Even therein lieth the danger, my liege,” replied the Prior. “The Holy Father recognises in your Grace, in every thought, word, and action, an obedient vassal of the Holy Church. But there are perverse counsellors, who obey the instinct of their wicked hearts, while they abuse the good-nature and ductility of their monarch, and under color of serving his temporal interests, take steps which are prejudicial to those that last to eternity.”

King Robert raised himself upright in his chair, and assumed an air of authority, which, though it well became him, he did not usually display.

“Prior Anselm,” he said, “if you have discovered anything in my conduct, whether as a king or a private individual, which may call down such censures as your words intimate, it is your duty to speak plainly, and I command you to do so.”

“My liege, you shall be obeyed,” answered the Prior, with an inclination of the body. Then raising himself up, and assuming the dignity of his rank in the Church, he said, “Hear from me words of our Holy Father the Pope, the successor of St Peter, to whom have descended the keys, both to bind and to unloose. ‘Wherefore, O Robert of Scotland, hast thou not received into the See of Saint Andrews, Henry of Wardlaw, whom the Pontiff hath recommended to fill that See? Why dost thou make profession with thy lips of dutiful service to the Church, when thy actions proclaim the depravity and disobedience of thy inward soul? Obedience is better than sacrifice.’”

“Sir Prior,” said the Monarch, bearing himself in a manner not unbecoming his lofty rank, “we may well dispense with answering you upon this subject, being a matter which concerns us and the Estates of our kingdom, but does not affect our private conscience.”

“Alas,” said the Prior, “and whose conscience will it concern at the last day? Which

of your belted lords or wealthy burgesses will then step between their King and the penalty which he has incurred, by following of their secular policy in matters ecclesiastical? Know, mighty King, that, were all the chivalry of thy realm drawn up to shield thee from the red levin-bolt, they would be consumed like scorched parchment before the blaze of a furnace.”

“Good Father Prior,” said the King, on whose timorous conscience this kind of language seldom failed to make an impression, “you surely argue over rigidly in this matter. It was during my last indisposition, while the Earl of Douglas held, as Lieutenant-General, the regal authority in Scotland, that the obstruction to the reception of the Primate unhappily arose. Do not, therefore, tax me with what happened when I was unable to conduct the affairs of the kingdom, and compelled to delegate my power to another.”

“To your subject, Sire, you have said enough,” replied the Prior. “But if the impediment arose during the lieutenantancy of the Earl of Douglas, the Legate of his Holiness will demand wherefore it has not been instantly removed, when the King resumed in his royal hands the reins of authority? The Black Douglas can do much; more perhaps than a subject should have power to do in the kingdom of his sovereign; but he cannot stand betwixt your grace and your own conscience, or release you from the duties of the Holy Church, which your situation as a king imposes upon you.”

“Father,” said Robert, somewhat impatiently, “you are over-remptory in this matter, and ought at least to wait a reasonable season, until we have time to consider of some remedy. Such disputes have happened repeatedly in the reigns of our predecessors; and our royal and blessed ancestor, Saint David, did not resign his privileges as a monarch without making a stand in their defence, even though he was involved in arguments with the Holy Father himself.”

“And therein was that great and good king neither holy nor saintly,” said the Prior: “and therefore was he given to be a rout and a spoil to his enemies, when he raised his sword against the banners of St. Peter, and St. Paul, and St. John of Beverley, in the war, as it is still called, of the Standard. Well was it for him, that, like his namesake, the son of Jesse, his sin was punished upon earth, and not entered against him at the long and dreary day of accounting.”

“Well, good Prior—well—enough of this for the present. The Holy See shall, God willing, have no reason to complain of me. I take Our Lady to witness, I would not, for the crown I wear, take the burden of wronging our Mother Church. We have ever feared that the Earl of Douglas kept his eyes too much fixed on the fame and the temporalities of this frail and passing life to feel altogether as he ought the claims that refer to a future world.”

“It is but lately,” said the Prior, “that he hath taken up forcible quarters in the Monastery

of Aberbrothock, with his retinue of a thousand followers; and the abbot is compelled to furnish him with all he needs for horse and man; which the Earl calls exercising the hospitality which he hath a right to expect from the foundation to which his ancestors were contributors. Certain it were better to return to the Douglas his lands than to submit to such exaction, which more resembles the masterful license of Highland thiggers and sorners,* than the demeanor of a Christian baron.”

“The Black Douglases,” said the King, with a sigh, “are a race which will not be said nay. But, Father Prior, I am myself, it may be, an intruder of this kind; for my sojourning hath been long among you, and my retinue, though far fewer than the Douglas’s, are nevertheless enough to cumber you for their daily maintenance; and though our order is to send out provisors to lessen your charge as much as may be, yet if there be inconvenience, it were fitting we should remove in time.”

“Now, Our Lady forbid!” said the Prior, who, if desirous of power, had nothing meanly covetous in his temper, but was even magnificent in his generous kindness; “certainly the Dominican Convent can afford to her Sovereign the hospitality which the house offers to every wanderer of whatever condition, who will receive it at the hands of the poor servants of our patron. No, my royal liege; come with ten times your present train, they shall neither want a grain of oats, a pile of straw, a morsel of bread, nor an ounce of food, which our convent can supply them. It is one thing to employ the revenues of the Church, which are so much larger than monks ought to need or wish for, in the suitable and dutiful reception of your Royal Majesty, and another to have it wrenched from us by the hands of rude and violent men, whose love of rapine is only limited by the extent of their power.”

“It is well, good Prior,” said the King; “and now to turn our thoughts for an instant from state affairs, can thy reverence inform us how the good citizens of Perth have begun their Valentine’s Day?—Gallantly and merrily, and peacefully, I hope.”

“For gallantry, my liege, I know little of such qualities. For peacefully, there were three or four men, two cruelly wounded, came this morning before daylight to ask the privilege of girth and sanctuary, pursued by a hue and cry of citizens in their shirts, with clubs, bills, Lochaber axes, and two-handed swords, crying kill and slay, each louder than another. Nay, they were not satisfied when our porter and watch told them that those they pursued had taken refuge in the Galilee of the Church,† but

* *Thiggers and sorners*, i. e., sturdy beggars, the former, however, being, as the word implies, more civil than the latter.

† The *Galilee* of a Catholic Cathedral is a small side chapel to which excommunicated persons have access, though they must not enter the body of the church. Mr. Surtees suggests

continued for some minutes clamoring and striking upon the postern-door, demanding that the men who had offended should be delivered up to them. I was afraid their rude noise might have broken your Majesty's rest, and raised some surprise."

"My rest might have been broken," said the Monarch; "but that sounds of violence should have occasioned surprise—Alas! reverend Father, there is in Scotland only one place where the shriek of the victim, and threats of the oppressor, are not heard—and that, Father, is—the grave."

The Prior stood in respectful silence, sympathizing with the feelings of a monarch whose tenderness of heart suited so ill with the condition and manners of his people.

"And what became of the fugitives?" asked Robert, after a minute's pause.

"Surely, Sire," said the Prior, "they were dismissed, as they desired to be, before daylight; and after we had sent out to be assured that no ambush of their enemies watched them in the vicinity, they went their way in peace."

"You know nothing," inquired the King, "who the men were, or the cause of their taking refuge with you?"

"The cause," said the Prior, "was a riot with the townsmen; but how arising is not known to us. The custom of our house is to afford twenty-four hours of uninterrupted refuge in the sanctuary of St. Dominic, without asking any question at the poor unfortunates who have sought relief there. If they desire to remain for a longer space, the cause of their resorting to sanctuary must be put upon the register of the convent; and, praised be our holy Saint, many persons escape the weight of the law by this temporary protection, whom, did we know the character of their crimes, we might have found ourselves obliged to render up to their pursuers and persecutors."

As the Prior spoke, a dim idea occurred to the Monarch, that the privilege of sanctuary thus peremptorily executed, must prove a severe interruption to the course of justice through his realm. But he repelled the feeling, as if it had been a suggestion of Satan, and took care that not a single word should escape to betray to the churchman that such a profane thought had ever occupied his bosom; on the contrary, he hastened to change the subject.

"The sun," he said, "moves slowly on the index. After the painful information you have given me, I expected the Lords of my Council ere now, to take order with the ravelled affairs of this unhappy riot. Evil was the fortune which gave me rule over a people, among

that the name of the place thus appropriated to the consolation of miserable penitents, was derived from the text:—"Ite, nunciate fratibus meis ut eant in Galliam: ibi me videbunt." Matth. xxviii. 10.—See *History of Durham*, vol. i., p. lvi. Criminals claiming sanctuary, were, for obvious reasons, accustomed to place themselves in this part of the edifice.

whom it seems to me I am in my own person the only man who desires rest and tranquillity!"

"The Church always desires peace and tranquillity," added the Prior, not suffering even so general a proposition to escape the poor King's oppressed mind, without insisting on a saving clause for the Church's honor.

"We meant nothing else," said Robert. "But, Father Prior, you will allow that the Church, in quelling strife, as is doubtless her purpose, resembles the busy housewife, who puts in motion the dust which she means to sweep away."

To this remark the Prior would have made some reply, but the door of the apartment was opened, and a gentleman-usher announced the Duke of Albany.

CHAPTER X.

Gentle friend!
Chide not her mirth, who was sad yesterday,
And may be so to-morrow.

JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE Duke of Albany was, like his royal brother, named Robert. The Christian name of the latter had been John, until he was called to the throne; when the superstition of the times observed, that the name had been connected with misfortune in the lives and reigns of John of England, John of France, and John Baliol of Scotland. It was, therefore, agreed, that, to elude the bad omen, the new King should assume the name of Robert, rendered dear to Scotland by the recollections of Robert Bruce. We mention this, to account for the existence of two brothers of the same Christian name in one family, which was not certainly a usual occurrence, more than at the present day.

Albany, also an aged man, was not supposed to be much more disposed for warlike enterprise than the King himself. But if he had not courage, he had wisdom to conceal and cloak over his want of that quality, which, once suspected, would have ruined all the plans which his ambition had formed. He had also pride enough to supply, in extremity, the want of real valor, and command enough over his nerves to conceal their agitation. In other respects, he was experienced in the ways of courts, calm, cool, and crafty, fixing upon the points which he desired to attain, while they were yet far removed, and never losing sight of them, though the winding paths in which he trode might occasionally seem to point to a different direction. In his person he resembled the King, for he was noble and majestic both in stature and countenance. But he had the advantage of his elder brother, in being unencumbered with any infirmity, and in every respect lighter and more active. His dress was rich and grave, as became his age and rank, and, like his royal brother, he wore no arms of any kind, a case of small knives supply-

ing at his girdle the place usually occupied by a dagger in absence of a sword.

At the Duke's entrance, the Prior, after making an obeisance, respectfully withdrew to a recess in the apartment, at some distance from the royal seat, in order to leave the conversation of the brothers uncontrolled by the presence of a third person. It is necessary to mention, that the recess was formed by a window, placed in the inner front of the monastic buildings, called the Palace, from its being the frequent residence of the Kings of Scotland, but which was, unless on such occasions, the residence of the Prior or Abbot. The window was placed over the principal entrance to the royal apartments, and commanded a view of the internal quadrangle of the convent, formed on the right hand by the length of the magnificent Church, on the left by a building, containing the range of cellars, with the refectory, chapter-house, and other conventual apartments rising above them, for such existed altogether independent of the space occupied by King Robert and his attendants; while a fourth row of buildings, showing a noble outward front to the rising sun, consisted of a large *hospitium* for the reception of strangers and pilgrims, and many subordinate offices, warehouses, and places of accommodation, for the ample stores which supplied the magnificent hospitality of the Dominican fathers. A lofty vaulted entrance led through this eastern front into the quadrangle, and was precisely opposite to the window at which Prior Anselm stood, so that he could see underneath the dark arch, and observe the light which gleamed below it from the eastern and open portal; but owing to the height to which he was raised, and the depth of the vaulted archway, his eye could but indistinctly reach the opposite and extended portal. It is necessary to notice these localities. We return to the conversation between the princely relatives.

"My dear brother," said the King, raising the Duke of Albany, as he stooped to kiss his hand; "my dear, dear brother, wherefore this ceremonial? Are we not both sons of the same Stewart of Scotland, and of the same Elizabeth More?"

"I have not forgot that it is so," said Albany, rising; "but I must not omit, in the familiarity of the brother, the respect that is due to the King."

"Oh, true, most true, Robin," answered the King. "The throne is like a lofty and barren rock, upon which flower or shrub can never take root. All kindly feelings, all tender affections, are denied to a monarch. A king must not fold a brother to his heart—he dare not give way to fondness for a son!"

"Such, in some respects, is the doom of greatness, Sire," answered Albany; "but Heaven, who removed to some distance from your Majesty's sphere the members of your own family, has given you a whole people to be your children."

"Alas! Robert," answered the Monarch, "your heart is better framed for the duties of a sovereign than mine. I see from the height at which fate has placed me, that multitude whom you call my children—I love them, I wish them well—but they are many, and they are distant from me. Alas! even the meanest of them has some beloved being whom he can clasp to his heart, and upon whom he can lavish the fondness of a father! But all that a king can give to a people is a smile, such as the sun bestows on the snowy peaks of the Grampian mountains, as distant and as ineffectual. Alas, Robin! our father used to caress us, and if he chid us it was with a tone of kindness; yet he was a monarch as well as I, and wherefore should not I be permitted, like him, to reclaim my poor prodigal by affection as well as severity?"

"Had affection never been tried, my liege," replied Albany, in the tone of one who delivers sentiments which he grieves to utter, "means of gentleness ought assuredly to be first made use of. Your Grace is best judge whether they have been long enough persevered in, and whether those of discouragement and restraint may not prove a more effectual corrective. It is exclusively in your royal power to take what measures with the Duke of Rothsay you think will be most available to his ultimate benefit, and that of the kingdom."

"This is unkind, brother," said the King; "you indicate the painful path which you would have me pursue, yet you offer me not your support in treading it."

"My support your Grace may ever command," replied Albany; "but would it become me, of all men on earth, to prompt to your Grace severe measures against your son and heir? Me—on whom, in case of failure—which Heaven forbid!—of your Grace's family, this fatal crown might descend? Would it not be thought and said by the fiery March and the haughty Douglas, that Albany had sown dissension between his royal brother and the heir to the Scottish throne, perhaps to clear the way for the succession of his own family?—No, my liege—I can sacrifice my life to your service, but I must not place my honor in danger."

"You say true, Robin—you say very true," replied the King, hastening to put his own interpretation upon his brother's words. "We must not suffer these powerful and dangerous lords to perceive that there is aught like discord in the royal family. That must be avoided of all things; and, therefore, we will still try indulgent measures, in hopes of correcting the follies of Rothsay. I behold sparks of hope in him, Robin, from time to time, that are well worth cherishing. He is young—very young—a prince, and in the hey-day of his blood. We will have patience with him, like a good rider with a hot-tempered horse. Let him exhaust this idle humor, and no one will be better pleased with him than yourself. You have censured me in your kindness