

## CHAPTER XII.

Then up and spak the auld gadwife,  
And wow, but she was grin:  
"Had e'er your father done the like,  
It had been ill for him."

LUCY TRUMBULL.

THE party were now, by a secret passage, admitted within the church, the outward doors of which, usually left open, had been closed against every one in consequence of the recent tumult, when the rioters of both parties had endeavored to rush into it for other purposes than those of devotion. They traversed the gloomy aisles, whose arched roof resounded to the heavy tread of the armorer, but was silent under the sandalled foot of the Monk, and the light step of poor Louise, who trembled excessively, as much from fear as cold. She saw that neither her spiritual nor temporal conductor looked kindly upon her. The former was an austere man, whose aspect seemed to hold the luckless wanderer in some degree of horror, as well as contempt; while the latter, though, as we have seen, one of the best-natured men living, was at present grave to the pitch of sternness, and not a little displeased with having the part he was playing forced upon him, with out, as he was constrained to feel, a possibility of his declining it.

His dislike at his task extended itself to the innocent object of his protection, and he internally said to himself, as he surveyed her scornfully,—"A proper queen of beggars to walk the streets of Perth with, and I a decent burgher! This tawdry minion must have as ragged a reputation as the rest of her sisterhood, and I am finely sped if my chivalry in her behalf comes to Catharine's ears. I had better have slain a man, were he the best in Perth; and, by hammer and nails, I would have done it on provocation, rather than convoy this baggage through the city."

Perhaps Louise suspected the cause of her conductor's anxiety, for she said, timidly and with hesitation, "Worthy sir, were it not better I should stop one instant in that chapel, and don my mantle?"

"Umph, sweetheart, well proposed," said the armorer; but the Monk interfered, raising at the same time the finger of interdiction.

"The chapel of Holy St. Madox is no tiring-room for jugglers and strollers to shift their trappings in. I will presently show thee a vestry more suited to thy condition."

The poor young woman hung down her humbled head, and turned from the chapel door which she had approached, with the deep sense of self-abasement. Her little spaniel seemed to gather from his mistress's looks and manner, that they were unauthorized intruders on the holy ground which they trode, and hung his ears, and swept the pavement with his tail, as he trotted slowly and close to Louise's heels.

The monk moved on without a pause. They descended a broad flight of steps, and proceeded

through a labyrinth of subterranean passages dimly lighted. As they passed a low-arched door, the Monk turned, and said to Louise, with the same stern voice as before,—"There, daughter of folly, there is a robing-room where many before you have deposited their vestments!"

Obedient to the least signal with ready and timorous acquiescence, she pushed the door open, but instantly recoiled with terror. It was a charnel-house, half filled with dry skulls and bones.

"I fear to change my dress there, and alone—But if you, father, command it, be it as you will."

"Why, thou child of vanity, the remains on which thou lookest are but the earthly attire of those who, in their day, led or followed in the pursuit of worldly pleasure. And such shalt thou be, for all thy mincing and ambling, thy piping and thy harping; thou and all such ministers of frivolous and worldly pleasure, must become like these poor bones, whom thy idle nicety fears and loathes to look upon."

"Say not with idle nicety, reverend father," answered the glee-maiden, "for Heaven knows, I covet the repose of these poor bleached relics; and if by stretching my body upon them, I could, without sin, bring my state to theirs, I would choose that charnel-heap for my place of rest, beyond the fairest and softest couch in Scotland."

"Be patient, and come on," said the monk, in a milder tone; "the reaper must not leave the harvest-work till sunset gives the signal that the day's toil is over."

They walked forward. Brother Cyprian, at the end of a long gallery, opened the door of a small apartment, or perhaps a chapel, for it was decorated with a crucifix, before which burned four lamps. All bent and crossed themselves; and the priest said to the minstrel maiden, pointing to the crucifix, "What says that emblem?"

"That He invites the sinner as well as the righteous to approach."

"Ay, if the sinner put from him his sin," said the Monk, whose tone of voice was evidently milder. "Prepare thyself here for thy journey."

Louise remained an instant or two in the chapel, and presently reappeared in a mantle of coarse gray cloth, in which she had closely muffled herself, having put such of her more gaudy habiliments as she had time to take off in the little basket which had before held her ordinary attire.

The Monk presently afterwards unlocked a door which led to the open air. They found themselves in the garden which surrounded the Monastery of the Dominicans. "The southern gate is on the latch, and through it you can pass unnoticed," said the Monk. "Bless thee, my son; and bless thee too, unhappy child. Remembering where you put off your idle trinkets

may you take care how you again resume them!"

"Alas, father!" said Louise, "if the poor foreigner could supply the mere wants of life by any more creditable occupation, she has small wish to profess her idle art. But—"

But the Monk had vanished, nay, the very door through which she had just passed appeared to have vanished also, so curiously was it concealed beneath a flying buttress, and among the profuse ornaments of Gothic architecture. "Here is a woman let out by this private postern, sure enough," was Henry's reflection.—"Pray Heaven the good fathers never let any in! The place seems convenient for such games at bopeep. But, benedicite, what is to be done next? I must get rid of this quean as fast as I can; and I must see her safe. For let her be at heart what she may, she looks too modest, now she is in decent dress, to deserve the usage which the wild Scot of Galloway, or the Devil's legion from the Liddell are like to afford her."

Louise stood as if she waited his pleasure which way to go. Her little dog, relieved by the exchange of the dark subterranean vault for the open air, sprung in wild gambols through the walks, and jumped upon its mistress; and even, though more timidly, circled close round the Smith's feet, to express its satisfaction to him also, and conciliate his favor.

"Down, Charlot, down!" said the glee-maiden. "You are glad to get into the blessed sunshine; but where shall we rest at night, my poor Charlot?"

"And now, mistress," said the Smith—not churlishly, for it was not in his nature, but bluntly, as one who is desirous to finish a disagreeable employment,—"which way lies your road?"

Louise looked on the ground, and was silent. On being again urged to say which way she desired to be conducted, she again looked down, and said, she could not tell.

"Come, come," said Henry, "I understand all that—I have been a *galliard*—a reveller in my day—but it's best to be plain. As matters are with me now, I am an altered man for these many, many months; and so, my quean, you and I must part sooner than perhaps a light-o'-love such as you expected to part with—a likely young fellow."

Louise wept silently, with her eyes still cast on the ground, as one who felt an insult which she had not a right to complain of. At length, perceiving that her conductor was grown impatient, she faltered out, "Noble sir—"

"*Sir* is for a knight," said the impatient burgher, "and *noble* is for a baron. I am Harry of the Wynd, an honest mechanic, and free of my guild."

"Good craftsman, then," said the minstrel woman, "you judge me harshly, but not without seeming cause. I would relieve you immediately of my company, which, it may be, brings little

credit to good men, did I but know which way to go."

"To the next wake or fair, to be sure," said Henry, roughly, having no doubt that this distress was affected for the purpose of palming herself upon him, and perhaps dreading to throw herself into the way of temptation; "and that is the feast of St. Madox, at Auchterarder. I warrant thou wilt find the way thither well enough."

"Aft—Auchter—" repeated the glee-maiden, her southern tongue in vain attempting the Celtic accentuation. "I am told my poor lays will not be understood if I go nearer to yon dreadful range of mountains."

"Will you abide, then, in Perth?"

"But where to lodge?" said the wanderer.

"Why, where lodged you last night?" replied the Smith. "You know where you came from surely, though you seem doubtful where you are going?"

"I slept in the hospital of the Convent. But I was only admitted upon great importunity, and I was commanded not to return."

"Nay, they will never take you in with the ban of the Douglas upon you, that is even too true. But the Prince mentioned Sir John Ramorny's—I can take you to his lodgings through by-streets—though it is short of an honest burgher's office, and my time presses."

"I will go anywhere—I know, I am a scandal and encumbrance. There was a time when it was otherwise—But this Ramorny, who is he?"

"A courtly knight, who lives a jolly bachelor's life, and is Master of the Horse, and privy, as they say, to the young Prince."

"What! to the wild, scornful young man who gave occasion to yonder scandal?—Oh, take me not thither, good friend!—Is there no Christian woman, who would give a poor creature rest in her cowhouse, or barn, for one night? I will be gone with early daybreak. I will repay her richly. I have gold—and I will repay you too, if you will take me where I may be safe from that wild reveller, and from the followers of that dark Baron, in whose eye was death."

"Keep your gold for those who lack it, mistress," said Henry, "and do not offer to honest hands the money that is won by violing, and taboring, and toe-tripping, and perhaps worse pastimes. I tell you plainly, mistress, I am not to be fooled. I am ready to take you to any place of safety you can name, for my promise is as strong as an iron shackle. But you cannot persuade me that you do not know what earth to make for. You are not so young in your trade as not to know there are hostleries in every town, much more in a city like Perth, where such as you may be harbored for your money, if you cannot find some gulls, more or fewer, to pay your lawing.—If you have money, mistress, my care about you need be the less; and truly, I see little but pretence in all that excessive grief, and fear of being left alone, in one of your occupation."



Having thus, as he conceived, signified that he was not to be deceived by the ordinary arts of a glee-maiden, Henry walked a few paces sturdily, endeavoring to think he was doing the wisest and most prudent thing in the world. Yet he could not help looking back to see how Louise bore his departure, and was shocked to observe that she had sunk upon a bank, with her arms resting on her knees, and her head on her arms, in a situation expressive of the utmost desolation.

The Smith tried to harden his heart. "It is all a sham," he said; "the gouge\* knows her trade—I'll be sworn, by Saint Ringan."

At the instant, something pulled the skirts of his cloak; and, looking round, he saw the little spaniel, who immediately, as if to plead his mistress's cause, got on his hind-legs, and began to dance, whimpering at the same time, and looking back to Louise, as if to solicit compassion for his forsaken owner.

"Poor thing," said the Smith, "there may be a trick in this too, for thou dost but as thou art taught.—Yet, as I promised to protect this poor creature, I must not leave her in a swoon, if it be one, were it but for manhood's sake."

Returning, and approaching his troublesome charge, he was at once assured, from the change of her complexion, either that she was actually in the deepest distress, or had a power of dissimulation beyond the comprehension of man—or woman either.

"Young woman," he said, with more of kindness than he had hitherto been able even to assume, "I will tell you frankly how I am placed. This is Saint Valentine's Day, and, by custom, I was to spend it with my fair Valentine. But blows and quarrels have occupied all the morning, save one poor half hour. Now, you may well understand where my heart and my thoughts are, and where, were it only in mere courtesy, my body ought to be."

The glee-maiden listened, and appeared to comprehend him.

"If you are a true lover, and have to wait upon a chaste Valentine, God forbid that one like me should make a disturbance between you! Think about me no more. I will ask of that great river to be my guide to where it meets the ocean, where I think they said there was a sea-port; I will sail from thence to La Belle France, and will find myself once more in a country in which the roughest peasant would not wrong the poorest female."

"You cannot go to Dundee to-day," said the Smith. "The Douglas people are in motion on both sides of the river, for the alarm of the morning has reached them ere now; and all this day, and the next, and the whole night which is between, they will gather to their leader's standard, like Highlandmen at the fiery cross.—Do you see yonder five or six men, who are riding so

wildly on the other side of the river? These are Annandale men; I know them by the length of their lances, and by the way they hold them. An Annandale man never slopes his spear backwards, but always keeps the point upright, or pointed forward."

"And what of them?" said the glee-maiden, "They are men-at-arms, and soldiers:—They would respect me for my viol and my helplessness."

"I will say them no scandal," answered the Smith. "If you were in their own glens, they would use you hospitably, and you would have nothing to fear; but they are now on an expedition. All is fish that comes to their net. There are amongst them who would take your life for the value of your gold ear-rings. Their whole soul is settled in their eyes to see prey, and in their hands to grasp it. They have no ears either to hear lays of music, or listen to prayers for mercy. Besides, their leader's order is gone forth concerning you, and it is of a kind sure to be obeyed. Ay, great lords are sooner listened to if they say, 'Burn a church,' than if they say, 'Build one.'"

"Then," said the glee-woman, "I were best sit down and die."

"Do not say so," replied the Smith. "If I could but get you a lodging for the night, I would carry you the next morning to Our Lady's Stairs, from whence the vessels go down the river for Dundee, and would put you on board with some one bound that way, who should see you safely lodged where you would have fair entertainment and kind usage."

"Good—excellent—generous man!" said the glee-maiden, "do this, and if the prayers and blessings of a poor unfortunate should ever reach Heaven, they will rise thither in thy behalf. We will meet at yonder postern-door, at whatever time the boats take their departure."

"That is at six in the morning, when the day is but young."

"Away with you, then, to your Valentine;—and if she loves you, oh, deceive her not."

"Alas, poor damsel! I fear it is deceit hath brought thee to this pass. But I must not leave you thus unprovided. I must know where you are to pass the night."

"Care not for that," replied Louise—"the heavens are clear—there are bushes and boskets enough by the river side; Charlot and I can well make a sleeping-room of a green arbor for one night; and to-morrow will, with your promised aid, see me out of reach of injury and wrong. Oh, the night soon passes away when there is hope for to-morrow!—Do you still linger, with your Valentine waiting for you? Nay, I shall hold you but a loitering lover, and you know what belongs to a minstrel's reproaches."

"I cannot leave you, damsel," answered the armorer, now completely melted. "It were mere murder to suffer you to pass the night exposed to the keenness of a Scottish blast in February

No, no—my word would be ill kept in this manner; and if I should incur some risk of blame, it is but just penance for thinking of thee, and using thee, more according to my own prejudices, as I now well believe, than thy merits. Come with me, damsel—thou shalt have a sure and honest lodging for the night, whatsoever may be the consequence. It would be an evil compliment to my Catharine, were I to leave a poor creature to be starved to death, that I might enjoy her company an hour sooner."

So saying, and hardening himself against all anticipations of the ill consequences or scandal which might arise from such a measure, the manly-hearted Smith resolved to set evil report at defiance, and give the wanderer a night's refuge in his own house. It must be added, that he did this with extreme reluctance, and in a sort of enthusiasm of benevolence.

Ere our stout son of Vulcan had fixed his worship on the Fair Maid of Perth, a certain natural wildness of disposition had placed him under the influence of Venus, as well as that of Mars; and it was only the effect of a sincere attachment which had withdrawn him entirely from such licentious pleasures. He was, therefore, justly jealous of his newly-acquired reputation for constancy, which his conduct to this poor wanderer must expose to suspicion—a little doubtful, perhaps, of exposing himself too venturously to temptation,—and, moreover, in despair to lose so much of St. Valentine's Day, which custom not only permitted, but enjoined him to pass beside his mate for the season. The journey to Kinfauns, and the various transactions which followed, had consumed the day, and it was now nearly even-song time.

As if to make up by a speedy pace for the time he was compelled to waste upon a subject so foreign to that which he had most at heart, he strode on through the Dominican's gardens, entered the town, and casting his cloak around the lower part of his face, and pulling down his bonnet to conceal the upper, he continued the same celerity of movement through by-streets and lanes, hoping to reach his own house in the Wynd without being observed. But when he had continued his rate of walking for ten minutes, he began to be sensible it might be too rapid for the young woman to keep up with him. He accordingly looked behind him with a degree of angry impatience, which soon turned into compunction, when he saw that she was almost utterly exhausted by the speed which she had exerted.

"Now, marry, hang me up for a brute," said Henry to himself. "Was my own haste ever so great, could it give that poor creature wings? And she loaded with baggage too! I am an ill-nurtured beast, that is certain, wherever women are in question; and always sure to do wrong when I have the best will to act right.—Hark thee, damsel; let me carry these things for thee. We shall make better speed that I do so."

Poor Louise would have objected, but her

breath was too much exhausted to express herself; and she permitted her good-natured guardian to take her little basket, which when the dog beheld, he came straight before Henry, stood up, and shook his forepaws, whining gently, as if he too wanted to be carried.

"Nay, then, I must needs lend thee a lift too," said the Smith, who saw the creature was tired.

"Fie, Charlot!" said Louise; "thou knowest I will carry thee myself."

She endeavored to take up the little spaniel, but it escaped from her; and going to the other side of the Smith, renewed its supplication that he would take it up.

"Charlot's right," said the Smith; "he knows best who is ablest to bear him. This lets me know, my pretty one, that you have not been always the bearer of your own mail—Charlot can tell tales."

So deadly a hue came across the poor glee-maiden's countenance as Henry spoke, that he was obliged to support her, lest she should have dropped to the ground. She recovered again, however, in an instant or two, and with a feeble voice, requested her guide would go on.

"Nay, nay," said Henry, as they began to move, "keep hold of my cloak, or my arm, if it helps you forward better. A fair sight we are; and had I but a rebcock or a guitar at my back, and a jackanapes on my shoulder, we should seem as joyous a brace of strollers as ever touched string at a castle gate.—Snails!" he ejaculated internally, "were any neighbor to meet me with this little harlotry's basket at my back, her dog under my arm, and herself hanging on my cloak, what could they think but that I had turned mumper in good earnest? I would not for the best harness I ever laid hammer on, that any of our long-tongued neighbors met me in this guise; it were a jest-would last from St. Valentine's Day to next Candlemas."

Stirred by these thoughts, the Smith, although at the risk of making much longer a route which he wished to traverse as swiftly as possible, took the most indirect and private course which he could find in order to avoid the main streets, still crowded with people, owing to the late scene of tumult and agitation. But, unhappily, his policy availed him nothing; for, in turning into an alley, he met a man with his cloak muffled around his face, from a desire like his own to pass unobserved, though the slight insignificant figure, the spindle-shanks, which showed themselves beneath the mantle, and the small dull eye that blinked over its upper folds, announced the Pottinger as distinctly as if he had carried his sign in front of his bonnet. His unexpected and most unwelcome presence overwhelmed the Smith with confusion. Ready evasion was not the property of his bold, blunt temper; and knowing this man to be a curious observer, a malignant tale-bearer, and by no means well disposed to himself in particular, no better hope occurred to him, than that the worshipful apothecary would

\* Gouge, in old French, is almost equivalent to wench.



give him some pretext to silence his testimony, and secure his discretion, by twisting his neck round.

But, far from doing or saying any thing which could warrant such extremities, the Pottingar, seeing himself so close upon his stalwart townsman that recognition was inevitable, seemed determined it should be as slight as possible; and without appearing to notice anything particular in the company or circumstances in which they met, he barely slid out these words as he passed him, without even a glance towards his companion after the first instant of their meeting.—“A merry holiday to you once more, stout Smith. What! thou art bringing thy cousin, pretty Mistress Joan Letham, with her mail, from the waterside—fresh from Dundee, I warrant? I heard she was expected at the old cordwainer’s.”

As he spoke thus, he looked neither right nor left; and exchanging a “Save you!” with a salute of the same kind which the Smith rather muttered than uttered distinctly, he glided forward on his way like a shadow.

“The foul fiend catch me, if I can swallow that pill,” said Henry Smith, “how well soever it may be gilded. The knave has a shrewd eye for a kirtle, and knows a wild-duck from a tame, as well as e’er a man in Perth.—He were the last in the Fair City to take sour plums for pears, or my roundabout cousin Joan for this piece of fantastic vanity. I fancy his bearing was as much as to say, ‘I will not see what you might wish me blind to’—and he is right to do so, as he might easily purchase himself a broken pate by meddling with my matters—and so he will be silent for his own sake.—But whom have we next?—By St. Dunstan! the chattering, bragging, cowardly knave, Oliver Proudfoot!”

It was, indeed, the bold Bonnet-maker whom they next encountered, who, with his cap on one side, and troling the ditty of

“Thou art over long at the pot, Tom, Tom,”

gave plain intimation that he had made no dry meal.

“Ha! my jolly Smith,” he said, “have I caught thee in the manner?—What, can the true steel bend?—Can Vulcan, as the minstrel says, pay Venus back in her own coin?—Faith, thou wilt be a gay Valentine before the year’s out, that begins with the holiday so jollily.”

“Hark ye, Oliver” said the displeased Smith, “shut your eyes and pass on, crony. And hark ye again, stir not your tongue about what concerns you not, as you value having an entire tooth in your head.”

“I betray counsel?—I bear tales, and that against my brother martialist?—I scorn it—I would not tell it even to my timber Soldan!—Why, I can be a wild galliard in a corner as well as thou, man—And now I think on’t, I will go with thee somewhere, and we will have a rouse together, and thy Delilah shall give us a song. Ha! said I not well?”

“Excellently,” said Henry, longing the whole time to knock his brother martialist down, but wisely taking a more peaceful way to rid himself of the incumbrance of his presence.—“Excellently well!—I may want thy help, too—for here are five or six of the Douglasses before us—they will not fail to try to take the wench from a poor burgher like myself, so I will be glad of the assistance of a tearer such as thou art.”

“I thank ye—I thank ye,” answered the Bonnet-maker; “but were I not better run, and cause ring the common bell, and get my great sword?”

“Ay, ay—run home as fast as you can, and say nothing of what you have seen.”

“Who, I?—Nay, fear me not. Pah! I scorn a talebearer.”

“Away with you, then;—I hear the clash of armor.”

This put life and mettle into the heels of the Bonnet-maker, who, turning his back on the supposed danger, set off at a pace which the Smith never doubted would speedily bring him to his own house.

“Here is another chattering jay to deal with,” thought the Smith; “but I have a hawk over him too. The minstrels have a fabliau of a daw with borrowed feathers,—why, this Oliver is the very bird, and, by St. Dunstan, if he lets his chattering tongue run at my expense, I will so pluck him as never hawk plumed a partridge. And this he knows.”

As these reflections thronged on his mind, he had nearly reached the end of his journey; and, with the glee-maiden still hanging on his cloak, exhausted partly with fear, partly with fatigue, he at length arrived at the middle of the Wynd, which was honored with his own habitation, and from which, in the uncertainty that then attended the application of surnames, he derived one of his own appellatives. Here, on ordinary days, his furnace was seen to blaze, and four half-stripped knaves stunned the neighborhood with the clang of hammer and stithy. But St. Valentine’s holiday was an excuse for these men of steel having shut the shop, and for the present being absent on their own errands of devotion or pleasure. The house which adjoined to the smithy called Henry its owner; and though it was small, and situated in a narrow street, yet, as there was a large garden with fruit-trees behind it, it constituted upon the whole a pleasant dwelling. The Smith, instead of knocking or calling, which would have drawn neighbors to doors and windows, drew out a pass-key of his own fabrication, then a great and envied curiosity, and opening the door of his house, introduced his companion into his habitation.

The apartment which received Henry and the glee-maiden was the kitchen, which served amongst those of the Smith’s station for the family sitting-room, although one or two individuals, like Simon Glover, had an eating-room apart from that in which their victuals were prepared.

In the corner of this apartment, which was arranged with an unusual attention to cleanliness, sat an old woman, whose neatness of attire, and the precision with which her scarlet plaid was drawn over her head, so as to descend to her shoulders on each side, might have indicated a higher rank than that of Luckie Shoobred, the Smith’s housekeeper. Yet such and no other was her designation; and not having attended mass in the morning, she was quietly reposing herself by the side of the fire, her beads, half told, hanging over her left arm; her prayers half said, loitering upon her tongue; her eyes, half closed, resigning themselves to slumber, while she expected the return of her foster-son, without being able to guess at what hour it was likely to happen. She started up at the sound of his entrance, and bent her eye upon his companion, at first with a look of the utmost surprise, which gradually was exchanged for one expressive of great displeasure.

“Now, the Saints bless mine eyesight, Henry Smith!”—she exclaimed, very devoutly.

“Amen, with all my heart.—Get some food ready presently, good nurse, for I fear me this traveller hath dined but lightly.”

“And again I pray that Our Lady would preserve my eyesight from the wicked delusions of Satan!”

“So be it, I tell you, good woman. But what is the use of all this pattering and praying? Do you not hear me? or will you not do as I bid you?”

“It must be himself, then, whatever is of it! But oh! it is more like the foul Fiend in his likeness, to have such a baggage hanging upon his cloak.—O Harry Smith, men called you a wild lad for less things! But who would ever have thought that Harry would have brought a light leman under the roof that sheltered his worthy mother, and where his own nurse has dwelt for thirty years!”

“Hold your peace, old woman, and be reasonable,” said the Smith. “This glee-woman is no leman of mine, nor of any other person that I know of; but she is going off for Dundee tomorrow by the boats, and we must give her quarters till then.”

“Quarters!” said the old woman. “You may give quarters to such cattle if you like it yourself, Harry Wynd; but the same house shall not quarter that trumpety quean and me, and of that you may assure yourself.”

“Your mother is angry with me,” said Louise, misconstruing the connection of the parties. “I will not remain to give her any offence. If there is a stable or a cowhouse, an empty stall will be bed enough for Charlot and me.”

“Ay ay; I am thinking it is the quarters you are best used to,” said Dame Shoobred.

“Hark ye, Nurse Shoobred,” said the Smith. “You know I love you for your own sake, and for my mother’s; but by St. Dunstan, who was a saint of my own craft, I will have the com-

mand of my own house; and if you leave me without any better reason but your own nonsensical suspicions, you must think how you will have the door open to you when you return; for you shall have no help of mine, I promise you.”

“Aweel, my bairn, and that will never make me risk the honest name I have kept for sixty years. It was never your mother’s custom, and it shall never be mine, to take up with ranters, and jugglers, and singing-women; and I am not so far to seek for a dwelling, that the same roof should cover me and a tramping princess like that.”

With this the refractory gouvernante began in great hurry to adjust her tartan mantle for going abroad, by pulling it so far forwards as to conceal the white linen cap, the edges of which bordered her shrivelled but still fresh and healthful countenance. This done, she seized upon a staff, the trusty companion of her journeys, and was fairly trudging towards the door, when the Smith stepped between her and the passage.

“Wait at least, old woman, till we have cleared scores. I owe you for fee and bountith.”

“An’ that’s e’en a dream of your own fool’s head. What fee or bountith am I to take from the son of your mother, that fed, clad, and bielded me as if I had been a sister?”

“And well you repay it, nurse, leaving her only child at his utmost need.”

This seemed to strike the obstinate old woman with compunction. She stopped and looked at her master and the minstrel alternately; then shook her head, and seemed about to resume her motion towards the door.

“I only receive this poor wanderer under my roof,” urged the Smith, “to save her from the prison and the scourge.”

“And why should you save her?” said the inexorable Dame Shoobred. “I dare say she has deserved them both as well as ever thief deserved a hempen collar.”

“For aught I know she may, or she may not. But she cannot deserve to be scourged to death, or imprisoned till she is starved to death; and that is the lot of them that the Black Douglas bears maltalent against.”

“And you are going to thraw the Black Douglas, for the sake of a glee woman? This will be the worst of your feuds yet.—Oh, Henry Gow, there is as much iron in your head as in your anvil!”

“I have sometimes thought this myself, Mistress Shoobred; but if I do get a cut or two on this new argument, I wonder who is to cure them, if you run away from me like a scared wild-goose? Ay, and moreover, who is to receive my bonny bride, that I hope to bring up the Wynd one of these days?”

“Ah, Harry, Harry,” said the old woman, shaking her head, “this is not the way to prepare an honest man’s house for a young bride—



you should be guided by modesty and discretion, and not by chambering and wantonness."

"I tell you again this poor creature is nothing to me. I wish her only to be safely taken care of; and I think the boldest Border-man in Perth will respect the bar of my door as much as the gate of Carlisle Castle.—I am going down to Sim Glover's—I may stay there all night, for the Highland cub is run back to the hills, like a wolf-whelp as he is, and so there is a bed to spare, and father Simon will make me welcome to the use of it. You will remain with this poor creature, feed her, and protect her during the night, and I will call on her before day; and thou mayest go with her to the boat thyself an thou wilt, and so thou wilt set the last eyes on her at the same time I shall."

"There is some reason in that," said Dame Shoolbred; "though why you should put your reputation in risk for a creature that would find a lodging for a silver twopence and less matter, is a mystery to me."

"Trust me with that, old woman, and be kind to the girl."

"Kinder than she deserves, I warrant you; and truly, though I little like the company of such cattle, yet I think I am less like to take harm from her than you—unless she be a witch, indeed, which may well come to be the case, as the devil is very powerful with all this wayfaring clanjam-fray."

"No more a witch than I am a warlock," said the honest Smith; "a poor broken-hearted thing, that, if she hath done evil, has dreed a sore weird for it. Be kind to her.—And you, my musical damsel—I will call on you to-morrow morning, and carry you to the water-side. This old woman will treat you kindly, if you say nothing to her but what becomes honest ears."

The poor minstrel had listened to this dialogue, without understanding more than its general tendency; for, though she spoke English well, she had acquired the language in England itself, and the northern dialect was then, as now, of a broader and harsher character. She saw, however, that she was to remain with the old lady, and meekly folding her arms on her bosom, bent her head with humility. She next looked towards the Smith with a strong expression of thankfulness, then raising her eyes to heaven, took his passive hand, and seemed about to kiss the sinewy fingers, in token of deep and affectionate gratitude. But Dame Shoolbred did not give license to the stranger's mode of expressing her feelings. She thrust in between them; and, pushing poor Louise aside, said, "No, no, I'll have none of that work. Go into the chimney-nook, mistress, and when Harry Smith's gone, if you must have hands to kiss, you shall kiss mine as long as you like.—And you, Harry, away down to Sim Glover's, for if pretty Mistress Catharine hears of the company you have brought home, she may chance to like them as little as I do. What's the matter now? is the

man demented?—are you going out without your buckler, and the whole town in misrule?"

"You are right, dame," said the armorer; and throwing the buckler over his broad shoulders, he departed from his house without abiding farther question.

### CHAPTER XIII.

How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,  
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills,  
Their mountain pipe, so fill the mountaineers  
With the fierce native daring which instils  
The stirring memory of a thousand years.

BYRON.

We must now leave the lower parties in our historical drama, to attend to the incidents which took place among those of a higher rank and greater importance.

We pass from the hut of an armorer, to the council-room of a monarch; and resume our story just when, the tumult beneath being settled, the angry chieftains were summoned to the royal presence. They entered displeased with and lowering upon each other, each so exclusively filled with his own fancied injuries, as to be equally unwilling and unable to attend to reason or argument. Albany alone, calm and crafty, seemed prepared to use their dissatisfaction for his own purposes, and turn each incident, as it should occur, to the furtherance of his own indirect ends.

The King's irresolution, although it amounted even to timidity, did not prevent his assuming the exterior bearing becoming his situation. It was only when hard pressed, as in the preceding scene, that he lost his apparent composure. In general, he might be driven from his purpose, but seldom from his dignity of manner. He received Albany, Douglas, March, and the Prior, (those ill-assorted members of his motley council), with a mixture of courtesy and loftiness, which reminded each haughty peer that he stood in the presence of his Sovereign, and compelled him to do the beseeching reverence.

Having received their salutations, the King motioned them to be seated; and they were obeying his commands when Rothsay entered. He walked gracefully up to his father, and, kneeling at his footstool, requested his blessing. Robert, with an aspect in which fondness and sorrow were ill disguised, made an attempt to assume a look of reproof, as he laid his hand on the youth's head, and said, with a sigh, "God bless thee, my thoughtless boy, and make thee a wiser man in thy future years!"

"Amen, my dearest father!" said Rothsay, in a tone of feeling such as his happier moments often evinced. He then kissed the royal hand, with the reverence of a son and a subject; and instead of taking a place at the council board, remained standing behind the King's chair, in such a position that he might, when he chose, whisper into his father's ear.

The King next made a sign to the Prior of St. Dominic to take his place at the table, on which there were writing materials, which, of all the subjects present, Albany excepted, the churchman was alone able to use.\* The King then opened the purpose of their meeting, by saying, with much dignity,

"Our business, my lords, respected these unhappy dissensions in the Highlands, which, we learn by our latest messengers, are about to occasion the waste and destruction of the country, even within a few miles of this our own court. But near as this trouble is, our ill fate, and the instigations of wicked men, have raised up one yet nearer, by throwing strife and contention among the citizens of Perth and those attendants who follow your lordships, and others our knights and nobles. I must first, therefore, apply to yourselves, my lords, to know why our court is disturbed by such unseemly contentings, and by what means they ought to be repressed?—Brother of Albany, do you tell us first your sentiments on this matter."

"Sir, our royal Sovereign and brother," said the Duke, "being in attendance on your Grace's person when the fray began, I am not acquainted with its origin."

"And for me," said the Prince, "I heard no worse war-cry than a minstrel wench's ballad, and saw no more dangerous bolts flying than hazel-nuts."

"And I," said the Earl of March, "could only perceive that the stout citizens of Perth had in chase some knaves who had assumed the Bloody Heart on their shoulders. They ran too fast to be actually the men of the Earl of Douglas."

Douglas understood the sneer, but only replied to it by one of those withering looks with which he was accustomed to intimate his mortal resentment. He spoke, however, with haughty composure.

"My liege," he said, "must of course know it is Douglas who must answer to this heavy charge; for when was there strife or bloodshed in Scotland, but there were foul tongues to asperse a Douglas or a Douglas's man, as having given cause to them? We have here goodly witnesses. I speak not of my Lord of Albany, who has only said that he was, as well becomes him, by your Grace's side. And I say nothing of my Lord of Rothsay, who, as befits his rank, years, and understanding, was cracking nuts with a strolling musician.—He smiles—Here he may say his pleasure—I shall not forget a tie which he seems to have forgotten. But here is my Lord of March, who saw my followers flying before the clowns of Perth! I can tell that Earl, that the

followers of the Bloody Heart advance or retreat, when their chieftain commands, and the good of Scotland requires."

"And I can answer"—exclaimed the equally proud Earl of March, his blood rushing into his face, when the King interrupted him—

"Peace! angry lords," said the King, "and remember in whose presence you stand!—And you, my Lord of Douglas, tell us, if you can, the cause of this mutiny, and why your followers, whose general good services we are most willing to acknowledge, were thus active in private brawl?"

"I obey, my lord," said Douglas, slightly stooping a head that seldom bent. "I was passing from my lodgings in the Carthusian Convent, through the High Street of Perth, with a few of my ordinary retinue, when I beheld some of the baser sort of citizens crowding around the Cross, against which there was nailed this placard, and that which accompanies it."

He took from a pocket in the bosom of his buff-coat, a human hand and a piece of parchment. The King was shocked and agitated.

"Read," he said, "good Father Prior, and let that ghastly spectacle be removed."

The Prior read a placard to the following purpose:

"Inasmuch as the house of a citizen of Perth was assaulted last night, being St. Valentine's Eve, by a sort of disorderly night-walkers, belonging to some company of the strangers now resident in the Fair City: And whereas this hand was struck from one of the lawless limmers in the fray that ensued, the Provost and Magistrates have directed that it should be nailed to the Cross, in scorn and contempt of those by whom such brawl was occasioned. And if any one of knightly degree shall say that this our act is wrongfully done, I, Patrick Charteris of Kinfauns, knight, will justify this cartel in knightly weapons within the barrack; or, if any one of meaner birth shall deny what is here said, he shall be met with by a citizen of the Fair City of Perth, according to his degree. And so God and St. John protect the Fair City!"

"You will not wonder, my lord," resumed Douglas, "that when my almoner had read to me the contents of so insolent a scroll, I caused one of my squires to pluck down a trophy so disgraceful to the chivalry and nobility of Scotland. Whereupon, it seems, some of these saucy burghers took license to hoot and insult the hindmost of my train, who wheeled their horses on them, and would soon have settled the feud, but for my positive command, that they should follow me in as much peace as the rascally vulgar would permit. And thus they arrived here in the guise of flying men, when, with my command to repel force by force, they might have set fire to the four corners of this wretched borough, and stifled the insolent churls, like malicious fox-cubs, in a burning brake of furze."

There was a silence when Douglas had done

\* Mr. Chrystal Croftangry had not, it must be confessed, when he indited this sentence, exactly recollected the character of Rothsay, as given by the Prior of Lochleven.—

"A seemly person in stature,  
Cannand into letterature."

B. I., cap. 23.