

and smooth. The checkered hose, which rose midway above his ankle, were fastened with garters of crimson ribands, a brogue of russet leather encased each foot, clasped by large silver buckles—while over all was thrown in graceful negligence a plaid of ample dimensions. Thus equipped, of him it might be said—

“So stately his form and so noble his face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;”

or rather, never were the heather breasts of his mountains trodden by a nobler form.

Among the youthful beauties of Glenlyon valley, was one who was esteemed the gem of maiden loveliness, Catharine Graham. On her had Allan in his days of boyhood looked kindly, and now that he was returned a man and a soldier, he deemed that the simple heart of the maiden would be easily captivated—but pure affection reigned not in his bosom, vice had sapped it to the foundation, and deep and dark designs against her innocence were by him meditated. In vain did he seek to win her ear, in vain did he vow that she was his only idol, but the maiden had already plighted her vows in the presence of heaven to Donald Kenmure, cousin of Allan, and also a dependent on the bounty of the Lady. Indignant at thus being foiled in his machinations, a deep and deadly hatred took possession of his heart, and he resolved to blight the character of his cousin in the eyes of his aunt, and thus, if possible, accomplish the easier his design upon the maiden. To effect this, he one night entered the chamber of his aunt while she was bound in slumber, and bore from it a valuable bracelet, the gift of her deceased husband, at the same time dropping behind him the bonnet of Donald, so that suspicion was naturally enough fastened upon the poor youth, who, being accused of the theft, and although no other evidence of guilt could be produced against him, save the circumstance of his bonnet having been found in the apartment, he was condemned and committed to prison.

Poor Catharine, almost heart broken, and knowing well that her lover was innocent, pleaded hard with the Lady Alice for pardon, but the apparent ingratitude of the youth made her deaf to all entreaty, and so, as a last resource, she condescended to make application to Allan to use his interest in behalf of his poor cousin.

“On one condition,” replied he, “I will.—Transfer your affections from Donald to me, and I will prevail upon my aunt to procure his release from prison.”

The eyes of Catharine flashed with contempt, the blood mounted to her face, and her whole frame shook with indignation. “Mean, contemptible being!” she exclaimed, “none but one who is unworthy of any woman’s hand would dare to proffer such terms to an affianced maiden. What! exchange virtue for vice, truth for deceit, honour for nobleness? Never! sooner would I link myself to the festering remnants of mortality and be entombed alive, than exchange my Donald’s love for the cold and selfish heart that beats within thy bosom,” and rushing from the apartment, left Allan confounded and speechless.

He was standing in that position, when a servant entered and placed a packet in his hand. He started when he beheld the superscription. “Ah! ’tis from Murdoch!” he exclaimed, and staggered breathless to a chair.—For some minutes he sat with his eyes fixed vacantly upon it, then mechanically broke the seal, and read as follows—

“It is already three weeks past the time appointed when I was to have received the money which you promised—but you thought that by flying from the city you would avoid me—’twas a vain thought—oceans cannot part us. The deepest solitude on earth cannot hide you from my searching eye. We are bound together by the indissoluble ties of crime, and when one falls so must the other. I am now in the neighbourhood. In two days I shall expect the promised stipend—you will find me at the pine crag beyond Saint Swithin’s care—if you fail me—infamy will claim thee for its own.”

There was no signature, but too well did Allan know the hand and truth of its contents. “Horror!” he exclaimed. “I am in the coils of the serpent—’tis in vain to struggle, I must bow me to my destiny—but how to acquire the sum? I am almost penniless—and to ask my aunt would but incur her censure, knowing well that I have here no temptation to cause my waste of money—yet he *must* be satisfied at every hazard—but how? by what means?” and he glanced his eyes around the apartment as if seeking to find an unexpected treasure—at length they alighted upon a large iron chest. “Ah! the fiend is ever with the wicked,” he exclaimed, “that box has stood my friend already—Murdoch and I have revelled joyously upon its contents—it must serve me again, but how to procure the key?” and he paused as if communing with himself the means how to obtain it.

At that moment a flash of lightning followed by a loud peal of thunder roused him from his reverie. “Ah! the heavens are warning me against the deed,” he cried, “I will seek