

By that showing the castle of Baron Lamond must be within half an hour's walk of where he now moved without show of eagerness, yet quickly none the less, from a danger the more alarming because the extent of it could not be computed.

In a little the rough path he followed bent parallel with the sea. A tide at the making licked ardently upon sand-spits strewn with ware, and at the forelands, overhung by harsh and stunted seaside shrubs, the breakers rose tumultuous. On the sea there was utter vacancy; only a few screaming birds slanted above the wave, and the coast, curving far before him, gave his eye no sign at first of the castle to which he had got the route from M. Hugh Bethune.

Then his vision, that had been set for something more imposing, for the towers and embrasures of a stately domicile, if not for a Chantilly, at least for the equal of the paternal chateau in the Meuse valley, with multitudinous chimneys and the incense of kind luxuriant hearths, suave parks, gardens, and gravelled walks, contracted with dubiety and amazement upon a dismal tower perched upon a promontory.

Revealed against the brown hills and the sombre woods of the farther coast, it was scarcely a wonder that his eye had failed at first to find it. Here were no pomps of lord or baron; little luxuriance could prevail behind those eyeless gables; there could be no suave pleasance about those walls hanging over the noisy and inhospitable wave. No pomp, no pleasant amenities; the place seemed to jut into the sea, defying man's oldest and most bitter enemy, its gable ends and one crenelated bastion or turret betraying its sinister relation to its age, its whole aspect arrogant and unfriendly, essential of war. Caught suddenly by the vision that swept the fretted curve of the coast, it seemed blackly to perpetuate the spirit of the land, its silence, its solitude and terrors.