

"Perhaps this token may quicken your memory," said the other, undoing from his plaid a brooch, which he handed to an old clansman, who carried it to his chief.

Macleod sprung up, as if he had seen an adder.

"Out of the hall, all of ye," cried he, hastily, "and leave us alone!"

So his family and retainers rose up and went out in haste, wondering much who the stranger might be, and what the token was, which had worked such an effect on their gloomy chieftain. They sat down in the outer apartment, and for a time there came no sound from within, save that Macleod drew bolt and bar after them.

In a little time, they heard voices apparently in high debate, and, to their astonishment, the voice of the stranger seemed the loudest and most imperative, which Macleod seemed rather to expostulate against some proposal which the other was forcing upon him. Then the stranger was heard to stamp on the floor, and both appeared to pace the hall hurriedly and in silence. Again the dispute commenced, and at last the stranger's voice alone was heard. Shortly afterward, Macleod entered the room where the rest of the family were sitting. He seemed unusually agitated, and there was a deep flush on his countenance, and a sternness in his eye, which betokened unwonted emotion, but what the cause of it might be none were hardy enough to enquire.

"The stranger abides with me to-night," said he; "see that the best chamber be got ready. He will take his evening meal alone. To-morrow he sets forward. Lachlan!" and he signed to his henchman, a strong, athletic man, who had followed his master in many a field and foray, and was possessed more of his confidence than any one else could boast. Followed by this man, Macleod left the castle. They tarried some time without, and the chieftain returned alone. He was again closeted with his guest, who did not appear to the family that evening, but retired early to rest. The family and servants shortly afterwards dispersed.

But the secret was not confined to Macleod alone. The old servant, who had carried the brooch, recognized the

badge, which he had often remarked before on the bosom of the bravest of the brave, on that of Montrose himself. This discovery, however, he studiously concealed from every member of the household, and he determined, moreover, to keep a strict watch over the motions of his master, whose fidelity to the royal cause he had long learned to distrust.

When, therefore, he saw Macleod leave the castle, accompanied only by his henchman, he stole up to the battlements, and observed that Lachlan, after receiving apparently minute directions from the chieftain, mounted the favorite horse of Macleod, and rode off to the eastward, sedulously keeping the covert of a natural wood as a screen between him and the house. The clansman then descended, and, mixing with the rest of the family, conversed of the stranger, as if he were as ignorant as the others. So the night wore on.

But the old man could not sleep. Strange misgivings crossed his mind as to the henchman's errand. The royalist forces had all retired toward the north, and the south and east country were entirely occupied by the troops of Leslie.

"Alas!" thought the old man, "if such treachery stain the honor of the house which I have served for three-score years, it were better for me that I were in my grave!"

Toward morning he heard some one pass the door of the room where he lay, and his practiced ear recognized the tread of his chieftain. Scarcely had the sound died away, ere he started up and hastening to the battlements, looked forth into the valley.

The sun had not yet risen, but the rosy clouds streaked the east announced his early coming; a heavy breeze swept along the surface of the lake, and the air was clear and cold. Suddenly there came down the glen, at a furious pace, as if hard pressed by the hunters, three noble deer. They raced along the greensward by the margin of the lake, until within two bowshots of the castle, when they halted, and, looking fixedly behind, seemed to take a new alarm, and held on their course toward the mountains of Loch Inver.

The watcher gazed anxiously upon