

aring man crossed the drawbridge at Berwick from the north and proceeded along Marygath, sat down to rest upon a bench by the door of an hostelrie on the south side of the street, nearly fronting where what was called the "main-guard" then stood. He did not enter the inn, for it was above his apparent condition, being that which Oliver Cromwell had made his head quarters a few years before, and where, at a somewhat earlier period, James the sixth of Scotland had taken up his residence, when on his way to enter on the sovereignty of England. The traveller wore a coarse jerkin, fastened round his body by a leathern girdle, and over it a short cloak, composed of equally plain materials. He was evidently a young man, but his beaver was drawn down so as almost to conceal his features. In one hand he carried a small bundle, and in the other a pilgrim's staff.—Having called for a glass of wine, he took a crust of bread from his bundle, and after resting for a few minutes, rose to depart. The shades of night were setting in, and it threatened to be a night of storms. The heavens were gathering black, the clouds rushing from the sea, sudden gusts of wind were moving along the streets, accompanied by heavy drops of rain, & the face of the Tweed was troubled.

"Heaven help thee! if thou intendest to travel far in such a night as this," said the sentinel at the English gate, as the traveller passed him and proceeded to cross the bridge.

In a few minutes he was upon the wide, desolate and dreary moor of Tweedmouth, which for miles presented a desert of furze, fern, and stunted heath, with here and there a dingle covered with thick brush-wood. He slowly toiled over the steep hill, braving the storm, which now raved with the wildest fury.—The rain fell in torrents, and the wind howled as a legion of famished wolves, hurling its doleful and angry echoes over the heath. Still the stranger pushed onward, until he had proceeded two or three miles from Berwick; when, as if unable longer to brave the storm, he sought shelter amidst some crab and bramble bushes by the way side. Nearly an hour had passed since he sought this imperfect refuge, and the darkness of the night and the storm had increased together, when the sound of a horse's feet was heard hurriedly plashing along the road. The rider bent his head to the blast. Suddenly his horse was grasped by the bridle; the rider raised his head, and the stranger stood before him, holding a pistol to his breast.

"Dismount!" cried the stranger, sternly.

The horseman, benumbed, and stricken with fear, made an effort to reach his arms; but in a moment the hand of the robber, quitting the bridle, grasped the breast of the rider, and dragged him to the ground. He fell heavily on his face, and for several mi-

minutes remained senseless. The stranger seized the leathern bag which contained the mail to the north and flinging it on his shoulder, rushed across the heath.

Early on the following morning the inhabitants of Berwick were seen hurrying in groups to the spot where the robbery had been committed, and were scattered in every direction over the moor, but no trace of the robber could be obtained.

Three days had passed, and Sir John Cochrane yet lived. The mail which contained his death-warrant had been robbed, and before another order for his execution could be given, the intercession of his father, the Earl of Dondonald, with the king's confessor, might be successful. Grizel now became his almost constant companion in prison, and spake to him words of comfort.

Nearly fourteen days had passed since the robbery of the mail had been committed, and protracted hope in the bosom of the prisoner became more bitter than his first despair.—But even that hope, bitter as it was, perished. The intercession of his father had been unsuccessful; and a second time the bigoted, and would be despotic monarch had signed the warrant for his death, and within little more than another day that warrant would reach his prison.

"The will of heaven be done! groaned the captive.

"Amen!" responded Grizel, with wild vehemence; "yet my father shall not die."

Again the rider with the mail had reached the moor of Tweedmouth, and a second time he bore with him the doom of Sir John Cochrane. He spurred his horse to its utmost speed—he looked cautiously before, behind and around him, and in his right hand he carried a pistol ready to defend himself. The moon shed a ghostly light across the heath, which was only sufficient to render desolation dimly visible, and it gave a spiritual embodiment to every shrub. He was turning the angle of a straggling copse when his horse reared at the report of a pistol, the fire of which seemed to dash into his very eyes. At the same moment his own pistol flashed, his horse reared more violently, he was driven from the saddle. In a moment the foot of the robber was upon his breast, who, bending over him, and brandishing a short dagger in his hand, said, "Give me thine arms, or die."

The heart of the king's servant failed within him, and without venturing to reply, he did as he was commanded.

"Now go thy way," said the robber, sternly, "but leave with me thy horse, and leave the mail, lest a worse thing come upon thee."

The man arose, and proceeded towards Berwick, trembling; and the robber, mounting the horse which he had left, rode rapidly across the heath.

Preparations were making for the execu-

tion of Sir John Cochrane, and the officers of the law waited only for the arrival of the mail, with his second death-warrant, to lead him forth to the scaffold, when the tidings arrived that the mail had again been robbed, for yet fourteen days, and the life of the prisoner would be again prolonged. He again fell on the neck of his daughter, and said, "It is good,—the hand of heaven is in this!"

"Said I not," replied the maiden, and for the first time she cried aloud, "that my father should not die?"

The fourteen days were not yet past, when the prison doors flew open, and the Earl of Dondonald rushed to the arms of his son. His intercession with the confessor had been successful, and after twice signing the warrant for the execution of Sir John, which had as often failed in reaching its destination, the king had sealed his pardon.

He had hurried with his father from the prison to his own house; his family was clinging around him, shedding tears of joy, but Grizel, who during his imprisonment, had suffered more than all, was again absent. They were marvelling with gratitude at the mysterious providence that had twice intercepted the mail, and saved his life, when a stranger craved an audience. Sir John desired him to be admitted, and the robber entered; he was habited, as we have before described, with the coarse cloak and coarser jerkin, but his bearing was above his condition. On entering, he slightly touched his beaver, but remained covered.

"When you have perused these," said he, taking two papers from his bosom, "cast them in the fire."

Sir John glanced on them—started, and became deadly pale. They were his death-warrants!

"My deliverer!" he exclaimed, "how—how shall I thank thee—how repay the saviour of my life?" My father—my children—thank him for me!

The old Earl grasped the hand of the stranger—the children embraced his knees. He pressed his hand to his face and burst into tears.

"By what name," eagerly inquired Sir John, "shall I thank my deliverer."

The stranger wept aloud, and raising his beaver, the raven tresses of Grizel Cochrane fell on the coarse cloak!

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed the astonished and enraptured father, "my own child—my saviour—my own Grizel!"

It is unnecessary to add more. The imagination of the reader can supply the rest; and we may only add, that Grizel Cochrane, whose heroism and noble affection we have here briefly and imperfectly sketched, was grand-mother of the late Sir John Stewart, of Allanbank, in Berwickshire, and great grand-mother of Mr. Coutts, the celebrated banker.