

bursting into beauty and being, were spreading their summer livery over Tarras forest, and the breeze wafted their grateful fragrance over the morass; even on the morass itself a thousand simple flowers, like fragments of beauty scattered in handfuls amidst the wide-spread desolation, peeped forth;—and over the sharp cry of the wheeling lapwing rang the summer hymn of the joyful lark, when, as we have before said, Sandy Armstrong sat on the turret of Cleughfoot with his son by his side.

"Archy," said the freebiter, "this world turning upside down, an' honest men hae the chance in't. We hear o' naething now at law! law! law!—but the sient a grain o' justice is to be met wi' on the Borders. A man canna take a bit beast or twa in an honest way, or make a bonfire o' an enemy's haystack, but there's naethin' for't but Carle and a hempen cravat. But mind callant, ye hae the bluid o' the Armstrongs in your veins, and their hands never earned bread by ony instrument but the sword, and ye winna be the son o' Sandy o' Cleughfoot that will disgrace his kith and kin by trudging at the ploughtail, or learning some beggarly handicraft. Swear to me, Archy, that ye will live by the sword like your faithers ere ye—swear to your faither, callant, an' neither Jamie Stuart, his twa kingdoms, nor his horsemen—they'll hae stout hearts at cross Tarras moss, and there will be few sleep in Liddesdale before the pot at Cleughfoot need nae skimming."

"I will live like my faither before me—like o' Tarrasside," said the youth.

"That shall ye, Archy," rejoined the freebiter—"an' though the Scotts an' the Elliots may, like false louns, make obeisance to the king, and get braid lands for bending their knees, what cares Sandy Armstrong for their lands, their manrents, or their sheepskins, scrawled owre by a silk-fingered monk—his twa-handed blade and his Jeddart-staff shall be a better title to an Armstrong than a acre o' parchment."

The boy caught the spirit of his sire, and grasped his Jeddart-staff, or battle axe, in his hand. The father raised the quegh to his lips—"Here's to ye, Archy," he cried, "ye'll be cooper o' Fogo!"

He crossed his arms upon his breast—he sat thoughtful for a few minutes, and again

added—"Archy—but my heart fills to look on ye—ye are a brave bairn, but this is nae langer the brave man's country. Courage is persecuted, and knaves are only encouraged, that can scribble like the monks o' Melrose. Ye had sax brithers, Archy—sax lads whase marrows warna to be found on a' the lang Borders—wi' them at my back an' I could hae ridden north an' south, an' made the name o' Sandy Armstrong be feared;—but they are gane—they're a' gane, and there's nane left but you to protect and defend your poor mother when I am gane too; and now they would hunt me like a deer if they durst, for they are butchering good and true men for our bit raid to Penrith, as tho' the life o' an Armstrong were o' less value than an English nowt. If ye live to be a man, Archy, and to see your poor auld mother's head laid in the mould, take my sword and leave this poor, pitifu', king-ridden, an' book ruined country; an' dinna ye disgrace yer faither by making bickers like the coopers o' Nicolwood, or pinglin wi' an elshin like the souters o' Selkirk."

The sluth-dog, which lay at their feet, started up, snuffed the air, growled and lashed its tail. "Ha! Tiger! what is't, Tiger?" cried Sandy, addressing the dog, and springing to his feet.

"Troopers! troopers, faither!" cried Archy, "an' they are comin' frae ilka side o' the forest."

"Get ready the dags," Archy," said the freebiter, "it's twa lang spears' length to the bottom o' Tarras moss, and they'll be lighter men and lighter horses that find na a grave in't—get ready the dags, and could lead shall welcome the first man that mentions King Jamie's name before the walls o' Cleughfoot."

The boy ran and brought his father's pistols—his mother accompanied him to the turret. She gazed earnestly on the threatening bands of horsemen as they approached, for a few seconds, then taking her husband's hand—"Sandy," said she, "I hae lang looked for this; but others that are wives the now shall gang widows to bed the night as well as Elspeth Armstrong!"

"Fear naething, Elspeth, my doo," replied the riever; "there wili be blood in the way if they attack the lion in his den. But there's a lang and tangled moss atween them an'