

axes. Livy was right, Pate, '*Nata in vanos tumultus gens.*' 'Twas ever so. I verily believe these moor cocks are born with dirks and claymores in their claws. When they cannot slash the common enemy they must needs slash each other. I would I were sure of the stuff whereof Alastair Macdonald's Irishry are made. I mind me they covered themselves but scantily with glory under my lord Antrim."

"The soldier's glory is as his leader makes it," responded Inchbrakie meaningly.

"Think you then 'twas but a rag of Cæsar's mantle that fell on the good Antrim's shoulders?" said Montrose. "Mayhap he crossed his Rubicon timidly. Do you make out the war tune of our Athole friends?"

"They call it their invitation to the eagles to come to the flesh-eating," replied Inchbrakie listening. "It ever portends slaughter."

"I should be sorry for Macdonald were the invitation to hold," said Montrose. "They have cruel sharp beaks, these Athole birds."

"They might find beaks as sharp and cruel as their own," returned Inchbrakie. "Macdonald looks no trifier. Saw you how he gathers his black brows?"

"Blacker than thine own, Pate," rejoined Montrose. "In truth, he smites with a terrible hand! It were dangerous to scratch him unwarily. But I trust he will make haste to withdraw from the Castle. To lie there were both provocation and challenge. Ah! look you here they come, here they come," he cried, as the advance-guard of the