

He put 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 rendering desolation visible, and giving 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 its very eyes. At the same moment his own pistol flashed, and the horse rearing 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 with me the mail,—lest a worse thing come upon thee.”

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

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Preparations were making for the execution 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 wept, and said :

“ It is good—the hand of heaven is in this !”

“ Said I not,” replied the maiden, and for the first time she wept aloud,—“ that my father shall not die.”

The fourteen days were not yet past, when the prison doors flew open, and the old Earl of Dundonald rushed to the arms of his son. His intercession with the confessor had been at length successful, and after twice signing the warrant for the execution