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The Hour of England's Darkness.

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"Better had he found his death," exclaimed Marmion fiercely, "than play the dastard thus. Give me arms and a horse, Mowbray, and let me back to the field, a God's name. You have no use for me here."

He would listen to no remonstrance; he could not rest within walls when his men were in distress. It was about three hours after noon when he set out with a few trusty spears, and rode at a gallop to Saint Ninian's. But the battle had roared and rolled away to the south. Dead and dying horses and men strewed all the ground; heaps of them lay in the brook, damming it into gory pools; crowds of men and women, aye, and children too, had gathered to the ghoulish work which follows the fray, stripping the dead, snarling and fighting over heaps of blood-soaked spoil. Sick in body and soul, Marmion made what speed he could over the cumbered sward, burning to strike yet one blow for his country, and to meet a soldier's death.

He thought of Challice as he rode, waiting his return to Kendal with that confidence which all men felt in the speedy success of the war. How sweet was the vision of that far-off, orderly home, with its tranquil monotony of peace and love; sweeter because of the misery and ruin around—the despair before him. It cost him an effort to persevere. He had done all that duty required; the king had fled, leaving his subjects to the fate his own folly had prepared for them. Why should one of his knights do more? *Sauve qui peut* was the word: why should he be the only one to be deaf to it? Such thoughts as these whirled through his brain, but they found no tarrying there. Marmion was not one to slip on the knightly profession like a holiday garment, to be cast aside as occasion suited. The image of his wife