

friended you. He is now dearer to me than life; and I marvel, while contemplating his excellence, how I ever could have preferred another.

"I raised my eyes to reply, but she had disappeared, and a servant entered to show me out. This was the last time I ever beheld that admirable woman. This affair made me very unhappy, and for many months after, suicide was always uppermost in my thoughts, but the dread of the vast unknown eternal, withheld my hand. Some months after this, poor Stavers was killed in an engagement we had with the Revenue Officers, off Kessingland, and I was voted unanimously to fill his place. For four years I have been your commander, and my adventures during that period are well known to you all. I am tired of this restless life, however; I long for peace. If this sweet girl Rosier, has courage to fulfil her promise, and become my wife, I shall leave for America, and my brave fellows will be free to choose another commander."

"There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked," said a clear manly voice, which made the smugglers both spring to their feet, and grasp their swords, as the tall figure of a man loomed from out the darkness, and Ebenezer Strong stood before them. "Put up your swords," he continued. "Those who take the sword, shall perish with the sword. Captain Tasker, resent yourself; I have a message for you."

"We are betrayed!" said the Captain; "Burwood, seize the villain! The sight of his carcass will frighten his companions."

"I am alone, Captain Tasker; I came here to do you good, not evil; see I am unarmed. Have confidence in one, who, murderer as you are, dares to have confidence in you."

"I will trust you," said the Captain, re-seating himself. "How came you here, and what do you want with me?"

"May I speak to you alone?" said the minister, glancing suspiciously at the sleepers. "I like not the countenances of these men; they may awake to mischief."

"Not unlikely. If they thought themselves discovered, I could not save you from their fears. Come this way," he continued, opening a low arched door; and the next moment they stood beneath the blue star gemmed arch of heaven, beside the massy wall of the grey priory. "We are safe from observation here; now speak out boldly; what is your message with me?"

"It is from God," replied the minister, solemnly, "and is simply this: Man of blood! renounce your evil course; repent and live!"

"And you ran the risk of your life to tell me this!"

"Captain Tasker, I feel an interest in your

welfare, for my young friend Mildred Rosier's sake. All I can gather from her about you convinces me that you have been an unfortunate man; and that it would be a good work to try and save you from destruction. The sad history which you just related to your comrade in guilt has not diminished the anxiety I feel on your account. Oh! take the advice of a real friend, and quit the accursed traffic in which you are engaged; seek in repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that peace and happiness which, through any other source, you vainly hope to attain."

"And turn preacher to obtain a comfortable living. Ah! priest, would not that make good the saying among you—'the greater the sinner the greater the saint?' Your pious labours are vainly bestowed upon me; I have seen too much of life to believe the diseases of the soul can be cured by the fables of religion. I thank you for your zeal. I even believe that your offers of service are sincere; but——"

"You prefer your own evil way, and rush upon certain destruction as a horse rusheth into the battle. But, Captain Tasker, if you have no compassion upon your own lost, miserable soul, will you not have pity upon a young and innocent girl? What has Mildred Rosier done, that you expect her to share your guilt?"

"My good man, trouble your head about your own affairs. What is that to you?"

"Much, much; I love the poor child—would save her. Aye! will save her, by the help of my God, from the impious clutches of a fiend-like you."

"Ebenezer Strong," said Tasker, flashing his sword before his eyes, "do you see that?"

"I do, and fear it as little as I fear you."

"If you dare to interfere between Mildred Rosier and me, your life is not worth a straw."

"It is not in your power to deprive me of it, without the especial permission of God. If he sees fit for me to die in the performance of my duty, I am ready for the sacrifice. But before that innocent girl shall become your victim, I would see you and your wicked crew upon the scaffold."

"I will prevent such a consummation of your pious wishes," said Tasker, his eyes flashing fire, and aiming a blow at his unarmed opponent, which, had it taken effect, would have silenced him forever. But the strong, powerful frame of the Yorkshireman, was not to be bent to the earth like a reed. Springing upon Tasker, and seizing him in his arms, with Herculean strength, he wrenched the sword from his grasp, and breaking it in two pieces, flung it over the wall. "Now murderer!" he cried, "do your worst. I feel jus-