

smack which lay on the south side of the harbour, by the lowest bridge. He hastened towards the vessel—but, before he approached it, and while the cry of the seamen yet continued, a party of soldiers and recruits issued from a tavern on the shore. They tossed their caps in the air, they huzzaed, and proceeded towards the smack. With a throbbing heart, James hurried forward, and in the midst of them, through the grey light, he beheld his son.

"O George!" cried the anxious parent, what a journey ye hae gien yer faither!"

George started at his father's voice, and for a moment he was silent and sullen, as though he had not yet forgiven him.

"Come, George," said the old man affectionately, "let us forget and forgie—come awa hame again, my man, an' I'll pay the smart money. Dinna persist in bringing yer mother to her grave—in breaking yer sister's heart, puir thing, and in making me miserable."

"O faither!" groaned George, grasping his father's hand, "its owre late—its owre late now! What's done canna be undone!"

"Why for no, bairn?" cried James; "an' how is it owre late? The ship's no sailed, and I've the smart-money in my pocket."

"But I've ta'en the bounty, faither—I'm sworn in!" replied the son.

"Sworn in!" exclaimed the unhappy father, "Oh mercy me! what's this o't! My happiness is destroyed for ever. O George George, man! what is this that ye've done? How shall I meet yer poor wretched mother without ye?"

George laid his head upon his father's shoulder and wrung his hand. He was beginning to experience what hours, what years of misery may proceed from the want of a minute's calm reflection. The thought of buying him off could not be entertained. The vessel was to sail within an hour—men were needed; but even had no other obstacles attended the taking of such a step, there was one that was insurmountable—James Nicholson had never in his life been possessed of half the sum necessary to accomplish it, nor could he have raised it by the sale of his entire goods and chattels; and his nature forbade him to solicit a loan from others, even to redeem a son.

They were beginning to haul off the vessel; and poor George, who now felt all the

bitterness of remorse, added to the anguish of parting from a parent, thrust his hand into his pocket, and, as he bade him farewell, attempted to put his bounty-money in his father's hand. The old man sprung back, as if a poisonous snake had touched him. The principles of the Leveller rose superior to the feelings of the father.

"George!" he cried, "George! can my ain son insult me, an' in a moment like this? Me tak yere blood-money!—me!—me! Ye dinna ken yer faither! Before I wad touch money gotten in such a cause, I wad starve by a dyke-side. Fling it into the sea, George!—fling it into the sea!—that's the only favour ye can confer upon yer faither." But, again, the parent gained the ascendancy in his heart, and he added—"But, poor chield, ye meant it kindly. Fareweel, then, my man!—Oh, fareweel, George! Heaven be wi' my misguided bairn! Oh! what shall I say to yer poor mother? Fareweel, lad!—fareweel!"

The vessel was pulled off—and thus parted the father and his son. I shall not describe the feelings of James on his solitary journey homewards, nor dwell upon the grief of his wife and daughter, when they beheld that he returned alone, and that George "was not."

It was about two years after his son had enlisted, that the news of the peace and the abdication of Napoleon arrived. James was not one of those who partook of the general joy; but while he mourned over the fall of the man whom he had all but worshipped, he denounced the conduct of the allied sovereigns in strong and bitter terms of indignation. The bellman went round the village, calling upon the inhabitants to demonstrate their rejoicing by an illumination. The Levellers consulted James upon the subject, and his advice was, that they ought not. Let the consequences be what they would, comply with the request or command of the authorities, and which had been proclaimed by the town-crier; on the contrary, he recommended, that at the hour when the illumination was to commence, every man of them should extinguish the fires in his house, and leave not a lamp or a rushlight burning. His advice was always akin to a command, and it was implicitly followed. The houses were lighted up—the illumination was general, save only the windows of the Levellers, which appeared as in mourning; and soon attracted the attention of the crowd, the most