

any address he could make, he naturally concluded that he had detected a thief plundering the altar of its rich ornaments of gold and silver; the water chalice being at hand, he threw it with such violence against the head of the supposed depredator, that it instantly fell motionless at the foot of the cross. Roland then rushed forward to secure him, and give the alarm to the brotherhood, but he found his victim lifeless; and when he recognized the features of his old opponent, Sir Swithin, he suddenly withdrew his hands from the corpse, and, as he stood in the utmost consternation, he thought he heard a voice distinctly say, "Whilst night is dark to cover thy flight, Roland of Gal-loway, mount thy steed, and flee to the hills of thy native land, otherwise, before the rising of the lark, the deed you have done will be discovered—the brethren will seek for the absentee, and when his death is ascertained, the fraternity being all aware of the rancorous dispute that has subsisted so long between you, every eye will turn towards you as being the murderer."

Such was the agitation of his troubled mind; but his ideal plan of escape was retarded by the security of the great gate, that was always barricaded at the close of day, till, wandering round the court-yard, he discovered, by the last gleam of the setting moon, the ladder standing upright against the wall, as unwittingly left there by the Norwegian in his flight from the convent.

Urgent necessity is well known sometimes to cause the adoption of sudden shifts. Roland, well knowing what was reported in the convent of Swithin's love for the lady patroness, instantly formed the resolution of carrying him over the wall, and placing him at the porch of the castle, hoping the suspicion of the murder might be thereby transferred from himself to some of the Baron's domestics, acting under authority to punish the imprudence of the deceased friar.

This undertaking was performed by Roland with much agility, and he returned into the convent without having been actually discovered by any person. But the vengeful spirit that gnaws the murderer's mind had troubled De Morvel so grievously that he could not rest, as, tumbling in bed, he heard distinctly the rustling of Roland laying down his burden in the porch; and, supposing it to be the monks of the monastery in search of the murderer, he roused Sygtryg from the truss where he lay sleeping soundly, and desired him to steal silently round all the buildings of the castle and the abbey, and to listen at each window, gate, and door, in order to ascertain if the officiating priest had yet been discovered lifeless at the horns of the altar.

The henchman went in great haste to obey undauntedly the command of his master, but soon returned, his countenance deadly pale, his hair bearing up his beaver, and his knees trembling, as he approached the Baron's chamber; and being for a time unable to articulate a single word, De Morvel supposed he had seen the monks running from every cell in the abbey to the altar, to erase, by virtue of bell, book, and candle, the person who had put an end to the existence of the brother Sir Swithin, when Sygtryg informed him that he had only seen an object, which he supposed to be his ghost, kneeling in the porch of the castle.

In that dark age, the immaterial inhabitants of the invisible world are said to have presented themselves, in a hostile manner, to earthly mortals, more frequently than in later times, and to have held over their minds a more terrific sway. Under the banner of his country, De Morvel, having been accustomed to combat more corporeal beings, fearlessly advanced to the porch, followed by his trembling henchman, whom, for his effeminacy, he chided as they passed through the long corridor on their way thither; but, when he plainly beheld the strangled priest, with his eyes staring and mouth distended, he stood aghast, seemingly ruminating upon the consequences of that person having been restored to life, and if so, by what means he had succeeded in scaling the convent wall, and what could possibly be his motive in returning to a place recently so fatal to him. But ultimately finding him cold and stiff, he thus addressed his confidential servant:—"By whatever power the remains of this unhappy man have been thrown back on our hands, he must be instantly removed. Percy's wild charger, which you know I took from him at the battle of the Standard, is standing idle in his stall—if the priest can be securely mounted on the back of this fiery animal, he will soon return back with him into Northumberland. Set him to the road and none dare stop him. Go, caparison this charger fully, and put the priest into complete panoply, that those who see him thus mounted may think he is a valiant knight, proceeding in great haste to the tournament that is to take place at the castle of Turnberry to-day."

The horse was soon caparisoned, and the friar, dressed in a coat of mail, mounted with a lance in his hand, firmly bound to the stirrups and to his wrist, as he was to the saddle—then up went the portcullis, and away went the charger, outstripping the wind!

While the knight and his man were thus employed in fitting out Sir Swithin for his journey,