

A second tear rose to the knight's eye, which he wiped on the bird's wing.

Wonder seized on all, and some cried—"Surely this must be Sire Bos de Bénac"; but others said—"It is a robber, a saracen, a sorcerer."

The friends and retainers of the Baron, bethinking themselves at last of defending him, now rushed, all armed, upon the knight; but, raising the Baron, and holding him as a shield before his head and breast, he snatched the shaft of a lance which was lying on the tomb of one of his ancestors, and made such good use of it in overthrowing and breaking the backs of his nearest opponents, that he was well able to defend himself until his vassals in the chapel, and those who had obeyed the infernal summons from the belfry, came to his aid. The enraged aspect of Sire Bos—the strength of his blows—that formidable and unequalled voice—proved to all that it was indeed the *preux* and mighty knight of the mountains, who had strangled a bear in combat, who would carry a cask like a goblet in his arms, and who, adroit as powerful, always unhorsed in the tourney whoever could be induced to risk his fame against him. When the chapel had been cleared of the enemies, and the Baron des Angles alone remained, bruised and vanquished, Sire Bos approached Mathe, who, after fainting, had recovered her consciousness in the midst of the tumult. Bending towards her, he said softly:

"My wife, my beloved, do you know me?"

Now it was that the brave Knight trembled.

"I know you not," cried the Châtelaine, confused, frightened, and turning her head away. "Have mercy on me, I know you not."

Sire Bos drew from his bosom the half of a ring.

"I left you," said he, "the other half. Are ring and memory both lost?"

Mathe looked wildly on the ring.

"It is," said she, "the ring of my lord and dearly beloved Bos. Are you Bos?"

"To supper," cried the demon, anxious to change the theme; "to supper—I am wanted elsewhere."

"So be it, that we may make an end of this," said the discouraged knight; and he whispered a few words in the ear of the amazed Ghiberta.

They passed to the banqueting-hall. Upon the upper table-covering of lace, in the midst of silver dishes, drinking-cups, inlaid with gold, and chased candelabras, in which now burnt brightly the yellow wax of Bénac, Nurse Ghiberta, with shame and vexation on her brow, placed one small, wretched dish of walnuts.

"It is a row," said Sire Bos; "we shall not want a *chef-de-cuisine* to-night."

Seated between the Dame Iolande and the Lady of Bénac, whose eyes rested constantly on him with more of doubt and uncertainty than of happiness, the knight mournfully picked his walnuts. The guests looked on in astonishment. The demon, seated at a corner of the table, opened his flaming eyes, gloating over the knight, as the gamester covets and watches the piece of gold for which he plays. When the crusader had picked and repicked his nuts, until not a bit remained, he threw the empty shells on the table—

"Try," cried he to the demon, "to sup after me; and if you cannot, begone in God's name!"

Heaven would not permit a knight so full of faith to become a prey to the Evil One, who, with a fiendish yell, sprang at the wall, through which he vanished, leaving an opening which no human workman has ever been able to close, and through which the pure azure of the sky can still be seen across the ruined tower of the once magnificent Castle of Bénac. Hence arose the proverb—"A Bigorraise will cheat the Devil."

Sire Bos left the table, passed the gates of the castle, and took the road to the Valley of Lourdes. Two things weighed heavily on the heart of the good knight—the forgetfulness and coldness of his lady, and the services and companionship of the devil, although he had come off victorious. Distrusting all earthly happiness, he desired only to obtain his portion in Paradise, and sought, a hermitage, where he could pass his life in prayer, and obtain peace and resignation. Nevertheless, clinging still to a wish to be beloved, he took with him his greyhound and his falcon. His end was unknown. His possessions passed to Loïse (or Louise) de Bénac, who brought them to the family of Montault; and, in order to preserve the remembrance of this singular and veracious history, his boots and spurs were preserved in the Church of the Cordeliers at Tarbes, until 1793, when the torrent of the Revolution swept away boots, spurs, and treasures; and the church itself is now fast disappearing, having been long disused.—*Dublin University Magazine*.

THE VENDETTA.

ONE morning we were off the coast of Sardinia, steaming rapidly along for the Straights of Bonifacio. The night had been tranquil, and the morning was more tranquil still: but no one who knew the capricious Mediterranean felt confident of continued fair weather. However, at sea the mind takes little thought for the morrow, or even for the afternoon; and as we sat in the warm shade of the awning, looking out on the purple horizon in the east, or on the rocky and varied coast to the west, I felt, and if the countenance be not treacherous, all felt that it was good, even for landsmen, to be moving over waters unrisped except by the active paddles, beneath a sky all radiant with light. My companions were chiefly Levant merchants, or sallow East Indians; for I was on board the French packet *Le Caire*, on its way from Alexandria, of Egypt, to Marseilles.

I had several times passed the Straits, each time with renewed pleasure and admiration. It would be difficult to imagine a scene more wild and peculiar. After rounding the huge rock of Taolara—apparently a promontory running boldly out into the sea, but in reality an island, we are at once at the mouth of the Straits. The mountains of Corsica, generally enveloped in clouds, rise above the horizon ahead, and near at hand a thousand rocks and islands of various dimensions appear to choke up the passage. The narrow southern channel, always selected by day, is intricate, and would be dangerous to strangers; and indeed the whole of the Straits are considered so difficult, that the fact of Nelson, without previous experience, having taken his fleet through, is cited even by French sailors as a prodigy.