

The marriage-party were returning by a foot-path from the church, the sorrowful bride resting on the arm of her bridegroom. A stranger met them—he turned aside, that they might pass. His eyes fell upon the countenance of the bride.

"O Heavens! my Agnes!" cried the stranger, in a voice of agony.

"Henry! my Henry!" screamed the wretched bride, and starting from the side of the bridegroom, she sank on the breast of the stranger.

That stranger was indeed Henry Cranstoun. A severe illness had brought him to the verge of death, and with his restoration to health reason was restored also. He had come to take his bride to his bosom—he met her the bride of another. It was a scene of misery.

"O Agnes! Agnes!" groaned Henry, "would to Heaven I had died! You are another's, though your heart is mine! Fare well! farewell!—we must meet no more! I have endured much, but never misery like this!"

She could only exclaim—"Henry!" and speech failed her—recollection fled. Henry Cranstoun struck his hand upon his brow, and rushed wildly away. Agnes was conveyed to her father's house, as being nearer than that of her bridegroom's. She was laid upon her bed, she seemed unconscious of all around, and her tongue only uttered the word "Henry." She rose not again from the bed on which she was laid, and, within a week, her gentle spirit fled. The shock which Henry had met with, occasioned a lapse of the fever from which he had but recently recovered. He was taken to the village inn. He felt that death was about terminate his sufferings, and when he heard of the death of his Agnes, he requested to be buried by her side. Within three weeks he died, and his latest wish was fulfilled—he was laid by the side of Agnes, and a rose tree was planted over their grave.

THE HEN-PECKED MAN.

Every one has heard the phrase, "*Go to Birgham!*" which signifies much the same bidding you go to a worse place. The phrase is familiar not only on the Borders, but throughout all Scotland, and has been in use for more than five hundred years, having

taken its rise from Birgham being the place where the Scottish nobility were, when they dastardly betrayed their country in the hands of the first Edward: and the people, disprizing the conduct and the cowardice of the nobles, have rendered the saying—"Go to Birgham!" an expression of contempt until this day. Many, however, may have heard the saying, and even used it, who know not that Birgham is a small village, beautifully situated on the north side of the Tweed about midway between Coldstream and Kelso; though, if I should say that the village itself is beautiful, I should be speaking on the wrong side of the truth. Yet there may be many who have both heard the saying, and seen the village, who never heard of little Patie Crichton, the bicker-maker. Patie was of diminutive stature, and he followed the profession (if the members of the *learned professions* be not offended at my using the term) of a cooper or bicker-maker in Birgham, for many years. His neighbours used to say of him—"The puir body's hen-pecked."

Patie was in the habit of attending the neighbouring fairs with the water-cogs, cream-bowies, bickers, piggins and other articles of his manufacture. It was Dunse fair, and Patie said, he "had dune extraordinary weel—the sale had been far beyond what he expectit." His success might be attributed to the circumstance that, when out of the sight and hearing of his better half, for every bicker he sold, he gave his customers half-a-dozen jokes into the bargain. Every one, therefore, liked to deal with little Patie.—The fair being over, he retired with a crony to a public house in the Castle Wynd, to crack of old stories over a glass, and inquire into each other's welfare. It was seldom they met, and it was as seldom that Patie dared to indulge in a single glass; but, on the day in question, he thought they could manage another gill, and another was brought. Whether the sight of it reminded him of his domestic miseries, and of what awaited him at home, I cannot tell; but after drinking another glass, and pronouncing the spirits excellent, he thus addressed his friend:—

"Ay, Robin, (his friend's name was Robin Roughead,) ye're a happy man—ye're mairster in your ain house, and ye've a wife that adores and obeys ye; but I'm nae better than naeboddy at my ain fireside. I'll declare I'm waur: wife an' bairns laugh at me—