

he passed through the Scottish lines in safety; and, proceeding by way of Morpeth and Newcastle, on the third day he reached the camp of King Edward, near Knaresborough. The gay and chivalrous monarch, at the head of a portion of his army, like a knight, hastened to the relief of his distressed cousin.

David, however, having heard of the approach of Edward at the head of an army more numerous than his own, and his nobles representing to him that the rich and weighty booty which they had taken in their inroad on England, together with the oxen and the horses, would be awkward incumbrances in battle, he reluctantly abandoned the siege of the castle, and commenced his march towards Jed Forrest, about six hours before the arrival of Edward and William Montague. Madeline took the hand of her lover as he rode, and tears of silent joy fell down her cheeks, but the Countess forgot to thank him, in her eagerness to display her beauty and her gratitude in the eyes of her sovereign and kinsman. The young monarch, enraptured, on the fair face of his lovely cousin; and it was evident while he looked in her eyes, he thought not of gentle Philippe, the wife of his boyhood; nor was it evident that she, flattered by the gallantry of her princely relative, forgot her absent husband, though in the presence of his brother. Edward, finding that it would be imprudent to follow the Scottish army into the forest, addressing the Countess, said—"Our knights expected, fair coz, to have tried the temper of their lances on the Scottish shields, but as it may not be, in honour of your deliverance, to-morrow we proclaim a tournament to be held in the castle-yard, when a true knight shall prove, on the morion his antagonist, whose ladye-love is the best."

The eyes of the Countess flashed joy; and she smiled, well pleased at the proposal of her sovereign; but Madeline trembled as she heard it.

Early on the following morning, the castle-yard was fitted up for the tournament.—The monarch and the Countess were seated on dais covered with a purple canopy, and the latter held in her hand a ring which shined as a morning star, and which the monarch had taken from his finger, that she might bestow it upon the victor. Near them sat Madeline, an unwilling spectator of the conflict. The names of the combatants were known to the pursuivants only, and

each entered the lists armed with lance and spear, with their visors down, and having, for defence, a shield, a sort of cuirass, the helmet, gauntlet, and gorget. Several knights had been wounded, and many dismounted; but the interest of the day turned upon the combat of two who already had each discomfited three. They contended long and keenly; their strength, their skill, their activity seemed equal. Victory hung suspended between them.

"Our ladye!" exclaimed the monarch, rising with delight; "but they fight bravely! Who may they be? Were it not that he cannot yet be in England, I should say the knight in dark armour is Sir John Aubrey."

Madeline uttered a suppressed scream, and cast round a look of mingled agony and surprise at the monarch; but the half stifled cry was drowned by the spectators, who, at that moment burst into a shout; the knight in dark armour was unhorsed—his conqueror suddenly placed his lance to his breast, but as suddenly withdrew it; and, stretching out his mailed hand to the other, said—"Rise mine equal! 'twas thy horse's fault, and none of thine, that chance gave me the victory, though I wished it much." The conqueror of the day approached the canopy beneath which the monarch and the Countess sat, and, kneeling before the dais, received the ring from her hands. While she had held the splendid bauble in her hands during the contest, conscious of her own beauty, of which Border minstrel and foreign troubadour had sung, she expected, on placing it in the hands of the victor, to behold in a homage laid again at her feet. But it was not so. The knight, on receiving it, bowed his head, and, stepping back again, knelt before the more lowly seat of Madeline.

"Accept this, dear Madeline," whispered he; and she blushed and startled at the voice which she knew and loved. The Countess cast a glance of envy on her companion as she beheld the victor at her feet; yet it was but one, which passed away as the young monarch poured his practised flatteries in her ear.

The King commanded that the two last combatants should raise their visors. The victor, still standing by the side of Madeline, obeyed. It was Sir William Montague.

"Ha! Montague!" said the monarch, "it is you, Well, for your gallant bearing to-day, you shall accompany us to France—we shall need such hands as thine to secure the scop-