

pity, murmurs of sympathy rose as he passed. In all the dense ranks there was no face of any friend he knew ; but there were wet faces, adoring faces, ay, and angry faces, and behind these, arms itching to strike for him through the double row of halberdiers. For the hero in his hour of ordeal and doom was not unworthy of his fame. Those who looked on him understood the marvellous tales of his deeds and his bearing, tales that had seemed fabulous enough to be the invention of some wild Oriental imagination. There was nothing fabulous in them now.

At the Mercat Cross, when the book of his deeds written by Mr. George Wishart, his friend and chaplain, was brought as an abominable, polluted, and accursed thing to be bound about his neck, he smiled as in joy.

"Suffer me, my good fellow," he said to the hangman politely, and tied the cord himself. "I am much beholden to you all for this," he added, looking round the ministers and magistrates. "Never was a greater honour conferred upon me."

The rich scarlet cloak was torn from his back ; the silver-laced beaver from his head. He would fain have kept his hat on for the final act ; but submitted quietly.

"Proceed, I pray," he said. "Bate not a jot of the shame you would inflict upon me." Then turning to him who was to do the last office, he added quite cheerfully, "Come, I am ready."