

during her illness, her poor boy never left her bedside. There he remained night and day, endeavoring to cheer the spirits of his poor parent, and to make her look lightly on her misfortunes that had befallen them.

"Dinna, mother—dinna tak it so much at heart. Never mind it, mother he would say; I'm strong and able to work for you, and I shall never want so long as I can earn my money; and I'll put the garden into as good a way as ever it was. It's no near sae much as ye think, mother; and what's to be done for me to buy you a cow by and by, as my father did. I'll sune hae as much as he had, and I'm sure I'll guide it well, for your sake." And, on one occasion the poor boy thinking to increase the value of the consolation he was administered—added—"And wha kens, mother, but I may yet meet the villain somewhere, and be revenged o' him for what he has done to us!" "My son, speak not of revenge!" said the widow. "It is unbecoming a Christian to leave vengeance in the hands of God, my son."

The boy was silenced by this reproof, but he can hardly say cleansed of the spirit of revenge which had been kindled in his youthfulness against the author of their ruin.

The following day, the widow expired; and on the fourth thereafter, her son buried her remains to the grave. He returned not again. At the conclusion of the ceremony he suddenly disappeared, and no one knew whither he had gone. In weeks, months, and years passed away, but no intelligence ever reached the neighborhood of what destiny had befallen the orphan boy.

Sixteen years after this, the famous battle of Minden was fought by Prince Ferdinand against the French. True, but what has to do with the story of the widow and her son? Attention, good reader, and you shall hear. Related with the army of Prince Ferdi-

nand, there was a large body of British horse under Lord George Sackville; and these shared in the dangers and glory of the victory. On the evening of the day on which the battle was fought, a party of these dragoons were assembled in a tavern, where they were boasting loudly, in their cups, of the feats they had performed, when one of them, striking the table fiercely with his clenched fist, swore that when he was in Scotland, he had done a more meritorious thing than any of them.

"What was that, Tom—what was that?" shouted out his companions at once.

"Why starving an old witch in Nithsdale, to be sure," replied the fellow. "We first, you see—for there was a party of us—ate up all she had, and then I paid the reckoning by shooting her cow, and riding down her greens."

"And don't you repent it?" exclaimed a young soldier, suddenly rising from his seat at the upper end of the apartment, and approaching the speaker, as he put the question "Don't you repent it?"

"Repent what?" said the ruffian, fiercely. "Repent such a matter as that! No, I glory in it."

"Then, villain!" said the youth, unsheathing his sword—"know that that woman was my mother; and since you do not repent the deed, you shall die for it. Draw and defend yourself."

The dragoon sprang to his feet—a combat ensued; and, after two or three passes, the latter was stretched lifeless on the floor.

"Had you repented," said the youth, looking towards the corpse as he sheathed his sword, "I would have left you in the hands of your God; but since you did not, I have made myself the instrument of his vengeance."

Young Riddel afterwards rose to the rank of Captain in the British service, and greatly distinguished himself in the German wars.