

ed after him : he stopped, and with a quick step he saw him returning. She still stood in the same spot, her eyes following his every motion. Again he approached, and leaning upon the gate where she still stood, said in a voice almost choked—

"Helen, do you love that person?"

"As a brother I love him, and cherish his memory," the agitated girl replied.

A groan burst from the minister as he ran from the house. She entered the house, for the first time in her life, a prey to anguish—what could be the cause of the sudden change in the manners of the minister, she was at a loss to conceive. She retired to bed, but not to rest.

For several days she saw nothing of her lover : he had never left the manse. On the sabbath following, Helen and her parents were in their usual place in the church—but she had a shade of care upon her lovely countenance, which no one had ever seen there before. Contrary to her wont, her eyes were never once directed to the pulpit, while the preacher sought her face with more than usual anxiety. Although there was a tremulousness in his voice at the commencement of the service, he preached with more than his usual eloquence and fervour.

At the conclusion of the service, the pious hearers crowded round their pastor—but it was remarked that although William Kerr and his wife shook hands with him, Helen passed on out of the churchyard unaccompanied by him, and without being recognised. The worthy pair were not less astonished than the rest of the spectators, and wondered much what could have caused the change: on their way home they inquired at Helen, who without reserve gave them an account of all that had occurred at their last interview. The good dame smiled.

"Oh, he will soon come back," said she; "it's a good sign—only a little jealousy of Willie."

"I am sure," she replied, "he need not be jealous of my loving my brother—for I shall always love him as such."

Grizzel was right : in the course of the following week, the minister was as much abroad as ever, and spent more than his usual time with the Kerrs. All was explained to the satisfaction of both parties, and a mutual declaration of love followed. Helen

Kerr was soon after led a bride to the manse and became its ornament and boast. With the plénishing of the bride, the old carved oak chest of Elizabeth was also taken, the ebony box was opened, and for the first time her husband knew of the treasure possessed by his wife. With a playful violence he pushed it from him, and clasped her in his arms.

"Helen," said he, "you are the jewel prize; put away from my sight these baubles—but what papers are these?"

"I am afraid to let you look upon them," said she—"for they are Willie's—and it is dangerous for me, you know, to speak of him."

She undid the ribbon and handed them to him : he read them over with care, together with the slip of paper written in French, and compared the hand in which it was written with the two letters. Resting his head upon his hand, he mused for some time, then again compared them, and seemed lost in thought.

"Helen," said he at length, "a strange fancy has taken possession of me—that you are in some way or other connected with the papers. It is so improbable that I am greatly at a loss to conceive how it can be—yet the conviction is not the less strong upon my mind. There is a similarity in the handwriting of the letters that struck me at once. Their date, and the date of my predecessor's certificate, are very near each other—the interval is not a month between the first letter and the certificate, and the second letter is a short time after the date of that document. It is very strange; and God, in his good time, agreeable to his will, may bring all to light."

About eighteen months after this conversation, Helen, one day, as was her wont, had walked over to William Kerr's, with her young son in her arms, to spend an hour with them, and wait until her husband called, on his return to the manse, from his visits. William had the babe on his knee and was talking to it, with all the fondness of age, about its mother, when he first beheld her on his knees in the same chair and at the same hearth. Their attention was excited by the tramp of horses' feet approaching the house. Helen started up and ran to the window to see who it might be. She could not recognise them : it was a gentleman in military undress, attended by a servant—