

and light, like a glow-worm in a sepulchre ; and, as he went, he locked the doors behind him. He carried a cat in his arms. Behind him, a dog followed timidly, and before him into the dungeon he drove a young bull that had 'never nipped the grass.' He entered the deep and the gloomy vault, and, with a loud voice, he exclaimed—

'Spirit of darkness!—I come!'

He placed the feeble lamp upon the ground in the middle of the vault ; and, with a pickaxe, which he had previously prepared, he dug a pit and buried the cat alive ; and, as the poor, suffocating creature mewed, he exclaimed the louder—

'Spirit of darkness, come!'

He then leaped upon the grave of the living animal, and, seizing the dog by the neck, dashed it violently against the wall, towards the left corner where he stood, and, unable to rise, it lay howling long and piteously on the floor. Then did he plunge his life into the throat of the young bull, and while its bleatings mingled with the howling of the dying dog, amidst what might be called the blue darkness of the vault, he received the blood in the palms of his hands, and stalked around the dungeon, sprinkling its circles, and crying with a loud voice—

'Spirit of darkness, hear me!'

Again he dug a pit, and, seizing the living animal, he hurled it into the grave feet forwards : and again he groaned, while the cat stood on his brow—'Come, spirit! come!'

He took a horse-shoe, which had lain in the vault for years, and which was called in the family the *spirit's shoe*, and he nailed it just the door so that it hung obliquely ;—as he gave the last blow to the nail, he said—

'Spirit, I obey thee!—come!'

Afterwards he took his place in the middle of the floor, and nine times he scattered around him a handful of salt, at each time saying—

'Spirit, arise!'

And did he strike thrice nine times with his foot upon a chest which stood in the middle of the floor, and by its foot was the pale light, and at each blow he cried—

'Arise, spirit! arise!'

Therefore when he had done these things, and cried seven and twenty times, the lid of the chest began to move, and a fearful figure with a red cap upon its head, and which resembled nothing in heaven above or on earth below, rose, and with a hollow voice inquired—

'What want ye, Soulis?'

'Power, spirit! power!' he cried. 'that mine eyes may have their desire, and that every weapon formed by man may fall scathless on my body, as the spent light of a waning moon!'

'Thy wish is granted, mortal!' groaned the fiend. 'To-morrow eve, young Branxholm's bride shall sit within thy bower, and his sword return bent from thy bosom, as though he had dashed it against a rock.—Farewell! invoke me not again for seven years, nor open the door of the vault, but then knock thrice upon the chest and I will answer thee. Away! follow thy course of sin and prosper—but beware of a coming wood.'

With a loud and sudden noise, the lid of the massy chest fell, and the spirit disappeared, and from the floor of the vault issued a deep sound, like the reverbing of thunder.—Soulis took up the flickering lamp, and leaving the dying dog still howling in the corner whence he had driven it, he locked the iron door, and placed the huge key in his bosom.

In the morning his vassals came to him, and they prayed him on their bended knees, that he would lessen the weight of their hard bondage ; but he laughed at their prayers, and answered them with stripes. He oppressed the widow, and persecuted the fatherless ; he defied the powerful, and trampled on the weak. His name spread terror where soever it was breathed, and there was not in all Scotland a man more feared than the wizard Soulis, the Lord of Hermitage.

He rode forth in the morning with twenty of his followers, and wherever his right was denied to the crown, they fired the castle and destroyed the cattle of the farmer.

But as they rode by the side of the Teviot, he beheld fair Marion, the betrothed of the heir of Branxholm, riding forth, pursuing the red deer. 'By this token, spirit,' muttered Soulis joyously, 'thou hast not lied—to-night young Branxholm's bride shall sit in my bower.'

He dashed forward, and although Mar-