

CHAPTER III.

BARON OF DOOM.

DEEP in some echoing corridor of the stronghold a man's voice rose in the Gaelic language, ringing in a cry for service, but no one came.

Count Victor stepped back and looked again upon the storm-battered front, the neglected garden, the pathetic bower. He saw smoke but at a single chimney, and broken glass in the little windows, and other evidences that suggested meagre soup as common fare in Doom.

"M. Bethune's bowl," he said to himself, "is not likely to be brimming over if he is to drink it here. M. le Baron sbouting there is too much of the gentleman to know the way to the back of his own door; Glengarry again for a louis!—Glengarry *sans feu ni lieu*, but always the most punctilious when most nearly penniless."

Impatiently he switched with the sword at the weeds about his feet; then reddened at the apprehension that had made him all unconsciously bare the weapon at a door whose hospitality he was seeking, rapped again, and sheathed the steel.

A shuffling step sounded on the stones within, stopped apparently just inside the door, and there fell silence. No bolt moved, no chain clanked. But something informed the Count Victor that he was being observed, and he looked all over the door till he saw that one bolt-boss was missing about the height of