

er was Thomas Hardie, and the youth none other than his Midside Maggy.

I will not follow them through the stages of their long and weary journey, nor dwell upon the perils and adventures they encountered by the way. But, on the third week after they had left Tollishill, and when they were beyond the town called Stevenage, and almost within sight of the metropolis, they were met by an elderly military-looking man who struck with the lovely countenance of the seeming youth, their dress, and wayworn appearance, accosted them saying—

“Good morrow, strangers; ye seem to have travelled far. Is this fair youth your son, old man?”

“He is a gay sib friend,” answered Thomas.

“And whence come ye?” continued the stranger.

“Frae Leader Haughs, on the bonny borders o’ the north countrie,” replied Margaret.

“And whence go ye?” resumed the other.

“First tell me wha ye may be that are sae quisitive,” interrupted Thomas, in a tone which betrayed something like impatience.

“Some call me George Monk,” replied the stranger mildly, “others Honest George. I am a general in the Parliamentary army.”—Thomas reverentially raised his hand to his forehead and bowed his head.

“Then pardon me, sir,” added Margaret, “and if ye indeed be the good and gallant general, small offence will ye take at our saying that may be said amiss by a country lad. We are tenants o’ the Lord o’ Lauderdale, whom ye now keep in captivity;—and though we mayna think as he thinks, yet we never found him but a good landlord, and a little good, in my opinion, it can do to anybody to keep him, as he has been now nine years, caged up like a bird. Therefore, though our ain business that has bro’t us up to London should fail, I winna regret the journey, since it has afforded me an opportunity of seeing your Excellency, and soliciting your interest, which must be powerful in behalf o’ our laird, and that ye would release him from his prison, and, if he mightna remain in this country, obtain permission for him to gang abroad.”

“Ye plead fairly and honestly for your

laird, fair youth,” returned the general;—“yet though he is no man to be trusted, I needs say he hath had his portion of captivity measured out abundantly; and since ye have minded me of him, ere a week go round I will think of what may be done for Lauderdale.” Other questions were asked and answered—some truly, and some evasively;—and Thomas and Margaret, blessing Honest George in their hearts, went on their way rejoicing at having met him.

On arriving in London, she laid aside the shepherd’s garb in which she had journeyed, and resumed her wonted apparel. On the second day after their arrival, she went out upon Tower-hill, dressed as a Scottish peasant girl, with a basket on her arm, and in the basket were a few ballads, and the bannock of Tollishill. She affected silliness, and, acting the part of a wandering minstrel, went singing her ballads towards the gate of the Tower. Thomas followed her at a distance. Her appearance interested the guard, and as she stood singing before the gate—“What want ye, pretty face?” inquired the officer of the guard. “Your alms, if ye please,” said she, smiling innocently, “and to sing a bonny Scotch sang to the laird o’ Lauderdale.”

The officer and the sentinels laughed—and after she had sung them another song or two she was permitted to enter the gate, and a soldier pointed out to her the room in which Lauderdale was confined. On arriving before the grated windows of his prison, she raised her eyes towards them, and began to sing “*Leader Haughs*.” The wild, sweet melody of his native land drew Lauderdale to the windows of his prison-house, and in the countenance of the minstrel he remembered the lovely features of Midside Maggy. He requested permission of the keeper that she should be admitted to his presence, and his request was complied with.

“Bless thee, sweet face,” said the Earl, as she was admitted into his prison; “and you have not forgotten the snow-ball in June?” and he took her hand to raise it to his lips.

“Hooly, hooly, my good lord,” said she, withdrawing her hand: “my fingers were made for nae such purpose—Thomas Hardie is here”—and she laid her hand upon her fair bosom—“though now standing without the yett of the Tower.” Lauderdale again wondered, and, with a look of mingled curiosity