

him. The behaviour of Elizabeth in the presence of Ramorgny, had filled March with solicitude as to the issue of the projected match; and he wished to counteract, as far as possible, the accounts which the favourite would, in all likelihood, give of his self-willed daughter. On seeing the Prince, he began to entertain hopes that Ramorgny's account was not so unfavourable as he suspected;—but his surprise may be imagined, when in a short conversation he had with the Prince previous to his introduction to the ladies, he ascertained that Ramorgny's eulogistic description of Elizabeth had filled him with an irresistible desire to see so beautiful and gentle a creature. March looked askance at the Prince, conceiving that he was making him and his family the subject of an ill-timed frolic—but he saw nothing in the face of the Prince but the gravest sincerity that his versatile temperament could exhibit. It is not difficult to make doubtful facts square with wishes—and March soon became satisfied that the Prince had received a favorable account, and was deeply impressed with a sense of the beauty and merits of his daughter: he immediately introduced him to Elizabeth, according to the request of the Prince; but it was not until he had got a gentle hint, that he shewed any inclination to leave them together—a piece of etiquette reckoned due to a lover who had been proposed as the husband of his daughter.

Pleased with the dark beauty, though unable to observe in her eye the Cynthian beam so elaborately described by Ramorgny, the Prince approached the damsel, and with that air of gallantry for which he was so remarkable, fell at her feet, and seizing her hand, said, in one of his sweetest accents—

"I know not, gentle damsel, whether I have any authority thus to sue for a slight indication of thy favour; but what may be refused by thy goodness to a lover not yet permitted to approach thee with confidence, may perhaps be granted to the Lieutenant of the King? The triumphs of beauty are best celebrated by favour—and condescension, which is the prettiest foil of excellence, is exhibited to the kneeling knight, by extending a hand to grace the act of his rising to receive it."

"Thou may'st e'en rise how and when thou wilt," replied Elizabeth, snatching from him her hand—"or thou may'st kneel there

till brown Marion of Leghorn or Jean Lindsay of Rossie comes to help thee up. I care no more for a general lover than I do for a general lieutenant. The only difference I see between them is, that the one hath many female slaves and the other many male ones. By the soul of Black Agnes, I shall love no man who loveth more than one woman!"

This speech soon raised the Prince to his feet. He stared at the damsel, doubting doubtful if she were serious, or if he had lost his senses. Her seriousness was clear enough; for she had finished her speech by a stamp of the foot, and a clenching of the hand, ut-able accompaniments of a female's oath.

"Art thou Elizabeth of Dunbar, the gentle daughter of the Earl of March?" said the Prince, hesitatingly.

"They say so," replied Elizabeth, "and it is to that reputation I owe a Prince's visit. I was born shortly after the sacking of Roxburgh by my father; and, if I have any reputation for being gentle, as thou termest me it may be owing to my birth following so close upon that famous occasion, on which mothers mourned the murder of their children, and children hung at the breasts of their dying or dead mothers. There is none of these things in our days: the world gets effeminate; and in place of women defending castles, and wiping the dust from their battlements with their white handkerchiefs as my ancestor did at Dunbar, they teach the arts of spinning and knitting to the men, who with the Prince of Scotland at their head, vie with each other in the smoothness of their skin and the smoothness of their speeches. How would Black Agnes have answered to the speech thou didst now address to her descendant, thinkest thou?"

"Very likely," replied the Prince, "in the way in which she answered the English who attacked her castle, or, perhaps, in the gentle way in which thou hast done."

"Would that all men spinsters were answered in the same way!" But I would make a distinction. The men who have the boldness to court women as they would attack a castle, I would speak softly; but the white-lipped simperers of smooth saying, who attack the heart with a tempest of sigh and sap its foundations with floods of tears, would open the sally port of my indignation and kill them with a look."