

recognised him, and, giving a sudden jerk to the chain by which he was held, had succeeded in freeing himself, and bounding towards the intruder, although he had returned to them upon hearing her voice. Under these circumstances, the active waiting-maid had, with great presence of mind, availed herself of a stunted pollard oak which concealed and facilitated the passage over the wall to the garden, and (first dashing away the tell-tale light) had literally hauled up, after her, both her companions, each of whom had, for a wonder, as she observed, been gifted with sufficient sense to submit to her guidance.

"'Ill befa' that weary lanthorn!' quoth Janet, 'I tell't the gentleman, gin he wad stay quiet i' the cave, I'd nae fear o' getting safe to the foot o' the rock. Wi' my plaidie rowed round me, and nane to look on, I should hae slid down the path, ye ken, like a snaw wreath at Yule. But he wadna be guidit. I'm minded that he's ane that has ta'en his ain gate owre lang-Weel, but ye maun hae a licht!' And off she ran, finding her way through the darkness with the security and ease which seems one of the many privileges of the light-hearted and the fearless.

During her absence, a fresh perplexity occurred to her mistress. Horses were heard galloping into the court, and a violent knocking at the gate was succeeded by a parley between Captain Archibald and the visitors. The voice of one of them was, she thought, familiar to her; and, to her unspeakable consternation, she found that he was advancing with Janet towards the apartment; Janet talking at the top of her voice, to give notice of his approach to her lady.

"Oot the nicht, General! Na, indeed, hae we not, except indeed to ca' Luath, poor hound, who's aye ganging forth in the rain. Sae my leddy and I we got a wee wet, and the wind put out the taper, and sae'—"

Whilst Janet thus "followed her instinct as a lady's maid, and lied," her companion, General Campbell, closely followed by Archibald, stepped forward into the room, where Marion sat trembling with anxiety and apprehension.

"I intrude upon you only for an instant, my fair cousin, late as is the hour and indisposed as I regret to see you are, merely to announce to you that I shall to-morrow, early, be obliged to steal away your visiter, whose presence is required in Edinburgh, to meet his brother, and Lord and Lady Bellasis, and their pretty daughter Lady Betty. Give my compliments to Locheden, and tell him that we have accounts of one of the rebel chiefs, Dunggallan, one of the ringleaders, having ventured into Argyle's country. Tell him that we have taken care of the land-passes, and that we shall borrow the castle boat in the morning, to dispatch a messenger across the loch. And now, good night. Go to bed, my dear, and refresh your roses. I don't like those pale cheeks." And, with a kind pressure of the hand, the good General quitted the apartment, Archibald lingered behind.

"You hear that Dunggallan, that this favoured friend, I presume you call him, has been traced into this neighbourhood, that he is even supposed to be upon this estate. Why do I speak of reports and suppositions when I know that he is here?" added Captain Campbell, impressively.

"You are mistaken! Indeed you are mistaken!" rejoined his cousin.

"Mistaken!—when I saw him enter the garden this very night!—when I can track his footsteps across this room!—when here is his glove dropped upon the floor! dropped at the very door which leads to your bedchamber, and to your bedchamber only!" cried he bitterly, flinging from him with violence the glove which he had picked up. "The rebel is here, and I know not what weakness hinders me from doing my duty as an officer in the King's service, and delivering him up at once to the General."

"Do as seems best to you Captain Campbell," said Marion, faintly. "My life, and far more than my life, my reputation, are in your power. Deal with me as you will."

"Nay, madam, your safety, and the honour of my kinsman's house, must ever be sacred in my eyes. Unkindly, cruelly as you have treated me, I cannot forget what we once were to each other. I warn you, however, that escape is impossible. You will live to repent this night's work. Farewell for ever!" And, without even a parting glance, he hurried out of the room.

"Ye are mair like to repent this nicht's wark yersel, captain," observed Janet, quietly, as she bolted the door after him, and addressed herself to the double task of comforting her lady and releasing the prisoner. "Gin the land-passes be waylaid, we maun try the loch. I'll gie a gay guess that the castle boatie 'ill be missin the morn."

And so it was managed. In less than two hours, the stranger, accompanied by Luath, was rowing across the loch; whilst, at daybreak the next morning, General Campbell and Archibald took their departure for Edinburgh.

Time dragged heavily on. Luath had returned, weary and travel-stained, without either his absence or his arrival having excited any suspicion in the castle. Nothing had been heard of the letter; and Marion had the satisfaction of believing that the

sacrifice of her happiness had not been made in vain, that she had at least succeeded in rescuing the object of her compassion.

Locheden had, upon his return, found his daughter sick and drooping; and, as days lengthened into weeks, and weeks into months, and left the prolonged absence of her lover unexplained, the old chief began to chafe with anger and impatience. He had heartily approved of a match which would unite his only child to the heir-male to whom, in default of a son, his own estate would descend, and who, besides his personal good gifts, and his high reputation for gallantry and military skill, inherited, in right of his English mother, a property which might be reckoned enormous for a Highlander in those days; but this neglect of one whom he regarded as the very apple of his eye, awakened all the irritability of his nature, and his fierce displeasure added tenfold, as that particular way of proving affection commonly does add, to the distress of her by whose injuries, real or supposed, his previous wrath had been originally excited.

Affairs were in this position, when, one fine morning in October, dispatches arrived from General Campbell, calculated to increase, if that were possible, the previous exasperation. After announcing his intention to visit Locheden, almost as soon as his letter could reach them, accompanied by their young kinsman, (Captain Archibald's next brother, John, being an officer in his own regiment,) he proceeded to say:—

"You will have heard, I am sure, with great pleasure, (for I take for granted that the bridegroom elect has apprised you of his good fortune,) of our gallant cousin's intended marriage with Lady Betty Bellasis, the English heiress and beauty, who has made so great a sensation in Edinburgh this summer. There have been difficulties, of course, upon the score of fortune and country with the Earl and Countess, but love has conquered them all; and the chief object of our journey to Locheden is to consult you, the kinsman, guardian, and friend, to whom both these young men are so deeply indebted, and upon the arrangements as to residence, &c., which this happy event will render necessary. The bridegroom elect is, in every way, a lucky fellow. In addition to her fortune and her beauty, *la future* is as charming a creature as one shall see on a summer's day—a fit companion for your sweet Marion, my pet and favourite. Heaven send them happy together!"

"A Lowlander! an Englishwoman! an heiress!—fortune-hunter! rascal! scoundrel, that he is!" exclaimed the old chieftain, throwing from him the unlucky letter, and striding up and down the hall, in breathless wrath. "And the doited idiot of a General, to even her with my Marion—the Sassenach doll! Let them take care how they speak of my daughter! Old as I am, the blood of M'Callamore runs as red in my veins as in theirs. Only let them dare to lightly her!"—And the very excess and fierceness of his anger took away the power of expression.

Marion listened tremblingly, delaying till calmer moments any attempts to soothe and expostulate.

"Coming, are they?" burst forth the enraged father. "Coming!—ay, by Heaven!" continued he, catching a glimpse of a party of horsemen approaching the castle—"here they come! And they think to find entrance, do they?" added he, bitterly. "They come to take account of our accommodations, that they may bring their braw young bride to insult over the old man and his daughter! Let them wait until I be dead. Not a foot shall that villain set in Locheden, until he walks over my corpse. Angus! Duncan! Where are the louns loitering! See that the gates be barred! Let none enter!"

"Stay, I implore you, I conjure you, my dearest father! For my peace and happiness, for the honour and dignity of your daughter and your house, refrain from this violence! Give entrance to them all. Receive them as usual. I ask you, in the name of maiden pride, of maiden modesty, to restrain all demonstrations of unger. Let him not imagine, let him not suspect—God knows how sincerely I wish him happy," cried Marion. "Give them admittance, I exhort you, I conjure you! Let them see no difference! Surely you will not vex and grieve your poor child. Yield to me in this, I implore you, dearest father!" And she drew her arms round his neck, leaned her head on his shoulder, and wept.

He kissed her with the fondest affection. "You are an angel, my darling, and shall have your own way in everything. Compare an English moppet with my noble Marion! The scoundrel will be miserable—that's my comfort. His father married a Lowlander for the sake of siller, a peevish Southron dame, that worried the life fairly out of him—and so will this great leddie. We are weel rid o' the loun. Dunggallan, pur laddie, 's worth twenty of him. He's won safe to France, ye ken, to his sister; and, gin we can save the estate from the clutches of thae Englishers," said the old chieftain, losing his English as he lost his temper, and checking himself as he perceived the effect his hint produced upon his daughter. "Weel! weel! We'll no talk of that the now. You shall see how civil I'll be to the villain. I'll no condesend to be angry. I'll take a lesson out of his ain book, and be as fause and fair as himsel. Here the rascal comes. You shall see how doucely I'll behave. Eh, now, that sic a perjured traitor should look so like an honest man!"

That Locheden fully intended his behaviour to be as false and fair as he believed his kinsman, there is no manner of doubt. But the inveterate truthfulness of threescore years was too much for his new resolution. He did not, it is true, bar his gates against his visitors, nor kick them out of doors, being entered. But he drew back haughtily from their proffered hands, with a look as fierce and wild as one of his own mountain eagles, and eyed Archibald, in particular, as if he had a mind to knock him down. General Campbell, a kind and acute person, and a man of the world, saw, at a glance, that something was amiss, and, determining not to enter upon family matters until the aspect of affairs should be somewhat cleared, began, after an affectionate expression of regret at Marion's pale cheeks, to talk over the news of the day.

"You have heard the grand piece of intelligence, I presume, Locheden, that this foolish young man, the Pretender, who has occasioned us so much trouble in chasing him up and down the country, has given us the slip at last, and got clear off to France? The thing is really so. Besides the accounts in the public papers, which are sufficiently precise and particular, I have a letter myself from a French friend, le Comte de Clermont, who actually saw him land. Why, hey-day my pretty Marion!" quoth the good General, observing the involuntary clasping of her hands, and the sudden rush of blood that coloured her fair face to the brow, as she listened to his words with breathless interest—"what should there be in this news to make you brighten up on a sudden? You are no damsel of the White Rose, I hope? No Flora M'Donald exploits here? Eh, Locheden?" And he turned to relate to the chief all that was then known of the escape of Charles Edward; whilst Archibald, to whom her emotion was as a flash of light that shewed him the whole thing at a glance, advanced to his fair cousin.

"He, then, and not Dunggallan, was the stranger at the cave? Charles Edward, the Pretender, the Chevalier, the Prince?"

"Nay, give me what title you will. I am no damsel of the White Rose, as the General calls it; although I risked much—ay, and would risk much again—to preserve a fugitive, in peril of his life, thrown, under such extraordinary circumstances, upon my poor resources for protection and assistance.

"But why not intrust me with the secret? Why occasion so much unnecessary pain—certainly to me—may I not say to both of us?"

"To have trusted you, Captain Campbell, an officer in the service of the King of England, with such a secret as that, however the confidence might have relieved and comforted myself, would have to endanger your professional reputation, your honour, perhaps even your life. No, I cannot think that I was wrong! The more especially," added she, in a lower voice, and with peculiar sweetness and gentleness of manner—"the more especially as the transient pain must have been long forgotten in your life and present happiness. Heaven knows I congratulate you most sincerely."

"Happiness!—congratulate!" echoed Captain Campbell, in unfeigned astonishment.

"Marion, my dow!" said her father, striding rapidly across the room—"I have done a great injustice. It's no our friend here, but Johnny, his brother, that's about to marry Lady Betty, who seems to be a fine spunky lassie, for all she has the ill luck to be an Englisher. Archie, my lad, I crave your pardon for thinking you could be such a villain!" And the old chief and the young soldier shook hands, with hearty affection and good will.

"There has been a small mistake on both sides, as it seems," observed General Campbell, joining the little group; "but matters are clearing up now, to judge from the gentleman's smiles and the lady's blushes; and, if I be permitted to advise, the best way to prevent a recurrence of doubts and misgivings, would be to have both the weddings on the same day. What say you, Mistress Janet?" For that faithful dependent, very anxious upon her lady's account, and it may be a little inquisitive upon her own, had contrived, on some pretence or other, to edge herself into the room. "What say you?"

"I gie my consent," responded Janet; "barring jealousy and a' sic nonsense, for the time to come. The captain and the loun Donald baith ken that I forewarned them what yon nicht's wark would come to. But ye men folk are aye rash and headstrong—ye canna help yourselves—it's born wi' ye; and we women are saft and complying—that's our nature; sae, sin, ye hae repentit, we maun e'en forgie ye," quoth Janet, "an' tak ye for better for worse."

And so it was settled.

There is not a book on earth, so favourable to all the kind and all the sublime affections, or so unfriendly to hatred and persecution, to tyranny, injustice, and every sort of malevolence, as the Gospel. It preaches nothing throughout but mercy, benevolence, and peace.—BEATTIE.