



## THE FAA'S REVENGE.

## A TALE OF THE BORDER GIPSIES.

Brown October was drawing to a close; breeze had acquired a degree of sharpness too strong to be merely termed bracing, the fire, as the saying is, was becoming the best flower in the garden, for the hardest of the latest plants had either shed their leaves, or their flowers had shrivelled at the approach of winter, when a stranger drew his seat towards the parlour fire of Three-Half-Moons Inn, in Rothbury.— He had sat for the space of half-an-hour, when a party entered who like himself, (as inferred from their conversation,) were strangers, or rather visitors of the scenery, antiquities, and antiquities in the vicinity.— One of them having ordered the waiter to bring each of them a glass of brandy and water, without appearing to notice the appearance of the first mentioned stranger, after a few remarks on the objects of interests in the neighbourhood, the following conversation took place amongst them:—

“Why,” said one, “but even Rothbury, secluded as it is from the world, and shut out from the daily intercourse of the world, is a noted place. It was here that the great and famous northern bard, and unrivalled ballad writer, Bernard Rummy, was bred; and died. Here, too, was born Dr. Rummy, who like Young and Home, united the characters of divine and dramatist, and the author of ‘*Barbarossa*,’ ‘*The Cure of the Plague*,’ and other works, of which posterity in his country are proud. The immediate neighbourhood, also, was the birth place of the inspired boy, the heaven-taught mathematician, George Cougran, who knew no bounds, and who bid fair to eclipse the glory of Newton, but whom death struck down ere he had reached the years of manhood.”

“Why I can’t tell,” said another, “I don’t know much about what you’ve been talking; but I know for one thing, that Rothbury was a noted place for every sort of games, and at Fasten’s E’en times the rule was, every inhabitant above eight years of age to be at a shilling, or out to the foot-ball. It was for its game-cocks too—they were the best bred on the Borders.”

“May be so,” said the first speaker, “but though I should be loath to see the foot-ball or any other innocent game which keeps up a manly spirit put down, yet I do trust that the brutal practice of cock-fighting will be abolished not only on the Borders, but throughout every country which professes the name of christian; and I rejoice that the practice is falling into disrepute. But although my hairs are not yet honoured with the silver tints of age, I am told enough to remember, that when a boy at school on the Scottish side of the Border, at every Fasten’s E’en which you have spoken of, every schoolboy was expected to provide a cock for the battle or main, and the teacher or his deputy presided as umpire. The same practice prevailed on the southern Border. It is a very old, savage amusement, even in this country; and perhaps the preceptors of youth, in former days, considered it *classical*, and that it would instil into their pupils a sentiment of emulation, inasmuch as the practice is said to have taken rise from Themistocles perceiving two cocks tearing at and fighting with each other, while marching his army against the Persians, when he called upon his soldiers to observe them, and remarked, that they neither fought for territory, defence of country, nor for glory, but they fought because the one would not yield to, or be defeated by the other, and he desired his soldiers to take a moral lesson from the barn-door fowls. Cock-fighting thus became among the heathen Greeks a political precept and a religious observance—and the christian inhabitants of Britain, disregarding the *religious and political moral*, kept up the practice, adding to it more disgusting barbarity for their amusement.”

“Coom,” said a third, who from his tongue appeared to be a thorough Northumbrian, “we wur talking about Rothbury, but you are goin’ to give us a regular sarmin on cock-fighting. Let’s hae none o’ that. You was saying wif at clever chaps had been born here; but none o’ ye mentioned Jemie Allan, the gipsey and Northumberland piper, who was born here as weel as the best o’ them. But I have heard that Rothbury, as well as Yeth-

olm and Tweedmouth Moor, was a great resort for the Faa or gipsy gangs in former times. Now I understand that thae folk were a sort o' bastard Egyptians—and though I am nae scholar, it strikes me forcibly that the meaning o' the word, *gipsies*, is just *Egyptis*, or *Gypties*, a contraction and corruption o' *Gyptian*!"

"Gipsies," said he who spoke of Rùmney and Brown, and abused the practice of cock-fighting, "still do in some degree, and formerly did in great numbers infest this county, and I will tell you a story concerning them."

"Do so," said the thorough Northumbrian, "I like a story when it's well put thegither. The gipsies were queer folk. I've heard my faither tell many a funny thing about them when he used to whistle "Felton Loanin'," which was made by awd Piper Allan,—Jemie's faither." And here the speaker struck up a lively air, which, to the stranger by the fire, seemed a sort of parody on the well-known tune of "Johnny Cope."

The other then proceeded with his tale, thus—

You have all heard of the celebrated Johnnie Faa, the Lord and Earl of little Egypt, who penetrated into Scotland in the reign of James IV., and with whom that gallant monarch was glad to conclude a treaty. Johnnie was not only the king, but the first of the Faa gang of whom we have mentioned. I am not aware that gipsies get the name of Faas anywhere but upon the Borders, and though it is difficult to account for the name satisfactorily, it is said to have had its origin from a family of the name of *Fall* or *Fa'*, who resided here (in Rothbury,) and that their superiority in their cunning and desperate profession, gave the same cognomen to all and sundry who followed the same mode of life upon the Borders. One thing is certain, that the name *Faa* not only was given to individuals whose surname might be *Fall*, but to the *Winters* and *Clarkes*,—*et id genus omne*,—gipsy families well known on the Borders. Since waste lands, which were their hiding-places and resorts, began to be cultivated, and especially since the sun of knowledge snuffed out the taper of superstition and credulity, most of them are beginning to form a part of society, to learn trades of industry, and live with men. Those who still prefer their fathers' vagabond mode of

life, finding that in the northern counties the old trade of fortune-telling is at a discount and that thieving has thinned their tribe, are dangerous, now follow the more useful and respectable callings of muggers, besom-makers, and tinkers. I do not know whether etiquette I ought to give precedence to 't besom-maker or tinker, though as compared with them, I should certainly suppose that the "muggers" of the present day belong to the Faa aristocracy; if it be not, that they like others, derive their nobility from descent of blood rather than weight of pocket—and that, after all, the mugger with his encampment, his caravans, horses, crystal and crockery, is but a mere wealthy plebian or *bourgeois* in the vagrant community.—But to relate.

On a dark and tempestuous night in the December of 1618, a Faa gang requested shelter in the out-houses of the laird of Clennel. The laird himself had retired to rest and his domestics being fewer in number than the Faas, they feared to refuse their request.

"Ye shall have up-putting for the night good neighbours," said Andrew Smith, who was a sort of Major-domo in the laird's household, and he spoke in a mingled authority and terror. "But sir," added he, addressing the chief of the tribe, "I will trust to your honour that ye will allow none o' your folk to be making free with the kye, or the sheep or the poultry—that is, that ye will not allow them to mistake ony o' them for your own lest' it bring me into trouble. For the laird has been in a fearful rage at some o' your people lately, and if ony thing were to be amissing in the morning, or he kenned that ye had been here, it might be as meikle my life is worth."

"Tush man!" said Willie Faa, the king of the tribe, "ye dree the death ye'll never die. Willie Faa and his folk maun live as well as the laird o' Clennel. But there's my thumb not a four-footed thing nor the feather o' bird shall be touched by me or mine. But see the light is out in the laird's chamber window, he is asleep and high up among the turrets, and wherefore should ye set your bodies in byres and stables in a night? This, when your Ha' fire is bleezing bonnie and there is room enough around it for us. Gie us a seat by the cheek o' your hearth and ye shall be nae loser, and I promise that we shall be off, bag and baggage."

to the skreigh o' day, or the laird kens here his head lies."

Andrew would fain have refused this request, but he knew that it amounted to a command, and moreover, while he had been making with the chief of the tribe, the maid-servants of the household, who had followed him and the other men-servants to the door, had divers of them been solicited by the females of the gang to have futurity revealed to them. And whether it indeed that curiosity is more powerful in woman than in man, (as is generally said to be,) I do not profess to determine, but certain it is that at the laird of Clennel's maid-servants, immediately on the hint being given by the seeresses, felt a very ardent desire to have a peep or two from the sibyl's leaves read to them, at least that part of them which related to their future husbands, and the time when they should obtain them. Therefore they backed the petition or command of king Willie, and said to Andrew—

"Really, Mr. Smith, it would be very christian-like to put poor wandering folk into cold out-houses in a night like this, and as Willie says, there is room enough in the earth."

"That may be a' very true lassies," returned Andrew, "but only ye think what a discomfiture there would be, if the laird were to ken or get wit o'?"

"Fearna the laird," said Elspeth, the wife of king Willie, "I will lay a spell on him so he canna be roused frae sleep, till I at least wash my hands in Darden Lough."

The sibyl then raised her arms and waved them fantastically in the air, uttering as she waved them the following uncouth rhymes way of incantation—

Bonny queen Mab—bonny queen Mab,  
Wave ye your wee bits o' poppy wings  
O'er Clennel's laird, that he may sleep  
Till I hae washed where Darden springs.

Thus assured, Andrew yielded to his fears and the wishes of his fellow servants, and carried the Faas into his master's hall for the night. But scarce had they taken their seats upon the oaken forms around the fire, when

"Come," said the Faa king, "the night is a-pinching cold Mr. Smith; and while the fire warms without, is there naething in the cellar that will warm within? See to it

Andrew man—thou art no churl, or thy face is fause."

"Really sir," replied Andrew, and in spite of all his efforts to appear at ease, his tongue faltered as he spoke, "I am not altogether certain what to say upon that subject, for ye observe that our laird is really a very singular man; ye might as weel put your head in the fire there as displease him in the smallest; and though Heaven kens that I would gie it ye just as freely as I would take it to myself, yet ye'll observe that the liquor in the cellars is not mine but his, and they are never sae well plenished but I believe he would miss a thimble-ful. But there is some excellent cold beef in the pantry, if ye could put up wi' the like o' it, and the home-brewed which we servants use."

"Andrew," returned the Faa king proudly, "castle have I none, flocks and herdshave I none, neither have I haughs where the wheat and the oats and the barley grow—but like Ishmael, my great forefather, every man's hand is against me and mine against them; yet when I am hungry, I never lack the flesh-pots o' my native land, where the moor-fowl and the venison make brown broo together.—Cauld meat agrees nae wi' my stomach, and servant's drink was never brewed for the lord o' little Egypt. Ye comprehend me Andrew?"

"O, I daresay I do sir," said the chief domestic of the house of Clennel, "but only as I have said, ye will recollect that the drink is not mine to give, and if I venture upon a jug, I hope ye winna think o' asking for another."

"We shall try it," said the royal vagrant.

Andrew with trembling and reluctance proceeded to the cellar, and returned with a large earthen vessel filled with the choicest home-brewed, which he placed upon a table in the midst of them.

"Then each took a smack  
Of the old black-jack,  
While the fire burned in the hall."

The Faa king pronounced the liquor to be palatable, and drank to his better acquaintance with the cellars of the laird of Clennel, and his gang followed his example.

Now I should remark that Willie Faa, the chief of the tribe, was a man of gigantic stature; the colour of his skin was the dingy brown peculiar to his race; his arms were of

remarkable length, and his limbs a union of strength and lightness; his raven hair was mingled with grey, while in his dark eyes, the impetuosity of youth and the cunning of age seemed blended together. It is vain to speak of his dress, for it was changed daily as his circumstances or avocations directed. He was ever ready to assume all characters, from the courtier down to the mendicant.— Like his wife, he was skilled in the reading of no book but the book of fate. Now Elspeth was a less agreeable personage to look upon than even her husband. The hue of her skin was as dark as his. She was also of his age—a woman of full fifty. She was the tallest female in her tribe, but her stoutness took away from her stature. Her eyes were small and piercing, her nose aquiline, and her upper lip was “bearded like the pard.”

While her husband sat at his carousals, and handing the beverage to his followers and the domestics of the house, Elspeth sat examining the lines upon the palms of the hands of the maid-servants,—pursuing her calling as a spae-wife. And ever as she traced the lines of matrimony, the sibyl would pause, and exclaim—

“Ha!—money!—money!—cross my loof again hinny. There is fortune before ye!—Let me see, a spur!—a sword!—a shield!—a gowden purse!—Heaven bless ye, they are there!—there as plain as a pike-staff; they are a’ in your path—but cross my loof again hinny, for until siller again cross it, I canna see whether thcy are to be yours or no.”

Thus did Elspeth go on until her “loof had been crossed” by the last coin amongst the domestics of the house of Clennel, and when these were exhausted, their trinkets were demanded and given to assist the spell of the prophetess. Good fortune was prognosticated to the most of them, and especially to those who crossed the loof of the reader of futurity most freely; but to others perils, and sudden deaths, and disappointments in love, and grief in wedlock were hinted; though to all and each of these forebodings, a something like hope and undefined way of escape was pended.

Now as the voice of Elspeth rose in solemn tones, and as the mystery of her manner increased, not only were the maid-servants stricken with awe and reverence for the wondrous woman, but the men-servants also

began to inquire into their fate. And as they extended their hands, and Elspeth traced the lines of the past upon them, ever and anon she spoke strange words, which intimated secret facts; and she spoke also of love-making and likings: and ever as she spoke, she would raise her head and grin a ghastly smile, not at the individual whose hand she was examining, and again at a maid-servant whose fortune she had read, while the former would smile and the latter blush, and their fellow domestics exclaim—

“That’s wonderfu’—that dings a’!—are queer folk!—how in the world do ken?”

Even the curiosity of Mr. Andrew Smi was raised and his wonder excited, and as he had quaffed his third cup with the girding, he too, reverently approached the bedded princess, extending his hand, and being to know what futurity had in store for him.

She raised it before her eyes, she rubbed hers over it.

“It is a dark and a difficult hand,” muttered she; “here are ships and the sea, crossing the sea, and great danger, and way to avoid it—but the gowd!—the gowd that’s there! And fyat ye may lose it. Cross my loof sir,—yours is an ill hand spae,—for it’s set wi’ fortune, and danger adventure.”

Andrew gave her all the money in his possession. Now it was understood that he was to return the money and the trinkets which her loof had been crossed, and Andrew’s curiosity overcoming his fears, he ventured to entrust his property in her keeping, for as he thought, it was not every day that people would or could have every thing that was to happen unto them revealed. But when she had again looked upon his hand

“It winna do,” said she, “I canna owre the dangers ye hae to encounter, seas ye hae to cross, and the mountains gowd that lie before ye yet,—ye maun a my loof again.” And when, with a countenance, he stated that he had crossed with his last coin—

Ye hae a chronometer man, said she, tells you the minutes now, it may enable to shew ye those that are to come.”

Andrew hesitated, and with doubt and willingness placed the chronometer in his hand.

Elspeth wore a short cloak of faded crimson, and in a sort of pouch in it, every coin, watch, and other article of value which was put into her hands were deposited, in order, she stated, to forward her mystic operations. Now the chronometer had just disappeared in the general receptacle of offerings to the oracle, when heavy footsteps were heard ascending the staircase leading to the hall. Andrew, the ruler of the household, appeared—the blood forsook his cheeks, his head involuntarily knocked one against the other, and he stammered out—

"For Heaven's sake gie me my chronometer—O gie me it!—we are a' ruined!"

"It canna be returned till the spell's completed," rejoined Elspeth, in a solemn and ominous tone, and her countenance bore no trace of her dupe's uneasiness, while her husband deliberately placed his hand upon a sort of dagger which he carried beneath a large coarse-jacket, that was flung over his shoulders. The males of the retinue, who were eight in number, followed his example.

Another moment the laird, with wrath on his countenance, burst into the hall.

"Andrew Smith," cried he sternly, and stamping his foot fiercely on the floor, "what is this I see? Answer me, ye betrayer—trust?—ye robber answer me?—ye shall die for it?"

"O sir! sir!" groaned Andrew, "mercy! mercy!—O sir!" and he wrung his hands together and shook exceedingly.

"Ye faus knave!" continued the laird, seizing him by the neck; and dashing him against the wall, Andrew fell flat upon the floor; his terror had almost shaken him from his feet before—"speak! ye faus knave!" roared the laird, what means your carousings?—ye sic a gang? Ye robber speak?"—he kicked him with his foot as he lay on the ground.

"O sir!—mercy sir!" vociferated Andrew, in a stupor and wildness of terror, "I canna live!—ye hae killed me outright! I am a stone dead! But it wasna my blame ye'll a' say that if they speak the truth."

"Out! out ye thieves!—ye gang o' plunderers born to the gallows! out o' my house!" roared the laird, addressing Willie Faa and his followers.

"Thieves! ye ached loon!" exclaimed the Faa King, starting to his feet, and drawing himself up to his full height—"wha does the worm that burrows in the lands o' Clennel ca' thieves? Thieves say ye!—speak such words to your equals, but no to me. Your forbears came owre wi' the Norman, invaded the nation, and seized upon land—mine invaded it also, and only laid a tax upon the flocks, the cattle, and the poultry—and wha ca' ye thieves?—or wi' what grace do ye speak the word?"

"A way ye audacious vagrant!" continued the laird, "ken ye not that the king's authority is in my hands, and for your former plunderings, if I again find ye setting foot upon ground o' mine, in the nearest tree ye shall find a gibbet."

"Boast awa'—boast awa' man," said Willie, "ye are safe here, for me and mine winna harm ye, and it is a fougie cock indeed that darena craw in its ain barn-yard. But wait until the day when ye may meet upon the wide moor, wi' only twa bits o' steel between us, and see wha shall brag then."

"Away!—instantly away!" exclaimed Clennel, drawing his sword, and waving it threateningly over the head of the gipsy.

"Proud, cauld-hearted and unfeeling mortal," said Elspeth, "will ye turn fellow-beings frae beneath your roof in a night like this, when the fox darena creep frae its hole, and the raven trembles on the tree?"

"Out! out! ye witch!" rejoined the laird.

"Farewell Clennel," said the Faa King, "we will leave your roof and seek the shelter o' the hill-side. But ye shall rue! As I speak man ye shall rue it!"

"Rue it!" screamed Elspeth, rising, her small dark eyes flashed with indignation; "he shall rue it—the bairn unborn shall rue it—and the bann o' Elspeth Faa shall be on Clennel and his kin, until his hearth be desolate, and his spirit howl within him like the tempest which this night rages in the heavens!"

The servants shrunk together into a corner of the hall, to avoid the rage of their master, and they shook the more at the threatening words of the weird woman, lest she should involve them in his doom; but he laughed with scorn at her words.

"Proud, pitiless fool," resumed Elspeth, more bitterly than before, "repress your

scorn. Whom think ye, ye treat wi' contempt? Ken ye that the humble adder which ye tread upon can destroy ye—that the very wasp can sting ye, and there is poison in its sting! Ye laugh, but for your want o' humanity this night, sorrow shall turn your head grey, lang before age sit down upon your brow."

"Off! off! ye wretches!" added the laird; "vent your threats in the wind, if it will hear ye, for I regard them as little as it will. But keep out o' my way for the future, as ye would escape the honours o' a hemp cravat, and the hereditary exaltation o' your race."

Willie Faa made a sign to his followers, and without speaking they instantly rose and departed, but as he himself reached the door, he turned round, and significantly striking the hilt of his dagger, exclaimed—

"Clenne! ye shall rue it!"

And the hoarse voice of Elspeth without, as the sound was borne away on the storm, was heard crying—"He shall rue it!" and repeating her imprecations.

Until now poor Andrew Smith had lain groaning upon the floor, more dead than alive, though not exactly "stone dead" as he expressed it, and ever as he heard his master's angry voice, he groaned the more, until in his agony he doubted his existence. When therefore on the departure of the Faas the laird dragged him to his feet, and feeling some pity for his terror, spoke to him more mildly. Andrew gazed vacantly around him, his teeth chattering together, and he first placed his hands upon his sides, to feel whether he was still indeed the identical flesh, blood and bones of Andrew Smith, or his disembodied spirit; and being assured that he was still a man, he put down his hand to feel for his chronometer, and again he groaned bitterly,—and although he now knew he was not dead, he almost wished he were so. The other servants thought also of their money and their trinkets, which as well as poor Andrew's chronometer, Elspeth, in the hurry in which she was rudely driven from the house, had, by a slip of memory, neglected to return to their lawful owners.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the laird's anger at his domestics, nor farther to describe Andrew's agitation, but I may say that he was not wroth against the Faa gang without reason. They had long committed ra-

vages on his flocks,—they had carried off the choicest of his oxen,—they destroyed his deer,—they plundered him of his poultry, and they even made free with the grain that he reared, and which he could spare with of all. But Willie Faa considered even a landed proprietor as his enemy, and thought it his duty to quarter on them. Moreover, it was his boisterous laugh, as he pushed round the tankard, which aroused the laird from his slumbers, and broke Elspeth's spell. At the destruction of the charm, by the appearance of their master, before she had washed her hands in Darden Lough, caused the laird who had parted with their money and their lives, to grieve for them the more, and doubt the promises of the prophetess or to

"Take all for gospel that the spae-folk say."

Many weeks, however, had not passed until the laird of Clenne found that Elspeth's threat, that he should "rue it," meant more than idle words. His cat sickened and died in their stalls, or the best of them disappeared; his favorite horses were found maimed in the morning, wounded and bleeding in the fields, and withstanding the vigilance of his shepherd, the depredations on his flocks augmented tenfold. He doubted not but that Willie Faa and his tribe were the authors of all the evil which were besetting him; but he doubted also their power, and their matchless cunning, which rendered it almost impossible either to detect or punish them. He had a favorite steed, which had borne him in boyhood, in battle when he served in foreign wars, one morning he went into his park, he found it lying bleeding upon the ground. Grief and indignation strove together in arousing vengeance within his bosom. He ordered his sluthound to be brought, and his dependants to be summoned together and to be armed with them. He had previously observed footprints on the ground, and he claimed—

"Now the fiend take the Faas, they find whose turn it is to rue before the gae down."

The gong was pealed on the turret of Clenne Hall, and the kempers with their poles bounded in every direction, with the fleetness of mountain stags, to surround the laird. The mandate was readily obeyed, and within two hours thirty armed

peared in the park. The sluthound was to the footprint, and after following it for any a weary mile over moss, moor and mountain, it stood and howled; and lashed its lips with its tongue, and again ran as though its prey were at hand, as it approached what might be called a gap in the wilderness between Key-heugh and Cloven-

Now in the space between these desolate glens, stood some score of peels, or rather hovels, half encampments—and this primitive city in the wilderness was the capital of the Faa king's people.

Now for vengeance!" exclaimed Clennel, and his desire of revenge was excited more from perceiving several of the choicest of his cattle, which had disappeared, lying before the doors or holes of the gipsy tents.

"Bring whins and heather," he continued, "and pile them around it, and burn the den of the gipsies to the ground."

In order was speedily obeyed, and when he commanded the trumpet to be sounded, the inmates might defend themselves if they dared, only two or three men and women of extreme age, and some half dozen children, crawled upon their hands and knees to the huts, (for it was impossible to stand upright in them.)

The aged men and women howled when they beheld the work of destruction that was being done, and the children screamed as they heard them howl. But the laird of Clennel had been injured, and he turned a deaf ear to their misery. A light was struck, and a dozen torches applied at once. The peels crackled, the heather blazoned, and flames overtopped the hovels which they surrounded, and which within an hour became a heap of smouldering ashes.

Clennel and his dependants returned home, and sought the cattle which had been stolen from them, and rejoicing in what they found. On the following day, William and a part of his tribe returned to their rendezvous,—their city and home were in ruins, and they found it a heap of smoking ruins, and the old men and the women of the tribe,—their fathers and mothers,—sitting wailing upon the ruins,—warming over them their shivering limbs while the children wept around them.

"Whose work is this?" inquired Willie, while anxiety and anger flashed in his eyes.

"The laird o' Clennel!—the laird o' Clennel!" answered every voice at the same instant.

"By this I swear!" exclaimed the king of Faas, drawing his dagger from beneath his coat, "from this night henceforth he is laird nor man nae langer!" and he turned hastily from the ruins as if to put his threat in execution.

"Stay, ye mad-cap!" cried Elspeth, following him, "would ye fling away revenge for half an a minute's satisfaction?"

"No, wife," cried he, "nae mair than I would sacrifice living a free and a fu' life for half an hour's hangin'."

"Stop then," returned she, "and let our vengeance fa' upon him, so that it may wring his life away drap by drap until his heart be dry, and grief, and shame and sorrow burn him up, as he has here burned house and home o' Elspeth Faa and her kindred."

"What mean ye, woman?" said Willie hastily: "if I thought ye would come between me and my revenge, I would drive this bit steel through ye wi' as good will as I shall drive it through him."

"And ye shall be welcome," said Elspeth. She drew him aside, and whispered a few minutes in his ear. He listened attentively. At times he seemed to start, and at length sheathing his dagger, and grasping her hand he exclaimed—"Excellent, Elspeth! ye have it!—ye have it!"

At this period the laird of Clennel was about thirty years of age, and two years before he had been married to Eleanor de Vere, a lady alike distinguished for her beauty and accomplishments. They had an infant son, who was the delight of his mother and his father's pride. Nor for two years after the conflagration of their little town, Clennel knew nothing of his old enemies the Faas, neither did they molest him, nor had they been seen in the neighbourhood, and he rejoiced at having cleared his estate of such dangerous visitors. But the Faa king, listening to the advice of his wife, only "nursed his wrath to keep it warm," and retired from the neighbourhood, that he might accomplish, in its proper season, his design of vengeance more effectually, and with greater cruelty.

The infant heir of the house of Clennel had



been named Henry, and he was about completing his third year, an age at which children are perhaps most interesting, and when their fondling and their prattling sink deepest into a parent's heart—for all is then beheld on childhood's sunny side, and all is innocence and love. Now it was in a lovely day in April, when every bird had begun its annual song, and flowers were bursting into beauty, buds into leaves, and the earth resuming its green mantle, when Lady Clennel and her infant son, who then, as I have said, was about three years of age, went forth to enjoy the loveliness and the luxuries of nature in the woods which surrounded their mansion, and Andrew Smith accompanied them as their guide and protector. They had proceeded somewhat more than a mile from the house, and the child at intervals breaking away from them, sometimes ran before his mother, and at others sauntered behind her, pulling the wild flowers that strewed their path, when a man springing from a dark thicket seized the child in his arms, and again darted into the wood. Lady Clennel screamed aloud and rushed after him. Andrew who was coming dreaming behind, got but a glance of the ruffian stranger, but that glance was enough to reveal to him the tall, terrible figure of Willie Faa, the gipsy king.

There are moments when, and circumstances under which even cowards become courageous, and this was one of those moments and circumstances which suddenly inspired Andrew (who was naturally no hero) with courage. He indeed loved the child as though he had been his own, and following the example of Lady Clennel, he drew his sword and rushed into the wood. He possessed considerable speed of foot, and he soon passed the wretched mother and came in sight of the pursued. The unhappy lady who ran panting and screaming as she rushed along, unable to keep pace with them, lost all trace of where the robber of her child had fled, and the cries of her agony and bereavement rang through the woods.

Andrew, however, though he did not gain ground upon the gipsy, still kept within sight of him, and shouted to him as he ran, saying that all the dependents of Clennel would soon be on horseback at his heels, and trusting that every moment he would drop the child upon the ground. Still Faa flew forward, bearing the boy in his arm, and disregarding the cries and threats of his pursu-

er. He knew that Andrew's was not what could be called a heart of steel, but he was aware that he had a powerful arm, and could use a sword as well as a better man, and he knew also that cowards will fight desperately, when their life is at stake, the brave.

The desperate chase continued for four hours, and till after the sun had set, and the gloaming was falling thick on the hills. Andrew, being younger and unencumbered, had at length gained ground upon the gipsy and was within ten yards of him when he reached the Coquet side, about a mile below this town, at the hideous Thrum, where a deep river, for many yards, rushes through a mere chasm in the rock. The Faa, with the child beneath his arm, leaped across the fearful gulf, and the dark flood gushed between him and his pursuer. He turned round, and with a horrid laugh, looked towards Andrew and unsheathed his dagger. But even at this moment the unwonted rage of the chief servant of Clennel did not fail him, and as he rushed up and down on one side of the gulf, that he might spring across and avoid the dagger of the gipsy, the other ran in like manner on the other side, and when Andrew stood as if ready to leap the Faa king pointing with his dagger to the dark flood that rolled between them, cried

"See fool! eternity divides us!"

"And for that bairn's sake, ye wretch, brave it!" exclaimed Andrew, while his teeth gnashed together: and he stepped in order that he might spring across with greater force and safety.

"Hold, man!" cried the Faa; "attend to cross to me, and I will plunge the heir o' Clennel into the flood below."

"O gracious! gracious!" cried Andrew, and his resolution and courage forsook him. "ye monster! ye barbarian! O what I do now!"

"Go back from whence you came," the gipsy, "or follow me another step the child dies."

"O ye butcher—ye murderer!" cried the other, and he tore his hair in agony. "hae ye nae mercy?"

"Sic mercy as your maister had," replied the Faa, "when he burned our heads about the ears o' the aged and infirm, my helpless bairns! Ye shall find it t-

o' the fasting wolf, o' the tiger when  
laps blood."

Andrew perceived that to rescue the child  
was now impossible, and with a heavy heart  
returned to his master's house, in which  
there was no sound save that of lamenta-

For many weeks, yea months, the laird of  
Clenel, his friends, and his servants, sought  
diligently throughout every part of the coun-  
ty to obtain tidings of his child, but their  
search was in vain. It was long ere his lady  
was expected to recover the shock, and the  
grief sat heavy on his soul, while in his  
heart he vowed revenge upon all of the  
Faa-race. But neither Willie Faa nor any  
of his tribe were again seen upon his estates,  
nor heard of in their neighbourhood.

Four years was passed from the time that  
Henry was stolen from them, and an infant  
daughter smiled upon the knee of lady Clen-  
nel, and oft as it smiled in her face and  
beckoned its little hands towards her, she  
would burst into tears, as the smile and the  
native fondness of her little daughter re-  
minded her of her lost Henry. They had had  
other children, but they had died while but  
a few weeks old.

For two years there had been a maiden in  
the household named Susan, and to her care,  
as the child was not in her own arms,  
Clennel entrusted her infant daughter ;  
every one loved Susan because of her af-  
fectionate nature and docile manners—she  
was moreover an orphan, and they pitied  
her as they loved her. But one evening when  
Clennel desired that her daughter might  
be brought to her, in order that she might  
be sent to a company who had come to  
buy them, an excusable although not a plea-  
santry in mothers, neither Susan nor  
the child were to be found. Wild fears seized  
the bosom of the already bereaved mother,  
and her husband felt his heart throb within  
him. They sought the woods, the hills, the  
glens around : they wandered by the side  
of the rivers and the mountain burns, but no  
trace had been seen, no trace could be discovered of  
either the girl or the child.

Clennel will not, because I cannot, describe the  
overwhelming misery of the afflicted parents  
as Clennel spent her days in tears and  
long nights in dreams of her children, and  
her husband sank into a settled melancholy,

while his hatred of the Faa race became more  
implacable, and he burst into frequent ex-  
clamations of vengeance against them.

More than fifteen years had passed, and  
though the poignancy of their grief had abated,  
yet their sadness was not removed, for  
they had been able to hear nothing that could  
throw light upon the fate of their children—  
about this time sheep were again missed from  
his flocks, and in one night the hen-roosts  
were emptied. There needed no other proof  
that a Faa gang was again in the neigh-  
bourhood. Now Northumberland at that  
period was still thickly covered with wood,  
and abounded with places where thieves  
might conceal themselves in security. Partly  
from a desire of vengeance, and partly from  
the hope of being able to extort from some of  
the tribe information respecting his children  
Clennel armed his servants, and taking his  
hounds with him, set out in quest of the  
plunderers.

For two days their search was unsuccessful  
—but on the third the dogs raised their sa-  
vage cry, and rushed into a thicket in a deep  
glen amongst the mountains. Clennel and  
his followers hurried forward, and in a few  
minutes perceived the fires of the Faa en-  
campment. The hounds had already alarmed  
the vagrant colony, they had sprung upon  
many of them and torn their flesh with their  
tusks, but the Faas defended themselves  
against them with their poignards, and be-  
fore Clennel's approach more than half his  
hounds lay dead upon the ground, and his  
enemies fled. Yet there was one poor girl  
amongst them, who had been attacked by a  
fierce hound, and whom no one attempted to  
rescue, as she strove to defend herself against  
it with her bare hands. Her screams for  
assistance rose louder and more loud ; and  
as Clennel and his followers drew near, and  
her companions fled, they turned round, and  
with a fiendish laugh cried—

"Rue it now !"

Maddened more keenly by the words, he  
was following on in pursuit, without rescuing  
the screaming girl from the teeth of the hound  
or seeming to perceive her. When a woman  
suddenly turning round from amongst the  
flying gipsies, exclaimed—

"For your sake ! for Heaven's sake ! laird  
Clennel ! save my bairn !"

He turned hastily round, and seizing the hound by the throat, he tore it from the lacerated girl, who sunk bleeding, terrified and exhausted, upon the ground. Her features were beautiful, and her yellow hair contrasted ill with the tawny hue of her countenance and the snowy whiteness of her bosom, which in the struggle had been revealed. The elder gipsy woman approached. She knelt by the side of the wounded girl.

"O my bairn!" she exclaimed, "what has this day brought upon me!—they have murdered you! This is rueing indeed, and I rue too!"

"Susan!" exclaimed Clennel, as he listened to her words, and his eyes had been for several seconds fixed upon her countenance.

"Yes!—Susan!—guilty Susan!" cried the gipsy.

"Wretch!" he exclaimed, "my child!—where is my child—is this?"—— and he gazed on the poor girl, his voice failed him, and he burst into tears.

"Yes!" replied she bitterly, "it is her!—there lies your daughter—look upon her."

He needed indeed but to look upon her countenance, disfigured as it was, and dyed with weeds to give it a sallow hue, to behold every lineament of her mother's lovely face, as when they first met his eye and entered his heart. He flung himself on the ground by her side, he raised her head, and kissed her cheek, he exclaimed—"My child!—my child!—my lost one!—I have destroyed thee!"

He bound up her lacerated arms, and applied a flask of wine which he carried with him to her lips, and he supported her on his knee, and again kissing her cheek, sobbed, "My child!—my own!"

Andrew Smith also wept over her and said—"O it is her, there isna the smallest doubt o' that. I could swear to her among a thousand. She's her mother's very picture."—And turning to Susan he added—"O Susan, woman, but ye had been a terrible hypocrite!"

Clennel placed his daughter on horseback before him, supporting her with his arm, and Susan was set between two of his followers, and conducted to the Hall.

Before the tidings were made known to lady Clennel, the wounds of her daughter were carefully dressed, the dye that disfigured the colour of her countenance was removed, and

her gipsy garb was exchanged for more respectably apparel.

Clennel anxiously entered the apartment of his lady, to reveal to her the tale of part but when he entered he wist not how to introduce it. He knew that excess of sudden joy was not less dangerous than excess of grief and his countenance was troubled, though his expression was less sad than it had been many years.

"Eleanor love," he at length began, and urged her "to cheer up."

"Why I am not sadder than usual, dear," replied she in her wonted gentle manner "and to become more cheerful would ill become one who has endured my sorrows."

"True," said he, "but our affliction may not be so severe as we have thought, there may be hope—there may be joy for us yet."

"What mean ye husband?" inquired she eagerly: "have ye heard aught—aught of my children?—you have!—you have!—your countenance speaks it."

"Yes, dear Eleanor," returned he, "I have heard of our daughter."

"And she lives?—she lives?—tell me if she lives!"

"Yes, she lives."

"And I shall see her—I shall embrace my child again!"

"Yes, love yes," replied he, and burst into tears.

"When? O when?" she exclaimed, "when will you take me to her now?"

"Be calm my sweet one. You shall see our child—our long lost child. You shall see her now—she is here."

"Here!—my child!" she exclaimed, and sank back upon her seat.

Words would fail to paint the tender interview—the mother's joy—the daughter's wonder—the long, the passionate embrace—the tears of all—the looks—the words—the moments of unutterable feeling.

I shall next notice the confession of Susan. Clennel promised her forgiveness if she would confess the whole truth, and he doubted that from her he would also obtain tidings of his son, and learn where he might find him if he yet lived. I shall give her story in her own words.

"When I came amongst you," she began, "I said that I was an orphan, and I told ye so far as I knew myself. I have been bred amongst the people ye call gipsies in infancy. They fed me before I could provide for myself. I have wandered with them through many lands. They taught me many things, and while young sent me as a want into families, that I might gather information to assist them in upholding their theories of fortune-telling. I dared not to obey them—they kept me as a slave, and knew that they would destroy my life for an act of disobedience. I was in London when ye cruelly burned down the bit town between the Key-heugh and Cloven-crag—on that night would have been your last, but through Faa vowed more cruel vengeance and death on you and yours. After our king was carried away your son, I was ordered to London to assist in the plot o' revenge. At length succeeded in getting into your city, and the rest ye know. When ye were a' busy wi' your company, I slipped into the woods wi' the bairn in my arms, where others were ready to meet us, and long before ye missed us we were miles across the hills, and frae that day to this your daughter is passed as mine."

"But tell me all woman, as you hope for your pardon or protection—where is my son, that little Harry—does he live?—where shall I find him?"

"As I live," replied Susan, "I cannot tell where there are but two know concerning him, that is the king and his wife Elspeth, and there is but one way of discovering any thing respecting him, which is by crossing Elspeth's loof, that she may betray her husband, and she would do it for revenge's sake if her ill husband has he been to her, and in her old days he has discarded her for another."

"And where may she be found?" inquired Clennel earnestly.

"That," added Susan, "is a question I cannot answer. She was with the people in the glen to-day, and was the first to raise the spear when your dog fastened its teeth in the flesh o' your ain bairn—but she may be to seek and ill to find now—for she is with them that travel fast and far, and that will see her hindmost."

Deep was the disappointment of the laird when he found he could obtain no tidings of his son. But at the intercession of his daughter (whose untutored mind her fond mother had begun to instruct) Susan was freely pardoned, promised protection from her tribe, and again admitted as one of the household.

I might describe the anxious care of the fond mother, as day by day she sat by her new-found and lovely daughter's side, teaching her, and telling her of a hundred things of which she had never heard before, while her father sat gazing and listening near them, rejoicing over both.

But the ray of sunshine which had penetrated the house of Clennel, was not destined to be of long duration. At that period a fearful cloud overhung the whole land, and the fury of civil war seemed about to burst forth.

The threatening storm did explode, a bigoted king overstepped his prerogative, set at naught the rights and liberties of the subject—and an indignant people stained their hands with blood. A political convulsion shook the empire to its centre. Families and individuals became involved in the general catastrophe, and the house of Clennel did not escape. In common with the majority of the English gentry of that period, Clennel was a staunch loyalist, and if not exactly a lover of the king, or an ardent admirer of his acts, yet one who would fight for the crown though it should (as it was expressed about the time) "hang by a bush." When therefore the Parliament declared war against the king, and the name of Cromwell spread awe throughout the country; and when some said that a prophet and deliverer had risen amongst them, and others an ambitious hypocrite and a tyrant, Clennel armed a body of his dependants, and hastened to the assistance of the sovereign, leaving his wife and his newly found daughter with the promise of a speedy return.

It is unnecessary to describe all that he did or encountered during the civil wars. He had been a zealous partisan of the first Charles, and he fought for the fortunes of his son to the last. He was present at the battle of Worcester, which Cromwell calls his "crowning mercy," in the September of 1651—where the already dispirited royalists were finally routed; and he fought by the side of

the king until the streets were heaped with dead, and when Charles fled, he with others accompanied him to the Borders of Staffordshire.

Having bid the young prince an affectionate farewell, Clennel turned back with the intention of proceeding on his journey on the following day to Northumberland, though he was aware that from the part which he had taken in the royal cause, even his person was in danger. Yet the desire again to behold his wife and daughter overcame his fears, and the thought of meeting them in some degree consoled him for the fate of his prince, and the result of the struggle in which he had been engaged.

But he had not proceeded far when he was met by two men dressed as soldiers of the parliamentary army, the one a veteran with grey hairs, and the other a youth. The shades of night had set in, but the latter he instantly recognised as a young soldier whom he had that day wounded in the streets of Worcester.

"Stand!" said the old man as they met him, and the younger drew his sword.

"If I stand!" exclaimed Clennel, "it shall not be when an old man and a boy command me;" and following their example he unsheathed his sword.

"Boy!" exclaimed the youth, "whom call ye boy? think ye because ye wounded me this morn that fortune shall aye sit on your arm?—yield or try."

They made several thrusts at each other, and the old man as an indifferent spectator stood looking on. But the youth, by a dexterous blow, shivered the sword in Clennel's hand, and left him at his mercy.

"Now yield ye," he exclaimed, "the chance is mine now—in the morning it was thine."

"Ye seem a fair foe," replied Clennel;—"and loath am I to yield, but that I am weaponless."

"Dispatch him at once," growled the old man, "if he spilled your blood in the morning there can be nae harm in spilling his the night—and especially after giein' him a fair chance."

"Father," returned the youth, "would ye have me to kill a man in cold blood?"

"Let him submit to be bound then, hands and eyes, or I will," cried the senior.

The younger obeyed, and Clennel finding

himself disarmed, submitted to his fate; and his hands were bound and his eyes tied up so that he knew not where they led him.

After wandering many miles, and having laid upon what appeared the cold earth a lodging, he was aroused from a comfortable and troubled sleep, by a person tearing the bandage from his eyes, and ordering him to prepare for his trial. He started to his feet. He looked around, and beheld that he stood in the midst of a gipsy encampment. He was not a man given to fear, but a sickness came over his heart when he thought of his wife and daughter, and that knowing the character of the people in whose power he was, he should never behold them again.

The males of the Faa tribe began to assemble in a sort of half circle in the area of the encampment, and in the midst of them towering over the heads of all, he immediately distinguished the tall figure of Willie Faa, in whom he also discovered the grey haired parliamentary soldier of the previous night. But the youth with whom he had twice contended and once wounded, and to whom he had been made prisoner, he was unable to single out amongst them.

He was rudely dragged before them, and Willie Faa cried—

"Ken ye the culprit?"

"Clennel o' Northumberland!—our enemy!" exclaimed twenty voices.

"Yes," continued Willie, "Clennel o' our enemy—the burner o' our humble habitations—that left the auld, the sick, the infirm and the helpless, and the infants o' our kind, to perish in the kindling flames. Had he burned his house the punishment would have been death, and shall we do less to him than he would do to us?"

"No! no!" they exclaimed with one voice.

"But," added Willie, "though he would have disgraced us wi' a gallows, as he has been a soldier, I propose that he hae the honour o' a soldier's death, and that Harry Faa be appointed to shoot him."

"All! all! all!" was the cry.

"He shall die with the setting sun," said Willie, and again they cried—"Agreed!"

Such was the form of trial which Clennel underwent, when he was again rudely dragged away, and placed in a tent round which four strong Faas kept guard. He had

alone an hour, when his judge the Faa entered, and addressed him--

Now laird Clennel, say ye that I haena to see day about wi' ye : when ye turned frae beneath your roof, when the drilt fierce and the wind howled in the moors, it not tauld to ye that ye would rue it ? when ye mocked the admonition and the at, and after that cruelly burned us out house and ha'. When I came hame, I w my auld mother, that was within three us of a hunder, cowering owre the reeking ne, without a wa' to shelter her, and croon-curses on the doer o' the black deed.-- are were my youngest bairns too, crouch- by their granny's side, starving wi' hun- as weel's wi' cauld, for ye burned a', and 'tho' their bit- o' hands before the burning so' the house that they were born in to m them! That night I vowed vengeance you, and even on that night I would have ruted it, but I was prevented, and glad I now that I was prevented, for my ven- ee has been complete--or a'but complete ? my ain hand I snatched your son and r from his mother's side, and a terrible e I had for it. But revenge lent me haith gth and speed. And when ye had ano- bairn that was like to live, I forced a e that some of our folk had stolen when infant, to bring it to us. Ye have got daughter back again, but no before she cost ye many a sad heart and mony a tear, and that was some revenge. But substance o' my satisfaction and revenge in what I hae to tell ye. Ye die this it as the sun gaes down ; and hearken to now--the young soldier whom ye wound- d the streets o' Worcester, and who last t made you prisoner, was your son--your --your lost son ! Ha ! ha!--Clennel, am I venged ?"

son !" screamed the prisoner ; "mons- that is that ye say ? Strike me dead now, in your power--but torment me not !"

Ha ! ha ! ha !" again laughed the grey ed savage ; " man, ye are about to die, ye know not ye are born. Ye have not a half I have to tell. I heard that ye joined the standard of king Charles. I, g in my own right, care for neither your nor parliament ; but I resolved to wear, time, the cloth of old Noll, and of ma- your son do the same, that I might have

an opportunity of meeting you as an enemy, and seeing him strike you to the heart. That satisfaction I had not, but I had its equivalent --yesterday I saw you shed his blood on the streets of Worcester, and in the evening he gave you a prisoner into my hands that desired you."

" Grey haired monster !" exclaimed Clennel --" have ye no feeling--have ye no heart : speak ye to torment me, or tell me truly have I seen my son ?"

" Patience man !" said the Faa with a smile of Sardonic triumph, " my story is but half finished. It was the blood of your son ye shed yesterday at Worcester : it was your son who disarmed ye and gave ye into my power-- and best of all ! now, hear me ! hear me !-- lose not a word ! It is the hand of your son that this night, at sunset, shall send you to eternity ! Now tell me Clennel, am I not revenged ? do ye not rue it ?"

" Wretch ! wretch !" cried the miserable parent, " in mercy strike me dead. If I have raised my sword against my son let that suffice ! but spare, O spare my child from being an involuntarily parricide !"

" Hush fool !" said the Faa, " I have waited for this consummation of my revenge for twenty years, and think ye that I will be deprived of it now by a few whining words ? Remember sunset," he added, and left the tent.

Evening came, and the disk of the sun began to disappear behind the western hills. Men and women, old and the young amongst the Faas, came out from their encampment to behold the death of their enemy. Clennel was brought forth between two, his hands fastened to his sides, and a bandage round his mouth to prevent him making himself known to his executioner. A rope was also brought round his body, and he was tied to the trunk of an old ash tree. The women of the tribe began a sort of yell or coronach, and their king stepping forward, and smiling savagely in the face of his victim, cried aloud--

" Harry Faa ! stand forth and perform the duty your tribe have imposed on you."

A young man reluctantly, and with slow and unwilling step, issued from one of the tents. He carried a musket in his hand, and placed himself in front of the prisoner, at about twenty yards from him.

"Make ready!" cried Willie Faa in a voice like thunder, and the youth, though his hands shook, levelled the musket at his victim.

But at that moment one who to appearance seemed a maniac, sprang from a clump of whins behind the ash tree where the prisoner was bound, and throwing herself before him she cried--

"Hold! would ye murder your own father! Harry Clennel! would ye murder your father! Mind ye not when ye was stolen frae your mother's side, as ye gathered wild flowers in the wood?"

It was Elspeth Faa.

The musket dropped from the hands of the intended executioner—a thousand recollections, that he had often fancied dreams, flit across his memory. He again seized the musket, he rushed forward to his father, but ere he reached Elspeth had cut the cords that bound him, and placed a dagger in his hands for his defence, and with extended arms he flew to meet him, crying—"My son! my son!"

The old Faa king shook with rage and disappointment, and his first impulse was to poignard his wife, but he feared to do so, although he had injured her, and had seen her for years, her influence was great with the tribe than his.

"Now Willie," cried she, addressing him, "wha rues it now? Fareweel for once a'—and the bairn I brought up will find shelter for my auld head."

It were vain to tell how Clennel and his son wept on each other's neck, and how they exchanged forgiveness. But such was the influence of Elspeth, that they departed from the midst of the Faas unmolested, and she accompanied them.

Imagination must picture the scene when the long lost son flung himself upon the bosom of his mother, and pressed his sister's hand in his. Clennel Hall rang with the sounds of joy for many days, and ere they were ended Andrew Smith placed a ring upon the finger of Susan, and they became one flesh—she a respectable woman, and Elspeth lived to the age of ninety and seventy years beneath its roof.

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## THE SOLITARY OF THE CAVE.

On the banks of the Tweed, close to where the Whitadder flows into it, there is a small and singular cave. It is evidently not an excavation formed by nature, but the work of man's hands. To the best of my recollection it is about ten feet square, and in the midst

of it is a pillar or column, hewn out of solid rock, and reaching from the floor to the roof. It is an apartment cut out of the rock; and must have been a work of great labour. In the neighbourhood it is generally known by the name of the King's Cove.

tradition runs that it was once the hiding place of a Scottish king. Formerly it was ascended from the level of the water by a flight of steps, also hewn out of the rock; but the mouldering touch of time—the storms of winter—and the undermining action of the sea, which continually appears to press upward, has long since swept them away. A large part of them were entire within the memory of living men: what king used it as a hiding place tradition sayeth not; but it is whispered that it was used for a like purpose by the “great patriot hero,” Sir Wm. Wallace. These things may have been; but mainly it was never formed to be a mere place of concealment for a king, though such is the popular belief. Immediately above the cave where it is situated, are the remains of a Roman camp; and it is more than probable that the cave is coeval with the camp, and may have been used for religious purposes—or perchance as a prison. But our story refers to more modern times. Almost thirty years have fallen as drops into the ocean of eternity, since a strange and solitary man took up his abode in the cave. He appeared a melancholy being: he was unseen; and there were few with whom he could hold converse: how he lived no one could tell, nor would he permit any one to reach his singular habitation. It was generally supposed that he had been ‘out,’ as the phrase went, with Prince Charles, who, being hunted as a wild beast upon the mountains, escaped to France only a few days before the appearance of the Solitary on the Tweedside. This however was merely a conjecture. The history and character of the stranger were a mystery; and the more ignorant of the people believed him to be a mad or wicked man, who while he avoided all manner of intercourse with his fellow creatures had power over and was familiar with the spirits of the air; for at that period the belief in witchery was still general: his arguments were as singular as his habits; and a large coat or cloak of a brown colour fastened around him with a leathern girdle covered his person; while on his head he wore a long, conical cap, composed of feathers somewhat resembling those worn many days by some of our regiments of dragoons. His beard, which was black, was also allowed to grow. But there was a dignity

in his step, as he was occasionally observed walking upon the banks over his hermitage and an expression of pride upon his countenance and in the glance of his eyes, which spoke him to be a person of some note.

For three years he continued the inhabitant of the cave, and throughout that period he permitted no one to enter it. But, on its appearing to be deserted for several days, some fishermen, apprehending that the recluse might be dying, or perchance dead within it, ascended the flight of steps, and, removing a rude door which merely rested against the rock and blocked up the aperture, they perceived that the cave was tenantless. On the farther side of the pillar, two boards slightly raised as an inclined plane, and covered with dried rushes, marked what had been the bed of the Solitary. A low stool, a small and rude table, and two or three simple cooking utensils, completed the furniture of the apartment. The fishermen were about to withdraw, when one of them picked up a small parcel of manuscripts near the door of the cave, as though the hermit had dropped them by accident at his departure. They appeared to be intended as letters to a friend, and were entitled—

#### “MY HISTORY.”

“Dear Lewis, (they began,) when death shall have sealed up the eyes, and perchance some stranger dug a grave for your early friend, Edward Fleming, then the words which he now writes for your perusal may meet your eye. You believe me dead,—and would to Heaven that I had died, ere my hands became red with guilt, and my conscience a living fire which preys upon and tortures me, but will not consume me. You remember—for you were with me—the first time I met Catherine Forrester. It was when her father invited us to his house in Nithsdale, and our hearts, like the season, were young. She came upon my eyes as a dream of beauty, a being more of heaven than of earth. You, Lewis, must admit that she was all that fancy can paint of loveliness. Her face, her form, her auburn ringlets falling over a neck of alabaster!—where might man find their equal? She became the sole object of my waking thoughts, the vision that haunted my sleep. And was she not good as beautiful? Oh! the glance of her eyes was mild as a summer morning breaking on the



earth, when the first rays of the sun shoot like streaks of gold across the sea. Her smile, too—you cannot have forgot its sweetness! Never did I behold it, but I thought an angel was in my presence, shedding influence over me. There was a soul, too, in every word she uttered. Affectation she had none; but the outpourings of her mind flowed forth as a river, and her wit played like the ripple which the gentle breeze makes to sport upon its bosom. You may think that I am about to write you a maudlin tale of love, such as would draw tears, from a maiden in her teens, while those of more sober age turned away from it, and cried—'pshaw!' But fear not, there is more of misery and madness than of love in my history. And yet, why should we turn with affected disgust from a tale of the heart's first, best, purest, and dearest affections? It is affectation, Lewis—the affectation of a cynic, who cries out, 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' when the delicacy of young affection has perished in his own breast. Who is there bearing the human form that looks not back upon those days of tenderness and bliss, with a feeling akin to that which our first parents might experience, when they looked back upon the Eden from which they were expelled? Whatever may be your feelings, forgive me, while, for a few moments, I indulge in the remembrance of this one bright spot in my history, even although you are already in part acquainted with it.

We had been inmates beneath the roof of Sir William Forrester for somewhat more than two months, waiting to receive intelligence respecting the designs of his Excellency or the landing of the Prince. It was during the Easter holidays, and you had gone to Edinburgh for a few days, to ascertain the feelings and the preparations of the friends of the cause there. I remained almost forgetful of our errand, dreaming beneath the eyes of Catherine. It was on the second day after your departure, Sir William sat brooding over the possible results of the contemplated expedition, now speaking of the feeling of the 'people, the power of the house of Hanover, the resources of Prince Charles, and the extent of the assistance he was likely to receive from France—drowning at the same time, every desponding thought that arose in an additional glass of claret, and calling on me to follow his example. But

my thoughts were of other matters. Catharine sat beside me arranging Easter gifts to the poor; and I, though awkwardly, attempted to assist her. Twilight was drawing and the day was stormy for the season, the snow fell, and the wind whirled round the drift in fantastic columns; but with the fire blazed blithely, mingling its light with the fading day, and though the stars raged without, and Sir William seemed ready to sink into melancholy, I was happy more than happy. But attend, Lewis, I never told you this; at the very moment when my happiness seemed tranquil as the rays of a summer moon at midnight, she bringing them on a mountain, and casting deep, silent shadow on a lake, as though revealed beneath the waters a bronzed and a silent world, the trampling of a horse's feet was heard at the gate, I looked towards the narrow window. A blackish, brown-shag animal attempted to trot towards the door. It had rough hanging ears, a round form, a hollow back; and a tall, lathy looking figure dismounted from it, gave the bridle to William's groom—and uttered his respects respecting it, notwithstanding of the slow with the slowness and solemnity of a judge. And fearful that, although it being so late, delivered, that they might not be obeyed the letter—

'A merciful man regardeth the life of a beast,' said he; and stalked to the stable, behind them.

'There goes a brace of originals,' thought I, and with a great difficulty, I suppressed my laugh.

But Catharine I perceived smiled not, as her father left the room to welcome the servant.

The tall, thin man now entered. I called him tall, for his stature exceeded six feet; and say thin, for nature had been abundant liberal with bones and muscle, but was niggard in clothing them with flesh: his limbs however were lengthy enough for a giant of seven feet, and it would be difficult for me to say whether his swinging arms which seemed suspended from his shoulders appeared more of use or of encumbrance.

His countenance was a thoughtful blank, and he stretched out his huge collection of fingers to shake hands with me.—

'You will allow me such an expression.—' He had large, grey, fixture-like, unmeaning eyes; and his hair was carefully combed back and plaited behind, to show his brow to the best advantage. He gave two familiar glances across the floor, and he either did not see me, or he cared not for seeing me.

'A good Easter to ye, Catherine, my love,' said he, 'still employed wi' works o' love and duty? How have ye been dear?' And he lifted her fair hand to his long blue lips.

Catherine was silent—she became pale, deadly pale. I believe her hand grew cold at his touch, and that she would have looked at me; but she could not—she dared not.—*Nothing forbode it.* But with me the spell was broken—the chain that bound me to her father's house, that withheld me from accompanying you to Eninburgh, was revealed.—An uncouth stranger tore the veil from my eyes—he shewed me my first glance of love in the mirror of jealousy. My teeth grated at her—my eyes flashed—drops of sweat fell upon my forehead. My first impulse was to dash the intruder to the ground; but to hide my feelings, I rose from my seat, and was about to leave the room.

'Sir, I ask your pardon,' said he, 'I did not perceive that ye was a stranger, but that accounts for the uncommon dryness o' my K.—' Yet, Sir, ye mustna think that though I am as modest as a bit daisy peeping out from beneath a clod to get a blink o' the sun, that we can ha'e our ain crack by oursel's for a' that.'

'Sir Peter Blakely,' said Catherine, rising with a look expressive of indignation and confusion, 'what mean ye?'

'Oh, no offence, Miss Catherine—none in the world,' he was beginning to say, when, unluckily, her father entered, as I found that I had advanced a step towards the stranger, with I scarce know what intention; it was not friendly.

'Sir Peter,' said Sir William, 'allow me to introduce you to my young friend, Mr. Fleming; he is *one of us*, a supporter of the same cause.'

He introduced me in like manner. I bowed—trembled—bowed again.

'I am very happy to see you, Mr. Fleming,' said Sir Peter, 'very happy, indeed;'

My eyes glared on his, and I felt them burn as I gazed on him. He evidently quailed, and would have stepped back, but I grasped his hand, and, scarce knowing what I did, I grasped it as though a vice had held it.—The blood sprang to his thin fingers, and his glazed orbs started farther from their sockets.

'Save us a'! friend! friend! Mr. Fleming! or what do they ca' ye?' he exclaimed in agony; 'is that the way ye shake hands in your country? I would ha' ye to mind my fingers arena made o' cauld iron.'

The cold and the snow had done half the work with his fingers before, and the grasp I gave them squeezed them into torture; and he stood shaking and rattling them in the air; applying them to his lips and again to the fire, and finally, dancing round the room, swinging his tormented hand, and exclaiming—

'Sorrow take ye! for I diinna ken whether my fingers be off or on!'

Sir William strove to assure him it was merely the effect of cold, and that I could not intend to injure him, while, with difficulty, he kept gravity at the grotesque contortions and stupendous strides of his intended son-in-law. Even Catherine's countenance relaxed into a languid smile, and I, in spite of my feelings, laughed outright, while the object of our amusement at once wept and laughed to keep us company.

You will remember that I slept in an apartment separated only by a thin partition from the breakfast parlour. In the partition which divided my chamber from the parlour was a door that led to it, one half of which was of glass fell a piece of drapery. It was not the door by which I passed from or entered my sleeping room, but through the drapery I could discover (if so minded) whatever took place in the adjoining apartment.

Throughout the night I had not retired to rest; my soul was filled with anxious and uneasy thoughts, and they chased sleep from me. I felt how deeply, shall I say how madly, I loved my Catherine, and in Sir Peter Blakely I beheld a rival who had forestalled me in soliciting her hand, and I hated him. My spirit was exhausted with its own bitter and conflicting feelings; and I sat down as

a man over whom agony of soul has brought a stupor, with my eyes vacantly fixed upon the curtain which screened me from the breakfast parlour. Sir Peter entered it, and the sound of his foot-steps broke my reverie. I could perceive him approach the fire, draw forward a chair, and place his feet on each side of the grate. He took out his tobacco-box, and began to enjoy the comforts of his morning pipe in front of a 'green fire,' shivering—for the morning was cold—and edging forward his chair, until his knees almost came in contact with the mantelpiece. His pipe was finished, and he was preparing to fill it a second time. He struck it over his finger to shake out the dust which remained after his last whiff; he struck it a second time, (he had been half dreaming like myself,) and it broke in two and fell among his feet. He was left without a companion. He arose and began to walk across the room; his countenance bespoke anxiety and restlessness. I heard him utter the words—

'I will marry her!—yea I will!—my sweet Catherine!' Every muttered word he uttered was a dagger driven into my bosom.—At that moment, Sir William entered the parlour.

'Sir,' said Sir Peter, after their morning salutations, 'I have been thinking it is a long way for me to come over from Roxburgh to her—and he paused, took out his snuff-box, opened the lid, and added—'Yes Sir, it is a long way'—he took a pinch of snuff, and continued—'Now, Sir William, I have been thinking that it would be as well, indeed a great deal better, for you to come over to my lodge at a time like this.' Here he paused, and placed the snuff-box in his pocket.

'I can appreciate your kind intentions,' said Sir William, 'but—'

'There can be no buts about it,' returned the other; 'I perceive ye dinna understand me, Sir William. What I mean is this'—but here he seemed at a loss to explain his meaning; and, after standing with a look of confusion for a few moments, he took out his tobacco-box, and added, 'I would thank you, Sir, to order me a pipe.' The pipe was brought—he put it in the fire, and added—'I have been thinking, Sir William, very seriously have I been thinking, on a change of life. I am no great bairn in the world now; and, I am sure, Sir, none knows better than

you, (who for ten years was my guardian, that I never had such a degree of thoughtlessness about me as to render it possible to suppose that I would make a bad husband to any woman that was disposed to be happy. Once more he became silent, and taking his pipe from the fire, after a few thoughtful whiffs, he resumed—'Servants will bathe their own way' without a mistress over them and I am sure it would be a pity to see any thing going wrong about my place, for everbody will say, that has seen it, that the *ex* doesna wauken the birds to throw the air of music over a lovelier spot, in a' his journey round the globe. Now, Sir William he added, 'it is needless for me to say it, if every person within twenty miles round is aware that I am just as fond o' Miss Catherine as the laverock is o' the blue lift; and it is equally sure and evident to me, that I care for naebody but myself.'

Lewis! imagine my feelings when I hear him utter this! There was a word that may not write, which filled my soul and almost burst from my tongue. I felt ago and indignation burn over my face. Again I heard him add—

'When I was over in the middle o' herest last, ye remember that, in your presence I put the question fairly to her; and although she hung down her head and said nothing yet that, Sir, in my opinion, is just what a virtuous woman ought to consent. I perceive that it shewed true affection, and stilling modesty; and, Sir, what I am thinking is this—Catherine is very little short of one and twenty, and I, not so young as I have been, am every day drawing nearer to my serf and yellow leaf; and I perceive it would be great foolishness—yea that so yourself—to be putting off time.'

'My worthy friend,' said Sir William, 'you are aware that the union you speak of is one from which my consent has never been withheld; and I am conscious that, in complying with your wishes, I shall bestow my daughter's hand upon one whose heart is as worthy of her affections, as his actions and principles are of her esteem.'

Sir Peter gave a skip (if I may call a skip of eight feet by such a name) across the room, he threw the pipe into the grate, and, with the hand of Sir William, exclaimed—

'Oh, joy supreme! oh, bliss beyond compare! My cup runs ower—Heaven's bounty canna mair!'

'Excuse the quotation from a profane author,' he added, 'upon such a solemn occasion; but he expresses exactly my feeling; at this moment; for, oh, could you feel what I feel here? and he laid his hand upon his breast. 'Whatever be my faults, whatever my weakness, I am strong in gratitude.'

You will despise me for having played the part of a mean listener. Be it so, Lewis—I despise, I hate myself. I heard it proposed that the wedding day should take place within a month; but the consent of Catherine was not yet obtained. I perceived her enter the apartment; I witnessed her agony when her father communicated to her the proposal of his friend, and his wish that it should be agreed to. Shall I tell it you, my friend, that the agony I perceived on her countenance kindled a glow of joy upon mine.—Yes, I rejoiced in it, for it filled my soul with hope, it raised my heart as from the grave.

Two days after this, and I wandered forth among the woods to nourish hope in solitude. Every trace of the recent storm had passed away, the young buds were wooing the sunbeams, and the viewless cuckoo lifted up his voice from afar. All that fell upon the ear, and all that met the eye, contributed to melt the soul to tenderness. My thoughts were of Catherine, and I now thought how I should unbosom before her my whole heart; or I fancied her by my side, her fair face beaming smiles on mine, her lips whispering music. My spirit became entranced—it was filled with her image. With my arms folded upon my bosom, I was wandering thus unconsciously along a footpath in the wood, when I was aroused by the exclamation—

'Edward!'

It was my Catherine. I started as though a disembodied spirit had met me on my path. Her agitation was not less than mine. I stepped forward—I would have clasped her to my bosom—but resolution forsook me—her presence awed me—I hesitated and faltered—

'Miss Forrester!'

I had never called her by any other name; but as she afterwards told me, the word then went to her heart, and she thought, 'He cares not for me, and I am lost!' Would to Heaven that such had ever remained her thoughts, and your friend would have been

less guilty and less wretched than he this day is.

I offered her my arm, and we walked onward together; but we spoke not to each other—we could not speak. Each had a thousand things to say, but they were all unutterable. A stifled sigh escaped from her bosom, and mine responded to it. We had approached within a quarter of a mile of her father's house. Still we were both silent.—I trembled—I stood suddenly still.

'Catherine!' I exclaimed, and my eyes remained fixed upon the ground—my bosom laboured in agony; I struggled for words, and, at length, added, 'I cannot return to your father's—Catherine, I cannot!'

'Edward!' she cried, 'whither—whither would you go?—you would not leave me thus? What means this?'

'Means! Catherine!' returned I, 'are ye not to be another's? Would that I had died before I had looked upon thy face, and my soul was lighted with a fleeting joy, only that the midnight of misery might sit down on it forever.'

'Oh, speak not thus!' she cried, and her gentle form shook as a blighted leaf in an autumnal breeze; 'speak not language unfit for you to utter or me to hear. Come, dear Edward!'

'Dear Edward!' I exclaimed, and my arms fell upon her neck, 'that word has recalled me to myself! *Dear Edward!*—repeat those words again!—let the night-breeze whisper them, and bear them on its wings for ever! Tell me, Catherine, am I indeed *dear* to you?'

She burst into tears, and hid her face upon my bosom.

'Edward!' she sobbed, 'let us leave this place—I have said too much—let us return home.'

'No, loved one!' resumed I, 'if you have said too much, we part now, and eternity may not unite us! Farewell, Catherine! be happy! Bear my thanks to your father, and say, but, no! no!—say nothing—let not the wretch he has honoured with his friendship blast his declining years! Farewell, love! I pressed my lips upon her snowy brow, and again I cried—'Farewell!'

'You must not—shall not leave me,' she said, and trembled, while her fair hands grasped my arm.

'Catherine,' added I, 'can I see you another's? The thought chokes me! Would you have me behold it?—shall my eyes be withered with the sight! Never! never! Forgive me!—Catherine, forgive me! I have acted rashly, perhaps cruelly: but I would not have spoken as I have done—I would have fled from your presence—I would not have given one pang to your gentle bosom; your father should not have said that he sheltered a scorpion that turned and stung him; but, meeting you as I have done to day, I could no longer suppress the tumultuous feelings that struggled in my bosom. But it is passed. Forgive me—forget me!'

Still memory hears her sighs, as her tears fell upon my bosom, and, wringing her hands in bitterness, she cried—

'Say not *forget* you! If, in compliance with my father's will, I must give my hand to another, and if to him my vows must be plighted, I will keep them sacred—Yet my heart is your's!'

Lewis! I was delirious with joy, as I listened to this confession from her lips. The ecstasy of years was compressed in a moment of deep, speechless, almost painful luxury. We mingled our tears together, and our vows went up to heaven a sacrifice pure as the first that ascended, when the young earth offered up its incense from paradise to the new-born sun.

I remained beneath her father's roof until within three days of the time fixed for her becoming the bride of Sir Peter Blakely.—Day by day I beheld my Catherine move to and fro like a walking corpse—pale, speechless, her eyes fixed and lacking their lustre. Even I seemed unnoticed by her. She neither sighed nor wept. A trance had come over her faculties. She made no arrangements for her bridal; and when I at times whispered to her that '*she should be mine!*' O Lewis! she would then smile—but it was a smile where the light of the soul was not; more dismal, more vacant than the laugh of idiotcy! Think, then, how unlike they were the rainbows of the soul, which I had seen radiate the countenance of my Catherine!

Sir Peter Blakely had gone into Roxburghshire, to make preparations for taking home his bride, and her father had joined you in Edinburgh, relative to the affairs of Prince Charles, in consequence of a letter which he had received from you, and the contents

which might not even be communicated to me.

At any other time, and this lack of confidence would have provoked my resentment, but my thoughts were then of other things, and I heeded it not. Catherine and I were ever together, and for hour succeeding hour we sat silent, gazing on each other. O my friend! could your imagination conjure up our feelings and our thoughts in this hour of trial, you would start, shudder, and think no more. The glance of each was as a pestilence, consuming the other: as the period of her father's return approached, a thousand resolutions crowded within my bosom, some of magnanimity, some of rashness.—But I was a coward—morally I was a coward—though I feared not the drawn sword nor the field of danger more than another man, yet misery compels me to confess what I was. Every hour, every moment, the sacrifice of parting from her became more painful. Oh, a mother might have torn her infant from her breast, dashed it on the earth, trampled on its outstretched hands, and laughed at its dying screams, rather than that I now could have lived to behold my Catherine another's.

Suddenly, the long, the melancholy charm of my silence broke. I fell upon my knee, and clenching my hands together, cried—

'Gracious Heaven!—if I be within the pale of thy mercy, spare me this sight!—let me be crushed as an atom—but let not mine eyes see the day when tongue speaks it, nor mine ears hear the sound that calls her another's.'

I started to my feet, I grasped her hands in frenzy, I exclaimed—'you shall be mine!' I took her hand. 'Catherine,' I added, 'you will not—you shall not give your hand to another! It is mine, and from mine it shall not part!'—and I pressed it to my breast as a mother would her child from the knife of a destroyer.

'It shall be yours!' she replied wildly, and the feeling of life and consciousness again gushed through her heart. But she sank on my breast, and sobbed—

'My father! O my father!'

'Your father is Sir Peter Blakely's friend,' replied I, 'and he will not break the pledge he has given him. With his return, Catherine, my hopes and life perish together. Now only can you save yourself—now only can you save me. Fly with me! and your father's

ing will not be withheld. Hesitate now  
farewell happiness.'

hastily raised her head from my breast  
stood proudly before me, and casting  
right blue eyes upon mine, with a look  
ing inquiry said—

toward! what would you have me to do  
as my love for you is—and I blush not  
less it—would you have me to fly with  
accompanied by the tears of blighted re-  
—followed by the groans and lamen-  
of a heart-broken father—pointed at  
hager of the world as an outcast of  
a frailty? Would you have me to  
the last cord that binds to existence the  
ing to whom I am related on earth—  
am have I but my father? My hand  
never give to another; but I cannot,  
to leave my father's house. If Cath-  
Forrester has gained your love, she  
forfeit your esteem. I may droop in  
Edward, as a bud broken on its stem,  
I'll not be trampled on in public as a  
weed.'

my beloved, mistake me not,' re-  
'when the lamb has changed na-  
the wolf, then, but not till then,  
breathe a thought, a word in your  
that I would blush to utter at the  
heaven. Within two days your fa-  
his intended son-in-law will return,  
ther's threats and tears will subdue  
her's purpose. Catherine will be a  
ward a'—

not impiously,' she cried, imploring-  
! what can we do?'

esent moment only is left us,' repli-  
-night become the wife of Edward  
and happiness will be ours.'

stood still; the blood rushed into  
and back to her heart, while her  
aved, and he cheeks glowed with  
of incertitude, as she resolved and

efore should I tire you with a re-  
-t you already know. That night  
me became my wife. For a few  
father disowned us; but when  
of the Prince began to ripen,  
instrumentality we were again  
to his favour. Yet I was grieved  
in consequence of our marriage,  
lakely's mind had become affect-

ed; for while I detested him as a rival, I was  
compelled to esteem him as a man.

But now, Lewis, comes the misery of my  
story. You are aware that before I saw my  
Catherine, I was a ruined man. Youthful  
indiscretions—but why call them indiscre-  
tions?—rather let me say my headlong sins,  
before I had well attained the age of man-  
hood, contributed to undermine my estate—  
and the unhappy political contest in which  
we were engaged had wrecked it still more.  
I had ventured all that my lollies had left me  
upon the fortunes of Prince Charles. You  
knew that I bought arms, kept men ready  
for the field, I made a voyage to France, I  
assisted others in their distress; and in doing  
all this, I anticipated nothing less than an  
earldom, when the Stuarts should again sit  
on the throne of their fathers. You had more  
sagacity, more of the world's wisdom; and  
you told me I was wrong—that I was in-  
volving myself in a labyrinth from which I  
might never escape. But I thought myself  
wiser than you. I knew the loyalty and the  
integrity of my own actions, and with me at  
all times to feel was to act. I had dragged  
ruin around me, indulging in a vague dream  
of hope; and now I had obtained the hand  
of my Catherine, and I had not the courage  
to inform her that she had wed a ruined  
man.

It was when you and I were at the Univer-  
sity together, that the spirit of gambling  
threw its deceitful net around me, and my  
estate was sunk to half its value ere I was of  
age to enjoy it; the other half I had wrecked  
in idle schemes for the restoration of the Stu-  
arts. When, therefore, a few weeks after  
our marriage, I removed with my Catherine  
to London, I was a beggar, a bankrupt, liv-  
ing in fashionable misery. I became a uni-  
versal borrower, making new creditors to  
pacify the clamours of the old, and to hide  
from my wife the wretchedness of which I  
had made her a partner. 'And, O Lewis!  
the thought that she should discover our po-  
verty, was to me a perpetual agony. It came  
over the fondest throbbings of my soul like  
the echo of a funeral bell, for ever pealing its  
sepulchral boom through the music of bridal  
joy. I cared not for suffering as it might af-  
fect myself, but I could not behold her suffer  
—and suffer for my sake. I heard words of  
tenderness fall from her tongue, in accents  
sweeter than the melody of the lark's evening  
song, as its chirring descends to fold its

wings for the night by the side of its anxious mate. I beheld her smiling to beguile my care and fondly watching every expression of my countenance, as a mother watches over her sick child, and the half-concealed tear following the smile when her efforts proved unavailing—and my heart smote me that she should weep for me, while her tears, her smiles, and her tenderness, added to my anguish, and I was unable to say in my heart, 'be comforted.' It could not be affection which made me desirous of concealing our situation from her, but a weakness which makes us unwilling to appear before each other as we really are.

For twelve months I concealed, or thought that I had concealed, the bankruptcy which overwhelmed me as a helmless vessel on a tempestuous sea. But the Prince landed in Scotland, and the war began. I was employed in preparing the way for him in England, and for a season wild hopes, that made my head giddy, rendered me forgetful of the misery that had hung over and haunted me. But the brilliant and desperate game was soon over; our cause was lost—and with it my hopes perished—remorse entered my breast—and I trembled in the grasp of ruin. Sir William Forrester effected his escape to France, but his estates were confiscated, and my Catharine was robbed of the inheritance that would have descended to her. With this came another pang, more bitter than the loss of her father's fortune, for, he, now a fugitive in a strange land, and unconscious of my condition, had a right to expect assistance from me. The thought dried up my very heart's blood, and made it burn within me—and I thought I heard my Catharine soliciting me to extend the means of life to her father, which I was no longer able to bestow upon herself: for, with the ruin of our cause, my schemes of borrowing, and of allaying the clamour of creditors perished.

But it is said that evils come not singly, nor did they so with me; they came as a legion, each more cruel than that which preceded it. Within three weeks after the confiscation of the estates of Sir William Forrester, the individual who held the mortgage upon mine died, and his property passed into the hands—of whom?—Heaven and earth! Lewis, I can hardly write it.—His property, including the mortgage on my estate, passed into the hands of—Sir Peter Blakely! I could have died a thousand

deaths rather than have listened to the  
ings. My estate was sunk beyond its  
and now I was at the mercy of the  
had injured—of him I hated. I could  
doubt but that, now that I was in his p  
he would wring from me his 'pound of  
to the last grain—and he has done it!  
monster has done it! But to proceed  
my history.

My Catharine was now a mother, longer to conceal from her the wretches that surrounded us, and was now re-  
overwhelm us, was impossible; yet I  
the courage, the manliness to acquiesce  
with it, or prepare her for the coming

But she had penetrated my soul—she read our condition; and, while I sat beside buried in gloom, and my soul groined in agony, she took my hand in hers and said—

'Come, dear Edward, conceal not from me. If I cannot remove your sorrows, let me share them. I have borne much for you, I can bear more.'

'What mean ye, Catharine?' I inquired in a tone of petulance.

'My dear husband,' replied she, with fervent affection, 'think not I am ignorant of the sorrow that preys upon your breast. But brood not on poverty as an affliction. You may regain affluence, or you may not; it can neither add to nor diminish my happiness but as it affects you. Only assist me, and I will welcome penury. We are not of degradation or of suffering? No, no, degrading that is virtuous and honest where honesty and virtue are, that is true nobility, though their own hewer of wood. Believe not that poverty is the foe of affection. The assertion is oft-repeated, but idle falsehood of those who never loved. I have seen much poverty joined with content, within the clay, humble cotters, rendering their scanty coarse morsel sweeter than the dainties of the rich; and affection and esteem rose, from the knowledge that they endured privation together, and comforted each other. No, Edward,' she added, placing her face upon my shoulder, 'think not of suffering. We are young, the world and Heaven is bountiful. Leave those who envy them, and attend to the morsel of our industry deli-

first impulse was to press her to my bosom: pride and shame mastered me, and, a troubled voice, I exclaimed—'Catherine!

'Edward!' she continued, and her tears forth, 'let us study to understand each other—I am worthy of being your wife, I worthy of your confidence.'

I could not reply. I was dumb in admiration, in reverence of virtue and affection of which I felt myself unworthy. A load seemed to fall from my heart, I pressed her lips.

'Can not Edward be as happy as his Catherine,' she continued; 'we have, at least, enough for the present, and with frugality we are enough for years. Come, love, where will you be unhappy? Bo you our purse, and endeavouring to smile, she gently placed her purse in my hands.

'O Heavens!' I exclaimed, striking my forehead, and the purse dropped upon the floor, 'am I reduced to this? Never, Catherine! never! Let me perish in my penury, do not crush me not beneath the weight of my weakness! Death! what must you think of me?'

'Think of you?' she replied with a smile, 'with affection, playfulness, and sorrow. I did not think that you would refuse your poor wife's banker.'

'Catherine!' cried I, 'would that I had your virtue—half your generosity.'

'The half?' she answered, laughingly, 'you not the whole? Did I not give you mind and heart—faults and virtues—and a cruel man, have lost the half already—wretched Edward!'

'O!' exclaimed I, 'may Heaven render me worthy of such a wife!'

'Come, then,' returned she, 'smile upon Catherine—it is all over now.'

'What is all over, love?' inquired I.

'Nothing, nothing,' continued she, 'merely the difficulty a young husband, in making his wife acquainted with the details of the firm in which she has become partner.'

'I added I, bitterly, 'you find it bank-

'No, nay,' rejoined she, cheerfully, 'not a cent; rather say beginning the world with a small capital. Come, now, dearest,

smile, and say you will be cashier to Fleming & Co.'

'Catherine! O Catherine!' I exclaimed, and tears filled my eyes.

'Edward! O Edward!' returned she, laughing, and mimicking my emotion;—'good by, dear—good by!' and picking up the purse, she dropped it on my knee, and tripped out of the room, adding gaily—

'For still the house affairs would call her hence.'

Fondly, as I imagined, that I loved Catherine, I had never felt its intensity until now, nor been aware of how deeply she deserved my affection. My indiscretions and misfortunes had taught me the use of money—they had made me to know that it was an indispensable agent in our dealings with the world, but they had not taught me economy—and I do not believe that a course of misery, continued and increasing throughout life, would ever teach this useful and prudent lesson to one of a warm-hearted and sanguine temperament—nor would any power on earth or in years enable him to put it in practice save the daily and endearing example of an affectionate and virtuous wife. I do not mean the influence which all women possess during the oftentimes morbid admiration of what is called a honeymoon, but the deeper and holier power which grows with years, and departs not with grey hairs; in our boyish fancies being embodied, and our young feelings being made tangible, in the never-changing smile of her who was the sun of our early hopes, the spirit of our dreams—and who now, as the partner of our fate, ever smiles on us, and by a thousand attentions, a thousand kindnesses, and acts of love becomes every day dearer, and more dear to the heart, where it is her only ambition to reign, and sit secure in her sovereignty—while her chains are soft as her own bosom, and she spreads her virtues around us, till they become a part of our own being, like an angel stretching his wings over innocence.—Such is the power and influence of every woman who is as studious to reform and delight the husband as to secure the lover.

Such was the influence which, I believed, I now felt over my spirit, and which would save me from future folly and from utter ruin—but I was wrong, I was deceived—yes, most wickedly I was deceived—but you shall hear. On examining the purse I found that



it contained between four and five hundred pounds in gold and bills.

'This,' thought I, 'is the wedding present of her father to my poor Catherine, and she has kept it until now! Bless her! Heaven bless her.'

I wandered to and fro across the room, in admiration of her excellence, and my bosom was troubled with a painful sense of my own unworthiness. I had often, when my heart was full, attempted to soothe its feelings by pouring them forth in rhyme. There were writing materials upon the table before me: I sat down—I could think of nothing but my Catherine, and I wrote the following verses:

### TO MY WIFE.

Call woman—angel—goddess, what you will,  
With all that fancy breathes at passion's call,

With all that rapture fondly raves—and still  
That one word—Wife—outvies—contains  
them all.

It is a word of music which can fill  
The soul with melody, when sorrows fall  
Round us, like darkness, and her heart alone  
Is all that fate has left to call our own.

Her bosom is a fount of love that swells,  
Widens and deepens with its own outpouring,

And as a desert stream, for ever wells  
Around her husband's heart, when cares  
devouring

Dry up its very blood, and man rebels  
Against his being!—When despair is lowering,

And ills sweep round him, like an angry river,  
She is his star, his rock of hope for ever.

Yes; woman only knows what 'tis to mourn—  
She only feels how slow the moments glide,  
Ere those her young heart loved in joy return  
And breathe affection, smiling by her side.

Her's only are the tears that waste and burn,  
The anxious watchings, and affection's tide  
That never, never ebbs!—her's are the cares  
No ear hath heard, and which no bosom  
shares.

Cares—like her spirit, delicate as light.  
Trembling at early dawn from morning  
stars;—

Cares—all unknown to feeling and to sight  
Of rougher man, whose stormy bosom wars  
With each fierce passion in its fiery might;  
Nor deems how look unkind, or absence, jars  
Affection's silver chords by women wove,  
Whose soul, whose business, and whose life  
is—LOVE!

I left the verses upon the table, that she might find them when she entered, and that they might whisper to her that I, at least, appreciated her excellence, however little I might have merited it.

Lewis, even in my solitary cell, I feel blush upon my cheek, when I think of next part of my history. My hand trembles to write it, and I cannot now. Methinks even the cold rock that surrounds me lar at me in derision, and I feel myself the r of human beings. But I cannot describe to-day—I have gone too far already, and find that my brain burns. I have come up the past and I would hide myself its remembrance. Another day when brain is cool, when my hand trembles, I may tell you all; but in the shame of my debasement, my reason is shaken for throne."

Here ended the first part of the Her manuscript, and on another, which ran— he had written the words—

### "MY HISTORY CONTINUED.

"I told you, Lewis, where I last brok my history, that I left the verses on the for my Catherine. I doubted not that I devise some plan of matchless wisdom, that with the money so unexpectedly into my possession, I would redeem my ken fortunes. I went out into the st taking the purse with me, scarce know what I did, but musing on what to do. I one who had been a fellow-gambler wa when at the University.

'Ha! Fleming!' he exclaimed, 'is a man alive! I expected that you and Prince would have crossed the water log or that you would have exhibited at C. or Tower Hill.'

He spoke of the run of good fortune he had on the previous night—(for he was gambler still.) 'Five thousand,' sa, 'were mine within five minutes.'

'Five thousand!' I repeated. I to Catherine's purse in my hand.

Lewis! some demon entered my soul, extinguished reason. 'Five thousand' repeated again, 'it would rescue my erine and my child from penury.' I th of the joy I should feel in placing the s and her purse again in her hands. I accompanied him to the table of destruction a time fortune, that it might mock my ry, and not dash the cup from my lips, they were parched, seemed to smile. But I will not dwell on particulars, my! 'I laughed to see the madness rise' with. I became desperate—nay, I was insane all that my wife had put into my ha.

lost coin, was lost. Never, until that moment, did I experience how terrible was the torture of self-reproach, or how fathomless the abyss of human wretchedness. I could have raised my hand against my own father, but, vile and contemptible as I was, I had not enough of the coward within me to accomplish the act. I thought of my mother. She had long disowned me, partly from my attachment to Hanover. But, though I had inherited the estates which my father had bequeathed to me, I knew that she was still rich, and she intended to bestow her wealth upon her younger children; for there were but two of us. Yet I remembered how fondly she had loved me, and I did not think that there was a feeling in my mother's breast that could spurn from me a penitent son—for nature, at the slightest spark, bursteth into flame. I resolved, therefore, to go as the prodigal in the Scripture, and to throw myself at her feet, and confess that I had sinned against Heaven, and against her sight.

I wrote a note to my injured Catherine, in which I stated that I was suddenly called away, and that I would not see her again perhaps some weeks. Almost without a coin in my pocket, I took my journey from London to Cumberland, where my mother dwelt.

My father was gathering around me when I returned to London, on the road leading to St. Asaph's. But I will not go through the details of my tedious journey; it is sufficient to say, that I allowed myself but little time for sleep or rest, and, on the eighth day after leaving London, I found myself, after an absence of eighteen years, again upon the banks of my ancestors. Foot-sore, fatigued, and broken down, my appearance bespoke a long and worn dejection. I rather halted than proceeded along, turning my face aside from my father and my passenger, and blushing at the thought of my recognition. It was mid-day when I reached an eminence, covered with elm trees, and skirted by a hedge of hawthorn. It commanded a view of what was called the Priory, the house in which I was born, and which was situated within a mile from where I now stood. The village church, surrounded by a ramp of dreary yews, lay immediately at my feet of the hill to my right, and the road leading from thence to the Priory crossed the stream before me. It was a raw and dismal day, and the birds sat shivering on the leafless

branches, and the cold, black clouds, seemed wedged together in a solid mass, ready to fall upon the earth and crush it, and the wind moaned over the bare fields. Yet disconsolate as the scene appeared, it was the soil of childhood on which I trode. The fields, the woods, the river, the mountains, the hills, the home of infancy were before me, and I felt their remembered sunshine rekindling in my bosom the feelings that make a patriot. A thousand recollections flashed before me.—Already did fancy hear the congratulations of my mother's voice, welcoming her prodigal—feel the warm pressure of her hand, and her joyous tears falling on my cheek. But again I hesitated, and feared that I might be received as an outcast. The wind howled around me—I felt impatient and benumbed—and, as I stood irresolute, with a moaning chime the church bell knelled upon my ear. A trembling and foreboding fell upon my heart, and before the first echo of the dull sound died in the distance, a muffled peal from the tower of the Priory answered back the invitation of the house of death, announcing that the earth would receive its sacrifice. A veil came over my eyes, the ground swam beneath my feet—and again and again did the church bell issue forth its slow, funeral tone, and again was it answered from the Priory.

Emerging from the thick elms that spread around the Priory and stretched to the gate, appeared a long and melancholy cavalcade. My eyes became dim with a presentiment of dread, and they were strained to torture.—The waving plumes of the hearse became visible. Every joint in my body trembled with agony, as though agony had become a thing of life.—I turned aside to watch it as it passed, and concealed myself behind the hedge.—The measured and grating sound of the carriages, the cautious trampling of the horses' feet, and the solemn pace of the poorer followers, became more and more audible on my ear.—The air of heaven felt substantial in my throat, and the breathing I endeavoured to suppress became audible, while the cold sweat dropped as icicles from my brow.—Sadly, with faces of grief, unlike the expression of hired sorrow, passed the solitary mutes; and in the countenance of each I recognised one of our tenantry. Onward moved the hearse and its dismal pageantry:—My heart fell, as with a blow, within my bosom.—For a moment I would have fancied

it a dream, but the train of carriages passed on, their grating aroused me from my insensibility, and rushing from the hedge towards one, who for forty years had been a servant in our house—

Robert! Robert! I exclaimed, 'whose funeral is this?'

Alack! Master Edward! he cried, 'is it you? It is the funeral of my good lady—your mother!'

The earth swam round with me—the funeral procession, with a sailing motion, seemed to circle me—and I fell with my face upon the ground.

Dejected, way-worn as I was, I accompanied the body of my mother to its last resting place: I wept over her grave, and returned with the chief mourners to the house of my birth—and there I was all but denied admission. I heard the will read, and in it my name was not once mentioned: I rushed from the house—I knew not, and I cared not where I ran—misery was before, behind, and around me. I thought of my Catherine and my child—and groaned with the tortures of a lost spirit.

But, as I best could, I returned to London, to fling myself at the feet of my wife, to confess my sins and my follies, to beg her forgiveness, yea, to labour for her with my hands.—I approached my own door as a criminal. I shrank from the very gaze of the servant that ushered me in, and I imagined that he looked on me with contempt. But now, Lewis, I come to the last act of my drama, and my hand trembles that it cannot write—my soul is convulsed within me. I thought my Catherine pure, sinless as a spirit of heaven—you thought so—all who beheld her must have thought as I did. But, oh! friend of my youth! mark what follows. I entered it—silently I entered it, as one who has guilt following his footsteps. And there, the first object that met my sight—that blasted it—was the man I hated, my former rival, he who held my fortunes in his hand—Sir Peter Blakely! My wife, my Catherine, my spotless Catherine, held him by the arm. O! Heaven! I heard him say—'Dear Catherine!' and she answered him, 'Stay!—stay my best, my only friend—do not leave me!'

Lewis! I could see, I could hear more.

'Wretch!—villain I exclaimed. The started at my voice. My sword that had done service in other lands, I still carried with me.

'Draw! miscreant!' I cried almost unconscious of what I said or what I did. I spoke to me, but I heard him not. I sprang upon him, and plunged my sword into his body. My wife rushed towards me. She screamed. I heard the words—'Dear Edward!' but I dashed her from me as an unclean thing, and fled from the house.

Every tie that had bound me to existence was severed asunder. Catharine had parted in twain the last cord that linked me with happiness. I sought the solitude of the wilderness, and there shouted her name, and now blessed her, and again—but I will go no farther. I long wandered a fugitive throughout the land, and at length perceiving an apartment in a rock, the base of which Tweed washes with its waters, in it I resolved to bury myself from the world: and still am, and mankind fear me."

Here abruptly ended the manuscript of the Solitary.

A few years after the manuscript had been found, a party, consisting of three gentlemen, a lady, and two children, came to visit King's Cove, and to them the individuals who had found the papers related the story of the hermit.

"But your manuscript is imperfect," said one of them, "and I shall supply its defects—the Solitary mentions having found Sir Peter Blakely in the presence of his wife, and he speaks of words that passed between them—but you shall hear all:

The wife of Edward Fleming was sitting weeping for his absence, when Sir Peter Blakely was announced. He shook as he entered. She started as she beheld him. She bent her head to conceal her tears, and sorrowfully extended her hand to welcome him.

'Catherine,' said he; and he paused, though he would have called her by the name of her husband; 'I have come to speak to you respecting your father's estate. I was brought up upon it, and there is not a tree, a bush, or a brae within miles, but to me is a tale of happiness and langsyne printed in it, in the heart's own alphabet. But now

charm that gave music to their whispers is  
 laged. Forgive me, Catherine, but it was  
 so that, as the spirit of the scene, converted  
 every thing into a paradise where ye trode,  
 that made it dear to me: it was the hope, the  
 ever, and the joy of many years, that I  
 could call you mine: it was this that made  
 me to fall upon my eyelids as honey on the  
 lip. But the thought has perished. I was  
 going to think that the primrose would flourish  
 on the harvest field. But Catherine, your  
 father was my guardian: I was deeply in  
 debt, for he was to me as a father, and  
 for his sake, and your sake, I have redeemed  
 his property, and it shall be, it is yours.'

Lost in wonder, Catherine was for a few  
 moments silent, but she at length said:

'Generous man, it must not; it shall not  
 bury me not. Crush me not beneath a  
 weight of generosity which from you I have  
 in the last to deserve. I could not love, but  
 ye ever esteemed you. But let not your  
 words hurry you into an act of rashness:  
 time will heal, if it do not efface the wounds  
 which now bleed, and you may still find a  
 man, more worthy of your own, with whom  
 to share the fortune of which you would  
 deprive yourself.'

'Never! never!' cried he; 'little do you  
 understand me. Your image and your's  
 was stamped where the pulse of life  
 was in my heart. The dream that I once  
 cherished is dead now—my grey hairs have  
 taken me from it. But I shall still be your  
 friend—yea, I will be your husband's friend  
 and, in memory of the past, your children  
 shall be as my children. Your husband's  
 property is encumbered—throw these in the  
 fire, and it is again his.' And as he spoke,  
 he placed the deeds of the mortgage on a  
 table before her.

Hear me, noblest and best of friends!  
 and Catherine, 'hear me as in the presence  
 of our Great Judge. Think not that I feel  
 less grateful for your generosity, that I  
 would refuse your offers, and adjure you  
 to mention them not in my presence. As the  
 friend of Edward Fleming, I will not accept  
 what he would spurn. Rather would I toil

with the sweat of my brow for the bare crust  
 that furnished us with a scanty meal; and if  
 I thought that, rather than share it with me,  
 he would sigh after the luxuries he has lost,  
 I would say unto him—'Go, you are free!  
 and, hiding myself from the world, weary  
 Heaven with prayers for his prosperity.'

'Ye talk in vain—as I have said, so it is  
 and shall be, added he; 'and, now, farewell,  
 dear Catherine.'

'Stay! leave me not thus!' she exclaimed,  
 and grasped his arm. At that moment her  
 husband returned and entered the room—and  
 you know the rest. But Sir Peter Blakely  
 was not mortally wounded, as the Solitary  
 believed: in a few months he recovered, and  
 what he promised to do he accomplished.'

'That is something new,' said the fisher-  
 man, who had found the manuscript, 'and  
 who told ye, or how do ye know, if it be a fair  
 question?'

'I,' replied he who had spoken, 'am the  
 the Lewis, to whom the paper was addressed.'

'You!' exclaimed the fisherman; 'well,  
 that beats a'—the like o' that I never heard  
 before.'

'And I,' said another, 'am Sir Peter  
 Blakely—the grey-haired dreamer—who ex-  
 pected an April lily to bloom beneath an Oc-  
 tober sun.' And he put a crown into the  
 hand of the fisherman.

'And I,' added the third, 'am the Soli-  
 tary himself—this my Catherine, and these  
 my children. He whom I thought dead—  
 dead by my own hand, the man whom I had  
 wronged, sought for me for years, and in  
 this my hermitage that was, he at length  
 found me. But he spoke, he uttered words  
 that entered my soul: I trembled in his pre-  
 sence; the load of my guiltiness fell as a  
 weight upon me. I was unable to speak, al-  
 most to move: he took my hand and led me  
 forth as a child: in my confusion the papers  
 which you found were left behind me. And  
 now when happiness has shed its light around  
 me, I have come with my benefactor, my  
 friend, my Catherine, and my children, to  
 view the cell of my penitence.'

## THE SEVEN YEAR'S DEARTH.

It was a good many years before the accession of King William 3d, that a farmer of the name of Kerr rented a farm in the parish of Minniegaff, in the county of Wigton, on the great road leading to Port-Patrick. The farm lay at some distance from the road, at the foot of some hills, a wild and secluded spot possessing few beauties save to a person who had been reared in the neighbourhood, whose earliest associations were blended with the scenes of his youth.

The farm of Kerr was of far greater extent than importance, only a few acres of it being in cultivation; but his flocks were numerous: he was looked upon as a wealthy man at the period of which we speak, had been married for many years, but had no children to enjoy that wealth which increased from year to year. This was the only drawback to his earthly happiness; but he never repined or let a word escape his lips to betray the wish of his heart. Even the rude taunts of his more fortunate neighbours he bore with unruffled countenance, though he felt them keenly.

Such was the situation of the worthy farmer, when one morning in harvest he went out with the earliest dawn to look at some sheep he had upon a hill in a distant part of the farm. He had counted them, and was returning to join his reapers accompanied by Colin, his faithful dog, who in devious excursions circled round the large grey stones that lay scattered about: he had proceeded some way without missing the animal, when he stopped and whistled for him: Colin, contrary to his usual custom, did not come bounding to his side, but answered by a loud barking; a circumstance which a little surprised him: but he proceeded homeward, thinking that he was amusing himself with some animal he had discovered; and being in haste to join his reapers, paid no further attention to this act of disobedience in his favourite: breakfast passed and mid-day came, and still Colin did not make his appearance: his master was both angry and uneasy at his

absence; but in the bustle and laughter the harvest field again forgot the occasional thoughts of his useful dog, that obtruded themselves on his mind: it drew towards evening, and still no Colin came: the circumstance was becoming unaccountable: none had seen the dog: and uneasiness succeeded to anger: he now left his reapers, went to the house to inquire of Grizzel, if the animal had been in the house; but she answered that she had only seen him once the early part of the day, for a minute or two, when after receiving a piece of cake had ran off with it in his mouth, nor stopped to eat it, contrary to his usual custom: it was with the circumstance of his leaving him the morning, and his unaccountable absence confirmed William Kerr in his opinion, that something uncommon must have happened to him: as he could ill do without his assistance to gather his sheep for the night, without returning to his reapers, he set out for the spot where the dog had left him, and anon calling him by his well known whistle and name. The barren muir echoed the call; but no Colin appeared. At length he came to the place, and was overtaken with fear, as he observed the animal stretch upon the ground, with something close beside him, which he seemed to watch.

"Colin! Colin!" he called, "poor Colin!"

The dog did not rise: he gave every token of joy and pleasure at the sight of his master, and wagging his tail; but he made no effort to stir, fearful, apparently, of disturbing the object that lay beside him.

"Surely," said his master, "my poor Colin is bewitched. Colin, you rascal, come to me." But Colin moved not.

The farmer stood rooted to the spot, he had neither the power to advance nor retreat—a superstitious fear took possession of him: a tingling feeling seemed to excite the muscle of his body: the fear in fact of the fairies was upon him; and conceived himself the victim of fascination, for he could not withdraw his eyes from the object of his alarm.

but there was ground for alarm: before under the shadow of a grey stone, within a few yards, lay his faithful dog, a creature that never before required a second call from him, now deaf to that voice which he was wont to obey: he was supporting something that had the appearance of a lovely child and asleep, nestled close into his bosom, the child resting upon his shaggy side, and its golden hair appearing like rays of light from the pillow upon which it rested: the face appeared more beautiful than any thing of the earth he had ever seen. As William Kerr's surprise began to abate, his fears, if possible, increased.

"Surely," said he to himself, "this is one of the children of the fairies. God protect me! I am bewitched as well as my dog. I never felt thus before in the presence of merely mortal beings! my knees can scarce support me, and cannot withdraw my eyes from that fearful object! God deliver me from the power of the enemy!" And he shut his eyes, by a convulsive effort.

He then attempted to pray, but memory failed, the palsy of fear had so completely seized him: the very beauty of the object increased his alarm; for he had heard that Satan is never more to be feared than when he appears as an angel of light: with his eyes closed by a nervous effort, he turned himself round and ran to his reapers.

As he approached them his natural firmness returned; but his countenance still betrayed the agitation of his mind: the reapers were just quitting the field, and seeing him running towards them, crowded round him, eagerly inquiring the cause of his alarm; and it was some time before he recovered his strength to give them an account of what he had seen: the whole group was struck with awe and amazement, gazing alternately at the farmer and at each other—not knowing what to think of the strange case; but they agreed that some effort should be made for the recovery of the dog: John Bell, an elder of the church, and a neighbour farmer, stepped forward and said—

"My brethren, the power of the Evil One is great; but it is overruled by One greater and more glorious: let us employ His aid, and we shall flee before us."

When his prayer was finished, he arose with a firm assurance in the Divine aid.

"I will go forth," said he, "in the strength of His name, and see what new delusion of Satan this is! William Kerr, send to the House for the ha' Bible, that I may carry it as a shield between us and the wiles of him who will vanish before the holy book, like mist before the wind."

One of the young men ran to the house, and soon returned with his mistress, she herself carrying the important volume, which she delivered into the hands of John Bell; and he read aloud to them that beautiful chapter, the fourteenth of St. John's Gospel. They then proceeded to the spot pointed out by the farmer, chanting a psalm as they walked along: all, excepting the elder, were unnerved by fear; casting many a glance around, and ready at the least alarm to run away: before they reached the stone, Colin came bounding to them, barking for joy, while the master exclaimed—

"Great is the power of the Word! The charm is broken! Colin, Colin, I am rejoiced to have rescued you from the evil powers: come my lad, let's to the hill and weer in the ewes." And with his usual whistle he pointed to the hill.

Colin would not obey the order, but ran back towards the large grey stone, barking in an unusual manner, returning, again running towards it, and looking back as if he wished his master to follow: the whole group were in amazement, and knew not what to think—but what surprised them the more was, at the dog taking the end of his master's plaid in his mouth, and endeavouring to drag him towards the stone: as the party thus stood irresolute, the faint wailing of a child was distinctly heard, and a babe, supporting its feeble arms upon the stone, was seen to emerge from the other side of it: it was the same the farmer had previously seen: his fears returned; several of the most timid fled—but Colin ran to the little stranger, and licked the tears that ran down its cheeks, while the child put its arms around his neck: that they witnessed something out of the usual order of nature, no one present had the smallest doubt; for how, by earthly means, could a child of man have reached a spot so lonely and secluded?

"What can this mean," exclaimed Grizzel: "Colin, you never refused to obey my voice;

surely nothing good can induce you to disregard it : come, come, and leave that un-earthly creature."

John Bell, who had been occupied in mental devotion, at length broke silence—

"Let us not judge harshly," said he; "perhaps it is a Christian child, dropped here by the fairies as they were bearing it away from its parents, who now mourn for its loss, and nurse a changeling in its place : it may have been rescued by the prayer of faith, or some other means, from their power: in the strength of His name, I will be convinced of its real nature, either by putting it to flight if it is unearthly, or rescuing it from death if it is human; for we must not leave it here to perish through cold and want, and prove ourselves more cruel than the dumb animal."

As he spoke the eye of the child turned towards them; it gave a feeble cry, and stretched out its arms, still supported by the dog. The elder advanced to it, and placing the Bible upon its head, it smiled in his face, and grasped his leg. The tears came into the good man's eyes, while Colin bounded for joy, and licked his hand as it rested upon the head of the child.

"Come forward my friends," he said; "it is a lovely child, a Christian babe, for it smiles at the touch of the blessed Word. It is weak and sore spent, and calls for attention and kindness.

All the woman was kindled in the heart of the farmer's wife; she ran to the babe and pressed it to her bosom, kissing it as it smiled in her face, and lisped a few words in a language none present could understand.—The fears of all were now nearly dissipated; those who had fled returned; all the females in turn embraced the babe; but the fondness of William Kerr for the foundling was now equal to his former fears. He at once resolved to adopt it as his own until its sorrowing parents should reclaim it. Grizzel concurred in the sentiment and resolution; and he and Colin, who now had resumed all his wonted obedience, set off for the hill, while the other returned to the house. As Grizzel carried the child home, she felt her love for it increase; and the void that had existed in

her bosom ever since her marriage, was filling up. The child's eyes were of a hazel, and gave indications of beauty; its clothes were of a far finer texture than those worn by children of humbler rank, bespoke a good origin. Of all the females present she alone felt assured that it was a proper child, because she wished it to be the others looked upon it still with some misgivings; revolving, doubtless, in their mind the strangeness of all the circumstances attending the affair—and not the least of these was the locality of the child's position.

It was a lonely spot, bearing no good near close by a beautiful green knoll, standing a spring of pure water, and covered with daisies; while all around was heather and stunted grass, resembling an oasis in the desert. Strange sights were reported to have been seen near it; and the shepherd lads the still evenings of summer, were wont to hear their strange humming noises, mixed with faint tinklings—sure signs, of course, of the presence of the fairies. It was called *Faire Knowe*, while the stone was called *Eldrich Stone*—names of bad omen, and sufficient to scare all visitors after nightfall. The newly awakened feelings of Grizzel deprived all these ideas and recollections of that weight which operated with the other females, and warped their opinions; and while they concluded that nothing good could be found in such a spot, they cautioned Grizzel, in their kindness, to be wary that the creature did her no harm. Grizzel however was not without some misgivings; but he clung to the babe that lay in her bosom, and resolved to put to the test, as soon as he reached home, whether it was really a fairy or a child stolen by these kidnappers.

She believed her test to be sufficient to make it, if a fairy, leave her presence; if a human babe, to place it beyond their power to recover it, cleanse it from any spell that might have put upon it, secure it from the evil eye, and prevent its being fore-spoken. For these most important purposes she borrowed a piece of money (without assigning a reason for wanting it) from one of her neighbours, and, as, soon as she reached home, secured herself in the spence with the bed (for no one must see her in the act,) put the piece of money into some clean water, and salt, stripped the child to its skin, washed

folly, then took its shift and passed it through the smoke of the fire, and put it again with the wrong side out. All this was done not without fear and trembling on the part of Grizzel; but her new found treasure was unchanged, and smiled sweetly in her face as she proceeded in her superstitious operations. Having supplied its little wants, fully assured, she put it to bed with joy and satisfaction, and looked on it till it fell asleep. Scarce had she accomplished this, when William Kerr entered with John Bell, upon whom he had called, and returned from the hill, to aid him with counsel and advice.

Well, Grizzel," said he, "is it a lad or a bairn we hae found; for I am convinced, and I'm satisfied, that it is nae fairy, but an unchristened wean the elves had been carryin awa from its parents, wha, I hae nae doot, are noo in its loss."

"Indeed, guidman," replied Grizzel, "it is nae a lass bairn as ever I saw in my time, and a's richt. It is nae fairy, I'm satisfied, and I'm right glad on't; for she'll be a comfort to us, now that we are getting on in years, if her ain mother doesna come to her to her ain bosom; but o' that I am sure there is little chance; for, by the few words she spoke, it is nae child o' oor land."

William Kerr," said the elder, "if, as your wife proposes, you mean to keep this child, there is one duty to perform, both for your sake and your own—and that is, it must be baptized; for there is no doubt this child's right has either been withheld or neglected, or the enemy would not have had power to do as he has done. To-morrow I will go myself to the minister and talk with him; and next Lord's Day you or I must attend it to be admitted into the visible church, of which I pray it may be a worthy member. Are you content?"

"Far mair than content," replied the farmer. "I will rejoice and bless God for the child as fervently as if she were my ain. I'll be bound to her, and I'll be bound to her; I hae a bit or a beild she shall neither be hunger nor cold."

The parties separated for the night, and the newly-found stranger slept in the bosom of the farmer and his wife. On the following Sabbath it was taken to the church of St. Margaret, to be baptized. The church was

crowded to excess. Every one that could, by any effort, get there, attended to witness the christening of a fairy, all expecting something uncommon to occur. The farmer and his wife, they thought, were too rash to harbour in their house, for it was not chancy to be at feud with "the good people," who, out of revenge, might shoot his cattle; and, verily, during that summer, a good many had already died of elve shots. As the christening party approached the church, every one was anxious to get a peep at the young creature. It was so beautiful that it could not, they said, be a common child; neither was it a changeling, for changelings are weazened, yammering, ill-looking things, that greet night and day, and never grow bigger. Contrary to the expectations of almost all the congregation, when the farmer and his party entered the church, the child neither screamed nor flew off in a flash of fire, but smiled as beautiful as a cherub.—The service went on as usual. The farmer stood up and took the holy vows upon himself, and gave the lovely babe the name of Helen. The girl throve, and became the pride of her foster parents, who loved her as intensely as if she had been their own child; and Colin became, if possible, more beloved by them, as Helen's playfellow.

A few months after the finding of Helen, as Grizzel was one day examinidg the silken dress which she wore when discovered on the muir, and which had never been put on since—being soiled and damp when taken off—she discovered a piece of paper in one of the folds, much creased, as if it had been placed there by some one in a state of great agitation. It was written in French; neither the farmer nor herself could read it; but William, on the first opportunity, took and shewed it to the minister, who translated it as follows:—"Merciful God! protect me and my child from the fury of my husband, who has returned, after his long absence, more gloomy than ever. Alas! in what have I offended him? If I have, without any intention, done so, my dear baby, you cannot have given offence. Good God! there are preparations for a journey making in the court-yard—horse, saddle, and pillion.—Where am I to be carried to? My babe! I will not be parted from you but by death!—His feet are on the stairs. I hear his voice. Alas! I tremble at that sound which was



once music to my soul. Holy Virgin! he approaches!" Here the writing ceased. It threw no light upon the event, further than it shewed that the mother of the child was unhappy, and above the lower ranks of life. The paper William left with the minister, at his request.

The little Helen grew, and became even more lovely and engaging—the delight and joy of the farmer and his wife. Yet their happiness had in it a mixture of pain; for they never thought of her but with a fear lest, as not being their own child, she should be claimed and taken from them. Years rolled on, and Helen grew apace. She was of quick parts, and learned, with facility, every thing she was taught—a circumstance which induced many to believe that the fairies were her private tutors. The opinion was justified by other circumstances. She was thoughtful and solitary for a child. The Eldrich Stone was her favourite haunt. She seldom joined in the sports of the other children of her age—having indeed, little inducement; for they were always fearful of her, and felt constraint in her presence.—Some of the most forward taunted her with the cognomen of Fairy Helen; and if she was successful, [as she often was] in their childish sports, they left her, saying, "Who could win with a fairy!" This chilled the joyous heart of the fair Helen, and was the cause of many tears, which the kind Grizzel would kiss off with more than maternal love. As she grew up, she withdrew herself from the society of those who thus grieved her; but there was one individual who ever took her part, and boldly stood forth in her defence. This was Willie, "the widow's son," as he was familiarly called, for no one knew his surname. He lived with an aged woman, who passed as his mother; but the more knowing females of the village said she could not, from her apparent age, bear the character. She had come there no one knew from whence, and inhabited a lone cottage with the boy. She appeared to be extremely poor, yet sought no aid from any one. William was better clad than any child in the parish, and much care had been taken in his education. She had [by the proper legitimate right] the name of being a witch. She sought not the acquaintance of her neighbours; and, when addressed by any of them, was very reserved, but civil: while the only thing that

saved her from persecution, was her regular and devout attendance at church, along with the child, William, and the good opinion of the worthy minister. Yet this scarcely saved her; for, when anything untoward occurred in the neighbourhood, it was always laid to her charge. William was six or seven years older than Helen, and, still smart under the taunts he had himself endured, was her champion, and none dared offer insult in his presence. Her timid heart clung to him and loved him as a brother, and they were ever together—as he accompanied her to and from school, as if she had been his sister. He was now about eighteen, tall, athletic for his age, and a firm and resolute mind.

It was in the autumn of the year 1763 that a strange horseman, with a servant behind him, was seen to approach the lone cottage of the widow, to dismount and enter. He remained for several hours, during which his servant was busy purchasing a horse and the necessary furniture for an immediate departure. Willie was afterwards seen being across the fields, towards the house of William Kerr, which he entered with a beaming with joy.

"Helen," said he, "I am come to bid you farewell; for I am going to leave Minni for a long time, and I could not think of going without seeing you, and letting you enjoy my good fortune."

Helen burst into tears and sobbed. "Willie!" she cried "who will take my place when you are gone? I will have no one left but my dear father and mother, and I will miss you so much; but it is worse for me to be grieved for your departure, if your fortune is good." And she tried to smother her tears.

"Yes, Helen," said he "my fortune is good; I have found, what I hope you soon find, a long-lost father—a parent I never knew existed. I now know that Elizabeth is not my mother, but has only had the care of me during my father's exile in a foreign land. He is now returned with William, Prince of Orange, and is restored to his estate. I am going to London to join my father, where I will often think of you Helen. Farewell!" And, clasping the weeping Helen to his bosom, he ran back to his cottage, and, full of hope and joyous expectation, soon was out of sight.