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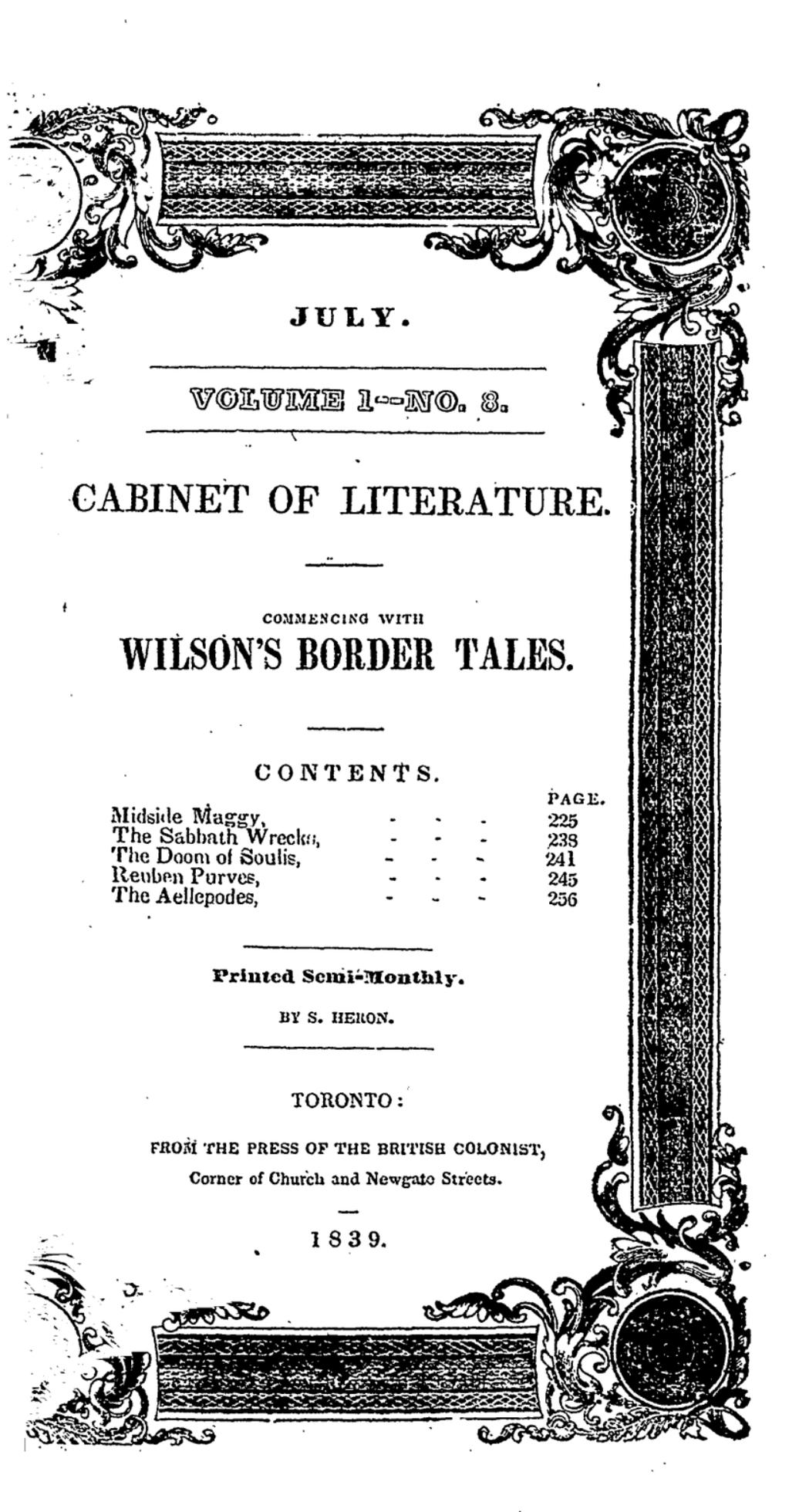
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COMMENCING WITH
WILSON'S BORDER TALES.

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MIDSIDE MAGGY—OR THE BANNOCK O' TOLLISHILL.

"Every bannock had its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill."

Belike, gentle reader, thou hast often heard the proverb quoted above, that "Every bannock had its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill." The saying hath its origin in a romantic tradition of the Lammermoors, which I shall relate to thee. Tollishill is the name of a sheep farm in Berwickshire, situated in the parish of Lauder. Formerly it was divided into three farms, which were occupied by different tenants; and, by way of distinguishing it from the others, that in which dwelt the subjects of our present story was generally called Midside, and our heroine obtained the appellation of Midside Maggy.—Tollishill was the property of John, second Earl, and afterwards Duke of Lauderdale—a personage whom I shall more than once, in these tales, have occasion to bring before the readers, and whose character posterity will find small cause to hold in veneration. Yet it is a black character, indeed, in which there is not to be found one streak of sunshine; and the story of the "Bannock of Tollishill" referreth to such a streak in the history of John, the Lord of Thirlestane.

Time hath numbered somewhat more than hundred and ninety years since Thomas Hardie became tenant of the principal farm of Tollishill. Now, that the reader may picture Thomas Hardie as he was, and as tradition hath described him, he or she must imagine a tall, strong, and fresh-coloured man of fifty, a few hairs of grey mingling with his own locks; a countenance expressive of such good nature and some intelligence; while a Lowland bonnet was drawn over his brow. The other parts of his dress were of coarse, grey, home-spun cloth, manufactured at Earlstoun; and across his shoulders, in summer as well as in winter, he wore the mountain plaid. His principles assimilated those held by the men of the Covenant; and Andrew, though a native of the hills, was not without the worldly prudence which is considered as being more immediately the characteristic of the buying and selling class of society. His landlord was no favourer of the Covenant, and, though Andrew wished well to the cause, he did not see the necessity of making his laird, the Lord of Lauderdale, his enemy for its sake. He, therefore, judged it wise to remain a neutral spec-

tator of the religious and political struggles of the period.

But Andrew was a bachelor. Half a century had he been in the world, and the eyes of no woman had had power to throw a spark into his heart. In his single, solitary state he was happy, or he thought himself happy, and that is much the same thing. But an accident occurred which led him, first to believe, and eventually to feel, that he was but a solitary and comfortless moorland farmer, toiling for he knew not what, and laying up treasure he knew not for whom. Yea, and while others had their wives spinning, carding, knitting, and smiling before them, and their bairns running laughing and sporting round about them, he was but a poor deserted creature, with nobody to speak to, nobody to care for, or to care for him. Every person had some object to strive for and to make them strive, but Thomas Hardie; or, to use his own words, "he was just in the situation o' a tewhit that had lost its mate—"te-wheet! te-wheet!" it cried, flapping its wings impatiently and forlornly—and "te-wheet! te-wheet!" answered vacant echo frae the dreary giens."

Thomas had been to Morpeth disposing of a part of his hirsels, and he had found a much better market for them than he anticipated. He returned, therefore, with a heavy purse, which generally hath a tendency to create a light and merry heart, and he arrived at Westruther, and went into a hotel, where, three or four times in the year, he was in the habit of spending a cheerful evening with his friends. He had called for a quegh of the landlady's best, and he sat down at his ease with the liquor before him, for he had but a short way to travel. He also pulled out his tobacco-box and his pipe, and began to inhale the fumes of what, up to that period, was almost a forbidden weed. But we question much, if the royal book of James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England, which he published against the use of tobacco, ever found its way into the Lammermoors, though the Indian weed did; therefore Thomas Hardie sat enjoying his glass and his pipe, unconscious or regardless of the fulminations which he who was king in his boyhood, had published against the latter. But he

had not sat long, when a fair maiden, an acquaintance of "mine hostess" entered the hostelry, and began to assist her in the cutting out or fashioning of a crimson kirtle.— Her voice fell upon the ear of Thomas like the "music of sweet sounds." He had never heard a voice before that not only fell softly on his ear, but left a lingering murmur in his heart. She, too, was a young thing of not more than eighteen. If ever hair might be called "gowden" it was hers. It was a light and shining bronze, where the prevalence of the golden hue gave a colour to the whole. Her face was a thing of beauty, over which health spread its roseate hue, yet softly, as though the westling winds had caused the leaves of the blushing rose to kiss her cheeks, and leave their delicate hues and impression behind them. She was of a middle stature, and her figure was such, although arrayed in homely garments, as would have commanded the worship of a connoisseur of grace and symmetry. But beyond all that kindled a flame within the hitherto obdurate heart of Thomas, was the witching influence of her smile. For a full hour he sat with his eyes fixed upon her, save at intervals, when he withdrew them to look into the unwonted agitation of his own breast, and examine the cause.

"Amongst the daughters of women," thought he unto himself; for he had a sprinkling of the language of the age about him; "none have I seen so beautiful. Her cheeks bloom bonnier than the heather on Tollishill, and her bosom seems soft as the new-shorn fleece. Her smile is like a blink o' sunshine, and would make summer to those on whom it fell all the year round."

He also discovered, for the first time, that "Tollishill was a dull place, especially in the winter season." When, therefore, the fair damsel had arrayed the fashion of the kirtle and departed, without once having seemed to observe Thomas, he said unto the good wife of the hostelry—"And wha, now, if it be a fair question, may that bonny lassie be?"

"She is indeed a bonny lassie," answered the landlady, "and a guid lassie too; and I hae nae doubt but, as you are a single man, Maister Hardie, your question is fair enough. Her name is Margaret Lyleston, and she is the only bairn o' a poor infirm widow that came to live here some two or three years syne. They came frae south ower some way, and I am sure they have seen better days.—

We thought at first that the auld woman had been a Catholic, but I suppose that isn't the case, though they certainly are baith o' them strong Episcopawlians, and in no way favourable to the preachers or the word o' the Covenant; but I must say for Maggy, that she is a bonny, sweet-tempered, and obliging lassie—though, poor thing, her mother has brought her up in a wrang way."

Many days had not passed ere Thomas Hardie, arrayed in his Sunday habiliments, paid another visit to Westruther, and he cautiously asked of the gudewife of the hostel many questions concerning Margaret; and although she jeered him, and said that "Maggy would ne'er think o' a grey-haired carle like him," he brooded over the fond fancy, and, although on this visit he saw her net, he returned to Tollishill, thinking of her as his bride. It was a difficult thing for a man of fifty, who had been the companion of solitude from his youth upwards, and who had lived in single blessedness amidst the silence of the hills without feeling the workings of the heart, or being subjected to the influence of its passions—I say, it was indeed difficult for such a one to declare, in the ear of a blooming maiden of eighteen, the tale of his first affections. But an opportunity arrived which enabled him to disembosom the burden that pressed upon his heart.

It has been mentioned that Margaret Lylestone and her mother were poor, and the latter, who had long been laid boun with infirmities, was supported by the industry of her daughter. They had also a cow, which was permitted to graze upon the hills without fee or reward, and with the milk which it produced, and the cheese they manufactured, together with the poor earnings of Margaret, positive want was long kept from them. But the old woman became more and more infirm—the hand of death seemed stretching over her. She required nourishment which Margaret could not procure for her; and that it might be procured—that her mother might live and not die—the fair maiden sent the cow to Kelso to be sold, from whence the seller was to bring with him the restorative that her parent required.

Now it so was that Thomas Hardie, tenant of Tollishill, was in Kelso market when the cow of Widow Lylestone was offered for sale; and, as it possessed the characteristic marks of a good milcher, he inquired to whom it belonged. On being answered, he turned round for a few moments

and stood thoughtful, but again turning to the individual who had been intrusted to dispose of it, he inquired—

“And wherefore is she selling it?”

“Really, Maister Hardie,” replied the other, “I could not positively say, but I have little doubt it is for want—absolute necessity. The auld woman’s very frail and very ill—I hae to take a’ sort o’ things out to her the night frae the doctor’s, after selling the cow, and it’s not in the power o’ things that her daughter, industrious as she is, should be able to get them for her otherwise.”

Thomas again turned aside, and he drew his sleeve across his eyes. Having inquired the price sought for the cow, he handed the money to the seller, and gave the animal in charge of one of his herdsmen. He left the market earlier than usual, and directed his servant that the cow should be taken to Westruther.

It was drawing towards gloaming before Thomas approached the habitation of the widow; and, before he could summon courage to enter it for the first time, he sauntered for several minutes, backward and forward on the moor, by the side of the Blackadder, which there silently wends its way, as a dull and simple burn, through the moss. He felt all the awkwardness of an old man struggling beneath the influence of a young feeling. He thought of what he should say, how he should act, and how he would be received.—At length he had composed a short introductory and explanatory speech which pleased him. He thought it contained both feeling and delicacy (according to his notions of the latter) in their proper proportions, and after repeating it three or four times over by the side of the Blackadder, he proceeded towards the cottage, still repeating it to himself as he went. But, when he raised his hand and knocked at the door, his heart gave a similar shock upon his bosom, as though it mimicked him, every word of the introductory speech which he had studied and repeated again and again, short though it was, was knocked from his memory. The door was opened by Margaret, who invited him to enter. She was beautiful as when he first beheld her—she thought more beautiful; for she now spoke to him. Her mother sat in an arm-chair, by the side of the peat fire, and was supported with pillows. He took off his bonnet, and performed an awkward but his best salutation.

“I beg your pardon,” said he, hesitatingly, “for the liberty I have taken in calling upon you. But—I was in Kelso the day—and”—he paused, and turned his bonnet once or twice in his hands—“and,” he resumed, “I observed, or rather I should say, I learned that ye intended to sell your cow; but, I also heard that ye was very ill, and”—here he made another pause.—“I say I heard that ye was very ill, and I thought it would be a hardship for you to part wi’ crummie, and especially at a time when ye are sure to stand most in need o’ every ye. So I bought the cow—but, as I say, it would be a very great hardship for you to be without the milk, and what the cheese may bring at a time like this; and, therefore, I have ordered her to be brought back to ye, and ane o’ my men will bring her hame presently. Never consider the cow as mine, for a bachelor farmer like me can better afford to want the siller, than ye can to want your cow; and I might hae spent it far mair foolishly, and wi’ less satisfaction. Indeed, if ye only but think that good I’ve done, I’m mair than paid.”

“Maister Hardie,” said the widow, “what have I, a stranger widow woman, done to deserve this kindness at your hands? Or how is it in the power o’ words for me to thank ye? HE who provideth for the widow and the fatherless will not permit you to go unrewarded, though I cannot. O Margaret, hinny,” added she, “thank our benefactor as we ought to thank him, for I cannot.”

Fair Margaret’s thanks were a flood of tears.

“Oh, dinna greet!” said Thomas; “I would ten times over rather not hae bought the cow, but hae lost the siller, than I would hae been the cause o’ a single tear rowin’ down your boony cheeks.”—“O sir,” answered the widow, “but they’re the tears o’ gratitude that distress my bairn, and nae tears are mair precious.”

I might tell how Thomas sat down by the peat fire between the widow and her daughter, and how he took the hand of the latter, and entreated her to dry up her tears, saying his chief happiness would be to be thought their friend, and to deserve their esteem.—The cow was brought back to the widow’s and Thomas returned to Tollishill with his herdsman. But, from that night, he became almost a daily visiter at the house of Mrs. Lylestone. He provided whatever she

required—all that was ordered her. He spoke not of love to Margaret, but he wooed her through his kindness to her mother. It was, perhaps, the most direct avenue to her affections. Yet, it was not because Thomas thought so that he pursued this course, but because he wanted confidence to make his appeal in a manner more formal or direct.

The widow lingered many months, and all that lay within the power of human means he caused to be done for her, to restore her to health and strength, or at least to smooth her dying pillow. But the last was all that could be done. Where death spreadeth the shadow of his wing, there is no escape from sinking beneath the baneful influence of its shade. Mrs. Lylestone, finding that the hour of her departure drew near, took the hand of her benefactor, and when she had thanked him for all the kindness which he had shewn towards her, she added—

“But, O Sir, there is one thing that makes the hand of death heavy. When the sod is cau'd upon my breast, who will look after my poor orphan—my bonny fatherless and motherless Margaret? Where will she find a hame?”

“O Mam,” said Thomas, “if the like o' me durst say it, she need na hae far to gang to find a hame and a heart too. Would she only be mine, I would be her protector—all that I have should be hers.” A gleam of joy brightened in the eyes of the dying widow. “Margaret!” she exclaimed faintly; and Margaret laid her face upon the bed and wept.

“O my bairn! my poor bairn!” continued her mother, “shall I see you protected and provided for before I am 'where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest,' which cannot be long now?”

Thomas groaned—tears glistened in his eyes; he held his breath in suspense. The moment of trial, of condemnation or acquittal, of happiness or misery, had arrived. With an eager impatience he trembled to hear her answer. But Margaret's heart was prepared for his proposal. He had first touched it with gratitude, he had obtained her esteem; and where these sentiments prevail in the bosom of a woman whose affections have not been bestowed upon another, love is not far distant—if it be not between them, and a part of both.

“Did ever I disobey you, mother?” sob-

bed Margaret, raising her parent's hand to her lips.

“No, my bairn, no!” answered the widow, and raising herself in the bed, she took her daughter's hand and placed it in the hand of Thomas Hardie.

“Oh!” said he, “is this possible? Does my bonny Margaret really consent to make me the happiest man on earth? Shall I have a gem at Tollishill that I wadna exchange for a monarch's diadem?”

It is sufficient to say, that the young and lovely Margaret Lylestone became Mrs. Hardie of Tollishill; or, as she was generally called, “Midside Maggy.” Her mother died within three months after their marriage, but died in peace, having, as she said, “seen her dear bairn blessed wi' a leal and a kind gudeman, and one that was weel to do.”

For two years after their marriage, and not a happier couple than Thomas and Midside Maggy were to be found on all the long Lammermoor, in the Merse, nor yet in the broad Lothians. They saw the broom and the heather bloom in their season, and they heard the mavis sing before their dwelling; yea, they beheld the snow falling on the mountains, and the drift sweeping down the glens; but while the former delighted, the latter harmed them not, and from all they drew mutual joy and happiness. Thomas said that “Maggy was a matchless wife,” and she that “he was a kind, kind husband.”

But the third winter was one of terror among the hills. It was near the new year the snow began to fall on a Saturday, and when the following Friday came, the storm had not ceased. It was accompanied by frost and a fierce wind, and the drift swept and whirled like awful pillars of alabaster down the hills and along the glens.

“Sweeping the flocks and herds.” Fearful was the wrath of the tempest on the Lammermoors. Many farmers suffered severely, but none more severely than Thomas Hardie of Tollishill. Hundreds of his sheep had perished in a single night. He was brought from prosperity to the brink of adversity.

But another winter came round. It commenced with a severity scarce inferior to that which had preceded it, and again scores of his sheep were buried in the snow.

February had not passed, and scarce had the sun entered what is represented as the astronomical sign of the "twa fish," in the heavens; when the genial influence of spring fell with almost summer warmth upon the earth. During the night, the dews came heavily on the ground, and the sun checked it up in a vapour. But the herbage grew rapidly, and the flocks ate of it greedily, and licked the dew ere the sun rose to dry it up. It brought a murrain amongst them; they died by hundreds, and those that were fattened, but did not die, no man would purchase; or, if purchased, it was only upon the understanding that the money should be returned if the animals were found unsound. These misfortunes were too much for Thomas Hardie. Within two years he found himself a ruined man. But he grieved not for the loss of his flocks, nor yet for his own sake, but for that of his fair young wife, whom he valued as the apple of his eye. Many, when they heard of his misfortunes, said that they were sorry for bonny Midside Maggy.

But, worst of all, the rent day of Thomas Hardie drew near, and for the first time since he held a farm, he was unable to meet his landlord with his money in his hand. Margaret beheld the agony of his spirit, and she drew his cause. She put on her Sunday hood and kirtle; and, professing to her husband that she wished to go to Lauder, she took her way to Thirlestane Castle, the residence of their proud landlord, before whom every man in arrear trembled. With a shaking hand she knocked at the hall door, and, after much perseverance and entreaty, was admitted into the presence of the haughty Earl. She curtsied low before him.

"Well, what want ye, my bonny lass?"—said Lauderdale, eyeing her significantly.

"May it please your Lordship," replied Margaret, "I am the wife o' your tenant, Thomas Hardie o' Tollishill, and a good tenant he has been to your Lordship for twenty years and more, as your Lordship must weel know."

"He has been my tenant for more than twenty years, say ye," interrupted Lauderdale; "and ye say ye are his wife; why, looking on thy bonny face, I should say, that the weather hasna bloomed twenty times on the cheek o' Tollishill since thy mother rethrew thee. Yet ye say ye are his wife!—show me, but Thomas Hardie is a man of taste. Are na ye his daughter?"

"No, my Lord; his first, his only, and his lawful wife—and I would only say, that to you and your father before ye, for more than twenty years, he has paid his rent regularly and faithfully; but the seasons have visited us sairly, very sairly, for two years successively, my Lord, and the drift has destroyed, and the rot rooted out our flocks, so that we are hardly able to hold up our heads among our neighbours, and to meet your Lordship at your rent-day is out o' our power—therefore have I come to ye to implore ye that we may have time to gather our feet, and to give your Lordship and every man his due, when it is in our power."

"Hear me, gudewife," rejoined the Earl: "were I to listen to such stories as yours, I might have every farmer's wife on my estates coming whimpering and whinging, till I was left to shake a purse with naething in't, and allowing others the benefit o' my lands. But it is not every day that a face like yours comes in the shape o' sorrow before me—and, for a kiss o' your cherry mou', (and ye may take my compliments to your auld man for his taste,) ye shall have a discharge for your half-year's rent and see if that may set your husband on his feet again."

"Na, your Lordship, na!" replied Margaret: "it would ill become any woman in my situation in life, and especially a married one, to be daffin' wi' such as your Lordship. I am the wife o' Thomas Hardie, who is a good gudeman to me, and I come here this day to entreat you to deal kindly wi' him in the day o' his misfortune."

"Troth," replied Lauderdale—who could feel the force of virtue in others, though he did not always practise it in his own person; "I have heard o' the blossom o' Tollishill before, and a bonny flower ye are to bloom in an auld man's bower; but I find ye modest as ye are bonny, and upon one condition will I grant your request. Ye have told me o' your hirsels being buried wi' the drift, and that the snow has covered the May primrose on Leader braes; now it is Martinmas, and if in June ye bring me a snowball, not only shall ye be quit o' your back rent, but ye shall sit free in Tollishill until Martinmas next. But see that in June ye bring me the snowball or the rent."

Margaret made her obeisance before the Earl, and, thanking him, withdrew. But

she feared the coming of June—for to raise the rent even then she well knew would be a thing impossible, and she thought also it would be equally so to preserve a snow-ball beneath the melting sun of June. Though young, she had too much prudence and honesty to keep a secret from her husband—it was her maxim, and it was a good one, that “there ought to be no secrets between a man and his wife which the one would conceal from the other.” She therefore told him of her journey to Thirlestane, and of all that had passed between her and the Earl.—Thomas kissed her cheek, and called her his “bonny, artless Maggy;” but he had no more hope of seeing a snow-ball in June than she had, and he said “the bargain was like the bargain o’ a crafty Lauderdale.”

Again the winter storms howled upon the Lammermoors, and the snow lay deep upon the hills. Thomas and his herdsmen were busied in exertions to preserve the remainder of his flocks; but one day, when the westling winds breathed with a thawing influence upon the snow-clad hills, Margaret went forth to where there was a small, deep, and shadowed ravine by the side of the Leader. In it the rivulet formed a pool and seemed to sleep, and there the grey trout loved to lie at ease; for a high dark rock, over which the brushwood grew, overhung it, and the rays of the sun fell not upon it. In the rock, and near the side of the stream, was a deep cavity, and Margaret formed a snow-ball on the brae top, and she rolled it slowly down into the shadowed glen, till it attained the magnitude of an avalanche in miniature.—She trode upon it, and pressed it firmly together. She rolled it far into the cavity, and blocked up the mouth of the aperture, so that neither light nor air might penetrate the strange coffer in which she had deposited the equally strange rent of Tollishill. Verily, common as ice-houses are in our day, let not Midside Maggy be deprived of the merit of their invention.

I have said that it was her maxim to keep no secret from her husband; but, as it is said, there is no rule without an exception, even so it was in the case of Margaret, and there was one secret which she communicated not to Thomas, and that was—the secret of the hidden snow-ball.

But June came, and Thomas Hardie was a sorrowful man. He had in no measure

overcome the calamities of former years and he was still unprepared with his rent. Margaret shared not his sorrow, but strove to cheer him, and said—

“We shall hae a snow-ball in June, though I climb to the top o’ Cheviot for it.”

“O my bonny lassie,” replied he—and I could see the summit of Cheviot from my farm—“dinna deceive yoursel’ wi’ words; could only be words spoken in jest—but, ony rate, I perceive there has been naesnae on Cheviot for a month past.”

Now, not a week had passed but Margaret had visited the aperture in the rock where the snow-ball was concealed, and through idle curiosity, to perceive whether had melted away, but more effectually stop up every crevice that might have been made in the materials with which she had blocked up the mouth of the cavity.

But the third day of the dreadful month had not passed, when a messenger arrived from Tollishill with the Earl’s mandate—“June has come!”

“And we shall be at Thirlestane tomorrow,” answered Margaret.

“O my doo,” said Thomas, “what sense are ye talking!—that isna like ye, Margaret—I’ll be in Greenlaw Jail the week and our bits o’ things in the house, and our flocks will be seized by the harpies o’ the law—and the only thing that distresses me is, what is to come o’ you, hinny.”

“Dinna dree the death ye’ll never see,” said Margaret affectionately—“we shall be safe if we be spared, what the morn will be.”

“The fortitude o’ your mind, Margaret,” said Thomas, taking her hand—he intended to have said more, to have finished a sentence in admiration of her worth, but his heart filled, and he was silent.

On the following morning, Margaret went unto him—

“Now, Thomas, if ye are ready, we will go to Thirlestane. It is always worse to expect or think o’ an evil than to face it.”

“Margaret, dear,” said he, “I cannot comprehend ye—wherefore should I thrust my head into the lion’s den? It will soon enough seek me in my path.”

Nevertheless, she said unto him “Go on,” and bade him to be of good heart—and he rose and accompanied her. But she

led him to the deep ravine, where the
 ters seemed to sleep, and no sunbeam ever
 —and, as she removed the earth and the
 nes, with which she had blocked up the
 uth of the cavity in the rock, he stood won-
 ring. She entered the aperture, and rolled
 h the firm mass of snow, which was yet
 large to be lifted by hands. When Tho-
 saw this, he smiled and wept at the same
 tant, and he pressed his wife's cheek to
 bosom, and said—

Great has been the care o' my poor Mar-
 et, but it is o' no avail—for though he hae
 ved more than a match for the seasons,
 proposal was but a jest o' Lauderdale.
 What is a man but his word?" replied
 garet, "and him a nobleman too."

Nobility are but men," answered Thomas,
 d seldom better men than other folk. Be-
 e me, if we were to gang before him wi'
 wba' in our hands, we should only get
 ehed at for our pains.—"It was his own
 ment," added she—"and, at ony rate,
 can be nothing the worse for seeing if he
 abide by it."

reaking the snowy mass, she rolled up a
 ion of it in a napkin, and they went to-
 ds Thirlestane together—though often
 Thomas stop by the way and say—

Margaret, dear, I'm perfectly ashamed to
 g upon this business—as sure as I am
 ding here, as I have tauld ye, we will
 get ourselves laughed at."

I would rather be laughed at, added she,
 n despised for breaking my word; and
 r laird break his now, wha wadna des-
 him?"

armonious as their wedded life had hi-
 o been, there was what might well nigh
 alled bickerings between them on the
 , for Thomas felt or believed that she
 leading him on a fool's errand. But they
 ved at the Castle of Thirlestane, and
 ushered into the mansion of his proud

ia?" said the Earl, as they entered,
 y Midside Maggy, and her auld good-
 Well, what bring ye—the rents o'
 skill, or the equivalent?" Thomas look-
 his young wife, for he saw nothing to
 him hope on the countenance of Lau-
 le, and he thought that he pronounced
 ord "equivalent" with a sneer.

"I bring ye snow in June, my Lord," re-
 plied Margaret, "agreeably to the terms o'
 your bargain, and am sorry, for your sake
 and ours, that it has not yet been in our pow-
 er to bring gowd instead o't."

Loud laughed the Earl, as Margaret un-
 rolled the huge snow-hall before him, and
 Thomas thought unto himself, "I said how
 it would be." But Lauderdale, calling for his
 writing materials, sat down and wrote, and
 he placed in the hands of Thomas a discharge
 not only for his back rent, but for all that
 should otherwise be due at the ensuing Mar-
 tinmas.

Thoms Hardie bowed, and bowed again
 before the Earl, low and yet lower, awk-
 wardly and still more awkwardly, and he
 endeavoured to thank him, but his tongue
 faltered in the performance of its office. He
 could have taken his hand in his and wrung
 it fervently, leaving his fingers to express
 what his tongue could not—but his laird was
 an Earl; and there was a necessary distance
 to be observed between an Earl and a Lam-
 mermoor farmer.

"Thank not me, goodman," said Lauder-
 dale, "but thank the modesty and discretion
 o' your winsome wife."

Margaret was silent, but gratitude for the
 kindness which the Earl had shewn unto her
 husband and herself, took deep root in her
 heart. Gratitude, indeed, formed the pre-
 dominating principle in ner character, and
 fitted her even for acts of heroism.

The unexpected and unwonted generosity
 of the Earl had enabled Thomas Hardie to
 overcome the losses with which the fury of
 the seasons had overwhelmed him, and he
 prospered beyond any farmer on the hills.—
 But, while he prospered, the Earl of Lau-
 derdale, in his turn, was overtaken by ad-
 versity. The stormy times of the civil wars
 raged, and it is well known with what de-
 votedness Lauderdale followed the fortunes
 of the king. When the Commonwealth be-
 gan, he was made prisoner, conveyed to Lon-
 don, and confined in the Tower. There nine
 weary years of captivity crept slowly and
 gloomily over him; but they neither taught
 him mercy to others nor to moderate his am-
 bition, as was manifested when power and
 posterity again cast their beams upon him.—
 But he now lingered in the Tower, without
 prospect or hope of release, living upon the

bare sustenance of a prisoner, while his tenants dwelt on his estates, and did as they pleased with his rents, as though they should never again behold the face of a landlord.

But Midside Maggy grieved for the fate of him whose generosity had brought prosperity, such as they had never known before, to herself and to her husband, and in the fullness of her gratitude she was ever planning schemes for his deliverance; and she urged upon her husband that it was their duty to attempt to deliver their benefactor from captivity, as he had delivered them from the iron grasp of ruin, when misfortune lay heavily on them. Now, as duly as the rent-day came, from the Martinmas to which the snow-ball had been his discharge, Thomas Hardie faithfully and punctually locked away his rent to the last farthing, that he might deliver it into the hands of his laird, should he again be permitted to claim his own; but he saw not in what way they could attempt his deliverance, as his wife proposed.

"Thomas," said she, "there are ten long years of rent due, and we have the siller locked away. It is of nae use to us, for it is nae ours, but it may be of use to him. It would enable him to fare better in his prison, and maybe to put a handfu' o' gowd into the hands o' his keepers, and thereby to escape abroad, and it would furnish him wi' the means o' living when he was abroad. Remember his kindness to us, and think that there is no sin equal to the sin of ingratitude."

"But," added Thomas, "in what way could we get the money to him, for if we were to send it, it would never reach him, and as a prisoner he wouldna be allowed to receive it."

"Let us take it to him oursels, then," said Margaret.

"Take it oursels!" exclaimed Thomas, in amazement, "a' the way to London! It is out o' the question altogether, Margaret.—We would be robbed o' every plack before we got half way—or, if we were even there, how in a' the world do ye think we could get it to him, or that we would be allowed to see him?"

"Leave that to me," was her reply; "only say ye will gang, and a' that shall be accomplished. There is nae obstacle in the way but the want o' your consent. But the debt,

and the ingratitude o' it together, hang heavy upon my heart."

Thomas at length yielded to the importunities of his wife, and agreed that they should make a pilgrimage to London, to pay t-rent to his captive laird; though how they were to carry the gold in safety, through an unsettled country, a distance of more than three hundred miles, was a difficulty he could not overcome. But Margaret removed his fears; she desired him to count out the gold and place it before her, and when he had done so, she went to the meal-tub and took out a quantity of pease and of barley mixed, sufficiently to knead a goodly loaf or bannock; and when she had kneaded and rolled it out, she took the golden pease and pressed them into the paste of the unbaked bannock, and again she doubled it together, and again rolled it out, and kneaded into it the remainder of the gold. She then fashioned it into a thick bannock, and placing it on the hearth, covered it with the ashes of the peats.

Thomas sat marvelling, as the formation of the singular purse proceeded, and when he beheld the operation completed, and the bannock placed upon the hearth to bake, he only exclaimed—"Well, woman's ingenuity dings a'! I wouldna hae thocht o' that, had I lived a thousand years! Margaret, hinny, but ye are a strange an-

"Hoots," replied she, "I'm sure ye might easily hae imagined that it was the simplest plan we could hae thought upon to carry the siller in safety; for I am sure there is nae thief between the Tweed and Lothian town, that would covet or carry awa' a bannock." "Troth, my doo, and I believe ye're right," replied Thomas; "but we could have thought o' sic an expedient. Sure there never was a bannock baked in the bannock o' Tollishill."

On the third day after this, an old man, a fair lad, before the sun had yet risen, was observed crossing the English Border. He alternately carried a wallet across his shoulders, which contained a few articles of apparel and a bannock. They were dressed as shepherds, and passengers turned and gazed on them as they passed along, for the beauty of the youth's countenance excited their admiration. Never had lowland beauty not covered so fair a brow. The elder of

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

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

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

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

“And whence come ye?” continued the stranger.

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

“And whence go ye?” resumed the other.

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

“Some call me George Monk,” replied the stranger mildly, “others Honest George. I am a general in the Parliamentary army.”

Thomas reverentially raised his hand to his forehead and bowed his head.

“Then pardon me, sir,” added Margaret, “and if ye indeed be the good and gallant general, small offence will ye take at our saying that may be said amiss by a country ladie. We are tenants o’ the Lord o’ Lauderdale, whom ye now keep in captivity;—

and though we mayna think as he thinks, yet we never found him but a good landlord,

and a little good, in my opinion, it can do to anybody to keep him, as he has been now nine years, caged up like a bird. There-

fore, though our ain business that has bro’t us up to London should fail, I winna regret the journey, since it has afforded me an opportunity of seeing your Excellency, and soliciting your interest, which must be powerful

in behalf o’ our laird, and that ye would release him from his prison, and, if he mightna

remain in this country, obtain permission for him to gang abroad.”

“Ye plead fairly and honestly for your

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

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

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

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

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

and confusion, inquired—"Wherefore do ye come—and why do ye seek me?" "I brought ye a snow-ball before," said she, "for your rent—I bring ye a bannock now;" and she took the bannock from the basket and placed it before him. "Woman," added he, "are ye really as dementit as I thought ye but feigned to be when ye sang before the window?" "The proof o' the bannock," replied Margaret, "will be in the breaking of it."

"Then, goodwife, it will not be easily proved," said he—and he took the bannock and with some difficulty broke it over his knee;—but when he beheld the golden coins that were kneaded through it, for the first, perhaps the last and only time in his existence, the Earl of Lauderdale burst into tears and exclaimed—"Well, every bannock has its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill! Yet, kind as ye hae been, the gold is useless to ane that groans in hopeless captivity."

"Yours has been a long captivity," said Margaret, "but it is not hopeless; and if honest General Monk is to be trusted, from what he tauld me not three days by-gane, before a week go round ye will be at liberty to go abroad, and there the bannock o' Tollishill may be of use."

The wonder of Lauderdale increased, and he replied—

"Monk will keep his word—but what mean ye of him?"

And she related to him the interview they had had with the General by the way.—Lauderdale took her hand, a ray of joy and hope spread over his face, and he added—

"Never shall ye rue the baking o' the bannock, if auld times comes back again."

Margaret left the Tower, singing as she had entered it, and joined her husband, whom she found leaning over the railing around the moat, and anxiously waiting her return.—They spent a few days more in London, to

rest and to gaze upon its wonders, and again set out upon their journey to Tollishill.—General Monk remembered his promise;—within a week the Earl of Lauderdale was liberated, with permission to go abroad, and there, as Margaret had intimated, he found the bannock of Tollishill of service.

A few more years passed round, during which old Thomas Hardie still prospered, but during those years the Commonwealth came to an end, the King was recalled, and with him, as one of his chief favourites, returned the Earl of Lauderdale. And when he arrived in Scotland, clothed with power, whatever else he forgot, he remembered the bannock of Tollishill. Arrayed in what might have passed as royal state, and attended by fifty of his followers, he rode in princely pomp to the dwelling of Thomas Hardie and Midside Maggy, and when they came forth to meet him, he dismounted, and drew forth a costly silver girdle of strange workmanship, and fastened it round her jimp waist, saying

"Wear this, for now it is my turn to be grateful, and for your husband's life, and your life, and the life of the generation after ye," (for they had children) "ye shall sit rent free on the lands ye now farm. For, truly, every bannock had its maik but the bannock o' Tollishill."

Thomas and Margaret felt their hearts full to express their thanks, and ere they could speak, the Earl, mounting his horse rode towards Thirlestane, and his followers, waving their bonnets, shouted—"Long live Midside Maggy, queen of Tollishill."

Such is the story of the bannock o' Tollishill; and it is only necessary to add, for the information of the curious, that I believe the silver girdle may be seen until this day in the neighbourhood of Tollishill, and in the possession of a descendant of Midside Maggy, to whom it was given.

THE SABBATH WRECKS.

A LEGEND OF DUNBAR.

It was a beautiful Sabbath morning in the autumn of 1576: a few small clouds, tinged with red, sailed slowly through the blue heavens; the sun shone brightly, as if conscious of the glory and goodness of its Maker, diffusing around a holy stillness and tranquillity, characteristic of the day of rest; the majestic sun flashed back the sunbeams, while, on its bosom, slowly glided the winged granaries of commerce; there, too, lay its islands, lying in their strength—the May, shrouded in light, appeared as a leviathan sunning its rays—and the giant Bass, covered with snow, rose as a proud mountain of alabaster in the midst of the waters. A thousand boats lay along the shores of Dunbar. It was the herring season, and there were many boats from the south and from the north, and also from the coast of Holland.

Now, tidings were brought to the fishermen that an immense shoal was upon the coast; and, regardless of its being Sabbath morning, they began to prepare their thousand boats, and to go out to set their nets.—The Rev. Andrew Simpson, a man possessed of the piety and boldness of an apostle, was then minister of Dunbar; and as he went forth to the kirk to preach to his people, he beheld the unhallowed preparations of the fishermen on the beach, and he turned and went amongst them, and reprov'd them chiefly for their great wickedness. But the men were obdurate—the prospect of great gain was before them, and they mocked the words of the preacher. Yea, some of them came unto him, in the words of the children to the prophet—“Go up, thou bald head.” He went from boat to boat, counselling, entreating, expostulating with them, and praying to them.

“Surely,” said he, “the Lord of the Sabbath will not hold ye guiltless for this profanation of his holy day.” But, at that period idolatry and religion was but little felt or understood in the Borders, and they regarded not his words.

He went to one boat, which was the property of members of his own congregation, and there he found Agnes Crawford, the daughter of one of his elders, hanging upon

the neck of her husband, and their three children also clung around him, and they entreated him not to be guilty of breaking the Sabbath for the sake of perishing gain. But he regarded not their voice; and he kissed his wife and his children, while he laughed at their idle fears. Mr. Simpson beheld the scene with emotion, and approaching the group—“John Crawford,” he exclaimed, addressing the husband, “you may profess to mock, to laugh to scorn the words of a feeble woman, but see that they return not like a consuming fire into your bosom when hope has departed. Is not the Lord of the Sabbath the Creator of the sea as well as of the dry land? Know ye not, that ye are now braving the wrath of Him before whom the mighty ocean is a drop, and all space but a span? Will ye then glory in insulting His ordinances, and delight in profaning the day of holiness? Will ye draw down everlasting darkness on the Sabbath of your soul?—When ye were but a youth, ye have listened to the words of John Knox—the great apostle of our country—ye have trembled beneath their power, and the conviction that they carried with them, and when ye think of those convictions, and contrast them with your conduct this day, does not the word *apostate* burn in your heart? John Crawford, some of your blood have embraced the stake for the sake of the truth, and will ye profane the Sabbath which they sanctified? The Scotsman who openly glories in such a sin, forfeits his claim to the name of one, and publishes to the world that he has no part or communion with the land that gave him birth. John Crawford, hearken unto my voice, to the voice of your wife, and that of your bairns, (whose bringing up is a credit to their mother) and be not guilty of this gross sin.” But the fisherman, while he regarded not the supplications of his wife, became sulky at the words of the preacher, and springing into the boat, seized an oar, and with his comrades, began to pull from the shore.

The thousand boats put to sea, and Mr. Simpson returned sorrowful from the beach to the kirk, while Agnes Crawford and her children followed him. That day he took

for his text, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy;" and, as he fearlessly and fervidly denounced the crime of Sabbath-breaking, and alluded to the impious proceedings of the day, his hearers trembled, but poor Agnes wept aloud, and her children clung around her, and they wept also, because she wept. But ere the service had concluded, the heavens began to lower.—Darkness fell over the congregation—and first came the murmur of the storm, which suddenly burst into the wild howl of the tempest. They gazed upon each other in silent terror, like guilty spirits stricken in their first rebellion by the searching glance of the Omniscient. The loud voice of Psalms was abruptly hushed, and its echo mingled with the dreadful music of the elements, like the bleating of a tender lamb, in the wind that sweepeth howling on the mountains. For a moment, their features, convulsed and immovable, were still distended with the song of praise; but every tongue was silent, every eye fixed—there was no voice, save heaven's. The church seemed to rock to its foundations, but none fled—none moved. Pale, powerless as marble statues, horror transfixed them in the house of prayer. The steeple rocked in the blast, and as it bent a knell untolled by human hands, pealed on the ears of the breathless multitude. A crash followed. The spire that glittered in the morning sun lay scattered in fragments, and the full voice of the whirlwind roared through the aisles. The trees crouched and were stripped leafless;—and the sturdy oak, whose roots had embraced the earth for centuries, torn from the deep darkness of its foundations, was uplifted on the wings of the tempest. Darkness was spread over the earth. Lightnings gathered together in terrors—and clothed in the fury of their fearful majesty flashed through the air. The fierce hail was poured down as a cloud of ice. At the awful voice of the deep and loud thunder the whirlwind quailed—and the rage of the whirlwind seemed spent.

Nothing was now heard save the rage of the troubled sea, which lashed into foam by the angry storm, still bellowed forth its white billows to the clouds, and shouted its defiance loud as the war-cry of embattled worlds. The congregation still sat mute, horrified, death-like as if waiting for the preacher to break the spell of the elements. He rose to

return thanks for their preservation, and he had given out the lines—

"When in thy wrath rebuke me not,
Nor in thy hot rage chasten me,"

when the screams and the howling of women and children, rushing wildly along the streets rendered his voice inaudible: the congregation rose; and hurrying one upon another they rushed from the church: the exhortations of the preacher to depart calmly were unheard and unheeded. Every seat was deserted, all rushed to the shore, and Agnes Crawford and her children ran also in terror with the multitude.

The wrecks of nearly two hundred boats were drifting among the rocks. The dead were strewed along the beach, and amongst them wailing widows sought their husbands, children their fathers, mothers their sons, and all their kindred, and ever and anon an additional scream of grief arose as the lifeless body of one or other such relations was found. A few of the lifeless bodies of the hardy crews were seen tossing to and fro, but the cry for help was hushed, and the yell of death was heard no more.

It was in truth a fearful day—a day of lamentation—of warning—and of judgment. In one hour, and within sight of the beach a hundred and ninety boats and their crews were whelmed in the mighty deep—dwelling on the shore between Spittal and North Berwick, two hundred and eighty widows wept their husbands lost.

The spectators were busied carrying the dead, as the were driven on shore, beyond the reach of tide-mark. They had continued their melancholy task for near an hour, when a voice exclaimed—"See! see!—one more lives and struggles to make the shore!"

All rushed to the spot from whence the voice proceeded, and a young man was perceived—with more than mortal strength yet labouring in the whirling waves. His countenance was black with despair. His heart panted with suffocating pangs. His limbs buffeted the billows in the strong agony of death; and he strained with desperate urgency towards the projecting point of a black rock. It was now within his grasp; but instead he clutched the deceitful wave and laughed at his deliverance. He was whirled around it—dashed on it with violence—

again swept back by the relentless surge.— He threw out his arms at random, and his deep groans and panting breath were heard through the sea's hoarse voice. He again reached the rock—he grasped—he clung to its tangled sides. A murmur moaned through the multitude. They gazed one upon another: his glazed eyes frowned darkly upon them. Supplication and scorn were mingled in his look: his lips moved but his tongue uttered no sound: he only gasped to speak—to implore assistance: his strength gave way—the waters rushed round the rock as a whirlpool: he was again uplifted on the white bosom of the foam, and tossed within a few yards of the wailing but unavailing crowd.

"It is John Crawford!" exclaimed those who were enabled to recognize his features. A loud shriek followed the mention of his name—a female rushed through the crowd; and the next moment the delicate form of Agnes Crawford was seen floating on the wild sea. In an instant a hundred plunged to her rescue: but before the scream of horror and surprise raised by the spectators when they beheld her devoted but desperate pursuer had subsided, she was beyond the reach of all who feared death. Although no female amusement, Agnes had delighted in letting the waters from a child as though they felt a home upon their bosom—and now strength of inspiration seemed to thrill through her frame. She was hidden from the gaze of the marvelling spectators and a progression crept along the shore. She again cried; and her fair hand grasped the forehead of the drowning man! A shout of joy rang back on the deserted town:—the father who was amongst the multitude upon his knees. He clasped his hands together. "Merciful Heaven!" he exclaimed—"Thou who stillest the tempest, and dost rest the waters in the hollow of thy hand, O—protect my child!"

The waters rioted with redoubled fury—strength seemed failing, but a smile of joy still lighted up her features, and her hand yet grasped her apparently lifeless burthen. Despair again brooded on the countenance of her friends. For a moment she appeared amongst the waves, but the next moment Crawford lay senseless on the beach, and resting on the bosom of him she had been rescued from a watery grave—on the bosom of her husband.

They were borne to their own house, where in a few minutes she recovered, but her husband manifested no signs of vitality. All the means within their power, and that they knew, were resorted to, in order to effect his resuscitation. Long and anxiously she wept over him, rubbing his temples and his bosom—and at length beneath her hand his breast first began to heave with the returning pulsation of his heart.

"He lives! he breathes!" she exclaimed, and she sank back in a state of unconsciousness, and was carried from the room. The preacher attended by the bedside, where the unconscious fisherman lay, directing and assisting in the operations necessary for restoring animation.

As John Crawford began to recover, the film of death that had gathered over his eyes began to melt away, and he gazed round in bewilderment, but unconscious of where he was, and he sank into a troubled sleep; and as he so slept, and his strength returned, he cast forth his arms, in imagination yet grappling with death: he dreamed, and in his dream he shouted for help: he prayed, and in the same breath he blasphemed, and reviled the trembling spectators, that his troubled fancy still pictured on the beach.

In a few hours the fisherman awoke from his troubled sleep, which many expected would have been the sleep of death: he raised himself in the bed—he looked around wistfully. Agnes, who had recovered, and returned to the room, fell upon his bosom—"My Agnes!—my poor Agnes!" he cried, gazing wistfully in her face—"but where—where am I?—and my bairnies, where are they?"

"Here, father, here!" cried the children, stretching out their little arms to embrace him.

Again he looked anxiously around. A recollection of the past, and a consciousness of the present, fell upon his mind. "Thank God!" he exclaimed, and burst into tears:—and when his troubled soul and agitated bosom had found in them relief, he inquired, eagerly—"But, oh, tell me, how was I saved—was I cast upon the beach? There is a confused remembrance in my brain, as though an angel grasped me when I was sinking, and held me. But my head is confused, it is fearfully confused, and I remember naething but as a dream—save the bursting awa o'the

dreadful storm, wi' the perishing o' hunders in an instant, and the awfu' cry that rang frae boat to boat—' A judgment has come ower us !' And it was a judgment indeed ! O Agnes ! had I listened to your words, to the prayers o' my bit bairns, or the advice o' the minister, I would hae escaped the sin that I hae this day committed, and the horrors wi' which it has been visited. But tell me how, or in what manner, I was saved ?"

" John," said the aged elder, the father of Agnes, " ye was saved by the merciful and sustaining power of that Providence which ye this morning set at naught. But I rejoice to find that your heart is not hardened, and that the awfu' visitation—the judgment, as ye have weel described it—which has this day filled our coast with widows and with orphans, has not fallen upon you in vain ; for ye acknowledge your guilt, and are grateful for your deliverance. Your being saved is naething short o' a miracle. We a' beheld how long and how desperately ye struggled wi' the raging waves, when ye knew not who you were, and when it wasna in the power o' ony being upon the shore to render ye the slightest assistance. We saw how ye struggled to reach the black rock, and how ye was swept round it ; and when ye at last reached it, we observed how ye cling to it wi' the grasp o' death, until your strength gave way, and the waves dashed you from it. Then ye was driven towards the beach, and some of the spectators recognised your face, and they cried out your name ! A scream burst upon my ear—a woman rushed through the crowd—and then, John—oh, then !"—but here the feelings of the old man overpowered him. He sobbed aloud, and pausing for a few moments added—" tell him some o' ye." " O tell me," said the fisherman ; " all that my father-in-law has said I kenned before. But how was I saved or by whom ?"

The preacher took up the tale. " Harken unto me, John Crawford," said he. " Ye have reason this day to sorrow, and to rejoice, and to be grateful beyond measure. In the morning ye mocked my counsel. True, it was not the speaker, but the words of truth that were spoken, that ye ought to have regarded—for they were not my words, and I

was but the humble instrument to convey them to ye. But ye despised them ; and as ye sowed so have ye reaped. But as your father-in-law has told ye, when your face was recognised from the shore, and your name mentioned, a woman screamed—she rushed through the multitude—she plunged into the boiling sea, and in an instant she was beyond the reach of help !"

" Speak !—speak on !" cried the fisherman eagerly ; " and he placed his hands on the heaving bosom, and gazed anxiously, now towards the preacher, and again towards his Agnes, who wept upon his shoulder.

" The Providence that had till then sustained you, while your fellow-creatures perished around you," added the clergyman " supported her. She reached you—she grasped your arm. After long struggling she brought ye within a few yards of the shore ; a wave overwhelmed you both and cast you upon the beach, with her arm—the arm of your wife that saved you—upon your bosom !"

" Gracious Heaven !" exclaimed the fisherman, and pressing his wife to his bosom—" my ain Agnes ! was it you ? was it you my wife ! my saviour !" And he wept aloud,—and his children wept also. " There is na merit in what I've done," replied she, " if wha should have attempted to save ye, he I no ! Ye were everything to me, John, as to our bairns."

But the feelings of the wife and the mother were too strong for words. I will not dwell upon the joy and gratitude of the family whom the husband and the father had been restored as from the dead. It found a sorrowful contrast in the voice of lamentation and of mourning, which echoed along the coast like the peal of an alarm-bell. The dead were laid in heaps upon the beach, and on the following day, widows, orphans, parents, and brothers, came from all the fishing towns along the coast, to seek their dearest amongst the drowned that had been galled together ; or, if they found them not, wandered along the shore to seek for them where the sea might have cast them for. Such is the tale of the Sabbath wrecks—the lost drave of Dunbar.

THE DOOM OF SOULIS.

"They rolled him up in a sheet of lead,
A sheet of lead for a funeral pall;
They plunged him in the caldron red,
And melted him—lead, and bones, and all."—*Leyden*.

A Gazetteer would inform you that Den-
olm is a village beautifully situated near
the banks of the Teviot, about midway be-
tween Jedburgh and Hawick, in the parish
of Cavers; and, perhaps, if of modern date,
would add, it has the honour of being the
birth-place of Dr. Leyden. However, it was
somewhat early on a summer morning, a few
years ago, that a young man, a stranger, with
a fishing-rod in his hand and a creel fastened
to his shoulders, entered the village. He stood
in the midst of it, and, turning round—"This,
sir," said he, "is the birth-place of Ley-
den—the son of genius—the martyr of study;
a friend of Scott!"

Few of the villagers were astir; and at
first he met—who carried a spade over
his shoulder, and appeared to be a ditcher;
inquired if he could shew him the house
in which the bard and scholar was born.

"Oh, ay, sir," said the man, "I wot can
I'll shew ye that instantly, and proud to
show you it too."

"That is good," thought the stranger;
"the prophet is dead, but he yet speaketh;
with honour in his own country."

The ditcher conducted him across the green
past the end of a house, which was des-
cribed as being a school-house, and was
newly built, and led him towards an humble
building, the height of which was but a sin-
gular, and which was found occupied by
a cooper as a workshop. Yet, again, the
stranger rejoiced to find that the occupier
valued his premises for the poet's sake,
that he honoured the genius of him who
was born in their precincts.

"Farewell!" said the stranger, quoting the
usual phrase of poor Leyden, "I shall fish
to-day." And I wonder not at his hav-
ing said; for it is not every day that we
stand beneath the thatch-clad roof—or
under her roof—where was born one whose
name will bear written in undying char-
acters on its wings, until those wings droop
in the darkness of eternity.

The stranger proceeded up the Teviot, of-

tentimes thinking of Leyden, of all that he
had written, and occasionally repeating pas-
sages aloud. He almost forgot that he had
a rod in his hand—his eyes did anything but
follow the fly, and, I need hard'y say, his
success was not great.

About mid-day, he sat down on the green
bank in solitariness, to enjoy a sandwich,
and he also placed by his side a small flask
containing spirits, which almost every an-
gler, who can afford it, carries with him.—
But he had not sat long, when a venerable
looking old man saluted him with—

"Here's a bonny day, sir." The old man
stood as he spoke. There was something pre-
possessing in his appearance. He had a weath-
er-beaten face, with thin white hair; blue
eyes that had lost somewhat of their former
lustre; his shoulders were rather bent; and
he seem'd a man who was certainly neither
rich nor affluent, but who was at ease with
the world, and the world was at ease with
him.

They entered into conversation, and they
sat down together. The old man appeared
exactly one of those characters whom you
will occasionally find fraught with the tra-
ditions of the Borders, and still tainted with,
and half believing in their ancient supersti-
tions. I wish not to infer that superstition
was carried to a greater height of absurdity
on the Borders than in other parts of En-
gland and Scotland, nor even that the inha-
bitants of the north were as remarkable in
early days for their superstitions, as they now
are for their intelligence; for every nation
had its superstitions, and I am persuaded
that most of them might be traced to a com-
mon origin. Yet, though the same in origin,
they change their likeness with the charac-
ter of a nation or district. People uncon-
sciously made their superstitions to suit them-
selves, though their imaginary effects still
terrified them. There was, therefore, a
something characteristic in the fables of our
forefathers, which fables they believed as
facts. The cunning deceived the ignorant;

the ignorant were willing to deceive themselves; and what we now laugh at as the clever trick of a "hocus-pocus" man, was scarce more than a century ago, received as a miracle—as a thing performed by the hand of the "prince of the powers of the air."—Religion without knowledge, and still swaddled in darkness, fostered the idle fear; yea, there are few superstitions, though prostituted by wickedness, that did not owe their existence to some glimmering idea of religion.—They had not seen the lamp which lightens the soul, and leadeth it to knowledge; but, having perceived its far-off reflection, plunged into the quagmire of error—and hence proceeded superstition. But I digress into a descant on the superstitions of our fathers, nor should I have done so, but that it is impossible to write a Border Tale of the olden time without bringing them forward; and, when I do so, it is not with the intention of instilling into the minds of my readers the old idea of sorcery, witchcraft, and visible spirits, but of shewing what was the belief and conduct of our forefathers. Therefore, without further comment, I shall cut short these remarks, and simply observe, that the thoughts of the young stranger still running upon Leyden, he turned to the elder, after they had sat together for some time, and said, "Did you know Dr. Leyden, sir?"

"Ken him!" said the old man; "fifty years ago, I've wrought day's-work beside his father for months together!"

They continued their conversation for some time, and the younger inquired of the elder, if he were acquainted with Leyden's ballad of "Lord Soulis?"

"Why, I hae heard a verse or twa o' the ballant, sir," said the old man, "but I'm sure everybody kens the story. However, if ye're no perfectly acquaint wi' it, I'm sure I'm willing to let ye hear it wi' great pleasure; and a remarkable story it is—and just as true, sir, ye may tak my word on't, as that I'm raising this bottle to my lips."

So saying, the old man raised the flask to his mouth, and after a regular fisher's draught, added—

"Well, sir, I'll let ye hear the story abou Lord Soulis:—You have, no doubt, heard of Hermitage Castle, which stands upon the river of that name, at no great distance from Hawick. In the days of the great and good King Robert the Bruce, that castle was inhabited by Lord Soulis.* He was a man whose very name spread terror far and wide, for he was a tyrant and a sorcerer. He had a giant's strength, an evil eye† and a demon's heart; and he kept his "familiar" locked in a chest. Peer and peasant became pale at the name of Lord Soulis. His hand smote down the strong, his eye blasted the healthy. He oppressed the poor, and he robbed the rich. He ruled over his vassals with a rod of iron. From the banks of the Tweed to the Teviot, and the Jed, with their tributaries, to beyond the Lothians, an incessant war was raised against him to Heaven and to Hell. But his life was protected by a charm and mortal weapons could not prevail against him. (The seriousness with which the narrator said this, shewed that he gave full credit to the tradition, and believed in Lord Soulis as a sorcerer.)

He was a man of great stature, and his person was exceeding powerful. He had a royal blood in his veins, and laid claim to the crown of Scotland in opposition to the Bruce. But two things troubled him; and the one was to place the crown of Scotland on his head; the other, to possess the hand of a fair and true maiden, named Marion, who was betrothed with Walter, the young heir of Braemarholm, the stoutest and the boldest youth auld the wide Borders. Soulis was a man who was not only of a cruel heart, but it was filled with forbidden thoughts; and, to accomplish his purposes, he went down into the dungeon of his castle, in the dead of night, that no man might see him perform the 'dead without a name.' He carried a magic lamp in his hand, which threw around a

* He was also proprietor of Eccles in Berwickshire, and, according to history, was so in the town of Berwick; but tradition sayeth otherwise.

† There is, perhaps, no superstition more widely diffused than the belief in the fascine of an evil eye or a malignant glance; and, I am sorry to say, the absurdity has still its believers.

‡ Each sorcerer was supposed to have his familiar spirit, that accompanied him; Soulis was said to keep his locked in a chest.

light, like a glow-worm in a sepulchre ; and, as he went, he locked the doors behind him. He carried a cat in his arms. Behind him, a dog followed timidly, and before him into the dungeon he drove a young bull that had 'never nipped the grass.' He entered the deep and the gloomy vault, and, with a loud voice, he exclaimed—

'Spirit of darkness!—I come !'

He placed the feeble lamp upon the ground in the middle of the vault ; and, with a pickaxe, which he had previously prepared, he dug a pit and buried the cat alive ; and, as the poor, suffocating creature mewed, he exclaimed the louder—

'Spirit of darkness, come !'

He then leaped upon the grave of the living animal, and, seizing the dog by the neck, he dashed it violently against the wall, towards the left corner where he stood, and, unable to rise, it lay howling long and piteously on the floor. Then did he plunge his life into the throat of the young bull, and while its bleatings mingled with the howling of the dying dog, amidst what might be called the blue darkness of the vault, he received the blood in the palms of his hands, and stalked around the dungeon, sprinkling its circles, and crying with a loud voice—

'Spirit of darkness, hear me !'

Again he dug a pit, and, seizing the living animal, he hurled it into the grave feet forwards : and again he groaned, while the cat stood on his brow—'Come, spirit! come!'

He took a horse-shoe, which had lain in the vault for years, and which was called in the family the *spirit's shoe*, and he nailed it fast to the door so that it hung obliquely ;—as he gave the last blow to the nail, he

'Spirit, I obey thee!—come !'

Afterwards he took his place in the middle of the floor, and nine times he scattered around him a handful of salt, at each time aiming—

'Spirit, arise !'

Then did he strike thrice nine times with his foot upon a chest which stood in the middle of the floor, and by its foot was the pale light, and at each blow he cried—

'Arise, spirit! arise !'

Therefore when he had done these things, and cried seven and twenty times, the lid of the chest began to move, and a fearful figure with a red cap upon its head, and which resembled nothing in heaven above or on earth below, rose, and with a hollow voice inquired—

'What want ye, Soulis?'

'Power, spirit! power!' he cried. 'that mine eyes may have their desire, and that every weapon formed by man may fall scatheless on my body, as the spent light of a waning moon !'

'Thy wish is granted, mortal!' groaned the fiend. 'To-morrow eve, young Branxholm's bride shall sit within thy bower, and his sword return bent from thy bosom, as though he had dashed it against a rock.—Farewell! invoke me not again for seven years, nor open the door of the vault, but then knock thrice upon the chest and I will answer thee. Away! follow thy course of sin and prosper—but beware of a coming wood.'

With a loud and sudden noise, the lid of the massy chest fell, and the spirit disappeared, and from the floor of the vault issued a deep sound, like the reverbing of thunder.—Soulis took up the flickering lamp, and leaving the dying dog still howling in the corner whence he had driven it, he locked the iron door, and placed the huge key in his bosom.

In the morning his vassals came to him, and they prayed him on their bended knees, that he would lessen the weight of their hard bondage ; but he laughed at their prayers, and answered them with stripes. He oppressed the widow, and persecuted the fatherless ; he defied the powerful, and trampled on the weak. His name spread terror where soever it was breathed, and there was not in all Scotland a man more feared than the wizard Soulis, the Lord of Hermitage.

He rode forth in the morning with twenty of his followers, and wherever his right was denied to the crown, they fired the castle and destroyed the cattle of the farmer.

But as they rode by the side of the Teviot, he beheld fair Marion, the betrothed of the heir of Branxholm, riding forth, pursuing the red deer. 'By this token, spirit,' muttered Soulis joyously, 'thou hast not lied—to-night young Branxholm's bride shall sit in my bower.'

He dashed forward, and although Mar

and her attendants fled, as they perceived him, yet, as though his *familiar* gave speed to his horse, in a few seconds he rode by the side of Marion, and throwing out his arm, he lifted her from her saddle, while her horse yet flew at its swiftest speed.

She screamed aloud, but her attendants had fled. He held her upon the saddle before him—'Marion!' said the wizard lover, 'scream not—be calm, and hear me. I love thee, pretty one! I love thee!' and he rudely raised her lips to his. 'Fate hath decreed thou shalt be mine, Marion—and no human power shall take thee from me. Weep not. I love thee fiercely, madly, as a she wolf doth its cubs. As a river seeketh the sea, so have I sought thee, Marion: and now thou art mine—and thy fair cheek shall rest upon a manlier bosom than that of Branhholm's beardless heir.' And then he rode furiously forward to his castle.

He locked the gentle Marion within a strong chamber—he 'wooded her as the lion woos his bride. And now she wept, and tore her raven hair before him, and it hung disshevelled upon her shoulders. She implored him to restore her to liberty—and again finding her prayers in vain, she defied him—she invoked the vengeance of Heaven upon his head; and at such moments the reputed sorcerer stood a wed and stricken in her presence. For there is something in the majesty of virtue, as they flash from the eyes of an injured woman, which deprives guilt of its strength, and defeats its purpose, as though Heaven lent its electricity to defend the weak.

But finding his threats of no effect, on the third night he clutched her in his arms and bore her to the haunted dungeon, that the spirit might throw its spell over her and compel her to love him. He unlocked the massy door. The faint howls of the dog were still heard from the corner of the vault: he put the lamp upon the ground: he still held Marion to his side—and her terror had almost mastered her struggles: he struck his clenched hand upon the huge chest, and cried—'Spirit! come forth!'

Thrice he repeated the blow—thrice he uttered aloud his invocation. But the spirit arose not at his summons. Marion knew the tale of his sorcery; and terror deprived her of consciousness. On recovering she found herself again in the strong chamber where she had been confined, but Soulis was not

with her. She strove to calm her fears, she knelt down and told her beads, and begged that her Walter might be sent to her deliverance.

It was scarce day-break when the heir of Branhholm, whose sword was terrible in battle, with twenty armed men arrived before Hermitage Castle, and demanded to speak with Lord Soulis. The warder blew his horn, and Soulis and his attendants came forth and looked over the battlement.

'What want ye, boy,' inquired the wizard chief, 'that, ere the sun be risen, ye come to seek the lion in his den?'

'I come,' replied young Walter, boldly, 'in the name of our good king, and by his authority to demand that ye give into my hands safe and sound my betrothed bride, lest vengeance come upon thee.'

'Vengeance! beardless!' rejoined the sorcerer; 'who dares speak of vengeance on the house of Soulis? The crown is mine—thy bride is mine, and thou also shalt be mine—and a dog's death shalt thou die for this morning's boasting.'

'To arms!' he exclaimed, as he disappeared from the battlement, and within a few minutes a hundred men rushed from the gate.

Sir Walter's band quailed as they beheld the superior force of his enemies, and also in dread of the sorcery of Soulis. But hope revived in them when they saw the look of confidence on the countenance of their leader.

As hungry tigers, rushed Soulis and his vassals upon Sir Walter and his men. No man could stand before the sword of the sorcerer—even Walter marvelled, and he pressed forward to measure swords with him. But ere he could reach him, his few followers who had escaped the hand of Soulis and his host, fled and left him to maintain the battle single-handed. Every vassal of the sorcerer, save three, pursued them; and against these three, and their charmed lord young Walter was left to maintain an equal strife. 'Back!' cried Soulis, 'thy hand alone must Branhholm's young heir meet his doom. It is meet that I should give his head as a toy to my bride, fair Marion.'

'Thy bride, fiend!' exclaimed Sir Walter—'now perish!' and he attacked him furiously.

'Ha!' cried Soulis, and laughed at the petuosity of his antagonist—'take rushes for thy weapon, boy; thy steel falls seckless!'

'Vile sorcerer!' continued Walter, pressing upon him fiercely; 'this sword shall sever thy enchantment.'

Again Soulis laughed, but he found that his contempt availed him not, for the strength of his enemy was equal to his own, and in repelling his fierce assaults, he almost forgot the charm which rendered his body invulnerable—when after fighting desperately, one of Soulis' men, unobserved, thrust his spear into the side of Walter's horse, it fell, and brought him to the ground.

'An arrow-shot!' exclaimed Soulis—'and wherefore boy didst thou presume to contend with me?' And suddenly springing from his horse, he pressed his iron heel upon the breast of his foe, and turning also the point of his sword towards his throat—

'Thou shalt not die yet,' and bidding his attendants to bind him fast, they were dragging him within the gate, when Walter exclaimed, 'Coward and wizard, ye shall rue this foul treachery.'

'Ha! vain, boasting boy!' replied Soulis; 'thou shalt rue thy recklessness.'

Walter was borne into the strong chamber where Marion was confined, and dragging him towards her, he said sternly, 'Consent now, maiden, to be mine, and this boy shall live—refuse, and his head shall roll before thee.'

'Monster!' she exclaimed, and screamed.

'Ha! my Marion!' cried Walter, striving to be free. And turning upon Soulis, 'deserve me, fiend,' he added, 'but harm not her.'

'Think on it, maiden,' cried the sorcerer, raising his sword: 'the life of thy bonny bridegroom hangs upon thy word. But ye shall have until midnight to reflect on it: be true then, and harm shall not come upon either: but a man shall be thy husband, and a boy whom he hath brought to thee in aid.'

'I will never thee, vile sorcerer!' rejoined Walter, 'were my hands unbound, I would see my way from thy prison in spite of thee and thine!'

Soulis laughed scornfully, and again added 'Think on it, fair Marion.'

He then dragged the betrothed bridegroom to a corner, and fettered him against the wall in the same manner he fastened her to the

opposite side of the apartment; but the chains that bound her were made of silver.

When they were left alone, 'Mourn not,' said Walter. 'and think not of saving me: before to-morrow our friends will be here to thy rescue.' Marion wept bitterly.

The spirit of Lord Soulis was troubled, and the fear of coming evil sat heavy on him, and wandered to and fro on the battlements, anxiously looking for the approach of his followers who had went in pursuit of Branhholm's men. But night had set in, still they came not; and it was drawing towards midnight when a solitary horseman spurred his steed towards the castle gate; and when admitted he inquired in a tone apprehension—

'Where be thy fellows, knave?'

'Pardon me, my lord,' said the horseman falteringly, 'thy faithful bondsman is the bearer of evil tidings.'

'Evil! slave!' exclaimed Soulis, striking him as he spoke, 'speak ye of evil to me?—Where are thy fellows?'

The man trembled, and added—'In pursuing the vassals of Branhholm, they sought refuge in the wilds of Tarras, and being ignorant of its bottomless morass, horses and men have been buried in it—and I only have escaped.'

'And wherefore did ye escape?' cried the fierce sorcerer—'why did ye live to remind me of the shame of the house of Soulis?'

He hurried to the haunted dungeon, to perform his incantations, with fury in his looks. Thrice he struck the chest, and thrice he exclaimed—

'Spirit! come forth!'

The lid was lifted up, and a deep and angry voice said—'Mortal! wherefore hast thou summoned me before the time I commanded thee? Was not thy wish granted—steel shall not wound thee: cords bind thee: hemp hang thee; nor water drown thee.'

'Stay,' exclaimed Soulis, 'add, nor fire consume me!'

'Ha!' cried the spirit, in a fit of horrid laughter—'Beware of a coming wood!' And a noise as of thunder was repeated beneath his feet.

'Beware of a coming wood!' muttered Soulis to himself; 'what means the fiend?'

He hastened from the dungeon without locking the door behind him, and drawing

the key from his bosom, he flung it over his left shoulder, crying, 'Keep it, spirit!'

He shut himself up, to ponder on the words of his familiar; and he thought not of Marion till day-break, when with a troubled countenance he entered the apartment where they were fettered.

'How, now, maiden?' he began; 'hast thou considered well my words? wilt thou be my willing bride, and let young Branhholm live?'

'Rather than see her thine, I would'st be hewn in pieces,' exclaimed Walter.

'Tis no bad thought,' said the sorcerer 'thou mayest have thy wish. Yet, boy, ye think that I have no mercy: I will teach thee that I have, and refined mercy too. Now, tell me, were I in thy power as thou art in mine, what fate would ye award to Soulis?'

'Then truly,' replied Walter, 'I would hang thee on the highest tree in the woods.'

'Well spoken, young strong bow,' Soulis replied; 'and I will shew thee, though ye think I have no mercy, that I am more merciful than thou. You would choose for me the highest tree, but I shall give thee the choice of the tree from which you may prefer your body to hang, and from whose top the owl may sing its midnight song, and to which the ravens may gather for a feast; and thou, pretty face,' turning to Marion, 'sith you will not, even to save him, give me thine hand, I will be thy priest and celebrate your marriage, for I will bind your hands together and ye shall hang on the next branch to him.'

'For that I thank thee,' replied she.

He then called his arm men, and putting halters round the necks of his intended victims, they were dragged forth to the woods around the Hermitage, where Walter was to choose the fatal tree.

A deep mist covered the face of the earth; and ere he had approached the wood where he was to carry his merciless project into execution--

'The wood comes towards us!' exclaimed one of his followers. 'What! *the wood comes!*' cried Soulis, and his cheek became pale: he thought of the words of the demon, '*Beware of a coming wood!*' and for a time their remembrance, and the forest that seemed to advance before him, deprived him of resolu-

tion, and before his heart recovered, the followers of the house of Branhholm, numbering fourscore, each bearing a tall branch of the rowan tree in their hands, as a charm against his sorcery, perceived, and raising a loud shout surrounded him.

The cords which bound the victims were cut immediately. But when the followers, Soulis were overpowered, his single arm deared around. Now, there was not a day that passed that complaints were not brought to King Robert, from those residing on the Borders, against Lord Soulis, for his lawless oppression, his cruelty, and his wizard-craft. Now, the King was wearied with their importunities, and he exclaimed peevishly and unthinkingly, 'Boil him, if you please, but let me hear no more about him.' And when the enemies of Soulis heard these words from the lips of the King, they hastened to execute them; and took with them a wise man who was learned in breaking the spells of sorcery, and they arrived before Hermitage Castle, while its lord was contending single-handed against the followers of Branhholm, and his body received no wounds; and they strove to bind him with cords, but his spell snapped them asunder as threads.

'Wrap him in lead,' cried the wise man, 'and boil him therewith, according to the command of the King; for water nor hempen cords have no power over his sorcery.'

Many ran to the castle, and got lead, and they rolled him in it, and he foamed in the impotency of his rage, for he had become as powerless as a child. Others procured a caldron in which it was said many of his incantations were performed. And they bore him to where the stones of the Druids are to be seen till this day, and the stones are pointed out on which the caldron was suspended: they kindled a pile of faggots beneath it, and they bent the living body of Soulis within the lead, and thrust it into the caldron, and the flesh and bones of the wizard were consumed in the boiling lead. Such was the doom of Soulis.

The King sent messengers to prevent his hasty words being carried into execution, but they arrived too late.

In a few weeks there was mirth and music and a marriage feast in the bowers of Branhholm, and fair Marion was his bride.'

REUBEN PURVES; OR, THE SPECULATOR.

Speculation is the soul of business, it is the manspring of improvement, it is essential to prosperity. Burns has signified that he could not stoop to crawl into what he considered as the narrow holes of bargain-making; and nine out of every ten persons, who consider themselves high-minded, profess to sympathize with him, and say he was right. But our immortal bard, in so saying, looked only at the odds and ends—the corners and the disjointed extremities of bargain-making, properly so called—and he suffered his pride and his prejudices to blind, in this instance, his mighty spirit, and contract his rasp, so that he saw not the all-powerful, humanizing, and civilizing influence of the very bargain-making which he despised. True it is, that as a spirit of speculation or bargain-making contracts itself, and every day becomes more and more a thing of farthings and of fractions, it begets a grovelling spirit of meanness, that may eventually end in dishonesty; but as it expands, it exalts the man, imbues his mind with liberality, and benefits society. The spirit of commercial speculation will spread abroad, until it render useless the sword of the hero, cause it to rust in its scabbard, and to be regarded as the barbarous plaything of antiquity. It will go forth as a dove from the ark of society, bearing the olive branch of peace and mutual benefits unto all lands, until men all learn war no more.

But at present I am not writing an essay on speculation or enterprise, but the history of Reuben Purvis, the speculator, and I will therefore begin with it at once. Reuben was born in Galashiels, than which I do not know a more thriving town, or one more beautifully situated on all the wide Borders. You pass it, seated on the outside of the heavy Chase coach on a summer day, (if chance a sunny shower shall have fallen,) it lies before you as a long and silvered line, its blue slates reflecting back the sunbeams. Its streets, cleanliness and prosperity join its sides, while before it and behind rise hills, high enough to be called mountains, where the gorgeous heather purples in its season. I fore it—I might say through it—wimples its side, almost leaving its thresholds. There

the spirit of speculation and of trade has taken up “a local habitation and a name” in the bosom of poetry. On the one hand is the magic of Abbotsford, on the other the memories of Melrose. But its description is best summed up in the condemnation of a Cockney traveller, who said—“Vy, certainly, Galashiels would be wery pretty, were it not its vood and vater!”

But I again digress from the history of Reuben Purves. I have said that he was born in Galashiels; his father was a weaver, and the father brought his son up to his own profession. But although Reuben

“was a wabster guid.
Could stown a clue wi’ ony body.”

his apprenticeship (if his instructions from his father could be called one) was scarce expired, when, like Othello, he found “his occupation gone,” and the hand-loom was falling into disuse. Arkwright, who was long considered a mere bee-headed barber, had, though in a great measure by the aid of others, brought his mechanism to a degree of perfection, that not only astonished the world, but held out a more inexhaustible, and a richer source of wealth to Britain, than its mines did to Peru. Deep and bitter were the imprecations of many against the power-loom; for it is difficult for any man to see good in that which dashes away his hard-earned morsel from the mouths of his family, and leaves them calling in vain for food.—But there were a few spirits who could appreciate the vast discovery, and who in it perceived, not only the benefits it would confer on the country, but on the human race.—Arkwright, who, though a wonderful man, was not one of deep or accurate knowledge, with a vanity which in him is excuseable, imagined that he could carry out the results of his improvements to an extent that would enable the country to pay off the national debt. It was a wild idea; but extravagant as it was, it must be acknowledged, that the fruits of his discoveries enabled Britain to bear up against its burdens, and maintain its faith in times of severest trial and oppression.

Reuben’s father was one of those who complained most bitterly against the modern

innovation. He said, "the work could never be like a man's work. It was a ridiculous novelty, and would justly end in the ruin of all engaged in it." It had, indeed, not only reduced his wages the one half, but he had not half his wonted employment, and he saw nothing but folly, ruin, and injustice in the speculation. Reuben, however, pondered more deeply; he entered somewhat into the spirit of the projector. He not only entertained the belief that it would enrich the nation, but he cherished the hope that it would enrich himself. How it was to accomplish his own advancement he did not exactly perceive but he lived in the idea—he dreamed of it; nothing could make him divest himself of it; and he was encouraged by his mother saying—

"Well, Reuben, I canna tell, things may be as ye say—only there is very little appearance o' them at present, when the wages o' you and your father put thegither, are hardly the half o' what ane o' ye could have made. But ae hing is certain—they who look for a silk gown, always get a sleeve o't."

"Nonsense, moman! ye're as bad as him," was the reply of his father; "wherefore would ye encourage the callant in his havers? I wonder, seeing the distress we are a' brought to, he doesna think shame to speak o' such a thing. Mak a fortune by the new-fangled systèm indeed!—my truly! if it continue meikle langer, he winna be able to get brose without butter."

"Well, faither," was the answer of Reuben, "we'll see; but you must perceive that there is no great improvement can take place, let it be what it will, without doing injury to somebody. And it is our duty to watch every opportunity to make the most of it."

"In my belief the laddy is out o' his head," rejoined the father, "but want will bring him to his senses."

Reuben, however, soon found that it became almost impossible to keep soul and body together by the labours of the loom. He therefore began to speculate on what he ought to do; and, like my honoured namesake, the respectable poet, but immortal ornithologist, he took unto himself a Pack, and with it upon his shoulders, he resolved to perambulate the Borders. There was no disgrace in the calling, for it is as ancient, perhaps more ancient, than nobility; and, we are told, that, even in the time of Solo-

mon, "there were chapmen in the land in those days." Therefore, Reuben Purves became a chapman. He, as his original trade might lead one to suppose, was purely a dealer in "soft" goods; and when he entered a farm-house, among the bonny buxom girls, he would have flung his pack upon the table, and said—

"Here, now, my braw lasses; look ye here! Here's the real upright, downright, elegant and irresistible muslin for frills, which no sweetheart upon this earth could have the power to withstand. Ane here's the gown pieces—cheap, cheap—actually gien thee away—the newest, the most elegant patterns! Only look at them!—it is a sin to see them so cheap! Naething could be more handsome! Now or never, lasses! Look at the ribbons, too—blue, red, yellow, purple, green, plain, flowered, and gauze; now is the time for busking your cockermony—naething could withstand them wi' sic faces as yours. Naething, naething, and that ye would find. It would be out o' the question to talk o't. Come hinnies, only observe them, I'm sure ye canna but buy—or look at this lawn."

"O, Reuben, man," they would have said "they are very bonny, but we have naething."

"Havers!" answered he, "young queer like you talking about siller! Sell your hair dears, and buy lang lawn!"

Then did Reuben pull forth his scissors and begin to exercise the functions of a hair dresser, in addition to his calling as a chapman—thinning, and sometimes almost cropping, the fair, the raven, the auburn, or the brown tresses of the serving-maids, and giving them his ribbons and his cambrics in exchange for their shorn locks. The ringle he disposed of to the hair dressers in Edinburgh, Newcastle, or Carlisle, and he confessed that he found it a very profitable speculation; and where the colour or texture of the hair was beautiful, he invariably preferred bartering for it, to receiving payment in money. This was a trait in Reuben's character, at the outset of his career as a speculator, which shewed that he had a correct appreciation of the real principles of trade—that he knew the importance of barter, without which commerce could not exist, and afforded an indication of the future merchant.

He was in the habit of visiting every town

village, and farm-stead within sixty miles of the Borders—to the north and to the south; and taking in the entire breadth of the island. His visits became as regular as clock-work. Every merchant now-a-days knows more exactly the day and almost the hour when he may expect a visit from the traveller of the house with which he deals, accompanied with an invitation to drink a bottle of wine, and pay his account, than the people in the Border villages knew when Reuben would appear amongst them.

It was shrewdly suspected that Reuben did not confine himself solely to the sale of ribbons, gown-pieces, and such like ware, but that his goodly pack was in fact a magazine, which was concealed tea, cogniac, and tobacco. At all events he prospered amazingly, and in the course of three years—though he lessened its weight at every village he came to—his pack overgrew his shoulders, and prosperity compelled him, first, to have recourse to a pack-horse, and, before he had long, to a covered cart or caravan. In short, arriving at a village, instead of going round from house to house, with his stock on his shoulders, as he was wont to do, he got round the drummer or bellman; or, where no such functionaries were known, he employed some other individual, with a key and a treacher, to go round the village and give the proclamation—

“This is to give notice, that Mr. Reuben Purves, with his grand and elegant assortment of the newest fashionable varieties of ware goods, and other commodities, all brought by him for ready money, so that great gains may be expected, has just arrived, (such an inn,) and will remain for this day only; therefore, those who wish the real superior articles, at most excellent bargains, will embrace the present opportunity!”

Let not the reader despise Reuben, because he practised and understood the mysteries of trading. There is nothing done in this world without it. No gardener ever “lichtlied” his own leaks. All men practise it, from the dealer of books to the maker of shoe-black, from the vender of matches. From the eloquent advertisement of a metropolitan auctioneer, down to the “only true and secular account” of an execution, bawled by a flying stationer on the streets, the spirit of puffing, in its various degrees, is to be

found. Therefore, we blame not Reuben; he only did what other people did, though perhaps after a different fashion, and with better success. It gave a promise of his success as a tradesman. He said he ventured on it as a speculation, and finding it to suit his purpose, he continued it. In truth, scarce had the herald made the proclamation which I have quoted, until Reuben's cart was literally besieged. His customers said, “it went like a cried fair”—“there was nae getting forward to it.”

Moreover, he was always civil, he was always obliging. He had a smile, and a pleasant and merry word for every one. Buy or not buy, his courtesy never failed him. In short, he would do anything to oblige his customers, save to give them credit; and that, as he said, was not because he had any doubt of their honesty, or that he was unwilling to serve them, but because he had laid it down as a rule never to trust a single penny, which rule he could not break. He was also possessed of a goodly person, was some five feet ten inches in height, he had fair hair, a ruddy cheerful countenance, intelligent blue eyes, and his years but little exceeded thirty.

At this period of Reuben's history, there dwelt in the town of Moffat, one Miss Priscilla Spottiswoode. Now, Priscilla was a portly, and withal a comely personage, and though rather stout, she was tall in proportion to her thickness. Nothing could surpass the smoothness of the clear red and white upon her goodly countenance. There was by no means too much red, and constitutional good-nature shed a sort of perpetual smile over her features, like a sun-beam irradiating a tranquil lake. In short, it was a reproach to every bachelor in the town and parish of Moffat, to have permitted forty and four summers to roll over the head of Priscilla, without one amongst them having the manliness to step forward and offer his hand to rescue her from a state of single solitariness. She had been for more than twenty years the maid, or rather I might say the nurse, of an old and rich lady, who, at her death, bequeathed to her five hundred pounds.

Reuben first saw Priscilla about three months after she had received the legacy.—“Five hundred pounds,” thought he “would set a man on his feet.” He also gazed on her kind, comely, smiling countenance, and

he said within himself, that "the men of Moffat were blind." And eventually he concluded, communing with himself, that the fair Priscilla was a speculation worthy the thinking of. She wished to purchase a few yards of lace for cap borders, and such like purposes, and as Reuben sold them to her, he said to her a hundred pleasant things, and he let drop some well-timed and well-turned compliments, and she blushed as his eulogy on the lace aptly ended in praise of her own fair features. Yet this was not all; for he not only sold to her fifty per cent. cheaper than he would have parted with his goods to any other purchaser, but he politely—by what appeared a wilful sort of accident—contrived to give her a full yard into her bargain. Priscilla looked upon Reuben with more than complacency; she acknowledged, (that is to herself,) that he was the best-looking, polite, and most sensible young man she had ever seen. She resolved that in future she would deal with no one else; and indeed she had got such an excellent bargain of the lace, that she had come to the determination of again visiting his stock, and making a purchase of other articles. And, added she, to a particular friend—

"It does a body good to buy from him, for he is always so pleasant."

But Reuben saved her the trouble, for early the next day he called at her house with a silk dress under his arm. He said—

"It was the last piece of the kind he had; indeed it was a perfect beauty, equal to real India, and would become her exceedingly; and not think about the price, for that was no object."

"What then am I to think about?" thought Priscilla; and she admired the silk much, but, peradventure, if the truth were told, she admired its owner more.

Reuben spent more than two hours beneath the roof of the too-long neglected spinstar: she blushed, his tongue faltered, and when he rose to depart, he had neither the silk beneath his arm, nor the cash for it in his pocket; but he shook her hand fervently, and would have saluted her fair check, but true love, like true genius, people say, is always modest. Priscilla, on being left, felt her heart in a very unusual tumult—and now she examined her face in a mirror, and again admired the silk which he had presented. She had heard him spoken of as a steady, thriving

and deserving young man; and it became a settled point in her mind, that if he directly popped the important question, she would be as candid with him, and at once answer—"Yes."

Reuben was frequently seen in Moffat after this, even when he brought no goods for sale, and within six months after her purchase of the lace, the sacred knot was tied between them: and at the age of forty-four years, Miss Priscilla Spottiswoode blushed into Mrs. Purves.

While following his avocation as a charman, Reuben had accumulated rising two hundred pounds, which added to his wife's five hundred, raised his capital to seven hundred. But he was not a man to look only at the needle point of things, or whose soul would be lost in a nutshell. Onward! was the ruling principle of Reuben—he had been fortunate in all his speculations, and trusted to be so still. Never had he lost sight of the important discoveries of Arkwright, and of the improvements which were being made upon them; and while he was convinced that they would become a source of inexhaustible wealth to the nation, he still cherished the hope that they would enrich himself: he said also—and Mrs. Purves agreed with him, that travelling the country was a most uncomfortable life for a married man: he therefore sold his horse and covered cart, disposed of his stock at prime cost, and with his wife and capital removed to Manchester.

He took a room and cellar at the top of Dean Street. The upper room served them for bedchamber, parlour, kitchen, and all, while the cellar he converted into a ware-room. Perhaps, having something more than seven hundred pounds to begin the world with, some may think that he might have taken more commodious premises: but rents were becoming high in Manchester—many a merchant has begun business in a cellar—and Reuben, quoting the words of poor Richard, said—"I am but serving my time yet; we must creep before we walk."

Never was any man who prospered in the affairs of this world more diligent than Reuben Purves, and in Priscilla he found an admirable helpmate. She soon learned the name, the price, and the quality of every description of goods; and when he was necessarily absent, she could attend to the orders of customers as well as himself. The

aler unacquainted with the Manchester mode of business, is not to suppose that Reuben, although his stock was wedged up in a dollar, was a retail draper or haberdasher.—As magnitude considered, there are fewer such in Manchester than in any other town in the kingdom; but Reuben commenced as a wholesale merchant—one who supplies the country dealers: he always went to the market to purchase with the money in his hand. When Joseph the patriarch's brethren came to him to buy corn—and pity it is that the good old custom has too much fallen into disuse.—He made his purchases chiefly from the small manufacturers, to whom ready money was the object, and consequently bought his goods to his much advantage. During his perambulations on the Borders also, he had become acquainted with the drapers in the towns upon his circuit; and at the seasons when they visited Manchester, he might have been seen passing rapidly along what is now called Piccadilly, and if one whose face he knew stepped from the coach, Reuben turned suddenly round as if by accident, took the purchaser by the hand, and invited him to come to “eat and drink” with him. He was generally successful, for to resist his solicitations was a matter of difficulty, and after partaking of a frugal meal and a single glass, the stranger was invited to examine the stock in the warehouse, and seldom failed of becoming the purchaser of a part.

Within three years he had taken extensive warehouses. He had a clerk, a salesman, four warehousemen, a traveller, and a porter: he had also taken his father from the farm. Reuben had seized fortune at the mill, and he floated down with the stream. He said he never undertook a speculation but was convinced it would be successful: he said that fortune-making was like courtship, it was never venture never win—only know what you were venturing upon.

I should have mentioned, that previous to the birth of Priscilla had made Reuben the happy father of twin daughters, and the one they named Rachel, and the other Elizabeth.—The mother gloried in her children, and her husband looked on them with delight. He was a fortunate man and a happy one, and a cup of felicity, if it did not run over, was well filled.

In a short time, Reuben not only supplied the goods to a great extent the merchants

on the Borders, but throughout the three kingdoms; and he also exported extensively to other countries, and even to some where the importation of British goods was prohibited.

“A fig to the tariffs,” he was wont to say, “the profit will cover the risk. The principle of trade is like the principle of steam—there is no restraining it.”

In these speculations, however, Reuben frequently experienced the common fate of the smuggler; and the goods which he sent into countries where they were prohibited, were seized: he was of too ardent a temperament to be merely the purchaser and vender of other men's manufactures, and eventually he erected a cotton mill of his own, a few miles out of Manchester.

And here it will, perhaps, be more acceptable to the reader, that I detail the remainder of Reuben's narrative in his own words, as he related it more than thirty years afterwards. It was delivered in the Scottish accent, which a residence of more than three times ten years had not destroyed:—

“I was now,” said he—alluding to the erection of the mill—“at what I had always considered as the very pinnacle of my ambition—the proprietor of a cotton-mill, and of one, too, that had cost me several thousand in completing it. I had no doubt but that it would turn out the master-speculation of my existence; for bless ye, at that period, to have a mill was to have a mine. A spinning jenny was worth its weight in rubies. There was Arkwright made a fortune like a nobleman's in a jiffy; and Robert Peel, greatly to his credit, from being a weaver lad, made a fortune that could buy up half the gentry in the country. Indeed, wealth just poured in upon the mill owners; and I must confess they werna bad times for the like o'me, that bought their calicoes, and got them dressed and printed to sell them out, as ye may judge from my having been able to erect a mill of my own before I had been many years in business. But I must confess that the mill ran between me and my wits. All the time it was building, I was out and in frae the town to see how the workmen were getting on, wet or dry, and I dare to say, that if I dreamed about it once during the twelve months it was in hands, I dreamed about it a thousand times. Many a time Priscilla said to me—

'Reuben, your'e thinking ower meikle about the mill—which I fear is enough to make the mill no prosper.'

'My dear,' I said, 'do ye consider what a speculation it is?—it is like death or life to me; and if I didna look after the workmen to see how they are getting on wi' it, who do ye suppose would? There is nothing like a man looking after his own concerns, and where there is sae meikle at stake, it is impossible but to think o't.'

But I looked after the progress of the mill, and my thoughts were taken up concerning it, to the neglect of my more immediate business. After commencing in the wholesale line, I found it impossible to abide by my original rule of—no credit; and during my frequent absence from my warehouse, my salesman had admitted the names of men into my books of whom I knew nothing, but whom I afterwards learned were not to be trusted.—Their payments were not forthcoming in the proper season, and in looking after them I put off insuring the mill at the time I intended. Delay is a curse to a person in business: it is as dangerous as the blandishments of a harlot to the young—and so I found it. On the very night that the machinery and every thing was completed, I allowed the spinners and others that I had engaged, to have a supper and dance in it wi' their wives and sweethearts. I kept them company for an hour mysel', and very merry they were.—But after charging them all to keep sober and harmonious, and to see that they locked the doors behind them when they broke up, and to leave every thing right, I wished them good night, and they drank my health and gave me three cheers as I left them. But I dinna think I had been three hours in bed, when Priscilla gave me a hunch, and says—

'Waken, Reuben, waken!—there's an unco knocking at the street door.'

'Hoot!' says I, 'some drunken body,' and turned round on my side to sleep.

But the knock continued louder.

'That is nae drunk body,' said Priscilla—'something has happened.'

I started ower the bed, half-dressed, when the servant lass come fleein' up the stair.

'What is it?' cried.

'O Sir—the mill! the mill!' said she.

A shot could not have stupified me more.

'What about the mill?' cries I.

'Oh, it's on fire! on fire!' she replied.

Priscilla screamed 'on fire!' and sprang u

I cannot tell ye how I threw on my coat—I know that I banged out without a napkin about my neck, and rushing down the stair. I couldna stop to get a horse saddled, but ran as fast as I cou'd. It was six miles, but never slackened. I didna even discover though the stones had cut my feet, that I had come away barefooted. The mill absorbed both thought and sense—I was dead to any thing else. But what a sight presented itself to my view! Great red flames raging up to the height of its five stories, and the very wheels of the machinery seen through the window glowing as bright as when in the hands of the smith that formed them. The clouds of smoke blinded me. Hundreds of women ran about screaming, and drunken men staggered to and fro, like lost spirits in the midst of their tortures. O, it was an awful sight to any one to behold; but for me to witness it was terrible! For some minutes I was bereft of reason, and had the spectators that held me back, I would have rushed into the middle of the flames. Crash, after crash, the newly erected walls fell in, and I was a helpless spectator of the destruction of my property. In one hour, more than half of the factory that I had struggled for years to gather together, was swept as by a whirlwind from off the face of the earth.

I stood till I beheld the edifice a mass of smoking ruins, with scarce one stone left upon another. All the manufacturers round about sympathised with me, and one of them drove me back to Manchester in his drosky. When I entered my own house, I believe I appeared like a person on whom sentence of death had been passed, as he is removed from the table and led back to his prison.

'Weel, Reuben,' asked Priscilla, in her calm way, 'is the damage great?'

'O my dear!' said I, 'there is nothing left but a heap o' ashes! we are ruined!'

"No, no," replied she, as quietly as ever, 'we arena ruined. The back is always made fit for the burden. The Hand that sent us to this misfortune (as we think it) upon us, will enable us to bear up against it. Now, just compose yourself, and dinna be angry with what I am going to say; but we are as well now as we were three years ago, and, I

Reuben, we were quite as happy then as we are now. Ye have still a very excellent business, and a fortune far beyond onything that you and I could ever expect to see when we cam' together. You have health and I have mine, and our twa bairnies are growing up to be a comfort to us baith. They will ne'er feel the loss of the cotton-mill, and you and I ne'er kened a guid o' it. Wherefore, then, should ye grieve. Ye ought rather to be thankfu' that the name o' your family that is ta'en frae ye, and I have nae doubt, that, although we are wise and short-sighted mortals cannot see, this visitation will be for the guide o' all. It is better that ye should lose the mill than forget your Maker; and forgi'e me for saying it, but I feared it was setting your heart upon the things o' this world, to a degree which did not become the faither o' a Christian family. Therefore, let me intreat you to say, 'His will be done,' and to believe that this has fallen upon you for the best.—The loss is not so great but that, if times keep on, we may soon overcome it.'

She had often experienced the value of my services, and admired her meek, patient spirit, and affectionate heart; but I never, until this trial came upon me, knew her real worth. It enabled me to begin the world; ay, Sir, and this far she has guided me through it.—She was better than twelve years older than I—but what of that? She looked as young at forty as ever I saw another woman do at twenty; and now, when she has been my wife for thirty years, I hardly ken her aulder. The staid lassie, under such circumstances, should have wrung her hands and upbraided me for allowing the supper and the dance; but Priscilla strove only to comfort me, to soothe my mind with fortitude, and to turn the accident to my eternal advantage. I had loved and esteemed her, but I now re-
sented her.

She sat and I listened to her, and looked in her face for the space of ten minutes without speaking a word; and, at last, fairly overpowered wi' her gentleness and her tenderness, I rose and took her hand, 'Priscilla,' I said, 'for your sake dear, I will think no more about the matter. The mill is destroyed, but, as you say, we may overcome the loss, and I shall try.'

Enough I have as keen feelings as onybody, and was not a person to sit down long, and

croon and shake my head over misfortunes that couldna be helped. I might be driven back from an object, and defeated in accomplishing it; but it would be necessary to take my life before I could be made to relinquish my attempts, or to conquer me. Perseverance, and a restless, ambitious spirit of enterprise, spurred me on.

I endeavoured to extend my business more widely than ever; and as I had sometimes had losses with houses on the Continent, I resolved to visit France, and Germany, and other places, myself; and see in what situation the land lay. I did so; and in Holland and Switzerland in particular. I entered into what proved some very profitable speculations. Now, Sir, it is my conviction, that where there is no speculation, there can be no luck. As well might a man with his hands in his pockets expect a guinea to drop into them. People who, perhaps, have been born with a silver spoon in their mouths, or had enough to purchase them a hot joint every day, trust upon them by accident, will tell you, in speaking of any particular subject—'Oh, I will hae nothing to do with it; it is only a speculation.' Now, Sir, but for some speculation that had been entered into before they were, the one would neither have had the silver spoon in his teeth, nor the other the hot joint. Without speculation, commerce could not exist. In the community where its spirit is not felt, they must be dull as horses in a ring; moving round and round as regularly and as monotonously as the wheels of a machine, to procure the every-day bread and cheese of existence. I have been a speculator all my life—I am a speculator still. Neither you nor I have time for me to enter into the particulars of thirty-years' enterprise. It is true I have lost by some, but in more I have been successful, or until this day I would been a hand-loom weaver in this my native town of Galashiels.

But, Sir, within three years I had built another mill. I commenced manufacturer, and prospered, and, in a short time, I began the business of printer also. You understand me—it is a calico-printer I mean, not a book or newspaper printer; for if, in a town in Lancashire, you ask for a printer, nobody would think of shewing you to a consumer of ink and paper.

Our two daughters had been educated at a boarding-school in Yorkshire; but they

were now come home, and were, I may say, women grown, for they were eighteen. And although I say it, that, perhaps, ought not to say it, remarkably fine-looking young women they were. People said that Elizabeth was a perfect picture, though, so far as I could judge, Rachel was the bonniest of the two; but they were remarkably like each other.—There, however, was this difference between them—Rachel was of a sedate and serious disposition, and very plain in her dress, even plainer sometimes than I wished to see her; but she was always so neat, that she set whatever she put on. Elizabeth, on the other hand, though a kind-hearted lassie, was more thoughtless, and more given to the vanities of this world. When her sister was at her books, she was at her looking-glass. She was as fond of dress as Rachel was the reverse.—I have often said to her—

‘O Bessy! Bessy!—dress will turn your head some day or other. Ye will frighten any man from having ye.’

‘Don’t be afraid of that, father,’ she replied, laughing, for there was no putting her out of temper, (she was like her mother in that;) ‘there is no danger, and it is time enough yet.’

She was also excessively fond of amusements, such as balls, concerts, plays, and parties. Much fonder, indeed, than it was agreeable for me or her mother to observe, and we frequently expostulated with her; for though we did not wish to debar her entirely from such amusements, yet there is a medium to be observed in all things, and we did not like to see her going beyond the medium.

Well, Sir, she had been at a party one night in Mosley Street, and a young gentleman, who, I afterwards understood, had shewn her a great deal of attention throughout the evening, saw her home. There was no harm in this; but he called again the next day, and, I shortly after learned, every day. So, when I heard this, I thought it was right and proper that I should see him, and learn who and what he was. I accordingly stopped at home a forenoon for the express purpose, but not much, as I easily observed, to the satisfaction of Elizabeth. About eleven o’clock, the gentleman came as usual. I easily saw that he was rather taken aback on perceiving me; but he recovered his self-possession as quick as the eyelid can twinkle,

and perfectly confused me with his superabundance of bows and scrapes. I did not like his appearance. He was dressed like a perfect fop. He wore silk stockings, and his feet were wedged into bits of French-skin pumps, which, to my eye, made it perfectly painful to look on them. He had on a light green, very fine and very fashionable coat and trousers, with a pure white waistcoat and a ribbon about his neck. He also carried a cane with an image on the head of it, and he had a great bunch of black curls on each side of his head, which, I verily believe, were pomatumed, brushed, and curled.

‘I must put an end to your visits, bully,’ thinks I, before ever he opened his lips.

He was what some ladies would call—‘most agreeable young man.’ In fact I hear one (not my daughter) pronounce him to be ‘a prodigious fine gentleman!’ ‘Prodigious,’ thought I, when I heard it. He had a great flow of speech and spirits, and could run over all the scandal of the town with a flippancy that disgusted me, but delighted many. He could also talk like a critic about dancers, singers, actors, and race-horses, and discuss the fashions like a milliner. All this I ascertained during the half hour I was in his company. He also gabbled French and Italian, and played upon a thing, like a sort of bass fiddle without a bow, that they call guitar. I at once set him down in my own mind for a mere fortune-hunter. He was a shallow puppy; he carried all on the outside of his head, and nothing within it. I felt he knew no more about business than the man in the moon. But he pretended to be the son of an Honourable, and carried cards with the words, ‘Charles Austin, Esq.’ engraved upon them. He was above belonging to any profession—he was a gentleman at large.

Disgusted as I was with him, I had no the face to rise and say to him—‘Sir, I will thank you to go out of my house, and not to enter it again.’ And from the manner in which I had been brought up, I had not the manner of what is called—bowing a person to the door. But what vexed me most when he remained, was to observe that even Priscilla sometimes laughed at the silly things he said, which, as I afterwards told her, was just encouraging him. When he left the house, I turned to Elizabeth, and—

'Now, Betty, hinny,' says I, 'tak' my ad- as your faither and your friend, and er speak to that young man again, nor al- him to keep your company; for, as sure my name is Reuben, there is something entially bad about him.'

She hung her head, and there was a tear her e'e, and I think, for the first time I had served it in my days, she looked rather sul- , but I could get no satisfaction from her. I think it was between two and three onths after this—during which time I had and heard no more of the fashionable Charles Austin—that having business to asact in Liverpool, I took Priscilla down th me in the gig, for the benefit of her alth. It was in the summer season, and even o'clock had chimed from the steeple the collegiate church before we returned night. But never, never shall I forget our iberable home-coming. There was our Rachel, sitting by herself, wringing her ods, and the tears rowing down her bonny eeks.

'Rachel! dear, Rachel! what is the mat- , love?' cried her mother and myself at the me instant.

'O Elizabeth!—Elizabeth is away!' sob- my poor bairn.

Priscilla was stupified, and she repeated e word 'Away!' but the truth broke over e in a moment; and I sunk back into a ir, as helpless, for all the world, as a new- infant.

Rachel tried to compose herself the best ay she could, and she informed us, that r sister had left the house about ten o'clock the forenoon, and that she had not since urned. She also mentioned, that Eliza- th had been seen in the company of Ch's. ustin shortly after leaving the house, and at when she did not return in the course of e day, suspecting they had fled to Gret- , she had sent my principal clerk, Thomas alloway, after them in a chaise and four, bring back Elizabeth.

Distressed as I was, I admired the pres- ce of mind which Rachel had exhibited. e had done all that I could have done my- lf, had I been at home; and a fitter per- n than Thomas Galloway could not have n sent. His zeal, honesty, and industry, d long rendered him a favourite with me, d though he was but a young man, I trea-

ted him more as an equal than a clerk. Nor had I any doubt but in the mission he was sent upon, he would shew as much cour- age, if such an article were required, as he had at all times shewn zeal and prudence in my service.

But Thomas returned. He had heard nothing of them on the road, and they had not been at Gretna. These tidings threw us all into deeper affliction, and a week pass- ed, and we could hear nothing of my daugh- ter, and our misery increased. But on the ninth day after her disappearance, a letter arrived from her. It was dated Coldstream. My fears read its contents before it was open- ed. In it she poured forth a rhapsody in praise of her 'dear Charles,' as she termed him, and said if we knew his virtues as well as she knew them, we would love him as she did. She begged forgiveness for the step she had taken, and sought permission to return with her husband, and receive mine and her mother's blessing. She concluded the letter by signing herself our 'affectionate and du- tiful daughter, Elizabeth Austin.'

'Dutiful!—the ungrateful, the silly gipsy,' crien I, flinging down the letter, and tramp- ing it under my feet in pure madness; 'she shall never inherit a penny of mine—she shall never enter my door. She is ruined—she has married worthlessness and misery!'

It was some time before Priscilla said any- thing, but I saw she was very greatly affec- ted. At last, the mother's love for her off- spring got the better of every other consider- ation in her heart, and she endeavoured to soothe me, and to prevail on me to forgive Elizabeth and to see her again.

I had intended that the marriage portion of my daughters, on the very day that they became wives, should be ten thousand each, providing that I approved of the match— though I by no manner of means wished or intended to direct their choice, or control their affections, farther than it was my duty as a parent to see that they did not throw them- selves away. But I was perfectly persuaded that to give ten thousand, or the half of it, or any sum to such a person as Elizabeth had got, would be no better than to fling it into the fire.

However, the entreaties and persuasion of Priscilla prevailed. I consented that Eliza- beth should return, and gave her husband five thousand pounds as her dowry, with a

promise of more, if they should conduct themselves to my satisfaction. He had not received the money many days when they set out for London.

Some time previous to this, I thought I had observed a sort of particular kindness between my daughter Rachel and my clerk Thomas Galloway, of whom I have already spoken, and to whose worth I have borne testimony. He was a native of Newton-Stewart, and a young man of humble parentage like myself, but I liked him nothing the worse upon that account, for, in my opinion, there is no real respectability, save that only which a man purchases through his own merits.—Now I once or twice, when I went out to enjoy the air in the summer nights, after business hours, perceived Rachel and Thomas exerting together along the green lanes, behind a place in the suburbs, that is called Strangeways. Such was the high opinion that I had of him, that I was determined, if there was anything between them, to offer no obstacle in the world to their marriage. I considered that a person with a character, a disposition and a knowledge of business, such as Thomas had, was far before riches. But I knew that in certain respects, both of the two were such bashful creatures, that neither of them would dare to mention the matter to me. So, after their familiarity became every day more apparent, though they tried to hide it, and when, at different times, I had tried humorously to sound both of them in vain, I mentioned the subject to Priscilla. I found that she had perceived it long before me, for women have quick eyes in such matters.—But she said that Rachel was such a strange reserved lassie, that though her own bairn, she could not speak to her with a mother's freedom; though now that she had heard my mind concerning the match, she would ask Rachel how matters stood between her and Thomas Galloway that very day.

She therefore went into the room where Rachel was sitting sewing, and after talking about various matters, by way of not just breaking the matter at once, she said—

'Rachel, dear, are ye aware if your faither has ever made ony sort o' recompense to Thomas Galloway for his trouble in gaun to Gretna after Elizabeth, when the foolish lassie ran away wi' young Mr. Austin?'

'I Do not think it,' replied Rachel.

'Then,' said the mother, 'he has not done right. He should do something for him, for he is a deserving lad. Do ye not think dear?'

This was a home thrust which our lassie was not prepared for, and it brought the veer million to her cheeks. The mother continued—'He is a lad that will rise in the world yet, and he weel deserves it—and I am gladd hinny, that ye hae the good sense to thin' weel o' him.'

'Mother!' said Rachel, greatly confused.

'Com, love,' continued Priscilla, 'ye need not conceal any thing from your mother, she must be a bad mother that a virtuous daughter darena trust with a secret. Dinna suppose that I am sae short sighted but that I hae observed the tender affection springing up between ye—and have not only observed it, but I ha'e done so with satisfaction, for I know not a young man that I could not have more credit by in calling him son-in-law.—Tell me at once, would ye not prefer Thomas to any man ye have seen for your husband?'

'Yes, mother!' faltered my sweet, blushing blossom, and sank on her mother's breast.

'That is right,' said her mother; 'but if ye had tauld me so before, it would ha'e saved you many a weary hour o' uneasiness. I ha'e nae doubt. But ye shall find nae obstacles in the way, for it is a match that will gie baith your faither and me great satisfaction. He has observed the attentions o' Thomas to ye; indeed, he desired me to mention the subject to ye, and if I found that your feelings were as we supposed, that the marriage should immediately take place, and he will also take Thomas into partnership.

Rachel, poor thing, grat with joy: when Thomas heard of it, he could have flung himself at my feet. And in a few weeks they were married, and I took Thomas into partnership, which took a great burden off my shoulders; and more particularly as I had recently entered into a canal speculation.

For twelve months from the time that Elizabeth went to London, we had but two letters from her, and one of them was abusing her sister for what she termed her 'grovelling spirit,' in marrying her father's clerk, and bringing disgrace upon her father's family.

When I saw the letter, my answer back to her was—

'Elizabeth, my woman, do not forget yourself. Your sister has married a deserving

and your mother married a packman ! From her husband I never had a scribe of pen. But I heard they were flinging away money I had given them ; and also that Elizabeth thoughtlessly whirled round with me in the vortex of worldly dissipation.

The third letter was received from her not fourteen months after her marriage, in strain of the wildest agony—in one line she explored her full dowry, and in the next she demanded it—and again she entreated me to release her 'dear Charles,' who, as she said it, had been imprisoned for the paltry sum of five hundred pounds. I was plainly would be throwing money away to assist them in their present course of extravagance. Finally, I made up my mind to let them feel that distress was, so that they might understand the value of money : we held a sort of family parliament, and Priscilla was dreadfully distressed. Rachel plead hard for her father, which I was pleased to see, though I did nothing—and Thomas suggested that I should release Charles Austin from prison, and give Elizabeth two hundred pounds for her immediate wants, and that I would set her husband in whatever line of business might prefer, but that I would not keep him in idleness. I released him from prison and sent two hundred pounds to my daughter, with a long letter of admonition.

We heard no more of them for six months and could get no answer to our letters—but one morning Thomas came into the parlour with an open letter in his hand, and his face like the face of death. A trembling seizure came all over.

Thomas !' cried I, as I saw the letter in his hand, 'is my bairn dead ?'

No !' said he, 'but'—and he stood still and handed me the letter.

I just glanced my eyes on it. It shewed us that a forgery had been committed upon our case to the extent of ten thousand pounds ! Oh, horrible ! by my own worthless son-in-law, Charles Austin ! I knew not how to

If I permitted the villain to escape unpunished, I was doing an injustice to society and oh ! how was it possible that I could send to the gallows the husband of my own daughter ! Thomas set off to London to see what could be done—and soon returned bringing the word that the villain had escaped abroad,

and had taken his wife and child with him, for they had an infant eight months old.

It was not the loss of the money that affected me, but the disgrace of my bairn. About twelve months after this melancholy event, I purchased a property in Dumfriesshire, and went to reside upon it. I entrusted my business to Thomas Galloway.

We had been a year in our house, and Rachel and Thomas had been down seeing us, and it was a gusty, cold night—and a poor woman came to our door with a bairn at her breast, and another on her back, and begging a morsel and a shelter : one of the servants came up and told us concerning her, and asked to give her a seat by the fire. I never liked to harbor beggars, and says I—

'No : there is a shilling for her ; gie her some meat, and tell her to go to the village.'

'And give her this,' said Rachel, when the lass added—

'Poor creature ! I dinna think she is able to crawl to the village.'

The servant added, 'she was a young and bonny creature.'

'She had better be brought in,' said my daughter, which was agreed to.

Well, shortly after Rachel went down to the kitchen, to see if any thing was needed, but the sound of her footsteps was hardly off the stairs, when we heard a scream—

'Sister ! sister !'

We all started to our feet and looked at each other with wonder ; then hurried down to the kitchen, and there was Rachel weeping on the bosom of the poor wandering woman—my lost, my ruined Elizabeth ! She sobbed as though her heart would burst, and embraced our knees, and her mother pressed her to her bosom, and cried, 'My bairn !'

We clothed her and her children ; and throughout the evening she sat sobbing and weeping, and could not be comforted. We were not in a state of feeling to ask her questions.

But in a few days she voluntarily unburdened her griefs to her sister. She knew nothing of the crime which her husband had committed, and we agreed that she should never know, as it would add a heavier load to her broken spirit. All she knew was that he had hastened with her to America, where

he had changed his name, in consequence, as he said, of a property that had fallen to him in that country. He had long treated her with coldness, and prohibited her from writing to us, using threats that made her tremble for her life. But on arriving in America his indifference gave place to open brutality, and in a few months he basely deserted her and her infants. She sold the few trinkets she had, and with her children, fainting and broken hearted, slowly performed a journey of nearly seven hundred miles to the nearest seaport, where she found a vessel about to sail for Greenock, and her passage money deprived her of her last coin. My poor bairn had been landed in Scotland without a penny in her pocket, and was begging her way to Manchester, to throw herself at our feet, when Providence directed her to our door.

Never do I think of the sufferings which my bairn must at this period have endured, but my heart melts within me; and, I think, what must have been the tortures of her proud spirit before she could seek assistance from the cold and measured hand of charity. Oh, what a struggle there must have been in her gentle bosom between the agonies of hunger, the feelings of the mother, and the shame that burned upon her face and deprived her of utterance!—and while her bits of bairnies clung to her neck, or pulled at her tattered gown, and cried—‘Bread, mother, give us bread,’ while her own heart was fainting within her, how dreadful must have been the sufferings that my poor Betsy endured! The idea that she was perishing, and begging like a wretched outcast from door to door, while we were feasting sumptuously every day, brings the tears to my eyes even to this hour, and often has my heart overflowed in gratitude to the Power that in mercy directed her steps to her father’s house.

From that day she and her children never left my roof, and she shall still be equally with Rachel. About six months I received a double letter from America. The outer one was from a clergyman, that which was enclosed, bore the signature of Charles Austin. It was his confession on his deathbed, begging my forgiveness and the forgiveness of his wife—my poor injured Elizabeth—for the wrongs and the evilities he had committed against her—declaring that she was ignorant and innocent of the crime he had committed against me. He also beseeched me to provide for his children, for their mother’s sake, if yet lived. It was the letter of a dying parent. Four thousand of the sum, with which he had absconded, he had not squandered and it he directed to be restored to me. A letter from the clergyman announced the death and burial of the unhappy young man, and that he had been appointed to carry his dying requests into effect.

I communicated the tidings of his death and his repentance of his conduct to my dear wife, and she received them meekly, wept, as the remembrance of young man’s affliction touched her heart.

Such, sir, is an account of my speculations and the losses and crosses with which they have been attended, but success and happiness have predominated. And I must conclude that I am happier now than ever; and the season when Rachel and Thomas came down to see us, with the bairns, and the children run romping about with Elizabeth’s, are two interesting creatures, and the three of us four will be crying at once—‘Granny, and Granny that,’ I believe there is no happier and woman in Britain than Priscilla, who first enabled me to speculate to a purpose.”

The Aellopodes.—A curious specimen of mechanical ingenuity bearing the above title is at present exhibiting at Aldermanbury. It is a carriage for travelling without horse or steam, propelled solely by the traveller’s own weight.