THE

VALE OF STRATHMORE:

ITS SCENES AND LEGENDS.

BY

JAMES CARGILL GUTHRIE,

AUTHOR OF "VILLAGE SCENES," "ROWENA," ETC.



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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Countess of Strathmore,

THIS WORK

IS, BY PERMISSION,

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

HER LADYSHIP'S OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

Re-classed 2-10-33 WAM

PREFACE.

THE vast valley of Strathmore proper, extends from the centre of Dumbartonshire to the sea-board of the German Ocean, from Redhead to Stonehaven. It comprehends part of Stirlingshire, all Strathallan, the greater part of Strathearn, and all the Howe of Mearns in Kincardineshire.

What is popularly known as Strathmore, however, consists only of what is flanked by the Sidlaw Hills on the south, and the braes of Angus on the north, and extends from Methven in Perthshire, to Brechin in Forfarshire. The Sidlaws is continuous of the Ochils, except for the intervention of the valley of the Tay, and forms a long chain of heights rising in some parts to upwards of 1500 feet above the level of the sea, and extending from Kinnoul Hill, on the north bank of the Tay in Perthshire, to Redhead, a promontory on the east coast of Forfarsbire, and to Stonehaven in Kincardineshire. At the Hill of Turin, a short distance east of Forfar, the Sidlaws fork into two lines, one of which branches off through the vale of Guthrie to the sea at Redhead, while the other proceeds north-eastward to Brechin, along the side of the Howe of Kincardine to the sea at Stonehaven.

The Howe of Strathmore is still more circumscribed in extent, stretching from the lower part of the North Esk on the east, to the western boundary of the parish of Kettins on the west. From its northern point it lies along the foot of the Forfarshire Grampians, till it forms the parish of Airlie, and the Braes of Angus, and terminates at Cargill, forming the continuation of Strathmore with Perthshire. This district is called the Howe or Hollow of Angus, and is thirty-three miles long, and four to six miles broad.

The "Scenes and Legends" embrace principally that part of Strathmore which stretches from the sea-board at Montrose and Redhead on the east, to the parishes of Kettins and Cargill on the west, and from Blairgowrie and Craighall to Fearn and Careston on the north. With few exceptions, I have preferred to weave the Legends and Traditions, together with the Superstitions of the district, naturally into my Tales and Sketches, rather than to give an isolated relation of them as distinct from any human interest with which they may have become associated.

In all the real or mythical scenes we may visit, I desire to take the reader with me as my confidant and friend, so that when our journey is ended, we may bid each other farewell, with the mutually cherished wish, that we may—meet again.

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STRATHMORE: ITS SCENES AND LEGENDS.

CHAPTER I.

GLAMIS.

Soft flow thy streams, bright bloom thy flowers,
Thy birdies liltin' as of yore:
The music of thy fragrant bowers,
The voice of love awakes once more.
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Life's early spring I spent in thee—
My blessings on thee evermore.

THE "Great Valley," or Howe of Strathmore, independent of its historical and classical associations, is one of the most beautiful and romantic vales in Scotland. Surrounded on the south by the long rugged ridge of the Sidlaw Hills, and guarded on the north by the Grampian Mountains, the "Howe" luxuriantly nestling between, the great valley is unsurpassed in all that constitutes soft, yet rich and gorgeous landscape. Hamlet, village, vale, and hill, combine with castle, wood, and stream, to form a picture, which, once seen, can never be forgotten.

Two of the finest and most striking views of this celebrated valley are obtained by the traveller; the one from the Castle of Hatton, in the Glack of Newtyle, and the other on the road from Dundee to Coupar-Angus, when emerging from the defile

through the Sidlaws in the immediate proximity of Haliburton House. When the Queen visited Scotland in the autumn of 1844, she took the latter route when proceeding to the Highlands of Perthshire. The scenery, on approaching the Sidlaws from the south, gradually becomes comparatively bleak and uninteresting; but, once through the "glack," the scene changes as if by enchantment, when the "Howe," in all its luxuriant loveliness, bursts in an instant on the enraptured view. The Prince Consort, who was an ardent admirer of the beauties of Nature, was so captivated by the unexpected yet fully appreciated beauty of the scene, that he ordered the Royal cortege to pause on the top of the hill to afford sufficient time to the Royal visitants to master the details of such a superb and beautiful picture, chased in frame-work so lofty and sublime.

Although the beautiful rivers, the North Esk and the South Esk (the *Tina* and *Esica* of the Romans) and the Isla, flow through the extreme east and western boundaries of the Strath, the Kerbet and the Dean are the only streams that diversify the landscape in Strathmore proper. The latter takes its rise in the Loch of Forfar, receiving in its course the waters of the Kerbet and falling into the Isla before its junction with the Tay at Kinclaven in Perthshire.

The Lochs of Feithie and Forfar in the Howe, although not equal in point of extent or romantic scenery to those of Lintrathen or Lee, are, nevertheless, most interesting in a geological or historical aspect. In regard to the first, Sir Charles Lyell observes that it is completely surrounded by calcareous deposits, making its geological features unique, and its treasures highly valuable.

Loch Feithie belongs to Mr Dempster of Dunnichen, and its banks until lately were covered with thriving forest trees, which gave the place a beautiful and romantic appearance, very different from its present bleak and cheerless aspect. This rude despoilage is the more to be regretted as this retired spot was a much-loved resort of its former proprietor, the celebrated

politician and agriculturist George Dempster, who wrote an inscription on the grave of a favourite green-linnet, buried by the side of the loch. He quaintly hopes the epitaph may

> "place on the rolls of fame
> The bird, his master's and his mistress' name,
> While school-boys perches in Loch Feithie take,
> And the sun's shadow dances on the lake."

Mr Dempster was long M.P. for the Fife and Forfar district of Burghs, and is celebrated by Burns, as "a true-blue Scot," in his address to the Scottish representatives.

The Loch of Forfar, on the other hand, is full of the most stirring historical associations. In remote times there seems to have been an island in the middle, or at the northern end of the Loch, for we find that Alexander II., by deed, dated at Kinross, 18th July 1234, provides that five merks be given for the lights at the monastery of Cupar, and ten for the support of two monks of that house, who shall abide and celebrate divine service on the island in the Loch of Forfar, to which were added, for the benefit of the officiating monks, the common pasture of the King's lands of Tyrbeg, for six cows and a horse. Subsequently, by a charter of Adam White of Forfar, the monks were constituted his heirs after his death, if he should die without issue (Brev. Reg. de Cupro). It was also on this island, or more probably on the peninsula or inch on the north side of the Loch, called Queen Margaret's Inch, that Margaret, Queen of Malcolm Canmore, had a royal residence, the foundations of which are still visible.

The assassins of Malcolm II., after committing the foul murder, endeavoured to escape, but in crossing Forfar Loch, then imperfectly frozen over, the ice gave way, and they all miserably perished.

The draining of the Loch has long formed the subject of debate among the wise men in the county town and the practical agriculturists of the country. It is in reference to this prolific source of dispute that the following amusing story is told of Patrick, Earl of Strathmore. After listening for some

time to an animated and scientific debate on the best means of effectually draining the Loch, in order to make it fit for agricultural purposes, his Lordship abruptly wound up the discussion by naïvely observing that in his opinion the only really practical mode left open to them was to empty a few hogsheads of whisky into the Loch, for in that case he wittily added, "The writers of Forfar would not be long in draining up the Loch!"

The most prominent object on the Sidlaw range of mountains is an observatory on the summit of Kinpurnie Hill, to the south-east of the village of Newtyle. This building was erected by the Hon. James Mackenzie, Lord Privy Seal, who, previous to his death in 1800, resided at Belmont Castle, as proprietor of the lands of Keilor, since then become the property of Lord Wharncliffe. The walls of the Observatory still defy the blasts of time, and form a well-known landmark for the mariner voyaging on the Northern Sea or entering the estuary of the Tay.

The most classical and historically interesting, as well as the grandest spot in Strathmore, is undoubtedly, however, the Castle of Glamis and its world-famed magnificent surroundings. I shall confine my dissertations, therefore, in these introductory chapters to the parishes of Glamis and Kinnettles, as forming the centre from which the Tales and Legends of the subsequent chapters will uniformly diverge.

Strathmore being my native vale, and Airniefoul farm, in the immediate neighbourhood of Glamis, the place of my birth, the Howe having been besides the birthplace of my ancestors for many centuries, and where many of their descendants tenant the farms of their fathers to the present day, I shall ever feel surrounded by an atmosphere of song, and of deeply-cherished sunny memories, while endeavouring to open up the legendary lore, and to portray the more salient and attractive features of a district in every sense so dear to my heart, and so worthy of being commemorated by an abler though not less loving pen than mine.

Glamis means noise or sound; and in similar situations, where there are ravines in the district, the affix *iss, yss, eis,* signifying an obstruction or barrier, is common in the names of places with some descriptive appellation prefixed. The name Glamis, or Glammis, therefore, seems to be descriptive of the most striking natural features of the parish. A sweet sparkling rivulet called "Glamis Burn" flows down its centre for some miles, rushing, immediately to the south of the village, through the rugged ravine, the rush of water along its bottom producing a subdued murmuring sound. There is another derivation of the name, however, which seems more applicable to the parish in general, viz., that Glamis is probably a corruption of the Gaelic *Glamhus,* which means a wide open, or champaign country.

It is much to be regretted that, although still retaining some of its former features, the natural beauties of this picturesque and romantic dell have been utterly destroyed by the erection of a huge structure of solid masonry which stretches across the ravine, damming up the waters of the burn to form an immense reservoir of water, which stretches away among the trees to the south nearly as far as the eye can reach. As the temporary cause for the erection of this rude obstruction of the waters of the burn and the formation of the reservoir has now passed away, it is to be hoped this lovely and romantic spot will soon be restored to its natural and pristine beauty.

The hamlet or village of Glamis, apart altogether from the historical and classical associations of its neighbourhood, is one of the most beautifully-situated of our Scottish villages. Built on the banks of a mountain rivulet, and at the base of a lofty pine-clad hill, surrounded by scenery of the most beautiful and attractive description, and nestling amongst ancient and extensive woods, it presents a scene of retired and quiet seclusion from the busy world quite refreshing to the pent-up denizen of the crowded city.

Standing on the bridge, beneath which pleasantly flows the

burn already noticed, the view on either side, although necessarily somewhat contracted, is very pleasing and beautiful. To the north appear the barley mill, the church, churchyard, and manse, the village stretching away to our left, and a beautifully wooded dell, with the water of the burn flowing fretfully through its midst, opening up its romantic beauties to our right. Southward—the brook, the rocky ravine, the smithy, a few straggling cottages amidst their trim gardens and kailyards, and the ruins of a modern, unromantic factory are the principal objects which attract the eye; while high above, the Hunter Hill, in all its luxuriant sylvan beauty, crowns the scene as with a diadem of emerald, the happy birds meanwhile comingling their thrilling notes of gladness with the merry voices of the rustic urchins at roystering play on the village green. The dens and ravines in the parish are very rich in their display of wild flowers during the season in particular of the avens, geraniums, and anemones. Among the more rare plants may be noticed the *orobus sylvaticus*, and in the marshes along the Dean the yellow water-lily may be seen in all its beauty.

John de Logy—supposed to have been the father of the Queen of David II.—received the reversion of the thanedom of Glamis from that monarch in the year 1363. The reddendo was a red falcon to be delivered yearly at the feast of Pentecost. This thanedom was afterwards given to Sir John Lyon, ancestor of the Earls of Strathmore, in dowry with his wife, Jane, daughter of Robert II.

The oldest castles in Angus are undoubtedly those of Red Castle and Guthrie, both occupied in 1306, and supposed to have been built some centuries previous. It is true, Sir David Guthrie of Kincaldrum, and Treasurer to James II., acquired the Barony of Guthrie in 1465, and became the founder of the family of that ilk, but the castle, and name, and family had been in existence many centuries before that period.

Although from a remote era there was a royal residence at Glamis, or in its immediate neighbourhood, first noticed in

connection with the death of Malcolm II., in 1034, the present Castle was only begun to be built in the time of the first Earl of Kinghorn, who succeeded his father in 1578. This nobleman did not live to finish the work, the much-admired ceiling in the great hall not being completed until 1620.

The chapel is a most interesting and beautiful apartment, the paintings on the walls and ceiling having been executed in 1688 by Jacob de Witt, the Dutchman, who a few years previous painted the Kings in the Picture Gallery of Holyrood Palace. The paintings in the chapel, however, are very much superior to those of Holyrood.

In the agreement between the Earl of Kinghorn and the artist, it was expressly stipulated that each of the fifteen large panels in the roof of the chapel should contain "a full and distinct storie of our Blessed Saviour, conforme to the cutts in a Bible here in the house, or the Service Booke;" while the lesser pannels were to be filled "with the angels in the skie, and such other things as he [De Witt] shall invent and be esteemed proper for the work." The altar-piece was to be the Crucifixion, "and the doore-piece the Ascencione." Our Saviour and His Twelve Apostles were to form the subjects of the paintings in the panels around the chapel, "in als full stature as the panels will permit."

For this work De Witt made a claim of 200 merks, which the Earl disputed, and wrote to the artist as follows:—

"I would give now, after full deliberation, for the roof of the chapel, £15 sterling; for our Saviour, the Twelve Apostles, the King's father, the two Martyrs, St Paul and St Stephen, the altar and door-pieces, £20 sterling."

It is said that the chapel at Glamis is the only one besides Roslin in which the exclusive use of the Liturgy dates from a period preceding the Revolution of 1688. Roslin and Glamis thus link the Episcopal Church of the present with that of the past. It was first consecrated in 1688, on the eve of that Revolution which hurled the last of the Royal Stuarts

from the throne and expelled the Bishops from their Dioceses.

This ancient chapel, after a period of desuetude of nearly a hundred years, was re-opened for divine service on the Feast of St Michael and All Angels, 1866. The ceremonial of the day commenced with a solemn service of benediction, composed for the occasion by the Bishop of Brechin. The office concluded with the celebration of the holy communion, according to the old Scottish rite.

The second service, or Matins, followed soon thereafter, with the *Benedicite* sung as a processional chant by a full and well-trained choir, among whom were the Countess of Strathmore, Lady Elizabeth Arthur, Lady Constance Hay, and other of the guests at the Castle, along with several of the domestics. The clergy in their surplices, and the Bishop in his robes closed the procession.

The chants used were Gregorian, and the anthem was the Dedication Hymn "Christ is made the sure Foundation." The musical service for the Holy Communion was "Marbeck's Plain Song." The effect of the fine chant, as heard in the chapel when the procession wound slowly from the crypt, up the grand stair-case, and through the ancient hall, was strikingly solemn and impressive, reminding one of old times, when

> "No sound of busy life was heard amid the cloisters dim,
> Save the tinkling of the silver bell, and the sister's holy hymn."

Previous to the re-opening of the hallowed shrine, great alterations had taken place in the interior arrangements and finishings of the chapel. The raised dais and box pews with all their graduated scale of rank, had disappeared, and in their stead were simple benches and chairs. In place of the old diminutive altar, there now arose a new one of large dimensions, splendidly vested in white silk, and richly embroidered in crimson and gold. On the super-altar was displayed a beautifully jewelled cross in all its symbolic significance with ornate vases of variegated flowers expressive of the

beauty of God's great creation. The heavy black panels in which the paintings are framed have been gilt, and the pictures themselves cleaned and varnished without, in the least, interfering with the air of antiquity which characterises the place.

The sermon by the Bishop of Brechin, from the appropriate text—Joshua xxiv. 15,—"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," was a very eloquent and impressive one —concluding thus—

"When I look upon this church I am called back to the recollections of the past. I see here a great religious effort upon the part of that strong-willed and predominant race who have so long inhabited this venerable Castle. I see here the first effort, after the doubts and difficulties of the Scotch Reformation, to raise a temple in the appropriate spirit to God. I see here the results of that short-lived period of civilization —of high cultivation—which from the time of the accession of King James to the English throne, till the troubles about the Prayer-book, distinguished Scotland. I see here the dedication of Christian art to the services of the sanctuary—not, indeed Christian art after the spiritual glories of the Italian Schools, but still they did what they could, and those who decorated the church were, at least, no puritans. I see here almost the last act of our Bishops in its consecration just before the dis-establishment of our church. And I see where, in the time of our depressed position, the litany used to be said, and prayers arose to God, till at last the French Revolution came, and all became coldness, and the voice of prayer and praise ceased. These days, thank God, are gone for ever. I should be mis-using this place were I to use it as a vehicle for praise and flattery. We are all in the presence of Almighty God, answerable for those talents, for those powers, for those opportunities which God gives us, and when we have done all we are unprofitable servants. But, still, I do believe that this will be a day much to be remembered in the future annals of this ancient house—that done in the true

spirit of religion and in the love of God, to-day's act may draw down many blessings from heaven, so that, continuing in God's fear and love this family may cast its roots deeper and spring to a more vigorous existence than ever, leavening, by its example, those around it, and impetrating fresh blessings from the Lord and God of all good things."

The Castle, apart from association altogether, is the noblest and most perfect specimen of feudal architecture in the kingdom—so grand and majestic as a whole, and so perfect in its every detail, that no description, however elaborate, can convey any just or adequate idea of its great magnitude and unique beauty. Embosomed among sombre and extensive woods, this vast pile proudly rears its castellated towers, the lowness of its situation and the level nature of the surrounding grounds, however, preventing its being seen from any great distance. The surprise and awe, therefore, experienced is so much the greater when, entering the long and beautiful avenue by which it is approached from the south, the feudal pile in all its solemn grandeur bursts suddenly upon the view.

Nor do these feelings lessen in intensity as we gradually approach its classical and hallowed precincts. There is such a rare combination of the various styles of the different ages of Scotch baronial architecture, harmonising strangely enough with the florid productions of the French architectural school, that our admiration intensifies and deepens the nearer we approach the imposing edifice. The great tower in the centre, upwards of 100 feet high, with its round-roofed vaults, narrow orifices, and great, thick, massy walls, is nearly of the earliest period of castellated masonry. The rich cluster of cone-topped turrets, again, with the spiral staircase in one of the angles of the building, and the wings which crouch beneath the great tower, are said to be the work of Inigo Jones.

The whole of the immense pile is in fine preservation, and contains some relics of great antiquity and general interest.

Besides the chapel, already noticed, there are some valuable historical portraits in the great hall; several specimens of old armour; some court dresses of the seventeenth century; and the motley raiment of the family fool, to the cap and other parts of which the bells are still attached.

The ornate and beautiful iron railing round the central tower was erected in 1682. The view obtained from this tower is of the most magnificent and attractive description. Indeed, it is scarcely possible to conceive a prospect of greater loveliness or more luxuriant beauty. The whole Strath, in its length and breadth, lies stretched out beneath and around you, while the Sidlaws on the one hand, and the Grampians on the other, form most fitting back-grounds to the picture, adding a mystic, weird-like sublimity to the fairy scene.

Here—Catlaw, like a sentinel grim,
Lone guards the Grampian Mountains dim,
Which stretch across from sea to sea,
In glorious, solemn majesty.
There—cleaving high ethereal air,
Loom Cairn-a-Month and dark Mount Blair;
And in the glack of yonder glen,
The wild woods wave in Airlie Den;
While rugged hills of dreamy hue,
Dim mingle with the azure blue,
And reach, in misty gloom afar,
The confines dark of Lochnagar.

In the surrounding grounds there were to be seen within the last fifty or sixty years a number of statues and sculptured ornaments, most of which were erected by Patrick, third Earl of Kinghorn, and first Earl of Strathmore, who did much to encourage the cultivation of a taste for the fine arts. None of these now remain, except a curious and richly-finished sun dial with its many faces to the sun, an object of great attraction to the antiquary, as, indeed, it is of general interest to all admirers of this classic spot.

To the eastward of the Church of Glamis there is a large stone or obelisk of rude design erected, as is generally

supposed, to commemorate the murder of Malcolm II., King of Scotland. In the northern part of the Hunter Hill, to the south of the village, there is also an ancient obelisk, in the midst of a large cairn of stones, called King Malcolm's grave-stone. Near a place called Cossins, about a mile north-east of the Castle, there stands another obelisk, called St Orland's Stone, evidently meant to perpetuate the same event. As these suggestive and interesting memorials will be noticed more at length when we introduce the legend of Malcolm's murder in the wood near Thornton, this brief reference to them here may in the meantime suffice.

Judging from the print of Glamis Castle by Slezer in Charles II.'s reign, it appears to have been anciently much more extensive, being a large quadrangular mass of buildings, with several circles of defensive boundaries, at each of which the sleepless sentinel kept watch and ward. Sir Walter Scott bitterly lamented the subsequent landscape-gardening operations, which, sweeping down all the exterior defences, left the clustered tower standing alone, in the middle of a park, unprotected, like a modern peaceful mansion. "A disciple of Kent," he says, "had the cruelty to render this splendid old mansion more parkish, as he was pleased to call it; to raze all those external defences, and to bring his mean and paltry gravel walk up to the very door, from which, deluded by the name, we might have imagined Lady Macbeth (with the form and features of Siddons) issuing forth to receive King Duncan."

Previous to the approaches being modernised, the Castle was the theme of admiring wonder of all who beheld it. The Pretender, the Chevalier St George, slept one night in the Castle, in 1715, when on his way to his coronation at Scone; and is said to have declared this ancient residence to be the finest he had ever seen.

"It is," says De Foe, "one of the finest old built palaces in Scotland, and by far the largest. When you see it at a distance, it is a pile of turrets and lofty buildings, spires and

towers—some plain, others shining with gilded tops, that it looks not like a town, but a city."

Gray, the poet, visited the Castle in the autumn of 1765, a minute description of which, and its surroundings, he gives in a letter to his friend, Wharton, concluding thus:—"The house, from the height of it, the greatness of its mass, the many towers a-top, the spread of its wings, has really a very singular and striking appearance—like nothing I ever saw."

Four years after the burgh of Forfar was pillaged by Colonel Ocky, a part of the army of the Commonwealth were quartered in Glamis Castle, during which the bakers of Forfar were bound, by order of Captain Pockley, dated from the Castle, 22d May 1654, to supply them with "fower dussen of wheate breade for each day in the week;" and the fleshers, "beefe, mutton, or lambe, each Munday and Wedensday to serve the Garison:" the baker to receive "riddymoney" for his "breade," provided it was "full weight;" the stipulation with the flesher being—"And for such meate as shall be brought in the partys shall receive good payment for the same."

The principal conspirators in the celebrated Raid of Ruthven were the Earl of Mar, Lords Oliphant, Boyd, and Lindsay, the Abbot of Dunfermline, and the Master of Glamis. The conspirators, in laying their complaints before the King, and seeking redress of their pretended grievances, used, it is said, strong and insulting language to His Majesty, who, feeling himself, however, entirely in their hands, forbore to express his displeasure. After patiently listening to their mock supplications, and giving a general promise to give all due consideration to the wants of his beloved subjects, the King rose to leave the chamber, but the Master of Glamis rudely interposed between him and the door of the apartment, and gave him bluntly to understand he would not be permitted to leave the Castle. The King, after vainly remonstrating with his enemies, burst into a flood of tears. "It is no matter for your tears," said Glamis

fiercely, "better that bairns should weep than bearded men." These words, it is recorded, sunk deep into the King's heart, and though generally of an unrevengeful amiable disposition, and easily appeased, the insult they contained, was never forgotten or forgiven.

The tale of Macbeth was undoubtedly found by Shakespeare in the Scottish Chronicles of Holinshed, and his genius adorned it with a lustre to which it was not originally entitled. The castle of Macbeth was situated in Inverness-shire, but the tragical events so vividly and stirringly portrayed in the drama have evident reference to a castle in the neighbourhood of Glamis. The present Castle of Glamis, as already noticed, was only begun to be built in the sixteenth century, whereas the "gracious Duncan" succeeded Malcolm II. in 1033. It was in the battle of Bothgowanan, near Elgin, that Duncan was slain. His defeat ensured the accession of Macbeth to the crown of Scotland. Macbeth was slain by Macduff at Lumphanan in Aberdeenshire. These facts in history are now known and believed, still the mind persistently retains the impression made by the creations of genius.

Sir Walter Scott spent a night in Glamis in 1794 and concludes an interesting account of his sensations by saying:—"In spite of the truth of history, the whole night scene in Macbeth's Castle rushed at once upon me, and struck my mind more forcibly than even when I have seen its terrors represented by John Kemble and his inimitable sister."

Macbeth, as well as Duncan, was a grandson of Malcolm II. The Lady of Macbeth, whose real name was Gruoch, had deadly injuries to avenge on the reigning prince. Her grandfather, Kenneth IV., was killed in 1003, fighting against Malcolm II., and this with other causes for revenge, combined (as the old annalists add) with instigations of a supernatural kind, increased the influence of a vindictive woman over an ambitious husband.

Macbeth, on the other hand, according to the legend, was inspired with seductive hopes by the prophetic exclamations

of the three women who appeared to him in a dream or vision, and hailed him successively as Thane of Cromarty, Thane of Moray, and King of Scots. Scott's version is that Macbeth was the son of Finel, Thane of Glamis, and that the first woman or witch said—"All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!"

Macbeth, however, instead of having been the ambitious conspirator, and cruel unscrupulous tyrant, represented by the great dramatist, was, in reality, no usurper at all, but an able, wise, and beneficent prince. He reigned seventeen years after the death of Duncan, and his reign was one of perfect tranquillity, his subjects enjoying prosperity and peace. The *Chron Elog*, represents fertile seasons as attendants of his reign, which Winter confirms: "If a King makes fertile seasons, it must be by promoting agriculture, and diffusing among his subjects the blessings of peace." As evidence of his religious convictions, as well as his general amiability of character, it is on record, that Macbeth went a pilgrimage to Rome in the time of Pope Leo the Ninth.

Simeon of Durham, and Roger Hoveden, tell us, that in the year 1050, *Rex Scotiæ Machetad Romæ argentum spargendo distribuit.* Sir David Dalrymple, it is true, endeavours to shew that Macbeth did not go himself to Rome, the passage only implying that he remitted money to Rome. But the plain obvious sense of the words points to the conclusion that he personally went to Rome at the time indicated. The practice of going to Rome was then quite common among the nobles and Kings of Europe. According to Pinkerton, Thorfin, Earl of Orkney, went to Rome about 1060; Haco, Earl of Orkney, visited Rome and Jerusalem in 1105; Canute, King of England, went to Rome about 1033; Eric King of Denmark travelled on foot to Rome about 1098; and to Jerusalem in 1102; Ingi, King of Norway, went to Jerusalem in the twelfth century; Garcias, King of Navarre, about 1033, according to the Spanish historians. The custom being then very common, and his subjects enjoying great prosperity and the blessings of

peace, there seems no reason to distort the plain sense of the words concerning Macbeth. Winter confirms this acceptation of the passage, when he says concerning the monarch:—

"All his tyme was great plente,
Habundande bathe on lande and se:
He was in justice richt lauchful,
And til his legis al awfule.
Quhen Pape was Leo the nynt in Rome;
As pilgryme to the court he come;
And in his alms he sew silver
Til al pur folk, that had myster.
In al tyme oysit he to wyrk
Profetabilly for haly Kyrk."

The noble family of Strathmore is descended from an illustrious and very ancient family called De Lyon, in France, a branch whereof settled in Scotland many centuries ago, and had, by the bounty of one of our Kings, sundry lands in the shire of Perth, which were called Glen Lyon, after their own surname whose successor, Sir John Lyon, received from King David II. the baronies of Forteviot and Forgandenny in Perthshire, and the lands of Courtestown and Drumgovan in Aberdeenshire.

The charter by which Robert II. bestowed the Thanedom of Glamis in free barony upon Sir John Lyon, Knight—*propter laudabile et fidela servitio et contius laboribus*—bears date 7th January 1374. Sir John's grandson, Patrick, was created Lord Glamis in 1445. Alexander, Second Lord, had a charter from Mary, the King's mother, of the Castle of Kinghorn with the lands of Balberdie, in 1463. John, third Lord, founded a chapel at Glamis by charter dated 20th October 1487. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Scrymgeour of Dudhope. George, fifth Lord, had a charter of the lands of Balneaves, in the Barony of Kinnell, from Thomas, Lord Fraser of Lovat, 31st October 1501. John, sixth Lord, married Janet, sister of Archibald, sixth earl of Angus. This is the lady who was burned on the Castlehill of Edinburgh on the 17th December 1534, for the alleged crime of sorcery, being indicted for conspiring against the life

of James V. Her son John, afterwards seventh lord, a mere boy, was also included in the charge. John, eighth Lord, was killed in a rencontre between his followers and those of the Earl of Crawford, at Stirling, in May 1578.

Patrick, ninth Lord, was created Earl of Kinghorn, Lord Lyon and Glamis, 1606. He acquired the barony of Tannadice, 13th July 1610, and the dominical lands of Castle Huntly, in the parish of Longforgan, 1613. His grandson, Patrick, third Earl of Kinghorn, was created Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn, 1677. Attached to the Stuart dynasty, at the Revolution he retired from public life, and spent his time in improving his estates and encouraging the arts, especially statuary. John, fourth Earl, was of Queen Anne's Privy Council, and at his death the uncommon circumstance occurred of four brothers succeeding each other in the family honours. Of this nobleman the following traditionary story is told:—

"An old man being in company with the Earl, who had his four sons with him, and in conversation with the old man, said,—'Are not these four pretty boys?' To which the old man replied—'Yes, but they will be all earls, my lord, all earls.' The earl said he would be sorry if he were sure that such would be the case. The old man affirmed that it would be so, and added—'God help the poor when Thomas comes to be Earl.'" This was literally accomplished in the year 1740, when scarcity and dearth threatened famine in the land.

The present Earl succeeded his brother in 1865, and is the thirteenth Earl of Strathmore, and fifteenth Earl of Kinghorn. He married in 1853 Frances Dora, third daughter of Oswald Smith, Esq., of Blendon Hall, Kent, and has a numerous family of sons and daughters.

On the 26th October 1874, the freedom of the Burgh of Dundee was presented to the Earl of Strathmore by the Magistrates and Town Council in honour of his having been appointed by her Majesty the Queen to the Lord Lieutenancy

of Angus, as successor to the late Earl of Dalhousie; and in testimony of their high appreciation of his private character and public services. A brilliant company assembled in the Albert Institute on the occasion, the Countess of Strathmore, Lady Constance, Lord Glamis, the Honourable Francis Lyon, and the Honourable Ernest Lyon being present. On the lid of the elegant casket containing the Freedom of the Burgh, is engraved the following inscription:—"The freedom of the Burgh of Dundee, the certificate of which is enclosed in this casket, was by the unanimous vote of the Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council, conferred on the Right Honourable Claude, Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn, Lord Lieutenant of the County of Forfar, in testimony of the respect entertained by them for his Lordship's character and public services."

CHAPTER II.

KINNETTLES.

Sweet were the days by the swift-flowing Kerbet,
When I trudged to Kinnettles' wee school.

THE name of the parish is doubtless derived from the Gaelic word *Kinnettles*, signifying "the head of the bog." The oldest forms in which the name appears are *Kynettles*, *Kynathes*, and *Kynnecles*.

The ancient church of Kinnettles occupied a much more elevated position than the present structure on the banks of the Kerbet; and was one of the churches which was given by King James VI. to the Archbishop of St Andrews. Laurence of Montealt, a supposed kinsman of the old Lords of Ferne, was rector of the church in 1226; and Matthew was the name of the rector in 1364.

In 1567 Inverarity, Meathie, and Kinnettles formed one parish, under the ministrations of James Fotheringham, to which was joined in 1574 those of Forfar, Rostinoth, and Tannadice, of all which Ninian Clement was minister, and Alexander Nevay was reader at Kinnettles.

The last Episcopal clergyman was Alexander Taylor, author of a serio-comic poem entitled "The Tempest." Taylor and several of his brethren, when crossing in a boat from Burntisland to Leith, on 26th November 1681, encountered a terrific storm, and his description of the angry waves buffeting against the frail bark though quaint is very expressive:—

"Each kept his time and place,
As if they meant to drown us with a grace;

> The first came tumbling on our boat's side,
> And knockt us twice her breadth and more beside;
> But—vext that it had wrought's no more disgrace,
> It spits on us—spits on its follower's face."

On the south bank of the Kerbet, opposite Brigton, is a conically shaped rising ground, called from time immemorial, Kirkhill, and which is supposed to have been at some remote period, the site of a religious house. It is matter of history that the proprietor of Foffarty built a popish chapel on his property after the Reformation, and appointed a priest to conduct the popish service, but the site of this chapel is said to have been on the margin of a den at the foot of Kincaldrum Hill. It was burnt by a party of Royal Dragoons in 1745; and so late as 1816, the ruins were dug up from the very foundation, and carried away to fill up drains! The lands of Foffarty were sold in 1758 to the Earl of Strathmore, and although they belong *quoad civilia* to the parish of Caputh, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland annexed them *quoad sacra* in 1773, to the parish of Kinnettles.

The Wisharts of that Ilk were proprietors of Kinnettles before and during the year 1612, since which period the lands have passed into the hands of various proprietors. One of the more recent of these was Col. William Patterson, an eminent botanist, and sometime Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales. He was the son of a humble gardener at Brigton, immediately adjoining Kinnettles. His parents being poor, he had the good fortune to receive the patronage of Lady Mary Lyon, second daughter of John, fourth Earl of Strathmore, by whom he was educated. Long residence abroad having impaired his health, he resolved to return to Great Britain, but died on the voyage, 21st June 1810. An elegant monument, on which are recorded his services and acquirements, was afterwards erected in the churchyard of his native parish.

Mr John Inglis Harvey was another distinguished native of the parish. He left Kinnettles at a very early age, and

after the completion of his studies at one of the English Universities, entered the service of the Hon. East India Company, and became a civil judge in India.

The estate of Kinnettles was purchased in 1864 by its present proprietor, Mr James Paterson of Heathfield, Dundee, from the representatives of the late Mrs Harvey. The estate of Kinnettles occupies the whole of the south slope of Brigton Hill, with the tablelands to the north, down to the Kerbet water. It has, therefore, a beautiful exposure to the south, while it is sheltered from the north and east, by the woodland on the summit of the hill. A fine new mansion has been recently erected on a preferable site to that on which the old house stood, and somewhat higher up the hill, from elaborate designs by Messrs Peddie and Kinnear of Edinburgh. The building is in the old Scotch baronial style, and the broken, irregular outline of its walls and roofs, with their numerous turrets, towers, and battlements, arrest the attention, and challenge the admiration of the beholder, not less for their own beautiful proportions, than for the graceful manner in which they harmonise with the sloping ground in front, and the steep cliffs and overhanging woods behind. The total length of frontage to the south, including the north-east wing and conservatory, is 160 feet. The principal entrance is in the base of a massive square tower, at the south-east angle of the building. The front of the building to the west of the tower is most effectively treated, by being divided into two gabled projections, one at each end with recessed wall space between. In the front of the building is a spacious terrace, laid out in keeping with the style of the building, retained by low ornamental walls of Gothic character, and flanked at the angles by circular turrets, like miniature shot towers. Altogether the new mansionhouse of Kinnettles is one of the most elegant mansionhouses for its size, in the county of Forfar.

The handsome village of Kinnettles is prettily situated on

the banks of the Kerbet, a few miles to the east of Glamis, with whose history it is closely associated. Lying very low in the valley, it is ofttimes flooded by the waters of the Kerbet, which, during a spate in winter, frequently overflow its level banks. Hence its other name, "The Bog," by which it was equally well known as by that of its more aristocratic title, Kinnettles.

The North Esk, has from time immemorial been the resort of the water-kelpies, and the Castle of Murphy being in the vicinity of that part of the river where he was most frequently seen, he afforded, tradition saith, most material service in its erection. In the *Minstrelsy of the Border*, Dr Jamieson refers to the circumstance thus:—

When Murphy's laird his biggin rear'd
I carryt aw the stanes,
And mony a chiel has heard me squeal,
For sair birz'd back and banes.

In a note the writer says—"the water-kelpy celebrated the event of carrying stones for the building of the castle in rhyme; and that for a long time after, he was heard to cry with a doleful voice—

"Sair back and sair banes,
Carrying the Laird o' Murphy's stanes."

to which a later edition of the history has added—

"The Laird o' Murphy will never thrive,
So long as Kelpy is alive."

As the extensive peat mosses in the neighbourhood, before they were drained, became the prolific nurseries of the "spunkies," so the Kerbet, like the North Esk, in a flood was also the favourite resort of the "water-kelpies"—both races of mythical spirits being now, alas! extinct.

With earnest voice, yet full of fire,
I've heard my venerable sire,
Enthusiastic tell,
How Spunkie danced in sportive glee
Along the marshy peat moss free—
An awful sight on earth to see,
Blue lighting all the dell

And how, by Brigton's spreading woods,
When Kerbet tumbled down his floods,
He's heard the well known splash
Of Waterkelpie's ponderous weight,
Enough an Indiaman to freight,
And all the old wives mad affright—
So terrible the smash.

And then to hear him lauchin' fast,
As wildly roared the stormy blast,
And plashing fell the rain;
'Twas like to shake the very earth,
And woe to that doomed household hearth,
Which check'd not revelry and mirth
In waterkelpie's reign!

The large rivulet, or stream, called Kerbet, takes its rise in Dilty Moss, in the parish of Carmylie, seven miles to the eastward of Kinnettles and falls into the Dean, as already noticed, before its junction with the Isla. In summer it flows gently on in its placid course, but after a thaw in a winter storm, it swells to an almost incredible extent, the low-lying fields and meadow-land being inundated by its impetuous torrent.

The Hill of Kinnettles, rising to the height of 356 feet above the level of the sea, adds greatly to the beauty of the parish. The view from the top is extensive, and very beautiful. This hill is one of the detached Sidlaw Hills, and is also sometimes called the Hill of Brigton.

Brigton, immediately adjoining the village, with its rich haughs and meadows, and beautifully-clustering sylvan woods, and the winding Kerbet sweetly flowing through its midst, is a deeply-interesting and lovely spot. Many a day, in the bright and gladsome days of youth, have I rambled among its sheltered glades, listening with ecstatic joy to the gushing melody of the happy birds, combined in softest harmony with the low, quiet song of the gently-flowing river. These are sunny memories, which no cloud, however dark, in after-life, can ever obliterate or obscure.

Kinnettles, during the life-time of its late parochial school-

master, Mr Daniel Robertson, enjoyed a wide-spread reputation for the high-class education of its "wee school," many of his pupils becoming in after-life eminently successful, and some achieving fame in the several arenas of science, commerce, and literature. Modern innovations have, however, swept away the sacred landmarks so dear to his heart, and so fondly cherished by his pupils. The schoolhouse and school have been ruthlessly levelled to the ground, but the associations thereof cannot be extinguished; and the place where once the humble seminary stood is ever eloquent to us the same.

Poor Daniel! all is over now,
At last at rest in peace art thou—
  Death on thee sets his seal;
And o'er God's acre, lone, below,
Where Kerbet's waters whispering flow,
They bear thee grieving, silent, slow,
  To the land o' the leal.

All is over now!—the pawky smile,
The simpering laugh, persuasive wile,
  The energy and zeal.
Desire of excellence, pride of lore,
Exciting labour, joys of yore—
These follow not beyond the shore
  Of the land o' the leal.

There are several very old grave-stones in the churchyard, the dates on which go back to an early period. Some of these were erected to the memory of the writer's ancestors several centuries ago. The more recently erected monuments are very handsome. The "ancient mill," immediately to the east of the village, is probably, however, the oldest relic of antiquity in the parish, it having been built sometime in the fifteenth century. In the year 1478, Andrew Guthrie of that Ilk was charged before the Lords of Council "anent a mylne biggit on the landis of Kyncaldrum, and holding on the multers of the corns of the samyn."—(Acta. Dom. Con. 5; And. 69.) The barony of Kincaldrum adjoins the lands of Kinnettles, the Guthries being at that period apparently proprietors of both. There is

every reason to believe the above allusion to the "mylne biggit on the landis of Kincaldrum" refers to the old mill on the Kerbet, immediately to the east of Kinnettles. Doubtless the building has received many alterations and repairs, and, in consequence, little of the original structure may remain. To the writer especially, however, it is still an object of the most absorbing and affectionate interest, as it and the adjoining farm were for many generations tenanted by his ancestors, as neighbouring homesteads are occupied by their descendants to the present day. An antiquarian relic of great value, however, dug up by the plough in a grass field in the parish, in 1833, carries us back beyond the Christian era. This was an "upper millstone of a hand mill, supposed to be about two thousand years old.' It is, says the Rev. Mr Lunan, formerly minister of the parish, —2¼ inches in diameter, 1½ inch thick, nearly quite circular, neatly hewn with the chisel, and displays the nicest workmanship around the small circular opening in the centre. The stone of which it is composed is mica-schist, has a leaden colour, contains a mixture of silicious spar, and is thickly studded with small garnets. The earliest instrument in combination with the pestle, for grinding corn, appears to have been the mortar, which, in process of time, was superseded by the *mola manuaria*, or handmill, first worked by bondmen and bondwomen, and afterwards by oxen and horses. Strabo, Vitruvius and other classic writers inform us, that water-mills were introduced in the reign of Julius Cæsar; so that hand-mills had probably been laid aside sometime before the Christian era, thus proving this ancient relic to be of the age already stated.

Surrounded rich by hill and dale,
Midway in Brigton's bonnie vale,
By Kerbet's water's still,
Outside the little village street,
Near by the manse, and garden neat,
Is seated cosily and sweet,
Kinnettles' ancient mill.

O very quaint it is, and old;
A pedant he, and very bold,
Who dared its age to tell;
For, grey and hoary though it be,
And sad its battered state to see,
The mill-wheel goes so steadily,
And does its work so well,

That antiquarian, seer, or sage
Could neither guess nor tell its age,
With an approach to truth;
So while the peasant wondering stares,
Judicious bit-by-bit repairs
Transform its aspect unawares,
And oft renews its youth.

Ah! ancient mill, though far from thee,
Still very dear art thou to me,
Nay, never art forgot;
For thou our name in days of yore,
For many generations bore;
'Tis known there now, alas! no more,
Still sacred, blessed spot.

My sire's and grandsire's birth-place dear,
Accept the tributary tear,
Which far from thee I shed.
Recalling scenes, narrations rare,
Of eldrich visions in the air,
Sepulchral warnings to beware,
And visits from the dead.

So thus, like April hopes and fears
There cometh sunshine with our tears,
From thee, O ancient mill:
Good luck attend thee evermore,
Have melders plenty oft in store,
The miller thrive as aye before,
My blessing with thee still.

CHAPTER III.

BRIGTON.

Fair are the lawns and the fields of sweet Brigton,
Surrounded by woodlands so green,
The sheep feeding rich in the haughs and the meadows,
The river meandering between.

Of Brigton, which has already been noticed, and which will be frequently alluded to in the subsequent chapters, more particularly in the "Lily of The Vale," it may suffice only to allude further, in this place, to the strong feelings of high regard and reciprocal attachment which had always been entertained by the members of the Douglas family, and those of the ancient house of Guthrie; culminating in the legend of the cruel betrayal of the Chief of the latter house, by Miss Douglas of Brigton.

The members of the Douglas family, both male and female, have always been distinguished for their love of field sports, as well as of warlike deeds. Sir David Guthrie of Kincaldrum, Treasurer to the king, and their near neighbour, after he had purchased the lands of Guthrie, as well as the barony of Lour, laid siege to the heart of Miss Douglas of Brigton, resolved to become the victor, or perish in the attempt. Sir David was more of a statesman than a warrior, his mission lying more in the planning and directing of aggressive or defensive wars in the cabinet, than in actual deeds of heroism on the field of battle. Miss Douglas, on the contrary, inheriting all the warlike genius of her race, revelled with unbounded enthusiasm in the glowing descriptions of military prowess, of which historians wrote and poets sung, the bravest of the brave fondly winning her

sweetest and most approving smiles, and coming the nearest to the sensitive outworks of her impulsive heart.

Although of very different temperaments, the chief of the Guthries effectually wooed and won the beautiful and accomplished Lady of Brigton; and every preparation had been made for the fitting celebration of the approaching nuptials of the happy pair. Alas! the course of true love seldom, if ever, runs always smooth. Sir David, on his way to a distant tournament, rode up one fine summer morning to Brigton's hospitable gates, to bid his ladye-love a temporary adieu. Either from her impulsive mind having otherwise undergone a change, or stung with contempt at the pusilanimous conduct of her carpet lover, in preferring the childish sport of the tournament, and the smiles of the Queen of Beauty, to the manlier warfare of the battle-field, and the ringing shouts of well-earned victory, she cruelly taunted Sir David with his effeminate conduct, and indirectly charged him with lack of courage and patriotism in that the day of Scotland's sorest trial. Be that as it may, her censure had the immediate effect of changing the purposes of her lover, and so effectually, that instead of proceeding to the tournament, he buckled on his armour, and hastened to give proof of his courage and valour in the field of battle; returning from the wars, however, only to find his affianced bride the wife of another!:—

CASTLE GUTHRIE.

In plume and doublet rides the knight,
On a summer morning early,
Of noble bearing, comely face,
His steed cap'risoned rarely.

And loud he knocks at Brigton's gates,
The warder asking sternly:—
"From whence come you?"—Sir David cries—
"I come from Castle Guthrie.

"Go quickly, tell your Ladye fair,
I would her see thus early,
I to the tournament away,
And cannot longer tarry."

The Ladye looks from her lattice high,
Her lover gazing fondly—
" The Guthrie would the Douglas wed?
Back hie to Castle Guthrie.

" Aside your tilting trappings throw,
Your armour buckle fairly,
The wars! the wars! haste to the fray,
Then, having suffered sairly,

" And won your spurs by noble deeds,
You ever fighting bravely,
Come back and claim your willing bride—
Then, ho! for Castle Guthrie!"

Forth to the wars Sir David went,
His pride and love taxed sorely,
The foremost ever in the fight,
His spurs he won right bravely.

Now homeward speeds he proud in haste,
To claim his bride, right fairly,
Upon her own conditions won—
All hail to Castle Guthrie!

" What sounds are these in Brigton's halls,
Of revelry thus early?"
" 'Tis e'en our Ladye's nuptial day,"
Leer'd the warder very glibly.

In haste again Sir David sped
To the wars now raging fiercely—
In battle slain, ne'er saw again
His own loved Castle Guthrie!

Centuries afterwards, however, the two houses were united in marriage, in the persons of the late laird of Guthrie, and Miss Anne Douglas; who, both living to a great age, died within a few weeks of each other, and might be said consequently, to have been buried in one grave: lovely in their lives, in their deaths they were not divided.

The new Episcopal Church, Forfar, contains a fine stained glass window, put up at the expense of, and thus inscribed by, the present laird of Guthrie:—

"In Honorem Dei, et Memoriam Joannis Gvthrie, de Gvthrie, Arm: Qui Obiit, 12 Nov. 1845. Ætatis svæ 82. Atqve in Memoriam Annæ Dovglas, Conjvgis ejvs, Qvæ Obiit, 2 Dec. 1845. Ætatis svæ 75."

CHAPTER IV.

LEGEND OF THE FIRST CASTLE OF CLAMIS.

How rich with legends is our land!
Its hills and dales and rock-girt strand—
Each doth its dread, mysterious tale,
Low ominous whisper in the gale:
The scowling loop-holed donjon keep,
The frowning walls that round it sweep,
The mouldering castle, grey and grim,
All chant some sad funereal hymn.

How varied, and antagonistic to each other, are the impressions produced on differently constituted minds by the outward aspects of nature, or by the historical traditions of an ancient, classical land like our own! Some expatiate on the richness of the fields, their high state of cultivation, and the comparative produce they yield in return for the diligent labours of the scientific and skilful husbandman. Others exult in the splendid garniture of the straths and valleys, aglow with the golden tints of autumnal fruitage, without one passing thought as to the probable yield per acre of barley, oats, or wheat. Many, while gazing on the far-stretching forests, or on the heath and grass-covered hills, only calculate on the capabilities of the one for the building of so many ships, or speculate on the capacities of the other to rear and fatten so many sheep; while the poetical few luxuriate only in the loveliness of the waving woodlands, ringing out their joyous chimes to fill the soul with melody, or, in a wild transport of luxurious rapture, enjoy with a passionate delight the beauty of the landscape, in all its variety of hill, and dale, and breezy upland, alive with the bleeting of lambs, and

vocal with the songs of children and of birds. Some regard with holy reverence the traditionary lore of our country, and are more engrossed with the mere romance of the legend than with its strict historical accuracy. Others, not content with ransacking musty, moth-eaten parchments and chronicles, and grubbing laboriously amongst the *debris* of decaying antiquarian relics, must needs throw doubts, if not direct discredit, on every startling and romantic incident which does not square with their prosaic ideas, or strictly harmonise with the dry and literal interpretation of history.

What is it that constitutes the grand difference between the scenery of the Western Hemisphere and that of our own beloved land? Is it not the associations, historical and otherwise, that encompass the land at every point, like a starry atmosphere of refulgent, unfading glory? The prairies of America may be more vast; her forests may cover, in all their primeval grandeur, an immeasurably greater extent and variety of space; her mountains may soar to a loftier altitude, approaching nearer the gates of the Celestial City, and the throne of the Great Eternal; her rivers may flow on in their stately course in mightier volume, and with greater majesty of power; her lakes may be more capacious, and her cataracts more ravishingly sublime. What of that? There is not a valley, forest, mountain, or glen; there is not a river, a lake, a cascade, or a burn throughout the length and breadth of the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland but hath each its separate history—its tale of love, of war, romance, or song—connecting the present with the past in a mystic, weird-like chain, whose golden links stretch far away in traditionary indistinctness to the remote and fabulous ages of antiquity. Nay, there is not a moss-covered stone in the plain, a rugged cairn upon the hill, a willowed or birch-shaded streamlet in the glen, or a lonely tarn in the bosom of the mist-enshrouded mountain but tell us, as in a dream, some wondrous legend of imaginative mystery or thrillingly-bewitching story of chase, foray, or daring, gallant deeds of wild, romantic chivalry.

And what of the old, grey ivy-mantled castles which stud the lovely glens, and perch, like the eyry of the eagle, on the rugged slopes of the rocky hills, or on the surf-beaten lofty cliffs by the ever-surging sea? What of the mouldering ruins—still beautiful in their premature decay—of the abbeys, the monasteries, the ancient houses of God, which throw around their holy shrines a rainbow instructive radiance of the never-to-be-forgotten past? What of the still existing magnificent cathedrals, with their noble proportions of transept, nave, and pillared aisle; their delicate tracery of sculptured choir and frescoed dome; their internal garniture of matchless splendour, and their external surroundings of majestic tower and lofty spire?

Each hath its intensely interesting associations; each hath its authentic, undying history. From the weird old castles, hoary with age—from the depths of their donjon keeps, from the heights of their battlemented towers—still come the rolling peals of martial music, the fitful strains of the minstrel harp, and the loud wassail roar of the midnight revel, all softly blent with the low-whispered roundelay issuing sweetly from the boudoirs of ladyes fair in the witching twilight of summer eves. From the mouldering abbeys, as well as from the existent cathedrals, arise alike the thunder-notes of the organ, and the softly-chanted songs of the white-robed choir. The aromatic incense still fragrantly perfumes the morning air, and the rolling anthems re-echo back, as of old, from the distant sky.

The associations? They remain for ever! Gold will not buy them; time cannot destroy them; new places cannot bribe them. From the old they never can be separated.

Ye Goths and Vandals, do your worst? Uproot each sacred vestige to faithful memory's eye most dear; raze, raze the well-remembered walls; waft, scatter rude to merciless, devastating blasts each palace hall and hospitable roof! Associations mock, defy your power; the heart's affections laugh your wrath to scorn! Ye cannot still the echoes of the

past—gag, silence memory's hallowed voice—rude hush the heavenly music of these holy, cherished songs!

In accompanying me, therefore, through the classical and traditional region of Strathmore, I wish the reader not to be too exacting in regard to places and dates, nor too rigidly examine into, and prosaically compare the startling legendary incidents narrated with the pretended revelations of unauthenticated history.

It is essential ever to bear in mind, while descanting on events so remote, that the earlier period of the history of Scotland is involved in great obscurity; that the first historical chronicles were compiled by the unlettered monks, chiefly from oral tradition; and that the oldest history of Scotland extant is of a comparatively recent date. John Fordoun, a canon of Aberdeen, who flourished in the fourteenth century, was the writer of the first history of Scotland; and, although Hailes and Chalmers have somewhat dispelled the darkness which had so long overhung the early period of Scottish history, their discoveries must necessarily be still received with extreme caution, if not with pardonable doubt.

It may be assumed, therefore, that I have no sympathy with those who would obscure the golden radiance of our legendary lore, or sacrilegiously attempt to obliterate the landmarks of poetry and song. In the hurry and excitement of this tumultuous and practically progressive age, let us admire and reverence the more the sacred impositions of genius, and cling with the greater fondness and tenacity to the loved and hallowed associations of the past. Premonitions are not awanting that the termination of the waning era of romance too assuredly draweth nigh. Let us not unfeelingly hasten prematurely the—bitter end.

Although record shows that the present Castle of Glamis was not begun to be built until the time of the first Earl of Kinghorn in 1578, yet for ages before the existence of written records, and claiming remote antiquity, there was a castle and royal residence of considerable extent within the

parish. It is quite certain there was a hill fort upon an isolated rocky eminence in the Glen of Denoon, in the Sidlaw district of the parish. This glen, altogether, is a very lovely and romantic spot, reposing calmly among the bleak and barren hills, and forming a pleasant contrast to the gorgeous luxuriance of the "Great Valley."

A sunny nook of Highland glen
Peeps out behind yon mossy den.
Lone spot! enshrined 'mong heather hills,
And watered fresh by mountain rills,
In modest loveliness afar,
Thou shinest bright, like distant star,
The rosy morning glad to greet,
In all thy loneliness—how sweet!

The Hill of Denoon is steep, and of considerable height, one side of the rock being nearly perpendicular, while the other sides are of tolerably easy ascent. A stone wall, eight or nine feet in thickness, is carried obliquely round the Hill, encircling a space of 340 or 350 yards in circumference. Within this semi-circular and extensive rampart, there are scattered vestiges of the foundations of an immense castellated edifice, with traces of several entrances in the external walls. It is to this Castle, therefore, the following short legend refers.

Eight hundred years have rolled away since the erection of the first Castle of Glamis; yet from the darkness, turmoil, and strife of that early time comes, weird-like, a legend's muffled chime.

The Hill of Denoon was at that remote period accounted sacred or haunted ground. It was the mythical abode of the elfins and fairies, and formerly a fitting haunt for their midnight revelries.

When the silvery moonbeams lovingly slept in dreamy beauty on the green slopes of the enchanted Hill, and the blue bells and the purple heather were wet with the dew of angels' tears, arrayed in gossamer robes of bespangled gold, with wands of dazzling sheen and lances of magical bright-

ness, would the troops of elfins flauntingly dance to the music of the zephyrs, until the shrill cry of the chanticleer put an end for the time to their mystical enchantments.

Suddenly, as in blue clouds of vapour, they noiselessly vanished away, no sound remaining to break the oppressive stillness, save that of the mountain rivulet, as it fretfully leapt from crag to crag, as if piteously regretting the mysterious departure of its ethereal visitors.

Having forsworn the presence and companionship of the terrestrial inhabitants of earth, it was a sacred *dictum* in the code of the fairies that no habitation for human beings should be permitted to be built within the hallowed precincts of the enchanted ground. Unable of themselves to guard against such sacrilegious encroachment, they had recourse to the aid of, and formed a secret compact with the demons, or evil spirits, whose sole avocation consisted in doing mischief, and bringing trouble and misfortune on those under the ban of their displeasure. By this compact these evil spirits became solemnly bound to prevent any human habitation whatever from being erected on the hill, and to blast in the bud any attempts whensoever and by whomsoever made to break this implacable, unalterable decree.

It was about this time the alarm-note was sounded, as the Queen of the Fairies, who, with an eye more observant than the rest of her compeers, observed one evening in the moonlight, certain indications of the commencement of a human habitation. Horror and dismay were instantly pictured on the fair countenances of the masquerading troops of merry dancers as the awful truth was ominously revealed to them by the recent workmanship of human hands.

A council of war was immediately held, when it was determined to summon at once the guardian spirits to their aid and protection.

"By our sacred compact," cried the Queen, "I command the immediate attendance of all the demons and evil spirits of the air, to avenge the insult now offered to the legions of

Fairyland, and to punish the sacrilegious usurpers who dare infringe the sanctity of their mystical domains."

These demons instantly obeyed the haughty summons, and, in the presence of those they had sworn to protect, they in a twinkling demolished the structure, hurling the well-proportioned foundations over the steep rock into the vale beneath!

The builder, doubtless very much surprised and chagrined when he returned to his work in the early dawn of the following morning, was sorely puzzled to account for the entire disappearance of the solid foundations of the great castle he intended to be erected on the Hill. He did not, however, waste much time, or use much philosophic argument on the matter, and gave orders to prepare new foundations of even a more durable character.

The demons, to show their invincible power, and for the sake of more effect, allowed the new foundations to rise a degree higher than the former, before they gave out their fiat of destruction. In an instant, however, they were again demolished, and the builder—this time gravely assigning some fatal shock of Nature as the cause of the catastrophe—quietly resolved to repair the damage by instantly preparing new and still more solid foundations.

Additional and more highly skilled workmen were engaged, and everything for a time went favourably on, the walls of the castle rising grandly to view in all the solidity and beauty of the favourite architecture of the period.

Biding their time, the demons again ruthlessly swept away as with a whirlwind every vestige of the spacious halls, razing the solid massy foundations so effectually that not one stone was left upon another!

Things were now assuming a rather serious aspect for the poor builder, who, thinking that he had at last hit upon the true cause of these successive disasters, attributed his misfortunes to the influence of evil spirits. A man of courage and a match, as he imagined, for all the evil spirits of Pandemonium, supposing they were let loose at once against

him by the Prince of Darkness, he unhesitatingly resolved to keep watch and ward on the following night, and to defy all the hosts of hell to prevent him rebuilding the projected edifice. The night expected came; but, alas, alas!—

His courage failed when on the blast
A demon swift came howling past,
Loud screeching wild and fearfully,
This ominous, dark, prophetic cry—
"Build not on this enchanted ground!
'Tis sacred all these hills around;
Go build the castle in a bog,
Where it will neither shake nor shog!"

CHAPTER V.

LEGEND OF THE FIRST LYON OF GLAMIS.

The clans and chiefs allegiance bring,
For Robert Stuart is Scotland's king,
Who, by his cousin, Rowallan fair
Had daughters famed for beauty rare;
But ne'er was comelier maiden seen,
More graceful, fair, than Ladye Jean.

THE genealogy of the Stuart family, though the theme of many a fable, has by late antiquarians been distinctly traced to the great Anglo-Norman family of Fitz-Allan, in England. Walter Fitz-Allan in David the First's time, held the high office of Seneschal or Steward of the King's household. This title was afterwards converted into a surname, and used as such by his descendants. It was the sixth High-Steward in succession who married Marjory, the daughter of Robert the Bruce; and to their only child, the seventh Lord High-Steward, the Crown of Scotland descended, on the extinction of the Bruce's line in his only son, David II. This monarch's reign was inaugurated at Scone, 27th March 1371, and it is to him the legend of the First Lyon of Glamis refers.

The coronation of Robert II. having been celebrated with great pomp and magnificence at Scone, the Court proceeded to the Castle of Stirling—then the favourite residence of royalty—to keep high holiday in commemoration of the event. On receiving the hand of the Princess Euphemia in marriage, the Earl of Douglas at once abandoned his claim to the throne, and the clans and their warrior chiefs, as well as the lowland nobles, flocked in great numbers to the Castle to pay their willing allegiance to their lawful king. Tourneys and feasting

were, for a time, the order of the day, the flower of the Scottish nobility, with many a titled dame of high degree, gaily mingling in the gorgeous and happy throng.

The six daughters of the King by his first marriage with his cousin of Rowallan, famed for their grace and comely beauty, received by universal acclaim the spontaneous homage as the most beautiful in all that beautiful and courtly assemblage. Ladye Jean, the youngest of the Princesses, by her graceful deportment, winning manners, and peculiarly Scottish type of expression, was, however, *par excellence* the Queen of Beauty.

The two principal State pages who waited on the Court were Sir James Lindsay and Sir John de Lyon. Sir James was of stern, cold, haughty demeanour, which somewhat detracted from the grace of his soldierly and handsome person, De Lyon was a youth of a very graceful and comely person courteous and complaisant in his manner, and a great favourite with the King, to whom he acted also in the capacity of private secretary.

These two royal pages were, unknown to each other, both passionately in love with Ladye Jean. So carefully, however, had they concealed their thoughts each from the other, that no jealous rivalry had ever entered their breasts; so they kept no watch or ward on each other's movements, which otherwise they would have done, to an extent, perhaps, sufficient to endanger their mutual friendship and esteem.

Queen Euphemia kept so strict surveillance over the Princesses that they seldom went beyond the Castle walls; and even in the palace the ever-watchful eye of the Queen was constantly upon them, their slightest movement escaping not her notice. De Lyon, who was yet in ignorance of the real feelings of Ladye Jean towards him, naturally chafed under the restraint to which the Princesses were subjected, because he was thereby deprived of any opportunity to make a declaration of his love.

The page, therefore, took a sudden resolution, beneath which was artfully concealed the real purpose he had in view.

Full of his deceptive mission, De Lyon one evening took his thoughtful yet solitary way along the gloomy corridors of the Castle, and having reached the Armoury Tower, the favourite resort of the Lindsay, he gently knocked for admission. The ponderous door was instantly opened by Sir James who courteously greeted his unexpected visitor.

"Thou oughtst to have been an Abbot, Sir James," said Lyon, playfully, "delighting thus in monkish solitude. The gloomy cloisters of a monastery would be a more appropriate residence for thee than the stately halls of a royal palace. Is not the bracing mountain air more lusciously sweet than the tainted atmosphere of courtly boudoirs, where royal dames, held captive, can only sigh, and mourn, and weep, protesting by their tears against such monastic surveillance?"

"What means this jesting, John de Lyon? Knowest thou not the difference in rank there is between us? While thou art but an obscure scion of an obscure house, the blue blood of royalty flows in my veins. The King is my kinsman, and as yestreen I mingled in the gay and brilliant assembly in the banquet hall, I knew the Princesses were my near relations—my cousins, if thou wouldst have the truth told thee again to remind thee of thy inferior rank."

The proud, disdainful manner of Lindsay, and the haughty, scornful tone in which these words were uttered, brought the blood to Lyon's cheek, and sunk deep into his heart—the first feeling called up in his soul being that of resentment for the undeserved, contemptuous insult. This feeling, however, speedily vanished when he remembered Ladye Jean; and, earnestly intent on his unsuspected mission, he broke the ominous silence thus—

"'Tis of the Princesses I would speak with thee. Nay, brave Lindsay, be not uncourteous even to thy inferior in rank, and listen calmly to what I have to reveal."

"Reveal? Then at thy peril keep nothing back. Thou to have anything to reveal in regard to the Princesses is, indeed,

to me a mystery. Proceed, Lyon; I am all impatient to hear thy pretended revelation."

"Yes, Sir James, it is of thy royal cousins I would speak," De Lyon boldly replied. "The surveillance which the Queen so strictly exercises over the Princesses must have been noticed and deplored by one so deeply interested in their welfare and happiness as the brave Lindsay, from whose society they are even debarred, as well as from that of all frequenters of the Court. So strict, you must be aware, is their captive seclusion, that not the smallest courtesy can be paid to them by any about the Court."

"What purpose, Lyon, hast thou in view?" emphatically interrupted the Lindsay.

"That the royal dames should have more liberty, and not thus pine in solitary seclusion, like sisters of mercy in a sainted nunnery," Lyon quickly replied. "The Princesses are young, and should not youthful hearts be gay? Instead of this forced seclusion from the outer world, why should not they be free as the mountain winds to roam, wherever they may list, in all the joyous ecstacy of the hey-day of their existence? Thou art their kinsman; to the King make this petition:—"The Princesses are unhappy, sire, in the strict seclusion in which they are kept in their palace home—their wish is to have more freedom of access to the world without. Grant them graciously, my King, their heart's desire, to roam at will among these royal halls, and over the sunny slopes and breezy hills of this fair region of romance and song, and thus bring health, and strength, and gladness to their grateful, loving hearts."

De Lyon had struck a kindred chord in the unsuspecting heart of his unknown rival, who, throwing off his partly assumed haughtiness of manner, very courteously and kindly replied—

"What assurance hast thou, Lyon, that Ladye Jean—I mean the princesses, my cousins, themselves desire this

liberty? Art thou their trusty confidant in such matters?—did they express their wishes secretly to thee?"

Without noticing the deep searching glance of Lindsay's eye as he eagerly made the important inquiry, and pursuing the advantage he had gained, the page, half-confusedly, half-blushingly, replied—

"I am not the confidant of the Princesses, brave Lindsay, in this or in any other matter; but I can truthfully penetrate their thoughts, and, without any communication with them personally, can prophetically express their wishes. To the King, Lindsay—his Majesty will doubtless most willingly listen to thy plaint, and graciously grant the prayer of thy petition."

"I faithfully promise, De Lyon," warmly replied Sir James, whose lynx eyes failed to detect aught of deceit or treachery, "and I feel that His Majesty's love for the happiness of his children will constrain him to grant the coveted boon."

The page, overjoyed and proud he had played his first desperate card in the game so well, with ill-suppressed gaiety most obsequiously proffered his respectful thanks for the courtesy extended to him by the now mollified and gracious Lindsay.

They parted—both firmly resolved to push unremittingly their suit with Ladye Jean!

His heart and interest being in the matter, Sir James most faithfully, and with a right good will, kept his promise to Lyon, and embraced the first opportunity to lay his petition before the King; and so well and powerfully did he plead their cause, that His Majesty, to the great joy of his kinsman, most graciously agreed that the Princesses should be at once freed from their bondage, and allowed to roam wherever they listed, taking blame at the sametime to himself for having so long allowed the Queen to keep his daughters in the durance vile of a convent cell.

This was just what Lyon in his inmost heart desired, and as his duties as domestic page brought him oftener into the

presence of the royal dames than Lindsay, he had determined within himself that he would take advantage of every opportunity to prosecute his suit with Ladye Jean. In the fond dreamings of youthful passion there is infinitely more conveyed by the glance of the eye or the pressure of the hand than in all the formal declarations of mutual feeling, however impassioned or sincere; or in all the heaven-registered vows of unalterable affection and undying love in which the doubtful and mistrustful so fatally indulge. Lyon therefore knew, before any formal declaration of his love had been made to Ladye Jean, that his passion was reciprocated by the Princess, but he still anxiously waited for a fitting opportunity to receive her willing assent to his suit.

Ladye Jean was alone one evening in her favourite boudoir, to which De Lyon stealthily repaired, and on bended knee made the customary obeisance. He slowly raised his eyes to those of the Princess, and felt that his passionate love was read and returned. One moment more and they were fervently locked in each other's embrace, avowing their mutual love, and declaring unalterable constancy and fidelity in whatever circumstances might intervene before the full fruition of their hopes.

Strange as it may seem, however, no sooner was the conquest gained than dark foreboding fears usurped the cruel mastery in De Lyon's mind; for how could he, an obscure page, successfully aspire to the hand of a Princess, and willingly be allowed to wed the favourite child of a proud and royal race? True, inter-marriages had frequently taken place between sons and daughters of Scottish Kings and the representatives of ancient and powerful families, but John De Lyon had neither houses nor lands, not even a rood of ground he could call his own.

The arrival at this juncture, however, of a polished stranger from the Court of France gave a new and darker current to the thoughts of the sorrowful page. This courtier was none other than the brave Sir Maurice De Charollés, famous as well

for his conquests amongst the fair as for his prodigies of valour in the field of battle. His stately person, courtly mien, and high intellectual attainments made him a general favourite with all, but especially so with the Princesses and ladyes of the Court. At the stirring chase, as well as in the banquet hall, he was equally successful by his refined and captivating manner in winning the good graces of the fair. Then, at evening's witching hour, when the ladyes assembled in their tapestry-adorned boudoirs, would the practised and polished Frenchman sing to the accompaniment of the harp the stirring songs of love and chivalry—

> While bosoms heaved the stifled sigh,
> And ladyes drooped the languid eye.

And none seemed so charmed with his presence and courtly demeanour, and to none, apparently, did he devote so much of his fascinating attentions as—Ladye Jean!

All the movements of the gallant cavalier had been closely watched by Lyon, as well as those of his ladye-love, but just as his feelings of jealousy had assumed the determination to seek an interview with Ladye Jean on the subject, the announcement was made in the palace that previous to the departure of the French knight he had desired to paint not only the portraits of all the Princesses, but to take them with him to the French Court. This openly avowed intention of De Charollés confirmed the page's suspicions, and intensified his fears lest, under this device, he might the more securely carry out his covert design to spirit off the Ladye Jean herself to France.

Exasperated by the apparent artful stratagems of the gallant knight, and writhing under the pangs of almost hopeless despair, he sought in haste his ladye-love, and in wild and passionate language poured into her ear his tale of jealous rivalry and gloomy, dark forebodings as to their future destiny.

The Princess—ignorant of any intrigue or deceit on her part—in wild amazement confidingly exclaimed—

"Is there no hope, De Lyon—no hope?"

"Yes, there is hope," the page replied; "a plan have I matured which, if properly put in execution, will not only avert from us the threatened danger, and happily result in our loving betrothal, but upon you more than on myself, will depend its final and successful issue."

"On me, more than on yourself, will depend the successful issue?" rejoined the Princess. "Some ruse or artful stratagem, I fear. Unfold at once your scheme, De Lyon, that I may judge of its fitness to promote the end in view."

With deep and bated breath, as on the issue hung his future fate, did Lyon, with the warmest protestations of undying love, effectually pave the way for the expected revelation of his self-lauded plan, and then, lowering his thick and husky voice to its lowest hollow notes, he whispered in the lady's ear some words of ominous import—for, quickly and proudly raising her indignant head, the Princess hastily replied—

"No! such foul disgrace shall never stain the unsullied honour of our kingly race. Lyon, I love thee—but we must part—now—for ever. Such impure thoughts would break my bursting heart. Farewell!"

"But 'tis the semblance, love, of crime—not crime itself," entreatingly replied the page, seizing affectionately at the same time the hand of the Princess to prevent her escape, while he passionately continued—"Time, assuredly, in the end, will bring our coveted reward, and to the Court and all the world most clearly and effectually prove your innocence."

"Never, never!" replied the Princess disdainfully, thrusting away his hand. "There's not a dame in all the land, however lowly or meanly born, but would scorn such a treacherous, villanous scheme, and indignantly spurn a plan so full of shame and dire disgrace."

"Thou dost not love me, Ladye Jean," in a highly assumed, offended tone, the page rejoined. "By treachery and stealth some other knight hath gained thy love, and now, forsooth, thou art glad to rid thee of my presence."

"'Tis false, 'tis false! Thy daring scheme in all its most minute details unfold, and though it may require the heart of a lion to crown it with victory, that bitter taunt I'll prove was to me most cruel and undeserved."

Lyon, skilled in all the phases of the human heart, now dexterously pursued the advantage he had gained, and in passionate and eloquent terms strove to reach the point he had hitherto attempted in vain, when, to his great joy, the Princess gradually relented, until at last she gave her willing consent to the mysterious compact.

A bold scheme assuredly it was which Lyon had conceived and now unfolded to the Princess. The dark proposal, so full of risk and danger, he had made to the spotless maiden, was none other than this—that at the fit season she should permit the slanderous rumour that the French knight, by wily, flattering tongue, had gained the mastery over her young and inexperienced heart, and that the intrigue would disgrace the hitherto unimpeachable honour of her stainless race.

"But art thou sure," abashed and doubtingly inquired the Princess, "that when the dark report shall reach the ear of my father the King, he will listen to thy proffered plea, and willingly give my hand to *thee?*"

"Yes, yes!" impetuously replied the page, "although thou dost not fully comprehend, the end will be in reality what we wish. Act thou thy part.—Farewell!"

"'Tis well," rejoined the Princess, sadly, "yet how in my virgin heart of innocence I loathe the despicable plot.—Farewell!"

The time fixed upon for the departure of De Charollés had now arrived, when, in courtly terms to the Court, and gallant adieux to the ladyes fair, the cavalier took his leave, and, attended by a splendid retinue, he disappeared in as gay and stately a manner as he had arrived.

The knight had not been long gone when some strange, undefined sickness confined the Ladye Jean to her own

apartments in the Castle, which circumstance coming to the expectant ears of Lyon, he saw the time for action had come, and that not a moment was to be lost.

"Another desperate card to play," thought the artful page, as he anxiously bent his devious way through the tortuous corridors of the Castle to the distant tower on the ramparts, where the Lindsay spent his evening hours in solitary musings on camp and field.

He was admitted right courteously by Sir James, who, however, could not help wondering what the motive might be which had induced this midnight visit, and the more so on observing the sad and downcast mien of the page, so different from his usual happy and joyous temperament.

De Lyon still continuing silent, the Lindsay, amazed at his reticence, very kindly asked the nature of his errand.

The dissembling page, with trembling tongue and downcast face, at once confessed the dire and foul disgrace which he by his guilty amour had brought on the Royal house.

"Nay—thou art dreaming, Lyon," tenderly the Lindsay said. "Rest thee awhile upon this silken couch, and sing, as thou wert wont in ladye's bower some of those soft and pensive songs of chase and love and beauty, more congenial to thy nature than the morose orisons of the cloister or the nunnery."

The page still downward cast his troubled eyes, crimsoned and blushed, and solemnly averred that all he had confessed was true. Then, as if terrified at the sound his fatal words had made, he shrunk abashed from his interrogator's presence.

The astonishment and rage of Lindsay was so great and overwhelming for the moment, that his words were hoarsely choked in his throat on their fiery way to his lips; so, drawing his trusty sword, he was about wreaking instant vengeance, when De Lyon exclaimed—

"Hold! hold! thy sword return to its scabbard—listen to me calmly for a moment, and I will show thee a way

whereby thou mayest mercifully screen and protect the guilty, and bring showers of gratitude on thyself as the instrument thereof."

De Lyon then proposed that Lindsay, early on the morrow should seek a private audience of the King, and in sorrowful and downcast mood, charge with guilt the Ladye Jean, yet not to reveal the whole truth, adroitly concealing the page as an actor in the scene, and, pointing with earnest look and meaning glance to the gallant Knight of France, endeavour to persuade His Majesty that his unholy intrigues had stained with crime the unsullied reputation of his favourite daughter. Then make this proposal humbly to the King—that, to prevent the inevitable exposure of the intrigue, the Ladye Jean be given in marriage to John de Lyon, who, doubtless, would only be too glad to comply with His Majesty's command.

The breast of the proud Lindsay now heaved with indescribable agony, boiling passion, and choking rage, and nothing would assuage his deeply-injured feelings, intensified as they were with such a sudden and bitter disappointment to all his most valued and cherished hopes. De Lyon, seeing the intensity of his grief, with great tact and knowledge of human nature, calmly allowed its wrath to expend itself—when, quickly seizing the opportune moment to resume the game, he boldly told the sorrow-stricken Lindsay that nothing less than what he had proposed, would wipe away the disgrace from the escutcheon of the Royal House.

Scarcely yet comprehending the full extent of his degradation and misery, the Lindsay retired to an oriel recess in his chamber, to ruminate on the apparently hopeless condition of his prospects and love, and to take counsel with himself as to his future course under the circumstances.

He thus reasoned:—De Lyon had never seen aught between himself and Ladye Jean to create the slightest suspicion of his real feelings towards the Princess; there could, therefore, be no jealousy or rivalry in the matter. If

the confession now made by Lyon be true, could he in his heart of hearts really love the woman who could not bring him honour? As to the first, he felt shut up, however reluctantly, to give credence to the page's confession; as to the second, he could not, as a man of honour himself, not only not have any affection or love for the guilty, but must spurn the very thought of such a feeling remaining in his breast. Love, he felt, must now give place to pity, and by this feeling his future actions in the case would be regulated.

Approaching the disconsolate page, the Lindsay, with the graceful air of generous chivalry, most fervently promised that on the early morrow he would not only see the King, but plead Lyon's cause in the disguise he had himself proposed, and with all the entreative earnestness of a mutual and trusty friend.

"To-morrow, then, De Lyon," said the Lindsay, "we meet again; meantime, farewell."

"Another card," thought Lyon, "well played;" and as he bent his way in the midnight silence and gloom of the palace halls, most fervently did he invoke the aid of angels, and of saints to guide the last bold throw in the desperate game to a successful issue, for on this depended the future fame or disgrace of his eventful life.

Next day when the Lindsay was admitted to the presence of the King, he found his Majesty arrayed and equipped for the Royal hunt, who in an unusual flow of good spirits, received his kinsman with the most familiar condescension, and gracious courtesy. Lindsay, however, came to the point, and explained his errand at once, withholding nothing of the compact between him and the page.

Who can depict the sudden and awful revulsion of feeling experienced by the grief-stricken King? Up and down upon his seat he swung with the most intense and bitter agony. The grey old castle rung like thunder with his threat of vengeance on the guilty head of his debased, undutiful daughter, renouncing her for ever as unworthy any more of

his protection and paternal love. The climax of his ungovernable rage was reached when, with a fearful damning oath, he swore that within the sacred precincts of his Court no gay French cavalier would ever be admitted more!

Lindsay, who felt that his mission was only yet half fulfilled, now, with wily, persuasive tongue, proposed that John de Lyon should wed the Ladye Jean, thus screening the guilty conduct of his daughter, and averting the inevitable disgrace which must otherwise fall on the Royal house.

Not knowing of the artful plot, the King, in another sudden revulsion of feeling, forgot both his shame and his wrath, for this proposal of Lindsay entirely changed the current of his thoughts. Like a drowning man, he caught the straw; for he at once perceived that to save his name and lineage from infamy, immediate marriage must take place.

Dismissing Lindsay, John de Lyon was instantly summoned to the presence of the King.

Not wishing that the page should suppose the thought had suddenly entered his mind, the King had quickly thrown aside his hunting habiliments, so that when the page appeared in his presence he had assumed his ordinary costume, and sat in the Royal chair as if nothing had occurred to disturb the general equanimity of his temper and demeanour. Uncertain whether Lindsay had been true or false, De Lyon stood before the monarch in a blushing, doubtful mood, not daring even to ask his royal pleasure. The King himself broke the painful silence, and thus kindly addressed the trembling page—

"A trusty and obedient servant long hast thou been, De Lyon, and I am wishful to reward thy faithfulness, yet feel somewhat at a loss what shape thy recompense may assume. Approach John Lyon—melancholy and sad, I ween! Come, raise thy blushing, drooping head, and picture a bright and sunny future. Listen—for thy great clerkly skill and faithful servitude, I will bestow upon thee this reward—thy dearest wish; thy heart's desire will I grant thee. How high, De Lyon, dost thou aspire?"

Inwardly congratulating himself on his success, in strange, bewildered amazement he raised his eyes to those of the King to assure himself the scene was real, and not a wild dream of his heated imagination. Not reading the thoughts nor comprehending the real feelings of the page, the King continued—

"All my daughters are now affianced excepting one—the Ladye Jean—and for thy worth and services, De Lyon, I would on *thee* bestow her hand."

The artful page could scarce conceal his inward emotion, and deeply blushing even at his own success, replied in broken sentences how much he prized the unexpected boon, concluding his confused expression of thanks by passionately exclaiming in the height of his joy—

"You have indeed, sire, granted to me the fulfilment of my dearest wishes, my fondest heart's desire; for I have ever most truly, affectionately loved the Ladye Jean!"

"'Tis well—'tis well; then be it so," rejoined the King; and, as the page was leaving the Royal presence, his Majesty kindly beckoned him back again, called him a mulish, love-sick swain, and, as he could brook no delay in the matter, enjoined him to fix at once his nuptial day:—

"To-morrow—if thou wilt—at noon."

The news of the approaching Royal wedding was hailed by the Court with the greatest satisfaction and delight, all approving highly of the monarch's choice—De Lyon having always been a marked favourite with every one, from the lowest to the highest in rank, ever since he became a courtier and a Royal page.

Meanwhile the lovers, with their secret pent up in their own breasts, longed for the time to give full vent to their triumphant, blissful joy, their very caution lest they should betray their real feelings being, strange as it may seem, the subtlest, most hazardous card they had to play!

At length, with great pomp and splendour, and high regal magnificence, the nuptials of the happy pair were duly celebrated, and all—save one—rejoiced in the budding joy, and

showered their best wishes and richest blessings on the loving hearts which had that day been united in the holy bonds of wedlock. The one who formed the solitary exception was Sir James Lindsay, who, pale and downcast, mingled not in the gay and glittering throng, but mused apart as in deepest solitude, apparently unconscious of any other presence save his own. Alas! no wonder the brave Lindsay is sad—despondingly sad—for his early, only love, she once so pricelessly dear to his manly heart, hath now been given to another.

Next day, De Lyon, impatient of restraint, and unable longer to conceal the victory he had gained, repaired to Lindsay's chamber, and as he entered stood confused, and sighed and blushed, and at last unfolded the deceitful tale, laying strength and emphasis on the cunning device, and confessing triumphantly the whole details of the artful plot, not omitting the emphatic declaration of the pure and perfect innocence of himself and the Princess!

Unaware of his attachment to the Princess, Lyon was confounded at the fierce and fiendish glare of the Lindsay's eye, and the terribly knit and scowling brow, as the wild, tumultuous heaving of his manly breast foreshadowed the coming storm.

"Thou hast deceived me," hoarsely and savagely he said at length, "vile wretch!"—then paused in his paroxysm of rage. "A villanous traitor hast thou been—dog—miscreant—the Princess was my bride—I loved, most dearly loved the Ladye Jean! Enjoy your stolen bliss, deceitful, treacherous boy, but—when we meet again—beware!"

De Lyon, by his courteous demeanour and exemplary conduct, ingratiated himself into the good graces of his Royal father-in-law, who raised him to the high office of Grand Chamberlain of Scotland, and as a fitting dowry to his daughter, the Ladye Jean, bestowed on him the Castle and broad lands of Glamis, in whose family they have ever since remained.

Many long years had rolled away since the nuptials of Lyon and Ladye Jean were celebrated in the Castle of Stirling, yet, although actively engaged in the stirring scenes of that eventful period, and victorious in many a hard-fought conflict on the field of battle, the Lindsay never forgot the scene, the plot, the threat, nor Ladye Jean!

The day of vengeance came at last. On the moss of Balhill, to the eastward of Glamis, the Lindsay and De Lyon once more, and for the last time, met. Each had brought his own retainers to the deadly combat, and long and fierce did the furious conflict rage. With ponderous battle-axe and shivering spear, midst hellish shoutings of the savage hordes, the combatants were stricken down upon the plain, while along the ridges like the rushing rain ran the crimson blood of the doughty warriors, till the battle-field was thickly strewn with the ghastly heaps of the dying and the dead.

"Hold!" cried the Lindsay; "cease the strife, spill no more precious blood; to single combat, Lyon—thy life or mine shall now decide the day."

Paralysed by the fierceness and determination of his adversary, and, doubtless, feeling that now indeed his hour was come, De Lyon lost all presence of mind, advancing to meet his deadly enemy as if in a trance or mystic dream.

Not so the Lindsay! On, on impetuously he rushed and with one true and deadly blow, low laid the suppliant Lyon at his feet.

"Take that," he fiercely cried, as he thrust at Lyon's heart his bloody sword. "'Twill be some time ere thou embrace again—thy Ladye Jean!"

And thus in bloody combat fell,
On Balhill Moss—there, mark it well—
The first that name of Lyon bore,
Who owned the Barony of Strathmore.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LEGEND OF THE MURDER OF MALCOLM II.

> Strange, we should meet thus drear and lone
> Beside King Malcolm's sculptured stone:
> 'Tis well we come not to this shrine
> To plight in fear your faith and mine—
> An evil omen hovers round
> This curs'd, mysterious, fatal ground.

ROBERT CHAMBERS, in his "Memoir of Burns," with reference to the vision seen at Alloway Kirk by Tam o' Shanter, makes the prosaic yet not altogether surprising observation that the witches must have had very little room in which to dance—he and others of like sort and compass of mind entirely ignoring the truism that he who created the witches could also have created space. Applying generally this rule and plummet kind of criticism, what would become of all our fondly-cherished associations, our venerated legendary romance, our ancient love and vivid realisation of the creations of poetic genius?

What distinguishes Homer as the greatest of all poets is his invention. It is this amazing and unequalled trait of his unrivalled genius that hurries on his verses—

> "Like a fire that sweeps the whole earth before it."

It is this invention that places the Iliad of Homer so far above the Æneas of Virgil, and stamps the author thereof as the highest in rank of any writer that ever lived. In the vividness of his descriptions; in the animation of his battles; in the unfolding of the workings of the tender passions; in the force and delineation of character, everything lives, and moves,

and has a being, and this to such an intense degree, that we forget we are reading a magnificent fable, and see only as a realised reality the matchless beauty of Helen, the insatiable wrath of Achilles, the generalship of Agamemnon, the bravery of Hector, the galleys of Crocylia, the ships of Athens, and the barks of Crete; the glittering spires of Ilion, the imperial towers of Corinth, and the lofty guarded walls and spear-crowned battlements of Troy!

Coming down to the remote events of our own country, notwithstanding that modern historians now generally assert that Malcolm II. died a peaceable death, we still obstinately cling to the mystical tradition which represents him as having been barbarously murdered by some of the adherents of Kenneth V., in the wood of Thornton, while on his way to the Castle of Glamis. The wood of Thornton, it may be remarked, takes its designation from the hamlet of that name, situated immediately to the eastward, in the parish of Kinnettles. In reality, however, it is not a distinct wood by itself, being merely the northern shoulder of the Hunter Hill already noticed, and to which frequent allusion will be made in the future.

It was winter—night—in the year of our Lord 1033; the snow lay deep upon the ground; wild, dreary desolation reigned throughout the great Howe of Strathmore. As an invited and ever-welcome guest, King Malcolm was on his way to the ancient Castle of Glamis. His gallant and gaily-caparisoned steed bore him with fearless haste along the hard, crisp snow, until, having passed lone Kerbet Bridge, the lights of the battlemented castle appeared in the distance to gladden the heart of the royal traveller. His journey was nearly ended; and, bidding adieu to the cares and anxieties of State, he slowly reined in his impetuous steed, and, dreaming not of danger, he gave himself up to the full enjoyment of the hour.

> Alas! these walls no more again
> Shall echo glad his joyous strain;

No more shall he in court or hall
Gay maiden's yielding hearts enthral,
Nor softly sing in Ladye's bowers,
At ev'ning's sweet and stilly hours;
Nor in the forest, or the hill,
When early morn her dews distil,
At thrilling sound of hunter's horn,
Shall chase the deer through brake and thorn;
Soon shall the song in Glamis' hall
Be changed to wailing, and o'er all
Be hung, in dark funereal gloom,
The sable mantle of the tomb!

The king had now reached the middle of the dark, thickly-planted wood of Thornton, when, rushing out from a clump of waving pine, three stalwart assassins, armed with sword and battleaxe, confronted the unsuspecting monarch. In a twinkling they unhorsed the King, and before he could draw his sword in self-defence, he was felled to the earth by his cowardly murderers, his gushing heart's blood dyeing with crimson gore the white and virgin snow all around where he fell.

His warrior steed, who had often before borne his royal master to the princely Castle of Glamis, with strange instinct, almost amounting to reason, careered away to Glamis the moment the monarch fell. Besmeared with the crimson blood of his master, he stood neighing at the gates of the Castle until admitted by the astonished and horror-stricken warder, who immediately gave the alarm to the inmates of the Castle.

In a moment the revels ceased. Save those of vengeance, no sounds were now heard in the princely Castle. The banquet hall resounded with the wild shrieks of agony, and fear and horror filled the minds of all.

The lawn in front of the Castle was soon thronged by doughty warriors and armed retainers, determined to unravel the mystery, for that the King had been basely murdered there could be no shadow of doubt. They waited long and patiently for the Lord of Glamis to give the word, and lead

them on to vengeance with his trusty sword, but they waited in vain. With a deep and ominous sound it was whispered hoarsely that he had mysteriously disappeared!

The chief warder of the Castle, however, now manfully put himself at their head; and, tracing the horse's bloody hoof-prints on the frozen snow, they soon reached the wood at Thornton, where, to their grief and horror, in a dark clump of mountain pine, they found the mangled remains of the barbarously murdered King.

Wild and deep now loudly arose the coronach's ringing wail, striking terror into the hearts of the cowardly assassins, who still hovered round the scene of the murder. But, guided by their bloody track, their fierce avengers were soon on the pursuit. Following close on their heels, they gave instant chase, pursuing the assassins o'er the snowy moonlit plain. Almost overtaken, they betook themselves to the lake of Forfar, which being but imperfectly frozen over, the ice gave way, and they miserably perished in sight of their avengers, but not until the spirit of their murdered King had appeared unto them, wielding the sword of vengeance o'er their guilty heads as they sank to rise no more.

To the keen eye of the warder, two only seemed to die in the lake, whereas all along the vale the bloody footprints of three different persons were distinctly traceable on the snow, until, having reached the lonely pine wood on the shore, the imprints of one had disappeared! The absence of their noble host from the Castle when the blood-smeared steed appeared at its gates did to him seem mysterious and unaccountable. He kept these dark thoughts, however, within his own breast, trusting to time to unravel the mystery.

The avengers now retraced their footsteps to the wood of Thornton, where they had left one of their number in charge of the body of the King. Clad in a flowing robe of Kendal green, the Bard of Glamis, grey and hoary with years, walked with stately and measured tread before the royal corpse, which, amidst profound grief, was now borne to the silent halls of the

Castle. On approaching the gates, where still stood the faithful steed of the murdered monarch, the aged minstrel strung his jewelled harp, and thus, in solemn accents, sung:—

THE MINSTREL'S LAMENT.

Oh! dark was the hour,
Remorseless the power,
That laid our young King Malcolm low;
No harm reck'd he,
Or black treachery,
Or vile and dark assassins' blow.

In gladsome mood
He reach'd the dark wood,
His steed dashing cheerily;
No time to repent,
Quick as lightning was sent
His soul to eternity!

Now shed the salt tear
O'er his blood-red bier,
And heave the sigh deep of sorrow;
Reign no more will he,
Ne'er on earth shall he see
The dawn of the beautiful morrow.

Jehovah is nigh;
Though th' assassins may fly,
'Tis time of their sins they were shriven,
For now we call down
The Almighty's frown,
And the swift awful vengeance of Heaven!

In the wood of Thornton, to the eastward of the village of Glamis, and on the spot where the murder was committed, there is a large cairn of stones surrounding an ancient obelisk, which is called King Malcolm's gravestone. The obelisk stands at a short distance from the road, in the most gloomy part of the wood, realising to the fullest extent all our high and weird imaginings of the dark and bloody scene. On this gravestone are rudely sculptured the figures of two men who are represented as forming the bloody conspiracy. A lion and a centaur on the upper part seem to be emblematical of the cowardly nature and horrible barbarity of the crime. Several

kinds of fishes are also represented on the stone as symbolical of the loch in which the murderers unexpectedly met a watery grave.

For long years after the assassination of Malcolm, the Lord of Glamis often took his sad and solitary way to the dark and lonely wood of Thornton, and lowly bowed his weary head over the spot where the tragical event occurred. This strange conduct did not escape the keen and ever-watchful eye of the warder, who, not unjustly, thought he had now detected sufficient to unveil the mystery already alluded to.

A stronger confirmation of his dark suspicions, however, was soon to be afforded to him. About this time the proud Earl of Angus, with his fair daughter Finella, arrived on a visit to Glamis Castle. The Lord of Glamis was instantly smitten with the matchless beauty of the fascinating maiden. His love being apparently returned, he boldly asked her hand in marriage from her lordly father, which priceless boon was most courteously and graciously granted.

By a strange fascination or infatuation, the Lord of Glamis, one morning of quiet summer beauty, led his affianced bride to the lonely wood of Thornton, and there, bound by a holy oath, they solemnly plighted their troth to each other. Not content with this mutual compact, the Lord of Glamis called aloud for the spirit of the murdered King to appear and be witness of their solemn engagement.

Sad, fatal wish! Wrapped in his shroud of clotted gore, the monarch appeared to the terror-stricken maiden, and, casting on them both a withering frown of revengeful scorn, slowly disappeared again among the silent dead!

And yet at length these two were wed, and a family of three sons grew up in beauty around them; but a curse seemed to have settled upon them, each striving for the mastery. So they led a very unhappy, wretched life.

One morn, with ominous foreboding, it was hoarsely whispered their hopeful heir could not be found, and the

Lord of Glamis immediately ordered strict search to be made for the missing boy.

"On, on with me, o'er glen and hill," he excitedly exclaimed. "Some scour the wood and some the plain, and return not from the search until your young lord you have found, and placed him safe within my loving arms, and then throughout the Castle halls shall mirth and song abound to celebrate his restoration to his father and his friends."

But ah! the dawning of the following morn still saw them sad pursue their search in vain, till, having reached the troubled lake, their worst fears were realised; for there upon the crested waves was sleeping his last sleep the heir to all those wide domains—the hope and joy of the proud Lord of Strathmore!

Soon again was heard the bitter wail of lamentation and sorrow, for one of their other sons had with youthful curiosity, crept his devious way to where the loftiest towers in grim array frowned sternly o'er the donjon keep of the Castle, and looking over the deep chasm, his little head grew giddy, and down into the gulf below he fell, and before the eyes of his father was dashed to pieces on the ground.

Their other child, a lovely and amiable boy, was now tended and caressed with the most anxious care and filial love. All in vain! Watched by a father's loving eye, the sportive boy one summer morn was joyously bounding o'er the greensward in front of the Castle, when, swift and suddenly as the lightning's flash, a wild and heavily-antlered stag, with one furious, fatal stroke, laid the lovely prattler dead at his father's feet.

Full oft, though revelling in sumptuous, almost regal magnificence, would Glamis and his proud ladye mourn their sad and bitter fate, and inwardly curse that fatal morn they pledged their love and plighted their troth at the gravestone of the murdered King.

It was a wild and stormy winter's eve. The old grey towers and battlements of the Castle shook to their foundations as

the blustering tempest expended its demoniac wrath on the grand old feudal pile. Guests and retainers were alike awe-struck with terror when now there mingled with and rose above the fury of the gale the long, loud, wailing shrieks of mortal agony, as if from one imploring help from the attacks of some deadly enemy.

The host had not been seen since the storm began! Apprehensive of some fearful catastrophe, all excepting Ladye Glamis now frantically rushed to the private chamber of the Lord of Glamis, situate in one of the gloomiest battlements of the Castle. The shrieks of agony and implorations for mercy had ceased, and there, on the cold oaken floor, lay the dead body of Glamis, the contorted features of the corpse vividly indicative of some fearful struggle with the Prince of Darkness, or his avenging legions from Pandemonium's innermost hell!

With great expressions of grief, the Ladye Glamis gave her Lord a sumptuous funeral, but none believed her professions of sorrow; and when in Thornton Wood she was shortly afterwards found by some of her menials weltering in her blood, no tears were shed over her, nor vespers sung or said—they buried her in silence where she fell, no priest or minstrel breaking by bead or harp the stillness of the scene:—

> And to this day no voice of song
> Is ever heard these woods among—
> 'Tis there the ravens croaking fly,
> And owl and bat hold revelry.

CHAPTER VII.

LEGEND OF THE SECRET CHAMBER.

The Castle now again behold,
Then mark yon lofty turret bold,
Which frowns above the western wing,
Its grim walls darkly shadowing.
There is a room within that tower
No mortal dare approach; the power
Of an avenging God is there,
Dread, awfully display'd—beware!
And enter not that dreaded room,
Else yours may be a fearful doom!

To hunt the wild boar of the forest, as well as the red deer of the hill, was the great and favourite pastime of the grim cavaliers and warriors of old. The far-famed, richly-wooded, and romantic "Hunter Hill" rears its umbrageous, lofty head immediately to the south of the village of Glamis, and within a short distance of the hoary old Castle. It is sometimes not very easy satisfactorily to trace the etymology of places which have become historically famous. There can be little doubt, however, but that the name of this hill, in some way or other, refers to the chase, which from a very remote period, was the national amusement of Scotland. In such high estimation was this favourite pastime held by the nobility and gentry, that, by the forest laws of Canute the Great, "no person under the rank of a gentleman was allowed to keep a greyhound." This hill, therefore, being of very considerable extent, and abounding in game, might on this account have been selected as the favourite arena of the chase, and been distinguished by the pre-eminent title of the "Hunter Hill."

The "meet" at Glamis on the morning of the hunt presented

one of the most stirring and picturesque scenes, therefore, that could either by painter or poet be imagined. On a grey, crisp morning in early spring there congregated on the undulating greensward in front of the Castle as gay and brilliant a throng as had ever heretofore assembled in martial array for the chase. Here, the stalwart swarthy mountaineers, attended by their grim and faithful henchmen, rode majestically along in the rear, and under the guidance of the doughty, steel-clad chieftains of each Highland clan, all cheered by the stirring sounds of the pibroch they loved so well. There, the flower of Lowland chivalry, with nodding plume and glancing spear, bestrode their fiery and impatient steeds in all the lordly state of cavaliers of high degree. Yonder, more intensely interesting and beautiful than all besides, on richly caparisoned palfreys, rode sweet lovely groups of ladyes fair, attended and adored by their obsequious courtiers, whose chief delight and duty it was to gratify and obey.

The bugle sounds! To join the hunt they hie away, fast as their gallant steeds can carry them, to the Hunter Hill and Glen of Ogilvy, the favourite resort of the wild boar, the red deer, and the buck. Like arrows shot from the bent bow of the archer, they dart on their several ways—some scouring the pine-clad lofty hills, and some the heath-covered, bleak, uncultivated plains; each by some valiant, chivalrous deed, striving unceasingly to win the coveted trophies of the slain as practical proofs of their daring prowess in the hunt, as well as in the battlefield; these trophies to be presented, as their wont, to the ladyes fair and gay, who in the one case accompanied them in their Kendal livery of green, and in the other, who either in bower or hall awaited anxiously and lovingly their long-looked-for return.

As the result of this unceasing activity, many a noble deer lay dead upon the hill, and many a grizly boar dyed with his heart's blood the rivers of the plain. The day drew near its close, and the sturdy ghillies having collected together the spoils of the chase, and slung them on the horses appointed

for the purpose, the wearied and exhausted huntsmen with their fair attendants returned, 'midst the sounds of martial music and the low whispered roundelays of the ladyes, victorious to the Castle.

Then, at the high behest of Glamis, was rudely yet richly spread in the old baronial dining-hall the sumptuous and savoury feast. Venison and reeking game, rich smoked ham and savoury roe, flanked by the wild boar's head, and viands and pasties without name, blent profusely on the hospitable board, while jewelled and capacious goblets, filled with ruby wine, were lavishly handed round to the admiring guests.

The banquet over, the minstrel strung his ancient harp, and charmed the company with his martial songs. And then they tripped it lightly on the oaken floar till the rafters rang with the merry sounds of their midnight revelry.

At break of day exhausted languor crept unconsciously over the numerous guests, and chieftains grim and ladyes gay retired to their several chambers to seek repose; and silence reigned over the vast old feudal pile, erewhile so full of mirthful revelry.

For three days and nights the hunt and the feast continued, varied with tilt and tournament on the lawn in front of the Castle. The third day of the revelries drew at last to a close, and cavaliers and retainers again retired to seek repose. The waning lights waxed faint and dim. Yet still four dark chieftains remained in an inner chamber of the Castle, and sang and drank, and shouted right merrilie. The day broke, yet louder rang the wassail roar; the goblets were over and over again replenished, and the terrible oaths and ribald songs continued, and the dice rattled, and the revelry became louder still, till the massy walls of the old Castle shook and reverberated with the awful sounds of debauchery, blasphemy, and crime.

At length their wild, ungovernable frenzy reached its climax. They had drunk until their eyes had grown dim, and their hands could scarcely throw the hellish dice, when driven

by expiring fury, with fiendish glee they defiantly gnashed their teeth and cursed the God of heaven! Then, with returning strength, and exhausting its last and fitful energies in still louder imprecations and more fearful yells, they deliberately, and with unanimous voice, consigned their guilty souls to the nethermost hell!

Fatal words! In a bright, broad sheet of lurid and sulphurous flame the Prince of Darkness appeared in their midst, and struck—not the shaft of death, but the vitality of eternal life—and there to this day in that dreaded room they sit, transfixed in all their hideous expression of ghastly terror and dismay—the cups of wine spread o'er their bacchanalian shrine, and the dice clattering and rattling as of yore—terribly, yet justly, doomed to drink the wine-cup and throw the dice till the dawning of the GREAT JUDGMENT DAY!

This legend is founded on an incident which is said to have occurred during one of the carousals of the Earl of Crawford, otherwise styled "Earl Beardie," or the "Tiger Earl," in what is now called the "Secret Room" of the Castle. This room has often been sought for, and while every other part of the Castle has been satisfactorily explored, the search for this celebrated and historic chamber has been in vain. It is said that this room is only known to two, or at most three, individuals at the same time, who are bound not to reveal it unless to their successors in the secret.

CHAPTER VIII.

LEGEND OF THE GROVE.

We cannot pass this shady grove,
For o'er it hangs a tale of love,
So tender I must tell it thee,
Though full of awe and mystery :—
You see these lofty beechen trees,
Which, moaning, sigh upon the breeze—
An alcove deep of darksome gloom,
O'erhung with shadows of the tomb :
Within that ghostly, gloomy shade,
There lies a broken-hearted maid,
Whose sad and melancholy tale
Is whispered by the passing gale,
Startling with horror and affright
The poor benighted luckless wight.

The Hunter Hill of Glamis, as has already been noted, is one of the most beautifully romantic and historically interesting spots in Scotland. It is of vast extent and great height. The wood of Thornton, in which the bloody tragedy recorded in the legend of the murder of Malcolm II. took place, is in reality part of the Hunter Hill, and not a distinct and separate wood as is generally supposed. In this hill and the Castle, therefore, centre nearly all the tales of chivalry and legends of romance which appertain to the district.

The Castle in all its unique grandeur and feudal magnificence I have already attempted to describe. The visits of the tourist and traveller to Glamis embrace often little else than the old hoary pile and its interesting and beautiful surroundings. They, therefore, know comparatively little of the general character of the far-stretching scenery beyond, vieing as it does in bold and rugged outline and quiet nestling

scenes of soft and sylvan beauty with those of any country in Europe.

From the gates of the Castle pathways the most beautiful and attractive stretch away in every direction, overshadowed with the umbrageous branches of the beech and oak, and vocal with the thrilling music of the gay and happy birds. Now passing through a sheltered and bosky dell, with the slow rolling Dean flowing musically through its midst; anon pursuing our devious way over an open, flower-gemmed, breezy common, gazing in rapture at the lofty battlements and towers of the Castle, as an occasional opening in the distant wood reveals them suddenly to our view; we find ourselves among shady, dreamy groves of overhanging trees, their green, interlacing leaves intermingled with the golden blossoms of the beautiful laburnum, hanging in rich luxuriance from the pendant boughs; and still proceeding westward, we reach with delightful joy the much-loved, solemn forest paths, as lovely and beautiful as any of the justly celebrated "green lanes" of England, and while roaming among the waving woodlands, may muse and dream away a long, long summer's day in all the mental luxuriance of aspiring thought and spiritual repose.

But our present destination being the Hunter Hill, our route must be in another direction. We shall, therefore, proceed through the village, turning to the right at the bridge; and, passing on our way the village green, we cross the rustic bridge, and bend our course up the wooded ravine, which now silently invites us to view its wild and sylvan beauty.

After crossing the bridge at the reservoir, we can either proceed to the summit of the hill by the direct road to which this leads, or we may have a delightful zig-zag ramble in the waving and beautiful woodland, until we come within sight of the village; and then, turning eastward, pass through bosky dells, and over gently sloping hillocks, covered with the green and beautiful bushes of the blaeberry, purpled richly in summer with prolific clusters of mellow fruit, the coveted

prize of the village urchins, who resort in eager and happy groups from far and near to fill their burnished and capacious flagons with the coveted berries. The star-like and beautiful anemone flourishes in great abundance all around; and the varied display of ferns which everywhere meets the eye forms of itself a most interesting and instructive study to the botanist.

The grove alluded to in the following legend is about midway up the hill, proceeding eastward. It presents this remarkable appearance, that it is composed entirely of beech, while all around grow the birch and the mountain pine.

Edmund Græme, the only son of a neighbouring proprietor on the other side of the hill, was as fair and handsome a youth as could be seen or admired in the whole Howe of Strathmore. His form well-knit and manly, complexion clear and ruddy, dreamy eyes of cerulean blue, and luxuriant tresses of wavy gold, he presented and became the very *beau ideal*, to the maidens of his native strath, of all that constitutes the externals of the real cavalier, gently and finely blended with the true and loving tenderness of a genuine human heart. Of a happy and enthusiastic temperament, his ringing voice and winning smile might have beguiled the heart of any damsel, whether of low or high degree. Yet, although many a longing eye would gaze on him with the deepest, fondest love, these glances of affectionate feeling failed to reach his inner heart; and at the banquet hall, or beneath the greenwood tree, his smile continued as fascinating and sweet, and his song as captivating and joyous as ever.

At length his countenance grew shrunk and pale—the bloom of youth had faded from his cheek, and the lustre of gladsome joy had departed from his eye. No melting strains of impassioned song were wafted on the passing gale from his now trembling, ashy lips, but a weird and ominous silence rested in the chamber of death, where, on his couch of darkness, they had laid him down to die!

Some stood in grief around his lowly bed, while others

affectionately held his hot and aching head; all silently wondering what dark and poisonous sorrow it could be that in so brief a space had mysteriously wrought a change so heart-rending and unaccountable. As they gazed, still sharper and sharper grew his shrunken, death-like features; his bosom heaved like the swelling billows of a dark and troubled sea; and his lips gave forth tortured and fitful expression to stifled groans of deep, unutterable agony! All wishing he would speak and solve the dreadful mystery, he wildly yet coherently uttered, in shrill affecting tones that pierced every heart, the well known name of one he had loved.

Scarcely were the words uttered, when a rustling noise was suddenly heard in the now dimly-lighted chamber of the dying youth. The attendants in amazement looked around whence the sound proceeded. Before them stood, in robes of flowing white, and with a sad, dejected air, a form of queenly and majestic beauty. Waving her jewelled hand on high, she, like a restless spirit from the other world, quickly passed them by, and stood for a moment in silence beside the dying bed of Edmund Græme. Then weeping like a sobbing child, she gently raised his drooping head, and gazed on his dim, glazed eyes with agonising and hopeless sadness, for the vital spark had fled for ever, and the dead body of her lover lay cold and helpless in her arms! Embracing the cold, cold clay, she wildly implored Almighty God to bereave her at once of life, and lay her in silence beside the slumbering dead.

Then in the hushed and awful stillness that once more prevailed, she shriekingly thus gave full vent to her torturing agony—

"Oh, Edmund! Edmund! My own—my well-beloved! I wish I had died for thee! Pure as an angel's, changeless and unstained, the love you bore to me."

Then with a wild, unearthly, high authoritative air, her hand uplifted, and her bright, keen eyes piercing the innermost recesses of the soul, she conjured the watchers with witching power to meet her on the Hunter Hill that evening as the

knell of the midnight hour was solemnly sounded from the convent bell of St Fergus, that she might give them instructions as to the burial of the dead!

The muffled chime of St Fergus' bell now struck the witching hour of twelve, and the attendants of Edmund Græme, in obedience to the strange summons of the apparition, now slowly wended their moon-lit way up the rugged, heath-clad Hunter Hill, to receive instructions as to the mysterious burial. The night oppressively calm and still, they had reached in silence a lonely hollow of the hill, when suddenly the same weird-like rustling noise they had previously heard in the chamber of death struck upon their listening ears with a harsh and ominous sound. Begemmed with the silvery radiance of the moon, before them trembling stood the strange, unearthly being they had seen in the early part of the evening at the bedside of their young master, Edmund Græme.

With the same majestic wave of her jewelled hand, she beckoned them to approach, and thus, in the sad and thrilling accents of grief, solemnly and measuredly addressed them:—

"In all the spring flush of life's young bloom and radiant beauty, we here for the first time met; and here now must be our lonely, isolated tomb. 'Twas here I broke his trusting, loving heart, and here beside my own must that heart rest, till disinterred to life at the Great Assize on the Resurrection morn. A hell I feel without—a hell within—Great God! my treachery and sin forgive—oh! cast me not away from thy sight and presence for evermore—from hope that comes to all, debar not utterly my guilty, yet repentant soul.—List! Make thou the coffin fit for two, and lay us gently and tenderly beneath this bleak and heathy turf, planting afterwards around a shady beechen grove, dark yet fitting emblem of our ill-fated love, and of the DOUBLE BIER!"

Watching again beside the dead, the attendants, in alarm, see noiselessly approach the expected spiritual visitor. Her countenance is pale yet comely, and her eye brightly intellect-

ual and clear; but she comes not in flowing robes of glistening sheen, but clothed in a ghastly linen shroud! Noiselessly she steps to where the double coffin lies, rapt gazing lovingly and long on the dead youth sleeping silently his last sleep. Unveiling, then, her snowy bosom, she brings forth flowers of the richest perfume and jewels of the costliest workmanship. These she solemnly lays on his cold, cold breast, with many a fervent prayer for the repose of his departed soul. Taking a last fond look of the dead, she gathers round her in flowing folds her long white shroud, and lays herself gently down beside her unconscious victim; to both a dark and unexpected doom—to her a martyr's crown!

Awed by the dread, terrific scene, and when all again was calm and still, the attendants furtively and quickly shut the coffin-lid, and solemnly bent their solitary way to bury its occupants in the Hunter Hill, ere the morning broke in streaks of grey, cold light o'er the desolate and mysterious scene.

Many long years have passed away since then, and the young saplings of beech have grown into high, umbrageous trees, grimly guarding those who sleep below, for whom yet blooming maidens weep, and pitying tears are shed, when in the long winter evenings their sad and sorrowful tale is tremblingly told by the blazing hearths of the happy cottagers of Strathmore.

'Tis said, when all is calm and still in the moon-lit winter eves, the spirit of the departed hovers mysteriously over the enchanted grove; and when a maiden passes underneath its bare and weird-like boughs she utters an entreating cry, kind beckoning her to visit the *living tomb*, and conjuring her never to deceive a faithful, trusting heart, nor grieve by coquetry or crime him whose affections she has unalterably and affectionately won; and when beside the lonely mountain grave, she, shrieking, wildly cries:—

"Young maiden, oh, beware!
And ne'er by love's deceitful smile
Confiding, truthful hearts beguile—
Beware—Beware—Beware!"

CHAPTER IX.

LEGEND OF JANE DOUGLAS, LADY GLAMIS, BURNED ON THE CASTLE HILL OF EDINBURGH.

King James, for former wrongs, long bore
To Angus' house a grudge, and swore,
While he the crown of Scotland wore,
No Douglas e'er should refuge find
In castle, cot, with serf or hind;
And banished exiles did they roam,
Far from their much-loved mountain home.

We are now getting gradually out of the hazy atmosphere of ancient and historical tradition, and after this tale of witchcraft is ended, we shall bask in the more congenial and sunnier region of the heart and the affections.

As has already been observed, while descanting on events so remote as those hitherto alluded to, it is necessary to bear in mind that the earlier period of the history of Scotland is involved in great obscurity; and that, notwithstanding the fact that Chalmers and Hailes have dispelled to a great extent the darkness in which the earlier period of Scottish history had hitherto been enveloped, even their explanatory statements must still be received with some degree of caution, if not with distrust.

The barbarous execution, however, of Lady Glamis on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh, on the 17th July 1537, in the reign of James V., for an alleged attempt to hasten the King's death by the imaginary crime of witchcraft, and thereby to restore the expatriated house of Angus, is incontrovertible matter of

history. It does appear singular, however, that, while all the Scottish historians declare their belief in the innocence of Lady Glamis, Sir Walter Scott should express a contrary opinion, and darkly hint that the effect of these unhallowed rites was often accelerated by the administration of poison. He exculpates James also, by saying that "the cruelty was that of the age, not of the sovereign." In almost the next sentence, however, he virtually resigns the question, by saying—"The license which he (the King) gave to the vindictive persecution of the Protestants seems to have originated in that personal severity of temper already noticed. His inexorable hatred of the Douglases partakes of the same character. No recollection of early familiarity, no degree of personal merit, would enduce him to extend any favour to an individual of that detested name."

This hatred of the Douglases by King James being at the root, and doubtless, the real cause of the criminal accusation against Lady Glamis, let us glance for a moment at the origin of this vindictive spirit displayed by the King to the house of Angus.

It occurred in this wise: When Lennox and his host arrived in the neighbourhood of Kirkliston, previous to the battle of that name, Angus rushed out of Edinburgh to support Arran. Sir George Douglas followed immediately thereafter, bringing with him the young King, and a goodly number of the citizens of Edinburgh. The conflict was hotly and pretty equally maintained, and the noise of the artillery on both sides waxed louder and louder. The King, by no means naturally courageous, betrayed great unwillingness to remain, which Sir George observing, addressed his Royal master in these memorable words—"I read your Majesty's thoughts," said the stern Douglas; "but do not deceive yourself. If your enemies had hold of you on one side, and we on the other, we would tear you asunder rather than quit our hold"—rash, fatal words, which the King never forgave. Although the Earl of Angus subsequently, and in many ways, by acts of moderation and

clemency to the Royal army when they besieged his garrisoned Castle of Tantallon, endeavoured to mollify the King's resentment, James bitterly remembered the wrongs which he had received, and felt no gratitude for this forbearance and mercy on the part of his subject. On the contrary, he solemnly swore, in his anger, that no Douglas should, while he lived and reigned, find favour or countenance in Scotland. Henry VIII. used all the intercession he could in the Earl's favour; but it was not until the death of James that the Douglases were restored to their native country of Scotland.

In the following legend I have assumed, as I am entitled to do, that Lady Glamis was innocent of the crimes, imaginary or otherwise, which were laid to her charge and, in accordance with this view, have depicted her character, trial and cruel and unjust puishment. An extorted confession was in those days of little avail to the unfortunate prisoner accused of witchcraft, for, whether she confessed or not, a cruel and ignominious death was her certain doom. The assumed confession, therefore, of Lady Glamis must not be taken as any indication or proof of her guilt. She was arraigned on the double charge of witchcraft and conspiracy; and, from the well-known inexorable hatred of the King to her family, she knew no mercy would ever be extended to her, far less an honourable acquital. To have prolonged the sufferings of Lord Glamis would have had the effect of sacrificing his life as well as her own. She is therefore represented as making the exclamation "Guilty!" that she might thereby save the life of her son, as fall a sacrifice she must herself, whether she made the confession or not.

A family union had again been consummated between the two noble Houses of Angus and Strathmore. Lady Jane Douglas became the bride and happy wife of Lord Glamis. Her wedded happiness, however, was not of long duration. Soon after the birth of their first-born, the Lord Glamis, after a lingering illness, was summoned to give in his final account, and died much lamented by his family and dependants.

The Lady Glamis, his widow, not only proved a truly enlightened and affectionate mother, but earned the highest encomiums from all the dwellers in Strathmore for her many unostentatious deeds of mercy and compassionate love. Without the family haughty pride of her race, and disdaining the chivalric amusements of the day, she found, and delighted to have found, a wide-spread field for the exercise of her amiable virtues in ministering to the wants and necessities, not only of those belonging to her own household, but of all who came within the wide scope of her benign influence. Hence, not only in lowly cot and courtly hall were her praises sung in every household, but her fame spontaneously spread through the length and breadth of the land as one who, by her deeds of benevolence, and philanthropic interest in all that pertains and ministers to the welfare and happiness of mankind, had raised her name to a pinnacle of renown which crowned and mitred heads might envy, but which, in all their ambitious strivings, they could never reach, far less surpass.

The fame of Lady Glamis, universal as it was, could not be long in penetrating to the Court of James, and from the implacable hatred of the King to all, whether male or female, who bore the detested name of Douglas, it required little persuasion on the part of his servile courtiers to poison the Royal mind against the sister of Angus, against whose house the fatal proscription pronounced was only waiting its practical fulfilment.

In that age of foul superstition and gross moral darkness, every benevolent action, every good deed of mercy, and every lofty philanthropic aspiration, were maliciously traced to imaginary witchcraft, in conjunction with, and at the instigation of, the Evil One. Thus noiselessly around the Lady Glamis did the clouds of evil omen gather, and the meshes of envy and revenge encircle themselves in an impenetrable labyrinth.

With artful skill the hellish plot was laid, and soon carried out with a ready and fiendish will. Accused of harbouring against the King designs to poison his Majesty, and of

exercising her power of witchcraft to restore the expatriated House of Angus, Lady Glamis was rudely seized, while occupied in deeds of mercy in the village, and carried off a prisoner to Edinburgh. Her youthful son, Lord Glamis, was also ignominiously and forcibly bound; and one of his own kin was found so base as to guide the cavalcade, and to guard with mock pride the ill-fated prisoners to the capital.

It was an awful, solemn, impressive scene! There, on an elevated bench in the ancient Parliament House, sat high in state the bewigged and crimson-robed Judges, with the mild and gracious Argyll as their President; while the crowded Court was composed not only of the worthy burgesses and sightseers of the city, but of the high and noble of every rank in the land.

The fair prisoner is now placed at the bar. Every voice is silent, every sound is hushed, every eye is searchingly directed to the beautiful creature, calm and resigned in conscious innocence, arraigned before her country on the double charge of witchcraft and conspiracy. Notwithstanding the powerful influence which superstition and the actual belief in witchcraft exercised over the minds of the people in general, there was not one in all that crowded Court who could look on the lovely form and angelic mien of the accused without from the heart commiserating her unhappy fate. This marked expression of pity contrasted strangely, yet forcibly, with the fierce, revengeful looks, and savage, restless demeanour of her persecutors, who inwardly thirsted for her precious blood, and eagerly longed to see the blazing faggots consume with merciless rage her majestic yet trembling frame, and cloud with guilt and shame her fair, unsullied brow.

There was now a dread and ominous pause; for the wiry, sinister-looking doomsters triumphantly brought into the Court the dreaded thumbkins, the boot, and the screw—precursors of excruciating anguish and agonising torture. The youthful Lord Glamis was then rudely led into the presence of the Judges, guarded, like a malefactor, by a body

of armed soldiers. His eye, for a moment, restlessly wandered o'er the august and solemn scene, and he felt dejected and oppressed. At last, through his sorrowful tears, he, enraptured, caught sight of the prisoner, and from his ashy lips there burst the thrilling cry, "My Mother!" Then, by strong impulse borne along, and dashing aside the arms of the soldiery, he rushed among the wondering crowd, and strove, with fondest affection, to embrace her who was dearer to him than life itself. But the officers of the Court overpowered him, and forcibly placed him face to face with the enraged Judges, who lost no time in commencing their interrogatories.

He was then solemnly asked if ever he had seen that sorceress at the bar at any time plying her wicked incantations, and if he knew that King James was doomed to die by her invoked conspiracy?

The Lord of Glamis not only passionately denied these charges against his mother, but, to end the sad suspense, declared aloud his firm, unalterable belief in her innocence.

The Judges looked incredulous; and the prosecutor could not brook to lose his victim, the latter thus fiercely giving vent to his ungovernable rage and bitter disappointment—

"Though all these charges have been denied, escape she shall not; for soon, yea, on the early morrow, like the vilest of malefactors, shall she be bound to the stake or gallows-tree, burnt by the blazing, crackling flames, and dogs be left to lick her blood!"

This brutal speech changed in an instant the feelings of the savage throng, superstition's mystic power regaining completely the mastery over them. They even chid the passing hour, so impatient had they become to glut their eye on the expectant, fearful tragedy.

Addressing the prisoner, the Judges fiercely exclaimed—

"Confess thy crime."

"Oh! innocent!" she firm replied.

The instruments of torture were, dark and grim, again displayed, and the vile doomsters, with a ready will, at once

proceeded to the exercise of their nefarious skill. Seizing young Glamis—who, meanwhile, had calmly viewed the dread preparations of death—they rudely and fiercely tortured him with savage glee, and mocked, with bitter irony, his writhing and excruciating agony, while, ever between his wild and piercing cries, the prisoner still firmly replied to all entreaties to confess—

"Oh! cease to torture one so dear to my heart. No agonising grief, no slavish fear, can ever compel me, in my own defence, vilely to disprove my innocence."

Enraged at the coolness of Lady Glamis, and her declarations of conscious innocence, the brutal Judges frowned the more savagely on the fair prisoner, and, ordering Glamis to be more firmly bound, and other means of torture to be tried to make him testify against his mother, they leaned back in their chairs, assured of a hopeful and successful result.

The sensitive flesh of the young witness was now savagely torn by formidable pinchers, prepared and sharpened for the occasion; his bones, full of sap and marrow, were broken on the wheel; and, shorn of all his pristine strength he helplessly lay a bleeding mass of shapeless, almost insensate clay! Still, other instruments of torture were gleefully brought by the cruel and merciless doomsters, and these were successfully plied with hellish energy, till from his ghastly, reeking wounds the blood gushed forth in purple streams, and from his tortured bosom there fitfully and mournfully came at intervals the stifled groans of deepest agony.

Hush! what wild and thrilling shriek was that? Awe-struck, and dumb with terror, the crowd sways to and fro in eager, keen expectancy of some weird, unearthly revelation! The prosecutor is effectually cowed into silence, and the stricken judges, for the moment like the leaves of the aspen, shake and tremble with visible emotion.

All eyes are directed to the dock, for it was from thence the shriek proceeded:—

"Guilty! guilty!" Lady Glamis energetically exclaimed

"Save! oh, save my son! Dishonoured be my name, if so be his be left spotless and unstained! For him—my son, my only son—I give up life; for him I give up hope; for him I give up—all."

That very night the impatient, bloodthirsty throng with blazing torches sped along to the Castle Hill, where Lady Glamis was summarily doomed to die. And there, resigned and cheerful, bound to the blazing stake she stood; her lovely form arrayed in the white robes of purity, her hands clasped firm upon her spotless breast, and her bright, longing eye upturned and rapturously fixed upon the star-lit far off sky! So heaven-like, so spiritual and ethereal, and yet so intensely human did she seem, that a revulsion of feeling was caused thereby in the heart of everyone who beheld her; and when the burning faggots crackling, and mercilessly fierce, roared and rioted in their furious rage around their resigned and silent victim, all, from the heart, deplored that one so bright in beauty's bloom should meet with a doom so very fearful and so very sad!

Dread silence reigned over that great living sea of waving heads, which luridly shone in the dark, sulphureous gloom, until, like the dread, dark shadows of the tomb, the whirling and ever-thickening murky smoke cast its funereal mantle over the dismal scene, and the winds, aroused from their ominous repose, howled sweeping past in eerie cadence, like damned spirits in their throes of hopeless agony! Soon, however, the tempest ceased as suddenly as it arose; and in the intervening calm the stifling canopy of smoke cleared gradually away, and the bright red flames lit up, as before, the angel form of the fair sufferer; but—

The fire had scorch'd her bosom fair,
Dishevelled hung her raven hair;
And yet, with sweet, angelic air,
Still to the blazing pile she clung,
While to her God high praise she sung;
And when her voice grew faint and low,
Soft music sweet was heard to flow,
And then, by angels' chariots driven,
She wing'd her flight to God and heaven!

CHAPTER X.

THE FORESTER'S DAUGHTER.

"'Tis sad to see the eye forget its ray,
And sorrow sit where smiles were wont to play;
'Tis sad, when youth is fair, and fresh, and warm,
And life is fraught with every sweeter charm,
To see it close the lips and droop the head,
Wane from the earth, and mingle with the dead."

Montgomery.

Many and strong are the emotions awakened in the minds of these who are removed to a distance from the scenes of their youth by the soul-stirring yet simple words, the "village green!" What delightful visions of innocent enjoyments and happy meetings, and loud and hearty merriment, and ringing laughter, and shouts of gladsome joy, float in welcome vision before the jaded mind, oft vibrating anew its tuneless chords, and ministering a sad and melancholy joy, which dispels for a time the clouds of sorrow and disappointment which darken the present and obscure the future from the view! Beautiful vision of the past! How often in the lonely midnight hour, when all around was hushed in quiet and refreshing sleep, hast thou come to me with thy soft and silvery voices, as from a far-off land, and with thy retrospective scenes of innocence, and purity, and love, soothing, like some angel of the sky, my wearied and troubled spirit to calm and peaceful repose! Beloved vision of the past! though thou bringest pain as well as joy, still, O, hover o'er my chequered path with thy golden sunny wings, and whisper in gentlest tone the tales of other years when life itself was young; and cease not thy welcome visits till I sleep with the mouldering dead

in the lone churchyard of my fathers, where at last the world will cease from troubling, and where the weary will be at rest.

Standing on the bridge at Glamis and looking southward towards the Hunter Hill, there was not a more joyous sight to be seen in the days of yore than that of the youngsters of the parish disporting themselves, after the weary hours with participles and verbs in the small, ill-ventilated school, in all the joyous and boisterous ecstasy of pure and happy hearts, at foot-ball, racing, or leap-the-frog, and then, exhausted with their frolicsome play, wending each his several way to his home in the strath or the glen. Strange as it may seem, however, there are comparatively few of those who romped and walked, in apparently soul-knit and loving friendship together, in the morning of life, who, after the lapse of years, retain the slightest remembrance of each other, far less the cherished friendships of their youth, at one time thought to be so lasting and sincere.

After the roystering play of the village green, and before wending my way along the base of the Hunter Hill to my home in the glen, it was my custom to rest for a while in the sweet cottage of the forester, Hector Wood, whose eldest daughter, Eliza, my playmate and companion at school, always brought me on these occasions, enriched with her sunniest and sweetest smiles, a basin of whey or sweet milk, as a welcome refresher after my victories or mishaps in the mimic field of battle. Sometimes Eliza would laughingly accompany me a short way on my return to watch with me the quick and graceful motions of the pretty minnows disporting themselves in the quiet shady pools of the burn; to pull the purple bells, the graceful ferns, and starlike anemones, which lined and beautified our woodland path; or to gather, in their season, the wild raspberries, small, yet lusciously sweet, which grew in abundance on the sunny slopes of the far-stretching hill.

On these occasions my young companion arrayed herself in neither bonnet nor cloak, but romped about in all the

graceful *neglige* of unadorned, sweet, artless beauty. Apart from her sylph-like comely form, her pure and delicate complexion, her sparklingly expressive eyes, and her flowing tresses of sunny brown, her voice, in its ringing laughter, as well as in its moods of pensive sadness, had in it an indescribable thrill of spiritual feeling and magical sweetness. In the spring-time of youth, in the summer of manhood, in the winter of old age, how irresistibly powerful, how preciously sweet, the hallowed, blessed tones of woman's voice!

As she flitted like a sunbeam among the shrubs and flowers, or intently gazed at intervals on the harping pines high overhead on the hill, I thought Eliza indeed very beautiful, although my boyish thoughts could not as yet express themselves in words. Sometimes in the bursting exuberance of my passionate feelings, I awkwardly, and it must be confessed, very bashfully, essayed to speak, but she intuitively comprehending my meaning, much to my chagrin and disapointment, was gone in an instant! Once, when years had rolled on, and we were becoming shyer and more distant to each other, she brought me a bunch of blaeberries from the hill, and seating herself at my request beside me on the bank of the stream, instead of taking the fruit, I gently took her lily-white hand in mine, the momentary pressure of which sent a new, strange, tumultuous thrill through my trembling frame, and a sweet, holy, indescribable joy to my beating heart—which have never come again! No words would come to my relief, and in the confused half sad, half joyful, abstraction of the moment, the dove had fled—I was alone!

Hector Wood, the forester at Glamis, was in many respects the chosen friend of my youth. Intelligent, kind-hearted, shrewd, with an education above his rank in life, and a thorough practical knowledge of his profession, he was much esteemed and generally respected throughout the Howe. It was one of my greatest delights to accompany the worthy forester in his official inspection of the woods on the summer holiday afternoons, and to hear him describe the

several varieties and qualities of the various trees that grew in rich luxuriance on the Hunter Hill, or spread their umbrageous branches on the stately lawns that stretched in sylvan beauty around the ancient Castle of Glamis. I thus in the most delightful manner acquired that theoretical knowledge of landscape gardening, which not only proved a source of intense delight in my youth, but a precious mine of inexhaustible wealth in after-years. Previously the wooded glades and pine-clad hills were to me a rich yet undefined mass of luxuriant foliage. Now, their several undulating lines of ever-changing beauty analysed, individualised, I could name every tree of the forest, every bush in the thicket, and every wildflower that blushed in virgin beauty on the brow of the lonely hills.

Had every lover of Nature even a limited knowledge of botany, zoology, geology, and the other kindred sciences, how much increased and intensified would his interest and delight be in the far-stretching landscape of hill and dale, in the bloom of the wayside flower, in the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, in the strata and formation of the rocks, and in the antediluvian deposits and remains embedded in the bowels and innermost recesses of the earth! In like manner, with a knowledge of architecture, be it Gothic or classic, how much more instructive and interesting to us the sight of a beautiful palatial city, with its gorgeous temples and castellated towers, than to him who knows not the difference between a Doric and Corinthian, an Ionic or Tuscan pillar, and cannot, for the life of him, distinguish the nave of a cathedral from its transept or choir. Ascending higher in the scale of intellectual enjoyment, how much more glorious and magnificent the midnight heaven of worlds and starry firmament above, when, by astronomical science, we can familiarly name every revolving planet and distant star, and calculate with the greatest exactness, their unvarying revolutions around the great centre of attraction in universal space, than when simply viewed through the telescope of

ordinary observation, as a mere celestial blush of ethereal splendour, a spangled gewgaw of fretted, burnished workmanship, or a gilded childish spectacle of atmospheric effulgence of undefined, unmeaning beauty?

Having exhausted the curriculum of the parish school, the time had now arrived when I must quit my native strath to pursue elsewhere my necessary studies preparatory to launching out on the great sea of life. On the evening previous to my departure, I had walked to the village for the purpose of bidding farewell to my schoolmates and numerous acquaintances, which I found to be a more difficult and affecting task than I had anticipated. It were needless to recount the many sorrowful adieus, the many expressions of good wishes, the many kindly shakings of the hand, that I gratefully received and affectionately returned. Suffice it to say that, while I felt the parting scene very deeply, I consoled myself with the comforting thought that the separation was not final, but temporary, and that I would yet have opportunities of paying occasional visits to my much-loved Howe, and renewing for a time those first sweet friendships which I so much valued, and which I should ever cherish in fond remembrance of my early youth.

Having purposely reserved my adieus to the inmates of the forester's cottage to the last, I now approached the little domicile by the well-known pathway up the side of the burn. I thought it strange—I don't so now—that the nearer I approached the cottage, I felt the greater hesitancy to enter it, my speed becoming every footfall more measured and slow, and my heart beating the quicker the more I lingered by the way. To my great relief, however, Mrs Wood now appeared at the open door in anticipation of my visit, and soon ushered me into the parlour, where I engaged for a few minutes in conversation with my good friend the forester, and the other members of the family, and then bade them all individually farewell.

But where was Eliza? She was not amongst the family

group that had assembled in the forester's cottage to bid her youthful companion farewell! As I slowly and thoughtfully went on my homeward way, the even-song of the happy birds above, resounded through the silent woods, like the requiem for departed spirits, and the sweet silvery song of the rushing burn below had in it, for the first time to me, a plaintive sound of sadness, akin to poignant pain, as if it mourned in hopeless grief for the absent and the lost.

Full of such new and strangely depressing thoughts, I had reached a sudden turning of my woodland path, when, to my great surprise and infinite delight, I beheld Eliza sitting on a mossy bank, arranging carefully a bunch of wild flowers she had apparently gathered on the hill. Seeing me approach, she rose to meet me, when, without uttering a word of greeting, or bidding me a formal farewell, she presented me with the beautiful bouquet, and then suddenly turned her face homewards:—

> But first love knowing no alarms,
> I round her threw my trembling arms,
> Gazed in her eyes of bonnie blue,
> And thought at least I would be true;
> Then, rapturously to crown my bliss,
> I took a long, long parting kiss:—
> Strange, in all scenes with changes rife,
> I've felt that virgin kiss through life!

Two years passed away, during which time I had not seen, and heard but little, of my native Howe. How eagerly, therefore, I embraced the opportunity of returning home during the summer vacation of my third year at college! On the afternoon of the day succeeding that of my return, I took my way through the ancient wood to the cottage of the forester's daughter. With a mind full of doubt and anxiety, I hastily entered the well-known room in which I had been so often received as an ever-welcome guest. Eliza, now grown into a fine comely woman, received me with her usual kindness, yet with an apparent reserve and slight embarrassment of manner, for which I then was sorely puzzled to

account. While her father and mother and other members of the family seated themselves beside me, and engaged in earnest conversation on topics of mutual interest, Eliza continued incessantly the performance of her household duties: indeed her assiduity seemed to increase in proportion to the length of time I remained in the cottage. Her finely-proportioned figure and graceful movements, the spring flush of delicate beauty on her cheek, and the clear bright lustre of intelligence in her sparkling eye, did not, however, escape my notice, or fail to draw out my silent admiration of the lovely creature before me, in all the fascinating bloom of bursting womanhood, surrounded by a halo of virgin innocence and youthful love.

I was in the act of attempting to draw the bashful maiden into conversation, when a horseman rode rapidly up to the door of the cottage, and delivered a startling message from my father, to the effect that my brother Charles had got himself entangled amongst the machinery of the mill, and that the injuries he had received in consequence, were of such a serious nature, that my presence was demanded at home without delay. While the horseman continued his journey to Forfar to fetch the medical attendant of the family, I hastily bade adieu for the present to my kind friends in the forester's cottage, and, as in duty bound, hastened with all speed to obey my father's summons home.

As had been foreshadowed, the accident to my brother had well nigh proved fatal to him, and his recovery was, in consequence, exceedingly tedious and slow. Some considerable time elapsed before he could be pronounced out of danger, and when that period came round my vacation holidays had expired. Anxious to pursue my classical studies, without delay I bade a hasty adieu to my rural home, without having had the opportunity of paying a visit to the forester's cottage, and of bidding all my friends there, another temporary farewell.

My studies being now completed, I returned home after

other two years' absence, delighted to see once more "the old familiar faces," and the lonely glen and lovely strath I loved so well. My first visit was spontaneously paid to the forester's cottage, picturing to myself as I went on my way the charms of her who was indeed the delight and sunshine of that village home.

It was early spring, and as I walked by the side of the burn, on the well-known footpath skirting the Hunter Hill, the welcome voice of the cuckoo resounded through the bursting woods, and the wooing love-songs of the happy birds gushed forth in richest melody from every budding spray. The stately elm was clothing herself with her feathery leaves, and the drooping willow with her silver palms; the poplar and the linden, the chestnut and the birch, were bursting into new life in every spreading bough; and the hawthorn, the laburnum, and the fir were loading the balmy air with the sweet virgin incense of a new and joyous life. In the pauses of their thrilling songs, the little finches, green and grey and gold, busied themselves in picking the sweetest buds from off the bursting boughs, while the mavis and the merle flitted restlessly among the thickets before attuning their richly toned notes to the far-resounding key-note of Nature's resurrection morn. Around me blushed in virgin purity the primrose and the snow-drop, first welcome flowerets of the year. Beyond in the glen the young wheat was upspringing green in the furrows, the morning dew upon its tender leaflets, like the tears of angels to fructify and bless the God-sent vegetation of the awakening earth for the joy and maintenance and well-being of man. In the distance, while the diligent husbandman guided the ploughshare on the uplands, the rooks following in his wake to catch the early worm, the no less diligent sower scattered with a plentiful hand the hopeful seed along the ridges of the plain, the harrows succeeding to level the uneven ground and distribute the seed into the long, straight lines of formal beauty, so pleasing to the eye before the luxuriance of summer has hidden by her rich effulgence

the virgin footsteps of early spring. The silver cloudlets overhead moved gently, almost imperceptibly, in their sweet unrest, across the ethereal blue, revealing occasional glimpses of the upper firmament in all its celestial purity and beauty.

How like to the spring of nature the early morn of the life of man! How akin to the new, ecstatic life of hill and dale, and the wild mad joy of beast and bird, to the fresh exuberant feelings of youthful passion, and the exultant tumultuous revelry which holds high carnival in the audience-chambers of the virgin heart, untainted by deceit, impurity, or crime! In our early dreams of honourable ambition, in our high resolves to win a place and name among the great and good, how have these pleasant dreams been sweetened, how have these high resolves been strengthened and matured into practical action, by the grand supporting thought that there was in this great and mighty world at least one heart that beat in unison with ours, around which all our hopes and wishes centred, and for which we would toil, and work, and pray, and suffer, and sacrifice, and endure, if so be we could win the prize, and wear as the jewel of our heart the unfading, priceless gem of a first, unselfish, pure, unchangeable love! Thrice happy those who have realised this consummation of their hopes. Blessed, surely, must be the ripe fruition of pristine affection; the holy, hallowed joy, the sweet, unfading bloom of wedded love!

The distant voices of children now breaking sweetly on the ear reminded me I was nearing the village, and in a few minutes more, on emerging from the wood, the secluded hamlet, with the forester's cottage on the right, and nearest to the bridge, appeared in all its sylvan, quiet beauty. No one was stirring about the cottage, and when I entered the little porch, contrary to my usual practice, I tremblingly knocked for admittance. The door was gently opened by the forester himself, who kindly led the way to the sitting-room with more reserve and greater quietude of manner than his wont. Not anticipating any change, however, my sur-

prise and grief were the greater when I beheld Eliza leaning on an easy-couch, wrapped carefully around with the warm covering of the invalid!

When I took her thin white hand in mine, and hurriedly made some incoherent inquiries in regard to her health, I long remembered, and do still remember, how damp and chilly-cold was the returning pressure of silent welcome. Yet the bloom on her cheek was so blushingly bright, and the lustre of her eye so brilliant and unusually clear, and her voice so strong in its silvery sweetness, that it was difficult for me to believe that she was otherwise than in perfect health. Alas! the very symptoms which to me appeared so indicative of health and hope spoke to the more experienced as only foreshadowing a time of suffering and an early grave!

"You did not expect to see me ill on your return," Eliza softly said at last; "but you have been so long away—at least *I* have thought the time long—that you must expect to see changes of some kind or another, and I daresay you have found them where you least expected them."

"But tell me, Eliza," I doubtingly rejoined, "if you are really ill. To my eye, you look as healthful as when I saw you two long years ago."

"Do not deceive yourself," she solemnly replied, "if I were not ill, I would not be lying here;" and then, as if regretting what she had said, she continued in a more cheerful tone—"The spring has again returned, the time of the singing of the birds has come, I feel my strength returning, and in a short time I trust to be able to be abroad again among the scenes I love so well. I have just been reading in the Revelation of the new heavens and the new earth; of the holy city, the new Jerusalem. Will you read a little to me of these heavenly scenes, for, notwithstanding my desire to live, I begin to think I am gradually becoming more akin to heaven than earth?"

Wondering at the style and fervour of her language, I mechanically took the Bible she had presented to me, and

read as I had never read before, of the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; of the great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God; of the great multitude that no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues; and of the angels that stood round about the throne, and of the elders who answered, saying—"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

When I had finished, Eliza regretfully whispered—

"I fain now would rest"—then extending her hand to bid me adieu, she warmly, yet enquiringly continued—"You will come to see me soon again?"

"I will, Eliza, very soon," I replied, and bade her for the time an affectionate adieu.

Her sorrowful mother and the other members of the family had all this time been in the other room, but as I was departing Mrs Wood followed me to the porch, kindly asking me to come soon again to see her daughter. In answer to my inquiries, she informed me that Eliza had first complained of illness in the autumn of the previous year, and that during the succeeding winter she had been closely confined to her room, and, although she did not complain of much pain, she was apprehensive of a fatal issue to her continued illness. My heart was too full to say much, but what I did say seemed hopeful and reassuring, for the fond mother faintly smiled through her blinding tears, and while expressing her gratitude for my good wishes, most fervently prayed they might in God's good time be happily realised.

During the spring I was a frequent visitor at the forester's cottage, and on every occasion, while all others saw too plainly that Eliza was slowly losing ground, I confidently imagined she was as surely gaining strength. In one respect, however, I could not but mark a great and decided change. Her style of conversation had gradually become more elevated

and refined; her language, in strength and beauty of expression, warmth and fervour of devotional feeling, partaking more of heaven than of earth, and encompassing her ever, to me at least, with an ethereal halo of celestial glory.

It was now summer, and as I leisurely pursued my way to the village by the side of the winding burn, listening gratefully to its lapping, silver sound, I thought the burden of its evening song was health and peace to the forester's daughter. Catching up the joyous theme, the jubilant birds among the spreading boughs in the woodland beyond exultingly blent their melodious notes in a full diapason of triumphant song. What a beauteous, lovely, delicious month is "leafy June!" There is in it such a prodigal effulgence of luxuriant beauty, such life, and hope, and joy; such gorgeous broadcast of fair and beautiful colours, such luscious fragrance of ambrosial sweets, such hallowed combinations of melodious sounds! The umbrageous oak and graceful ash have leafed themselves at last in green; the heather hath assumed its purple robe, and the wild rose its rich vermillion blush of virgin beauty; the briar and hawthorn scent the evening gale, and the finch and linnet sing together on the topmost boughs, the merle and thrush answering each other lovingly in the den. Then there is such ever-changing variety of light and shade, such echoing bursts of rural sounds, such joyous shouts of happy children in the glens, such plaintive bleatings from motherless lambs on the hills, such cawing of rooks over their new-fledged young, such dreamy music sweet of distant village bells, that the heart feels all aglow in a wild transport of voluptuous joy, and the soul is stirred to its inmost depths with the deep emotions of holy rapture, gushing forth in the joyous strains of gratitude and love.

As I neared the forester's cottage, the "Defiance" coach, with its splendid team of spotted greys, and driven by its aristocratic owner, Mr Barclay of Ury, dashed at a rattling pace along the bridge on its way to Aberdeen, the merry sounds of the bugle re-echoing through the woods in unison

with man's expanding heart, and Nature's song of universal joy.

As if to complete the picture of general happiness without, I found Eliza on this summer evening looking very much better, and altogether more cheerful and happy than I had seen her since my return. Reclining on her couch, arrayed in spotless white, her countenance lighted up by the reflection of some inward joy, and her long bright tresses bedropt with spangled gold from the dazzling rays of the setting sun, and gently stirred by the evening breeze which came in softly at the open window, I thought that surely no human being could look more saint-like, more spiritually lovely, more divinely beautiful! Around the little window which looked out to the churchyard and the church the fragrant honeysuckle entwined its beautiful blossoms, while in at the open casement to the west the roses, nodding with the breeze, peeped in like blushing maidens sly, not to be caught yet, but coquettely to tease awhile, so timid were they and so shy.

"You see that wooded height in the churchyard above St Fergus' Well?" said Eliza softly, now breaking the sweet silence of the hour. "I should wish to be buried there when I die—nay, startle not; we must all die, and I feel my time has nearly come. Often in your long absences have I wandered by our favourite pathways o'er the Hunter Hill, but oftener I lingered in the twilight eves—I cannot tell how it was—by lone St Fergus' Well, and in the quiet secluded burying-ground above and around that romantic spot. You will come sometimes and visit my last resting-place—will you not?"

"Eliza," I replied, "such thoughts would break my heart——"

"Listen," said she, interruptingly, and without noticing my remark. "When I am dying—and I feel assured I will die in calmness and in peace—I would wish to enter heaven with the songs of earth vibrating in my ear, thus sweetly carrying me

imperceptibly over that undefined, mysterious line which separates eternity from time. It is said the dying carry on the retina of the eye to the other world the features and expression of those on whom they have last gazed on earth. So would I wish to carry with me also to the abodes of glory the cherished voices of those I love. But," she excitedly continued, as if recollecting at the moment something that had escaped her memory, "I have had such a strange and beautiful dream. Listen, and I will tell it thee. Stay; lift me up, my mother; pile these pillows high; my head I fain would raise once more and look around on each familiar thing, then gaze abroad to mark the blossoms of my favourite flowers, inhale the sweetness of the balmy air, and list the cheering melody of birds; I yet may gather the blaeberries on the hill and eat the ripe autumnal fruit. Hush! soul, this cannot be; these are the expressions of my other nature still unweaned from the things of earth and time."

"Your dream, Eliza?" I inquiringly said; "was it pleasing or otherwise?"

"My dream?" she delightedly replied. "Oh, it was so strange, so pleasing, so very beautiful! Methought, swift borne above the abyssmal air, I floated noiselessly away among the palmy isles, the breezes redolent of sweetest odours softly wafted o'er the undulating waves like honied breath of violets, in rich festoons, the flowering climbing plants profusedly hanging from the shelving cliffs in never-fading bloom. The cities were of rubies, and the hills were richly gemmed with amethysts and sapphires; the amber streams all pebbled bright with diamonds, and agates, and all kinds of precious stones, and the woods ablaze with gorgeous foliage, crowned bright with fragrant flowers of every hue and form. The groves of palm were vocal with the flute-like tones of clear-voiced arioles, commingled sweetly with the bulbul's plaintive notes at noon, sublimed at night by vesper hymns of humming birds and sacred songs of paradise!

"Anon I wandered midst the dazzling throngs which

crowd the matchless Place St. Mark, in lovely Venice, City of the Sea! 'Twas night; the sun had disappeared in glory behind the Friulian mountains, and softly came from the Adriatic Sea the sweet refreshing evening breeze, stirring with Æolean music rich my long dishevelled curls, soft kissing me with balmy, honied lips, as if in expectancy, I silent stood on the marble steps of an ancient palace, beside the waveless Grand Canal. Softly the moonbeams now jewelled bright the clear blue waters, rich with diamond gems, all glistering tremulous innumerable. The hearse-like gondolas swift glided past to strains of richest music, the song of nearing gondoliers, as on they came from distant Molo, soft breaking on the ear with pensive sweetness, swelling as they passed to loud, melodious notes, then faintly dying away in tremulously lessening echoes beneath the one-arched high Rialto.

"Among the gondolas one floating came more beautiful, more stately, than the rest. Her timbers of burnished amber, her awnings white and golden fringed, her prow all brightly gemmed with precious stones, without either sail or oar, onward gliding noiselessly like a swan majestically it came.

"As it approached, distinguish could I clearly those on board—tall, white-draped figures, with faces like the dawn, and angelic in expression, all gathered round one statelier than they on dais, raised high elevated in the midst; a hum of soft low voices stirring sweet the air, then slowly dying away among the golden clouds, like angel-whispers floating tremulous in mystic fields of ether.

"On, on it came to where I stood. The prow just touched the marble pier, when, like a bridal train without the bride, its white-robed occupants debarked, and, noiseless, formed a living avenue between me and the ship, a form familiar walking up the midst, her face becoming as I gazed pale, rigid, sharp, and ghastly, changing in a moment grand to pure celestial beauty, spirit-like, a luminous vapour rainbowed bright around her beaming features like the blushing morn

rich purpling in the east, her attitude now rapt adoring, all her stately frame inspired with spiritual emotion deep, high quivering with an ecstasy of joy! Her hands clasped firm upon her breast, her lips apart, her head in fond sweet longing lovingly upraised, glad listening to some coming sound; a song of soft celestial music bursting rich high over head from out the golden sky; bright cloud-borne angels winging quick their way amidst melodious anthems to our earth. As nearer they approached, beheld I one more glorious than the rest in triumph bearing quick a golden crown to where the rapt expectant stood, which on her radiant brow she midst hosannahs placed, the long white robes of her surrounding mates transformed to down, pure, soft, and glistering, which, outstretched, became angelic wings, and as they strung their jewelled lyres in harmony seraphically sweet, all bright ascended in one glorious, mystic throng, majestic to the sky! In the sainted one thus crowned with glory and triumphantly borne aloft on angels' wings I recognised—MYSELF—and I awoke!"

The animated recital of her extraordinary dream had so exhausted Eliza that she fell back upon her pillow in a state of great prostration, amounting almost to unconsciousness. When she had somewhat recovered, I commended her to the affectionate care of her mother, and on retiring felt more depressed and sad than I had ever done before. The description of the dream, and the prophetic train of thought to which it naturally gave rise, formed the one absorbing subject of contemplation on my way homeward, the solution to which I arrived being, as may be imagined, the one most satisfactory to myself—viz., that it was—a dream.

Having to repair for a time to Edinburgh immediately after this visit to the forester's daughter, I did not return home until the middle of October, fully three months having elapsed in the interval.

Full of anxious thoughts about Eliza, which grew more intense and painful the nearer I approached her father's

cottage on the following day after my return, when I silently took my accustomed way along the well-known winding pathway by the base of the Hunter Hill. It was a lovely autumnal day, and most unusually warm for the season of the year. The sun shone forth o'er hill and dale in all the bright effulgence of summer, the happy midges dancing in wild, mad revelry in his sparkling beams, and the pugnacious robin singing in flute-like notes from the topmost boughs the sweetly plaintive requiem of the fast decaying year. The ash and the oak, still green and beautiful, contrasted finely with the deep bronze of the beech and the golden yellow of the elm, while the stately mountain pine upreared high up above them all her dark and sombre diadem of everlasting green. The dull rustling noise of the falling leaves, otherwise so saddening to the mind, and so painfully suggestive of the decay of the life of man, was on this glad day of sunny brightness and joy more pensively solemn than sad, more soothing and comforting than a gloomy foreshadowing of the dark river, or an ominous foreboding of the unseen world beyond. Far up in the golden sky the beautiful clouds bright tinged with a rainbow softness of colour and richly fringed with a delicate saffron of matchless splendour, seemed like guardian angels reposing in the lap of the Great Eternal and gazing with intense interest on some attractive object on earth, as if waiting, with their chariots of glory, to convey some sainted loved one to the far-off land of blessedness and peace!

I had now entered the deep ravine through which the waters of the burn rush with great velocity, until abruptly divided by a little grass-covered island, on either side of which they dash down the shelving rocks like mimic waterfalls of pleasing sweetness and picturesque beauty. Often, in the rich blush of summer, had I solitary stood on this lonely island admiring the sharp outlines of the beautiful picture which stretched itself out before me in all its light and shade of romantic, ever-changing loveliness—the rugged banks around rich clothed with luxuriant foliage, the wooded hill beyond

all sweetly vocal with the songs of birds, the church spire towering high between, with the distant Grampians, in all their grim and lofty grandeur, forming a noble and fitting background to such an enchanting scene.

Emerging slowly from the ravine, I unexpectedly met Dr Steele, of Forfar, returning from a professional visit to the forester's daughter. After the usual greeting, the good, kind doctor, gently putting his arm in mine, turned with me in the direction of the cottage, inquiringly saying, as he did so—

"You are much interested in the welfare of the forester's daughter?"

"Very much interested indeed," I frankly replied. "How did you find your patient to-day, doctor, for I have not seen her myself for several months? I sincerely hope she may be getting better, and that you entertain good hopes of her ultimate recovery."

"She is better in one respect," he quietly replied, "for she is getting nearer heaven every day she survives. As to her ultimate recovery, I dare not hold out any hope whatever; if I did, I should belie, as a professional man, my own convictions."

"You surprise me much, doctor," I hurriedly rejoined. "To me, on the contrary, Eliza appears to be gradually gaining strength. Her eye is as bright and her countenance as blooming as ever."

"These are just the symptoms, my young friend," the doctor replied, "which to the experienced eye lead to the very opposite conclusion. To be candid with you, the trembling tenement, which still so tenaciously retains its feeble hold of her up-soaring spirit, is so worn and fragile in its texture, that the silver cord may be loosed and the golden bowl be broken in the twinkling of an eye. She will pass away so peacefully that, if not watched by night and by day, her pure and gentle soul may wing its silent flight above before any perceptible change be observed or anticipated. Take this in good part, and you may remember afterwards my parting words."

My trembling lips could not articulate a reply, and the forester's cottage being now in sight, the tender-hearted doctor bade me an affectionate adieu, and went on his way to the glen.

To my great surprise, and as if falsifying the predictions of the good physician, instead of finding Eliza on the couch of sickness, she was seated at the door of the cottage, where she received me with her sweetest smiles of welcome, gently chiding me at the same time for my long absence from the cottage.

"Eliza expected you to-day," said her mother, who sat beside her daughter, intently watching her every movement with the tenderest solicitude. "No one had informed her of your arrival, and yet she heard your footsteps, she said, in the tangled brushwood long before you came in sight, and seemed to feel your presence beside her while you were yet a far way off. 'Array me, mother,' she joyfully exclaimed in the morning, 'in my long white robe and let my tresses fall full and carelessly adown my shoulders in the way he likes to see them best, and lead me out among the sunshine and the flowers as a bride to meet the bridegroom.'"

"Mother should not have told you that," Eliza blushingly said, at the same time beckoning me to be seated in the empty chair beside her. "The beautiful morning 'blent in the more beautiful day," she continued, "I felt so cheerful and so happy, as if inhaling the very atmosphere of heaven, my exulting spirit bounding in gladness in fond anticipation of some coming joy, that I longed to breathe again the soft sweet air of the hills, and to listen to the last long plaintive song of the dying year. You will read again to me, will you not, of the celestial city and the river of God, of the new song of the redeemed, and the harpings of the angels on the hills of heaven? You remember my last wish?"

On presenting me with the same Bible from which I had formerly read, and which I had given her many years before, she fixed her clear blue eye with such a spiritual intensity of

gaze on mine that I felt as if I were in heaven itself, or rather that one of its celestial inhabitants had become my companion on earth. Seeing me hesitate, Eliza softly said—

"Much as I love this fair and beautiful earth my spirit longs to breathe a purer atmosphere of bliss, to roam in glorious sunshine on the mountain tops of the empyrean heavens, and, grandest thing of all grand things, to walk with Christ in white amid the Father's smiles. Read:—I long yet once again to hear from loving lips the sweet notes of that triumphal song, 'Alleluia; the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints!'"

Catching now her intensity of joy, I rapturously read of the holy city, with its gates of pearl inwrought with burnished gold, its dazzling walls of jasper, amethyst, and emerald; the rainbow round about the Throne, the crowns and sceptres, robes of white and palms of victory; the thousand times ten thousand voices thundering loud like sound of many waters, and harpers harping with their harps—the song, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Hearing no response, I looked up from the book on which I was reading, but, alas! the brightness of Eliza's eye was quenching fast in darkness; the snow of death was already gathering on her brow, and her pure and gentle spirit was peacefully passing away to God who gave it! I gently took her cold and clammy hand in mine. The pressure was returned, and with a faint, sweet smile on her ashy lips, Eliza Wood, the forester's daughter, entered into her rest!

CHAPTER XI.

WILL-O'-THE-WISP.

"What else but evil could betide,
With that cursed Palmer for our guide?
Better we had through mire and bush
Been lantern-led by Friar Rush."
—*Marmion.*

Will-o'-the-Wisp, according to Scott, is "a strolling demon, or *esprit follet*, who once upon a time got admittance into a monastery as a scullion and played the monks many pranks." He is sometimes called Jack-o'-Lanthern, and as such is familiar to our southern neighbours. The followers of Marmion attributed the mysterious disasters that befell them at Gifford Castle to the guidance of the assumed ecclesiastic—"the cursed Palmer"— and expressed the belief that it had been better for them they had been lantern-led by Friar Rush. Milton also makes the same allusion through his clown—

"She was pinched and pulled, she said,
And he by Friar's Lanthorn led."

This wandering demon, however, was universally known throughout the "Howe" by the more familiar name of *Spunkie*, whose freaks and pranks in that amusing and mischievous character might form the subject-matter of a lengthened tale or stirring romance. Many a poor benighted wight hath this uncannie warlock driven to his wits'-end by his uncouth gambols and deceptive light, and many a bold and valiant knight hath he laid *hors de combat* on the marshy plain.

Some fifty or sixty years ago, nearly one half of the parish of Kinnettles was one continued marsh or bog, arising,

doubtless, from the circumstance that the northern part had formed, at some remote period, the bed of a large river or lake. At that time, and before the great drain was opened through the Howe from the Loch of Forfar, peat mosses and stagnant marshes occupied the whole tract of level land which stretches for some miles between the Castle of Glamis and the Loch. It was in this low, marshy region that Spunkie reigned supreme, and where he held his dreaded midnight revels with sovereign and undisputed sway.

On a dreary night in the latter end of December, 1822, the inmates of the farm-house of Foffarty were assembled in the cozy kitchen around a blazing wood fire, which cast its cheerful light around the no less cheerful room. A tidy, couthie kitchen was that of Foffarty; and a contented, happy household withal. The lasses were spinning busily, and singing while they span; the young men were seated by the ingle, with the Dominie of Kinnettles in their midst; while the gudewife was busily engaged preparing the evening meal. The old arm-chair of the gudeman stood in its accustomed place, however, unoccupied. The worthy farmer had gone to attend the Kirriemuir market, but was expected home every moment. Intending to take the shortest road through the marsh and peat moss, instead of going round by the turnpike, he was obliged to go a-foot, and, consequently, to trust to his own resources in the case of any emergency.

The table was spread, and all awaited his coming. The clock struck nine—a long hour after his usual time of returning from market—and still he did not appear. The gudewife, after looking out to the cold, dark night for the sixth or seventh time, to descry, if she could, any signs of his coming, returned to the kitchen in a state of increased anxiety and fear; the spinning wheels were silent, and the general buzz of the conversation was hushed into ominous whispers of dread import and prophetic meaning.

Amidst the silence and general consternation that prevailed, the door suddenly opened, and the farmer staggered across the

floor, and sunk, like a stricken deer, into the chair by the fire. His broad-brimmed hat was slouched over his eyes, his great-coat and topboots were bespattered with mire and peat, and, altogether, he was in a most woeful and sorry plight.

"Fat's come owre ye, gudeman?" exclaimed his affectionate helpmate, while trying to unbutton his greatcoat at the same time. "Has Spunkie or the waterkelpies been meddlin' wi' ye this dark and dreary nicht?"

A long drawn sigh and stifled groan were the only response to these well-meant and anxious enquiries.

"Leave him to himself for a few minutes," solemnly said the Dominie. "If there have been any manifestations of a supernatural character vouchsafed to him on his journey, he will the better reveal them when his mind has become calm and unclouded, and reason resumed her throne on the judgment-seat."

A long deep silence ensued. At last the farmer slowly raised his hat, and instead of the well-known ruddy, cheerful face, a pale, sad, bewildered countenance met their gaze.

"Am I in my ain hoose at last?" faintly gasped the half-demented gudeman.

"Deed are ye, Robert," rejoined his wife. "Dinna look sae bewildered-like. Do you no ken your ain hoose, gudeman? There's a' your ain' laddies and lassies aroond you; and here's Maister Robertson, frae Kinnettles, come tae welcome ye hame, and there's the supper ready waitin' you on the table, Robert."

"Give him a dram out of your own bottle, goodwife," said the Dominie; "the smell and taste of the aquavitae will soon bring him round, I'll warrant ye."

The dram had the desired effect. The rosy colour returned to his cheeks, and the kindly twinkle to his eye; and collecting his scattered thoughts for a few minutes, he quietly said—

"I am glad I'm in my ain hoose again, after the trials and troubles o' this awfu' nicht. Sic a time o' warslin' an' fechtin

an' fa'in' I hae' haen sin' I left Kirry! Ye may be glad an' thankfu', gudewife, that the Lord, in His great mercy, has spared me to meet you and the weans again, for mony a time this nicht o' nichts I had gien up a' houps o' ever seein' you in the flesh again."

"Losh me, gudeman," rejoined his wife, "ye set my blude a' creepin', and my puir heart gaes pitty-patty in sic a manner as I never kent afore. Noo, Robert," she coaxingly continued, at the same time easing him of his greatcoat, "tell's far ye've been, and if thae mischievous spunkies hae dune ony evil tae you on your way hame?"

"Spunkies and fiddlesticks," interrupted the Dominie. "It's all imagination—a mere chimera."

"Fat dis the body say?" hastily interposed the farmer in his turn, and who was now "himself again." "I'll tell you what it is, Maister Dominie—ye ken naething aboot it ava. Wi' a' your buke learnin'—an' ye're a gey learned body, I maun admit—ye canna explain the antics and mischievous doings o' thae spunkies an' fairlies an' witchies an' waterkelpies. I wish ye had only been wi' me this winter nicht, an' ye wad hae seen wi' yer ain een if it was a mere keemera or no. But, gudewife, lat's hae our supper. Na, na, nane o' yer slops for me the nicht. Tak' awa' thae tea dishes, and fry some nice bacon and eggs; and, lassies, assist yer mither, and bring forrit the bannocks, and the flour scones, and the sweetest butter ye hae in the dairy, for I canna begin to argue thae matters wi' Maister Robertson on an empty stamach."

"Well thought of, and well said," quietly remarked the worthy Dominie to the obedient gudewife. "It is a laudible and wise precaution to line well the inner man with substantial realities before commencing a learned discussion on visionary topics of imaginative theories which evade the grasp of solid judgment and common sense, even as the gossamer mists on the hills evaporate and collapse when the golden beams of the god of day break forth in all their splendour to diffuse light, purity, and joy over the fair face

of Nature, and the remoter recesses of the sympathetic heart of man."

Whether the plain, honest gudewife sufficiently caught in her perplexity the full meaning of this grandiloquent speech, I am not quite certain. All I know is, that she looked as if she understood every word of it, which comes, I daresay, pretty much to the same thing.

The table was profusely spread, in a wonderfully short space of time, with all the substantial viands so heartily commanded by our warm-hearted host; and, after grace had been solemnly said by the Dominie, the serious work of mastication and demolition commenced in right earnest, during which process, except the clatter of knives and forks, no other sound was heard but a faint monosyllable now and then, pronounced as if ashamed of itself for causing any interruption to such a thoroughly enjoyable feast.

"Bring the bottle, gudewife," at last said mine host, wiping off at the same time with his spotted handkerchief the big drops of perspiration that stood conspicuous on his brow; "we'll be a' the better o' a dram aifter the bacon and the eggs; but, Martha, ye've forgotten the cheese, lassie. Bring the kebbit oot o' the pantry—the mooldy ane, made frae sweet milk, I mean—and Kitty, put on the kettle on the *sway*, and bring the auld punch-bowl that's claspit a' owre wi' silver to keep it thaegither for the use o' future generations, for I intend to fill it ance the nicht, at ony rate. Ye ken, gudewife, it's no ilka nicht we hae Maister Robertson o' Kinnettles under the auld roof o' Faffarty."

While the necessary preparations for the bowl of punch are proceeding, we may take a passing glance at the *physique* of the two principal characters in the little domestic scene we are now describing.

To begin with mine host. The tenant of Foffarty was a hale, hearty yeoman of sixty; strong and well formed, of middle size; of a ruddy cheerful countenance, and a warm and generous nature withal. Superstitious he was to an intense degree, and as fully believed in the veritable existence

of Will-o'-the-wisps, waterkelpies, brownies, and fairies, as he did of the being of his own boys and girls, or of the sheep and cattle which browsed on the hill-sides of his farm. He was careful, if not proud, of his personal appearance, wearing always at kirk and market a full dress suit of dark brown; knee-breeches corded, but somewhat of a lighter colour; with bright polished top-boots, of the true hunting size and type.

The Dominie, again, seemed to be considerably younger, and of a form and type entirely different from that of the worthy farmer. Although rather below the middle size, his carriage and bearing were so erect and dignified that his small stature was not so observable as it otherwise would have been. His countenance was pale and colourless, as became the scholar and philosopher; and his brow capacious and high, betokening the possession of faculties of no common order; while his small, grey, twinkling eye glistened brightly with kindly feeling and benevolent affection. Like the silver lining to the ebon cloud, his dark raven hair was being whitened thickly o'er with grey, deepening the expressive contour of his thoughtful yet congenial face. He had a warm and couthy way of speaking to his old pupils, but in general his manner was somewhat formal and pedantic, and his speech slow, measured, and pompous withal.

"Now for our bowl of punch, Maister Robertson," kindly said mine host. "I'll just mix it the auld way—naething but the pure Glenlivet, the lump sugar, an' the boilin' water. I dinna like your new-fangled mixtures ava, ava. I really think, Maister Daniel—do ye mind, by the by, what a skirmish ye kicket up at the examination o' your schule, in presence o' a' the Presbytery and the big folks, when I ca'ad ye Maister Donald—eh! eh! eh!" and the jolly farmer laughed, and laughed until the tears stood in his twinkling, mirth-provoking eyes; his self-created merriment causing him completely to forget the termination of his sentence, whatever that might have been.

"A few thin slices of lemon," observed the Dominie, entirely ignoring the latter remark of our host, "I am of opinion, very much improves the punch, at least to my taste. Besides, the rancid acidity of the fruit serves in a great measure to counteract the evil consequences of the inflammable alcohol."

"But it destroys the flavour, man," impetuously rejoined the farmer. "I widna gie the gran' smell o' the peat reek for a' your furrin scents; and as for taste, commend me, Maister Robertson, to the pure, unadulterated, sma' still mountain dew."

"But you are forgettin', Robert, to tell us the story o' your mishaps on your way frae Kirry," gently interrupted his better half, who had now cozily seated herself beside him. "We're a' waitin' to hear fu' ye got through a' thae clamjamfries i' the moss, an' fa' it was that bedraggled a' your claes i' that awfu' fashion, gudeman."

"Very pertinent remark," chimed in the Dominie; "we are all impatience to hear the particulars of this, to you, eventful night, Mr Guthrie."

The very natural reminder by his wife of the indirect promise he had given to recount the circumstances of his somewhat erratic and mysterious journey that night from Kirry produced at once a strange effect on mine host. All his glee and hilarity had, in an instant, vanished, and his hitherto cheerful countenance assumed a sad thoughtful expression. Throwing back his coat on his shoulders, planting firmly his two thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, and thrusting out his legs with great force towards the blazing fire, he looked with a furtive, enquiring glance around the room, taking, apparently, particular notice that the door was properly shut, and that there was none in the house except those on whom he could with all confidence thoroughly rely. He gave at last some ominous "hems," followed in quick succession by several rather suspicious coughs, which certainly did not strengthen the belief of his hearers in the truth of the

revelations he had indirectly promised to make, and which he was now about to give.

Evidently he had failed to bring his courage "to the sticking place;" and so, after desperately snuffing the only candle on the table, and taking off another glass of punch, he fixed his eyes for a few moments on the smoke-begrimed wooden rafters above, as if invoking the aid of his good angel to come to the rescue.

Then, as if nothing unusual had occurred, he filled himself another glass from the punch-bowl, politely handing one, at the same time, to the wondering dominie, and thus began the long-expected narration:—

"Aifter finishin' a' my business i' the market, Benshie, and Glassell, and Redford, and Dragonha', and mysel' adjourned to the inn aff the cross to get a snack and some refreshment afore takin' the road hame. Aifter we had had our dinner, we had a glass or twa to keep oot the cauld—there micht hae been ane, maybee twa mair, but that's neither here nor there, for Benshie and Glassell had selt a' their knout, an', bein' michty big ower their pouchfu's o' siller, they were uncommon leeberal wi' their drink, payin' a' the lawin' atween their twa selves. By this time is was gettin' gey dark, and—no onywise oot o' fear, ye ken—I began to think o' the lang road I had to gae hame, an' o' the dangerous spunkies and waterkelpies that micht beset my path fan threadin' my way through the peat mosses and swampy marshes that lay atween me an' Faffarty. Whether my freends read my thochts or no, I couldna be quite certain; but, at a' events, they a' wi' ane accord, began to ragg and banter me aboot the spunkies i' the moss, and insinuated, rather undeservedly, as I thocht, that I was nae match for thae warlocks, bein' somewhat deficient in the bravery necessar' for a successfu' encounter wi' them. So, by way o' keepin' up my coorage, as far as that was possible, I ordered in some mair Glenlivet, to drink 'Deuchan doris' afore we took our several ways hame. This bein' dune, we each rose, as sober an' weel-conduckit as ony o' his Majesty's judges o' the land.

"Havin' parted wi' Glassell on the High Street, as his road hame lay to the eastert, I and my three other freends proceeded steadily doon the Farfar Road. It was pitch dark; but, comin' oot a' of a sudden frae the inn wi' its blazin' lichts, it wasna muckle winder although we staichered sometimes frae side to side, and didna just keep the proper equil—equil—ye ken weel eneuch what I mean, Maister Daniel——"

"Equilibrium," solemnly rejoined the Dominie.

"That's it," continued mine host. "We're never at a loss for a lang-nebbit wird when you're beside us, Maister Robertson. Weel, as I was sayin', we trudged alang the road as weel as could reasonably be expeckit, and that's just as near the real truth as, 'tween oorsel's, I could venture to gae. Benshie now bade us gude-nicht, an' as he did so, he wickedly cried owre his shouther—'Tak care, Faffarty; mind the warlocks and the spunkies. If ye shou'd fraegather wi' them, and get the warst o't, ye'll gie us a' the particulars when we neist meet again at Kirry. Ha! ha!' And then, as if his conscience had suddenly smitten him, he exclaimed in a few minutes afterwards—'I wish ye safe hame for a' that, Faffarty,' and disappeared behind the fir plantin' to the east.

"We had now reached the junction of the roads," continued the farmer, "and after shakin' hands, and biddin' each other gude-nicht, Redford took his way up to his farm-toun, which stands, as you ken, only a hundred yards to the north; and Dragonha', keepin' on the Farfar road, would be in his hoose also in a few minutes afterwards.

"My road hame struck aff to the south, immediately opposite Redford, and a rough, lanely, uncannie road it is, as I found to my cost. Havin' naebody beside me noo to speak to and converse wi', I for the first time that nicht began tae feel a wee queerish—a little eerie-ways—and my speerits fell sae low, and my heart beat sae quickly, that I felt somewhat like Tom o' Shanter in similar circumstances:—

"'Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet,
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scot's sonnet;

Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares."

"Distressed beyond measure, I lookit for relief tae the cairnie aboon me; an' O, how beautifu' the sicht! Thae useless creatures they ca' poets say the bonnie mornin' glisterin' dew is composed o' angels' tears; but as I gazed an' gazed on

"The spangled firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,"

the thocht cam' unbidden into my reelin' head—"What if a' thae stars were angels' een lookin' doon upon me in my loneliness an' kindly biddin' me 'God speed' on my weary way? Wisna that a gran' thocht to come into my head, Maister Robertson—wisna it no?"

"A grand thought indeed," impatiently observed the Dominie, in reply; "but you are long in coming to the point. We are not in the mood at the present moment either to enter into dry metaphysical disquisitions, or to listen to poetic raptures or fanciful comparisons on Nature's phenomena, but to hear your plain, unvarnished narrative of what befell you this night on your way from market."

"To state it shorter," said his equally impatient wife, taking hold of his arm at the same time; "we're a' wearyin' to hear the partic'lars o' the awfu' fecht ye said ye had wi' the Spunkie i' the moss."

"You're just as bad's the Dominie, gudewife," testily rejoined mine host, thrusting away her hand, and replenishing his glass from the now nearly emptied punch-bowl; "how, in the nature o' things, can I tell you aboot the fecht i' the moss, fin I hav'na got that length yet? I'm no oot o' the road wi' the leafless trees an' the dark hedges; an' was just takin' a glint o' the cairnie to while awa' the lonesomeness of the journey afore I cam' to the peat moss whaur the protracted yet bluidless engagement, alas! took place. But I'm comin' on tae it noo," taking off his glass, and turning up his little finger in a scornful, triumphant manner, "an' will bravely

fecht 'my battles ower again,' in defiance o' a' your priggish taunts and silly interruptions."

"I got tae the end o' that lang, dreary road at last," resumed mine host, "an' havin' passed Lochty, at the foot o' the brae, I at once entered on the marshy moss. Not a hundred yards had I gane when I was surrounded by a countless troop o' haggard demons, dancin' an' grinnin' awa, wi' the maist hellish-lookin' grimaces an' threatenin' gestures I had ever seen. When I moved, they followed me; but observin' they leapt aside as I approached, I held on my way until I reached a grass-covered mound aboot the middle o' the moss.

"Frae this spot I took a survey o' the strange scene afore an' around me. Near at hand, an' as far as my een could reach, the hale moss was thickly covered ower wi' warlocks an' hobgoblins, grinnin', caperin', an' makin' the awfulest antics that ever was seen by mortal man. There were blue deevils an' red deevils an' white deevils an' green deevils; some wi' lang shanks and some wi' short shanks; some wi' straicht an' lythsome bodies, an' some wi' shapeless, distorted bodies; mony wi' countenances lang and lantern-like, een like furnaces, and noses as sharp as scythes new frae the grindstane; and mair wi' faces without flesh, een as hollow as a scoupit neep, and noses as big an' crookit as a Heeland ram's horns when three years auld; while the feck o' them were just a mere rackle o' banes, which shook an' rattled i' the winter wind like as mony craw-mills aifter the fair. Faith, sirs, it was an awfu' sicht! An' when they ogled an' skippit an' cleekit like sae mony thoosand evil speerits lat loose frae the brimstone regions o' the bottomless pit, what could I think but that the Prince o' Darkness had in reality surrounded me wi' a' his legions o' deevils, wi' the underhand intention of sweepin' me aff wi' the beesom o' destruction to the abodes o' the damned, whaur naething is for ever heard but 'weepin' and wailin' an' gnashin' o' teeth.' But, becomin' bolder as my trials increased, an' recollectin' for a moment that other passage o' Scripture which says, that in that awfu'

place 'the worm dieth not, an' the fire is not quenched,' I resolved that I would endeavour to checkmate auld 'Cloutie' if I could, or perish in the attempt. So, takin' firm hold o' my gude, sturdy ash stick, an' flourishin' it high in the air to show them I was not to be tampered with, I strode courageously doon the hillock, charging as I went in grand style, but yearnin' to get a hit at what appeared to be the leader o' the band, I struck out wi' a' my micht, and was in the very act o' annihilating him, when, as bad luck would have it, my foot struck against some peats, and whack doon I tumbled into a mossy hole, wi' a' the deevils an' their leader on my back.

Fa's that lauchin' there?" thundered mine host, while looking savagely round to the farther corner of the kitchen, where the lads and lasses had snugly ensconsed themselves to hear the awful news.

"We wisna misdootin' your word, maister," at last replied one of the group, "we were only wonderin' fat the weight o' the deevils had been that you were able to bear them a' on your back."

The lasses tittered, the Dominie grinned, the gudewife laughed, and the forgiving host, after several ineffectual attempts, to keep his gravity, at last joined in the general laughter himself, to the no small amusement of his wondering household.

"Go on with your narrative," said the Dominie, when the laughter had somewhat subsided; "you must surely be near the grand finale now."

"Finale, or no finale," continued mine host, "I only wish I were safely through the bog, that I micht hae time, to mak' up anither bowl o' punch, for fechtin' wi' the spunkies is gey dry wark. Weel, notwithstanding a' their efforts to keep me doon, I got the better at last o' the mischievous imps, and, managin' to get out o' the miry puddle into which I had fallen, I warstled through the hale pack o' them, brandishin' my heavy stick i' their faces; and whether they were feart

or no, it lookit gey like it, for they retreated as quickly as did the French afore Wellington at Waterloo!

"Thinkin' I had dune weel, I paused a little to tak' breath; but I had no sooner stopped than a' the legions o' the bottomless pit were aroond me again, mair numerous and mair threatenin' than ever. Wishin' to see whether they wid really meddle wi' me or no, I remained for a few minutes quite motionless, during which time they danced, an' capered, an' cleekit, an' grinned; noo peerin' wi' their fiery een into my very face, an' then retreatin' like lichtnin' tae the ither end o' the moss; their places, meanwhile, supplied by ither imps as wild an' uncannie as themselves, wha sprang, as it were, out o' the very earth, like sae mony emissaries o' the Evil One, bent on errands o' wrath an' destruction an' death!

"I could stand it nae langer, an' determined to fecht my way hame, although, like Samson, I should slay my thoosands an' tens o' thoosands, I strode manfully forward, strikin' richt an' left wi' a' my vengeance; and, though tumblin' noo an' then among the peat-holes, I was nae sooner doon than I was up again, wrastlin' an' fechtin' on, till I reached the road to Glamis at last; an' the warlocks, keepin' strictly to the moss, didna farther molest me, though I saw them fine, caperin' an' dancin' awa' i' the distance, until the hedges o' Brigton concealed them from my sicht!"

"Losh me, gudeman," said his wife, "but did you really *fecht* wi' the warlocks?"

"Fecht wi' the warlocks?" exclaimed mine host, rising at the same time, and seizing with a firm grasp his faithful ash stick which stood by the fire—"Fecht wi' the warlocks! I would like to see the imp, be it warlock, or hobgoblin, or will-o'-the-wisp, that I widna, wi' the aid o' this stick, fecht wi' an' overcome! Notwithstandin' the great odds against me this nicht, I struck at them wi' my sturdy ash in this way"—suiting the action to the word—"sae effectually, an' wi' sic uncommon power an' vengeance, that this goblin's head was severed frae his body, and that Jack-o'-the-lanthorn's body frae his legs, in

less time than it tak's tae tell ye. Fat are ye gickerin' at, lassies?"

The fact is, the expression of mine host was so fierce, and his actions so animated and comical, that the whole assemblage burst out into a loud, uncontrollable fit of laughter, during which he walked to the still blazing ingle, laid down his staff in its accustomed place, seated himself in his arm-chair, and, covering his face with his handkerchief, laughed as long and heartily as any of them.

"Esther!" at last cried our host, uncovering his face once more, "Esther, put on the kettle again, my lassie; we maun hae an eik afore Maister Robertson tak's the road to Kinnettles; it's no every nicht he honours us wi' his company." Then, lowering his voice to a whisper, and looking straight in the Dominie's face, he inquiringly said, "You seem to doubt the narration o' this nicht's adventures?"

"A mere phenomenon of nature," loudly and scornfully replied the Dominie.

"Phenominum o' natur' or no, Maister Robertson," rejoined mine host, in a still louder voice, "tak' care as ye gae hame to Kinnettles the nicht that nae 'keemeera' or 'phenominum,' as ye ca' them, disna turn up your heels in a way ye wot not of."

Then, turning with a couthy look to his wife, to whom he was much attached, and by way of changing the current of the conversation, he sang with great feeling and tenderness:—

My bonnie wee wifie, in life's early morn,
When sweet as the linnet that sings on the thorn,
You sang, and I listened, till that song of thine
Tuned all my young heart-strings to music divine.

And aye it grew sweeter, like song of the thrush,
Which, mellow, melodious, makes vocal each bush,
All nature rejoicing in blossoms so rare,
You each day becoming more charmingly fair.

Till in my nights' dreaming, like lark poised on high,
You sang, while ascending far up in the sky;

Alas! in proportion the farther you flew,
My heart the more lonely, more desolate grew.

So, from a heart broken, the voice of true love
Came rushing, swift gushing, 'Be thou a sweet dove,
And dwell in my bosom, there nestle through life,
Thee ever I'll cherish, my bonnie wee wife.'

My bonnie wee wifie, long, long thou hast lain
Next my heart, the bright sunshine, in sorrow and pain;
Still dwell in my bosom, there nestle through life,
Aye the more will I love thee, my bonnie wee wife.

"Noo, Maister Robertson," continued mine host, "we'll hae an eik to drink the stirrup cup, and a safe landin' tae you at Kinnettles;" and while handing him his glass of punch, and another to the gudewife, he wickedly observed, "I hope the waterkelpies are no abroad the nicht, Mr Daniel."

"Mere myths," courageously rejoined the Dominie.

"Weel, weel," replied mine host, "we'll see what we'll see; that's all I'll say for the present; tak' aff yer glass."

"Bring the lantern, Peter," said the gudewife; "an' ye maun licht Maister Robertson hame, for it's a dark eerie nicht."

"I'm to gie Maister Robertson a convoy hame the nicht mysel'," said mine host, rising at the same time and putting on his hat and overcoat, and grasping firmly in his hand his great ash cudgel, as if preparing for another mysterious encounter with the weird-like denizens of the bog.

"Jamie," said the farmer, "you're a gey whin stronger than Peter; tak' you the lantern, an' I'll lift the stiles mysel'."

"But are ye no feart, aifter what ye've come through this awfu' nicht?" timidly enquired his better-half.

"Feart? gudewife," defiantly replied mine host—"feart! I'm ready for anither fecht whenever the time comes, for—

"Wi' tippeny we fear nae evil,
Wi' usquebae we'll face the——"

"Fie! for shame, gudeman," interrupted his wife, "an'

Maister Robertson, a rulin' elder o' the kirk, standin' an' hearin' ye a' the time!"

"But I didna say the word," quietly observed the gudeman in reply, taking the credit to himself for his circumspection. "Are ye ready, Jamie? Come awa', Maister Robertson. Button up yer coat, and tie yer comforter round yer neck for it's a gey cauld winter's nicht."

And away the trio went out into the darkness, mine host on the one side and his stalwart son on the other, with the phlegmatic and censorious Dominie in the midst.

A little bewildered at first, they soon got accustomed to the darkness, and strode down the hill with as steady steps as, under the circumstances, could with a good grace have been anticipated—Jamie keeping the lantern as much in front of the Dominie as possible, and his father lifting the stiles at the end of each park with due care and attention to their progress and comfort.

It was a beautiful night, the ground crisp and hard with the whitening frost; the air clear, sharp and exhilarating, with just enough of wind as gently to stir the leafless branches with a deep, hollow, weird-like sadness. Overhead the stars shone out in all their quiet, subdued loveliness, looking calmly down upon the wayfarers like so many guardian angels overshadowing their midnight path.

"Yonder's the spunkies i' the moss," burst out the farmer, when they had gone about mid-way down the hill. "Do ye no see them, Maister Robertson, kickin' an' flingin' and caperin' like sae mony warlocks frae the ither warld?"

"I see," replied the Dominie, "what might properly be termed the inevitable and natural exhaltations of a marsh or moss, phenomena of Nature explainable and clear in the light of science and philosophic research. The wonder would be, not that there should be phenomena of the kind, but why such should not appear in all similar circumstances."

"Ye're aff the subject a'thegither," pettishly rejoined his

companion. "Do you really mean to tell me, Maister Daniel Robertson, that thae warlocks I encoontered and slew this very nicht i' the bog yonder are no leevin' creatur's, wi' flesh an' bluid an' banes like ourselves?"

"Wisht!" said Jamie, interrupting. "Did you no hear yon lauch? I doot the waterkelpies are abroad the nicht!"

"What man of ordinary comprehension, or sound judgment," sneeringly retorted the Dominie, "could for a moment believe in such imaginary nondescripts as waterkelpies, far less give credence to the absurd and ridiculous idea that articulate sounds of laughter could, by any possibility, proceed from that which has no existence? Pshaw!"

The travellers had now reached the margin of the Kerbet, which, very much swollen by the recent rains, had overflowed its banks, its dark and drumly waters stretching far and near in the hollow, like a vast inland lake. As good, or ill fortune would have it, the rickety wooden bridge was still left intact. The courageous Dominie now declared that, as the frail structure could not bear the weight of more than one individual at the same time, he would go across it alone, and bidding his good guardians farewell, he boldly proceeded to put his brave purpose into execution.

Brave Daniel reached, without a word,
The middle of the trembling ford,
When guffaw from the bank,
A laugh arose—his fate deplore—
A cry of terror reached the shore—
"I'll never see my 'laddies' more"—
And 'tween the planks he sank!

"Whaur are ye?" cried mine host behind,
"For I the bodie canna find,
I'll tell't to a' the clachan:
Ou, there ye are, wat, drucket hen,
Half-drooned; I wot ye'll no again
Mak' sport wi' ony in the glen,
O' waterkelpy's lauchin!

The crestfallen, sadly-troubled, and discomfited Dominie was duly escorted to the door of his house in Kinnettles, where

his companions bade him a kind adieu, with sincerely-expressed wishes that no bad effects would follow his sudden and mysterious immersion in the haunted Kerbet.

The farmer and his son reached home in safety, very much to the delight and relief of the ever-watchful gudewife, who kindly welcomed them at its threshhold, with as much warmth of affection and kindly feeling as if they had just returned from a long and perilous journey.

The worthy farmer, and the no less worthy Dominie, now sleep side by side in the quiet, secluded churchyard of Kinnettles, undisturbed in their slumbers by the rush of their native river, in whose now unruffled waters no demons or waterkelpies riot or roar; but where all is serenity and peace in the smiling and fertile valley of the Kerbet.

The marshes and mosses have long since been drained and brought under productive cultivation; will-o'-the-wisps, the brownies, and the fairies have all disappeared; eldrich screams and weird-like sounds have given place to the songs of the reapers and the melody of birds; and green fields wave and wild flowers bloom on the once haunted and desolate Bog.

CHAPTER XII.

THE VILLAGE CLUB—1830.

"Ye powers wha mak' mankind yer care,
An' dish them oot their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware,
That jaups in luggies;
But if ye wish her gratefu' pray'r
Gie her a haggis!"

—*Burns.*

In the days of which I write there were no daily newspapers published out of London, public libraries were few and far between, and reading-rooms in the country were entirely unknown. Hence the establishment of "Village Clubs," at whose periodical meetings were reciprocated the general and political news of the week. I do not mean it to be understood that every hamlet or village had its literary or political Club; on the contrary, very few of the country parishes in Scotland could boast of having anything even approaching to the semblance of such institutions. People then were either content with the perusal of the weekly paper of the district at their own individual expense, or shared the coveted pleasure with others, each in his turn transmitting the precious treasure throughout its prescribed and charmed circle.

The village Club of Glamis was neither wholly literary nor wholly political. True, it partook somewhat of both in its compound elements, but essentially its objects and aims were of an entirely different character. In a word, the tie that bound the members of this little village Club together was

trusty friendship, and the end they had in view—the cultivation of good brotherhood.

"As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Acting on this principle, the subjects discussed at the meetings of this small and rather select society embraced the literature, politics, and current news of the day, together with every social and Christian topic which might have a tendency to amuse and instruct. Fettered by no creed of faith, guided by no rules of debate, the conversation flowed on in an easy, off-hand manner, with a sense of intellectual freedom quite exhilarating and delightful. Removed on the one hand from the prim-starched, hypocritical, "unco gude," and on the other from the openly licentious, profane, or ribald winebibber, the happy, versatile members occupied an enviable position between, enjoying in this vantage-ground a thorough appreciation, if not of lofty converse or elevated thought, at least of candour, truthfulness, straightforward independency of purpose, and intuitively inhaling an innate horror of all that was mean and selfish, artful or untrue.

Delighting in odd numbers, the Club was composed of five members only—viz, the dominie, the laird, the student, the miller, and the smith. Another odd feature in connection with the Club was that the blanks which might be occasioned by change of residence or death were never to be filled up on any pretence whatever, and that when four were removed by death the surviving member was bound to visit the Club-room in the village hostelrie every Auld Yule evening thereafter so long as he was able, and drink a bumper in solemn silence to the memory of those who were gone.

I shall now attempt to sketch the portraitures of the members of the Club, premising that there was such diversity in their moral and physical features, so much of that changeful light and shade so tantalising to the painter that it need not excite surprise if I should comparatively fail in bringing them fully *in propria persona* before my indulgent readers.

At the outset of my sketch I feel considerably relieved in regard to the first, and in many respects the most important member of the Club, having already in chapter xi., entitled "Will o' the wisp," given a portraiture of the "Dominie;" for, be it observed, it was he of Kinnettles, and not the dominie of the parish, that was the leading member in the Club of Glamis. When Daniel, however, sat last for his portrait, under the roof-tree of Foffarty, he was getting stricken in years, and considerably past the prime of life, whereas at this time he was in the full vigour of manhood, and at the height of his fame as a popular and successful teacher. Not a hair of grey yet silvered his raven locks, not a wrinkle had furrowed his colourless cheek. His air was light and jaunty, and his little, trig figure full of pompous agility. Always particular as to his dress, he was peculiarly sensitive as to the adornment of his person in this the heyday of his life. His quiet elegance was never more persuasive nor his pawky smile more potent and powerful. Yet with all his eccentricities and peculiarities there lay beneath a pedantic exterior a warm and generous heart, to the ripe fruitage of which, clustering around the future pathways of his favourite pupils, I have elsewhere and more than once most cheerfully and gratefully borne the most ample testimony.

The Laird of Rochel-hill was of an entirely different character, being in every respect the very antipodes of the worthy Dominie of Kinnettles. Tall, muscular, and firmly-knit, his iron frame seemed to have been formed in a Herculean mould. If the faculties of his mind did not bear the same proportion to the gigantic powers of his body that might have been wished, the difference between the two was considerably modified by a quiet, pawky humour peculiarly his own, and an enviable gift of *repartee*, which stood him in good stead when opposed to the merciless fire of his opponents more lavishly gifted with the faculty of speech than himself. Like the small lairds of Fife, he wore the gude auld blue bonnet, in preference to the modern beaver, then coming into

general use; his hodden grey coat, corduroy knee-breeches, strong wide-ribbed hose, and steel-heeled, tackety brogues being all in perfect keeping the one with the other. Farming his own land, the Laird was a practical agriculturist of the old school, admitting no novelty of any kind on his lands, until forced by the greater gain or ridicule of his more progressive neighbours to adopt it, which he would do quietly, and "under the rose," and so gradually as scarcely to be perceptible, except in the results that prospectively might follow. Exposed to all weathers, his complexion was as brown as a nut, which set forth in greater relief his small, twinkling hazel eyes, certainly by far the most intelligent part of the external physique of the Laird.

To sketch the Student is a much more difficult task. I do not mean that there was anything so peculiar or extraordinary in his external appearance that the art of the limner would be thoroughly baffled in its attempt to pourtray his features, and catch his expression, and give the general contour of his presence. The youth was fair to look upon; and, with a deeply-benevolent and contemplative expression in his eye, a fresh spring-flush of bloom on his delicate cheek, and a winning smile playing ever around his coral lips, would, had there been nothing else to attract and absorb the attention, have presented little difficulty to the experienced sketcher of the "human face divine." But like the puzzled painter in a wood full of ever-changing light and shade, the limner here no sooner caught the expression of the moment than it vanished in an instant, to give place to an entirely different expression, and so on, *ad infinitum*, until, bewildered and perplexed beyond the possibility of escape, he had to throw away his otherwise faithful pencil in despair. Doubtless the reason of this ever-changing light and shade was the inward workings of the soul developing themselves outwardly, in alternate night, alternate day; now, golden sunshine, rife with beauty and melodious sounds; anon, dark tempests sweeping harsh the mountain pines, in weird-like music wild; this moment,

the sobbing rain beating mournfully on the window-panes; the next, the rainbow breaking through the murky clouds in all the gorgeous colours of animating hope, and holy, peaceful love!

The Miller was a jolly-looking, portly, broad-shouldered personage, of middle height, of a sonsie, florid complexion, with a sleek smile on his cheek, and a waggish expression in his eye, which betokened extreme contentment and good fellowship. Indeed, you could scarcely ever see him—in the mill, at market, in the field, or seated at his cottage door on a fine summer evening—without imagining he was singing, like his great prototype, the Miller o' Dee—

> "I care for nobody—no, not I,
> If nobody cares for me!"

A well-to-do farmer's son in the glen, the Miller had received a liberal education, and, being well posted up in the current literature of the day, he was a formidable antagonist for any village disputant who had the temerity to break a lance with him in vain-glorious rivalry. Amongst his many good qualities, that of the piety of a learned and douce divine most certainly did not constitute one of the brightest—

> For if my mind be spoken true,
> He slept each diet the sermon through,
> And once fierce roused a drowsy elder,
> By roaring for another *melder!*

The Smith, stalwart, lank, sallow in complexion, with a thoughtful countenance and keen, black, piercing eye, formed a marked contrast to the Miller. Unlike the latter, he could not boast of having received a very liberal education, but in lieu of which he had inherited acute powers of observation, a considerable fund of mother wit, indomitable industry and perseverance, and a large amount of good, unvarnished common sense. An advanced Liberal of the extreme Radical type, he was the oracle of the village on all political subjects; and while delivering his ultimatum on the estates of the realm, or on things in general, he exhibited considerable knowledge

of the subjects on which he dilated, and showed not only a power of will and strength of purpose, but a certain rugged, clenching, slashing kind of Doric eloquence that seldom failed to arouse, if it did not convince, those whom he addressed. Divinity, however, was his chief and ever favourite topic. He could split hairs on Arianism and Calvinism, free-will and election, on the covenants of works and the covenants of grace, with the most astute and subtle debater of the day. Instead of going off, like the Miller, into a state of somnambulism during the delivery of the village sermon, he kept the eyes of his mind and body awake even more keenly than on other days, if perchance some slip of the tongue, or false stated proposition, might afford him subject-matter of discussion during the ensuing week. Yet the Smith had strong natural affections, a fine perception of the true and the beautiful, elevated aspirations and aims, and a good, kind, generous heart withal. The smithy was the centre from which radiated all the current news of politics and literature, as well as the silly gossip and scandal of the parish. There, amidst the showers of crackling sparks which flew upwards and around, and the swift, sharp cracks of the ever-descending hammer on the ponderous anvil, would the brawny, giant Smith propound the mysteries of Calvinism, the political creeds of Charles James Fox and William Pitt, or the newly fledged principles of Political Economy of Adam Smith. While this high converse proceeded in the inner sanctum, would brainless hinds and clownish gossips of the village lounge lazily around the door, indulging in all the tittle-tattle of the parish, prying into the secrets of the domestic hearth, exposing with boisterous gusto the sins and failures of their unsuspecting neighbours, and rejoicing with a deeper relish in the downfall or punishment of supposed delinquents, or abettors of crime, till, having reached their pitiful climax, they rejoicingly sang in chorus :—

How fop Tam Langlands jilted clean
Baith handsome Bess and bonnie Jean,
And took the dochter o' the miller,
Who'd neither beauty, sense, nor siller !

So much for the *dramatis personæ* of the village club of Glamis. There is just one other oddity to be noticed before the reader's formal introduction to the Club, which in many respects, is certainly the oddest feature of all. Strange to say, the members all fancied themselves to be poets. To test their individual excellences, or pretensions rather, it had, therefore, been resolved at the last assembly of the Club, that, as their next meeting would fall to be held on the evening of Auld Yule, each member should compose, and bring with him to the gathering, an original song or poem on subjects connected specially with the Howe of Strathmore, which he would be required to sing or recite for the benefit and decision of the meeting.

The appointed evening had at last come round. Auld Yule once so dear to, and so heartily celebrated by, every dweller in the Howe, again appeared in appropriate costume, attended by his satellites of frost and snow and hail, and heralded as was his wont by the sweet, soft notes of robin red-breast, who on that day welcomed himself into every household, hopping and twittering in the porch or on the floor, wishing all a merry Christmas and many returns of the season, and picking gratefully in return the numerous dainty crumbs which were lavishingly showered around him.

For three days previous a severe and blinding snow-storm had ruthlessly swept over the Strath, obscuring every familiar landmark, and foreboding a long continued "feeding" storm. To the intense delight of every one in the Howe, however, the morning of Auld Yule broke out bright and beautiful, the cheering rays of the sun tinging with a saffron and orange radiance the summits of the Sidlaw and Grampian Hills, and crowning with a jewelled diadem of purple and gold the far-off snow-capped Cairn-a-Month and Mount Blair, scattering with prodigal beauty around the upheaving lofty peak of the still more remote Schiehallion the concentrated effulgence of their united glory and splendour. Many a fat brose breakfast was cheerfully, yet speedily discussed that morning in the

Strath and Glen, and many a happy group of lads and lasses erewhile went on their several ways to spend a happy Christmas with their distant friends forming truly a red-letter day in, to them, the calendar of life.

Towards afternoon, however, unmistakable symptoms appeared in the heavens of a fresh outbreak of the storm. The sky grew troubled and gloomy; dark, murky, leaden clouds obscured the lustre of the sun's cold yet genial rays; and the feathery snowflakes began silently and steadily to fall, until the whole Strath was again enveloped in winter's livery of spotless white. As evening advanced the mysterious winds, erewhile asleep in their unknown caves, suddenly awoke in all their howling wrath, whirling the snow-wreathes with maddening strength along the plain, and fiercely drifting the thickly-falling snow in blinding eddies of resistless fury.

"A terrible storm, Mrs Hendry," said our friend the Smith, who was the first to arrive at the village hostelrie. "I'm thinkin' the Dominie will hae a gey warsall wi' the drift atween the hedges o' Brigton afore he tastes your haggis the nicht."

"An awfu' storm, indeed," replied our buxom hostess; "but I've nae fear o' Maister Robertson gettin' safely through the drift, for——"

"For what?" cried the Miller, who next abruptly entered, shaking off the snow from his brawny shoulders, for he scorned to wear a greatcoat, be the storm however severe—"for what?" he repeated, as he whirled his north-wester to its usual nag in the lobby.

"For he's sae very wee," pawkilly replied our hostess. "Little bodies are the teuchest at ony time, but teuchest ava in a storm."

"My certie!" laughingly rejoined the miller, "it's just as weel for ye Maister Daniel's no here for naething offends his dignity so much as to be ca'd leetle. But here come our friends from the glen—the laird and the young minister—as white as if they'd been smoored in ane o' my sacks o' flour."

"You're aye sae white wi' meal yoursel', Miller," quietly

retorted the laird, "that ye think it odd fin ither folk appear in your favourite livery—eh?"

"Come now," coaxingly said the miller to the bashful student, "lat me help you aff wi' that Puritan-lookin' cloak o' yours; and when you're a minister, I chap to be the minister's man, for in that case I wid hae nae fear, o' you acquittin' yoursel' to my entire satisfaction."

"Did ye ever here sic vanity?" interruptingly cried the smith. "Man"—addressing the miller—"ye ken nae mair about prechin' than daft Geordie, that never darkens a kirk door; and as for predestination——"

"Stop, stop," said the student, smilingly; "it is quite out of place to debate such knotty points of divinity on Old Christmas night. This is the season of innocent amusement and good cheer, and the learned debate must for once give way to the generous sentiment and cheerful song."

"Capital, Maister Student!" exultingly said the miller. "That's my mind to a hair; and until the dominie mak's his appearance, we'll carry out the suggestion in a practical manner. Mrs Hendry, this is Auld Yule nicht, ye ken, an' we'll just tak' a dram oot o' yer ain bottle to begin wi' for the praise-worthy purpose, as the Glasgow bodies would say, of sharpening oor appetites a wee bit for the proper enjoyment o' yer excellent haggis."

"That's not exactly what I meant, however," said the student, quietly, aside to the laird; "but the miller must have his own way for one night at least."

"When I spoke of predestination," chimed in the smith, "I didna at a' mean to pursue the subject to its logical and legitimate conclusion; but the allusion to the Puritan cloak went richt into my very heart, just as if I'd seen the black banner o' the Covenant flutterin' i' the breeze at the battle o' Bothwell Brig. The fac' is, there are very few divines even in our day who really ken the difference, if any, atween predestination, free will, or election, or——

"I wish you all a merry Christmas, my friends, and many

happy returns of the season," shiveringly exclaimed a voice, issuing from what at first sight appeared to be a round living snow-ball, which, like a ghostly apparition, noiselessly appeared in their midst.

"It's Maister Robertson, upon my word!" excitedly cried the miller, and in a twinkling he had eased him of his hat and greatcoat, unfolding *in propria personæ* the veritable dominie of Kinnettles, who, pleased to see the attention and deference paid to him, smiled one of his pawkiest smiles, and condescendingly shook them all very heartily by the hand, expressing at the same time his high appreciation of, and grateful thanks for, their kindly greeting.

"Supper's ready, gentlemen," said the worthy hostess, and immediately led the way to the principal room upstairs, where, on the hospitable board, already smoked the favourite national haggis, flanked by some dainty barnyard fowls and reaming bickers of Edinburgh ale.

The dominie, as President of the Club, took the chair amidst loud applause, and, after he had said grace the demolishment of the tempting viands was begun in good earnest, each helping the other with the utmost cordiality and good feeling.

"What a fine haggis, though," at last breaking the silence of speech, half-chokingly, said the miller. "I think our national bard was never more richt than when he christened the haggis, 'chieftain o' the puddin' race"—

> "'His knife see rustic labour dight,
> And cut you up wi' ready slight,
> Trenching your gushing entrails bright
> Like ony ditch;
> And then, oh, what a glorious sight,
> Warm, reekin', rich!'"

A leg o' that chuckie, laird, if you please"—adding, after a good long swill at the bicker—"and you may send me a wee bit o' that nice ham beside you, Maister Robertson. Thank ye, that will do," immediately resuming his masticating

powers, which, to do them justice, seemed to be of a rare order indeed.

"I trust you are all enjoying your Auld Yule supper?" quietly enquired the worthy President. "For my part, taking example from the English, I say as little as possible during my meals, reserving the 'feast of reason and the flow of soul' for the wine and desert. Any more haggis, laird?"

"Nae mair, thank you; but I think I've a wee bit corner for a slice o' that fine tongue—a commodity I'm no overburthened wi'. Will you tak' a slice, too, Maister Student? —I thocht I saw ye lookin' wi' a sheep's e'e in that direction —eh?"

"You have kindly anticipated my wishes," politely rejoined the student; "and I will trouble you, Mr Smith, for a wing of that fowl before you, also, when you are disengaged."

"Wi' great pleasure," said the smith. "As for mysel', I'll stick to the haggis the nicht, it bein' mair in keepin wi' the national holiday o' Auld Christmas. Our puir ancestors, the Covenanters, would hae been glad to hae tasted a bit o' it when wandering o'er the mountains and hidin' in dens an' caves o' the earth."

"Aff on the wrang tack again," said the miller; "but the best way is to lat ye rin the length o' yer tether; and I'm thinkin' afore it's run oot in a nicht like this, ye'll be sae chokit i' the snaw, ye'll be unco glad to get safe back again amon' kent folk at the keepin' o' Auld Yule, wi' a' the happy comforts o' a cozy fireside—ha, ha, ha!"

Thanks having been returned by the student, the cloth and *et ceteras* were removed from the table, leaving its well-polished mahogany exposed to view, as a fitting testimony to the care and tidiness of our excellent hostess.

While the punch-bowl and necessary adjuncts are being brought in I may as well explain that the table at which our worthies sat was of a shape perfectly round, and as Knights of the Round table, except the arm-chair on which the presid-

ent sat, there was no other mark visible to distinguish one member from another.

"Are your glasses all charged, gentlemen?" enquired the Chairman. "You are aware we only drink to two toasts at our meetings, viz.—'The King and Constitution,' and 'Our noble Selves.' Let them be given at once, that we may proceed to the more important business of the evening. 'To the King and Constitution,' gentlemen."

The toast having been duly honoured, the Miller was called upon to give "Our Noble Selves," which he did in almost as brief terms as the President had given the previous toast, with this difference, however, that the former insisted that his toast should be drunk to with all the honours, together with a tremendous "hip, hip, hurrah," as a necessary and suitable conclusion to his speech.

All having resumed their seats, the Student proposed that, as the night was fast wearing away, the real business of the evening should now be proceeded with.

"Ye'll be sittin' on heckle-pins," satirically said the Laird, "till ye get quit o' the burthen o' your sang, Maister Student, eh?"

"It will come to your ain turn by-and-by, Laird," quietly said the Smith. "Ye'll nae doot astonish us a' the nicht wi' your learnin'."

"Well then, gentlemen," said the President, glad to change at once the current of conversation, "to encourage you in your poetical efforts, I will, without the least hesitation, give you the trifle I have composed for this evening's entertainment." The Dominie then, in a fine clear, musical voice, sang—

THE BONNIE HOWE O' SWEET STRATHMORE.

Air—"Bonnie Wood o' Craigie Lee."

Soft flow thy streams, bright bloom thy flowers,
Thy birdies liltin' as of yore,
The music of thy fragrant bowers
The voice of love awakes once more.
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Life's early spring-time spent in thee,
My blessings on thee evermore.

And must I leave thee, bonnie Howe,
To brave the broad Atlantic's roar,
By gowand lea and broomy knowe,
Are all my youthful ramblings o'er?
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Life's joyous summer spent in thee,
And must I leave thee evermore!

Far from thy vocal woods and streams,
My fate I weeping sad deplore,
Yet oft my sunny golden dreams,
Do all thy charms to me restore.
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Life's autumn spend I far from thee,
Oh! shall I never see thee more?

Years fled—enraptured now I see
My own loved native Strath again,
Hail! bonnie Howe! shout I with glee,
Hark! love re-echoes back the strain.
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Thou bonnie Howe o' sweet Strathmore,
Life's closing eve I'll spend in thee,
And never, never leave thee more!

"Excellent!" said all the members, as with one voice they cordially pronounced their verdict.

"I wish I could sing like you, Maister Robertson," quietly said the Smith; "but my feeble voice, never very gude, is noo a little cracket, an' I dinna hae the same heart to lilt awa' as I used to do in my young days."

"Come awa' wi' your sang," impatiently rejoined the Miller, "We a' ken vera weell you're juist like a win'bag at the burstin'—ha, ha, ha!"

"Order, gentlemen," indignantly said the President. "No insinuations, Mr Miller. Your song, Mr Smith."

"Belangin' as I do, to Douglastown," said the Smith, "I've made up a wee bit sangie aboot my native Kerbet, which I'll sing the best way I can." Sings—

THE SWIFT FLOWING KERBET.

Air—"Saw ye my Father."

Sweet were the days by the swift flowing Kerbet,
When I trudged to Kinnettles' wee school;
Or fond wi' young Jessie oft willingly linger'd
To gaze in the deep minnow pool.

Fair were the lawns and the fields of sweet Brigton,
Surrounded by woodlands so green;
The sheep feeding rich in the haughs and the meadows,
The river meand'ring between.

Wild were our pranks with the kind-hearted miller,
As o'er the lade waters we swam;
Or sly stopp'd the voice of the noisy loud happer,
By shutting the sluice of the dam.

Loud, long our glad shoutings on holiday mornings,
As we play'd on the sunny bright knowes;
Or piled the ripe fruit in our burnish'd white flagons,
As we lay 'mong the blackberry boughs.

I've drank of the waters of many strange rivers,
And gaz'd on fair maidens divine,
But my heart turns to thee, my own native Kerbet,
The sights and the sounds o' langsyne.

"A very sweet song, indeed," approvingly said the Chairman.

"An' weel sung, too," chimed in the Laird, betraying at the same time considerable uneasiness as the time approached for him to give tangible evidence of his poetical powers.

"Nae shirkin', noo," authoritatively said the Miller. "If ye canna sing, Laird, ye maun juist get up upon your feet an' mak' a speech as lang's my airm; an' if so, it'll no be short, I'm thinkin'."

"We are all impatiently waiting for your song, Laird," said the President, respectfully, "and I feel our expectations in regard to your mental and vocal powers will be more than realised."

In obedience to the fiat of his chief, the Laird with great emotion sang—

GLAMIS' BONNIE BURNIE.

Air—"Katherine Ogie."

From springs on Sidlaw's highest hills
  Flows Glamis' bonnie burnie;
And down the glen it murmurs sweet,
  Wi' mony a jinkin' turnie.
It laves the meadows bright and green,
  Where lasses soft are singing,
And wild woods with the melody
  Of happy birds are ringing.

All Nature sang fair Isa's charms,
  Heav'n's smiles in bliss revealing,
As to mine own her lips I prest,
  And nought from her concealing.
She vowed her heart was wholly mine,
  Forsake me would she never;
Believing then her words sincere,
  My love I gave for ever.

On still thou flow'st, my bonnie burn,
  But thy voice is wild and dreary;
Birds' dewie songs attune no more
  My heart so faint and weary.
Woes me! the sunshine of my soul
  With her hath all departed:
No longer mine, yet from my heart,
  Oh! never to be parted.

The Laird's song had apparently astonished them all, for, instead of instant applause following, as in the case of the others, the members seemed to be struck dumb with amazement, as if they had not expected so fine marble out of such an unpromising quarry.

"That's fine, though," patronisingly said the Miller, at length. "Ye'd surely been jilted, Laird, i' your youth, else ye widnae kent sae weel aboot it."

"We will compare it with your own by-and-by," quizzingly remarked the Chairman. "Now, Mr Miller, we are all attention, sir, expecting you will astonish us by as gratifying an exhibition of the muse's inspirations as those to which we have just listened with so much pleasure."

"What a terrible nicht that is, though," said the Miller,

looking in the direction of the window, and apparently quite unheeding the satirical remarks of the worthy Chairman. "The wind's roarin' amon' the trees as if a' the demons an' evil speerits o' the air had been let loose at ance by the Prince o' Darkness to terrify us puir bodies wi' their screechin' din an' eldrich screams; an' the snaw-flakes are flappin' an' dashin' against the shiverin' window-panes juist like a heart-broken lover in sorrow an' in pain, left alane to his hopeless fate by his cruel false one, noo left him for ever——"

"Very good," interrupted the Chairman; "but we want your song, Mr Miller."

"Juist like him," said the Smith, with a triumphant leer in his waggish eye. "Nane kens better than himsel' what we're a' waitin' for. It's time *his* win'-bag was burst, at onyrate."

A peal of laughter followed this well-timed *repartee* of the Smith, which, having somewhat subsided, the Miller indignantly rejoined—

"I'll match my ain native Dean wi' the drumley Kerbet ony day;" and immediately, in a fine tenor voice, very tenderly sang—

MY AIN BONNIE DEAN.

Air—"Mrs Admiral Gordon's Strathspey."

Of a' the streams that gently flow
By moorland, strath, or den,
I love the Dean, meand'ring slow
Where dwells sweet Lizzie Glen.
She's dear to me as ane can be,
Love sparkles in her een;
Her voice sae sweet oft mingles meet
Wi' my ain bonnie Dean.

Sing by her cot, my bonnie stream,
Her charms sae rich and rare;
Gay deck, wi' diamond jewels bright,
Her gowden tresses fair.
Then on thy bosom tenderly
Bring safe my bridal queen,
By gow'ny howe and broomy knowe,
Come thou, my bonnie Dean.

I carena for the winsome swains,
  Nor each admiring e'e;
No a' their art, wi' dextrous dart,
  Can wile her heart frae me.
Wi' lav'rocks liltin' in the lift,
  An' linties by the green,
True, constant both, we'll pledge our troth,
  By thee, my bonnie Dean.

In after days, when bairnies play
  Upon thy hazel braes,
And Lizzie sings o' wedded joys,
  While spreading out her claes,
The burden o' her sang will be,
  While fond I listen keen—
"O, blessings rest the sweetest, best,
  On thee, my bonnie Dean!"

A long ringing burst of general applause followed the singing of "Bonnie Dean," which having been suitably acknowledged by the Miller, the Student was next called upon for his anxiously-expected contribution to the evening's enjoyment.

"We'll get something noo," said the Laird, "that'll be worth the listenin' to, for as he and I cam' alang frae the glen thegither to the meetin' o' the Club the nicht, he wad scarce speak a single word, but keepit strummin' and hummin' awa' to himsel', as if he was either demented, or in a deep broon study wi' which nae ordinar' mortal was fit to enter-meddle."

"But he's maistly aye that way," rejoined the Miller; "aye think, thinkin' awa' to himsel' fin he should be engaged in the conversation that may be goin' on, or else he juist runs in a minute to the other extreme. He's a perfect cameleon—he's never half an hour after the same thing."

"Grantin' yer premises are richt," said the more observant Smith, "yonr deductions are no soond. It by no means follows that because our young friend is reticent at one time and loquacious at anither, that he should therefore, or neces-

sarily, be devoid either of high intellectual thought, or of a steady persevering will to carry his thoughts, whatever these may be to a definite and practical conclusion,"

"I agree entirely with our good friend the Smith," remarked the Chairman, "who has stated the case with his usual clearness and good sense——"

"The forester tells me, too," interruptingly persisted the Miller, "that if a wee bit birdie happens to gie a bit liltie, that nae ither body wid tak' the least notice o', the electrified Student will listen to it in rapture, as if it were an angel fae Heaven that sang upon the tree——"

"You do me by far too much honour," said the Student, quietly interrupting the Miller in his turn. "The light and shade of which you speak are the result of inward emotions implanted by the great Creator, doubtless to serve some useful and beneficent purpose hereafter. If I sometimes revel in a visionary land of golden dreams, surrounded by an atmosphere of melodious song, it is equally my delight to dwell with my fellow-men upon this fair and beautiful earth, and to exhibit as far as I can all the traits and feelings of an intensely human, tender, loving heart. But, dismissing this subject, as too personal for the present, permit me to say that I have noticed with great interest that the sentiments expressed in the songs you have so creditably sung to-night refer almost exclusively to the past: and, strange to say, I have unconsciously struck the same key-note in the verses which, with your leave, brother members, I will now read to you." (Reads.)

THE DAYS O' LANGSYNE.

As in the gloaming's eerie calm,
'Midst fancies fleeting fast,
Our thoughts in unison revert
All fondly to the past,
So in the evening soft of life,
The scenes that brightest shine
Within our inmost heart of hearts
Are the days o' langsyne.

Now, as beside the fire I sit,
In my old rocking-chair,
Before the lighted tapers gleam,
Disclosing beauties fair,
How vivid come the visions blest,
Like sweet celestial dreams,
Of my own native valley—list!
The music of its streams.

The gowans, whins, the buttercups,
In all their beauty bloom,
The gowdies and the linties sing
Among the yellow broom.
Again I wander by the burn
That skirts the homestead dear—
My own loved home! can I conceal
The tributary tear?

No! gem with liquid silvery pearls
This roughly wrinkled cheek,
All fondly gushing from the heart,
Of life's bright morn they speak.
My father's manly form I see,
I hear my mother's voice,
And the rhymes of some old melody
Do now my heart rejoice.

How fresh the sough of wild-woods green
Plays round my raptured ear,
Recalling whisperings from afar
Of memories ever dear!
How clear the bleating of the sheep,
The lowing of the kine!
Alas! how dear, how very dear
The days o' langsyne.

The mill-wheel dashes round and round,
The miller spruce and gay,
The lads and lasses lilting loud,
I e'en as glad as they;
As, on the sunny knowe, beside
The tufts of golden broom,
'Midst songs of birds, soft hymns of streams
Wild flowers of richest bloom—

I sit and read the ancient lays
Of classic Greece and Rome,
Or sing with abbot, monk, and nun
Beneath cathedral dome;

My young soul stirred to ecstacy
By deeds of the olden time,
My thoughts, unconscious, moulding slow,
In strains of flowing rhyme.

Or wandering on the Hunter Hill,
The dreamy poet boy,
My youthful bosom heaving wild
With strange tumultuous joy,
As round me stretch the mountain groves,
Like dim cathedral aisles,
While sunbeams flash athwart the gloom,
Like God's own holy smiles.

And she I loved—— but feelings rise
That are akin to pain,
For, oh, the joys of early love,
They never come again!
Yet still in sunshine, radiant, pure,
Within my heart she dwells,
Her voice vibrating sweet its chords,
Like chime of silver bells.

Again the exulting soul is full
Of early memories,
All revelling blissful in the strains
Of ancient melodies.
The cherished odour of the fir,
Perfumes the mountain air,
The same glad hymn the lav'rock sings,
The uplands bloom as fair.

The ripening grain, so golden bright,
Is waving all around,
The brook runs lapping o'er the stones
With its ancient silver sound.
Lo! there in corner of the glen,
Beneath the shadow cool
Of hanging woods on Hunter Hill,
My own loved Airniefoul.

And here old Rover wags his tail,
In welcome at the style,
As from my pony I dismount,
And pat his head the while.
Or when from distant village school,
I come at eve's decline,
I hear his joyous bark as in
The days o' langsyne.

The blessed Sabbath peaceful dawns
  In all its sacred calm;
Hark! sweet arise the morning prayer,
  The holy altar psalm.
Again within the village church
  My pastor's voice I hear;
"Devizes'" notes in plaintive swell,
  Oft bringing fond the tear.

The breezes fresh from heather hills
  Come fragrant as of yore,
My throbbing pulses bounding beat—
  Yes, I am young once more;
And all is fair and beautiful,
  Each sound, each sight divine;
Alas! how dear, how very dear,
  The days o' langsyne!

No response coming from his friends, the Student, while folding up his manuscript, looked inquiringly around the table to ascertain the cause of the strange silence. To his surprise the several members were in tears. Tears are sympathetic, and in the eyes of the amazed and bewildered Student, the tears came quickly and unbidden, although he yet could scarcely tell the reason why. All at once this thought struck him with startling effect—"Have I through my imaginary hero given, by anticipation, expression to the feelings which I may experience in after-life, after having passed through the storms of sixty winters, and suffered all the ills which flesh is heir to? and are these the calm, yet melancholy reflections, which will, at that decade of my existence, occupy my mind when about to gird up my loins for the passage across the dark river, to the unknown world beyond?" The Student, overcome with his emotions, covered his face with his hands, and wept long and bitterly, as one who would not be comforted.

"I think we've been a' greetin' thegither," at last said the Miller, at the same time wiping, with his coat-sleeve, the big tears that still stood in his humid eyes. "That was very affectin', though, Maister Student; it cam' to the heart at

ance, an' although I strove hard to hide my feelin's, I was fairly overcome at the last."

"It is such touches of Nature," solemnly remarked the President, "'that makes the whole world kin.'"

"It's ten minutes ayont the twal," resumed the Miller. "We'll just hae *deuchin doris*, then, 'Auld Langsyne,' an' syne we'll part—happy to meet, sorry to part, and happy to meet again."

The stirrup-cup was duly handed round, the worthy Chairman remarking during its progress that he hoped they would have many more such happy and profitable meetings in the days that were to come.

All now rose to their feet, and, led by the stentorian voice of the Miller, sung with fine effect, and with considerably greater feeling than their wont, the grand old national anthem, so dear to the heart of every Scotchman, whether at home or abroad.

Descending to the lobby, they found the worthy hostess ready to hand them their greatcoats and mufflers; and the process of wrapping up having been completed to their entire satisfaction, they issued forth from the comfortable hostelrie into the cold air of a frosty winter night.

The winds were now hushed into a calm, the snow had ceased to fall, and the stars shone out in all their brilliancy and splendour. In the little square in front of the inn, the members of the Club bade each other an affectionate adieu, with many good and heart-felt wishes for their future welfare; and with another warm shake of the hand, they reluctantly separated, and went on their several ways homewards—a raven in his flight over them ominously whispering in the air—

"WHEN WILL THESE FIVE MEET AGAIN?"

CHAPTER XIII.

ST ORLAND'S STONE.

"Sweet the hum
Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
The lisp of children, and their earliest words.
. . . And dear the schoolboy spot
We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot.
But sweeter still, than this, than these, than all,
Is first and passionate love—it stands alone,
Like Adam's recollection of his fall."

Byron.

BESIDES the ancient obelisk already noticed in the Legend of the Murder of Malcolm II., in 1034, there is another obelisk of more elaborate design in the immediate vicinity of the manse at Glamis. The former—although Malcolm was actually buried at Iona—may probably mark the spot where, tradition saith, the King fell, and the latter may have been erected to his memory. This supposition is strengthened by the symbolical figures represented on the stone at the manse —two men in the apparent attitude of forming some secret conspiracy, with a lion and a centaur overhead, exhibiting the bloody nature of the crime; the several kinds of fishes engraven on the reverse of the monument representing the loch in which the assassins were drowned.

St Orland's Stone stands about a mile north-east of the castle of Glamis, near the small hamlet of Cossins. With all due deference to those who have supposed that this obelisk is also a memorial of the murdered King, I am of opinion that it was erected at a period long antecedent to the death of Malcolm II., and records, in consequence, a totally different

event, or events. Indeed, the flowered cross so rudely yet sharply chiselled on this stone classifies it, in my humble judgment, with the less-known sculptured stone that stands near to the old church at Eassie, or the more celebrated pillars at Meigle and Aberlemno. If this view be the correct one, it would necessarily fix the date of erection some time between the seventh and ninth centuries. It was early in the fifth century, when the Romans abandoned Britain, that the inhabitants of the south of Scotland were converted to Christianity; but those in the north did not embrace it until the close of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century. The pillars with crosses and other Christian symbols engraven on them must therefore have been erected subsequent to the conversion of the inhabitants to Christianity, and before the close of the Pictish period of 843.

A monumental pillar was called in the olden time "Amad," a Hebrew word signifying the lips or words of the people, meaning thereby that the people of former ages spoke through those symbolic pictures to the generations that came after them. Hence the popular traditions transmitted to posterity in connection with these "Speaking Stones," such as that they called out when a dead body was placed upon them, or contradicted a person who swore falsely by them—common tradition, indeed, regarding them as once animated beings.

Commencing with the mystic and fabulous ages of remote antiquity, the traditions of Strathmore existed in scarcely less strength and influence in the popular superstitions of the last or even in the beginning of the present century. Death lights, warnings, second sights, mysterious forebodings of evil; not to speak of ghosts, hobgoblins, brownies, and fairies, were just as veritably believed in by our fathers and grandfathers of the Howe as they were by their rude progenitors of any former age.

The popular tradition connected with St Orland's Stone was that, either by speech or sign from itself, or inward response felt by those who invoked its aid, the events of the

future were prophetically revealed. Maidens, therefore, repaired to its hallowed shrine at the midnight's 'witching hour to consult the holy oracle as to their future destiny; and lovers plighted, with bated breath, their solemn troth, and vowed to heaven their unchanged and unchangeable love.

Mary Armstrong, the butler's daughter, was as pretty and coquettish a blonde as there was in all the Howe of Strathmore. Her dress, though plain, as became her station, was always neat and becoming, and the simple drapery so artfully arranged that her graceful and handsome figure was always displayed to the best advantage. No one, however, of even ordinary perception but could detect in the pouting lip and roguish eye the confirmed trifler, and coquettish Love, according to the ordinary acceptation of his infirmities, being "blind," could not in consequence perceive these flagrant defects in her character; and so her numerous and ardent wooers went round and round the charmed circle in which she moved as if drawn unresistingly by the potent magnet of her magical influence.

This hollow device could not, however, last long, for, although the jilted seldom confess their discomfiture in words, yet their dejected appearance betrays their chagrin, and their actions evince either their disappointment or passive disgust. Misfortunes, it is said, make one acquainted with strange bedfellows; and so it turned out in this case. The powerful loadstone of sympathy had, from the same cause, mysteriously attracted two apparently very opposite characters together.

The miller's son had been an enthusiastic and constant wooer of the butler's daughter; but he, in his turn, had been cruelly cast off by the versatile maiden, when she became tired of his importunate addresses. Thereafter her cap was set to catch higher game, and her affections, such as they were, without the least hesitation or compunction, were immediately transferred to the eldest son of the worthy minister—an equally ardent admirer of Mary, whose reign over her heart, however, comprehended even a briefer space

than that enjoyed by his more lowly, yet not less passionate and persistent rival.

The two cast-off wooers having accidentally met one autumn evening at the Market Muir, they proceeded homewards to the village together.

"You seem very dull to-day, Jamie," said the minister's son, after the two friends had walked a considerable distance in company, without exchanging any words, except the mere formal compliments of the day. "What is the matter with you, my man? You are not like yourself at all, Jamie."

"I think there's a pair o' us." replied Jamie. "You havena spoken a word yoursel,' Maister Alfred, for the last twenty minutes. This is no your usual way—you are sae hearty and cheerfu' wi' high and low, rich and poor."

"When did you see the butler's daughter?" quietly rejoined Alfred, unheeding the remarks regarding himself.

"No for some time," said Jamie, blushing. "Fan did ye see her yersel', Maister Alfred? It's said you are the favourite noo in that quarter; but, depend upon it, she'll jilt you some o' these days in as cruel a manner as——"

"She has jilted you," interrupted Alfred. "The fact is, Jamie," he continued, "we are two great fools to be imposed upon as we have been by such a gay, giddy, heartless imp; and I am resolved—firmly resolved to be revenged," concluded Alfred, in a semi-comic, theatrical manner, his voice rising ominously at the same time several octaves above its natural compass.

"Fat's that you say, Maister Alfred?" quickly replied his companion. "You're no to bring the lassie to ony harm, surely? Wranged me sair as she has dune, I widna allow a single hair o' her head to be touched wi' ill intent, if I could help it, for, to tell the honest truth, Maister Alfred"—wiping at the same time away with his sleeve the tale-telling tear that was gathering—"I hae a soft place in my heart for Mary yet."

"You have quite mistaken my meaning," said Alfred,

half-laughing at the comical appearance assumed by his partner in distress. "I would not lift a finger to injure her personally. The revenge I spoke of is of a different kind. Instead of harm, I wish the maiden, good, Jamie, and still have my revenge in a way you wot not of."

The ice being now fairly broken, like ships in distress, they sympathetically bore away to the nearest friendly port for the necessary repairs to enable them to continue their voyage. During their cruise homewards, Alfred confided to his shipwrecked ally a scheme he had deliberately formed with the object, at the same time, to avenge their mutual wrongs, and to bring about the reformation of the offending maiden—the well-known and confessed cause of all their misfortunes. The scheme partook somewhat of those practical yet questionable frolics indulged in by Alfred and his fellow-students at the University of St Andrews; but as the parties most interested in carrying out its execution were perfectly satisfied of its capabilities to ensure success, it is certainly no business of ours to question its propriety.

Alfred was not long in meeting Mary Armstrong, and as she did not in reality wish to cast eventually off such a coveted prize as the minister's son, she willingly permitted Alfred to accompany her home. During their walk to the Castle, Alfred, pretending to forget his defeat, like a skilful general endeavoured to make the most of his present opportunity, and began the siege anew. With this view, he renewed his "rejected addresses"—skilfully cautious, however, not to betray himself by promises he really never meant to fulfil. The consequence was that Mary, still coy and coquettish as her wont, was cleverly drawn by Alfred into making a solemn promise to refer the matter of her destiny to the oracle at St Orland's Stone.

Jamie, having been duly apprised of the engagement, lay down, with some trepidation and misgiving, in a neighbouring hollow on the appointed night, to await the mysterious issue, while Alfred busied himself in covering the Stone with

a large linen sheet, seating himself, when he had draped it in white, on the side of the pillar opposite to that by which the maiden would approach the Stone.

It was a gusty, moonlight night, at the witching hour when spirits haunt the air, and demons roam abroad on the earth. The Queen of Night rode ominously on her silver chariot in a troubled and changing sky, and the fitful winds chimed sad and mournfully among the leafless trees. Mary had almost approached the stone unobserved by the watchers, when the moon, suddenly bursting through a black, driving cloud, disclosed her beautiful form in the suppliant attitude of a devout worshipper, solemnly invoking the assistance and presence of the Oracle of St Orland. Awaiting the expected response, she wistfully raised her eyes, when, instead of the well-known sculptured pillar, she wildly shrieked on beholding what to her excited imagination, appeared to be a denizen in reality of the other world. Her fears of the future augmented, as a hoarse, unearthly voice prophetically exclaimed—"Beware! Beware! Beware!"

This warning of the Oracle might doubtless be interpreted in many ways, according to the phase of thought indulged in, or the complexion of retrospective feeling passing through the mind at the time. Though equally superstitious as her compeers, Mary Armstrong, with all her thoughtless frivolity, being of a practical turn of mind, applied, after due reflection, the prophetic warning, not only personally to herself, but to that particular besetting sin which she now remorsefully felt had hitherto characterised her restless and unsettled life.

As Alfred had anticipated, the happy result was that the butler's daughter became a staid and reflective maiden, and in a short time was comfortably married to the douce, swarthy smith of the village, to whom she proved a contented, faithful, and affectionate wife.

Jamie, although he never forgot his first love, in course of time became the industrious and cheerful tenant of the "auld meal mill," and Alfred gradually attained by his learning and

genius to the very highest place among the celebrated preachers of the day. To their sound judgment and delicacy of feeling be it further recorded to their credit that not until after the death of Mary, did they disclose the story of the white sheet on St Orland's Stone, or reveal the author of that terrible yet well-meant warning which changed in a moment her whole character, and turned into another channel the wayward current of her existence.

Although the miller apparently seemed resigned to his fate, and went about his ordinary business so diligently that everything went well and prosperously with him, still there was an under-current of unrest beneath the calm unruffled surface above, a deep-seated, corroding grief, which, unknown to the world, exercised over his mind a painful, yet pleasing influence, solemnising, if not saddening, every action of his otherwise uneventful life. This was his never-changing, undying affection for his first love. So true is it in real life, in every rank and station, whatever cold, unfeeling men of the world may assert to the contrary, that true heart love never knows decay. Circumstances may intervene to prevent the visible union of two loving, devoted hearts, but they will ever remain united in reality all the same. Other family ties may be formed, and the duties of husband and wife, father and mother, religiously, nay, affectionately discharged, but the old old feeling is still there, not, I verily believe, for the purpose of disquieting and making unhappy —God never intended that—but rather to hallow and temper the bursting exuberance of domestic joys.

There is this difference, however, between love as a passion, and love as a deep-rooted feeling of the heart, that whereas the former may change to hatred, the latter—never! Every good and loving wish surrounds the object of a first affection, these wishes culminating in the fervent hope that wedded love may be ever happy, the children rising up to call their parents blessed.

The miller had a fine ear for music, and was an excellent

player on the violin, but after this, his first and greatest disappointment in life, he hung his harp upon the willows, where it ever afterwards remained uncared for and unstrung. He also sung well, but now his musical powers were concentrated on one solitary song. Not that he ever audibly sung this song, but mentally brooded over it through life. Not only did its melody come spontaneously and unbidden when he feverishly awoke at early morn, and when he gently fell asleep at eventide, but without interfering with his ordinary avocations, it constantly occupied his thoughts, whether in the workshop, at market, or in the field, in the solitary lane, or in the crowded city. Time, instead of blunting the fine edge of this pristine feeling, only deepened and intensified its pleasing sadness; and, like the wounded dove which instinctively covers with its fluttering wings the poisoned arrow which is slowly doing its deadly work, so the poor deserted lover hugged the more tenderly and to the last, the fatal shaft which surely, though unseen, was gradually draining to the last dregs the ebbing stream of life:—

EARLY LOVE.

Dear early love! these beauteous scenes
No charms have now for me,
How cruel thus to break the tie
That bound my soul to thee.

O how I loved with thee to roam
By woodland, stream, and bower,
And whisper all my inmost thoughts
With hope's electric power!

How soft on golden wings was borne
The wild-flower's rich perfume,
As glad we roamed o'er hazel braes,
Fringed bright with yellow broom!

How sweetly blushed the dewy rose,
How glad the linnets sang,
When with thy thrilling, silvery strains,
The greenwood echoes rang!

And when at evening's twilight hour,
Thee to my heart I prest,
We wept, we vowed, O! surely then,
Were we supremely blest!

And now, when all is over, love,
  And I'm no longer thine,
Not heaven itself will disapprove
  A love so pure as mine.

O! bid me not then e'er forget
  Those hours of rapturous joy,
When free from care I roamed with thee,
  The blithsome artless boy.

For, Oh! this heart can never cease
  To beat, first love, for thee,
My love can never die though thou
  Hast torn thyself from me.

Love, deep, eternal, changeless love,
  Will not thus cast away,
When firm implanted in the breast,
  It never knows decay!

Another incident in connection with St Orland's Stone, occurred a short time afterwards.

Helen Lindsay, the younger daughter of a well-to-do crofter in the immediate neighbourhood of Cossins, was as pretty a brunette, as Mary Armstrong had been a beautiful and fascinating blonde. There was this difference in their character and feelings, however, that, whereas the latter was volatile and changeable, the former was unswerving and constant in her love. Yet with all this fixity and steadiness of purpose, strange to say in one remarkable instance she proved herself at fault.

Amongst her numerous admirers in the Strath, the most prominent by common consent were the young carpenter of the village, and the elder son of the aged farmer of Drumgley. Either, irrespective of their excellent character, and good looks, would in point of social position have been a most suitable and eligible match for the rich crofter's daughter. It so happened, however, that the young maiden's heart was equally divided between the two lovers. This untoward state of her feelings she frankly and unequivocally confided to both, affirming at the same time that she would be quite happy and contented with either of them.

What was to be done? A busy cleansing out of old horse-pistols, and an anxious furbishing up of rusty claymores of course. Nothing of the kind. The mill-wright and the farmer were men of common sense, with cool heads, and unexciteable feelings withal. At a mutual and amicable conference it was solemnly agreed that the choice of the maiden should be referred simpliciter to the Oracle of St Orland's Stone. A certain night was accordingly fixed when Helen and her two lovers were to appear in company at the shrine of the Oracle, whose decision was to be received as final. The only other condition attached to the compact was, as it turned out to be, a very necessary and important one. The proviso was this:—In the event of either of the lovers not putting in appearance at the time appointed, the compact to be held as irrevocably dissolved, and the one who fulfilled his promise, to be declared the accepted suitor of Mary Armstrong.

It so happened that the honest millwright received intelligence on the following day of the sudden death of an old friend, and an invitation to attend his funeral. The day of the interment was the same as that on the evening of which it had been agreed to meet at St Orland's Stone. Not in the least doubting but that he would be quite able to keep both appointments, especially as the interment was to take place at Glamis, and anxiously desirous to pay his last respects to the remains of his friend, he started early for the Murroes, where his friend had died, to attend his funeral.

It was the universal custom then, as I know from experience it still is, that the friends and acquaintances of the deceased who attended these country funerals came from great distances, and necessarily required, as they liberally received, a bountiful supply of all kinds of substantial viands and native liquors. It is just possible that sometimes there may have been an excess of the latter over the former. Be that as it may, the funeral procession started at last on its road to Glamis. There being no hearse in the parish, the

remains of the deceased were put into a cart, and the coffin carefully covered over with the ancient and well-worn mortcloth. Amidst the sobs and tears of sorrowing women, and heart-felt sighs of aged, grey-haired men, the lowly, unpretending funeral car proceeded slowly on its rugged and circuitous route.

As the irregular and highly characteristic procession moved on by the dark woods of Ballumbie, the attendants gradually dropped off until at Powrie Brae, where the road joins the Forfar highway, the number had been gradually reduced to about a dozen of the stronger and younger men—including, of course, our good friend the millwright. On and on, amidst the sweltering heat, they slowly toiled, until they had reached the well-known divergence of the road at Tealing—that to the left leading to Glamis by Lumleyden, and that to the right to Forfar by Fotheringhame. The weather being excessively warm, and feeling fatigued by their long journey, they unanimously agreed to adjourn to the then way-side inn for refreshment, leaving the cart with the corpse in a recess a little way off from the junction of the three roads.

Bicker followed bicker, and stoup followed stoup, until the extent of their potations began gradually, yet visibly, to tell both upon their physical and mental condition. One thing was quite certain—it was now far on in the afternoon, and that they took no note of time, whatever reckoning they kept of their cups. All at once, like a flash of lightning, the startling remembrance of the important meeting that evening at St Orland's Stone, which was to decide irrevocably his future destiny, penetrated the half-muddled, alarmed brain of the conscience-stricken millwright, who, rising in a moment from his seat, declared he would drink no more, and firmly insisted that they should immediately proceed to the place of interment.

From the authoritative and determined manner of the speaker, his companions saw at once the futility of resistance;

so, submitting with the best grace they could, they, in a somewhat unbecomingly irregular manner, proceeded to the spot where they had left the cart with the corpse.

What was their unutterable surprise and amazement when neither cart, nor horse, nor corpse was to be seen! In vain they eagerly searched every cranny, shed, and outhouse—the cart, with its precious contents, was nowhere to be found!

In their present plight of dreamy half-unconsciousness, it would have been certainly unexpectedly remarkable if they had satisfactorily solved the mysterious enigma. So, without attempting any rational or logical solution—feeling, doubtless, their utter incapacity for so doing—they jumped at once to the conclusion, that as their dead friend was "no very canny" while he lived, the Devil had taken the body to himself when he died.

"But the De'il, if he had wished to tak' him to himsel'," said one of the most thoughtful of the group, "could hae dune that without plaguing us takin' him a' this length."

"Besides," said another, "he needna ta'en the cart and the horse, although he micht hae ta'en the corp. He's nae use for the cart, and as for the bit beastie, it never did him ony harm, I'm sure."

These acute and sensible remarks might, if followed up, have led to some feasible, if not satisfactory solution of the circumstance; but the general opinion decidedly being that no explanation could by any possibility prevail other than that already given, and not being otherwise in the mood for weighing seeming probabilities and drawing logical deductions, they turned their faces homewards.

What was the poor millwright to do? To go on to Glamis and meet the company invited there, without the body of the deceased, would, he reasoned, be simply a mockery. His safest course, he concluded, would be to follow the multitude, whether to good or evil. Accordingly he joined issue with his fellow mourners, and moodily proceeded with them on the road he had come, not knowing what might betide them

on the way, or what would be the result at their journey's end.

As may be supposed, their heads became somewhat clearer as they proceeded. Still no other feasible explanation presented itself to their minds than that the Evil One was the dreaded cause of the dire catastrophe, and the millwright, fully as superstitious as themselves, not being able either to solve the mystery or propound any rational interpretation, the matter became a settled point without any further controversy.

They at last reached the point from whence they had started. Judge of their amazement when on entering the courtyard of the farm they stumbled upon the veritable cart and horse of their dead friend, with the coffin and mortcloth untouched where they had been so solemnly laid in the morning! The simple fact was, that while they cared for their own creature comforts, they had forgotten to provide any provender for the horse, and the poor beastie, after waiting a reasonable time, and doubtless feeling aggrieved by their neglect, quietly turned its head homewards in search of more hospitable quarters!

It is easy to haloo when one is out of the wood, and to become courageous when the danger is past; and so in this case it ludicrously turned out.

"The horse and cart, with the coffin," 'twas naively said, "were left where three roads met. The horse could not have been expected to take either the one to Forfar or that to Glamis, for the simple reason that the beastie had never been there at all."

"Of course not," chimed in, interruptedly, another wiseacre of the group, "and therefore the sensible animal took the road homewards, which it knew."

The whole affair having been thus satisfactorily settled to their own entire satisfaction, and having arranged for the interrupted funeral to take place on the morrow, they adjourned in a body to the farmhouse, to join the female

relations and acquaintances of the deceased, who had assembled to drink tea on their departure, and who were all in total ignorance of the ludicrous mishap which had taken place.

What occurred on the evening of that eventful day beside St. Orland's Stone may be more easily imagined than described. A merry wedding took place shortly afterwards in the Howe when Helen Lindsay and young Drumgley were united in the holy bonds of matrimonial love. The millwright, though suffering acutely under his sore disappointment, had the good sense to accept the kindly-sent invitation to the marriage; but no allusion, we may rest assured, was made on the festive occasion either to the unlucky funeral, or to the equally unfortunate tryst at ST ORLAND'S STONE!

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LILY OF THE VALE.

"Gone are the heads of the silvery hair
And the young that were have a brow of care,
And the place is hush'd where the children play'd,
Nought looks the same save the nest we made."

Mrs Hemans.

THAN the Milton, there was not a pleasanter, cozier, or happier homestead in all the wide valley of Strathmore. It has seen many changes, however, since the time of which I write. None the least of these was its change of tenancy, when Arthur Cargill bade it forever farewell—when he left with his household to seek a new home in the backwoods of Canada.

The broad acres of the Milton, although not uniformly of the same high quality, never failed to yield a rich and profitable return to the practical agriculturist who farmed it so scientifically, and so well; for Arthur Cargill was accounted amongst his compeers as the best educated and foremost tiller of the soil in his day. To this home he had brought his blushing and happy bride, the eldest daughter of a neighbouring farmer in the Howe, who had in every respect proved a worthy and willing helpmate to him in all the vicissitudes of his joys and sorrows.

In course of time seven lovely boys were born to him, who grew up in quiet beauty like so many olive plants around his hospitable and happy hearth. Still the measure of his earthly happiness was not yet full, for both he and Mary, his wife, yearned in secret for a girl, to crown, as with a diadem of glory, their connubial bliss. The eighth addition to the family circle was now expected; and when the child was born

the joyful news was heard that the young stranger was really and in very deed—a lassie.

All things continued to thrive with the worthy farmer, until the Milton became the very *beau ideal* of a Scottish homestead in the nineteenth century. His well-reared cattle browsed on the fruitful plains around; his numerous flocks of sheep fed on the rich haughs and meadows, or whitened with their fleecy brightness the neighbouring Sidlaw Hills; while his merry reapers among the golden harvest fields sung in the blithest strains the songs of contentment and peace.

A decade of years had now rapidly passed away since the birth of Arthur's daughter, and Jeanie Cargill's charms were gradually bursting into the full matured bloom of womanhood. She was a model type of the true Scotch beauty, with this exception—that, while she had in perfection the aquiline, delicately-cut features; the soft, blue, dreamy eyes; the ringlets of golden yellow, and the silvery voice of ringing sweetness, her cheeks had not the blushing richness of the rose, but the pale and subdued, though lovely hue of the lily. Hence, by general consent, she was endearingly known throughout Strathmore as the "Lily of the vale."

But she had other and higher charms than these. Her mind was richly endowed, not only with the more solid acquirements of a liberal education, but with all that was amiable in disposition, gentle in spirit, beautiful and true in heart. Her manners were as void of affectation as her actions were destitute of interested motives. Thoroughly unselfish in her nature, she wished all with whom she came into contact to share the common joys and mental pleasures she experienced herself. A halo of goodness and beauty encompassing her wherever she went, she was indeed the charm and delight of her rural home, the sunshine and joy of the lovely strath in which she dwelt.

Admirers of every station she had many. The bashful swain and the purse-proud squire, alike assiduously strove to win her regards, and bask in her smiles. To one only had

she given any encouragement. This was Percy Guthrie, son and heir to the rich and worthy farmer of Scroggerfield, and one in every respect worthy of such a maiden's love.

Percy and Jeanie had attended Kinnettles parish school together, and had, unconsciously, become warmly attached to each other from their youth upwards. Many a happy ramble they had had in the sylvan woods of Brigton, and along the rich haughs and meadows that fringe with emerald beauty the banks of the swift-running Kerbet. Hand-in-hand would they joyously wander on; now stopping their march for a brief moment to listen to the merry songs of the happy birds, or to pull a primrose or gowan from the lovely greensward on which they trod; anon to watch the speckled trout and gambolling minnow, as they sported in their own wild joy in the shady pools of the beautiful river; or to pat with affectionate gentleness, the pretty heads of the new-born lambs, as they quietly lay in some flowery hollow, basking in safety their brief hours of happiness in the sultry rays of the summer's sun.

In going or returning by the bonny hedges of Brigton to Kinnettles "wee school," while his other schoolmates were roystering away in their joyous mirth, and roughly indulging in practical jokes at his expense, Percy was ever silently by the side of Jeanie Cargill; not that without his guardianship she would ever receive insult or come to harm, but feeling intuitively it was not only his duty, but his right to stand between her and all danger, imaginary or otherwise.

On one of these occasions, while returning from school, and when Percy had become a stout lad of fourteen, the practical joking had, in his estimation, taken such an offensive turn, that, purposely walking on with Jeanie before his schoolmates, at a quicker pace than was his wont, he abruptly bade her adieu as she entered Douglastown, and, returning the way he had come, bent on avenging the insult he imagined he had received, he met in proud defiance his roystering schoolmates, and challenging any one of them to

single combat to settle the quarrel, calmly awaited their decision.

Great was the consternation in the enemy's camp, and, a council of war having been held, it was wisely determined that the biggest boy in the group should be selected as their champion. Now, the biggest boy—Davie Gray—was a veritable big boy indeed, and, as far as size and strength were concerned, shewed a marked contrast to the slender stripling with whom he was to measure his martial prowess. Although Davie afterwards became an esteemed minister in a rural parish not far from his native Howe, his appearance at this time was far from being clerical or prepossessing. Stalwart and swarthy, big-boned, and long-legged; with a great black, bushy, burly head, surmounted by a very small Glengarry bonnet; a pair of piercing black eyes, and a Roman beak, as bent and sharp as that of a hawk; with hodden-grey clothes by far too small for the growing body they encased, and great tackety, home-made brogues, as heavy as a ploughshare, the figure presented by the embryo minister was anything but savouring of the manse.

"Tak' aff your coat, Davie—tak' aff your coat," cried the excited urchins, eager for the fray; "ye canna feicht wi' your coat on, man," forming a wide living ring, at the same time, round the expected combatants, just in front of the gateway leading to the home farm of Brigton.

Percy's jacket was off in an instant, which act Davie perceiving with the tail of his eye, obliged him to follow suit, and to appear at least courageous, although, if the truth must be told, the little courage he had was now beginning, like that of another personage in similar circumstances, to ooze out rather quickly from his finger ends.

"Tak' your time, my lad," Davie growled at length; "I'll be at you in a jiffey." But, somehow or other, Davie's homespun coat would not be persuaded to come off even, with the zealous assistance of several boys, who, after many fruitless attempts at co-operation, gave it up in despair, not,

however, without quietly insinuating that "Davie was naething but a coo'rd."

"Davie's feart," cried the other boys in the ring. "Davie's feart, and winna feight."

"Fa says I'm feart?" wildly shouted Davie, now fairly put upon his mettle; and, casting his hitherto unyielding coat from him with the utmost ease, he again defiantly exclaimed, "Fa says I'm fear't?" at the same time somewhat retreating from, rather than advancing to meet the foe.

Something again had evidently gone wrong, and the more eager of the group of boys surrounded their champion in the utmost consternation. Still Davie showed no signs of immediate action, far less any intention of dying game.

"Come awa' hame," said a little fellow, more observant than the others. "Lat him pech, and pech awa'; he's feart I tell ye, and winna feight."

"Fa says I'm feart and winna feicht?" for the third time roared the valiant Davie, brandishing his brawny arms in the air, and rushing headlong into the ring, as if to annihilate at one fell swoop his brave, yet comparatively puny antagonist. Percy, to avoid the apparently coming blow, dexterously stepped aside to prevent the awful consequences thereof, when his ferocious antagonist, by the sheer force of the impetus he had given himself, went bounding like a Jove-shot thunderbolt to the other side of the road, where, tripped by an unfriendly boulder, over and over again he rolled, until, amidst the jeers and laughter of all, he sprawled and floundered in the miry ditch!

While the preparations for the fight were going forward, and unknown to his schoolmates, a little spy in the camp had quietly slipped away to Kinnettles, and informed the worthy schoolmaster of the expected battle, exaggerating, doubtless, every little detail, and extending the affair into the largest dimensions he possibly could. Scarcely had the untoward event above referred to occurred, when "Daniel" was descried in the distance half-walking, half-running, to the

scene of action. When he reached the battle-field, the boys had just managed to drag the almost inert body of Davie to the middle of the road, when, mistaking the red clay with which he was bespattered for veritable human blood, and interpreting his silence as the silence of death, the stricken schoolmaster piteously exclaimed—

"My laddies! Oh! what's this you've dune? Killed poor Davie Gray! Wha's brain planned the plot? Wha's hand did the deed? Wae's me! that I should hae lived to see this day! Ane o' my ain laddies murdered—killed by ane o' my ane bairns!"

To the surprise and delight of the grey-haired, weeping schoolmaster, Davie slowly rose to his feet, and after Daniel had fully satisfied and convinced himself of the reality of his existence, Davie explained in a few words the beginning and the ending of the laughable *fracas*, right generously exonerating Percy Guthrie from all blame in his ludicrous discomfiture.

Grateful for the happy turn events had so unexpectedly taken, and overjoyed at the safety of his "laddies," Daniel made Percy and Davie join their willing hands in forgiving brotherhood together; gave them all his parting benediction, and returned to his home in Kinnettles with a firmer step and a lighter heart than he had left it on his errand of justice and mercy.

The practical result of the evening's encounter was, that Percy Guthrie had never afterwards reason to complain of taunt or jeer while he continued the acknowledged and admitted guardian of Jeanie Cargill.

The time had now arrived when Jeanie had either to be sent to a boarding-school to finish her education, or learn the higher branches from a governess at home. Unwilling to deprive themselves of the society of their beloved daughter, Jeanie's father and mother wisely decided on the latter course, and the eldest daughter of a city clergyman was, after due inquiry, selected as the future instructress of the young maiden.

By natural ability, and dint of patient industry, Percy Guthrie had also exhausted the intellectual resources of the parish school, so that it became absolutely necessary to send him to some seminary of eminence, to complete the education so well and profitably begun by Daniel Robertson. The far-famed Academy of Montrose was deemed the most eligible for this purpose, and the day was fixed for Percy's departure for that ancient and still renowned seat of learning.

It was a chill, gusty afternoon in the latter end of October, when, at the "skailing" of the school, Percy and Jeanie, instead of going home as usual by the hedgerows of Brigton, walked unconsciously along by the banks of the Kerbet, in the direction of the pretty bridge which spans the river at Douglastown. The autumn winds were sighing in mournful cadence among the overshadowing groves, and the dry withered leaves of the forest trees were falling in plentiful showers upon the still verdant meadows, or circling in rustling eddies in the partially sheltered holms and hollows of the glen. No sound of joy or gladness intermingled with the sad, funereal obsequies of expiring Nature, save the measured and mournful ripplings of the swift-flowing river, as it rushed unceasingly on its winding, circuitous route to the far distant sea.

Wandering silently on, they reached at last the extremity of the wood, when Jeanie, in faint and tremulous tones, strange and altogether new to her, bade, almost inarticulately, her attached companion "Good-bye," and moved reluctantly away from his presence.

"Not yet," kindly said Percy. "Not yet, Jeanie," taking hold of her willing hand as he spoke, and gazing tenderly in her soft blue, speaking eyes, which instinctively returned his rapturous gaze, though scarcely comprehending its full, yet partially hidden import.

"This is our last night at school together," rejoined Percy, "and I feel so sad, so very sad. Do you also feel sad, Jeanie?"

"I feel," said Jeanie—"but I cannot tell you what I feel, Percy," raising her eyes again in youthful innocence, as if fondly seeking for a solution of the strange enigma.

"We will meet again, Jeanie?" Percy hesitatingly and inquiringly replied; and while her hand, trembling in his, sent by its gentle touch a new, luxurious glow throughout his sympathetic frame, kindling at the same time a strange, indefinable joy in her own, he took and she returned—the first kiss of Love?

The first kiss of love! Dearly as Percy loved, he little knew how tenderly, how deeply he was loved in return. That night his affianced bride on laying her lovely head on the snowy pillow of her couch of innocence, thus gave expression to her feelings of

REST, LOVE, JOY.

O, joyful sounds! methinks I hear
An angel softly singing,
Heave not that sigh, dry up that tear,
Faith, hope to me are clinging.
And far above yon golden cloud,
In mellifluous harmony,
Celestial notes break swelling loud,
How glorious the symphony!
Rest, love, joy! sweet sounds divine!
Dwell within this heart of mine.

Now calm, serene in tranquil rest,
While my heart-strings fondly quiver,
I lean upon my lover's breast,
By the moon-lit flowing river.
And O! his words to me, how sweet!
The silvery beams soft streaming,
With dew-drops bright on my fairy feet,
I lie and muse half-dreaming.
Rest, love, joy! sweet notes divine!
Dwell within this heart of mine.

Deep in my rapt entranced soul,
And nought from me concealing,
My loved one's strains in music roll,
Extatic joy revealing.

Meet for immortal tuneful ears,
These sweetest sounds are ringing,
No sorrow, pain, no sighs, no tears,
When my love to me is singing.
Rest, love, joy! sweet sounds divine!
Dwell within this heart of mine.

Sing on, my love, that joyous strain,
Throned in my mind for ever,
Its echoes thrill my heart again,
Forget it? O, no,—never!
Again, again at eventide,
The witching tones shall quiver
My raptured soul with thee beside,
By the moon-lit flowing river.
Rest, love, joy! sweet sounds divine!
Dwell within this heart of mine.

While Percy and Jeanie were pursuing apart their respective studies to fit them for the duties and business of life, dark and dreary clouds of misfortune were gathering slowly yet surely around the hitherto prosperous and happy Milton. At the time of which I write, the larger class of farmers were extensive dealers in horses as well as stock—the horse-couping, indeed, in most instances, forming by far the largest share of their multifarious transactions. Arthur Cargill, irrespective of his acknowledged merits as a farmer and agriculturist, had also the reputation of being the most extensive and successful horse-dealer in the district.

Prudent and far-seeing in everything he undertook, it was unaccountably strange how he allowed himself to become imprudent even in one transaction. Yet so, alas! it was. A reputed wealthy farmer and horse-dealer in the south had made several very heavy purchases of cattle and horses in succession, and meeting Mr Cargill, to whom he was intimately known, in Trinity Muir market, where to his knowledge he had completed his immense transactions for the time, he persuaded his friend to become security for the amount, on the understanding that the profits of the sales were to be equally divided between them.

Scorning to benefit by what he deemed at the time an undue advantage in the circumstances, Arthur generously and unconditionally came at once to the rescue of his friend, in whom he placed the most unbounded confidence, subscribed the bond, and went home congratulating himself on having done a highly praiseworthy act in furtherance of the interests of such a deserving friend.

Alas! scarcely had a month run its rapid course when the unexpected intelligence spread rapidly over the Strath that the great southern dealer had been gazetted a bankrupt! The blow fell with crushing effect on the head and heart of Arthur Cargill, the more so that in his pride he unwisely determined to keep the circumstances of the bond a secret, at least for a time, from his wife and family.

Time wore on, and Arthur Cargill might have recovered himself, even from the effect of such a heavy loss; but his concealment of the fact from those who, of all others, should have been the first to know of it, ground him, soul and body, to the very earth; so that gradually, by inattention and want of proper supervision on his part, his affairs were hopelessly drifting into confusion and insolvency. Even yet, had he taken counsel with his own household, and steadily and bravely looked his affairs in the face, the impending ruin of his fortunes might have been prevented.

How sad the consequences often of a First False Step! And these the hitherto happy household of Milton were now doomed to feel in their utmost severity and rigour. Loss followed loss—crash followed crash—until the bitter end was reached. And a bitter end, in every sense of the term, it was! Misfortunes, proverbially, seldom come alone; but here they burst in such quick succession that, triumphing in the miserable wreck they had made, they left not a single oasis in the desert on which the eye or foot could rest in peace.

Assuredly I have no heart to dwell on the desolate, heart-rending picture. Suffice it to say that the ruin was so complete that Arthur Cargill determined, in something like his

manly spirit and heroic energy of old, to retrieve his fallen fortunes by seeking a new home in the far West, where, by his own exertions and those of his attached and numerous family, he might regain in another land the position he had lost in this.

And how did Jeanie Cargill, the far-famed "Lily of the Vale" deport herself under this change of circumstances? Educated to the highest degree in the pure and sunny atmosphere of home, she united to the more showy accomplishments of the day, the fixed principles of religious rectitude and truth, and these, acting in happy combination with a well regulated mind and a warm and generous human heart, bore her triumphantly over a succession of trials and withering disappointments which would have crushed and blighted for ever a spirit less prepared effectually to resist their terrible consequences.

"Are you aware, Jeanie," quietly said her father, one summer's eve, as they were both seated in the shady arbour of their little garden, "that I have at last fully made up my mind to seek a new home in the far West?"

Jeanie dropt in an instant the needlework on which she had been engaged, and, gazing on her father's sad and sorrowful countenance, softly replied, while the big tears were gathering in her troubled eyes, "Why should you, dear father, determine on leaving your native land? Is it really necessary that you should do so? Nursed though I have been in the lap of luxury, every advantage of birth, position, and education will I willingly and cheerfully, for your sake, resign, and with a brave heart perform the duties which our change of circumstances now necessarily and imperatively demand, assured that all our sorrows and trials will be sanctified and blessed to us in the end."

"I could endure anything," quickly rejoined her father; "loss of wealth, loss of health, loss of caste—oh! everything in the shape of trials, afflictions, scorn, and contumely could I willingly and resignedly endure; but there is one thing to which I can never submit."

"What is that, father?" interruptingly said Jeanie.

"To be an object of pity," replied her father, in scornful accents, quite foreign to his nature. "Men may hate me; men may despise me; men may turn their heel against me, passing by in their pride on the other side; but as for pity, I will have none of it. No, Jeanie; amidst the wreck and ruin there is still left to me the unchanged and unchangeable love of your mother; and this, combined with my own firm determination to retrieve my fallen fortunes, and the reverential affection and indomitable industry of my seven manly boys, will achieve, under God, the ultimate success at which I aim, though that success will be realised in another land than this."

"But, my dear father," said Jeanie, her voice trembling, and her bosom heaving with the deepest emotion, "amidst the desolating wreck and ruin has there not also nobly survived a daughter's dutiful obedience and undying love?"

"True, true, dear Jeanie," quickly replied her father; "I am just coming to that. Listen, my daughter—Percy Guthrie has just confided to myself and your mother his prospects in life, and the devoted affection he bears to you; and, without in plain terms saying so, hinted, if I have not mistaken his meaning, that, as in the course of nature he would succeed his father as tenant of Scroggerfield, it might be better that a certain member of the family were not exposed to the perilous dangers of the sea, but remain"—

"Enough, my father," said Jeanie, interrupting him before he could finish the sentence; "the wish must, in this instance, have been with you father to the thought, for Percy Guthrie would never, never demand from any one such a heavy—such a cruel sacrifice."

She rose, and taking her father's arm, they proceeded slowly and silently through the garden to the house together. When they had reached the ivied porch, Jeanie could contain her pent-up feelings no longer, and, throwing her arms around her father's neck, she tearfully and passionately exclaimed—

"No, my dear father, we cannot be parted, at least for the present. 'Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.'"

The harvest moon profusely shed her silvery radiance over the bonnie woods of Brigton, when, at the accustomed place, Jeanie Cargill and Percy Guthrie met, for the last time. Along the haughs, and by the banks of their much-loved Kerbet, arm in arm the two lovers wandered, their hearts too big for words, their eyes too full for tears. At last, they instinctively stood in silence beneath the far-spreading branches of a venerable elm, the rustling bronze-tinted leaves falling thickly, as they did at their first parting, in melancholy cadence all around; the autumn winds in dirge-like music low chanting measured requiems of moaning sadness for the unforgotten dead, and the stately flowing river subduedly singing on with greater solemnity of tone than its wont the well-known and never-to-be-forgotten evening hymn.

Jeanie, in all the flush and bloom of womanly beauty, was still, in every respect, the "Lily of the Vale." Percy, to a highly intelligent, richly cultivated, and well-balanced mind, added all the charms of a graceful person, and the winning endearments of refined and gentlemanly manners. Standing in the clear moonlight, beneath the sheltering branches of the friendly elm, with his fine Roman features, ruddy complexion, and clustering ringlets of darkest brown, he presented a type of beauty the very opposite to that of the delicate and gentle "Lily."

"This is our last meeting, Jeanie," softly, at last, said Percy, tenderly taking her willing hand in his, and gazing on her beautiful countenance, now dreamily lighted up by the unclouded radiance of the harvest moon into more than its usual spiritual, indescribable loveliness.

"I trust not, Percy," Jeanie gently replied; "and yet—but I must not make you sad—I have a strange presentiment that it may, alas! be our last meeting."

"You mean, dearest Jeanie," Percy rejoined, "that this may be our last meeting until I rejoin you in your new home?"

"No, that is not my meaning, Percy; you may probably know by and by."

"You have seen a wraith or heard a warning?" tremblingly enquired Percy.

"Yestreen," Jeanie quietly replied, "I stood on my favourite knoll at the Milton, admiring the gorgeous sunset on the western hills. The sun had just disappeared in all his regal magnificence, the saffron and purple clouds, golden and silver-fringed, suffusing their expiring radiance over the Howe, when a bright fleecy cloudlet in the midst assumed to my wondering gaze the vividly life-like form of a white-robed saint reclining calmly as on a couch of down, and borne mysteriously away by what seemed the white-crested waves of a tempestuous sea. Then a dark murky cloud suddenly obscured my vision, and although far away from it I distinctly heard the distant moaning of the ocean, and the dashing crushing sound of its angry billows as if they swept the reeling deck of some tempest-tost ship in the mid sea-way of the mighty Atlantic.—You have seen my father?"

"I have," said Percy, blushingly; "and he and your mother most heartily approve of our betrothal, Jeanie; and, were it not for the strength of that dutiful love which I know you bear to your parents, I would have given full expression to the wishes of my heart—that you would not expose yourself to the perilous dangers of a sea voyage at this season of the year, but at once become my bride and wedded wife. Strong, pure, and unchangeable though my love for you be, I felt that, under the circumstances I could not ask from you such a heavy sacrifice, especially as my proposals to this end might admit of being misconstrued, and motives be attributed to me the very opposite of those which in reality regulated my conduct. Do you understand me, Jeanie?"

"I understand you perfectly," Jeanie replied. "Your unselfish and noble resolution only the more deeply confirms

the high estimation I have ever formed of your character, and of the sterling qualities of your mind and heart, Percy."

"That is rather a cold way of putting it, is it not Jeanie?" said Percy inquiringly.

"But you know my meaning, and you can put it in any shape or form you like. I am sure I will agree with you, Percy, if so be you are satisfied yourself."

"Oh, yes; I know that," Percy quickly replied. "I am so glad you approve of my plans, as your father also, doubtless, will do when he sees them in their proper light. Twelve-months hence, then, dearest Jeanie, I will cross the seas and rejoin you in the country of your father's adoption. Consulting the happiness and comfort of her, the dearest to me on earth, I will be guided, Jeanie, then entirely by your wishes, and either bring you to the 'Howe,' my loving, wedded wife, or remain in the backwoods, your guardian and protector for life."

"Noble Percy!" said Jeanie: "the more I know you, the more I esteem you and—"

"Love me," quickly interrupted Percy; and the two lovers were locked in each other's embrace, in all the blissful enjoyment of true, pure, unchangeable love!

A few minutes more, and they had parted—their low-breathed farewell sympathetically blending with the mournful ripplings of the moon-lit river, which had striven in vain to calm its heaving, troubled bosom, or to sing itself to sweet and peaceful rest.

As I am not writing a work of fiction, but of fact, I may be allowed to remark, *en passant*, especially for the benefit of my fair readers, that neither in the parting scene between the two lovers, narrated above, nor in any of their previous interviews, is there any breakings of pieces of silver or gold, exactings of promises, declarations of constancy, or vowings before high heaven to fulfil extorted engagements, or suffer the most condign punishments both in this world and the next, if they failed to fulfil their high-flown promises or impious vows.

No; their attachment to each other was of a nature so pure, undoubting, and true, that it required no unhallowed artificial support to nurse its growth or promote its after-existence.

With all your raving vows away,
Your lisping speeches bland;
Give me the language of the eye,
The pressure of the hand.

Their last day at the Milton had now arrived, and the stricken, yet undismayed household were early astir to complete the preparations for their long and perilous journey. Jeanie went out, unobserved, by the garden gate, and, ascending a little broomy knowe where she could see at a glance the whole of her much-loved and beautiful Howe, she thus, in plaintive accents, sung her last farewell:—

THE 'LILY'S' FAREWELL.

Farewell, my own sweet Highland glen,
Away from thee I roam;
Afar from scenes and haunts of men
I seek a distant home.

No more I'll see thy bonnie broom,
Thy daisies on the lea,
Nor yet the waving blue-bell's bloom
Beneath the greenwood tree.

No more I'll hear the lav'rock's strains,
Breathed sweet at early morn,
Nor, ringing glad the happy plains,
The linnet on the thorn.

No more I'll hear the blackbird's song
At evening's silent hour;
Nor yet the thrush the notes prolong,
In woodland leafy bower.

No more shall children's voices cheer,
When they sing merrilie;
Nor shepherds charm my raptured ear,
When they pipe bonnilie.

But though afar from thee I roam,
No more my glen to see,
My heart will bless my Highland home,
My thoughts shall be of thee.

And though the billows swift may bear
The ship across the sea,
And balmy gales may waft despair,
My heart shall beat for thee.

And when afar from haunts of men,
My future home I see,
Oh! then, my own sweet Highland glen,
My heart shall turn to thee!

The good ship Lady Kinnaird, well-manned and found, sailed from Dundee to New York in the autumn of 1837. The vessel had been a week at sea. The weather continued agreeable and pleasant, and everything tended to strengthen the hope and belief that the sorrowing emigrants would make a rapid and successful voyage. It was a beautiful afternoon, the sun shining in all his splendour, cresting with sparkling silver the gently undulating billows, and diffusing throughout the mind a tranquil feeling of serenity and peace. With pardonable pride the merry-hearted crew leant over the sides of their noble barque, admiring the unprecedented speed with which she bravely cleaved for herself a triumphant highway over the apparently shoreless deep.

Enjoying the beauty and calm tranquillity of the scene, Arthur Cargill, with his wife and daughter, and seven manly boys, were standing a thoughtful, yet picturesque group, on the large and roomy deck, listening in deep earnestness to the sweet, soft voice of Jeanie, as in gentle and tender accents she pictured to them their distant home in the far West, where, by steady, united, persevering industry, health, peace, and plenty might yet be their blest and happy destiny.

They were now joined by a young lady who, with her family, had also emigrated from Strathmore. Jeanie put her arm into that of her friend, and after pacing the deck in loving converse for a few minutes together, Jeanie complained that the strange, undulating motion of the ship still continued to cause that swimming giddiness in her head which had so much pained and discouraged her from the commencement of the voyage. By her friend's advice they retired to their little

cabin on the poop, and hastily undressing, she lay down to seek repose and rest on her fragile, yet airy couch.

"Lizzie," said Jeanie, addressing her friend, "no sooner is my aching head laid upon this friendly pillow than I get better. Read to me, dear Lizzie, my favourite Paraphrase, beginning with—

> "Take comfort, Christians, when your friends
> In Jesus fall asleep;
> Their better being never ends;
> Why, then, dejected weep?"

Her sympathising companion, taking out the time-honoured "Ha' Bible" from amongst the few household gods which they had been able to save from the wreck and ruin of their Scottish home, commenced softly to read the plaintively beautiful fifty-third Paraphrase as requested so beseechingly by her dear and much-loved friend.

A great and rapid change had now come over the peaceful scene. Dark thunder-charged clouds lowered ominously in the changing, murky sky; alternate fitful gusts piped harsh and shrill among the flapping sails and creaking shrouds; a long, black, troublous ripple broke over the rolling, threatening waves; and a heavy, far-stretching, scowling swell struck swiftly with giant strength against the reeling ship. Wave followed wave, and fiercer grew the elemental war, until the mountain billows broke at last with thundering crash over the unprotected deck, sweeping the fragile poop-cabin and one of its saintly inmates into the dark and troubled sea!

There—swiftly borne away upon the angry waves—still lying resigned upon her little bed, with her hands firm clasped across her breast, and her dreamy eyes upraised to heaven, is Jeanie Cargill, the "Lily of the Vale," like a white-robed angel, peaceful amidst the storm, calm hastening on to her eternal rest!

The sad and startling news came upon Percy Guthrie with the most crushing and overwhelming effect. Recovering after a time from the shock, he betrayed no unmanly or sentimental

When I last sat by the well—now a good many years ago—I thought I had never till then so fully realised the touching sentiment of the beautifully expressive line—

"How still and peaceful is the grave!"

All was so silent, so solemn, and the woodland surroundings so appropriate to the quiet resting-places of the dead! A grey linnet perched itself on the overhanging boughs immediately above where I musingly sat, and chanted very sweetly its summer song; but not being joined by any other of the songsters of the grove, and not wishing to intrude, as I imagined, on my then overwhelming grief, it soon ceased its flute-like warblings, and flew quickly away across the burn to the waving woodland beyond—

Birdie! hie thee on thy way,
Fill up thy time of gladness,
HEREAFTER bringeth not to thee
Aught e'er of joy or gladness.

Merrily revel in thy joy,
Each bursting joyous morrow,
Nor come thou near my breaking heart
To drink its bitter sorrow.

Ornamental cemeteries are new and not unimposing features in our Scottish landscape. Is it not to be feared, however, that, while these statued burying-grounds give full scope for the display of taste, they may at the same time serve gradually to uproot the reverential and solemn feelings universally experienced by our countrymen, even at the sight of a single grave? We enter a Pere la Chaise, or Necropolis, not with the feelings of those who are entering the "place of graves," but with the intention and desire of beholding works of art; and while we admiringly gaze on the monumental pillars and sculptured tombs which surround us, the slumbering dead who lie mouldering beneath are not in all our thoughts.

I love the quiet, secluded burying-ground, with its little green hillocks and rudely-sculptured tombstones, surrounded

with the solemn grove of lofty oaks or wide-spreading elms; beautified, it may be, by some tiny, murmuring rivulet, and overlooked by the modest, yet venerable house of God. All these characteristics are in the highest degree combined in the churchyard of Glamis, than which a sweeter or more romantic "resting place" is not to be found among all the beautiful scenes of our beautiful land. Full of such thoughts, as I sat on the occasion alluded to beside St Fergus' Well, beneath the dark shadow of the rock from which it springs, and encompassed by a deeper shadow of the heart crushed and broken under its great sorrow, I could not refrain from exclaiming with Bernard Barton:—

"Then be our burial grounds as should become
A simple, but a not unfeeling race;
Let them appear, to outward semblance, dumb,
As best befits the quiet resting place
Appointed for the prisoners of grace,
Who wait the promise by the gospel given—
When the last trump shall sound, the trembling base
Of tombs, of temples, pyramids be riven,
And all the dead arise before the hosts of heaven!"

Although no authentic history is on record, and no vestiges of any buildings remain, it has, with every probability, been supposed that the name of this romantic well had its origin in some ancient monastery, of which St Fergus was the patron saint and chief. No site for an Abbey or a Monastery could have been finer, or more appropriate; and the imagination is left free and unfettered to fill up the picture as best it may.

We can thus wing our thoughts away at our own free will to that dark-shadowed, remote age, when this romantic sylvan den was rife with friars and monks and nuns, and vocal with the choral hymns and orisons and vesper songs of the cloistered Abbey, with all its splendid garniture of sculptured nave and pillared aisle; the crosier, mitre, jewelled cross; the marble altars in the dimly-lighted choir, at whose holy shrines the shaven priests do minister in their variegated robes, from

the sober hues of mottled grey, to the royal purple aglow with precious stones, and bedight with glittering trappings of burnished gold.

As is my wont, however, I wish to surround St. Fergus' Well with some living, human interest, and to connect its hallowed precincts with the present as well as with the past.

About the middle of the last century there was born in the neighbourhood of Glamis, of humble, yet industrious and respectable parents, the seventh son of the family. Joe Wightman, although an ailing and sickly child, grew up apace, and by the time he went to the village school he had grown into a fine, stout, healthy boy. After mastering the rudiments, he pursued his studies, such as they were, with the greatest application and industry. He excelled in arithmetic, his great delight being in the successful manipulation of figures. The climax to him was reached at last when he was taught a smattering of algebra and mathematics, and had fairly mastered all the other branches of education then common to his class.

It was now that the golden dreams of the future flitted fitfully across the mind of the adventurous and aspiring boy. He had high ambition, but his ambition was to be great and rich. While his youthful brain was teeming with these gilded visions of power and renown, he used to retire every evening to the shady quietude of St Fergus' Well to "build his castles in the air," and ruminate on the steps to be taken to secure the reality of his fondly cherished dreams.

Of this truth he became early and thoroughly convinced, viz., that if he would be great and rich, he must work to attain these ends. Being of a practical turn of mind, he duly balanced and weighed the probabilities and improbabilities of his ever being so successful in life as to reach the summit of his ambitious hopes. Feeling persuaded in his own mind that he had sufficient energy, nerve, and perseverance to achieve success, if he only knew how to set about it, he resolved to make himself acquainted with the histories of those who had, by their own unaided exertions, become great and good.

Books and libraries not being so plentiful in those days, the only volume pertaining to the subject he could obtain was the "Life and Career of Whittington," who, from a poor friendless boy, became thrice Lord Mayor of London. This was sufficient for young Wightman; he had read enough; his resolution was unalterably taken; he would go to England and strive by every means in his power to reach the summit of his ambition.

Like all persons, man or boy, who are of a resolute, determined turn of mind, our hero was very reticent as to his future plans and purposes, concealing his high aims even from his nearest and dearest relations, unburthening his mind and the projects by which it was filled to none but himself and God. This is scarcely, however, literally correct. He had a "familiar," and that familiar was St Fergus' Well! Strange as it may seem, this ancient well and classical surroundings had from the first been the recipients of his thoughts, and with whom he had taken counsel as with animate intelligent beings. Not that the young aspirant was of a dreamy, poetical temperament. He had not the most infinitesimal particle of that in his composition. If he had had, he would never have achieved success as a plodding, money-making man of business.

Before advancing further in his career, his parents had now to be consulted. This he did with all the fervour of emotional feeling, yet with due respect and affection to those who had done well their part to him, and whom he most tenderly and reverentially loved. To his inexpressible delight, his father encouragingly approved of his plans, while his mother did not object, although it was apparent her negative consent was given reservedly and with great reluctance.

It having been arranged that Joe was to sail for London from Dundee, he paid his last visit to St Fergus' Well on the evening previous to his departure, to bid a final adieu to scenes which had become incorporated with his very nature. It was a beautiful summer evening, but Joe saw not its beauty; the

birds were twittering among the branches, but he heard them not; the bonnie burn was sweetly singing its low, quiet even-song, but he heeded it not. Sipping for the last time the cool, refreshing waters of the well, he vowed before high heaven he would not return to his native village until he was —Lord Mayor of London!

The next morning at early dawn, Joe, with his ash sapling in his hand and his little bundle o'er his arm, was ready for his journey. His father's farewell was tender and affecting; but the parting with his mother was, on her part, overwhelmingly sad. As she for the last time strained her favourite boy to her bosom, the only expression to which she could give utterance were these simple words—"Dear Joe."

"Farewell," responded Joe. "Weep not, my mother; your boy will soon return."

Footsore and weary with his journey, Joe arrived in Dundee in the afternoon, and proceeded at once to the office of the Dundee and London Shipping Company, where he engaged a berth in the steerage of the good smack Bridport, Captain Wishart. He then proceeded to the harbour, and deposited his bundle and stick in the little crib in the forecastle which he had selected as his berth. Finding the vessel was to sail, wind and weather permitting, at two o'clock on the following morning, Joe was permitted to remain on board, which saved him some expense, a matter of great importance to him in the then rather low state of his scanty exchequer.

These were the good old days of the trim sailing clipper smacks, which took from ten days to two or three weeks to make the passage—when there was no certain time for their sailing, far less any fixed period for their return. So accustomed, however, had the voyageurs to and from the Metropolis become to this means of transit, that many of them, long after the steamers had commenced to run the passage with the greatest regularity, and in a twentieth part less of time, still preferred the "old way" in the trig sailing smacks. Major Guthrie, a well-known and highly respected

citizen of Dundee, took a trip once every year to London, but to the last he gave the preference to his favourite smack, the Sovereign, over the fast-sailing and splendidly equipped steamers then on the passage. When seriously asked the reason, one day, for this strange preference, he jocularly replied, "I always invest my money where I can get the best return!"

Captain Wishart, of the Bridport, was the real veritable type of the old "salt"—brusque, genial, kind-hearted, brave —always rough and ready for his work, and whose delight it was to encounter the tempest and the storm, and to guide his weather-beaten ship all safely and true amongst and over the roaring billows to her destined haven.

Long afterwards, when the Captain's son was appointed to the command of the steamship London, the late Lord Panmure was a passenger in that vessel in one of her trips from London to Dundee. The weather, after she had left the Thames, became very tempestuous and stormy, but so bravely and well did the Captain do his duty that the genial and appreciative peer proclaimed him to be "the prince of sailors," and, in the fulness of his gratitude, bestowed upon him a piece of ground at the West Ferry, on which he afterwards erected a cottage as a refuge from the storms of life, and which the old sailor very thankfully enjoyed when no longer able to contend with the warring elements on the sea, and from under the roof-tree of which his brave spirit at last departed in peace to the quiet haven of eternal rest.

Everything was strange and new to Joe, who had never seen the sea or a ship before. "A rough lot these sailors," said Joe to himself, "but I am determined to take nothing amiss, but to rough it with the best of them, deeming the performance of no duty menial or beneath me, if by the doing of it I can honestly and effectually advance my own interest," an axiom which afterwards proved to be the real cause of his success in life.

The tide was full, and the hour appointed for sailing had

arrived, but the wind had suddenly chopped round to the east, and Captain Wishart was reluctantly compelled to delay the ship's departure till the following tide. When the tide again was full the wind had become more favourable, and the impatient captain gave the expected fiat to make ready for sea.

All now was bustle and excitement on board the good ship Bridport, the cabin passengers were all on deck, and the crew, all told, were running hither and thither, shouting "Aye, aye, sir," and unfurling the huge mainsail to the piping breeze, while the sonorous voice of the captain rose hoarsely and high above all in authoritative tones of high command, which to hear was to obey.

"Lend us a hand, young chap," jocularly cried one of the sailors to Joe, who, nothing loth, obeyed the summons with the utmost alacrity by pulling the ropes as the sailors pulled, and with a right good will otherwise assisting in their duties to the best of his ability.

"That's a good lad," encouragingly said the captain; "you'll be Lord Mayor of London yet."

Away down the beautiful river proud and swan-like the Bridport went, passing Broughty Castle and the Lights of Tay with a proud, majestic sweep, that bore her on triumphantly to the bar, o'er which the white-crested breakers ominously broke with a crashing, growling sound, which went to Joe's innermost heart of hearts, for the land of his fathers was fast receding from his view, and he now realised for the first time that he was literally and emphatically alone on life's dark and troubled sea, with none to guide the helm save He who alone can still the stormy wave, and bring the tempest-tossed voyager to the havens of earthly and everlasting rest.

The sailors prophesied it would be a "nasty" night, and Joe, feeling somewhat squeamish, and sick at heart to boot, retired below to his crib in the forecastle, ostensibly to sleep, but in reality to ruminate on the perilous future that lay in all its indistinctive outlines before him. The ship had now

cleared the Tay, and was tossing amongst the troubled billows of St Andrews Bay, her sails flapping in fitful thuds on the creaking masts, and her cordage, lashed by the roaring waves, groaning in agony like the vengeful demon of the brooding storm. Now down in the trough of the swelling sea, anon riding out the tempest on the crest of the mountain wave, with the sea-mews screaming ominously o'erhead, and the sleety rain falling in copious showers around, away went the little smack, right bravely clearing for herself a pathway safe and clear over the stormy deep.

Joe could not sleep; Joe could not think. Such was the fury of the storm, that for three long days and nights the hatches had to be fastened down, leaving the forecastle during all that dreary time in total darkness. Fortunately for our young hero, he was so miserably sea-sick all that terrible time, that he had ceased to think of life and its prospects at all, or if occasionally he did so, it was only to wish himself and all his ambitious hopes at the bottom of the sea.

"A rough beginning means a good ending," encouragingly shouted the captain, as young Wightman appeared on the deck on the morning of the fourth day, pale and sickly from recent illness, and ravenously hungry by reason of his long fast. The swell of the sea was still considerable, but the sun was shining bright and unclouded overhead, begemming the troubled waves with a silvery radiance very beautiful and exhilarating, coming after such a dark and fearful storm.

"That is Scarborough," kindly said our captain to Joe, as he leant over the vessel's side, evidently delighted he had seen the land and human habitations once more.

"When shall we reach London?" responded Joe, apparently unheeding the remark of the captain.

"In three days at farthest," replied Captain Wishart; "but, dear me, my lad, he added, "your gills are as white as a well-bleached spelding. Come down and breakfast with me in the cabin, you require some nourishing food after your long fast."

On the second day thereafter, the Bridport was dashing through Yarmouth Roads, in which there was the usual display of shipping, a scene which never fails to call forth exclamations of wonder and delight as one of the most beautiful and animating sights a seaman or landsman can behold. On the following day she entered the Thames.

"There is the land of plenty now, my lad," gaily said the captain to our young hero, whose heart beat quickly with new and indescribable emotions, as the vessel swept swiftly on her course with the flowing tide up the renowned and beautiful river.

Under the pilot's directions she soon passed Sheerness on the one hand, and Southend on the other, till Gravesend and Greenwich reached and passed, she slowly made her way through the forests of shipping in the Pool, until the Bridge of London coming suddenly in sight, made her passengers and crew aware their voyage was ended.

Having learned somewhat of young Wightman's history and aims during the voyage, Captain Wishart kindly gave Joe the address of a lodging-house-keeper in Wapping, where he knew he would not only be comfortably provided for, but safe from all attempts at imposition and fraud.

"Good-bye, my lad," said the kind-hearted captain. "We shall lie here for a week or ten days. Come down to the wharf before we sail and let me know how you get on. This boy will pilot you safely. Good-bye. God bless you!"

Joe was up betimes next morning, and, looking out from his bed-room window, the high brick walls of St Katherine's Dock too truly told him he was indeed far away from his native village and the breezy fields of Strathmore! From a cage hung out beneath, there came at that instant, the sweet, well-known song of the lark, which, while it carried his thoughts on the wings of love, in joyous ecstasy to the scenes of his childhood home, served, at the same time, to cheer his spirits and nerve his heart, to achieve success in the perilous enterprise on which he had embarked.

After a hasty breakfast, Joe eagerly set out for the City. He passed along Tower Hill, scarcely noticing the grim castellated Tower on his left, with the Beef-eaters, in their quaint yet picturesque costumes, lounging at its gates. Through the narrow and tortuous defiles of Great Tower Street he went, turning to the right at London Bridge, until he stood paralysed and bewildered amidst the crowd on the pavement in front of the Old Royal Exchange. He knew, as if by instinct, that the heavily-porticoed palatial building before him to the west was the Mansion House, the City residence of the Lord Mayor, on which he gazed long and anxiously, in a reverie of strange, inexpressible delight. Threading his way amongst the innumerable vehicles and pedestrians as best he could, he crossed over to Lothbury, from which he passed to Old Broad Street, and from thence into Bishopgate Street, all the while keeping a sharp eye about him, lest any chance should be lost of advancing in the slightest degree his own personal interest, amidst the thousands of interests that everywhere manifested themselves around him. When he reached the London Tavern, with Cornhill on his right, Leadenhall Street on his left, and Fenchurch Street immediately opposite, he felt quite puzzled which route to take next.

A "block," as it is familiarly called in the City, having occurred at the moment in the first-named thoroughfares, Joe darted like an arrow down Fenchurch Street, and, turning into Lombard Street for a moment to be somewhat out of the crowd, he stood at the entrance to Abchurch Lane, quite exhausted with his morning's peregrinations in the great City.

While dolefully musing as to his future proceedings, an elderly gentleman, with all the air of a "City man," rode up the street on horseback, and, dismounting where Joe in such dubiety stood, he abruptly asked him to hold his horse for a few minutes while he went up the lane to his counting-house.

Joe most readily and cheerfully assented, and when his

employer re-appeared, he kindly gave him a shilling—the first money he had ever gained in his life.

"Thank you, sir," very gratefully said Joe, and the gentleman sprang into the saddle with all the agility of one accustomed to such exercise. Before he started, however, he turned round enquiringly to Joe, and asked if he was from Scotland. Joe proudly answered that he was from Forfarshire.

"I thought so," rejoined the horseman, "from the manner in which you so broadly pronounced the word 'Thank.' A very small, and somewhat similar circumstance, was the turning point in my own life, and this may, perhaps, be the turning point in yours. Take this card, and while I am at Guild Hall await in my office my return."

Reading from the card aloud as he went up the lane in search of the office, the dingy thoroughfare re-echoed the words—"Alderman Pirie, Abchurch Lane." With a beating heart Joe entered the counting-house, delivered his message, and sat down, as desired, beside the porter in the outer office.

Left alone to his own reflections, Joe inwardly pondered very fondly and hopefully on the kind stranger's prophetic words, recalling to his recollection the simple circumstance that became the turning-point in the youthful career of his favourite Whittington, "thrice Lord Mayor of London." As is usual, however, with young or old, suspense he felt to be the most painful sensation he had ever yet experienced, so pleasurably tantalizing and yet so poignantly wringing the tender chords of his young and sensitive heart.

How trivial and unexpected ofttimes are the circumstances which change and fix our destinies! When the great Napoleon was dictating a despatch on the head of a drum at the siege of Toulin in 1794, to an unknown sergeant of artillery, a cannon ball came close to them and threw a quantity of dust on the paper. "That is lucky," exclaimed the sergeant, "we shall not require sand for this paper." "What can I do

for you," said Napoleon, "to evince my regard?" "Everything," said the sergeant, "you can convert my worsted shoulder-knot into an epaulette." Napoleon recommended him for promotion, and he got his commission. His name was JUNOT, and he became Duke of Abrantes, and one of the most distinguished marshalls of France.

In an hour and a half, which to the expectant boy seemed an age, the worthy Alderman returned, and Joe being ushered into his private room, his worship put several searching questions to the young adventurer, whose straightforward and candid answers seemed to the merchant so satisfactory that he offered to take him at once into his employment.

"You must begin at the lowest step of the ladder, as I did," said the Alderman, "when I came from Aberdeen to London, a poor and friendless lad, some five-and-thirty years ago. The world is pretty much as we make it ourselves. It is not by any miracle or trick of legerdemain that men generally achieve success. On the contrary, it is only by integrity, unwearied industry, and steady perseverance, that any one can attain to eminence, be his profession what it may. You seem to have got a fair education, and this, united to solid religious principles, which is the pride and birthright of every Scotsman, combined with the indispensable requisites already mentioned, should enable you to make your mark on the age in which you live. With these few words of advice I dismiss you to your duties.—Take this youngster into the counting-house," continued the merchant, addressing his chief clerk, who had noiselessly appeared at the summons of his master. "We need some little assistance at present; and tell me in a month what you can make of him."

Remembering his promise to Captain Wishart, Joe rushed down to the Dundee Wharf on the following morning, before he went to the city, to communicate to his kind-hearted friend the good news of his success.

"Right glad to hear it, my lad," rejoined the Captain, after listening to his young *protégé's* recital of the events of the

previous day. "I felt certain, somehow or other, you would succeed. I always have a good opinion of a youth at your age who lends a hand to assist in anything that comes in his way. I took notice of your willingness to make yourself useful in our upward voyage, and said in jest you would be Lord Mayor of London yet. I may not live to see it, but I am much mistaken if you don't weather the storm and make that port at last. Away to your duty, my boy. Come and see me when you know that I am at the Wharf. Good-bye; God bless you."

The report given at the end of the month by the principal clerk to his superior must have been, on the whole, highly satisfactory, for Joe was installed as a junior apprentice at a small advancing salary per annum, sufficient to keep him, by the exercise of care and economy, in comparative respectability and comfort.

The three years of his apprenticeship soon passed away, and young Wightman, at eighteen years of age, found himself in the receipt of a very liberal salary, which enabled him to be of some assistance to his parents, who were ever duly advised of all his proceedings and prospects.

He now removed from Wapping to Islington, the favourite residence then and still of the Scotch, in as remarkable a degree as Chelsea is the chosen paradise of old Indians. Wightman—now a smart, well dressed youth—might be seen every morning walking with a proud and firm step down the City Road to Lombard Street, where he earnestly and industriously pursued his commercial studies, and assiduously and ungrudgingly performed his daily duties.

As the result of his early religious training, he regularly attended Divine worship in the Presbyterian Church at London-Wall, then the only Scotch church in the east of London. The congregation having within the last ten or twelve years removed to a handsome new church in De Beauvoir Town, Kingsland, the site of the old building in the City is now occupied by extensive general warehouses,

thus obliterating for ever one of the old landmarks so dear to every Scotsman's heart.

As years rolled on, the tide of good fortune and prosperity still flowed in rich abundance to the worthy Alderman's *protegé*, who, by his activity, shrewdness, and untiring industry, had raised himself to a high position in the office, and completely succeeded in gaining the entire confidence of his appreciative employer. The chief clerk, who had grown grey in the service of his master, having retired at this time from active duty in the enjoyment of a handsome annuity generously bestowed upon him by Mr Pirie, Mr Wightman was at once promoted to the important post, the duties of which were so efficiently discharged by him, that at the termination of three years he was taken into partnership with the worthy Alderman, whose time being now much engrossed with Corporation affairs, the whole responsibility of his extensive business devolved in consequence upon the shoulders of the junior partner, who proved himself in every way equal to the task, and worthy of the confidence reposed in him by his chief.

As a proof o the high esteem in which he was held by his employer, young Wightman was now a frequent guest at the Alderman's beautiful residence at Twickenham, on the banks of the winding Thames, on which occasions his early education and Christian training stood him in good stead in the superior and intelligent society which congregated around the hospitable table of the great and popular magnate of the City. Mr Wightman had occasionally been a visitor there during the years of his clerkship, but the distance between himself and his master he invariably felt to be so great, that a necessary diffidence of manner restrained the full play of his natural abilities, and checked the current of his powers of conversation. Now all was changed; and as an equal with the best of them, he worthily sustained, without hindrance from within or from without, the important part that was ex-

pected of him as the partner of one of the most intelligent and richest merchants of the City.

Alderman Pirie had an only child—the sunshine of his luxurious and happy home. His heart was centred in his amiable and beautiful daughter Evangeline, who had lost her mother several years before, to the great regret and grief of all who had known her. From the first, a deep-rooted affection had sprung up, unknown to each other, in the breasts of Evangeline and young Wightman; but the feeling never found expression until the latter had established himself in a position worthy of the daughter of such a father, and of her own superior excellences as a lovely and accomplished woman. It was the prospect, indeed, of her becoming at some distant day his own that had upheld his heart and cheered his spirit amidst the dangers and difficulties through which he had passed, and which had nerved and encouraged his unceasing efforts and unwearying labours to make his mark in the world, and to raise himself to the high and enviable position to which he had now most gratefully attained.

His highest hopes, his dearest wishes, were at last realised. Evangeline became the happy wife of Mr Joseph Wightman —the happy pair receiving on their wedding day the joyful congratulations and good wishes of all who had the honour and pleasure of their acquaintance. The fruition of the first and only love of each, and a union of the purest and sweetest affection, no wonder that, under God, their after-life became progressively prosperous and supremely happy. Alas! alas! if it had been fated to have been united in the bonds of first affection, how different, in its aims and results, might many a life have been!

Still true to his early ambition, Joe forgot not the goal to which all his restless hopes tended, and lost no opportunity to advance his personal interests in that direction. Keeping this object steadily in view, he became a Liveryman, by joining the Merchant Tailors' Company, one of the most ancient and richest Guilds of the City. He was soon afterwards

elected a Common Councilman—the next step to an Alderman's gown—and assiduously devoted himself to the acquirement of the requisite knowledge of Corporation affairs to enable him satisfactorily to perform his varied duties.

At this time, "like a shock of corn fully ripe," the good old Alderman Pirie was gathered to his fathers, leaving behind him an untarnished reputation as a man and a Christian, and bequeathing to those who were to follow him in the race of life the example of his good deeds, as an incentive to imitate those virtues and perform those duties which alone can enable them effectually to reach the goal.

By the unanimous voice of the Ward, Councillor Wightman was elected Alderman of Bishopgate-Without, as successor to his father-in-law, Alderman Pirie. Assuming his official robes, the young aspirant, at the next Court of Aldermen in Guild Hall, was duly sworn into office, and took his place amongst the City magnates amidst the warmest congratulations of his brother magistrates.

The Aldermen of London are elected to the office for life, and, as Magistrates and Justices of the Peace, enjoy a source of professional training befitting their high office, and effectually preparing them for their higher duties when they in due rotation become Lord Mayor. There being seven Aldermen who had not passed the chair when Mr Wightman was elected to the office, it followed that seven years must elapse ere he could wield the sceptre of the City.

Another honour, however, awaited him before the final consummation of his hopes. In two years after assuming the aldermanic gown he was elected by the Livery to fill the honourable office of one of the Sheriffs of London, the onerous duties of which high position he performed with great zeal and becoming dignity.

At the termination of other five years he rode forth, on the morning of the 9th November, from Guild Hall to Westminster in his chariot of state, in all the pomp and circumstance of Lord Mayor of London, and Chief Magistrate of the greatest

City of the world. In the evening were gathered round him in the banquet hall several members of the Royal Family, the great Officers and Ministers of State, the Foreign Ambassadors, many Members of the two Houses of Parliament; men of science, art, and literature; the first merchants in the city, and the greatest men in the country. And so it came to pass that the once poor and friendless boy from the Howe of Strathmore not only sat as an equal with the princes, and nobles, and great ones of the earth, but entertained them as guests at his own table.

When the great civic feast was ended, and the numerous guests were slowly departing, the Right Honourable Joseph Wightman, Lord Mayor of London, turned aside to speak with a friend from Scotland, whom he had especially invited to be present.

"I have carefully preserved," said his Lordship, "the spotted handkerchief in which my mother wrapped my scanty wardrobe on the morning of my departure from home, and also the sapling ash stick I carried in my hand on my journey to Dundee when I embarked for London, and these I value more than my official robes, this brightly begemmed massy circlet of gold, or the silver-gilt mace, and sword of state. I have now only one wish left ungratified—the longing, yearning wish to see my mother and St Fergus Well.

Mr Wightman's father had died many years before, and his aged mother was now on her death-bed. When informed of her son's elevation, and the great splendour with which the event had been celebrated, instead of indulging in expressions of grateful joy, her thoughts reverted to the days of his youth, and to her sad parting with her darling boy on the morning he left his native vale; and turning her face to the wall, she quietly passed away, repeating in mournful accents the refrain she had so often and grievingly sung since his departure—"My boy does not return!"

> Joe, sad now leaves his native village,
> His bundle o'er his arm;

He's ta'en the last look of the cottage,
The last look of the farm.
His mother clasps him to her bosom,
Beside the bonnie burn—
"Dear Joe;"—"Farewell, weep not, my mother,
Your boy will soon return,
Your boy will soon return."

The summer time oft glad revolving,
Brought sunshine, fruit, and flowers;
And winter's blasts oft wildly roaring,
Howl'd through the leafless bowers.
The young grew old, the aged passing,
Each to his silent urn;
The widowed mother lone repining—
"My boy does not return,
My boy does not return!"

To that bright vale swift flew an angel,
With trumpet blast of fame,
Proclaiming to the dying mother
Her son's now honoured name.
But of his youth e'er fondly dreaming,
For him she still doth yearn;
Her last words faintly low and broken—
"My boy does not return,
My boy does not return!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE WARNING.

"The night has been unruly; where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down; and as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible,
Of dire combustion and confused events,
New hatch'd to the woeful time."

MACBETH.

THE dwellers in the Howe, like the generality of their countrymen, were, at the time of which I write, not only firm believers in the existence of brownies, fairies, spunkies, and waterkelpies, but also in the prophetic surroundings of dreams, mysterious noises, death-lights, warnings, &c., which exercised no inconsiderable influence on their lives and destinies. I shall confine myself in the present chapter, however, to the influence mysterious sounds, heard in certain circumstances, had upon the minds, generally, of those who heard them.

I have in "Village Scenes" attempted to draw the portraiture, and record the many virtues of a revered and beloved parent, whose name is still honoured and venerated in the district of the Howe where he lived. With a well-cultured mind, he was of a courteous and benevolent disposition, although prudent and cautious withal. Though strictly formal, in every way, so that each thing about the farm and mill stood in its proper place, and each performed his or her allotted duty within the specified time, his sway, from his God-fearing nature, was felt to be neither irksome nor severe. Everything did he so nicely and strictly poise, that no rude bustle or unseemly noise was ever seen or heard

about the farm; and nothing that could be done at once, was left to be accomplished on the morrow. The consequence was that the Sabbath was a day of holy and peaceful rest; not a day of gloomy austerity, but of cheerful, religious repose.

O softly on the breeze was borne
The incense sweet of Sabbath morn;
And in the evening's peaceful calm,
How sweet arose the holy psalm,
The thrilling, heartfelt, solemn prayer,
Which he, with patriarchal air,
Did at the throne on bended knee,
Present with deep humility!
No venal song to him I bring,
Nor hollow praise unfeeling sing,
Nor an ideal shadow forth,
While I pay tribute to his worth.
Ah, no! see here the mountain stream,
By which in childhood's sunny dream,
The good man wandered with his boy,
In blissful, sweet, untroubled joy;
And there, the flowery braes so fair,
On which did he his gambols share,
And here the wood, and there the mill,
The fondly-cherished murmuring rill;
And there—beside the spreading thorn,
Sweet stands the house where I was born.

Village Scenes.

It was the evening of a sweet autumnal Sabbath day. My father, servants, and all the household of Airniefoul, had been to the church of Glamis, and listened with deep reverence to the stirring expositions of Scripture, and solemn devotional exercises of the venerable Dr. Lyon, then in the full zenith of his well-earned reputation as a faithful and zealous parochial minister. As was then the custom in Strathmore, all were assembled in the kitchen for family worship. Besides the members of our own household, there was, in addition, the tailor of the district, whose form and bearing did not, certainly, belie his profession. This important functionary was quite an institution in the parish.

When there was sufficient work for him to do, he sometimes abode at the different farms for days, and even weeks together. He was always well lodged, and well fed, as became his station. Generally well informed of all domestic matters amongst his neighbours, he might, very appropriately have been termed gossip-general of the Strath. And so well did he maintain his reputation, that it was generally reported of him that he knew the public and private affairs of all in the Howe and the Glen, very much better than they did themselves.

As the tailor here alluded to, is, undoubtedly, the pivot around which the incidents to be described in this chapter will naturally turn, it may be interesting, as well as necessary, that I should rapidly sketch the outlines of the corporeal tabernacle of the man on whose shoulders such momentous events and their consequences have been thrown.

Sandy Alison, the tailor-in-chief of the Howe, was a dapper, priggish, little active body. His age might be fifty-five or sixty, less or more; his height somewhere between five feet five, and five feet seven. His figure was slim and somewhat bent, his features small and sharp, his complexion sallow, and his twinkling grey eyes of that restless mischievous description which boded no good to any body to whom he had taken a dislike.

When he sat with his legs twisted beneath him on the work-board, he looked a very insignificant specimen of humanity indeed. When he walked, his legs carried him along at such a rate, that it seemed as if they had run off with him, like the man with the new cork leg, who could not unwind its springs to stop its never-ending velocity. His voice, always pitched in a high key, was sharp, harsh, and disagreeable to the ear. He seldom laughed, but his chuckle was fiendish-like and ominously malicious. The chief delight of his being seemed to be to riot in the woes and misfortunes of others, and darkly to prophesy from the apparently mysterious incidents occurring around him, those bitter

trials and bereavements, whose dark shadow generally precedes the reality itself. Sandy, be it further observed, was of a very sensitive nature, and extremely superstitious withal. A firm believer in warnings in particular, he had studied the subject with all the ardour of an enthusiast, and had become the admitted Oracle of the Howe to unravel their weird-like mystic meaning. When I add that his dress consisted of white corduroy knee breeches, bright red plush waistcoat, long swallow-tailed blue coat, with brass buttons, and party-coloured neckerchief; that his hair was brackish grey, and that when at work he wore, very far down on the nose, a pair of large pinchbeck, round globed spectacles, you will have a pretty accurate idea of Sandy Alison, the village tailor.

"Let us worship God," solemnly said my father; and reverently opening the Ha' bible, he read in measured tones, first a chapter from the Old Testament, and afterwards a chapter from the New. Closing the bible, he was in the act of turning over the leaves of the venerated psalm book, for the purpose of selecting a suitable psalm to be sung by the worshippers, when a strange, unearthly noise, proceeding from the "Ben-house," at once startled us all, striking terror and dismay into every heart. The sound resembled a muffled *thud*, as if some heavy body had fallen with violence on the oaken floor.

My father, the least superstitious of any one I ever knew, dropped the book instinctively on the table, and appeared the very personification of amazement and fear. All seemed terror-struck, as if some ominous summons had come to them from the unseen world. The tailor was the first to break the oppressive silence.

"A warnin'," gudeman, to prepare for some great change, trial, or misfortune;"—and lowering his voice to a hissing, husky whisper, he savagely added—"In the coorse o' the neist week, three things will happen tae this hoose which it had better been without."

A long and painful silence succeeded this fatal, unexpected prophecy.

At last my father with great presence of mind, rose from his seat, took a candle from the table, and slowly walked towards the parlour to ascertain, if possible, the cause of the alarming noise which had so much distressed us. Cautiously entering the room, he looked enquiringly and anxiously around, but could not see or hear anything which might explain the mystery. There was no disarrangement of the furniture, no appearance of any one having been in the room, everything remained the same as they had been during the day. The search was given up in despair!

There was no resumption of the family worship, and all retired ostensibly to rest, but in reality to muse on the ominous warning, and the three events which had been so solemnly predicted to happen during the ensuing fatal week.

Monday and Tuesday passed over pretty much as usual, with this difference, that a settled gloom seemed to have overshadowed the farm and all its surroundings; and while the indoor and field work were assiduously performed, there was less life exhibited by the workers than was their wont, their thoughts being apparently occupied otherwise. Even in the mill, where generally the utmost hilarity prevailed, the work of the day was gone about in comparative silence; not a *lilt* was sung by the lasses, not a joke was cracked by the millers. The only lively person about the farm was the itinerant tailor, who exhibited all that anxious feverishness, and nervous excitement characteristic of those who impatiently await the fulfilment of their malicious predictions.

My elder brother, David, who had just received the appointment of Land Steward to the Earl of De Vesci in Queen's County, Ireland, had invited some young friends to a day's shooting in the glen, previous to his departure. The time appointed being Wednesday, the little party assembled at Airniefoul farm on the early morning of that day, and soon

thereafter were on their way with their guns and dogs, to the Glen of Ogilvy and the Sidlaw Hills.

Looking out in the evening to welcome the sportsmen home, I thought I could descry in the distance, coming along the white dusty road, a dark group of people huddled together in a manner such as I had never seen before. My father coming out of the house at the same time, I called his attention to the circumstance.

As we intently gazed, the strangely grouped living mass gradually approached until we could distinctly discern what appeared to be a bier covered with a white sheet, supported on the shoulders of several men who seemed to stagger under their heavy burden.

"Something has happened to David," wildly exclaimed my mother who had come behind us unobserved. This exclamation brought the whole household to the garden gate, from which the road through the glen could, for some distance, be distinctly seen.

It was an anxious group that which looked out in affectionate longing to the glen, the most tender solicitude being strongly marked in every countenance, save that of the tailor, on which was depicted that sinister, eager expression which desired anything but—good news.

Nearer and nearer the mysterious procession came slowly along the rugged, winding road. At the junction of the turnpike with the bye-road leading to Airniefoul, the west shoulder of the Hunter-Hill with its dark and sombre wood, hid it for a time from our sight. Soon, however, it emerged again with awful distinctness. There was no mistaking the nature of that ominous procession now!

Amidst the most oppressive, death-like silence, the sad assemblage with their white-covered bier, slowly, and measuredly approach the farm. One of the group is seen to disengage himself from his fellows, and advance with a quicker pace to the place where we stood in the most painful state of suspense and expectancy. My father, unable to move,

remains rivetted to the spot. All eyes are bent, all hearts are turned to the coming messenger. Hush! we hear the ominous sound of his fast approaching footsteps! A moment more, and my father and he are in earnest converse.

"David shot!"—huskily screeched the tailor, who had, with his usual cunning, contrived to hear every word that had passed between the messenger and my father.

True it was, my brother was shot, and that was his body now borne on a shutter into the house of mourning on the shoulders of his youthful and sorrowing comrades. Eager in pursuit of game, he was somewhat carelessly carrying his loaded gun, yet keeping it in a position to fire at a moment's notice, when a rut in the hill caught his foot, and on falling heavily, the charge went off, lodging as it was supposed in his left side.

When laid upon the bed, the first thing that my father did was to feel his pulse, while my mother clasped his brow. A moment of dread suspense—and the joyful words are heard alternately from their lips—"He lives!" "He lives!"

Tenderly undressing him, we soon discovered the rugged wound, all clotted with crimson gore.

"Staunch the wound," calmly said my father—"Bathe his brow with water—be guided by circumstances what to do until my return."

A few minutes more, and he was on his swift-footed horse on the road to Forfar, to fetch with all speed the family doctor.

Fortunately he found Dr Steele at home; who, in an almost incredibly short space of time was at the bedside of his patient.

The ugly wound was thoroughly examined by the doctor, and to our great relief, pronounced, emphatically, not to be dangerous.

"The ball has passed,"—said Dr Steele, "clean through the fleshy part of the thigh, leaving only a rather serious flesh-wound to receive my attention and care. With the probing and dressing it has now got, should the patient keep free from fever, I have no fear of the result."

All now breathed more freely, and a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty Preserver, with one exception, pervaded every heart. I was at this time but a stripling, and not much given to serious reflection. It did not, however, escape my notice, that whereas all others seemed overjoyed at the happy turn the untoward event had taken, a shadow of disappointment rested darkly on the cadaverous countenance of the tailor.

My brother passed a good night without exhibiting any symptoms of fever, and when the worthy doctor paid his visit next afternoon, his patient, though weak from the loss of so much blood, was able to converse with him as to the particulars of the accident, and how he now felt as giving good hopes of his recovery.

The day following being the market day, my father wishing to superintend some rather particular drainage operations himself, despatched my brother John to Dundee to transact the necessary business there ; remaining at home to meet the factor and land-surveyor before commencing the work which was then quite new, and almost unknown in the glen or Howe.

The day had throughout been oppressively sultry and warm ; and towards afternoon, dark, murky thunder-clouds swept ominously across the troubled sky. Darker and darker grew the lurid heavens, the lightning flashes momentarily lighting up the deepening gloom ; and the rattling thunder bellowing in its wrath among the hills, startlingly breaking the awful silence of the scene, and shaking, so as to be felt, the very depths of the now trembling foundations of the rocky glen. The rain now fell in torrents, and wildly swept along by the howling winds, every glack and runnel in the Sidlaws became a leaping cataract, or a rushing stream.

The storm abated not. The shadows of evening overspread the troubled glen—and my brother came not. The deep darkness of the dismal night succeeded—but he came not. The midnight hour had passed—yet he came not !

"The second part of my prediction fulfilled"—triumph-

antly whispered the ever-watchful tailor. The remark fortunately was not overheard by my father or mother whose minds were too much occupied to bandy words with such a base disturber of their peace.

At day-break my father was on his way to Lumleyden to endeavour to gather some tidings of his missing son at the hostelry in the pass which romantically unites the glen of Ogilvy to the lowland region beyond. The storm had now spent its fury, and calmness reigned again throughout the glen.

To my father's anxious enquiries, the reply at the toll-gate was, that my brother had not passed on his way home. He had not been seen by any of the inmates since the previous morning when he rode past on his way to market!

Anxiously awaiting my father's return, we heard from his lips, with dismay and grief, the unwelcome tidings. My father, however, being a man of action, his horse was kept ready saddled at the gate; and after having partaken of an early and hurried breakfast, he was soon thereafter on his way to Forfar.

The day passed without any tidings having reached us as to the lost brother. Towards evening the tailor—who had finished his work at the farm, and gone to Hayston that morning, to commence an engagement there,—was, to the surprise of everyone, observed, coming at a rapid rate down the road to Airniefoul. His visit, it was universally surmised, boded no good, and every one was prepared for the reception of evil tidings.

"Read that, lassie"—hurriedly exclaimed the tailor to Annie Glen, one of the servant-maids, as he advanced to the middle of the kitchen where she stood amongst the eager, expectant group of domestics, holding out to her at the same time, a tattered and well-thumbed copy of a local newspaper, more than a fortnight old.

Annie, as was to be expected, eagerly perused the paragraph pointed out to her. She uttered a wild, hysteric scream, and fell senseless on the floor!

Unheeding the piteous state of poor Annie, the tailor snatched the paper which she still held firmly in her grasp, and read aloud as follows—"Wreck of the Ocean Queen. This vessel was totally wrecked on the 5th instant, on a coral reef in the South Seas, and it is feared that all on board have perished."

Jamie Langlands, the betrothed sweetheart of Annie Glen, was a sailor on board the 'Ocean Queen,' and this circumstance conclusively accounts for the sudden and distressing effect which the unexpected intelligence had upon her sensitive nature and feeling heart.

The stricken maiden, was not long, however in recovering consciousness. Staggering to the open window, which looked out upon the garden, she gazed long and anxiously, her attention apparently rivetted and fixed upon some object in the far distance. Another scream, but of a different kind, escaped from her pallid lips. It was a scream of joy—pure, unmitigated, triumphant joy!

"There's either Jamie Langlands or his ghaist"—she cried —"It is—it is himsel'—my ain dear Jamie!"

And, sure enough, as we eagerly gazed, there, on the road to the farm, came rocking along the well known form of Jamie Langlands. A few minutes more, and he and Annie Glen were clasped in true sailor-like fashion, in each other's warm and tender embrace!

The unreflecting tailor, in his eager anxiety to be the messenger of ill news, had apparently forgotten, that there might be more than one 'Ocean Queen' amongst the mercantile navy of Britain; and that, sometimes, good news travels with as great rapidity as bad!

Notwithstanding the uncertainty of my brother's fate, and the consequent gloom still brooding over our spirits, we could not refrain from sharing in the general joy, and joining with that of other's, our congratulations to the happy lovers with the most fervent wishes for their future welfare.

Scarcely had these expressions of kindness and good will

escaped our lips, when the clattering of horses' hoofs was heard, and two horsemen were seen trotting briskly up the lane. There was no mistaking their identity. It was my father, and—my lost brother! Except the invalid, the whole household rushed out to greet them.

"Forgive the fright I have given you"—eagerly yet joyously exclaimed my brother, addressing my mother.—"It is the first time I have ever disobeyed the orders of my father, and it shall be the last. The explanation is shortly this—Dryburns, Little Lour, and Mickle Lour, and I, had all met in Morren's to dine together after the business of the day, and prepare for our homeward journey. Scarcely, however, had we taken our seats at the table, when the most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning broke over the town that we had ever witnessed. The rain came down like a cataract, flooding the streets as if it had been a deluge. Hours passed, and the storm raged with unabated fury. Darkness set in, and the feeble lamps began to twinkle and glimmer in the rain-flooded, deserted streets. What was to be done? By unanimous consent we judged discretion to be, at such a juncture, infinitely the better part of valour. And so we agreed to remain where we were for the night, with the fixed determination of returning home as early as we possibly could on the following morning. We kept our promise, but on the way remembering of some pressing business that required immediate attention at the market to-day in Forfar, I parted from my friends at the junction of the roads, at Tealing, and proceeded on my way to the county town. Proceeding along the High Street, in a few minutes I met my father. He was, as you may well believe, overjoyed to see me; and so after a short paternal lecture on his part, and a solemn promise on mine, never to disobey orders again, we transacted the necessary business of the day; and here I am in the old house again—David, I am glad to hear, is better—but who is this? What! Jamie Langlands?"—and the two friends most cordially joined hands, and warmly congratulated each other on the

manly appearance each had assumed since they sat in their boyhood days, on the same form, at Daniel Robertson's wee school in the Bog.

The artful conduct of the tailor, and the non-fulfilment of his prediction in regard to the sailor, having been communicated to my father, he led the way to the house, gratefully exclaiming at the same time, "*To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.*"

"There is still the awfu' soond to be accounted for"—maliciously persisted the crest-fallen tailor; a remark which in the happy throng assembled in the kitchen, passed unheeded by all except my father, who merely said in reply—"God will bring every secret thing to judgment, whether it be for good, or whether it be for evil."

The hilarity in the house became sympathetic in a high degree, so much so, that the convalescent invalid expressed an earnest wish to share in the general joy. For this purpose, and in opposition to the gentle remonstrances of my mother, he insisted on being partially dressed, and placed in the old arm-chair by the cheerful fire which burned so brightly in the cozy parlour. His wishes were complied with, and as one from the dead, his heart was lifted up to the throne on high, in silent yet heart-felt gratitude to the great Preserver for his merciful deliverance.

"Now, goodwife,"—coaxingly said my father,—"this is a night among nights; and I would like the whole household to assemble in the parlour, and that you, yourself should superintend the happy feast."

"I'll do that with a right good will, goodman"—emphatically replied my mother—"and all shall be seated at the table alike; no sitting above or below the salt; but all as

one happy family met to rejoice together in each other's happiness."

The damask table-cloth was accordingly laid, and the ample repast profusely spread. Doubt, and gloom, and grief had given way to confidence, and light, and joy. Peace and happiness rested lovingly together under the ancient roof-tree of Airniefoul.

My father, regular and methodical in all his actions, took down the key from its accustomed place, and proceeded as was his wont every Saturday evening at the same hour, to wind up the old clock which stood at the east end of the sitting-room, in which we had all now assembled. Gently opening the door, he gazed for a moment in much surprise. Taking a candle from the table, he peered intently down to the bottom of the case, from which he lifted, in apparent wonderment, one of the heavy weights of the clock.

Placing the weight on the table in full view of every one present, he thus solemnly addressed the assembled guests—

"Last Sabbath evening in the midst of the services of our family worship, a loud, strange, unearthly sound was suddenly heard, as if proceeding from this room. The mystery has remained unexplained until now. The rusty and worn-out wire, unable longer to sustain the weight, had, in a moment, given way, and down the heavy body came on the oaken floor with that supernatural weird-like sound, which so terribly paralyzed us all. The cause of the mysterious noise is now satisfactorily explained, thus severing in a moment the trying events of the by-gone week, with any superstitious agency whatever. Supposing, however, the cause had forever remained undiscovered, that was no reason why we, puny and insignificant mortals, that we are, should dare to interpret the mind of the Great Eternal; far less to prophesy either good or evil from mysteries in Nature or Providence, which we can neither unravel nor comprehend."

All felt relieved as if some heavy burden had suddenly been removed from their oppressed spirits, for while the painful

incidents of the week had all terminated happily, the "Warning" had, until now, remained an unexplained mystery.

All eyes were now turned to the crest-fallen, disappointed tailor. He sat motionless and speechless, crouched and doubled up to half his usual size, in a further corner of the room, evidently smarting under the indirect yet well-merited rebuke just administered to him, and ashamed to look in the face those whose peace of mind he had intended to destroy, and by whom he was now so thoroughly despised.

The homely, yet substantial, feast was now heartily partaken of, and thoroughly appreciated; and the happy enjoyment of the evening reached its culminating point, when the worthy host burst forth into song with all the energy and enthusiasm of his youth :—

Loud the timbrel sound,
Clash the cymbals high;
Taber, sackbut, harp,
Swell the minstrelsy.

Beat the martial drum,
Blow, ye trumpets, blow;
Cornet, viol, and lute,
Hearts set all aglow.

Kill the fatted calf;
Shoes, the golden ring,
Richest jewelled robes,
Haste thee to me bring.

Music fill the air,
Mirth and song abound;
Lo! my lov'd ones lost,
Smile on all around.

Clouds have passed away,
Storms and sobbing rain,
On my faithful breast
Rest in peace again.

To my heart they come—
Bliss without alloy;
Chime of silver bells,
Never-ending joy!

Loud the timbrel sound,
Clash the cymbals high;
Earth and Heaven is blest,
Lov'd ones now are nigh!

During the hilarity that prevailed, the poor tailor had slunk away unobserved. Whether the rebuke administered to him had had the effect of curbing his propensity to proclaim warnings, and prophesy evil tidings, the records of the parish say not. One thing, however, is certain, that while he peregrinated the Glen as usual, he never again ventured within the precincts of Airniefoul!

CHAPTER XVII.

A SABBATH DAY AT KINNETLES.

"Hail Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day,
The pale mechanic now has leave to breathe
The morning air, pure from the city's smoke,
While wandering slowly up the river's side,
He meditates on Him, whose power he marks
In each green tree that proudly spreads the bough,
As in the tiny dew-bent flowers that bloom
Around its roots; and while he thus surveys,
With elevated joy, each rural charm,
He hopes, yet fears, presumption in the hope,
That Heaven may be one Sabbath without end."

Grahame.

LAST Sabbath day I spent in a neighbouring city. How different the throng of its streets, the chime of its bells, and the holiday appearance of its people, with the sacred quietness and holy serenity which now reign around this peaceful glen! Some scenes when they become too common pall and cloy the appetite, and the wisest of men's sayings lose by repetition half their value. But who ever wearies by gazing on the cherished scenes of their youth, or of listening to the hallowed sound of the sabbath bell?

O how precious is the rest of the holy Sabbath; sweet earnest and foretaste of that serene and everlasting rest, which remaineth for the people of God in the Zion that is above. May the day never come when its blessed calm shall be broken by the chariot wheels of commerce or of pleasure, or its holy worship exchanged for the shout of merriment and revelry. Avert, O God of nations, from our beloved country, that heinous neglect of the Sabbath and its duties, which, like the

ever-increasing waves of the stormy sea, threaten to obliterate the landmarks of our fathers, and overwhelm the people in its black and scowling waters.

You have often, dear reader, in the quietude of your closet, perused with a holy delight, the glowing and extatic raptures of the poet, descriptive of Sabbath morning in the country. Try now definitely to realize them.

Look abroad on the beautiful scenes of Nature, and then inwards to your own exulting soul, and say if you do not feel the truth of the description. There is indeed throughout the domains of Nature, a universal and spiritual-like repose. Not only are the sounds of rural labour hushed into silence, but a softer hymn cometh from the golden tinted woods, and a lower and less fretful song from the bonnie burn as it flows quietly and sweetly by. In the low grassy holms, and in the flower-begemmed meadows, the kine are quietly feeding, and on the upland lea, fragrant with its white and purple clover, the horse enjoys his much prized freedom, rolling himself on the grass in all the playful enjoyment of his liberty. A faint bleating now and then from the hills, does not disturb, but is in fine keeping with the general picture of repose and happiness.

But much of this quiet loveliness is owing to your own feelings of sacred reverence for the holy day. Without these, even though the whistle of the ploughboy, and the song of the milkmaid be mute, the scenes of Nature would ever continue the same. It is not Nature that changes, but man. It is man, who, under divine influence, invests her on this day, with these holy and sweet associations, and attunes her harp of ten thousands strings to the solemn minstrelsy of heaven. It is the mind that throws a charm, or otherwise, on everything around us. The man whose broken heart is over-burthened with grief and poignant sorrow, experiences no pleasure and sees no beauty in the richest scenes of Nature, but let the load of grief be removed, and everything is changed into beauty, and joy, and gladness. So it is with regard to the Sabbath.

With a heart dead to all holy affections and spiritual influences, we see Nature on this day, just the same as we do on any other day, and behold her with no higher, or more reverential feelings of emotion; but let a live coal from off the holy altar touch the heart, and the soul be strung to the music of heaven, and everything assumes a new aspect, what was dark becoming light as the noon-day sun, and every object surrounded as with a halo of seraphic glory.

Hush! there is my father quietly reading his bible in the arbour—come, we shall not disturb him, and as we go, I may relate to you the simple routine of our Sabbath day at Airniefoul, the description of one day applying to the first day of the week, with scarcely any variation, throughout the year.

The household at the farm and mill all rise just about as early as they do on other days; but no noise or bustle is observable; a hushed stillness sweetly pervades all their movements. My father, when the weather is fine, reads for sometime in the little summerhouse; or if otherwise, he seats himself for the same purpose by the large kitchen ingle till the breakfast hour, when the whole inmates assemble together as one family under one patriarchal head. A chapter is then read, with an appropriate psalm, or hymn, when a prayer is fervently offered up, embodying confession of sin, gratitude for by-past mercies, and supplication for the guidance and direction of the Most High, during the services of the holy day. After church service and a quiet walk in the garden, or by the daisied meadow which skirts the murmuring burn, and an hour or two devoted to the perusal and study of some favourite tome of divinity, the evening is closed in the same devout and solemn manner, with this exception, that the psalm or paraphrase is sung to the plaintive airs of Martyrdom, or Dundee, or of some other old and favourite tune; and though the cadence be rude and unmelodious, it is, doubtless, sweet to the ears of the God of Sabaoth, who requires not orchestral symphonies but the homage of devout and believing hearts. Religion is not, as some would have us believe, a cold

and gloomy thing. Eminently practical, it enters into all the scenes of life, sweetening our enjoyments, deepening our affections, hallowing our thoughts, elevating our desires, soothing our sorrows, and lightening our cares. It was in this cheerful light that my revered father regarded our holy religion and its every-day duties, and hence, instead of dark and troubled clouds of ominous gloom ever brooding mysteriously over his sequestered home, a halo of sweet and silvery brightness, ever encircled with celestial radiance the blessed spot on which he, and his happy household, dwelt.

I know not, dear reader, to what distant lands in future years my footsteps may lead me, nor to what sublime Cathedral services I may listen, but of this I am persuaded, that no clime on earth, however gorgeously beautiful, no pompous ritual however attractive and fascinating, shall ever erase from my heart the cherished altar-scene of my happy childhood home, or hush the rude music of its holy songs.

What heart does not glow with the deepest emotion at the scene described by the unfortunate Pringle, when in the wild solitudes of an African valley, with the wild beasts of the forest as listeners, his little family group offered up praise and prayer as they were wont in the peaceful glens of Scotland? But what heart can fully enter into the feelings of the lonely emigrants, when for the first time in that savage wilderness, the plaintive melody of the songs of Zion was borne upon the pestilential breeze; what tongue can tell their poignant grief when their troubled thoughts wandered to the homes they had left, in a land whose every association and remembrance entwined themselves around their heart-strings the firmer and the closer the further their feet wandered from its much loved shores!

And by a natural transition, remember the constancy of the Jews in captivity.—"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they

that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning, if I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

But 'tis now near the hour of prayer, and the Sabbath bell will soon break in silvery sweetness over our peaceful glen. Already some of our people are skirting the wood on their way to the House of God. As we follow in a little family group, let us observe the hilly road before us crowded with anxious travellers, clad in glowing and not unpicturesque costumes, all pressing onwards to worship in the distant village church. The top-boots of the farmer, and the red plaid and snood of the cottar are there, blended with the dazzling colours of the "gudewife's" newest dress, the bright tints of the scarlet plush of the ploughman's habiliments, and the gaudy hues of the flaunting ribbons of the sweet and bonnie lasses. Every homestead in the glen, every lonely cot on the hill-side, sends its quota of devout worshippers.

Beautiful Sabbath morning! We wend our way midst wayside flowers and golden sunshine, melody of hymning brooks and woodland birds, along the white and dusty road; now on the upland lea 'mong bleating lambs, anon in shady groves of beech and elm, on through the hazel copse and gowand holm, the mountain streamlet murmuring at our feet, reflecting on its tremulous bosom the passing vision—pilgrims on the march, by smiling faces, silvery voices cheered of God-sent happy children,—each starting far from different points yet all arriving glad beneath the same blest, sacred roof at last. Beautiful emblem of the true church of Christ, divided into many sects and parties setting out on their Zionward march from many different points, and pursuing their way by many different paths, but all gathering into one happy, glorious company at the gates of Paradise!

We have now reached the top of the hill, and as we slowly pace along by Hayston and Foffarty, we can admire at our leisure the magnificent panorama of hill and dale, which stretches away in surpassing beauty to the foot of the Grampians on our left. The Hunter Hill on the west and the hill of Kinnettles on the east, necessarily considerably circumscribe the view of the Howe, but the effect produced on the mind is just the more exhilarating and sublime by reason of its contraction. Sweetly reposing in the hollow amidst umbrageous woods and daisied meadows, the mansion-house of Brigton appears from this point of view in all its simple and primitive beauty. The sloping lawns of Invereighty so green and pleasant to the sight, stretch smilingly away by sylvan-fringed copses to the east; while the pretty village of Kinnettles with its church and manse, its "ancient mill," and little school nestles peacefully by the banks of the Kerbet, beneath the friendly shadow of its beautifully wooded hill on the north. Amidst its dark and gloomy forests, the red embattled towers of Lindertis gleam brightly in the morning sun; the steeples of Kirriemuir in the distance, shaded somewhat by the great dark quarried rock, opaquely crowned with gloomy stunted pine behind, standing sharply out in bold relief against the clear blue sky; the sparkling peat streams, like winding threads of silver, meandering to their own soft music, in the lovely valley between. Bleak and grim in the far north, the lofty Grampians tower upwards towards heaven in all their majesty and grandeur; black Carn-a-month, and snow-capped Mount Blair looking down mysteriously from their mist-enshrouded thrones as if charged from spirit land with some portentous message to the thoughtless and unreflective inhabitants below.

Crossing now the swift flowing Kerbet, by a little rickety wooden bridge, we are kindly greeted by my old and worthy schoolmaster Mr Daniel Robertson, of Kinnettles, for in that little school, yonder, did I con the first elements of learning. Dear spot! ever sacred shalt thou be to me, and oft re-

membered fondly in after-life, and as often as the cherished picture is recalled to my memory, will appear in the midst thereof the form and expression of the venerable man who first opened to me the gates of knowledge.

Now we are pacing among the tombs. What a holy instructive place is a country churchyard! We see old and decaying sepulchres, quaint and rude inscriptions in the cemetery of the crowded city, as well as in the lonely burying-ground of a sequestered Highland glen. But here, for ages, have the members of the same family been successively buried in the same grave, the same spot of earth thus becoming a resting-place for several generations. In many a surrounding homestead as in my own ancestral line, son succeeds father, and brother succeeds brother, it may be for centuries, and to the same narrow house do they quickly succeed each other in the dark and Silent Land. With the German poet Klopstock, we fervently exclaim :—

"How they so softly rest,
All, all the holy dead,
Unto whose dwelling place
Now doth my soul draw near!
How they so softly rest
All in their silent graves,
Deep to corruption
Slowly down-sinking!

"And they no longer weep,
Here, where complaint is still!
And they no longer feel,
Here, where all gladness flies!
And, by the cypresses
Softly o'ershadowed,
Until the Angel
Calls them, they slumber!"

What a pleasant thought that you will sleep the last long sleep in the grave of your fathers, and that your ashes will congenially mix with kindred dust! How comforting to look every sabbath-day on that little green hillock; to become familiar with your own grave, begemmed in summer with

butter-cups and daisies, around which the butterflies spread their silken wings, and the humming bees drowse luxuriously among their honied sweets! How consoling the thought that when you are quietly sleeping beneath that grassy mound, the flowers you loved so well will bloom above you, and the birds you so delighted to hear will sing around you; yet more consoling still, that friends will fondle these flowers, and bless these birds for your sake; and every Sabbath day will look upon your grave, and think of you, and speak about you, and vividly realise the time—not far distant—when they shall be gently laid in the same narrow house beside you!

How different, dear reader, may be your fate and mine! The time is at hand when we must go forth into the world to brave its dangers and its temptations, its sorrows and its trials, and we may wander many a weary mile, see the strange scenes of many a strange land, and drink of the waters of many a strange river, ere our earthly pilgrimage be ended. But our grave—where shall *it* be? In the pestilential swamps of Africa, or on the burning plains of Hindostan; on the solitary prairie of America, or on the ice-bound coast of Labrador; in the crowded cemetery of the city, or in the depths of the ever-surging sea? We cannot tell! Alas! our sad fate it may be to experience the poignant feelings of the sick and lonely exile, far from country, far from friends, dying in solitude among strangers, who, when he knows the approach of death cannot be averted, nor his poisoned shafts turned aside, turns his face to the wall and breathes a hopeless wish that he may be buried in the grave of his fathers!

But the church-bell has ceased. Let us now reverently enter the House of God. How sacred and holy we feel the place to be where we, in early childhood, first offered up praise and prayer from pure and loving hearts, to the Most High God, the great Omniscient Author of our being, the Guide and Counsellor of our youth! Impressions made on the young and tender heart are seldom, if ever, effaced in after-life. How supremely important, therefore, they be, right

religious impressions, which, though sometimes choked well nigh to extermination, by the cares and pleasures or riches of the world, will ultimately flourish in healthful luxuriance and beauty.

The service ended, we now, amidst kind words and smiling adieus, turn our faces homewards; and as we journey leisurely on our way, it may not be out of place or uninstructive, to give expression to our feelings and convictions in regard to the subject matter of the discourse to which we have just listened, from our worthy parish minister. The theme was in the abstract, Foreign Missions, and eloquently and powerfully did he plead their cause. To me, however, a transparent fallacy seemed to run through all his arguments, for I have always most firmly held the opinion that the true spirit of Christianity is best exemplified, in the first instance, in the home circle of our family and friends, gradually extending its benign influence to our neighbours and countrymen in general. Nay, more, I hold that the Christian most lamentably fails in his duty, who, while he opens his purse-strings to support, and makes every sacrifice to extend, the field of Foreign Missions, neglects or ignores the confessed spiritual destitution which reigns on every hand around him, in his native land.

Let an exhibition be got up for the sale of fancy work; a subscription set a-foot; or a public meeting convened, for the purpose of swelling the treasury of our foreign missions, and what sacrifices we see made, what generosity displayed, and what thrilling eloquence is poured forth, until heaven and earth seem stirred and aroused by the commotion! Yet, that gorgeous array of finery may be displayed in the same city, where hundreds and thousands of our fellow-creatures are naked, houseless wanderers, without a place whereon to lay their head; these princely subscriptions are given, it may be from the same locality where many are pining with hunger, nay, actually dying for want of the common necessaries of life; and these rushing strains of eloquence may almost

penetrate to the dark and dismal hovels, where countless throngs of our own countrymen are wallowing in vice and crime, and from which may be heard the reproachful and bitter cry—"No man careth for our souls."

I venture to assert, that, if but a tithe of the vast sums expended on foreign missions were applied to the excavation and enlightenment of the heathen in our own land, the arid deserts and moral wastes, which, in spite of all our boasted advancement, everywhere encompass us, would, under the blessing of the Most High, soon assume the gladdening appearance of fertility and beauty; the deadly and pestilential atmosphere be purified by the cheering and invigorating light of the gospel; and the loud universal hymn of praise and thanksgiving be heard throughout the length and breadth of our beloved land.

I know it is said, and believe truly said, that those who are the warmest supporters of foreign missions, are generally the most zealous promoters of home schemes of reformation. But that the efforts made in behalf of the latter, are in any way commensurate to the necessitous nature of the case, let the revenue for home and foreign missions of our various churches and societies testify. Surely the soul of a Scotchman is as precious and as worthy to be saved as that of an African Negro, or of a South Sea Islander. Nay, does not the charm of country and of home throw an additional interest over the former? It is delightful to read of the triumph and success of the far-distant missionary, and to receive regular tidings of the little Indian boy and girl who are being reared in the paths of virtue and holiness by our instrumentality. But, O! surely it is not less delightful to follow in the rugged pathway of the Christian philanthropist, as he ministers of the bread and water of life to those who are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and to see with our own eyes, the reclaimed and happy urchins in the Ragged School, and mark the progress of our little foundling as he scans the elements of Christian knowledge!

To be a Christian is to love with brotherly affection all mankind. But there are degrees of love. A man has not, and cannot have, the same affection for a stranger as he feels for those of his own household. The patriot has not, and never can have, the same undying love for his adopted country, as he has for his own father-land. Religion, when it enters the soul, hallows and deepens, instead of eradicating or weakening these emotions.

Were we to cast this shining pebble into yon calm and peaceful lake, the tremulous ripple would begin where the stone had sunk, imperceptibly increasing further and further from the spot, till the wide bosom of the lake heaved and vibrated in sympathetic unison. So it is with Christianity. Seated in the heart, the Christian's heart affections flow out, first to those of his family, or his own household, yet gradually and surely extending its influence, until the whole human race are encompassed with its holy, and vivifying, and everlasting love.

But let me, and those who conscientiously think with me, not be misunderstood. We depreciate not the labours of the missionary in other lands, nor wish his sphere of usefulness abridged. On the contrary, we hail with joy every accession to the ranks of those devoted men, who, leaving country and friends, and the comforts and happiness of social and civilized life, to brave the dangers of distant climes, ought ever to receive our warmest gratitude. We do not wish for less of missionary zeal, but only for more heart-felt interest and anxious efforts on behalf of our own country-men. We do not think less of the pioneer of the Cross, as he discourses of the Saviour on the sandy deserts of Africa, or on the burning plains of Hindostan; but we think more of the humble missionary prayerfully and perseveringly pursuing his tortuous way along the dark alleys and dismal streets of our large cities, braving reproach, disease and death, that he may win souls to Christ. We love not a'Duff or a Williams less—we only love a Chalmers and a Guthrie more.

As a fitting sequel to these reflections on the good man's discourse, may we not now enquire into the causes of the decline of sacred music in our Scottish Churches, as you could not but have been most forcibly struck to-day with the extreme *bauchness*, and the very cold, and inefficient state of this part of the service. In general the persons appointed to lead the psalmody, and the great majority, if not nearly all of the members and adherents of our congregations in the country, come to the sanctuary on the Sabbath day, with little or no preparation whatever for that part of the service in which only they are permitted to engage, the reasons in most instances being, that the latter cannot learn what the other is utterly incapable of communicating, the former being often destitute even of an ear for music, and oftener entirely ignorant of the very first elements of the science.

It was not always so. Music was cultivated under express divine sanction in the Jewish Church, and from the time of David held a high place as part of the public worship of God. When David was old and full of years, the number of the Levites above thirty years of age, was thirty-eight thousand, and out of this number four thousand praised the Lord with the instruments which he had made. The Songs of Solomon, his successor, we are informed, were one thousand and five, and all his arrangements for the celebration of public worship were on a scale of even greater magnificence than those of David. These were not mere Jewish appointments. Devotional singing was earlier than Judaism, as is seen in the hymn of praise sung by Moses and Miriam on the shores of the Red Sea. It is as early as the creation itself, for when the copestone thereof was laid, "The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

The spiritual priesthood under the New Testament, perpetuated the appointment of praise as the duty of the whole church,—"That they should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." Jesus Himself sang an hymn with His disciples on the

night in which He was betrayed. Paul in his epistle to the church at Corinth, says,—"when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm." He exhorts the Colossian Church, also, to "admonish one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs."

Approaching our own day, D'Aubigné says—"The souls of Luther and his contemporaries, elevated by faith to the most sublime contemplations, roused to enthusiasm by the dangers and struggles which incessantly threatened the infant church, inspired by the poetry of the Old, and the hope of the New Testament, soon began to pour out their feelings in religious songs, in which poetry and music joined, and blended their most heavenly accents, and thus were heard reviving in the sixteenth century, the hymns, which, in the first century, soothed the sufferings of the martyrs. Many were the hymns composed, and rapidly circulated among the people, and greatly did they contribute to arouse their slumbering minds."

Calvin and Knox were both enthusiastic lovers of music, the former establishing the singing of psalms as a distinguished and important part of public worship; and the latter compiling a work on sacred music to give an increased impetus to the general cultivation of the divine science. And until lately psalmody was cultivated with much success, and was universally popular in our own country. Calderwood relates the return of John Durie to Edinburgh, thus:—"As he was coming from Leith to Edinburgh, upon tuesday the fourth September, there met him at the Gallow Greene two hundredth men of the inhabitants of Edinburgh. Their number still increased till he came within the Nether Bow. There they beganne to sing the 124th Psalme, 'Now Isrrael may say,' &c., and sang in foure parts, knowne to the most of the people. They came up the street till they came to the Great Kirk, singing all the way to the number of two thowsand."

It thus appears, that in the Jewish and New Testament Churches, as well as in the churches of the Reformation, in

this and other lands, the place assigned to praise as a part of the worship of God, was distinguished and prominent, and that every exertion was used by kings, priests, and ministers, to encourage and keep alive in the minds of the people, the glowing flame of divine song.

Why has it declined to its present miserably low state amongst the churches in Scotland? Why is so little interest taken in the cultivation of sacred music in an age conspicuous above all others, for its rapid advancement in philosophy and literature, in science and art? Has the worship of God lost any of its charms, or the Songs of Zion any of their sweetness? Alas, alas! In this romantic land of poetry and song, with its deeds of glory and of fame strung to the loftiest strains of national music, and sung with enthusiastic rapture, on every hill-side and in every glen, the sublime praises of Divine Worship are either in a languid, cheerless state, or altogether neglected; no joyous, well-sustained, melodious hymn of gladness rising like the hallelujahs of heaven from the Sanctuary of the saints on earth.

What shall we say then to break the slumbering apathy and arouse the minds of our countrymen to their former ardour and enthusiastic love of the sweet Songs of Zion? Shall we exclaim with Baxter—"A choir of holy persons singing melodiously the praises of Jehovah, are most like the angelical society." Or with Edwards—"As it is the command of God that all should sing, so all should make conscience of learning to sing, as it is a thing which cannot be decently performed at all without learning. Those, therefore, who neglect to learn to sing, live in sin." With Luther—"I verily think, and am not ashamed to say, that next to divinity no art is comparable to music;" or join with him in singing his own sublime hymn—

"Eine vaste burg ist unser Gott"—
OUR GOD IS A STRONG TOWER.

Or, leaving man's saying, shall we quote the injunctions

and admonitions of Holy Writ?—"Let the people praise Thee, O Lord; let all the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us." "Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good: sing praises unto His name, for it is pleasant." "Let us come —make haste—before His presence with thanksgivings, and make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms."

But a divine vision now floats before my entranced and dazzled eyes:—Heaven with its unspeakable glories unfolds itself to view—with jewelled harps and crowns of gold, on sunny wings the angels fly—arrayed in robes of white, and wearing diadems of glory, redeemed ones tread the golden streets of Paradise—softly o'er its amber bed flows the river of life among the groves of amaranth—celestial music fills and ravishes my soul—in holy unison my heart vibrates with sweet exulting joy—and hark! a voice cometh out of the throne saying—"Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that hear Him, both small and great."—And I hear, "as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, 'ALLELUJAH: FOR THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH!'"

CHAPTER XVIII.

LUCY JOHNSTONE.

PART I.—SUNSHINE.

So sure as God doth reign on high,
Controlling this world's destiny,
Shall conscience sting that guilty breast,
Nor give his troubled spirit rest;
Recalling oft her wasted form,
Swift flitting through the raging storm;
Rehearsing in his troubled dreams
Her wild-like shouts and piercing screams,
And picturing dark that desolate hearth,
From which hath fled the joys of earth.

THE farm and mill of Airniefoul, the birthplace of the writer, is pleasantly situated in the extreme east corner of the Glen of Ogilvy. Surrounded on all sides by a mountainous belt of hills, the lonely glen is, apparently, completely isolated from the outer world. Yet, it is not so. The county town is within a few miles distance, and populous hamlets and villages encompass it on all sides; while the Howe, or Valley of Strathmore, stretches away in its sylvan beauty beyond; the long rugged range of the Sidlaw Hills grim towering dark between.

It was now autumn; the fields in their golden yellow were ripening luxuriantly for the sickle; and all was bustle and preparation at Airniefoul for the approaching harvest. A re-union of two loving and trusting hearts had just taken place within its precincts. Kate, the only daughter of the worthy farmer, and Jeanie Morison, a former school companion in a neighbouring city, had met the evening before after a separation of many years, the latter the invited guest

to Airniefoul, to partake for a time of its simple hospitalities and rural pleasures.

Kate, it may be observed, was some years the elder of Jeanie. She was of a warm and genial temperament, yet apparently saddened in heart by some early disappointment, which, however, infused a pensive sweetness to her voice, and a solemn melody to her words, very attractive and winning especially in one who combined the inward qualities of a cultivated mind, with all the external graces of comeliness and beauty.

The landscape around her mountain home was not only beautiful in picturesque and attractive scenery, but from its close connection with, and immediate proximity to, Glamis, was also rich in classic associations and legendary lore. Her great delight, therefore, had latterly been to muse over the wizard and fairy tales of by-gone times, and to treasure up in her heart whatever was romantic or interesting in the more unheeded, yet not less momentous scenes of every day life. And this, not from the mere love of the marvellous, but with an anxious, fixed desire to extract some moral or useful lesson from all that was happening around her.

On the morning after Jeanie Morison's arrival at Airniefoul, the two friends were walking arm in arm by the banks of the little streamlet that murmurs round the homestead, when Kate, ever anxious to communicate whatever had profitably impressed herself, thus addressed her companion :—

"This balmy morning so bright and beautiful seems to invite us to wander over the glen. But whither shall we bend our footsteps? You see that lonely cottage on the brow of the hill, the sun shining bright on its white-washed walls, and partly overshadowed with a clump of stately elms? There is a sad story of domestic misery connected with that cot; a blight has come over its once joyous and happy hearth. Let us seat ourselves on this mossy bank and I will tell it thee :—

"Adam Johnstone, the late occupant of the cottage, was,

for many years Grieve or Overseer of the neighbouring farm of Hayston, to whom the proprietor, who did not reside on the estate, entrusted the full management of its affairs. A most diligent and faithful servant, ever alive to the interests of his employer, was honest Adam Johnstone. He superintended the farm, bought and sold, engaged and discharged servants, as if the whole were his own property, every transaction, however small, being negotiated with the most scrupulous fidelity. Honesty had its reward in the unswerving confidence of his employer, and the good wishes and respect of all who knew him. The minister and session of the parish, with the unanimous concurrence and approval of the congregation, elected him cordially to the eldership, an office which he faithfully though unostentatiously filled for a longer term of years than had ever fallen to the lot of any of his compeers. Yet all this prosperous and happy time, he sought not the applause of men, but the possession of a good conscience, and a single eye to rectitude and truth.

"Janet, his sonsie helpmate, was in every respect a suitable wife to Adam Johnstone. Active, industrious, frugal, inventive, making 'auld claes look maist as weel as new,' she kept a warm and cosy hearth, the envy of many a gudewife in the glen with double the means without being able to bring about the same result. Her kitchen or but end was kept as scrupulously clean as a Dutch cottage; she was always scouring away at chairs, tables, 'luggies,' and all the et-ceteras of her sanctum; and then her capacious hearthstone and large roomy ingle, how white and beautiful! The roof was hung round with dainty sized hams and rolls of bacon all her own curing, while her clean-kept dairy was full of large earthen dishes brimful of nice rich milk for the making of butter and cheese, at which she was quite an adept, and which, on market days, she disposed of herself in the neighbouring town. The parlour or ben house was a mirror of neatness and comfort. The floor scoured clean and white, and covered over with a slight sprinkling of glistering sand

from the bonnie burn; the chairs, table, and cupboard of bright varnished oak, with the mahogany eight day clock ticking cheerily behind the door, gave the whole quite an air of rural independence. On the white-washed walls hung several gaudily coloured prints without frames, descriptive of Wallace and his exploits; or the re-union of loves long estranged, with the village church in the distance; the cupboard filled with the glowing china tea set, used only now on rare and high occasions; and the sunny recess of the little diamond-paned window adorned with the gaudily painted parrot in its stucco cage. On the mantelpiece were placed several nondescript figures of porcelain bedecked with peacock's feathers, and long strings of birds' eggs fantastically hung round the whole, while on the mahogany chest of drawers lay the big Ha' bible with the shorter and larger Catechism, the Confession of Faith, Hervey's Meditations, Pilgrim's Progress, and Guthrie's Christian's Great Interest.

"But Adam and Janet were now surrounded by much more interesting objects than these. Sweet, healthy, olive plants grew around their table, destined in time to be either a blessing or a crown of thorns to their aged heads. Four beautiful children, three boys and one girl, made their lonely cot a little paradise; and it was Adam's delight when the labours of the day were over, to work in his little garden with all his laughing children around him; or to train the honeysuckle and jessamine on the porch and walls of his cottage, while they bedecked themselves with the pretty blossoms which he threw down amongst them ostensibly as useless for his purpose, but in reality that he might see their sunny ringlets clustered with their bloom, and listen to their ringing merry laughter ever so sweetly dear to a father's heart. In the long winter evenings he would tell them the story of Joseph and his brethren, till their little cheeks were wet with tears; or romp with them at "hide-and-seek," or "blind man's buff," till warned by Janet it was time to "gie ower their daffin," when they would all gather round him to

say their evening prayers; and in a few minutes the house would be still and silent, the lovely sleepers each on his little pillow, a perfect picture of innocence and beauty.

"The Saturday holiday has an irresistible, inexpressible charm for every schoolboy, but to those at a remote country school, it possesses a double charm. There are so many little excursions to make, sights to see, friends to visit, that it is always looked forward to with delight, and enjoyed with the rarest pleasure. The youngsters at Woodbine Cottage were now attending school, and as they were our nearest neighbours they and the young people belonging to Airnie-foul were in the constant habit of going to, and returning from Kinnettles' school together. On these occasions many were the excursions we planned, and the exploits we projected. None, however, afforded me greater pleasure than to spend the afternoon at Adam's cottage, and to take a "dish o' tea" in his cozy kitchen. Then Janet was in all her glory, her grey wincey gown tucked neatly up behind, her massive broad-winged cap as white as driven snow, and her blooming sonsie face all radiant with sunny smiles; the hearthstone and "jams" newly "calmed," a large log fire blazing in the ingle, and the burnished tea kettle singing on the "sway." Then the table was duly placed in the middle of the nicely sanded floor, on which were laid the "tea dishes," with pyramids of oaten cakes and flour "scones," nice fresh butter and "groser jam." Some of the urchins who had been watching without would now enter in breathless haste with the joyful announcement that "Father was coming." We would then all hasten out to welcome him home, and Adam would then enter the cottage with a little elf on each arm, and the rest somewhat jealous, all clinging round him, but it took some little time to satisfy by many marks of affection, that they all equally shared his love.

"There was one, however, in this little group always more conspicuous than the rest in her eager and childlike attention to her father, who in his turn caressed and fondled her with

apparently more warmth of affection than any of her little brothers. This was Lucy. With her ruddy cheeks and hazel eyes, and light sunny curls she was as pretty a little nymph as one could look upon. A wild little imp too was Lucy, always doing a great many tricks at other people's expense. Yet being the only girl in the family, we were never very severe upon the culprit, who, to do her justice, when fairly taxed with her misdeeds, never denied that of which she knew she was really guilty. This was a beautiful trait in her then embryo character, which, developing itself in after life, made her the very personification of truthfulness, a virtue beautiful in all, but priceless and incomparable in woman. Then she was not childish; she had a courage and fortitude far above her years; nor selfish, for she would have shared any or everything with her playmates; nor capricious, for her friendship and love were steady and unchanging. Although a slight feeling of jealousy might occasionally spring up in our little breasts, at any marked, and as we might have supposed, uncalled for attention bestowed on Lucy, the cloud soon passed away, leaving the horizon purer and brighter than before. We all loved Lucy; her father tenderly and dearly; and, although then a mere girl, I have often detected his eyes following her every movement in our romping games, and when not missed by the others, have seen her seated on his knee, his hard bony fingers playing with her waving curls, while a low voice would tenderly whisper,—"My ain Lucy."

"Two circumstances which occurred in my girlhood, served indelibly to impress on my mind the features and expression of Lucy, circumstances which I will doubtless often recall in after life, as mementoes of early years. We had all planned a blaeberry excursion for a Saturday in the latter end of July, to the Hunter Hill which you see rising yonder immediately behind the farm of Airniefoul. It was a lovely morning when we all mustered on the green meadow beside the Mill, with our burnished flagons to contain the united proceeds of our

individual gatherings. After receiving sundry admonitions to keep well together, and not fall out by the way, and having been duly marshalled in regular marching order by the good-natured miller, we began our journey in the highest spirits.

"Over the burn we crossed, and away among the lofty pines we rambled, shouting loudly as we went, to the no small amazement of honest Reynard, who, thinking a pack of hounds had got on his track, broke cover in fine style, and bounded away with swift, yet stealthy steps across the hill. Even a majestic deer would now and then start from the brushwood in affright, but discovering the puny foes with whom he imagined he had to contend, would, in utter contempt, kick his heels in the air, and walk leisurely and proudly away till lost to sight by the thick entangling brushwood. All the while, little Lucy kept close by my side as her legitimate protector, for I had promised to her parents to be her faithful guide, and to return her to them in safety. She was only then seven years of age, and as she toddled by my side, occasionally looking up slyly into my face with an expression of gratitude and happiness, I felt my young heart beat with excusable pride, that such a dear little lovely sylph had been committed to my care and keeping. As we wandered on, now in a deep mossy dell, anon on a high broomy knoll, I would gather for her the tallest and most beautiful of the blue and purple bells, or pluck the variegated ferns to adorn her sunny ringlets, or quickly pull a few of the wild raspberries which temptingly hung around our path, till we at last became very good friends indeed, so much so that no inducements could entice her to leave my side even for an instant. Sometimes, as the great lofty pines overhead shook their far-stretching branches in the breeze, now tremulous and faint as the notes of distant music, then loud and boisterous like the voice of approaching thunder, she would suddenly stop and gaze upwards with an expression of fear and awe till reassured by some gentle word, she would tremblingly take my hand, and move onwards as before. Often since then have I con-

jectured, what were the thoughts that passed through the mind of that timid child as these giant old harpers struck their thundering harps. To my own soul their notes were ever as the music of the spheres, suggestive of spiritual influences, and visions of glory. Did the tender strings of *her* little heart vibrate in sympathetic unison with mine? Was a passing glimpse of spiritual existence vouchsafed to her startled soul as she intently gazed on the azure sky far beyond, and above these harping pines?

"Loud shoutings and clapping of hands from the vanguard of our troop now announced the joyful intelligence that the blaeberry ground had been reached at last, and, sure enough, there were the bright green bushes hanging thick with the much prized purple fruit, at sight of which little Lucy forgot her gravity, and clapped her little hands in excess of joy. We again marshalled our forces, sending some to the right, and some to the left, while a few went forward as pioneers of the unexplored regions beyond. As for Lucy I judged it the safer plan to give her a very limited boundary wherein to range about for the exercise of her exploring propensities; so placing her down on a knoll in a sunny opening of the wood where the berries were ripe and plentiful, assigning to her a certain fixed limit, over the verge of which she was not to pass, and giving her the tiniest vessel to fill against our return, I cheerily pushed along among the pioneers, not however before announcing that our ultimate rendezvous was to be the 'Fiery Pans,' a well known spot on the top of the hill.

"The berries were ripe to perfection, and the crop luxuriantly large, so that with the shouting of captains in battle we filled our capacious flagons to overflowing, having at the same time made a rich feast to ourselves as we gathered; for, while we kept one eye steadily on the vessel, we as steadily kept the other on our own pleasure, ever remembering, no doubt with great self-satisfaction, that the workman is worthy of his hire. The word was given—'To the Fiery Pans,' and as the feast of blaeberries, instead of allaying, had rather increased our

hunger, and with our luxurious picnic, of bread and cheese and milk, in prospect, to the Fiery Pans assuredly we scampered, not by any means in regular file, but in strangely crooked and zigzag movements resembling rather the straggling of an army beating a retreat, than victorious conquerors announcing a victory. The last straggler had appeared on the summit of the hill, and our little party sat down without any ceremony, eager to discuss our wallets. The cakes and milk had just been introduced, when, as with one voice, we all exclaimed—'Lucy! Lucy! where is Lucy?' Like one demented I rushed down the hill not knowing whither I went or where to go; my conscience smote me so violently, that filled with remorse and grief, I hardly knew what I was doing. The rest of our party following with anxious and hasty steps, immediately saw the necessity for decisive and active measures being instantly taken, for the sun was declining in the west; and the shadows of the trees fell heavily on the ground. Our little party was now organized and speedily on our different routes, shouting and hallooing at the top of our voices, if so be the lost Lucy—now dearer than ever—might hear and answer our cries. What agony I endured, what remorse I felt since my cruel and inexcusable neglect had been the cause of this grief; and how it might end, I was afraid to contemplate, the image of the little lost Lucy ever rising reproachfully before me, goading me on to despair. For hours we continued to search every dell and hollow, every rising knoll and opening of the wood. Our voices were now hoarse with shouting, and our eyes were dim with tears, and I shall never forget the look of blank and hopeless despair which overshadowed every face of our little group as we all again met without having obtained the object of our search. In my despair I gave her up for lost, and walking slowly and sadly on, we came suddenly upon an opening in the wood, which we had not hitherto explored. I looked anxiously down from the hill on which we stood and to my amazement and great joy remembered this as the place where I had left Lucy, and perceived the coloured

handkerchief, which, as a mark by which I might know the place again, I had tied to the highest branches of the bushes, still hanging where I had left it. Frantic with joy, I shouted 'Lucy' and bade them follow, and down the hill, and over the hollow we rushed, when, breathless with anxiety, we stood at last beside the very spot where I had left her. Beckoning them to be quiet, and remain where they were, I cautiously advanced, and there, in a little mossy hollow between some blaeberry bushes, lay the form of the little lost one, reclining sweetly in the arms of sleep. My heart palpitated with exulting joy as I gazed on the lovely sleeper, and felt my anxiety and grief for her sake were now over. She seemed to have scrupulously obeyed my injunctions, not to wander from the prescribed limits; her little flagon was full of fruit, and it would seem she had awaited our return, till, overpowered by the heat, she had fallen asleep. And there she lay, dear, sweet little elf, a bunch of moss for her pillow, her head reclining gently on her hand, her golden ringlets flowing dishevelled over her shoulders, and her plump cheeks well besmeared with the purple juice of the blaeberry. I need not tell you what a joyful awakening it was to Lucy, nor how merrily we threaded our homeward way among the still sighing pines, nor with what pride and joy I delivered over my little pet lamb to the safe fold of her doting parents."

"And what was the other incident, Kate?"

"The other circumstance to which I alluded, occurred when Lucy was eleven years of age. It was a dreary day in winter, dark scowling clouds were driving through the sky chasing each other like demons intent on mischief; and the wild blustering winds howled and bellowed along the glen, shaking the bending trees with resistless power and fury. I had gone up the hill as usual to spend the Saturday afternoon in Adam's cottage, and felt sorry my little favourite Lucy was absent, having gone to Kinnettles on some necessary household duties. We romped and gambolled about as usual, but sadly missed the fairy form, and ringing silvery voice of our little favourite.

There was a vacuum felt in, and silently acknowledged by each little heart, which cast a damper over our frolicsome pastimes, so that it was by the greatest effort our childish games could be pursued or kept up at all. At last our merriment fairly died out of itself, and as with one consent, we gathered in a group at the door of the cottage, to watch the threatening storm. Just at this moment, a strange murky darkness overspread the dreary glen; a deceitful calm settled for a moment on the face of the sky, and a mysterious, suspicious hush came over the conflicting elements, foreboding darkly, yet surely, the coming tempest. There we stood, with the anxious mother in the midst intently gazing on the gathering tempest, feeling a strange unearthly sensation of unpending desolation, and all thinking of dear much loved Lucy, and earnestly longing for her return. Blacker and blacker grew the threatening heavens, and more oppressively settled the saddening silence, when the feathery snowflakes silently and softly began to fall hiding first the surrounding hills from our view, and latterly obscuring every landmark in the glen.

"'A snow storm,' cried Janet convulsively wringing her hands, 'Lucy, Lucy! what will become of Lucy?' Thicker, and thicker fell the driving snow, and darker, and blacker grew the deepening gloom, the depressing silence only broken at long intervals by the whirring flight of the moorland birds seeking vainly for shelter from the feeding storm. Our little hearts trembled, and our spirits gave way, and the hot tears began to trickle down our cheeks as we looked into each other's faces with all the varied expression of grief and despair, feeling some overwhelming calamity was about to overtake us. Janet seemed to have entirely lost her presence of mind, and by her frantic gestures and melancholy cries, only served to encrease tenfold our bitter distress.

"I now volunteered to go in search of Lucy, and was just preparing to put my purpose into execution, when a dark figure was dimly seen advancing in the direction of the cottage. As it slowly approached, it soon became evident it was not

the form of Lucy. Still, we held our breath in eager expectation, and in a few moments, Adam Johnstone entered the cottage.

"'Lucy! Lucy, our dear Lucy,' frantically exclaimed Janet, rushing into her husband's arms, and sobbing, like a child. 'Let us put our trust in God: He will temper the wind to the shorn lamb,' was Adam's solemn reply, and gently disengaging himself from her wild-like embrace, he hastily threw his plaid around his brawny shoulders, took down his rustic staff, called his faithful dog, drew his bonnet over his brow, and cautioning us not to leave the cottage, till his return, he left with a steady step, and was soon lost to sight in the thickening snow.

"So calm, yet quick, had been his movements, that it was not till his darkly receding figure had entirely disappeared that I remembered my resolution to go in search of Lucy. Without communicating my intention lest I might be prevented from leaving the cottage in terms of Adam's injunctions, I slipped quietly from the group, and before any obstacle could be thrown in my way, was bounding down the glen.

"I had gone a considerable way without finding any trace of Adam, and soon regretted the rash step I had taken in blindly rushing into danger, without any reasonable hope that I would ever reach the object of my search. I stood still amidst the falling snow, and in utter helplessness burst into tears. Just at this moment the flakes fell less frequently, and became gradually smaller in size till they ceased altogether, and the setting sun shone brightly upon the grey leaden sky, illuminating the dreary glen by his welcome light. At a short distance stood Adam in wild amazement at my unexpected appearance, and when I joyfully rushed to him for protection, he, at first, seemed inclined to chide me for my rashness, but so tenaciously and tenderly did I cling to him, telling him that I must go with him to seek for Lucy, that his brow at last relaxed, and his frown passed away, as he gently covered me with his plaid, grasped warmly my tremb-

ling hand, and bade me take courage for the Lord would yet restore to us our dear lost Lucy. 'This is only a blink before the storm,' said Adam, and we hastily pursued our way.

"The flakes of snow again began to fall, the sun went down in darkness, and bleak and dreary grew the troubled sky. The winds, which had for sometime slept in ominous silence, now roused into frantic wrath, shook their shaggy manes to the storm, dancing on in their thundering vengeance and desolating fury, driving, and tossing, and wheeling into maddening eddies the light and feathery snowflakes, and shaking the surrounding hills from their very foundations. No wonder my young heart trembled, and my feeble limbs shook with fear, but Adam kept my hand firmly clasped in his, and if *it* shook too, it was not for fear of the whirlwind or the tempest, but for the weak helpless lamb now wandering in the wilderness far from her own loved sheltered fold. Thicker fell the blinding snow, and drearier grew the hopeless night, yet on we went amidst the storm supported safely by an unseen hand.

"'Lucy must have long since left the village,' said Adam solemnly, 'yet she could not, I think, have passed this spot.'

"'But you forget, Adam,' I replied, 'that the snow is deep, and the night is dark.'

"'True, true, poor Lucy has doubtless lost her way. May the Lord have mercy on her.'

"'List, Adam, I hear a distant sound—a sound as it were of music. Listen—do you not hear it?'

"'I do hear a strange-like pleasing sound, but it is not like a human voice—something spiritual, I fear.'

"'Yes, Adam,' said I joyfully, 'It is a human voice, and I know the soft notes of that pensive song.'

"Still nearer and nearer came the pleasing sound, until at last we distinctly heard these plaintive words.

O wearily I wander
O'er dreary glen and wold,
All blacker grows the darkness
Which hides me from my fold.

To Thee, O God, Jehovah,
The sorrows of my breast
I tell, for Thou wilt hear me,
And give my spirit rest.

For me there is no coffin,
The snow will be my shroud,
While Angels hover round me,
Like a bright celestial cloud.

O wearily I wander
O'er dreary glen and wold,
Through this increasing darkness
Find not can I my fold.

"The snowflakes suddenly ceased, the moon shone forth in soft and silvery brightness; a moment more, and I and Lucy were rapturously clasped in each others arms.

"Need I tell the sequel. How old Adam embraced again and again his little daughter; and how she related to us as we went joyfully homeward, how long after she had hopelessly wandered among the snow, the idea suggested itself of singing as loudly as she could in the faint hope of her voice reaching the ears of those who might be sent from the cottage in search of her;—how Janet met us frantic with joy at the door of the cottage, and how all the little ones clung round their beloved sister, refusing for sometime to be parted from her."

"I can easily imagine, Kate, the joyous and happy scene," quietly said Jeanie, "but you seem to have had a melancholy pleasure in relating or rather dwelling on these interesting incidents in Lucy's early life while I was all impatience and anxiety to hear the sequel."

"Yes, my dear friend, you have penetrated my real feelings. Every picture of life has its bright and its dark side. I love to dwell on the one, but fear to turn to the other. I have no heart at least to dwell on the dark side of this picture. But as we are invited to drink tea this evening at the manse tomorrow I will tell it thee."

PART II.—THE DESTROYER.

"It strikes me, my dearest friend," cheerfully said Kate next morning, "you begin to like our country life. You have probably from childhood been so accustomed to the gay circle of city life that this change to rural scenes and primitive customs and habits has the greater effect on your sensitive nature. And you have been so gentle and silent too; more anxious apparently to listen than to join in conversation, which with your natural amiability and cultivated talents you could possibly so much adorn."

"Yes, Kate," Jeanie replied, "I came rather to be a listener than a prominent speaker, for well knowing your powers of description, warm affections, and still warmer heart, I anticipated learning much during my brief visit to Airniefoul, and I have not been disappointed."

"Dearest Jeanie, you flatter me too much, for the fact is, this glen, the surrounding hills, the villages, the castles, the lochs, the moors of this and the adjoining parishes are so rich in poetic and historic lore, that although you were to prolong your stay at Airniefoul for a full twelvemonth, I would be unable to exhaust their treasures."

"Then let us make the most of our time, Kate. I am all impatience to hear the sequel of the story of Lucy Johnstone."

"Let us seat ourselves then in this quiet arbour in the garden, and, as briefly as I can, I will tell it thee:—

"Lucy Johnstone had reached her nineteenth year when a young man, the son of a merchant prince of a neighbouring sea-port town, came to reside at the farm of Hayston for the purpose of being instructed by Adam Johnstone in the practical science of agriculture, previous to his departure to Australia to take possession of a large tract of land purchased for him by his father.

"Walter Ogilvy was a younger son, and much beloved

by both his parents. With good average natural abilities he united warm and generous affections, being rather a favourite than otherwise with the friends of his younger days. As he grew up to manhood, however, whether from the over-indulgence of his parents, or the development of innate propensities hitherto lying concealed, he began gradually to exhibit feelings of restless discontent, and a desire to distinguish himself in some more extended and more congenial sphere than the counting-house of his father, in whose service he had been for some years. Mistaking, what might only, after all, have been a mere dislike to parental authority, and the dull, monotonous routine of methodical duty, for the secret stirrings of a noble and genuine ambition, his worthy father and too indulgent mother unitedly came to the abrupt conclusion, that the profession of the law was a much more suitable and congenial profession for their recreant son; and, forthwith without much consultation with him on a matter of which they believed themselves the better judges, they proceeded to put their darling project into execution. An old friend, the law agent in Edinburgh of the firm, was appealed to with such effect, that within one month from the time the scheme was first entertained all the preliminaries preparatory to Walter's commencement of the study of the law, were, in the technical phrase of the profession, 'signed, sealed, and delivered,' and our hero duly installed in his comfortable lodgings on the second flat of a highly respectable house in Pitt Street in the New Town.

"When I suddenly drop the curtain on his career in Edinburgh, by at once and honestly telling you, that he was neither more nor less than what is charitably and considerately termed, 'a spoiled child,' with no fixed principles in his head, and plenty of gold in his pocket, you can at once imagine, what, in its details, that career had been. At the time of which I speak, drunkenness was in the northern capital the rule, sobriety the exception. Hard drinking particularly distinguished the habits of the middle and upper classes of

society. No business of any kind could be transacted without drink. Judges drank, advocates drank, physicians drank, ministers drank, shop-keepers and tradesmen drank. No wonder then such a reckless youth as Walter Ogilvy fell into, and was carried off by the vortex. His hours of study became few and far between, and the purlieus of Potterrow and the Cowgate, became gradually more familiar to him than the more aristocratic lounges of Princes Street, or George Street. He had formed the acquaintance,—we cannot call ties formed in such circumstances, by the sacred name of friendship—of other too young men, equally wild, irresolute, and thoughtless as himself, whose parents being also rich, had liberally supplied them hitherto with funds. The drafts however on their liberality becoming so outrageously large, the fathers of the two young men proceeded to Edinburgh to learn and investigate for themselves, the true state of the case.

"Curiously enough, Walter's father having for sometime had grave suspicions that all was not right in Pitt Street either, met by accident at the 'Royal' on his arrival in Auld Reekie, those two veritable gentlemen just mentioned. There seems to be a sort of freemasonry in such things, for as the three sat down to breakfast, they soon discovered their affinity to each other, and as the first-named pair had had the advantage of a day's start, they of course knew everything the other wished, or cared to know. The revelation was sad and sorrowful enough, and after a full review of the whole matter, they came, as they thought, to the wise and philosophic conclusion, that a sheep-farm in the wilds of Australia was the best and only reformatory for such reckless, unprincipled, ungrateful scapegoats. This duly arranged, Walter came home with his father to Deedun, from thence removing, after a short probation, to Hayston, the Laird of which estate, Mr Douglas, being a private friend of his father, and whose recommendation to place his son under the care of Adam Johnstone had been eagerly and gladly adopted.

"Walter Ogilvy might have been at this time about twenty-

four or twenty-five years of age, and I well remember—not knowing anything of his previous history,—of being particularly struck with his appearance as he walked into the church on the first Sunday after his arrival, and sedately took his seat in the Laird's pew. Though not particularly tall, he was well formed; his mein graceful and easy; and the expression of his countenance pensive if not sad. His hair in dark brown ringlets fell carelessly around his brow, and his rich, full lips, regularly classic features and fine piercing eyes, shewed nothing of the debauchee, or man of the world. I may just add, his dress was plain and becoming, exhibiting not the remotest feature of the fop or votary of fashion.

"You may well believe that in the little village church of Kinnettles, the presence of the interesting stranger was no small event, and created no little *furor* among such a rustic congregation. When service was over, I joined Lucy Johnstone at the church door; Walter Ogilvy and her father, walking on together before, our thoughts naturally reverting to, and our conversation turning upon, the favourable impression the manners and appearance of the young stranger had made upon each of our minds. As we approached the Kerbet, now flooded by the July rains, Adam turned round to allow us to pass first over the ricketty planks which, at that time, served as a bridge opposite the village, when Walter, with no airs of assumed gallantry, but quiet subdued politeness, offered his hand to Lucy, and thus led her gently along the bridge; Adam and I following, when we observed them safely over. Taking the nearest paths homeward, by turnip fields, and across grassy leas, many were the stiles lifted by our gallant attendant, and many were the admonitions of old Adam to the young and thoughtless lassies, said half in earnest, half in jest, leaving each to make the application as best suited herself, under the circumstances. Coming at last to the road which led more directly to Hayston, Mr Ogilvy made his parting salaam, and with a peculiarly winning smile to Lucy went on his way; while I accompanied her and her father to the door of their

cottage, where, meeting my father and brothers, I pursued with them my way homeward."

"What impressions did the young stranger make on yourself, Kate?" said Jeanie. "Pardon the interruption, but if not too rude, I feel curious and anxious to have an answer to my question before I hear the sequel."

"I was just about giving you my own impressions, when you put your question. They were simply these. Though not at all reckoning myself peculiarly acute in such matters, I thought I detected a lurking, sinister expression in his eye, whenever he addressed himself to Lucy, which for the time, created a kind of instinctive aversion to the speaker, engendering uneasy misgivings and suspicions, which, in spite of myself, I could not, without an effort, shake entirely off. On reflection, I reproachfully thought, I did him injustice, thus to cast doubts and shadows over his character at a first interview, yet secretly imagined I had really hit upon some true trait of his inner heart that served at least to arouse the utmost watchfulness and care."

"Had Lucy and he ever met before?" enquired Jeanie.

"No:—Listen: Up to this time, Lucy had lived altogether retired from the world, knowing comparatively nothing of its gaieties or vanities; its hollow heartlessness or seductive pleasures; its base deceitfulness, or its heinous crimes. Happy in a home of strictly religious and moral propriety, and breathing the atmosphere of purity and love, she scarcely knew what sin was, far less felt able to detect its subtleties, or comprehend its results. Yet with all this strict propriety and purity of life, it must be confessed, the only companions with whom she could come in contact, and the only society in which, of necessity, she could mingle, were not of such an elevated order or cast, as to impress her young heart with feelings or aspirations superior to her own. There was no elevation of thought, no new desire, or holier, or deeper affection inspired by contact with those in whose society she had lived from childhood; and her short visits to the neighbour-

ing country town, were too brief and transitory to light up any latent and hidden emotion of the heart. She had received just such an ordinary education as the parish school afforded, and her conversation did not display any particular elevation of thought or expression; still, I felt convinced, hers was a soul of no common order, and would not, willingly, ally itself to anything of meaner, more inferior or grosser mould. This may partly account for the circumstance, that although now passing out of girlhood into the more comely and maturer graces of womanhood, her heart apparently had never been touched by the impress of love or if touched at all had not continued to vibrate to the passing stroke. Of admirers she had many; of lovers none. The halo that ever surrounded her, forbade the least approach to familiar converse, or the flattering expressions of regard. Beautiful she was to a degree, and many a rural gallant came joyfully many a long mile to gaze upon her angelic countenance in the little village church, and then turn his weary way homeward, carrying however her celestial image in his heart.

"At this peculiarly trying and critical time in the life of woman came this gay young stranger to reside at Hayston. It were useless to deny the naturally fascinating charm and grace of those who have moved in the polished circles of life, nor the powerful effects, for good or evil, which these accomplishments produce, especially in the minds of those removed far beneath them in the scale of worldly wealth or intellectual acquirements. And if I could have read Lucy's thoughts aright when she laid her beautiful head on her pillow on the evening of the day on which she first met Walter Ogilvy, they would doubtless have resolved themselves into intense absorbing admiration of the only man whose presence and voice and manner had ever abidingly touched her pure and tender trusting heart; the impression deepening the more, and the spirit strings of the soul vibrating the sweeter the the more her mind dwelt upon the object who had been the

primary cause of all this new, tumultuous, yet feverish and luxurious joy.

"In like manner, if I could have unveiled the thoughts, which no less tremulously passed swiftly through the mind of Walter Ogilvy on that same Sabbath evening, they would in effect have somewhat taken this shape:—"What a thoughtless scapegrace have I been! How many fine opportunities of starting in life have I missed, and to be about to suffer banishment to the Antipodes as a debauched and witless ne'er-do-weel! But all are mistaken in regard to my real character. I have been idle, irresolute, dissatisfied; have haunted recklessly the lowest abodes of vice and crime, and madly joined in the ribbald jest and drunken song: Innocence hath lain prostrate at my feet, a withered, scorched, degraded thing! while I, remorseless, struck the fallen with the leering smile of triumph, and the cold, unfeeling, scornful words of contempt. Yet I have activity, resolution, noble ambition; my heart's affections are warm, susceptible, and capable withal of pure, enduring, elevated love." And then, as if some pleasing conception had passed before him, resuming enthusiastically:—"Yes, there's no denying it; she is the only woman who has ever created within me the pure emotion of holy love. I felt my soul moved towards her when I first beheld her in church, and had a firm strong belief her heart vibrated in unison with mine. When I heard her soft silvery voice behind me in the churchyard; when I tenderly held her trembling little hand in mine while gently leading her across the rustic bridge; and drank in her artless doric words, as we sauntered by the hedge-rows, and over the fields; and returned the sweet smile, the piercing, yet innocent glances he gave me at parting; my soul seemed suddenly lifted out of the pit of darkness and degradation into which it had fallen, and to live a new, and purer, and holier existence, experiencing the elevating sentiments of purity and virtue, and inhaling an atmosphere of holiness and love, to me, until then, utter and entire strangers. The Bible tells me, my conscience tells

me, God, the Omniscient, tells me, these are tokens for good. Let me arise, therefore, and, like the prodigal of old, go to my earthly father, confessing my sins, imploring his mercy; and when the fatted calf has been killed, and the guests assembled; when mirth and song, and psaltery, and harp harmoniously resound; the shoes been put upon my naked feet, the rings on my fingers, and the fairest robe hung round my shoulders, and the shouts of exulting thousands are heard:—'Let us eat and drink, and be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again; was lost, but now is found;'—may the breathings of my soul be heard above the long resounding song, that my happiness be completed in joining with me in bonds indissoluble, this lovely maiden through whose instrumentality, under God, I was induced to leave the husks, and swine, and miseries of a far country, and present myself, repentant and forgiven, at my father's house."

"But here come my cousins, Martha and Esther, from Foffarty."

"How provoking this interruption," said Jeanie.

"Say not so, Jeanie. They are my kindred; good as they are kind. Let us rise and welcome them: they have now passed the mill, and will soon be at the garden-gate. We shall have a ramble with them in the Hunter Hill after dinner, and then give them a 'Scotch convoy' up the brae on their way home in the evening. Come, let us go:—but here come the merry reapers from the harvest field—and, hark! how softly sweet their even-song:—

THE REAPER'S SONG.

O, bright arose the glorious sun,
Sweet blush'd the rosy morn,
Blithe sang the shepherd on the lea,
The bird upon the thorn.

The streamlet, as it joyous ran,
Soft music breathed around,
A song the breeze brought on its wings,
Attuned to sweetest sound.

While thus all Nature gladsome sung,
To greet the early morn,
O, soft the reaper's song arose
Among the yellow corn.

And now at ev'ning's twilight hour,
When solemn silence reigns,
To heaven above we joyful raise
Our heart's adoring strains.

And when the sun in glory bright,
Begems the rosy morn,
The reaper's song again shall rise
Among the yellow corn.

Then music sweet again shall float
Upon the balmy air,
While clouds of incense rise to heaven
At th' morning hour of prayer.

O, when the sun in glory bright,
Begems the rosy morn,
The reaper's song again shall rise
Among the yellow corn.

PART III.—THE VICTIM.

"Now, dearest Kate," impatiently said Jeanie on the early morrow, "let us seat ourselves again in the arbour, for I long to know the fate of Lucy Johnstone. It strikes me, however, you were rather pleased than otherwise at the abrupt interruption we experienced yesterday."

"On a fine summer evening," Kate replied, "you have noticed the doves whirling and floating about their dove-cot apparently unwilling to enter, and then just as they seemed to have made up their minds at last to terminate their zig-zag flights, they bound still farther off in the distant sky. In like manner I loathe to leave the sunshine of purity and love, to enter the dark chambers of sin and shame, and every little passing interruption is a strange relief to me, shadowing away as it does the ominous future. One is ever unwilling to

believe human nature to be so depraved as I am afraid the sequel of my story will too manifestly unfold. But let us sit down, Jeanie, and as briefly as I can I shall narrate the sequel:—

"Since Lucy Johnstone's first interview with Walter Ogilvy, a marked change had come over her manner; such a change as generally takes place whenever the affections of the heart are really touched by the tender passion of love. With me, it was no difficult matter to solve the riddle; for now, the very name of Walter Ogilvy could not be pronounced in her presence, or the least allusion made to the affairs of Hayston, without the rosy blush mantling the cheek and the sparkling response glistening intelligently in the eye. Although we had been playmates and confidantes from childhood, she had never yet made the most distant allusion to the new hopes and feelings which had evidently taken possession of her youthful mind; and I had not deemed it prudent, to open up the subject myself, lest I might be betrayed into expressions of my own suspicions regarding the true character of him on whom, it was too evident, her heart's affections were fixed.

"Walter Ogilvy was regular in his attendance at church, but it soon became manifest how his thoughts, even there, were occupied. No sooner had he seated himself in his prominent pew in front of the gallery, than his restless eye sought out and fixed itself on the humble seat of Adam Johnstone, in the opposite and lower part of the church. Lucy was also as regular in her attendance, and although no eye was ever lifted up to the gallery she seemed conscious of the pleasing fact that *he* was there in the same house of prayer as herself. After service, there were the same friendly greetings among the parishioners as heretofore; but the meetings between Lucy and Walter were more punctilious and constrained than formerly; the former, if not actually shrinking from the presence of the latter, at least betraying a nervous timidity, as if afraid of the very object around which her heart strings were gradually and securely entwining themselves. We crossed the burn, and walked on as before, across the fields and along the bye-paths,

on our way home, but our converse had lost its sprightliness and vigour, sinking down into a cold, methodical disquisition on Scotch divinity, in which, with the exception always of Adam Johnstone, the heart of the speakers had manifestly no share.

"Adam's quick and experienced eye, it may readily be believed was not slow to detect this marked change in the manner, and bearing of his beloved daughter. This timid shyness, and expressive silence were more to be dreaded, he evidently thought, than joyous excitement, or innocent familiarity, and I often detected an uneasy glance at Lucy as she systematically declined to respond to the pertinent remarks addressed to her.

"Lucy's changed demeanour imposed, sympathetically, a similar restraint on myself. This at last became so intolerably burdensome that I reluctantly resolved to go home, at least from church, alone, or with my own friends, for the future. On the first occasion, however, of my attempting to put my resolution into practice, Lucy, with instinctive perception, divined at once the truth, and clinging as it were the closer to me, the more I moved away from her presence, I was soon compelled to abandon my intention, and to walk silent and thoughtful home with her as before.

"It might be about twelve months from the time of her first introduction to Walter Ogilvy, when I was agreeably surprised one afternoon by seeing, from the garden gate, the wellknown form of Lucy Johnstone coming down the hill on her way to Airniefoul. Gladly welcoming her, I led the way to the parlour; when, after some general conversation, she proposed a walk to the Hunter Hill.

"Down by the burn, and up the hazel braes we went till, coming to a shady alcove, overlooking the glen, we sat down, our previous converse turning upon points of trivial importance. It seemed evident to me there was something pressing upon her mind which it would be a relief to her to get rid of; but I did not, apparently, seem anxious to be made

acquainted with her secret. At last, as if unable to conceal her emotion any longer, she faintly said :—

"'You have not mentioned the name of Walter Ogilvy to me for sometime, Katherine?'

"'No,' I replied, 'because it did not seem to be agreeable to you. I hear he leaves for Australia early next spring.'

"'Yes,' she archly replied, "but he goes not alone."

Entirely thrown off my guard, I laughingly said, "So I understand, for he takes some agricultural labourers, of your father's selection, with him as assistants."

"'Yes,' she naively replied, 'but he takes a partner with him, besides.'

"'A partner in business?'

"'A partner for life!'

"'And you are that partner?'

"'Yes, and I ought to ask your forgiveness for my, apparently, strange conduct to you for sometime past, you having been my confidante in everything but this——'

"'The most important event of your life'—I hastily interrupted.

"'Forgive me, I am sure you will, Kate, when you have heard my explanation. Up to the period of Walter Ogilvy coming to reside amongst us, my heart's affections remained almost untouched, and, most certainly, disengaged. Yet, I felt my heart was made to love, and yearning long for some kindred soul on which to lay its first unsullied offering, I no sooner saw this accomplished stranger than I felt my dearest hopes and most ardent longings, in a moment realised. It could not altogether have been his superior breeding and high accomplishments which captivated me, for before I had seen him at all, a thrilling, peculiar, luxurious presentiment foreshadowed the realisation of my wishes. The sensations were to me, however, so strange, and so new, that I seemed to have changed my very being, and to live a new etherealised existence. So much has this been the case, Kate, that a considerable time elapsed before I could satisfactorily collect my

thoughts; and even then, the reality so far exceeded the picturings of fancy, I could not find words sufficiently expressive to pourtray my happiness. Do you forgive me, Kate?'

"'O yes, you have anticipated that already. Is the matter, then, all arranged, and does your father know of the compact?'

"'It is all arranged, Kate, but as some recompense for my former seeming neglect, you are the first to whom I have communicated the good news.'

A shade of doubt passed across my mind, and after some hesitation presuming upon old friendship, I ventured to ask, if she knew sufficient of his former life to warrant her in betrothing herself thus without either her father's knowledge or permission.

"'He has told me everything,' she rather pettishly replied, "'And are you satisfied, Lucy,' I immediately rejoined.

"'Perfectly satisfied, Kate. His protestations also are so strong, and his vows of amendment so profuse and overpowering, that I fully believe his future career will be as brilliant and as happy as his previous life has been clouded and miserable.'

"'Then there is the greater reason for your informing your parents, who, I feel persuaded, would rejoice with you in your anticipated happiness.'

Lucy was silent. It was quite evident she felt disappointed by my manner of cross questioning, to her so unexpected. Piqued therefore at the cool, cautious manner in which I had received her revelations, she rose abruptly, and as we walked together to the little bye-path in the wood which led to her father's cottage, she at last said—

"'You do not seem to partake of my happiness, Kate?'

"'You are altogether mistaken, Lucy. Next to, nay even before my own, I desire most heartily and sincerely your happiness both in this life and the next. I cannot, however, but feel anxious that, you should be fully satisfied in your own mind as to the stability of the foundations on which your future happiness is to be reared.'

"'But why all these doubts and misgivings, Kate?'

"It was my turn to be silent now, for I really could give no tangible explanation of the doubts and fears which ofttimes, for her sake, perplexed me. And so we walked till we arrived at the outskirts of the wood, where, meeting my father returning from the village, we bade each other an affectionate yet constrained and lingering adieu.

"On the following Saturday evening I was proceeding to the surgeon's in the village for some medicines for one of the female servants, when, at a sudden turning of the road, beneath the brow of the hill, I met Lucy Johnstone and Walter Ogilvy. Receiving previously the intelligence of their betrothal from Lucy herself, I did not feel so much surprised as I otherwise would have done, at their presence together; so, after a short interview, I passed on, not wishing to interrupt their apparently interesting conversation. Lucy was looking so radiantly beautiful in her neat white bonnet and tartan scarf, her rich auburn hair flowing in sunny tresses over her shoulders, and her whole air and bearing so confidingly trustful as she hung affectionately on the arm of her companion, that when I involuntarily turned round when I had reached the top of the hill to take a long last look of them, I most devoutly wished my fears, and doubts, and misgivings might be illusory and groundless. Just as I turned round they entered the outskirts of the wood, and in a few minutes disappeared.

"Next day, my mind troubled about many things, I entered the village church, and at the commencement of, and during the service, my eye wandered in vain to Adam Johnstone's pew in search of Lucy. She was not there! Walter Ogilvy was in his accustomed place, but although I watched him narrowly he never once looked in the direction of Adam's pew, contenting himself apparently with his own private acts of devotion. This being the only instance I could recollect of Lucy having been absent from church, I hastily overtook old Adam on his way home, to learn the cause of her absence. A slight headache, Adam said, had unexpectedly confined her to the

house, and Walter now joining us, the conversation took another direction.

"I imagined Walter's manner to be quieter and more reserved than usual, but this, to me at least, was partly accounted for by his telling me this was his last appearance in the church of Kinnettles, his father having taken his passage by the first Australian packet from Liverpool. With a courteous adieu he took leave of us at the separation of our paths, and I proceeded for some little time with Adam alone, till overtaken by my father and mother, we all went on our homeward way together. Adam did not ask me to enter the cottage to enquire after Lucy, and not caring to intrude, especially as her mother cheerfully told us as we passed the door that she was better, I journeyed onward to Airniefoul with my parents.

"During the ensuing week it was quite current in the parish, that Walter was to leave Hayston, on the Saturday, but not a whisper of any wedding or of Lucy becoming his wife. It soon became apparent that Adam knew nothing of any such engagement, else he would have been the first to divulge it to me. And so the expected Saturday came, and Walter bade adieu to Hayston, taking an affectionate farewell of old Adam, who had been, in every respect as a friend and counsellor to the young man, in whose welfare from the first, he had taken much interest.

"Sunday came, and in her accustomed seat sat Lucy Johnstone, but how changed! Her once blooming cheek had become even paler than the lily, and her countenance had assumed a restless sadness, which I accounted for, scarcely satisfactorily however, as her deep, unfeigned sorrow at the premature departure of her lover. But her marriage? I could not trust myself to think of that, or if I did, it was to judge charitably—some unforeseen event may have occurred to prevent its celebration at the present time—he will return after due preparation for his betrothed bride; the manner and conduct of both attesting to the truth of their mutual affection.

"For some months did Lucy and I meet each other at the church door as usual at the conclusion of the service, but on each occasion there was an evident shrinking from coming into near and familiar contact. Her cheek became still more deadly pale; her eye more restless and uneasy, her voice more hollow and sepulchral, and her whole demeanour more timid and retiring. Hers was evidently some deep, deep, inward, secret grief, with which the outer world dared not intermeddle.

"Her attendance at church now became less regular, until about six months after Walter's departure, she ceased to attend the village sanctuary altogether. Censuring my own neglect in not sooner having offered her my sincere sympathy in her sorrow, I called one day at the cottage, when her mother informed me she particularly wished to be kept quiet from all intrusion; but with such a sad mysterious air was the prohibition uttered, that I was at a loss to account for my being denied admittance to her sick chamber. Janet too, seemed much changed, in as much as her wonted buoyancy of spirits seemed entirely to have forsaken her, and a peculiar kind of melancholy having settled down upon her once joyously expressive features.

"It was now winter, and the snow lay deep upon the ground. Adam Johnstone entered his cottage on a cold, gusty, snowy night in the latter end of December. Lucy, pale and dejected, sat by the blazing ingle, without, however, once turning her eyes toward her father, while her mother paced to and fro on the kitchen floor in a state of frenzied distraction. Adam hung his bonnet on the rafters, shook the frosted snow from his ample plaid, and was about to seat himself in his old arm-chair by the fire, when Janet with an ominous meaning in her tremulous voice, summoned him to follow her to the spence or inner room. What revelation was made there we cannot exactly tell, but terrible, angry, and threatening words reached the ears of the terror-stricken Lucy :—'Disgraced, ruined in soul and body—curse her!—

Yes, I will, and do curse her; darken my door she shall no more. Yes! accursed be my own flesh that thus brings my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave,' were some of the incoherent expressions which resounded through the house, making the very rafters tremble with the sound.

"Adam followed by Janet now furiously entered the kitchen to vent his terrible wrath on the stricken maiden, but Lucy was not there! Every room, nook, and cranny of the cottage was minutely searched, but to no effect. She had fled—no one knew whither!

"Adam's imprecations now gave place to lamentation and woe, and on a far more fearful night than that on which Adam and I had many years before gone forth in search of Lucy, did the now aroused villagers scour the country round without finding any trace of the lost maiden. The snow fell thickly during the greater part of the night; the winds howled in fitful gusts along the glen; and many a noble heart felt desolate and broken at the thought of Lucy perishing among the snow. Towards daybreak the snow ceased to fall, and a severe sharp frost set fiercely in, chilling and curdling the blood of even the youngest and strongest of the band. Still they searched on, and at last gathering in a melancholy group at the outskirts of yon dark pine wood, to resolve as to their future proceedings, low moanings were distinctly heard to issue from the clump of furze hard by. In a few minutes they were on the spot, and there sat Adam Johnstone with his still loved daughter and her new-born babe in his arms—but the snow of death was on the brow of Lucy and her child—their spirits had fled to God who gave them.

"Adam Johnstone never was himself again. A curse seemed to have settled on his household. In one short twelvemonth Adam and Janet had followed each other to the grave, and the voice of gladness and mirth were heard no more in that once happy home. The cottage is now tenanted by strangers, and a new generation is springing up

in the parish of Kinnettles. Still, the tale of Lucy Johnstone is told at many a fireside in the long winter evenings, and compassion mingles with grief as the cottagers dwell upon the sorrowful details of her tragical end."

PART IV.—THE RETRIBUTION.

ON the evening immediately following that on which Kate had related to Jeanie the tragical fate of Lucy Johnstone, the two friends were walking together as usual by the side of the burn enjoying the quiet loveliness of the sylvan landscape. It was one of those beautiful autumnal nights, which, while it yielded the most exquisite enjoyment, threw a shadow of melancholy sadness over the spirit, rather pleasing, however, than otherwise, to studious and contemplative minds. The two friends walked on in silence, neither, apparently, wishing to disturb or interrupt the reveries of the other. This continued and studied silence at last became oppressively painful, and, accurately divining the thoughts which now dwelt uppermost in her mind, Jeanie Morison thus abruptly addressed her companion :—

"Surely vice as well as virtue meets sometimes with its due reward, even in this world, Kate?"

"Yes, dear Jeanie, and in the case of Walter Ogilvy, the retribution was full and complete."

"Relate the sequel, then, Kate, not for the purpose of gloating over the sufferings even of the most guilty, but as a fitting and instructive conclusion to a tale, not of romance but of real life."

"Being of your opinion, Jeanie, that the narrative would be incomplete without some allusion, at least, to Walter Ogilvy's future career, I shall briefly recount to you, therefore, the principal incidents of the remaining years of his eventful life. We have walked, however, much farther than I had

intended. Let us now retrace our steps homeward, and I shall talk as we walk along. There will just be sufficient time to narrate the sequel before we again reach Airnie-foul.'

"Three years had passed away since Walter Ogilvy's departure for Australia. The minister of Kinnettles after having completed his weekly sermon for the following day, was sitting in the cozy parlour of the manse, in the greatest good humour with himself, one Saturday evening in the autumn of 18—, when a stranger was abruptly announced. Rising to receive his visitor the minister was presented with a letter of introduction. Desiring the stranger to be seated, the minister resumed his place by the fire and began to peruse the letter. While doing so, we shall glance for a moment at the stranger's general appearance. Moderately tall, well-formed, his face much bronzed by apparent exposure to the sun, he might have passed for a stalwart, sturdy mountaineer, had not the restless, hollow eye betrayed the inward workings of a mind ill at ease with itself. On closer inspection, we perceive in the wasted cheek and glassy eye unmistakable evidences of broken health, whilst a pensive melancholy sadness seems to have settled on his soul. His attire bespeaks the studied *negligè* of a man of the world; a profusion of hair envelopes his brow, and his long chestnut curls, plentifully tinged with grey, hang in admired disorder over his shoulders.

"'Captain Vernon, I presume,' said the minister.

The stranger bowed.

"'It is many years since I had the pleasure of seeing the writer of this letter. He was a very intimate college friend of mine, and for the sake of old days, nothing could possibly give me greater pleasure than to be of service to any friend of his. I see,' continued the minister, glancing at the letter, "that you intend taking up your residence for a short time in the neighbourhood in consequence of failing health. Well, although there are many places much more attractive than

our old fashioned little village and surrounding homesteads, yet we have classic land hard by, immortalized by the historian and the poet, and I shall do my best to make you, in time, acquainted with its unrivalled beauties. Have you procured comfortable and suitable quarters for your sojourn amongst us—if not, I can possibly put you in the way of obtaining them?'

"'You are very kind, indeed," replied the Captain, 'but I have obtained accommodation in the little hamlet of Thornton, where, I believe, I shall find myself at home during my short stay amongst you.'

"'You are welcome to the use of my pew during your stay, should you feel inclined to attend the Sabbath services of our little sanctuary—but here comes the tea—we shall be so happy by your joining our family circle and becoming one of us for the evening.'

"Captain Vernon, however, pleaded the fatigue of a long journey as an excuse for not complying with the kind invitation of the worthy minister, and almost immediately took his leave, promising to wait again upon him on the following Monday.

"The minister's pew is, as you know, opposite to that of Airniefoul, so that, on the succeeding Sabbath, I could not fail to observe the presence of the stranger, who gave, however, but little opportunity for any one to scrutinize his features, covering, as he did, his face with his hand during almost the whole service. The subject of discourse was taken from these remarkable words:—'For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing whether it be good, or whether it be evil.' The sermon struck me at the time as peculiarly pointed and impressive, and I could not help thinking of the mournful fate of Lucy Johnstone, nor of wondering whether retributive justice would, even in this world, overtake her destroyer.

"Beautiful and green was the velvet turf on Lucy's grave, begemmed, as it was, with the modest daisy, an emblem once

of her own purity and simple loveliness. It did not obtrude itself on the attention of the passers-by, but nestling in a quiet nook of the churchyard, remote from vulgar eyes, its isolated loneliness bespoke the greater sympathy for the unhappy fate of its silent occupant. As usual, after church service, I was musingly loitering among the graves on my way to Lucy's resting place, when, to my great surprise, I abruptly encountered the foreign-looking stranger whom I had that morning seen in church. He seemed to be intently endeavouring to discover some particular grave with all the keen earnestness of a man searching for some lost or hidden treasure. He started as I approached, fixing his cold glassy eye enquiringly upon me for an instant. I returned his enquiring look with a strange, unwelcome feeling of recognition. Whether he read aright the expression of that momentary glance, I know not, but he hurriedly made his way across the burial-ground, disappearing from my sight before I had time to recover myself from the strange excitement the encounter had occasioned.

"It was sometime before my reeling and tumultuous thoughts could gather any tangible form; but when they had somewhat settled and moulded themselves into shape, the conviction grew strong and defined that I had not only seen a once familiar form, but had penetrated his own conviction, that he felt himself to be known and discovered. His name; his introduction to the minister; and the attention bestowed on him as a stranger; which came subsequently to my knowledge, did not in the least shake my conviction, and I felt, that sooner or later, the apparent mystery would be satisfactorily solved. I kept my suspicions, however, entirely to myself, and resolutely resolved to bide my time.

"On the next day, the minister, without waiting for the promised visit of the captain, called at the hamlet of Thornton where he was residing, and, after some unimportant conversation, proposed a walk to the grand old Castle of Glamis, which, although situate in a different parish, is only a short

distance from Kinnettles. The stranger assented, and, the minister leading the way, the two proceeded by the shortest road through the wood of Thornton to the ancient stronghold of a long illustrious line of earls, in whose veins ran the purple blood of kings. They had now entered the wood, the minister discoursing eloquently of ancient days with their rude accompaniments of Chase and Tournay, bloody catastrophes, and war-like deeds. In the gloomiest part of this classic wood, tradition saith King Malcolm was slain, and, like a spectre of the past, at a weird-like turning of the path, abruptly uprose before them, the gaunt Memorial Stone, erected on the spot, where, as fanciful imagination will have it, the bloody deed was consummated.

"'There,' said the minister, pointing to the rude yet impressive memorial, 'stands to this day, the stone erected to perpetuate the remembrance of the tragically foul and treacherous deed. Depend upon it, my young friend, every deed of darkness, however long concealed, will ultimately be brought to light.'

"A slight tremor passed through the frame of his companion, his cheek paled, his lips quivered, and his limbs smote the one against the other. The minister observed the sudden change and jocularly remarked, that these old legends had probably turned his head, as they did the heads of younger children in the nursery.

"'I confess,' said the Captain, 'I do not feel quite well—we will not, if you please, proceed any further to-day—some other time I shall be happy to accompany you in a pilgrimage to the old Castle, but I feel unequal to the task to-day.'

"So, retracing their steps homeward, they emerged from the wood in silence, a strange unaccountable feeling of embarrassment preventing either from resuming the conversation. The sight of the pretty vale of Kinnettles bathed in the golden sunshine, seemed, however, to revive the stranger as if by enchantment.

"'Tis a beautiful valley,' said he, 'with its waving woods

and sparkling streams. I almost envy your happy life, spent among such pleasant scenes.'

"'Yes,' replied the minister, sorrowfully, 'if the moral picture were as untainted and beautiful, it would, indeed, be a pleasant spot in which to spend one's days; but the fact, that beneath that smiling exterior, impure desires and heartless deeds lie concealed from the common eye, causes a deep and lasting shadow to overcast the beautiful landscape.'

"A shade of gloom again came over the stranger's spirit, and they walked on in silence. They had passed the Plans and were now approaching the village. Crossing the river the minister kindly assisted the stranger to keep his balance on the old rickety planks, and while he did so, felt the arm he held tremble like an aspen in his gentle grasp. Attributing this to nervous feeling caused by his weak state of health, the good man spoke still more kindly to him, inviting him to spend the evening at the manse, which they had now almost reached.

"'I would prefer a quiet walk in the churchyard,' replied his companion; and while proceeding thither the door of the little parish school quickly opened, and like bees issuing from their byke, out rushed the noisy happy throng, shouting, and singing, and trampling upon each other's heels in their eagerness to escape into the free, breezy, exhilarating air.

"'God bless their little happy hearts,' said the minister,

"The stranger made no reply, and they both passed into the churchyard in silence.

"'Whose solitary resting-place is that?'—suddenly asked Captain Vernon, pointing to Lucy Johnstone's unnamed grave.

"'That is the grave, alas! of one,' replied the minister,—'once the purest and loveliest amongst the creatures of God.'

"'Her name?'—interrupted the stranger.

"'Lucy Johnstone.'

"'The cause of her death?'

"'A broken heart.'

"'She is buried there?'

"'She and her babe, together.'

"'Both dead?'

"'Father and mother, besides.'

"'Her home?'

"'Desolate and waste.'

"'The night air comes chilly over me—let us go.'

"And with the same oppressive silence as they entered, they returned from the churchyard.

"Politely declining the good man's reiterated invitation to the manse, the stranger bade adieu at the gate, and proceeded on his way to Thornton.

"Several days passed away without the minister either seeing or hearing any more of the stranger, at which he was both puzzled and surprised. Ruminating one evening as to what might be the cause of his non-appearance, his musings were suddenly interrupted by the entrance of a messenger from Thornton, with an urgent request from Captain Vernon that he would hasten without delay to see him.

"Promptly obeying the summons, the minister was instantly on his way to the neighbouring hamlet. On arriving at the cottage where the Captain resided, he was immediately shown into his bedroom. On the bed, his head propped up by pillows, lay the stranger, who held out his hand in token of welcome, as the minister softly approached. The change in his general appearance was so great that the latter could not, without an effort, recognize in the shrivelled attenuated frame, and pale and ghastly features of the sick man, the handsome and athletic-looking stranger so lately introduced to him. Dashing back his dishevelled hair, which had fallen in thick damp clusters over his brow, the Captain faintly said, "'I have been ill, sir.'

"'I am extremely sorry, indeed, to see you in such a weak and exhausted condition. Has any medical man been called in to see you?' replied the minister.

"'Doctors, I am afraid, can do me no good. The root of the disease is beyond their ken, and the cure above their skill.'

"'My dear friend,' said the minister, still affectionately pressing his hand, 'you must not give way to despair. These gloomy forebodings only aggravate your disease. Our family physician shall be immediately sent for, and'—

"'Take a chair by my side, and listen,' interrupted the sick man. 'If I fail to convince you that my case is altogether hopeless, you may then send for medical assistance. My name is—Walter Ogilvy.'

"'Walter Ogilvy?'

"'Yes, forgive your old friend Graeme, as well as myself, for the fraud we have jointly perpetrated. It was done in this wise. On my arrival from Australia, I sought out the old companion of my youth, and to him disclosed the true cause and nature of my malady. Perceiving I was resolutely bent on revisiting Kinnettles he advised the change of name out of deference to my feelings, until it should be seen what effect the visit had on my spirits. To save any further cross-questioning, I may as well at once proceed with the narrative of which I wish to make you the recipient.'

"'Walter Ogilvy!' again, half incredulously exclaimed the minister.

"'Do not shrink from me, good sir, I am now more an object of pity than contempt; but as I feel my time is short, forgive me for detaining you a very few minutes while I have strength left for the recital. To be brief, then, nothing went well with me in Australia. My mind, filled with remorse, could not settle itself to any steady pursuit, and the natural consequences of the want of any fixed purpose, coupled with neglected business, soon followed with retributive swiftness; my health began to give way; and broken in fortune and in health, I returned to Scotland.

"'A strange fascination impelled me to revisit the scenes once so purified and blessed by the presence of Lucy Johnstone. A sense of shame, however, prevented the accomplishment of my purpose, until Mr Graeme suggested the project of a visit under an assumed name. Feeling safe, then, from detection,

my whole appearance being so much changed, I came to Kinnettles, not certainly with the purpose of practising any criminal deception, but that I might, unmolested, again survey and penitentially visit those scenes in which I felt myself now so deeply interested. But I had calculated beyond my strength. Every field, and hedgerow, and meadow, reminded me of Lucy Johnstone. The winds, the birds, the streams ever whispered her endearing name. Her once happy home of innocence and love, the humble cottage on the hill-side—but my imagination supplied the picture—I could not venture *there*. Neither could I find courage to breathe her name, or to ask any questions concerning her or her family; the more especially, since I felt I had actually been discovered on the very day after my arrival, while furtively searching in the burial-ground for what I instinctively felt *was* there, although entirely ignorant of the fact until the harrowing revelation fell from your own lips. Then, again, the effects of an evil conscience were evinced in connection with almost every passing occurrence. The subject of your discourse on the Sunday—the remark you incidentally made at the Memorial Stone in the wood of Thornton—the picture you drew of the landscape when we again came in sight of the valley of Kinnettles—your allusion to the happy hearts of the children as they escaped from the bondage of the little village school. But your solemn yet cutting replies to my home questioning in the church-yard, gave the death-blow to all my hopes of forgiveness from the lips of her whom I had so deeply wronged. The disclosure burst like a thunderbolt on my accursed soul, crushing it at once beyond hope of revival. My dear sir, God and myself only know what I have suffered since that to me fatal revelation. Yet you see I am comparatively calm. I speak not in cant, or rant, or rhapsody. Still waters run deep. The heart is smote the sorest when it sheds no tears. With me the bitterness of death is past. I know you will pray for me. I have almost ceased to pray for myself. God of justice have mercy on me! I shall soon go hence and

be no more as to this world. When I die, bury me near HER. This is my last request, sir:—fare-you-well!'

"He fell back utterly prostrated by the exertion and excitement of the recital; and the minister, commending him to the special care of the sick nurse, took his departure with a heavy heart.

"Three days after, the mortal remains of Walter Ogilvy were consigned to the tomb.

"His dying request was not forgotten, and he sleeps in the quiet churchyard of Kinnettles, side by side with Lucy Johnstone."

Jeanie Morrison after spending a plcasant week at Airnie-foul, bade an affectionate adieu to her dear and early friend, returning to her city home to increase by her radiant presence ts purity, its happiness, and love.

Kate, in course of time forgot her early sorrows, having become the happy wife of a neighbouring farmer in the Howe, whose descendants still occupy the "bonnie farm."

CHAPTER XIX.

LEGEND OF THE NINE MAIDENS.

> "See yonder hallowed fane! the pious work
> Of names once famed, now dubious or forgot,
> And buried, 'midst the wreck of things that were."
>
> *Blair.*

THE Glen of Ogilvy, at one time the property of Graham of Claverhouse, the scene of the legend of the Nine Maidens, is in immediate proximity to, and territorially connected with, the earldom of Strathmore, with which, in its traditional and historical associations, it is closely identified. From the south it is entered by the rugged pass of Lumleyden, on emerging from which, the sweet romantic glen with its smiling homesteads, cultivated fields, and little clachan in the midst surrounded by the southern and northern ranges of the Sidlaw Hills, bursts at once upon the view. Not the least pleasing feature in the landscape is the winding rivulet, called Glamis burn, which, rising in the hill of Auchterhouse, traverses the whole length of the glen, cutting its devious way through the central hilly ridge, and joining the sluggish Dean on the demesne of Glamis Castle on the north.

The Gaelic word *Ogle* means "wood," and *vy* being a corruption of *buie*—"yellow," the literal meaning of both would be, "The glen of yellow wood." This interpretation would also agree with tradition and history, for both represent the glen in ancient times as being covered with wood, or, to speak more correctly, as being an extensive, if not a royal forest. As will afterwards be shown, the Ogilvys of Forfarshire are descended from Gilbert, third son of Gillebride, second Earl of Angus; and that in the "Douglas

Peerage" it is recorded that he obtained from King William the Lion, the lands of Ogilvy in the parish of Glamis, and from these lands assumed the surname of Ogilvy. Hector Boece, however, gives a more romantic, although less reliable account of the progenitor of the noble house of Airlie. He relates that he bore the name of *Gilchrist*, and that he married a sister of King William the Lion. The marriage proved an unhappy one, and jealous of his honour, Gilchrist strangled his wife at Mains near Dundee, for which he and his family were outlawed. They fled to England, but after many years' absence returned to Scotland, furtively retiring to the forest of Glen of Ogilvy. The king happening to be travelling through the glen came upon an old man and two sons "delving up turfs." Surprised at the unexpected encounter, his Majesty requested an explanation of the circumstance, when, probably thinking a frank confession would stand them in better stead than any subterfuge they might invent, they at once revealed who they were, expressing at the same time, such deep contrition for the murder of his sister, that they were not only pardoned and received again into favour, but had their estates restored, receiving also a grant of the lands of Ogilvy in the parish of Glamis.

Far away back in the eighth century, the Glen of Ogilvy, tradition saith, was the chosen residence of St. Donivald and his nine daughters. They lived in the glen "as in a hermitage, labouring the ground with their own hands, and eating but once a day, and then but barley bread and water." After a long life of fasting and incessant toil, St Donivald died in his rude dormitory in the glen; the daughters thereafter removing to Abernethy, where Garnard King of the Picts, had granted them a lodging and oratory. "They were visited there by King Eugen VII. of Scotland, who made them large presents; and dying there, they were buried at the foot of a large oak, much frequented by pilgrims till the Reformation." They were canonised as the "Nine Maidens," and many churches were dedicated to them throughout

Scotland. One of these churches was that of Strathmartine, near Dundee, with which is connected the famous tradition of the "Nine Maidens of Pitempan," being devoured by a serpent at the Nine Maiden Well in that parish. They are intimately associated with Glamis, for within the Castle grounds, the Nine Maiden Well is still an object of superstitious awe and reverence.

THE NINE MAIDENS.

Barbaric darkness shadowing o'er,
Among the Picts in days of yore,
St Donivald, devoid of lore,
  Lived in the Glen of Ogilvy.

Beside the forest's mantling shade,
His daughters nine a temple made,
To shelter rude his aged head
  Within the Glen of Ogilvy.

Charred wood-burned ashes formed the floor,
The trunks of pines around the door
Supporting walls of branches hoar,
  Turf-roofed in Glen of Ogilvy.

Nine maidens were they spotless fair,
With silver skins, bright golden hair,
Blue-eyed, vermillion-cheeked, nowhere
  Their match in Glen of Ogilvy.

Yet these fair maids, like muses nine,
God-like, etherealized, divine,
To perfect some high-souled design
  Within the Glen of Ogilvy,

Did with the aged hermit toil,
With their own hands in daily moil,
Hard labouring rude the barren soil
  Around the Glen of Ogilvy.

Poor barley bread and water clear,
And that but once a-day, I fear,
Was all their fare from year to year,
  Within the Glen of Ogilvy.

A chapel built they rude at Glamis,
From whence, like sound of waving palms,
Arose on high the voice of psalms,
  Near by the Glen of Ogilvy.

The hermit dead, they left the glen,
E'er shunning dread the haunts of men,
In oratory sacred then,
  Far from the Glen of Ogilvy;

On Abernethy's holy ground,
From whence their fame spread soon around,
Although no more their songs resound
  In their loved Glen of Ogilvy.

Nine maidens fair in life were they,
Nine maidens fair in death's last fray,
Nine maidens fair in fame alway,
  The maids of Glen of Ogilvy.

And to their grave from every land,
Come many a sorrowing pilgrim band,
The oak to kiss whose branches grand
  Wave o'er the maids of Ogilvy.

CHAPTER XX.

LIFE.

Life from its rapid shifting scenes, appears,
E'en in its great realities, to all
As but a bright, or dark bewildered dream.

HAVE we ever asked ourselves the question, "When did we *begin* to live?" We breathed, it is true, at the moment of our birth, and certainly in a primary sense we then began to live; but at what particular period of our life were we for the first time perfectly and really intelligibly conscious that we were a reasonable and responsible being—one that had a separate and individual part to act in the great drama of life, irrespective of, and altogether unconnected with, that of any of our fellows; when we, fresco-like, stood out in our own individuality, and felt the movings of our conscience within rousing us from our lethargic repose to acquit ourselves like men in the great battle of the world; in other words,—*When did we begin to live?*

Supposing we are now in one of the fashionable suburbs of the Metropolis, and as the luxurious equipages of the great and noble pass in rapid review before us, we put the question in succession to each of their lordly occupants. We might fancy the almost uniform reply would be—"Born to affluence, we have never experienced want; initiated not into the mysteries of any profession, we know not the toil and labour of those who work for their subsistence by the sweat of their brow, or by the exercise of their mental faculties; the stream of life, on the whole, hath flowed so soft and pleasantly that we can scarcely tell *when* we began to live."

Now, this may, to a certain extent, be true as regards the higher classes of our land; but its full and unqualified admission would lead to the supposition that the rich have not the same feelings as the poor, than which there cannot be a greater or more transparent fallacy. The sorrows of the rich are as sharp, their trials as severe, their hearts as impressible, their affections as finely-strung to tender emotions, as are the sorrows, the trials, and heart emotions of the poor. Nay, from the upper ranks have sprung the greatest men of our time, with each and all of whom there must have been some distinct, particular period of their life which effectually startled them into reflection, resolution, and action.

But let us for a moment change the scene. We are now in one of the poorest and most densely-populated districts, where, with God-defying front, vice and wretchedness go boldly hand in hand, and the air is polluted with the ribbald jest and obscene song; the maudlin roar of the drunkard, the screams of famishing children, the shouts of the profane, and the groans of the dying. Ask that bold virago, with blotched and swollen features, clad in tattered and faded garments, with a puling, sickly infant at her breast and a ragged urchin by her side, just issuing from the gaudily-decorated gin palace; or yonder hoary-headed sinner, reeling along to his miserable den, with delirium in his eye and curses on his lip; or this little half-starved "Arab of the city," sharp and acute beyond his years, clothed in flaunting rags, without shoes to his feet or covering to his head, who never knew a father's care or a mother's love: they will each in their turn laugh at your ignorance and simplicity, and, with a savage leer, in confidence tell you that, early thrown upon their own resources, they began to live with the first dawnings of reasons, and that the battle of life to them has been so fierce and prolonged, they have always known by bitter experience what it is *to live.*

Ruminating on these things one beautiful summer evening in the honeysuckle porch of our suburban cottage, far away

from the Howe of Strathmore, and relating to him the train of thought with which my mind had been occupied, I hastily put the question to my eldest boy, an intelligent lad of some sixteen summers, when he quickly but with great solemnity replied—

"When my dear little brother died."

"But why," I asked, "do you fix upon that particular period?"

"Because," said he, "I never was conscious of reasoning before that event."

"Explain yourself still further, my boy. Do you mean to say your life was all a blank previous to the death of little Edmund?"

"It was, my father. Our home was such a happy home, the sunshine of love ever o'er us, and glad faces and merry hearts ever around us, that I never thought what life was till my little playmate grew sick and drooped and died. It was not so much his pale, thin cheek, his dim eye, or his weak and scarcely audible voice, nor was it the low and ceaseless moan, the pressure of his damp and wasted hand, nor his last long look before he closed his eyes in death—but—it was——"

"Go on, my son. Unburthen everything to a father's ear."

"It was the *silence*, my father, that came like a cloud over everything when he was gone—that hushed and deep stillness, more terrible than all beside, that oppressed my heart with strange new feelings, that I could not weep, though my heart was troubled and heavy with grief. Then all at once the thought struck my mind—'Where has my brother gone?' 'To God,' some inward monitor replied. Tears then gushed forth like a stream, my heart was relieved of its heavy burden, a new existence seemed implanted within me, and a new world opened up before me, and I then *felt* that in reality I had begun to live."

"God bless you, my dear boy. Live on, live on, and never allow the cares, or sorrows, or temptations of the world to obscure for an instant thy First impressions of Life!"

"But will you now permit me, my father, to put the same question to yourself?"

"Certainly, my son. Although the pictures I drew of the great and wealthy, and of the abject and suffering poor, are in their details literally and substantially true, it must be admitted that these are the extreme cases of obliviousness on the one hand and precociously developed intellect on the other. Still, generally speaking, there must be some event in the lives of most men which served, if not as the turning-point of their destiny, at least to direct their thoughts into a new channel, and add fresh impulse to all their actions. Affliction, death, some sudden and severe temporal loss, disappointment in love, the estrangement of friends, or the malignity of enemies, may each in their turn, to differently constituted minds, have been the cause of a complete revulsion in their feelings and change of their deportment, so that they have begun in reality to lead a new life. I am no exception to this rule myself, but the particular circumstance which tinged with reflection my after life may appear trivial in your eyes when compared with any of those I have enumerated, or even with that sad and solemn event which inspired new life and opened up a new world to yourself."

During this conversation, my little bright-haired Mary had, unknown to me, entwined her arms around her brother's neck, and now, gazing intently with her large hazel, dreamy eyes into mine, joined her entreaties to those of her brother that I would relate to them this little incident in my history.

"Do tell us, dear father," again repeated Mary; "we are so anxious to know, and we shall listen so attentively."

"You have often heard me speak of my mountain home?"

"Oh, yes," said Mary; "we know all about the pretty little homestead and the mill, in Strathmore, the daisied meadow and the bonnie burn, and the grand old ancestral trees; the honeysuckled porch, the moss-covered arbour, the lowing of the kine on the leas, and the bleating of the sheep on the hills."

"Yes," rejoined Harry; "and the great bleak mountains and weird old castles, with their stirring stories of knights and cavaliers and 'ladyes gay,' of tilt and tournament and foray."

"'Then, my children, I need not describe that home you seem to know so well, but shall at once proceed to my narrative. My boyhood had passed so pleasantly away that hardly a cloud had ever obscured its brightness. A fond father and a doting mother had done everything for their boy's present and future happiness that an enduring love, sanctified by religious principles, could dictate; and the time had at last arrived when I was to bid farewell to this happy home, and to go forth to the world to act my part on the great stage of life. I had already bade adieu to my merry-hearted school-fellows, and received the sage advice and parting benediction of my respected preceptor. On the day before I left, I paid some parting visits to my friends in the glen, and while each and all expressed their sorrow at my departure, I never felt so very happy, nor so free from anxiety and care.

"As I went on my homeward way, there were many things to attract and interest me. The village green, the dark pine wood, for,—

> I thought the Indies, Isle of Palms,
> Could ne'er outvie the woods of Glamis:

—the murmuring streamlet, the heath-clad hills—shall I ever see them again? Sometimes such thoughts would intrude themselves; but the sun shone so brightly, the birds sang so sweetly, and the bonnie burn meandered so softly, that I gave my heart up to its full current of gushing gladness, and thought not of the morrow.

"When I reached Airniefoul there was an unusual stillness in the house. My father was sitting in his old arm-chair, apparently in deep and troubled thought; my mother was busy packing my wardrobe, and the servants were moving noiselessly about their household duties:—

The wee herd laddie at his brose,
The tears felt trickling down his nose!

My first feeling was that of depression, as if some dread calamity had happened or was about to happen, never once imagining that all this interest was solely and altogether centred in myself. Quickly rallying, however, I passed the evening in my usual cheerful manner, although my father and mother spoke much less than usual, and, to my astonishment, never uttered a word unless in reply to some question of mine regarding my journey on the morrow, and never said, contrary to their usual custom, it is time to retire to rest.

"Alas! thoughtless Youth, the morrow will have pangs sufficient for itself; and—the last night—could a father or a mother's heart desire that their boy should be ever out of their sight?

"I went to my bed-chamber of my own accord, and slept soundly till softly aroused by the sound of footsteps stealthily proceeding across the room. I slightly raised my head, and beheld my mother on her knees in the attitude of prayer, and though no words escaped her lips, she was doubtless supplicating a blessing on her darling boy, from whom she was so soon to part, probably for ever. I for some time lay as if asleep, and often did she come and stroke the golden tresses from off my forehead and place her warm and feverish hand in mine, and say. 'Who will care for my boy now?'

"We were to start at an early hour, and I knew that hour must be past: still she awoke me not! Oh! who can tell the feelings of a mother's heart? To awake me would be cruel. Let the fond mother gaze yet a little longer on her darling boy!

"Comprehending her feelings, I arose, and made ready for my journey. The cart with my luggage had already started, and my father was ready to accompany me a short way on the road. I turned to bid my mother farewell. Not a word she spoke—but oh! that last, long look, so sweetly solemn, yet so full of yearning love—that last, long, long embrace which held her to her boy, till gently parted from him for

ever. Excuse these tears, my children, they are a tribute to a mother's love.

"Slowly my father and I proceeded on our way. Our words were few, and neither seemed inclined to interrupt the reveries of the other.

The dew still gemmed the shooting corn,
Dull, grey and misty, bleak the morn,
The lark had not begun to sing,
The linnet smoothed her dewy wing;
Yet, curling smoke from homesteads rose,
The fox, now roused from his repose,
With timid hare, sped o'er the glen,
Avoiding haunts of murderous men;
Defiant, brave, without alarm,
Cock answered cock from many a farm,
While moorland birds no more forlorn,
Announced, while onwards quickly borne,
With whirring flight the break of morn.
The bleating sheep on Sidlaw Hills,
The murmuring rush of mountain rills,
Soft mingled with the early lay
Of shepherd laddie, as he lay
Wrapped in his ragged tartan plaid,
The fragrant heather for his bed,
Shared by his faithful dog alway,
All welcomed glad the opening day;
Which now, soft blushing in the east,
Seemed to arise at their behest,
All glorious as the smiling sun
Proclaimed with joy the day begun,
While lark and linnet cheerily sang,
With bursting song the wild-woods rang;
The maiden blithe by sunny bield,
The ploughman by his team afield,
The neighing horse, the lowing kine,
All felt the influence divine:
While hind to early market sent,
His longwhip cracked in merriment;
And lasses trudging o'er the road,
Now lighter felt their heavy load,
And smirked and smiled as they passed by,
As if we would their butter buy.

Surrounded grim by Sidlaw hills,
All watered fresh by mountain rills,

With skirting copsewood here and there,
The hill tops leaving bleak and bare,
On which the shepherd feeds his flock,
Sometimes, nay oft, a scanty stock;
A little hamlet with its school,
Its streamlet, bridge, and minnow pool,
And hostelry well stored and found,
With smiling homesteads all around,
Removed afar from haunts of men,
Lonely, yet sweet, thou bonnie glen!
'Tween Dryburns bleak, Kilmundie warm,
There's many a snug and smiling farm,
Many a cozy home the sun shines on
From Airniefoul to Middleton.
May plenty, virtue, peace and love,
With choicest blessings from above,
Be yours in perpetuity,
Who dwell in Glen of Ogilvy.

"At last we reached the top of the Sidlaw Hills. Behind me lay the glen where I was born; before me the untrodden, unknown world, where I felt I was doomed to die.

"'We must now part, my son,' my father tremulously said, 'and I commend you to God, who is able and willing to protect you in all your wanderings. Trust ye in Him, and you shall never have cause to be ashamed. Take His Holy Word as your comforter and guide, and if we never meet again in this world, we shall meet at last in our heavenly Father's house above.'

"Presenting me with a Bible, he fervently embraced me, turning abruptly his steps homeward.

"Not anticipating either the gift or the solemn benediction by which it had been accompanied, I stood for some minutes gazing on the retreating form of my venerable parent, when, just before turning the brow of the hill, he turned round and waved his last adieu. I would have run after him and embraced him, and said many things to him which I now remembered, but I was spell-bound to the spot—all my regrets were vain. I looked in the direction he had gone, but he had disappeared!

"Then new thoughts and feelings rushed through my mind

as I experienced the bitter pangs of remorse at losing the last opportunity I might ever have of unburthening my heart to a beloved parent. And then came the sad and withering thought which never ceased to influence me in after-life—to be within a short distance of those we love, and not to be able to take advantage of our position; to live in the same world, and see the same sun and sky, and breathe the same atmosphere, and yet be separated from our friends by continents and by seas, is the greatest trial and the most grievous burden that mortals can be called upon to bear. We lose our dearest by death, but the very fact that their doom is irrevocable, and that we cannot by any possibility alter the decree, makes us resigned to bereavements, however severe. But the thought that *distance* only separates us from our friends, and yet we can see them no more, is more intensely agonising than losing them by death itself.

"Such, my children, were my first impressions of LIFE."

CHAPTER XXI.

DEATH.

"Invidious Grave! how dost thou rend in sunder
Whom love has knit, and sympathy made one."
Blair.

"HAVE you ever seen a dead poet?"—excitedly exclaimed an esteemed friend, as I met him sometime ago on a winter afternoon in one of the busiest thoroughfares in Dundee. Startled by the weird-like question, I kindly requested an explanation of its meaning. My friend then with the greatest tenderness of feeling informed me that James Gow, the weaver-poet, had died a pauper's death the day before, in a common lodging-house in the Overgate; requesting my presence at the sametime at his funeral, the expenses of which, Lord Kinnaird, with his usual generosity, had just telegraphed that he would most willingly liquidate.

On my way homewards, I felt rather at sea in regard to the *personnelle* of the weaver-poet; when all at once I recollected, that some five and twenty years before, I had read and re-read with the greatest delight, some beautiful pieces of sterling poetry, in Tait's Magazine, and Chambers' Journal, by James Gow, author of "Lays of the Loom." These fugitive pieces were entitled—"Alic the Pauper"—"The Orphan Laddie"—"Helen the Outcast"—"The Snow-Drop"—"The Orphan's Grave," &c., suggestive now of sad and touching memories. These, as well as his "Lays of the Loom," were all composed, like Tannahill, as he worked at his loom, then familiarly termed—"the four posts of misery!"

On recovering from a severe attack of typhus fever, some

twenty-five years before he died, he found the genius of poetry had deserted him, and from that time to the day of his death, his life had been one of melancholy silence and gloom, and a continued struggle with poverty and want.

On the forenoon of the following day, after the conversation recorded had taken place, I went alone in a very melancholy mood to see the remains of the poor weaver-poet. Up a dark narrow close, midway between Barrack Street and Lindsay Street, I groped my devious way until I found the lodging-house I sought. And there, in a dark, ill-ventilated room, scantily furnished, yet scrupulously neat and clean, on a common deal table, rested the black coffin of the dead poet. With tremulous hand I gently raised the ghastly shroud, and with tearful eyes long and tenderly gazed on the pleasant and resigned-like features of him whom I had never seen till his eyes had closed in death, and his spirit had gone to God who gave it.

Two days afterwards we buried him up yonder in the Eastern Necropolis, shewing that if in his life he had receded from the world's gaze, in his death he had not been forgotten.

On a bright, cloudless day on the following spring, with a heart full of emotion, I stood alone by the grave of the poor poet. This emotional feeling, however, did not arise from a sorrowful regret for him who was calmly sleeping below, but from a deep feeling of holy gratitude to those good friends, by whose delicate kindness the "Snow-Drop" was now blooming in all its pure loveliness over the grave of him who had so sweetly sung its praise, and which, while on earth, he had loved so well. A neat, little memorial stone had also been erected at the poet's grave, with a representation of the snow-drop cut in bas-relief at the top, and the simple inscription beneath of the date of his birth, and the date of his death.

IN MEMORIAM.

I knew thee not in life, 'twas only when the snow
Of Death lay icy cold upon thy marble brow;

The child of grief, and yet no trace of sorrow there,
Thy lips had closed, it seemed, while breathing words of prayer.

Thine not the high-pitched key of royal nightingale,
Nor gushing note of thrush, borne richly on the gale,
But to the linnet's song thy harp of music strung,
Thy strains were sweet and true as ever poet sung.

The "Snow-Drop" couldst thou sing, but 'mong thy notes of joy,
Low, sad, the "Orphan's Grave," like undertones deploy;
Thus, ever with the song of bird upon the tree,
Like distant dirges come the wailings of the sea!

The son of poverty, as there thou calmly slept
'Midst want and woe, could I have child-like sobb'd and wept;
Oh Genius! must it be thy ever-chequered doom
To languish in neglect, cloud-wrapt in deepest gloom?

No! no! God wills it not, His every gift is giv'n,
To gild the scenes of earth, and raise our hopes to heav'n:
Die? die! we love not death; we wish, we pray for life,
That manfully may we do battle in the strife.

Ye bright immortals blest, victorious in the fight,
Who 'midst the sunshine walk, robed with celestial light,
Look on our struggles here, that nerved we be withal
To wrestle on until in harness brave we fall!

By a natural transition of thought, my mind reverts to the time, when, in my early youth, I came into close contact with Death, and gazed for the first time, with sorrowful, yet inexperienced eyes, on the face of the dead. This reminiscence of former days, carries us—after this, I trust, pardonable digression—again to the sunny fields of Strathmore, and its wide-spreading, glorious sea-board at Montrose.

I have often thought of and never can forget that bright and beautiful summer morning, on which at early dawn, and at an early age, I took my departure from my father's farm in the "Howe," to be entered as a pupil in the far-famed Academy of Montrose. My conveyance was a very homely, old-fashioned one, being none other than an ordinary coupe-cart with a heavy slow-paced horse, called "Dicer," and a raw, young hind as my postillion. My father having previously made the necessary arrangements at Montrose, everything

had been done to make the journey as comfortable to me as possible. Clean wheaten straw was plentifully strewn around in the bottom of the cart, while sundry sacks of chaff, as an apology for seats, lined the sides and top of the primitive conveyance; while a mother's hand could be detected in sundry little arrangements as to creature comforts for the young and inexperienced traveller.

Up the hill of Hayston, and down the Plans of Thornton we went; passed quietly through the still slumbering villages of Kinnettles and Douglastown; reaching the county town of Forfar, before a curl of smoke arose from its chimneys, or any of its denizens were seen perambulating its silent streets. Taking the old road to Brechin, we wended slowly, yet delightfully on our way.

Ascending the rugged acclivity behind Turin Hill, and just before reaching the confines of Aberlemno, I was aroused from my dreamy reverie by the wild and thrilling cry of my conductor:—

"The Sea! The Sea! The Sea!"

With a new impulse of life, and feeling the divine extacy of a higher existence, I started to my feet, and intently gazed in the direction indicated. In the far distance a mystic, ethereal, and apparently boundless waste of waters stretched in matchless, indescribable beauty to the furthermost verge of the eastern horizon; while the ships on its calm and silvery surface, the bright cerulean sky above, and the golden shore around, lent additional beauty and animation to the scene. And this was my first view of the sea! I had read of it, dreamed of it, sung of it, and there it lay before me, the grand reality infinitely exceeding the fanciful ideal of the most imaginative of poetic conceptions!

> Hail! Hail! Thou ever bless'd, great, glorious sea!
> How leapt my young heart glad with joy, when, lone,
> Thee first I saw from yonder heath-clad hill,
> All still and peaceful, slumbering calm, begirt
> With golden radiance, as the summer sun,
> With prodigal effulgence, thee enchased

With regal glory, and the sweet soft winds,
Fresh from the fields of heaven, swept gently o'er
Thy fragrant bosom, fondly kissing thee
With warm and honied lips, or cresting white
The idle wavelets, as they rushing broke,
Melodious murmuring on the yellow sands.
Sweet scene! Bright morn! Engraven on my heart
To be remembered ever!

Long, long, next day from the sandy bent-covered hills, I gazed upon the broad expanse of ocean, stretched out in dreamy beauty before my enraptured vision, while far away on the verge of the horizon, the stately ships like things of life, were sailing to and fro; and near at hand, the fishing-boats, with their dark brown sails and hardy crews, came bounding o'er the sea to the measured strokes of their glancing oars, and the rude yet tuneful numbers of their sea-loved songs. With wondering awe, my unpractised eye followed the long, resounding swell of the heaving billows, and listened with a mixture of mystical delight and superstitious fear to the never-ceasing, weary moan of the ever-surging troubled sea, until my virgin thoughts, in all their pristine exuberance, burst spontaneously forth into tumultuous song:—

What aileth thee, O Sea?
Asleep or awake, thy ceaseless groan,
Thee near or away, thy weary moan,
Sad, dreamy come to me.

What aileth thee, O Sea?
In storm or in calm, thy heaving breast,
Wild surging, e'er tells of deep unrest,
And the pain that wasteth thee.

What aileth thee, O Sea?
Now riding aloft on thy billowy way,
Now drenching the rocks with thy weeping spray,
In thy mad agony.

What aileth thee, O Sea?
Now feigning to sleep in the soft summer beams,
Thy bosom bejewelled with diamond gleams,
To hide thy hypocrisy.

What aileth thee, O Sea?
Do the spirits of those in thy deep coral caves,
Loud thunder above the roar of the waves—
'Slain! slain, O Sea, by thee!'

What aileth thee, O Sea?
A murderer's conscience? Ha! ha! that shriek;
A hell e'er within thee? Speak! O speak!
Is it this that aileth thee?

Montrose is a beautiful seaport town on the east coast of Scotland. Situate on an extensive peninsula, with its lofty stone buildings and splendid church spire, and surrounded by undulating hills studded with hamlets, and country seats embosomed among umbrageous woods, it presents, when viewed from the sea, a very attractive and picturesque appearance. It is, besides, one of those few towns that does not sink in your estimation on a nearer approach or inspection; for, with the exception that in the principal street a great number of the houses are constructed Flemish-like, with their gables in front, there is, on the whole, a uniform grace and elegance in everything that meets the eye, which leaves on the mind a very pleasing and favourable impression.

The ancient name of Montrose is said to have been Celurca or Salorky, and this is the designation given to it by Boyce, Dr Arthur Johnstone, and other early writers. Although the motto on the town's seal—MARE DITAT ROSA DECORAT—would seem to refer to its present name having been derived from the Latin "*Mons Rosarum*,"—"The Mount of Roses,"—this derivation is evidently fanciful, the name in ancient charters being Monross—Ross signifying a promontory between two waters, and *Mon or Moinh* the back of the promontory, these two names being certainly more descriptive of its situation. The time of the erection of the town and castle of Montrose must have been very remote, as it is stated in Abercromby's "Martial Achievements," that when the Danes invaded Scotland in the year 980, they destroyed both the *town* and *castle*, putting the citizens to the sword. In 1244, the town

was entirely consumed by fire: and in allusion to this conflagration, the learned Camden says, "the town is built out of the ruins of another of the same name."

The earliest account of the town is given by Ochterlony who describes it as "a very handsome well-built toune, of considerable trade in all places abroad; good houses all of stone, excellent large streets, a good tolbuith and church, good shipping of their own, a good shore at the toune, a myle within the river of South Esk; but the entrie is very dangerous for strangers that know it not, by reason of a great bank of sand that lyeth before the mouth of the entrie, called Long Ennell, but that defect is supplied by getting pilots from the neighbouring fisher-towns of Ulishavene or Ferredene, who know it so well that they cannot mistake." He says further, that "they are mighty fyne burgesses, and delicate and painfull merchants. There have been men of great substance in that toune of a long time, and yet are, who have and are purchasing good estates in the country. The generalitie of the burgesses and merchants do very far exceed those in any other toune in the shyre."

Daniel de Foe in his tour through Scotland in the beginning of the eighteenth century, speaks of Montrose as "a pretty seaport town, and one street very good; the houses well built, and the town well pav'd. The inhabitants here, as at Dundee, are very genteel, and have more the air of gentlemen than merchants." Captain Franck, in 1657-8, in "Northern Memoirs," says in grandiloquent terms that Montrose is called "a beauty that lies concealed, as it were, in the bosom of Scotland; most delicately dressed up and adorned with excellent buildings, whose foundations are laid with polished stone, and her ports all washed with silver streams, that trickle down from the famous Ask!"

Dr Johnson visited Montrose when on his journey to the Western Islands. He describes the Episcopal Chapel of the day—St. Peter's, since destroyed by fire—as "clean to a degree unknown in any other part of Scotland, with com-

modious galleries, and what was less expected with an organ." Burns who visited his cousin, Mr Burness, there in 1787, in less poetical language calls it "a finely situated handsome town," which, in every respect it certainly is, with its broad and splendid High Street, almost rivalling the Trongate of Glasgow, or the High Street of Edinburgh. Sir Thomas the Rymer, however, dooms it to inglorious destruction, prophesying, with his usual truthfulness, that—

"Bonny Monross will be a moss,
When Brechin's a borough town;
An' Forfar will be Forfar still,
When Dundee's a' dung down!"

When Sir William Wallace resigned the guardianship of Scotland in 1299, and retired to France, the northern lairds of Scotland sent Squire Guthrie to request his return in order to assist in opposing the English. In obedience to this request Wallace landed at Montrose in 1303, which historical event is thus quaintly alluded to by Blind Harry:—

"Na ma with him he brocht off that cuntre,
Bot his awn men, and Schyr Thomas the Knicht,
In Flawndrys land that past with all thar mycht.
Guthries barg was at the Slus left styll;
To se thai went with ane full egyr will.
Bath Forth and Tay thai left and passyt by
On the north cost, (gud) Guthre was thar gy,
In *Munross hawyn* that brocht hym to the land;
Till trew Scottis it was a blyth tithand.
Schyr Ihon Ramsay, that worthi was and wycht,
Frae Ochtyrhouss the way he chesyt rycht,
To meite Wallace with men off armes strang;
Off his duellyng thai had thocht wondyr lang.
The trew Ruwan come als with outyn baid;
In Barnan wod he had his lugying maid.
Barklay be that to Wallace semblyt fast;
With thre hundreth to Ochtyrhouss he past."

The old steeple, which was only taken down in 1832, was, besides being of unknown antiquity, an object of some historical note. It was from that "Stiple head," says Melvill, that "the fyre of joy" blazed in June 1566, when the news

of the birth of King James was announced. Previously in the year 1493, it had been the scene of Sir Thomas Froster's murder by young Erskine of Dun. Froster was a priest of Montrose, to whose father Erskine granted a bond of assythment or blood money for the offence.

Between the town and the sea a large level tract of greensward stretches away for many miles, which in England would be called the "Downs," but to which the name of "Links" is given in Scotland; while beyond the bent-covered sandhills the German Ocean lashes the rugged rocks, or breaks in gentle wavelets on the tawny sands. When standing on these sandy knolls, the attention of the stranger is always directed to the "Ennet," a large bank of quicksands, where many a melancholy and heartrending shipwreck has happened within hail of the shore. Between the Ennet and the rocks, to the south, flows the South Esk, a narrow, deep, and rapid stream, forming the natural inlet to the harbour, which widening considerably opposite the town, again contracts beneath a handsome Suspension Bridge, till its waters fill an immense basin, to the west, which, when the tide is full, presents the appearance of a capacious lake, with numerous boats and small craft skimming its clear and silvery surface.

There is one spot to me, however, more interesting than any other, and that is the lesser Links, on which the Academy stands; for on that bright greensward, in boyish, healthful sport, I spent many a happy day of my youth, and within the precincts of that classical seminary I commenced my educational career. Montrose has earned the proud distinction of having been the cradle of the Greek language in Scotland. Even in the days of The Bruce, the public schools had gained such eminence that he granted a sum out of the public revenue for their support.

The first teacher of Greek at Montrose Academy was a Frenchman of the name of Marsilliers, who, in 1534, John Erskine of Dun brought from the continent for the purpose of teaching that classic language. Greek, previously, was almost

unknown in the country. Andrew Melville, the father of Presbytery in Scotland, was educated in Montrose; and when in his fourteenth year, he went to the University of St. Andrews, he surprised his teachers by his knowledge of Greek, with which they were wholly unacquainted. Marsilliers was succeeded by his pupil, the celebrated George Wishart, who, for his zeal in openly teaching and circulating the Greek New Testament, was summoned to appear before Bishop Hepburn of Brechin on a charge of heresy, which he eluded by escaping to England where he remained for some years. The grammar school had the honour of being taught by David Lindsay, son to the laird of Edzell Lindsay, who was afterwards bishop, first of Brechin, and then of Edinburgh, and it was at his head that Jeanie Geddes flung the stool when he began to read the Book of Common Prayer in the High Church of Edinburgh, in July 1637.

At the time of which I write—now, alas! some five-and-thirty years ago—there were comparatively few educational establishments of high repute in Scotland, and still fewer in England. Among the few which then existed the Academy of Montrose still held the first rank, and many families of distinction were attracted by its fame to send their sons and daughters from other lands to be educated by its learned and accomplished professors. The masters, besides being the public instructors of these strangers, were also their private tutors and guardians, inasmuch as they all kept large boarding establishments, where their wards were lodged and fed and where all the comforts and instructions of home were reproduced in all their affectionate kindness and love. I had the good fortune to form one of the happy household of Dr Calvert, the classical teacher, and, as such, contracted friendships among my fellow-boarders which I have ever retained in after-life. The younger members of the afterwards celebrated Burness family, and Sir George Balfour, M.P. for Kincardineshire, were class-fellows of the writer at the public classes in the Academy.

"How shall we spend to-morrow's holiday, comrades? We have had so many rural excursions lately—first to the North Water Bridge, then to the Hill of Craig and Rossie Castle, anon to the rocks of St Cyrus and the Castle of Kinnaird—that, to tell you the truth, I am heartily sick of the thing altogether. What say ye, my boys, to a boating excursion to-morrow? I'll teach you how to ply the oar and furl the sail, and guide you safely over the waves. Hurrah! my lads, hurrah!"

This little speech was addressed to his fellow-boarders by Billy Dickson, on the evening preceding a long-looked-for holiday, just as we had finished our last game in the play-ground, and were about retiring for the night. Billy, with his brother James, had come from the far east, and although his hair was black and curly as a negro's, and his complexion even swarthier than a "dusky brown," he had a sharp, intelligent eye, expressive features, well-formed, handsome limbs, a sympathetic, merry laugh, and a loving heart withal. A favourite with every one, and particularly so with his comrades at school, was dear, beloved Billy Dickson. What he recommended we as readily adopted; where he led, we obediently followed; when he commanded, we as instantly obeyed. In very truth, by his winning manners and consummate generalship he had gradually acquired the complete mastery over us; but he exercised this vested power with such skill, and grace, and good brotherhood, that we felt the yoke neither irksome nor severe.

At the conclusion of his address, a long and loud hurrah responded to his appeal, and after having determined on the hour of departure, we bade each other good-night, and retired, ostensibly to rest, but in reality to dream of our voyage on the morrow.

"Good morning, my hearties," said Billy, as he met us at an early hour next morning at the breakfast table. "No chicken-hearted, feather-bed sailors amongst my crew, I hope." Then, approaching, he chucked me good-naturedly under the

chin, and archly said, "What! my little boatswain first beginning to show the white feather? Cheer up, cheer up, my boy. Only think how these land sharks will jerk up their trousers and trip up the shrouds when your piping cry is heard, 'All hands aloft, boys, all hands aloft!'" Then giving me a hearty slap on the shoulder, and with a waggish leer directed to the rest of my schoolmates, he boisterously exclaimed, "Show them pluck, my boy—show them pluck, my hearty!"

After partaking of an excellent breakfast, and having received the parting benediction and advice of our worthy teacher, we sallied first along the High Street and Bridge Street, and then to the harbour, where we had little difficulty in engaging a small fishing-boat for the day.

"All hands on board," cried Billy; and when seated in the little craft, our amateur crew of eight looked like so many tight, jolly tars on the eve of a long and perilous voyage.

"Stow the beef and biscuit in the locker," again cried our captain; "and, Tom, you seat yourself on the prow and look out for squalls. The rudder I will guide myself assisted by (as he always called me) my little friend Jim, who will sit in the stern beside me; and as for the rest of you, my boys, bestir yourselves to weigh the anchor and unfurl the sails, and let us scud before the gale ere it lulls itself into a calm."

In a few minutes all was ready, and our tight little boat passed under the old wooden bridge, carrying us on to the "Backsands" right merrily. It was a beautiful morning in April, the air crisp, sharp, and exhilarating, and as we bounded over the silver waves we looked so proud and so happy—proud at our dexterous and successful seamanship, and happy at the prospect of a long and merry holiday.

"Steady, boys, steady," said Billy, as a heavily-laden coal craft bore down upon us. "We must give her more way. There, on like a duck in a mill-pond, she scuds away, and I defy that clumsy lugger to overtake her."

"We must beware of the treacherous sandbanks," I said, sometime after, looking up into Billy's face, as he now stood

in the stern of the boat, as if listening to some distant sound, and scanning at the same time the changed aspect of the heavens. "I fear these sudden squalls," said Billy, quietly, "much more than I do the changing quicksands. For the one we may be prepared, for the other we cannot."

The wind was now hushed into a deceitful calm, the sails flapped ominously on the creaking masts, the sky grew dark and troubled, and the low moan of the distant sea, mingled with the mournful cry of the seagull, fell heavily on the ear.

"Squalls ahead!" cried Tom, from the prow, and instantly all eyes were directed to a dark lowering cloud, which every moment increased its threatening aspect, till the black ripple on the water forewarned us of the coming tempest.

"Steady, boys, steady," cried Billy. "Quick, furl the sails, and I shall lay her more to leeward. The wind is rising, but there is no danger."

"There *is* danger," Billy whispered in my ear. "When the lurch comes cling fast to me, Jim."

Scarcely were the words uttered when the swell of the water shook the timbers of our little craft, and the squall burst in merciless rage over her, tearing into tatters her tiny sails, and capsizing her in an instant into the trough of the sea!

The salt brine gurgled in my throat,
As stunned I lay beneath the boat,
But quick I floated far away
Amongst the white, fierce dashing spray,
And faint, like sounds heard in our dreams,
I heard some distant wild-like screams;
Then in a slumber sweet I fell,
As mermaids bore me to their cell;
Far down below in the deep, deep sea,
A bed of coral they made for me.
Oh, fondly and softly they laid me down,
Of flowers of the sea gay wreathing a crown,
And arraying me bright with silver shells,
All musical sweet like evening bells;
Then archly combing their golden hair—
I never saw maidens look so fair,

Their skin all so pure and silvery white,
And their pouting lips so rosy bright,
And their eyes so arch and sparkling blue,
Like violets gemmed with the morning dew,
And their busts so plump and rounded fine—
I thought them beautiful, nay divine!
The fishes swam round and round my head,
Green were the waters above my head,
And yet so sparkling and bright the waves,
I saw every gem of the ocean caves.
The mermaids now listened—I heard a strain
Come sweetly across the watery main,
Nor of earth, nor of sea it seemed to be,
So spiritually pure in its melody!
Nearer, and nearer, yet sweeter it came,
Till wondering I heard 'mong the notes my name
Sung softly and fondly; a well-known voice
Filled glad my rapt soul, and bade me rejoice;
And now o'er my couch my fond mother smiled,
Surrounded by angels, who'd watched o'er her child,
And brought her in safety and love to me,
On my white coral bed in the deep, deep sea.
Now softly and swiftly they bore me away,
While the mermaids, dejected, sad, urged me to stay,
And followed entreating, as upwards we flew,
More mournful the nearer to earth we drew,
Till fondly, yet sadly, they kissed me each one,
Then vanished, as now their good mission was done!

I awoke. Where? On the lowly bed of a little cottage, on the southern banks of the Esk, and attended by my shivering and anxious shipmates. The truth at once dawned upon me, and I essayed to speak; but for some time was unable to articulate.

At last I cried—"Where is Billy Dickson?" No answer being returned, I carefully scrutinised each anxious face to read the truth, if possible, in each expression, but not being satisfied I rose, and staggered feebly towards a little group who seemed intently gazing on some object which, apparently, deeply interested them.

And there—stretched on a lowly couch—lay Billy Dickson, his garments drenched with brine, and his hair dishevelled

yet so natural and life-like, that with great rapture I exclaimed—

"How happy I am our dear Billy is safe."

"He is safe, I trust, in one respect," said an elderly cottar beside me; "but I fear——"

"Fear what?" I interrupted impetuously.

"He is dead," was the reply.

"Dead!" I cried. "Dear Billy Dickson dead?" And I gazed on his calm expressive countenance, the sweet smile on his lip, and the clear lustre in his eye, and exclaimed with tears of joy in my eyes—

"You mock me—he is not dead," and I eagerly grasped his hand in mine.

It was damp and clammy to the touch. I pressed it with greater warmth; but oh! how cold, cold, this last pressure, sending a withering and chilling thrill to my innermost heart, never, never to be forgotten, for this was my first contact with death!

The details of the catastrophe are few, and soon told.

Capsized in the storm, our cries were heard by those on board the coal sloop, which we were so anxious to outsail. They bore down with all speed to the scene, and all were rescued from a watery grave.

Poor Billy, however, never rallied, and by the time the shore was reached his spirit had fled to another and a happier sphere.

Such were my first impressions of Death.

CHAPTER XXII.

KINNAIRD CASTLE.

Lo! princely mansion, hall and tower,
Proclaim the spell of beauty's power;
Here, ancient, modern art combine,
To raise a shrine almost divine.

SKIRTING the basin of Montrose are the rich alluvial lands of Kinnaird, and after a pleasant drive of an hour, we enter the gates of Kinnaird Castle, the princely residence of the Earls of Southesk.

The lands which form the territorial earldom of Southesk extend from the basin of Montrose on the east to the western extremity of Monrommon Moor on the west, a distance of fully eight miles. The southern division of the Kinnaird estates comprehends the lands of Baldovie, Fullerton, Bonayton, part of Carcary, Upper and Lower Fithie, Bolsham, Kinnell, and others, comprehending the lands of Baldovie on the east, to the parish of Kinnell on the south-west and is in length seven and a half miles. The northern division comprises the portion north of the river South Esk, and extends from Balwyllo on the east to Brechin on the west.

The early history of the family—according to Mr Fraser to whose antiquarian researches I have in the composition of this chapter been greatly indebted—is involved in much obscurity, owing in a great measure to the destruction of the charters and records of Kinnaird by the burning of the mansionhouse of Kinnaird after the battle of Brechin in the year 1452; and again suffering from the confusion of the times, having been dispersed on the forfeiture of the fifth Earl

in 1715, when the family papers were taken possession of by the Commissioners on the forfeited estate of Southesk.

Sufficient evidence, however, has been preserved in a Charter by King David II.—without date, but probably granted in 1358—confirming a donation made by the then deceased Walter Maule, to John de Balinhard—afterwards de Carnegie —of the lands of Carnegie, to prove that four generations of the family bore the surname of Balinhard. In the county of Forfar, there are at least three places of the name of Balinhard; one of these is Balinhard, or Bonhard, in the parish of Arbirlot, another forms part of the estate of Clova, and the third, known as Bonhard, lies in Edzell parish.

The lands of Carnegie from the time of their being first acquired by John de Balinhard, the ancestor of the Carnegies, in the year 1358, continued to form part of the possessions of the family, either in the direct or collateral lines, till they were forfeited in the year 1716. The direct male line of the Carnegies of Carnegie, failed about the year 1530, when the lands became the property of a collateral branch. On the failure of that branch about the end of the sixteenth century, the lands again reverted to the Carnegies of Kinnaird, then the main line.

Three years after the restoration of Charles II., James, the second Earl of Southesk, obtained from His Majesty a Charter dated 3d August 1663, by which the lands of Carnegie and many other lands were erected into a free barony, to be called the barony of Carnegie in all time coming.

After the lands of Carnegie were forfeited in 1716, they remained for a considerable number of years in other hands, but in the year 1763, they were purchased by Sir James Carnegie of Pittarrow, the heir male of the family. He, however, retained them only for a very short time, having almost immediately exchanged them with the Earl of Panmure for other lands adjacent to the principal residence of Kinnaird.

Duthac of Carnegie, second son of John de Carnegie, who held the lands of Carnegie, was the first of that family who

possessed Kinnaird and Carcary. In the year 1401 he acquired a small portion of the lands of Kinnaird; and in the year 1409, the half of the same lands which belonged to Mariota of Kinnaird. The lands of Kinnaird and Little Carcary were first erected into the barony of Kinnaird by King James V. who, by a Charter under the Great Seal, dated 17th July 1542, granted to Robert Carnegie of Kinnaird, on his own resignation, the lands of Kinnaird and Little Carcary, with the Manor of Kinnaird and all privileges pertaining thereto. The reddendo is a silver penny to be paid upon the said lands of Kinnaird, yearly if asked, and also the keeping of the king's ale cellar within the shire of Forfar, when he should happen to reside there, the grantee and his heirs being lawfully warned.

In consequence of several extensive additions to the Kinnaird barony, a new erection of the barony was made by Queen Mary by a Charter under the Great Seal, dated 25th March 1565. The reddendo is the same as in the previous Charter of erection by King James V.

Another, and third erection of the barony of Kinnaird was made by King James VI. by a Charter under the Great Seal, dated 14th October 1591.

On the resignation of James, second Earl of Southesk, the barony of Kinnaird, and many other baronies and lands which had been acquired by him, were by a Charter granted by King Charles II. in favour of Robert Lord Carnegie, and Lady Anna Hamilton, his spouse, dated 8th March 1667, erected and incorporated into one whole and free Earldom of and Lordship to be called the Earldom of Southesk, and Lordship of Carnegie in all time coming; the tower, fortalice, and manor place of Kinnaird were declared to be the principal messuage; and one sasine to be taken thereat was to be sufficient infeftment for the whole earldom and lordship. The reddendo consisted of certain payments specified for the several lands, the keeping of the King's ale-cellar being omitted apparently for the first time.

Since the acquisition of the lands of Kinnaird by the Carnegie family, the Castle of Kinnaird has been their principal residence. The House of Kinnaird is first mentioned in 1409, in a charter in which Duthac Carnegie obtains a grant and confirmation of half of the town of Kinnaird, upon the resignation thereof in his favour by Mariota de Kinnaird, supposed to have married him, who, in resigning it, reserves to herself a house called the Chemyse, with an adjoining acre of land. After the battle of Brechin in 1452, this house was burned to the ground by the Earl of Crawford in revenge for the part which Walter de Carnegie, son of Duthac de Carnegie, and the then proprietor of Kinnaird, took in fighting in support of the standard of his Sovereign, King James II., in that sanguinary engagement. A new house was built, it is conjectured, by Walter de Carnegie. This house which succeeded the old tower, burned by Crawford, was placed by Walter de Carnegie upon the present site, parts of the existing building giving evidence, by extreme thickness of wall, and other peculiarities, of an antiquity too considerable to be referred to any much later period. This is all that can now be ascertained regarding the erection of the earlier house of Kinnaird. It is referred to in the testimonial of Sasine, dated in 1479, in favour of John Carnegie the third laird of Kinnaird, who was the son of Walter de Carnegie.

The Mansion-house of Kinnaird remained, it is probable, without any material alteration till the time of Sir Robert Carnegie, fifth laird, who greatly added to its size as appears from the contract between him and the builders, John Hutoun and William Welsche, dated at Kinnaird, 7th November 1555, a short time before he had received the honour of Knighthood which is still preserved.

David, first Earl of Southesk, the grandson of Sir Robert Carnegie, is understood to have considerably enlarged the Castle. In the time of Robert the third Earl, it is described by John Ochterlony of Gwynd in his account of the Shire of

Forfar written about the year 1685, as "a great house having excellent gardens, parks with fallow deer, orchards, hay meadows, wherein are extraordinare quantities of hay, very much planting, ane excellent breed of horse, cattle, and sheep, extraordinare good land: without competition the finest place taken altogether in the shire." Ochterlony adds that the family had been honoured by having his Majesty Charles II., his father Charles I., and his grandfather James VI., at their house of Kinnaird.

For several generations after the time of the first Earl of Southesk, the family dwelling-place would seem to have satisfied its possessors. Charles the fourth Earl, however, after devoting himself to planting and improving the grounds of Kinnaird, determined to enlarge and renovate the mansion also. Earl Charles' death in course of the next year, the long minority which followed, the troublous times of the '15, the forfeiture of the estate, and the exile and attainder of James, fifth Earl, precluded the execution of the plans of 1698.

In 1763, Sir James Carnegie purchased the Southesk estates, but he had not completed his possession to them when he died. Sir David, his son, a man of refined tastes, matured by study and travel, found himself more happily situated as to means and leisure. In 1779, fourteen years after he had inherited Kinnaird, but when still a minor, he refers to the family residence in one of his poetical addresses to a relative, as—

"The uncouth mansion of this ancient place."

Dissatisfied with the somewhat dilapidated ancestral house, he began about 1790, under the auspices of Mr Playfair, extensive alterations which completely changed its aspect, and greatly increased its size, making it perhaps the largest mansion-house in the county.

For fully half a century the castle remained unchanged, with the exception of small and unimportant additions; but a few years after the accession of the present Earl, it was

destined to undergo an entire transformation. Great alterations on the park and grounds had, for some time, been in progress; when his Lordship, desirous in all respects to improve the ancient home of his family, resolved that the house itself should be thoroughly renovated and re-modelled both within and without. Plans were obtained from Mr Bryce of Edinburgh; a beginning was made in 1854, and the work, carried on more or less vigorously during the intervening years, was brought to its completion in 1862.

The Castle, as it now stands, forms a nearly perfect square; and very much presents the appearance of a French chateau of the olden time;—with its massive towers capped by steep and lofty roofs crowned with gilt stars and pennoned vanes; its long stretch of balustraded balconies and terrace walls; its many windows—mullioned and plain, dormer, lay, and oriel; its quaintly carved coats of arms, blazoning the alliances of its owners since the days of Duthac and Mariota; a French Chateau, in short, in its irregularity within bounds, in its flexible formality, in its mixture of Mediæval Gothic with Italian outlines and classical detail, in its rich decoration, and especially in its prodigal display of roof, a feature so carefully concealed in the English Tudor style.

The west and principal front is 208 feet long from point to point, including the square flanking towers, which are connected by an open stone-work balcony, where a double flight of steps leads to the terrace gardens. In the centre is another tower of rather larger size, and 90 feet in height to the level of its roof platform, above which rises a round turret, surmounted by a vane, the top of which is 115 feet above the ground. The most conspicuous part of the south front is, with its flanking towers, 100 feet long; the Conservatory, a tower, lower and wider than the rest, and part of the offices, complete the square, which is thus exactly 200 feet in length. The length of the north front is the same, as is also its general arrangement; but between flanking towers is the principal entrance, protected by a columned porte-cochère of elaborate design,

while, instead of the conservatory and third tower, a three storied wing forms the connecting link with the lower range of offices. The east front, also of an ornamental character, is considerably inferior in height to the rest of the building; it is mostly devoted to stables and offices, and forms one side of an open court, which occupies the central portion of the great square. The roofs are covered with Westmoreland slates of a greenish tone, and along their ridges run iron railings of rich tracery. The four fronts of the house are entirely built in dressed square ruble-work, and of a pale pink brown freestone quarried on the estate.

Entering from the north, the visitor after passing through a small outer hall, finds himself in a low gallery about 80 feet in length fitted with oak and adorned with the spoils of the chase. Towards the end of the gallery he ascends by a ballustraded staircase to the first floor, and arrives at a corridor 95 feet long, and 18 high, which, like the gallery beneath, is painted of a dulled vermilion, a shade brighter than the well-known Pompeian hue. Opening on this corridor, is the principal suit of rooms: the dining-room 36 feet by 26; the drawing-rooms 24 and 30 feet by 24, pannelled in white, blue, and gold,—all these 18 feet high; and the library, fitted in oak, 44 by 25, and 30 in height. In the dining-room hang most of the family portraits. In the drawing-rooms and other parts of the house, are some valuable pictures, chiefly Italian and Dutch, and in the library, the corridor, and Lord Southesk's sitting-room, is a collection of 8000 volumes, many of which are rare and of great value.

The remainder of the west rooms on this floor, and all those to the north, are occupied by the family apartments, and the nurseries, but at the end of the corridor facing the south, is a bed-room which formed part of the old house, and which was certainly slept in by the Chevalier in 1715, and probably by King James VI. and the two Kings Charles, on the occasion of their recorded visits to Kinnaird.

The second floor consists entirely of bed-rooms; the ground

floor comprises offices and cellars, the hall and gallery already mentioned, a large billiard-room in the centre of the west front, taking the place of the former entrance hall, also a smoking-room looking southwards, near which a door opening on the terrace cuts through part of the wall of the oldest house, and displays its remarkable thickness.

Kinnaird Castle is situated some fifty feet above the adjacent valley, at the extreme end of a gravel plateau of considerable size, whose steep banks have evidently formed part of the coast line in times of remote antiquity. Before the woods which now conceal the shape of the country were called into being, the appearance of the old fort must have well justified its name—Ceann-airde—the head of the height, (or the higher head,—the headland) an appellation which it shares with several similarly situated places in other parts of Scotland.

Let us now ascend to the platform of the central tower and gaze with delight on the wide and varied expanse of land and sea which on either hand meets our admiring view. To the south, indeed, the eye is stopped by the unbroken slopes of Carcary and Bonnyton range, one extremity of which is lost in the sea beyond the tower of Craig, while the other terminates in the wooded hill of Bolshan.

On the north, however, the Grampian mountains form a more distant and nobler back-ground, and towards the front of the intervening undulations, you observe the City of Brechin comes into sight. A screen of trees between, however, completely hides from the view the hoary spires of the cathedral, and mysterious round tower, which would have added so much historical and general interest to the beautiful landscape.

Stretching westwards, you descry the immense woods of Monrommon Moor, once a barren, heath-covered plain. Its flat and monotonous outline, you observe, is picturesquely broken in the distance by the rocky heights of Turin, and the more rounded eminences of Guthrie, Dunnichen, and Lour.

To the east from the foot of the Castle bank, extends a rich and level vale, along which, on the northern side, the

river South Esk finds its way to the tidal lake commonly called the Basin; and bounding this estuary on the long promontory which shuts out the German Ocean, stands the ancient City of Montrose, with its lofty well-proportioned steeple rising clear against the open sky. And far away on ocean's hazy verge your eye rests in dreamy repose on the calm, unruffled surface of the great Northern Sea, tracing as you gaze, the indistinct outlines of many a gallant ship, as with white expanded sails, they gradually disappear below the mystical line of the distant horizon.

Immediately before the west and principal front of the Castle, lies the deer park stretching in one level sweep to woods which combine with those of Monrommon Moor. At this part the deer park is a mile across, but it does not maintain an equal width in its whole north and south length of more than two miles. Within its area are contained 800 acres, comprising every variety of soil, from the warm gravel of the principal plateau on which the castle stands, to the cold clay of Tilly-soil and the whinny moors of the higher ground near the North Lodge.

Large woods of varying age and growth, and many young plantations shelter herds of red and fallow deer, in number generally limited to from 50 to 70 for the former, and from 400 to 500 for the latter, which, it may be noticed, are the direct descendants of those mentioned by Ochterlony in his account of the Castle already quoted.

The armorial bearing of the Carnegies of Southesk is an eagle with expanded wings, azure, armed, beaked, and membered.

The Carnegies of Southesk are not only famous as the inheritors of a very ancient name, but are equally distinguished by their brilliant talents and literary acquirements. Sir Robert Carnegie adopted, from choice, the law as a profession, and prosecuted it successfully while the Earl of Arran was Regent of Scotland, during the minority of Queen Mary. He displayed abilities and a capacity for the trans-

action of public business so eminent, that the regent was induced not only to promote him in his profession, but also to employ him in various important embassies to France and England. Arran, indeed, consulted Sir Robert and relied on his advice and assistance, during a great part of his regency. He made him a senator of the College of Justice on the 4th July 1547. He was about the same time made one of the Privy Councillors of the Regent.

Sir Robert was afterwards employed on several important missions. In 1548 the regent sent the laird of Kinnaird as his special ambassador to England to treat for the ransom of George, Earl of Huntly, Chancellor of Scotland, who had been taken prisoner at the battle of Pinkie in the previous year, in which mission he was eminently successful. He was also employed as one of the Commissioners on the part of Scotland for arranging the treaty of peace with England, which was concluded at Norham-on-Tweed, on 10th June 1551; and on his passing through England to France, the regent wrote to Edward VI. for letters of confirmation of the treaty under the Great Seal, stating that Sir Robert Carnegie was fully instructed in the views of the regent, and asking Edward to give him the same credit as he would have done to the regent himself.

Sir Robert Carnegie retained the confidence of the Duke of Chatelherault as long as he held the office of regent; and there is reason to believe that he retained it to the last. It was about this time he received the honour of Knighthood, very probably on the assumption of power by the new regent, with whom he was so soon in high favour. Sir Robert who had enjoyed the confidence of the regent and of his successor, Mary of Guise, enjoyed in like manner the confidence of Queen Mary when she took the reins of power into her own hands. He had the care of the Great Seal while the Earl of Huntly, then Chancellor, was abroad; and was also Collector-General of the Temporal Taxation during the regency of Mary, Queen Dowager. Notwithstanding the numerous

important offices he held, he found leisure to write a work on the law of Scotland, which is quoted by Sir James Balfour in his *Practicks of the Ancient Law of Scotland.* Sir Robert married, in the year 1527, Margaret, daughter of Guthrie of Lunan. Of this marriage there were eight sons and eight daughters.

Mr David Carnegie of Colluthie and Kinnaird, who was also bred to the law, took a prominent part in the civil business of Scotland, and was appointed on many commissions by King James VI. The public services of David Carnegie are specially referred to on the occasion of his eldest son's elevation to the peerage, first as Lord Carnegie, and afterwards as Earl of Southesk.

David, first earl of Southesk, inherited the talents of his father, and grandfather for public business, and like them passed a long and active life in the service of his country. Lord Carnegie was soon after appointed an Extraordinary Lord of Session and took his seat on the bench on the 5th of July 1616. He continued to occupy the place of an Extraordinary Lord of Session till the death of King James VI. in 1625. He was also admitted a Privy Councillor in the month of February 1617.

When King James left Scotland to assume the English crown, he promised to revisit his native kingdom once in every three years; but he did not return to Scotland till the year 1617, when he declared that he felt "a salmon-like instinct" to revisit his native kingdom. Amongst the houses which were honoured by his presence was Kinnaird, the residence of Lord Carnegie in Angus.

Like his father, James, second Earl of Southesk, took an active part in the civil and religious controversies, which then occupied the attention of the country. He was chosen Commissioner by the Presbytery of Brechin to the famous Glasgow Assembly of 1638; and in the following year was more active in assisting his brother-in-law, Montrose, and his covenanting friends. He became a commander in Montrose's

army on his first expedition to the north to enforce the adoption of the covenant by all recusants.

Shortly after his Lordship had become Earl of Southesk, an unhappy accident occurred which caused the death of his intimate friend the Master of Gray. Lord Southesk and the Master of Gray, were both expert swordsmen. After a convivial meeting near London in the end of August 1660, whilst they were fencing with their swords, with no intention to injure each other, the Earl of Southesk had the misfortune to inflict on his friend a mortal wound of which he soon died.

Tradition saith that the fame of the Earl of Southesk as an expert swordsman was attributed to the gift of supernatural power. He is said to have studied the *Black Art* at Padua, a place once famed for its seminaries of magic. The devil himself was the instructor, and he annually claimed as the reward of his tuition, the person of a pupil at dismissing the class. To give all a fair chance of escape, he ranged the class in a line within the school, and on a given signal, all rushed to the door, the devoted victim being he who was last in getting out. On one of these occasions Sir James Carnegie was the last, but having invoked the devil to take his shadow which was the object last behind, instead of himself, the devil caught by the *ruse* seized the shadow in place of the substance. It was afterwards remarked that Sir James never had a shadow, and that, to hide this defect, he usually walked in the shade.

There is also a tradition that at Earl James' death, the devil carried him away in a coach and six and plunged with him into a well near the family burying-ground. The adjoining valley is universally known as the "Deil's Den," and it is said that on stormy nights the Earl sometimes drives past his former home in the equipage provided for him by his Satanic Majesty!

James, fifth Earl of Southesk, is supposed to have been the brave Carnegie who is the hero of the popular song—"The Piper o' Dundee." The subject of the song appears to have

been the proceedings of a private meeting held at Dundee for the purpose of favouring the Jacobite cause.

"There was Tullibardine and Burleigh,
And Struan, Keith, and Ogilvie,
And brave Carnegie, wha but he,
The piper o' Dundee."

Sir David Carnegie, grandfather of the present Earl of Southesk, was educated successively at Eton, St Andrews, and Christ Church, Oxford. He very early gave promising indications of literary talent and poetic genius. In the year 1773, when Lord North was installed as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, Sir David, indulging the inspiration of his muse, wrote some really fine stanzas in commemoration of that event, which are carefully preserved in the archives of Kinnaird Castle.

In March next year (1774) Sir David read an Essay or Declamation on "A Comparison of the Athenian and Spartan Constitutions," in the Hall of Christ Church College. The subject proposed was—"Whether the Athenian or Spartan Constitution was the most excellent;" and Lord Lewisham to whom the option was given, having chosen to support the latter, it fell to Sir David to defend that of Athens.

At intervals Sir David continued to cultivate the muses. In 1777, he composed, and sent to Miss Doig an elegant poem, as an apology for his long silence. Again, he presented a poetic welcome to a relative on her arrival at Kinnaird, in 1779, commencing thus:—

"Since with your presence you have deigned to grace
The uncouth mansion of this ancient place,
Accept our thanks, O Anna! and receive
The heartiest welcome that your host can give.

"Long from your country and your friends remov'd,
From those who loved you, and from those you loved,
You came at length to dry affliction's tear,
And make it lighter by the share you bear.
Though pleased that ought could move you to return,
We praise the motive, while the cause we mourn."

Sir David took an active part in the management of the affairs of the large and important county in which his estates were situated, and he was looked up to as a leader in political and other matters connected with the district where he resided. At the general election in 1784, he was elected Member of Parliament for the group of Burghs consisting of Montrose, Brechin, Aberdeen, Bervie and Arbroath. Again, at the general election in 1796, Sir David was elected member for the county of Forfar. Sir David continued to represent Forfarshire till his death, which took place in 1805.

Sir David, however, was not the only poet of his race, for we find that Mrs Carnegie of Pittarrow and Charlton, was largely embued with an ardent love of the muses. In September 1761, when she was only seventeen years of age, she composed a poem entitled "A Vision," in which some really fine thoughts occur. The poem commences thus:—

> "Methought, I most devoutly pray'd
> To great Apollo for his aid,
> And that he'd give me—(nothing less)
> A muse to be my governess:
> When on a cloud of purple dye
> A nymph came swiftly from on high,
> And stopt before my wondering eye;
> Perpetual smiles adorned her face,
> And heighten'd every youthful grace."

Our fair poetess wrote several other poems, entitled "On Light"—"On the Approach of Winter"—"Donottar Castle" &c., all of which exhibit an ardent love of Nature, and considerable fire of poetic genius.

At the early age of six years, Sir James Carnegie succeeded his father, Sir David, having been born at Kinnaird on the 28th of September 1799. After his education had been completed, Sir James, in the autumn of the year 1818, made a tour through parts of France, Germany, and Italy; and in the following year, he revisited these countries. During the year 1820, he travelled in Spain and Holland. And in the spring of the year 1824, he made another tour through parts of France and Italy.

Sir James kept journals of all his travels, a part of which is preserved at Kinnaird. He also took a warm interest in the spiritual welfare of the people of his district. In 1834 he corresponded with Dr Chalmers on the subject of free sittings in churches and other matters connected with the extension and additional endowment of the church of Scotland.

Sir James Carnegie for sometime took an active part in those political questions which frequently agitated the country in his day. Like his father, Sir David, he became the representative of the Montrose district of Burghs in the Parliament of the United Kingdom. He was elected at the general election in 1830, and continued to represent these burghs till the dissolution of that Parliament. For many years before his death, he withdrew from taking an active part in public affairs, and lived retired with his family at Kinnaird.

James, sixth and present Earl of Southesk, (and but for the attainder, ninth Earl) was born at Edinburgh on the 16th of November, 1827. He received the earlier part of his education at the Edinburgh Academy, and in 1841, became a cadet at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, where he passed examinations which entitled him to a commission without purchase. In 1845, he was gazetted to an ensigncy in the 92d Highlanders; and on 23d January 1846, he obtained a commission in the Grenadier Guards, in which he remained for three years.

On the death of Sir Thomas Burnett of Leys, Lord Lieutenant of Kincardineshire, in 1849, the Earl, then Sir James Carnegie, was nominated to that office by the crown, and he continued to hold it until shortly after the disposal of his estate of Strachan in that county in 1856, when he deemed it his duty to resign the Lord Lieutenancy.

It being the great ambition of his life to see his family reinstated in their ancient family honours, Sir James Carnegie in the year 1853, renewed the claim originally made by his

father and grandfather to the titles of Earl of Southesk and Lord Carnegie. At the final meeting of the Committee of Privileges held on the 24th July 1855 after the Act of Restitution had been passed, the Attorney-General (Cockburn) on the part of the Crown, stated that he agreed in the opinion expressed by the Lord Advocate on a former occasion, that the pedigree had been satisfactorily proved; and the Committee of Privileges resolved that the claim to the titles of Earl of Southesk and Lord Carnegie of Kinnaird and Leuchars had been established. Lord Southesk was afterwards placed on the roll of Peers in Scotland, with the same precedency as if no forfeiture had taken place, and his brothers and sisters received a grant of precedency in the same rank as the children of an earl.

In the year 1850-1, and again in 1864-5, Lord Southesk passed the winter in France and Italy. In 1859, he travelled in North America visiting parts of Canada, and of the United States; and proceeding by the Minnesota route to Fort Garry in the Red River Settlement. Thence he set out on a hunting expedition, crossed the prairies to the Rocky mountains, and stayed there some weeks, chiefly in the district near the heads of the two branches of the river Saskatchewan. During winter he travelled from Fort Edmonton to Fort Garry, and thence by St Paul to New York, and, after an absence of nearly a year, he returned to England in March 1860.

That the present Earl of Southesk has inherited the polished culture and literary genius of his distinguished ancestors, the publication in 1875, of "Saskatchewan, and The Rocky Mountains: A Diary and Narrative of Travel, Sport, and Adventure, during a journey through The Hudson's Bay Companies Territories, in 1859 and 1860,"—abundantly testifies.

The subject matter of this work, so carefully and truthfully treated, and written in such an easy gracefully flowing style at once captivated the reading public, whose universally

favourable verdict has at once placed it among our standard books of modern travel.

Lord Southesk married, 1st, on 19th June 1849, the Lady Catherine Hamilton Noel, third daughter of the first Earl of Gainsborough, and of that marriage there was issue one son and three daughters. Lady Catherine Carnegie died in London, on 9th March 1855, only a few months previous to the restoration of the Southesk titles, and was buried in the family vault of Kinnaird.

Lord Southesk married, 2ndly, on 29th November 1860, the Lady Susan Catherine Mary Murray, eldest daughter of Alexander, Edward, sixth Earl of Dunmore, and of this marriage there is issue one son and four daughters.

Charles Lord Carnegie, eldest son of the Earl of Southesk, K.T., attained his majority on the 20th March 1875. The titles of the Southesk family, as already noticed, having been attainted in the rising of 1715, this was the first occasion since that date, that the coming of age of a Lord Carnegie had been celebrated, the present Lord Southesk having got the titles restored a few years ago. A very laudable desire was, therefore, expressed among the tenants of Lord Southesk's extensive estates, and the gentlemen of the county in general, that suitable recognition should be made of the interesting occurrence. Accordingly, a magnificent banquet was given in his honour on the 30th March, in the Mechanics' Institute, Brechin, at which there was a large attendance of noblemen and gentlemen of the county. The writer having been an honoured guest at the banquet, did what he could to render the proceedings both appropriate and agreeable. The "Congratulatory Ode" which he composed specially for the occasion, was read by the Rev. Mr Cameron, minister of Farnell, with great power and effect. The Ode is as follows:—

CONGRATULATORY ODE.

Hail! youthful scion of a noble race,
In whose veins runs the purple blood of earls!

Six hundred years thy pedigree can boast,
From John de Balinhard, unto thy sire,
Whose cultured mind a radiance sheds around,
More brilliant far than daring deeds of arms,
Or senatorial triumphs in the State—
Whose glory, gourd-like, fadeth in a night.

Hail! youthful scion of a noble race!
On this auspicious day we greet thee well,
And bid thee welcome to our feudal feast;
Yet, not as vassals pay we homage due—
We meet as brothers, knit by every tie
Of friendship true, affectionate regard.
We go not forth to war, our trumpets hang
Unsounded in the corridors of peace,
Through which in low-breathed music ever rolls
The fervent homage of the loving heart.

Hail! youthful scion of a noble race!
Thy long, illustrious, bright ancestral line,
By warriors brave not all alone adorn'd,
But statesmen high in offices of trust—
Poets, lawyers, judges, men of high repute,
And loftiest range of thought, poetic song,
Whose mystic numbers vibrate in the ear,
Like ancient, well-remembered melodies.

Hail! youthful scion of a noble race!
The song of welcome greets thee from the hills,
Re-echoed from Monrommon's sylvan moor,
Whose woods are vocal with responsive praise;
The South Esk, sparkling bright with jewelled beams,
Enraptured onward flows in golden joy,
And virgin flowerets on its emerald banks
Blush sweeter in the fresh spring-time for thee.
And lo! in gossamer robes of purest white,
Gay crowned with diadems of roseate blooms,
Come tripping light with fairy feet, the band
Of loving sisters, whose soft voices, blent
With Nature's joyous songs, sweet fill the air
With strains divine of richest harmony!

Hail! youthful scion of a noble race,
In whose veins runs the purple blood of earls!
Uphold by noble deeds thine honoured name,
Not circumscribed by earth's contracted verge,
But stretching to infinity of space,
And grasping themes of philosophic thought,

Soar upwards ever with enlightened ken,
To higher, purer spheres of light divine.
Thus, like the eagle with expanded wings—
Imperial emblem of thine ancient House—
Sweep with thy pinions earth, and heaven, and time,
Thy keen eye fixed on far-off heights sublime,
Where, in unfading splendour, gleams the crown—
Eternal prize of glory and renown.

The "Song of Welcome," also composed by the Author, for the occasion, was finely and spiritedly sung by Mr Alexander Foote, son of the Rev. Dr Foote, Brechin :—

SONG OF WELCOME.

Air.—"Lewie Gordon."

Brightest hope of Southesk vale!
Borne upon the fragrant gale,
Songs of beauty through the dale,
Ring out clear to welcome thee!

Joy each swelling bosom fills,
High o'er Carcary's gushing rills,
Echoed back from Grampian hills,
Sounds the trump of Jubilee!

Bursting woods all vocal sweet,
Blossoms white so rare and meet,
Clust'ring fondly roûnd our feet,
Winds so balmy, fresh, and free!

Hark! Monrommon joins the song,
South Esk's hymns the strains prolong,
Maidens singing trip along,
Vocal valley, mountain, sea!

Scion of an ancient line!
Weal or woe, the task be thine—
Boldly tread the path divine,
Leading on to liberty!

Pure thy soaring high desires,
Strive to emulate thy sires,
Keeping bright the holy fires
Pointing heav'nward, God, to Thee!

CHAPTER XXIII.

GUTHRIE CASTLE.

Hail! Castle Guthrie's turrets high
Upshooting dark against the sky,
That grim old loop-holed stately tower,
The fit abode of feudal power.

LEAVING the princely mansion of Kinnaird, the first place of historic importance we reach, as we retrace our steps through the beautiful vale of Guthrie, is Guthrie Castle, the chief seat of the ancient family of that ilk.

The lands of Lour, situated in the barony and parish of Inverarity, were erected into a barony by Alexander III., and before the year 1464, they became the property of George first Earl of Rothes. On the 18th October of that year, the earl granted a charter of the barony of Lour, the lands of Muirtown, and half of the lands of Carrate, with the superiority of the barony, all in the shire of Forfar, in favour of Sir David Guthrie of Kincaldrum, Treasurer to James II. To much the same age as Redcastle, which was occupied down to about the close of the sixteenth century, probably belongs the tower or older portion of Guthrie Castle. Sir David Guthrie of Kincaldrum and Lour, acquired the barony of Guthrie from the Earl of Crawford, about the year 1465, and became the founder of the family of that ilk. The new dormitory of the Abbey Church, Arbroath, was erected about 1470, during the time of Abbot Guthrie.

The barony of Guthrie was probably Crown property when William the Lion granted the church and its patronage to the Abbey of Arbroath. Sir David Guthrie, when he

acquired the barony, purchased the church and patronage of Guthrie from the Abbey of Arbroath, and erected it into a Collegiate Church, with a provost and three canons, to which number his son added five. Sir David Guthrie was designed in the charters of King James III., in the public records, first, Captain of the King's Guard, afterwards Comptroller, then Register, and afterwards, Lord Treasurer, and last of all, Lord Justice General of Scotland. He was the son of Alexander Guthrie, laird of Kincaldrum, and brother to Abbot Richard of Arbroath, and appears to have been the most illustrious of his family. His grandson James was the parent of James Guthrie, the famous martyr who was executed at the Grassmarket of Edinburgh in 1651.

The celebrated William Guthrie, minister of Fenwick, author of the "Christian's Great Interest," was a son of the laird of Pitforthy, a collateral branch of the Guthrie family. He was born at Pitforthy in 1620, and died October 10, 1655. His ashes repose in the south aisle of the Cathedral of Brechin. William Guthrie, the historian of a later date, was a member of the same family.

In the charter by Sir John Erskine of Dun to Walter of Ogilvy, of the lands of Carcarry, 18th March 1400, occurs the name of John de Guthry. In the year 1506 the Abbot and Convent of Arbroath, granted to Thomas, Lord of Innermeith and Baron of Inverkeilor, by an indenture made between them, the free use of that haven for fishing purposes during his lifetime. To this document, Alexander Guthrie of that ilk, subscribes his name and designation as a witness. In the same year Sir Alexander Guthrie of that ilk, adhibits his name to the retour of the service of James, Lord Ogilvy, as heir of his father, Lord Ogilvy, in the lands and mill of the Kirkton of Kynnell. Andrew Guthrie of that ilk, subscribes his name to the retour of the service of James, Lord Ogilvy of Airlie, as heir to James, Lord Ogilvy, his uncle, in the lands of Brekko and Ballischan, 31st August 1558.

"Deidlie feuds" continued to rage for generations between

the Gardynes and their neighbour and rival, Guthrie of that ilk. In 1578, Patrick Gardyne of that ilk, fell by the hand of William Guthrie. Ten years afterwards, doubtless out of revenge for the death of their chief, the Gardynes attacked and killed the head of the family of Guthrie; and according to the charge preferred against them, the deed was committed "beside the place of Innerpeffer, vponne sett purpois provisioune, auld feid and foirthocht fellony." These disastrous feuds became so serious, that the king was called upon to interpose his authority between them; and not long thereafter, the estates of both families were reduced and broken up, those of Guthrie passing into the hands of Bishop Guthrie of Moray, who was descended from John Guthrie of Hilltown, fourth son of Sir Alexander Guthrie.

Guthrie—anciently spelt Guthery, Guthre, and Guthry—has been a name of distinction in Scotland as far back as the records of the country extend. It is believed that the family of Guthrie is the most ancient of the County of Angus. It is matter of undoubted fact, that they were men of rank and property long before the time of James II. of Scotland, and that many of the house were distinguished by their talents, enterprise and valour. Sir Alexander Guthrie, with one of his sons and three brothers-in-law, fell at Flodden Field. It is true Sir David Guthrie of Kincaldrum acquired the lands of Guthrie in 1465, but the family, as will afterwards appear, were men of eminence and distinction centuries before that era. The Kincaldrum, or more properly the Brigton Guthries, where the ancestors of the writer have resided for centuries, are the most ancient of the clan, all the other direct or collateral branches having originally sprung from this the most ancient stock of which we have any record.

Guthrie Castle, the principal residence of the chief of the family of that name is of great antiquity. Sir David Guthrie, already mentioned, obtained warrant under the great seal to build the present Castle in 1468, but the old Castle was in existence centuries before that period. It is still in good preservation

and must formerly, when surrounded by water, have been a place of considerable strength. The fact has already been alluded to, that, in 1299, when Sir William Wallace had resigned the guardianship of Scotland and retired to France, the Northern lairds of Scotland sent Squire Guthrie to request his return, in order to assist in opposing the English.

The Castle of Guthrie to which the present laird has added a spire and other castellated embellishments viewed from the south, with the gently undulating hill of Guthrie as a fitting back-ground to the pleasant picture, has a very grand and imposing appearance. Although the antique towers are only seen at a distance, uprearing their lofty pinnacles above the umbrageous woods, the effect produced on the mind is pleasing and classical in the extreme. The castellated gateway is one of the most magnificent in the country. It is a fine gothic structure composed of a graceful arch, flanked with towers and bearing a fine sculpture of the family arms. Guthrie Junction is now one of the most important stations on the great line of railway from London to Aberdeen. In the southern division of the parish, is a Roman Camp, situate about five miles south-east from Forfar. It is one of the most entire of any of the Roman temporary camps that have been discovered. Its length is about 2280 feet by 1080, close to the south-east angle is an enclosure, situated on the highest ground, whence all the rest of the camp is seen. Its gate is covered with a straight traverse, like that of the camp. This camp, on the Polybian system, would hold, it is supposed, 10,000 men.

The church and manse are very pleasantly situated, being on the verge of a declivity, sloping down into the valley through which the Lunan flows peacefully on its course to the sea. The Guthrie arms surmount the gateway of the churchyard, with the initials and date—"G : B. G : 1637." There are some curious mottos on the graveyard stones, not the least curious being the following over the burying ground of a family named Spence :—

"Beside this stone lyes many Spences,
Who in their life did no offences;
And where they lived, if that ye speir,
In Guthrie's ground four hundred year."

Under the head "Brigton," I have given the legend of Sir David Guthrie and Ladye Douglas, and alluded to the fine memorial window erected in the Episcopal church of Forfar by the present esteemed laird of Guthrie, in memory of his father and mother, Joannis Gvthrie de Gvthrie, and Annæ Douglas de Brigton.

Dr Jamieson gives Guthrie as a Pictish name, and shews its affinity to some Icelandic and Danish names. This derivation of the name is borne out by other authorities, who aver that the Guthries are descended from Guthrum, a royal prince of Denmark, who came to, and settled in Scotland in the earliest era of her history. The oldest spelling of the name is "Guthryn," and the Gaelic Gath-erran, means "a dart-shaped division," being singularly expressive of the form of the parish.

Francis Guthrie of Gaigie married his cousin, Berthia Guthrie, only child of Bishop Guthrie. This Francis Guthrie being a grandson of Alexander Guthrie of Guthrie, thus, as the direct lineal descendant of the Guthries of Guthrie, reinstated the direct line of the family in their ancient possessions. The provincial couplet still applies to the properties alluded to:—

"Guthrie of Guthrie,
And Guthrie of Gaigie,
Guthrie of Taybank,
And Guthrie of Craigie."

The Guthries are connected by marriage with some of the noblest families in the county, including those of Panmure, Southesk, Strathmore, and Airlie.

GUTHRIE ARMS—Quarterly: 1st and 4th or, a lion, rampant, gu., armed and langued, az.; 2d and 3d az., a garb, or.

CREST—A dexter arm, issuing, holding a drawn sword, ppr.

SUPPORTERS—Two knights, armed at all points, with batons in their dexter hands, and the vizors of their helmets up, all ppr.

MOTTO (Above the Crest)—*Sto Pro Veritate.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

ABERLEMNO.

There's not a cairn or mossy stone,
But hath some legend of its own.

BIDDING adieu for the present to the classic precincts and beautiful surroundings of Castle Guthrie, we shall now leisurely wend our way over the eastern shoulder of Turin hill, casting an admiring gaze, on our way, at the beautiful Loch of Rescobie, whence the Lunan takes its rise, on our left, with the glorious Howe stretching far away to the west in all its golden loveliness and unparalleled beauty.

We are now approaching the far-famed "Cross Stones of Aberlemno," all the more interesting because of the mythical halo which still encompasses with uncertainty their original design and meaning.

The parish derives its name from the small river Lemno, which has its origin in a spring near the house of Carsegownie. This stream falls into the South Esk near the ruins of the ancient castle of Finhaven. Aberlemno signifies at the mouth of the Lemno. Close to the source of the Lemno the outlines of an ancient church are still visible, but whether this was the original church of Aberlemno or only a chapel attached to the neighbouring Castle of Finhaven, is very doubtful.

A charter of infeftment of the Thanedom of Aberlenoche, or Aberlemno, was granted by Robert the Bruce to William Blunt, a cadet of an old Dumfriesshire family. (Robertson's *Index*, 18). Adam, of Anand, a canon of Dunkeld, rector of the church of Monimail, in Fife, 1254-71, appears to have been the proprietor, at that time, of the lands of Melgund in

the parish of Aberlemno. The family held these lands until the year 1542, when the heiress, Janet of Anand, with consent of her second husband, Balfour of Baledmouth, sold them to Cardinal Beaton, who built the Castle of which the ruins still remain. The estate of Aberlemno was acquired in 1845, by Patrick Hunter Thoms, Esq., of the Crescent, Dundee. Melgund Castle was a favourite country residence of Cardinal Beaton, to which, tradition saith, he frequently resorted for other purposes less creditable to the prelate's character, and less consistent with his vow of celibacy than a mere love of retirement or of relaxation from the fatigues of public business. The remains of this castle are still extensive, such as the spacious banquetting hall and other portions of the building which indicate it to have originally been a place of great strength and magnificence.

Tradition avers that Melgund Castle was, for some considerable time, the prison-residence of one of Cardinal Beaton's Mistresses. On one of the landing-places of the stair, which leads to the tower in which she was confined, are still to be seen, in antique characters, the initials M. O. which refer, it is said, to Mary Ogilvy, daughter of one of the most ancient houses in Angus. Her violent death is shrouded in mystery.

Another legend commonly associated with the supposed attempt to build Melgund Castle on a neighbouring hill, and its ultimate erection in its present low, damp situation, in which invisible agencies had the principal share in the demolition of the mythical building, is, in reality, a mere counterpart of the tradition, already related as "Legend of the First Castle of Glamis."

A subterraneous passage at the bottom of one of the towers of Melgund, although now closed up in consequence, it is said, of a cow having fallen into it some years ago, forms still a subject of mysterious conjecture, in as much as it is believed to be the depository of prodigious treasures of untold value. The fabulous wealth it was believed to contain, induced an adventurous youth to explore some time ago its mysterious

recesses. The expectations formed with regard to the great discoveries resulting from his explorations, were, however, not doomed to be realised. On reappearing again amongst his fellows, the only information that could be extracted from him was that "he had gone a great way under ground, and had seen such sights, as, he blessed God, he could never expect to see on earth again!"

Another legend in regard to this mysterious passage, is of a more tragic character. The last laird of Melgund having spent all his fortune in one night at cards, left the room in which he had been playing, and deliberately went with his whole family into this awful pit, and was never more heard of!

Turin hill, the highest eminence in the parish, is 800 feet above the level of the sea. On the summit of this hill, are the remains of an ancient fort, still called Camp Castle. The space occupied by it is considerable, and has been fortified with a double rampart. The view from this fort is very extensive, and must have been admirably fitted for a watch-tower, overlooking the vale of Guthrie to Redhead on the one hand, and the pass from Forfar to Brechin on the other. This camp having been constructed with dry stones, and these not having been fused and cemented by the action of fire, would point to the conclusion that it was only a summer, and not a permanent camp of the Romans.

In the parish churchyard is an antique obelisk covered with hieroglyphics. On one side of this stone is a curious cross in bold *relievo*, and entirely covered with flowered ornaments. On the reverse, towards the upper part of the stone, is another very much defaced, and having no obvious meaning. Beneath it there are some rudely sculptured figures on horseback, armed *cap-a-pee* with helmets. Below these there are other three equestrian figures, one of which holds a baton in his right hand, while the others appear in the attitude of encountering him. Also, a little to the north of the parish church, are three ancient obelisks. One of these monumental stones is about eight feet in height, ornamented on one side with a

cross, richly carved, and with two female figures in the garb and attitude of mourning. The other side is sculptured *in relievo*, with men, some on horseback, and others, on foot, intermingled with dogs. The other two stones are of smaller dimensions. They have also been ornamented; but the hand of time has greatly defaced them.

According to the Annals of Ulster, a battle was fought at Aberlemno in the year 697, in which "Conquar Mac Echa M'Maldwin, and Aod, the tall King of Daleriaid," were slain; and that, subsequently, Malcolm II. defeated the Danes in the same neighbourhood. On the latter occasion, one portion of the Northmen is said to have landed in the South Esk, at Montrose, another at Lunan Bay, and a third at Barry. The slaughter was great at Aberlemno, but not more so than took place at Barry, in which Camus, the reputed leader of the Northmen, was killed. Tradition avers that the slaughter here was so great, that a neighbouring burn ran three days with human blood, as is commemorated in an old local rhyme: —

"Lochty, Lochty, is red, red, red
For it has run three days wi' bluid."

Whatever may have been the cause, it is quite certain that in no part of Angus have there been found so many traces of ancient sepulture and tumuli, as in the district of Carnoustie and Aberlemno.

However antiquarians may be divided in opinion as to the design for which they were erected, local tradition uniformly avers, that the sculptured stone monuments had their origin in the defeat of the Danes by King Malcolm. The peasantry also believe that the curious symbols engraved upon the stones, are a species of hieroglyphics, and that those at Aberlemno were once read by a Danish soldier! This tradition is of ancient origin, and the interpretation of the figures is preserved in these rude couplets:

"Here lies the King o' Denmark's son,
Wi' twenty thousand o' his horse and men."

And—

"Here lies the King o' Denmark sleepin'.
Naebody can pass by this without weepin'."

Other traditions aver that these cross-stones of Aberlemno commemorate the defeat of one section of a powerful army, which Sueno, a Danish prince, sent into Scotland about the beginning of the eleventh century, to avenge the destruction of a previous army, and the death of his two generals, Eneck and Olave. These traditions, however evidently refer to the victory obtained over the Danes by Malcolm II. already alluded to.

About a mile south-east of the church of Aberlemno, in a hillock upon the estate of Pitkennedy, was lately found a rudely constructed stone coffin, containing a clay urn. Near the urn were scattered a number of beads, composed of jet or cannel coal, of which upwards of a hundred were recovered. A little to the eastward of the church, are the ruins of the Castle of Flemington; those of Melgund Castle being about two miles north-east from the church. Angus Hill, from which some authorities assert the county takes its name, rises to a considerable height in the north-eastern section of the parish.

CHAPTER XXV.

FINHAVEN CASTLE.

Castles, forts, and classic streams,
Realising youthful dreams,
Mystic scenes in bright array,
View them e'er they pass away.

FINHAVEN, or Oathlaw, to which we are now approaching, lies on the south bank of the South Esk, being the adjoining parish to that of Aberlemno, and distant about four miles in a northerly direction from Forfar. In the Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, and in other old records, this parish is variously spelled Fynnevin, Ffinheaven, and Phinheaven. The name is supposed to be compounded of two Gaelic words, *Fin*, signifying white or clear, and *Avon*, or *Aven*, signifying a water or a river.

Finhaven Castle is an object of great interest to the antiquarian tourist, for it was in days of yore the magnificent abode of the powerful family of Lindsay. It surmounts the steep bank of the Lemno, near the place where that beautiful stream joins the Esk, and derives its name "Fion-ablian," or the "white river," from the foam cast up by the rippling of the waters of that little stream at their confluence with the Esk. The site of the castle is finely chosen, in a military point of view, being situated at the entrance of the great valley of Strathmore, and so as to command the whole of the Lowlands, beneath the base of the Grampians, and guard the passes of the Highlands through the neighbouring valleys of Glenisla, Glenprosen, and Glenclova. All its ancient splendour is now gone, for you observe the ruins consists of little more

than the keep, a solitary weather-beaten tower of the fourteenth century, split asunder as by lightning and over-grown with ivy. But the associations remain, and the situation of the fine old tower in a rich and fertile vale, with the river Esk running almost under its walls, is picturesquely interesting in the extreme.

You see these iron spikes jutting out from the mouldering walls? It was on these spikes, tradition relates, that "Earl Beardie," proprietor then of the castle, was wont to hang his prisoners. This was the same Earl Beardie or "Tiger Earl," whose acquaintance we have already formed as the chief actor at Glamis in the terrible legend of "The Secret Chamber." The following episode in his history fully bears out the ferocious features of his character.

Earl Beardie joined in the celebrated league with the Earls of Douglas and Ross, and fought, May 18, 1452, at the battle of Brechin, alluded to under the history of "Kinnaird Castle"—in which he was defeated in disgrace. His great object in this intrigue, was to oppose Huntly, the Commander of the royal army, in his passage across the *Mouth;* and the cause of his defeat was the desertion of the laird of Balnamoon to the enemy. He was pursued to the castle of Finhaven, and there gave vent to his rage in the most passionate language, exclaiming, that "he would willingly live seven years in hell, to acquire the glory which had that day fallen to Huntly!"

In the court of the castle, in the time of Earl Beardie, there grew a magnificent Spanish chestnut nearly forty-three feet in circumference, and probably served as the "covin-tree," under which the stirrup-cup was drunk, when guests departed on their journey. There is a tradition connected with this tree,—that a gillie who had been sent on an errand from the castle of Careston to that of Finhaven, had the hardihood to cut a stick from it, which so enraged the Earl that he hanged him on a branch of it, and that immediately afterwards the tree began to decay. It was not, however, till 1740, that the bitter frost of that year killed it outright, and for twenty years later it

continued standing till a storm in 1760 finally levelled it with the ground. The legend would not be complete without adding, that the ghost of the gillie has ever since constantly walked between Finhaven and Careston, under the designation of "Jock Barefoot," getting credit for all the tricks and rogueries commonly attributed in England to Robin Goodfellow.

The Barony of the Forest of Platane, a primeval forest chiefly of oak, extended westward of the castle for several miles, in which the Earls of Crawford had a lodge, or residence in the greenwood, the vestiges of which are still pointed out under the name of Lindsay's Hall. The forest has long since disappeared but the tradition of the county bears that the wild cat could leap from tree to tree from the castle of Finhaven to the hill of Kirriemuir.

Alexander de Lindsay, Lord of that ilk, Earl of Crawford, Knight,—as the Master of Crawford, and Victor of Arbroath is designed in a charter of 1449—is still remembered traditionally in Scotland, as "The Tiger," or "Earl Beardie." These nicknames he acquired from the ferocity of his character, and the exuberance of his beard, although a more modern authority derives the latter epithet from the little reverence in which he held the King's courtiers, and his readiness to "beard the best of them."

In consequence of his defeat at the battle of Brechin, already alluded to, the superstition long prevailed, that green was unlucky to the Lindsays, the prevailing colour of their dress having on this occasion been of that colour:—that

> "A Lindsay with green
> Should never be seen."

Although after his reconciliation with the king, Earl Beardie's whole character changed, and from being the wildest of the wild chiefs of the north, he became "ane faithful subject and sicker target, (sure shield) to the king and his subjects," tradition has forgotten his repentance, and the

tiger earl is believed to be still playing at "the deil's buiks," in the Castle of Glamis, doomed by the Evil One to play there till the end of time!

This legend receives in this neighbourhood a somewhat different interpretation from that given to it by the writer in the tradition of the "Secret Chamber," inasmuch as it is averred that Beardie, who was constantly losing, having been advised by one of his companions to give up the game—"Never," he exclaimed—"till the day of judgment!" The Evil One, it is further said, instantly appeared, and both chamber and company vanished. No one has since discovered them, but in the stormy nights when the winds howl drearily around the old castle, the stamps and curses of the doomed gamesters may still, it is said, be heard mingling with the blast. Both versions are terrible enough, and I leave my readers to judge which is the more awful of the two.

Earl Beardie, left by his wife Elizabeth Dunbar, who survived him for nearly half a century, two sons, minors, David fifth Earl of Crawford, created Duke of Montrose by James III., and Sir Alexander of Auchtermonzie, who inherited that barony from his mother, and who latterly became seventh Earl of Crawford.

Earl Beardie left a daughter also, Lady Elizabeth Lindsay, wife of John the first Lord Drummond, and ancestress of the unhappy Darnley, father by Mary Queen of Scots, of James I. of Great Britain.

Cardinal Beaton, the ruins of whose once splendid residence at Melgund we have just seen and described, resided for a short time at Finhaven Castle in 1545, and there publicly, and in a style of the most ostentatious magnificence, married one of his natural daughters to the Master of Crawford. He had six natural daughters, and if he had bestowed upon each of them the same dowry of 4000 merks, they must have been among the best tochered brides in Scotland.

On that beautiful point of land, a little below the castle at the junction of the Esk and the Lemno, are still visible the

foundations of an old church called the Church of Aikenhauld, and this would appear to have been the original parish church.

The celebrated "Vitrified Fort," on the hill of Finhaven, is one of the earliest and most conspicuous of those ancient monuments, which must in early times have been the residence of some very powerful tribes. This hill rises to the height of about 1500 feet above the level of the surrounding country; and commands a very rich and extensive prospect of hill and dale in all their panoramic beauty.

The fort is in the form of a parallelogram, extending from east to west by recent accurate measurement, about 476 feet. At the east end the breadth is about 83 feet, and towards the west end which is somewhat lower down the hill, the breadth is about 125 feet. The exact height and thickness of the walls cannot now be ascertained, although, in their present state, they are in many places upwards of ten feet from the ground. The masonry of the walls must have been subjected to the action of a very powerful fire. The most fusible stones are placed indiscriminately on the walls with others, in order to bind them together. It is evident that this work had been raised at a great amount and expense of labour and skill, and constructed upon military principles, for the holding of a numerous garrison, with walls and outworks for their defence, and capable of resisting not only a sudden attack, but a lengthened siege. It is undoubted that this fort was one of the strongholds of those early tribes, who inhabited the country about the time of the invasion of the Romans.

About two miles and a half to the north-west of this fort is the Roman camp of Battledykes. This camp is of very considerable magnitude, the mean length of it being about 2970 feet, and its mean breadth about 1850 feet. It encloses a space of about 80 acres, and is now the site of a well-cultivated farm called the farm of Battledykes.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FEARN.

"Of brownyis and of bogillis full this buke."

Gawin Douglas.

LEAVING Finhaven Castle with all its mystical associations, we cross the beautiful Esk, at a most interesting point on the great north road to Brechin; where, to the left, you observe the miller's cozy cottage, with the old-fashioned meal mill, and trimly kept garden, snugly reposing on the verdant banks of the musical river; while on our right, the luxuriant woods of Finhaven, in all their summer beauty, stretch away in ever-varying lines of light and shade, far away into the shadowy distance.

As we leisurely wend our way along the now almost deserted road, let us admire with a passionate delight, the long and beautiful array of lofty mountain pines which line our woodland path, and listen to the soft yet sad and weird-like music which issues from their waving boughs, like the sweet angelic notes of a thousand Æolian harps attuned in harmony with the "new song," which ever reverberates along the golden valleys, and over the radiant mountain-tops of the empyreal heavens. What charms had these scenes, and that music to me in early youth, and what day-dreams of prospective fame would then flash before my dazzled eyes, as I lay beneath the friendly shadow of these stately mountain pines, which so lavishly adorn this ancient highway, and the banks of that beautiful river!

We are now approaching Fearn, a parish also connected with the Lindsays, full of legendary lore, and remarkable as the birth-place of men of genius.

This locality seems to have been a favourite haunt of his Satanic Majesty, for according to provincial belief—

"There's the Brownie o' Ba'quharn,
And the gaist o' Brandieden;
But of a' the places i' the parish,
The deil burns up the Vayne."

The Noran seems also to have been a favourite haunt of the Water-kelpy, who, it is said, with a view to deceive the neighbours as to the depth of the water at the ford of Waterstone, when any real case of drowning occurred called out—

"A' the men of Waterstone!—Come here! come here!"

Nearly opposite Vayne castle, there is a small piece of ground in the middle of a moor, called the "Deil's Hows," where the personage after whom the place is named, has made, within the memory of the present generation, some wonderful manifestations of his presence. From this place, according to the old Statistical Account, large lumps of earth have been thrown to a considerable distance without any visible cause!

There are some wonderful ghost stories connected with Ferne, for the most popular here of all the *spirits*, undoubtedly are the *ghaists* and the *brownies*. Here, these are considered by some one and the same, but in other quarters the brownie was an independent and entirely different being altogether, and similar in his disposition and habits to the *Lar Familiaris* of the ancients. He was equally well known in the classic lands of Greece and Italy, as in these Northern latitudes. The brownie seems to have derived his name from his assumed swarthy complexion, and his partiality to old ruinous buildings, and the solitary banks of unfrequented rivers. The Shetland brownie, according to Jamieson, differed in his habits from all others, assuming "all the covetousness of the most interested hireling, instead of performing the laborious and self-imposed services which characterised his fellows in other quarters." Having at present more to do,

however, with these mysterious beings, inhabiting places very much nearer home, I shall confine myself, in the meantime, to their peculiarities as evidenced in the brownies of Ferne.

In addition to the leading characteristics of Brownies in general the more prominent of these being, that they forded the rivers when their waters were at their highest, and that the *sage femme* always landed safely at the door of the sick wife—the brownies of Ferne are connected with scenes of cruelty and bloodshed. This peculiarity would seem to indicate that the brownie and the ghaist of Ferne, were one and the same. The *Ghaist Stane* is in the vicinity of the church. To this piece of isolated rock, it is said this disturber of the peace was often chained as a fitting punishment for his misdeeds, but tradition is silent as to the brownie being similarly dealt with, which strengthens the supposition that they were, in this quarter at least, generally regarded as one being.

Equally as much secluded as the Castle of Vayne, the old fortalice of the lords of Ferne in Brandyden, situate between the Kirk and Noranside, was, according to tradition, occupied at one time, by a sort of Bluebeard who punished his miserable menials with the utmost cruelty. One of his vassals offended this cruel lord of Ferne so grievously, that his bloodthirsty master sentenced him to die the death of a traitor. Thrown into a deep dungeon to await his execution, death in some mysterious form, relieved him from its ignominy, and his body was secretly buried in a solitary spot betwixt the Castle and Balquharn. From that time the laird's conscience never ceased to upbraid him, and he could find no peace in his house —the doors and windows, in summer and winter, flying open of their own accord, and ghostly yells and piercing screams continuing to reverberate at all hours through his lonely dwelling.

Worn out by fear, and dejected by despondency, the laird at last died mysteriously and unseen. The laird's death completely changed the character of his vassal's spirit, who now seemed to delight in acts of usefulness, especially to the gude-

wife of the farm house in the district made so famous in "The Ghaist o' Ferne-den."

There are several versions of the tale, but I prefer that given by Mr Jervise, as in early youth I often heard my mother repeat some stanzas of this ballad, which she had heard recited by our parish minister, Dr Lyon, of Glamis. Curiously enough the Rev. Mr Harris, minister of Ferne, received this version from the worthy doctor, and communicated the same to Mr Jervise.

THE GHAIST O' FERNE-DEN,

There liv'd a farmer in the North,
(I canna tell you when),
But just he had a famous farm
Nae far frae Ferne-den.
I doubtna, sirs, ye a' hae heard,
Baith women folks an' men,
About a muckle, fearfu' ghaist—
The ghaist o' Ferne-den!
The muckle ghaist, the fearfu' ghaist,
The ghaist o' Ferne-den;
He wad hae wrought as muckle wark
As four-an'-twenty men!

Gin there was ony strae to thrash,
Or ony byres to clean,
He never thocht it muckle fash
O' workin' late at e'en!
Although the nicht was ne'er sae dark,
He scuddit through the glen,
An' ran an errand in a crack—
The ghaist o' Ferne-den!

Ane nicht the mistress o' the house
Fell sick an' like to dee,—
"O! for a canny wily wife!"
Wi' micht an' main, cried she!
The nicht was dark, an' no a spark
Wad venture through the glen,
For fear that they micht meet the ghaist—
The ghaist o' Ferne-den!

But ghaistie stood ahint the door,
An' hearin' a' the strife,
He saw though they had men a score,
They soon wad tyne the wife!

Aff to the stable then he goes,
An' saddles the auld mare,
An' through the splash an' slash he ran
As fast as ony hare!

He chappit at the Mammy's door—
Says he—"mak' haste an' rise;
Put on your claise an' come wi' me,
An' take ye nae surprise!"
"Where am I gaun?" quo' the wife,
"Nae far, but through the glen—
Ye're wantit to a farmer's wife,
No far frae Ferne-den!"

He's taen the Mammy by the hand
An' set her on the pad,
Got on afore her an' set aff
As though they baith were mad!
They climb'd the braes—they lap the burns—
An' through the glush did plash:
They never minded stock nor stane,
Nor ony kind o' trash!

As they were near their journey's end
An' scudden through the glen:
"Oh!" says the Mammy to the ghaist,
"Are we come near the den!
For oh! I'm feared we meet the ghaist!"
"Tush, weesht, ye fool!"quo' he;
"For waur than ye ha'e i' your arms,
This nicht ye winna see!"

When they cam to the farmer's door
He set the Mammy down:—
"I've left the house but ae half hour—
I am a clever loon!
But step ye in an' mind the wife
An' see that a' gae richt,
An' I will tak ye hame again
At twal' o' clock at nicht!"

"What maks yer feet sae braid?" quo' she,
"What maks yer een sae sair?"
Said he,—"I've wander'd mony a road
Without a horse or mare!
But gin they speir, wha' brought ye here,
'Cause they were scarce o' men;
Just tell them that ye rade ahint
The ghaist o' Ferne-den!"

Some aver that the Ghaist was never seen or heard of from the time he landed the "Mammy wife," her persistent enquiries as to the peculiarity of the form of his feet and the colour of his eyes, having caused his immediate disappearance from the district. The gudewife of Farmerton, tradition however saith, had a male child, born on the same night that the Ghaist brought the "Mammy" to her house, and that this child when he grew up to manhood became celebrated for courage and valour. As the brownie still continued his midnight wanderings, and no one daring to "speak" to the spirit of the murdered vassal, this youth, when returning home one dark night accidentally met the Ghaist, and boldly demanded to know the cause of his wanderings:—

"About himsel wi hazell staff,
He made ane roundlie score;
And said, 'My lad, in name o' Gyde,
What doe you wander for?'"

The Ghaist replied by confessing the offences of his life, and thereafter immediately vanished. He was never more seen in the parish of Ferne!

CHAPTER XXVII.

CARESTON CASTLE.

From love of art, and taste withal,
Some sweetly hallow every scene,
But for Vandalic plunder, all
Must execrate the name of Skene.

RELUCTANTLY bidding adieu to the mystical and bewitching Ferne, we shall now pay a visit to the ancient and interesting Castle of Careston, a short distance to the eastward, on what may be still termed the braes of Angus.

The origin of the name of Careston, or Caraldstone is involved in much obscurity. Some authorities trace the derivation to the Ossianic hero, Carril; and others, to the now disused Celtic word, *Carald*, denoting the quality, red. Others, again, assume from an expression that occurs in a decreet of valuation of the teinds in 1758, viz., "the lands and barony of Caraldstone, formerly called Fuirdstone, with the tower, fortalice, manor places" &c, that Careston was known at one time by the name of Fuirdstone.

The more probable source, however, appears to be that which is indicated in the preface to the Registrum de Aberbrothic:—"A person of the name of Bricius occurs in very early charters as 'judex' of Angus, probably holding his office under the great Earls. In 1219, Adam was judex of the Earl's Court. Some six years later he became judex of the King's Court, and his brother Keraldus succeeded to his office in the Court of the Earl; for in the year 1227, we find the brothers acting together, and styled respectively 'judex' of Angus, and 'judex' of our Lord the King. The dwelling of Keraldus received the name of

'Keraldiston,' now Caraldstoun; and the office of judex becoming heritable, and taking its Scotch title of 'Dempster,' gave name to the family who for many generations held the lands of Caraldstoun and performed the office of Dempster to the Parliaments of Scotland."

The Noran and the South Esk flow and unite together in this parish. The water of the Noran is celebrated for its purity, caused, doubtless, by its flowing over a bed of rock and gravel. There is a tradition, that one of our Queens, in olden time, washed her curtch or cap in its stream, near the place where the farm-house of Nether Careston is now situated, and pronounced the Noran to be the clearest stream in Scotland.

The parish is rich in botanical treasures. In the meadows and moors, in the fields and woods, and on the banks of the Noran and Esk, many fine specimens of the Orchis Moris, Chrysanthemum Segetum, Geranium Sylvaticum, Anemone Nemorosa, Narcissus Pseudo-Narcissus, Spirara Ulmaria, and Rosa Eglanteria, are to be found in great abundance. That very rare plant, *Stratictes Aliodes*, or the fresh water soldier, discovered by the Rev. Mr. Haldane of Kingoldrum, is to be found in a pool at Bracklawburn.

Careston is said to be the least parish in Angus-shire, both as regards extent and population, and the fifth least in the Kingdom. Although the churchyard is correspondingly small, the tombstones—until George Skene, the late proprietor, sacrilegiously had them all thrown from the graveyard to be afterwards either broken to pieces, or used for drain covers—were at one time very numerous and interesting in an antiquarian point of view. A few of these stones were, however, rescued from oblivion, and placed again in the churchyard after this Vandalic laird's death. The inscription on one of these is as follows:—

"This stone doth hold these corps of mine,
While I lie buried here;
None shall molest nor wrong this stone,
Except my freinds that near.

My flesh and bones lyes in Earth's womb,
Wintill Judgment do appear,
And then I shall be raised again
To meet my Saviour dear."

As we have seen, the family of Dempster were the first recorded proprietors of Careston, and this surname was assumed by the lairds of Careston before 1360. The Lindsays became connected with Careston in the person of Sir Henry Lindsay of Kinfauns, afterwards thirteenth Earl of Crawford, about the close of the sixteenth century. The Carnegies of Southesk held the barony thereafter, and till 1707, at which time, Sir John Stewart of Grandtully and Murthly, succeeded the Carnegies by purchase. Thirteen years afterwards, Careston again changed hands, having been purchased in 1720, by Major Skene, a cadet of the old family of that ilk.

There is a tradition, that the first who bore the surname of Skene, was a younger son of Donald of the Isles, "who saved Malcolm II. from being torn to pieces by an enraged wolf that chased him from the forest of Kilblein in Marr to the burn of Broadtach, now within the boundary of the town of Aberdeen. At this point, the wolf came up with the King, and was just about to spring upon him, when the gallant youth, wrapping his plaid about his left arm, and rushing in betwixt the King and the wolf, thrust his left arm into the wolf's mouth, and drawing his *skene*—which in the Gaelic language signifies a dirk or knife—struck it to the wolf's heart, and then cut off its head and presented it to King Malcolm."

The most popular of the Skene family in Angus-shire, was the eldest son of Mrs Skene, who succeeded to Careston through her marriage to her cousin-german, the laird of Skene. Though a person of considerable learning and ability, Skene is said to have been a man of greater Bacchanalianism, fairly out-doing, in his deep carousals, his friend and neighbour, of similar propensities, the "rebel laird," Carnegie of Balnamoon, with whom he usually associated in his midnight

orgies. He had spent a good deal of his time on the Continent, where, like the "Black Earl of Southesk," already alluded to, it was believed

> "He learned the art that none could name,
> In Padua, beyond the sea."

He was an amateur musician of considerable skill, and the peasantry believed him to have the power of making his favourite instrument, the bagpipe, play in the castle while he peregrinated the neighbourhood, or walked among the fields! The eldest daughter of Mrs Skene, married Alexander, third Earl of Fife, in whose family the lands of Careston remained until 1871, when they were acquired by John Adamson, Esq., of Falcon House, Blairgowrie.

The Castle of Careston has undergone important alterations, and received considerable additions, during the many changes in its proprietorship. The centre is the oldest portion of the castle, and is thus described by Ochterlony:—"A great and most delicat house, well-built, brave lights, and of a most excellent contrivance, without debait the best gentleman's house in the shyre; extraordinare much planting, delicate yards and gardens, with stone walls, ane excellent avenue with ane range of ash trees on every side, ane excellent arbour, for length and breadth, nane in the country like it. The house built by Sir Harry Lindsay of Kinfaines, afterwards Earl of Crawford."

Two centuries have elapsed since Guynd gave this graphic description of the castle, during which time the avenue has been completely rooted out, the arbour allowed to fall into disrepair, and much of the fine sculpture either destroyed or carried off to decorate some more favoured mansion. The house has been long tenantless and uncared for, and the consequence is that some of the finest ornaments in the garden and elsewhere are fast crumbling to pieces.

The internal decorations of the castle, you observe, are better preserved, and some fine sculpture still adorns the old staircase,

the dining and drawing rooms, in which heraldic bearings and armorial groups predominate. A fine sculpture of the Royal Arms of Scotland, surrounded by military trophies, adorns the mantel-piece of the old drawing-room, under which a tablet bears the following inscription, in allusion, no doubt, to the first Earl of Crawford, and his marriage with the daughter of King Robert II. :—

"THIS . HONORIS . SINGE
AND . FIGVRIT . THROPHE . BOR—
SVLD . PVSE . ASPYRING . SPRE
ITIS . AND . MARTIAL . MYND
TO . THRVST . YAIR . FORTONE
FWRTH . & . IN . HIR . SCORNE
BELIEVE . IN . FAITHE
OVR . FAIT . GOD . HES . ASSIGND."

Although not in any degree ornamental in its construction, the Castle of Careston has all the ancient grandeur of a baronial residence; and the present proprietor has it now in his power to render it one of the finest and most interesting mansions in the county of Angus.

The tradition of Jock Barefoot, connected with this parish, has already been noticed. There is another of a *White Lady* who was wont to perambulate the district when the vast forests covered to such a great extent these Northern parishes.

This Lady must have belonged to the mild type of her genus, for she has left no trace of her deeds either of good or evil.

The greatest historical event connected with the district was the encampment of the Marquis of Montrose and his followers in front of the castle, on the 5th of April 1645, after the storming of the town of Dundee.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MAULESDEN.

Sunny memories come again,
Mellowing present grief and pain;
Hark! the well-known early strain—
A long time ago!

We are now entering the gateway to Maulesden. How fresh you feel the balmy air, redolent with the glad music of the happy birds, in this the spring-flush of their joyous life of love and song. Disporting on the green sward on either side, the young lambs playfully usher in their happy yet, alas! precarious and short existence. There are lowings of kine in the valleys, and bleatings of sheep on the hills; and to complete the grand diapason of Nature's resurrection anthem of praise, comes softly, like an angel's song, the low sweet hymning of the musical Esk, as it now flows in winding beauty at our feet.

As we delightedly wander from terrace to terrace, with their trimmed beds of beautiful flowers, and rare rose-trees at appreciative intervals, and casting our eye in every direction, could we imagine any scene so limited in extent, combining in such a high degree of excellence, every element of the soft, the romantic, and the beautiful. Here, stately river, luxuriant valley, wooded hill, blend in almost unparalleled beauty to form one of those natural pictures of peaceful repose, on which the eye loves to linger, and the memory to dwell.

The Burghal hills immediately opposite, though not of great height, are finely wooded to their summits, with variegated green fields peeping out cheerfully and hopefully between. The beautiful Esk comes musically out amongst the foliage on

our right, flowing like a line of beauty, peacefully and lovingly by and disappearing quietly on our left beneath the one-arched Stannochy Bridge. Very beautiful the many winding walks along the banks of the Esk terminating often in those quiet foliage-shrouded, cozy nooks, shut out from the cares and toils of the busy world without, and surrounded with a balmy atmosphere of song, which lovers in the exuberance of their imaginative desires, so often vainly picture in their dreams, but which all true poets, ever in their reality, so goldenly value, and rapturously love so well. The murmuring burns in the wooded dens musically meet in the picturesque ornamental pond with its fountain and waterfall, and finally fall into the Esk in a miniature cascade of great beauty.

Some splendid specimens of fir adorn the terraces and walks. Near to the house on the east, you observe, is one specimen marked "1851, Abies Douglass ii.: 200 feet:"—meaning, doubtless, that this is the probable height to which the tree may grow.

The original house of Maulesden was built about the latter end of the last century. It was soon afterwards acquired by Mr Binny, who made some additions to the old pile, which did not, however, add much to its beauty. It was then acquired by the Honourable William Maule about 1854, who built the present fine mansion, in the old Scotch Baronial Style after elaborate designs by Mr Bryce of Edinburgh. The estate came into the possession of the present proprietor, Thomas Hunter Cox, Esq., of Duncarse in 1871. Mr Cox is at present President of the Dundee Chamber of Commerce, and is one of the members of the well-known firm of Messrs Cox Brothers, of Dundee and Calcutta. This family can trace an unbroken connection with the staple trade of Forfarshire for the last two hundred years, being very much farther back in point of time, than any traces of other county mercantile pedigrees extend.

The mansion-house of Maulesden is one of those pleasing and graceful structures which one likes the better the longer

the eye is accustomed to its quiet, unpretending beauty. The gardens, sloping gently down to the river on the south, are extensive, and laid out with great artistic skill and natural effect.

When a student at the Academy of Montrose, I often visited this neighbourhood where I had some near and dear relations, and spent amongst its romantic surroundings, some of the happiest days of my youth. On re-visiting these scenes in 1859, after an absence of many years, I could not forbear, while standing once more on the Stannochy Bridge, beneath which flowed softly as of yore, my favourite Esk, to give vent to the mingled feelings of pain and pleasure, which then alternately agitated and soothed my troubled breast:—

THE BELL IN THE OLD BRECHIN TOWER STRUCK ONE.

The bell in the old Brechin tower struck one,
Like a chime from th' eternal shore,
As away in the golden bright sunshine,
I rambled in days of yore.

A-down the long straggling Tenements grim,
Or high up the dark-wooded ridge,
Along by the banks of the bonnie South Esk,
Where spans the high Stannochy bridge.

Or musing in mystic fond dreamings
In the old churchyard of Albar,
With no care, or sorrow, or weeping,
The joy of my young heart to mar.

While happy loved voices soft chiming,
Filled the air with melodious sweet joy,
Tumultuously joyous! O, happy! how happy!
The free, fair, and bright poet boy!

The bell in the old grey tower strikes one,
Alas! on a far southern shore,
Its well-known soft chimes came fond in my dreamings,
As I heard them in days of yore.

And the voices I loved vibrated the ear,
Like distant music sweet;
Yes! I heard the old silvery laughter clear,
And the pattering of restless feet.

In an atmosphere blest of bright young love,
The songs of my youth I sang,
Along by the banks of the musical Esk,
The wild-wood echoes rang.

The bell in the old grey tower strikes one,
And I wander, how happy! once more,
Along by the one-arched high Stannochy bridge,
My heart e'en as green as of yore.

And I gaze on the scenes so touchingly beautiful,
Maulesden, the uplands, the stream,
And feel that I see in reality true,
And not through a mystic wild dream.

But where, Oh! where gone those voices so joyous,
That tuned my young heart-strings to love?
The woodland, the river, the birds soft reply,
In a musical chorus—"Above!"

Oh, God! have I lived e'en too long, and all sadly,
Now reckoning the slow fleeting hours?
Hush! hush, widowed soul, live on, they're all happy gone
To a better world than ours.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE RECOGNITION.

Since young life's morn all crimsoned gay
With hues of rosy gold,
When fairy dreams of splendour rich
The future bright unroll'd;

I've roamed afar, but now return,
My wanderings to bewail;
For oh! there's not a spot on earth,
Like my own native vale.

"THE world appears all bright and beautiful to you now; what will be its aspect twenty years hence? Dark and troubled days will come when least expected. You cannot always walk amidst the golden sunshine, in blissful and untroubled joy. May the Most High be your hiding-place from the storm, and your covert from the tempest. In all your trials and sorrows may He temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Fare-thee-well!"

Such were the solemn and impressive words uttered feelingly by the venerable Dr Lyon, our parish minister, as he bade me an affectionate adieu at the gateway of the manse of Glamis, when I left, in early youth, my native Howe, to push my fortune in the great, seething, restless world beyond.

Twenty years very quickly passed away. It was on a dreary day in December 18—, the snow falling fast, that I landed from the steamer at Dundee, and, being anxious to proceed immediately on my journey homeward, I started on foot late in the afternoon, no railways then, or now, existing

in that part of the country, the caravan having started for the county town some two hours previously. Having ordered my luggage to be sent on after me the next day, I had no encumbrance to retard my progress, which had been so unexpectedly rapid, that I had arrived at the bye-road by Lumleyden leading to my native glen, much sooner than I had anticipated.

No sooner had I diverged from the main road than the snow ceased to fall, and the moon shone out in all her splendour. The frost set in sharp and severe, and the night became so clear that objects at a considerable distance were distinctly visible. The road lay along a wild and desolate moor, now thickly covered with the deep, crisp snow, no sound of beast or bird breaking the solemn silence which reigned around. Nature, to me, is ever more grand and impressive in her silence than in her stormy, wild, and tempestuous moods. The latter rouse our fear and terror; the former forces us to retire within ourselves, producing sedative contemplation and calm reflection, so that we imperceptibly seem linked to the spiritual world, partaking of its strange, undefined, yet sublime mysteries.

In my present circumstances, returning to my native strath after a long absence of twenty years, the most natural train of thought that could fill the mind was to ruminate and reflect on the events which had taken place, and the scenes through which I had passed in these, the most eventful years of a man's existence. The feelings which first arose in my mind were just those which most men, in the meridian of life, primarily experience on casting a retrospective glance at the past, before calmly reviewing the reasons why such and such things had taken place. I mused, for instance, on the disappointments of life, the teachery of friends, and the malignity of enemies, just as if there had not existed any overt acts on my part which might, to some extent at least, have been the secret cause of these misfortunes. And, without philosophising too much, the world and I became

gradually better friends, and I unfeignedly and repentingly felt that human nature was not so bad after all.

The nearer we approach the unseen world beyond, the deeper will be our abasement of self, and the higher the actions of our contemporaries will rise in our estimation, and this very feeling of humiliation as to our own actions, and generosity and charitableness as to the doings of others, does, in very truth, bring more real, pure, and lasting satisfaction to the mind than if we, Pharisaic-like, only thought contemptuously of our brethren of mankind, exclaiming, in the fulness of our haughty pride and self-righteousness, 'God, I thank thee, I am not as other men, or even as this publican.' After some reflection, therefore, and after having calmly reviewed the events of the last twenty years, I had worked myself very comfortably up to the conclusion that the world was not so base as some men, in their gloomy moods, would have us believe it to be, but that much elevation of thought, much purity of desire, and, consequently, much real happiness, were felt and enjoyed by the fallen sons of Adam, in this sublunary state of existence, preparatory to, and in earnest of, that purer, higher, and holier state of being on which the immortal part of man enters definitely at death.

Pursuing this train of pleasing reflection, I had arrived very nearly at the spot where my father, twenty long years before, bade his darling boy farewell. Another train of thought now took possession of my mind. What events had happened; what trials; what sorrows; what bereavements; what secret corroding griefs had overwhelmed the spirits and wrung the hearts of those dear to me as life itself; for a long period had elapsed since I had received any intelligence from home, and I was now returning, unknown to my friends, to my paternal hearth.

Not naturally superstitious, I do not easily give way to presentiments of any kind, but, in spite of all my philosophical efforts to the contrary, a strange, indescribable sadness came over my spirits, which, deepening every instant, spell-bound

me to the spot, although with very different feelings to those which, twenty years before, had so depressed and withered the heart emotions of my soul.

Just at this instant a muircock flapped his wings immediately above me, and looking across the moor, I imagined I saw within a short distance of me the figure of a man as if in the act of removing the snow from the ground. This incident changed at once the current of thought in which I had been indulging, and, curious to know the cause of such a strange proceeding, I at once boldly proceeded to the spot where the strange unknown seemed so busily at work. Whether he had observed me approaching, or whether his object had been accomplished, I know not; but as I approached the figure muffled itself up in a flowing mantle, and strode across the heath in the direction of the little hostelrie at the opening in the glen.

I had now reached the spot where I was certain I had seen the singular apparition, and, all at once, came upon—a grave! The snow had been cleared away, and the black earth laid carefully up on either side, while a gardner's spade lay partially concealed amongst the snow. Ruminating on the strange, yet still mysterious occurrence, I mechanically took up the spade, on the handle of which were distinctly visible the letters "J. H.," cut rudely with some blunt instrument. When I looked round the figure had disappeared; but, as the hostelrie lay in my way, I resolved, if possible, to solve the mystery by entering the house on some pretext or another, which would lull any suspicions my sudden appearance might otherwise create.

This house stood, and still stands, alone, in one of the most uninviting, wild and desolate spots which it is possible for the imagination to conceive. On the one side stretches the long dreary moor, skirted on the far eastern extremity by a dark, thickly-planted pine wood; while on the other, and immediately behind the house, rise some bleak, barren hills, on which, in summer time, a few Highland sheep manage to

pick up a scanty subsistence. To the north, and within a few hundred yards of the house, a deep, rocky gorge opens up an outlet to the sequestered glen of Ogilvy beyond. To this lone and comfortless hostelrie, therefore, did my hurried footsteps now lead me. Arrived at the door, not hesitating for a moment, I entered without waiting to be admitted. On approaching what appeared to be the kitchen, I impatiently asked for some refreshment, when a rough, stalwart fellow, who appeared to be the landlord, answered, rather gruffly—

"What's yer wull?"

I repeated my request, adding, somewhat sharply, that, being rather cold, the sooner he could let me have a drop of mountain-dew the better.

While Boniface was engaged in filling the gill-stoup, I without any ceremony, seated myself beside the blazing ingle, and, turning round, observed, for the first time, a stout, strapping fellow, in the homely garb of a comfortable countryman, seated at the extreme end of the room. His features seemed not unfamiliar to me, and, accosting him with a "Good evening, sir," received a courteous reply, in the soft tones of a voice which at once awakened all the feelings and sympathies of my youth. Asking him to partake of my hospitality, I pondered over the circumstance until my recollection of early companions became so distinctly defined that I at last fixed on one as being the boy to the man who now sat beside me.

Forgetting altogether, for the moment, the mysterious circumstance which had attracted me to enter the house, and all the well-springs of my heart now gushing out in tender emotions, I hastily put the question whether he belonged to the village of Glamis. Evidently thrown off his guard, he at once replied that Glamis was his native village, but that he had removed to a neighbouring parish many years ago. Feeling assured I was on the right track, yet without the least idea as to the result to which my enquiries might lead, I abruptly asked whether he knew one of the name of James Howden, who, twenty years ago, was a pupil of good Mr

Cowper, the parish schoolmaster. His colour changed a little at the abruptness of the question; but, quickly rallying, he laughingly replied that he certainly did know such a person, for he had known him all his life. In answer to some further queries, he unwittingly stated that my youthful companion had gone to learn the trade of a gardener; but, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he changed the conversation by ordering the landlord to replenish the glasses at his expense.

The whole scene of the grave, the spade with its mysterious initials, the disappearance of the apparition in the direction of the hostelrie, flashed at once on my mind, and a cold, clammy sweat stood in big drops on my brow. I scanned the stranger's dress of dark corduroy, with a huge Highland plaid thrown over his brawny shoulders, and then the expression of his fine Roman features and florid complexion, and was puzzled to reconcile my suspicions on the one hand with my extremely favourable impressions on the other. Noticing my sudden abstraction, he jocularly alluded to the effects of Glenlivet punch in loosening the tongue, and causing good brotherhood. Happening to turn my eyes in the direction of the landlord, it occurred to me there was some secret free-masonry going on between him and his guest; but before I had time to scan the actions of the other, the latter hurriedly glanced at his watch, and, taking up the ponderous stick which lay before him on the table, he hastily bade me "Good night," and left the house.

Having paid my reckoning, and without any courtesies passing between me and the landlord, I followed my companion to the door. The snow was again falling thickly, and I soon lost all trace of him among the blinding drift. I was now proceeding in the direction by which I had come, and, although anxious to reach my destination as soon as possible, a strange, increasing curiosity impelled me to endeavour to unriddle the enigma and solve the mystery.

Attentively listening, as I went along, to catch the faintest sound, I now distinctly heard the snortings of a horse, and

almost immediately afterwards the voices of men, as if in angry conversation. I knew from the distinctness of the sounds I could not be far distant; and, hastily proceeding in the direction from which they evidently proceeded, I tremulously heard the following colloquy:—

"Is it you, James Howden?"

"Yes, old sinner; and for thee there is no escape."

"There's my purse. But it's not money you want?"

"No. I want that which I shall now have."

"What?"

"Your life! Your grave is already dug, and waiting for your corpse!"

"Oh God! Have mercy!"

The snow suddenly ceased, and the moon shining brightly again, I stood, very much to my surprise and amazement, within a few yards of the actors in this strange drama. One, an old man, with long white silvery hair, clad in the white great-coat and topboots of a farmer, on horseback; the other, my veritable companion of the hostelrie, with his huge stick raised high above his head, and in the act of felling the farmer to the earth.

"Villain!" I shouted, "you are known!"

"Blasted eaves-dropper!" he savagely replied, "thy knowledge of me will not avail thee much." But, quickly drawing my stilletto from my sword-stick I parried his deadly blow, inflicting a severe wound in his right arm, from which his ponderous bludgeon dropped powerless to the earth. Penetrated by the groans of the sufferer, it quickly occurred to me that I might possibly make a friend of him in this emergency, as the old man seemed evidently dying, and it being utterly impossible for me alone to be of any assistance to him while engaged keeping the other at bay. A sudden revulsion of feeling, therefore, took possession of my mind, and, without a moment's hesitation, I thus addressed the murderer:—

"I have no ill feeling towards you. Assist me to carry this old man to the nearest house, and I solemnly swear that

the occurrences of this night shall never, in time, be revealed by me."

He seemed struck with this abrupt yet feeling offer of reconciliation on my part, and all at once the wild and savage expression of his features gave way, and, seizing my proffered hand, he eagerly exclaimed:—

"I close with your offer. Swear not. I feel I can trust you without the convenant of an oath. Here, take this handkerchief, and quickly bind up my ugly wound. He is not dead. There—that will do."

Without prolonging the conversation, we instantly turned attention to the old man lying silent on the snow. Cautiously feeling his pulse, I was rejoiced to find he was not dead.

"Only somewhat stunned by the blow," said my companion, and, lifting him tenderly in his arms, I was struck with the affectionate solicitude with which he now examined the person of him whom, but for my sudden appearance on the scene, he would most certainly have bereft of life. It was no time either to moralise or philosophise, however, as the heavens became again overcast, and the snow began to fall heavily in drifting flakes, obscuring all the landmarks of, and every object on, the moor. While I took hold of the reins of the farmer's horse —who had stood all the while looking thoughtfully on— my companion lifted his master gently on the animal's back, and, springing up behind, held him firmly in his arms, telling me, at the same time, to lead the way to the adjacent hostelrie.

In less than half an hour we had reached the lonely public-house, at the door of which stood the landlord, evidently bewildered at the unexpected scene before him.

"Lend us a hand, Jem," softly said my companion to the staring, stupified Boniface. "A sad accident. Hold his back steadily upright while I dismount. There—come round now to this side, and take hold of the reins of the horse while my friend and I carry him into the house."

"Put him on this low bed," said he to me. "There,—put

this other pillow beneath his head; turn his face to the wall; Jem,—some brandy and water, hot, quick, that's a good fellow."

"He begins to breathe more naturally," he quietly said again to me, but with evident feelings of joy and thankfulness. "This brandy and water will revive him."

Very much to my astonishment and relief—for there seemed from the first to exist some strange mysterious sympathy between the aged sufferer and myself—the old man quickly and greedily swallowed the proffered draught, falling immediately afterwards into a deep sound slumber.

"He will be better, if not quite conscious, when he awakes," again whispered my companion. "But if he shculd not?"

"I will keep my vow," I eagerly replied.

"I was not thinking of that, my friend," replied he, rather pettishly. "But, to save reflections, we must get medical advice. It is a long way off to the nearest doctor; but I'll mount the horse, and away this instant." Then, as if recollecting himself—"No, the landlord must fetch the doctor, while I go—no matter where."

Turning quickly round to the landlord, who stood, still bewildered, beside him, he hurriedly said, "Have your wits about you. Mount the farmer's horse this instant; ride as fast as his legs can carry him to Glamis, and bring the doctor. And, hark ye, come not back alone, but bring the leech with you. It is a case of life and death. Go!"

The landlord instantly disappeared to obey the imperious order, his authoritative friend immediately approaching where I sat beside the bed, and just opposite the pine-wood fire, which cast a lurid, uncertain light around the comfortless room, he, in more subdued and tremulous tones, said to me—"While I leave you for a short time, you will intently watch over the sick man. There is no probability of his awakening before I return, but, should he do so, you must be guided by circumstances how to act in such an emergency. I'll be back anon," and forthwith disappeared.

Left to my own reflections, of one thing I felt quite certain,

and it was this—that of the two it was just barely possible I might see the landlord again in the flesh. As for the other, I felt relieved I had seen the last of him, while, at the same time, I firmly resolved that, come what might, I should religiously observe my solemn, though voluntarily-given oath.

Alone, I had time to observe the aspect of the room in which, watching over the sick man, I was resolved patiently to wait till relieved in some way or another from my precious charge. The furnishings were poor and miserable enough—a few deal chairs, a large oaken table in the middle of the room, a cold stone floor, and log-fire of pine on the hearth, while a few gaudily-coloured prints of "Courtship," "Sir William Wallace," and "Robert Bruce" adorned the damp, whitewashed walls. Some large brown greybeards stood in a corner in an open press, with the usual adjuncts of glasses, tumblers and bickers for the use of the thirsty souls who frequented this roadside inn. I had hardly completed my survey of the apartment, when the noise of wheels at the door, and loud, husky voices bawling for the landlord, set my wits to work as to how I was to acquit myself in an emergency not once alluded to by my mysterious friend, and most certainly not calculated on by myself.

"Hilloa! old boy!" a voice bawled out, and repeated still ruder and louder than before. "Asleep—eh? Bring half a mutchkin o' yer best, will ye? Do you think we can wait ony langer on sic a nicht as this, wi' the drift blawin' auld wives and pike-staves, fit to smore the verra deil himsel', were he to venture out in sic a storm. Mak' haste, will ye?"

This characteristic speech relieved my anxiety considerably, for it gave me to understand that the poor frozen creatures without did not intend to enter the house, but were to swallow the mountain dew as they sat in their carts; so, quickly catching hold of a gillstoup, I filled it with Glenlivet from one of the greybeards, and, summoning up all my forgotten Scotch to my aid, I cried out, as I furiously opened the door and presented the whisky—

"Ye're in an awfu' hurry the nicht, lads; ye'll hardly gi'e me time to fill the gill-stoup. See—put that in your cheek."

"It's a' verra weel for you to crack awa' that way, sittin' toastin' your taes at the fireside, fin we, poor carrier bodies, maun face the storm," said the person addressed, the latter part of the sentence interrupted by the passage of the Glenlivet down his thirsty maw.

"Tak' ye the ither glass," I said to his companion on the other cart, not caring to prolong the conversation, lest, even in the darkness of the night, I might be discovered.

"Thank ye, Jem," he replied, as he tossed up his little finger. "We'll do noo till we get out o' the glen. There's a saxpence. We've a lang, lang road afore us yet. Gude nicht;" and much to my relief, "Come aither, Donald," said his companion in the leading vehicle to his horse, and slowly, away in the murky darkness, over the crisp white snow, went the lumbering, creaking waggons, while I impatiently, yet joyfully, returned to my important charge in the miserable hostelrie.

The wind had now risen to a furious gale, driving in whirling eddies the powdered snow through the chinks and cranies of the walls, and whistling in eerie cadence around the chimney top, while the log-fire on the hearth was gradually wasting away, and a settled and oppressive gloom seemed gathering sadly on everything around:—

> "That nicht a child micht understand
> The deil had business on his hand."

I had often read, heard repeated, and pronounced these deeply prophetic, ghostly lines; but under all the circumstances of the case, I certainly never till now experienced their full meaning and import; and so, alike forgetting my patient and my *non est inventus* friends, I gave myself up to the full enjoyment of the terrific and sublime.

"Well, my friend, how does your patient now?"

Whether my hair started on end I am not quite certain, but I know for a truth I started instantly to my feet; for

there, before my eyes, in veritable flesh and blood, stood my quondam friend, wrapped in the same identical plaid I saw him wear while flitting from the new-made grave in the early part of the night.

Where he had been I was now at no loss to conjecture—doubtless filling up the grave, and again covering the earth with its snowy mantle, the falling snow obliterating all traces of the circumstance.

"Dead men tell no tales," said he, as he took from beneath the folds of his ample plaid the identical spade which I had seen and examined at the grave; and, breaking the woodwork of it in two across his knee, he threw the whole into the fire, stirring it up at the same time, till the flames rose high in the chimney, consuming, in a twinkling, every vestige of the fatal witness.

Not aware that I had seen the instrument before, he rather curiously observed—

"Not that I doubt your solemn oath, but *that* might have been discovered and identified by others. But how goes our patient? Still asleep. I trust he won't awake till the doctor comes; till then I pray you listen to a short explanation of the strange occurrences of this mysterious night. Whether you belong to these parts I know not; but few people within fifty miles of the parish of Glamis who have not heard of the peerless charms of Annie Lawson"——

"Annie Lawson?" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he repeated, drily. "Annie Lawson. Didst thou know any maiden in thy youth who bore that charmed name?"

She was my cousin; but, fortunately, I had sufficient control over my feelings to remain silent, while he thus continued:

"There is not time for leading questions or cross-examinations at present, therefore I shall at once and hastily proceed to my narrative.

"The maiden, whose name I cannot repeat, I from childhood tenderly loved, and, I have every reason to believe, was

as tenderly loved in return. She was meek and gentle as a lamb, but, as I grew up to manhood, I became wild, irresolute, and unsettled in my habits, a short residence at Dundee having changed my whole nature, excepting my unchangeable affection for the only woman I had ever loved. It is a long story; but suffice it, in the meantime, to say that, having wasted my little patrimony, and not having been brought up to any profession, I was often reduced to great straits; and, more from the taunts I experienced from Annie's guardian—since the death of her parents—than from any good purpose or resolution of my own, I bound myself, for a short period, to learn the handicraft of a gardener. For some years I had been debarred from her uncle's house, although I not unfrequently met him, only to experience, however, some bitter taunt or reproach, which so deeply rankled in my soul that I gradually, at last, came to the calm resolution that it would be no crime to rid the world of one who, perseveringly and systematically, set himself, so far as I could judge, to oppose the union of two hearts evidently designed by Nature and God for each other, and—you know the sequel."

"A terrible resolution," I interrupted.

"Have patience; I have not quite done yet. A terrible resolution, doubtless; but you must take into account the long series of provocations I had received, although I frankly admit that nothing can by any possibility justify the deliberate taking away the life of a fellow creature. But these taunts and reproaches had worked me up to madness, and my diseased imagination and unsanctified mind not only coloured, according to my wishes, every untoward event of my life, but easily found fertile excuses for the perpetration of any deed, however dark and tragical, for the purposes of resentment. But a truce to these dark thoughts, which have now for ever fled from that breast so long their foul nursery and habitation. Annie's uncle and guardian was a man of high principle and unbending rectitude of conduct, and doubtless his intentions were good in acting towards me as he had done,

and, on a mind differently constituted than mine, such conduct might have had a different effect. Generally speaking, however, the human heart can be much more effectually touched, and melted into obedience, by the tender accents of persuasive love than by harsh, cold, and unfeeling sarcasm and bitter reproaches, however much these, in reality, may be deserved by the object of such vituperations. Taunts and reproaches drove me to madness, but the few words you uttered of generous impulse changed, in an instant, my whole being. The milk of human kindness again flowed warmly into my soul, and, while momentarily and secretly asking forgiveness for my great crime, I blessed my God for those sweet accents of considerate love, when I deserved nothing but the direst punishment which the hand of man or God could inflict. Love in my heart took the place of hatred, sympathy came in the stead of resentment, tenderness transplanted rancour, affection cast out every root of strife and bitterness. The sequel, I feel, will show this to have been the turning-point of my destiny. Such, my friend, is an instructive phase of human life."

The door was suddenly opened from without, and anxiously and enquiringly entered the bustling landlord, ushering in, with all due formality, the worthy doctor. Having divested themselves of their snow-covered garments, the latter cautiously approached the bed. What account Boniface had given of the occurrence we never knew, but it was evident the doctor treated the case as contusion of the brain, occasioned by a fall, in which belief we were content to allow the man of skill to remain.

"A severe contusion," he said, as if speaking to himself; "but the pulse is strong," turning round, and encouragingly addressing us. "Just assist to turn him gently on this side. There; that will do. Now, bring the candle."

The change of posture appeared to have brought the sufferer to consciousness, for no sooner had the light shone upon his agitated features, than he opened his eyes, and looked enquiringly around.

"My father!" I exclaimed, and threw myself on his neck.

"My son!" he faintly replied, "is it, indeed, thus we meet again?"

Need I tell how I watched by his bedside with all a loving son's devotion and solicitude, until his gradual yet complete restoration to health? or how we again lifted him up on his faithful Donald, and took our way from the little, lonely hostelrie to the neighbouring glen of Ogilvy—I walking on the one side and James Howden on the other, our conversation sweet, soft, and subdued, as became our new relationship? or how dear Annie Lawson, still comely and beautiful, though no longer young, met us with a sweet smile of thankfulness and joy as we entered my father's cosy homestead? or how a happy wedding took place in the glen a few months afterwards, and James Howden and Cousin Annie at last were united in the bonds of holy wedlock?

CHAPTER XXX.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

"O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still."

Tennyson.

A SWEET, sweet lassie was dear loved Annie Glen. With a light and graceful figure, a winning and engaging manner, and an education much above her rank in life, Annie might have graced the home of any squire in the parish. And she was not without her woers in that high station, for all forgot the miller's daughter in the sylph-like being who moved as a queen among her compeers.

Squire Grahame, whose small estate was only a short distance from the mill of Airniefoul, seemed to be more smitten than all others with the charms of the lovely maiden; and many a basketful of rare and beautiful fruit did the miller get from the prolific garden of Kincaldrum, accompanied always with a rich bouquet of flowers, grouped with much taste and skill, and which Annie, with a blush, would unhesitatingly receive from her good-natured, but not far-seeing father. In riding past, Mr Grahame never omitted calling on the miller, nor of exchanging, if he could, a glance with his lovely daughter. For Annie had now reached that period of girlhood at which it was not unnatural that her little heart should flutter, and her cheek redden, at the sight of such a gallant cavalier, whose attentions to her father could not be misconstrued or mistaken. Then, again, wherever she was seen—in the mill, or in the field, in the garden among her flowers, or seated, at her little window, trellised with roses and honeysuckle—she was ever graceful in the pure simplicity of nature.

The Laird of Kincaldrum was considerably older than Annie, but yet in the full bloom of manhood. Tall, stately, and of truly noble carriage, with handsome, if not very regular features, eyes of hazel, and locks as black as ebony, he was no unfit personification of the brave and loving hero of young maidens' mystifying yet enchanting dreams. But what captivates a woman's heart is not so much the outward graces of the man, as the inward workings of the mind. The expression of the eye, the lip, the brow, can speak more truly and more effectively than all the charms, however bewitching, of mere external beauty. Of all these graces and arts a thorough master was Mr Grahame. To the sentiments which flowed from his silvery tongue, now rapid as a cataract, then gentle as a low, quiet stream, his dark sparkling eyes corroborated by their lustre or their softness the truth of his eloquent words; and yet, in my conscience, I believe he loved, sincerely loved, Annie Glen.

About this time you might have seen, in the summer evenings, a pale, slender, thoughtful-looking lad in the miller's garden, weeding and dressing the flowers, or entwining the creepers and honeysuckle around the cottage windows, while Annie knitted or sewed in the green-leaved summer-house, reared also by his industrious hands. Tired, or affecting to be so, he would now seat himself beside Annie in the bower, and in a little while, when the shadows of evening gathered around, they would slowly leave their seat, passing silently along the garden, and at the little wicket bid each other an affectionate adieu. This was William Osler, the son of a poor but pious widow, whose lowly cottage is situate on the brow of the Hunter Hill on the other side of the wood. The great ambition of his parents had been to make their son "a minister." The death of the father, however, caused their removal from the farm they had so long occupied in the glen, and apparently for ever blighted the hopes so long and so fondly cherished. Inheriting the enthusiasm of his father, the boy, however, studied on, and at the time of our story had

been several sessions at College. William and Annie had been playmates from childhood, and devoutly and affectionately attached to each other. They had sat on the same form at school, had paddled in the burn, and gathered blaeberries on the hill together. As they grew in years their attachment increased; they were seldom away from, and seemed to live to and for, each other.

It began to be observed, however, that Annie now became more reserved and silent in the presence of her youthful lover, and seldom, if ever, sang any of those sweet songs with which, unknown to herself, she had kept spell-bound, as with a charm, his thrilling, trembling heart. She began to experience a strange, luxurious kind of joy when he was with her, and a feeling of loneliness and settled sadness when he was away.

Ah! these were the first emotions of young love in Annie's heart. Sweet, indescribable, never-to-be-forgotten first love, it becomes us not to check thine aspirations, for thou visitest us only once in our life-time, leaving on some fond hearts impressions which shall never pass away!

At this time William would long and eloquently expatiate to Annie on the bright prospects which lay before him as the reward of all his privations and toils, and pictured himself as the happy pastor of some sequestered parish, with its little church embosomed among venerable elms, and its snug, quiet manse, with its garden and its glebe, on the banks of some gentle flowing burn. But he never hinted that she had been the unacknowledged cause of all this spirit of emulation, nor that his future happiness depended on her consent to share with him the joys and sorrows of life. A circumstance, slight and unimportant in itself, nerved his mind, however, at this time to the determination of an immediate declaration of his love. He was seated with Annie and her family one afternoon in the miller's cottage, when a servant from Kincaldrum entered, as was her wont, and laid on the table a basketful of plums and apricots as a present from the Squire. The miller immedi-

ately opened the basket and took out the usual bouquet of flowers, and, in his own pawky manner, presented it smilingly to Annie, who eagerly grasped the more than usually beautiful nosegay; but presently encountering the gaze of William's eye, she blushed more deeply than she had ever done before, and hastily placed it in the crystal vase in silence, not daring again to cast her eye where he sat in a new and dreamy state of sadness and reflection. Annie's mother emptied the contents of the basket in a pretty little dish, and caressingly importuned William to partake of the tempting fruit; but with a full, heavy heart, no wonder that he could not eat. Annie also declined, and, as if the feeling had become sympathetic, the miller himself did not seem to enjoy with his usual relish the gift of his kind patron, while the mother, with more penetration and sagacity than her husband, immediately comprehended the true meaning of the pantomime—she read the enigma at once. The cloud, however, apparently soon passed away, and Annie and William's adieu that evening at the little wicket was more than usually fervent, he extracting from her a sacred promise to meet him on the evening of the next day, in the wood about half-way between his mother's house and her own.

Not knowing of the appointment, I was next evening carelessly leaning over our garden gate, when Annie passed me with a smile, and took her way by the side of the stream, and along the wooded banks of the Hunter-hill till she was lost to sight among the thick foliage of the wood. I do not know what possessed me, but I thought I had never seen her look so surpassingly beautiful, nor wearing such a radiant expression of happiness. Her graceful step, light as that of the nimble fawn, seemed hardly to come in contact with the ground, so eager and impatient did she seem to embrace some hidden, unrevealed, yet distant and mysterious joy!

Annie and William met. With hearts o'erflowing with tenderest love, they vowed to be each other's for ever, and called on heaven to witness the solemn compact. What a

load was now removed from each other's minds! How supremely happy did they feel! How dazzlingly bright and beautiful did the world appear! What graspings of the hand—what gazings into each other's eyes—what long, long draughts from sweet and honied lips of pure, unsullied, rapturous love!

But the shades of twilight reminded William of two things—of his duty to see Annie home, and of his engagement, that evening at the manse of Glamis. The particulars of this engagement, which had reference to their future prospects, he truthfully confided to Annie, who gently insisted on her returning home alone, to enable him to fulfil his promise to Dr Lyon, who, as his pastor and friend, took a great interest in his welfare. Not like some gay cavaliers who depreciate the prize when the victory is won, William was loth to part with the jewel of his heart, now dearer to him than ever. They walked homewards on the pathway together, and never to either had the soft winds brought such fragrant sweets, or the murmuring streamlet beneath, such low-breathed songs of melody.

They had now come in sight of the mill, and within a short distance of her father's cottage, and Annie again firmly insisted on William's return to fulfil his engagement at the manse. They paused. William looked first on the angel face of his beloved, then on the heavens above—looked again through the tear-bedimmed eye, to the very depths of her inmost soul, received a silent yet truthful response, commended her to the care of the Good Shepherd, and, with a long, long rapt embrace, they parted.

William, it may well be conceived, would go home with a glad heart, and for a time he did luxuriate in all the ecstatic bliss of his new-born joy; but, as if suddenly calling to remembrance the inestimable value of the prize he had won, and that it was evidently his first and paramount duty to protect and guard her who now to him was dearer than his own life, he quickly retraced his steps, that he might overtake his Annie, and conduct her in safety to her father's cottage.

He passed nimbly along, reproaching himself all the while with his want of feeling and neglect, when, at a sudden turn of the rugged pathway, he came all at once upon a shady alcove, situate on a deep declivity, and overlooking the stream beneath. Pausing, he thought he heard voices in the bower. No; it must be the evening zephyrs whispering among the branches. Stealthily approaching, the tones of a voice familiar in all its modulations, fell upon his startled ear. Scarcely knowing what he did, he peered with maddening eagerness between the branches, and there, seated on the velvet turf, was the Squire of Kincaldrum, and beside him—yes, and with one hand in his, and speaking softly and sweetly, with downcast head, was his own beloved, his dear loved Annie Glen! The scene—so unexpected, so mysterious, so suspicious—overmastered his judgment, and, impelled by his infuriated passions, he madly rushed into the alcove, and, with a demoniac look of jealousy at the terrified maiden, he wildly seized his equally affrighted rival, who instantly arose to throw him off, mildly, yet firmly saying to him, at the same time, "Young man, forbear, and all will be explained." But, alas! he was deaf to the dictates of reason, and the voice of his Annie, who had now recovered her self-possession, entreating him also to desist, only seemed to exasperate him the more, till, struggling on the brink of the precipice, with Annie between, vainly endeavouring to calm her lover, a rustling sound was heard among the bushes —a faint cry arose, "Oh, Willie, Willie, my own dear Willie!" a plunge in the stream, a long, wild shriek, and one of the three had disappeared!

Of the two combatants, one rushed frantically down the steep banks to the stream, while the other ran to Airniefoul for assistance. The whole inhabitants, young and old, were soon following the excited Squire—the poor old miller, with a heavy and sorrowing heart, taking the lead of us all. Oh, I well remember, when we had reached the fatal precipice, and while eagerly listening for tidings from below, we heard,

in the stillness of evening, this heart-rending and bitter cry—"Oh, my Annie, my dear, dear Annie!" We now descended speedily, and found William seated on the grassy bank beside a large, deep pool, with his Annie in his arms; but her pure and gentle spirit had passed away—she was dead! We tried to force, to tear her from him, but he firmly maintained his grasp, until, comprehending our meaning, he rose and crept slowly with his precious burden up the steep banks, till, having reached the pathway above, we slowly proceeded on our way, the sighing of the branches overhead blending wildly with the oft-repeated cry—"Oh, my Annie! I have lost my Annie!"

Arrived at the cottage, amidst the sobs, and sighs, and tears of all, was the lifeless body laid gently on the bed. Clean white linen soon replaced the dripping clothes, and a mother's gentle hand having closed the still open, lustrous eyes, and parted the bright auburn hair on the cold, cold brow, we all assembled round the bed to take our last look of Annie Glen. There she lay, like a young and beautiful bride asleep upon her nuptial couch, with a sweet smile on her lips, her thin, white hands lying gently across her bosom, her cheeks radiant with healthful bloom, and her long, golden ringlets flowing luxuriantly over her shoulders. Oh, thought I, can *this* be death? That lovely being, who only a few short hours ago I saw in all the flush of health and beauty, is she in reality dead, and am I even now in the very presence chamber of the King of Terrors? A low, tremulous, sepulchral cry—"Oh, my Annie! I have lost my Annie!" interrupted my reverie, and recalled me to the scene before me. William, haggard and ghastly, stood at one end of the bed, the Squire, pale and trembling, stood at the other, while father, mother, and friends, all intently gazing on the dead, filled up the group between. The miller, trembling with emotion, now opened the large "ha' Bible," which he had brought from another room, and closed the never-to-be-forgotten scene by solemnly reading—"Behold I show you a

mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But, thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

If I could divine your thoughts, dear reader, I would imagine you now to be weighing carefully the probabilities and improbabilities of the story of the "Miller's Daughter." If true, you think, not without reason, that a strange and strong suspicion must ever rest on the singular and mysterious conduct of Annie Glen. Her apparent calmness in the interview with her lover; her repeated expostulations as to the propriety of his leaving her to pursue her way home alone; and her sudden discovery in the arbour in company with the Laird of Kincaldrum, all tend to the grave suspicion that she was playing false with her affianced lover. Well, I am rather glad than otherwise that your mind still continues overshadowed with these doubts, as it will give me an opportunity of dispelling ungenerous thoughts and unjust suspicions, dishonourable alike to the living and the dead.

On the evening in question, Mr Grahame was taking his accustomed walk along the banks of the burn. Enticed by the extreme beauty of the night, and beguiled, as he has since confessed, by busy and ever-anxious thoughts regarding the miller's daughter, he had wandered much farther in the wood than was his wont, when, at an abrupt turn of the narrow path, who, to his utter surprise and astonishment, should he meet but Annie Glen! A strange, indescribable embarrassment overpoweringly and suddenly seized both at the same moment;

and while the one essayed to speak, the other trembled like an aspen, crimsoned and turned pale by turns.

"Good evening, Miss Annie," at last said the Laird. "I did not expect the pleasure of seeing you here. Have you come from a distance? You seem fatigued with walking."

To these questions, so pointed and yet so natural, Annie could not reply without in some measure entangling herself in a labyrinth of explanations which she could not doubt were not really desired, and which she certainly had no inclination to make. Still, this hesitation increased her embarrassment, which Mr Grahame very naturally construed into a feeling the very opposite of what it really was. Overcome by her own feelings and his soft, tender words, and entirely forgetting, or rather not once thinking of, the consequences, she sank down on the rustic seat in the alcove. Mr Grahame immediately seated himself beside her, apparently in rapt admiration at the fascinating and bewitching charms of to him the fairest creature in God's creation. Allowing her a few minutes to compose herself—during which time her large, blue, dreamy eyes would sometimes meet and dwell on his with a strange expression of pleasure and grief—he thus addressed the trembling maiden—

"Dear. Annie Glen, I have ever loved you dearly. My heart has long been yours. Oh, give me, dearest Annie, yours in return! The happiness of my future life depends on your consent. Shall I, dearest, call you mine?"

He grasped her yielding hand, and pressed it to his lips. Strange! this pressure of the hand had a more powerful effect on her heart than all the sweet and honied words to which he had so tenderly given utterance. Its vibrations with electric force thrilled luxuriously through her very soul, and cast for a time over every sense and feeling a strange, mysterious, yet delightful spell. Such homage, such an avowal of heart-felt love, from one high in birth and station to one so infinitely his inferior, might have turned a stronger head than that of Annie Glen. But it was only a momentary feeling; a woman's courage and presence of mind came to her relief at last.

"Mr Grahame," she said, softly and sweetly, "I feel grateful—very grateful—for your kind wishes; but my heart is not mine, it is another's. It is only an hour since I vowed to be Willie Osler's for ever, and I will keep my vow, for I have loved Willie and Willie has loved me since we were bairns; and my heart and love I have willingly and unalterably given to him. But you, Mr Grahame, will get some great lady that you will like better, I trust, and who will be a fitter wife to you than would have been poor Annie Glen."

This reply, so unexpected, and yet so artlessly firm, quite confounded the Laird of Kincaldrum who, soon recovering himself, however, was just expressing his admiration of the noble sentiments she had uttered; and, forgetting his own disappointment and sorrow, he was assuring her of his continued interest in her welfare, and of his heartfelt wishes for her happiness, when William rushed, like one demented, into the alcove, startling both as if by some wild and ghostly apparation.

Now you seem satisfied, and Annie Glen is restored to your confidence in all her guileless innocence and beauty. The character of the Laird must also, if possible, rise higher in your estimation, for you observe he makes no allusion to her attractive charms or bewitching beauty, praising neither the bright vermilion of her cheek, the dreamy lustre of her eye, nor the flowing and beautiful luxuriance of her golden tresses; nor speaks of his rank and high station, his houses nor his lands, but simply makes a declaration of his love, in words so pure and simple that we cannot doubt but that they flowed from a sincere and loving heart.

But the immediate cause of her sudden disappearance? That, I grant, is enveloped in mystery, for Mr Grahame has never disclosed any particulars of this part of the tragedy which has in any way served to throw the least light upon it. The scuffle did not last many minutes, and the violence was all on the side of William, the Laird merely keeping him at bay. Whether she was pushed over the precipice, either acci-

dentally or intentionally, or lost her footing on the narrow pathway in the excitement of the moment, must now and for ever be unsatisfying matter of conjecture.

Mr Grahame, for some considerable time after this melancholy and mysterious occurrence, shut himself up in his house and was seen by no one save an old domestic who attended him. It was imagined his mind had become affected, and all sincerely mourned the sad fate of the good laird of Kincaldrum. But a purifying and sanctifying process was going on in his mind under divine and spiritual influence. Despair, like an evil spirit, at first prostrated him to the dust, and no ray of hope for a time penetrated his soul in the darkness by which he was enveloped. But his mind gradually became more composed, and its faculties, instead of spending their strength in ceaseless ravings against the hardness of his fate, and the hopeless nature of his malady, began to exert their influence in first calming, then comforting his troubled spirit, till a sweet and heavenly joy filled his soul, and a holy and blessed influence from on high overshadowed and controlled his thoughts.

Feeling the weight of sorrow removed from his heart, he now came forth to view again the beauty and glory of this fair world; and although he had often before felt his soul elevated and refreshed by the chaste loveliness of the bursting spring, yet never till now did his own heart seem so bright a reflex and emblem of that instructive and expressive season, which now awakening as from the dead, luxuriated in new life and vigour, arrayed in the bright hues of youth, and scattering beauty and hope, and gladness all around. Nature to him became more lovely than ever, everything in this fair and beautiful earth becoming signs and emblems of spiritual life; and he roamed over hill and dale, rejoicing in his new existence, his heart ever rising to his Heavenly Father in holy and adoring aspirations of love and gratitude.

From all this he saw and learned his duty to man. God never intended that man should live the life of an anchorite. Every

human being, however humble his station, has faculties to exercise and duties to perform, and these faculties can only be exercised and those duties performed in society, in daily and habitual intercourse with his fellow-men. From this time Mr Grahame was seen, to the great delight of all, moving about the parish as usual, engaging actively in every good work; giving liberally of his means and substance for the promotion of all schemes of benevolence; personally superintending some of our parochial institutions; and kindly and cheerfully giving his assistance and advice to all who required them. Yet traces of the terrible struggle through which his mind had passed remained, in the deep wrinkles which furrowed his brow, in the grey and silvery hairs, and in the shadow of melancholy sorrow which sometimes overcast his usually serene and saint-like countenance.

But what became of William? Does he still live? Alas! his short life affords a sad yet instructive contrast to that of his rival, the Laird of Kincaldrum. Naturally of an extremely sensitive disposition, and having no solid abiding principles to uphold him in the day of trial, his frail tenement when the floods came and the waves beat, fell an easy prey to the storm. Within two days after Annie's death he had become a raving maniac. From the first his case was hopeless. A fever of the brain may deprive for a time the patient of his reason, but recovery, though slow, generally comes at last. But poor Willie was crushed to the earth as with a thunderbolt—reason fled suddenly and for ever!

The first time I met him was about two months after the catastrophe. I was returning home alone one evening, and had just reached the fatal precipice, when, to my utter dismay, he darted wildly out of the arbour, calling piteously to me—"Have you seen my Annie? have you seen my Annie?" and then, looking wistfully down the steep banks to the stream beneath, he shuddered, sobbed, and wept like a child wringing his hands in the most acute anguish; then, suddenly darting into the wood, he was in a moment out of sight, cry-

ing mournfully as he disappeared—"O, my Annie! I have lost my Annie!"

The only occupation that seemed to afford him any apparent pleasure was the cultivation of a little plot of flowers in his mother's garden. Here he had planted all the favourite flowerets of Annie, and tended them with more than parental care, watching their unfolding blossoms with the most rapturous delight. He trod softly among them, and spoke gently to them, as if they had been spiritual beings who ever held sweet communion with his beloved in some far-off land, and who would carry his thoughts and his wishes on their fragrant wings to her blest and sunny abode in the sky.

When any of them began to droop, and their cherished bloom to fade away, he evinced the greatest concern and sorrow, often hanging over them for hours, and murmuring softly—"Oh, my Annie! I have lost my Annie!"

In the long dreary days of winter, he would mope beside the ingle, as if in a drowsy troubled dream, until the time of the evening when the catastrophe occurred, and which he seemed to know by instinct, when he would instantly bound away to the fatal spot, sob and weep on the banks of the stream, making the leafless woods to ring, and startling the passing traveller with the bitter cry—"Oh, my Annie! I have lost my Annie!"—a cry which, coming as it did, from the very depths of a broken heart, so plaintively wild and sorrowful, none who heard could ever forget.

With the voice of the cuckoo ushering in the advent of spring, came new life and vigour to the poor maniac, and he watched the rolling up of winter's white shroud, and the arraying of Nature in her vernal robes, and listened to the singing of the birds and the humming of the streams, with the most intense anxiety and delight; for he instinctively knew that the time of the springing of plants, of the bursting of leaves, and the blossoming of flowers, was come. Oh, with what rapture would he kneel on the green velvet grass, and kiss the first snowdrop that caught his eye! What a

beautiful emblem of his Annie, snatched, in all her virgin purity in the spring-time of life, from this cold, uncongenial soil, and transplanted to bloom for ever in a sunnier and happier clime! And, poor soul! who knows but thine agitated mind could sometimes collect and concentrate its ideas upon some object like this, till a glimpse of reason was given thee to comprehend the type and the anti-type!

A beautiful and instructive trait in the character of the true Christian, must now be unfolded. The mother of the poor student was so broken down in health by the sad affliction that had befallen her, that she was totally unable to maintain either herself or her maniac son. A kind, though for some time an unknown friend, was, however, now raised up for her help, and not only did she not want the comforts and necessaries of life, but enjoyed many little luxuries which she had never before either wished for, or received. A tall, thoughtful-looking man was now often to be seen in the widow's cottage, kindly inquiring for her and her son, who would, on leaving, enter the little garden, and softly walk among the flowers, trying all the while to attract the attention of William, who, however, never seemed to be aware of his presence, but talked away to his flowers gently and softly, as if none but himself were there to listen to his soliloquies. Do you not recognise in this visitor an old and valued friend? Yes; it is indeed the pious Laird of Kincaldrum. Oh, God! how wonderful are thy ways to man! They are indeed past finding out.

But the closing scene is at hand. Being in the village, I called at the cottage to inquire for the poor student. It was a beautiful day in spring, and the woods were vocal with the sweet minstrelsy of the birds rejoicing in their new-born gladness. As I entered the little wicket, I was struck with the oppressive stillness which reigned around. I walked up to the flower-beds and observed several favourites just bursting into full bloom, and all seemed trim and neat, as if

some gentle hand had recently been dressing and fondling them. But where was the poor maniac?

A strange presentiment came chillingly over me, and I softly entered the cottage. On the bed lay the poor spent student, apparently dying. Beside him sat his aged mother, gazing wistfully into his sightless eyes; while Mr Grahame of Kincaldrum, devoutly kneeling on the cold clay floor, was fervently supplicating for mercy and peace to the departing spirit. Some of his favourite flowers, I now observed, were strewed on the bed around him; a fresh, newly-pulled snow-drop he grasped in his thin white hands, while he held them up in the attitude of prayer, pronouncing solemnly and distinctly the blessed words which he had heard read over the lifeless body of his beloved—"Behold I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed," &c., &c., adding immediately after, but in low, broken accents—"The time is at hand. Farewell. Oh, my Annie! I have found my Annie now!"

A long pause ensued. His hands dropped powerlessly on his scarcely-heaving breast—a long, deep-drawn sigh—then a sudden spiritual expression of inward joy, and Willie had rejoined his Annie in a purer and happier world than ours!

CHAPTER XXXI.

FIRST AND LAST LOVE.

"And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own."

Puck.

LOVE? There is no single word in our language which conveys, at the same time, so many joyous anticipations, and so many painful recollections. Woman's love! what is it? An unchangeable, eternal thing, or a flickering fleeting shadow; man's guiding star to happiness and peace, or an *ignis fatuus* that lures him on to wretchedness and woe; the grand aim of all his hopes, or only the prophetic beginning of his misery?

Ask that impetuous youth, with eager elasticity in his step, and beaming rapture in his eye, coming up yon shady lane where he has just given his heart to another, and received another's in return, what he thinks of woman's love, and he will at once declare, with the utmost sincerity, founded on a thorough conviction of its truth, that it is pure as the love of angels, and eternal as the everlasting hills; that sooner will the sun forget to shine, or the moon to charioteer in the heavens, than woman's love shall grow cold, or change, or ever lose one spark of its intensity or brightness!

But here comes a traveller of another description. His step is slow and hesitating, his cheek is pale, his eye is troubled, and you observe, he is no longer young, as the dry wiry wrinkles and stray grey hairs, provokingly testify. He seems sad. Shall we speak to him? Probably he has been forsaken —jilted!

"What is woman's love, my friend?"

"Woman's love! Tell it not in time; pronounce it not in

eternity. It is deceitful—changeful—despotic—fickle—illusive—a lie! Believe me, there is no such thing in the wide universe, as woman's love. Put not thy confidence in woman. Toy with her not; trust her not. She only wooes you to her heart that you may feel how cold a thing it is; she syren-like, allures you within her meshes, only to vanquish and destroy, and then laugh at your extreme simplicity, and mock your bitter agony!"

Then, how many kinds of love are there? First love; second love; love in teens; and old love renewed. Which of these is the most enduring and true?

My dashing young friend, Frank Surface, asserts most energetically it must be the first, probably for this very reason, that time with him has not yet tested its sincerity. My worthy and long-tried friend, Joseph Sharp again, assures me, with a peculiar shrug of the shoulders, and a knowing twinkle of the eye, that "second thoughts are best." Then, my little nephew in his teens, by his sighs and his tears, and his blind devotion to that little coquetish puss, cousin Jane, would fain make me believe, there is nothing like "Calf love," while that elderly couple seated lovingly side by side in the shady arbour, would equally impress me with the notion, that there is no love like "old love renewed!"

And now, gentle reader, amidst this conflict of opinion, both as regards the existence, or non-existence, of woman's love, and,—supposing it to have a real existence—how am I to decide the question—what kind of love is the most enduring and true?

Look down on the beautiful Howe, with its clumps of trees and daisied meadows, its flocks of sheep and lowing kine, and follow the course of the gently flowing Dean, now kissing the wild flowers on its verdant banks, then dashing fretfully o'er the mimic rocks, until, coming near us, placid and calm it sings its quiet evening song beneath the windows of yonder cottage, embosomed among spreading elms, and festooned with roses and honeysuckle, and the sweetly scented briar. Gaze somewhat

more intently, and you will observe a beautiful girl in white seated at an open casement, around which the jessamine and the rose, with undisguised rivalry, strive which will have the preference first to kiss her honied lips. Observe the rich auburn of her sunny ringlets, stirred gently by the evening breeze, the deep thoughtfulness of her dreamy eyes of soft, celestial blue, the broad and high forehead of marble whiteness, the vermilion cheek and pouting lip, and you will admit you have never seen a more fascinating or beautiful woman. Your interest in this fair damsel will increase when I tell you she has left harp and song, the merry dance, and festal hall, that she might gaze awhile on hill and dale, and the glories of the setting sun, and listen to the soft breathings of her much-loved streamlet, hushing all around to repose and rest. But the secret spring of all this abstraction and solicitude takes its rise in the fact that within one short hour she would meet the choice of her heart, and be in the arms of her beloved.

"My dear, dear Lucy!"

"My own beloved Edmund!—

"How very long this day hath seemed to me! The hours hung so heavily, I thought that evening would never come. My books ceased to interest me, my harp emitted strange and doleful sounds, the festal hall to me had lost its charms, and when I pensively gazed from my casement on the scenes I loved so well, the trees would only sigh, the streamlet fret and mourn, the roses around would tempt me with their full-blown blossoms, then pettishly shrink back, as they pitied my sadness, and the evening sun, to me, sank down to rest, not in a burnished couch of glory, but in a dark and troubled cloud."

"But why this sadness, love."

"Because, Edmund, this was to be our last meeting."

"Oh, surely not our last meeting, Lucy. True, we must now part—but not for ever! To-morrow's sun will see me on the great deep, voyaging on to the Indies, but I go there with

your sanction and approval, love, and in a few years I shall return to cast my treasures and my heart at your feet, and to spend together my hard-earned rupees in a style and manner befitting your station and condition in life. Is there not something noble in the sacrifice?"

"I freely grant there is; but hearts may change with change of scene."

"What! Distance and time obliterate the land-marks of love? On the contrary, in hearts where true and real affection hath taken root, distance only serves to strike its tendrils the stronger, and

'Time the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.'"

"Yes! So sing the poets, Edmund; but true affection, tested by the rough hand of time and distance, is subjected to a great trial, and sometimes—sometimes gives way."

"Oh! I understand you, Lucy—(kiss me, my love)—you mean that we who go forth to the world, exposed to its trials, and temptations, and varied duties, are more apt to be overcome by the blandishments and allurements which may surround us than those we leave behind in comparative retirement, and unexposed to the same temptations?"

"Exactly so, my Edmund."

"Then, who shall first fail in their allegiance?"

"Oh, do not ask that question. It implies a latent doubt in the mind which I am sure neither you nor I entertain. What I more particularly alluded to was your sojourn in a foreign clime, where everything that met the eye or reached the ear would be strange and new, and the possibility of all combined causing a forgetfulness of home, and of those trusting and loving hearts who cling the more closely to those they love in proportion as time and hope wear away."

"Then your anxiety, Lucy, regarding the future, arises not so much from an apprehension that your lover may turn an idolator of wealth, to the exclusion of all the finer feelings of his nature, but from an innate jealous fear—"

"For shame, Edmund!"

"That his eyes may be dazzled and his heart touched by the swarthy charms of some dusky, dreamy beauty in the golden bowers of Ind? Then I swear—"

"Don't swear, Edmund!"

"I solemnly swear, that sooner shall the sun forget to shine—"

"What noise was that among the bushes?"

"Or trees forget to leaf themselves in summer—"

"That noise again?"

"Than that I shall ever forget—THEE!"

"Hush! Some eavesdropper, Edmund, is nigh!"

"Beloved of my soul! my own! my beautiful! my love for thee is pure as that of the angels, and eternal as the everlasting hills."

"We are discovered. Farewell!"

"Change? Oh, no! my love can never change—heaven and earth my witnesses!"

"One word more, and we are lost. Farewell!"

"Stay! Lucy, stay!—one moment stay!"

"No, not one moment, Edmund. See, take this locket; 'tis in the form of a heart, and within is a ringlet of my hair, festooned like forget-me-not. Keep it; never part with it; and if ever I should prove false, present it to me, that the sight thereof may fill me with remorse and shame. That sound again? Dearest Edmund, farewell."

"My dear, dear Lucy!"

"My own dear Edmund!"

And thus they parted; and if ever man and woman believed their love to and for each other, at the time, was pure, and true, and unchangeable, it was the two actors in the little secret drama now narrated.

I dislike long introductions either to a sermon, a poem, a tale, or a novel, so will neither tease nor weary the reader by minute, stereotyped details of my farewell to the lovely Howe, or of my voyage out to India; or, when arrived there, the

him how many bottles of pale ale I consumed per diem; how many tiger hunts and hairbreadth escapes I had in the jungle; how many faithful Sepoys, like guardian angels, protected my luxurious bungalow; or how high I rose in the service, by no particular merit of my own, but simply because my father's second cousin claimed some distant relationship with the head groom of the Governor-General's aide-de-camp. Neither shall one word be said of the once famous mid-day tiffins; or the cool rides after sunset, enhanced very considerably by the beautiful fair English girls, of recent importation from fatherland, who laughingly accompanied us to enjoy the refreshing evening breeze; or the quiet *tête-a-têtes* in the shady verandah, or amid the gorgeous and luxuriant foliage, which in that fair and sunny land so prodigally abounds.

To say anything of my martial prowess on the field, or simply to hint at the number of wild beasts (better not give their names) which succumbed to my deadly and unerring rifle, would just be at the expense of so much ink and paper, for no one would believe one word of the touchingly thrilling tales. As to my studied flirtations with all and sundry that came in my way, until "caught at last" by one of the sweetest, loveliest, and most bewitching creatures that ever set her cap to entrap and conquer a son of Mars, or of the mad devotion and rapturous love which filled my enchanted soul, like some luxurious syren melody; what my dulcet charmer softly whispered to me, and what I, drunk with love, sweet chanted in reply, all this, I very well know, my fair readers at least—who of all others, I am most anxious to please and to gratify—would skim over so quickly and impatiently that, for any interest they take in the matter, I might as well not have troubled either myself or them with the egotistic and tedious narrative.

It is said, and said truly, "Faint heart never gained fair lady;" for this, the simplest and best of all reasons, that the dear creatures hate, above all things, puling sentimentalism and child-like trifling, almost invariably preferring the man who boldly and firmly goes at once to the point.

Keeping still, therefore, the good opinion, as well as the good wishes of my fair readers distinctly in view, I shall at once proceed to the culminating parts of my philosophical narrative, by the announcement of my safe arrival from India, coupled with an invitation (to a limited number of course) to take tea at my snug, semi-detached villa at Chelsea, that justly celebrated paradise of old Indians, although if I had got my own way in the matter, I would vastly have preferred a quiet rural snuggery in my own native Howe of Strathmore. Before making your appearance, however, I may as well warn you that I am still in my prime, with neither a roasted liver nor a jaundiced cheek; that I am married—yes, married to one of the best and loveliest of women in all—no matter where—and that the olive plants around my table are so numerous, that I am sometimes at a loss to reckon them up exactly, especially when the question is put in an abrupt, thrown-off-your-guard sort of a manner.

Now, I am quite sure, after you have enjoyed our hospitality, and whilst sitting in little whispering groups in the ante-drawing-room, you will be exultingly saying to one another, "What a charming, kind, loving, and intelligent wife his own still loved Lucy makes to him, and how doatingly fond they seem of each other! and, oh! what ducks of children to be sure! Well, there's nothing like 'First Love' after all!'"

And is not that the blooming idolised blonde, Lucy Bertram? Not a bit of it. Don't faint for a few minutes yet, till I have endeavoured at least to exonerate myself; but we need not speak so hysterically loud, lest my wife, even while playing a rattling Indian march on the piano, may catch some distant sound of our private council. That lovely woman, my lawfully wedded wife and happy mother of my children, is *not* Lucy Bertram, my first love, but one whom I wooed and won in the sunny East, and—don't faint just yet—I declare, on my honour as a lover, a gentleman, a soldier, and an old Indian, that I never knew or felt what real love, in its most comprehensive sense, was, until I met the woman who is now my wife.

There, now, I knew how it would be—a rustling of dresses for salts, a nervous application of bottles to the nose, a choking sensation in the throat, as if the room had suddenly become too hot, and then a bustling and hurrying for bonnets and shawls, a calling for cabs, and hastily uttered, abrupt, and querulous good nights, until the last fair creature evanishes myth-like at last from my wondering sight.

Now, this is not giving me what vulgarly, yet emphatically, I may be permitted to call fair play, and I must trust to the sequel for my explanation and exoneration.

My wife and I were seated in our cozy drawing-room on the evening immediately succeeding the above "untoward" event, when the servant entered with a gilt-edged, nicely-sealed note, opening which without noticing to whom it was addressed, I read as follows:—

"Wedded Love Cottage,
Brompton, 20th December, 18—.

"Mrs Augustus Lovelace presents compliments to Mrs Brigadier Constance. Mrs Lovelace would be glad if Mr and Mrs Constance would join her Christmas party on Wednesday evening next, the 25th inst., at seven o'clock."

"Mrs Augustus Lovelace!" I exclaimed, handing the note to my wife, who had managed previously, however, to read every word of it over my shoulder.

"Yes," coolly replied my wife; "Mrs Augustus Lovelace—some old acquaintance or friend of yours, my love, for to me the name is quite unknown. But you are pale, my dear; don't go to your Club to-night if you feel unwell."

I forget what reasons I gave, or what excuses I made, for my apparently sudden indisposition, or whether I proffered or received the customary salute previous to my shutting the front door behind me. I only remember of coming somewhat to my senses when about half-way to the United Service Club, whither I, for the first time, supposed I was bound.

Who does my fair reader imagine this Mrs Augustus Lovelace to be? Why, none other than my first love, Lucy

Bertram; and living with her husband and family, too, in the immediate neighbourhood of my own cherished snuggery! What was to be done? Commit suicide in the Green Park, of course! That, I admit, was my first magnanimous resolve; but then I recollected I had neither rifle, pistol, or stiletto, with me, and I scorned to think of cowardly dying by laudanum, strychnine, or prussic acid, even although the wary chemist would sell me any where-with to "poison rats," or such small deer. The thoughts of my unsuspecting spouse and little Brigadiers at home transplanted these war-like aspirations on my part, especially as I had now reached Constitution Hill, and was within a furlong of the veritable Green Park itself. The gates were fortunately shut for the night—a very wise precaution, I now felt. I had no alternative but to fight my way through Piccadily, the never-ceasing throng on the pave, and the rolling carriages on the roadway—rather pleasing to me than otherwise—assisting, as they unconsciously did, to minister to a mind diseased, and drive away that melancholy sadness which seemed now settling on my stricken, self-condemned soul. Long before I had reached St James Street—to me the finest and most interesting street in London—my mind had undergone all the agonising tortures of self-reproach and stinging remorse, musing, as I did, on my dastardly and unfeeling conduct in betraying such an innocent, confiding, and truthful creature as my own dear Lucy—she whom I had sworn to make my own, the chaste moon my priestess, and all the stars of the firmament my witnesses! How changed I must have become even in a few years after my arrival in India, for every day and month and year were slowly, gradually, yet, alas! soo surely, obliterating every remnant and particle of love in my heart, so that, after the lapse of some years, when I read in the *Times* the glowing account of her marriage, so cool and indifferent was I that, instead of a tear of grief filling my eyelids, a low chuckling laugh actually profaned my lips, as I inwardly congratulated myself on my escape—for she having married first, all my

vows and engagements went, of course, to the winds. On passing the Clubs in St James Street, I had worked myself up to a pretty pitch of excitement, and nothing would satisfy my tortured and awakened conscience but a long, solemn declaration, sworn before one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, of my unpalliated and enormous crime, and a meek submission to undergo any punishment, short of death or penal servitude, which my dignified inamorata might be pleased to inflict! Slowly pacing over the now silent and dreary Mall, my thoughts now taking another dismal turn, I pictured to myself the many weary days and sleepless nights she had patiently and martyr-like endured on account of the treachery of her false lover, until, after—though willing—she could weep no more, she had, either out of spite, or in dutiful obedience to parental authority, given her hand, but not her heart, to some shrivelled shrunken old Indian major, quite unworthy of such a treasure. Then, with tears in my eyes, as I crossed over Waterloo Place, I thought of her present misery, and wedded unhappiness, still thinking of her false lover, and of all that lovingly passed at our last interview, and ever wondering whether I had preserved that precious locket—that often-kissed and fondled ringlet—but I had now fairly reached my Club, and so, with a—"Beast that I am," I disappeared under its portico!

The fatal twenty-fifth came duly round, and, having finished my toilet, I was in the act of unfolding a little packet which I had just taken from a private drawer in my own escritoire, when the voice of my beloved, behind me, rather pettishly said—"My dearest Edmund, we shall be too late if you don't make haste—well, a charming little locket, I declare—just let me see what it is like—O! what a love of a jewel, to be sure—and a ringlet of such beautiful hair inside, too, wreathed tastefully in the form of forget-me-not—why, this must have been a precious keepsake from some of your old sweethearts, Edmund?"

While my wife was thus speaking, partly to herself, and

partly to me, I had been attentively watching the expression of her features; but, not detecting the most remote shadow of jealousy or chagrin, I thought I would be quite safe in at least cautiously replying in the monosyllable—"Yes!" This, seeming to have no deadly effect, at least for the moment, I, after some excusable hesitation, added—

"And what would you think, or do, my dear, if this old sweetheart was none other than this veritable Mrs Augustus Lovelace, to whose Christmas party we are this evening invited?" Although well aware of the strength of nerve and mind with which my wife had happily been endowed, I did, however, in very truth, expect a "scene," but I was quickly undeceived by her half-laughing, half-earnest reply—

"Why, I should think the more of her, certainly, seeing you had once been one of her admirers, and do her all the kind offices I possibly could as a neighbour and a friend—come, I am all anxiety and impatience to make her acquaintance."

Arrived at our destination, my nervousness and remorse of conscience again returned with redoubled vigour, so that while my wife was being shown up stairs, I tottered after the servant to the drawing-room door, more like a criminal on whom the extreme penalty of the law was just about to be inflicted, than an invited guest to a happy Christmas dinner party.

"Mr Constance!" said the servant, duly ushering me into the splendid drawing-room.

"Ah! Mr Constance, how are you?" said a fine, comely-looking matron, advancing to greet me with one of the most bewitching and insinuating smiles which ever lighted up the angel face of woman.

"Mrs Lovelace, I presume?"

"O! I see you have quite forgotten me!"

This, however, was said with such an *abandon* of manner, and amidst such hearty laughter, that I refrained from making my confession just yet, especially as the last sentence was

quickly followed by another from her rich full lips, still more damning to my accusing conscience—

"My husband will be with us presently. He will be *so* glad to make your acquaintance."

As we were still in the room alone, I was just about beginning a nice little previously-concocted speech, having special bearing and reference to our early years, when she provokingly asked me, in the most winning and tender terms, after the welfare of my wife and children, and, without giving me time to reply, she added :—

"You would like to see *my* children, I'm sure. I used to be very fond, you know, of keep-sake ornaments in my youth, but now, I am like the famous Cornelia, daughter of the great Scipio, who when importuned by a lady of her acquaintance to shew her toilet, she deferred satisfying her curiosity till her children, who were the famous Gracchi, came from school, and then said. '*En ! haec ornamenta mea sunt*,'—"These are my ornaments." Oh, here they come ! Mr Constance, my dears."

This was nearly too much for me ; but I managed to get over the ceremony of embracing and fondling some half-dozen second editions of their mother pretty well, and was at last beginning to feel the full force of the conviction that things were not so bad after all, when my equilibrium of mind was doomed once more to be disturbed by the half-whispered remark of Lucy the younger to her mother, that she thought "Mr Constance was crying !"

Just at this moment, however, a hale, hearty aldermanic-like personage, having all the air of a "City" man, smilingly entered the room.

"My husband. Mr Constance."

Mr Lovelace shook me most heartily by the hand, expressing the very great pleasure he felt in making my acquaintance, congratulating me on my safe arrival in my native land after so long absence, reiterating the pleasure and delight he felt that I had taken up my residence in his own immediate

neighbourhood, and at the pleasing prospect of the friendly interchange of courtesies between the two families.

The company now began to arrive, and in the general conversation which ensued, I felt my spirits rising again to their usual height, and Lucy—I mean—Mrs Lovelace—and I chatted away about anything and everything, except our early loves, or broken vows, or present unhappiness.

Dinner announced, Mr Lovelace asked me in the blandest manner possible to lead to the dining-room the mistress of the house, which I most gallantly did, sat at her right hand during dinner, did the amiable in the most approved style of the West End, and again led her up to the drawing-room, where the young people had already assembled, to conclude with the merry dance the festivities of the evening.

To make the narrative complete, I may as well add that I was actually Mrs Lovelace's partner in the first quadrille, her dutiful husband and Mrs Constance being the opposite couple, and that what took place beneath the mistletoe was just that which usually occurs either when old or young pass under the enchanted bough.

Many years have passed away since then, and my wife and Mrs Lovelace have been bosom friends ever since, while Mr Lovelace and I have had many a quiet rubber together in each other's houses, always winding up with a modicum of warm cognac, drinking each other's good health, as well as that of our wives (when present) with all the gusto and warmth of old, attached friends.

I stated at the outset how much I disliked long introductions, and now add in conclusion, that I have an equal aversion to what is popularly called "pointing" the moral of a tale. My opinion has always been that if a tale be worth the paper on which it is written it ought to carry its moral along with it, not requiring any formal or studied "application" of the subject.

I should now, therefore, finally conclude with the simple yet comprehensive words, "Second thoughts are best," were

it not I overhear some of my fair readers doubtingly whisper, "Depend upon it, these old lovers—especially the lady—were simply playing a part, affecting indifference to, and non-remembrance of, former days, while their real feelings had actually undergone no change, being in point of fact, as strong and sensitive as ever."

Now, I frankly admit this is not only the poetic view of the subject, but that true, pure, and first heart-love knows no decay; and had I been writing a novel, most certainly there would have been a suicide, or a murder, or some other dread catastrophe amongst my characters long before this time. But as I am not writing a romance, but a story of real life, I must not colour my narrative at the expense of truth, nor sacrifice domestic felicity at the shrine of wedded love. Rather allow me to refer to the only witness, besides myself, who can by any possibility unravel the mystery. Mrs Lovelace still lives, a happy wife and mother, in her semi-detached villa at Brompton; and sure I am, when she reads these lines, her evidence will coincide in every important particular with my own—the gist of the whole simply amounting to this, that in spite of ourselves, the feelings of love we once entertained for each other gradually and imperceptibly, without reasons asked, given, or assigned, died completely and for ever away, giving place to a deeper, higher, and holier affection, which neither time nor death can ever destroy, exemplifying the grand difference between love as a passion and love as a deep-seated feeling of the heart.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A SISTER'S LOVE.

" Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit ! rest thee now !
E'er while with ours thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

" Dust to its narrow house beneath !
Soul to its place on high !
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die."

Mrs Hemans

I ALWAYS wished I had had a sister; the very name "sister" has such a charm about it of sweetness, and purity, and beauty, and love! How, I thought from boyhood, I should have tended, adored, and loved an only sister! I used to think, to muse, to dream of, yea, petition, beseech, and pray for a little sister, not only to share in my youthful pleasures and amusements, but to partake of my ardent affection, my deep-seated, yearning, devoted love. The wish became in time a passion, so that everything in nature, every event of providence, was hallowed by the precious, mysterious unction of a sister's love, which imagination governed, subdued, and sweetened every emotion of the soul, every affection of the heart, until I lived a new existence of elevated, inspired aspirations.

Pretty little sister,
Art thou far away,
That thou dost not hear me
Calling thee all day?

Art thou in the sunshine,
  Glancing on the streams,
Crystalline bright sunbeam,
  Lighting all my dreams?

Art thou in the rosebud,
  Gemmed with morning dew,
Peeping out so slyly,
  While I wait for you?

Art thou with the skylark,
  Chanting in the sky,
While on earth I listen
  Thy sweet minstrelsy?

Art thou in the welkin,
  Glist'ning like a star,
While all night I'm weeping,
  Wond'ring where you are?

Art thou like an angel,
  Bright with sunny wings,
Crowns and sceptres golden,
  Harps of sweetest strings?

Pretty little sister,
  I can weep no more;
Shall we meet in heaven,
  If not on earth before?

Come, sweet little sister,
  Nestle in my breast,
Songs of welcome greeting—
  Softly be at rest.

My strange yet ardent wish was at length realised. I was just turned twelve when another member was added to our already numerous family. No one was more really interested in all the preliminary stages of preparation for the long-looked-for event, and no one more assiduously watched the mysterious movements and whispered instructions of "Nursy" than myself. And when at last the announcement was made that it was "a girl," my heart leapt within me for very joy, and I experienced all the joyous feeling and hallowed delight which those only can feel and experience who have courag-

eously and confidingly hoped against hope, and luxuriated at last in the full fruition of realised felicity.

I had seen some of my younger brothers brought into the parlour by the obsequious, pawky nurse, and heard all the smiling remarks which usually accompany such a gift; but I was more than enraptured now when the pretty sleeping babe was softly put into my arms, and the kind, sweet voice of my father bade me kiss my little *sister!*

During the hapless years of infancy, little Marguerette was pretty much like other babies—fretting, and fuming, and crying, teething and sickening, and getting better again; but when at length able to run about, and notice, and talk, it was evident that a superior intelligence had been implanted in the child, and that a marked and peculiar spiritualism characterised all her actions. As for myself, I seemed but to live for her, attentively watching every movement of the body, and hailing with delight every intelligent manifestation of the mind. I was more concerned for her comfort and happiness, than for my own, frequently, nay often, sacrificing personal ease and convenience of every kind, to minister to the wants, real and otherwise, of her I valued more than life itself. These feelings seemed returned on her part by a thousand little attentions, trivial in themselves, and unobservable by others, yet precious and sweet to me, as the early germs of a sister's holy love.

By the time she was able to go to school, I wished I had been even older and stronger than I was, that I might have been the more able to protect and defend her from all danger, imaginary and otherwise. As it was, my martial prowess was not long in being called into requisition, and the only fight in which I was ever engaged was in her defence. It turned out on investigation that no offence had been committed; but I ever afterwards admired the manly bravery and independent spirit displayed by the noble boy who, when charged by me with the imaginary insult, indignantly denied the impeachment, yet boldly added—

"You have insulted me by making such a charge. I challenge you to make reparation."

Nothing loth, we did fight, and that bravely, too, and although I was, after a most determined contest, declared the victor, I felt truly ashamed of myself, and refused to wear the proffered laurel. The consequence was, that, so long as I remained at, and after I had left, the parochial school of Glamis, and, indeed, until my sister's removal to Edinburgh some years afterwards, Marguerette had no braver defender, or more ardent admirer, than young Richard Gordon.

What sweet walks were those along the byepath, through fragrant fields and by the pine-wooded Hunter Hill skirting the little mountain streamlet which sung its low quiet song in peaceful harmony with the wild-wood minstrelsy of the happy birds; and how pure and holy our thoughts and imaginings as we seated ourselves on the sunny bank, just midway between our father's farm and the parish school. Poets may sing of the thrilling ecstacies and luxurious emotions of first love as they may, but the holy sweetness and heavenly joy of a sister's love is something very different, and more akin to the love of angels in Paradise, than any sentiment or feeling of which the human mind is susceptible.

Marguerette was now thirteen years of age, and as we took our last walk together on the evening preceding my departure for college, a sympathetic sadness settled heavily on our spirits, and we talked but little by the way until arriving at our usual resting-place to and from school, when I suddenly thus addressed my sister:—

"Do you think you will ever die, Marguerette?" My question, although strangely abrupt, did not seem to disconcert her, but calmly asking me to gather some of the few remaining anemones, the last remnants of autumnal wildflowers, she seated herself on a little verdant knoll, while I gathered and brought to her the now leaf-closed flowers.

"Brother," she began softly, "I am not startled by your question. I know it proceeds from a vain, yet natural wish,

that I might be always with you—just your little sister Marguerette as I am now. But this cannot be, my brother. You see these sweet anemones, their white star-like leaves closed for the night. How beautiful they were in the morning; and yet no sooner does the sun withdraw his light than they close their leaves in darkness. I feel my course on this earth, brother, will be equally short, with this difference, that though I shut my eyes in death, I shall open them in a happy eternity, for "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

I looked at the beautiful creature before me, all radiant with healthful bloom, her chestnut ringlets flowing luxuriantly down her silvery neck, and her eyes, of sweet celestial blue, beaming with an intense angelic intelligence; and then, musing on the deeply-touching and solemn tones in which she had just spoken, I wondered whether death would be so cruel as change that lovely countenance, and silence that silvery voice, sending her away to the dark and silent land from whence she would not return.

"You leave to-morrow, my brother," she resumed, "but I feel we shall meet again ere I depart hence and be no more as to this world. But look not sad; I am just going home a very short time before, to welcome you the more gladly when you come. We shall never part again, brother, then; for there is no sorrow nor death where I am going, but all is happiness and everlasting life."

The session at College passed away, and, although anxious to return home, I had to attend some private classes preparatory to my entering the Divinity Hall. My private studies had brought me to the beginning of June, at which time, while preparing to proceed homewards, I received a letter from my father intimating that, as Marguerette had been rather unwell for some weeks previously, he had determined on removing her for a short time to Portobello for a change of air, and requesting me to meet them on the arrival of the morning coach in Princes Street on the following day. I had often

mused, in my lonely lodging-house in the meadows, on the last conversation between Marguerette and myself, and had long ago prepared my mind for the worst; and now a strange presentiment took possession of my mind that her end was indeed approaching, and that I should soon call her by the endearing name of sister no more.

I need not say how anxiously I awaited next day the arrival of the coach from the North, and how rapturously I embraced my beloved sister, without, however, making any particular enquiries after the state of her health, fearful to anticipate the awful truth. Whether it was from being flushed and healthful-looking on account of her journey, or from my own innate unwillingness to believe she was otherwise than when we last parted, I was altogether deceived by the freshness of her looks and the full, cheerful, silvery ring of her musical voice; and, as we proceeded in an open carriage on our way through the beautiful streets of Edinburgh, she pointed out and talked of all the interesting objects which everywhere met our view—the luxuriant gardens and lofty castle on our right, with the towering antique buildings of the old town bristling away on the ridge of the hill, till lost to view in the precincts of Holyrood; the long range of Princes Street buildings, with their splendid, gaily decorated shops, and busy throng of idlers, on our left—together with the palatial-like terraces of Waterloo Place, with the renowned Calton Hill, adorned with monuments to the brave, the learned, and the wise, and the lofty, perpendicular ridges of Salisbury Crags, and the green verdant summit of Arthur's Seat; the palace of the unfortunate Stuarts nestling at our feet. Then, again, when we came in view of the beautiful bay, with its bright golden sands and silvery waves hemmed in on either side by verdurous, sunny hills, with the great heaving ocean beyond carrying on its troubled bosom the fisherman's tiny boat and the merchant's gallant ship, its huge rolling billows breaking into white feathery spray, with a never-ceasing moan, she stood up in the carriage and clapped her little hands in a perfect ecstacy of rapturous joy.

The next day we walked together on the beautiful sands opposite Portobello, listening to the soft music of the rippling waves, blended with the loud gushing song of the restless skylark far, far overhead in the golden sky. We had walked a considerable distance, when I unfolded the portable seat I had brought with me for her convenience, and, seating ourselves together, I ventured to ask whether she felt better by the change.

"That implies, dear brother," she said, "that I had been ill. But I really feel no pain; just a curious, strange, mysterious wasting away, my mind sympathising with and partaking of the feeling—with this difference, that my soul seems ever blending with some other spiritual thing more pure, more holy than itself."

Then, abruptly turning her face, and fixing her long-lashed spiritual eyes on mine, she gaily said—

"Do you know any change in me since we last met, dear brother?"

"The only change I know, my dear sister, is that you are lovelier and dearer to me than ever."

"That I doubt not, brother; but there may be a worm at the root of the gourd, and it may perish in a night. These sweet, soft winds, which sweep with their honied lips the bosom of the sea, white-cresting bright the idle wavelets as they gently break on the tawny sands, bracing and invigorating to my flushed and feverish cheeks, come fresh and fragrant from the hills of Paradise."

"My dear Marguerette, you already speak the language of heaven."

"Yes; and feel, even now, a foretaste of its pleasures. As we sit on the sands of this beautiful bay, do you not exhale the odour and hear the solemn sound of the distant sea? So do I exhale the perfumes of the celestial fields, and listen to the hymning songs of the River of God. But the cold night breezes are coming on, dear brother; wrap this plaid around my shoulders, and let us go."

Next day we prolonged our walk to Musselburgh, the quiet abode of the gentle "Delta," her loved and favourite bard. He was not at home, however, when we called, and we were about returning by the sands again, when her eye caught the tapering spire of Inveresk Church. I explained to her the historical associations connected with the spot, which, however, did not seem to interest her much, her mind being apparently occupied with a train of thought altogether alien to the subject in hand.

"Dear brother," she anxiously said, at length, "I have a great desire to visit that beautiful church and burial ground. Do come and see them."

"But, my dear sister," I affectionately replied, "you forget the distance we are from home, and you must already feel fatigued by your long walk."

"Yes, brother; but strength comes when least expected—

> 'He gives the conquest to the weak,
> Supports the fainting heart.'

Come, let us go."

The church and burial-ground of Inveresk is, apart altogether from its historical associations, one of the most interesting and lovely spots on the coast. Situate on a gently rising hill, and overlooking the almost unrivalled bay, its aspect is at once picturesque and beautiful; and as Marguerette and I seated ourselves on one of the green hillocks, and looked admiringly on the splendid panorama of sea and land which smilingly spread itself out before us, she gently put her hand in mine, whispering solemnly, yet sweetly—

"Dear brother, I dearly love my own church and churchyard of Glamis, with the green meadows spreading around, the bonnie burn meandering by the village green, and the grand ancestral trees shadowing luxuriantly around; but—it is strange, is it not—I like this beautiful spot, brother, looking out, as it does, upon the sea, that emblem of man's life on earth, with the white cliffs of some sunny land like the hills of Paradise arising in dreamy beauty on the far horizon's voice-

meadows by the sunny banks of the slow-rolling Dean; the Lowland and Highland sheep, intermingling in good fellowship together, feed lovingly and well on the grassy uplands amongst their numerous progeny of playful, bleating lambs; and the madly happy birds pour forth in varied harmony their sweetly gushing, ever welcome songs from every blossoming thorn and green umbrageous bough. And here, crossing the leafy lane at Eassie, a pretty, rushing, sparkling rivulet playfully dances in its wild joy along its rugged, pebbly bed till lost to sight amidst the exuberant foliage, its sweetly cherished sound soon to be rudely hushed in the loud sweep of the darkly troubled waters of the far-distant river beyond. How I envy these little romping boys and girls paidling in that tiny burn, the cheerful glee of their roystering, merry voices breaking sweetly on the summer air, reminding us, with a feeling akin to pain, of our own innocent and happy childhood days, and of those fondly cherished scenes of love and joy and beauty which, alas! can never, never more return!

There, on our right, still stand the mouldering ruins of the old church of Eassie. With its uncouth, forbidding form, its low, bleak, and cheerless walls, and its damp, uneven earthen floor set several feet beneath the surrounding surface, what a miserable, uncongenial place in which to worship the great Creator of the universe it must have been! And yet, not half a century ago, the poor parishioners had no fitter shrine in which to offer up their homage and praise to the Most High Almighty God! Thanks to the taste and spirit of the age, a higher, nobler, holier feeling has arisen in our midst. No longer content to worship God in dreary, gloomy barns, or inappropriately furnished wretched hovels, the present generation are distinguishing, if not immortalising themselves as the successful pioneers of a new order of things, and churches and temples are arising, as if by enchantment, throughout the length and breadth of the land, which would do honour to any people or any nation under the sun.

Several interesting remains of antiquity are still to be seen in the immediate neighbourhood of the old church of Eassie. Not the least remarkable of these is an extensive circular mound, on which the farm-house of Castle Nairn is built. Although the traces of a drawbridge, which were not long ago distinctly visible, no longer exist, the deep and broad moat that surrounded it still remains. Not many years ago, a spear-head and several coins of Edward I. were found in it, from which discoveries it has been concluded, with some degree of probability, that the English army, under that monarch, had occupied this as a military position.

Not content, however, with this, to them, too matter-of-fact, prosaic conclusion, others of a more romantic and superstitious turn of mind argue from the same premises that this mysterious circular mound, the ground to a very considerable extent around being quite flat, must have direct and special reference to ancient Pictish worship, and deduce from this assumption that it originally was the sacred receptacle of consecrated cells for penance and purification. This position and deduction are, doubtless, considerably strengthened by the arguments in "The Doctrine of the Deluge," by the Rev. Vernon Harcourt, son of the late Archbishop of York, who connects these and similar remains of antiquity with that great fact of Scripture history, and calls them "Memorials of Arkite Worship." These Arkite Memorials, he observes, abound along the Grampians, for the Arkite worship clung most tenaciously to islands and mountains. In regard to this ancient mound, therefore, both conjectures are quite reconcilable, and not inconsistent with each other, for it may with equal truth be viewed in the light of a military station and a "diluvian" mount, that which was originally intended for worship being in course of time converted to war.

Standing near the old church of Eassie is another interesting remnant of antiquity—a large sculptured stone of the same class, and possessing the same characteristics as those more celebrated pillars at Meigle and Aberlemno. That some

mysterious, unexplainable affinity exists between the sculpture of these monuments and Egyptian symbols must be apparent to all antiquarian scholars who have attentively studied the subject. In almost all of them the serpent is the most conspicuous object, taking, doubtless, its rise from the serpent in Paradise as being the origin of serpent-worship everywhere; and thus, as has been well observed, "an idolatrous symbol on an ancient obelisk becomes an argument at once for the antiquity and truth of the Old Testament Scriptures."

Tradition connects this stone at Eassie with the death of one of the Royal family in Scotland. Historical facts, however, go far to disprove this conjectural solution of the cause and purpose of its erection. The Eassie where Lubach, great-grandson of Kenneth IV., on the death of Macbeth, fell in battle in 1057 defending his claim against Malcolm, Duncan's eldest son, is in Strathbogie, and has no connection historically or otherwise, with the parish of the same name in Angusshire. That this stone commemorates some rite in religion, some usage of the country, or perpetuates the memory of some great battle or other important historical event, does not admit of doubt, but to which of these its symbolical sculpture specially and primarily refers must, we fear, for ever remain an insoluble mystery.

In this long, bright, summer day, as we leisurely pursue our gladsome way through the parish of Eassie, let us enter one of those bothies connected with the large farms of the district, and judge by our own eyes of the comfort or otherwise of a system of which Cobbett says "that it is a disgrace to a civilised country, and, from the total want of comfort and cleanliness, is ruinous to the domestic habits of the labourer."

As we are now passing an isolated farm answering to this description, we shall follow the ploughmen, as, riding on their jaded horses and whistling a merry tune, they wend their way to partake of their mid-day meal. Most heartily granted per-

mission, we find ourselves in the centre of their bothy in a twinkling, and, sitting on ricketty three-legged stools, partaking of their rude and simple fare of chopped potatoes, oatcake, and skimmed or butter-milk. They kindle their own fires, they tell us, cook their own victuals, as well as make their own beds, and their early morning meal is the unvarying, conventional brose, made hastily and without much ceremony by simply pouring the boiling water into a large wooden cap filled to the brim with coarsely-ground oatmeal, and accompanied with as much good milk as they are able to swallow. Their dinner is generally pretty much the same as already described, and their supper or evening repast is either a repetition of their morning meal, or varied occasionally by the famous Scotch sowans, mixed with sweet whey or rich buttermilk, all partaken of from their knees, for tables they have none. If their food be plain it is apparently plentiful, and while regretting the entire absence of animal food, we must candidly confess it is not their daily fare to which we so much object as to the utter want of comfort and cleanliness which painfully characterises their miserable dwellings. Damp clay floors, bare white-washed walls, small darkly-lighted windows, ricketty furniture, small glimmering brushwood fires, and close, ill-ventilated box-beds, would, as they undoubtedly do, effectually stultify the nutritious effects of good living, and rudely repress the least approach to cheerfulness, contentment, or permanent happiness.

The bothy system prevails in Norway as well as in Scotland, but on how different a footing, let Mr Laing, in his able and interesting work, on that country, testify: "There is," he says, "a bothy here, as in Scotland, called a 'bortstue' —a separate house detached from the main one, and better than the dwelling-houses of many respectable farmers in Aberdeenshire and Mearns, paying considerable rents. It consists of one large well-lighted room with four windows, a good stove or fire-place, a wooden floor, with benches, chairs, and a table. At the end is a kitchen, in which their victuals

are cooked by a servant, whose business it is to attend to the bortstue and cook for the people. The space above is divided into bedrooms, each with a window; and the doors lead into a covered gallery open at the side, such as we still see in some of the old inns in London, and in this gallery the bed-clothes are hung out daily, whatever be the weather."

In our short intercourse with the dwellers in the bothy, you must have remarked the difference in dialect from that of the more northern districts of Scotland. Not only in Angus, but throughout Aberdeenshire and Mearns, the same marked peculiarity prevails. This is accounted for from the fact that these counties originally formed the chief part of the Pictish nation, being in consequence less subject to the invasion of the English, but more exposed to the adventurous raids of the wild yet chivalrous hordes of the north of Europe. Dr Jamieson, who spent the greater part of his life in Angusshire, thus alludes to the subject in his introduction to his "Scottish Dictionary;"—"Having resided for many years in the county of Angus, where the old Scottish is spoken with as great purity as anywhere in Great Britain, I collected a vast number of words unknown in the southern and western dialects of Scotland. Many of these I found the classical terms in the language of Iceland, Sweden, and Denmark."

After a very pleasant and enjoyable walk, we have now come in sight of the pretty village of Newtyle, nestling in its sweet, quiet beauty beneath the friendly shadow of Kinpurnie Hill, with its celebrated Observatory on its extreme summit, being the most conspicuous object in the long rugged range of the Sidlaw Hills. In ancient historical records, the name of this parish is given as Newtyld, originating doubtless from tyle, or tyld, or grey slates having been found in great abundance on almost every hill in the neighbourhood of the village. The hills in the parish are severally named Kinpurnie, Hatton, Newtyle, and Keillor, all bearing the same remarkable characteristic of being clothed with beautiful green, while all

the surrounding mountains are bleak and barren to their tops.

The Castle of Hatton, or Halltown, is beautifully situated on the north-west base of the hill of Hatton, in the glack of Newtyle, commanding an extensive and uninterrupted view of the valley of Strathmore, and the far-famed Grampian mountains beyond. This once splendid Castle, now in ruins, was built in 1575 by Lord Oliphant, and appears to have been originally a fortified residence of great strength and beauty. The massive tower and walls, which still effectually defy the blast of time, embosomed among umbrageous, venerable trees, form a very picturesque and striking feature in a landscape distinguished above all others for its remarkable combination of the soft and the beautiful with the romantic and sublime.

Easter and Wester Keilor, situated in Newtyle and the adjoining parish of Kettins, were anciently a portion of the earldom of Strathearn. Randulph de Kelore, who is designed of Forfarshire, and who, according to Jervise, did homage to King Edward at two different times during the year 1296—first at the Castle of Kildrummy, in Aberdeenshire, and next at Berwick-upon-Tweed (Rag. Roll. 111, 126; Prynne, 654; Palgrave, 196)—had doubtless been a vassal of the Earls of Strathearn. From this period the same authority traces the surname of Keilor to 1384, when John of Kelor, the last of the family who held 'lands in Angus, parted with his patrimonial estate to John of Ardillar, or Ardler. Keilor afterwards passed into the hands successively of the Harkers and Ogilvys until, in 1645, it fell to Susan, heiress of her brother, Alexander Haldane, who was of the Haldanes of Gleneagles, in Perthshire, more anciently of Hadden, or Haldane Rigg, on the Border, from which place the name was assumed. It is in reference either to these Haldanes of Keilor, or to those in the neighbourhood of Alyth, that tradition says that, in consequence of some act of kindness which was shown by one of "the auld guidwives" to King James when he was

travelling *incognito* in that district, the patrimonial estate of the family was increased by royal grant, and held upon this curious tenure:—

> "Ye Haddens o' the Moor, ye pay nocht
> But a hairen tither*—if it's socht—
> A red rose at Yule, and a sna' ba' at Lammas."

Keilor passed from the Haldanes to the Hallyburtons of Pitcur, and is now the property of Lord Wharncliffe.

On the side of the Hill of Keilor a hamlet still bears the name of "Chapel Keilor." No remains of any ancient place of worship exists, but the meaning of the word *keil* or *killard* being a church or burial place situated upon an eminence, it is more than probable that at some remote period there had been a sanctuary and place of burial in the immediate neighbourhood of this sequestered little hamlet on the hill. In support of this theory, the antiquarian scholar is referred to the ancient sepulchral remains which have been found at different times near "the chapel," and upon the Hill of Keilor. Not far from this hamlet, curiously embellished with the rude outlines of a wild boar, stands conspicuously to view one of those famous sculptured monuments of the ancient inhabitants of the more northerly parts of Scotland.

Some of those curious subterraneous dwellings called *weems* or *peght's houses*, having been discovered about sixty years ago on the adjoining lands of Achtertyre, adds considerably to the interesting associations of the district. One of these was discovered in so singular a manner, that I am constrained to relate to you the mirth-provoking particulars thereof, the recital of which may pleasantly beguile the time as we slowly ascend the zig-zag sheep walk on our way to the summit of Kinpurnie Hill. Thus sings the poet:—

> "Some fifty years ago, or less,
> A pair were thrown in great distress;
> Tho' nought they saw, yet strange to say,
> Their house was haunted night and day—

* A rope made of hair.

The fuel they burn'd no ashes gave,
And fallen pin no power could save.
Whither they went, or how, none knew,
But pass they did quite out of view!
Nay, when the wife was baking once,
She saw a cake pass at a glance
Right through the floor, and from her eyes,
As fast as lightning through the skies!
Alarm'd she from the cottage fled,
And rais'd a hue-and-cry so dread,
That from all corners of the glen
Came women, weans, and stalwart men,
Who, after deep and solemn thought,
Resolv'd that down the house be brought,
Which to the ground was quickly thrown,
But deil or ghaist they 'counter'd none!

"One lad, howe'er, with courage strong,
On seeing a crevice black and long,
Near to the hearth he plied a pick,
And rais'd a boulder broad and thick,
When, lo! he found the bannock there,
The missing ase, and pins so rare;
And, on descending saw a *weem*,
Of length and build that few could dream.
Strewn here and there were guerns and bones—
Strange cups, and hammers made of stones,
And tiny flints for bow or spear—
Charr'd corn, and wood, and other gear.

"'Twas a *Peght's House* (as some these call),
With flagstone roof and whinstone wall;
In form like to an arm they bend,
Are rounded slightly towards the end;
'Bout six feet high, and near as wide,
And with a door a gnat might stride!"

. . . . . .

We have now reached the top of the Hill, and can survey at our leisure, the attractively beautiful scene around. But, first of all, let us inspect the Observatory, built, as previously noticed, by the good and learned Mr Mackenzie, of Belmont Castle, a great lover and successful cultivator of mathematics, algebra, and astronomy. It is a noble-looking tower, although only the four walls remain. On the western turret a light-

ning rod, with the four cardinal points at the top, seems in excellent preservation. Inside, it is entirely gutted; nothing being left to indicate for what purpose it was originally built. Lord Wharncliffe should be recommended to renovate the old tower, and put it in proper condition, in memory of Mr Mackenzie, from whom, through the marriage of the first Earl of Bute with Agnes, eldest daughter of Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, he derived his Scotch estates.

How fine the effect of the bleating of lambs, the singing of birds, blent with the melancholy sound of the moaning wind among the waving branches of the dark mountain pines clustering like guardian angels around the old tower! How grand the swell of the southern double range of the Sidlaws, some of the higher and more mountainous, beautifully wooded to their summits, with the Law and the estuary of the Tay in the far distance, and the white crested billows of the German Ocean beyond! In a lone, sequestered hollow to the west, under the shadow of the northern range of the Sidlaws, and beneath the hill of Keilor, reposes Lundie Loch; and as the rays of the evening sun now gild with golden beauty its calm and peaceful waters, it seems like a scene in fairyland, the elfins in their gossamer robes of silver sheen being only awanting to complete the picture.

Far away in the west, "by dim Rannoch's shore," beside his dwarf attendant, Farragon, crowned with his diadem of sparkling snow, and asserting his supremacy as monarch of the northern mountains, the towering, conical, isolated form of the far-famed Schiehallion appears in majestic grandeur athwart the deep blue sky, his sharp, shining summit piercing the driving clouds as with a javelin or spear, and appearing as if it had reached the very gates of heaven! Along the Grampians, and directly in front of us, rises Catlaw, the grim sentinel of the mountains, looming Cairn-a-Month, and dark-frowning Mount Blair, their shaggy summits still capped with the winter snows, which sparkle with a diamond lustre as a beautiful reflex of the glories of the setting sun.

Immediately opposite is Alyth, and farther north, where you see the mist arising among the hills, is Lintrathen Loch, while that narrow glack to the east is the entrance to the Den of Airlie, famous in history and song. Mountains of all shapes and altitudes, rising in great numbers above and around each other, stretch away in solemn grandeur to the mystic confines and classical surroundings of the celebrated Lochnagar.

At our feet nestles, in sylvan beauty, the pretty village of Newtyle, with its handsome new church, one of the most elegant in every respect of all the country churches in the Howe. In the immediate vicinity are the beautiful woods of Belmont Castle, Kinloch, and Meigle; and along the ridge of the western hills you can descry Blairgowrie and New Rattray, snugly reposing beneath the great shadow of the neighbouring Grampians, and looking down with pride on the beautiful valley of Strathmore, now in all the splendour of its summer beauty.

Although from this spot you can only see the western part of the bonnie Howe, sufficient appears to give you some idea of its marvellous and unrivalled beauty—a rolling river like the noble Tay being the only feature in the landscape awanting to finish the picture, and convert it into an earthly paradise.

We must now descend the hill, for these dark, driving, murky clouds o'erhead forbode a coming storm. Even while we speak, the red forked lightning flashes ominously amongst the dark firs, and around the grey battlements of the lonely tower—and hark! the rattling thunder-peal, bursting darkly over the Strath, breaks out in all its terrific grandeur over the hill on which we stand, and the driving rain pours down like a destructive deluge, and in a few seconds we feel as thoroughly drenched as if we had been for an hour exposed to the full fury of the storm.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MEIGLE.

VANORA—KING ARTHUR.

"Renowned in days of yore
Has stood our father's hospitable door;
No other roof a stranger should receive,
No other hands than ours the welcome give.
But in my absence riot fills the place,
Nor bears the modest queen a stranger's face;
From noiseful revel far remote she flies,
But rarely seen or seen with weeping eyes.
No—Eurymachus receive my guest,
Of nature courteous, and by far the best;
He woos the queen with more respectful flame,
And emulates her former husband's fame:
With what success, 'tis Love's alone to know,
And the hoped nuptials turn to joy or woe."

Homer.

As we walk down the beautiful road leading from Newtyle to Meigle, we may profitably beguile the time, by reverting, enquiringly, to what are termed "the good old times," in striking contrast with those "degenerate days" in which we live.

On the accession of the house of Stuart the people of Scotland were only slowly advancing from almost extreme barbarism towards modern civilization. Every man was a soldier, or the menial vassal of his chief, trade and agriculture being made altogether subservient to the science of war. At this period—1371—Scotland continued to be regarded by intelligent foreigners as a country still completely barbarous. The author of the Dittamundi says it is rich in fish, flesh, and milk, but—

"Molto e el paese alpestro é perigrino,
E ha la gente ruvida é salvatica."—

Mountainous and strange is the country,
And the people rough and savage.

Froissart in his history—1400—states, the French nation "shuddered at the penury and barbarity of Scotland." He further says, that "the meanest articles of manufacture, horse-shoes, harness, saddles, bridles were all imported ready-made from Flanders. The houses of the common people were composed of four or five posts to support the turf walls, and a roof of boughs, three days sufficing to erect the humble mansion." A contemporary historian adds, that "the country was rather desert than inhabited, was almost wholly mountainous, and more abundant in savages than in cattle." (*Hist. de Charles VI., par Le Laboureur, Tome I., p.* 102,—"*plus pleine de sauvagine que de bestail.*")

Even in the reign of James I. who contributed greatly to the civilization of his kingdom, we find Enea Silvio, afterwards Pope Pius II., thus writing disparagingly of the Scotch. "Concerning Scotland he found these things worthy of repetition. It is an *island joined* to England, stretching two hundred miles to the north and about fifty broad; a cold country, fertile of few sorts of grain, and generally void of trees, but there is a sulphureous stone dug up which is used for firing. The towns are unwalled, the houses commonly built without lime, and the villages roofed with turf, while a cow's hide supplies the place of a door. The commonality are poor and uneducated, have abundance of flesh and fish, but eat bread as a dainty. The men are small in stature, but bold; the women fair and comely, and prone to the pleasures of love; kisses being there esteemed of less consequence than pressing the hand is in Italy. The wine is all imported; the horses are mostly small ambling nags, only a few being preserved entire for propagation, and neither curry-combs nor reins are used. The oysters are larger than in England. From Scotland are imported into Flanders hides, wool, salt fish, and

pearls. Nothing gives the Scots more pleasure than to hear the English dispraised. The country is divided into two parts, the cultivated lowlands, and the region where agriculture is not used. The wild Scots have a different language, and sometimes eat the bark of trees. There are no wolves. Crows are new inhabitants, and therefore the tree in which they build becomes royal property. At the winter solstice, when the author was there, the day did not exceed four hours."

During the reigns of James IV. and V. Scotland progressed more rapidly towards comparative civilization, but the peasantry still suffered great oppression at the hands of the landlords and nobles. The latter, says Queen Margaret, in a letter of September 1523, "regard not the disasters of the poor but laugh at them." In his description of Scotland, 1521, John Mair states that Perth was the only fortified town, the Scots being little versed either in fortification, or siege; that there were often thirty hamlets attached to one parish church, distant from some of them four, five, or even ten miles; that the houses of the farmers were miserably small and uncomfortable and although stone was common, they showed no desire to erect good houses, to plant trees or hedges, or to enrich the ground; that the farmers openly express their contempt of manufactures, and that the nobles are in perpetual feuds with their neighbours to the complete neglect of the education of their families; that the Highlanders were partly possessed of cattle and horses which they sold in Perth or Dundee for two francs each, but that the others more savage only hunted, or followed their chiefs, in their constant expeditions and conflicts. He further says, that the Highlanders wore caligoe, or trouse, reaching only to the middle of the leg, a mantle, and a shirt stained with saffron, their weapons a bow and arrows, a broad sword, small halbert, large dagger of one edge; armour, mail of iron rings; but the common people wore in battle jackets of quilted linen, waxed or pitched, and covered with deer's skin; while the Lowlanders like the English, fought in short cloaks.

Boece in his pedantic description of Scotland, gives but a very meagre account of the manners and customs of the people, and what he does give, can scarcely be relied upon as authentic. Bowar, (1444), says very little as to the domestic condition of the inhabitants, or of the state of the country in general. Fordoun merely observes that the Highlanders spoke Irish; the Lowlanders Teutonic; and that the latter were decently clothed and civilized, while the former were mere savages.

The Highlands must even at this time and for sometime afterwards have been in a most deplorable and barbarous condition. Take the account given of themselves by John Eldar, a clergyman and native of Caithness, one who had studied for some years at English universities, and who, on the death of James V. presented to Henry VIII. a project of a union between the two Kingdoms. With reference to the appellation *Redshanks*, given to the Highlanders, he thus explains the term.—"Moreover wherefore they call us in Scotland Redshanks, and in your grace's dominion of England *Rough footed Scots*, please it your majesty to understand, that we of people can tolerate, suffer, and away best with cold; for both summer and winter, (except when the frost is most vehement) going always bare-legged and barefooted, our delight and pleasure is not only in hunting of red-deer, wolves, foxes, and *graios*, whereof we abound and have great plenty; but also in running, leaping, swimming, shooting, and throwing of darts. Therefore in so much as we use, and delight, so to go always, the tender delicate gentlemen of Scotland call us *Redshanks*.

"And again in winter when the frost is most vehement, (as I have said) which we cannot suffer bare-footed, so well as snow which can never hurt us, when it comes to our girdles, we go a-hunting, and after that we have slain red-deer, we slay off the skin by-and-bye, and setting of our bare foot on the inside thereof, for want of cunning shoemakers, by your Grace's pardon, we play the cobblers, compassing and measuring so much thereof, as shall reach up to our ankles; pricking the upper part thereof with holes, that the water

fact, and the Lowlanders continue to call the Highlanders Irishy, and their language Irish, Erish, or Erse.

The name *Piks* or *Picts*, otherwise Caledonians, is first mentioned by Eumenius, in the year 296, who says 'that before the time of Julius Cæsar, Britain south of Forth and Clyde, or Roman Britain, was only invaded by the Picts and Irish, *Pictis modo et Hibernis*. The name of Scots was at that time unknown. *Hiberni* and *Scoti* have been clearly proved to be synonymous; that Ireland was *Scotia*, and the Irish *Scoti*. Ethicus (368) says, *Hibernia a Scotorum gentibus colitur*, Ireland is inhabited by the nations of Scots. In the next century Orosius writes—*Hibernia insular inter Britanniam et Hispaniam . . . a Scotorum gentibus colitur*.—Ireland an island between Britain and Spain . . . is inhabited by the Scotch nations. In the seventh century Isidorus thus clearly and explicitly says, *Scotia eadem et Hibernia proxima Britanniæ insula*, Scotia the same as Ireland, an island very near Britain. Beda, speaking in the next age of Hibernia or Ireland, says,—*hæc Scotorum patria est*—This is the native country of the Scots. Without quoting any more authorities on the subject, such as Eginhart in the ninth century, Notherus Balbulus in the tenth; Marianus Scotus in the eleventh; and St. Bernard in the twelfth century—it may be confidently taken as indisputably proved that Scotland was not called Scotia before the eleventh century. Irish writers may be prejudiced on the one side, and Scottish on the other side, but the former is the right side, and the latter the wrong. Impartial foreigners universally pronounce against the Scotch. Sirmond, a Frenchman; Bozius an Italian; Molanus, Miræus, Canisius, Gretserus, Germans, and even our own countrymen, Major and Buchanan, give it against us even at the commencement of the controversy.

As to the general history of Scotland, it only becomes partially clear at the commencement of the reign of Malcolm III., in the year 1056, all preceding that date being utterly

untrustworthy, and lost in the veriest and silliest fiction. In regard to a nation's ignorance of its own history, especially and not very creditably peculiarly applicable to Scotland, one of the greatest of the ancients expresses himself thus, that "Not to know what has happened before one's birth, is to be always a child." And again that—"to him none seemed to have any claim to learning, who were ignorant concerning the affairs of their own country." The foundation of the early history of any country should be carefully and critically examined; for as a celebrated historian most truly remarks, "how is it possible that, while the beginnings are false, the rest should prove true?" Such a task requires great research, unflagging patience, and indomitable industry, keen critical acumen, variety of information, and persistent, continuous labour. But this incessant drudgery and extreme stretching of the powers of the mind, is at first very irksome and exceedingly painful, for in the truthful words of Thucydides, "amongst most men, even the investigation of truth is impatient of labour; so that they rather have recourse to what is next at hand."

Learning in Scotland being thus degraded and neglected, it was not till the beginning of the last century, that the study of antiquities made any progress in that country. While in the sixteenth century, France, Spain, Italy, and Germany had produced several eminent antiquaries, and Hungary, Poland, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, had almost rivalled, if not eclipsed them in the next, Scotland remained barren of, and undistinguished by, antiquarian lore, and isolated by its ignorance of the sciences, from all the other civilized nations of Europe. The best, as well as the weakest writers, seemed to have despised the name and province of an antiquary, ignoring the bright examples of Cato, Varro, Cæsar, in ancient times; and of Luther, Melanchthon, Spelman, Selden, Du Cange, Leibnitz, and Muratori, in modern.

When the science of antiquities, however, began to be

cultivated, the first great enquiry ought to have been, whether the barbaric monuments in Britain were either Celtic or Gothic. Without examining at all the foundation, and taking as their guide those very points which have been proved to be entirely false and illusory, antiquarians have rushed at once to the conclusion that they are all Celtic, while the truth is all on the other side, that they are Gothic. Save cairns of stones used as sepulchres, and as memorials of ancient monuments by the British Scots, there are none. This may be attributed to Celtic inaction and indolence; while the activity and industry of the Gothic raised vast stones for the same purposes, instead of heaping together an insignificant number of small ones. The Celts, according to all ancient history and present knowledge of their habits of life, were a race utterly incapable of labour, far less adept in the rude arts. No stone monuments can anywhere be traced among them. The Goths, on the contrary, originating from Asia, where the rude as well as the cultivated arts, first began, were only a barbaric race, with barbaric arts from the beginning. The antiquities of the Picts, the Gothic inhabitants of Scotland, may, according to Pinkerton, be classified thus:—

I. Single Stones erect; being 1. Sepulchral; 2. Memorial; 3. Boundaries.
II. Barrows or Sepulchral Hillocks.
III. Temples, and Places of Judgment.
IV. Castles.
V. Caves.
VI. Entrenchments.

Meigle, the quiet secluded village we are now approaching, is beautifully situated in the very heart of Strathmore. Beneath the friendly shadow of the umbrageous woods of Belmont and Kinloch, it unostentatiously reposes in all the richness of its sylvan beauty. Its name may have been derived from the circumstance of the church and manse being situate on a tract of level ground between two marshes or

"gills," giving rise to the word, Midgile or Meigle. Little of its ancient history is known. Boece, however, notices it when alluding to the monument erected there to the memory of the faithless wife of the fabulous King Arthur. It is certain it was a burying-place before the introduction of Christianity. The sluggish Dean and the impetuous Isla, water the north-west boundary of the parish, and the placid rivulet called Meigle burn, flows gently around its south-western borders, the whole parish being in the highest and most beautiful state of cultivation, and the crops rich, varied, and abundant.

Kinloch House, Drumkilbo, and Meigle House, in the immediate neighbourhood of the village, embosomed in extensive woods, and pleasantly situated, contribute greatly to the rural and architectural adornment of the district. Belmont Castle, the seat of Lord Wharncliffe, about a mile south of the village, is a large and very elegant quadrangular building, the venerable old tower of the ancient pile being happily incorporated with the modern mansion. In Belmont Park there is a tumulus called Beliduff, which, like so many other fabulous places associated with the death of Macbeth and its attendant circumstances, tradition assigns as the spot on which that monarch fell in combat with Macduff. This popular tradition is still tenaciously adhered to, in defiance of the historical fact, that Macbeth was slain at Lumphanan or Lunfanans in Aberdeenshire. About a mile distant stands a large, erect block of whinstone, of nearly twenty tons in weight, called Macbeth's Stone, said to be monumental of one of his chief officers. This conjecture differs from the former, inasmuch as it has at least the air of probability about it, for although Meigle be now proved not to have been the place where Macbeth fell, it may, nevertheless, have been the scene of some of his many battles.

To the scholar and antiquarian, however, the churchyard of Meigle which we are now entering, must prove the most interesting spot in the parish, containing as it does the remains

of the famous sepulchral monument of Vanora, or Guinevar, wife of the renowned King Arthur. According to tradition, Arthur lived in the beginning of the sixth century; was conquered in battle by the Picts and Scots;—and that Vanora was detained as a prisoner for some time at the fortified castle of Barryhill in the neighbouring parish of Alyth, about three miles distant from Meigle. Tradition relates further, that Vanora, during her husband's absence, proved unfaithful to him, having held an unlawful intercourse with Mordred, a Pictish King; that Arthur when he returned, enraged at her infidelity, caused her to be torn to pieces by wild beasts; and that she was buried at Meigle where a monument has been erected to perpetuate her infamy.

The account of these doubtful circumstances chronicled by Geoffrey of Monmouth, differs very considerably from the above commonly received local tradition. According to this authority, the origin of King Arthur occurred in this wise. When the Saxons were laying waste our Island, but before they had made themselves masters of it, the Britons were ruled by a wise and valiant King, named Uther Pendagron. One of the most eminent of his nobles was Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, whose wife Igerna was a woman of exquisite and surpassing beauty. At one of the royal feasts of Easter, Gorlois was present with his lady. The king, who had never seen her before, immediately fell violently in love with her, and manifested his passion so openly that Gorlios took away his wife abruptly, and went home with her to Cornwall without asking for Arthur's leave. To punish his offending vassal, the enraged king led an army into Cornwall. Conscious of his inability to resist the King in the field, Gorlios shut up his wife in the impregnable Castle of Tintagel, while he took shelter in another castle, where he was immediately besieged by Uther. Borrowing the main incident from classical history, Geoffrey relates further, that during the siege, Uther, with the assistance of his magician, Merlin, obtained access to the beautiful Igerna in the same manner as Jupiter approached Alcmena,

namely, by assuming the form of her husband; and that the consequence was the birth of the child who was destined to be the Hercules of the Britons, and who when born was named Arthur. In the sequel, Gorbios was killed, and then Uther married his widow.

Such, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, was the origin of King Arthur. On the death of Uther, Arthur, it is said, was unanimously chosen to succeed him, and was crowned at Silchester.

In recounting the stirring events of Arthur's life and reign, Geoffrey alludes to his wars with the Saxons, when he crushed the Picts and Scots to such a helpless condition that they took shelter in the Islands of Loch-Lomond, and there made their peace with him. He next conquered Ireland, Iceland, Gothland, the Orcades, Norway and Denmark. He afterwards subdued the whole of Gaul, the prolonged conquest occupying nearly nine years.

Arthur, at this time, according to the same authority, being in the full zenith of his power, was suddenly startled by a peremptory summons from Lucius Tiberius, the "Procurator" of the republic of Rome, to restore to Rome the provinces which he had unjustly usurped on the Continent, and also to pay the tribute which Britain had formerly paid to the Imperial power. At a great council held it was resolved to retort by demanding tribute of Rome, and to march an army immediately into Italy to subdue the Imperial city.

Arthur entrusted the government of Britain to his nephew, Modred, and his queen, Guanhumara, and then embarked at Southampton for the Continent.

The army of Britain soon encountered the Romans, who had advanced into Gaul to meet them. After much fighting, and great slaughter on both sides, the Romans were driven out of the country with the loss of their Commander, Lucius Tiberius, who was slain by Arthur's nephew, Walgan, the Gawain of later romance

Disastrous news from Britain reached the King when on his

march to Rome. Modred, who had been left there as Regent during the absence of the King, conspired with the queen, whom he married, and usurped the crown he had sworn faithfully to defend. Arthur, dividing his forces, immediately returned to Britain, and soon encountered in battle the powerful army which Modred had assembled at Richborough in Kent, to meet him. Although in this battle Arthur lost a great many of his best generals, including, among the rest, his nephew, Walgan, Modred was ignominiously defeated and put to flight. The queen was so overwhelmed with grief and shame by the unexpected news of her paramour's defeat, that she fled in all haste to Caerlcon, and took refuge in a nunnery, where she resolved to pass the remainder of her life in penitence for her sins.

After two other battles, obstinately maintained on both sides, Modred was slain, and Arthur himself mortally wounded. He was carried to the Isle of Avallon, where he died and was buried in the year 542.

Such is substantially the account given by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the so called British historians, of the fabulous history of King Arthur. His knights of the round table which so charmingly swell out the story, are the productions of the romance writers of a later period. Entire belief in these fascinating narratives has, however, gradually diminished, and it is now very much doubted whether such a personage ever existed, Geoffrey's history being generally regarded as mere fable. It is certain that no such name as King Arthur was known before the Norman period, and Giraldus Cambrensis in the end of the twelfth century proves indisputably that Geoffrey's stories were not Welsh. It therefore has been surmised, that they were derived from Brittany, and that Arthur may have been a personage in the mythic history of the Bretons. While the historian, however, discards the whole history as entirely fabulous, it has, in the inverse direction, risen higher in the estimation of the poet, the genius of Bulwer and Tennyson having shed a lustre around it to which it was not otherwise entitled.

It is under the halo of romance, therefore, that we proceed to examine these curious monumental stones which tradition associates with the name of the faithless wife of King Arthur, the previous narratives, doubtless, adding additional zest and interest to our examination.

The principal stone stands immediately in front of the church, and is, apparently, well cared for, and reverentially preserved. A variety of sculptured figures, for the most part of the unique and monstrous kind, cover the surface of the monument, all appearing, not only in bas-relief but as sharp and perfect as when originally fashioned by the cunning workman's primitive chisel of the sixth or seventh century. These finely cut representations of the fearful punishment of Vanora's crime, might be more clearly and prominently brought out, were it not for the sacred moss of ages which partially covers them. But no Vandalic, sacrilegious hand must desecrate the venerable shrine, or impair the ancient associations which hover round these precious relics of the past. The yellow moss itself suggests the idea of great age and antiquarian value, and must not be rudely touched or obliterated.

One of these monumental stones now lies near the entrance to the manse, religiously preserved among the shrubs and flowers which line the beautiful pathway from the gate to the minister's house.

In all these stones, the sculptured figures are of the monstrous kind. One is a large serpent fastened to a Bull's mouth; another resembling a Centaur; and two representations of wild beasts tearing a human body; and one where the body seems tied, or close to chariot wheels, which may refer to Vanora, or may have given rise to the tradition.

The old church of Meigle was totally consumed by fire some years ago. A new and exceedingly handsome church has been erected on the site of the ancient edifice, which in the interior, as well as exterior, may favourably compare with any of our recently erected City churches.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE ABBEY OF CUPAR-ANGUS.

"By a steel-clenched postern door,
They enter'd now the chancel tall;
The darken'd roof rose high aloof
On pillars lofty and light and small:
The Key-stone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,
Was a fleur-de-lis, or a quatre-feuille;
The corbells were carved grotesque and grim;
And the pillars, with clustr'd shafts so trim,
With base and with capital flourish'd around,
Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound."

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

"THE great misfortune of my life," saith Robert Burns,—"was to want an aim." In every decade of life, it is well for man to have, in small matters as well as great, some distinct and definite object always in view. The possession of this inestimable treasure will not only balance and steady the various faculties of the mind, but effectually serve to soften and molify the sharp edge of those vissicitudes, disappointments, and sorrows, which all to some extent experience in their chequered journey through this sublunary state of existence, as preparatory to the full and eternal enjoyment of that celestial blessedness, which, as the inheritance of the saints, await the righteous as their reward, when death at last shall break their bands asunder, and open for their joyful entrance, the gates of immortality.

As in walking along the beautiful pathway leading from Newtyle to Meigle, we lovingly discoursed together on "the good old times" of Scotland's ancient history, let us now, on

some kindred subject, confidingly commune together, as we wend our level, bough-o'ershadowed way between the famous monument of Vanora, and the solitary remains of the once stately and magnificent Abbey of Cupar. Let us take at random, the fascinating theme of Literary Genius, with all its disheartening struggles, yet sublime and hopeful surroundings.

The specious yet forbidding dogma, that the lover and follower of literature could not be at the same time a man of business, is fortunately, now, to a certain extent exploded. Recent brilliant instances attest the perfect compatibility of high intellect and lofty genius being occasionally combined with the most acute, active, and solid habits of business. While admitting this to the fullest extent, however, we must take care not to confound two things, in themselves essentially different. The first of these is, that true genius is not the result of external circumstances; and the second, that native inspiration will shew itself, in some way or another, independent of, and altogether apart from, all external causes whatsoever. "Some minds," says Irving; "seem almost to create themselves, springing up under every disadvantage, and working their solitary but irresistible way through a thousand obstacles. Nature seems to delight in disappointing the assiduities of art, with which it would rear dulness to maturity; and to glory in the vigour and luxuriance of her chance productions. She scatters the seeds of genius to the winds, and though some may perish among the stony places of the world, and some may be choked by the thorns and brambles of early adversity, yet others will now and then strike roots even in the clefts of the rock; struggle bravely up into sunshine, and spread over their sterile birth-place all the beauties of vegetation."

Two equally repugnant dogmas still, however, to some extent, exert their influence in society, but which are not the less easily overthrown. I allude, first, to the commonly received notion, that the man of great grasp of intellect and

commanding genius, must, of necessity, be *outré* in his conduct and behaviour in the world—that, in short, there must be something in his walk and conversation, which at once distinguishes him from among the common herd by whom he is surrounded. Now, every attentive reader of biography must admit, that the most prominent and attractive feature in the characters of the great, is their humility. Those who have been privileged to enjoy their friendship, will as readily admit, that the great charm of their converse lay in its unaffected and child-like simplicity. Just in proportion as we rise from little minds to great, we shall find humility becoming more humble, and purity more pure. Even the divine Newton was, in his own estimation, only as a little child gathering coloured shells on the sea-shore, while the great ocean of scientific research lay unexplored and unknown beyond.

The other equally forbidding idea to which I allude is this, namely, that to cultivate literature with success, and to earn fame and renown, we must isolate ourselves altogether from the world, any contact with which would effectually destroy every noble impulse, and check and impede every lofty and hallowed aspiration. To disprove this, willing witnesses are so numerous, that I scarcely know whom to select. I will, however, confidently rest my case on the following evidence :—

Saadi, the Persian poet, in one of his delightful Fable stories, teaches a very pleasant and instructive moral truth. He describes, in oriental imagery, the gorgeous splendour of a garden of roses, in which two friends of opposite tastes spent a beautiful summer day in the most exquisite enjoyment of its varied and effulgent beauty. Their tastes and feelings, however, practically manifested themselves at the close, in very marked, and opposite directions. While the one was satisfied and contented with the colours and perfume of the flowers, the other resolved that those nearest and dearest to him should share in his enjoyment and pleasure by gathering the choicest bloom and carrying it to his family. The every

day home life of a man of genius is the great moral indirectly inculcated in the fascinating story.

"O bliss, when all in circle drawn
About him, heart and ear were fed,
To hear him as he lay and read
The Tuscan poets on the lawn."

The moral of the rose garden is fully and lovingly exemplified by Sterne, when in the midst of his family, he cheerfully pursues his literary studies. "I am scribbling away," he says, "at my *Tristram;* these two volumes are, I think, the best I shall write as long as I live. My Lydia helps to copy for me, and my wife knits and listens as I read her chapters."

The domestic life of Milton, like that of not a few other noble, yet sensitive poets, is generally believed to have been an unhappy one. Still, he must at some period of his literary career, have carried the rose-leaves to his family circle, else he could not have invited a chosen friend to a

"Neat repast
Of Attic taste with wine, when we may rise
To hear the lute well-touched, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes, and Tuscan air."

Neither could he have written the tender, love-breathing lines "On his Deceased Wife," unless he had, to some extent, comparatively enjoyed the comforts and pleasures of the home-life of genius:—

"Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind;
Her face was veiled; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetest goodness, in her bosom shined,
So clear, as in no face with more delight,
But, O! as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled; and day brought back my night."

How feelingly the German poet, Pfizer, pictures his present unhappy and restless state, in sad contrast with his former domestic joys:—

"A youth, light-hearted and content,
I wander through the world;
Here, Arab-like, is pitched my tent,
And straight again is furled.

"Yet oft I dream that once a wife
Close in my heart was locked,
And in the sweet repose of life
A blessed child I rocked.

"I wake! away that dream—away!
Too long did it remain!
So long, that both by night and day
It ever comes again."

We can appreciate and fully enjoy the graphic decription by Cowper of the pure and innocent enjoyments of a winter evening in the snug cozy parlour, when the curtains have been closely drawn over the darkened windows, the luxurious sofa gently wheeled before the cheerful hearth, "the cups that cheer, but not inebriate," circling freely among the assembled guests, amidst "the feast of reason, and the flow of soul."

After his marriage, Burns, we know, was never satisfied with the composition of his songs until, in the privacy of his family, he had heard them sung by his "bonnie Jean." No occupation, indeed, seemed so much after his own heart as that of composing and writing out his poetic effusions in the midst of household duties, and youthful, frolicsome amusements.

The melancholy and awful death of the accomplished wife of Longfellow, has, so far as she is concerned, effectually sealed his lips and unnerved his pen, for no "In Memoriam" so far as I know, has appeared to her memory. The poet, however, in his description of his own home-life of genius had previously recorded in "The Day is Done," how much her loving and appreciative society served effectually to soothe

and comfort him after the fatiguing toils and labours of the day :—

"The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

"Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heart-felt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

"Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

"And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

The moonlight garden-suppers of Titian, rendered intensely delicious by the fascinating music of the ladies of Venice; the domestic happiness and peace of Pliny, a scholar of seventeen hundred years ago; the grotto of Richardson; the poetic hearth of Weston; the study of Jewell; the well-regulated household of Bishop Hall; the happy and peaceful homes of Wordsworth and Southey, by the beautiful lakes of the now classic Westmoreland, all breathed the perfume of the rose garden, in the most beautiful and instructive sense of the Persian allegory.

To bring our evidence to a close, have we not a striking testimony to the quiet pleasures of the home-life of a young genius, in our own loved "Delta," who, only so lately, passed away from amongst us. A physician, in extensive practice, like Mr Moir, could not select his own time for study and composition. But, believe it, there is a time for everything. It is only those who have least to do, who complain the most for want of time. System, with a fixed determination to occupy every moment of our time, will enable us to overcome

every obstacle, and to find leisure for study and contemplation, when the man without method, in the arrangement of his time, cannot satisfactorily perform any duty whatsoever.

What did the gentle "Delta" do then, after the turmoil and bustle of a busy day? Did he retire in a fit of dreamy abstraction, shutting himself up from his family and the world, only to re-appear again when the inspiration of his genius had passed away? No, he sat down in his usual seat, collected and arranged his papers, and thought, meditated, and composed, in the midst of his affectionate family.

But all this neither implies that the task of the poet or literateur is an easy one, nor that everyone who attempts to scale the rugged hill of fame, returns successful from the pursuit. That genius is labour, and toil alone will produce inspiration, is one of the most illusive and chimerical dogmas ever propounded by any school of philosophy, ancient or modern. Conception must be in the mind, God-sent, original, eternal. Studious labour, scientific art, with all extraneous means to boot, will never create true genius, with its holy unction and divine afflatus, these forming part of the indescribable Divine Essence itself, and communicated to man by the unchangeable decree of the Great Original.

Hence, no genuine poet *can* compose immortal verse, until the glow of divine inspiration kindles into burning flame the latent powers of his genius; and then, with his singing robes about him, and his far-seeing prophetic vision lighted up by celestial fire, he attunes his harp of song to the sweet notes of its native music. To write to order, or to unfold the subtleties or beauties of a prescribed theme, is simply beyond the power of the poet of Nature. Pre-eminently the child of impulse and passion, he never attempts composition until he feels in his innermost soul the divine fire of holy inspiration; nor prolongs his efforts beyond its subsidence, and withdrawal. Burns says, "Poesy was still a darling walk for my mind, but it was only indulged in according to the humour of the hour. I had usually half-a-dozen or more pieces on hand; I

took up one or other, as it suited the momentary tone of the mind, and dismissed the work as it bordered on fatigue. My passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils, till they got vent in rhyme and then the conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet!" It was under a passionate spell of heroic inspiration, he also informs us, that while riding over a wild and lonely moor, amidst the darkness, and the thunder, and the tempest, he composed that immortal song: "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled!" In similar moods of poetic abstraction, he composed the sublime ode: "To Mary in Heaven;" and that affecting and beautiful song: "The Soldier's Return." "The Poetic Genius of my country found me," he beautifully exclaims, "as the prophetic bard, Elijah, did Elisha—at the PLOUGH; and threw her inspiring mantle over me. She bade me sing the loves, the joys, the rural scenes, and rural pleasures of my native soil, in my native tongue: I tuned my wild artless notes as she inspired."

> Hail, Genius! Genius! kin art thou to God;
> The golden chain that binds the world of mind;
> The bridge, connecting mortal with immortal;
> The heart whose every beat vibrates the world,
> Whose great pulsations stir eternity.

Beautiful and sonorous as are the sounding periods of Gibbon, we have it on record that he "wrote slowly." "Everybody," says Goldsmith, "wrote better, because he wrote faster than I." Cowper's pleasant *Task* was constructed, we are informed, "with weariness and watching." Addison composed so slowly, that the patience of his printer was invariably exhausted while waiting for "copy." Campbell, we know, composed with toilsome effort, re-writing, and polishing his poems and songs, with indomitable yet painfully protracted labour. Even the exquisite lyrics, and passionate love-songs of Burns, were the fruitage of much continuous and laborious effort. The divine instinct was there, but a certain amount of labour was requisite to crown the creations of genius with effective and substantial maturity. Pope is probably the most elegant and musical of all poets; yet in addressing his friend Jervas he, confessingly, says:—

"How oft in pleasing tasks we wear the day,
While summer suns roll unperceived away;
How oft our slowly-growing works impart,
While images reflect from art to art."

Dr Chalmers, pursuing the same theme, very forcibly remarks:—"There is a certain showy and superficial something which can be done in a very short time. One may act the part of a harlequin with his mind, as well as with his body; and there is a sort of mental agility which always gives me the impression of a harlequin. Anything which can be spoken of as a feat, is apt to suggest this association. That man, for example, was a thorough harlequin, in both senses of the word, who boasted that he could throw off a hundred verses of poetry while he stood upon one foot. There was something for wonder in this; but it is rarely by any such exploit that we obtain deep, and powerful, and enduring poetry. It is by dint of steady labour—it is by giving enough of application to the work, and having enough of time for the doing of it—it is by regular painstaking, and the plying of constant assiduities—it is by these, and not by any process of legerdemain, that we secure the strength and the staple of real excellence."

Lord Cockburn, in his *Life of Jeffrey*, also says—

"If there be anything valuable in the history of his (Jeffrey's) progress, it seems to me to consist chiefly in the example of meritorious labour which his case exhibits to young men, even of the highest talent. . . . His early passion for distinction was never separated from the conviction, that in order to obtain it, he must work for it."

With reference to literature as a profession, Lord Cockburn elsewhere most justly remarks—"Literature is seldom more graceful than when combined with something more solid."

But success, alas! crowns but few of the aspirants after fame. Many go forth to the battle—how few victoriously return!—

Broad-shouldered men there be with iron nerves,
Who safe the storm, howe'er severe, withstand;

Yet, oh! beneath the waves how many sink,
Whose spirits weak and timid, all unfit
With blustering tempests to contend; depressed
By words unkind, clown-usage rough; would fain
To life and hope have clung, had one kind word
Been whispered softly, bidding them 'God speed'
Upon their dark and perilous way; the star
Of gladsome hope bright rising 'mid the gloom,
To cheer them onward to the height of fame.

The quiet and pleasant town of Cupar-in-Angus, which we are now approaching, is beautifully situated in the centre of Strathmore. The greater part of the town is in the county of Perth, but the ancient part of it being in Angus, the parish takes it name from that county; the burn which runs through the town dividing the two shires from each other.

The church and burial ground, on the Angus side of the stream, now occupy the site of the once famous and magnificent Abbey of Cupar.

There is great uncertainty as to the origin of the name, Cupar. The ancient forms in which the word is written, are Culpyr, Culpar, Cuper, Cupre, Cupir, Cupyr, and Cupar; and the more modern, Cowpir, Cowper, Coupar and Cupar-in-Angus, to distinguish it from Cupar-in-Fife. Some handsome villas, with flower and fruit gardens, surround the town, which add very much to its adornment and beauty. Formerly the inhabitants were chiefly employed in hand-loom weaving; but since the introduction of steam-loom power by several enterprising firms some few years ago, the aspect of the town has been happily changed from a torpid and lethargic condition, to a lively state of great vigour, and industrious vitality. So very marked has been the rapid transformation, that it may without exaggeration be said, that the town was never in such a progressively flourishing state at any former period of its history.

The churchyard contains some very elegant monuments to the memory of the Hays of Ballendoch, and other ancient families connected with the parish. A number of stone coffins

are also to be seen at the east and west ends of the church, all in a good state of preservation. A flat flag inside the church, 800 years old, on which is the effigy of a Bishop in robes and mitre still sharp and clear in outline, forms a most interesting object of study to the antiquarian. In the south porch of the church is the effigy of a warrior very much defaced; and also the sides of an ancient tomb found in the churchyard some years ago, on which are distinctly and beautifully cut the figures of warriors, templars, and begging monks.

But you wonder, no doubt, why in the presence of the "mighty dead," and amidst the precious memorials of the ecclesiastical magnificence of a former age, that I so sadly, yet lovingly linger beside that little grave of yesterday! Two short years ago I came here to see a grand-child, who had been previously laid on a sick bed. I found him better than I had expected, looking cheerful and comparatively happy. Before I left for home in the evening he sat a little while on my knee and chatted to me as usual, and I bade him adieu in the full hope, not only that the crisis of his illness was past, but that he was on a fair way for complete recovery. Very early next morning I was roused by a loud ominous rap. A telegram was handed to me in silence. Poor Willie was dead! Very sad, dear reader: is it not? Before we enter the sacred precincts of the grand old Abbey, you may sympathisingly indulge me by reading his Epitaph:—

IN MEMORIAM.

Yestreen—a gladsome sight to see,
You prattled cheerful on my knee,
This morn—that Telegram—woes me!
My poor, dear Willie

Now to thy dark, funereal dome,
All weeping sad, I sorrowing come,
Thy little coffin now thy home
My own dear Willie!

But thou'rt not dead? thy curls of gold,
In tresses o'er thy brow unfold,
Thine eye is bright, expression bold;
Arise, dear Willie!

There, take my hand; adown the walk,
Let me sweet hear thy silvery talk,
Pull winter flow'rets from their stalk,
My own dear Willie!

Hush! hush! a gathering mist upsprings,
A noise o'erhead of rushing wings,
An angel surely welcome sings—
Hold fast, dear Willie!

What voice is that which calls—"Arise,
Thy crown awaits thee in the skies,
Come with me now to Paradise;
All hail! dear Willie!"

Now in my breast arise dread fears,
Heav'n's glory through the clouds appears,
I cannot see thee through my tears—
Where art thou—Willie?

Hast thou ascended bright thy throne,
Thy ramblings o'er, thy brief life done?
Alas! Alas! I feel Alone—
Farewell—dear Willie!

The Abbey Mill stands about 150 yards to the west of the church, and is now used as a plash mill for cleaning yarn. "To what base uses we may return, Horatio?"

It is the current belief that the two old Scotch firs by the side of the turnpike road immediately to the west of the churchyard, were at one time enclosed within the Abbey grounds, and are as old as the Abbey itself. I have great difficulty, however, in giving credence to the popular belief, as it is scarcely within the range of probability, that that kind of tree can be of such great age. The Scotch fir if not cut down when it has reached the age of sixty or seventy years, decays and soon withers away. The larch, on the contrary, becomes the more endurable the longer it is allowed to grow.

The following rare plants are found in the parish, namely, *Stratiotes aloides, Lysimachia thyrsiflora, Tragopogon major, Teucrium chamaedrys, Hyoscyamus niger, Sambucus ebulus.*

The Abbey, it is believed, was built on the site of a Roman camp. The remains of the latter are still to be seen immedi-

ately to the east of the churchyard. It is described by Maitland in his History of Scotland, as a square of 1200 feet, fortified with two strong ramparts and large ditches. It has been surmised to be one of the famous camps of Lollius Urbicus, but this is mere conjecture resting on no solid foundation whatever.

From Balfour's Annals, we learn, the Abbey of Cupar is said to have been one of three religious houses which King Malcolm the Maiden founded in Scotland during the year 1164, the other two being the Hospital of Soutra, in Midlothian, and the Nunnery of Manuel, near Linlithgow. Wyntown in "De Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland," thus quaintly records its foundation:—

"A thowsand a hundyre and sexty yhere
And fowre . . . . .
Malcolme, Kyng of Scotland,
And peysybly in it regnand,
The elevynd yhere of his crowne,
Mad the fundatyowne,
Of the Abbay of Culpyr-in-Angws,
And dowyt it wyth hys Almws,
In honoure of the maykles May:
Relygyws Munkis thare dwellis ay,
All lyk to Cystwys in habyt;
We oys to call thame Monkis qwhyt."

The Cistertian monks, referred to by Wyntown, were known also as white monks, their garments with the exception of the cowl and scapular, being entirely white. Fordun, in his "Scotichronicon," says—"Anno MCLXIV., de consilio Waltheri, Abbatis de Melros, rex Malcolmus, fundavit nobile monasterium de Cupro-in-Angus." He adds further on—"Hoc Anno (1233) dedicatæ sunt ecclesiæ de Newbotil Abirbrothoc, et cupro." In regard to the revenues of the Abbey, Boece says,—"Ea est abbacia divæ virgini sacra, amplissimis dotata redditibus. Inhabitant eam viri religiosi ordinis Cistertii, multa pietate celebres; nec in hunc usque diem ullo notati manifesto flagitio."

In the Book of Assumptions, the rentals of the Abbey were

valued at £1886, 8s. 6d; and by Keith at £1238, 14s. 9d, in money, besides wheat, bear, meal, and oats, amounting altogether to 180 chalders, 30 bolls, 9 pecks, and 5½ lippies. Malcolm the Maiden, founder of the Abbey, contributed also very largely to its revenues and endowment. Of these gifts there are two charters, dated from Traquare, witnessed by Gillebride, Earl of Angus, and other notables, which were afterwards confirmed by William the Lion. These deeds confirmed to the monks of Cupar, the whole of the King's lands of Cupar, support from the royal forest, and fuel also therefrom for the use of the monks. King William and Alexander II. were both princely benefactors of the Abbey, the former giving the lands of Aberbothry, Keithock, and Parthesin (Pearsie) and granting the monks (1165-6) freedom throughout Scotland from tollage, passage, markets, and other customs, etc., and the latter, among his many grants, were a discharge to them "airimam waytingam quam facere solebant falconariis predecessorum meorum de terra de Abrith," and a yearly gift of ten pounds of silver from the lands of Glenisla.

The greatest benefactors of the Abbey, however, whether for extent or value, were undoubtedly the Hays of Errol. Soon after William of Hay received from King William the Lion, the manor of Errol. About 1170, he made a donation of the lands of Ederpoles in that district, to the Abbey of Cupar, in pure and perpetual alms. The family during many successive generations, continued by their grants of net fishings in the Tay; pasture and fishings of Ederpoles; and lands in the Carse of Gowrie, considerably to enrich the revenues of the Abbey. In 1585 (Spalding Club Miscell.) is recorded upon a tablet preserved at the monastery, the seventh Earl of Errol was buried at Cupar beside thirteen of his predecessors.

It also appears from Douglas' Peerage, Brev. Reg. de Cupro, Balfour's Annals, &c., that William of Montealt, William of Muschet, Henry of Brechin, Thomas of Lundie, Sir James Lindsay of Crawford, and the princely families of Panmure and Athole, were early and extensive benefactors of the

Abbey. Possessing lands in addition to those already enumerated, in the parish of Fossaway; the estates of Keithock, Arthurstone, Denhead, Balgersho, Cronan, in the parish of Cupar; and Cupar Grange, the home-farm of the Abbey, and country seat of the Abbot, in the parish of Bendochy; and Drimmie, Persie, and Monk's Cally, in the same neighbourhood, it must have been at that early period, one of the most richly endowed religious houses in the country.

From the time of the first recorded Abbot, Fulc, in 1165, to that of Donald Campbell, fourth son of Archibald, second Earl of Argyll, who was appointed Abbot on the 18th of June 1526, a long line of illustrious names continued to enrich the historic annals of the Abbey of Cupar. Campbell was, in many respects, the most eminent of the Abbots of Cupar. He was one of the twenty lords, who, in 1546, composed the secret council of the Earl of Arran; and owing probably, to his high birth and great influence, was for sometime lord privy seal to Queen Mary. He was appointed to the See of Brechin on the death of Bishop Hepburn, but according to Keith's "Scottish Bishops," owing to his favour for the reformed doctrines, his appointment was not confirmed by the court of Rome, and he never assumed the title of Bishop. He practically showed his leanings to the Reformation by attending the parliament in August 1560, which annulled the Papal jurisdiction in Scotland.

Campbell, the last Abbot, died in 1562, or about two years after the overthrow of the Church of Rome, in Scotland. To each of his five illegitimate sons, he gave an estate out of the Abbacy. The church properties assigned to them respectively were Keithic, Balgersho, Denhead, Cronan, and Arthurstone. Two of Campbell's sons,—Nicol of Keithic, and Donald of Denhead—were interred in the church of Bendochy, where their tombs are still to be seen. After the Reformation the Church lands which fell to the crown, were bestowed by the king on special personal favourites, who were called

Commendators. Those of the Abbey of Cupar, were given to Leonard Leslie, who died in 1605, at the advanced age of eighty-one, and was also buried in the same church. He is designed upon his tombstone, which is very entire, as "*Dominus de Cupro*," and Commendator of Cupar.

The oldest known seal of the Abbey belongs to the time of Abbot Andrew, in 1292, which bears, according to Laing's Scottish Seals, "the design of a hand vested, issuing from the sinister side of the seal, holding a crozier, between two *fleurs-de-lis*." Besides this counter seal, there are three other seals described by Laing. The principal one of the three,—which all belong to the time of Abbot Donald—is "a rich design. Within a gothic niche, a figure of the Virgin sitting, holding in her right hand a bunch of lilies, and her left supporting the infant Jesus standing on a seat beside her; in the lower part of the seal, within an arched niche, an Abbot in front, with a crozier, kneeling at prayer; at the sides of the niche are two shields, the dexter one bearing the arms of Scotland, and the sinister three escutcheons, being the bearing of Hay," with the legend, "S'COMUNE CAPITU LI MON DE CUPRO."

The Abbey of Cupar was, on several occasions, the temporary residence of the king and court. King Alexander II. visited this Convent in 1246, and on the 12th November of that year executed a charter dated from the Abbey, by which he granted a hundred shillings to the Abbey of Arbroath. Robert the Bruce, on 25th December 1317, confirmed the charters of the lands of Eskdale to Sir John Graham, also dated from the same place. King Robert II. was at the Abbey on several occasions during the year 1378; and Queen Mary in August 1562, visited Cupar while on her journey to quell the famous Huntly rebellion in the north. Sir William Wallace taxed the hospitality of the Abbey in 1297, and so frightened the Abbot and monks that they fled in a body at his approach, leaving him and his followers in the undisturbed possession of the Convent.

King James VI. having, according to Jervise, united the remaining lands and baronies of the monastery into a temporary lordship, conferred them on 20th December 1607, with the title of Lord Cupar, upon James Elphinstone, second son of the first Lord Balmerino. Lord Cupar died some sixty years afterwards, and having no family, the title and estates devolved on his nephew, the third Lord Balmerino. This nobleman having joined the standard of the Pretender, the temporal lordship of Cupar, together with the patrimonial estates of the family, were forfeited to the crown in 1746.

The office of hereditary bailie of the regality of the Abbey, was conferred by Abbot Donald, in 1540, upon James, Lord Ogilvy. The Earl of Airlie, in whose family the office had continuously remained, received £800, in compensation for the loss of this distinction, when, in 1747, heritable jurisdictions were formally abolished.

In the Ogilvy family also was vested the office of heritable porter or gate-keeper to the Abbey of Cupar. The earliest appointment to this office, was made by the Convent in the time of Abbot John, a charter being then granted to John Porter, of the office of porter of the Monastery. This office became vested in the Ogilvys in 1589, a contract having on the 12th March of that year, been entered into betwpen William Ogilvy of Easter Keilor, and "John Faryar," porter of the Abbey, the adopted son of Robert Porter, anent the office of porter of the monastery, cell, and porter lodge, and pension of 55 merks, &c. This was followed by a charter of the office, by the said "John Faryar," or "John Fairhar," with consent of Robert Porter, to William and Archibald Ogilvy in life-rent and fee, dated 26th May 1590. (*Breviarium Antiqui Registri de Cupro in Anegus.*)

After passing through a great many vicissitudes of fortune, such as feuds in the year 1478, with Alexander Guthrie of that ilk, for trying to evade the payment of thirlage "anent a milne biggit on the landis of Kyncaldrum, and holdin of the multers of the corns of the samyn;" in the following year

with Alexander Lindsay, son of the Earl of Crawford, for, "the taking and halding of twa monkis of the said Abbey, (of Cupar) and spulzeing of thair horses parking at thair place, and chusing of thair servandis;"—and some years subsequently with Robert Hay, son of Tullymet, who had, with a number of associates, harried their lands of Pert of "five skore ky and oxen, and four hors and meris," all taken from "the hirddis, seruandis, and tenentis of the landis of the convent;" the Abbey's affairs got into a more settled state in the time of Abbot William, and the brotherhood found sufficient leisure to direct its attention towards the practical improvement of its valuable property.

Tacks of land were granted in liferent to John Pylmore, and his wife, Catherine Nicholson, and, "to ane ayr maill lachfully gottin betwiex thaim tua." The lands were contiguous to Cupar, then called "our burgh of Kethik;" and the tenants were to have right to "fewell in our Monkmuir, as we sall assygn to thaim, with tua Kyis gyrs in the commonties of Baitchelhill and Gallweaw, fail and dowet, with discretion as effeirs." They also bound themselves to "put the said toft, zard, and crofts, till all possibyl policy in biggyn, of gud and sufficiand zeird houses for haw, chawmerys, and stabuls, to resave and herbry to the nowmer of xij or xvj horses honestly as effeirs, for hors meit and manns meit, sua that of reson thar be sein na fault in thaim; plantand fret tris with thair defensours; and they sall keip our medowis, wards, and broumer parks frae thaimself and thair catel, under pain as efferis." The Abbey bound itself, on the other hand, to protect and defend the tenants, and "the langest liffer of thaim, but fraud or gyle." (Spalding Club Miscell.)

The tenant of Campsie, in the parish of Cargill, Alexander Macbroke, advocate, besides an annual money rent of twenty pounds Scots, was bound to make payments in kind to the Abbot and convent, of "four dozen poultrie, with all aryage, and carriage," &c., and on receiving twenty four hours' warning, he had to "find ane sufficient rowar to the fishing of

Neither Campsey, with an carriage man to bring hame the fishe frae the samyn; with sufficient wax to St Hannand's lyght and chapel: And also, that the said place should at all times be patent and ready to him and his successors, brethren, and familie, as often as should happen him, or any of them to come therto, furnisht with four feddir beddis, and four other beddis, convenient for servandes, with all the sundry necessaries pertaining to said awcht beddis; and also upholding said place of Campsey in sclates, and biggin; and attour, finding burd claithis, towalis, pottes, pannys, plates, dishes, and other necessaries convenient for his hall, kitchen, panntre, bakehouse, brewhouse, and celler, as effeirs to his honesty and familie alenarlie, with elden of sawn wood and browme." Old Stat. Acct. of Scot.)

The extent of the Abbey buildings must have been great, and its external appearance imposingly grand, as were all the monasteries of Scotland in the heyday of the Papal jurisdiction. Fanciful plans of the edifice were constructed by a working mason some hundred and twenty years after,—when according to Spottiswoode, the abbey was "nothing but rubbish." The only fragment of the building now remaining stands at the south-west corner of the churchyard, a venerable and much-prized relic, as this ivy-covered archway, some old stone coffins, imperfect pieces of pillars, and a few mutilated patches of ornamental masonry in the Early English and decorated styles of architecture, are all that remain of the once famous and magnificent Abbey of Cupar. It is understood to have been one of the first monastic houses destroyed in Scotland. But painfully complete as was its destruction by the infuriated biggots of the fanatical John Knox, under whose ill-timed orders they acted; the good citizens of Cupar ruthlessly demolished what remained,—including an arch of singular beauty, and other valuable relics—"for the purpose," as Dr Stevenson informs us, "of furnishing stones for building the present church!" Worse than this, it was literally turned into a quarry; from which unhallowed hands sacrilegiously

carried off the precious remains wherewith to build, forsooth! the ungainly houses and garden walls of the burghers! Many ancient carved stones may yet be seen built into dykes and ruinous walls throughout the town, very sad and deeply instructive memorials of the past. A finely cut shield also, bearing the royal lion of Scotland in excellent preservation, forms part of a common wall opposite the parish church, on the west side of the turnpike road leading to Dundee.

When last in Cupar, an old residenter of the town related to me the following tradition. An underground communication formerly existed between the solitary remaining arch of the ancient Abbey, already alluded to, and the neighbouring south-western Sidlaws. It was discovered by some workmen who were employed in the construction of a very deep drain, somewhere between the extreme points of the subterraneous roadway. One of the workmen more courageous than the rest, volunteered to explore the tunnel to the north, which he found to terminate immediately beneath the old crumbling archway; from which exploration he returned skaithless to his anxious and wonder-stricken comrades. Emboldened by his first successful attempt to unravel the mystery, he had the hardihood to attempt a solution of the remaining part of the mystical passage; and for this purpose to the great regret and consternation of his fellows, he fearlessly entered the dark unknown pathway leading to the south. All that day and night, and many succeeding days and nights they, as well as others, patiently watched and waited for his return. He never returned! Whether killed outright by the noxious vapours of the vault, or spirited away by the Evil One, as a punishment for his temerity, tradition averreth not. After a long time of weary watching, the entrance to the dreaded tunnel was, with fear and trembling, closed for ever, and the poor forlorn voyageur left mournfully to his fate!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

KETTINS.

"Can we love Nature over-much? In youth,
My young blood dancing wild in every vein,
And music in my footsteps light, I loved
Sweet Nature, with a warm first love, and hung
With all the ardour of a lover true,
Upon her rich vermillion lips, aglow,
In a wild transport of voluptuous joy;
And then I'd wander 'mong the leafy groves,
The harping forests ringing out their chimes
To fill my soul with melody; while all
The deep emotions of my yearning heart,
Were stirred to holy rapture, gushing forth
In joyous strains of never-ending song."

Rowena.

WE shall now leave the shadow of the grand old Abbey of Cupar, and proceed to the quiet sequestered village of Kettins in its immediate vicinity. Part of this parish is situated in Forfarshire, and part in Perthshire, its whole extent stretching along the southern part of the valley of Strathmore, at the base of the Sidlaw hills. The situation and surroundings of the village are extremely beautiful. Standing on the bridge, beneath which the placid streamlet runs gently on in its winding course to the Isla, the scene presented to the eye on a cloudless summer evening—the pretty little cottages with their flower and kitchen gardens; the tree-embossomed villa of Newhall on our left, the old-fashioned church and manse on our right; the finely wooded surroundings of Haliburton House in the distance; with the sweet begowaned village green between—could scarcely be surpassed for rich luxuriant beauty

With only one word of alteration, to Kettins, the fine line of Goldsmith might be aptly applied—

"Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain!"

Passing some flower-embowered cottages to the south, we enter the beautiful avenue which leads to Haliburton House. The seat of the ancient and historic family of Halyburton, a family intimately associated with the Scottish Reformation, is a fine old structure, embosomed among ancient woods, and is in every way worthy of its present much respected and very popular occupant. In some respects, it may be matter of regret, that at the death of its present owner, Admiral, Lord J. F. G. Halyburton, the estate passes away to the Marquis of Huntly, the next heir of entail.

The great grandfather of a highly esteemed friend of the writer, held the stirrup to "Great Pitcur," when mounting for the battle of Killiecrankie, and it was considered a bad omen that his horse's back broke when about half a mile from his own door, from the extreme weight of his armour. This omen was sadly verified by his falling, with his famous leader, in the battle. He, and his friend Claverhouse, were buried in the little churchyard of Blair, a short distance from the spot where they fell. The old church of Blair-Athole is now in ruins, but their burial places are still prominently to be seen —instructive memorials of that terrible conflict, when—

"Horse and man went down like driftwood,
When the floods are black at Yule;
And their carcasses are whirling
In the Gary's deepest pool.

"Horse and man went down before us,
Living foe there tarried none,
On the field of Killecrankie,
When the stubborn fight was done."

Two miles to the south of the village, are the ruins of the Castle of Pictur, which gave title to the family. Still further to the south, on the summit of the hill, stood in ancient times

the Castle of Dores, one of the many fabulous residences of Macbeth.

The outlines of a Roman camp can still be traced at Camp-Muir. A very ancient upright stone, some six or seven feet in height, said to have been erected by the Danes, is to be seen at Baldowrie, about two miles to the south-east of the village. The sculptured figures on this monument are very much defaced, so that nothing with certainty can be learned of its history.

In the churchyard, beside the burying-place of the Murrays of Lintrose, stands another upright stone about the same size, and similar in shape to those at Meigle and Glamis, but not in such a good state of preservation, the sculpture being almost entirely obliterated. The carving seems to have originally been of a very elaborate character. With the exception, however, of the figure of some animal on the right of the stone, the other figures are not recognisable to the extent of forming any just opinion of the original symbolic signs referring to its history and purpose of erection. The indifference and positive sacrilege of the burghers of Cupar, alluded to in the preceding chapter, seem to have extended their baneful influence to the quiet, unobtrusive villagers of Kettins, for, until very lately, this sacred relic of the past lay ingloriously in the bed of the placid rivulet, a degraded stepping-stone to either side of the village green, and irreverently trod upon by every clownish, unhallowed foot in the parish!

Some very handsome modern monuments adorn the quiet, secluded burying-place of Kettins, which is now religiously kept in the best order, standing out in this respect, in favourable contrast with most of the churchyards in our country parishes, where nothing is apparently so lovingly cultivated as docks and nettles and other noxious weeds! There are besides, some finely ornamented ancient stones, the monograms being as sharp in outline as when chiselled at first by the sculptor. Two flat stones at the entrance to the manse

exhibit some fine specimens of the symbolic signs in vogue a century ago—Death-heads, sand-glasses, cross bones, &c., the one of date 1770, and the other with the motto—*Pulvis et sumus.*

In my late cursory ramble through this favourite "resting-place," the oldest date on the grave-stones I could recognise, was 1722; and the oldest recorded sleeper below, that of Louis Pedrana, who died 29th April 1844, at the great age of ninety-one years. There must doubtless, however, be older memorials than those of the last century, in this very ancient churchyard, did the crumbling moss-covered stones allow of their being minutely deciphered.

On the finely-wooded estate of Lintrose, formerly called Todderance, and once a seat of a lateral branch of the Haly-burton family, situate about a mile south-west of the village, there was lately discovered a cave about fifty feet long, with built sides, paved floor, and two fireplaces. Various conjectures were hazarded as to the origin and uses of this singularly primitive dwelling-place; some supposing it to have been a winter retreat of the ancient Caledonians; and others, a hiding-place of the persecuted Covenanters.

Lintrose is interesting in another respect, inasmuch as it is indirectly connected with one of Burns' finest songs:—

"Blithe, blithe and merry was she," &c.

The heroine of this song was Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, distinguished by her sprightliness and beauty, as the "Flower of Strathmore." The poet met her in June 1787, while on a visit to the seat of her uncle, Sir William Murray of Ochtertyre. Beauty and affability combined in woman, had always a great charm for Burns, and this lovely and fascinating creature being then in her eighteenth year, seems to have captivated him exceedingly, and hence this favourite effusion of his muse. Miss Murray subsequently became the wife of Mr Smythe of Methven, one of the judges of the Court of Session.

In connection with the religious order of the Red or

Trinity Friars, Sir James Lindsay of Crawford, according to Jervise, granted, about the year 1390, to the brethren of the Holy Trinity, his house or tenement in Dundee to be an hospital or *Maisondieu* in which the old and infirm might reside. In confirming this charter of Lindsay's foundation of the hospital, according to the same authority, King Robert enriched it with a gift of the Church of Kettins and its revenues.

Among the many donors to the hospital, William Duncan, proprietor of Templeton of Auchterhouse, stands unenviously conspicuous, inasmuch as the deed conveying a donation from these lands, is attested thus :—"Villiame Duncane, with my hand twitching ye pen, led by ye notar becaus I can nocht vryte myself."

In the rental of the lands belonging to the Priory of Rostinoth in the "Miscellanea Aldbarensia," occur these characteristic entries in reference to the parish of Kettins, viz :—

Item de terris de baronia de Kethenys, iiij lib.
Item de molendino de de Kethynnes xis.
Item de terris de baldowry iiijs. iiijd.

In the reign of James VI., by a charter dated 15th November 1558, subsequently confirmed by another charter dated 24th May 1585, the Kirk lands of Kettins, now called Newhall, were disponed, according to Mr Gibb, by Friar Gilbert Brown, minister of the Holy Cross of Peebles, to James Small of Kettins, and Elizabeth Blair, his wife. It would thus appear, that prior to the Reformation, the church and kirk lands had been transferred to the ministry of Peebles. Anciently there were six chapels dependent on the Church of Kettins, viz., one at Peatie, another at South Corston, a third at Pitcur, a fourth at Muiryfaulds, a fifth at Denhead, and a sixth on the south side of the village of Kettins. Not a vestige of these chapels now remains.

The parish contains some rare plants, amongst which may be noticed the Geranium Sanguineum ; Parnassia palustris ;

Trientalis Europæa; Vinca Minor; Saxifraga Granulata; Anemone Memorosa; Hypericum humifusum; Trollius Europæus; Lobelia Dortmanna; Pilularia globulifera; and the Gymnadenia canopsea.

Returning at eventide from our pleasant excursion to this lovely and delicious neighbourhood, what sweet rural sounds salute our delighted ears:—The lowing of oxen on the plain, the bleating of sheep on the hills; the drowsy hum of the honey bees, the even-song of the happy birds; the cheerful lilt of the sturdy peasant returning from his labour in the fields, the distant bark of welcome home from his faithful watch-dog at the cottage gate; the plaintive sighing of the balmy winds among the rustling branches of the ancient trees, blent softly with the lapping silver sound of the gently flowing burn; and—

Hark! 'tis the cheerful thrilling song
Of happy children, who prolong
With merry, loud, untiring glee,
The forest birds' loved melody.
In yonder sylvan solitude,
Afar in depths of summer wood,
With glist'ring dew-drops on their feet,
They wild flowers gather fresh and sweet;
Or, decked with garlands bright and fair,
Wreathed gay around their sunny hair,
Their hearts from care and sorrow free,
They dance around the greenwood tree.
How sweet these artless wood-notes wild,
How blooming fair each happy child!
No woodland sounds I love so well,
None make my heart so rapturous swell,
As children's voices ringing sweet,
The hymning choir of heaven to greet,
Or silvery strains in summer wood,
'Midst Nature's wildest solitude,
Wide ringing o'er the list'ning plains,
In God-adoring, blessed strains!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CARGILL.

Coy with our sunny ringlets fair,
Do arch the zephyrs play,
While murmurs fondly at our feet
The wavelets of the Tay.

PROCEEDING on this bright morning a few miles to the west of Kettins, we reach the beautifully situated parish of Cargill. The scenery now becomes much bolder in outline, and altogether more richly diversified by wood and water, gentle eminence and luxuriant hollow, than that around the district we have left. The church and manse occupy a charmingly romantic site on the sylvan banks of the noble Tay, forming, with the adjoining well-kept burial-ground, one of the most delightful scenes on which the eye could rest. The original church, gifted to the Abbey of Cupar, would seem to have been in another part of the parish, the Priests' Den and the Priests' Well being a considerable distance from the present structure. On the top of a perpendicular rock which rises abruptly over the Linn at Campsie, are traceable the remains of an ancient religious house and burial-place, and being near the site of a Roman Camp, it is probable, according to Jervise, as the Gaelic words *Caer-Kill* mean either the kirk, or burial-place of the fort or camp, that the peculiar situation of this church or chapel had given the name of Cargill to the district.

The Muschets of Cargill were of Roman origin, and seem to have come to Scotland with William the Lion, the first appearance of them being in the year 1200, when Richard of Munficheth, witnesses a grant by that king to the Monks of Arbroath, of a toft in the burgh of Perth. (*Reg. Vet. de*

Aberb. 13). Twenty years later, William, the son of Richard, gave the Abbey of Cupar a grant of the common pasture of his lordship of Cargill, which his father had received from King William. This baron, who appears to have been afterwards knighted, witnesses various charters during the time of Alexander II. (*Jervise*). The male line of the family failed in the person of William, warder of the town and castle of Dundee for the English, during the early part of the Wars of Independence, who, in 1331, is a witness to a local charter; and the following year became Justiciary of Scotland. (*Spalding Club Miscell., v.* 10). Like his progenitor in England, he left three co-heiresses, one of whom, Mary, carried the lands of Cargill and Stobhall, by marriage, to Sir John Drummond, ancestor of the Earls of Perth; while the lands of Pitfour and Drumgrain, which belonged to the other sisters, Margaret and Dornagilla of Montefix, and also some estates in Dumbartonshire, were lost by forfeiture in the time of David II. (*Crawford's Peerage*).

The noble family of Drummond, one of the most ancient and illustrious of the Scottish nation, still possesses the Muschet estates in this district. Annabella Drummond, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Sir John Drummond and Lady Mary Muschet or Montefix, had the high honour of being married to Robert III. King of Scotland, and crowned with him at Scone in the month of September 1390. Queen Annabella was mother to James I., King of Scotland, and from her are lineally descended all the royal race of the Stuarts.

Very beautiful and romantic are the views along the Tay in this charmingly situated parish. The village of Cargill stands near the river about half-a-mile from its junction with the Isla. At this spot, and exactly opposite to the ancient Castle of Kinclaven on the other side of the river are the vestiges of a Roman encampment, now called the Castlehill. The encampment was defended on one side by the steep banks of the Tay, on another by a deep ravine; while on all

other sides where it was assailable, it was guarded by high breastworks and strong entrenchments. The fossæ are yet distinct, and the aqueduct by which they were filled from a neighbouring rivulet, is still in a good state of preservation. The site of the encampment, however, is now converted into a corn-field. In this camp, according to Bœthius, the Romans took up their winter quarters under Tribellius, after Agricola left him, and preserved their communication with other detachments of their troops who had advanced farther into the country, towards the foot of the Grampians.

Another interesting object in this parish is Stobhall, a venerable fabric, formerly a seat of the Perth family, now belonging to the representatives of Lord Willoughby d'Eresby. It is fancifully situated on a narrow peninsula on the banks of the Tay, and being of various kinds of architecture, must have been built at different times and on different plans.

The river, near the west end of the parish, forms what is called the Linn of Campsie, already noticed, by falling over a rugged basaltic dyke, which crosses the bed of the river at this place, and extends in a direct line many miles to the east and west of the Tay. At the distance of twenty miles to the westward, Drummond Castle stands on a similar rock, which is supposed to be a continuation of the same range.

A Roman road about twenty feet broad, composed of rough round stones, rudely laid together, passes along the high grounds. This military road is supposed to have been made by the army at Ardoch, to preserve a communication between their different camps, and as convenient for their after marches, had they conquered the country.

The village of Gallowhill in a field called the Gallowshade, is so named as having been a place of execution under the feudal system; and near the parish-school-house, to the north, is a well said to have been used by the executioner for washing his hands after being engaged in his bloody work. In this well, now partly filled up, some seventy or eighty years ago a

quantity of human bones were discovered. The well still goes by the name of "Hangies Well."

Near the village were, until lately, to be seen a number of large erect stones, said to have been of the same class of antiquities as the sculptured stones of Meigle. Upon these stones were representations of the moon, and stars, and the corn-field where they stood, is called the Moonshade, or Moonstane Butts to this day.

The parish is diversified by several artificial little hills or conically shaped mounds, called Laws. One of these at Lawton, being in the near neighbourhood of Macbeth's Castle on Dunsinane Hill, is supposed to have been the place where Macbeth dispensed laws and settled differences among his subjects.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BENDOCHY.

"Woodman, spare that tree."

Two miles from Coupar Angus, and towards the eastern boundary of Perthshire, we come to the borders of Bendochy, a parish which consists of two great divisions, the Highland and the Lowland. The Highland division nearest to the parish church is about eight miles distant, while its remotest point is upwards of thirteen miles off. In the parochial registers of the parish the name is written Bendochie, in 1642; Bennathie in 1704; and Bendochy in 1760. From the great uncertainty of Gaelic Etymology, it has been found very difficult to ascertain the true import of the name; some defining its meaning to be *Nether Hill;* others, *The hill of good prospect;* or, *The hill of two waters.*

Leaving these etymological differences to be reconciled by the learned in such matters, let us pause for a moment on the middle of the bridge over the Isla at Couttie, and watch the placid river's zigzag, meandering course among the hollows to the east until our eye rests with a sweet pleasure on the prettily situated manse of Bendochy on its gently rising banks to the north. How silent and lone! How shut out from the busy world does it seem! Yet for nearly half-a-century in that modest solitary manse has lived one of the most eloquent and accomplished ministers of the Church of Scotland. Yes, and in that little white-washed barn-like kirk has he been content to minister to a rural congregation, when he would have been admiringly welcomed as their pastor by the

wealthiest and most intellectual communions, worshipping in the noblest temples in the country.

Dr J. S. Barty, the present incumbent of Bendochy, was ordained assistant and successor to his father, Mr Thomas Barty, in 1829. He was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1868; and in the same year was entertained at a public dinner at Dundee in recognition of his great abilities as a minister of the Gospel, and for general services to his church and country. During the agitation for the abolition of the Corn Laws, he distinguished himself under the *nom-de-plume* of "Peter Plough," as an uncompromising opponent of the Abolitionists. He also contributed some able papers to Blackwood's Magazine, under the signature of "Cato the Censor."

Dr Barty, amongst his other accomplishments, includes that of a discriminating and enthusiastic botanist. In his elaborate description of the parish in the "Statistical Account of Scotland," he lovingly enumerates almost every plant found in it of interest to the botanical collector. The catalogue is so complete even at this date, that with the exception of a few plants in the adjoining parish of Coupar Angus, the student will find it contains the botany of a section of country extending from the base of the Sidlaws, across the valley of Strathmore, and over the Grampian range. To the east the practised eye of Don has left little to be discovered, but his researches do not seem, in the doctor's opinion, to have extended so far westward.

In this exhaustive enumeration of the Flora of the district, are included the *Hieracium sylvaticum*, a rare plant in Strathmore; the *Ornithopus perpusillus;* the *Lythrum Salicaria;* the *Scirpus sylvaticus;* the *Chelidonium majus*, &c.

In the highland part of the parish, the vegetation being of a sub-alpine type, are found, amongst other rare plants, the *Alchemilla alpina*, *Viola lutea*, *Meum athamanticum*, *Sesleria cærulea*, *Polygonum viviparum*, the *Primula elatior;* the *Listera ovata;* the *Pyrola rotundifolia;* the *Botrychium lunaria.*

The earliest date of the baptism register, Dr Barty states, is 23d January 1642. The proceedings of session commence with 11th September 1692. The marriage register begins in 1700. The minutes of session in the end of the seventeenth, and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, give some curious revelations of the history of the period. Regarding one offender, the doctor quotes—"the session thouyat fitt to bring him in sackcloth, and cause him acknowledge his guilt on his knees." And regarding another, she appears for the twentieth time before the congregation on the stool of repentance! Again, T. B., "being examined anent what was alleged anent his stricking Thomas Craigie, a boy, on the Sabbath day, answered that the said Thomas threw in a stone among the children, and that he went out and only shot him over, he being removed, the members after discoursing of it, thought fit to dismiss him with the session rebook." Again, the laird of —— having been cited, appeared, and being asked whether he did "scandalously go out on the fast day with his gun," answered, "that he went out only to fleg the tod from his sheep." He was dismissed with the session's rebuke. The following entry also occurs, viz.,—"Received from G. B. 2 lib. 9 sh with other 2 lib. paid by him before to the session, is accepted as satisfaction for his daughter's resiling from purpose of marriage with one A. B., after the publication of the banns." An assault in 1721, of a very extraordinary character, having been committed on the person of a servant by his master, the case was taken up by the civil magistrate. The master, however, was cited before the session. He appeared and gave in a paper which he called a "declinator," having in company with him Mr Charles Hay, writer in Cupar. The declining their jurisdiction seems greatly to have provoked the session, and "having considered the whole matter, the insolent carriage of the said W. R., in presuming to decline this judicatory, his bringing in a public notar on the Lord's day," &c., "they did, and hereby do refer the samen to the reverend presbytery of

Miggle to determine therein, in such a way as may either make the said W. R. obsequious to discipline, or bring him under ecclesiastical censure," &c. It is not recorded, quietly adds the doctor, whether the presbytery rendered the said W. R. "obsequious."

The Isla takes its rise in the Grampians and runs south-east with a rapid current, until it is joined by the sluggish Dean, and the "ireful Ericht," this latter river being composed of the united streams of the Blackwater and Ardle. Thus increased in its volume of water, the Isla meanders past the church and manse of Bendochy, after which its direction is south-west to the Tay, into which it falls at Kinclaven.

Nearly the whole of the parish having been at one time Abbey lands belonging to the abbacy at Coupar-Angus, there are, as may be supposed, several interesting antiquarian objects in the district. The names of Monk Mire, Monk Callie, the Abbey Mill of Blacklaw, indicate to the present day, the connection which subsisted betwixt this parish and the religious houses at Coupar-Angus. In ancient times there was a chapel at St. Phink, of which a small part of the foundation still remains. Near this place, as also at Pictfield, there were several cairns, below and around which human bones partially burned, bronzed battle-axes, and spear-heads have been found. At Monk Callie, there was also a chapel, and the burying-ground attached is still used as such.

The walls of the "parish church," Dr. Barty relates, "are very old. The pulpit is curious, being carved of oak, resembling John Knox's pulpit at St. Andrews, and evidently of the same era. There is a monumental stone in the back wall of the church to the memory of Nicol Campbell of Keithock, (son of Donald, Abbot of Coupar, and grandson of the Earl of Argyle,) who died 1587, aged seventy. Another in the west passage, (the inscription on which will soon be obliterated) to David Campbell of Denhead, the brother of Nicol Campbell. There are two other stones on the wall of the church, one to the memory of Leonard Leslie, entitled

Dominus de Cupro, Commendator of Coupar, who died 1605, aged eighty-one; and another representing a John Cummin of Couttie in this parish, dressed in a coat of mail, and standing on a dog; the date 1606."

We might now saunter "at our own sweet will," over level haughs and up gently sloping ridges in the lowland part of the parish, towards the confluence of the Ericht and Isla, until we reach the frontier of the Grampians; and then sniffing the mountain air of the Highlands, continue our delightful rambles to the hill of Persie where the wild roe breeds and abounds, and to which occasionally the red deer wanders from the herds of Caenlochan. We might also ply the "gentle art" in the angle of the confluence between the Ardle and Blackwater; or have a shot at the grouse or blackcock as they rise among the heather hills. But we shall, for the present, bid adieu to the pleasant scene; and while our eye again lovingly rests on the quiet, sequestered manse, "snugly embosomed in its own little grove of wood," let us listen to the warning voice of its incumbent which issues from its hallowed precincts—"Oh! ye, my successors, lift not up the axe against the trees. Touch not the old ash, that has stood for a century the sentinel of the manse, guarding it from the eastern blasts, and protecting from the storm the graceful birches that weep and wave their graceful branches below."

Since these pages were written, alas! this amiable and learned divine has passed away to his heavenly rest, leaving an odour behind him of rich and pleasant memories, none the least of which is the deeply cherished recollection of the writer's visit to the manse and braes of Bendochy only a few short months before his departure hence. Although feebler in body, he seemed stronger in spirit, his conversation being characterised by all the ardour and exuberance of youth. But his work was done, and premonitions were not awanting that the summons was already on the wing, and the chariot ready!

CHAPTER XXXIX.

BLAIRGOWRIE.

'Twas my delight to roam afar
In wild sequestered glens; by pine clad hills;
Where, on bold rocky eminences high,
The weird old castles, hoary grey with age,
Grand in their fading glory, moulder lone;
Their donjon keeps, rude battlemented towers,
With climbing ivy richly mantled green,
Still faithful clinging to the crumbling pile
Of feudal rude magnificence; the winds,
In eerie cadence, though the crevices
Loud wailing like the shrieks of drowning men,
Or damnéd spirits in their agony!

Rowena.

THE parish of Blairgowrie, which we have now reached, adjoins that of Bendochy, and lies on the north side of the valley of Strathmore, stretching along the gently rising heights till it terminates on the lofty summits of the Grampian mountains. The barony once formed a part of the extensive possessions of the family of Gowrie, and the name is, doubtless derived from the Gaelic word *Blaar,—a place where moor and moss abound*, with the addition of Gowrie, as the ancient name of the district.

The parish is unusually rich in lochs, rivers, bridges, and old castles. Of the first there are no less than six, viz. the Stormont Loch, Black Loch, White Loch, Fingask Loch, the Monkmyre Loch, and Ardblair or the Rae Loch. The rivers connected with the parish are the Ardle, and Blackwater, the Lunan, and the Lornty, all these united forming the Ericht, which flows along the north-east boundary of the parish, and

falls into the Isla, as already noticed, at Cupar Grange. There are five bridges in the parish, viz. the Bridge of Blairgowrie, across the Ericht; the Bridge of Craighall, where it recrosses the river; the Bridge of Cally, where it crosses the Ardle; the Bridge of Carsie, by which it crosses the water of Lunan, and the Bridge of Lornty, where the old military road crossed the the Lornty. Of castles, we have Craighall, Lady Lindsay's Castle, of which more anon; Newton Castle, situated close to the town, commanding one of the finest prospects of the great valley of Strathmore; Drumlochy Castle, on the north side of the Lornty Burn, the ruins of a once noble fortress; and at a short distance to the west of Drumlochy Castle on the opposite side of a deep ravine, the imposing ruins of the ancient Castle of Glasclune, which played no inconsiderable part in the bloody feuds between the Herons of Drumlochy and the Blairs of Glasclune.

The scenery around Craighall is of the most romantic and magnificent description, and although confined to a comparatively small compass can nevertheless scarcely be excelled not only as an enchanting but perfect embodiment of all that constitutes the essential elements of grandeur and beauty. Wood, water, chasm, rock are finely intermingled in all the light and shade so dear to the lover of Nature in her grandest displays of panoramic sublimity. There, through a deep ravine of savage rocks, their steep acclivities interspersed with the beautiful foliage of the hazel and oak, dark and sullen flows the gloomy river; up yonder on the higher verge of the cliff like the eyrie of the eagle, stands, or rather hangs, in its lone majesty the picturesque, and now classic Craighall, the prototype of the Tully-Veolan of Waverley. All around the scene is most enchantingly beautiful, and while encompassed with the mystical halo of the past, is pregnant with the tragic events of the present; for while our thoughts revert at first to the Baron of Bradwardine, they converge in the end on that fatal catastrophe by which, a few years ago, a young and blooming maiden met a horrible and untimely death by falling from that

precipitous cliff to the rocky bed of the yawning chasm, full three hundred feet below!

"Another resting-place," says Lockhart, in his Life of Sir Walter Scott, in allusion to the great enchanter's visit to this part of the country—"was Craighall, in Perthshire, the seat of the Rattrays, a family related to Mr. Clerk, who accompanied him. From the position of this striking place, as Mr. Clerk at once perceived, and as the author afterwards confessed to him, that of Tully-Veolan was very faithfully copied, though, in the description of the house itself and its gardens, many features were adopted from Bruntsfield and Ravelstone."

It is rather singular, however, and scarcely in accordance with this confession, that Sir Walter makes no allusion whatever to Craighall in his notes on Waverley. "There is no particular mansion described," he says, "under the name of Tully-Veolan; but the peculiarities of the description occur in various old Scottish seats. The house of Warrender, upon Bruntsfield Links, and that of old Ravelstone, belonging, the former to Sir George Warrender, the latter to Sir Alexander Keith, have both contributed several hints to the description in the text. The House of Dean, near Edinburgh, has also some points of resemblance with Tully-Veolan. The author, has, however, been informed, that the House of Grandtully resembles that of the Baron of Bradwardine, still more than any of the above." As to the garden,—which presented "a pleasant scene"—Sir Walter adds—"At Ravelstone may be seen such a garden, which the taste of the proprietor, the author's friend and kinsman, Sir Alexander Keith, Knight Mareschal, has judiciously preserved. That, as well as the house, is, however, of smaller dimensions than the Baron of Bradwardine's mansion and garden are presumed to have been." The explanation seems simply to be, that, with a few notable exceptions, the great Necromancer, either in his descriptions of men or places, did not slavishly copy any particular person or place, but filled in the details of his pictures from every fitting available source that came under his practised, ever watch-

ful eye. And hence, his baronial castles with their inmates, his lowland scottish homes with their sturdy yeomen or peasant proprietory are rather the types of the prevailing styles of architecture, and general features of society in a given age, than photographs of particular structures, or portraits of individual characters.

On the west side of the river, and rising perpendicularly to the height of 300 feet, is the famous precipice of *Craig Liach* or "The Eagle's Craig." At the base of this rock there is a low, dark, gloomy cave, and the scenery around is romantic and grand. Casting our eye upwards to the extreme verge of the precipice, we can discern the crumbling ruins of a circular tower, still popularly known as Lady Lindsay's castle. The scene would not be complete without some legend or traditionary story to invest with human interest these grey old walls and their savage yet romantic surroundings. Lord Lindsay, in the time of James III., occupied as his residence the Castle of Inverqueich, near the kirk of Ruthven. He was a lawless, unprincipled desperado, at one time renewing the family feuds with the house of Glamis, and at another fighting against his father in his struggle for the king. He was wounded in a duel, or single combat, by his younger brother, John. Removed to the Castle of Inverqueich, he is said by some to have died there of his wounds. Others assert that he was smothered in his bed with the knowledge and connivance of his wife. The evidence in support of the latter view of the case is certainly very strong, if not conclusive. In the MS. genealogy of the family, *ante* 1580, *Haigh Muniment-room*, it is said that popular rumour accused her of having smothered her first husband, Lord Lindsay, with a down pillow in the Castle of Inverqueich:—"He was smorit be his wife." It is also recorded in the "Genealogy of 1623," *ibid*, as likewise in Sir James Balfour's "Genealogy," in the Advocates' Library, that "he was smored in his bed at Inverqueich, and, as was thought, not without knowledge of his wife."

This took place on the 16th September 1489, and the

countess was Janet Gordon of the Huntly family, granddaughter to James I. She must have been a very different character from her sister, Catherine Gordon, celebrated for her beauty as "The White Rose of Scotland." This lady was given in marriage by her cousin-german, James IV., to Perken Warbeck, then believed to be the real Duke of York, and whom she never deserted in all his subsequent misery. Their mother was the Princess Annabella, daughter of James I.

Tradition saith, that although Lady Lindsay had other two husbands, and survived both, her spirit, when she died, haunted for ages the castle and surroundings of Inverqueich, and points out that high table rock in this romantic glen of Craighall, as the scene of the penance imposed for murdering her husband, which was, that she should sit upon it and spin night and day till the thread should reach the river beneath.

Assuming this task not to be impossible of execution within a given time, a much severer penance has been imposed, or rather added, by subsequent traditions, *id est*, that Lady Lindsay shall live out her punishment on this Craig Liach, or the Eagle's Rock, at Craighall, being doomed to spin a long unbroken thread,—sufficiently long to reach from the remotest part of her rocky habitation up to the heavens, by which, when accomplished, she is to be permitted to mount to the spheres, and enjoy for ever the society of her injured lord!

Do you not pity the fair yet pining prisoner in that lonely tower, as in imagination you picture her dreary monotonous misery, or listen to her faintly-heard plaintive supplications for mercy. But I forbear—the sullen river weeps not, the sultry breezes sigh not; no sympathetic response comes from the leaden air above, no answering echo issues from the gloomy depths below—all is silence—darkness—gloom; the voiceless birds hide themselves in fear among the branches, the very denizens of the woods are startled by the ominous sound of their own footsteps!

Newton Castle, in the immediate vicinity of the town, as already noticed, and occupying an elevated site, is a very

picturesque object of itself and is visible from a great distance. The whole structure is very imposing, being considered a good specimen of the castellated style of baronial residences which prevailed in the seventeenth century. The only legend connected with this ancient mansion is in the shape of a ghostly apparition—the "Green Lady,"—so named because of her dress being that of green silk. This mysterious personage, it is averred, haunted in days of old, the grounds around, and the apartments within the Castle, but as no authentic records of her movements have been preserved, it is left to the individual fancy of her admirers to fill up and finish the sketchings of her exploits, which otherwise might evaporate in the undefined mists of a superstitious antiquity.

The parish church occupies a commanding situation on the summit of the Hill of Blair. Behind the church there is a finely wooded ravine, descending almost perpendicularly to the bed of the river on the east. The prospect from the church-yard embraces the whole valley of Strathmore from its extreme boundary on the west to the Hunter Hill of Glamis on the east; a prospect of unparalleled sublimity and beauty combining the luxuriant loveliness of the richly wooded, cultivated valley, with the magnificent grandeur of mountain scenery in all its varied aspects of light and shade so dear to the lover of Nature, and so highly prized by the painter and the poet.

The parochial registers of this parish, like those of Bendochy are curious and instructive, and throw a startling light on the manners and customs of our fathers. From these ancient Sessional records, unearthed by Mr William Shaw Soutar, I may be permitted to give a few specimens.

First, as to strictness of discipline:—"October 15, 1648, The minister asking if there was any new scandal, the session declare that George Clyde, Andrew Keay, and Walter Butchart, were shearing corne the last Sabbath, and George Watson did threshe the said Sabbath. The kirk-officer ordained to summon them against ye next day." In obedience

to the summons, the culprits duly appeared before the august tribunal:—"October 29, 1648, the above parties called comperit, quho, after long denying, at last being convinced, confessed the breach of ye Sabbath, as they alleged after sunsetting. After ye minister had aggravated yair sinne, by shewing yat ye whole Sabbath is religiouslie to be observed not only in the Kirk, but in yair private families, the sessione ordain them to satisfie ye next Lord's day, before ye pulpit, in humbling themselves and acknowledging their breach of Sabbath before ye congregation." On the 12th August, 1649, "compeared James Ireland (adultr.) in ye public place of repentance (for the *twenty-fourth time*,) and the minister aggravated his sinne, and exhorting him to sorrow and griefe of heart for the same, *was continued* to give *farther evidence* of ye trueth of his repentance." On the 24th February 1650," the Presbyterie Act anent brydals, ordaining thair sould not be above eight persons in ye syde, that thair sould be no debaucht pypars nor fiddlars, nor promiscuous dancing, nor excessive drunkennesse, was lykeways intimate out of ye pulpit." The following excerpt of minute of session, of date 19th July 1650, shews that there were contumacious individuals in those days who rebelled against the despotic government of the Kirk after a rather demonstrative fashion: —"the minister enquiring if there was anie new scandall, it was declared be some yat Andro Malcolme had most despytfullie and devilishlie railed against ye sessione, cursing ministers and elders. The said Andro ordained to be cited against next day." On being commanded to evidence his repentance in face of the congregation, and proving "refractory and contumacious," Andro was put into "the jouggs," till he agreed to obey the former ordinance.

Second, as to Sunday drinking. "November 27. 1648, Sundrie people fined," (under an ordinance previously made regarding the keeping of the Sabbath), "and ordained to satisfie before ye pulpit. Further, ye sessione, for the suppressing of this sinne upon the Lord's day, doe also hereby

ordain that every taverene keeper, or seller of aile, quho runs aile in tyme of sermon, or ye whole day in ane excessive manner, to any, sall pay hereafter, as much as ye drinkers, *toties quoties*, it sall be found they are guiltie therein." This ordinance not having apparently produced the desired effect, more stringent measures had to be adopted. Accordingly on the 5th August, 1649, it was further ordained, that the elders should search the "taverene houses" during afternoon service, "for contemners of the Word." This ordinance, also, proved a comparative failure, for there seems to have been "artful dodgers" in existence then, as well as in these "degenerate days," for on August 12. 1649, there occurs the following entry:—"The elders being required to give account of yair diligence anent searching ye tavern houses for contemners of God's worship, reported that two of them had gone through the toune, and searched, and had found sundrie in their awin houses, quho declared to them that they were presentlie going to ye church, before yair coming in to them. The sessione, therefore, to the end that the wicked prevaricatione of these persons may be better detected, ordaine that hereafter they search, not immediatelie at the beginning of ye afternoon service, but betwixt ye closure of the sermon and ye blessing, or betwixt ye last prayer and Psalme, that such persons as then sall be found may be clearly rendered inexcusable." Notwithstanding these severe ordinances, the breaking of the Sabbath, and "selling of aile" still continued to vex the sorely tried session. On the 16th January 1654, George Ambrose was called before the session to answer the double charge of being absent from church, and selling of ale, on the preceding Sabbath. George, being apparently a bit of a wag, "denied that he sold any aile that day in tyme of Divine service, and that the trow cause of his absence was, that he had but ane playd betwixt his wyfe and him, and that she had the use thereof that day, and was in the church!" The session were not however to be caught with chaff, and solemnly "reprove him of his sinne, and ordain him to keepe the kirk in tyme cumand, under ye paine of censure."

Third, as to things in general. On the 10th December, 1648, "the Covenant, and ane publick acknowledgement of the sinnes of the land, were publickly read before the blessing and a fast for this effect intimated, to be keeped on Thursday first, and the next Sunday immediatelie following; and the Covenant intimated to be renewed on ye said Lord's day." Witchcraft, and other "abominable sinnes," seem to have been the cause of other fasts being appointed by the Kirk:—"August 16th, 1649. The same day there was intimat and read causes of a solemne fast, appointed by ye Generall Assemblie to be kept throughout all the congregations of the kingdom upon ye last Sabbath of this instant;" the causes whereof were, *inter alia*, the following:—I. "We are to mourne for the continuance and increase of sinne and profanitie, especiallie of *the abominable sinne of Witchcraft.* II. We are to afflict our souls before ye Lord for ye sad interruption of the Lord's work in England and in Ireland, &c. III. Because our king hath *graunted unto the Irish rebells the full libertie of Poperie,*" &c. Another fast was ordained on the 14th November following, one of the causes of which was stated to be "ye pregnant scandall of witchcraft and charming within this part of ye land;" and again on 26th May, 1650, solemn thanksgiving is intimated "to be keeppit upon the 2d of June, the next Lord's day, for that wonderful victorie over James Grahame and his associates of late in the north." On the 10th October 1652, intimation is given of a collection "for the sadd condition of the toune of Glasgow, being half burnt." It would appear the members of Session drew the sword of war when occasion required, for under the date of 12th November 1653, it is intimated that there was "na sessione, in respect the elders were withdrawn in attending some of Glencairne's souldiers who were ranging throw the paroch." A meritorious act on the part of the Session must close these interesting extracts, viz:—"February 17, 1650. Given this day to Sir Robert Mubray, sometyme Laird of Barnbougall, now become through indigence, ane poor supplicant, twentie-foure shillings."

CHAPTER XL.

RATTRAY.

Join glad the poet's rhyme
That o'er the landscape swells,
Roll on the joyous chime
Of these sweet village bells.

We shall now cross the Ericht to the parish of Rattray, on our way to Alyth and the Den of Airlie. Although the etymology of the name be somewhat obscure, the probability is, that as there are records which bear the name of Rattray as early as 1066, that name had been transferred to the parish in general, the Castle of Rattray, on the Hill of Rattray, having anciently been the residence of the family of that name. As a place of greater security during the troublous times of intestine wars, the family, it would appear, removed from this hill to Craighall. With the exception of a few standing stones supposed to be the ruins of a Druidical temple, and the remains of the old Castle of Rattray, there are no antiquities of any note in the parish.

Of eminent men connected with the parish, Mr Donald Cargill—from whom maternally the writer is lineally descended, as he is, fraternally, from Mr James Guthrie, another no less celebrated martyr—deserves a distinguished place, as one of the ministers who lived and suffered in the troubled and unhappy reign of Charles II. He was born about the year 1610, at Hatton, in this parish, of which estate his father was proprietor. He studied at the University of St Andrews, and on being licensed to preach, was ordained minister of the Barony parish of Glasgow, where he remained till the

establishment of episcopacy in 1662. He was at the battle of Bothwell and received several wounds. The boldness of his nature was exhibited in his excommunication of the king and his principal officers in 1680. Shortly after, he was apprehended, tried and condemned by the Justiciary Court for high treason. The sentence was immediately carried into effect, and he was executed at Edinburgh, on the 27th of July 1681.

As we proceed on our way, how sweet to listen to the distant sound of these fondly cherished village bells, whose dreamy ethereal music now swelling up from the valley below and softly floating on the balmy summer air, carries our wandering thoughts, with traditionary swiftness, far away to the time, when, as Pliny informs us, small bells (tintinnabula) were suspended by chains in a monumental edifice erected by Porsenna, King of Etruria, near Clusium, five centuries before the Christian era. Suetonius also informs us that Augustus Cæsar hung bells of the same kind round the temple of Jupiter Tonans, at Rome. It is difficult, and perhaps impossible to ascertain, however, when bells were first used in religious edifices. The inventor of bells of that kind is generally reputed to be Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, in Campania, the invention dating from the beginning of the fifth century. Bells and bell-towers are repeatedly mentioned in the eighth century. One of the earliest of these bell-towers is the Campanile of St Peter at Rome. Mr Gunn says:—"The first bell-tower we hear of belonging to the Basilica, was built either by Adrian I., or by Stephen III. Anastasius assigns it to the latter. The date of this tower is, however, by Pompeius Sarnellus, placed higher, and perhaps justly. From a coin of Heraclius, found in the ruins of the latter, in the seventeenth century, he conjectures it was constructed about 610."

In his life of Eloy, written in 650, St Ouen, Archbishop of Rouen, mentions (Campanæ) bells. They appear to have been known in England, at the time of Bede, for the Arch-

bishop, in giving an account of the death of Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, represents the event as being miraculously made known to a nun of the monastery of Hakeness "by the familiar sound of a bell."

Coming down to the nineteenth century, we all know the intense effect which the distant sound of cathedral bells had on the iron mind of the great Napoleon, in the midst of his sanguinary career of boundless ambition and heroic victories.

In Scotland, however, we know little of the exquisite pleasure experienced in listening to the sweet music of the village and city bells of our more favoured sister, England. On a still Sabbath morning, every hamlet and town, every valley and hill, is vocal with the hallowed sounds of musical reverberating chimes, ringing out harmoniously from every ivy-covered belfry and lofty cathedral tower, till the outspreading landscape, far and near, is filled with divinest melody. And yet after all, dear reader, it is not the richness of the music, but the tender associations encompassing the sound of the "Sabbath bell," that is so dear to a Scotman's heart, whether he lovingly lingers at home among his native hills, or boldly braves the dangers of distant lands, where

> "No Sabbath bell
> Awakes the Sabbath morn,
> Nor sound of reapers heard
> Among the yellow corn!"

Very solemn and sweet at all times to the sensitive mind, are the sounds, of whatever kind, of distant music, but chief at balmy summer eventide, when it softly dies away among the distant hills, more dearly loved the farther from us it recedes, more sweet the fainter it becomes, like dying song, low breathed, of some pure sainted spirit gone to rest in the land o' the leal!

CHAPTER XLI.

ALYTH.

Oh ! whither shall we roam, my love,
By mountain, glen, or stream, or grove,
Where, on this gladsome summer's day,
Shall we, beloved one, hie away ?

CRAIGHALL and Rattray, with their romantic surroundings, having already been described, there is nothing more of sufficient importance to detain us longer on our way to the braes of Angus. We shall, therefore, at once proceed thither, taking the ancient town of Alyth on our way, not forgetting to cast a loving and admiring gaze on the beautiful Howe on our right with its many towns and villages, its churches, castles, woods, and streams; bounded grandly on the south by the undulating range of the Sidlaws, now clothed to their summits with hanging sylvan woods, or waving fields of golden grain; anon diversified by grassy uplands, and richly purpling heather hills.

Here comes the creaking, heavy laden waggon, slowly along the white and dusty road, and by it proudly walks the stalwart peasant, cracking his long whip loudly in the summer air, while cheerily whistling some favourite rustic air dear to his manly heart. There goes the fresh and rosy shepherd boy, with his fleecy flock of ewes and lambs, and his ever faithful collie dog keeping diligent watch and ward over the numerous, yet obedient flock committed to his charge. See how his canine sagacity is exercised in carefully tending, yet gently chiding yon little bleating lamb that, tired and bewildered, laggs wearily in the rear! While admiring the patient

docility of the flock, let us encouragingly stroke as we pass, the smooth silky head of their shaggy guardian, who, you will observe, repays our kindness by an answering glance of intelligent appreciation from his speaking eyes, and by expressively wagging for a moment his bushy tail, without apparently withdrawing his supervision from the little bleating lamb to which he pays far more attention than to the rest of its companions on account of its inability to keep pace with the straggling flock. Kindness to animals, as well as kindness to children, should be a loving part of our nature, which when exercised to either, will always bring with it its own reward.

The town of Alyth was created a burgh or barony in the reign of James III. It would seem, however, to have been a place of some importance at a much earlier period, for it is said that David Bruce, who reigned from 1341 to 1371, granted an edict in favour of that town, prohibiting Kirriemuir, Alyth, &c., from holding weekly markets, as being within the liberties of Dundee. The antiquity of the parish itself can be traced still farther back, for the lands of Bamff were granted by Alexander II., in the year 1232, to Nessus de Ramsay, the lineal ancestor of the present proprietor, Sir James Ramsay, Bart. In 1303, King David II. confirmed a charter previously granted by the Earl of Marr to the Lyndesays, afterwards Earls of Crawford, of the lands of Balwyndoloch, now Ballendoch; and by successive charters from Scottish Kings the family came into possession of nearly the whole of the parish of Alyth. In 1630, having fallen into straightened circumstances, that family having previously sold the greater part of their lands piecemeal, disposed of all their remaining property in the district to the family of Airlie.

The lower part of the parish lies in the valley of Strathmore, forming an irregular square of nearly four miles a-side. The parish is watered by the Isla and Ericht, and is also traversed by the burn of Alyth, and other minor streams. Mount Blair rises at the northern extremity of the parish to the height of 1700 feet. Three miles to the south of Mount Blair, is

picturesquely situated, on the banks of the Ericht, the hill of Kingseat, 1178 feet above the level of the sea. The other elevations of the parish are Barryhill, and the hills of Loyall and Alyth.

Notwithstanding the proximity of powerful royalist families, the people of Alyth seem to have adhered rigidly to the cause of Presbytery. During the troublous period, from 1640 to 1660, there occur several entries in the Session Records, as to intermissions of public worship, "because of the common enemy." During the greater part of 1646, Montrose's army was stationed in the immediate neighbourhood, to the great consternation of the inhabitants: as appears from the following entries, viz.,— "July 5 day 1646, first Sabbath. Given to Hendrie Gargill x sh^{u} for to go to the camp to trie and search some news from the malignants, and that he may forwarnisse of their cuming upon us. July 2 Sab: This day no preaching, because of the common enemie. July 3 Sab. and 4 Sab.: No preaching, because Montrose was so near us. August the first Sab. and 2 day: Ther was no preaching with us since the last Fast, (Feby. 1st) because the enemie was quarterit in our bownds. This day our minister taught."

Among the entries a few years afterwards, occur the following —viz., "August the last day 1651; This day no preaching, because our minister was taken on Thursday last by the Englishes, being the 28 of August 1651." "March the 28, 1652: No preaching, except only one Englishe trooper went up to ye pulpit, and made ane forme of ane preaching who hade no warrant to preach, whose text was upon the 45 Psalm, 13, 14 vs." After the Restoration, however, a change seems to have come over "the spirit of their dream," for we find both minister and people quietly submitting to the altered state of things:—"March 15, 1663: This day, the clerk writter hereof, being appointed and ordained be the minister and session to everie Sab., before the incoming of the minister to the pulpit, red this day," &c. In 1667, it is further recorded that Mr Thomas Robertson was inducted as assistant

and successor, with the usages and ceremonies of the Episcopal Church.

The Flora of the parish although not extensive, is yet rich in rare and beautiful plants, amongst which may be noticed the following, viz.—the *Alisma ranunculoides*, the *Scrophularia vernalis*, the *Senicio saracenicus*, the *Astragalus glycyphyllus*, the *Trollius Europæus*, the *Campanula latifolia*, and the *Gallium boreale*. In the upland districts may be found, the *Orobus sylvaticus*, the *Trientalis Europæa*, the *Saxrifraga aizoides*, and the *Erica vulgaris alba* (white heath)—these latter very abundantly.

The ruins of several old castles in the parish add considerably to its other attractions. The principal of these are the remains of the old castle of Inverquiech, situated at the junction of the Burn of Alyth with the Isla. The date of the erection of this castle is lost in the mists of antiquity. In a charter granted by Robert II. in 1394, to his nephew James de Lyndesay, it is mentioned as "the King's Castle of Inucuyth," and appears to have been even then in ruins. At Corb, there are also the remains of a castle, the name of which is unknown. It is supposed to have been a hunting-seat of the Scottish Kings, or of the Earls of Crawford, from its situation being on the borders of the forest.

The most attractive place, to the antiquarian, however, is doubtless the fort on Barry Hill which Chalmers considers to be coeval with the Roman Invasion. It would appear to have been a pictish entrenchment of great strength, the remains of which are still in a very perfect state of preservation. A deep fosse, about ten feet in height, seems to have protected the fort on the east and south; the other sides of the hill being so precipitous as to render such an artificial defence unnecessary. Some remains exist of a narrow bridge thrown over the fosse; and though there is no vestige of a well, there was, until lately, a very deep pond, which the tenants in their wisdom, thought proper to fill up, the spot of ground reclaimed being doubtless, in their eyes, of more value than antiquarian associations however ancient or important.

Numerous legends spread their mystic halo around this ancient fort. The chief of these may be said to be that referring to Vanora or Guinevar, already referred to in the description of the monuments traditionally erected to her infamous memory at Meigle. The title conferred by the local tradition, on the heroine of the story being that of Queen Wander, a malignant giantess, is not certainly so high sounding as that of the wife of King Arthur. The legends all agree, however, in representing this fortified castle as the residence or prison of Arthur's Queen. What after all, should the surmises of Captain Mitchell turn out to be the correct interpretation of these ancient monuments at Meigle, and thus at once sever the alleged connection between them and Barry Hill? Mr Mitchell considers them "as neither more nor less than the monuments of the Knights Templars, who unquestionably had a burying-ground at Meigle. At the top of the south face of the largest stone, the armorial bearings of the kingdom of Jerusalem may be distinctly traced, and the group of figures, now almost obliterated, which has been supposed to represent Vanora torn in pieces by wild beasts, (and on which the popular tradition was very probably founded), may be considered, with great probability, as an allegorical representation of Judea rescued by the Crusaders."

To the south of Barry Hill, there are several rude obelisks, or "Standing Stones," on one of which there is the mark of a large horse shoe, with indistinct traces of other figures. Tradition refers to the time of King Robert the Bruce, as the date of their erection, but they evidently belong to a much more remote period.

The parish records, Mr Ramsay states, commence in 1624, and the minutes of session in 1637. Many of the earlier entries given by him are extremely curious. One of the most remarkable is the entry for the 9th of February 1651, which is as follows:—"This day my Lord Ogilvy declared his repentance before the congregation, in the habit of sackcloth, confessed his sinful accession to General Major Middleton's

rebellion, and for his sinful miscarriages against the Covenant, and gave great evidence of his heartie grief for the samine, to the full satisfaction of the whole congregation." On the 18th of August, and first of September, 1649, fifteen soldiers, who had taken arms in what is called the "unlawful engagement," professed their repentance, and were admitted to the renewal of the covenant as a necessary preliminary to their participating in the communion. The cases of contumacy are numerous; and in addition to the classes of offences which usually fall under the cognizance of a church court, the Kirk session seems to have been frequently occupied with cases of "fechting and flyting," slander, &c., with occasional investigations into charges of witchcraft. Having regard to the changed circumstances of the times in which we live very few now will question the conclusion to which the late minister of the parish, Mr Ramsay, reflectingly arrived, viz.—"On the whole, however, if we may judge from the ecclesiastical records of this parish, the parochial police of that period, to which many are disposed to look back as a golden age of purity and piety, can hardly be regarded in any other view than as most injudiciously and unjustifiably rigid, and rather calculated to irritate and harden the offender, than to win him to repentance."

CHAPTER XLII.

DEN OF AIRLIE.

"Argyle has raised a hunder men,
A hunder men an' mairly,
An' he's awa doun by the back o' Dunkeld,
To plunder the bonnie house o' Airlie."

Old Ballad.

THE name of the parish of Airlie is supposed to have been Airdly, from the Gaelic Aird, signifying the extremity of a ridge, and which exactly describes the locality of Airlie Castle. It is situated in the western part of Forfarshire, and borders upon Perthshire. The southern part stretches along the Howe of Strathmore, gradually rising in a series of undulating ridges, forming a portion of the braes of Angus. The principal ridge stretches along the north side of the parish, and terminates in a deep rocky gorge, through which the impetuous Isla pours its troubled waters from the high lands into those of the low country. At Airlie Castle, this wild ravine separates into two parts, which form, respectively, the channels of the Isla, and the Melgum.

As the genealogy of the noble house of Airlie will be more appropriately alluded to in the succeeding chapter, suffice it here to state, that this noble family became connected with the parish in the year 1458, when Sir John Ogilvy of Lintrathen, received a grant of the Castle and Barony from James II.

The Den of Airlie, celebrated for its fine river scenery and romantic beauty, extends about a mile below the junction of the Isla and the Melgum, and forms one of the most picturesque and beautiful scenes to be met with in the country. The luxuriant brushwood of the Den consists chiefly of oak,

and is remarkable as containing the most easterly remains of natural oakwood on the southern face of the Grampians.

The Den of Airlie, besides its unrivalled scenery, and historical associations, is classic ground to the botanical student, having been a favourite resort of the elder Don, and the scene of some of his earliest discoveries. Here, amongst many other rare plants enumerated by Dr. Barty, are to be found, in comparatively so small a space, the *Ribes petræum* or rock currant; the *Orobus niger*; the curious *Paris quadrifolia* rare in Strathmore; the interesting *Nidus-avis*; the *Vicia sylvatica*, with its trailing festoons of beautiful flowers; the showy *Epilobium augustifolium*; while the gray walls of Airlie Castle are redolent with the sweetly scented wall-flower, the *Cheiranthus Cheiri*, a favourite plant in the garden, looking still more attractive in its wild natural beauty, as it clings with loving tenacity to the sheltered crevices of the classical hoary pile.

Come—let us wreathe a garland sweet
Of wild-flowers blooming at our feet,
And twine the mountain heather green,
To weave a crown for fairy queen.
Now mark the varied coloured hue
Of mountain flowers—some softly blue,
And glistering bright with pearly dew;
Some blooming like the purple bell,
Which loves the lonesome mossy dell;
While some, all hung with silver sheen,
Look pure as angels' robes, I ween,
And gently humming sounds distil,
Like distant song of flowing rill;
And though the music deeper swells,
The bee, deep in these silvery cells,
Pursues her task with busy feet,
And loads her wings with nectar sweet!
Of mountain flowers then twine the wreath—
How rich the perfume which they breathe!
But mark the leaves of every flower,
And say if aught in garden bower,
Can e'er these gorgeous tints outvie,
Those beauteous flow'rets of the sky.

How delicate their colours bright
Of petals, purple, blue, and white;
What rich embroid'ry gems the form
Of these lone children of the storm!

Although in reality, it was at the Castle of Forter, in Glenisla, that the incidents recorded in the popular old ballad of the "Bonnie House o' Airlie," took place, tradition still clings to Airlie Castle, as the scene of Argyle's cruelties, just as it tenaciously does to the Castle of Glamis, as the locale of the murder of Duncan and the scene of the deadly combat between Macduff and Macbeth.

It is matter of history, however, that the Earl of Airlie was one of the most faithful and distinguished champions of the royal cause, and that in 1639 the middle parts of Scotland were put under his command by king Charles I. In the year 1640, to avoid the necessity of subscribing the covenant, the Earl covertly passed over to England, and knowing this, his hereditary enemy, the Earl of Argyll, obtained authority from the Committee of Estates to take and destroy the Castle of Airlie and that of Forter, in Glenisla, which was also one of the seats of the Airlie family. Argyll, according to Spalding, raised a body of 5000 men of his own clan, and proceeded in the month of July to execute his commission. The Castle had been left in the charge of Lord Ogilvy, the Earl's eldest son, —who had recently maintained it against the assault of the Earl of Montrose—but on the approach of Argyll's army, he regarded all idea of resistance as hopeless, and abandoned it at once to the assailants, who plundered it of everything which they coveted, and could carry away with them, and burned it to the ground.

Argyll not only directed the siege, but personally lent a willing and earnest hand in the work of demolition. According to the parson of Rothiemay—"He was seen taking a hammer in his hand and knocking down the hewed work of the doors and windows till he did sweat for heat at his work."

It will be observed, that the ballad, instead of taking the

poetical licence of exaggeration, very materially diminishes the number of the besiegers, in as much as while the historian states the army of Argyll to have amounted to 5000 men, the lyrist modestly puts down the number as only a 'hunder.' The statement that "he's awa' down by the back o' Dunkeld," may have been the foundation of the tradition, that the men who burned Airlie Castle halted on the night previous at the haughs of Rattray.

True to his commission, Argyll and his men also demolished the Castle of Forter, but tradition saith the Campbells kept possession of it for several months before they destroyed and abandoned it. It was here where the Lady Ogilvy was residing, and not at Airlie Castle, when the destruction of the two houses was perpretated by Argyll. Lady Ogilvy, it is said, was treated with the greatest cruelty by Argyll, "who not only would not allow her, although far advanced in pregnancy, to remain at Forter till she was brought to bed, but even refused to grant permission to her grandmother, and his own kinswoman, the Lady Drimmie, to receive her into her house of Kelly."

The house of Craig in Glenisla, although not included in Argyll's commission, was destroyed at the same time. The particulars of the event are thus related by Gordon:—"At such time as Argyll was making havoc of Airlie's lands, he was not forgetful of old quarrels to Sir John Ogilvy of Craig, cousin to Airlie; therefore he directs one, sergeant Campbell, to Sir John Ogilvy's house, and gives him warning to sleight it. The sergeant coming thither found a sick gentlewoman there, and some servants, and looking upon the house with a full survey, returned without doing anything, telling Argyll what he had seen, and that Sir John Ogilvy's house was no strength at all, and therefore he conceived that it fell not within his orders to cast it down. Argyll fell in some chafe with the sergeant, telling him that it was his part to have obeyed his orders, and instantly commanded him back again, and caused him deface and spoil the house."

The old castle of Airlie is supposed to have belonged to the same age as those of Redcastle, and Castle Guthrie, the latter being the seat of Guthrie of Guthrie, the most ancient family in the County of Angus. It occupied a commanding site on the rocky promontory at the confluence of the Melgum and the Isla. A building of great strength, both as regards position and masonry, it ranked as one of the noblest and most formidable baronial residences in the country, and previous to the introduction of artillery, must have been almost impregnable. In its original state it had the form of an oblong quadrangle, and occupied nearly the whole summit of the promontory. The massive wall which protected the castle on the eastern and most accessible side, together with the portcullis entry, still remain in connexion with the modern mansion of Airlie. The fosse also continues distinct, although now partially filled up to suit the questionable ideas of modern improvement. And these few remains are all that is left of the "Bonnie House o' Airlie!"

Byron says—"Not that I love man the less, but Nature more," which, to be in full accordance with my own feelings, I should alter thus—Not that I love Nature less, but mankind before. Intensely as I adore and love Nature in all her varied moods of sunshine and storm, sublime magnificence and golden beauty, I still more intensely adore and love the human heart, with all its warm affections, tender emotions, its deep-seated, holy, unchangeable love. Hence, I never feel my landscapes to be complete, without the voices of children mingling in the diapason of song. There may be the choral melody of birds, the sweet murmuring of streams, the mystic music of the distant sea, but all is to me comparatively a world of silence without human interest being manifested in the scene, and human voices blending with Nature's far resounding hymn of universal joy.

So, as when at Craighall, our thoughts at first reverted to the mythical baron of Bradwardine, they converged in the end on that recent catastrophe, by which a young and blooming

maiden was suddenly bereft of life, just because of its human interest, and having in it that "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin;" we now leave the recital of the barbarous cruelties of Argyll, and the cruel wrongs of Airlie, and fix our thoughts on the sad and sudden death of the young Cambridge student, at the very moment the prize of his ambition seemed to be within his reach.

Mr Andrew Craik, M.A., and fourth wrangler at Cambridge, was born and brought up on the Braes of Airlie, where his father has a small pendicle. From his boyhood, he evinced great aptitude for learning, displaying more than ordinary talents in mastering the elements of classical and general literature. From the parish school of Airlie, he went to the University of Aberdeen, where he was a distinguished student. The bursaries and prizes which he gained at Aberdeen and in Glasgow, amounted to £500, which enabled him to pursue his studies without requiring any assistance from his friends. At Cambridge, he at once gained a scholarship, and was appointed by the University to lecture in some of the principal towns in England. Had he lived a few days longer, he would have got his Fellowship. A good classical scholar, and a distinguished mathematician, his whole career was one of splendid success. He died, after a few hours' illness, at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, on the 2d June 1874, at the early age of twenty-seven.

His early death has caused wide-spread regret. His winning, unassuming manners endeared him to the poor; his gentlemanly bearing and well-stored mind, made him a welcome guest at the tables of the higher classes. The Earl of Airlie, with his accustomed discernment and generosity of heart, took an early interest in his welfare, and encouraged him to proceed bravely on in his literary career; while a letter from the countess, congratulating him on his Cambridge successes, was one of the earliest received, as it was amongst the most highly prized by his mother.

Only a few days before his death, he wrote home that he

had secured a lectureship, and that he had a hope almost reaching to assurance, that he was soon to receive a Fellowship of considerable value. He expressed himself as longing for home; that, rich as were the English landscapes which daily met his eye, no fields were so green, nor woods so beautiful as those of Airlie.

THE BONNIE BRAES O' AIRLIE.*

Bonnie sing the birds in the bright English valleys,
Bonnie bloom the flowers in the lime-shelter'd alleys,
Golden rich the air with perfume laden rarely,
But dearer far to me the bonnie braes o' Airlie.

Winding flows the Cam, but it's no my ain loved Isla,
Rosy decked the meads, but they're no like dear Glenisla,
Cloudless shines the sun, but I wish I saw it fairly,
Sweet blinkin' through the mist on the bonnie braes o' Airlie.

Thirsting for a name, I left my native mountains,
Drinking here my fill at the pure classic fountains,
Striving hard for fame, I've wrestled late an' early,
An' a' that I might rest on the bonnie braes o' Airlie.

Yonder gleams the prize for which I've aye been longing—
Darkness comes atween my struggles sad prolonging;
Dimly grow my een, an' my heart is breaking sairly,
Waes me! I'll never see the bonnie braes o' Airlie.

* Set to music by Alfred Stella.

CHAPTER XLIII.

KIRRIEMUIR.

"Kirriemuir bears the gree."
Drummond.

PROCEEDING eastward, and passing by the dark woods and castellated Mansion of Lindertis, the next parish we reach is Kirriemuir, anciently *Kil-marie*, a burgh or barony, of which the old Earls of Angus were superiors. It skirts the north side of the valley of Strathmore, and its locality is discernable from a great distance, the hill of Kirriemuir rising abruptly to a great height immediately to the north of the town. The name is supposed to be compounded of two words, *Corrie-mor, the large hollow or den.* The situation of the town on the side of a ravine or den, fully bears out the derivation. Nothing authentic is known respecting the early history of Kirriemuir. Tradition is silent, and history only records some miniature battles between the Ogilvys and Lindsays in 1447.

The noble family of Airlie connected with this parish, can trace their genealogy as far back as the reign of William the Lion, who succeeded to the crown of Scotland in 1165, being descended from Gilbert, third son of Gillebride, second Earl of Angus. King William conferred on Gilbert the lands of Powrie, and those of Ogilvy in the parish of Glamis. From the last named, the surname of Ogilvy was assumed. Sir James Ogilvy was created a peer by King James IV., by the title of Lord Ogilvy of Airlie, and sat in his Parliament in 1491. The title of Earl was conferred on the eighth Lord Ogilvy in 1639, by King Charles I. After the rebellion in 1745, in which Lord Ogilvy was engaged, the title was for sometime

in abeyance, but was restored in 1826, to David, the late Earl, and father to the present nobleman who so worthily bears the titles and honours of this ancient house.

The Ogilvys of Inverquharity trace their descent from Walter Ogilvy of Auchterhouse, and had conferred on them the lands and barony of Inverquharity in 1420. The members of this family have generally distinguished themselves, and have held, in different reigns, the highest military and civil appointments. Captain Ogilvy, son of Sir David Ogilvy of Inverquharity, is said to have been the author of the once popular song—"It was a' for our rightful King." The present representative of this ancient family is Sir John Ogilvy of Baldovan, who ably represented Dundee in Parliament, from 1857 to 1874. Sir John, by his dignified and courteous bearing, combined with continuous assiduity in the discharge of his parliamentary duties, was always regarded by his constituents with the highest respect and esteem, and general regret was felt at the unexpected result of the late election, by which the union which had so long subsisted between him and the community, was so suddenly dissolved.

The Kirriemuirians, if undistinguished by their martial prowess in the field of battle, were noted for the fervour with which they pursued their inglorious feuds with the *Souters* of Forfar. There is a tradition or legend, that Drummond of Hawthornden visited Forfar in the summer of 1645, while on a tour through the north of Scotland, and that he was inhospitably refused shelter for the night. The plague was then raging in many parts of Scotland, and this might have been the reason of their uncourteous and unfriendly treatment of the sensitive bard. Stung by such ungenerous treatment, the poet disdainfully shook the dust from off his feet, and betook himself to the neighbouring town of Kirriemuir, where he at once received a hearty welcome. Having become acquainted with the pending feud betwixt the inhabitants of the two places, respecting a piece of ground called the Muir Moss, which was claimed by both parishes, Drummond resolved

to be revenged for the affront put upon him by the burghers of Forfar. The Estates of Parliament were then sitting at St Andrews, and Drummond contrived to send a very formidable official-looking document to the Provost, with the intention that his honour might suppose it came from that august body. The bait took so amazingly well, that the chief magistrate immediately convened the council and clergyman of the burgh to hear and deliberate upon the contents of the document. All being assembled, with eager haste the mysterious missive was opened, when much to their chagrin and disappointment they found it only contained the following severe philippic against themselves:—

> "The Kirriemairians an' the Forfarians met at Muir Moss,
> The Kirriemairians beat the Forfarians back to the cross;
> Sutors ye are, an Sutors ye'll be,
> Fye upo' Forfar, Kirriemuir bears the gree!"

The rivers or streams in this parish are the South Esk, which takes its rise at the mountains of Clova, and falls into the sea at Montrose; the Prosen, which runs through Glenprosen, and after receiving the waters of several rivulets, falls into the South Esk, near Inverquharity; the Carity, which rises at Balintore, and also falls into the South Esk, near Inverquharity.

Some rare birds are found in this parish, such as the Golden Eagle, (*Falco Chrysäetos*); the Blue hawk, (*F. cyaneus*); the Merlin, (*F. Æsalon*); the Missel thrush, (*Turdus viscivorus*); the Ring or rock-ousel, (*T. torquatus*) the Snow-bunting, (*Emberiza nivalis*); the Mountain finch, (*F. montifringilla*); the Wood-lark, (*Alanda arborea*); the Golden-crested wren (*M. regulus*) the least of all European birds; the Wood-cock (*Scolopax rusticolo*); the Wild-swan (*Anus cygnus ferus*); the Spotted fly-catcher (*Muscipula grisola*) &c.

Catlaw, the foremost mountain of the Grampian ridge, supposed to be the Mons Grampius of Tacitus, rising to the height of 2,264 feet above the level of the sea, is partly situated in the parish of Kirriemuir, and partly in the parish of Kingoldrum. The only eminences of any consequence in the

southern division of the parish, are the braes of Inverquharity, and the hill of Kirriemuir. The view from the latter hill is very extensive and beautiful in the extreme. To the east is seen the hills of the Mearns, which extend to the German Ocean; and nearer at hand, the bold undulating heights of Finhaven. To the north, the scene that meets the eye is inexpressibly wild and sublime, hill rising upon hill, and mountain upon mountain, stretching grandly away with their cloud-covered summits, to the mystic confines of classic Loch-nagar, enshrouded with "its steep frowning glories," and casting around its gloomy shadow, like the surging, troublous life of the unhappy yet noble poet, who loved in youth to sing of its weird-like sublimity and awful grandeur, till its changing moods and fitful shades were photographed in unfading lines upon the rugged fretwork of his dark tumultuous soul. Far away in the west, backed by the mountains of Perthshire, amidst a flood of classic glory, bright and beautiful in the golden sunshine, rise Birnam wood and lofty Dunsinane hill, associated for evermore with the matchless fancy and transcendent genius of the bard of Avon. To the south, beneath our feet and on either hand, lies in all its unparalleled beauty, the lovely valley of Strathmore, bright with its glittering streams and daisied meadows, luxuriantly fruitful in its orchard woods, and waving fields of corn; and supremely rich in all the delicate tints and gorgeous hues of an eastern landscape, blent with the wilder beauties of mountain scenery as a fitting background of Alpine magnificence.

A very attractive object to the antiquarian is the "Standing Stone," on the hill of Kirriemuir, which, although it has no inscription of any kind, is, nevertheless, deeply interesting as a voiceless relic of the past. The stone, since its erection, has evidently been split into two, one part left standing, the other lying on the ground. Above the surface of the ground, the standing part is nine feet in height, and the lying part of the stone nearly thirteen feet in length. The purpose for which the stone was erected is unknown. Regarding the cause of

the stone having been split into two, tradition saith, that after a most daring robbery had been committed by them, the robbers sat down beside the stone to count their gold, when the stone suddenly split into two, the falling part burying the robbers and their booty underneath together. It is currently believed, that by lifting the stone, the treasure would be found, but to this day no one has had the courage to test the experiment!

Of Rocking Stones, or as the Highlanders call them *Clacha Breath*, that is, *the stones of judgment*, there are two a short distance to the north-west of the hill of Kirriemuir. The one is of whinstone, and the other of porphyry, being three feet three inches in height, nine feet in length, and four feet ten inches in breadth; and two feet in height, eight feet in length, and five feet in breadth, respectively. The most interesting feature in connection with these stones, is this, that whereas Mr Huddlestone, in his learned and elaborate notes to his edition of Tolland, authoritatively asserts, that no two rocking stones are ever found together, these stones are in close proximity to each other.

Several "Weem's Holes," or caves in the earth, have been discovered in the parish; one on the top of the hill of Mearns, and another at Auchlishie. That on the hill is built of stone, and is about sixty or seventy yards in length. The other is a long subterranean recess in which, when it was opened, a currah and some querns were discovered.

Descending from the hill of Kirriemuir, let us take our evening walk along the Den which extends to the east of the town, and where in my boyhood I loved to wander, when on occasional visits to a near relative at Denmill, during the short holidays then allowed at the Academy of Montrose. During the daytime I wandered up and down the ravine in golden reveries, building mystic shrines and gossamer "castles in the air," and wondering whether in after-life my youthful dreams would ever be realised.

The sweet little burn called the Garie takes its rise in the

loch of Kinnordy, and runs with a pleasant sound through the den. An excavation, or cave, in the red rock on the north bank of the stream, is called "The King's Chamber," beside which I often mused in dreamy reflectiveness. What was the origin of the name; and what legend or tradition associated with it, could unravel somewhat of its history, were questions more easily put than answered. My grandfather voted it a myth; but the fact was, the shrewd old man was, for once, quite at fault, for all his ingenuity completely failed to give an ordinary or extraordinary solution of the mystery.

Left, therefore, entirely to my own resources, it was my delight to produce and reproduce all sorts of legendary fancies, quite satisfactory to myself if not to others. Taken in connection with the admitted facts, that the lonely den was the chosen resort of the *Spunkies*, and that the neighbouring farm of Glasswell was nightly haunted by ghosts and hobgoblins, I came at last to the sage conclusion, that as the elfins and fairies were presided over and ruled by a queen, the cave in the rock had been, and was the presence-chamber of the King of the Evil Spirits, where he, in royal state, gave audiences to his mythical subjects, and from whence were promulgated those terrible fiats of vengeance and destruction, which made men's hearts to quake with fear, and the material world to upheave in volcanic throes of expiring dissolution!

In the gloaming the good old man invariably accompanied me, and with his warm hand in mine, would relate with dramatic power, as we went along, the mystic stories of bygone days;—of fairies in their robes of green at their wild incantations beneath the silvery beams of the harvest moon; of spunkies and waterkelpies, brownies and witches, each at his or her particular vocation; of love-sick swains and broken-hearted maids; making me tremble, and laugh, and weep by turns, till my young heart beat high with feelings strange and new, and my innermost soul was deeply stirred alternately with gushing joy or pensive sorrow, emotions which, at this distance of time, are as fresh and strong as when at first

they threw over me their fascinating spell under the virgin impulses of pristine youth.

As we leisurely pursue our way down the winding road to Forfar, let us pause for a moment opposite the prettily situated farm of Redford, on our left. Another near relative was tenant of that farm in my boyhood. Though duty and inclination led me to devote the greater part of my holidays to Glamis, I never failed to set aside a few days to spend with my aunt—the "Flower of Brigton"—at Redford; and these I divided, as best I could, with my old maternal grandfather at Denmill. The farm-house and steading remain the same, but what was the sweetest and most interesting feature in the landscape, has disappeared.

You see that triangular field immediately to the left of the bye-road leading up to the farm, now waving in all the golden luxuriance of autumnal beauty? It was not always so. In my boyhood, that now rustling field of corn fast ripening for the scythe of the reaper, was covered with a beautiful plantation of silver fir, whose fair spreading branches were vocal in spring with the melody of birds, and whose winding walks were redolent in summer with the balmy perfume of a thousand flowers. Many a bright summer day have I wandered alone in that sylvan wood, now penetrating into its inmost recesses, anon reclining on some mossy bank, the sweet choristers of Nature attuning the tender heart-strings of my virgin harp to the minstrelsy of the sky! How sweet on the calm Sabbath morning to walk from the smiling farmstead through this fir-scented planting to the distant church, surrounded with an atmosphere of love, and purity and holy joy! How refreshing its pleasant shade, when, after leaving the white and dusty road, we again, after sermon by the good Dr. Easton, entered its green o'ershadowed pathway welcomed back by the bursting melody of the happy birds, whose gushing strains seemed the more ravishingly joyous because of our return!

And now—all is gone! If I can never forget the spring-

flush of happiness ministered to my ripening heart by that solitary wood of silver-fir, so, also, can I never forget those feelings of sadness and of pain, when, after an absence of many long years, I sought in vain for my favourite haunts in one of the most dearly cherished scenes of my early youth.

Some time or other, dear reader—it may be soon—weeping eyes will look in vain for the landmarks of our existence; and loving hearts will mourn our exit hence, the more deeply and the more sadly, insomuch as we have imperceptibly evaporated like a gossamer dissolving view, leaving not a memory behind. Be it ours then to fulfil our proper destiny, by striving to develop to full fruition, those precious gifts with which a gracious God may have endowed us, and husbanding those blessed opportunities for doing good, which a kind Providence may have combined with our social positions in life. True, we cannot all aspire to be statesmen, philosophers, or poets, but each can do something, however infinitessimally small, to promote the general weal of the Commonwealth, and thereby accelerate the advent of that happy era in the world's history, when moral and Christian enlightenment shall flow down our streets like a stream, and righteousness as a mighty river.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CASTLE OF FORFAR.

"The castell of Forfar was then,
Stuffit all with Englishmen."
Barbour.

THE old castle of Forfar was of great but uncertain antiquity. All vestiges of the original building have long since disappeared, and with them all record of the date of its erection, or the particular form of the structure itself. Boyce says that Forfar had a castle at the time of the Roman invasion under Agricola, which is considered to be altogether apocryphal. The castle, however, is recorded to have been the scene of the parliament which was held in the year 1057, by Malcolm Canmore after the recovery of his kingdom from the usurpation of Macbeth, and in which surnames and titles were first conferred on the Scottish nobility. It is quite certain that within one hundred and fifty years after the death of that King, Robert de Quincy made over to Roger de Argenten what he designates, "my place of the *old castle* of Forfar, which our Lord King William gave to me in lieu of a toft, to be held of me and my heirs by him and his heirs, well and peacefully, freely and quietly." (Reg. Prioratus S. Andrae). It is evident from this charter, that there must then have been more than one castle at Forfar; and this view is confirmed by Boyce (Hollinshed's Chron.) who says, that Forfar was "strengthened with *two* roiall castles as, (he continues) the ruins doo yet declare."

It is supposed that the *old castle* given over by De Quincy was that of King Malcolm, which tradition states to have stood

upon an island on the north side of the loch, called *Queen Margaret's Inch*, and that it was there King Malcolm held his first parliament, as already noted. The more recent castle would, on this hypothesis, have been the one that stood on the rising ground to the north of the town, called the Castlehill, some traces of which existed down to the end of the last century. William the Lion held a court at this castle between 1202-7; and Alexander I. held a parliament there in person, in 1225, and another in 1227, but from which the king was absent.

King Edward and his retinue entered Forfar on Tuesday the 3d of July 1296, and resided in the castle until Friday the 6th. It would appear, however, that during the English monarch's stay at Forfar, only two churchmen and four barons from various parts of the kingdom went there and owned his superiority over Scotland. After Edward's departure, it was held by Brian Fitzadam, one of his retainers, from whom it was captured by Sir William Wallace. It soon fell again into the hands of the English, who kept possession of the fort until its re-capture by Robert the Bruce.

Barbour assigns the merit of this capture to Philip, the forester of Platane, near Finhaven :—

"The castell of Forfar was then
Stuffit all with Englishmen,
But Philip the forestar of Platane
Has of his frendis with him tane,
And with ledderis all prevely
Till the castell he can him hy,
And clam out our the wall of stane,
And saget has the castell tain
Throu falt of wach with litill pan
And syn all that he fand his slane.
Syn yhald the castell to the King,
That mad him richt gude rewarding,
And syn gert brek down the wall,
And fordid the castell all.
And all the towris tumlit war
Down till the erd"—

The castle, thus so completely demolished, was never

rebuilt, and the court afterwards resided, on its occasional visits to the neighbourhood, either at the Castle of Glamis, or at the Priory of Rostinoth. As not a vestige now remains of this fort on the Castlehill, no conception can be formed of its elevation or extent. The only representations of one or other of these ancient castles which now exist are the figure cut upon the top of the old market cross, and the device which forms the common seal of the burgh. These devices, however, apparently only give a representation of a very inconsiderable portion of what originally must have been a very palatial and extensive stronghold. Like the burghers of Coupar, the "sutors" of Forfar seem to have turned the ruins of the ancient edifice into a quarry, for it furnished them with the materials, it is affirmed, for the building of the old steeple, the west entry to the old church, and a large portion of the houses which formed the streets of the old county town!

Not a legend or tradition have I been able to trace in connection either with the castle on St Margaret's Inch, or the more kingly residence and stronghold on the castle hill. This is the more remarkable as interesting memorials of royal residences poetically survive in the names of some localities, such as, the King's muir, the Queen's well, the Queen's manor, the Palace dykes, and the Court road; and in the vicinity, the King's burn, the King's seat, and the Wolf law where the nobles were wont to meet for hunting the wolf. Some bronze celts and cabinet ornaments, preserved in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland; and a few warlike swords and battle axes, in Glamis Castle, are all that remain to posterity of the royal palaces and castles of Forfar. Even the traditionary story of the armour found in the loch as being that of the murderers of Malcolm II., is rudely falsified by the more prosaic probability, that the swords and battle-axes had rather belonged to the soldiers who fell at the capture of the Castle of Forfar in 1308.

Disappointed by the paucity of legendary lore, we must be content to note the more prosaic yet not less interesting

historical facts. The first record of these is undoubtedly due to the liberality of the brothers Strang, merchants in Stockholm, and natives of Forfar, who, in 1657 presented to the town three very handsome bells, of which the citizens are justly proud. They were originally hung in the old crazy tower which, until 1814, occupied the site of the present handsome steeple, to which they were then with all due formality transferred. The inscriptions on the largest of the three bells is worth transcribing: viz—

"THIS BELL IS PERFECTED AND AUGMENTED BY
WILLIAM STRANG AND HIS WYFE MARGRET PATTILLO IN STOCKHOLM
ANNO 1656."

The other inscription is on the east side of the bell—viz:

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD
AND LOWE HE DID BEARE TO HIS NATIVE TOUNE,
HATHE VMQ' ROBERT STRANG, FRIELY GIFFTED THIS BELL
TO THE CHURCHE OF THE BURGHE OF FORFAR,
WHO DECEASED IN THE LORD IN STOCKHOLM THE 21 DAY OF APRIL,
ANNO 1651.

The following quotations from the Evangelist and Psalmist, surround the rim of the bell, at the top and bottom respectively:—

"GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO
ET IN TERRA PAX HOMINIBUS BONA VOLUNTAS. ANNO 1656."
"LAETATUS SUM IN HIS QUÆ DICTA SUNT MIHI IN DOMUM DOMINI
IBIMUS STANTES ERANT PEDES NOSTRI IN ARTRIIS TUIS JERUSALEM.
ME FECIT GEROT MEYER. 1656."

In the letter of William Strang to the magistrates of Forfar accompanying the gift, he naively says.—"Pay the skipper his reasonable fracht for I behowed to gift him 2 bells for his ship, and hous wse befor he would grant to take it in.—Per skipper whom God preserve."

Forfar had always stood firm to the cause of Episcopacy, its magistracy and council boldly protesting when occasion required against the pretensions of the covenanters. In the reign of Charles II. the following remarkable declaration

against the legality of the Solemn League and Covenant, was fulminated from the Council Chamber:—

"Wee Prowest, Baillies, and Counsellers of the burghe of Forfar, under subscryvand and evry ane of Ws Doe sincerly affirme and declaire That we judge it wnlawfull To subjects vpon pretence of reformatione or other pretence whatsoever, To enter into Leagues and Covenants, or to take vp armes aganest the King or theise commissionated by him. And all theise gatherings, conwocations, petitiones, protestationes, and erecting and keiping of counsell tables, that wore used in the beginning, and for careing on of the late troubles, wer wnlawfull and seditious; And particularlie that theise oathes wherof the one was comonlie called *The Nationall Covenant* (as it wes sworne and explained in the j^m vj^c and thirtie eight, and therefter, and the vther entituled *A Solemne League and Covenant*, wer and are in themselfes unlawful oaths, and wer taken by, and imposed vpone, the svbjects of this kingdome aganest the foundamentale Laws and Liberties of the same: And that ther lyeth no obligations vpone ws or any of the subjects from the saids oathes, or aither of them, to endeavoure any change or alteratione of the government, aither in churche or state, as it is now established by the Lawes of this Kingdom: In witnes whereof wee put owr handis heirto att Forfar this tuentie one day of December j^m vj^c thriescore thrie yeares.

CHARLES DICKESON, prouest.
T. GUTHRIE, bailie.
CHARLES THORNTOUNE, balzie.
A. SCOTT, counseller.
DA. DICKSON, counseller.
JAMES BENNY, counseller.
RO. HOOD, counsellar.
JAMES BENNY, counsellor.
JHONE MORGAN.
TH. BENNY, consoler.
MR. WILLIAM SUTTIE, cowncellar.
H. CUTHBERT, coonceller.
JOHNE AIRTH, JS. BROWNE, jr.
JOHN COOK, JHON BRANDORE.

The "Sutors" of Forfar are equally distinguished in ancient annals as those of their neighbours, the "Weavers" of Kirrie-

muir. Their petty feuds, and the stinging satire of Drummond of Hawthornden, thereanent, have already been alluded to in the preceding chapter. At what period the manufacture of shoes or "brogues" was introduced into Forfar has not been very accurately ascertained, but it must at all events have been a considerable time before the visit of Drummond in 1645. The learned Dr. Arthur Johnstone in his Poemata, 1642, assigns to the trade a fabulous antiquity, as appears from the following translation given by Jervise, in his "Memorials of Angus and Mearns":—

"The ruines of a Palace thee decore,
A fruitfull Lake, and fruitfull Land much more,
Thy Precincts (it's confest) much straitened be,
Yet ancient SCOTLAND did give Power to thee:
Angus and other places of the Land,
Yeeld to thy Jurisdiction and Command,
Nobles unto the People Laws do give,
By Handy-Crafts the vulgar sort do live.
They pull of Bullock's-hydes and make them meet
When tanned, to cover handsome Virgin's feet:
From thee are Sandals to light Umbrians sent,
And solls with latchets to Rope-Climbers lent:
And Rullions werewith the Bowrs do go
To Keep their feet unhurt with Yce and Snow.
The ancient Greeks their Boots from this Town brought
And also hence their Laidies slippers sought.
This the Tragedians did with Buskings fit,
And the Commedian-shooes invented it.
Let not Rome henceforth of its Puissance boast
Nor Spartans vaunt much of their warlick-host:
They laid their yoak on necks of other Lands
Farfar doth tye their feet and leggs with bands."

Dr. Jamieson, the learned compiler of the Scottish Dictionary, resided for seventeen years in Forfar, during which time from 1780 to 1797, he was pastor of the Anti-burgher congregation there, and—

"Living blest on Fifty pounds a year."

During his residence in Forfar he enjoyed the society and friendship of Mr. George Dempster of Dunnichen, at whose hospitable board he formed the acquaintance of Grim Thorkelin,

professor of Antiquities at Copenhagen. The learned antiquary had noted the similarity of many purely Gothic words then spoken in Forfarshire, with the Icelandic idiom, and from this hint the Doctor formed the resolution of writing a Dictionary of the Scottish language.

Some valuable paintings adorn the County Hall of Forfar, embracing excellent portraits of the hero of Camperdown; Dempster of Dunnichen; Scott of Dunninald; and Henry Dundas, Lord Melville. At a county dinner, shortly after the picture of the famous Tory, Dundas, had been hung up in the hall, the late Lord Panmure a zealous adherent of the whig party, in a frolicsome mood applied a lighted taper to the portrait. The picture did not sustain much injury, but the incident gave rise to the following stinging satire by the Honourable Miss Wortley, whose relations were of the same politics as Dundas:—

> "To vent his spleen on MELVILLE'S patriot name,
> MAULE gave his picture to the ruthless flame;
> Nor knew that this was MELVILLE'S fame to raise—
> Censure from MAULE is MELVILLE'S greatest praise.

At Black Dykes, and Haerfaulds, in the neighbourhood of Forfar, there are traceable remains of two Roman Camps. Between these, and at a distance of about a mile and a half east from Forfar, are the extensive remains of another camp, by some alleged to be of Roman, and by others of Pictish origin. It is supposed, that anciently a fosse extended from the Loch of Forfar to that of Restennet, and Dr. Jamieson is of opinion,—"that the ditch and the rampart had been cast by the Picts under Feredith, for guarding their camp against the attack from the Scots under Alpin, before the battle of Restennet." Ruins of a priory still exist at Restennet. This priory was connected with the Abbey of Jedburgh, and the charters and other important documents of that Abbey were deposited for safety at Restennet. Spottiswoode says, that about the year 697, one Boniface, an Italian, came to Scotland, where he erected several churches, one near the mouth

of the Tay, a second at Tealing, and a third at Restennet. According to Boece, Fergus had appointed Iona to be a repository for the public records, but that Alexander I., on account of the great difficulty of the access to Iona, had caused our annals to be transported to the Priory of Restennet in Angus. From the Prior of Restennet, the magistrates and town-council of Forfar purchased the right of patronage to Forfar-Restennet in 1652, for the sum of 2250 merks Scots.

In 1643, the glebe of Forfar-Restennet, or more properly—Rostinoth-Forfar, was removed nearer to the town, and, in lieu of the glebe allotted to the then incumbent Mr. Thomas Pierson, from the lands of Restennet, he had, as given by Jervise from archives of Burgh,—"All and heall that craft of arribill land callit the Bread croft lyand within the territorie of the said burgh of Forfar, betwixt the lands of William Scott at ye wast, the lands of Jhon Morgoun on the east, the Ferrietoun fields on the south, an the Kings gait ledand to Dundie at the north pairts, Extending to four ackers of arrabill land or thairby, to be holden in frie burgage and heretage for ye yeirlie payment of the Kings meall and wthors common anuells and debbit furth yrof of befoir, by the said Mr. Thomas Pierson, and his successors, ministers, serueing the kirk and cuir y^{r}of as a constant gleib to him and them in all time coming."

Misinterpreting, or rather interpreting too literally, the words in Exodus—"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," James VI. promulgated his celebrated statute for the punishment of witches. Forfar, like many other towns in Scotland, had her due share of the disgrace attendant upon the rigorous enforcement of this barbarous decree. The last execution for witchcraft which took place at Forfar, seems to have been about the year 1682. By a special Commission appointed by the Crown in 1661, it was decreed that "persones jimprisoned for witchcraft shall have no watch with them jn ther prisones, nor fyre nor candle, but that sex men nightly and dayly attend and watch them jn the vper tolbooth, and that the quartermaster shall order the watchmen to visit them at every

three houres end night and day." The "Witches Howe," where these poor creatures were put to death is situate a little north of the town, but is now occupied by works of industry and commerce. The branks or witches bridle, however, is still preserved in the county hall. It is a small circle of iron, consisting of four parts, connected by hinges, and adapted as a collar for the neck. Behind is a short chain, and in front, pointing inwards, is a gag which entered the mouth, and pressed down the tongue for preventing speech or cries amidst the tortures of the flames. This infamous instrument was usually found amongst the mingled ashes of the body and the faggots, after the infernal incremation was over.

Shortly after the last execution for witchcraft, the town and neighbourhood of Forfar, was the stirring scene of a raid, or foray, between the Farquharsons and the M'Comies, two brave, yet revengeful Highland clans; the former of Brochdarg in Glenshee, and the latter of Forther in Glenisla. The immediate cause of quarrel seems to have been a dispute in regard to a right of forestry in the forest of Glascorie. As usual in those days, a fatal conflict was the consequence. The opposing parties met near the muir of Forfar, on the 28th of January 1673. In the encounter M'Comie was severely wounded, the same shot killing his brother Robert, while ultimately the Farquharsons, savagely despatched John "with their durks and swords." Brochdarg, afraid of the consequences to himself, precipitately took flight, but the M'Comies pursuing, soon overtook him, and killed him in cold blood at the extremity of the moss. Those who survived the fight were all outlawed.

Traditional stories of this conflict at Forfar, are still fresh and rife in Glenshee, and Glenisla, in which the great personal strength and gallantry of the M'Comies are dwelt upon with the greatest enthusiasm. The chief of the clan was named "The big M'Comie." He delighted in wielding the claymore, and in popular feats of strength, such as

"Putting the Stone," "Throwing the Hammer," and other Highland games, where great muscular power was indispensable to secure success.

His natural daring and undaunted courage, M'Comie sedulously endeavoured to impart to his seven sons, the eldest of whom he supposed to have inherited the least of the courageous spirit of his ancestors. For the purpose of testing his powers, Mr Jervise graphically relates, that "the old man waylaid him one dark night, at a large stone in the solitude of Glenbaynie, known at this day as "*M'Comie's Chair*," and pouncing upon him unawares, a dreadful tulzie took place between the father and the son. The father, finding his son's strength and courage fully a match for his own, at length discovered himself, upon which his astonished son is said to have allowed the sword to drop insensibly from his hand."

A favourite resort of the old highlander was Camlochan, or "the Crooked loch," a beautiful sequestered spot on his property in Glenisla. Here, he is said to have had frequent interviews with a *Mermaid*, who revealed some wonderful stories to him; and on one occasion, like "witch Maggie," with Tam o' Shanter, it is traditionised, "that she took advantage of his horse in a trip down Glenisla, by leaping on behind him!"

The big M'Comie was a severe disciplinarian, and the Cateran whom he ruled with despotic sway, instead of lamenting his death, regarded that event as a happy deliverance from his tyranny. One of the clan returning from the Lowlands at the time, on being asked the usual question—"What News?" with great rapture exclaimed—"What News? News! and good news! Blessed be the Virgin Mary! The great M'Comie in the head of the Lowlands is dead, for as big and strong as he was!"

CHAPTER XLV.

THE VILLAGE CLUB,—1870.

"A change we have found there and many a change,
Faces and footsteps and all things strange!"
Mrs Hemans.

ON the morning of Auld Yule, 1870, one, who had been long absent from these parts, might have been seen emerging from the Lowlands at the Sidlaw Hills, and taking his solitary way to the Glen of Ogilvy in the direction of Glamis. Although past the meridian of life, scarcely a grey hair yet silvered his forehead; the bloom of health was on his cheek, the light of intelligence beamed in his eye, and his step was as firm and elastic as in the days of his sunny youth.

As the well-remembered scene burst suddenly upon his view he paused on the verge of the Sidlaws overlooking the wild yet peaceful glen, with the feelings of one who had just left the outer world behind and entered a sequestered Elysium of quiet rest and peace. Was it so? Alas! no resting-place for the foot of the weary wanderer but that of the ancient churchyard of his fathers, to which he was now instinctively approaching. With tearful eye he looked round on the once familiar scene. Here was Dryburns at his feet; there was the Milton in the centre of the glen, and Middleton and Wood-end to the north; with little and muckle Kilmundie in the far east, and reposing, as of old, under the shadow of the Hunter Hill, the mill and farm of Airniefoul, with the mountain rivulet still meandering through the glen with its unforgotten silver sound, just as it leaped and babbled in the days of yore. But where were the dwellers of the glen in his early youth? where the loved friends, the dear companions of

his boyhood? where the sweet merry voices that once stirred to its deepest core the golden harp-strings of his young and innocent heart? All, all were gone—"the once familiar faces." Hushed for ever on this earth the dearly cherished voices he once loved, and still, in his memory, loves so well.

He had now reached the very spot where his venerated parent had bade him farewell on his leaving the home of his fathers to fight the battle of life in the great restless world beyond. Had the visions of fame which then flitted across his youthful vision like the golden dreams of a blissful Elysium been in part, or in full realized? Realized or not, the healthy pulsations of his heart beat true, as they ever had done, to the dearly cherished scenes of his early youth; and the words he had uttered a decade of life before, he could, with as much truth and warmth of feeling, utter now:—

Dear spot! though changed to me thou be,
My wandering thoughts still turn to thee,
Glad picturing bright the happy scene
Of children's gambols on the green;
When all was beautiful around,
That e'er to me loved, sacred ground.

Oh! when amidst the city's throng,
I ne'er forgot my boyhood song;
When dulcet music strove to please,
It brought to mind the swelling breeze,
Which, rushing, swept my native glen,
And tuned my mimic harp again.
When vacant laughter, shouts of joy,
Bewildered wild the rustic boy,
I timid thought of foaming floods,
Of maiden's songs, and summer woods.

My native glen! my heart's been thine,
Through all this chequered life of mine;
When fortune swelled the prosperous gale,
Or fate low howled her shuddering wail;
When friendship burned without alloy,
Or did its devotees destroy;
When first love thrilled its magic tone,

Or charmed the cold false-hearted one;
When children's blest sweet voices rung,
Or sad, bereaved, the bosom wrung;

Throughout each scene of grief or joy,
In manhood's prime as when a boy,
I loved with thee in thought to be,
My wearied heart e'er turned to thee!

Village Scenes.

He now in sadness mused by the old homestead and "Ancient Mill:"—

There stood the house, the old apple tree,
In age with grey branches adorning;
And there in the gable his own little window,
Where the sun peep'd through in the morning.

And there was the steading, the stack'd farm-yard,
The haughs for bleaching the claes;
The mill and the burn, and the dark Hunter Hill,
The uplands, and broom-covered braes.

It is said the dread, unbroken silence which ever pervades the vast forests of the American continent are more eloquently impressive than their vastness of extent, or their unrivalled prodigality of luxuriant beauty. And so, with the keenest edge of that saddening and painfully oppressive feeling, did the hushed silence which now reigned around his birth-place pierce the innermost recesses of the traveller's soul, until a welcome flood of tears obscured from his vision the landmarks of his fathers, as he, with overpowering emotion, exclaimed: "Oh! for the wings of a dove, that I might flee away and be at rest!"

Having crossed the burn, our traveller now took his way by the well-known by-path through the Hunter Hill:—

And onwards, how sadly! through copeswood he wander'd,
Yet feeling a deep solemn joy,
For these were the pathways, zigzag in the woodland,
Where rambled he free when a boy.

He entered at last the village of Glamis; and, standing on

the bridge over the burn, he could recognise little, if any change in the salient points of the landscape. There flowed, in low breathed music as of old, the little mountain rivulet, and on its rugged banks the leafless brushwood, and icicle-bespangled trees, studded like a woodland terrace, the romantic base of the well-known Hunter Hill. Beneath, stretched out the fondly cherished village green, alive at the moment, with the rural urchins' happy merriment on being let loose from the galling restraints of Compound Division, and the Rule of Three. The millwright's shop, and the blacksmith's shed, still stood in their wonted place on the right bank of the stream; while further to the south, the ruins of the old spinning mill seemed the only object in view on which the iron pencil of time had inscribed the dreaded word—"Change."

Turning to the north, the old romantic meal mill, with all its tender associations, met at once his loving gaze; and the churchyard, church and manse, reposing among the leafless woods, filled up sympathetically, the receding background of the picture. Then his mind instinctively again reverted to the unforgotten past. Fixing his weary eyes on the manse, his thoughts lovingly wandered back to the many happy hours he had spent in that sainted dwelling, when the lovely and accomplished family of the venerable Dr Lyon shed a radiant sunshine over their peaceful village home; until one after another had taken their solitary way to the dark and silent land of the dead! He then thought of the learned Dr. Crawford, and the accomplished Dr. Tannoch, the first regrettingly removed from this peaceful scene, to high office in the Metropolitan University; and the last, dying the death of the Christian in that sequestered manse, and followed to the grave by the lamentations of all who had known him as their pastor and friend.

His mind full of warm and loving remembrances, and as if his eye had forgotten to search for something that was lost, he once more turned round in the direction of the

Hunter Hill, and gazed long and fondly on some deeply cherished object that then met his view. Ah! he had *not* forgotten to look for what now so intensely interests him; but aware of the effect the sight of it would have upon his sensitive feelings, he had refrained to the last from subjecting them to the severe and painful ordeal of recognition. With a heart too big for words, with eyes too full for tears, he felt that some loved Presence was, unseen, encompassing him as with a halo of celestial brightness. The object, dear reader, on which he so agonizingly, yet lovingly gazed, was an isolated, lonely dwelling on the left bank of the stream, and that silent cottage was once the home of—"The Forester's Daughter!" No wonder, poor soul! that he felt the extreme bitterness of hopeless grief, for there was the well-known garden in which Eliza had tended her favourite flowers; yonder the little window where she had sat reading or at work; and, fronting the west, the honeysuckle porch from whence her pure and gentle spirit had passed silently away to her home in the sky. Had she lived, how different, he thought, might his life have been!

COULD HE EVER FORGET HER?

Forget her? mock me not; behold
The everlasting hills,
Adown whose rugged fissures dash
A thousand flashing rills.
E'en they, inheriting decay,
Slow moulder though unseen,
But love, celestial sacred flower,
Is ever fresh and green.

Forget her? gaze on that bright stream,
E'er deep'ning, as it runs,
Its rocky channel, leaping free
In storms and summer suns.
So in my heart of hearts do years,
As onward swift they roll,
The deeper grave in diamond lines,
Her name upon my soul.

Forget her! hast thou ever loved?
Know then love cannot die,
Eternal as the eternal God
'Twill ripen in the sky.
O yes! sad drench'd in tears on earth,
By storms and tempests riven,
'Twill only blossom in its prime
In the golden air of Heaven!

The village of Glamis is one of those ancient places which change not with the lapse of years, and, therefore, just because of its unchangeableness, the more dear to those who have long been absent from their native Strath. While every other town and village in Scotland has of late gradually assumed a new aspect, Glamis remains almost the same as it was a century ago. The only new houses erected in this village during that decade of time, are the masonic lodge on the east, and the handsome parochial school and school-house to the west. There was one change, however, not in the building but in the occupation thereof, which arrested the attention of the traveller. The old school-house, associated to many with the fondest recollections, was turned into a lumber room or wash-house! The sight was too much for him, and he sorrowfully retraced his footsteps to the village.

Standing at the door of the village hostelrie, the aspect of the village seemed to the stranger in all its externals, very much the same as it was forty long years ago. The well remembered names over the shop doors had disappeared, and with them the old respected traders who had so long supplied the wants and luxuries of the villagers. He looked in vain for the name of the old hostess over the door of the hospitable inn by which he was musing; it too had disappeared. He was glad to know, however, she was still hale and hearty, although now known by another name than the well-remembered one of old.

As he sauntered through the village, his mind reverted to the many *characters* of former days, who by their wit and sarcasm, their calvinistic enthusiasm, and sterling worth, had

enlivened and made bright the little community in which they lived, and moved, and had their being. He imagined he still beheld

> the smith his hammer ply,
> With brawny arm so lustily,
> That every stroke upheaved the ground,
> While showers of sparks flew wheeling round;

and, with fond recollections of the many genial hours he had spent with him in the old meal mill,

> Still seated at his cottage door,
> He saw the miller pondering o'er,
> With waggish eye and smile so sleek,
> The bargains of the by-gone week,
> Well pleased, he'd added to his store
> One weighty, well-paid *melder* more.

There goes his old sarcastic friend the hard-wrought, ill-paid village postman of other days:—

> With gaucy face and honest smile,
> And words upright—no art or guile,
> He's civil, kind, polite to all,
> In lowly cot, or courtly hall;
> But many a weary mile he goes
> Through raging storms and drifting snows,
> In noon-day bright or twilight dim,
> By lonely wood or castle grim,
> And lists the owl's wild eildrich scream,
> By haunted tower, or roaring stream.

And here comes poor daft Geordie, the simpleton of the village, with whom the stranger in his boyish days had cracked many a humorous joke, sometimes to the discomfiture of the simpleton, but very much oftener to his own:—

> George long a denizen had been,
> Well known about the village green;
> Though all he curtly passes by,
> Nor aught displays of courtesy,
> Yet he his life would quickly peril,
> To please the factor or the earl.

After these imaginary meetings with former friends in his solitary ramble through the village, the stranger entered the

western gate of the Castle, and looked long and wistfully along the lime-shaded avenue to the magnificent hoary pile beyond. There it was, with its massive walls, and spacious courts, its spreading wings and lofty tower, its ramparts and battlements, and cone-roofed turrets as of old. Yet, even here, associations were not wanting personally to connect some incidents in his life with the venerable and princely pile which proudly seemed to challenge his right of relationship with its history :—

For from these grey embattled towers,
We gazed on mountain, lake and stream,
On woodlands, meadows, sylvan bowers,
All seemed a fairy sunny dream ;
Till her sweet voice awoke, dispell'd
The wizard minstrelsy of the past ;
Then first my youthful heart rebelled,
'Twas our first meeting, and—our last.

Retracing his steps, the stranger walked up the lane which led to the manse, and entering the church-yard he paced slowly among the tombs, and the lonely burying-ground would literally to him have been a land of silence, had it not been for the humming voice of the old grave-digger, as he dug a little grave on the eastern brow of the hill which gently slopes down to the murmuring rivulet at its base.

"A very small grave that you are digging, my friend," softly said the stranger, to the hoary sexton of sixty winters.

Resting from his work and looking up inquiringly at the speaker, that worthy quaintly replied,—"It's a sma' bit grave indeed, but big eneuch to haud the corp o' a little wean scarcely a year auld, sir."

"Do you take as much pains with the graves of the young," the stranger asked, "as you do with those of the old ?"

"Fat for no," was the rather testy reply, "the weest bairnie that dees is as precious in God's sicht as the man o' fourscore, and shudna' it be as precious in mine ?"

This was rather a home-thrust to the stranger, who parried it off, however, very adroitly by immediately putting a further

question to the grave-digger of a totally different import, viz:—

"Is your trade in these parts in a healthy state at present?"

"Gie middlin, sir," was the rather doleful reply—"Ye see, sir, sin' the mosses an' marshes i' the parish hae been a' drained, an' brocht under cultivation an' a' the spunkies an' waterkelpies hae disappeared, foulks are livin' langer than they used to do, and if this be so, it stands to reason, that there canna be sae mony buirrils."

"But the spunkies and waterkelpies," said the stranger, "could not have been the cause surely of the previous greater mortality!"

"No juist directly," somewhat hesitatingly replied the sexton, "but," he continued, "the fac' is as I hae stated, for sin' thae uncannie cre'tures hae taen their departure, there has na been sae mony deeing within a given time as afore, although my opinion is that it's a tempting o' Providence aifter a'. There was, for instance, an auld residentor i' the parish deed lately at the advanced age o' ninety-twa, and if it hadna been for some illness they ca' the elic passion, he micht hae made out the hunder an' been livin yet!"

"Is there any vacant ground that could be acquired by myself, as my own burial place?" asked the stranger with some emotion.

"But you're no deed yet, sir," sarcastically replied the sexton, "time eneuch to bury you surely when you're deed?"

"But we're enjoined to prepare for death," solemnly said the stranger, "and this implies preparation for the grave."

"Did you want the bit grund for yoursel'?" reflectingly said the sexton; adding after a short pause—"there's a bonnie spot aboon St. Fergus' Well wud suit you to a tee, for in summer-time the burnie below and the birdies above wud sing to you frae mornin' tae nicht, and you wud sleep there juist as cozily as in your ain bed, sir."

"But in winter?" enquiringly asked the stranger.

"Ou aye—in—winter"—somewhat perplexed, answered

the sexton—"ye see, when you're lyin' there, sir, you'll no need to care whether it be winter or no; an' at ony rate, the robin redbreast will be happin' aboot amang the leafless bushes, an' singin' his fareweel sang to the expirin' year, an' may-be he'll gather some o' the withered leaves that will be rustlin' i' the furrows, an' gently cover your grave as was dune to the 'Babes in the Wood' in the days o' auld:—but I maun get on wi' my wark though, for you see the sun is juist aboot settin' ahint the Grampians, and the day-licht will sune gie place to the darkness o' a cauld wintry nicht."

The old man again began shovelling the earth out of the little grave, when all at once, and as if something had suddenly come to his remembrance, he ceased work in an instant, and leaning reflectively on his spade, thus interrogatively addressed the stranger, who still lingered in silence by the little grave:—

"Ye kent the Forester's daughter in your youth?"

"You know me then?" quickly said the startled traveller.

"Ou aye," replied the sexton, "I kent you by—in—"

"Intuition," interrupted the stranger.

"That's it—thank you, sir," replied the sexton, "it's a word gie aften used by thae harum-scarum cre'tures they ca' poets, an' I'm no juist vera sure what they mean by it, but I ken my ain meanin' o't, which is,—when people ken things without bein' tell'd by ony body. Ken you? Man, I kent wha you wis whenever my een lichtet on your face, an' what's mair I kent a' your forbears afore your day tae."

"That could scarcely be," quietly retorted the stranger, "for my ancestors have been connected with the parish of Glamis and that of Kinnettles for many centuries."

"I kent a guide wheen o' them, though," impatiently answered the sexton, "an' as for the rest o' them,—I hae heard o' them at ony rate, an' that comes pretty much to the same thing I dar' say"—

"Did you know Mr Wood, the Forester?" interposed the stranger.

"Kent Maister Wud, the forester?" exclaimed the sexton, "Man I kent him as weel as I ken mysel'; an' a dainty, weel-faured, weel-edicate gentleman he was, an' a great favourite wi' everybody on the estate. An' as for Mrs Wud she was a stately, weel-bred, comely woman, an' fit to be the companion o' ony countess i' the land. She was a born leddie, sir, an' I could tell you something o' her history that ye may-be dinna ken onything aboot."

"What is that?" hastily interrupted the stranger.

"That she was a gentlewoman by birth, sir," replied the sexton. "Maister Wud, in his early youth," he continued, "was overseer an' forester to a heeland laird i' the wast countrie, an' while there ane o' the dochters o' the laird fell in luve wi' him, or may be it wid be nearer the truth to say, that they baith fell in luve wi' ane anither. Fa' in luve was ae thing, but hoo to get buckled as man an' wife was quite anither thing. Ae thing was quite clear, an' that was, that the heeland pride o' the laird wid never submit to such a degradation. So, the short an the 'lang o' it is, that they made a rin-awa match o't, an' cam' doon to the low countrie to push their fortunes, an after a while settled at Glamis. That raither astonishes you, freend, does it not?"

"It does indeed," said the stranger, in a musing mood.

"But I'm no dune yet, sir," quickly continued the grave-digger; "fouks that didna ken ony better, objecit to the grand ideas an' fine words you put into the lassie's heed, in her last illness, because, said they, forsooth, it was na nat'ral to think that ane in her station, could think sic grand thochts an' say sic fine things, forgettin' that she was the dochter o' a born leddie, an' the very image o' her mother. Eliza was weel edicate, an' alang wi' her ain accomplishments, had inherited the graces, intelligence, an' beauty o' her mother; for puir folk may say what they like, but there's a certain air an' manner connecit wi' gentle blude, that is very winnin' an' which inspires respect, an' is as different fae the airs an'

manners o' your upstart, imitation gentry, as buckram is fae camric, or pinckbeck fae fine gold."

"You seem to be well acquainted with the history of the Forester and his family," quietly said the stranger.

"Yes," rejoined the sexton, still leaning on his spade, and fixing his eyes still more intently on those of the stranger, "an' the story o' the "Forester's Daughter," revived a' the memories o' the past sae clearly, yet sae sadly, that I couldna read o' her deeing at the cottage door, without sheddin' mony a bitter tear o' sorrow, an' even yet, I canna read it without greetin' like a bairn;—very affectin' though,"—continued the old man, as, after a pause, he turned round, and again gently dug his spade into the ground, while the bursting tears standing for a moment in his trembling eyelids, at last ran down his furrowed cheeks in a copious stream.

"Nae winder"—the stranger heard him saying, as if speaking to himself, as he quietly retired from the scene—"Nae winder than he was half broken-hearted at the loss o' his early love, for mine wid hae broken a' thaegither, if it had haen the chance. She was as bonnie an' sweet a lassie as ever trod God's earth—but she was owre gude for this warld, and so her Heavenly Father took her to himsel'. We'll soon, however, meet her up yonder, where there is no sighin', or sorrow, an' where the tears will be wiped away from every weeping eye:—

"A few short years of evil past,
We reach the happy shore,
Where death-divided friends at last,
Shall meet, to part no more."

Darkness now set in and the beautiful stars were shining brightly in the welkin above, betokening a clear and frosty night, the weather being in agreeable contrast to the dark murky sky and blinding snow-storm of that well-remembered yule evening when last we met the jocund members of the Village Club, in all the plenitude of their glory and happiness.

The stranger now slowly retired from the churchyard, and having reached the village Inn, he requested to be shown upstairs to the dining-room. The well-known resort seemed pretty much the same as it appeared to him, on his last visit. The table and chairs stood in the same position as of old, and, with the exception of the adornment of the walls, and the introduction of gas, no change was apparent in the cherished sanctum of other years.

Summoning the landlady he politely asked her on her appearance, if the members of the Village Club still held their periodical meetings in that room, and assembled at Yule to make merry over their cups as in the days of yore?

The landlady as courteously replied, that these meetings were principally held there during the occupancy of her predecessor, Mrs Hendry, but that she knew the several members very well.

"How many do you expect to-night?" enquired the stranger.

"None," was the hostess' solemn reply.

"None!" repeated the stranger,—"Are they all gone?"

"All gone, sir," said the hostess.

"Do I understand you to mean, my good lady, that they are all dead?" further enquired the stranger.

"Four of them, I know, are dead and buried," replied the good-natured landlady—"and as for the fifth, he has been so long absent from the Howe, that we may safely put him, I think, in the same black list too."

"Who died first?" hurriedly asked the stranger—"and what were the circumstances attending his death?"

"The Laird was the first to dee," said the landlady, "because I suppose he was the oldest. He deed as he had lived, farming his ain land, in the auld style, and drivin' hard bargains to the last. He retained his quiet pawky humour in his auld age, and even in his last illness, he enjoyed a sly joke immensely, firing off his retorts wi' a' the vigour o' his youth."

"And the next?"

"The Smith," rejoined the engaging hostess; "he wasna lang o' deein' aifter the laird, wi' whom he had had mony a tulzie about free will, an' election, an' the Covenant o' grace. He died quite calm, askin' to be forgiven for a' the temper he had displayed, an' a' the harsh words he had used, in the many debates an' disputes in which he had sae often been engaged, an' turnin' his face to the wall, fell gently asleep."

"Who followed him?"

"The Miller—but he lived to a green old age, waggish and jolly to the last. It was a treat to look upon his happy smiling face, and to share in his contentment, and enjoy his good fellowship."

"One by one they are falling through the bridge—the last will soon follow. Who was the next to fall?"

"The Dominie—and it's only a few years ago since they buried him in the Kirkyard o' Kinnettles, for although he had given up teaching on account o' the frailties o' auld age, an' retired to Forfar to spend the evening o' his days there, he made it his last request to be interred beside the village where he had so long taught the promising youth o' the Howe o' Strathmore."

Before making any further enquiries, the stranger feelingly asked his hostess, whether she was aware,—"that when four were removed by death, the surviving member was bound to visit the Club-room in the village hostelrie every Auld Yule evening thereafter, so long as he was able, and drink a bumper in solemn silence to the memory of those who were gone?"

Our hostess, somewhat nervelessly, replied, that she was aware of the strange compact, which she believed, was not now likely ever to implemented.

"This is the same table, is it not, at which they sat?"—excitedly asked the stranger, unheeding her reply—"place five chairs around the board in the way they used to be arranged when the Club met at Auld Yule—there, that will do—now

bring up the old punch-bowl filled to the brim with the finest toddy you can brew:—You have still the old china punch-bowl, have you not?"

What, between the placing of the chairs to please the stranger, and the number of questions asked, the obliging hostess was put into a state of nervous tremour akin to superstitious fear, the reverse of agreeable to a sensitive nature like hers. Recovering herself, however, and thinking what a strange customer she had to deal with, she quietly responded,

"That is the table at which the members of the Club sat, and the old punch-bowl from which they drank is still to the fore in remembrance o' their meetings. But you're no in earnest, surely, in askin' me to fill the bowl wi' punch:—wha's to drink it a'?"

"Your duty is to obey"—quickly retorted the stranger,—immediately adding in a kinder, though mysterious tone—"Execute the order and bring the bowl, for we don't know WHO may partake of its contents."

Our hostess, sadly puzzled to account for the eccentricities of her guest, came to the wise conclusion, that it would be the safest way to comply with his request, and quietly abide the result.

Left alone, the stranger seated himself at the table, on the same chair, it might be, on which he had sat, as it was certainly the same position he had occupied, on the last occasion at which he was present at the meeting of the Club, on the evening of Auld Yule forty long years ago. "I have had playmates," said he, with Charles Lamb:—

"I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

"I loved a love once, fairest among women;
Closed are her doors upon me—I must not see her;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

"Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood—
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

"Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother;
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces—

"How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me—all are departed—
All, all are gone—the old familiar faces."

The hostess now appeared with the capacious punch bowl, but she had taken the wise precaution not to fill it above half full, afraid of what the consequences might be to herself were her guest to drink it all himself.

"You have only brought one glass," rather querulously said the stranger—"be kind enough," he continued, "to send up other four."

"Other four?" repeated the hostess, in amazement,—"Other four glasses!—when there's naebody i' the room but yoursel'!"

"Yes," said the stranger—"other four glasses,—you are not aware, as I have already said, who may yet be present to-night to assist me in my orgies!"

Our hostess looked more bewildered than ever, but still acting upon the safe principle, that it was better to flatter fools than to fight with them, she instantly disappeared to obey the imperious behest of her strange guest.

Not choosing to entrust her servant with the fulfilment of the message, she appeared in a few seconds with the four glasses, which she tremulously put down beside the punch-bowl, opposite to the chair on which the stranger sat.

"Place one glass before each chair," said the stranger, in a still more imperious tone; which request was no sooner complied with by the attentive hostess, than the stranger, by a dignified wave of the hand, dismissed her from his presence!

As she retired from the room, she cast another doubtful glance at her guest, thinking at the same time, he was certainly the strangest customer she had ever had in her life, and wondering what the upshot of all these mad-cap manœuvres would eventually be!

Again left alone, and having drank in solemn silence to the memory of those who were gone; the stranger fell into another reverie, still sadder and gloomier than the last; for in sharp, clear outlines, vividly and truthfully defined, the whole course of his past life, like a luminous panorama of light and shade, of sunshine and of storm, passed rapidly in review before him, and like fairy gossamer dissolving views, as quickly, in dreamy indistinctness, faded mysteriously away! As the summer sun, in lessening radiance, lingers lovingly on some solitary mountain-top, as if loth to withdraw from it her golden beams, so there was one scene in his life, which, frescoe-like, stood out in grand relief from all the others, and on which the wayward sun of his destiny, still lavished his lingering tints of undiminished glory. This cherished scene was the last, and, in some respects, the happiest meeting of the "Village Club," at which he had been present; and the reason why it stood out in such vivid distinctness, could be discovered in the fact, that he had then, unconsciously, prophetically foreshadowed some of the turning points of his life, and had, in picturing the feelings of an imaginary hero, given, by anticipation, expression to the very feelings by which his troubled mind was now so poignantly agitated:—

For in the autumn ripe of life,
The scenes that brightest shine,
Within our inmost heart of hearts,
Are the days o' langsyne!

The stranger now overcome with his emotions, covered his face as of old, weeping long and bitterly, like one who would not be comforted. The flood of grief having somewhat expended itself, he looked up again through his blinding tears, when a mystical haze seemed to have filled the room, so that he could not recognise the various objects around with sufficient distinctness to enable him to analyse them as before. The mist grew denser as he gazed, but having apparently reached its climax, it gradually dissolved away,—and there, each seated on his own chair, sat the other members of the Club, just as

they had talked and laughed, and sung, and disputed forty long years ago! In the chair of honour, sat the worthy President of the Club in all the panoply of state, conducting the weighty business of the meeting with the same pompous dignity as of yore. On his right sat the Laird, on his left the Smith: while our jolly friend the Miller, was boisterously engaged in singing his favourite song—"The Miller o' Dee." After the ringing applause which followed the Miller's song had subsided, the chairman called for a bumper to the good health, long life, and prosperity of the singer, which was heartily responded to with all the honours, as of old.

"Hand in your glasses," impatiently demanded the Dominie, "for there is a great deal of work to get through, before we can break up for the night."

While the glasses were being replenished, the Laird and the Smith had drifted away into an acrimonious argument as to the relative merits of Arminianism versus Calvinism, ending as usual, in neither being convinced by the luminous and learned arguments of the other, very much to the chagrin and disgust of the stalwart Smith, who, in his own peculiarly charitable way, imagined none so well understood the bearings of theological subjects as he did himself.

"That's aye the way wi' you twa," indignantly chimed in the Miller, "wranglin' an fechtin' awa aboot doctrinal points that naebody noo understands, or cares a single flee aboot. But, my certe, if ance Patronage were abolished,—an' I may live to see it sweepit awa wi' the besom o' destruction yet—the barrier atween a' the sects will be sae microscopically sma' that fouks will need to search for it as they would for a needle in a wisp o' strae: ha, ha, ha! An' the best o' it a' will be, that thae doctrinal disputes, an' a' ither bickerins aboot this ism an' that ism, will never be heard o' mair, for in the words o' Scripture—"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." Will that no be so, Student?

"You're unco dull an' melancholy the nicht, man. Noo, when you've gotten fame, if not fortune, I expecit ye wid ha'e been as cheery as the liltin' birdies o' your ain bonnie sangs wha sing as if nae cankerin' sorrow or care had ever rent their little hearts. You see I aye gae you the auld familiar name, although mony lang years hae flown by since last ye met your trusty cronies four at the celebration o' Auld Yule in the bonnie Howe o' Strathmore. Here's a lilt to cheer you up a bit, my boy:"—sings—

What though the night be stormy,
'Twill break before the day,
What though the day be cloudy,
The clouds will pass away.

Come, let us e'er be manly,
Treat life not as a toy,
There's manliness in sorrow,
There's manliness in joy.

Pray ever calm contentment
May make its voice be heard,
And set our heart a-singing,
Sweet like a little bird.

No more unjust complaining
Of ills we never feel,
All rousing now put boldly
Our shoulder to the wheel.

Let him who wields the hammer,
List music in the sound,
As from the sturdy anvil
The sparks fly thick around.

Let him who guides the shuttle,
See through the misty gloom
The dignity of labour,
E'en at the humble loom.

And let the pale mechanic,
No cause see of chagrin,
While guiding man's invention,
The complicate machine.

And happy, gay the miller,
  Aye merry may he be,
While grinding out the barley,
  Or on the grassy lea.

The peasant at the ploughshare,
  May oft his heart upraise,
As from the woodland rises
  The melody of praise.

So may the ship-tost sea-boy,
  Aloft upon the shrouds,
Hear God above the thunder,
  And see Him in the clouds.

And loud in voice angelic,
  Be heard the poet's song,
All cheerful, hopeful ever,
  The joy-notes to prolong;

Its rolling notes of gladness,
  So pleasant, yet so coy,
All heav'n in rapture list'ning
  To earth's high song of joy!

"Well done, Miller," exclaimed the worthy Dominie; "I like volunteered songs best," he continued; "they are fresher and more enjoyable than the formally prepared musical effusions we have had hitherto, and following the good example of our facetious friend, I will also give you a song from the impulsive recollections of the moment. Before doing so, just allow me one word of explanation. You all know with what intense interest I continue to watch over the future fortunes and destinies of my "Laddies;" for they remain aye laddies to me though the golden hair of their youth may be turned to silver grey. Well, very lately, while enjoying the hospitalities of the happy home of an old pupil on the east coast, in whose career I was proudly interested, my friend proposed an excursion to the caves of Auchmithie. Delighted to be his companion with such an inviting object in view, I accompanied him the next morning to view these celebrated caves, the sight of which more than repaid us for the exertions of a long

summer day in exploring their mystical recesses. Beautifully grand and solemnly impressive as were the scenes through which we passed, the thoughts of my companion seemed nevertheless, incomprehensibly to be fixed on other objects than those which met his eye; and a feeling of relief evidently came over him when we at last rested on the velvet green sward by the ruins of the ancient castle of Redhead overlooking the beautiful bay of Lunan. 'There,' he enthusiastically exclaimed—

Is the bonnie, bonnie bay
All bright with sea-gemmed shells, and glistering sands,
White skiffs light dancing o'er the sparkling waves,
And coursing sea-mews, in a giddy maze
Of snowy whiteness, 'mong the golden clouds!
Dost thou remember of my young heart's wish—
To dwell through life within that cozy manse,
The guide, the father of my little flock,
Lulled to sweet rest by murmuring waves, awoke
Each Sabbath morn by Sabbath bell's loved chimes,
All softly blent with music of the sea?

"After this spontaneous burst of poetic enthusiasm, his soft tremulous voice blending pensively with the gentle ripple of the tiny billows on the far stretching yellow sands beneath, he sang, as I now sing to you—

THE BONNIE BAY O' LUNAN.

Yonder bright the bay,
The bonnie, bonnie bay,
Yonder bright the bay,
The bonnie bay o' Lunan!
Sparkling white with silver waves,
Girt with high wild rocky caves,
Mermaids sing o'er seamen's graves
In the bonnie bay o' Lunan.
Yonder bright the bay,
The bonnie, bonnie bay,
The bonnie bay o' Lunan.

Glist'ring shine the purple shells,
Gemmed with flowers the woody dells,

Softly chime the evening bells
In the bonnie bay o' Lunan.
Crested white the bay,
Wavelet's murm'ring play
In the bonnie bay o' Lunan.

Wafted gently by the gale,
Come the boats with slacken'd sail,
Hark! the joyous welcome:—"Hail!
To the bonnie bay o' Lunan!"
Brightly gleams the bay,
The bonnie, bonnie bay,
The bonnie bay o' Lunan.

Now the boats unload their store,
Creels lie piled along the shore;
Plenty reign for evermore
In the bonnie bay o' Lunan.
Lovely calm the bay,
The bonnie, bonnie bay,
The bonnie bay o' Lunan.

Hark! the fisher's jovial song,
Wives and bairns the strains prolong,
Old men shout, maids trip along
In the bonnie bay o' Lunan.
Sunny bright the bay,
The bonnie, bonnie bay,
The bonnie bay o' Lunan.

Bright like life the morning sky,
Soft like death the shadows lie,
Sweet to live, how blest to die
In the bonnie bay o' Lunan!
Softly sleeps the bay,
The bonnie, bonnie bay,
Softly sleeps the bay,
The bonnie bay o' Lunan!

"Very good," said the Laird; "capital," chimed in the Miller; "excellent," added the Smith, who apparently bent on winning new laurels in the field of extempore effusion, immediately sang with more than his accustomed spirit:—

The Golden Orange.

O sweet the golden orange,
The fragrance of the vine,
And beautiful the maidens
Of sunny Palestine.
But I like the blooming heather,
The odour of the pine;
My native land, I love thee,
And people that are thine.

How luscious, fig and pine-apple,
Bananas of the plain,
The fruitage of the palm-date,
The vintage red of Spain.
But I like the English apple,
Strawberries when they're fine,
And after rich plum-pudding,
A cup of elder wine.

All grand the western prairies,
Where buffaloes abound;
Or Afric's spreading vallies,
Where zebras skip the ground.
But I like the gowan'd meadows,
Where browse the udder'd kine,
Where frisk the sportive lammies,
And brooklets sparkling shine.

How rich the note of nightingale
In balmy southern plains,
And minstrel gallant serenades
Of love-sick swarthy swains.
But I like the warbling linnet,
The blackbird's evening song,
And whisp'rings soft of lovers
The hazel bowers among.

All gorgeous bright the palaces
By Indian sparkling seas,
Soft shaded by the palm-tree,
Fann'd by the balmy breeze.
But I like the ivy cottage
Embower'd 'mong eglantine,
With porch of honeysuckle,
White flow'ring jessamine.

O fair the dark-eyed damsels
In islands of the sun,
Who sound the lute and timbrel,
Where silver waters run.
But I like the Highland lassies,
To me they're all divine,
Dear Scotland, how I love thee,
And people that are thine!

Great applause followed the singing of this song, the Miller declaring he "didna gie a carl doddie for onything furrin;" and as for the ladies, "commend me," said he with emphatic unction, "to the dimpled cheeks, the pouting lips, and the bonnie blue e'en o' our ain Scotch winsome lassies?"

"Well," quietly said the Laird, "I'll no be behind ony o' ye yet in singin' aff hand a gude Scotch sang, but it having of late very forcibly struck me that poets run too much in one groove, inasmuch as they're aye lamentin' o'er the love disappointments o' the lords o' creation, I will sing to you of the heart-sorrows of the fairer sex, viz:

THE FORSAKEN.

Oh! I can greet nae mair,
Break, break my heart,
'Twas very, very sair
From him to part.
My ain dear Jamie's gane,
Noo I am left alane,
Yet ne'er I'll sad complain,
Though deep the smart.

His bonnie yellow hair
Laid on my breast,
An' he sae passing fair,
How happy, blest!
Anither's noo! again
Waft back love's early strain,
O may its sweet refrain
Lull me to rest.

Still, still, my heart is thine,
Love lasts for ever,
Those heav'n-knit chords divine
Earth cannot sever.

When bairnies climb thy knee,
Dear Jamie, think o' me;
Cease I to think o' thee?
Never! Never!

"You have sung that plaintive lament, Laird, with great tenderness and feeling," responded the chairman, "and I congratulate you on your success in unfolding that rather neglected phase of love's too often erratic and undefinable career."

"Three cheers for the Laird," exclaimed the Miller, "an' if he gaes on at this rate, we'll need to promote him by-an'-by to the poet laureate-ship of the Village Club: ha! ha! ha! Fat say ye to that, Student? ye'll need to look to your laurels, my boy: ha! ha! ha! Fat are ye a' starin' at, 'my reverend, grave, and potent signiors,' as if there was ony ill in takin' a gude hearty lauch. My certe! those who lauch langest will live langest: ha! ha! ha: Get out o' your dowy, absent mood, maister Student, an' wind up the business o' the meetin' wi' something cheery an' grand, for do ye no see thae midden cocks around you are crawin' gie crouse the nicht on their ain midden taps."

The Student, apparently shaking off for the moment the abstracted lethargy in which he had enveloped himself during the greater part of the evening, in the enjoyment of which he seemed to have had no share, in slow and painfully tremulous tones, thus addressed himself as if to some unseen, yet visibly felt Presence, which held him spellbound by some mysterious power or fascinating charm:—

THE UNSEEN.

'Twas on a wild and gusty night, in winter's dreary gloom,
I sat in meditation rapt, within my lonesome room,
While like a panorama passed the days of love's sweet joy,
And all youth's blissful visions bright which cheered me when a boy.

The winds let loose, mad shrieking howled among the leafless trees,
Sad from the distance hollow came the murmur of the seas,
While on the trembling window-panes wild dashed the sobbing rain,
Like a maiden by her lover left in sorrow and in pain.

Clear high above the blast arose like an ancient melody,
The silver tones of a well known voice:—'I come my love to thee;
My broken vows forgive, fain I would come to thee for rest,
And pillow soft my weary head upon thy faithful breast!'

Like summer cloud across the blue, a shadow on my soul
Fell dark and heavily, but quick, it vanished like a scroll!
Yes! freely I forgave, forgot, the change she'd wrought in me,
And seizing quick the lamp I cried—'I come my love to thee!'

The door I opened wide, and blush'd to welcome to my hearth
Her to my heart the dearest jewel, most precious gem of earth:
Alas! the flickering taper frail, it went out like a spark,
And lo! all weeping, left me lone, faint crying in the dark—

'Beloved! O, beloved, come, I wait to welcome thee!'
But no refrain came answering back save the wailing of the sea:
Yet still I cried—'Beloved, come'—as if I'd cry my last,
Heard only by the rushing wind, mock'd by the stormy blast!

Deserted, sad, woes me! return'd into my widowed room,
The chambers of my soul hung round with dark funereal gloom,
Loud on the shivering window-panes wild beats the sobbing rain,
Like a lover by his false one left in sorrow and in pain!

The clock struck twelve; and the dreamy haze again enshrouded the room, obscuring its occupants from the view. As the mist cleared away, the stranger once more found himself ALONE! The glasses had been filled, but their contents remained untouched!

Descending the staircase, he was met in the lobby by his attentive hostess, who kindly helped him to his overcoat and muffler, remarking at the same time, that she was very glad to see him looking so much more cheerful than he had done in the earlier part of the evening.

"I have done my duty," kindly replied the stranger—"and when a man feels he has done his duty, he becomes naturally more cheerful, inasmuch as he has fulfilled his promises, and discharged his obligations to the best of his ability. My obligations to you, as my hostess, I must now discharge also; and, while doing so, permit me to thank you very much for your courtesy and kindness to me on this ever-to-be-remem-

bered evening—I am the LAST surviving member of the VILLAGE CLUB!"

"Preserve us a'," exclaimed our worthy hostess; but before she had time further to express her astonishment, her strange guest had disappeared!

Stepping across the little square in front of the Inn, in the direction of the bridge, a sweet soft voice saluted the stranger's ear, and turning round in the direction whence the sound proceeded, he beheld, not an ominously croaking raven in the air, but his much valued friend and companion—the Reader—who kindly expressed the wish that they might meet again.

"In bidding you, for the present, adieu," the stranger feelingly said, "I have to thank you sincerely for the great patience and forbearance which you have manifested during our many wanderings through the Howe of Strathmore, and if, during the progress of our explorations to the end of our journey, I have been the humble means of inspiring you with a love of Nature, and of all that is true and beautiful in human nature; if I have ministered to your innocent amusement, or raised the merry laugh to lighten the heavy heart; if I have instilled into your mind one affectionate feeling, or one holy, lofty desire; if I have dried the tear of sorrow, or soothed the dying moments of the departing spirit, I shall ever feel a grateful delight that my labours have not been in vain. Most cordially do I reciprocate the much appreciated wish, that we may—meet again. For the present, dear Reader——

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