

## CHAPTER XXI

Rich the treasure,  
Sweet the pleasure—  
Sweet is pleasure after pain  
DRYDEN.

IT was on a beautiful evening in autumn, when the russet clothing of tree and shrub, and the scattered leaves resting on the moist pathways, told that Ichabod was being written on summer's charms, and that gloomy winter was near at hand. Lelah was resting on her favourite rustic seat, which was beautifully trellised around by creeping plants, and concealed from view on the river by the tall reeds which grew thickly on its banks. She had just finished the last stanza of her song, and as its mournful cadence died away in the calm evening air, she thought she heard voices proceed from the river, and again the sound of oars dipping the water. Startled and surprised she sprang to her feet, and tripped lightly over the smooth lawn towards an opening in the reedy screen through which a view of the river could be obtained ; but just as she reached this spot, a boat shot past within a few yards of the shore, with two seamen pulling, and a man seated in the stern, dressed like an English captain. The moment this person saw her, he raised his hat, and signalled the rowers to stop the boat.

“Pardon me, gentle lady, but I wish to speak to you ; and I do so in English, because I have just been listening to the words of your song, which indeed has quite overpowered me, and filled my heart with strange emotions, for in that song you have mentioned my native land.”

“And where is your native land, may I enquire?” said Lelah, trembling with excitement, and scarcely able to articulate the words.

“Shetland is my native country, and Trosswick and Sumburgh, which you mentioned in your song, are spots which gladdened my youthful eyes, and are still dear to my heart.”

“Great heaven !” exclaimed Lelah in a whisper, and then added more audibly, “And what is your name, sir, may I ask ?”

“My name,” replied the captain, “is Tom Yunson, and my father’s name is Yacob, and he is still alive in the village of Trosswick, for one of my men has come from that quarter not long ago.”

Lelah’s excitement had now become insupportable, and she felt her strength giving way ; but she was able to say, in a faint tremulous voice, “Does your sailor know any one of the name of Olla Ollison there ?”

“Yes,” replied the captain ; “I have just been hearing from him all the home news, and there is such a man still alive and well ; but he lives as a hermit, and people think him a strange person, because he goes often to the sea-shore, and sits there alone.”

“O God ! is it possible ?” she exclaimed, and then fainted away, falling softly against the mossy bank near which she stood.

Quick as lightning the captain sprang from the boat, which was now close to the river’s bank, and raising her in his arms, sprinkled her face with water, which one of the sailors brought him, and Lelah quickly recovered, and was led by the captain to a rustic seat close by.

“This is a strange adventure, gentle lady,” said the captain, again addressing her ; “and I beg you will tell me your name, for surely some wonderful fate has led me to find you here.”

“My name is Lelah Halcro,” replied Lelah ; “I’m a countrywoman of your own, and the news you have brought me is passing strange, and has quite overpowered me.”

“Merciful Providence !” cried the captain, grasping her

hand, "is it possible you are really Lelah Halcro? Now I understand it all. You were carried off by that scoundrel Jack Smith in the 'Bockanier;' but, thank God, all will be well yet; you will find your sweetheart alive and well, and my ship is at your service."

"O, am I asleep or awake; or is this a vision again from dreamland to mock me?" soliloquised Lelah, clasping her hands, as a flood of tears came to her relief.

"It is no dream, my lady," replied the captain; "but if you have any doubt, see, there is my name," and he bared his arm, showing her his name in full, tattooed with an anchor and chain entwined around it. "There, you see," he added, "that is true blue; and if you come with me, you shall have my cabin to yourself, and everything I can do to make you comfortable, and only a three days' run to Sumburgh Head."

"I thank you, and may God bless you for your kindness," said Lelah; "but leave me alone for a short time that I may collect my thoughts, and I will decide."

"All right, my lady," replied the captain; "we will lie concealed down there by the clump of willows, until you make up your mind, and will be here at the time you appoint."

"I will return in half-an-hour," she replied, as she lightly ascended the bank, and hurried to her favourite bower. As soon as she reached its quiet retreat, she threw herself on her knees, and poured out her soul in fervent thanks for the glad tidings which had been brought to her, and imploring Divine aid to guide her in deciding the momentous question which she had only one short half-hour left to consider.

Shortly she arose from her knees, and her purpose was fixed; for something like a voice from Heaven whispered the word in her ear, "Go;" but the pang of leaving her dear friends without seeing them shot through her heart like an arrow, and her purpose again faltered. Should she yet go back and tell them all, and ask permission to go with these strangers?

This was her duty, and gladly would she have performed it ; but would Widow Vanderboor and her daughter trust her in the hands of strangers ? Would they believe the report that her lover was still alive, and permit her to cross the tempestuous sea, now so far advanced as the season was ? All this she feared they would not do, and much less would they trust her again to walk by herself ; and thus the last chance of ever seeing her native land again might be lost.

“ It must be now or never ! ” she cried ; “ but I will write and explain all, and leave it in the bower here.” So saying she opened out a portfolio, which she carried with her, and spreading out a sheet, wrote a letter in German, of which the following is a translation :—

“ DEAREST MOTHER AND SISTER,—O, pity and forgive me. I must leave you for a little time. My lover is still alive, and I must go and see him. I go in a ship to my native land ; and a countryman I know and can trust takes me there. His boat came by accident to the river’s bank, near my bower ; and I thought to come first and tell you all, but feared you would not believe me, nor trust me to go with strangers, and then I would see my long lost lover no more. But my heart bleeds to leave you, my dearest loving friends ; but I will return and seek your forgiveness on my knees. Yes, I will soon come back, and pour out my heart in gratitude to you for all your kindness and care of me.—Your ever affectionate and loving daughter and sister,

“ LELAH HALCRO.”

This letter, wet with tear-drops, she folded and addressed, and, laying it on the rustic seat, hurried to the boat, which was waiting for her at the appointed place.

“ Here you are, my dear lady,” said the captain, as he sprang out of the boat, and assisted Lelah to step on board ; and then seating himself by her side in the stern, he said, addressing the sailors—

“ Now, my lads, give way, and keep close by the left bank of the river ; then we shall not be observed from the shore.”

The men bent their oars, and the boat shot onward, gliding swiftly and smoothly down the broad bosom of the river.

Lelah spoke but little, for her thoughts were swallowed up in pondering over the marvellous events of the day, which had indeed been so strangely brought about.

When Lelah did not return at the usual time, Widow Vanderboor and her daughter went to seek her in her accustomed walks, and, coming to her bower, they found the letter there, which had been left for them. On reading its contents, they were both struck speechless with grief and astonishment, but their faith in her was unshaken ; they understood why she feared to come and see them before going away. The distress of the parting scene, and the fear that they would oppose her going at all, were the powerful motives which had forced her to leave them so abruptly. The assurance which she gave in her letter that her lover was still alive, filled their hearts with gladness ; for they knew that nothing else in this world could ever remove sorrow from her heart, and enable her to again enjoy life ; and they knew she would fulfil her promise, and return to see them at the earliest opportunity. With these thoughts they comforted and consoled themselves, until they should hear further intelligence from her.

The reader will remember that, in a former portion of this narrative, it was stated that old Yacob had a son at sea, from whom he had received no intelligence for many years ; for Tom Yunson had seen many strange lands, and been where he had no opportunity of communicating with those friends he left behind. Returning, however, at last to a British port, he got command of a vessel bound for Holland, which vessel was now lying at Overflakkee, waiting for a cargo.

The leisure thus afforded Captain Yunson he employed in making excursions in his gig up the canals and rivers of the country, and it was on one of these excursions up the Waal

that he was led by Providence to the spot of Lelah Halcro's residence, and thus made the means of fulfilling his father's earnest wish, expressed by him on the last occasion when he parted from the hermit ; his words, as the reader will remember, being, " An' I earnestly pray dat her dat wis taen awa fae you may yet be restored ta you, an' dat me or mine may in some wy or idder be da means o' bringin' dis about."

On reaching the ship, Captain Yunson conducted Lelah to the cabin, which he gave up entirely for her accommodation.

The ship's cargo being now completed, her broad sails were unfurled to a prosperous breeze, and as the ship went on her course, and as the low-lying coast-line of Holland became lost to view, how overwhelming were the thoughts that crowded upon Lelah's mind ! Here she was once again the solitary occupant of a cabin ; but how changed the scene ! *Then* she was a trembling captive, leaving with heart-rending sorrow her native land, and before her the dark unknown future ; *now* the dark cloud had rolled away, and the star of hope again twinkled brightly in the serene sky of the future. She had drunk the bitter cup of human sorrow to its dregs, and now the cup of pleasure which had been put into her hands was so intoxicating, so overwhelming, that she trembled as she put it to her lips. But, alas, how unstable are all hopes ! how transient are life's best joys ! for they are indeed like

" The snowflake on the river—

A moment seen, then gone for ever."

Or, again, when the goal has been almost reached, one false step and the prize is lost for ever, and Lelah Halcro is yet once more to be the sport of cruel fate ; and when just near her native land, and ready to fly to the arms of her lover, the angry waves are to raise their foaming crests as a barrier in her path, and the wild tempest moan in rage as she stretches forth her hand to secure the precious fruit—the reward of all her sorrow and suffering.

## CHAPTER XXII.

The wind grew loud, and the sea grew rough,  
And the ship was rent in twain.

BALLAD.

THE reader will remember Halloween, when the merry gathering of lads and lassies surrounded the hospitable hearth of Bawby .o' Brigstanes, and when the approach of a south-east wind forced that happy company to break up at an earlier hour than usual.

On that memorable night the "Ocean Spray," bearing the precious and priceless freight of a lovely woman, became the sport of the raging tempest, and drifted helplessly on to destruction. Captain Yunson had sighted the bold rugged promontory of Sumburgh Head, and was shaping his course for the sheltered bay of Levenwick, when the storm broke upon him. But a few hours more, and he would have reached the haven of safety; but, alas! it was to be otherwise; his gallant ship was to be cruelly gored to death by the pointed rocks of Sloga Head, and beaten to splinters by the mighty waves which rolled upon the rocky beach of Trosswick.

It was about ten o'clock at night, when the prelude to the coming storm told the experienced eye and ear that a tempest was following hard behind. Fitful gusts shot through the valley of Trosswick, and a hoarse murmur came from the distant cliffs, while dark masses of clouds from east to west fled athwart the sky, like demons chasing each other. Another hour, and the hurricane reached its height—one loud unbroken roar sweeping on with resistless force, and making every cottage tremble to its foundation, while masses of churned froth from the seething

waves as they rolled on the shore, were carried high in the air over the house tops, and far into the loch beyond.

Ere the tempest reached its height, men could be seen, clad in sea-going attire, securing boats and corn stacks by placing additional ropes, and heavy stones to anchor them to the earth, that they might better withstand the fury of the blast.

“He’s a wild nicht, Tammie,” shouted Rasme Rudderhead to Tammie Toughlands, as the latter was putting an additional “fastie” on a screw.

“Ay, man, he’s dat,” shouted Tammie in reply; “dis nicht ’ill be heard o’ yet, tak du my wurd fir dat.”

“Man, dey say dere wis a ship seen aff da head aboot day-set,” again roared Rasme, his voice barely audible above the roar of the tempest.

“Düs du say sae? den Lord hae mercy apo’ der souls,” ejaculated Tammie; “fir dere’s nae ship can live in da sea dat he’s on just noo.”

“Ay, I fear it, man,” cried Rasme; and then added, “kens du if auld Yacob has tried to lay da wind da nicht yet?”

“I never ken, boy; but I sall geng alang een noo and see,” roared Tammie, as he bent his head to the blast, and made for old Yacob’s dwelling. On reaching it he found the door shut, and on knocking loudly old Yacob came, and removing a spade with which it was barred, called out—

“Whaa’s dere?”

“It’s me, Yacob,” cried Tammie.

“O, it’s dee, Tammie,” said Yacob, opening the door and admitting him, and then quickly bolting it again by the same primitive appliance; and in doing so it required all the strength of his body to hold against the force of the wind which pressed the door inwards.

“I just lüikit in alang,” explained Tammie, as Yacob and he advanced towards the inner end of the cottage, “ta see if ye tocht ye wid be able ta come fort and try and lay da wind; fir



man, he's fearful ootside ; and dey say dere wis a ship seen i' da east sea just afore dayset, sae it's muckle needit baith by laand an' by sea if da strent o' da wind cud be broken ony wy."

"O spaek na till him, spaek na till him," groaned Peggy, rocking herself to and fro in her chair, with her hands clasped and resting on her lap, "unnatural bein' dat he is," she continued ; "kennin' dat his bairn is tossin' upo' da ragin' sea, an' he sittin' here wi' a hert as hard as da nedder mill-stane, an' winna geng oot ta sober da wind, though weel he can dü it, as he's düne afore ; an' every minit I'm fearin' da tinbill 'ill be laid within da cauld steede, an' den we'll nidder hae hoose nor hald ta geng ta ; but we'll no be brunt i' da ruins, dat's ae Lord's mercy ; fir ye see, Tammie, I'm whumbled da kettle ower da fire in case o' ony thing happenin', though it's geen me my death o' cauld up trow da soles o' my feet ;" and Peggy placed her feet against the sides of the kettle, which covered the few remaining embers on the hearth, now nearly put out by the formidable extinguisher which had been placed over them.

"O deil dore dee, Peggy," said Yacob, "an' haud dy tongue aff me some time ; what gude can my layin' da wind dü, I winder ? . I can thole da wind as lang as da ruif bides on ; bit I canna thole dy everlastin' sharg, dats' warr den ony nor-east storm dat ever blew."

"Ay, bit Yacob," interposed Tammie, "I tink Peggy is in da richt dis time ; ye ken ye've aften laid da wind afore noo, whin dere wis mebbe no sae muckle need fir it, an' if it does nae gude it 'ill dü nae ill, ony wy."

"Ah, weel, boy," said the good-natured Yacob, "if it 'ill please dee I'm shüre I can try it ; sae come awa an' we'll see whidder it can dü ony gude or no." So saying, Yacob arose and pulled his knitted cap down over his ears, and buttoning up his jacket, took his staff in his hand, and stepping out over the floor, was followed by Tammie.

When they got outside, Yacob placed himself on the "brig-

stane," with his face towards the east, and taking his staff in his left hand, raised his right arm, and pronounced the following incantation, sawing the wind with his arm as he spoke:—

"Robbin cam ower da vaana wi' a shü nü ; Twabbie, Toobie, Keeliken Kollickin, Palktrick alanks da robin. Güd sober da wind."<sup>1</sup>

But the wind sobered not ; the spirit of the storm, as if in mockery of such feeble attempts to propitiate his wrath, raged still more furiously, and drove the clouds of salt spray, hail, and sleet, with hurricane force, against the earth, so that old Yacob had to beat a hasty retreat to his cottage ; and Tammie, taking the shelter of the yard dyke, reached his own habitation in safety.

Few in the village of Trosswick slept that awful night, for the tempest raged with unabated violence, and the inmates of many a cottage crowded round their cheerless and fireless hearth, expecting every moment that the roof which covered their heads would be scattered to the winds, and they left exposed to the pitiless blast.

As dawn approached the gale slightly moderated, and all able-bodied men were soon astir to see that their boats were safe, and if any wrecks had been thrown upon the shore during the night.

As the foremost of the men approached the head of the creek, fragments of wreck, consisting of pieces of bulwark, spars with torn sails and rigging attached, were seen scattered along the beach, or wildly tossed on the crests of mighty waves, which, one after another, rolled upon the shore in mountains of snowy foam. A life-buoy was also picked up with the name "Ocean Spray" painted on it. All this convinced the men that the hull of a vessel must have struck on some of the outlying

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<sup>1</sup> These are the exact words of an incantation used by the old men of a bygone generation, when they wished to "lay the wind." The words were repeated to the author by an old woman some years ago.

skerries, and two men were therefore despatched to reconnoitre the shore along the north side of the Ness, but they had not proceeded far along the cliff when they were seen to stop suddenly, and point towards the scarf skerries. Then came a wild and thrilling cry, borne on the wings of the blast—

“A ship! a ship! on the scarf skerries.” Fast the thrilling news spread, and, like another fiery cross, was carried with breathless speed from cottage to cottage, from village to village, arousing alike the stripling and the greyhaired sage, who soon were seen running side by side to the scene of the disaster.

In a short space of time the shore was lined with hundreds of spectators, all eagerly straining their eyes in the direction of the stranded vessel, her form now being seen from the beach; but owing to the haze caused by the drifting spray, it was impossible to discern whether any survivors remained. The ship, evidently a brig, had struck on the seaward side of the rock; and as the waves rolled against her she had been gradually forced up its sloping surface until her prow rested on its highest elevation, and her stern still exposed to the fury of the tempest.

The flood-tide was now setting in, and it was therefore evident that the stranded vessel could not long remain in her present position, but must soon be swept by the force of the waves into the deep water which lay between her and the shore.

As eager groups were watching in breathless suspense the tremendous waves, as they rolled over the skerry, and sometimes almost burying the dark hull of the vessel in their seething foam, the startling cry was raised, “The Hermit! the Hermit!” and soon all eyes were turned towards the hermit’s hut on the Ness, from which he came running at his utmost speed down the declivity of the headland, his form bending against the blast, and his long hair floating behind.

A few moments more, and he reached the beach, his eyes flashing, and his whole being as if under the influence of some powerful spell.

“Thoughtless men!” he exclaimed, as he advanced through the crowd, “See you not that there are survivors on yonder wreck, and soon they must perish! The flood tide is advancing; not a moment is to be lost!”

“O, Mr Ollison,” exclaimed old Yacob (who was amongst the crowd), as he rushed forward and grasped the hermit’s hand, “what can men dü in da face o’ a sea like dis? We canna see fae here whidder ony o’ da crew is still left; but if dey ir, den Lord hae mercy on der souls, fir nane here can help dem.”

“But I will help them,” cried the hermit, “or perish in the attempt.” With this, he divested himself of his clothing, all to his shirt and trousers; and taking the kerchief from his neck, bound it round his head, thereby closely concealing his flowing locks within its folds. He next grasped the end of a rope which lay coiled at his feet, and tying it securely round his waist, again addressed the crowd—

“Fellow countrymen!” he said, in a solemn and stern voice, “as you hope for mercy in the world to come, I ask you now to aid me in this work of mercy. You see every moment the flood tide is gaining strength, and those mighty waves will soon sweep the ill-fated vessel from her present position; therefore obey the instructions I now give you, and mark that I will wait until I see a wave approaching, which I know must overwhelm the ill-fated vessel, and sweep her from the rock, and then as that wave rolls back, I will dive through the one that succeeds it, and swim to the survivors, if they can be saved. They are now clinging to the bowsprit, and that spar will part soon, as the vessel leaves the rock; when I reach the floating spar I will raise my arm as a signal, if the survivors are still on it. Then draw the rope quickly to land, waiting till the highest wave approaches, so that the spar may be carried on its crest to the top of the beach; then let some of your strongest men be ready, with ropes around their waists, to save us from being

drawn back again by the receding wave."

"We will do all you say," exclaimed a hundred voices, while old Yacob, with tears streaming down his cheeks, threw his arms round the hermit, crying, "O what is dis ye're gaen ta dü, Mr Ollison—cast your ain life awa in tryin' to save idders? Na, na ; fir da Lord's sake an' my sake, dünna temp Providence; fir nae mortal man can face dis awful sea, every lay comin' in laek da hill o' Hallilee."

"Tempt me not, Yacob," sternly replied the hermit ; "you know not what you say. In a vision last night I saw this scene before me, and now the hour is come when release from my sorrow is at hand ; but whether in life or death this is to be accomplished I know not. God's will be done. Duty calls me here, and my mission must be fulfilled."

As he uttered these words, a mighty wave rolled upon the shore, and sent its floating foam to the highest elevation of the beach, and then went back with a voice of thunder, caused by the loosened rocks and boulders striking against each other as they rolled down in the descending torrent which madly rushed to meet the succeeding wave.

Swift as the receding waters fled down the declivity, the hermit followed, drawing the rope after him ; and as the next wave, like a wall of emerald, rose high over his head, he was seen to throw his arms around a fragment of rock which projected like a pillar from the beach, and was instantly lost to view in the roaring seething waters which rolled over him, and sent its floods of foam higher up the beach than before.<sup>1</sup>

"O God, he is lost ! and there the ship is gone at last !" broke from hundreds of voices, as the moving masses of awe-struck spectators swayed to and fro in an agony of excitement. It was when this mighty wave, like a mountain, came towering on, that the dark hull of the vessel was seen trembling on its

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<sup>1</sup> See Note Q. Native Courage.

summit, and then in a moment disappeared in the yawning valley behind. That same moment, the hermit's rope was drawn quickly from the shore ; and just as the wave broke and poured itself down in one mighty cataract of green, streaked with broken foam, he was seen like a dark speck on the snowy bosom of the waters beyond—striking out as only an expert swimmer could, and struggling hard to reach the floating spar, which had parted from the vessel as he predicted it would.

“There, he has it !” broke wildly from the crowd on the shore, as he was seen grasping the spar with its precious freight (for two survivors were seen on it). Now he attaches the rope to it—there his arm is raised as a signal, and the rope is quickly drawn in by strong arms, as a mighty swelling wave follows. A piercing cry breaks from the beach, as the spar with its living freight rises aloft on the broken wave, and then rolls over and over in the wild seething maelström, which rushes hither and thither in foaming wavelets, like sheeted spectres still bent on the work of destruction ; but onwards and upwards, as if guided by unseen hands, that priceless spar is borne, and twenty brawny arms are ready to receive it. Three human forms, apparently lifeless, are secured to that spar by ropes. Now it is grasped by strong men, standing deep amid the roaring flood ; back the wave rolls with awful force ; and but for the ropes which secure those brave men to the shore, their destruction is inevitable. Another moment, and the spar with its precious burden is lifted bodily and carried high up the beach—snatched from the devouring flood—from the very jaws of death.

“The hermit—a sailor—a woman—are saved !” broke in wild acclamation from a thousand voices, as their three apparently lifeless bodies were loosed from the spar, and carried on stretchers to the nearest houses, followed by crowds of weeping, sympathizing women, and many not less feeling-hearted men ; while the greater number remained on the beach

to await the not less exciting event of the breaking up of the hull of the vessel, and sharing in the much-coveted plunder which was soon to lie scattered along the beach.<sup>1</sup>

“Oh, care an’ düle, care an’ düle!” mournfully soliloquised old Yacob, as he assisted to carry his friend from the beach to his own house—“I kent weel dis wid happen, bit he widna be appered ;<sup>2</sup> an’ noo, puir man, he’s casen awa his ain life, an’ no düne muckle gude idder ; fir, ales ! I doot dey twa püir craeturs dat’s been brocht ashore ’ill never come back ta dis warld agen. Oh, da dangers o’ da sea ! da weary, weary sea ! Ales ! ales ! I winder whaur my puir bairn can be wi’ sic a tempest as dis has been ; shürelly, shürelly, dem dat’s upo’ da laand, and hes a rüif ower der head, an’ soond sleep i’ der bed, hes muckle ta be tankful fir, tho’ dey sud eat sparely an’ cled barely at times.”

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<sup>1</sup> See Note R. Wreckers.

<sup>2</sup> Prevented.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Turn, Angelina, ever dear,  
My charmer turn and see  
Thy own, thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,  
Restored to love and thee.

GOLDSMITH.

THE mournful procession now reached old Yacob's door, and was met by Peggy, who, notwithstanding her generally unbending and unlovable nature, was much moved by the sad spectacle before her; for the hermit's cheek was pale and blanched, and his apparently lifeless body, like an ocean waif, was covered by froth and fragments of seaweed.

"O, püir bodie, püir bodie," she murmured, "get him tae da fire, an' get warm blankets aboot him, an' he'll mebbe come ta life yet; an' get oot da Yule bottle, Yacob, an' mak a drap o' het punch, an' try an' get it doon wi' him. Ales! ales a me! little ken I whaur my bairn is; mebbe, fir oucht I ken, some ane hes da sam ta dü fir him da day. O dear a me! dear a me!" and Peggy took blankets from one of the wooden box-beds and spread them on the "restin'" chair, while Yacob, assisted by the other men who had helped to carry the hermit, divested him of his wet clothes, and supplied their place with garments of his own.

A blazing fire was on the hearth, and the hermit was quickly wrapped in the warm blankets, with the heavy bed-rug placed over him, then bottles of hot-water were placed at his feet, while the Yule bottle was cheerfully uncorked, and the warm mixture prepared as Peggy directed. Happily those humane and anxious efforts were at last crowned with success, and the hermit slowly revived, and the first words he was able



faintly to whisper were, "Where are the survivors of the wreck ; and are they attended to?"

"Yea, yea, dat are dey, Mr Ollison," eagerly replied Yacob ; "but ye maunna try an' speak muckle yet, ye're no able fir it ; tho' it's just laek you, aye tinkin aboot idders, an' no carin' aboot yersell. The man bodie ye saved is in Tammie's hoose up by, an' weel taen care o', an' sae is da woman or lady, fir she's mair laek dat ; shü's in Rasmie's neist door, an' dere's signs o' life in dem baith, da Lord be praised fir His mercies."

"Amen," sighed the hermit, as he clasped his hands, while his lips moved in silent prayer.

Old Yacob spoke truly, for Lelah Halcro and Captain Yunson, the only survivors of the "Ocean Spray," were ministered to by loving hearts and willing hands, and every effort made for their recovery, which the limited means of their humble but kindhearted attendants could afford.

As formerly mentioned, the "Ocean Spray," when caught in a hurricane near the coast of Shetland, tried to bear up for the sheltered bay of Levenwick ; but just when off Trosswick, the vessel was struck by a tremendous wave, which carried away her bulwarks, and threw her on her beam-ends ; and while thus drifting on a lee-shore, at the mercy of the wind and waves, the crew managed to cut away the masts and rigging, which allowed the vessel to right herself, and then they let go both anchors, in the hope that she might ride out the storm ; but, owing to the great depth of water, the anchors had little or no hold, and their noble but now disabled bark therefore drifted helplessly on to destruction. Then the captain called all hands on the quarter-deck, and addressing them said, "Now, lads, it is all over with us ; and therefore I need only say, it is every man for himself, and God for us all. I will remain with the vessel until I see the last of her, for the lady under my charge must have my attention as long as that can be of any avail. If, therefore,

you think you can save yourselves in the long-boat, I will not prevent you trying to do so, though I think the attempt is hopeless ; so then, farewell, comrades ! may we all meet in a better world, where the storms of life shall be no more known." So saying, the captain shook hands with them all, and the crew proceeded to launch the long-boat ; but as the dismantled vessel was rolling helplessly in the deep trough of the sea, with her broadside to the waves, this was a work of great difficulty. At last, when the crew had all got into the boat, and just as they were trying to cast loose, a mighty wave broke over the ship, and, overwhelming the boat, every soul found a watery grave.

The captain then returned to the cabin, and, lifting the terrified and almost speechless Lelah in his arms, bore her to the deck ; and then, as the vessel neared the rocks, he secured her and himself to the bowsprit—the rest is known to the reader.

Little dreamed those good Samaritans of the momentous issues which trembled in the balance, as they watched by the couch on which lay the pale and prostrate form of Lelah Halcro. The feeble pulse throbbed, and then paused, and the lamp of life glimmered in the socket, as if it would go out for ever ; but as the darkest hour is before the dawn, so the dawn of returning life in the bosom of Lelah Halcro was to usher in for her once more the day of happiness—the return of departed joys which had so long been shrouded in the darkness of sorrow.

It was not till Captain Yunson had regained consciousness, and was able to speak to those around him, that the villagers of Trosswick knew who Lelah was, and then surprise and joy was seen depicted on every countenance. But it was agreed by all that her life, as well as that of the hermit, depended on keeping them in ignorance of each other's presence, until such time as they would be able to bear the overwhelming transports of joy which their meeting must bring.

“Where am I?” faintly inquired Lelah, as she looked dreamily around on the strange faces which surrounded her couch.

“Ye’re in your ain native laand, my bonnie lady,” replied Mrs Rudderhead, approaching close to her patient’s bedside ; “bit, dear cratur, ye maunna try to spaek just yet, fir ye’re odious weak ; bit praise be ta da Lord dat ye’re in life, fir nane o’ wis tocht dat ye wid ever come dis lent.”

“Yes, I thank God for my deliverance,” faintly murmured Lelah, as she clasped her hands in the attitude of prayer ; and then again, after a pause, she enquired, “What is the name of this place, and can you tell me if the captain or any of the crew are saved?”

“Yea, Lord be praised, the captain is saved,” replied Mrs Rudderhead, “bit a da rest o’ da crew is lost, mem, fir naethin’ bit a miracle cud save ony cratur in sic a fearful tempest. Dis place, lammit, is a lang wy fae your ain hame, bit ye’ll be pitten dere safe an soond as shüine as ye’re able to muve about.”

“Thank you, kind friend,” faintly replied Lelah, as she again closed her eyes, for she felt she was not able to dwell upon the thought that she was once more in her native land, much less could she think of the renewal of sorrow which such a visit might bring with it.

“How is the captain, and has he been able to see his wife yet?” anxiously enquired the hermit of Yacob as the latter stood by his bedside.

“Na, no he, Mr Ollison,” replied Yacob, “bit we’re hoopin’ he’ll be able ta see her da morn’s efernüin, an’ if shü’s able ta be upo’ her feet, dey’re baith comin’ ta see you ; fir dey’re just oot o’ a patience ta tank you, as dey’re tanked da Lord already, fir savin’ der lives in sic a wy as ye did, fir da laek wis never heard or seen in da isle o’ Shetland afore, an’ winna be forgotten as lang as ony ane is alive dat saw it.”

“I shall rejoice to see them,” replied the hermit, little

dreaming of the sense in which this prediction was to be so truly verified.

While old Yacob spoke, he could scarcely conceal his emotion. The thought that his friend the hermit was so very near his long-lost Lelah, and yet not to know it, nor be able to receive the intelligence, was overwhelming, and every moment seemed an age, until the happy meeting should take place.

Old Yacob only knew Captain Yunson as the captain of the shipwrecked vessel, for years had so changed the appearance of the latter, that neither his father nor mother could recognize him ; and he thought it wise to conceal his relationship from them until he had fully recovered. It was known, however, in the village that his name was Yunson, but that being a common name in the islands, no one had any reason to suppose that he was old Yacob's son. The hermit had come to the very natural conclusion, that the lady he was the means of saving was the captain's wife ; and for reasons already explained, old Yacob felt the necessity of saying nothing which could alter this opinion in the hermit's mind, until it was safe to allow their meeting together to take place.

On the evening of the third day after the wreck of the "Ocean Spray" had strewed the rocky beach of Trosswick,—her valuable cargo of tobacco, gin, and other Dutch commodities forming a rich prize to the islanders, who looked upon it as their lawful right,—the low slanting rays of the sun gilded the Ness, and nature breathed in soft repose, while the murmur of the yet restless waves fell mournfully on the ear, as they sullenly broke along the distant cliffs.

It was then that Lelah Halcro, leaning on the arm of Captain Yunson, directed her steps to old Yacob's dwelling. She looked pale and anxious, but her native beauty shone out in all its loveliness, for she wore a rustic dress which had been supplied to her by her kind hostess, and this seemed to enchain or bring back that charming simplicity of manner and artless

modesty which those who formerly knew her could so well remember.

As they approached old Yacob's cottage, Peggy occupied her accustomed seat in the high-backed "straen" chair, while the hermit sat in the arm-chair on the opposite side of the fire, and old Yacob paced the floor with hurried steps, breathing heavily, and showing other symptoms of extreme agitation ; for he knew of Lelah's approaching visit, and every moment to him seemed an age.

"Sit dee doun, Yacob," said Peggy in a half angry tone, "an' spaek ta da jantleman, an' no geng figin' aboot da hoose yon wy, blawin' an puffin' like a pellick, as if dy judgment had left dee."

To this Yacob replied not, for at that moment Captain Yunson and Lelah entered, and as they advanced through the narrow entrance between the two wooden dormitories, the hermit rose to meet them, and Yacob in a tremulous voice said, "I needna tell you, Mr Ollison, wha dis is dat's come ta see you."

The hermit shook hands with Captain Yunson, and then gently taking Lelah's hand in his, he gazed for a moment in her face, and then exclaimed, in a wild and piercing cry, which sent a thrill to every heart, "My God, my Lelah !" and they were instantly locked in each other's arms. The scene was so touching, so overwhelming, that old Yacob sobbed aloud like a child, and the captain turned his face to the wall to hide the tears that flowed fast down his weather-beaten cheek. Peggy sprang to her feet, uttering a kind of mournful croon, while she ran to the hevel daffock<sup>1</sup> for a little water to sprinkle on Lelah's face, for the latter had fainted away in the hermit's arms. In a few moments she revived, and, then raising her soft loving eyes, brimful of tears; looked in the hermit's face, and throwing her arms around his neck, sobbed aloud in transports of joy.

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<sup>1</sup> Water-pail.

The hermit now led Lelah to a seat on the settle by the fireside, soothing her with words of fond affection, and trying to suppress, as far as he could, his own emotion. The captain also stepped forward, and taking Peggy's withered hand in his, and looking enquiringly into her face, said, "Do you not know me?"

"Na, na, Lord ken o' you, sir, fir I ken you no," replied Peggy; "bit nae maiter fir dat, ye're wilcome here as if ye hed a been my ain an' only bairn dat's been lang fae me, an' dat mebbe I'll never see agen in dis life. Lord open your wy afore you, an' bring you safely to your ain hame, fir ye're brocht joy ta mony a sorrowful hert in hein' da means o' bringin dis dear cratur ta her ain native laand."

"Mother, can't you recognize your own Tom?" said the captain, and his voice quivered as he spoke.

"O my son!" shrieked the old woman, as she locked her arms around his brawny shoulders with a deathlike grasp, and then fainted away. Old Yacob also threw his arms round his son's neck, while the latter supported his mother in his arms till she came to herself.

This touching scene was scarcely over, when Lelah's father and mother arrived. Then followed another scene still more affecting if possible than that which preceeded it; for Lelah was to them as one risen from the dead, and then tears of joy fell fast while they pressed her to their bosoms with all the yearning tenderness of parental love.

As soon as tears were dried and some degree of composure obtained, old Yacob brought out the Yule bottle, and Peggy devoted her attention to the teapot, also preparing pancakes, fresh eggs, and rich butter (for her butter profit had been recovered by the use of a new charm), and when all was ready, the happiest company sat around old Yacob's humble festive board that ever shared his hospitality.

"Eh, Mr Ollison, what a day is dis ta mind apon," said old Yacob, when he had an opportunity to speak to the hermit

alone. "I kent lang sin syne dere wis sountin winderful gaen ta happen, an' ye'll mind dat I said sae in your ain hoose. Shürelly, shürelly, muckle raisin hes every ain o' 'is to say wi' Dauvid, 'Let us praise da Lord fir his goodness, and fir his wonderful works unto da children o' men.' O, dear-a-me! ta tink, efter sic a life o' separation an' sorrow as ye're baith hed, ta meet agen in dis world, an' fir my ain son ta come back agen in sic a winderful wy till his ain native place: its shürelly an truly da Lord's düins, an' mervelous in our eyes. Aye, as da paraphrase says, 'da hallowed morn sall chase awa da sorrows o' da night,' an' as da sorrows o' da nicht o' affliction is noo chased awa fae wir herts, an' da gledsome sunshine o' hop an' happiness agen glintin' brightly ower wir heads, sae may wir herts owerflow wi' gratitude, an' wir days, few or mony as dey be, may dey be hallowed in da service o' Him wha's mercy is abüne a' his idder warks, an' nae mercy cud a come ta me mair joyful den da shange dat's come ower wir Peggy sin dis ship wis wracked. It lüiks as if da storm dat blew da püir ship apo' da rocks o' Trosswick hed blawn every breath o' flytin' oot o' Peggy's body; an' Lord keep it sae, if it's no feyness wi' her! Eh, Mr Ollison, if shü hed aye been as güid as shü's been dis efternüin, auld Yacob's head widna been sae muckle laek a lint tap as it is da day."

To these impressive and touching remarks the hermit was about to reply, when some one announced at the door that the horse was ready which was to convey Lelah to her father's house. The happy company therefore broke up, and Lelah was placed on horseback, and accompanied on her way home by her father and mother, and a large number of friends and villagers who joined in the joyful procession.

The hermit returned once more to his hut on the Ness, no longer to sit solitary by its lonely hearth, but to plan arrangements for fulfilling those engagements which a new and happy era in his life now rendered necessary.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

The bride she cometh into the hall,  
Red as a rose is she.

COLERIDGE.

Two short weeks passed, and the herald of day, one December morning, came forth in rosy smiles, and casting his slanting mellow rays athwart the frost-bespangled earth, made it sparkle and twinkle in serene beauty, like a field of countless diamonds. The sparrows on housetop and hedge chirped in unusually clear and musical notes, and the circling flocks of fluttering cushats appeared like queens from fairy-land, all dressed in honour of some great event, for their necks gleamed in the sunshine in colours of the richest hues of green and gold, and their soft eyes sparkled with a darker and more beautiful lustre than usual. And why was all this? Why were nature's children in such a state of preparation and expectation? Just because a wedding company was about to walk in procession to the manse of Skelaburg. The bridesmaids, all blooming and rosy, their gay muslin caps trimmed with a profusion of red and blue ribbon, while the bridegroom's men were all dressed in their best, and as fine strapping fellows as ever were reared upon the "Lot o' Huandal."

There they start. The bride wears a pure white silk dress and gay cap, which is more profusely adorned with ribbon than the rest. Her smile is of surpassing sweetness, and her matchless beauty is the wonder and admiration of all beholders. The bridegroom walks with a bold elastic step, his elegant dress and polished manners indicating his superior rank in life.

Eager and smiling groups crowd at every cottage-door to gaze at the procession as it passes, and the merry music of the



fiddle comes thrilling on the calm sunny air, as the fiddler, leading the way a few yards in advance, plays the half joyous, half melancholy air of the "Bride's March," the words being—

Now must I leave both father and mother,  
Now must I leave both sister and brother,  
Now must I leave both kith and kin,  
An' follow the fate o' a frem'd man's son.

The gunner follows at the same distance in the rear, and ever and anon sends out a tiny puff of blue curling smoke, while the report of his gun echoes in loud crackle amongst the stone dykes and "fairy knowes" which skirt the path.

Need the reader be told that the hermit of Trosswickness and his fair Lelah are the happy bride and bridegroom in this happy marriage procession, and the venerable minister of the parish is about to tie the indissoluble knot of their happiness, as soon as the company shall assemble in his front dining-room, which has got an extra dusting and sorting-up for the occasion?

It was indeed a rare circumstance for a marriage ceremony to be performed in this apartment, the kitchen being always used for that purpose; and this circumstance was a source of great satisfaction to the worthy pastor, for he attributed in no small degree, the stability and permanency of his work to the domesticating influence which the savoury smells and "feast of fat things" in his capacious kitchen exercised over the devotees at Hymen's altar. He could point proudly to the work of thirty long years, during which innumerable knots had been tied in that homely and comfortable culinary apartment, and not in a single instance had ever the fastening slipped, until the material itself was reduced to the condition of "old junk," while many elegant and highly finished knots done in the drawing-room and in the decorated hall, had "pulled through" under the first strain.

As soon as the ceremony was over the procession again formed, and the well-rosined bow drew from the merry and sympathetic fiddle the joyous marching strains of

“Wooded an’ married an’ a’,”

until arriving at the house of the bride’s father, where the company halted on the green to witness the ceremony of breaking the bride’s-cake. This hymeneal bakement was no pyramid of ornamental sugar, surmounted by satin flags and silver-gift flowers, but a plain home-made oatcake, which, being broken in fragments in a basket, and thrown over the bride’s head, were eagerly picked up by the lads and lasses to place under their pillows at night, when each hoped to see in dreamland the image of a future bridegroom.<sup>1</sup>

Inside the cottage all was bustle and preparation for prolonged festivities.<sup>2</sup> Large peat-fires, “but” and “ben,” blazed on the hearth, and whole quarters of smoke-dried mutton, “reisted” geese, and pork hams, were served up in large wooden Norway plates, scrubbed and polished for the occasion. On groaning tables rose towers and pyramids of “hurstan brünies,” “beremeal bannocks,” “saft scones” and “hard scones,”—a large proportion of which was contributed by the “auld folk,” for no heads of families, invited to a wedding, would have accepted the invitation without bringing along with them a suitable present in the shape of food supplies.

As soon as the company were seated, and the clatter of plates and knives, with the muffled hum of half-articulated sentences, showed that there were no idlers at the festive board, brimming “remicles” of home-brewed ale, and newly broached kegs of smuggled Dutch gin, were brought in, and

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<sup>1</sup> See Note S. “Bridecake.”

<sup>2</sup> Up to the beginning of the present century, it was customary in Shetland to continue a wedding for three or four days and nights, and sometimes for a whole week.

flowing bumpers in horn and glass were quaffed in native fashion, while homely toasts and witty jokes went round; and all this 200 miles from the nearest exciseman. No wonder a huge bonfire blazed on the Wart, and that loud laughter and merry music made the reek-stained rafters of old Eric Halcro's cottage dirl with the glorious din.

It was when the "seven stars"<sup>1</sup> twinkled over a point on Noness Head, marking the hour of 10 o'clock, that the fiddler again opened his reek-stained fiddle-case, and enlivened the scene by playing "Wood and Married an' a'," "Saw ye my Pot-Ladle?" and other appropriate airs. At 12 o'clock, the whole company proceeded to the barn—the fiddler leading the way. This primitive ball-room had been swept and garnished for the occasion, and the sheaves of black-oats snugly and evenly arranged in one end, so as to form a convenient resting-place for tired dancers or onlookers. One lamp in the kiln-door, and six "lowing' collies" swinging from as many rafters, sent out a blaze of light which illuminated every part of the barn.

Now the fiddler mounts the steps of the kiln-door, and taking his seat on the second from the top—

"Screws his pins and plinks his strings,  
An' rubs his bow wi' roset,"

and then strikes up the appropriate reel of "Mally, put the kettle on." Soon as the soul-stirring music thrills on the ear, eight merry dancers spring to the floor. "Reel!" cries the leader of the dance, and round they wheel through a figure of 8. Then, partners opposite, they tread to a measure in quick step, silver-buckled shoes and woollen "smucks" beating the earthen floor in rapid and well-timed thuds.

There, on the right, is the queen of the ball—the bride herself, in all her queenly beauty and polished grace, her

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<sup>1</sup> Pleiades.

charming native simplicity enlivened by the rustic costume she wears, for she has laid aside her bridal attire, that she may more fully and freely participate in the nuptial rejoicings now begun, and make her brides'-maids feel that she is as one of themselves. Her partner opposite is no longer the dreaded and awe-inspiring recluse of Trosswickness, but a happy bridegroom in the full glory of his manhood. His countenance beams with joy as he gazes on his lovely bride, no phantom now in dreamland to mock him with unreal bliss, but his own loving and long-lost Lelah. Lightly he skims through the reel, merrily he steps the dance, his silver-buttoned jerkin, and knee-breeches of Flemish cloth, showing off his handsome figure to great advantage. His hair, which once fell in wild confusion around his shoulders, is now twisted in the handsome queue of the period, bound with silken cord, and decorated with blue ribbon. Next the bridegroom, and no less nimble in his step, dances Johnnie o' Greentaft, with his partner and future bride, bonnie Annie Leslie. Next is Captain Yunson, who has chosen for his partner Jeannie o' Voe, and a handsome couple they are ; and last, but not least, in the foursome reel, is Lowrie o' Lingigirt and Girzie o' Glufftown, soon to dance more merrily at their own wedding.

Now faster and faster the fiddler's elbow flies as the merry bow trembles on each sympathetic string, and thrills out the foot-inspiring strain, and faster and faster the dancers trip on "the light fantastic toe," and wheel in giddy flight, crying "Houch !" "Reel !" "Success ta da bride an' bridegrüm," and "Success ta da fiddler." At last the knight of the bow gallantly gives the kissing signal, which he does by drawing his bow quickly across the strings behind the bridge, and giving a shrill sound or squeak, imitative of a kiss, and then "Kiss da lasses !" is repeated by four voices, while four arms encircle four necks, and four smacks are distinctly heard.

The reel being ended, eight tired dancers recline on the

sheaves, while other eight take their places on the floor ; and after all the "young folk" have had their turn in the same order of precedence as they walked in procession to the manse, old Eric, as Master of Ceremonies, enters the barn, carrying a brimming "remicle" of ale, followed by the best man carrying a keg of Dutch gin, and the bride's mother a large straw-basket full of oat-cakes, pancakes, ale-horns and dram-glasses.

"Noo, folk, come an' hae a dram an' a bite, an' den ye can dance agen," says old Eric, as "remicle," keg, and basket are deposited on an old oak table placed at one side of the barn.

"Here's ta da bride an' da bridegrüm's helt," resounds on all sides, as horns and glasses are drained, and then filled, and emptied again—to "da fiddler's helt," and "da company's helt a-round."

The repast being over, loud calls were made for the "auld folks'" reels, and four venerable pairs at once took the floor. At "da head o' da flüir" was old Yacob and Peggy ; next them Eric Halcro and his wife Medgie ; then Tammie Toughlands and his wife Joan ; and last, Rasmie Rudderhead, and his wife Doratty.

The fiddler plays up "Saw ye my Pot-ladle?" a slow and appropriate reel, and away the dancers skip ; four red night-caps, with ribbon-tied tails streaming behind, chase four large high-crowned white muslin "toys" till partners opposite, and then the red "tapped" night-caps and muslin "toys" go bobbing up and down as fast as the fiddler's elbow follows his bow.

"Dance, Peggy, dance," cries Yacob, as he merrily pats the barn-floor in his well-quilted "smucks,"<sup>1</sup> his honest face radiant with smiles, and his aged yet manly form encased in a new suit of *wadmäl*—teased, carded, spun, and sewed by his venerable partner opposite.

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<sup>1</sup> A sort of woollen "carpets" or sandals, formerly worn by natives of Shetland.

“Dance, Yacob, dance!” screams Peggy, as in “high jinks” she flings herself right and left, and gives a see-saw motion with her head and arms, as if she supposed herself the veritable pot-ladle at work, which the fiddler is musically enquiring after.

“Naebody deein’ da nicht, Mr Ollison,” whispers old Yacob, with suppressed merriment, as he skips past where the bridegroom is seated on the sheaves, and jerks out his thumb towards Peggy, who was skipping through the dance before him.

“Naebody laek a beddral da nicht, Mr Ollison,” more audibly whispers Yacob, as the reel again brings him back to the sheaves, and upon which he rolls in a fit of smothered laughter, his face expanding into a round rosy disc, like a frosty moon, and his fat sides, shaking under his two broad hands, which he holds on tightly to lessen the strain on his diaphragm. “Naebody yatterin’ noo,” he again screams out, as the tears roll over his cheeks, and this fit of laughing is succeeded by a fit of coughing which threatens to end tragically.

“Be no a füle, Yacob,” cries Peggy, as she foots away by herself, opposite Yacob’s empty place. “Come awa noo, Yacob—reel,” again cries Peggy, as Yacob quickly recovers the use of his faculties, and his place on the floor at the same time. Old Yacob’s hilarity on this occasion arose from three causes. First, certain horns of home-brewed ale and glasses of Dutch gin, which had made him “as happy as a king;” second, Peggy’s appearance in general, and her *step* in particular; and third, the contrast between her normal condition at home and her abnormal condition at the wedding.

On still went the old folks’ reel, but slower and slower the red night-cap nodded to the white muslin “toys,” and slower and slower the sympathizing fiddler drew the bow, till at last “kiss da lasses” was screeched out behind the bridge, and four red night-caps disappeared inside four muslin toys, and

four *soughs* were heard ; but whether it was the wind whistling, or “*auld folks kissin’*,” there was no time left to inquire, for at that moment loud calls were made for the Bride’s Reels, and eight bonny lasses stepped on the floor, as the fiddler played up

“ The Scallaway Lasses.”

Like seven queen bees chasing one butterfly, seven bride’s-maids followed the bride, skimming in giddy flight through the reel without stopping, until the report of a gun was heard outside, and then all eyes were turned towards the barn-door, and several voices shouted, “ Da guisers, da guisers ! ” as the “ scuddler ” or captain entered with three of his men. The former was dressed in straw kilt, with tippet and high conical hat of the same material, but profusely decorated with ribbon. His face was covered with a blue veil, and in his hands he carried a “ bent ” brush with a long handle, which he twirled about with great velocity, making a snoring noise, and producing a similar sound through his nose. This he did as he shuffled along the floor, followed by his men, who were all dressed like their captain, excepting the large bunch of ribbon or favour which the latter wore at the apex of his hat.

After going through various pantomimic performances, and chasing the girls around the barn with their brushes, the guisers laid aside their weeping implements, and prepared for the dance, the captain leading out the bride, and his men choosing their partners ; and after all the bride’s-maids had danced, the guisers drank the bride and bridegroom’s health in silence, quaffing the liquor through their veils, and then making their exit *incognito*.

The bride and bridegroom now retired, leaving the rest of the company to continue the merriment till “ the cock wis crawin’,” and then many a tired dancer reclined in primitive innocence on the sheaves ; and, by the passport of a fragment

of oatcake beneath the cereal pillow, roamed through dream-land in quest of future brides and bridegrooms.

In the kiln door the fiddler reposed in deep slumber beside his fiddle, snoring unmusical bass, and mumbling dreamy toasts to visions of brimming horns of nut-brown ale, and flowing glasses of Holland gin.

At nine o'clock the company assembled for breakfast, and at ten o'clock the dancing was resumed, and so continued for three days and nights, with intervals of playing at football, or running "comalae" on the green.

On the fourth day, the young men held the "weddin' treat," which was simply continuing the marriage festivities and rejoicings for another day and night ; and this they did at their own expense, as an expression of their goodwill toward the newly married couple, and also as a return for the liberal entertainment which had been provided for all the wedding-guests.

On the morning of the fifth day, after paying the fiddler, and distributing among the poor of the district numerous baskets of fragments from the festive board, the company broke up, and all returned to their respective homes, to live in happy anticipation of the next wedding to take place in the district.

What now remains of the strange and evenful history of the Hermit of Trosswickness and his fair Lelah, is soon told, and must rejoice the reader's heart, for the sun of prosperity had now arisen upon their path, and a happy future was before them, to compensate for all past sorrows and suffering.

After remaining a few days with his father-in-law, the Laird of Noss (no longer "The Hermit"), accompanied by his wife and Captain Yunson, proceeded to Lerwick, intending to sail by the first vessel leaving for Holland ; for it was Lelah's earnest desire to visit without delay her kind benefactresses, Widow Vanderboor and her daughter, and to convey to them an account of all that had befallen her since her sudden départurè from them.



Arriving at Lerwick, they were so fortunate as to find the "Vanderstein" of Yesselmonde lying wind-bound for Holland, and in this vessel they at once embarked.

Three days of a fair wind brought them in sight of the Dutch coast; and after other three days, they arrived at the house of Widow Vanderhoor, where they were received with unbounded joy, and entertained in high festival for many days in the midst of a brilliant assembly; parting again with many regrets.

On returning to the coast, Captain Yunson obtained command of a vessel bound for Scotland, and therefore invited Lelah and her husband to accompany him, arranging to land them at Lerwick before proceeding to his port of destination.

After an equally prosperous voyage the vessel arrived in Lerwick, and the Laird of Noss and his happy wife proceeded to their future home, which was in Bressay, there to enjoy the happiness which now awaited them.

Nor in his day of prosperity did the "Hermit of Tross-wickness" forget those whom duty or affection brought to his remembrance.

Rasmie Rudderhead and Tammie Toughlands were put in possession of farms on his property.

By his kindness and liberality, old Yacob's declining years were rendered happy, and this happiness increased as Peggy's failing strength tended to bring about a change for the better in her walk and conversation—the latter, however, continuing many years after the former had ceased.

Bawby o' Brigstanes kept up her merry evening gatherings to the last, liberally supported alike by old and young—the former for matrimonial favours experienced, the latter for similar favours expected; and lastly, the Laird of Noss, in the spirit of David when he said, "Is there yet any remaining of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's

sake?" sought out some distant relations of Bill Ericson's, and bestowed upon them many marks of his favour.

During the future years in the life of the Laird of Noss and his happy wife they made an annual journey to Dunrossness, visiting the old retreat on the Ness, the trysting-place by the shore, and other scenes of their former joys and sorrows; and often by the domestic hearth were those scenes recalled to memory, when a cherub occupant of the cradle was hushed to peaceful slumber by a mother's voice singing

“THE EXILE'S LAMENT.”