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**THE
SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR.**

**BY JAMES HOGG,
AUTHOR OF "THE QUEEN'S WAKE," &c. &c.**

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

**WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH;
AND T. CADELL, LONDON.
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THE
SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR.

CHAPTER I.

WINDOW WAT'S COURTSHIP.

Great have been the conquests, and grievous the deray, wrought in the hearts of the rustic youth by some mountain nymphs. The confusion that particular ones have sometimes occasioned for a year or two almost exceeds credibility. When any young woman has obtained a great reputation for beauty, every young man in the bounds is sure either to be in love with her, or to believe that he is so; and as all these run on a Friday's evening to woo her, of course the pride and vanity of the fair is raised to such a height, that she will rarely yield a preference to any, but is sure to put them all off with gibes and jeers. This shyness, instead of allaying, never fails to increase, the fervour of the flame; an emulation, if not a rivalry, is excited among the youngers, until the getting a single word exchanged with the reigning beauty becomes a matter of thrilling interest to many a tender-hearted swain; but, generally speaking, none of these admired beauties are married till they settle into the more quiet vale of life, and the current of admiration has turned towards others. Then do they betake themselves to sober reflection, listen to the most rational, though not the most youthful, of their lovers, and sit down, contented to share through life the toils, sorrows, and joys of the humble cot.

I am not now writing of ladies, nor of "farmers' bonny daughters;" but merely of country maidens, such as ewe-milkers, hay-workers, har'st-shearers, the healthy and comely daughters of shepherds, hinds, country tradesmen, and small tenants; in short, all the rosy, romping, and light-hearted dames that handle the sickle, the hoe, the hay-raik, and the fleece. And of these I can say, to their credit, that rarely an instance happens of a celebrated beauty turning out a bad, or even an indifferent wife. This is perhaps owing to the circumstance of their never marrying very young, (for a youthful marriage of a pair who have nought but their exertions and a good name to depend on for the support of a family, is far from being a prudent, or highly commendable step,) or that these belles, having had too much experience in the follies and flippancies of youthful love, and youthful lovers, make their choice at last on principles of reason; or it may be owing to another reason still, namely, that among the peasantry young men never flock about, or make love to a girl who is not noted for activity, as well as beauty. Cleverness is always the first recommendation; and consequently, when a young woman so endowed chooses to marry, it is natural to suppose that the good qualities, which before were only occasionally called into exercise, will then be exerted to the utmost. Experience is the great teacher among the labouring class, and her maxims are carried down from father to son in all their pristine strength. Seldom are they violated in any thing, and never in this. No young man will court a beautiful daw, unless he be either a booby or a rake.

In detailing a signal instance of the power of country beauty, I shall make use of fictitious names; and as I have not been an eye-witness to the scenes I mean to detail, I judge it best to give them in the colloquial style, exactly in the same manner as they have been rehearsed to me. Without adopting this mode, I might make a more perfect arrangement in my present story, but could not give it any degree of the interest it appeared to me to possess; nor could the characters be exhibited so well in any way as by letting them speak for themselves.

"Wat, what was the matter wi' you, that ye never keepit your face to the minister the last Sabbath day? Yon's an unco unreverend gate in a kirk, man. I hae seen you keep a good ee on the preacher, and take good tent to what was gaun, too; and troth I'm wae to see ye altered to the waur."

"I kenna how I might chance to be looking, but I hope I was listening as weel as you, or ony that was there!—Heighow! It's a weary warld this!"

"What has made it siccan a weary warld, Wat? I'm sure it wasna about the ills o' life that the minister was preaching that day, that has gart ye change sae sair? Now, Wat, I tentit ye weel a' the day, and I'll be in your debt for a toop lamb at Michaelmass, gin ye'll just tell me ae distinct sentence o' the sermon on Sabbath last."

"Hout, Jock, man! ye ken I dinna want to make a jest about ony saacred thing; and as for your paulie toop lamb, what care I for it?"

"Ye needna think to win aff that gate, callant. Just confess the truth, that ye never heard a word the good man said, and that baith your heart and your ee war fixed on some object in the contrair direction. And I may be mistaen, but I think I

could guess what it was."

"Whisht, lad, and let us alane o' your sinfu' surmeeses. I might turn my back on the minister during the time o' the prayer; but that was for getting a lean on the seat, and what ill was in that?"

"Ay, and ye might likewise hirsle yoursell up to the corner o' the seat a' the time o' baith the sermons, and lean your head on your hand, and look through your fingers too. Can ye deny this? Or that your een were fixed the haill day on ae particular place?"

"Aweel, I winna gie a friend the lee to his face. But this I will say—that an you had been gieing a' the attention to the minister, that ane should do wha takes it upon him to lecture his neighbours at this rate, ye wadna hae been sae weel aveesed with respect to my behaviour in the kirk. Take that for your share o' blame. And mair than that, if I'm nae waur than you, neither am I waur than other folk; for an ye had lookit as weel at a' the rest as it seems ye did at me, ye wad hae seen that a' the men in the kirk were looking the same gate."

"And a' at the same object too? And a' as deeply interested in it as you? Isna that what ye're thinking? Ah, Wat, Wat! love winna hide! I saw a pair o' slae-black een that threw some geyan saucy disdainfu' looks up the kirk, and I soon saw the havoc they were making, and had made, i' your simple honest heart. Wow, man! but I fear me you are in a bad predickiment."

"Weel, weel, murder will out, and I confess between twa friends, Jock, there never was a lad in sic a predickiment as I am. I needna keep ought frae you; but for the life that's i' your bouk, dinna let a pater about it escape frae atween your lips. I wadna that it were kenn'd how deeply I am in love, and how little it is like to be requited, for the haill warld! But I am this day as miserable a man as breathes the breath o' life. For I like yon lass as man never likit another, and a' that I get is scorn, and gibes, and mockery in return. O Jock, I wish I was dead in an honest natural way, and that my burial day were the morn!"

"Weel, after a', I daresay that is the best way o' winding up a hopeless love concern. But only it ought surely to be the last resource. Now, will ye be candid, and tell me gin ye hae made all lawful endeavours to preserve your ain life, as the commandment requires us to do, ye ken? Hae ye courtit the lass as a man ought to court her who is in every respect her equal?"

"Oh, yes, I have! I have told her a' my love, and a' my sufferings; but it has been only to be mockit, and dismissed about my business."

"And for that ye whine and mak wry faces, as you are doing just now? Na, na, Wat, that's no the gate o't;—a maid maun just be wooed in the same spirit she shows; and when she shows sauciness, there's naething for it but taking a step higher than her in the same humour, letting her always ken, and always see, that you are naturally her superior, and that you havena forgotten that you are even stooping from your dignity when you condescend to ask her to become your equal. If she refuse to be your joe at the fair, never either whine or look disappointed, but be sure to wale the bonniest lass you can get in the market, and lead her to the same party where your saucy dame is. Take her to the top o' the dance, the top o' the table at dinner, and laugh, and sing; and aye between hands, whisper your bonny partner; and if your ain lass disna happen to be unco weel buckled, it is ten to ane she will find an opportunity of offering you her company afore night. If she look angry or offended at your attention to others, you are sure o' her. They are queer creatures the lasses, Wat, and I rather dread ye haena muckle skill or experience in their bits o' wily gates. For, to tell you the truth, there's naething pleases me sae weel as to see them begin to pout, and prim their bits o' gabs, and look sulky out frae the wick o' the ee, and gar ilka feather and flower-knot quiver wi' their angry capers; for let me tell you, it is a great matter to get them to take offence—it lets a man see they are vexed for the loss o' him."

"If you had ever loved as I do, Jock, ye wad hae found little comfort in their offence. For my part, every disdainfu' word that yon dear lovely lassie says, gangs to my heart like a red-hot spindle. My life is bound up in her favour. It is only in it that I can live, move, or breathe; and whenever she says a severe or cutting word to me, I feel as if ane o' my members were torn away, and am glad to escape as lang as I am ony thing ava; for I find, if I war to remain, a few mae siccan sentences wad soon annihilate me."

"Ou ay! you're a buirdly chield, to be sure; but I have nae doubt ye wad melt away like snaw off a dike, or a dead sheep weel pykit by the corbies! Wow, man, but it maks me wae to think o't! and sae, to save you frae sic a melancholy end, I shall take in hand to bring her to your ain terms, in three months' time, if you will take my advice."

"O man, speak; for ye are garring a' the blood in my veins rin up to my head, as gin it war a thousand ants galloping like mad, running races."

"Weel, Wat, in the first place, I propose to gang down yonder a night by mysell, and speak baith to her father and her, to find how the land lies; and after that we can gang down baith thegither, and gie her a fair broadside.—The deil's in't, if we sanna bring her to reason."

Wat scratched his head, and pulled the grass (that was quite blameless in the affair) furiously up by the roots, but made no answer. On being urged to declare his sentiments, he said, "I dinna ken about that way o' ganging down your lane; I wish you maunna stick by the auld fisher's rule, 'Every man for his ain hand.' For I ken weel, that nae man alive can see her, and speak to her, and no be in love wi' her."

"It is a good thing in love affairs, Wat, that there are hardly two in the world wha think the same way."

"Ay, but this is a particular case; for a' the men in the country think the same gate here, and rin the same gate to the wooing. It is impossible to win near the house on a Friday night without knocking your head against that of some rival. Na, na, John, this plan o' ganging down by yoursell winna do. And now when I think on't, ye had better no gang down ava; for if we gang down friends, we'll come up enemies; and that wadna be a very agreeable catastroff."

"Now shame fa' me, gin ever I heard sic nonsense! To think that a' the warld see wi' your een! Hear ye, Wat—I wadna gie that snap o' my fingers for her. I never saw her till Sunday last, when I came to your kirk ance errand for that purpose, and I wadna ken her again gin I war to meet her here come out to the glen wi' your whey—what ails you, ye fool, that you're dighting your een?"

"Come out to the glen wi' *my* whey! Ah, man! the words gaed through me like the stang of a bumbee. Come out to the glen wi' *my* whey! Gude forgie my sin, what is the reason I canna thole that thought? That were a consummation devoutly to be wussed, as the soloquy in the Collection says. I fear I'll never see that blessed sight! But, Jock, take my advice; stay at hame, and gangna near her, gin ye wad enjoy ony peace o' conscience."

"Ye ken naething about women, Wat, and as little about me. If I gang near her, it will only be to humble her a wee, and bring her to reason, for your sake. Jock the Jewel wadna say 'Wae's me!' for the best lass's frown in a' the Kingdom o' Britain—whatever some of them might do for his."

Jock the Jewel went down in all his might and high experience, to put every thing to rights between his friend Wat and the bonny Snaw-fleck, as this pink of a mountain damsel was called. For be it understood, that every girl in the parish was named after one of the birds of the air; and every man, too, young and old, had his by-name, by which we shall distinguish them all for the present. Thus the Snaw-fleck's father was called Tod-Lowrie, (the fox;) his eldest daughter, the Eagle; the second, the Sea-maw; and his only son was denominated the Founmart, (pole-cat,) on account of a notable hunt he once had with one of these creatures in the middle of the night, in a strange house;—and it was the worst name I ever heard for a young man. Our disconsolate lover was called Window Wat, on account of his bashful nature, and, as was alleged, because he was in the habit of hanging about the windows when he went a-courting, and never venturing in. It was a good while after this first rencounter before the two shepherds met again with the opportunity of resuming the discussion of their love affairs. But at length an occasion offered, and then—— But we must suffer every man to tell his own tale, else the sport will be spoilt.

"Weel, Wat, hae ye been ony mair down at Lowrie's Lodge, sin' I saw you?"

"And if I hae, I hae been little the better o' you. I heard that you were there before me—and sinsyne too."

"Now, Wat, that's mere jealousy and suspicion, for ye didna see the lass to ken whether I was there or not. I ken ye wad be hinging about the window-soles as usual, kecking in, feasting your een, seeing other woosters beiking their shins at the ingle; but for a' that, durstna venture ben. Come, I dinna like siccan sachless gates as thae. I *was* down, I'se no deny't, but I gaed to wark in a manner different from yours. Unco cauldriife wark that o' standing peenging about windows, man! Come, tell me a' your expedition, and I'll tell you mine,—like friends, ye ken."

"Mine's no ill to tell. I gaed down that night after I saw you, e'en though Wednesday be the widower's night. More than I were there, but I was fear'd ye had got there afore me, and then, wi' your great skill o' the ways o' women, ye might hae left me nae chance at a'. I was there, but I might as weel hae staid at hame, for there were sae mony o' the out-wale

wallietrable kind o' woovers there, like mysell, a' them that canna win forret on a Friday night, that I got the back o' the hallan to keep; but there's ae good thing about the auld Tod's house,—they never ditt up their windows. Ane sees aye what's gaun on within doors. They leave a' their actions open to the ee o' man, yon family; and I often think it is nae ill sign o' them. Auld Tod-Lowrie himsell sometimes looks at the window in a kind o' considering mood, as if doubtful that at that moment he is both overheard and overseen; but, or it is lang, he cocks up his bonnet and cracks as crouse as ever, as if he thought again. There's aye ae ee that sees me at a' times, and a ear that hears me; and when that's the case, what need I care for a' the birkies o' the land!—I like that open independent way that the family has. But O, they are surely sair harassed wi' woovers!"

"The woovers are the very joy o' their hearts, excepting the Foumart's; he hates them a' unless they can tell him hunders o' lies about battles, bogles, and awfu' murders, and persecutions. And the leaving o' the windows open too is not without an aim. The Eagle is beginning to weary for a husband; and if ye'll notice how dink she dresses hersell ilka night, and jinks away at the muckle wheel as she war spinning for a wager. They hae found out that they are often seen at night, yon lasses; and though they hae to work the foulest work o' the bit farm a' the day when naebody sees them, at night they are a' dressed up like pet-ewes for a market, and ilka ane is acting a part. The Eagle is yerking on at the wheel, and now and then gieing a smirk wi' her face to the window. The Snaw-fleck sits busy in the neuk, as sleek as a kinnen, and the auld clocker fornent her admiring and misca'ing her a' the time. The white Sea-maw flees up and down the house, but and ben, ae while i' the spence, ane i' the awmrie, and then to the door wi' a soap-suds. Then the Foumart, he sits knitting his stocking, and quarrelling wi' the haill o' them. The feint a haed he minds but sheer ill nature. If there be a good body i' the house, the auld Tod is the ane. He is a geyan honest, downright carle, the Tod."

"It is hardly the nature o' a tod to be sae; and there's no ae bit o' your description that I gang in wi'! It is a fine, douse family.

'But O the Snaw-fleck!
The bonny bonny Snaw-fleck!
She is the bird for me, O!'"

"If love wad make you a poeter, Wat, I wad say it had wrought miracles. Ony mair about the bonny Snaw-fleck, eh? I wonder how you can make glowing love-sangs standing at a cauld window—No the way that, man. Tell me plainly, did ye ever get a word o' the bonny lass ava?"

"Hey how me!—I can hardly say that I did; and yet I hae been three times there sin' I saw you."

"And gat your travel for your pains a' the times?"

"No sae bad as that, neither. I had the pleasure o' seeing her, bonny, braw, innocent, and happy, busy working her mother's wark. I saw her smile at her brother's crabbit words, and I saw the approving glances beam frae the twa auld folk's een. When her father made family-worship, she took her Bible, and followed devoutly wi' her ee the words o' holy writ, as the old man read them; and her voice in singing the psalm was as mellow and as sweet as the flute playing afar off. Ye may believe me, Jock, when I saw her lift up her lovely face in sweet devotion, I stood on the outside o' the window, and grat like a bairn. It was mair than my heart could thole; and gin it warna for shame, I wad gang every night to enjoy the same heavenly vision."

"As I'm a Christian man, Wat, I believe love *has* made a poeter of you. Ye winna believe me, man, that very woman is acting her part. Do you think she didna ken that ye saw her, and was making a' thae fine murgeons to throw glamour in your een, and gar you trow she was an angel? I managed otherwise; but it is best to tell a' plain out, like friends, ye ken. Weel, down I goes to Lowrie's Lodge, and, like you, keeks in at the window; and the first thing I saw was the auld Tod toving out tobacco-reek like a moorburn. The haill biggin was sae chokefu' o' the vapour, it was like a dark mist, and I could see naething through it but his ain braid bonnet moving up and down like the tap o' the smith's bellows, at every poogh he gave. At length he handit by the pipe to the auld wife, and the reek soon turned mair moderate. I could then see the lasses a' dressed out like dolls, and several young boobies o' hinds, threshers, and thrum-cutters, sitting gashing and glowring among them.—I shall soon set your backs to the wa', thinks I, if I could get ony possible means o' introduction.—It wasna lang till ane offered; out comes a lass wi' a cog o' warm water, and she gars it a' clash on me. 'Thanks t'ye for your kindness, my woman,' says I. 'Ye canna say I hae gi'en ye a cauld reception,' says she. 'But wha are ye, standing like a thief i' the mirk?'—'Maybe kenn'd folk, gin it war daylight,' quo' I. 'Ye had better come in by, and see gin candle-light

winna beet the mister,' says she. 'Thanks t'ye,' says I; 'but I wad rather hae you to come *out by*, and try gin stern-light winna do!'—'Catch me doing that,' cried she, and bounced into the house again.

"I then laid my lug close to the window, and heard ane asking wha that was she was speaking to? 'I dinna ken him,' quo' she; 'but I trow I hae gi'en him a mark to ken him by; I hae gi'en him a balsam o' boiling water.'

"I wish ye may hae peeled a' the hide aff his shins,' quo' the Foumart, and he mudded and leugh; 'haste ye, dame, rin awa out and lay a plaster o' lime and linseed-oil to the lad's trams,' continued he.

"I can tell ye wha it is,' said ane o' the hamlet wooers; 'it will be Jock the Jewel comed down frae the moors; for I saw him waiting about the chop and the smiddy till the darkness came on. If ye hae disabled him, lady Seabird, the wind will blaw nae mair out o' the west.'

"I durstna trust them wi' my character and me in hearing; sae, without mair ado, I gangs bauldly ben.—'Gude-e'en to ye, kimmers a' in a ring,' says I.

"'Gude-e'en t'ye, honest lad,' quo' the Eagle. 'How does your cauld constitution and our potatoe-broo sort?'

"'Thanks t'ye, bonny lass,' says I. 'I hae gotten a right sair skelloch; but I wish I warna woundit nae deeper somewhere else than i' the shinbanes; I might shoot a flying erne for a' that's come and gane yet.'

"'That's weel answered, lad,' quo' the Tod. 'Keep her down, for she's unco glib o' the gab,—especially to strangers.'

"'You will never touch a feather o' her wing, lad,' quo' she. 'But if ye could—I'll say nae mair.'

"'Na, na, Mistress Eagle, ye soar o'er high for me,' says I. 'I'll bring down nae sky-cleaving harpies to pick the een out o' my sheep, and my ain into the bargain, maybe. I see a bit bonny norland bird in the nook here, that I would rather woo to my little hamely nest. The Eagle maun to her eyry; or, as the auld ballant says—

'Gasp and speel to her yermite riven,
Amid the mists and the rains of heaven.'

It is the innocent, thrifty little Snaw-fleck that will suit me, wi' the white wings and the blue body. She's pleased wi' the hardest and hameliest fare; a picking o' the seeds o' the pipe-bent is a feast to her."

"Now, by the faith o' my body, Jewel, that wasna fair. Was that preparing the way for your friend's success?"

"Naething but sheer banter, man; like friends, ye ken. But ye sall hear. 'The Snaw-fleck's a braw beast,' said I, 'but the Eagle's a waster and a destroyer.'

"'She's true to her mate, though,' said the dame; 'but the tither is a bird o' passage, and mate to the haill flock.'

"I was a wee startled at this observe, when I thought of the number of wooers that were rinning after the bonny Snaw-fleck. However, I didna like to yield to the haughty Eagle; and I added, that I wad take my chance o' the wee Snaw-bird, for though she war ane of a flock, that flock was an honest ane. This pleased them a'; and the auld sleet Tod, he spake up and said, he hadna the pleasure o' being acquaint wi' me, but he hoped he shouldna hae it in his power to say sae again. Only there was ae thing he beggit to remind me o', before I went any farther, and that was, that the law of Padanaram was established in his family, and he could by no means give a younger daughter in marriage before one that was elder.

"I think you will maybe keep them for a gay while, then,' said the Foumart. 'But if the Sea-gull wad stay at hame, I carena if the rest were at Bamph. She's the only usefu' body I see about the house.'

"'Haud the tongue o' thee, thou illfa' red, cat-witted serf,' said the auld wife. 'I'm sure ony o' them's worth a faggald o' thee! And that lad, gin I dinna forecast alee, wad do credit to ony kin.'

"'He's rather ower weel giftit o' the gab,' quo' the menseless thing. This remark threw a damp on my spirits a' the night after, and I rather lost ground than gained ony mair. The ill-hued weazel-blawn thing of a brother, never missed an opportunity of gieing me a yerker wi' his ill-scrapit tongue, and the Eagle was aye gieing hints about the virtues o' potatoe-broo. The auld Tod chewed tobacco and threw his mouth, lookit whiles at ane and whiles at another, and seemed to enjoy the joke as muckle as ony o' them. As for the bonny Snaw-bird, she never leugh aboon her breath, but sat as mim

and as sleek as a moudie. There were some very pretty smiles and dimples gaun, but nae gaffawing. She is really a fine lass."

"There it goes now! I tauld you how it would be! I tell you, Jewel, the deil a bit o' this is fair play."

"Ane may tell what he thinks—like a friend, ye ken. Weel—to make a lang tale short—I couldna help seeing a' the forenigh that she had an ee to me. I couldna help *that*, ye ken. Gat mony a sweet blink and smile thravn o'er the fire to me—couldna help that either, ye ken—never lost that a friend gets. At length a' the douce wooers drew off ane by ane—saw it was needless to dispute the point wi' me that night. Ane had to gang hame to supper his horses, another to fodder the kye, and another had to be hame afore his master took the book, else he had to gang supperless to bed. I sat still—needless to lose a good boon for lack o' asking. The potatoes were poured and champit—naebody bade me bide to supper; but I sat still; and the auld wife she slippit away to the awmrie, and brought a knoll o' butter like ane's nieve, and slippit that into the potatoe-pot hidling ways, but the fine flavour that filled the house soon outed the secret. I drew in my seat wi' the rest, resolved to hae my share. I saw that I had a hearty welcome frae them a' but the Foumart, and I loot him girn as muckle as he liket. Weel, I saw it was turning late, and there was a necessity for proceeding to business, else the prayers wad be on. Sae I draws to my plaid and staff, and I looks round to the lasses; but in the meantime I dropt half a wink to the Snaw-fleck, and I says, 'Weel, wha o' you bonny lasses sets me the length o' the townhead yett the night?'

"The feint a ane o' them,' quo' the Foumart wi' a girn.

"The townhead yett the night, honest lad?' quo' the wife. 'Be my certe, thou's no gaun nae siccan a geat. Dis thou think thou can gang to the muirs the night? Nay, nay, thou shalt take share of a bed wi' our son till it be day, for the night's dark and the road's eiry."

"He needna stay unless he likes,' quo' the Foumart.

"Haud thy tongue,' said the wife. So I sat down again, and we grew a' unco silent. At length the Eagle rose and flew to the door. It wadna do—I wadna follow; sat aye still, and threw another straight wink to the bonny Snaw-fleck, but the shy shirling sat snug in her corner, and wadna move. At length the Eagle comes gliding in, and in a moment, or ever I kem'd what I was doing, claps down a wee table at my left hand, and the big Bible and psalm-book on't. I never got sic a stound, and really thought I wad sink down through the floor; and when I saw the lasses shading their faces wi' their hands, I grew waur.

"What ails thee, honest lad, that thou looks sae baugh?' said the auld wife. 'Sure thou's no asheamed to praise thy Meaker? for an thou be, I shall be asheamed o' thee. It is an auld family custom we hae, aye to gie a stranger the honour o' being our leader in this duty; and gin he refuse that, we dinna countenance him nea mair.'

"That was a yerker! I now fand I was fairly in the mire. For the saul o' me I durstna take the book; for though I had a good deal o' good words by heart, I didna ken how I might gar them compluther. And as I took this to be a sort o' test to try a wooer's abilities, I could easily see that my hough was fairly i' the sheep-crook, and that what wi' sticking the psalm, bungling the prayer, potatoe-broo and a'thegither, I was like to come badly off. Sae I says, 'Gudewife, I'm obliged t'ye for the honour ye hae offered me; and sae far frae being ashamed o' my Maker's service, I rejoice in it; but I hae mony reasons for declining the honour. In the first place, war I to take the task out o' the gudeman's hand, it wad be like the youngest scholar o' the school pretending to teach his master; and were I to stay here a' night, it wad be principally for the purpose of hearing family worship frae his ain lips. But the truth is, and that's my great reason, I *can not* stay a' night. I want just ae single word o' this bonny lass, and then I maun take the road, for I'm far o'er late already.'

"I bide by my text, young man,' says the Tod; 'the law of Padanaram is the law of this house.'

"And, by the troth o' me, thou'lt find it nea bad law for thee, honest lad,' said the wife; 'our eldest will meak the *best* wife for thee—teak thou my word for that.'

"Maybe she wad,' said I, 'but I want just a single word wi' this dink chicken; but it isna on my ain account—it is a word frae a friend, and I'm bound in honour to deliver it.'

"That is spoken sae like an honest man, and a disinterested ane,' quo' the Tod, 'that I winna refuse the boon. Gae your ways ben to our ben-end, and say what ye hae to say; for I dinna suffer my bairns to gang out i' the dark wi' strangers.'

"Come away, then, hinny,' says I. She rose wi' slow and ill will, for I saw she wad rather I had been to speak for mysell;

and as I perceived this, as soon as I got her ben the house, and the door fairly steekit, I says till her, says I, 'Now, bonny lassie, I never saw your face afore but ance, and that day I gaed mony fit to see't. I came here the night ance errand to speak a word for a friend, but really'—Here she interrupted me as soon as she heard *but really*.

"'Could your friend no speak his word himsell?' said she.

"'As you say,' says I; 'that is good sense—I ca' that good, sound common sense; for a man does always his own turn best; and therefore I maun tell you, that I am fairly fa'en in love wi' you mysell, and am determined to hae you for my ain, cost what it will.'"

At this part of the story, Wat sprung to his feet—"Did you say sae?" said he. "If ye did, ye are a fause loun, and a villain, and I am determined to hae pennyworths o' *you*, cost what it will."

"Hout, fych, fie, Wat, man! dinna be a fool. Sit down, and let us listen to reason, like friends, ye ken. Ye sall hear, man—ye sall hear."

"I winna hear another word, Jewel. Up to your feet; either single stick or dry nieves, ony o' them ye like. Ye gat the lass ben the house on the credit o' my name, and that was the use you made o't! Ye dinna ken how near my heart, and how near my life, ye war edging then, and I'll break every bane in your bouk for it; only ye shall hae fair play, to smash mine gin ye can. Up, I say; for yon was a deed I winna brook."

"Perhaps I was wrang; but I'll speak the truth. Sit down, and ye shall hear—and then, gin we maun fight there's time enough for it after. If I had thought I acted wrang, I wadna hae tauld it sae plain out; but when twa folk think the saam gate, it isna a good sign. 'I'm in love wi' you, and am determined to hae you,' says I.

"'I winna hear a single word frae ane that's betraying his friend,' said she;—'not one word, after your avowal to my father. If he hae ony private word, say it—and if no, good night.'

"Did she say that, the dear creature? Heaven bless her bonny face!"

"'I did promise to a particular friend o' mine to speak a kind word for him,' said I. 'He is unco blate and modest, but there's no a better lad; and I never saw ane as deeply and as distractedly in love; for though I feel I *do* love, it is with reason and moderation.'"

"There again!" cried Wat, who had begun to hold out his hand—"There again! Do you ca' that acting like a faithfu' friend?"

"'Not a word of yourself,' said she. 'Who is this friend of yours! And has he any more to say by you? Not one word more of yourself—at least not to-night.'"

"At least not to-night!" repeated Wat, again and again—"Did she say that? I dinna like the addition ava."

"That was what she said; and naething could be plainer than that she was inviting me back; but as I was tied down, I was obliged to say something about you. 'Ye ken Window Wat?' says I. 'He is o'er sight and judgment in love wi' you, and he comes here ance or twice every week, just for the pleasure o' seeing you through the window. He's a gay queer compost—for though he is a' soul, yet he wants spirit.'"

"Did ye ca' me a compost? That was rather a queer term, begging your pardon," observed Wat.

"'I hae seen the lad sometimes,' says she. 'If he came here to see me, he certainly need not be sae muckle ashamed of his errand as not to show his face. I think him a main saft ane.'

"'Ye're quite i' the wrang, lass,' says I. 'Wat's a great dab. He's an arithmeticker, a 'stronomer, a historian, and a grand poeter, and has made braw sangs about yourself. What think ye o' being made a wife to sic a hero as him? Od help ye, it will raise ye as high as the moon.'"

"I'll tell ye what it is, Jock the Jewel—the niest time ye gang to court, court for yourself; for a' that ye hae said about me is downright mockery, and it strikes me that you are baith a selfish knave and a gommeril. Sae good e'en t'ye for the present. I owe you a good turn for your kind offices down by. I'll speak for mysell in future, and do ye the same—*like friends, ye ken*—that's a' I say."

"If I speak for mysell, I ken wha will hae but a poor chance," cried Jock after him.

The next time our two shepherds met, it was in the identical smithy adjoining to Lowrie's Lodge, and that at six o'clock on a December evening. The smith looked exceedingly wise, and when he heard the two swains begin to cut and sneer at one another, it was delicate food for Vulcan. He puffed and blew at the bellows, and thumped at the stithy, and always between put in a disjointed word or two.—"Mae hunters! mae hunters for the Tod's bairns—hem, phoogh, phoogh—will be worried now!—phoogh"—thump, thump—"will be run down now—hem!"

"Are ye gaun far this way the night, Jewel, an ane may spier?"

"Far enough for you, Wat, I'm thinking. How has the praying been coming on this while bygane?"

"What d'ye mean, Mr Jewel? If ye will speak, let it no be in riddles. Rather speak nonsense, as ye used to do."

"I am speaking in nae riddles, lad. I wat weel a' the country-side kens that ye hae been gaun learning prayers aff Hervey's Meditations, and crooning them o'er to yoursell in every cleuch o' the glen, a' to tame a young she-fox wi'."

"And that ye hae been lying under the hands o' the moor doctor a month, and submitting to an operation, frae the effects o' somebody's potatoe-broo—isna that as weel kent?"

"Till't, lads, till't!" cried the smith—"that's the right way o' ganging to wark—phoogh!"—clink, clink—"pepper away!"—clink, clink—"soon be baith as het as nailstrings—phoogh!"

The mention of the potatoe-broo somewhat abated Jock's sarcastic humour, for he had suffered some inconvenience from the effects of it, and the circumstance had turned the laugh against him among his companions. Ere long he glided from the smithy, and after that Wat sat in the fidgets for fear his rival had effected a previous engagement with the Snaw-fleck. The smith, perceiving it, seized him in good-humour, and turned him out at the door. "Nae time to stay now, lad—nae time to wait here now. The hunt will be up, and the young Tod holed, if ye dinna make a' the better speed." Then, as Wat vanished down the way, the smith imitated the sound of the fox-hounds and the cries of the huntsmen. "Will be run down now, thae young Tods—heavy metal laid on now—we'll have a walding heat some night, an the track keep warm," said the smith, as he fell to the big bellows with both hands.

When Wat arrived at Lowrie's Lodge, he first came in contact with one wooer, and then another, hanging about the corners of the house; but finding that none of them was his neighbour and avowed rival, he hastened to his old quiet station at the back window, not the window where the Jewel stood when he met with his mischance, but one right opposite to it. There he saw the three bonniest birds of the air surrounded with admirers, and the Jewel sitting cheek by cheek with the lovely Snaw-bird. The unbidden tears sprung to Wat's eyes, but it was not from jealousy, but from the most tender affection, as well as intense admiration, that they had their source. The other wooers that were lingering without, joined him at the window; and Wat feeling this an incumbrance, and eager to mar his rival's success, actually plucked up courage, and strode in amongst them all.

"How came the twa moorland chiels on at the courting the other night?"

"It's hard to say; there are various accounts about the matter."

"What does the smith say?—for, though his sentences are but short, he says them loud enough, and often enough ower, and folks reckon there's aye some truth in the foundation."

"I can tell ye what he says, for I heard him on the subject oftener than aince, and his information was precisely as follows:—'The Tod's bairns maun gang now, lads—I'm saying, the Tod's bairns maun gang now—eh, Menye?—fairly run down. Half-a-dozen tykes ower sair for ae young Tod—eh? Fairly holed the young ane, it seems—I'm saying, the young ane's holed. Nought but a pick and shool wantit to howk her. Jewel has gi'en mouth there—I'm saying, auld Jewel has gi'en mouth there. Poor Wat has been obliged to turn to the auld ane—he's on the full track o' her—I'm saying, he's after her, full trot. But some thinks she'll turn her tail to a craig, and wear him up. It was Wat that got the honour o' the beuk, though—I'm saying, it was him that took the beuk—wan gloriously through, too. The saxteenth o' the Romans, without a hamp, hinny. Was that true, think ye?—I'm saying, think ye that was true? Cam to the holy kiss; a' the wooers'

teeth watered—eh?—Think ye that was true, hinny? The Jewel was amaist comed to grips at that verse about the kiss—eh?—I'm saying, the Jewel closed wi' the beauty there, I'm saying—Ha! ha!—I think that wadna be true.'—This is the length the smith's information gangs."

"I'm sure, gin the Snaw-fleck take the Jewel, in preference to Wat, it will show a strange perversion of taste."

"O, there's naebody can answer for the fancies of a woman. But they're a geyan auld-farrant set the Tods, and winna be easily outwitted. Did ye no hear ought of a moonlight-match that was to be there?"

"Not a word; and if I had, I wadna hae believed it."

"The Jewel has been whispering something to that effect; he's sae uplifted, he canna haud his tongue; and I dinna wonder at it. But, for a' the offers the bonny lass had, that she should fix on him, is a miracle. Time tries a'; and Jock may be cheated yet."

Yes, time is the great trier of human events. Let any man review his correspondences for ten years back, and he will then see how widely different his own prospects of the future have been from the lessons taught him by that hoary monitor Time. But, for the present, matters turned out as the fortunate wooer had insinuated; for, in a short month after this confabulation had taken place, the auld Tod's helpmate arose early one morning, and began a-bustling about the house in her usual busy way, and always now and then kept giving hints to her bonny lasses to rise and begin to their daily tasks.—"Come, stir ye, stir ye, my bonny bairns. When the sterns o' heaven hae gane to their beds, it is time the flowers o' the yird war rising—Come, come!—No stirring yet?—Busk ye, busk ye, like thrifty bairns, and dinna let the lads say that ye are sleepie dowdies, that lie in your beds till the sun burns holes in your coverlets. Fie, fie!—There has been a reek i' Jean Lowrie's lum this half-hour. The moor-cock has crawed, the mawkin cowered, and the whaup yammered abune the flower. Streak your young limbs—open your young een—a foot on the cauld floor, and sleep will soon be aboon the cluds.—Up, up, my winsome bairns!"

The white Lady-Seabird was soon afoot, for she slept by herself; but the old dame still kept speaking away to the other two, at one time gibing, at another coaxing them to rise, but still there was no answer. "Peace be here, Helen, but this is an unco sleep-sleeping!" said she.—"What has been asteer owerneight? I wish your twa titties haena been out wi' the men?"

"Ay, I wish they binna out wi' them still; for I heard them steal out yestreen, but I never heard them steal in again."

The old wife ran to the bed, and in a moment was heard exclaiming,—"The sorrow be i' my een gin ever I saw the like o' that! I declare the bed's as cauld as a curling-stane!—Ay, the nest's cauld, and the birds are flown. Oh, wae be to the day! wae be to the day! Gudeman, gudeman, get up and raise the parishen, for our bairns are baith stown away!"

"Stown away!" cried the father—"What does the woman mean?"

"Ay, let them gang," cried the son; "they're weel away, gin they bide."

"Tewhoo! hoo-hoo!" cried the daughter, weeping,—"That comes o' your laws o' Padanaram! What had ye ado with auld Laban's rules? Ye might hae letten us gang aff as we could win.—There, I am left to spin tow, wha might hae been married the first, had it no been for your daft laws o' Padanaram."

The girl cried, the son laughed, the old woman raved and danced through very despair, but the gudeman took the matter quite calmly, as if determined to wait the issue with resignation, for better or worse.

"Haud your tongues, ilk ane o' ye," said he—"What's a' the fy-gae-to about? I hae that muckle to trust to my lasses, that I can lippen them as weel out o' my sight as in my sight, and as weel wi' young men as wi' auld women. Bairns that are brought up in the fear, nurture, and admonition o' their Maker, will aye swee to the right side, and sae will mine. Gin they thought they had a right to choose for themselves, they war right in exercising that right; and I'm little feared that their choices be bad anes, or yet that they be contrary to my wishes. Sae I rede you to haud a' your tongues, and tak nae mair notice o' ought that has happened, than if it hadna been. We're a' in gude hands to guide us; and though we whiles pu' the reins out o' His hand to tak a gallop our ain gate, yet He winna leave us lang to our ain direction."

With these sagacious words, the auld sly Tod settled the clamour and outcry in his family that morning; and the country has never doubted to this day, that he plowed with his own heifers.

On the evening previous to this colloquy, the family of the Tods went to rest at an early hour. There had been no wooers admitted that night; and no sooner had the two old people begun to breathe deep, than the eldest and youngest girls, who slept in an apartment by themselves, and had every thing in readiness, eloped from their father's cot, the Eagle with a lightsome heart and willing mind, but the younger with many fears and misgivings. For thus the matter stood:—Wat sighed and pined in love for the Snaw-fleck, but he was young and modest, and could not tell his mind; but he was such a youth as a maiden would love,—handsome, respectable, and virtuous; and a match with him was so likely, that no one ever supposed the girl would make objections to it. Jock, on the other hand, was nearly twice her age, talkative, forward, and self-conceited; and, it was thought, rather wanted to win the girl for a brag, than for any great love he bore her. But Jock was rich; and when one has told that, he has told enough. In short, the admired, the young, the modest, and reserved Snaw-fleck, in order to get quit of her father's laws of Padanaram, agreed to make a run-away marriage with Jock the Jewel. But what was far more extraordinary, her youthful lover agreed to accompany her as bridesman, and, on that account, it may possibly be supposed, her eldest sister never objected to accompany her as maid.

The shepherds had each of them provided himself with a good horse, saddle, and pillion; and, as the custom is, the intended bride was committed to the care of the best-man, and the Eagle was mounted behind her brother-in-law that was to be. It was agreed, before mounting, that in case of their being parted in the dark by a pursuit, or any other accident, their place of rendezvous was to be at the Golden Harrow, in the Candlemaker-Row, towards which they were to make with all speed.

They had a wild moorland path to traverse for some space, on which there were a multiplicity of tracks, but no definitive road. The night was dark and chill, and, on such ground, the bride was obliged to ride constantly with her right hand round Wat's waist, and Wat was obliged to press that hand to his bosom, for fear of its being cold; and in the excess of his politeness he magnified the intemperance of the night at least seven-fold. When pressing that fair hand to his bosom, Wat sometimes thought to himself, what a hard matter it was that it should so soon be given away to another; and then he wiped a tear from his eye, and did not speak again for a good while. Now the night, as was said, being very dark, and the bride having made a pleasant remark, Wat spontaneously lifted that dear hand from his bosom, in order to attempt passing it to his lips, but (as he told me himself) without the smallest hope of being permitted. But behold, the gentle ravishment was never resisted! On the contrary, as Wat replaced the insulted hand in his bosom, he felt the pressure of his hand gently returned.

Wat was confounded, electrified! and felt as the scalp of his head had been contracting to a point. He felt, in one moment, as if there had been a new existence sprung up within him, a new motive for life, and for every great and good action; and, without any express aim, he felt a disposition to push onward. His horse soon began to partake of his rider's buoyancy of spirits, (which a horse always does,) so he cocked up his ears, mended his pace, and, in a short time, was far a-head of the heavy, stagnant-blooded beast on which the Jewel bridegroom and his buxom Eagle rode. She had *her* right arm round *his* waist too, of course; but her hand lacked the exhilarating qualities of her lovely sister's; and yet one would have thought that the Eagle's looks were superior to those of most young girls outgone thirty.

"I wish thae young fools wad take time and ride at leisure; we'll lose them on this black moor a'thegither, and then it is a question how we may foregather again," said the bridegroom; at the same time making his hazel sapling play yerker on the hind-quarters of his nag. "Gin the gowk let aught happen to that bit lassie o' mine under cloud o' night, it wad be a' ower wi' me—I could never get aboon that. There are some things, ye ken, Mrs Eagle, for a' your sneering, that a man can never get aboon."

"No very mony o' them, gin a chield hae ony spirit," returned the Eagle. "Take ye time, and take a little care o' your ain neck and mine. Let them gang their gates. Gin Wat binna tired o' her, and glad to get quat o' her, or they win to the Ports o' Edinburgh, I hae tint my computation."

"Na, if he takes care o' *her*, that's a' my dread," rejoined he, and at the same time kicked viciously with both heels, and applied the sapling with great vigour. But "the mair haste the waur speed" is a true proverb; for the horse, instead of mending his pace, slackened it, and absolutely grew so frightened for the gutters on the moor, that he would hardly be persuaded to take one of them, even though the sapling sounded loud and thick on his far loin. He tried this ford, and the other ford, and smelled and smelled with long-drawn breathings. "Ay, ye may snuff!" cried Jock, losing all patience; "the deil that ye had ever been foaled!—Hilloa! Wat Scott, where are ye?"

"Hush, hush, for gudesake," cried the Eagle; "ye'll raise the country, and put a' out thegither."

They listened for Wat's answer, and at length heard a far-away whistle. The Jewel grew like a man half distracted, and in spite of the Eagle's remonstrances, thrashed on his horse, cursed him, and bellowed out still the more; for he suspected what was the case, that, owing to the turnings and windings of his horse among the hags, he had lost his aim altogether, and knew not which way he went. Heavens! what a stentorian voice he sent through the moor before him! but he was only answered by the distant whistle, that still went farther and farther away.

When the bride heard these loud cries of desperation so far behind, and in a wrong direction, she was mightily tickled, and laughed so much that she could hardly keep her seat on the horse; at the same time, she continued urging Wat to ride, and he, seeing her so much amused and delighted at the embarrassment of her betrothed and sister, humoured her with equal good-will, rode off, and soon lost all hearing of the unfortunate bridegroom. They came to the high-road at Middleton, cantered on, and reached Edinburgh by break of day, laughing all the way at their unfortunate companions. Instead, however, of putting up at the Golden Harrow, in order to render the bridegroom's embarrassment still more complete, at the bride's suggestion, they went to a different corner of the city, namely, to the White Horse, Canongate. There the two spent the morning, Wat as much embarrassed as any man could be, but his lovely companion quite delighted at the thoughts of *what* Jock and her sister *would do*. Wat could not understand her for his life, and he conceived that she did not understand herself; but perhaps Wat Scott was mistaken. They breakfasted together; but for all their long and fatiguing journey, neither of them seemed disposed to eat. At length Wat ventured to say, "We'll be obliged to gang to the Harrow, and see what's become o' our friends."

"O no, no! by no means!" cried she fervently; "I would not, for all the world, relieve them from such a delightful scrape. What the two *will do* is beyond my comprehension."

"If ye want just to bamboozle them a'thegither, the best way to do that is for you and me to marry," said Wat, "and leave them twa to shift for themselves."

"O that wad be so grand!" said she.

Though this was the thing nearest to honest Wat's heart of all things in the world, he only made the proposal by way of joke, and as such he supposed himself answered. Nevertheless, the answer made the hairs of his head creep once more. "My truly, but that wad gar our friend Jock loup twa gates at ance!" rejoined Wat.

"It wad be the grandest trick that ever was played upon man," said she.

"It wad mak an awfu' sound in the country," said Wat.

"It wad gang through the twa shires like a handbell," said she.

"Od, I really think it is worth our while to try't," said he.

"O by a' manner o' means!" cried she, clasping her hands together for joy.

Wat's breath cut short, and his visage began to alter. He was likely to acquire the blessing of a wife rather more suddenly than he anticipated, and he began to wish that the girl might be in her perfect senses. "My dear M—," said he, "are you serious? would you really consent to marry me?"

"Would I consent to marry you!" reiterated she. "That is siccan a question to speer!"

"It *is* a question," said Wat, "and I think a very natural ane."

"Ay, it is a question, to be sure," said she; "but it is ane that ye ken ye needna hae put to me to answer, at least till ye had tauld me whether ye wad marry me or no."

"Yes, faith, I will—there's my hand on it," eagerly exclaimed Wat. "Now, what say ye?"

"No," said she;—"that is, I mean—yes."

"I wonder ye war sae lang o' thinking about that," said Wat. "Ye ought surely to hae tauld me sooner."

"Sae I wad, if ever ye had speered the question," said she.

"What a stupid idiot I was!" exclaimed Wat, and rapped on the floor with his stick for the landlord. "An it be your will,

sir, we want a minister," says Wat.

"There's one in the house, sir," said the landlord, chuckling with joy at the prospect of some fun. "Keep a daily chaplain here—Thirlstane's motto, 'Ayeready.' Could ye no contrive to do without him?"

"Na, na, sir, we're folk frae the country," said Wat; "we hae comed far and foul gate for a preevat but honest hand-fasting."

"Quite right, quite right," said my landlord. "Never saw a more comely country couple. Your business is done for you at once;" at the same time he tapped on the hollow of his hand, as much as to say, some reward must be forthcoming. In a few minutes he returned, and setting the one cheek in at the side of the door, said, with great rapidity, "Could not contrive to do without the minister, then? Better?—no getting off again. Better?—what?—Can't do without him?"

"O no, sir," said Wat, who was beginning a long explanatory speech, but my landlord cut him short, by introducing a right reverend divine, more than half-seas over. He was a neat, well-powdered, cheerful little old gentleman, but one who never asked any farther warrant for the marrying of a couple, than the full consent of parties. About this he was very particular, and advised them, in strong set phrases, to beware of entering rashly into that state ordained for the happiness of mankind. Wat thought he was advising him against the match, but told him he was very particularly situated. Parties soon came to a right understanding, the match was made, the minister had his fee, and afterwards he and the landlord invited themselves to the honour, and very particular pleasure, of dining with the young couple at two.

What has become of Jock the Jewel and his partner all this while? We left them stabled in a mossy moor, surrounded with hags, and bogs, and mires, every one of which would have taken a horse over the back; at least so Jock's great strong plough-horse supposed, for he became so terrified that he absolutely refused to take one of them. Now, Jock's horse happened to be wrong, for I know the moor very well, and there is not a bog on it all, that will hold a horse still. But it was the same thing in effect to Jock and the Eagle—the horse would have gone eastward or westward along and along and along the sides of these little dark stripes, which he mistook for tremendous quagmires; or if Jock would have suffered him to turn his head homeward, he would, as Jock said, have galloped for joy; but northwards towards Edinburgh, never a step would he proceed. Jock thrashed him at one time, stroked his mane at another, at one time coaxed, at another cursed him, till, ultimately, on the horse trying to force his head homeward in spite of Jock, the latter, in high wrath, struck him a blow on the far ear with all his might. This had the effect of making the animal take the motion of a horizontal wheel, or millstone. The weight of the riders fell naturally to the outer side of the circle—Jock held by the saddle, and the Eagle held by Jock—till down came the whole concern with a thump on the moss. "I daresay, that beast's gane mad the night," said Jock; and, rising, he made a spring at the bridle, for the horse continued still to reel; but, in the dark, our hero missed his hold—off went the horse, like an arrow out of a bow, and left our hapless couple in the midst of a black moor.

"What shall we do now?—shall we turn back?" said Jock.

"Turn back!" said the Eagle; "certainly not, unless you hae ta'en the rue."

"I wasna thinking o' that ava," said he; "but, O, it is an unfortunate-like business—I dinna like their leaving o' us, nor can I ken what's their meaning."

"They war fear'd for being catched, owing to the noise that you were making," said she.

"And wha wad hae been the loser gin we had been catched? I think the loss then wad hae faun on me," said Jock.

"We'll come better speed wanting the beast," said she; "I wadna wonder that we are in Edinburgh afore them yet."

Wearied and splashed with mud, the two arrived at the sign of the Harrow, a little after noon, and instantly made inquiries for the bride and best-man. A description of one man answers well enough for another to people quite indifferent. Such a country gentleman as the one described, the landlady said, had called twice in the course of the day, and looked into several rooms, without leaving his name. They were both *sure* it was Wat, and rested content. The gentleman came *not* back, so Jock and the Eagle sat and looked at one another. "They will be looking at the grand things o' this grand town," said she.

"Ay, maybe," said Jock, in manifest discontent. "I couldna say what they may be looking at, or what they may be doing. When folks gang ower the march to be married, they should gang by themselves twa. But some wadna be tauld sae."

"I canna comprehend where he has ta'en my sister to, or what he's doing wi' her a' this time," said the Eagle.

"I couldna say," said Jock, his chagrin still increasing, a disposition which his companion took care to cherish, by throwing out hints and insinuations that kept him constantly in the fidgets; and he seemed to be repenting heartily of the step he had taken. A late hour arrived, and the two, having had a sleepless night and a toilsome day, ordered supper, and apartments for the night. They had not yet sat down to supper, when the landlord requested permission for two gentlemen, acquaintances of his, to take a glass together in the same room with our two friends, which being readily granted, who should enter but the identical landlord and parson who had so opportunely buckled the other couple! They had dined with Wat and his bride, and the whisky-toddy had elicited the whole secret from the happy bridegroom. The old gentlemen were highly tickled with the oddity of the adventure, and particularly with the whimsical situation of the pair at the Harrow; and away they went at length on a reconnoitring expedition, having previously settled the measures to be pursued.

My landlord of the White Horse soon introduced himself to the good graces of the hapless couple by his affability, jokes, quips, and quibbles, and Jock and he were soon as intimate as brothers, and the maid and he as sweethearts, or old intimate acquaintance. He commended her as the most beautiful, handsome, courteous, and accomplished country lady he ever had seen in his life, and at length asked Jock if the lady was his sister. No, she was not. Some near relation, perhaps, that he had the charge of.—No.—"Oh! Beg pardon—perceive very well—plain—evident—wonder at my blindness," said my landlord of the White Horse—"sweetheart—sweetheart? Hope 'tis to be a match? Not take back such a flower to the wilderness unplucked—unappropriated that is—to blush unseen—waste sweetness on the desert air? What? Hope so? Eh? More sense than that, I hope?"

"You mistak, sir; you mistak. My case is a very particular ane," said Jock.

"I wish it were mine, though," said he of the White Horse.

"Pray, sir, are you a married man?" said the Eagle.

"Married? Oh yes, mim, married, and settled in life, with a White Horse," returned he.

"A grey mare, you mean," said the Eagle.

"Excellent! superlative!" exclaimed my landlord. "Minister, what think you of that? I'm snubbed—cut down—shorn to the quick! Delightful girl! something favoured like the young country bride we dined with to-day. What say you, minister? Prettier, though—decidedly prettier. More animation, too. Girls from the same country-side have always a resemblance."

"Sir, did you say you dined with a bride from our country-side?" said Jock.

"Did so—did so."

"What was the bridegroom like?"

"A soft-soles—milk-and-water."

"And his name? You will not tell, maybe,—a W and an S?"

"The same—the same—mum!—W.S., writer to the signet. The same. An M and a T, too. You understand? Mum!"

"Sir, I'll be muckle obliged to you, gin ye'll tak me to where they are. I hae something to say to them," said Jock, with great emphasis.

"Oh! you are the father, are you? Minister, I'll take you a bet this is the bride's father and sister. You are too late, sir; far too late. They are bedded long ago!"

"Bedded!" cried Jock, in a shrill and desperate tone of voice.

"The case is past redemption now," began mine host; "a father is to be pitied! but—"

"Sir, you mistak—I'm not her father."

About this stage of the conversation, a letter was handed in "to Miss Tod, at the Golden Harrow;" but the bearer went off, and waited no answer. The contents were as follows:—

"DEAR SISTER,

This cometh to let you know, that I have married Walter, thinking you and John had turned on the height, and that he had taken the rue; so I thought, after leaving the country to be married, I could never set up my face in it again, without a husband; for you know a woman leaving home with a man, as we both have done, can never be received into a church or family again, unless she be married on him; and you must consider of this; for if you are comed to Edinburg with a man, you need never go home again. John hath used me very bad, and made me do the thing I may rue; but I could not help it. I hope he will die an old bachelor, as he is, and never taste the joys of the married state. We will remain here another night, for some refreshment, and then I go home to his mother. This business will make a terrible noise in the country. I would not have gone home, and me not married, for all the whole world."

When the Eagle read this, she assumed symptoms of great distress, and after much beseeching and great attention from the two strangers, she handed the letter to Jock, showing him that she could never go home again after what had happened. He scratched his head often, and acknowledged that "Maggy's was a ticklish case," and then observed that he would see what was to be done about it to-morrow. My landlord called for a huge bowl of punch, which he handed liberally round. The matter was discussed in all its bearings. The minister made it clearly out, that the thing had been foreordained, and it was out of their power to counteract it. My landlord gave the preference to the Eagle in every accomplishment. Jock's heart grew mellow, while the maid blushed and wept; and in short, they went to bed that night a married couple, to the great joy of the Eagle's heart; for it was never once doubted that the whole scheme was a contrivance of her own—a bold stroke to get hold of the man with the money. She knew Wat would marry her sister at a word or hint, and then the Jewel had scarcely an alternative. He took the disappointment and affront so much to heart, that he removed with his Eagle to America, at the Whitsunday following, where their success was beyond anticipation, and where they were both living at an advanced age about twelve years ago, without any surviving family.

CHAPTER II.

A STRANGE SECRET.

Some years ago, a poor man named Thomas Henderson came to me, and presented me with a letter from a valued friend. I showed some little kindness to the man; and as an acknowledgment, he gave me an account of himself, in that plain, simple, and drawling style, which removed all doubts of its authenticity. His story, as a whole, was one of very deep interest to himself, no doubt, but of very little to me, as it would be to the world at large if it were repeated; but as one will rarely listen to even the most common-place individual without hearing something to reward the attention bestowed upon him, so there was one incident in this man Henderson's life which excited my curiosity very much. I shall give it nearly in his own words:—

I was nine years a servant to the Earl of ——, (said he,) and when I left him, he made me a handsome present; but it was on condition that I should never again come within a hundred miles of his house. The truth is, that I would have been there to this day, had I not chanced to come at the knowledge of something relating to the family that I ought not to have known, and which I never would have known, had I gotten my own will. When the auld Earl died, there was an unco confusion, and at length the young Lord came hame frae abroad, and tuke the command. He hadna been master about twa years when he rings the bell ae morning, and sends for me. I was merely a groom, and no used to gang up stairs to my Lord; but he often spoke to me in the stables, for I had the charge o' his favourites Cleopatra and Venus, and I thought he wanted to gie me some directions about them. Weel, up the stair I rins, wanting the jacket and bonnet, and I opens the door, and I says, "What is't, my Lord?"—"Shut the door, and come in," says he. Hech! what in the world is in the wind now! thinks I. Am I gaun to be made some grand secreter?

"Tom, has the Lady Julia ordered the coach to-day?" says he.

"I believe she has, my Lord, I think Hector was saying so."

"And is it still to the old spot again, in the forest?"

"That winna be kenn'd till Hector is on the seat. But there is little doubt that it is to the same place. She never drives to ony other."

"Tom, I was long absent from home, but you have been in the family all the while, and must know all its secrets—What is it supposed my sister Julia has always ado with the forester's wife at the shieling of Aberduchra?"

"That has never been kenn'd to ane o' us, my Lord. But it is supposed there is some secret business connected wi' her visits there."

"That is a great stretch of supposition, indeed, Tom! Of that there can be no doubt. But what do the servants suppose the secret relates to? Or what do *you* suppose concerning it? Come, tell me honestly and freely."

"Ou, naebody kens that, my Lord; for Lady Julia just lights at a certain point o' the road, and orders the coach to be there again at a certain hour at night; and that's a' that has ever been kenn'd about it. But we a' notice that Lady Julia is sair altered. And folks they say—but as to that I am ignorant—they say, ye ken, that auld Eppie Cowan's a witch."

"And that it is on some business of enchantment or divination that my sister goes to her?"

"Na, na, I dinna say that, my Lord; for a' that I say is just this, that I believe naebody in this world, excepting Lady Julia and auld Eppie themsells twa, kens what their business is thegither, or how they came to be connected."

"Well, well, Tom, that is what I want particularly to know. Do you set out just now; go over the shoulder of Beinny-Veol, and through Glen-Ellich, by the straight route; get to Aberduchra before my sister; conceal yourself somewhere, in the house or out of the house, in a thicket or in a tree; note all that you see Lady Julia engaged in—who meets her there—what they do, and what they say, and bring me a time report of every thing; and your reward shall be according to your success."

Weel, aff I rins, and ower the hills at the nearest, and sair wark had I afore I got mysell concealed, for auld Eppie was running out and in, and in and out again, in an unco fyke, weel kenning wha was to be her visitor that day; for every time

she cam to the door she gae a lang look down the glen, and then a' round about her, as if feared for being catched in a fault.

I had by this time got up to the top of a great elm-tree that almost overlooked the door o' the shieling, but when I saw the auld roudess looking about her sae sternly, I grew frightened; for I thought, if she be a witch, I shall soon be discovered; and then, should she cast ony cantrips that may dumfounder me, or should I see aught to put me beside mysell, what a fa' I will get! I wad now hae gien a' the claes on my back to have been safe down again, and had begun to study a quick descent, when I perceived Lady Julia coming rapidly up the glen, with manifest trepidation in her manner. My heart began now to quake like an aspen leaf, for I suspected that some awesome scene was gaun to be transacted, that could bring the accomplished Lady Julia to that wild retired spot. And yet when she drew near, her modest mien and fading beauty were sae unlike ony thing wicked or hellish, that—in short I didna ken what to think or what to fear, but I had a considerable allowance o' baith.

With many kind and obsequious courtesies did old Eppie receive the lady on the green, and after exchanging a few words, they both vanished into the cottage, and shut the door. Now, thinks I, the infernal wark will begin; but goodness be thankit, I'll see nane o't frae here.—I changed my place on the tree, however, and came as near to the top of the lum as the branches would carry me. From thence I heard the voices of the twa, but knew not what they were saying. The Lady Julia's voice was seldom heard, but when it was, it had the sounds of agony; and I certainly thought she was imploring the old hag to desist from something which the other persisted in. The voice of the latter never ceased; it went on with one continued mumble, like the sound of a distant waterfall. The sounds still increased, and I sometimes made myself believe that I heard the voice of a third person. I cannot tell what I would then have given to have heard what was going on, but though I strained my hearing to the uttermost, I could not attain it.

At length, all at once, I heard a piercing shriek, which was followed by low stifled moanings. "They are murdering a bairn, and what *will* I do!" said I to myself, sobbing till my heart was like to burst. And finding that I was just upon the point of losing my senses, as well as my hold, and falling from the tree, I descended with all expedition, and straightway ran and hid mysell under the bank of the burn behind the house, that thereby I might avoid hearing the cries of the suffering innocent, and secure myself from a fall.

Now, here shall be my watch, thinks I; for here I can see every ane that passes out frae or into the house; and as for what is gaun on in the inside, that's mair than I'll meddle wi'.

I had got a nice situation now, and a safe ane, for there was a thick natural hedge of briers, broom, and brambles, down the back o' the kail-yard. These overhung the burn-brae, so that I could hide mysell frae every human ee in case of great danger, and there was an opening in the hedge, through which I could see all that passed, and there I cowered down on my knees, and lay wi' my een stelled on that shieling o' sin and iniquity.

I hadna lain lang in this position till out comes the twasome, cheek for chowe, and the auld ane had a coffin under her arm; and straight on they comes for the very opening o' the hedge where I was lying. Now, thinks I, I'm a gone man; for in below this very bank where I am sitting, are they coming to hide the corpse o' the poor bairn, and here ten might lie till they consumed, unkenn'd to the hail world. Ay, here they are coming, indeed, for there is not another bit in the whole thicket where they can win through; and in half a minute, I will have the witch and the murderess baith hinging at my throat like twa wullcats!—I was aince just setting a' my joints to make a clean splash down the middle of the burn like an otter; but the power was denied me, and a' that I could do, was to draw mysell close into my cove, like a hare into her form; and there I sat and heard the following dialogue, and I think I remember it every word.

"Now, my good Eppie, are you certain that no person will come upon us, or within view of us, before we have done?"
(*Good Eppie!* thinks I, Heaven preserve us a' frae sic goodness!)

"Ay, ay, weel am I sure o' that, Leddy July, for my ain goodman is on the watch, and he has a signal that I ken, which will warn us in good time if ony body leave the high-way."

"Then open the lid, and let me look into it once more; for the poor inanimate remains that are in that chest have a hold of this disconsolate and broken heart, which nothing else in this world can ever have again. O my dear boy! My comely, my beautiful, my murdered boy!"

Here Lady Julia burst into the most violent and passionate grief, shrieking and weeping like one in distraction. I was terrified out o' a' bounds; but I couldna help thinking to mysell what a strange inconsistent creature a woman was, first to

take away a dear little boy's life, and then rair and scraugh over what she had done, like a madwoman! Her passion was sae violent and sae loud that I couldna take up what the auld crone was saying, although her tongue never lay for a moment; but I thought a' the time that she was trying to pacify and comfort Lady Julia; and I thought I heard her saying that the boy wasna murdered. Now, thinks I, that dings a' that ever I heard! If a man aince understands a woman, he needna be feared to try ough in nature.

"Now here they are, my Leddy July, just as your own fair hands laid them. There's no ane o' them out o' its place yet. There they a' lie, little and muckle, frae the crown o' the head to the soles o' the feet."

"Gude forgie the woman!" says I to mysell—"Can these be the banes o' bairns that she is speaking about? It is a question how mony has been put into that black kist afore this time, and there their banes will be lying, tier aboon tier, like the contents of a candlemaker's box!"

"Look, here is the first, my Leddy. This is the first year's anes. Then, below that sheet o' silver paper, is the second year's, and on sae to the third and the fourth."

I didna think there had been as muckle wickedness in human nature, thought I; but if thae twa escape out o' this world without some veesible judgment, I'm unco sair mistaen!

"Come now, Leddy July, and let us gae through them a' regularly; and gie ower greeting. See, as I said, this contains the first year's suits of a' kinds, and here, amang others, is the frock he was bapteezed in, far, far frae here. Ay, weel I mind that day, and sae may ye, Leddy July; when the Bishop flung the water on your boy's face, how the little chub looked at him! Ech—ech—ech—I'll never forget it! He didna whimper and whine, like ither bairns, but his little arms gae a quiver wi' anger, and sic a look as he gae the priest! Ay, it was as plain as he had said it in gude Scots, 'Billy, I'll be about wi' you for this yet!' He—he—he—my brave boy! Ay, there needed nae confessions, nor parish registers, to declare wha was his father! 'Faith, billy, I'll be about wi' you for this insult!' He—he—he! That was what he thought plainly enough, and he looked *very* angry at the Bishop the haill night.—O fie, Leddy July, dinna stain the bonny frock wi' your tears. Troth, they are sae warm and sae saut, that they will never wash out again. There now, there now. We will hing them a' out to the sun ane by ane."

Shame fa' my stupidity! thought I to mysell. Is the haill terrible affair endit in a bichel o' baby-clouts?—I then heard that they were moving farther away from me, and ventured to peep through the boughs, and saw the coffin standing open, about three feet from my nose. It was a small low trunk, covered with green velvet, lined with white satin, and filled with clothes that had belonged to a princely boy, who, it appeared from what I overheard, had either been privately murdered, or stolen away, or had somehow unaccountably disappeared. This I gathered from the parts of the dialogue that reached me, for always when they came near to the trunk, they were close beside me, and I heard every word; but as they went farther away, hanging out the bairn's claes to air, I lost the parts between. Auld Eppie spake without intermission, but Lady Julia did little else save cry, and weet the different parts of the dress with tears. It was excessively affecting to see the bonny young lady, wha was the flower o' the haill country, bending ower a wheen claes, pressing them to her bosom, and greeting till the very heart within her was like to melt, and aye crying, between every fit o' sobbing, "O my boy, my dear boy! my noble, my beautiful boy! How my soul yearns after thee! Oh, Eppie, may you never know what it is to have but one only son, and to be bereaved of him in such a way as I have been!"

At one time I heard the old wife say, "See, here is the silk corslet that he wore next his breast that very day;" on which the Lady Julia seized the little tucker, and kissed it an hundred times, and then said, "Since it once was warmed in his dear little bosom, it shall never cool again as long as his mother's is warm." So saying, she placed the relic in her breast, weeping bitterly.

Eppie's anecdotes of the boy were without end; the bereaved and beautiful mother often rebuking her, but all the while manifestly indulging in a painful pleasure. She showed her a pair of trows that were discoloured, and added, "Ah, I ken brawly what made them sae dim. His foster-brother, Ranald, and he were after a fine painted butterfly one day. The creature took across a mire, a perfect stank. Ranald stopped short, but Lewie made a bauld spring to clear it. He hardly wan by the middle, where he stuck up to the waist in mire. Afore my goodman reached him, there was naething aboon but the blue bonnet and the feather. 'You little imp, how gat you in there?' said my husband. 'That's not your concern, sir, but how I shall get out again,' said the little pestilence. Ah, he was the bairn that had the kind heart when kindness was shown to him; but no ae thing in this 'versal world wad he do by compulsion. We could never make him comprehend the power of death; he always bit his lip, and scowled wi' his eebrows, as if determined to resist it. At first he held him at

defiance, threatening to shoot or run him through the body; but when checked so that he durst not openly defy him, his resolution was evidently unchanged. Ha! he was the gallant boy; and if he lives to be a man, he winna have his match in the three kingdoms."

"Alack, alack, my dear boy," exclaimed Lady Julia; "his beauty is long ago defaced, his princely form decayed, and his little unripe bones lie mouldering in some pit or concealed grave. Perhaps he was flung from these rocks, and his fair and mangled form became the prey of the raven or the eagle."

The lady's vehemence some way affected my heart, and raised siccan a disposition in me to join her in crying, that in spite o' my heart, I fell a-fuffing like a goose as I was, in below the burn-brae. I was overheard; and then all was silence and consternation for about the space of a minute, till I hears Eppie say, "Did you hear that, Leddy July? What say ye? What in the world was that? I wish there may be nae concealed spies. I hope nae unhallowed ee has seen our wark the day, or unblest ear heard our words! Eh?"

Neck butt, neck ben,
I find the smell o' quick men;
But be he living or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to mix my bread."

So saying, the old hag in one moment rushed through the thin part of the brake, by a retrograde motion, and drapping down from the hanging bank, she lighted precisely with a foot on each side of my neck. I tried to withdraw my head quietly and peaceably, but she held me as if my head had been in a vice, and, with the most unearthly yells, called out for a knife! a knife! I had now no other resource left but to make a tremendous bolt forward, by which I easily overturned the old dame, and off I ran plash for plash down the burn, till I came to an opening, by which I reached the only path down the glen. I had lost my bonnet, but got off with my head, which was more than the roudess intended.

Such screaming and howling as the two carried on behind me, I never heard. Their grand secret was now out; and I suppose they looked upon the discovery as utter ruin, for both of them knew me perfectly well, and guessed by whom I had been sent. I made the best of my way home, where I arrived before dark, and gave my master, the Earl, a full and faithful account of all that I had seen and all that I had heard. He said not a word until I had ended, but his face grew dark, and his eyes as red as a coal, and I easily perceived that he repented having sent me. When I had concluded my narrative, he bit his lip for some time, and then said, in a low smothered voice,—"I see how it has been—I see how it has been; I understand it all perfectly well." Then, after a short pause, he continued, "I believe, Tom, it will be unsafe for you to stay longer here; for, if you do, you will not be alive till to-morrow at midnight. Therefore haste to the south, and never for your life come north of the Tweed again, or you are a dead man, depend on that. If you promise me this, I will make you a present of £10, over and above your wages; but if you refuse, I will take my chance of having your motions watched, and you may take yours."

As I had often heard hints that certain officious people had vanished from my Lord's mansion before this time, I was glad to make my escape; and taking him at his offer, I was conveyed on shipboard that same night, and have never again looked towards the north.

"It is a great pity, Thomas," said I, when he had finished this recital, "that you can give me no account of the boy—whose son he was, or what became of him. Was Lady Julia ever married?"

I couldna say, sir. I never heard it said either that she was married, or that she was not married. I never had the slightest suspicion that she was married till that day; but I certainly believe sinsyne, that she aince *had* been married at ony rate. Last year I met with one John Ferguson from that country, who told me the Earl was dead, and that there was some dispute about the heirship, and that some strange secrets had come out; and he added, "For you know very weel, Thomas, that that family never could do any thing like other people."

"Think you there is no person in that country to whom I could apply," said I, "for a developement of these mysterious circumstances?"

"There is only one person," said Henderson, "and I am sure he knows every thing about it, and that is the Bishop; for he was almost constantly in the family, was sent for on every emergency, and was often away on long jaunts with Lady Julia alone. I am sure he can inform you of every circumstance; but then it is almost certain either that he will not dare, or that

he will not choose, to disclose them."

This story of Henderson's made so strong an impression upon me that I could not refrain from addressing a letter to the Bishop, requesting, in as polite terms as I could, an explanation of the events to which it referred. I was not aware that the reverend prelate had been in any way personally connected with the events referred to, nor did his answer expressly admit that he was; but I could gather from it, that he had a very intimate share in them, and was highly offended at the liberty I had taken, upon an acquaintance that was certainly slight, of addressing him on the subject. I was sorry that I should have inadvertently disturbed his reverence's equanimity, for his reply betrayed a good deal of angry feeling; and as in it he took the trouble of entering at some length into a defence of the Roman Catholic religion, against which I had made no insinuation, nor even once referred to it, I suspected that there had been something wrong, and, more and more resolved to get to the bottom of the affair, I next wrote to the Protestant clergyman of the place. His reply informed me that it was altogether out of his power to furnish the information desired, inasmuch as he had come to the pastoral charge of his parish many years subsequently to the period alluded to; and the Earl of ---'s family being Catholic, he had no intercourse with them. It was considered unsafe to meddle with them, he said; they had the reputation of being a dangerous race, and, interfering with no man's affairs, allowed no interference with theirs. In conclusion, however, my reverend correspondent referred me to a Mr MacTavish, tenant of Innismore, as one who possessed more knowledge concerning the Earl's family than any one out of it. This person, he farther stated, was seventy years of age, and had lived in the district all his life, though the late Earl tried every means to remove him.

Availing myself of this clew, I made it my business to address Mr MacTavish in such a way as was most likely to ensure compliance with my wishes. I was at some pains to procure introductions, and establish a sort of acquaintance with him, and at last succeeded in gaining a detail of the circumstances, in so far as he knew them, connected with the adventure of Henderson at the shieling of Aberduchra. This detail was given me in a series of letters of different dates, and many of them at long intervals from each other, which I shall take the liberty of throwing into a continuous narrative, retaining, however, the old gentleman's own way of telling the story.

About the time when the French were all to be killed in Lochaber (Mr MacTavish's narrative commences), I was employed in raising the militia soldiers, and so had often to make excursions through the country, both by night and day. One morning, before dawn, as I was riding up the Clunie side of the river, I was alarmed by perceiving a huge black body moving along the road before me. I knew very well that it was the Bogle of Glastullochan, and kept at a respectful distance behind it. After I had ridden a considerable way in great terror, but yet not daring to turn and fly, the light became more and more clear, and the size of the apparition decreased, and, from a huge undefined mass, assumed sundry shapes, which made it evident that it meditated an attack on me, or, as I had some faint hopes, to vanish altogether. To attempt to fly from a spirit I knew to be needless, so I held on my way, in great perturbation. At last, as the apparition mounted an eminence over which the road winded, and so came more distinctly between me and the light, I discovered that it was two persons on horseback, travelling the same way as myself. On coming up, I recognised the Popish Bishop accompanied by the most beautiful young lady I had ever seen.

"Good morrow to you, pretty lady, and to you, reverend sir," said I; but not one of them answered a word. The lady, however, gazed intently at me, as if she expected I had been some other, while the Bishop seemed greatly incensed, and never once turned round his head. I cannot tell how it was, but I became all at once greatly in love with the lady, and resolved not to part till I discovered who she was. So when we came to the house of Robert MacNab, I said, "Madam, do you cross the corrie to-day?"

"No," said she.

"Then I shall stay on this side too," said I.

"Young soldier, we desire to be alone," said the Bishop, (and this was the first time he had spoken,) "therefore be pleased to take your own way, and to free us of your company."

"By no means," said I; "neither the lady nor your Reverence can be the worse of my protection."

When I said "your Reverence," the Bishop started, and stared me in the face; and after a long pause, once more desired me to leave them. I would not do so, however, although I must acknowledge my behaviour was exceedingly improper; but I was under the influence of a strange fascination at the time, which I am the more convinced of now that I know the events that have followed upon that rencounter.

"We travel by the Spean," said he.

"It is the nearest way," I replied, "and I shall go that way too." The Bishop then became very angry, and I, I must confess, more and more impertinent. "I know better," said I, "than to trust a Popish priest with such a lovely and beautiful, and amiable dear lady in such a wild and lonely place. I bear his Majesty's commission, and it is my duty to protect all the ladies that are his true subjects." This was taking a good deal upon me, but I thought I perceived that the Bishop had an abashed look, as if detected in an affair he was ashamed of; and so I determined to see the end of it. We travelled together till we arrived at Fort William, where we were met by a gallant gentleman, who took the lady from her horse, and kissed her, and made many fine speeches; and she wept, and suffered herself to be led away towards the beach. I went with them, and there being a great stir at the shore, and fearing that they were going to take the lady on board by force, I drew my sword, and advancing to the gentleman, commanded him not to take the lady on board against her will, adding, that she was under my protection.

"Is she indeed, sir?" said he. "And pray may I ask to whom she is indebted for this kind and gratuitous protection?"

"That is to myself, sir," said I.

He pushed me aside in high disdain, and as I continued to show a disposition to oppose by force his purpose of taking the lady on board, I was surrounded by nine or ten fellows who were in readiness to act upon his orders; they disarmed me, and persuading the spectators that I was insane or intoxicated, bound me, as the only means of preventing me from annoying their master. The whole party then went on board, and sailed down the frith; and I saw no more of them, nor discovered any more concerning the lady at that time.

Soon after this adventure, the Bishop returned home, but whenever he saw my face, he looked as if he had seen a serpent ready to spring on him. Many a sore and heavy heart I had about the lady that I saw fallen among the Papists, and carried away by them; but for a long while I remained in ignorance who she was, being only able to conjecture that she was some young woman about to be made a nun, contrary to her own inclination.

At length a fearful report began to spread through the country of the loss of Lady Julia, and of her having been last seen in the company of her confessor; but the Bishop frequented the Castle the same as before, and therefore people shook their heads whenever the subject was mentioned, as if much were suspected, though little durst be said. I wondered greatly if that lady with whom I fell so much in love in our passage through the Highlands, could have been this Lady Julia. My father died that year, so I left the regiment in which I had been an officer, and being in Glasgow about the end of September, I went from thence in a vessel to Fort-William. As we passed the island of Illismore, a lady came on board rather in a secret manner. She had a maid-servant with her, who carried a child. The moment the lady stepped up the ship's side, I perceived it to be the identical beautiful creature with whom I had fallen in the year before, when the Bishop was carrying her away. But what a change had taken place in her appearance! her countenance was pale and emaciated, her looks dejected, and she seemed to be heart-broken. At our first rencounter, she looked me full in the face, and I saw that she recognised me, for she hurried past me into the cabin, followed by her maid.

When we came to the fortress, and were paying our fares, I observed some dispute between the lady and the mate or master of the boat and a West-Islander, the one charging her for boat-fare, and the other for board and lodging. "I give you my word of honour," she said, "that you shall be paid double your demands in two weeks; but at present I have no means of satisfying you."

"Words of honour won't pass current here, mistress," said the sailor; "money or value I must have, for I am but a servant."

The West-Islander was less uncivil, and expressing his reluctance to press a gentlewoman in a strait, said, if she would tell him who she was, he would ask no more security.

"You are very good," said she, as she wiped away the tears that were streaming down her cheeks; but she would not tell her name. Her confusion and despair became extreme, so much so, that I could no longer endure to see one who appeared so ingenuous, yet compelled to shroud herself in mystery, suffer so much from so paltry a cause; and, interfering, I satisfied the demands of the two men. The look of gratitude which she cast upon me was most expressive; but she said nothing. We travelled in company to Inverness, I supplying her with what money was necessary to meet the expenses of the road, which she took without offering a word of explanation. Before we parted, she called me into an apartment, and assuring me that I should soon hear from her, she thanked me briefly for the assistance I had afforded her. "And this little fellow," continued she, "if he live to be a man, shall thank you too for your kindness to his mother." She then asked if I could know the child again, and I answered that I could not, all infants were so much alike. She said there was a good reason why she wished that I should be able to recognise the child at any future period, and she would show me a private mark by which I should know him as long as I lived. Baring his little bosom accordingly, she displayed the mark of a gold ring, with a ruby, immediately below his left breast. I said it was a very curious mark indeed, and one that I could not mistake. She next asked me if I was a Roman Catholic? but I shook my head, and said, God forbid! and so we parted.

I had learned from the West-Islander that his name was Malcolm M'Leod, a poor and honest Roman Catholic, and that the child was born at his house, one of the most remote places in the world, being on a sequestered and inaccessible peninsula in one of the Western Isles. The infant had been baptized privately by the Bishop of Illismore, by the name of Lewis William. But farther the man either could not or would not give me any information.

Before I left Inverness I learned that the lady was no other than the noble and fair Lady Julia, and shortly after I got home to Innismore, I received a blank letter, enclosing the sum I had expended on her behalf. Not long after, a message came, desiring me to come express to the Bishop's house. This was the whole amount of the message, and although no definite object was held out to me, I undertook the journey. Indeed, throughout the whole transactions connected with this affair, I cannot understand what motives they were that I acted on. It seems rather that I was influenced by a sort of fatality throughout, as well as the other persons with whom I had to deal. What human probability was there, for instance, that I would obey a summons of this nature? and yet I was summoned. There was no inducement held out to procure my compliance with the request; and yet I did comply with it. Upon what pretext was I to gain admittance to the Bishop's house? I could think of none. And if I am called upon to tell how I did gain admittance, if it were not that subsequent events demonstrate that my proceedings were in accordance with the decrees of a superior destiny, I should say that it was by the mere force of impudence. As I approached the house, I heard there was such a weeping, and screaming, and lamentation, that I almost thought murder was going on within it. There were many voices, all speaking at once; but the cries were heard above all, and grew more woful and bitter. When I entered the house, which I did without much ceremony, and flung open the door of the apartment from which the noise proceeded, there was Lady Julia screaming in an agony of despair, and holding her child to her bosom, who was crying as bitterly as herself. She was surrounded by the Bishop and three other gentlemen, one of them on his knees, as if imploring her to consent to something, and the other three using gentle force to take the child from her. My entrance seemed to strike them with equal terror and astonishment; they commanded me loudly to retire; but I forced myself forward, while Lady Julia called out and named me, saying I was her friend and protector. She was quite in a state of derangement through agony and despair, and I was much moved when I saw how she pressed her babe to her bosom, bathed him with tears, and kissed him and blessed him a thousand times.

"O Mr MacTavish," cried she, "they are going to take my child from me,—my dear, dear boy! and I would rather part with my life. But they cannot take my child from me if you will protect me. They cannot—they cannot!" And in that way did she rave on, regardless of all their entreaties.

"My dear Lady Julia, what madness has seized you?" said a reverend-looking gentleman. "Are you going to bring ruin on yourself and your whole family, and to disgrace the holy religion which you profess? Did you not promise that you would give up the child? did you not come here for that special purpose? and do not we all engage, in the most solemn manner, to see him bred and educated as becomes his birth?"

"No, no, no, no!" cried she; "I cannot, I cannot! I will not part with him! I will go with him to the farthest ends of the world, where our names were never heard of,—but, oh! do not separate me from my dear boy!"

The men stared at one another, and held their peace.

"Madam," said I, "I will willingly protect your baby and you, if there is occasion for it, as long as there is a drop of

blood in my body; but it strikes me that these gentlemen are in the right, and that you are in the wrong. It is true, I speak in ignorance of circumstances; but from all that I can guess, you cannot doubt of your baby's safety, when all these honourable men stand security to you for him. But if it is necessary that you should part with him, and if you will not intrust him to them, give him to me. I will have him nursed and educated in my own house, and under mine own eye."

"You are very good—you are very good!" said she, rather calmly. "Well, let this worthy gentleman take the charge of him, and I yield to give him up."

"No, no!" exclaimed they all at once, "no heretic can have the charge of the boy; he must be brought up under our own auspices; therefore, dearest Lady Julia, bethink you what you are doing, before you work your own ruin, and his ruin, and the ruin of us all."

Lady Julia then burst into a long fit of weeping, and I saw she was going to yield; she, however, requested permission to speak a few words with me in private. This was readily granted, and all of them retired. When we were alone, she said to me softly, "They are going to take my child from me, and I cannot and dare not resist them any longer, for fear a worse fate befall him. But I sent for you to be a witness of our separation. You will know my poor hapless child as long as he lives, from the mark that I showed you; and when they force him from me, O watch where they take him, and to whatever quarter that may be, follow, and bring me word, and high shall be your reward. Now, farewell; remember I trust in you, —and God be with you! I do not wish any one to see my last extremity, save those who cause it, for I know my heart must break. Desire them to come in, and say that you have persuaded me to yield to their will."

I did so; but I could see that they only regarded me with looks of suspicion.

I lingered in the narrow lobby, and it was not two minutes, till two persons, one of whom I had previously ascertained by his accent to be an Irish gentleman, hurried by me with the child. I should have followed, but, as, in their haste, they left open the door of the apartment where Julia was, my attention was riveted on the lady; she was paralysed with affliction, and clasped the air, as if trying to embrace something,—but finding her child was no longer in her bosom, she sprung up to an amazing height, uttered a terrible shriek, and fell down strongly convulsed. Shortly after, she uttered a tremulous moan, and died quite away. I had no doubt that her heart was broken, and that she had expired; and indeed the Bishop, and the other gentleman, who remained with her, seemed to be of the same opinion, and were benumbed with astonishment. I called aloud for assistance, when two women came bustling in with water; but the Bishop ordered one of them, in an angry tone, to retire. He gave the command in Gaelic, and the poor creature cowered like a spaniel under the lash, and made all haste out of his sight. This circumstance caused me to take a look at the woman, and I perceived at once that I knew her,—but the hurry and confusion of the moment prevented me from thinking of the incident, less or more, until long afterwards.

Lady Julia at length gave symptoms of returning animation, and then I recollected the neglect of the charge she had committed to me. I hurried out; but all trace of the child was lost. The two gentlemen who took him from his mother, were walking and conversing deliberately in the garden, as if nothing had happened, and all my inquiries of them and of others were unavailing.

After the loss of Lady Julia's child, I searched the whole country, but no child could I either see or hear of; and at length my only hope rested on being able to remember who the old woman was whom the Bishop ordered so abruptly out of his presence that day the child was disposed of. I was sure, from the manner in which she skulked away, as if afraid of being discovered, that she had taken him away, either dead or alive. Of all the sensations I ever experienced I was now subjected to the most teasing: I was sensible that I knew the woman perfectly well,—so well, that at first I believed I could call her to my recollection whenever I chose; but, though I put my memory to the rack a thousand and a thousand times, the name, residence, and connexions of the woman went farther and farther from my grasp, till at last they vanished like clouds that mock us with forms of the long-departed.

And now I am going to tell a very marvellous story: One day, when I was hunting in Correi-beg of Glen-Anam, I shot so well that I wondered at myself. Before my unerring aim, whole coveys of moor game fluttered to the earth; and as for the ptarmigans, they fell like showers of hailstones. At length I began to observe that the wounded birds eyed me with strange, unearthly looks, and recollecting the traditions of the glen, and its name, I suspected there was some enchantment in the case. What, thought I, if I am shooting good fairies, or little harmless hill spirits, or mayhap whole flocks of Papists trying feats of witchcraft!—and to think that I am carrying all these on my back! While standing in this perplexity, I heard a voice behind me, which said, "O Sandy MacTavish, Sandy MacTavish, how will you answer for this day's

work? What will become of me! what will become of me!"

I turned round in great consternation, my hairs all standing on end—but nothing could I see, save a wounded ptarmigan, hopping among the greystones. It looked at its feathery legs and its snow-white breast all covered with blood,—and at length the creature said, in Gaelic, as before, for it could not be expected that a ptarmigan should have spoken English, "How would you like to find all your family and friends shot and mangled in this way when you gang hame? Ay, if you do not catch me, you will rue this morning's work as long as you live,—and long, long afterwards. But if you catch me, your fortune is made, and you will gain both great riches and respect."

"Then have with you, creature!" exclaimed I, "for it strikes me that I can never make a fortune so easily;" and I ran at it, with my bonnet in both hands, to catch it.

"Hee-hee-hee!" laughed the creature; and away it bounded among the grey stones, jumping like a jackdaw with a clipped wing. I ran and ran, and every time that I tried to clap my bonnet above it, down I came with a rattle among the stones—"Hee-hee-hee!" shouted the bird at every tumble. So provoking was this, and so eager did I become in the pursuit, that I flung away my gun and my load of game, and ran after the bird like a madman, floundering over rugged stones, laying on with my bonnet, and sometimes throwing myself above the little creature, which always eluded me.

I knew all this while that the creature was a witch, or a fairy, or something worse,—but nathless I could not resist chasing it, being resolved to catch it, cost what it would; and on I ran, by cliff and corrie, till I came to a cottage which I remembered having seen once before. The creature, having involved me in the linns of the glen, had got considerably ahead of me, and took shelter in the cottage. I was all covered with blood as well as the bird, and in that state I ran into the bothy after my prey.

On entering, I heard a great bustle, as if all the inmates were employed in effecting the concealment of something. I took it for a concern of smuggling, and went boldly forward, with a "Hilloa! who bides here?"

At the question there appeared one I had good reason to recollect, at sight of whom my heart thrilled. This was no other than the old woman I had seen at the Bishop's house. I knew her perfectly well, for I had been in the same bothy once before, when out hunting, to get some refreshment. I now wondered much that I should never have been able to recollect who the beldam was, till that moment, when I saw her again in her own house. Her looks betrayed the utmost confusion and dismay, as she addressed me in these words, "Hee-hee, good Mr MacTavish, what will you be seeking so far from home to-day?"

"I am only seeking a wounded ptarmigan, mistress," said I; "and if it be not a witch and yourself that I have wounded, I must have it,—for a great deal depends upon my getting hold of the creature."

"Ha, ha! you are coming pursuing after your fortune the day, Mr MacTavish," said she, "and mayhap you may seize her; but we have a small piece of an operation to go through before that can take place."

"And pray, what is that, Mrs Elspeth?" said I; "for if it be any of your witchcraft doings, I will have no hand in it. Give me my bird; that is all I ask of you."

"And so you really and positively believe it was a bird you chased in here to-day, Mr MacTavish?"

"Why, what could I think, mistress? It had the appearance of a bird."

"Margati Cousland! come hither," said the old witch; "what is ordained must be done;—lay hold of him, Margati."

The two women then laid hold of me, and being under some spell, I had no power to resist; so they bound my hands and feet, and laid me on a table, laughing immoderately at my terrors. They then begged I would excuse them, for they were under the necessity of going on with the operation, though it might not be quite agreeable to me in the first instance.

"And pray, Mrs Elspeth, what is this same operation?" said I.

"Why," said she, "you have come here chasing after a great fortune, and there is no other way of attaining it save by one,—and that is, YOUR HEART'S BLOOD MUST BE LET OUT."

"That is a very uncommon way of attaining a fortune, Mrs Elspeth," said I, as good-humouredly as I could, although my heart was quaking within me.

"It is nevertheless a very excellent plan," said the witch, "and it is very rarely that a fortune can be made without it." So saying, the beldam plunged a skein-ochil into my breast, with a loud and a fiendish laugh. "There goes the heart's blood of black Sandy MacTavish!" cried she; and that instant I heard the sound of it rushing to the floor. It was not like the sound of a cataract of blood, however, but rather like the tinkling of a stream of gold guineas. I forced up my head, and behold, there was a stream of pure and shining gold pieces issuing from my bosom; while a number of demons, some in black gowns, and others in white petticoats, were running off with them, and flinging them about in every direction! I could stand this no longer; to have parted with a little blood I found would have been nothing, but to see my vitals drained of a precious treasure, which I knew not had been there, was more than human nature could bear; so I roared out, in a voice that made all the house and all the hills to yell, "Murder! thieves! thieves! robbers!—Murder! Ho! ho! ho!" Thus did I continue loudly to shout, till one of the witches, or infernals, as I thought, dashed a pail of water on my face, a portion of which going into my mouth and windpipe, choked my utterance; but natheless the remorseless wretch continued to dash water upon me with an unsparing hand, till at last the spell was broke, and the whole illusion vanished.

In order to establish the credibility of the above relation, I must tell another story, which shall be a very short one.

"Our mhaster slheeps fery lhang this tay, Mrs Roy MacCallum," said my man, Donald, to my old housekeeper.

"Huh aye, and that she does, Tonald; and Cot pe plessing her slheep to her, honest shentlemans! Donald MacIntosh."

"Huh aye, Mrs Roy MacCallum. But hersell looked just pen te house to see if mhaster was waking and quite coot in health; and, would you pelieve it, Mrs MacCallum? her is lying staring and struggling as if her were quite mhad."

"Cot forpit, Tonald MacIntosh!"

"Huh aye, to be sure, Mrs MacCallum, Cot forpit, to be sure; but her pe mhad for all tat; and tere pe one creat trial, Mrs Roy MacCallum, and we mhust mhake it, and tat is py water."

"It pe te creat and lhast trial; let us ply te water," rejoined the sage housekeeper.

With that, Mrs Roy MacCallum and Donald MacIntosh came into my sleeping-room with pails of water, and began to fling it upon me in such copious showers that I was wellnigh choked; and to prevent myself from being drowned, I sprung up; but still they continued to dash water upon me. At length I knew my own man Donald's voice as I heard him calling out, "Clash on, Mrs MacCallum! it pe for life or teath."

"Huh aye, ply on te water, Tonald!" cried the other.

"Hold, hold, my good friends," cried I, skipping round the room all dripping wet—"Hold, hold, I am wide awake now, and better."

"Huh! plessit pe Cot, and plessit pe te creat MacTavish!" cried they both at once.

"But where is the witch of the glen?" cried I. "And where is the wounded ptarmigan?—and where is all the gold that came out with my heart's blood?"

"Clash on te water, Mrs MacCallum!" exclaimed Donald; and the indefatigable pails of Donald and the housekeeper were again put in requisition to some purpose. Having skipped about for some time, I at last escaped into a closet, and locked the door. I had then leisure to remonstrate with them through the key-hole; but still there were many things about which we could not come to a right understanding, and I began to dread a tremendous shower-bath from above, as I heard them carrying water up stairs; and that dread brought me first to my proper and right senses.

It will now be perceived that the whole of my adventure in the glen, with the ptarmigan and the witches, was nothing more than a dream. But yet in my opinion it was more than a dream, for it was the same as reality to me. I had all the feelings and sensations of a rational being, and every circumstance was impressed on my mind the same as if I had transacted it awake. Besides, there was a most singular and important revelation imparted to me by the vision: I had discovered who the old woman was whose identity had before perplexed me so much, and who I was sure either had Lady Julia's boy, or knew where he was. About five years previous to this I had come into the same woman's house, weary and hungry, and laden with game, and was very kindly treated. Of course, her face was quite familiar to me; but till I had this singular dream, all the efforts of my memory could not recall the woman's name and habitation, nor in what country or circumstances I had before seen her. From that morning forth I thought of nothing else save another visit to the

forester's cottage in the glen; and, though my heart foreboded some evil, I rested not till I had accomplished it.

It was not long till I made a journey to Aberduchra, in search of the old witch whom I had seen in my dream. I found her; and apparently she had recently suffered much from distress of mind; her eyes were red with weeping, her hairs were hanging in elf-switches, and her dress in much disorder. She knew me, and said, "God bless you, Mr MacTavish, where are you travelling this way?"

"In truth, Mrs Cowan," I replied, "I am just come to see after Lady Julia's little boy, poor Lewis William, you know, who was put under your care by the Bishop, on the first of November last year."

She held up her hands and stared, and then fell a-crying most bitterly, striking her breast, and wringing her hands, like one distracted, but still without answering me one word.

"Ochon, ochon!" said I; "then it is all as I suspected, and the dear child is indeed murdered!"

On this she sprung to her feet, and uttered an appalling scream, and then yelled out, "Murdered! murdered! Is the dear boy murdered? Is he—is he murdered?"

This vehemence of feeling on her part at the idea of the boy's being cut off, convinced me that she had not murdered the child herself; and being greatly relieved in my heart, I sat still as in astonishment, until she again put the question if her dear foster-child was murdered.

"Why, Mrs Cowan, not to my knowledge," I replied. "I did not see him murdered; but if he has not been foully dealt with, what has become of him?—for well I know he was put under your charge; and before the world, and before the judges of the land, I shall make you render an account of him."

"Was the boy yours, Mr MacTavish," said she, "that you are so deeply interested in him? For the love of Heaven, tell me who was his father, and then I shall confess to you every thing that I know concerning him."

I then told the old woman the whole story as I have here related it, and requested her to inform me what had become of the boy.

"He was delivered to me after the most solemn injunctions of concealment," said she; "and these were accompanied with threatenings, in case of disobedience, of no ordinary nature. He was to be brought up in this inaccessible wild with us as our grandson; and farther than that, no being was to know. Our reward was to be very high—too high, I am afraid, which may have caused his abstraction. But O he was a dear delightful boy! and I loved him better than my own grandson. He was so playful, so bold, and, at the same time, so forgiving and generous!"

"Well, he lived on with us, and grew, and no one acknowledged or noticed him until a little while ago, that one Bill Nicol came into the forest as fox-hunter, and came here to board, to be near the foxes, having, as he pretended, the factor's orders for doing so; and every day he would sport with the two boys, who were both alike fond of him,—and every day would he be giving them rides on his pony, which put them half crazy about the man. And then one day, when he was giving them a ride time about, the knave mounted behind poor little Lewie, and rode off with him altogether into the forest, and there was an end of him. Ranald ran crying after them till he could run no farther, and then, losing sight of them, he sat down and wept. I was busy at work, and thought always that my two little fellows were playing not far off, until I began to wonder where they could be, and ran out to the top of the little birky knowe-head there, and called, and louder called them; but nothing answered me, save the echoes of my own voice from the rocks and trees; so I grew very greatly distracted, and ran up Glen-Caolas, shouting as I went, and always praying between whiles to the Holy Virgin and to the good saints to restore me my boys. But they did not do it—Oh no, they never did! I then began to suspect that this pretended fox-hunter might have been the Wicked One come in disguise to take away my children; and the more so, as I knew not if Lewie had been blessed in holy church. But what could I do but run on, calling, and crying, and raving all the way, until I came to the pass of Bally-keurach, and then I saw that no pony's foot had passed on that path, and turned and ran home; but it was growing dark, and there was nobody there, so I took to the woods again. How I spent that night I do not know, but I think I had fallen into a trance through sorrow and fatigue.

"Next morning, when I came to my senses, the first thing I saw was a man who came by me, chasing a wounded bird, like a white moorfowl, and he was always trying to catch it with his bonnet, and many a hard fall he got among the stones. I called after him, for I was glad to see a human being in that place, and I made all the speed I could to follow; but he

regarded me not, but ran after the wounded bird. He went down the linns, which retarded him a good deal, and I got quite near him. Then from that he went into a small hollow straight before me, to which I ran, for I wanted to tell him my tale, and beg his assistance in raising the country in the strath below. When I came into the little hollow, he had vanished, although a hare could not have left it without my seeing it. I was greatly astonished, assured that I had seen a vision. But how much more was I astonished to find, on the very spot where he had disappeared, my grandson, Ranald, lying sound asleep, and quite motionless, through hunger and fatigue! At first I thought he was dead, and lost all recollection of the wonderful way in which I had been led to him; but when I found he was alive and breathing, I took him up in my arms, and carried him home, and there found the same man, or rather the same apparition, busily employed hunting the wounded bird within this same cottage, and he declared that have it he must. I was terrified almost out of my wits, but tried to thank the mysterious being for leading me to my perishing child. His answer—which I shall never forget—was, 'Yes, I have found one, and I will find the other too, if the Almighty spare me in life.' And when the apparition said so, it gave me such a look in the face—Oh! ah! What is this! what is this!"

Here the old woman began to shriek like one distracted, and appeared in an agony of terror; and, to tell the truth, I was not much better myself, when I heard the story of the wounded ptarmigan. But I tried to support the old woman, and asked what ailed her.

"Well you may ask what ails me!" said she. "Oh Mr MacTavish, what did I see just now but the very same look that the apparition gave that morning! The same look, and from the very same features; for indeed it was the apparition of yourself, in every lineament, and in every article of dress:—your very self. And it is the most strange vision that ever happened to me in all my visionary life!"

"I will tell you what it is, Mrs Elspeth Cowan," said I, "you do not know one half of its strangeness yet; but tell me the day of the week and the day of the month when you beheld this same vision of myself."

"Ay, that day I never shall forget," answered Elspeth; "for of all the days of the year it was the one after I lost my dear foster-son, and that was the seventh of Averile. I have always thought my boy was stolen to be murdered, or put out of the way most unfairly, till this very day; but now, when I see the same man in flesh and blood, whom I saw that day chasing the wounded bird, I am sure poor Lewie will be found; for with that very look which you gave me but a minute ago, and in that very place where you stand, your apparition or yourself said to me, 'Yes, I have found the one, and I will find the other if the Almighty spare me in life.'"

"I do not recollect of saying these words, Mrs Cowan," said I.

"Recollect?" said she; "what is it you mean? Sure you were not here your own self that morning?"

"Why, to tell you the solemn truth," replied I, "I was in the glen that very morning chasing a wounded ptarmigan, and I now have some faint recollection of seeing a red-haired boy lying asleep in a little green hollow beside a grey stone,—and I think I did say these words to some one too. But was not there something more? Was not there something about letting out somebody's heart's blood?"

"Yes; but then that was only a dream I had," said she, "while the other was no dream, but a sad reality. But how, in the name of the blessed saints, do you happen to know of that dream?"

"It is not easy, now-a-days," answered I, "to say what is a dream and what is a reality. For my part, from this moment I renounce all certainty of the distinction. It is a fact, that on that very morning, and at that hour, I was in this glen and in this cottage,—and yet I was neither in this glen nor in this cottage. So, if you can unriddle that, you are welcome."

"I knew you were not here in flesh and blood. I knew it was your wraith, or *anam*, as we call it; for, first, you vanished in the hollow before my eyes; then you appeared here again, and when you went away in haste, I followed you to beg your assistance; and all that I could hear was your spirit howling under a waterfall of the linn."

This confounded me more than ever, and it was some time before I recovered my self-possession so far as to inquire if what she had related to me was all she knew about the boy.

"Nothing more," she said, "save that you are destined to discover him again, either dead or alive—for I can assure you, from the words that I heard out of your own spirit's mouth, that if you do not find him, and restore him to his birthright, he never will be discovered by mortal man. I went, poor, sachless, and helpless being as I was, to the Bishop, and told him

my woful story; for I durst do nothing till I asked counsel of him. He was, or rather pretended to be, very angry, and said I deserved to be burnt for my negligence, for there was no doubt the boy had fallen over some precipice. It was in vain that I told him how my own grandson had seen him carried off on the pony by the pretended fox-hunter; he persisted in his own belief, and would not suffer me to mention the circumstances to a single individual. So, knowing that the counsel of the Lord was with his servant, I could do nothing but weep in secret, and hold my peace."

Thus ended my interview with Elspeth of the glen.

After my visit to the old sibyl, my mind ran much on the extraordinary vision I had had, and on the old witch's having actually seen a being in my shape at the very instant of time that I myself weened and felt that I was there.

I have forgot whether I went to Lady Julia that very night or some time after, but I did carry her the tidings, which threw her into an agony of the deepest distress. She continued for a long space to repeat that her child was murdered,—her dear, her innocent child. But before I left her, she said her situation was a very peculiar one, and therefore she entreated me to be secret, and to tell no one of the circumstance, yet by all means to lose no time in endeavouring to trace the fox-hunter, and to find out, if possible, whether the boy was dead or alive. She concluded by saying, "Exert yourself like a man and a true friend, as you have always been to me. Spare no expense in attaining your object, and my whole fortune is at your disposal." I was so completely involved in the business, that I saw no alternative but that of proceeding,—and not to proceed with vigour was contrary to my nature.

Lady Julia had all this time been kept in profound ignorance where the child had been concealed, and the very next day after our interview, she paid a visit to old Elspeth Cowan at the remote cottage of Aberduchra, and there I again met with her as I set out on the pursuit. Long and serious was our consultation, and I wrote down all the marks of the man and the horse from Elspeth's mouth; and the child Ranald also gave me some very nice marks of the pony.

The only new thing that had come out, was that the boy Ranald had persisted in saying, that the fox-hunter took his brother Lewie *down* the glen, in place of up, which every other circumstance seemed to indicate. Elspeth had seen them go all three up the glen, the two boys riding on the pony, and the fox-hunter leading it, and Ranald himself was found far up the glen; but yet when we took him to the spot, and pointed up the glen, he said, No, they did not go that way, but the other. Elspeth said it was not possible, but I thought otherwise; for when I asked at Ranald where he thought Nicol the fox-hunter was going with his brother, he said he thought he was taking him home, and that he would come back for him. Elspeth wanted me to take the route through the hills towards the south; but as soon as I heard the boy's tale, I suspected the Bishop had had some share in the abstraction of the missing child, and set out on my search in the direction of his mansion. I asked at every house and at every person, for such a man and such a pony as I described, making no mention of a boy; but no such man had been seen. At length I chanced to be asking at a shieling, within a mile of the Bishop's house, if, on such a day, they had seen such a man ride by on a black pony. They had not seen him; but there was a poor vagrant boy chanced to be present, and heard my inquiry, and he said he saw a man like that ride by on a black pony one day, but it could not be the man I wanted, for he had a bonny boy on the horse before him.

"Indeed?" said I. "O, then, it could not be the man I want. Had the pony any mark by which you could remember it?"

"*Cheas gear*," said the boy. This was the very mark that little Ranald had given me of the pony. Oho! I have my man now! thought I; so I said no more, but shook my head and went away. Every thing was kept so close about the Bishop's house, I could get no intelligence there, nor even entrance—and in truth, I durst hardly be seen about the premises.

In this dilemma, I recollected the words of the sibyl of the glen, as I had heard them in my strange vision, namely, that my only sure way of making a fortune was by letting out my heart's blood; and also, that when my heart's blood was let out, it proved to be a flood of guineas. Now, thought I to myself, what does making a fortune mean but carrying out successfully any enterprise one may have in hand? and though to part with money is a very hard matter, especially in an affair in which I have no concern, yet I will try the efficacy of it here, and so learn whether the experiment is worth making in other cases where I am more closely interested.—The truth is, I found that I *was* deeply interested in the affair, although, not being able to satisfy my own mind with reasons why I should be so, I affected to consider myself mightily indifferent about it. In pursuance, therefore, of the plan suggested in my dream, and on a proper opportunity, by means of a present administered to one of the Bishop's servants, I learnt, that about the time when the boy had been carried off by the fox-hunter, a priest of the name of O'Callaghan had made his appearance at the Bishop's house; that he was dressed in a dark grey jacket and trowsers, and rode a black pony with cropped ears; that he was believed to have some secret business with the Bishop, and had frequent consultations with him; and my informant, becoming more and more free in his

communications, as the facts, one after another, were drawn from him, confessed to me that he had one night overheard quarrelling between O'Callaghan and his master, and having stolen to the door of the apartment, listened for some time, but was unable to make out more of the angry whisperings within than a threat from O'Callaghan, that if the Bishop would not give him more, "he (O'Callaghan) would throw him overboard into the first salt dub he came to." On interrogating my informant if he knew whom O'Callaghan meant, when he said he would "throw him overboard," he replied that he could not guess. I had, however, no doubt, that it was the boy I was in search of, and I had as little doubt that the fellow knew to whom the threat referred; but I have often known people have no scruple in telling all about a secret, so as to give any one a key to the complete knowledge of it, who would yet, upon no consideration, give utterance to the secret itself; and judging this to be the case in the present instance, I contented myself with learning farther, that when the priest left the Bishop's, he went directly to Ireland, of which country he was a native, and would, in all probability, ere long revisit Scotland.

Possessed of this clew, I was nevertheless much at a loss to determine what was the most advisable way of following it out. My inclination led me to wait the fellow's return, and to have him seized and examined. But then I bethought me, if I could be instrumental in saving the boy's life, or of discovering where he was placed, or how circumstanced, it would avail me more, and give Lady Julia more satisfaction than any punishment that might be inflicted on the perpetrators of this deed afterwards. So after a troubled night and day, which I spent in preparation, I armed myself with a pair of pistols and a pair of Highland dirks, a long and a short one, and set out in my arduous undertaking, either to recover the boy or perish in the attempt. And it is needless for me to deny to you, sir, that the vision, and the weird wife of the glen's prophecy, had no small part in urging me to this adventure.

I got no trace of the priest till I went to Abertarf, where I found out that he had lodged in the house of a Catholic, and that he had shown a good deal of kindness and attention to the boy, while the boy seemed also attached to him, but still more to the pony. I went to the house of this man, whose name was Angus Roy MacDonald; but he was close as death, suspicious, and sullen, and would tell me nothing of O'Callaghan's motions. I succeeded, however, in tracing him till he went on board of a Liverpool sloop at Arisaig. I was much at a loss how to proceed, when, in the evening, perceiving a vessel in the offing, bearing against the tide, and hoping that the persons I sought might be aboard of her, I hired a boat to take me out; but we lost sight of her in the dusk of the evening, and I was obliged to bribe the boatmen to take me all the way to Tobermory, having been assured that the Liverpool vessel would be obliged to put in there, in order to clear at the custom-house. We did not reach Tobermory till the next day at noon; and as we entered the narrow passage that leads into the harbour, a sloop came full sail by us right before the wind, and I saw a pretty boy standing on the poop. I called out "Lewis" to him, but he only looked over his shoulder as for some one else, and did not answer me. The ship going on, as she turned her stern right towards us, I saw "The Blake of Boston" in golden letters, and thought no more of the encounter till I went on shore, and there I learned on the quay that she was the identical Liverpool vessel of which I was in pursuit, and the boy I had seen, the very one I was in search of. I learnt that he was crying much when ashore, and refused to go on shipboard again till taken by force; and that he told the people boldly, that that man, Nicol the fox-hunter, had taken him from his mother and father, and his brother Ranald, having enticed him out to give him a ride, and never taken him home again. But the fellow telling them a plausible story, they durst not meddle in the matter. It was known, however, that the vessel had to go round by the Shannon, as she had some valuable loading on board for Limerick.

This was heavy news, as how to get a passage thither I wist not. But the thoughts of the poor boy crying for his home hung about my heart, and so, going to Greenock I took a passage for Belfast, and travelled on foot or on horseback as I could, all the way to Limerick. When I got there, matters looked still worse. The Blake had not come up to Limerick, but discharged her bales at the mouth of the river, and again sailed; and here was I in a strange country with no one perhaps to believe my tale. The Irish, however, showed no signs of apathy or indifference to my case, as my own countrymen did. They manifested the utmost sympathy for me, and the utmost indignation against O'Callaghan; and the man being known in the country, he was soon found out by the natives. Yet, strange to say! though found out by twenty men all eagerly bent on the discovery, as soon as he gave them a hint respecting the person by whom he was employed, off they went, and never so much as came back to tell either the Mayor or myself that their search had been successful or not.

But two or three officers, who were Protestants, being dispatched in search of him, they soon brought him to Limerick, where he and I were both examined, and he was committed to jail till the next court day. He denied all knowledge of the boy, and all concern whatever in the crime he was charged with; and the ship being gone I could procure no evidence against him. There was nothing but the allegations of parties, upon which no judgment could be given: I had to pay the

expenses of process, and he gave securities for his appearance at the court of Inverness, if he should be cited. I spent nine days more in searching for the boy on the Clare side of the river; but all my efforts were fruitless. I found that my accusation of their vagrant priest rendered me very unpopular among the natives, and was obliged to relinquish the investigation.

O'Callaghan was in Scotland before me, and on my arrival I caused him to be instantly seized, secure now of enough of witnesses to prove the fact of his having taken off the boy. Old Elspeth of the glen and her husband were summoned, as were Lady Julia and Angus Roy MacDonald. When the day of trial came, O'Callaghan's indictment was read in court, charging him with having abstracted a boy from the sheiling of Aberduchra. The Bishop being present, and a great number of his adherents, the panel boldly denied every circumstance; and what was my astonishment to find, on the witnesses' names being called, that not one of them was there! The officers were called and examined, who declared that they could not find one of the witnesses in the whole country. The forester and his wife, they said, had left Aberduchra, and gone nobody knew whither; Lady Julia had gone to France, and Angus MacDonald to the Lowlands, it was supposed, with cows. The court remarked it was a singular and rather suspicious circumstance, that the witnesses should all be absent. O'Callaghan said something in his own defence, and having made a reference to the Bishop for his character, his reverence made a long speech in his praise. The consequence was, that as not one witness was produced in support of the accusation, O'Callaghan was once more liberated.

I would never have learned what became of the boy, had not a young soldier, a cousin's son of mine, come to Innismore the other year. He was a fine lad, and I soon became a good deal attached to him; and he being one of a company stationed in the neighbourhood to guard the passes for the prevention of smuggling, he lived a good deal at my house, while his officer remained nightly at the old mansion-house, the guest of Lady Julia and the young Lord.

It is perhaps proper here to mention that Lady Julia was now the only remaining member of the late Earl's family, and the heir of entail, being the son of a distant relation, had been sent from Ireland to be brought up by Lady Julia. He was a perverse and wicked boy, and grieved her heart every day.

The young man, my relation, was one day called out to follow his captain on a private expedition against some smugglers. The next day one of his comrades came and told me that they had had a set battle with a great band of smugglers, in which several were killed and wounded. "Among the rest," said he, "our gallant commander, Captain MacKenzie, is killed, and your nephew is lying mortally wounded at the still-house."

I lost no time in getting ready, and mounting one horse, and causing the soldier to take another, I bade him lead the way, and I followed. It may well be supposed that I was much astonished on finding that the lad was leading me straight to the cottage of Aberduchra! Ever since the old forester and his wife had been removed, the cottage had stood uninhabited; and it seems that, from its inaccessible situation, it had been pitched upon as a still-house, and occupied as such, for several years, by a strong band of smugglers from the Deveron. They were all bold, resolute fellows, and when surprised by MacKenzie and his party, and commanded to yield, they soon showed that there was nothing farther from their intention. In one moment every one had a weapon in his hand; they rushed upon the military with such fury that in a few minutes they beat them back, after having run their captain and another man through the body, and wounded several besides. Captain MacKenzie had slain one of the smugglers at the first onset; but the next instant he fell, and his party retired. The smugglers then staved their casks, and fled, leaving the military in possession of the field of battle, and of the sheiling, in which nothing was found save a great rubbish of smashed utensils and the killed and wounded of both sides.

In this state I found the cottage of Aberduchra. There were one smuggler and a soldier quite dead, and a number badly wounded; and among the latter was the young man, my relative, who was sore wounded in the left shoulder. My whole attention was instantly turned towards him. He was very faint, but the bleeding was stanch'd, and I had hopes of his recovery. I gave him some brandy and water, which revived him a great deal; and as soon as he could speak, he said, in a low voice, "For God's sake, attend to our gallant captain's wound. Mine is nothing, but, if he is still living, his, I fear, is dangerous; and a nobler youth never breathed."

I found him lying on a bed of rushes, one soldier supporting his head, and another sitting beside him with a dish of cold water. I asked the captain how he did; but he only shook his head, and pointed to the wound in his side. I mixed a good strong cup of brandy and water, and gave it him. He swallowed it greedily, and I had then no doubt that the young man was near his last. "I am a great deal the better of that," said he. I requested him not to speak, and then asked the soldiers if the wound had bled freely, but they said no, it had scarcely bled any. I was quite ignorant of surgery, but it struck me

that, if possible, the wound should be made to bleed, to prevent it from bleeding inwardly. Accordingly, the men having kindled a good fire in the cottage, I got some warm water, and began to foment the wound. As the stripes of crusted blood began to disappear, judge of my astonishment, when I perceived the mark of a ruby ring below his left breast! There was no mistaking the token. I knew that moment that I was administering to Lady Julia's son, for whom I had travelled so far in vain, and over whom my soul had yearned as over a lost child of my own. The basin fell from my hands, my hair stood on end, and my whole frame grew rigid, so that the soldiers stared at me, thinking I was bewitched, or seized with some strange malady. The captain, however, made signs for them to proceed with the fomentation, which they did, until the wound bled considerably; and I began to have some hopes that there might be a possibility of saving his life. I then sent off a soldier on one of my horses for the nearest surgeon, and I myself rode straight to the Castle to Lady Julia, and informed her of the captain's wound, and the miserable state in which he was lying at the sheiling of Aberduchra. She held up her hands, and had nearly fainted, and made a lamentation so grievous, that I was convinced she already knew who the young man was. She instantly ordered the carriage to be got ready, and a bed put into it, in order to have the captain conveyed straight to the Castle. I expected she would have gone in the carriage herself, but when she only gave charges to the servants and me, I then knew that the quality and propinquity of her guest were not known to her.

My reflections on the scenes that had happened at that cottage, made a deep impression on me that night, as well they might, considering how singular they were. At that cottage I had once been in spirit, though certainly not in the body, yet there my bodily form was seen speaking and acting as I would have done, and as at the same moment I believed I was doing. By that vision I discovered where the lost boy was to be found, and there I found him; and when he was lost again, on that very same spot was I told that I should find him, else he never would be discovered by man. And now, after a lapse of fifteen years, and a thousand wanderings on his part overgone, on that very same spot did I again discover him.

Captain MacKenzie was removed to the Castle, and his recovery watched by Lady Julia and myself with the utmost solicitude—a solicitude on her part which seemed to arise from some mysterious impulse of the tie that connected her with the sufferer; for had she known that she was his mother, her care and anxiety about him could scarcely have been greater. When his wound was so far recovered, that no danger was to be apprehended from the agitating discovery, the secret of his birth was communicated to himself and Lady Julia. It is needless for me to trace farther the details of their eventful history. That history, the evidence adduced before the courts of law for the rights of heritage, and before the Peers for the titles, have now been divulged and laid quite open, so that the deeds done in darkness have been brought to light, and that which was meant to have been concealed from the knowledge of all mankind, has been published to the whole world, even in its most minute and intricate windings. It is therefore needless for me to recapitulate all the events that preceded the time when this narrative begins. Let it suffice, that Lady Julia's son has been fully proved legitimate, and we have now a Protestant Earl, in spite of all that the Bishop did to prevent it. And it having been, in a great measure, owing to my evidence that the identity of the heir was established, I have now the prospect of being, if not the richest, at least, the most independent man of either Buchan or Mar.

CHAPTER III.

THE MARVELLOUS DOCTOR.

When my parents lived in the old Manse of Ettrick, which they did for a number of years, an old grey-headed man came one summer and lived with them nearly a whole half year, paying my mother at the rate of ten shillings a-month for bed, board, and washing. He was a mysterious being, and no one knew who he was, or what he was; but all the neighbourhood reckoned him "uncanny;" which in that part of the country means, a warlock, or one some way conversant with beings of another nature.

I remember him well; he was a tall ungainly figure, dressed in a long black coat, the longest and the narrowest coat I ever saw; his vest was something like blue velvet, and his breeches of leather, buckled with silver knee-buckles. He wore always white thread stockings, and as his breeches came exactly to the knap of the knee, his legs appeared so long and thin that it was a marvel to me how they carried him. Take in black spats, and a very narrow-brimmed hat, and you have the figure complete; any painter might take his likeness, provided he did not make him too straight in the back, which would never answer, as his formed the segment of a great circle. He was a doctor; but whether of law, medicine, or divinity, I never learned; perhaps of them all, for a doctor he certainly was—we called him so, and never knew him by any other name; some, indeed, called him the Lying Doctor, some the Herb Doctor, and some the Warlock Doctor; but my mother, behind his back, called him always THE MARVELLOUS DOCTOR, which I have chosen to retain, as the one about whose accuracy there can be no dispute.

His whole occupation was in gathering flowers and herbs, and arranging them; and, as he picked a number of these out of the churchyard, the old wives in the vicinity grew terribly jealous of him. He seemed, by his own account, to have been over the whole world, on what business or in what capacity he never mentioned; but from his stories of himself, and of his wonderful feats, one might have concluded that he had been every thing. I remember a number of these stories quite distinctly, for at that time I believed them all for perfect truth, though I have been since led to suspect that it was scarcely consistent with nature or reason they could be so. One or two of these tales I shall here relate, but with this great disadvantage, that I have, in many instances, forgot the names of the places where they happened. I knew nothing about geography then, or where the places were, and the faint recollection I have of them will only, I fear, tend to confuse my narrative the more.

One day, while he was very busy arranging his flowers and herbs, and constantly speaking to himself, my mother said to him, "Doctor, you that kens sae weel about the nature of a' kinds o' plants and yirbs, will ye tell me gin there be sic a yirb existing as that, if ye pit it either on beast or body, it will gar that beast or body follow you?"

"No, Margaret, there is not an herb existing which has that power by itself; but there is a decoction from certain rare herbs, of which I have had the honour, or rather the misfortune, to be the sole discoverer, which has that effect infallibly."

"Dear Doctor, there was sic a kind of charm i' the warld hunders o' years afore ye were born."

"So it has been said, Margaret, so it has been said; but falsely, I assure you. It cost me seven years' hard study and hard labour, both by night and by day, and some thousands of miles' travelling; but at last I effected it, and then I thought my fortune was made. But—would you believe it, Margaret?—my fortune was lost, my time was lost, and I myself was twenty times on the point of being lost too."

"Dear Doctor, tell us some o' your ploys wi' that drog; for they surely must be very curious, especially if you used it as a love-charm to gar the lasses follow you."—The Doctor, be it observed, was one of the most unlikely persons in the world to be the object of a tender passion.

"I did use it as a love-charm," replied the sage, smiling grimly; "and sometimes got those to follow me that I did not want, as you shall hear by and by. But before I proceed, I may inform you, that I was offered a hundred thousand pounds by the College of Physicians in Spain, and twice the sum by the Queen of that country, if I would impart my discovery to them in full; and I refused it! Yes, for the sake of human nature I refused it. I durst not take the offer, for my life."

"What for, Doctor?"

"What for, woman? Do you say, what for? Don't you see that it would have turned the world upside down, and inverted the whole order of nature? The lowest miscreant in the country might have taken away the first lady—might have taken her from her parents, or her husband, and kept her a slave to him for life; and no opiate in nature to counteract the power of the charm. The secret shall go to the grave with me; for were it once to be made public in any country, that country would be ruined; and for the sake of good order among mankind, I have slighted all the grandeur that this world could have bestowed. The first great trial of my skill was a public one;"—and the Doctor went on to relate that it occurred as follows:

The Spanish Professor.

Having brought my valued charm to full perfection abroad, I returned to Britain to enjoy the fruit of my labours, convinced that I would ensure a patent, and carry all the world before me. But on my arrival in London, I was told that a great Spanish Professor had made the discovery five years before, and had arrived at great riches and preferment on that account, under the patronage of the Queen. Convinced that no man alive was thoroughly master of the charm but myself, I went straight to Spain, and waited on this eminent Professor, whose name was Don Felix de Valdez. This man lived in a style superior to the great nobility and grandees of his country. He had a palace that was not exceeded in splendour by any in the city, and a suite of lacqueys, young gentlemen, and physicians, attending him, as if he had been the greatest man in the world. It cost me much trouble, and three days' attendance, before I could be admitted to his presence; and even then he received me so cavalierly that my British blood boiled with indignation.

"What is it you want with me, fellow?" said he.

"Sir, I would have you know," said I, "that I am an English Doctor, and Master of Arts, and *your* fellow in any respect. So far good. I was told in my own country, sir, that you are a pretender to the profound art of attachment; or, in other words, that you have made a discovery of that divine elixir, which attaches every living creature touched with it to your person. Do you pretend to such a discovery? Or do you not, sir?"

"And what if I do, most sublime Doctor and Master of Arts? In what way does that concern your great sapience?"

"Only thus far, Professor Don Felix de Valdez," says I, "that the discovery is my own, wholly my own, and solely my own; and after travelling over half the world in my researches for the proper ingredients, and making myself master of the all-powerful nostrum, is it reasonable, do you think, that I should be deprived of my honour and emolument without an effort? I am come from Britain, sir, for the sole purpose of challenging you to a trial of skill before your sovereign and all his people, as well as the learned world in general. I throw down the gauntlet, sir. Dare you enter the lists with me?"

"Desire my lacqueys to take away this mad foreigner," said he to an attendant. "Beat him well with staves, for his impertinence, and give him up to the officers of police, to be put in the House of Correction; and say to Signior Philipppo that I ordered it."

"You ordered it!" said I. "And who are you, to order such a thing? I am a free-born British subject, a Doctor, and Master of Arts and Sciences, and I have a pass from your government to come to Madrid to exercise my calling; and I dare any of you to touch a hair of my head."

"Let him be taken away," said he, nodding disdainfully, "and see that you deal with him as I have commanded."

The students then conducted me gently forth, pretending to pay me great deference; but when I was put into the hands of the vulgar lacqueys, they made sport of me, and having their master's orders, used me with great rudeness, beating me, and pricking me with needle-pointed stiletos, till I was in great fear for my life, and was glad when put into the hands of the police.

Being liberated immediately on making known my country and erudition, I set myself with all my might to bring this haughty and insolent Professor to the test. A number of his students having heard the challenge, it soon made a great noise in Madrid; for the young King, Charles the Third, and particularly his Queen, were half mad about the possession of such a nostrum at that period. In order, therefore, to add fuel to the flame now kindled, I published challenges in every one of the Spanish journals, and causing three thousand copies to be printed, I posted them up in every corner of the city, distributing them to all the colleges of the kingdom, and to the college of Toledo in particular, of which Don Felix was

the Principal—I sent a sealed copy to every one of its twenty-four professors, and caused some hundreds to be distributed amongst the students.

This challenge made a great noise in the city, and soon reached the ears of the Queen, who became quite impatient to witness a trial of our skill in this her favourite art. She harassed his Majesty with such effect, that he was obliged to join her in a request to Professor Don Felix de Valdez, that he would vouchsafe a public trial of skill with this ostentatious foreigner.

The Professor besought that he might be spared the indignity of a public exhibition along with the crazy half-witted foreigner, especially as his was a secret art, and ought only to be practised in secret. But the voices of the court and the colleges were loud for the trial, and the Professor was compelled to consent and name a day. We both waited on their Majesties to settle the order and manner of trial; and on drawing lots who was to exhibit first, the Professor got the preference. The Prado was the place appointed for the exhibition, and Good Friday the day. The Professor engaged to enter the lists precisely at half past twelve o'clock; but he begged that he might be suffered to come in disguise, in order to do away all suspicions of a private understanding with others; and assured their Majesties that he would soon be known to them by his works.

When the appointed day arrived, I verily believed that all Spain had assembled to witness the trial. I was placed next to the royal stage, in company with many learned doctors, the Queen being anxious to witness the effect that the display of her wonderful Professor's skill produced on me, and to hear my remarks. The anxiety that prevailed for almost a whole hour was wonderful; for no one knew in what guise the Professor would appear, or how attended, or who were the persons on whom the effect of the unguent was to be tried. Whenever a throng or bustle was perceived in any part of the parade, then the buzz began, "Yonder he is now! Yon must be he, our great Professor, Don Felix de Valdez, the wonder of Spain and of the world!"

The Queen was the first to perceive him, perhaps from some private hint given her in what disguise he would appear; on which she motioned to me, pointing out a mendicant Friar as my opponent, and added, that she thought it but just and right that I should witness all his motions, his feats, and the power of his art. I did so, and thought very meanly of the whole exhibition, it being, in fact, nothing else than a farce got up among a great number of associates, all of whom were combined to carry on the deception, and share in the profits accruing therefrom. The Friar did nothing till he came opposite to the royal stage, when, beckoning slightly to her Majesty, he began to look out for his game, and perceiving an elegant lady sitting on a stage with her back towards him, he took a phial from his bosom, and letting the liquid touch the top of his finger, he reached up that finger and touched the hem of the lady's robe. She uttered a scream, as if pierced to the heart, sprung to her feet, and held her breast as if wounded; then, after looking round and round, as if in great agitation, she descended from the stage, followed the Friar, kneeled at his feet, and entreated to be allowed to follow and serve him. He requested her to depart, as he could not be served by woman; but she wept and followed on. He came to a thick-lipped African, who was standing grinning at the scene. The Professor touched him with his unguent, and immediately blackie fell a-striving with the lady, who should walk next the wonderful sage, and the two actually went to blows, to the great amusement of the spectators, who applauded these two feats prodigiously, and hailed their Professor as the greatest man in the world. He walked twice the length of the promenade, and certainly every one whom he touched with his ointment followed him, so that if he had been a stranger in the community as I was, there could scarcely have been a doubt of the efficacy of his unguent of attraction. When he came last before the royal stage, and ours, he was encumbered by a crowd of persons following and kneeling to him; apparently they were of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest. He then caused proclamation to be made from a stage, that if any doubted the power of his elixir, he might have it proved on himself without danger or disgrace; a dowager lady defied him, but he soon brought her to her knee with the rest, and no one of the whole begged to be released.

The King and Queen, and all the judges, then declaring themselves satisfied, the Professor withdrew, with his motley followers, to undo the charm in secret; after that, he returned in most brilliant and gorgeous array, and was received on the royal stage, amid deafening shouts of applause. The King then asked me, if I deemed myself still able to compete with his liege kinsman, Professor Don Felix de Valdez? or if I joined the rest in approval, and yielded the palm to his merits in good fellowship?

I addressed his Majesty with all humility, acknowledged the extent of the Professor's powers, as very wonderful, provided they were all real; but of that there was no proof to me. "If he had been a foreigner, and a stranger, as I am, in this place, and if prejudices had been excited against him," added I, "then I would have viewed this exhibition of his art

as highly wonderful; but, as it is, I only look on it as a well contrived farce."

The Professor reddened, and bit his lip in the height of scorn and indignation; and indeed their Majesties and all the nobility seemed offended at my freedom; on which I added, "My exhibition, my liege, shall be a very short one; and I shall at least convince your Majesty, that there is no deceit nor collusion in it." And with that I took a small syringe from my bosom, which I had concealed there for the purpose, as the liquor, to have due effect, must be always warm with the heat of the body of him that sprinkles it; and with that small instrument, I squirted a spray of my elixir on Professor Don Felix's fine head of hair, that hung in wavy locks almost to his waist.

At that moment there were thousands all standing agape, eager to witness the effect of this bold appeal. The Professor stood up, and looked at me, while the tears stood in his eyes. That was the proudest moment of my life! For about the space of three minutes, his pride seemed warring with his feelings; but the energy and impulse of the latter prevailed, and he came and kneeled at my feet.

"Felix, you dog! what is the meaning of this?" cried I. "How dare you go and dress yourself like a grandee of the kingdom, and then come forth and mount the stage in the presence of royalty, knowing, as you do, that you were born to be my slave? Go this instant! doff that gorgeous apparel, and put on my livery, and come and wait here at my heel. And, do you hear, bring my horse properly caparisoned, and one to yourself; for I ride into the country to dinner. Take note of what I order, and attend to it, else I'll beat you to a jelly, and have you distilled into the elixir of attraction. Presumption indeed, to come into my presence in a dress like that!"

He ran to obey my orders, and then the admiration so lately expressed was turned into contempt. All the people were struck with awe and astonishment. They could not applaud, for they were struck dumb, and eyed me with terror, as if I had been a divinity. "This exceeds all comprehension," said the judges. "If he had told me that he could have upheaved the Pyrenean mountains from their foundations, I could as well have believed it," said the King. But the Queen was the most perverse of all, for she would not believe it, though she witnessed it; and she declared she never would believe it to be a reality, for I had only thrown glamour in their eyes. "Is it possible," said she, "that the most famous man in Spain, or perhaps in the world, who has hundreds to serve him, and run at his bidding, should all at once, by his own choice, submit to become a slave to an opponent whom he despised, and be buffeted like a dog, without resenting it? No; I'll never believe it is any thing but an illusion."

"There is no denying of your victory," said King Charles to me; "for you have humbled your opponent in the dust.—You must dine with me to-night, as we have a great entertainment to the learned of our kingdom, over all of whom you shall be preferred to the highest place. But as Don Felix de Valdez is likewise an invited guest, let me entreat you to disenchant him, that he may be again restored to his place in society."

"I shall do myself the distinguished honour of dining with your exalted and most Catholic Majesty," I replied. "But will it be no degradation to your high dignity, for the man who has worn my livery in public, to appear the same day at the table of royalty?"

"This is no common occurrence," answered the King. "Although, by one great effort of art, nature has been overpowered, it would be hard that a great man should remain degraded for ever."

"Well, then, I shall not only permit him to leave my service, but I shall order him from it, and beat him from it. I can do no more to oblige your Majesty at present."

"What! can you not then remove the charm?" said he. "You saw the Professor could do that at once."

"A mere trick," said I. "If the Professor, Don Felix, had been in the least conscious of the power of his liquor, he would at once have attacked and degraded me. It is quite evident. I expected a trial at least, as I am sure all the company did; but I stood secure, and held him and his art at defiance. He is a sheer impostor, and his boasted discovery a cheat."

"Nay, but I have tried the power of his unguent again and again, and proved it," said the Queen. "But, indeed, its effect is of very short duration; therefore, all I request is, that you will give the Professor his liberty; and take my word for it, it will soon be accepted."

I again promised that I would; but at the same time I shook my head, as much as to signify to the Queen, she was not aware of the power of my elixir; and I determined to punish the Professor for his insolence to me, and the sound beating I

got in the court of his hotel. While we were speaking, Don Felix approached us, dressed in my plain yellow livery, leading my horse, and mounted on a grand one of his own, that cost two hundred gold ducats, while mine was only a hack, and no very fine animal either.

"How dare you have the impudence to mount my horse, sir?" exclaimed I, taking his gold-headed whip from him, and lashing him with it. "Get off instantly, you blundering booby, take your own spavined jade, and ride off where I may never see your face again."

"I beg your pardon, honoured master," said he, humbly; "I will take any horse you please; but I thought this had been mine."

"You thought, sirrah! What right have you to think?" I demanded. "I desire no more of your attendance," I continued. "Here, before their Majesties, and all their court and people, I discharge you my service, and dare you, on the penalty of your life, ever to approach my presence."

"Pardon me this time," said he; "I'll sooner die than leave you."

"But you shall leave me or do worse," said I, "and therefore disappear instantly;" and I pushed him through the throng away from me, and lashed him with the whip till he screamed and wept like a lubberly boy.

"You must have some one to ride with you and be your guide," he said; "and why will you not suffer me to do so? You know I cannot leave you."

His Majesty, taking pity on the helpless Professor, sent a livery-man to take his place, and attend me on my little jaunt, at the same time entreating him to desist, and remember who he was. It was all in vain. He fought with the King's servant for the privilege, mounted my hack, and followed me to the villa, about six miles from the city, where I had been engaged to dine. The news had not arrived of my victory when I got there. The lord of the manor was at the exhibition, and he not having returned, the ladies were all impatience to learn the result.

"It becomes not me, noble ladies," said I, "to bring the news of my own triumph, which you might very reasonably expect to be untrue, or overcharged; but you shall witness my power yourselves."

Then they set up eldrich screams in frolic, and begged, for the sake of the Virgin, that I would not put my skill to the test on any of them, for they had no desire to follow to England even a master of the arts and sciences; and every one assured me personally that she would be a horrid plague to me, and that I had better pause before I made the experiment.

"My dear and noble dames," said I, "there is nothing farther from my intention than to make any of you the objects of fascination. But come all hither," and I threw up the sash of the window—"Come all hither, and behold a proof; and if more is required, it shall not be lacking. See; do you all know that gentleman there?"

"What gentleman? Where is he? I see no gentleman," was the general rejoinder.

"That gentleman who is holding my horse—he on the sorry hack there, with yellow livery. You all know him assuredly. That is your great Professor, Don Felix de Valdez, accounted the most wonderful man in Spain, and by many of you the greatest in the world."

They would not believe it, until I called him close up to the door of the chateau, and showed him to them like any wild beast or natural curiosity, and called him by his name. Then they grew frightened, or pretended to be so, at being in the presence of a man of so much power, for they all knew the Professor personally; and if one could have believed them, they were like to go into hysterics for fear of fascination. Yet, for all that, I perceived they were dying for a specimen of my art, and that any of them would rather the experiment should be made on herself, than not witness it.

Accordingly, there was a very handsome and engaging brunette of the party, named Donna Rashelli, on whom I could not help sometimes casting an eye, being a little fascinated myself. This was soon perceived by the lively group, and they all gathered round me, and teased me to try the power of my philtre on Rashelli. I asked the lady's consent, on which she answered rather disdainfully, that "she *would* be fascinated *indeed* if she followed *me!* and therefore she held me at defiance, provided I did not *touch* her, which she would *not* allow."

Without more ado, I took my tube from my bosom, and squirted a little of the philtre on her left-foot shoe—at least I

meant it so, though I afterwards perceived that some of it had touched her stocking.

"And now, Donna Rashelli," said I, "you are in for your part in this drama, and you little know what you have authorized." She turned from me in disdain; but it was not long till I beheld the tears gathering in her eyes; she retired hastily to a recess in a window, covered her face with her hands, and wept bitterly. The others tried to comfort her, and laugh her out of her frenzy, but that was of no avail; she broke from them, and, drowned in tears, embraced my knees, requesting in the most fervent terms to be allowed the liberty of following me over the world.

The ladies were all thrown by this into the utmost consternation, and besought me to undo the charm, both for the sake of the young lady herself and her honourable kin; but I had taken my measures, and paid no regard to their entreaties. On the contrary, I made my apology for not being able to dine there, owing to the King's commanding my attendance at the palace, took a hasty leave, mounted my horse, and, with Don Felix at my back, rode away.

I knew all their power could not detain Donna Rashelli, and, riding slowly, I heard the screams of madness and despair as they tried to hold her. She tore their head-dresses and robes in pieces, and fought like a fury, till they were glad to suffer her to go; but they all followed in a group, to overtake and entreat me to restore their friend to liberty.

I forded the stream that swept round the grounds, and waited on the other bank, well knowing what would occur, as a Spanish maiden never crosses even a rivulet without taking off her shoes and stockings. Accordingly she came running to the side of the stream, followed by all the ladies of the chateau, calling to me, and adjuring me to have pity on them. I laughed aloud at their tribulation, saying, I had done nothing but at their joint request, and they must now abide by the consequences. Rashelli threw off her shoes and stockings in a moment, and rushed into the stream, for fear of being detained; but before taking two steps, the charm being removed with her left-foot shoe, she stood still, abashed; and so fine a model of blushing and repentant beauty I never beheld, with her raven hair hanging dishevelled far over her waist, her feet and half her limbs of alabaster bathing in the stream, and her cheek overspread with the blush of shame.

"What am I about?" cried she. "Am I mad? or bewitched? or possessed of a demon, to run after a mountebank, that I would order the menials to drive from my door!"

"So you are gone, then, dear Donna Rashelli?" cried I. "Farewell, then, and peace be with you. Shall I not see you again before leaving this country?" but she looked not up, nor deigned to reply. Away she tripped, led by one lady on each hand, barefooted as she was, till they came to the gravel walk, and then she slipped on her morocco shoes. The moment her left-foot shoe was on, she sprung towards me again, and all the dames after her full cry. It was precisely like a hare-hunt, and so comic, that even the degraded Don Felix laughed amain at the scene. Again she plunged into the stream, and again she returned, weeping for shame; and this self-same scene was acted seven times over. At length I took compassion on the humbled beauty, and called to her aunt to seize her left-foot shoe, and wash it in the river. She did so; and I, thinking all was then over and safe, rode on my way. But I had not gone three furlongs till the chase again commenced as loud and as violently as ever, and in a short time the lady was again in the stream. I was vexed at this, not knowing what was the matter, and terrified that I might have attached her to me for life; but I besought her friends to keep her from putting on her stocking likewise, till it was washed and fomented as well as her shoe. This they went about with great eagerness, an old dame seizing the stocking, and hiding it in her bosom; and when I saw this I rode quickly away, afraid I should be too late for my engagement with the King.

We had turned the corner of a wood, when again the screams and yells of females reached our ears.

"What, in the name of St Nicholas, is this now?" said I.

"I suppose the hunt is up again, sir; but surely our best plan is to ride off and leave them," replied Don Felix.

"That will never do," returned I; "I cannot have a lady of rank attending me at the palace; and no power on earth, save iron and chains, can detain her, if one-thousandth part of a drop of my elixir remain about her person."

We turned back, and behold there was the old dowager coming waddling along, with a haste and agitation not to be described, and all her daughters, nieces, and maidens, after her. She had taken the river at the broadest, shoes and all, and had got so far a-head of her pursuers that she reached me first, and seizing me by the leg, embraced and kissed it, begging and praying all the while for my favour, in the most breathless and grotesque manner imaginable. I knew not what to do; not in the least aware how she became affected, till Donna Rashelli called out, "O, the stocking, sir, the stocking!" on which I caused them to take it from her altogether, and give it to me, and then they went home in peace.

I dined that night with their Majesties, not indeed at the same table, but at the head of the table in the anteroom, from whence I had a full view of them. I was a great and proud man that night, and neither threats nor persuasions could drive the great Professor from waiting at the back of my chair, and frequently serving me kneeling. After dinner I had an audience of the Queen, who offered me a galleon laden with gold for the receipt of my divine elixir of love. But I withstood it, representing to her Majesty the great clanger of imparting such a secret, because, after it had escaped from my lips, I could no more recall it, and knew not what use might be made of it; I accounted myself answerable, I said, to my Maker for the abuse of talents bestowed on me, and, therefore, was determined that the secret should go to the grave with me. I was, however, reduced to the necessity of giving her Majesty a part of the pure and sublime elixir ready prepared, taking her solemn promise, however, not to communicate any portion of it to another. She had found a ready use for it, for in a few days she requested more, and more, and more, till I began to think it was high time for me to leave the country.

Having now got as much money as I wanted, and a great deal more than I knew what to do with, I prepared for leaving Spain; for I was afraid that I should be made accountable for the effects produced by the charm in the hands of a capricious woman. Had I yielded to the requests of the young nobles for supplies, I might almost have exhausted the riches of Spain; but as it was, I had got more than my own weight in gold, part of which I forwarded to London, and put the remainder out to interest in Spain, and left Madrid not without fear of being seized and sent to the Inquisition as a necromancer. In place of that, however, the highest honours were bestowed on me, and I was accompanied to the port by numbers of the first people of the realm, and by all the friends of the Professor Don Felix de Valdez. These people had laid a plot to assassinate me, which they would have executed but for fear that the charm would never leave their friend; and as Felix himself discovered it to me, I kept him in bondage till the very day I was about to sail; then I caused his head to be shaved, and washed with a preparation of vinegar, alum, and cinnamon; and he returned to his senses and right feelings once more. But he never could show his face again in the land wherein he had been so much caressed and admired, but changed his name and retired to Peru, where he acquired both fame and respectability.

The Countess.

When a man gains great wealth too suddenly and with much ease, it is not unusual for him to throw it away with as little concern as he had anxiety in the gathering of it. This I was aware of, and determined to avoid. I began, therefore, without loss of time, to look about me for a respectable settlement in life; and having, after much inquiry, obtained a list of the unmarried ladies possessing the greatest fortunes in England, I fixed on a young Countess, who was a widow, had a large fortune, and suited my wishes in every respect. Possessing as I did the divine cordial of love, I had no fears of her ready compliance; so, after providing myself with a suitable equipage, I set off to her residence to Court and win her without any loss of time.

On arriving at her mansion about noon, I was rather coldly received, which was not surprising, for I had no introduction, but trusted to my own powers alone. Though shy and reserved at first, she, however, at length invited me to an early dinner, letting me know at the same time that no visitor remained there over-night when her brother was not present. This was so much gained; so I made my acknowledgments, and accepted the invitation,—thinking to myself, My pretty Countess, before you and I part, your haughtiness shall be wonderfully abated!—I waited my opportunity, and as she was leaving the apartment, aimed a small sprinkling of my cordial at her bushy locks; but owing to a sudden cast of her head, as ladies will affect pretty airs of disdain, the spray of my powerful elixir of love fell on an embroidered scarf that hung gracefully on her shoulder.

I was now sure of the effect, provided she did not throw the scarf aside before I got her properly sprinkled anew, but I had hopes its operation would be too instant and potent to permit that. I judged right; in three minutes she returned to the drawing-room, and proposed that we two should take a walk in her park before dinner, as she had some curiosities to show me. I acquiesced with pleasure, as may well be supposed.—I have you now, my pretty Countess, thought I; if it be in your power to escape me, I shall account you more than woman.

This park of hers was an immense field enclosed with a high wall, with a rail on the top. She had some roes in it, one couple of fallow deer, and a herd of kine. This last was what she pretended that she wished to show me; they were all milk-white, nay, as white as snow. They were not of the wild bison breed, but as gentle and tame as lambs—came to her when called by their names, and seemed so fond of being caressed, that several were following and teasing her at the same time. One favourite in particular was so fond, that she became troublesome; and the lady wished to be quit of her. But the beast would not go away. She followed on, humming, and rubbing on her mistress with her cheek, till at last the

latter, to rid herself of the annoyance, took her scarf, and struck the cow sharply across the face with it! The tassels of the scarf fastened on the far horn of the cow, and the animal being a little hurt by the stroke, as well as blinded, it sprung away; and in one moment the lady lost hold of her scarf. This was death and destruction to me; for the lady was thus bereaved of all her attachment to me in an instant, and what the Countess had lost was transferred to the cow. I therefore pursued the animal with my whole speed, calling her many kind and affectionate names, to make her stop. These she did not seem to understand, for stop she would not; but perceiving that she was a little blindfolded with the scarf, I slid quietly forward, and making a great spring, seized the embroidered scarf by the corner. The cow galloped, and I ran and held, determined to have the scarf, though I should tear it all to pieces,—for I knew well that my divine elixir had the effect of rousing animals into boundless rage and madness,—and held with a desperate grasp. I could not obtain it! All that I effected was to fasten the other horn in it likewise, and away went the cow flaunting through the park, like a fine madam in her gold embroidery.

I fled to the Countess as fast as my feet could carry me, and begged her, for Heaven's sake, to fly with me, for that our lives were at stake. She could not understand this; and moreover, she, that a minute or two before had been clinging to me with as much confidence as if our acquaintance had been of many years' standing, and of the most intimate kind, appeared to have conceived a sort of horror of me, and would not allow me to approach her. There was no time to parley; so I left her to shift for herself, and fled with all my might towards the gate at which we entered, knowing of no other point of egress. Time was it; for the creature instantly became furious, and came after me at full speed, bellowing like some agonized fiend escaped from the infernal regions. The herd was roused by the outrageous sounds, and followed in the same direction, every one galloping faster and roaring louder than another, apparently for company's sake; but, far a-head of them all, the cow came with the embroidered scarf flying over her shoulders, hanging out her tongue and bellowing, and gaining every minute on me. Next her in order came a stately milk-white bull, tall as a hunting steed, and shapely as a deer. My heart became chill with horror; for of all things on this earth, I stood in the most mortal terror of a bull. I saw, however, that I would gain the wicket before I was overtaken; and, in the brightness of hope, I looked back to see what had become of the Countess. She had fallen down on a rising ground in a convulsion of laughter! This nettled me exceedingly; however, I gained the gate; but, O misery and despair! it was fast locked, the Countess having the pass-key. To clear the wall was out of my power in such a dilemma as I then was in, so I had nothing left for it but swiftness of foot. Often had I valued myself on that qualification, but little expected ever to have so much need of it. So I ran and ran, pursued by twenty milk-white kine and a bull, all bellowing like as many infernal creatures. Never was there such another chase! I tried to reach the place where the Countess was, thinking she might be able, by her voice, to stay them, or, at all events, that she would tell me how I could escape from their fury. But the drove having all got between her and me, I could not effect it, and was obliged to run at random, which I continued to do, straining with all my might, but now found that my breath was nearly gone, and the terrible race drawing to a crisis.

What was to be done? Life was sweet, but expedients there were none. There were no trees in the park save young ones, dropped down, as it were, here and there, with palings round them, to prevent the cattle from destroying them. The only one that I could perceive was a tall fir, I suppose of the larch species, which seemed calculated to afford a little shelter in a desperate case; so I made towards it with a last effort. There was a triangular paling around it, setting my foot on which, I darted among the branches, clomb like a cat, and soon vanished among the foliage.

Then did I call aloud to the Countess for assistance, imploring her to raise the country for my rescue; but all that she did, was to come towards me herself, slowly and with lagging pace, for she was feeble with laughing; and when she did come, the cattle were all so infuriated that they would not once regard her.

"What is the matter with my cattle, sir?" cried she. "They are surely bewitched."

"I think they are bedeviled, and that is worse, madam," returned I. "But, for Heaven's sake, try to regain the scarf. It is the scarf which is the cause of all this uproar."

"What is in the scarf?" said she. "It can have no effect in raising this deadly enmity against you, if all is as it should be, which I now begin to suspect, from some strange diversity of feelings I have experienced."

"It is merely on account of the gold that is on it, madam," said I. "You cannot imagine how mad the sight of gold, that pest of the earth, makes some animals; and it was the effort I made to get it from the animal that has excited in her so much fury against me."

"That is most strange indeed!" exclaimed the lady. "Then the animal shall keep it for me, for I would not for half my

fortune that these favourites should be driven to become my persecutors."

She now called the cattle by their names, and some of them left me; for it was evident that, save the charmed animal, the rest of the herd were only running for company or diversion's sake. Still their looks were exceedingly wild and unstable, and the one that wore the anointed shawl, named Fair Margaret, continued foaming mad, and would do nothing but stand and bellow, toss her adorned head, and look up to the tree. I would have given ten thousand pounds to have got hold of that vile embroidered scarf, but to effect it, and retain my life, at that time was impracticable.

And now a scene ensued, which, for horror to me could not be equalled, although, to any unconcerned beholder, it must have appeared ludicrous in the extreme. The bull, perceiving one of his favourite mates thus distempered, showed a great deal of anxiety; he went round her, and round her, and perceiving the flaunting thing on her head and shoulders, he seemed to entertain some kind of idea that it was the cause of this unwonted and obstreperous noise. He tried to fling it off with his horns, I know not how oft; but so awkward were his efforts that they all failed. Enraged at being thus baffled, he then had recourse to a most unexpected expedient—he actually seized the scarf with his great mouth, tore it off, and in a few seconds swallowed it every thread!

What was I to do now? Here was a new enemy, and one ten times more formidable than the other, who had swallowed up the elixir, and whom, therefore, it was impossible ever to disarm; who, I knew, would pursue me to the death, even though at the distance of fifty miles. I was in the most dreadful agony of terror imaginable, as well I might, for the cow went away shaking her ears, as if happily quit of a tormentor, and the bull instantly began to tear up the earth with hoof and horn, while the late bellowings of the cow were, to his, like the howl of a beagle to the roar of a lion. They made the very earth to quake; while distant woods, and walls, and the very skies, returned the astounding echoes. He went round and round the tree, digging graves on each side of it; and his fury still increasing, he broke through the paling as it had been a spider's web, and setting his head to the trunk, pushed with all his mighty force, doubled by supernatural rage. The tree yielded like a bulrush, until I hung dangling from it as if suspended from a cross-beam; still I durst not quit my hold, having no other resource. While in this situation, I observed the Countess speeding away. It seemed to me as if she were Hope flying from me and abandoning me to my fate, and I uttered some piercing cries of desperation. The tree, however, was young and elastic, and always as the infuriated animal withdrew his force for a new attack, it sprung up to its original slender and stately form, and then down it went again; so that there was I swinging between heaven and earth, expecting every moment to be my last; and if the bull had not, in his mad efforts, wheeled round to the contrary side, I might have been swinging there to this day. When he changed sides, the fibres of the tree weakened, and at last I came down to the earth, and he made at me with full force; it was in vain that I called to him to keep off, and bullied him, and pretended to hunt dogs on him; on he came, and plunged his horns into the foliage; the cows did the same for company's sake, and, I'm sure, never was there a poor soul so completely mobbed by a vulgar herd. Still the tree had as much strength left as to heave me gently above their reach, and no more, and I now began to lose all power through terror and despair, and merely kept my hold instinctively, as a drowning man would hold by a rush. The next push the tree got it was again laid prostrate, and again the bull dashed his horns into the foliage, and through that into the earth. I now saw there was no longer any hope of safety if I remained where I was, and therefore quitted hold of the tree. How I escaped I scarce can tell, but I did escape through amongst the feet of the cows.

At first I stole away like a hare from a cover, and could not help admiring the absurdity of the cows, that continued tossing and tearing the tree with their horns, as if determined not to leave a stiver of it; whilst the bull continued grovelling with his horns, down through the branches and into the ground. Heavens! with what velocity I clove the wind! I have fled from battle—I have fled from the face of the lions of Asia, the dragons of Africa, and the snakes of America—I have fled before the Indians with their scalping knives; but never in my life was I enabled to run with such speed as I did from this infuriated monster.

He was now coming full speed after me, as I knew he would, the moment he disengaged himself; but I had got a good way a-head, and, I assure you, was losing no time, and as I was following a small beaten track, I came to a stile over the wall. I never was so thankful for any thing since I was born! It was a crooked stone stair, with angles to hinder animals from passing, and a locked door on the top, about the height of an ordinary man. I easily surmounted this, by getting hold of the iron spikes on the top; and now, being clear of my adversary, I set my head over the door and looked him in the face, mocking and provoking him all that I could, for I had no other means of retaliation, and felt exceedingly indignant at having been put in danger of my life by so ignoble an enemy. I never beheld a more hideous picture of rage! He was foaming at the mouth, and rather belching than bellowing; his tail was writhing in the air like a serpent, and his eyes burning like small globes of bright flame. He grew so enraged at length, that he rushed up the stone stair, and the frame-

work at the angles began to crash before him. Thinks I to myself, Friend, I do not covet such a close vicinity with you; so, with your leave, I'll keep a due distance; and then descending to the high road, I again began to speed away, though rather leisurely, knowing that he could not possibly get over the iron-railed wall.

There was now a close hedge on every side of me, about eight or ten feet high, and as a man who has been in great jeopardy naturally looks about him for some safe retreat in case of an emergency, so I continued jogging on and looking for such, but perceived none; when, hearing a great noise far behind me, I looked back, and saw the irresistible monster coming tumbling from the wall, bringing gates, bars, and railing, all before him. He fell with a tremendous crash, and I had great hopes his neck was broken, for at first he tried to rise, and, stumbling, fell down again; but, to my dismay, he was soon again on the chase, and making ground on me faster than ever. He came close on me at last, and I had no other shift than to throw off my fine coat, turn round to await him, and fling it over his horns and eyes.

This not only marred him, but detained him long wreaking his vengeance on the coat, which he tore all to pieces with his feet and horns, taking it for a part of me. By this time I had reached a willow-tree in the hedge, the twigs of which hung down within reach. I seized on two or three of these, wrung them together like a rope, and by the assistance of that, swung myself over the hedge. Still I slackened not my pace, knowing that the devil was in the beast, and that nothing but blood would allay his fury. Accordingly, it was not long till I saw him plunging in the hedge; and through it he came.

I now perceived a fine sheet of water on my left, about a mile broad, I knew not whether a lake or river, never having been in those bounds before. I made towards it with all my remaining energy, which was not great. I cleared many common stone-walls in my course, but these proved no obstacles to my pursuer, and before I reached the lake, he came so close upon me, that I was obliged to fling my hat in his face, and as he fortunately took that for my head, it served him a good while to crush it in pieces, so that I made to the lake and plunged in. At the very first, I dived and swam under water as long as I could keep my breath, assured that my enemy would lose all traces of me then; but when I came to the surface, I found him puffing within two yards of me. I was in such horror, that I knew not what to do, for I found he could swim twice as fast as I could; so I dived again, but my breath being gone, I could not remain below, and whenever I came to the surface, there was he.

If I had had the smallest reasoning faculty left, or had once entertained a thought of resistance, I might easily have known that I was now perfectly safe. The beast could not harm me. Whenever he made a push at me, his head went below the water, which confounded him. My perturbation was so extreme, that I was on the point of perishing from exhaustion, before I perceived this to be the case. When, however, I did observe it, I took courage, seized him by the tail, clomb upon his back, and then rode in perfect safety.

I never got a more complete and satisfactory revenge of an enemy, not even over the Spanish Professor, and that was complete enough; but here I had nothing to do but to sit exulting on the monster's back, while he kept wallowing and struggling in the waves. I then took my penknife, and stabbed him deliberately over the whole body, letting out his heart's blood. He took this very much amiss, but he had now got enough of blood around him, and began to calm himself. I kept my seat nevertheless, to make all sure, till his head sunk below the water, while his huge hinder parts turned straight upmost, and I left him floating away like a huge buoy that had lost its anchor.

"Now, Doctor, gin a' tales be true, yours is nae lee, that is certain," said my mother, at the conclusion of this narration; "but I want some explanations—it's a grand story, but I want to take the consequences along wi' me. What did the Queen o' Spain wi' a' the ointment you left wi' her? I'm thinking there wad be some strange scenes about that Court for a while."

"Why, Margaret, to say the truth, the elixir was not used in such a way as might have been expected. The truth appeared afterwards to have been this: The King had at that time resolved on that ruinous, and then very unpopular war, about what was called the Family Compact; and finding that the clergy, and a part of the principal nobility, were in opposition to it, and that, without their concurrence, the war could not be prosecuted with any effect, the Queen took this very politic method of purchasing plenty of my divine elixir of attachment, and giving them all a touch of it every one. The effect was, of course, instant, potent, and notorious; and it is a curious and incontestable fact, that the effects of that sprinkling have continued the mania of attachment among that class of Spain to this day."

"And how came you on wi' your grand Countess? Ye wad be a bonny figure gaun hame again to her place, half-naked,

and like a droukit crow, wi' the life of her favourite animal to answer for!"

"That is rather a painful subject, Margaret—rather a painful subject. I never saw her again! I had lost my coat and hat. I had lost all my money, which was in notes, in swimming and diving. I had lost my carriage and horses, and I had lost my good name, which was worst of all; for from that day forth, I was branded and shunned as a necromancer. The abrupt and extraordinary changes in the lady's sentiments had not escaped her own notice, while the distraction of the animals on the transference of the enchanted scarf to them, confirmed her worst suspicions, that I was a dealer in unlawful arts, and come to gain possession of herself and fortune, by the most infamous measures; and as I did not choose to come to an explanation with her on that subject, I escaped as quietly from the district as possible.

"It surely can be no sin to dive into the hidden mysteries of nature, particularly those of plants and flowers. Why, then, have I been punished as never pharmacopolist was punished before; can you tell me that, Margaret?"

"Indeed, can I—weel enough—Doctor. Other men have studied the qualities o' yirbs to assist nature; but ye have done it only to pervert nature,—and I hope you hae read your sin in your punishment."

"The very sentiment that my heart has whispered to me a thousand times! It indeed occurred to me, whilst skulking about on my escape after the adventure with the Countess; but it was not until farther and still more bitter experience of the dangerous effects of my secret, that I could bring myself to destroy the maddening liquid. It had taken years of anxiety and labour to perfect a mixture, from which I anticipated the most beneficial results. The consequences which it drew upon me, although, at first, they promised to be all I could wish, proved in the end every way annoying, and often wellnigh fatal, and I carefully consumed with fire every drop of the potion, and every scrap of writing, in which the progress of the discovery had been noted. I cannot myself forget the painful and tedious steps by which it was obtained. And even after all the disasters to which it has subjected me—after the miserable wreck of all my high-pitched ambition, I cannot but feel a pride in the consciousness that I carry with me the knowledge of a secret never before possessed by mortal man, which no one shall learn from me, and which it is all but certain that none after me will have perseverance enough, or genius, to arrive at!"

The learned Doctor usually wound up the history of an adventure with a sonorous conclusion like the above, the high-wrought theatrical tone of which, as it was incomprehensible to his hearers, for the most part produced a wonderful effect. Looking upon the gaunt form of the sage, I was penetrated with immeasurable reverence, and though the fascination of his marvellous stories kept me listening with eager curiosity while they lasted, I always retired shortly after he ceased speaking, not being able to endure the august presence of so wise a personage as he appeared to me to be.

Many of his relations were still more marvellous than those I have preserved; but these are sufficient for a specimen, and it would be idle to pursue the Doctor's hallucinations farther. All I can say about these adventures of his is, that when I heard them first, I received them as strictly true; my mother believed them most implicitly, and the Doctor related them as if he had believed in the truth of them himself. But there were disputes every day between my mother and him about the invention of the charm, the former always maintaining that it was known to the chiefs of the gipsy tribes for centuries bygone; and as proofs of her position, she cited Johnie Faa's seduction of the Earl of Cassillis's lady, so well known in Lowland song, and Hector Kennedy's seduction of three brides, all of high quality, by merely touching the palms of their hands, after which no power could prevent any of them from following him. She likewise told a very affecting story of an exceedingly beautiful girl, named Sophy Sloan, who left Kirkhope, and eloped after the gipsies, though she had never exchanged a word with one of them. Her father and uncle followed, and found her with them in an old kiln on the water of Milk. Her head was wounded, bloody, and tied up with a napkin. They had pawned all her good clothes, and covered her with rags, and though weeping with grief and despair, yet she refused to leave them. The man to whom she was attached had never asked her to go with him; he even threatened her with death if she would not return with her father, but she continued obstinate, and was not suffered long to outlive her infatuation and disgrace. This story *was* a fact; yet the Doctor held all these instances in utter contempt, and maintained his prerogative, as the sole and original inventor of

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE.

There was not a doubt that the Doctor was skulking, and in terror of being apprehended for some misdemeanour, all the time he was at Etrick Manse; and never one of us had a doubt that it was on account of some enchantment. But I had reason to conclude, long afterwards, that his seclusion then, and all the latter part of his life, was owing to an unfortunate and fatal experiment in pharmacy, which deprived society of a number of valuable lives. The circumstances are related in a note to the third volume of Eustace's *Pharmacop[oe]ia*, and it will there be seen that the description of the

delinquent suits exactly with that of THE MARVELLOUS DOCTOR.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WITCHES OF TRAQUAIR.

There was once a young man, a native of Traquair, in the county of Peebles, whose name was Colin Hyslop, and who suffered more by witchcraft, and the intervention of supernatural beings, than any man I ever heard of.

Traquair was a terrible place then! There was a witch almost in every hamlet, and a warlock here and there besides. There were no fewer than twelve witches in one straggling hamlet, called Taniel Burn, and five in Kirk Row. What a desperate place Traquair had been in those days! But there is no person who is so apt to overshoot his mark as the Devil. He must be a great fool in the main; for, with all his supposed acuteness, he often runs himself into the most confounded blunders that ever the leader of an opposition got into the midst of. Throughout all the annals of the human race, it is manifest, that whenever he was aiming to do the most evil, he was uniformly employed in such a way as to bring about the most good; and it seems to have been so, in a particular manner, in the case with which my tale shall make the reader acquainted.

The truth is, that Popery was then on its last legs, and the Devil, finding it (as then exercised) a very convenient and profitable sort of religion, exerted himself beyond measure to give its motley hues a little more variety; and the making witches and warlocks, and holding nocturnal revels with them, where every sort of devilry was exercised, was at that time with him a favourite plan. It was also favourably received by the meaner sort of the populace. Witches gloried in their power, and warlocks in their foreknowledge of events, and the energies of their master. Women, beyond a certain age, when the pleasures and hopes of youth delighted no more, flew to an intercourse with the unseen powers, as affording an excitement of a higher and more terrible nature; and men, whose tempers had been soured by disappointment and ill usage, betook themselves to the Prince of the Power of the Air, enlisting under his banner, in hopes of obtaining revenge on their oppressors, or those against whom they had conceived displeasure. However extravagant this may appear, there is no doubt of the fact, that, in those days, the hopes of attaining some energies beyond the reach of mere human capability, inflamed the ignorant and wicked to attempts and acts of the most diabolical nature; for hundreds acknowledged their principles, and gloried in them, before the tribunals that adjudged them to the stake.

"I am now fairly under the power of witchcraft," said Colin Hyslop, as he sat on the side of the Feathen Hill, with his plaid drawn over his head, the tears running down his brown manly cheek, and a paper marked with uncouth lines and figures in his hand,—*"I am now fairly under the power of witchcraft, and must submit to my fate; I am entangled, enchained, enslaved; and the fault is all my own, for I have committed that degree of sin which my sainted and dying father assured me would subject me to the snares of my hellish neighbours and sworn adversaries. My pickle sheep have a' been bewitched, and a great part o' them have died dancing hornpipes and French curtillions. I have been changed, and ower again changed, into shapes and forms that I darena think of, far less name; and a' through account of my ain sin. Hech! but it is a queer thing that sin! It has sae mony inroads to the heart, and outlets by the senses, that we seem to live and breathe in it. And I canna trow that the Deil is the wyte of a' our sins neither. Na, na; black as he is, he canna be the cause and the mover of a' our transgressions, for I find them often engendering and breeding in my heart as fast as maggots on tainted carrion; and then it is out o' the power of man to keep them down. My father tauld me, that if ance I let the Deil get his little finger into *ane* o' my transactions, he wad soon hae his haill hand into them a'. Now I hae found it in effect, but not in belief; for, from a' that I can borrow frae Rob Kirkwood, the warlock, and my aunty Nans, the wickedest witch in Christendye, the Deil appears to me to be a geyan obliging chap. That he is wayward and fond o' sin, I hae nae doubt; but in that he has mony neighbours. And then his great power over the senses and conditions of men, over the winds, the waters, and the element of flame, is to me incomprehensible, and would make him appear rather a sort of vicegerent over the outskirts and unruly parts of nature, than an opponent to its lawful lord.—What then shall I do with this?"* looking at the scroll; *"shall I subscribe to the conditions, and enlist under his banner, or shall I not? O love, love! were it not for thee, all the torments that Old Mahoun and his followers could inflict, should not induce me to quit the plain path of Christianity. But that disdainful, cruel, and lovely Barbara! I must and will have her, though my repentance should be without measure and without end. So then it is settled! Here I will draw blood from my arm—blot out the sign of the cross with it, and form that of the crescent, and these other things, the meaning of which I do not know.—Halloo! What's that? Two beautiful deers, as I am a sinner, and one of them lame. What a prey for poor ruined Colin! and fairly off the royal bounds, too. Now for it, Bawty, my fine dog! now for a clean chase! A' the links o' the Feathen Wood winna hide them from your infallible nose, billy Bawty. Halloo! off you go! and now for the bow and the broad arrow at the head slap!—What! ye winna hunt a foot-length after them, will ye no? Then, Bawty, there's some mair*

mischief in the wind for me! I see what your frightened looks tell me. That they dinna leave the scent of other deers on their track, but ane that terrifies you, and makes your blood creep. It is hardly possible, ane wad think, that witches could assume the shapes of these bonny harmless creatures; but their power has come to sic a height hereabouts, that nae man alive can tell what they can do. There's my aunt Nans has already turned me into a gait, then to a gairder, and last of a' into a three-legged stool!

"I am a ruined man, Bawty! your master is a ruined man, and a lost man, that's far waur. He has sold himself for love to one beautiful creature, the comelies of all the human race. And yet that beautiful creature must be a witch, else how could a' the witches o' Traquair gie me possession o' her?"

"Let me consider and calculate. Now, supposing they are deceiving me—for that's their character; and supposing they can never put me in possession of her, then I hae brought myself into a fine scrape. How terrible a thought this is! Let me see; is all over? Is this scroll signed and sealed; and am I wholly given up to this unknown and untried destiny?" (Opens his scroll with trembling agitation, and looks over it.) "No, thanks to the Lord of the universe, I am yet a Christian. The cross stands uncanceled, and there is neither sign nor superscription in my blood. How did this happen? I had the blood drawn—the pen filled—and the scroll laid out. Let me consider what it was that prevented me? The deers? It was, indeed, the two comely deers. What a strange intervention this is! Ah! these were no witches! but some good angels, or happy fays, or guardian spirits of the wild, sent to snatch an abused youth from destruction. Now, thanks be to Heaven, though poor and reduced to the last extremity, I am yet a free man, and in my Maker's hand. My resolution is changed—my promise is broken, and here I give this mystic scroll to the winds of the glen.

"Alas, alas! to what a state sin has reduced me! Now shall I be tortured by night, and persecuted by day; changed into monstrous shapes, torn by cats, pricked by invisible bodkins, my heart racked by insufferable pangs of love, until I either lose my reason, and yield to the dreadful conditions held out to me, or abandon all hope of earthly happiness, and yield up my life. Oh, that I were as free of sin as that day my father gave me his last blessing! then might I withstand all their charms and enchantments. But that I will never be. So as I have brewed so must I drink. These were his last words to me, which I may weel remember:—'You will have many enemies of your soul to contend with, my son; for your nearest relations are in compact with the devil; and as they have hated and persecuted me, so will they hate and persecute you; and it will only be by repeating your prayers evening and morning, and keeping a conscience void of all offence towards God and towards man, that you can hope to escape the snares that will be laid for you. But the good angels from the presence of the Almighty will, perhaps, guard my poor orphan boy, and protect him from the counsels of the wicked.'

"Now, in the first place, I have never prayed at all; and, in the second place, I have sinned so much, that I have long ago subjected myself to their snares, and given myself up for lost. What will become of me? flight is in vain, for they can fly through the air, and follow me wherever I go. And then, Barbara,—O that lovely and bewitching creature! in leaving her I would leave life and saul behind!"

After this long and troubled soliloquy, poor Colin burst into tears, and wished himself a dove, or a sparrow-hawk, or an eagle, to fly away and be seen no more; but, in either case, to have bonny Barbara for his mate. At this instant Bawty began to cock up his ears, and turn his head first to the one side and then to the other; and, when Colin looked up, he beheld two hares cowering away from a bush behind him. There was nothing that Colin was so fond of as a chase. He sprung up, pursued the hares, and shouted to his dog, Halloo, halloo! No, Bawty would not pursue them a foot, but whenever he came to the place where he had seen them, and put his nose to the ground, ran back, hanging his tail, and uttering short barks, as he was wont to do when attacked by witches in the night. Colin's hair rose up on his head, for he instantly suspected that the two hares were Robin Kirkwood and his aunt Nans, watching his motions, and the fulfilment of his promise to them. Colin was horrified, and knew not what to do. He did not try to pray, for he could not; but he wished, in his heart, that his father's dying prayer for him had been heard.

He rose, and hastened away in the direction contrary to that the hares had taken, as may well be supposed; and as he jogged along, in melancholy mood, he was aware of two damsels, who approached him slowly and cautiously. They were clothed in white, with garlands on their heads; and, on their near approach, Colin perceived that one of them was lame, and the other supported her by the hand. The two comely hinds that had come upon him so suddenly and unexpectedly, and had prevented him, at the very decisive moment, from selling his salvation for sensual enjoyment, instantly came over Colin's awakened recollection, and he was struck with indescribable awe. Bawty was affected somewhat in the same manner with his master. The dismay he manifested was different from that inspired by the attacks of witches and warlocks; he crept close to the ground, and turning his face half away from the radiant objects, uttered a

sort of stifled murmur, as if moved both by respect and fear. Colin perceived, from these infallible symptoms, that the beings with whom he was now coming in contact were not the subjects of the Power of Darkness.

He therefore threw his plaid over his shoulder in the true shepherd-style, took his staff below his left arm, so that his right hand might be at liberty to lift his bonnet when the fair damsels accosted him, and, not choosing to advance direct upon them, he paused at a respectful distance, straight in their path. When they came within a few paces of him, they turned gently from the path, as if to pass him on the left side, but all the while kept their bright eyes fixed on him, and whispered to each other. Colin was grieved that so much comeliness should pass by without saluting him, and kept his regretful eyes steadily on them. At length they paused, and one of them called, in a sweet but solemn voice, "Ah, Colin Hyslop, Colin Hyslop! you are on the braid way for destruction."

"How do ye ken that, madam?" returned Colin. "Do you ca' the road up the Kirk Rigg the braid way to destruction?"

"Ay, up the rigg or down the rigg, cross the rigg or round the rigg, all is the same for you, Colin. You are a lost man; and it is a great pity. One single step farther on the path you are now treading, and all is over."

"What wad ye hae me to do, sweet madam? Wad ye hae me to stand still and starve here on the crown o' the Kirk Rigg?"

"Better starve in a dungeon than take the steps you are about to take. You were at a witch and warlock meeting yestreen."

"It looks like as gin you had been there too, madam, that you ken sae weel."

"Yes, I *was* there, but under concealment, and not for the purpose of making any such vows and promises as you made. O wretched Colin Hyslop, what is to become of you!"

"I did naething, madam, but what I couldna help; and my heart is sair for it the day."

"Can you lay your hand on that heart and say so?"

"Yes, I can, dear madam, and swear to it too."

"Then follow us down to this little green knowe, and recount to us the circumstances of your life, and I will inform you of a secret I heard yestreen."

"Aha, madam, but yon is a fairy ring, and I hae gotten sae mony cheats wi' changelings, that I hae muckle need to be on my guard. However, things can hardly be waur wi' me. Lead on, and I shall e'en follow."

The two female figures walked before him to a fairy knowe, on the top of the Feathen Hill, and sat down, with their faces towards him, till he recounted the incidents of his life, the outline of which was this:—His father was a sincere adherent of the Reformers, and a good Christian; but poor Colin was born at Taniel-Burn, in the midst of Papists and witches; and the nearest relation he had, a maternal aunt, was the leading witch of the neighbourhood. Consequently, Colin was nurtured in sin, and inured to iniquity, until all the kindly and humane principles of his nature were erased, or so much distorted, as to appear like their very opposites; and when this was accomplished, his wicked aunt and her associate hags, judging him fairly gained, and without the pale of redemption, began to exercise cantrips, the most comical, and, at the same time, the most refined in cruelty, at his expense; and at length, on being assured of every earthly enjoyment, he engaged to join their hellish community, only craving three days to study their mysteries, before he should bleed himself, and, with the blood extracted from his veins, extinguish the sign of the cross, and thereby renounce his hope in mercy, and likewise make some hieroglyphics of strange shapes and mysterious efficacy, and finally subscribe his name to the whole.

When the relation was finished, one of the lovely auditors said,—"You are a wicked and abandoned person, Colin Hyslop. But you were reared up in iniquity, and know no better; and the mercy of Heaven is most readily extended to such. You have, besides, some good points in your character still; for you have told us the truth, however much to your own disadvantage."

"Aha, madam! How do you ken sae weel that I hae been telling you a' the truth?"

"I know all concerning you better than you do yourself. There is little, very little, of a redeeming nature in your own history; but you had an upright and devout father, and the seed of the just may not perish for ever. I have been young, and now am old, yet have I never seen the good man forsaken, nor his children cast out as vagabonds in the land of their

fathers."

"Ah, na, na, madam! ye canna be auld. It is impossible! But goodness kens! there are sad changelings now-a-days. I have seen an auld wrinkled wife blooming o'ernight like a cherub."

"Colin, you are a fool! And folly in youth leads to misery in old age. But I am your friend, and you have not another on earth this night but myself and my sister here, and one more. Pray, will you keep this little vial, and drink it for my sake?"

"Will it no change me, madam?"

"Yes, it will."

"Then I thank you; but will have nothing to do with it. I have had enow of these kind o' drinks in my life."

"But suppose it change you for the better? Suppose it change you to a new creature?"

"Weel, suppose it should, what will that creature be? Tell me that first. Will it no be a fox, nor a gairder, nor a bearded gait, nor—nor—a three-legged stool, which is no a creature ava?"

"Ah, Colin, Colin!" exclaimed she, smiling through tears, "your own wickedness and unbelief gave the agents of perdition power over you. It is that power which I wish to counteract. But I will tell you nothing more. If you will not take this little vial, and drink it, for my sake,—why, then, let it alone, and follow your own course."

"O dear madam! ye ken little thing about me. I was only joking wi' you, for the sake o' hearing your sweet answers. For were that bit glass fu' o' rank poison, and were it to turn me intil a taed or a worm, I wad drink it aff at your behest. I hae been sae little accustomed to hear aught serious or friendly, that my very heart clings to you as it wad do to an angel coming down frae heaven to save me. Ay, and ye said something kind and respectfu' about my auld father too. That's what I hae been as little used to. Ah, but he was a douce man! Wasna he, mem?—Drink that bit bottle o' liquor for your sake! Od, I wish it were fu' to the brim, and that's no what it is by twa-thirds."

"Ay, but it has this property, Colin, that drinking will never exhaust it; and the langer you drink it, the sweeter it will become."

"Say you sae? Then here's till ye. We'll see whether drinking winna exhaust it or no."

Colin set the vial to his lips, with intent of draining it; but the first portion that he swallowed made him change his countenance, and shudder from head to heel.

"Ah! sweeter did you say, madam? by the faith of my heart, it has muckle need; for siccan a potion for bitterness never entered the mouth of mortal man. Oh, I am ruined, poisoned, and undone!"

With that poor Colin drew his plaid over his head, fell flat on his face, and wept bitterly, while his two comely visitants withdrew, smiling at the success of their mission. As they went down by the side of the Feathen Wood, the one said to the other, "Did you not perceive two of that infatuated community haunting this poor hapless youth to destruction? Let us go and hear their schemes, that we may the better counteract them."

They skimmed over the lea fields, and, in a thicket of brambles, briers, and nettles, they found—not two hares, but the identical Rob Kirkwood, the warlock, and Colin's aunt Nans, in close and unholy consultation. This bush has often been pointed out to me as the scene of that memorable meeting. It perhaps still remains at the side of a little hollow, nigh to the east corner of the Feathen arable fields; and the spots occupied by the witch and warlock, without a green shrub on them, are still as visible as on the day they left them. The two sisters, having chosen a disguise that, like Jack the Giant-Killer's coat of darkness, completely concealed them, heard the following dialogue, from beginning to end.

"Kimmer, I trow the prize is won. I saw his arm bared; the red blood streaming; the scroll in the one hand, and the pen in the other."

"He's ours! he's ours!"

"He's nae mair yours."

"We'll ower the kirkstyle, and away wi' him!"

"I liked not the appearance of yon two pale hinds at such a moment. I wish the fruit of all our pains be not stolen from us when ready for our lord and master's board. How he will storm and misuse us if this has befallen!"

"What of the two hinds? What of them, I say? I like to see blood. It is a beautiful thing blood."

"Thou art as gross as flesh and blood itself, and hast nothing in thee of the true sublimity of a supernatural being. I love to scale the thundercloud; to ride on the topmost billow of the storm; to roost by the cataract, or croon the anthem of hell at the gate of heaven. But *thou* delightest to see blood,—rank, reeking, and baleful Christian blood. What pleasure is in that, dotard?"

"Humph! I like to see Christian blood, howsomever. It bodes luck, kimmer—it bodes luck."

"It bodes that thou art a mere block, Rob Kirkwood! but it is needless to upbraid thee, senseless as thou art. Listen then to me:—It has been our master's charge to us these seven years to gain that goodly stripling, my nephew; and you know that you and I engaged to accomplish it; if we break that engagement, woe unto us! Our master bore a grudge at his father; but he particularly desires the son, because he knows that, could we gain him, all the pretty girls of the parish would flock to our standard.—But, Robin Kirkwood, I say, Robin Kirkwood, what two white birds are these always hopping around us? I dinna like their looks unco weel. See, the one of them is lame too; and they seem to have a language of their own to one another. Let us leave this place, Robin; my heart is quaking like an aspen."

"Let them hap on. What ill can wee bits o' birdies do till us? Come, let us try some o' yon cantrips our master learned us. Grand sport yon, Nans!"

"Robin, did not you see that the birds hopped three times round us! I am afraid we are charmed to the spot."

"Never mind, auld fool! It's a very good spot.—Some of our cantrips! some of our cantrips!"

What cantrips they performed is not known; but, on that day fortnight, the two were found still sitting in the middle of the bush, the two most miserable and disgusting figures that ever shocked humanity. Their cronies came with a hurdle to take them home; but Nans expired by the way, uttering wild gibberish and blasphemy, and Rob Kirkwood died soon after he got home. The last words he uttered were, "Plenty o' Christian blood soon! It will be running in streams!—in streams!—in streams!"

We now return to Colin, who, freed of his two greatest adversaries, now spent his time in a state bordering on happiness, compared with the life he had formerly led. He wept much, staid on the hill by himself, and pondered deeply on something—nobody knew what, and it was believed he did not know well himself. He was in love—over head and ears in love; which may account for any thing in man, however ridiculous. He was in love with Barbara Stewart, an angel in loveliness as well as virtue; but she had hitherto shunned a young man so dissolute and unfortunate in his connexions. To her rejection of his suit were attributed Colin's melancholy and retirement from society; and it might be partly the cause, but there were other matters that troubled his inmost soul.

Ever since he had been visited by the two mysterious dames, he had kept the vial close in his bosom, and had drunk of the bitter potion again and again. He felt a change within him, a certain renovation of his nature, and a new train of thoughts, to which he was an utter stranger; yet he cherished them, tasting oftener and oftener his vial of bitterness, and always, as he drank, the liquor increased in quantity.

While in this half-resigned, half-desponding state, he ventured once more to visit Barbara. He thought to himself that he would go and see her, if but to take farewell of her; for he resolved not to harass so dear a creature with a suit which was displeasing to her. But, to his utter surprise, Barbara received him kindly. His humbled look made a deep impression on her; and, on taking leave, he found that she had treated him with as much favour as any virtuous maiden could display.

He therefore went home rather too much uplifted in spirit, which his old adversaries, the witches, perceived, and having laid all their snares open to entrap him, they in part prevailed, and he returned, in the moment of temptation, to his old courses. The day after, as he went out to the hill, he whistled and sung,—for he durst not think,—till, behold, at a distance, he saw his two lovely monitors approaching. He was confounded and afraid, for he found his heart was not right for the encounter; so he ran away with all his might, and hid himself in the Feathen Wood.

As soon as he was alone, he took the vial from his bosom, and, wondering, beheld that the bitter liquid was dried up all

to a few drops, although the glass was nearly full when he last deposited it in his bosom. He set it eagerly to his lips, lest the last remnant should have escaped him; but never was it so bitter as now; his very heart and spirit failed him, and, trembling, he lay down and wept. He tried again to drain out the dregs of his cup of bitterness; but still, as he drank, it increased in quantity, and became more and more palatable; and he now continued the task so eagerly, that in a few days it was once more nearly full.

The two lovely strangers coming now often in his mind, he regretted running from them, and longed to see them again. So, going out, he sat down within the fairy ring, on the top of the Feathen Hill, with a sort of presentiment that they would appear to him. Accordingly, it was not long till they made their appearance, but still at a distance, as if travelling along the kirk-road. Colin, perceiving that they were going to pass, without looking his way, thought it his duty to wait on them. He hasted across the moor, and met them; nor did they now shun him. The one that was lame now addressed him, while she who had formerly accosted him, and presented him with the vial, looked shy, and kept a marked distance, which Colin was exceedingly sorry for, as he loved her best. The other examined him sharply concerning all his transactions since they last met. He acknowledged every thing candidly—the great folly of which he had been guilty, and likewise the great terror he was in of being changed into some horrible bestial creature, by the bitter drug they had given him. "For d'ye ken, madam," said he, "I fand the change beginning within, at the very core o' the heart, and spreading aye outward and outward, and I lookit aye every minute when my hands and my feet wad change into clutes; for I expeckit nae less than to have another turn o' the gait, or some waur thing, kenning how weel I deserved it. And when I saw that I keptit my right proportions, I grat for my ain wickedness, that had before subjected me to such unhallowed influence."

The two sisters now looked to each other, and a heavenly benevolence shone through the smiles with which that look was accompanied. The lame one said, "Did I not say, sister, that there was some hope?" She then asked a sight of his vial, which he took from his bosom, and put into her hands; and when she had viewed it carefully, she returned it, without any injunction; but taking from her own bosom a medal of pure gold, which seemed to have been dipped in blood, she fastened it round his neck with a chain of steel. "As long as you keep that vial, and use it," said she, "the other will never be taken from you, and with these two you may defy all the Powers of Darkness."

As soon as Colin was alone, he surveyed his purple medal with great earnestness, but could make nothing of it; there was a mystery in the characters and figures which he could not in the least comprehend; yet he kept all that had happened closely concealed; and walked softly.

The witches now found that he was lost to their community, and, enraged beyond measure at being deprived of such a prize, which they had judged fairly their own, and of which their master was so desirous, they now laid a plan to destroy him.

Colin went down to the Castle one night to see Barbara Stewart, who talked to him much of religion and of the Bible; but of these things Colin knew very little. He engaged, however, to go with her to the house of prayer—not the Popish chapel, where he had once been a most irreverent auditor, but to the Reformed church, which then began to divide the parish, and the pastor of which was a devout man.

On taking leave of Barbara, and promising to attend her on the following Sabbath, a burst of eldrich laughter arose close by, and a voice, with a hoarse and giggling sound, exclaimed, "No sae fast, canny lad—no sae fast. There will maybe be a whipping o' cripples afore that play be played."

Barbara consigned them both to the care of the Almighty with great fervency, wondering how they could have been watched and overheard in such a place. Colin trembled from head to foot, for he knew the laugh too well to be that of Maude Stott, the leading witch of the Traquair gang, now that his aunt was removed. He had no sooner crossed the Quair, than, at the junction of a little streamlet, called to this day the Satyr Sike, he was set upon by a countless number of cats, which surrounded him, making the most infernal noises, and putting themselves into the most threatening attitudes. For a good while they did not touch him, but leaped around him, often as high as his throat, screaming most furiously; but at length his faith failed him, and he cried out in utter despair. At that moment, they all closed upon him, some round his neck, some round his legs, and some endeavouring to tear out his heart and bowels. At length one or two that came in contact with the medal in his bosom fled away, howling most fearfully, and did not return. Still he was in great jeopardy of being instantly torn to pieces; on which he flung himself flat on his face in the midst of his devouring enemies, and invoked a sacred name. That moment he felt partial relief, as if some one were driving them off one by one, and on raising his head, he beheld his lovely lame visitant of the mountains, driving these infernals off with a white wand, and mocking their threatening looks and vain attempts to return. "Off with you, poor infatuated wretches!" cried

she: "Minions of perdition, off to your abodes of misery and despair! Where now is your boasted whipping of cripples? See if one poor cripple cannot whip you all!"

By this time the monsters had all taken their flight, save one, that had fastened its talons in Colin's left side, and was making a last and desperate effort to reach his vitals; but he, being now freed from the rest, lent it a blow with such good-will, as made it speedily desist, and fly tumbling and mewing down the brae. He shrewdly guessed who this inveterate assailant was. Nor was he mistaken; for next day Maude Stott was lying powerless on account of a broken limb, and several of her cronies were in great torment, having been struck by the white rod of the Lady of the Moor.

But the great Master Fiend, seeing now that his emissaries were all baffled and outdone, was enraged beyond bounds, and set himself with all his wit, and with all his power, to be revenged on poor Colin. As to his power, no one disputed it; but his wit and ingenuity always appear to me to be very equivocal. He tried to assault Colin's humble dwelling that same night, in sundry terrific shapes; but many of the villagers perceived a slender form, clothed in white, that kept watch at his door until the morning twilight. The next day, he haunted him on the hill in the form of a great shaggy bloodhound, infected with madness; but finding his utter inability to touch him, he uttered a howl that made all the hills quake, and, like a flash of lightning, darted into Glendean Banks.

He next set himself to procure Colin's punishment by other means, namely, by the hands of Christian men, the only way now left for him. He accordingly engaged his emissaries to inform against him to holy Mother Church, as a warlock and necromancer. The Crown and the Church had at that time joined in appointing judges of these difficult and interesting questions. The quorum amounted to seven, consisting of the King's Advocate, and an equal number of priests and laymen, all of them in opposition to the principles of the Reformation, which was at that time obnoxious at court, Colin was seized, arraigned, and lodged in prison at Peebles; and never was there such clamour and discontent in Strathquair. The young women wept, and tore their hair, for the goodliest lad in the valley; their mothers scolded; and the old men scratched their grey polls, bit their lips, and remained quiescent, but were at length compelled to join the combination.

Colin's trial came on; and his accusers being summoned as witnesses against him, it may well be supposed how little chance he had of escaping, especially as the noted David Beatoun sat that day as judge, a severe and bigoted Papist. There were many things proven against poor Colin,—as much as would have been at one time sufficient to bring all the youth of Traquair to the stake.

For instance, three sportsmen swore, that they had started a large he-fox in the Feathen Wood, and, after pursuing him all the way to Glenrath-hope, with horses and hounds, on coming up, they found Colin Hyslop lying panting in the midst of the hounds, and caressing and endeavouring to pacify them. It was farther deponed, that he had been discovered in the shape of a huge gander sitting on eggs; and in the shape of a three-legged stool, which, on being tossed about and overturned, as three-legged stools are apt to be, had groaned, and given other symptoms of animation, by which its identity with Colin Hyslop was discovered.

But when they came to the story of a he-goat, which had proceeded to attend the service in the chapel of St John the Evangelist, and which said he-goat proved to be the unhappy delinquent, Beatoun growled with rage and indignation, and said, that such a dog deserved to suffer death by a thousand tortures, and to be excluded from the power of repentance by the instant infliction of them. The most of the judges were not, however, satisfied of the authenticity of this monstrous story, and insisted on examining a great number of witnesses, both young and old, many of whom happened to be quite unconnected with the horrid community of the Traquair witches. Among the rest, a girl, named Tibby Frater, was examined about that, as well as the three-legged stool; and her examination may here be copied verbatim. The querist, who was a cunning man, began as follows:—

"Were you in St John's Chapel, Isabel, on the Sunday after Easter?"

"Yes."

"Did you there see a man changed into a he-goat?"

"I saw a gait in the chapel that day."

"Did he, as has been declared, seem intent on disturbing divine worship?"

"He was playing some pranks. But what else could you expect of a gait?"

"Please to describe what you saw."

"Oo, he was just rampaging about, and dinging folk ower. The clerk and the sacristan ran to attack him, but he soon laid them baith prostrate. Mess John prayed against him, in Latin, they said, and tried to lay him, as if he had been a deil; but he never heedit that, and just rampit on."

"Did he ever come near or molest you in the chapel?"

"Ay, he did that."

"What did he do to you?—describe it all."

"Oo, he didna do that muckle ill, after a'; but if it was the poor young man that was changed, I'll warrant he had nae hand in it, for dearly he paid the kain. Ere long there were fifty staves raised against him, and he was beaten till there was hardly life left in him."

"And what were the people's reasons for believing that this he-goat and the prisoner were the same?"

"He was found a' wounded and bruised the next day. But, in truth, I believe he never denied these changes wrought on him, to his intimate friends; but we a' ken weel wha it was that effected them. Od help you! ye little ken how we are plaguit and harassed down yonder-abouts, and what scathe the country suffers, by the emissaries o' Satan! If there be any amang you that ken the true marks o' the beast, you will discern plenty o' them here-about, amang some that hae been witnessing against this poor abused and unfortunate young man."

The members of the community of Satan were now greatly astounded. Their eyes gleamed with the desire of vengeance, and they gnashed their teeth on the maiden. But the buzz ran through the assembly against them, and execrations were poured from every corner of the crowded court. Cries of—"Plenty o' proof o' what Tibby has said!"—"Let the saddle be laid on the right horse!"—"Down wi' the plagues o' the land!" and many such exclamations, were sent forth by the good people of Traquair. They durst not meddle with the witches at home, because, when any thing was done to disoblige them, the sheep and cattle were seized with new and frightful distempers, the corn and barley were shaken, and the honest people themselves quaked under agues, sweatings, and great horrors of mind. But now that they had them all collected in a court of justice, and were all assembled themselves, and holy men present, they hoped to bring the delinquents to due punishment at last. Beatoun, however, seemed absolutely bent on the destruction of Colin, alleging, that the depravity of his heart was manifest in every one of his actions during the periods of his metamorphoses, even although he himself had no share in effecting these metamorphoses; he therefore sought a verdict against the prisoner, as did also the King's Advocate. Sir James Stuart of Traquair, however, rose up, and spoke with great eloquence and energy in favour of his vassal, and insisted on having his accusers tried face to face with him, when, he had no doubt, it would be seen on which side the sorcery had been exercised. "For I appeal to your honourable judgments," continued he, "if any man would transform himself into a fox, for the sake of being hunted to death, and torn into pieces by hounds? Neither, I think, would any person choose to translate himself into a gander, for the purpose of bringing out a few worthless goslings! But, above all, I am morally certain, that no living man would turn himself into a three-legged stool, for no other purpose but to be kicked into the mire, as the evidence shows this stool to have been. And as for a very handsome youth turning himself into a he-goat, in order to exhibit his prowess in outbraving and beating the men of the whole congregation, that would be a supposition equally absurd. But as we have a thousand instances of honest men being affected and injured by spells and enchantments, I give it as my firm opinion, that this young man has been abused grievously in this manner, and that these his accusers, afraid of exposure through his agency, are trying in this way to put him down."

Sir James's speech was received with murmurs of applause through the whole crowded court: but the principal judge continued obstinate, and made a speech in reply. Being a man of a most austere temperament, and as bloody-minded as obstinate, he made no objections to the seizing of the youth's accusers, and called to the officers to guard the door; on which the old sacristan of Traquair remarked aloud, "By my faith in the holy Apostle John, my lord governor, you must be quick in your seizures; for an ye gie but the witches o' Traquair ten minutes, ye will hae naething o' them but moorfowls and pairicks blattering about the rigging o' the kirk; and a' the offishers ye hae will neither catch nor keep them."

They were, however, seized and incarcerated. The trials lasted for three days, at which the most amazing crowds attended; for the evidence was of the most extraordinary nature ever elicited, displaying such a system of diablerie,

malevolence, and unheard-of wickedness, as never came to light in a Christian land. Seven women and two men were found guilty, and condemned to be burnt at the stake; and several more would have shared the same fate, had the private marks, which were then thoroughly and perfectly known, coincided with the evidence produced. This not having been the case, they were banished out of the Scottish dominions, any man being at liberty to shoot them, if found there under any shape whatever, after sixty-one hours from that date.

There being wise men who attended the courts in those days, called Searchers or Triers, they were ordered to take Colin into the vestry, (the trials having taken place in a church,) and examine him strictly for the diabolical marks. They could find none; but in the course of their investigation they found the vial in his bosom, as well as the medal that wore the hue of blood, and which was locked to his neck, so that the hands of man could not remove it. They returned to the judge, bearing the vial in triumph, and saying they had found no private mark, as proof of the master he served, but that here was an unguent, which they had no doubt was proof sufficient, and would, if they judged aright, when accompanied by proper incantations, transform a human being into any beast or monster intended. It was handed to the judge, who shook his head, and acquiesced with the searchers. It was then handed around, and Mr Wiseheart, or Wishart, a learned man, deciphered these words on it, in a sacred language,—“The Vial of Repentance.”

The judges looked at one another when they heard these ominous words so unlooked for; and Wishart remarked, with a solemn assurance, that neither the term, nor the cup of bitterness, was likely to be in use among the slaves of Satan, and the bounden drudges of the land of perdition.

The searchers now begged the Court to suspend their judgment for a space, as the prisoner wore a charm of a bloody hue, which was locked to his body with steel, so that no hands could loose it, and which they judged of far more ominous import than all the other proofs put together. Colin was then brought into Court once more, and the medal examined carefully; and lo! on the one side were engraved, in the same character, two words, the meanings of which were decided to be, “Forgiveness” above, and “Acceptance” below. On the other side was a representation of the Crucifixion, and these words in another language, *Cruci, dum spiro, fido*; which words struck the judges with great amazement. They forthwith ordered the bonds to be taken off the prisoner, and commanded him to speak for himself, and tell, without fear and dread, how he came by these precious and holy bequests.

Colin, who was noted for sincerity and simplicity, began and related the circumstances of his life, his temptations, his follies, and his disregard of all the duties of religion, which had subjected him in no common degree to the charms and enchantments of his hellish neighbours, whose principal efforts and energies seemed to be aimed at his destruction. But when he came to the vision of the fair virgins on the hill, and of their gracious bequests, that had preserved him thenceforward, both from the devil in person, and from the vengeance of all his emissaries combined, so well did this suit the strenuous efforts then making to obtain popularity for a falling system of faith, that the judges instantly claimed the miracle to their own side, and were clamorous with approbation of his modesty, and cravings of forgiveness for the insults and contumely which they had heaped upon this favourite of Heaven. Barbara Stewart was at this time sitting on the bench close behind Colin, weeping for joy at this favourable turn of affairs, having, for several days previous to that, given up all hopes of his life, when Mr David Beatoun, pointing to the image of the Holy Virgin, asked if the fair dame who bestowed these invaluable and heavenly relics bore any resemblance to that divine figure. Colin, with his accustomed blunt honesty, was just about to answer in the negative, when Barbara exclaimed in a whisper behind him, “Ah! how like!”

“How do you ken, dearest Barbara?” said he, softly, over his shoulder.

“Because I saw her watching your door once when surrounded by fiends—Ah! how like!”

“Ah, how like!” exclaimed Colin, by way of response to one whose opinion was to him as a thing sacred, and not to be disputed. How much hung on that moment! A denial might perhaps have still subjected him to obloquy, bonds, and death, but an anxious maiden's ready expedient saved him; and now it was with difficulty that Mr Wishart could prevent the Catholic part of the throng from falling down and worshipping him, whom they had so lately reviled and accused of the blackest crimes.

Times were now altered with Colin Hyslop. David Beatoun took him to Edinburgh in his chariot, and presented him to the Queen Regent, who put a ring on his right hand, a chain of gold about his neck, and loaded him with her bounty. All the Catholic nobles of the court presented him with valuable gifts, and then he was caused to make the tour of all the rich abbeys of Fife and the Border; so that, without ever having one more question asked him about his tenets, he returned

home the richest man of all Traquair, even richer, as men supposed, than Sir James Stuart himself. He married Barbara Stewart, and purchased the Plora from the female heirs of Alexander Murray, where he built a mansion, planted a vineyard, and lived in retirement and happiness till the day of his death.

I have thus recorded the leading events of this tale, although many of the incidents, as handed down by tradition, are of so heinous a nature as not to bear recital. It has always appeared to me to have been moulded on the bones of some ancient religious allegory, and by being thus transformed into a nursery tale, rendered unintelligible. It would be in vain now to endeavour to restore its original structure, in the same way as Mr Blore can delineate an ancient abbey from the smallest remnant; but I should like exceedingly to understand properly what was represented by the two lovely and mysterious sisters, one of whom was lame. It is most probable that they were supposed apparitions of renowned female saints; or perhaps Faith and Charity. This, however, is manifest, that it is a Reformer's tale, founded on a Catholic allegory.

Of the witches of Traquair there are many other traditions extant, as well as many authentic records; and so far the tale accords with the history of the times. That they were tried and suffered there is no doubt; and the Devil lost all his popularity in that district ever after, being despised by his friends for his shallow and rash politics, and hooted and held up to ridicule by his enemies. I still maintain, that there has been no great personage since the world was framed, so apt to commit a manifest blunder, and to overshoot his mark, as he is.

CHAPTER V.

SHEEP.

The sheep has scarcely any marked character, save that of natural affection, of which it possesses a very great share. It is otherwise a stupid, indifferent animal, having few wants, and fewer expedients. The old black-faced, or Forest breed, have far more powerful capabilities than any of the finer breeds that have been introduced into Scotland; and therefore the few anecdotes that I have to relate, shall be confined to them.

So strong is the attachment of sheep to the place where they have been bred, that I have heard of their returning from Yorkshire to the Highlands. I was always somewhat inclined to suspect that they might have been lost by the way. But it is certain, however, that when once one, or a few sheep, get away from the rest of their acquaintances, they return homeward with great eagerness and perseverance. I have lived beside a drove-road the better part of my life, and many stragglers have I seen bending their steps northward in the spring of the year. A shepherd rarely sees these journeyers twice; if he sees them, and stops them in the morning, they are gone long before night; and if he sees them at night, they will be gone many miles before morning. This strong attachment to the place of their nativity, is much more predominant in our old aboriginal breed, than in any of the other kinds with which I am acquainted.

The most singular instance that I know of, to be quite well authenticated, is that of a black ewe, that returned with her lamb from a farm in the head of Glen-Lyon, to the farm of Harehope, in Tweeddale, and accomplished the journey in nine days. She was soon missed by her owner, and a shepherd was dispatched in pursuit of her, who followed her all the way to Crieff, where he turned, and gave her up. He got intelligence of her all the way, and every one told him that she absolutely persisted in travelling on—She would not be turned, regarding neither sheep nor shepherd by the way. Her lamb was often far behind, and she had constantly to urge it on, by impatient bleating. She unluckily came to Stirling on the morning of a great annual fair, about the end of May, and judging it imprudent to venture through the crowd with her lamb, she halted on the north side of the town the whole day, where she was seen by hundreds, lying close by the roadside. But next morning, when all became quiet, a little after the break of day, she was observed stealing quietly through the town, in apparent terror of the dogs that were prowling about the street. The last time she was seen on the road, was at a toll-bar near St Ninian's; the man stopped her, thinking she was a strayed animal, and that some one would claim her. She tried several times to break through by force when he opened the gate, but he always prevented her, and at length she turned patiently back. She had found some means of eluding him, however, for home she came on a Sabbath morning, the 4th of June; and she left the farm of Lochs, in Glen-Lyon, either on the Thursday afternoon, or Friday morning, a week and two days before. The farmer of Harehope paid the Highland farmer the price of her, and she remained on her native farm till she died of old age, in her seventeenth year.

There is another peculiarity in the nature of sheep, of which I have witnessed innumerable examples. But as they are all alike, and show how much the sheep is a creature of habit, I shall only relate one:

A shepherd in Blackhouse bought a few sheep from another in Crawmel, about ten miles distant. In the spring following, one of the ewes went back to her native place, and yeaned on a wild hill, called Crawmel Craig. One day, about the beginning of July following, the shepherd went and brought home his ewe and lamb—took the fleece from the ewe, and kept the lamb for one of his stock. The lamb lived and throve, became a hog and a gimmer, and never offered to leave home; but when three years of age, and about to have her first lamb, she vanished; and the morning after, the Crawmel shepherd, in going his rounds, found her with a new-yeaned lamb on the very gair of the Crawmel Craig, where she was lambed herself. She remained there till the first week of July, the time when she was brought a lamb herself, and then she came home with hers of her own accord; and this custom she continued annually with the greatest punctuality as long as she lived. At length her lambs, when they came of age, began the same practice, and the shepherd was obliged to dispose of the whole breed.

With regard to the natural affection of this animal, stupid and actionless as it is, the instances that might be mentioned are without number. When one loses its sight in a flock of short sheep, it is rarely abandoned to itself in that hapless and helpless state. Some one always attaches itself to it, and by bleating calls it back from the precipice, the lake, the pool, and all dangers whatever. There is a disease among sheep, called by shepherds the Breakshugh, a deadly sort of dysentery, which is as infectious as fire, in a flock. Whenever a sheep feels itself seized by this, it instantly withdraws from all the rest, shunning their society with the greatest care; it even hides itself, and is often very hard to be found.

Though this propensity can hardly be attributed to natural instinct, it is, at all events, a provision of nature of the greatest kindness and beneficence.

Another manifest provision of nature with regard to these animals, is, that the more inhospitable the land is on which they feed, the greater their kindness and attention to their young. I once herded two years on a wild and bare farm called Willenslee, on the border of Mid-Lothian, and of all the sheep I ever saw, these were the kindest and most affectionate to their young. I was often deeply affected at scenes which I witnessed. We had one very hard winter, so that our sheep grew lean in the spring, and the thwarter-ill (a sort of paralytic affection) came among them, and carried off a number. Often have I seen these poor victims when fallen down to rise no more, even when unable to lift their heads from the ground, holding up the leg, to invite the starving lamb to the miserable pittance that the udder still could supply. I had never seen aught more painfully affecting.

It is well known that it is a custom with shepherds, when a lamb dies, if the mother have a sufficiency of milk, to bring her from the hill, and put another lamb to her. This is done by putting the skin of the dead lamb upon the living one; the ewe immediately acknowledges the relationship, and after the skin has warmed on it, so as to give it something of the smell of her own progeny, and it has sucked her two or three times, she accepts and nourishes it as her own ever after. Whether it is from joy at this apparent reanimation of her young one, or because a little doubt remains on her mind which she would fain dispel, I cannot decide; but, for a number of days, she shows far more fondness, by bleating, and caressing, over this one, than she did formerly over the one that was really her own.

But this is not what I wanted to explain; it was, that such sheep as thus lose their lambs, must be driven to a house with dogs, so that the lamb may be put to them; for they will only take it in a dark confined place. But at Willenslee, I never needed to drive home a sheep by force, with dogs, or in any other way than the following: I found every ewe, of course, standing hanging her head over her dead lamb, and having a piece of twine with me for the purpose, I tied that to the lamb's neck, or foot, and trailing it along, the ewe followed me into any house or fold that I chose to lead her. Any of them would have followed me in that way for miles, with her nose close on the lamb, which she never quitted for a moment, except to chase my dog, which she would not suffer to walk near me. I often, out of curiosity, led them in to the side of the kitchen fire by this means, into the midst of servants and dogs; but the more that dangers multiplied around the ewe, she clung the closer to her dead offspring, and thought of nothing whatever but protecting it.

One of the two years while I remained on this farm, a severe blast of snow came on by night about the latter end of April, which destroyed several scores of our lambs; and as we had not enow of twins and odd lambs for the mothers that had lost theirs, of course we selected the best ewes, and put lambs to them. As we were making the distribution, I requested of my master to spare me a lamb for a hawked ewe which he knew, and which was standing over a dead lamb in the head of the hope, about four miles from the house. He would not do it, but bid me let her stand over her lamb for a day or two, and perhaps a twin would be forthcoming. I did so, and faithfully she did stand to her charge; so faithfully, that I think the like never was equalled by any of the woolly race. I visited her every morning and evening, and for the first eight days never found her above two or three yards from the lamb; and always, as I went my rounds, she eyed me long ere I came near her, and kept tramping with her foot, and whistling through her nose, to frighten away the dog; he got a regular chase twice a-day as I passed by: but, however excited and fierce a ewe may be, she never offers any resistance to mankind, being perfectly and meekly passive to them. The weather grew fine and warm, and the dead lamb soon decayed, which the body of a dead lamb does particularly soon; but still this affectionate and desolate creature kept hanging over the poor remains with an attachment that seemed to be nourished by hopelessness. It often drew the tears from my eyes to see her hanging with such fondness over a few bones, mixed with a small portion of wool. For the first fortnight she never quitted the spot, and for another week she visited it every morning and evening, uttering a few kindly and heart-piercing bleats each time; till at length every remnant of her offspring vanished, mixing with the soil, or wafted away by the winds.

CHAPTER VI.

PRAYERS.

There is, I believe, no class of men professing the Protestant faith, so truly devout as the shepherds of Scotland. They get all the learning that the parish schools afford; are thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures; deeply read in theological works, and really, I am sorry to say it, generally much better informed on these topics than their masters. Every shepherd is a man of respectability—he must be so, else he must cease to be a shepherd. His master's flock is entirely committed to his care, and if he does not manage it with constant attention, caution, and decision, he cannot be employed. A part of the stock is his own, however, so that his interest in it is the same with that of his master; and being thus the most independent of men, if he cherishes a good behaviour, and the most insignificant if he loses the esteem of his employers, he has every motive for maintaining an unimpeachable character.

It is almost impossible, also, that he can be other than a religious character, being so much conversant with the Almighty in his works, in all the goings-on of nature, and in his control of the otherwise resistless elements. He feels himself a dependent being, morning and evening, on the great Ruler of the universe; he holds converse with him in the cloud and the storm—on the misty mountain and the darksome waste—in the whirling drift and the overwhelming thaw—and even in voices and sounds that are only heard by the howling cliff or solitary dell. How can such a man fail to be impressed with the presence of an eternal God, of an omniscient eye, and an almighty arm?

The position generally holds good; for, as I have said, the shepherds are a religious and devout set of men, and among them the antiquated but delightful exercise of family worship is never neglected. It is always gone about with decency and decorum; but formality being a thing despised, there is no composition that I ever heard so truly original as these prayers occasionally are; sometimes for rude eloquence and pathos, at other times for a nondescript sort of pomp, and not unfrequently for a plain and somewhat unbecoming familiarity.

One of the most notable men for this sort of family eloquence was Adam Scott, in Upper Dalgliesh. I had an uncle who herded with him, from whom I heard many quotations from Scott's prayers:—a few of them are as follows.

"We particularly thank thee for thy great goodness to Meg, and that ever it came into your head to take any thought of sic an useless baw-waw as her." (This was a little girl that had been somewhat miraculously saved from drowning.)

"For thy mercy's sake—for the sake of thy poor sinfu' servants that are now addressing thee in their ain shilly-shally way, and for the sake o' mair than we dare weel name to thee, hae mercy on Rob. Ye ken yoursell he is a wild mischievous callant, and thinks nae mair o' committing sin than a dog does o' licking a dish; but put thy hook in his nose, and thy bridle in his gab, and gar him come back to thee wi' a jerk that he'll no forget the langest day he has to leeve."

"Dinna forget poor Jamie, wha's far away frae amang us the night. Keep thy arm o' power about him, and O, I wish ye wad endow him wi' a little spunk and smeddum to act for himsell. For if ye dinna, he'll be but a bauchle in this world, and a backsitter in the neist."

"We desire to be submissive to thy will and pleasure at a' times; but our desires are like new-bridled colts, or dogs that are first laid to the brae—they run wild frae under our control. Thou hast added one to our family—so has been thy will; but it would never hae been mine. If it's of thee, do thou bless and prosper the connexion; but if the fool hath done it out of carnal desire, against all reason and credit, may the cauld rainy cloud of adversity settle on his habitation; till he shiver in the flame that his folly hath kindled." (I think this was said to be in allusion to the marriage of one of his sons.)

"We're a' like hawks, we're a' like snails, we're a' like slogie riddles;—like hawks to do evil, like snails to do good, and like slogie riddles, that let through a' the good, and keep the bad."

"Bring down the tyrant and his lang neb, for he has done muckle ill the year, and gie him a cup o' thy wrath, and gin he winna tak that, gie him kelty." (*Kelty* signifies double, or two cups. This was an occasional petition for one season only, and my uncle never could comprehend what it meant.)

The general character of Scott was one of decision and activity; constant in the duties of religion, but not over strict with regard to some of its moral precepts.

I have heard the following petitions sundry times in the family prayers of an old relation of my own, long since gone to his rest.

"And mairower and aboon, do thou bless us a' wi' thy best warldly blessings—wi' bread for the belly and theeking for the back, a lang stride and a clear ee-sight. Keep us from a' proud prassing and upsetting—from foul flaiaps, and stray steps, and from all unnecessary trouble."

But, in generalities, these prayers are never half so original as when they come to particular incidents that affect only the petitioners; for some things happen daily, which they deem it their bounden duty to remember before their Maker, either by way of petition, confession, or thanksgiving. The following was told to me as a part of the same worthy old man's prayer occasionally, for some weeks before he left a master, in whose father's service and his own the decayed shepherd had spent the whole of his life.

"Bless my master and his family with thy best blessings in Christ Jesus. Prosper all his worldly concerns, especially that valuable part which is committed to my care. I have worn out my life in the service of him and his fathers, and thou knowest that I have never bowed a knee before thee without remembering them. Thou knowest, also, that I have never studied night's rest, nor day's comfort, when put in competition with their interest. The foulest days and the stormiest nights were to me as the brightest of summer; and if he has not done weel in casting out his auld servant, do thou forgive him. I forgive him with all my heart, and will never cease to pray for him; but when the hard storms o' winter come, may he miss the braid bonnet and the grey head, and say to himsell, 'I wish to God that my auld herd had been here yet!' I ken o' neither house nor habitation this night, but for the sake o' them amang us that canna do for themsells, I ken thou wilt provide ane; for though thou hast tried me with hard and sair adversities, I have had more than my share of thy mercies, and thou kens better than I can tell thee that thou hast never bestowed them on an unthankful heart."

This is the sentence, exactly as it was related to me, but I am sure it is not correct; for, though very like his manner, I never heard him come so near the English language in one sentence in my life. I once heard him say, in allusion to a chapter he had been reading about David and Goliath, and just at the close of his prayer: "And when our besetting sins come bragging and blowsterring upon us, like Gully o' Gath, O enable us to fling off the airmen and hairnishing o' the law, whilk we haena proved, and whup up the simple sling o' the gospel, and nail the smooth stanes o' redeeming grace into their foreheads."

Of all the compositions, for simple pathos, that I ever saw or heard, his prayer, on the evening of that day on which he buried his only son, excelled; but at this distance of time, it is impossible for me to do it justice; and I dare not take it on me to garble it. He began the subject of his sorrows thus:—

"Thou hast seen meet, in thy wise providence, to remove the staff out of my right hand, at the very time when, to us poor sand-blind mortals, it appeared that I stood maist in need o't. But O it was a sicker ane, and a sure ane, and a dear ane to my heart! and how I'll climb the steep hill o' auld age and sorrow without it, thou mayst ken, but I dinna."

His singing of the psalms surpassed all exhibitions that ever were witnessed of a sacred nature. He had not the least air of sacred music; there was no attempt at it; it was a sort of recitative of the most grotesque kind; and yet he delighted in it, and sung far more verses every night than is customary. The first time I heard him, I was very young; but I could not stand it, and leaned myself back into a bed, and laughed till my strength could serve me no longer. He had likewise an out-of-the-way custom, in reading a portion of Scripture every night, of always making remarks as he went on. And such remarks! One evening I heard him reading a chapter—I have forgot where it was—but he came to words like these: "And other nations, whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over"—John stopped short, and, considering for a little, says: "Asnapper! whaten a king was he that? I dinna mind o' ever hearing tell o' him afore."—"I dinna ken," said one of the girls; "but he has a queer name."—"It is something like a goolly knife," said a younger one. "Whisht, dame," said John, and then went on with the chapter. I believe it was about the fourth or fifth chapter of Ezra. He seldom, for a single night, missed a few observations of the same sort.

Another night, not long after the time above noticed, he was reading of the feats of one Sanballat, who set himself against the building of the second temple; on closing the Bible John uttered a long hemh! and then I knew there was something forthcoming. "He has been another nor a gude ane that," added he; "I hae nae brow o' their Sandy-ballet."

Upon another occasion he stopped in the middle of a chapter and uttered his "hemh!" of disapproval, and then added, "If it had been the Lord's will, I think they might hae left out that verse."—"It hasna been his will, though," said one of the

girls.—"It seems sae," said John. I have entirely forgot what he was reading about, and am often vexed at having forgot the verse that John wanted expunged from the Bible. It was in some of the minor prophets.

There was another time he came to his brother-in-law's house, where I was then living, and John being the oldest man, the Bible was laid down before him to make family worship. He made no objections, but began, as was always his custom, by asking a blessing on their devotions; and when he had done, it being customary for those who make family worship to sing straight through the Psalms from beginning to end, John says, "We'll sing in your ordinary. Where is it?"—"We do not always sing in one place," said the goodman of the house. "Na, I daresay no, or else ye'll make that place threadbare," said John, in a short crabbed style, manifestly suspecting that his friend was not regular in his family devotions. This piece of sharp wit after the worship was begun had to me an effect highly ludicrous.

When he came to give out the chapter, he remarked, that there would be no ordinary there either, he supposed. "We have been reading in Job for a lang time," said the goodman. "How lang?" said John slyly, as he turned over the leaves, thinking to catch his friend at fault. "O, I dinna ken that," said the other; "but there's a mark laid in that will tell you the bit."—"If you hae read *vera* lang in Job," says John, "you will hae made him threadbare too, for the mark is only at the ninth chapter." There was no answer, so he read on. In the course of the chapter he came to these words—"Who commandeth the sun, and it riseth not."—"I never heard of Him doing that," says John. "But Job, honest man, maybe means the darkness that was in the land o' Egypt. It wad be a fearsome thing an the sun warn't till rise." A little farther on he came to these words—"Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south."—"I hae often wondered at that verse," says John. "Job has been a grand philosopher! The Pleiades are the Se'en Sterns,—I ken them; and Orion, that's the King's Ellwand; but I'm never sae sure about Arcturus. I fancy he's ane o' the plennits, or maybe him that hauds the Gowden Plough."

On reading the last chapter of the book of Job, when he came to the enumeration of the patriarch's live stock, he remarked, "He has had an unco sight o' creatures. Fourteen thousand sheep! How mony was that?"—"He has had seven hundred scores," said one. "Ay," said John, "it was an unco swarm o' creatures. There wad be a dreadful confusion at his clippings and spainings. Six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. What, in the wide world, did he do wi' a' thae creatures? Wad it no hae been mair purpose-like if he had had them a' milk kye?"—"Wha wad he hae gotten to have milked them?" said one of the girls. "It's vera true," said John.

One time, during a long and severe lying storm of snow, in allusion to some chapter he had been reading, he prayed as follows: (This is from hearsay.) "Is the whiteness of desolation to lie still on the mountains of our land for ever? Is the earthly hope o' thy servants to perish frae the face of the earth? The flocks on a thousand hills are thine, and their lives or deaths wad be naething to thee—thou wad neither be the richer nor the poorer; but it is a great matter to us. Have pity, then, on the lives o' thy creatures, for beast and body are a' thy handywark, and send us the little wee cludd out o' the sea like a man's hand, to spread and darken, and pour and plash, till the green gladsome face o' nature aince mair appear."

During the smearing season one year, it was agreed that each shepherd, young and old, should ask a blessing and return thanks at meal-time, in his turn, beginning at the eldest, and going off at the youngest; that, as there was no respect of persons with God, so there should be none shown among neighbours. John being the eldest, the graces began with him, and went decently on till they came to the youngest, who obstinately refused. Of course it devolved again on John, who, taking off his broad bonnet, thus addressed his Maker with great fervency:—

"O our gracious Lord and Redeemer, thou hast said, in thy blessed word, that those who are ashamed of thee and thy service, of them thou wilt be ashamed when thou comest into thy kingdom. Now, all that we humbly beg of thee at this time is, that Geordie may not be reckoned amang that unhappy number. Open the poor chield's heart and his een to a sight o' his lost condition; and though he be that prood that he'll no ask a blessing o' thee, neither for himsell nor us, do thou grant us a' thy blessing ne'ertheless, and him amang the rest, for Christ's sake. Amen."

The young man felt the rebuke very severely, his face grew as red as flame, and it was several days before he could assume his usual hilarity. Had I lived with John a few years, I could have picked up his remarks on the greater part of the Scriptures, for to read and not make remarks was out of his power. The story of Ruth was a great favourite with him—he often read it to his family of a Sabbath evening, as "a good lesson on naturalty;" but he never failed making the remark, that "it was nae mair nor decency in her to creep in beside the douss man i' the night-time when he was sleeping."

CHAPTER VII.

ODD CHARACTERS.

Many single anecdotes of country life might be collected—enough, perhaps, to form a volume as amusing as others connected with higher names—but in this place I shall confine myself to a few, of which several relate to the same person, and are thus illustrative of individual character. The first that claim attention are those concerning a man very famous in his own sphere, an ancestor of my own,—the redoubted

Will o' Phaup.

Will o' Phaup, one of the genuine Laidlaws of Craik, was born at that place in 1691. He was shepherd in Phaup for fifty-five years. For feats of frolic, strength, and agility, he had no equal in his day. In the hall of the laird, at the farmer's ingle, and in the shepherd's cot, Will was alike a welcome guest; and in whatever company he was, he kept the whole in one roar of merriment. In Will's days, brandy was the common drink in this country; as for whisky, it was, like silver in the days of Solomon, nothing accounted of. Good black French brandy was the constant beverage; and a heavy neighbour Will was on it. Many a hard bouse he had about Moffat, and many a race he ran, generally for wagers of so many pints of brandy; and in all his life he never was beat. He once ran at Moffat for a wager of five guineas, which one of the chiefs of the Johnstons betted on his head. His opponent was a celebrated runner from Crawford-Muir, of the name of Blaikley, on whose head, or rather on whose feet, a Captain Douglas had wagered. Will knew nothing of the match till he went to Moffat, and was very averse to it. "No that he was ony way fear'd for the chap," he said; "but he had on a' his ilka-day claes, and as mony leddies and gentlemen war to be there to see the race, he didna like to appear afore them like an assie whalp."

However, he was urged, and obliged to go out and strip; and, as he told it, "a poor figure I made beside the chield wi' his grand ruffled sark. I was sae affrontit at thinking that Will o' Phaup should hae made sic a dirty shabby appearance afore sae mony grit folks and bonny leddies, that not a fit I could rin mair nor I had been a diker. The race was down on Annan-side, and jimply a mile, out and in; and, at the very first, the man wi' the ruffled sark flew off like a hare, and left poor Will o' Phaup to come waughling up ahint him like a singit cur, wi' his din sark and his cloutit breeks. I had neither heart nor power, till a very queer accident befell me; for, Scots grund! disna the tying o' my cloutit breeks brek loose, and in a moment they war at my heels, and there was I standing like a hapshekel'd staig! 'Off wi' them, Phaup! Off wi' them!' cries ane. Od, sir, I just sprang out o' them; and that instant I fand my spirits rise to the proper pitch. The chield was clean afore me, but I fand that if he war a yeagle I wad o'ertak him, for I scarcely kenn'd whether I was touching the grund or fleeing in the air, and as I came by Mr Welch, I heard him saying, 'Phaup has him yet!' for he saw Blaikley failing. I got by him, but I had not muckle to brag o', for he keepit the step on me till within a gun-shot o' the starting-post.

"Then there was sic a fraze about me by the winning party, and naething wad serve them but that I should dine wi' them in the public room. 'Na, fiend be there then, Mr Johnston,' says I, 'for though your leddies only leuch at my accident, if I war to dinner wi' them in this state, I kenna how they might tak it.'"

When Will was a young lad, only sixteen years of age, and the very first year he was in Phaup, his master betted the price of his whole drove of Phaup hogs on his head, at a race with an Englishman on Stagshawbank. James Anderson, Esq. of Ettrickhall, was then farmer of Phaup, and he had noted at the shedding, before his young shepherd left home, that whenever a sheep got by wrong, he never did more than run straight after it, lay hold of it by sheer speed, and bring it back in his arms. So the laird having formed high ideas of Will's swiftness, without letting him know of the matter, first got an English gentleman into a heat, by bragging the English runners with Scots ones, and then proffered betting the price of his 300 wedder hogs, that he had a poor starved barefooted boy who was helping to drive them,—whom he believed to be about the worst runner in Scotland,—who would yet beat the best Englishman that could be found in Stagshawbank-fair.

The Englishman's national pride was touched, as well it might, his countrymen being well known as the superior runners. The bet was taken, and Will won it with the greatest ease, for his master, without being made aware of the stake for which he ran. This he never knew till some months afterwards, that his master presented him with a guinea, a pair of new shoes, and a load of oatmeal, for winning him the price of the Phaup hogs. Will was exceedingly proud of the feat he had performed, as well as of the present, which, he remarked, was as much to him as the price of the hogs was to his master.

From that day forth he was never beat at a fair race.

He never went to Moffat, that the farmers did not get him into their company, and then never did he get home to Phaup sober. The mad feats which he then performed, were, for an age, the standing jokes of the country, and many of his sayings settled into regular proverbs or by-words. His great oath was "Scots grund!" And "Scots grund, quo' Will o' Phaup," is a standing exclamation to this day—"One plash more, quo' Will o' Phaup," is another,—and there are many similar ones. The last mentioned had its origin in one of those Moffat bouses, from which the farmer of Selcouth and Will were returning by night greatly inebriated, the former riding, and Will running by his side. Moffat water being somewhat flooded, the farmer proposed taking Laidlaw on the horse behind him. Will sprang on, but, as he averred, never got seated right, till the impatient animal plunged into the water, and the two friends came off, and floated down the river, hanging by one another. The farmer got to his feet first, but in pulling out Will, lost his equilibrium a second time, and plunging headlong into the stream, down he went. Will was then in the utmost perplexity, for, with the drink and ducking together, he was quite benumbed, and the night was as dark as pitch; he ran down the side of the stream to succour his friend, and losing all sight of him, he knew not what to do; but hearing a great plunge, he made towards the place, calling out, "One plash more, sir, and I have you—One plash more, quo' Will o' Phaup!" but all was silent! "Scots grund! quo' Will o' Phaup—a man drown'd, and me here!" Will ran to a stream, and took his station in the middle of the water, in hopes of feeling his drowning friend come against his legs;—but the farmer got safely out by himself.

There was another time at Moffat, that he was taken in, and had to pay a dinner and drink for a whole large party of gentlemen. I have forgot how it happened, but think it was by a wager. He had not only to part with all his money, but had to pawn his whole stock of sheep. He then came home with a heavy heart, told his wife what he had done, and that he was a ruined man. She said, that since he had saved the cow, they would do well enough.

The money was repaid afterwards, so that Will did not actually lose his stock; but after that he went seldomer to Moffat. He fell upon a much easier plan of getting sport; for, at that period, there were constantly bands of smugglers passing from the Solway, through the wild region where he lived, towards the Lothians. From these Will purchased occasionally a stock of brandy, and then the gentlemen and farmers came all and drank with him, paying him at the enormous rate of a shilling per bottle, all lesser measures being despised, and out of repute, at Phaup. It became a place of constant rendezvous, but a place where they drank too deep to be a safe place for gentlemen to meet. There were two rival houses of Andersons at that time that never ceased quarrelling, and they were wont always to come to Phaup with their swords by their sides. Being all exceedingly stout men, and equally good swordsmen, it may easily be supposed they were dangerous neighbours to meet in such a wild remote place. Accordingly, there were many quarrels and bloody bouts there as long as the Andersons possessed Phaup; after which, the brandy system was laid aside. Will twice saved his master's life in these affrays;—once, when he had drawn on three of the Amoses, tenants of Potburn, and when they had mastered his sword, broken it, and were dragging him to the river by the neckcloth. Will knocked down one, cut his master's neckcloth, and defended him stoutly till he gathered his breath; and then the two jointly did thrash the Amoses to their heart's satisfaction! And another time, from the sword of Michael of Tushielaw; but he could not help the two fighting a duel afterwards, which was the cause of much mischief, and many heart-burnings, among these haughty relatives.

Will and his master once fought a battle themselves two, up in a wild glen called Phaup Coom. They differed about a young horse, which the Laird had sent there to graze, and which he thought had not been well treated; and so bitter did the recriminations grow between them, that the Laird threatened to send Will to hell. Will defied him; on which he attacked him furiously with his cane, while the shepherd defended himself as resolutely with his staff. The combat was exceedingly sharp and severe; but the gentleman was too scientific for the shepherd, and hit him many blows about the head and shoulders, while Will could not hit him once, "all that he could thrash on." The latter was determined, however, not to yield, and fought on, although, as he termed it, "the blood began to blind his een." He tried several times to close with his master, but found him so complete in both his defences and offences, that he never could accomplish it, but always suffered for his temerity. At length he "jouked down his head, took a lounder across the shoulders, and, in the meantime, hit his master across the shins." This ungentlemanly blow quite paralysed the Laird, and the cane dropped out of his hand, on which Will closed with him, mastered him with ease, laying him down, and holding him fast;—but all that he could do, he could not pacify him,—he still swore he would have his heart's blood. Will had then no recourse, but to spring up, and bound away to the hill. The Laird pursued for a time, but he might as well have tried to catch a roe-buck; so he went back to Phaup, took his horse in silence, and rode away home. Will expected a summons of removal next day, or next term at the farthest; but Mr Anderson took no notice of the affair, nor ever so much as mentioned it again.

Will had many pitched battles with the bands of smugglers, in defence of his master's grass, for they never missed unloading on the lands of Phaup, and turning their horses to the best grass they could find. According to his account, these fellows were exceedingly lawless, and accounted nothing of taking from the country people whatever they needed in emergencies. The gipsies, too, were then accustomed to traverse the country in bands of from twenty to forty, and were no better than freebooters. But to record every one of Will o' Phaup's heroic feats, would require a volume. I shall, therefore, only mention one trait more of his character, which was this—

He was the last man of this wild region, who heard, saw, and conversed with the Fairies; and that not once or twice, but at sundry times and seasons. The sheiling at which Will lived for the better part of his life, at Old Upper Phaup, was one of the most lonely and dismal situations that ever was the dwelling of human creatures. I have often wondered how such a man could live so long, and rear so numerous and respectable a family, in such a habitation. It is on the very outskirts of Ettrick Forest, quite out of the range of social intercourse, a fit retirement for lawless banditti, and a genial one for the last retreat of the spirits of the glen—before taking their final leave of the land of their love, in which the light of the gospel then grew too bright for their tiny moonlight forms. There has Will beheld them riding in long and beautiful array, by the light of the moon, and even in the summer twilight; and there has he seen them sitting in seven circles, in the bottom of a deep ravine, drinking nectar out of cups of silver and gold, no bigger than the dew-cup flower; and there did he behold their wild unearthly eyes, all of one bright sparkling blue, turned every one upon him at the same moment, and heard their mysterious whisperings, of which he knew no word, save now and then the repetition of his own name, which was always done in a strain of pity. Will was coming from the hill one dark misty evening in winter, and, for a good while, imagined he heard a great gabbling of children's voices, not far from him, which still grew more and more audible; it being before sunset, he had no spark of fear, but set about investigating whence the sounds and laughter proceeded. He, at length, discovered that they issued from a deep cleugh not far distant, and thinking it was a band of gipsies, or some marauders, he laid down his bonnet and plaid, and creeping softly over the heath, reached the brink of the precipice, peeped over, and to his utter astonishment, beheld the Fairies sitting in seven circles, on a green spot in the bottom of the dell, where no green spot ever was before. They were apparently eating and drinking; but all their motions were so quick and momentary, he could not well say what they were doing. Two or three at the queen's back appeared to be baking bread. The party consisted wholly of ladies, and their numbers quite countless—dressed in green pollonians, and grass-green bonnets on their heads. He perceived at once, by their looks, their giggling, and their peals of laughter, that he was discovered. Still fear took no hold of his heart, for it was daylight, and the blessed sun was in heaven, although obscured by clouds; till at length he heard them pronounce his own name twice; Will then began to think it might not be quite so safe to wait till they pronounced it a third time, and at that moment of hesitation it first came into his mind that it was All Hallow Eve! There was no farther occasion to warn Will to rise and run; for he well knew the Fairies were privileged, on that day and night, to do what seemed good in their own eyes. "His hair," he said, "stood all up like the birses on a sow's back, and every bit o' his body, outside and in, prinkled as it had been brunt wi' nettles." He ran home as fast as his feet could carry him, and greatly were his children astonished (for he was then a widower) to see their father come running like a madman, without either his bonnet or plaid. He assembled them to prayers, and shut the door, but did not tell them what he had seen for several years.

Another time he followed a whole troop of them up a wild glen called Entertrony, from one end to the other, without ever being able to come up with them, although they never appeared to be more than twenty paces in advance. Neither were they flying from him; for instead of being running at their speed, as he was doing, they seemed to be standing in a large circle. It happened to be the day after a Moffat fair, and he supposed them to be a party of his neighbours returning from it, who wished to lead him a long chase before they suffered themselves to be overtaken. He heard them speaking, singing, and laughing; and being a man so fond of sociality, he exerted himself to come up with them, but to no purpose. Several times did he hail them, and desire them to halt, and tell him the news of the fair; but whenever he shouted, in a moment all was silent, until in a short time he heard the same noise of laughing and conversation at some distance from him. Their talk, although Will could not hear the words of it distinctly, was evidently very animated, and he had no doubt they were recounting their feats at the fair. This always excited his curiosity afresh, and he made every exertion to overtake the party; and when he judged, from the sounds, that he was close upon them, he sent forth his stentorian hollo—"Stop, lads, and tell us the news o' the fair!" which produced the same effect of deep silence for a time. When this had been repeated several times, and after the usual pause, the silence was again broken by a peal of eldrich laughter, that seemed to spread along the skies over his head. Will began to suspect that that unearthly laugh was not altogether unknown to him. He stood still to consider, and that moment the laugh was repeated, and a voice out of the crowd called to him, in a shrill laughing tone, "Ha, ha, ha! Will o' Phaup, look to your ain hearth-stane the night." Will again threw off every encumbrance, and fled home to his lonely cot, the most likely spot in the district for the Fairies to congregate; but it

is wonderful what an idea of safety is conferred by the sight of a man's own hearth and family circle.

When Will had become a right old man, and was sitting on a little green hillock at the end of his house, one evening, resting himself, there came three little boys up to him, all exactly like one another, when the following short dialogue ensued between Will and them.

"Good e'en t'ye, Will Laidlaw."

"Good e'en t'ye, creatures. Where ir ye gaun this gate?"

"Can ye gie us up-putting for the night?"

"I think three siccan bits o' shreds o' hurchins winna be ill to put up.—Where came ye frae?"

"Frae a place that ye dinna ken. But we are come on a commission to you."

"Come away in then, and tak sic cheer as we hae."

Will rose and led the way into the house, and the little boys followed; and as he went, he said carelessly, without looking back, "What's your commission to me, bairns?" He thought they might be the sons of some gentleman, who was a guest of his master's.

"We are sent to demand a silver key that you have in your possession."

Will was astounded; and standing still to consider of some old transaction, he said, without lifting his eyes from the ground,—

"A silver key? In God's name, where came ye from?"

There was no answer, on which Will wheeled round, and round, and round; but the tiny beings were all gone, and Will never saw them more. At the name of God, they vanished in the twinkling of an eye. It is curious that I never should have heard the secret of the silver key, or indeed, whether there was such a thing or not.

But Will once saw a vision which was more unaccountable than this still. On his way from Moffat one time, about midnight, he perceived a light very near to the verge of a steep hill, which he knew perfectly well, on the lands of Selcouth. The light appeared exactly like one from a window, and as if a lamp moved frequently within. His path was by the bottom of the hill, and the light being almost close at the top, he had at first no thoughts of visiting it: but as it shone in sight for a full mile, his curiosity to see what it was continued still to increase as he approached nearer. At length, on coming to the bottom of the steep bank, it appeared so bright and near, that he determined to climb the hill and see what it was. There was no moon, but it was a starry night and not very dark, and Will clambered up the precipice, and went straight to the light, which he found to proceed from an opening into a cavern, of about the dimensions of an ordinary barn. The opening was a square one, and just big enough for a man to creep in. Will set in his head, and beheld a row of casks from one end to the other, and two men with long beards, buff belts about their waists, and torches in their hands, who seemed busy in writing something on each cask. They were not the small casks used by smugglers, but large ones, about one half bigger than common tar-barrels, and all of a size, save two very huge ones at the further end. The cavern was all neat and clean, but there was an appearance of mouldiness about the casks, as if they had stood there for ages. The men were both at the farther end when Will looked in, and busily engaged; but at length one of them came towards him, holding his torch above his head, and, as Will thought, having his eyes fixed on him. Will never got such a fright in his life;—many a fright he had got with unearthly creatures, but this was the worst of all. The figure that approached him from the cavern was of gigantic size, with grizzly features, and a beard hanging down to his belt. Will did not stop to consider what was best to be done, but, quite forgetting that he was on the face of a hill, almost perpendicular, turned round, and ran with all his might. It was not long till he missed his feet, fell, and hurling down with great celerity, soon reached the bottom of the steep, and getting on his feet, pursued his way home in the utmost haste, terror, and amazement; but the light from the cavern was extinguished on the instant—he saw it no more.

Will apprised all the people within his reach, the next morning, of the wonderful discovery he had made; but the story was so like a fantasy or a dream, that most of them were hard of belief; and some never did believe it, but ascribed all to the Moffat brandy. However, they sallied out in a body, armed with cudgels and two or three rusty rapiers, to reconnoitre; but the entrance into the cave they could not find, nor has it ever been discovered to this day. They observed

very plainly the rut in the grass which Will had made in his rapid descent from the cave, and there were also found evident marks of two horses having been fastened that night in a wild cleuch-head, at a short distance from the spot they were searching. But these were the only discoveries to which the investigation led. If the whole of this was an optical delusion, it was the most singular I ever heard or read of. For my part, I do not believe it was; I believe there was such a cavern existing at that day, and that vestiges of it may still be discovered. It was an unfeasible story altogether for a man to invent; and, moreover, though Will was a man whose character had a deep tinge of the superstitions of his own country, he was besides a man of probity, truth, and honour, and never told that for the truth, which he did not believe to be so.

Daft Jock Amos.

Daft Jock Amos was another odd character, of whom many droll sayings are handed down. He was a lunatic; but having been a scholar in his youth, he was possessed of a sort of wicked wit, and wavering uncertain intelligence, that proved right troublesome to those who took it on them to reprove his eccentricities. As he lived close by the church, in the time of the far-famed Boston, the minister and he were constantly coming in contact, and many of their little dialogues are preserved.

"The mair fool are ye, quo' Jock Amos to the minister," is a constant by-word in Ettrick to this day. It had its origin simply as follows:—Mr Boston was taking his walk one fine summer evening after sermon, and in his way came upon Jock, very busy cutting some grotesque figures in wood with his knife. Jock, looking hastily up, found he was fairly caught, and not knowing what to say, burst into a foolish laugh—"Ha! ha! ha! Mr Boston, are you there? Will you coss a good whittle wi' me?"

"Nay, nay, John, I will not exchange knives to-day."

"The mair fool are ye," quo' Jock Amos to the minister.

"But, John, can you repeat the fourth commandment?—I hope you can—Which is the fourth commandment?"

"I daresay, Mr Boston, it'll be the ane after the third."

"Can you not repeat it?"

"I am no sure about it—I ken it has some wheeram by the rest."

Mr Boston repeated it, and tried to show him his error in working with knives on the Sabbath day. John wrought away till the divine added,

"But why won't you rather come to church, John?—what is the reason you never come to church?"

"Because you never preach on the text I want you to preach on."

"What text would you have me to preach on?"

"On the nine-and-twenty knives that came back from Babylon."

"I never heard of them before."

"It is a sign you have never read your Bible. Ha, ha, ha, Mr Boston! sic fool sic minister."

Mr Boston searched long for John's text that evening, and at last finding it recorded in Ezra, i. 9., he wondered greatly at the acuteness of the fool, considering the subject on which he had been reproofing him.

"John, how auld will you be?" said a sage wife to him one day, when talking of their ages.

"O, I dinna ken," said John. "It wad tak a wiser head than mine to tell you that."

"It is unco queer that you dinna ken how auld you are," returned she.

"I ken weel enough how auld I am," said John; "but I dinna ken how auld I'll be."

An old man, named Adam Linton, once met him running from home in the grey of the morning. "Hey, Jock Amos," said he, "where are you bound for so briskly this morning?"

"Aha! He's wise that wats that, and as daft wha speers," says Jock, without taking his eye from some object that it seemed to be following.

"Are you running after any body?" said Linton.

"I am that, man," returned Jock; "I'm rinning after the deil's messenger. Did you see ought o' him gaun by?"

"What was he like?" said Linton.

"Like a great big black corbie," said Jock, "carrying a bit tow in his gab. And what do you think?—he has tauld me a piece o' news the day! There's to be a wedding ower by here the day, man—ay, a wedding! I maun after him, for he has gien me an invitation."

"A wedding? Dear Jock, you are raving. What wedding can there be to-day?" said Linton.

"It is Eppy Telfer's, man—auld Eppy Telfer's to be wed the day; and I'm to be there; and the minister is to be there, and a' the elders. But Tammie, the Cameronian, he darena come, for fear he should hae to dance wi' the kimmers. There will be braw wark there the day, Aedie Linton,—braw wark there the day!" And away ran Jock towards Ettrickhouse, hallooing and waving his cap for joy. Old Adam came in, and said to his wife, who was still in bed, that he supposed the moon was at the full, for Jock Amos was "gane quite gyte awthegither, and was away shouting to Ettrickhouse to Eppy Telfer's wedding."

"Then," said his wife, "if he be ill, she will be waur, for they are always affected at the same time; and, though Eppy is better than Jock in her ordinary way, she is waur when the moon-madness comes ower her." (This woman, Eppy Telfer, was likewise subject to lunatic fits of insanity, and Jock had a great ill will at her; he could not even endure the sight of her.)

The above little dialogue was hardly ended before word came that Eppy Telfer had "put down" herself over night, and was found hanging dead in her own little cottage at day-break. Mr Boston was sent for, who, with his servant man and one of his elders, attended, but in a state of such perplexity and grief, that he seemed almost as much dead as alive. The body was tied on a deal, carried to the peak of the Wedder Law, and interred there, and all the while Jock Amos attended, and never in his life met with an entertainment that appeared to please him more. While the men were making the grave, he sat on a stone near by, jabbering and speaking one while, always addressing Eppy, and laughing most heartily at another.

After this high fit Jock lost his spirits entirely, and never more recovered them. He became a complete nonentity, and lay mostly in his bed till the day of his death.

Willie Candlem.

Another notable man of that day was William Stoddart, nicknamed Candlem, one of the feuars of Ettrickhouse. He was simple, unlettered, and rude, as all his sayings that are preserved testify. Being about to be married to one Meggie Coltard, a great penny-wedding was announced, and the numbers that came to attend it were immense. Candlem and his bride went to Ettrick church to be married, and Mr Boston, who was minister there, perceiving such a motley crowd following them, repaired into the church; and after admitting a few respectable witnesses, he set his son John, and his servant John Currie, to keep the two doors, and restrain the crowd from entering. Young Boston let in a number at his door, but John Currie stood manfully in the breach, refusing entrance to all. When the minister came to put the question, "Are you willing to take this woman," &c.

"I wat weel I was thinking sae," says Candlem.—"Haud to the door, John Currie!"

When the question was put to Meggie, she bowed assent like a dumb woman, but this did not satisfy Willie Candlem.—"What for d'ye no answer, Meggie?" says he. "Dinna ye hear what the honest man's speering at ye?"

In due time Willie Candlem and Meggie had a son, and as the custom then was, it was decreed that the first Sabbath after he was born he should be baptized. It was about the Martinmas time, the day was stormy, and the water flooded;

however, it was agreed that the baptism could not be put off, for fear of the fairies; so the babe was well rolled up in swaddling clothes, and laid on before his father on the white mare,—the stoutest of the kimmers stemming the water on foot. Willie Candlem rode the water slowly and cautiously. When about the middle of the stream, he heard a most unearthly yelling and screaming rise behind him; "What are they squeeling at?" said he to himself, but durst not look back for fear of his charge. After he had crossed the river safely, and a sand-bed about as wide, Willie wheeled his white mare's head about, and exclaimed—"Why, the ne'er a haet I hae but the slough!" Willie had dropped the child into the flooded river, without missing it out of the huge bundle of clothes; but luckily, one of the kimmers picked him up, and as he showed some signs of life, they hurried into a house at Goosegreen, and got him brought round again. In the afternoon he was so far recovered, that the kimmers thought he might be taken up to church for baptism, but Willie Candlem made this sage remark—"I doubt he's rather unfeiroch to stand it;—he has gotten eneugh o' the water for ae day." On going home to his poor wife, his first address to her was—"Ay, ye may take up your handywark, Meggie, in making a slough open at baith ends. What signifies a thing that's open at baith ends?"

Another time, in harvest, it came a rainy day, and the Ettrick began to look very big in the evening. Willie Candlem, perceiving his crop in danger, yoked the white mare in the sledge, and was proceeding to lead his corn out of watermark; but out came Meggie, and began expostulating with him on the sinfulness of the act,— "Put in your beast again, like a good Christian man, Willie," said she, "and dinna be setting an ill example to a' the parish. Ye ken, that this vera day the minister bade us lippen to Providence in our straits, and we wad never rue't. He'll take it very ill off your hand, the setting of sic an example on the Lord's day; therefore, Willie, my man, take his advice and mine, and lippen to Providence this time."

Willie Candlem was obliged to comply, for who can withstand the artillery of a woman's tongue? So he put up his white mare, and went to bed with a heavy heart; and the next morning, by break of day, when he arose and looked out, behold the greater part of his crop was gone.— "Ye may take up your Providence now, Meggie! Where's your Providence now? A' down the water wi' my corn! Ah! I wad trust mair to my gude white mare than to you and Providence baith!"

Meggie answered him meekly, as her duty and custom was—"O Willie! dinna rail at Providence, but down to the meadow-head and claim first." Willie Candlem took the hint, galloped on his white mare down to the Ettrick meadows, over which the river spread, and they were covered with floating sheaves; so Willie began and hauled out, and carried out, till he had at least six times as much corn as he had lost. At length one man came, and another, but Willie refused all partition of the spoil. "Ay, ye may take up your corn now where ye can find it, lads," said Willie; "I keppit nane but my ain. Yours is gane farther down. Had ye come when I came, ye might have keppit it a'." So Willie drove and drove, till the stackyard was full.

"I think the crop has turn'd no that ill out after a'," said Meggie. "You've been nae the waur o' trusting to Providence."

"Na," rejoined Willie, "nor o' taking your advice, Meggie, and ganging down to kep and claim at the meadow-head."

CHAPTER VIII.

NANCY CHISHOLM.

John Chisholm, farmer of Moorlaggan, was, in the early part of his life, a wealthy and highly respectable man, and associated with the best gentlemen of the country; and in those days he was accounted to be not only reasonable, but mild and benevolent in his disposition. A continued train of unfortunate speculations, however, at last reduced his circumstances so much, that, though at the time when this tale commences, he still continued solvent, it was well enough known to all the country that he was on the brink of ruin; and, by an unfortunate fatality, too inherent in human nature, still as he descended in circumstances, he advanced in pride and violence of temper, until his conduct grew so intolerable, as scarcely to be submitted to even by his own family.

Mr Chisholm had five daughters, well brought up, and well educated; but the second, whose name was Nancy Chisholm, was acknowledged to be the most beautiful and accomplished of them all. She was so buoyant of spirits, that she hardly appeared to know whether she was treading on the face of the earth, or bounding on the breeze; and before Nancy was eighteen, as was quite natural, she was beloved by the handsomest lad in the parish, whose proper Christian name was Archibald Gillies, but who, by some patronymic or designation of whose import I am ignorant, was always called Gillespick.

Young Gillies was quite below Nancy in rank, although in circumstances they were by this time much the same. His father being only a small sub-tenant of Mr Chisholm's, the latter would have thought his child degraded, had she been discovered even speaking to the young man. He had, moreover, been bred to the profession of a tailor, which, though an honest occupation, and perhaps more lucrative than many others, is viewed, in the country places of Scotland, with a degree of contempt far exceeding that with which it is regarded in more polished communities. Notwithstanding of all this, Gillespick Gillies, the tailor, had the preference of all others in the heart of pretty Nancy; and, as he durst not pay his addresses to her openly, or appear at Moorlaggan by day, they were driven to an expedient quite in mode with the class to which Gillies belonged, but as entirely inconsistent with that propriety of conduct which ought to be observed by young ladies like those of Moorlaggan—they met by night; that is, about night-fall in summer, and at the same hour in winter, which made it very late in the night.

Now it unluckily had so happened, that Gillies, the young dashing tailor, newly arrived from Aberdeen, had, at a great wedding the previous winter, paid all his attentions to Siobla, Nancy's eldest sister. This happened, indeed, by mere accident, owing to Nancy's many engagements; but Siobla did not know that; and Gillies, being the best dancer in the barn, led her to the head every time, and behaved so courteously, that he made a greater impression on her heart than she was willing to acknowledge. As all ranks mingle at a country wedding, the thing was noted and talked of, both among the low and high; but neither the high nor the low thought or said that young Gillies had made a very prudent choice. She was not, however, the tailor's choice; for his whole heart was fixed on her sister Nancy.

The two slept in one chamber, and it was impossible for the younger to escape to her lover without confiding the secret to Siobla, which, therefore, she was obliged to do; and from that moment jealousy—for jealousy it was, though Miss Siobla called it by another name—began to rankle in her elder sister's bosom. She called Gillies every degrading name she could invent,—a profligate, a libertine,—and to sum up all, she called him *a tailor*, thereby finishing the sum of degeneracy, and crowning the climax of her reproaches.

Nancy was, nevertheless, exceedingly happy with her handsome lover, who all but adored her. She enjoyed his company perhaps the more on two accounts, one of which she might probably deduce from the words of the wise man, that "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant;" but another most certainly was, that Gillies having opened her eyes to the true state of her father's affairs, and by this led her to perceive that she was only "a pennyless lass wi' a lang pedigree," she could not help drawing the conclusion, that the tailor was as good as she, and that the course she was taking, besides being very agreeable to her own wishes, was the most prudent that could be conceived.

This information preying on Nancy's mind, she could not help communicating it in confidence to one of her sisters, (Siobla, it is to be supposed,) who, believing the report to be a malicious falsehood, went straight to her father with the news, as soon as he arrived from the market. Some vexatious occurrences connected with his depressed fortunes, had put him sorely out of humour that night, and he had likewise been drinking a good deal, which made matters worse; so that when Siobla informed him of the country rumour, that he was about to become a bankrupt, his fury rose to an

ungovernable pitch, and, seizing her by the arm, he adjured her forthwith to name her informer, against whom he at the same time vowed the most consummate vengeance. His daughter was frightened, and without hesitation told him that she had learnt the report from her sister Nancy. Nancy was a favourite with old Chisholm, but that circumstance seemed only to inflame him the more; that one so much cherished and beloved should make herself instrumental in breaking his credit, was, he thought, a degree of ingratitude that justified his severest resentment, and with a countenance of the utmost fury, he turned on her, and demanded if what he had heard was true. With a face as pale as death, and trembling lips, she acknowledged that it was. But when desired to name her informer, she remained silent, trembled, and wept. On being further urged, and threatened, she said, hesitatingly, that she did not invent the story; and supposed she had heard it among the servants.

"This will not do, miss," exclaimed her father; "tell me at once the name of your informer; and depend upon it, that person, whoever it is, had better never been born."

Nancy could not answer, but sobbed and wept.

Just at that unlucky moment, a whistle was heard from the wood opposite the window. This was noticed by Mr Chisholm, who looked a little startled, and enquired what or who it was; but no one gave him any answer.

It had been settled between the two lovers, that when Gillies came to see Nancy, he was to whistle from a certain spot in a certain manner, while she was to open the window, and hold the light close to the glass for an instant, that being the token that she heard and understood the signal. In the present dilemma, the performance of her part of the agreement was impracticable; and, of course, when old Chisholm was once more rising into a paroxysm of rage at his daughter, the ominous whistle was repeated.

"What *is* this?" demanded he, in a peremptory tone. "Tell me instantly; for I see by your looks you know and understand what it is. Siobla, do you know?"

"Yes, I do," replied Siobla. "I know well enough what it is—I do not hear it so seldom."

"Well, then, inform me at once what it means," said her father.

"It is Nancy's sweetheart come to whistle her out—young tailor Gillies;" answered Siobla, without any endeavour to avert her father's wrath, by giving the information in an indirect way.

"Oho! Is it thus?" exclaimed the infuriated father. "And Nancy always answers and attends to this audacious tailor's whistle, does she?"

"Indeed she does, sir; generally once or twice every week," replied the young woman, in the same willing tone.

"The secret is then out!" said old Chisholm, in words that quavered with anger. "It is plain from whence the injurious report has been attained! Too fond father! alas, poor old man! Have matters already come thus low with thee? And hast thou indeed nourished and cherished this favourite child, giving her an education fitting her for the highest rank in society, and all that she might throw herself away upon a—a—a tailor!—Begone, girls! I must converse with this degraded creature alone."

When her sisters had left the apartment, Nancy knelt, wept, prayed, and begged forgiveness; but a temporary distraction had banished her father's reason, and he took hold of her long fair hair, wound it round his left hand in the most methodical manner, and began to beat her with his cane. She uttered a scream; on which he stopped, and told her that if she uttered another sound before he had done chastising her, it should be her last; but this causing her to scream only ten times louder he beat her with such violence that he shivered the cane to pieces. He then desisted, calling her the ruin of her sisters, of himself, and all her father's house; opened the door, and was about to depart and leave her, when the tailor's whistle again sounded in his ears, louder and nearer than before. This once more drove him to madness, and seizing a heavy dog-whip that hung in the lobby, he returned into the parlour, and struck his daughter repeatedly in the most unmerciful manner. During the concluding part of this horrid scene, she opened not her mouth, but eyed her ferocious parent with composure, thinking she had nothing but death to expect from his hands.

Alas! death was nothing to the pangs she then suffered, and those she was doomed to suffer! Her father at last ceased from his brutal treatment, led her from the house, threw her from him, with a curse, and closed the door with a force that made the casements of the house clatter.

There never was perhaps a human being whose circumstances in life were as suddenly changed, or more deplorable than Nancy Chisholm's were that night. But it was not only her circumstances in life that were changed: she felt at once that the very nature within her was changed also, and that from being a thing of happiness and joy, approaching to the nature of a seraph, she was now converted into a fiend. She had a cup measured to her which nature could not endure, and its baneful influences had the instant effect of making her abhor her own nature, and become a rebel to all its milder qualities.

The first resolution she formed was that of full and ample revenge. She determined to make such a dreadful retaliation, as should be an example to all jealous sisters and unnatural parents, while the world lasted. Her plan was to wait till after midnight, and then set fire to the premises, and burn her father, her sisters, and all that pertained to them, to ashes. In little more than an instant was her generous nature so far altered, that she exulted in the prospect of this horrid catastrophe.

With such a purpose, the poor wretch went and hid herself until all was quiet; and there is no doubt that she would have put her scheme in execution, had it not been for the want of fire to kindle the house; for as to going into any dwelling, or seeing the face of an acquaintance, in her present degraded condition, her heart shrunk from it. So, after spending some hours in abortive attempts at raising fire, she was obliged to depart, bidding an eternal adieu to all that she had hitherto held dear on earth.

On the approach of daylight, she retired into a thicket, and, at a brook, washed and bathed her bloated arms and face, disentangled and combed her yellow hair with her fingers, and when she thought she was unobserved, drew the train of her gown over her head, and sped away on her journey, whither she knew not. No distinct account of her escape, or of what became of her for some time, can be given; but the whole bent of her inclinations was to do evil; she felt herself impelled to it by a motive she could not account for, but which she had no power or desire to resist. She felt it as it were incumbent on her always to retaliate evil for good,—the most fiendish disposition that the human heart could feel. She had a desire that the Evil One would appear in person, that she might enter into a formal contract to do evil. She had a longing to impart to others some share of the torment she had herself endured, and missed no opportunity of inflicting such. Once in the course of her wanderings, she met, in a sequestered place, a little girl, whom she seized, and beat her "within an inch of her life," as she called it. She was at this period quite a vagabond, and a pest wherever she went.

The manner in which she first got into a place was not the least remarkable of her adventures. On first coming to Aberdeen, she went into the house of one Mr Simon Gordon, in the upper Kirkgate, and asked some food, which was readily granted her by the housekeeper; for, owing to her great beauty and superior address, few ever refused her any thing she asked. She seemed little disposed to leave the house again, and by no means could the housekeeper prevail upon her to depart, unless she were admitted to speak with Mr Gordon.

This person was an old bachelor, rich and miserly; and the housekeeper was terrified at the very idea of acknowledging to him that she had disposed of the least morsel of food in charity; far less dared she allow a mendicant to carry her petition into her master's very presence. But the pertinacity of the individual she had now to deal with fairly overcame her fears, and she carried up to Mr Simon Gordon the appalling message, that a "seeking woman," that is, a begging woman, demanded to speak with him. Whether it was that Mr Simon's abhorrence of persons of that cast was driven from the field by the audacity of the announcement, I cannot pretend to say; but it is certain that he remitted in his study of the state of the public funds, and granted the interview. And as wonders when they once commence, are, for the most part, observed to continue to follow each other for a time, he not only astounded the housekeeper by his ready assent to let the stranger have speech of him: but the poor woman had nearly sunk into the ground with dismay when she heard him, after the interview was over, give orders that this same wanderer was to be retained in the house in the capacity of her assistant. Here, however, the miraculous part of this adventure stops; for the housekeeper, who had previously been a rich old miser's only servant, did, in the first place, remonstrate loudly against any person being admitted to share her labours, or her power; and on finding all that could be said totally without effect, she refused to remain with her master any longer, and immediately departed, leaving Nancy Chisholm in full possession of the premises.

Being now in some degree tired of a wandering unsettled life, she continued with Mr Gordon, testifying her hatred of the world rather by a sullen and haughty apathy, than by any active demonstrations of enmity; and what was somewhat remarkable, by her attention to the wants of the peevish and feeble old man, her master, she gained greatly upon his good-will.

In this situation her father discovered her, after an absence of three years, during which time his compunctious visitings

had never either ceased or diminished from the time he had expelled her his house, while under the sway of unbridled passion. He never had more heart for any thing in the world. All his affairs went to wreck; he became bankrupt, and was driven from his ample possessions, and was forced to live in a wretched cottage in a sort of genteel penury. But all his misfortunes and disappointments put together did not affect him half so much as the loss of his darling daughter; he never doubted that she had gone to the home of her lover, to the house of old Gillies; and this belief was one that carried great bitterness to his heart. When he discovered that she had never been seen there, his next terror was that she had committed suicide; and he trembled night and day, anticipating all the horrid shapes in which he might hear that the desperate act had been accomplished. When the dread of this began to wear away, a still more frightful idea arose to haunt his troubled imagination—it was that of his once beloved child driven to lead a life of infamy and disgrace. This conclusion was but too natural, and he brooded on it with many repentant tears for the space of nearly two years, when he at last set out with a resolution either to find his lost daughter, or spend the remainder of his life in search of her.

It is painful to think of the scenes that he went through in this harassing and heart-rending search, until he at length discovered her in the house of Mr Simon Gordon. For a whole week he had not the courage to visit her, though he stole looks of her every day; but he employed himself in making every inquiry concerning her present situation.

One day she was sitting, in gay attire, sewing, and singing the following rhyme, in crooning of which she spent a part of every day:

I am lost to peace, I am lost to grace,
I am lost to all that's beneath the sun;
I have lost my way in the light of day,
And the gates of heaven I will never won.

If one sigh would part from my burning heart,
Or one tear would rise in my thirsty eye,
Through wo and pain it might come again—
The soul that fled, from deep injury.

In one hour of grief I would find relief,
One pang of sorrow would ease my pain;
But joy or wo, in this world below,
I can never never know again!

While she was thus engaged, old Chisholm, with an agitated heart and trembling frame, knocked gently at the door, which was slowly and carelessly opened by his daughter; for she performed every thing as if she had no interest in it. The two gazed on one another for a moment, without speaking; but the eyes of the father were beaming with love and tenderness, while those of the daughter had that glazed and joyless gleam which too well bespoke her hardened spirit. The old man spread out his arms to embrace her; but she closed the door upon him. He retired again to his poor lodgings, from whence he sent her a letter fraught with tenderness and sorrow, which produced no answer.

There was another besides her father who had found her out before this time, though he had never ventured to make himself known to her; and that was her former lover, Gillespick Gillies, the tailor. He had traced her in all her wanderings, and though it had been once his intention to settle in Edinburgh, yet for her sake, he hired himself to a great clothier and tailor in the city of Aberdeen. After her father's ineffectual application to her, young Gillies ventured to make his appearance; but his reception was far from what he hoped. She was embarrassed and cold, attaching blame to him for every thing, particularly for persuading her out to the woods by night, which had been the means of drawing down her father's anger upon her. He proffered all the reparation in his power; but she would not hear him speak, and even forbade him ever to attempt seeing her again.

The tailor's love was, however, too deeply rooted to be so easily overcome. He would not he said nay, but waited upon her evening and morning; still she remained callous and unmoved, notwithstanding of all his kind attentions.

The frame of her spirit at this period must have been an anomaly in human nature; she knew no happiness, and shunned, with the utmost pertinacity, every avenue leading towards its heavenly shrine. She often said afterwards, that she believed her father's rod had beat an angel out of her, and a demon into its place.

But Gillespick, besides being an affectionate and faithful lover, was a singularly acute youth. He told this perverse beauty again and again that she was acknowledged the flower of all Aberdeen, saving a Miss Marshall, who sat in the College Church every Sunday, to whom some gentlemen gave the preference; and then he always added, "But I am quite certain that were you to appear there dressed in your best style, every one would at once see how much you outshine her." He went over this so often, that Nancy's vanity became interested, and she proffered, of her own accord, to accompany him one day to the College Kirk.

From the time that Gillies got her to enter the church-door again, although she went from no good motive, he considered the victory won, and counted on the certainty of reclaiming his beloved from despair and destruction. All eyes were soon turned on her beauty, but hers sought out and rested on Mary Marshall alone. She was convinced of her own superiority, which added to the elegance of her carriage and gaiety of her looks; so that she went home exceedingly well pleased with—*the ministers sermon!*

She went back in the afternoon, the next day, and every day thereafter; and her lover noted that she sometimes appeared to fix her attention on the minister's discourse. But one day in particular, when he was preaching on that divine precept, contained in St Luke's Gospel, "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you," she seemed all the while enrapt by the most ardent feelings, and never for one moment took her eye from the speaker. Her lover perceived this, and kept his eyes steadfastly fixed on her face. At last the reverend divine, in his application of this doctrine to various characters, painted her own case in such a light that it appeared drawn from nature. He then expatiated on the sweet and heavenly joys of forgiveness with such ardour and devotion, that tears once more began to beam in those bright eyes, whose fountains seemed long to have been dried up; and ere the preacher concluded, she was forced to hide her face, and give free vent to her feelings, weeping abundantly.

Her lover conducted her home, and observed a total alteration in her manner towards him. This change on her seared and hardened spirit, was more, however, than her frame could brook. The next day she was ill, and she grew worse and worse daily; a strange disease was hers, for she was seized with stubborn and fierce paroxysms, very much resembling those possessed of devils in the dawning of Christianity. It appeared exactly as if a good spirit and an evil one were contending for the possession of her person as their tabernacle, none of the medical faculty being able to account for these extraordinary changes in a natural way. Her lover hired a sick-nurse, who attended both on her and the old man, which pleased the latter well, and he thought there was not such a man in the city of Aberdeen as the young tailor.

Nancy's disease was at length mastered, but it left her feeble and emaciated, and from that time forth, she showed herself indeed an altered woman. The worthy divine who first opened her eyes to her lost condition, had visited her frequently in her sickness, and repeated his exhortations. Her lover waited on her every day; and not only this, but being, as I before observed, an acute youth, he carried to the house with him cordials for the old miser, and told or read him the news from the Stock Exchange. Nancy was now attached to Gillespick with the most ardent and pure affection, and more deeply than in her early days of frolic and thoughtlessness; for now her love toward him was mellowed by a ray from heaven. In few words, they were married. Old Simon Gordon died shortly after, and left them more than half his fortune, amounting, it was said, to £11,000; a piece of generosity to which he was moved, not only by the attention shown him in his latter days by the young pair, but, as he expressed it in his will, "being convinced that Gillies would take care of the money." This legacy was a great fortune for an Aberdeen tailor and clothier. He bought the half of his master's stock and business, and in consequence of some army and navy contracts, realized a very large fortune in a short time.

Old Chisholm was by this time reduced to absolute beggary; he lived among his former wealthy acquaintances, sometimes in the hall, sometimes in the parlour, as their good or bad humour prevailed. His daughters, likewise, were all forced to accept situations as upper servants, and were, of course, very unhappily placed, countenanced by no class, being too proud to associate with those in the station to which they had fallen. The company of lowlanders that had taken Moorlaggan on Chisholm's failure, followed his example, and failed also. The farm was again in the market, and nobody to bid any thing for it; at length an agent from Edinburgh took it for a rich lady, at half the rent that had been paid for it before; and then every one said, had old John Chisholm held it at such a rent, he would have been the head of the country to that day. The whole of the stock and furniture were bought up from the creditors, paid in ready money, and the discount returned; and as this was all done by the Edinburgh agent, no one knew who was to be the farmer, although the shepherds and servants were hired, and the business of the farm went on as before.

Old Chisholm was at this time living in the house of a Mr Mitchell, on Spey, not far from Pitmain, when he received a letter from this same Edinburgh agent, stating, that the new farmer of Moorlaggan wanted to speak with him on very

important business relating to that farm; and that all his expenses would be paid to that place, and back again, or to what other place in the country he chose to go. Chisholm showed Mr Mitchell the letter, who said, he understood it was to settle the marches about some disputed land, and it would be as well for him to go and make a good charge for his trouble, and at the same time offered to accommodate him with a pony. Mr Mitchell could not spare his own saddle-horse, having to go a journey; so he mounted Mr Chisholm on a small shaggy highland nag, with crop ears, and equipped with an old saddle, and a bridle with hair reins. It was the evening of the third day after he left Mr Mitchell's house before he reached Moorlaggan; and as he went up Coolen-aird, he could not help reflecting with bitterness of spirit on the alteration of times with him. It was not many years ago when he was wont to ride by the same path, mounted on a fine horse of his own, with a livery servant behind him; now he rode a little shabby nag, with crop ears and a hair bridle, and even that diminutive creature belonged to another man. Formerly he had a comfortable home, and a respectful family to welcome him; now he had no home, and that family was all scattered abroad. "Alas!" said he to himself, "times are indeed sadly altered with me; ay, and I may affect to blame misfortune for all that has befallen me; but I cannot help being persuaded that the man who is driven by unmanly passions to do that of which he is ashamed both before God and man, can never prosper. Oh, my child! my lost and darling child! What I have suffered for her both in body, mind, and outward estate!"

In this downcast and querulous mood did the forlorn old man reach his former habitation. All was neat and elegant about the place, and there was a chaise standing at the end of the house. When old Chisholm saw this, he did not venture up to the front door, but alighted, and led his crop-eared pony to the back door, at which he knocked, and having stated the errand upon which he came, was, after some delay, ushered into the presence of a courtly dame, who accosted him in proud and dignified language as follows:—

"Your name is Mr John Chisholm, I believe?"

"It is, madam; at your service."

"And you were once farmer here, I believe?" (A bow.) "Ay. Hem. And how did you lose your farms?"

"Through misfortunes, madam, and by giving too much credit to insufficient parties."

"Ay—so! That was not prudent in you to give so much credit in such quarters—Eh?"

"I have been favoured with a letter from your agent, madam," said Chisholm, to whom this supercilious tone of cross-questioning was far from being agreeable, "and I beg to know what are your commands with me."

"Ay. True. Very right. So you don't like to talk of your own affairs, don't you? No; it seems not.—Why, the truth is, that my agent wished me to employ you as factor or manager of these lands, as my husband and I must live for the greater part of the year at a great distance. We are willing to give a good salary; and I believe there is no man so fit for our purpose. But I have heard accounts of you that I do not like,—that you were an inexorable tyrant in your own family, abusing and maltreating the most amiable of them in a very unmanly manner. And, I have heard, but I hope not truly, that you drove one daughter to disgrace and destruction."

Here Chisholm turned his face towards the window, burst into tears, and said, he hoped she had not sent for a miserable and degraded old man to torture his feelings by probing those wounds of the soul that were incurable.

"Nay, I beg your pardon, old gentleman. I sent for you to do you a service. I was only mentioning a vile report that reached my ear, in hopes you could exculpate yourself."

"Alas, madam, I cannot."

"Dreadful! Dreadful! Father of heaven, could thy hand frame a being with feelings like this! But I hope you did not, as is reported,—No—you could not—you did not strike her, did you?"

"Alas! alas!" exclaimed the agonized old man.

"What? Beat her—scourge her—throw her from your house at midnight with a father's curse upon her head?"

"I did! I did! I did!"

"Monster! Monster! Go, and hide your devoted and execrable head in some cavern in the bowels of the earth, and wear

out the remainder of your life in praying to thy God for repentance; for thou art not fit to herd with the rest of his creatures!"

"My cup of sorrow and misery is now full," said the old man as he turned, staggering, towards the door. "On the very spot has this judgment fallen on me."

"But stop, sir—stop for a little space," said the lady. "Perhaps I have been too hasty, and it may be you have repented of that unnatural crime already?"

"Repented! Ay, God is my witness, not a night or day has passed over this grey head on which I have not repented; in that bitterness of spirit too, which the chief of sinners only can feel."

"Have you indeed repented of your treatment of your daughter? Then all is forgiven on her part. And do you, father, forgive me too!"

The old man looked down with bewildered vision, and, behold, there was the lady of the mansion kneeling at his feet, and embracing his knees! She had thrown aside her long flowing veil, and he at once discovered the comely face of his beloved daughter.

That very night she put into her father's hand the new lease of all his former possessions, and receipts for the stock, crop, and furniture. The rest of the family were summoned together, and on the following Sabbath they went all to church and took possession of their old family seat, every one sitting in the place she occupied formerly, with Siobla at the head. But the generous creature who had thus repaid good for evil, was the object of attraction for every eye, and the admiration of every heart.

This is a true story, and it contains not one moral, but many, as every true portraiture of human life must do: It shows us the danger of youthful imprudence, of jealousy, and of unruly passions; but, above all, it shows, that without a due sense of religion there can be no true and disinterested love.

CHAPTER IX.

SNOW-STORMS.

Snow-storms constitute the various eras of the pastoral life. They are the red lines in the shepherd's manual—the remembrancers of years and ages that are past—the tablets of memory by which the ages of his children, the times of his ancestors, and the rise and downfall of families, are invariably ascertained. Even the progress of improvement in Scotch farming can be traced traditionally from these, and the rent of a farm or estate given with precision, before and after such and such a storm, though the narrator be uncertain in what century the said notable storm happened. Mar's Year, and "that year the Hielanders raid," are but secondary mementos to the Year Nine and the Year Forty—these stand in bloody capitals in the annals of the pastoral life, as well as many more that shall hereafter be mentioned.

The most dismal of all those on record is the Thirteen Drifty Days. This extraordinary storm, as near as I have been able to trace, must have occurred in the year 1660. The traditionary stories and pictures of desolation that remain of it, are the most dire imaginable; and the mentioning of the Thirteen Drifty Days to an old shepherd, in a stormy winter night, never fails to impress his mind with a sort of religious awe, and often sets him on his knees before that Being who alone can avert such another calamity.

It is said that for thirteen days and nights the snow-drift never once abated—the ground was covered with frozen snow when it commenced, and during all the time of its continuance the sheep never broke their fast. The cold was intense to a degree never before remembered; and about the fifth and sixth days of the storm, the young sheep began to fall into a sleepy and torpid state, and all that were so affected in the evening died over-night. The intensity of the frost-wind often cut them off when in that state quite instantaneously. About the ninth and tenth days, the shepherds began to build up huge semicircular walls of their dead, in order to afford some shelter for the living remainder, but such shelter availed little, for about the same time the want of food began to be felt so severely that they were frequently seen tearing one another's wool with their teeth.

When the storm abated, on the fourteenth day from its commencement, there was on many a high-lying farm not a living sheep to be seen. Large misshapen walls of dead, surrounding a small prostrate flock likewise all dead, and frozen stiff in their lairs, were all that remained to the forlorn shepherd and his master; and though on low-lying farms, where the snow was not so hard before the tempest began, numbers of sheep weathered the storm, yet their constitutions received such a shock, that the greater part of them perished afterwards; and the final consequence was, that about nine-tenths of all the sheep in the South of Scotland were destroyed.

In the extensive pastoral district of Eskdale-muir, which maintains upwards of 20,000 sheep, it is said none were left alive, but forty young wedders on one farm, and five old ewes on another. The farm of Phaup remained without a stock and without a tenant for twenty years after the storm; and when at length one very honest and liberal-minded man ventured to take a lease of it, it was at the annual rent of "a grey coat and a pair of hose!" It is now rented at £500. An extensive glen in Tweedsmuir, now belonging to Sir James Montgomery of Stanhope, became a common at that time, to which any man drove his flocks that pleased, and it continued so for nearly a century. On one of Sir Patrick Scott of Thirlestane's farms, that keeps upwards of 900 sheep, they all died save one black ewe, from which the farmer had high hopes of preserving a breed; but some unlucky dogs, that were all laid idle for want of sheep to run at, fell upon this poor solitary remnant of a good stock, and chased her into St Mary's Loch, where she was drowned. When word of this was brought to John Scott the farmer, commonly called Gouffing Jock, he is reported to have expressed himself as follows: "Ochon, ochon! and is that the gate o't?—a black beginning maks aye a black end." Then taking down an old rusty sword, he added, "Come thou away, my auld friend; thou and I maun e'en stock Bowerhope Law ance mair. Bessy, my dow, how gaes the auld sang?—

There's walth o' kye i' bonny Braidlees;
There's walth o' yowes i' Tyne;
There's walth o' gear i' Gowanburn—
And they shall a' be thine."

It is a pity that tradition has not preserved any thing farther of the history of Gouffing Jock than this one saying.

The next memorable event of this nature is the Blast o' March, which happened on the 27th day of that month, in the year

1724, on a Monday morning; and though it lasted only for one forenoon, it was calculated that it destroyed upwards of a thousand scores of sheep, as well as a number of shepherds. There is one anecdote of this storm that is worthy of being preserved, as it shows with how much attention shepherds, as well as sailors, should observe the appearances of the sky. The previous Sunday evening was so warm that the lasses went home from church barefoot, and the young men threw off their plaids and coats, and carried them over their shoulders. A large group of these youngers, going home from the church of Yarrow, equipped in this manner, chanced to pass by an old shepherd on the farm of Newhouse, named Walter Blake, who had all his sheep gathered to the side of a wood. They asked Wattie, who was a very religious man, what could have induced him to gather his sheep on the Sabbath day? He answered, that he had seen an ill-hued weather-gaw that morning, and was afraid it was going to be a drift. They were so much amused at Wattie's apprehensions, that they clapped their hands, and laughed at him, and one pert girl cried, "Aye, fie tak care, Wattie; I wadna say but it may be thrapple deep or the morn." Another asked, "If he wasna rather feared for the sun burning the een out o' their heads?" and a third, "If he didna keep a correspondence wi' the thieves, and ken they were to ride that night?" Wattie was obliged to bear all this, for the evening was fine beyond any thing generally seen at that season, and only said to them at parting, "Weel, weel, callants, time will try a'; let him laugh that wins, but slacks will be sleek, a hogg for the howking; we'll a' get horns to tout on the morn." The saying grew proverbial; but Wattie was the only man in that country who saved the whole of his flock.

The years 1709, 1740, and 1772, were likewise all years notable for severity, and for the losses sustained among the flocks of sheep. In the latter, the snow lay from the middle of December until the middle of April, and was all that time hard frozen. Partial thaws always kept the farmer's hopes of relief alive, and thus prevented him from removing his sheep to a lower situation, till at length they grew so weak that they could not be removed. There has not been such a general loss in the days of any man living as in that year. It is by these years that the severity of all subsequent hard winters has been estimated, and also, of late, by that of 1795; and when the balance turns out in favour of the calculator, there is always a degree of thankfulness expressed, as well as a composed submission to the awards of Divine providence. The daily feeling naturally impressed on the shepherd's mind, that all his comforts are so entirely in the hand of Him that rules the elements, contributes not a little to that firm spirit of devotion for which the Scottish shepherd is so distinguished. I know of no scene so impressive, as that of a family sequestered in a lone glen during the time of a winter storm;—and where is the glen in the kingdom that wants such a habitation? There they are left to the protection of Heaven; and they know and feel it. Throughout all the wild vicissitudes of nature, they have no hope of assistance from man, but expect to receive it from the Almighty alone. Before retiring to rest, the shepherd uniformly goes out to examine the state of the weather, and make his report to the little dependent group within—nothing is to be seen but the conflict of the elements, nor heard but the raving of the storm—then they all kneel around him, while he recommends them to the protection of Heaven; and though their little hymn of praise can scarcely be heard even by themselves, as it mixes with the roar of the tempest, they never fail to rise from their devotions with their spirits cheered and their confidence renewed, and go to sleep with an exaltation of mind of which kings and conquerors have no share. Often have I been a sharer in such scenes; and never, even in my youngest years, without having my heart deeply impressed by the circumstances. There is a sublimity in the very idea. There we lived, as it were, inmates of the cloud and the storm; but we stood in a relationship to the Ruler of these, that neither time nor eternity could ever cancel. Woe to him that would weaken the bonds with which true Christianity connects us with Heaven and with each other!

But of all the storms that ever Scotland witnessed, or I hope ever will again behold, there is none of them that can once be compared with that of the memorable night between Friday the 24th and Saturday the 25th of January, 1794. This storm fell with peculiar violence on that division of the South of Scotland that lies between Crawford-muir and the Border. In these bounds seventeen shepherds perished, and upwards of thirty were carried home insensible, who afterwards recovered. The number of sheep that were lost far outwent any possibility of calculation. One farmer alone, Mr Thomas Beattie, lost seventy-two scores—and many others, in the same quarter, from thirty to forty scores each. Whole flocks were overwhelmed with snow, and no one ever knew where they were till the snow was dissolved, and they were all found dead. I myself witnessed one particular instance of this, on the farm of Thickside: there were twelve scores of excellent ewes, all one age, that were missing all the time that the snow lay, which was only a week, and no traces of them could be found; when the snow went away, they were discovered all lying dead, with their heads one way, as if a flock of sheep had dropped dead going from the washing. Many hundreds were driven into waters, burns, and lakes, by the violence of the storm, where they were buried or frozen up, and these the flood carried away, so that they were never seen or found by the owners at all. The following anecdote somewhat illustrates the confusion and devastation bred in the country:—The greater part of the rivers on which the storm was most deadly, run into the Solway Frith, on which there is a place called the Beds of Esk, where the tide throws out, and leaves whatever is carried into it

by the rivers. When the flood after the storm subsided, there were found on that place, and the shores adjacent, one thousand eight hundred and forty sheep, nine black cattle, three horses, two men, one woman, forty-five dogs, and one hundred and eighty hares, besides a number of meaner animals.

The snow lay a week on the ground, the thaw having begun on Friday, the 31st of January. Some registers that I have seen, place the date of this storm on the 24th of December, a month too early; but that day was one of the finest winter days I ever saw.

To relate all the particular scenes of distress that occurred during this tremendous hurricane is impossible—a volume would not contain them. I shall, therefore, in order to give a true picture of the storm, merely relate what I saw, and shall in nothing exaggerate. But before doing this, I must mention a circumstance, curious in its nature, and connected with others that afterwards occurred.

Some time before that, a few young shepherds (of whom I was one, and the youngest, though not the least ambitious, of the number) had formed themselves into a sort of literary society, that met periodically, at one or other of the houses of its members, where each read an essay on a subject previously given out; and after that, every essay was minutely investigated and criticised. We met in the evening, and continued our important discussions all night. Friday the 24th of January was the day appointed for one of these meetings, and it was to be held at Entertrony, a wild and remote shieling, at the very sources of the Ettrick. I had the honour of being named preses—so, leaving the charge of my flock with my master, off I set from Blackhouse, on Thursday, a very ill day, with a flaming bombastical essay in my pocket, and my tongue trained to many wise and profound remarks, to attend this extraordinary meeting, though the place lay at the distance of twenty miles, over the wildest hills in the kingdom, and the time the depth of winter. I remained that night with my parents at Ettrickhouse, and next day again set out on my journey. I had not, however, proceeded far, before I perceived, or thought I perceived, symptoms of an approaching storm, and that of no ordinary nature. I remember the day well: the wind, which was rough on the preceding day, had subsided into a dead calm; there was a slight fall of snow, which descended in small thin flakes, that seemed to hover and reel in the air, as if uncertain whether to go upward or downward—the hills were covered down to the middle with deep folds of rime, or frost-fog—in the cloughs the fog was dark, dense, and seemed as if it were heaped and crushed together—but on the brows of the hills it had a pale and fleecy appearance; and, altogether, I never beheld a day of such gloomy aspect. A thought now began to intrude itself on me, though I strove all that I could to get quit of it, that it would be a wise course in me to return home to my sheep. Inclination urged me on, and I tried to bring reason to her aid, by saying to myself, "I have no reason in the world to be afraid of my sheep; my master took the charge of them cheerfully; there is not a better shepherd in the kingdom, and I cannot doubt his concern in having them right." All would not do; I stood still and contemplated the day, and the more closely I examined it, the more was I impressed that some mischief was brewing; so, with a heavy heart, I turned on my heel, and made the best of my way back the road I came;—my elaborate essay, and all my wise observations, had been provided in vain.

On my way home, I called at a place named the Hopehouse, to see a maternal uncle, whom I loved; he was angry when he saw me, and said it was not like a prudent lad to be running up and down the country in such weather, and at such a season; and urged me to make haste home, for it would be a drift before next morning. He accompanied me to the top of the height, called the Black Gate-head, and on parting, he shook his head, and said, "Ah! it is a dangerous-looking day! In troth I'm amaist fear'd to look at it." I said I would not mind it, if any one knew from what quarter the storm would arise; but we might, in all likelihood, gather our sheep to the place where they would be most exposed to danger. He bade me keep a good look-out all the way home, and whenever I observed the first opening through the rime, to be assured the wind would rise directly from that point: I did as he desired me, but the clouds continued close-set all around, till the fall of evening; and as the snow had been accumulating all day, so as to render walking very unfurthersome, it was that time before I reached home. The first thing I did was to go to my master, and inquire where he had left my sheep. He told me; but though I had always the most perfect confidence in his experience, I was not pleased with what he had done—he had left a part of them far too high out on the hills, and the rest were not where I would have had them; and I told him so: he said he had done all for the best, but if there appeared to be any danger, if I would call him up in the morning, he would assist me. We had two beautiful servant girls, and with them I sat chattering till past eleven o'clock, and then I went down to the Old Tower. What could have taken me to that ruinous habitation of the Black Douglasses at that untimeous hour, I cannot recollect, but it certainly must have been from a supposition that one of the girls would follow me, or else that I would see a hare—both very unlikely events to have taken place on such a night. However, certain it is, that there I was at midnight, and it was while standing on the top of the staircase turret, that I first beheld a bright bore

through the clouds, towards the north, which reminded me of my uncle's warning about the point from which the wind would rise. But at this time a smart thaw had commenced, and the breeze seemed to be coming from the south, so that I laughed in my heart at his prediction, and accounted it quite absurd.—Short was the time till awful experience told me how true it was!

I then went to my bed in the byre-loft, where I slept with a neighbour shepherd, named Borthwick; but though fatigued with walking through the snow, I could not close an eye, so that I heard the first burst of the storm, which commenced between one and two, with a fury that no one can conceive who does not remember it. Besides, the place where I lived being exposed to two or three "gathered winds," as they are called by shepherds, the storm raged there with redoubled fury. It began all at once, with such a tremendous roar, that I imagined it was a peal of thunder, until I felt the house trembling to its foundation. In a few minutes I thrust my naked arm through a hole in the roof, in order, if possible, to ascertain what was going on without, for not a ray of light could I see. I could not then, nor can I yet, express my astonishment: So completely was the air overloaded with falling and driving snow, that, but for the force of the wind, I felt as if I had thrust my arm into a wreath of snow. I deemed it a judgment sent from Heaven upon us, and went to bed again, trembling with agitation. I lay still for about an hour, in hopes that it might prove only a temporary hurricane; but, hearing no abatement of its fury, I awakened Borthwick, and bade him get up, for it was come on such a night or morning, as never blew from the heavens. He was not long in obeying, for as soon as he had heard the turmoil, he started from his bed, and in one minute throwing on his clothes, he hastened down the ladder, and opening the door, remained for a good while, uttering exclamations of astonishment. The door where he stood was not above fourteen yards from the door of the dwelling-house; but a wreath was already heaped between them, as high as the walls of the house—and in trying to get round or through this, Borthwick lost himself, and could neither find the house nor his way back to the byre; and about six minutes after, I heard him calling my name, in a shrill desperate tone of voice, at which I could not refrain from laughing immoderately, notwithstanding the dismal prospect that lay before us. I heard from his cries where he was. He had tried to make his way over the top of a large dunghill, but going to the wrong side, had fallen over, and wrestled long among snow, quite over the head. I did not think proper to move to his assistance, but lay still, and shortly after, heard him shouting at the kitchen-door for instant admittance. I kept my bed for about three quarters of an hour longer; and then rose, and on reaching the house with much difficulty, found our master, the ploughman, Borthwick, and the two servant maids, sitting round the kitchen fire, with looks of dismay, I may almost say despair. We all agreed at once, that the sooner we were able to reach the sheep, the better chance we had to save a remnant; and as there were eight hundred excellent ewes, all in one lot, but a long way distant, and the most valuable lot of any on the farm, we resolved to make a bold effort to reach them. Our master made family worship, a duty he never neglected; but that morning, the manner in which he expressed our trust and confidence in Heaven, was particularly affecting. We took our breakfast—filled our pockets with bread and cheese—sewed our plaids around us—tied down our hats with napkins coming below our chins—and each taking a strong staff in his hand, we set out on the attempt.

No sooner was the door closed behind us than we lost sight of each other; seeing there was none—it was impossible for a man to see his hand held up before him—and it was still two hours till day. We had no means of keeping together but by following to one another's voices, nor of working our way save by groping before us with our staves. It soon appeared to me a hopeless concern, for, ere ever we got clear of the houses and hay-stacks, we had to roll ourselves over two or three wreaths which it was impossible to wade through; and all the while the wind and drift were so violent, that every three or four minutes we were obliged to hold our faces down between our knees to recover our breath.

We soon got into an eddying wind that was altogether insufferable, and, at the same time, we were struggling among snow so deep, that our progress in the way we proposed going was very equivocal indeed, for we had, by this time, lost all idea of east, west, north, or south. Still we were as busy as men determined on an enterprise of moment could be, and persevered on we knew not whither, sometimes rolling over the snow, and sometimes weltering in it up to the chin. The following instance of our successful exertions marks our progress to a tittle: There was an enclosure around the house to the westward, which we denominated "the Park," as was customary in Scotland at that period, and in that quarter, where a farm seldom boasted more than one enclosed piece of ground. When we went away we calculated that it was two hours until day; the Park did not extend above three hundred yards; and we were still engaged in it when daylight appeared.

When we got free of the Park, we also got free of the eddy of the wind. It was now straight in our faces; we went in a line before each other, and changed places every three or four minutes, and at length, after great fatigue, reached a long ridge of a hill where the snow was thinner, having been blown off by the force of the wind, and by this we had hopes of

reaching within a short space of the ewes, which were still a mile and a half distant. Our master had taken the lead; I was next him, and soon began to suspect, from the depth of the snow, that he was leading us quite wrong; but as we always trusted implicitly to the person that was foremost for the time, I said nothing for a good while, until satisfied that we were going in a direction very nearly right opposite to that we intended. I then tried to expostulate with him; but he did not seem to understand what I said; and, on getting a glimpse of his countenance, I perceived that it was quite altered. Not to alarm the others, nor even himself, I said I was becoming terribly fatigued, and proposed that we should lean on the snow and take each a little whisky, (for I had brought a small bottle in my pocket for fear of the worst), and some bread and cheese. This was unanimously agreed to, and I noted that he swallowed the spirits rather eagerly, a thing not usual with him, and when he tried to eat, it was long before he could swallow any thing. I was convinced that he would fail altogether, but, as it would have been easier to have got him to the shepherd's house, which was before us, than home again, I made no proposal for him to return. On the contrary, I said, if they would trust themselves entirely to me, I would engage to lead them to the ewes without going a foot out of the way. The other two agreed to this, and acknowledged that they knew not where they were; but he never opened his mouth, nor did he speak a word for two hours thereafter. It had only been a temporary exhaustion, however, for he afterwards recovered, and wrought till night as well as any of us; though he never could recollect a single circumstance that occurred during that part of our way, nor a word that was said, nor of having got any refreshment whatever.

At about half an hour past ten, we reached the flock, and just in time to save them. Before that, both Borthwick and the ploughman had lost their hats, notwithstanding all their precautions; and to impede us still farther, I went inadvertently over a precipice, and going down head foremost, between the scaur and the snow, found it impossible to extricate myself, for the more I struggled I went the deeper. For all our troubles, I heard Borthwick above convulsed with laughter;—he thought he had got the affair of the dunghill paid back. By holding by one another, and letting down a plaid to me, they hauled me up; but I was terribly incommoded by snow that had got inside my clothes.

The ewes were standing in a close body; one half of them were covered over with snow to the depth of ten feet, the rest were forced against a brae. We knew not what to do, for we had no spades to dig them out; but to our agreeable astonishment, when those in front were removed, the rest walked out from below the snow after their neighbours in a body, for they had been so closely pent together, as to be all touching one another. If the snow-wreath had not broke, and crumbled down upon a few that were hindmost, we should have got them all out, without putting a hand to them. This was effecting a good deal more than any of the party expected a few hours before. There were one hundred ewes in another place near by, but of these we could only get out a very few, and lost all hopes of saving what remained.

It was now wearing towards mid-day, and there were occasionally short intervals in which we could see round us for perhaps a score of yards; but we got only one momentary glance of the hills around us all that day. I grew quite impatient to be at my own charge, and leaving the rest I went away to them by myself, that is, I went to the division that was left far out on the hills, while our master and the ploughman volunteered to rescue those that were down on the lower ground. I found mine in miserable circumstances, but making all possible exertion, I got out about one half of them, which I left in a place of safety, and made towards home, for it was beginning to grow dark, and the storm was again raging in all its darkness and fury. I was not in the least afraid of losing my way, for I knew all the declivities of the hills so well, that I could have come home with my eyes bound up; and indeed, long ere I got home, they were of no use to me. I was terrified for the water (Douglas Burn), for in the morning it was flooded and gorged up with snow in a dreadful manner, and I judged that it would be now quite impassable. At length I came to a place where I thought the water should be, and fell a-boring and groping for it with my long staff. No: I could find no water, and began to dread that, in spite of my supposed accuracy, I had gone wrong. This greatly surprised me, and standing still to consider, I looked up towards Heaven, I shall not say for what cause, and to my utter amazement thought I beheld trees over my head, flourishing abroad over the whole sky. I never had seen such an optical delusion before; it was so like enchantment that I knew not what to think, but dreaded that some extraordinary thing was coming over me, and that I was deprived of my right senses. I concluded that the storm was a great judgment sent on us for our sins, and that this strange phantasy was connected with it, an illusion effected by evil spirits. I stood a good while in this painful trance; but at length, on making a bold exertion to escape from the fairy vision, I came all at once in contact with the Old Tower. Never in my life did I experience such a relief; I was not only all at once freed from the fairies, but from the dangers of the gorged river. I had come over it on some mountain of snow, I knew not how nor where, nor do I know to this day. So that, after all, what I had seen *were* trees, and trees of no great magnitude neither; but their appearance to my eyes it is impossible to describe. I thought they flourished abroad, not for miles, but for hundreds of miles, to the utmost verges of the visible heavens. Such a day and such a night may the eye of a shepherd never again behold!

On reaching home, I found our women-folk sitting in woful plight. It is well known how wonderfully acute they generally are, either at raising up imaginary evils, or magnifying those that exist; and ours had made out a theory so fraught with misery and distress, that the poor things were quite overwhelmed with grief; "There was none of us ever to see the house again *in life*. There was no possibility of the thing happening, all circumstances considered. There was not a sheep in the country to be saved, nor a single shepherd left alive—nothing but *women!* and there they were left, three poor helpless creatures, and the men lying dead out among the snow, and none to bring them home. Lord help them, what was to become of them!" They perfectly agreed in all this; there was no dissenting voice; and then prospects still continuing to darken with the fall of night, they had no other resource left them, long before my arrival, but to lift up their voices and weep. The group consisted of a young lady, our master's niece, and two servant girls, all of the same age, and beautiful as three spring days, all of which are mild and sweet, but differ only a little in brightness. No sooner had I entered, than every tongue and every hand was put in motion, the former to pour forth queries faster than six tongues of men could answer with any degree of precision, and the latter to rid me of the incumbrances of snow and ice with which I was loaded. One slit up the sewing of my frozen plaid, another brushed the icicles from my locks, and a third unloosed my clotted snow-boots. We all arrived within a few minutes of each other, and all shared the same kind offices; even our dogs shared of their caresses and ready assistance in ridding them of the frozen snow, and the dear consistent creatures were six times happier than if no storm or danger had ever existed.—Let no one suppose that, even amid toils and perils, the shepherd's life is destitute of enjoyment.

Borthwick had found his way home without losing his aim in the least. I had deviated but little, save that I lost the river, and remained a short time in the country of the Fairies; but the other two had a hard struggle for life. They went off, as I said formerly, in search of seventeen scores of my flock that had been left in a place not far from the house; but being unable to find one of them, in searching for these they lost themselves, while it was yet early in the afternoon. They supposed that they had gone by the house very near to it, for they had toiled till dark among deep snow in the burn below; and if John Burnet, a neighbouring shepherd, had not heard them calling, and found and conducted them home, it would have stood hard with them indeed, for none of us would have looked for them in that direction. They were both very much exhausted, and the goodman could not speak above his breath that night.

Next morning the sky was clear; but a cold intemperate wind still blew from the north. The face of the country was entirely altered. The form of every hill was changed, and new mountains leaned over every valley. All traces of burns, rivers, and lakes, were obliterated; for the frost had been commensurate with the storm, and such as had never been witnessed in Scotland.

There having been three hundred and forty of my flock that had never been found at all during the preceding day, as soon as the morning dawned, we set all out to look after them. It was a hideous-looking scene—no one could cast his eyes around him and entertain any expectation of sheep being saved. It was one picture of desolation. There is a deep glen between Blackhouse and Dryhope, called the Hawkshaw Cleuch, which is full of trees. There was not the top of one of them to be seen. This may convey some idea how the country looked; and no one can suspect that I would state circumstances otherwise than they were, when there are so many living that could confute me.

When we came to the ground where the sheep should have been, there was not one of them above the snow. Here and there, at a great distance from each other, we could perceive the heads or horns of stragglers appearing; and these were easily got out: but when we had collected these few, we could find no more. They had been lying all abroad in a scattered state when the storm came on, and were covered over just as they had been lying. It was on a kind of sloping ground, that lay half beneath the wind, and the snow was uniformly from six to eight feet deep. Under this the hogs were lying scattered over at least one hundred acres of heathery ground. It was a very ill-looking concern. We went about boring with our long poles, and often did not find one hog in a quarter of an hour. But at length a white shaggy colly, named Sparkie, that belonged to the cowherd boy, seemed to have comprehended something of our perplexity, for we observed him plying and scraping in the snow with great violence, and always looking over his shoulder to us. On going to the spot, we found that he had marked straight above a sheep. From that he flew to another, and so on to another, as fast as we could dig them out, and ten times faster, for he sometimes had twenty or thirty holes marked beforehand.

We got out three hundred of that division before night, and about half as many on the other parts of the farm, in addition to those we had rescued the day before; and the greater part of these would have been lost had it not been for the voluntary exertions of Sparkie. Before the snow went away (which lay only eight days) we had got out every sheep on the farm, either dead or alive, except four; and that these were not found was not Sparkie's blame, for though they were buried below a mountain of snow at least fifty feet deep, he had again and again marked on the top of it above them. The

sheep were all living when we found them; but those that were buried in the snow to a certain depth, being, I suppose, in a warm, half-suffocated state, though on being taken out they bounded away like roes, were instantly after paralyzed by the sudden change of atmosphere, and fell down, deprived of all power in their limbs. We had great numbers of these to carry home and feed with the hand; but others that were buried very deep, died outright in a few minutes. We did not, however, lose above sixty in all; but I am certain Sparkie saved us at least two hundred.

We were for several days utterly ignorant how affairs stood with the country around us, all communication between farms being cut off, at least in the wild district where I lived; but John Burnet, a neighbouring shepherd, on another farm, was remarkably good at picking up the rumours that were afloat in the country, which he delighted to circulate without abatement. Many people tell their stories by halves, and in a manner so cold and indifferent, that the purport can scarcely be discerned, and if it is, cannot be believed; but that was not the case with John; he gave them with *interest*, and we were very much indebted to him for the intelligence that we daily received that week. No sooner was the first brunt of the tempest over, than John made a point of going off at a tangent every day, to learn what was going on, and to bring us word of it. The accounts were most dismal; the country was a charnel-house. The first day he brought us tidings of the loss of thousands of sheep, and likewise of the death of Robert Armstrong, a neighbour shepherd, one whom we all knew well, he having but lately left the Blackhouse to herd on another farm. He died not above three hundred paces from a farm-house, while at the same time it was known to all the inmates where he was. His companion left him at a dike-side, and went in to procure assistance; yet, near as it was, they could not reach him, though they attempted it again and again; and at length they were obliged to return, and suffer him to perish at the side of the dike. Three of my own intimate acquaintances perished that night. There was another shepherd named Watt, the circumstances of whose death were peculiarly affecting. He had gone to see his sweetheart the night before, with whom he had finally agreed and settled every thing about their marriage; but it so happened, in the inscrutable awards of Providence, that at the very time when the banns of his marriage were proclaimed in the church of Moffat, his companions were carrying him home a corpse from the hill.

It may not be amiss here to remark, that it was a received opinion all over the country, that sundry lives were lost, and a great many more endangered, by the administering of ardent spirits to the sufferers while in a state of exhaustion. It was a practice against which I entered my vehement protest, although the voice of the multitude should never be disregarded. A little bread and sweet milk, or even a little bread and cold water, proved a much safer restorative in the fields. There is no denying, that some who took a glass of spirits that night never spoke another word, even though they were continuing to walk and converse when their friends found them.

On the other hand, there was one woman who left her children, and followed her husband's dog, which brought her to his master lying in a state of insensibility. He had fallen down bareheaded among the snow, and was all covered over, save one corner of his plaid. She had nothing better to take with her, when she set out, than a bottle of sweet milk and a little oatmeal cake, and yet, with the help of these, she so far recruited his strength as to get him safe home, though not without long and active perseverance. She took two little vials with her, and in these she heated the milk in her bosom.—That man would not be disposed to laugh at the silliness of the fair sex for some time.

It is perfectly unaccountable how easily people died. The frost must certainly have been prodigious; so intense as to have seized momentarily on the vitals of those that overheated themselves by wading and toiling too impatiently among the snow, a thing that is very aptly done. I have conversed with five or six that were carried home in a state of insensibility, who never would again have moved from the spot where they lay, and were only brought to life by rubbing and warm applications; and they uniformly declared, that they felt no kind of pain or debility, farther than an irresistible desire to sleep. Many fell down while walking and speaking, in a sleep so sound as to resemble torpidity; and there is little doubt that those who perished slept away in the same manner. I knew a man well, whose name was Andrew Murray, that perished in the snow on Minchmoor; and he had taken it so deliberately, that he had buttoned his coat and folded his plaid, which he had laid beneath his head for a bolster.

But it is now time to return to my notable literary society. In spite of the hideous prognostications that appeared, the members actually met, all save myself, in that solitary shieling before mentioned. It is easy to conceive how they were confounded and taken by surprise, when the storm burst forth on them in the middle of the night, while they were in the heat of sublime disputation. There can be little doubt that some loss was sustained in their respective flocks, by reason of that meeting; but this was nothing, compared with the obloquy to which they were subjected on another account, and one which will scarcely be believed, even though the most part of the members are yet alive to bear testimony to it.

The storm was altogether an unusual convulsion of nature. Nothing like it had ever been seen or heard of among us before; and it was enough of itself to arouse every spark of superstition that lingered among these mountains. It did so. It was universally viewed as a judgment sent by God for the punishment of some heinous offence; but what that offence was, could not for a while be ascertained. When, however, it came out, that so many men had been assembled in a lone unfrequented place, and busily engaged in some mysterious work at the very instant that the blast came on, no doubts were entertained that all had not been right there, and that some horrible rite or correspondence with the powers of darkness had been going on. It so happened, too, that this shieling of Entertrony was situated in the very vortex of the storm; the devastations made by it extended all around that to a certain extent, and no farther on any one quarter than another. This was easily and soon remarked; and, upon the whole, the first view of the matter had rather an equivocal appearance to those around, who had suffered so severely by it.

But still as the rumour grew, the certainty of the event gained ground—new corroborative circumstances were every day divulged, till the whole district was in an uproar, and several of the members began to meditate a speedy retreat from the country; some of them, I know, would have fled, if it had not been for the advice of the late worthy and judicious Mr Bryden of Crosslee. The first intimation that I had of it was from my friend John Burnet, who gave it me with his accustomed energy and full assurance. He came over one evening, and I saw by his face he had some great news. I think I remember, as I well may, every word that passed between us on the subject.

"Weel, chap," said he to me, "we hae fund out what has been the cause of a' this mischief now."

"What do you mean, John?"

"What do I mean?—It seems that a great squad o' birkies that ye are connectit wi', had met that night at the herd's house o' Ever Phawhope, and had raised the deil amang them!"

Every countenance in the kitchen changed; the women gazed at John, and then at me, and their lips grew white. These kind of feelings are infectious, people may say what they will; fear begets fear as naturally as light springs from reflection. I reasoned stoutly at first against the veracity of the report, observing that it was utter absurdity, and a shame and disgrace for the country to believe such a ridiculous lie.

"Lie!" said John, "It's nae lie; they had him up amang them like a great rough dog at the very time that the tempest began, and were glad to draw cuts, and gie him ane o' their number to get quit o' him again."

Every hair of my head, and inch of my frame, crept when I heard this sentence; for I had a dearly loved brother who was of the number, and several full cousins and intimate acquaintances; indeed, I looked upon the whole assembly as my brethren, and considered myself involved in all their transactions. I could say no more in defence of the society's proceedings; for, to tell the truth, though I am ashamed to acknowledge it, I suspected that the allegation might be true.

"Has the deil actually taen awa ane o' them bodily?" said Jean.

"He has that," returned John, "and it's thought the skaith wadna hae been grit, had he taen twa or three mae o' them. Base villains! that the haill country should hae to suffer for their pranks! But, however, the law's to tak its course on them, and they'll find, ere a' the play be played, that he has need of a lang spoon that sups wi' the deil."

The next day John brought us word, that it was "*only* the servant-maid that the Ill Thief had taen away," and the next again, that it was actually Bryden of Glenkerry; but, finally, he was obliged to inform us, "That a' was exactly true, as it was first tauld, but only that Jamie Bryden, after being a-wanting for some days, had casten up again."

There has been nothing since that time that has caused such a ferment in the country—nought else could be talked of; and grievous was the blame attached to those who had the temerity to raise up the devil to waste the land. Legal proceedings, it is said, were actually meditated, and attempted; but lucky it was for the shepherds that they agreed to no reference, for such were the feelings of the country, and the opprobrium in which the act was held, that it is likely it would have fared very ill with them;—at all events, it would have required an arbiter of some decision and uprightness to have dared to oppose the prejudices that were entertained. Two men were sent to come to the house as by chance, and endeavour to learn from the shepherd, and particularly from the servant-maid, what grounds there were for inflicting legal punishment; but before that happened, I had the good luck to hear her examined myself, and that in a way by which all suspicions were put to rest, and simplicity and truth left to war with superstition alone. I deemed it very curious at the time, and shall give it verbatim, as nearly as I can recollect.

Being all impatience to learn particulars, as soon as the waters abated, so as to become fordable, I hasted over to Ettrick, and the day being fine, I found numbers of people astir on the same errand with myself,—the valley was moving with people, gathered in from the glens around, to hear and relate the dangers and difficulties that were just overpast. Among others, the identical girl who served with the shepherd in whose house the meeting took place, had come down to Ettrick School-house to see her parents. Her name was Mary Beattie, a beautiful sprightly lass, about twenty years of age; and if the devil had taken her in preference to any one of the shepherds, his good taste could scarcely have been disputed. The first person I met was my friend, the late Mr James Anderson, who was as anxious to hear what had passed at the meeting as I was, so we two contrived a scheme whereby we thought we would hear every thing from the girl's own mouth.

We sent word to the School-house for Mary, to call at my father's house on her return up the water, as there was a parcel to go to Phawhope. She came accordingly, and when we saw her approaching, we went into a little sleeping apartment, where we could hear every thing that passed, leaving directions with my mother how to manage the affair. My mother herself was in perfect horror about the business, and believed it all; as for my father, he did not say much either the one way or the other, but bit his lip, and remarked, that, "folk would find that it was an ill thing to hae to do wi' the Enemy."

My mother would have managed extremely well, had her own early prejudices in favour of the doctrine of all kinds of apparitions not got the better of her. She was very kind to the girl, and talked with her about the storm, and the events that had occurred, till she brought the subject of the meeting forward herself, on which the following dialogue commenced:—

"But, dear Mary, my woman, what were the chiels a' met about that night?"

"O, they were just gaun through their papers and arguing."

"Arguing! what were they arguing about?"

"I have often thought about it sinsyne, but really I canna tell precisely what they were arguing about."

"Were you wi' them a' the time?"

"Yes, a' the time, but the wee while I was milking the cow."

"And did they never bid ye gang out?"

"Oo no; they never heedit whether I gaed out or in."

"It's queer that ye canna mind ought ava;—can ye no tell me ae word that ye heard them say?"

"I heard them saying something about the fitness o' things."

"Ay, that was a braw subject for them! But, Mary, did ye no hear them saying nae ill words?"

"No."

"Did ye no hear them speaking naething about the deil?"

"Very little."

"What were they saying about *him*?"

"I thought I aince heard Jamie Fletcher saying there was nae deil ava."

"Ah! the unwordy rascal! How durst he for the life o' him! I wonder he didna think shame."

"I fear aye he's something regardless, Jamie."

"I hope nane that belangs to me will ever join him in sic wickedness! But tell me, Mary, my woman, did ye no see nor hear naething uncanny about the house yoursell that night?"

"There was something like a plover cried twice i' the peat-neuk, in at the side o' Will's bed."

"A plover! His presence be about us! There was never a plover at this time o' the year. And in the house too! Ah, Mary,

I'm feared and concerned about that night's wark! What thought ye it was that it cried?"

"I didna ken what it was,—it cried just like a plover."

"Did the callants look as they war fear'd when they heard it?"

"They lookit geyan queer."

"What did they say?"

"Ane cried, 'What is that?' and another said, 'What can it mean?'—'Hout,' quo' Jamie Fletcher, 'it's just some bit stray bird that has lost itsell.'—'I dinna ken,' quo' your Will, 'I dinna like it unco weel.'"

"Think ye, did nane o' the rest see ony thing?"

"I believe there was something seen."

"What was't?" (in a half whisper, with manifest alarm.)

"When Will gaed out to try if he could gang to the sheep, he met wi' a great big rough dog, that had very near worn him into a linn in the water."

My mother was now deeply affected, and after two or three smothered exclamations, she fell a-whispering; the other followed her example, and shortly after, they rose and went out, leaving my friend and me very little wiser than we were, for we had heard both these incidents before with little variation. I accompanied Mary to Phawhope, and met with my brother, who soon convinced me of the falsehood and absurdity of the whole report; but I was grieved to find him so much cast down and distressed about it. None of them durst well show then faces at either kirk or market for a whole year, and more. The weather continuing fine, we two went together and perambulated Eskdale Moor, visiting the principal scenes of carnage among the flocks, where we saw multitudes of men skinning and burying whole droves of sheep, taking with them only the skins and tallow.

I shall now conclude this long account of the storm, and its consequences, by an extract from a poet for whose works I always feel disposed to have a great partiality; and whoever reads the above will not doubt on what incident the description is founded, nor yet deem it greatly overcharged.

"Who was it rear'd these whelming waves?
Who scalp'd the brows of old Cairn Gorm,
And scoop'd these ever-yawning caves?"—
"'Twas I, the Spirit of the Storm!"

He waved his sceptre north away,
The arctic ring was reft asunder;
And through the heaven the startling bray
Burst louder than the loudest thunder.

The feathery clouds, condensed and furl'd,
In columns swept the quaking glen;
Destruction down the dale was hurl'd,
O'er bleating flocks and wondering men.

The Grampians groan'd beneath the storm;
New mountains o'er the correi lean'd;
Ben Nevis shook his shaggy form,
And wonder'd what his Sovereign mean'd.

Even far on Yarrow's fairy dale,

The shepherd paused in dumb dismay;
And cries of spirits in the gale
Lured many a pitying hind away.

The Lowthers felt the tyrant's wrath;
Proud Hartfell quaked beneath his brand;
And Cheviot heard the cries of death,
Guarding his loved Northumberland.

But O, as fell that fateful night,
What horrors Avin wilds deform,
And choke the ghastly lingering light!
There whirl'd the vortex of the storm.

Ere morn the wind grew deadly still,
And dawning in the air updrew,
From many a shelve and shining hill,
Her folding robe of fairy blue.

Then what a smooth and wondrous scene
Hung o'er Loch Avin's lovely breast!
Not top of tallest pine was seen,
On which the dazzled eye could rest;

But mitred cliff and crested fell,
In lucid curls, her brows adorn;
Aloft the radiant crescents swell,
All pure as robes by angels worn.

Sound sleeps our seer, far from the day,
Beneath yon sleek and wreathed cone;
His spirit steals, unmiss'd, away,
And dreams across the desert lone.

Sound sleeps our seer!—the tempests rave,
And cold sheets o'er his bosom fling;
The moldwarp digs his mossy grave;
His requiem Avin eagles sing.

CHAPTER X.

THE SHEPHERD'S DOG.

A curious story that appeared lately of a dog belonging to a shepherd, named John Hoy, has brought sundry similar ones to my recollection, which I am sure cannot fail to be interesting to those unacquainted with the qualities of that most docile and affectionate of the whole animal creation—the shepherd's dog.

The story alluded to was shortly this. John was at a sacrament of the Covenanters, and being loath to leave the afternoon sermon, and likewise obliged to have his ewes at the bught by a certain hour, gave his dog a quiet hint at the outskirts of the congregation, and instantly she went away, took the hills, and gathered the whole flock of ewes to the bught, as carefully and quietly as if her master had been with her, to the astonishment of a thousand beholders, for the ewes lay scattered over two large and steep hills.

This John Hoy was my uncle; that is, he was married to my mother's sister. He was all his life remarkable for breeding up his dogs to perform his commands with wonderful promptitude and exactness, especially at a distance from him, and he kept always by the same breed. It may be necessary to remark here, that there is no species of animals so varied in their natures and propensities as the shepherd's dog, and these propensities are preserved inviolate in the same breed from generation to generation. One kind will manage sheep about hand, about a bught, shedding, or fold, almost naturally; and those that excel most in this kind of service, are always the least tractable at a distance; others will gather sheep from the hills, or turn them this way and that way, as they are commanded, as far as they can hear their master's voice, or note the signals made by his hand, and yet can never be taught to command sheep close around him. Some excel again in a kind of social intercourse. They understand all that is said to them, or of them, in the family; and often a good deal that is said of sheep, and of other dogs, their comrades. One kind will bite the legs of cattle, and no species of correction or disapprobation will restrain them, or ever make them give it up; another kind bays at the heads of cattle, and neither precept nor example will ever induce them to attack a beast behind, or bite its legs.

My uncle Hoy's kind were held in estimation over the whole country for their docility in what is termed *hirsels-rinning*; that is, gathering sheep at a distance, but they were never very good at commanding sheep about hand. Often have I stood with astonishment at seeing him standing on the top of one hill, and the Tub, as he called an excellent snow-white bitch that he had, gathering all the sheep from another with great care and caution. I once saw her gathering the head of a hope, or glen, quite out of her master's sight, while all that she heard of him was now and then the echo of his voice or whistle from another hill, yet, from the direction of that echo, she gathered the sheep with perfect acuteness and punctuality.

I have often heard him tell an anecdote of another dog, called Nimble: One drifty day, in *the seventy-four*, after gathering the ewes of Chapelhope, he found that he wanted about an hundred of them. He again betook himself to the heights, and sought for them the whole day without being able to find them, and began to suspect that they were covered over with snow in some ravine. Towards the evening it cleared up a little, and as a last resource, he sent away Nimble. She had found the scent of them on the hill while her master was looking for them; but not having received orders to bring them, she had not the means of communicating the knowledge she possessed. But as soon as John gave her the gathering word, she went away, he said, like an arrow out of a bow, and in less than five minutes he beheld her at about a mile's distance, bringing them round a hill, called the Middle, cocking her tail behind them, and apparently very happy at having got the opportunity of terminating her master's disquietude with so much ease.

I once witnessed another very singular feat performed by a dog belonging to John Graham, late tenant in Ashesteel. A neighbour came to his house after it was dark, and told him that he had lost a sheep on his farm, and that if he (Graham) did not secure her in the morning early, she would be lost, as he had brought her far. John said, he could not possibly get to the hill next morning, but if he would take him to the very spot where he lost the sheep, perhaps his dog Chieftain would find her that night. On that they went away with all expedition, lest the traces of the feet should cool; and I, then a boy, being in the house, went with them. The night was pitch-dark, which had been the cause of the man losing his ewe; and at length he pointed out a place to John, by the side of the water, where he had lost her. "Chieftain, fetch that," said John, "bring her back, sir." The dog jumped around and around, and reared himself up on end, but not being able to see any thing, evidently misapprehended his master; on which John fell a-cursing and swearing at the dog, calling him a great many blackguard names. He at last told the man, that he must point out the *very track* that the sheep went, otherwise he had no chance of recovering it. The man led him to a grey stone, and said, he was sure she took the brae within a yard of

that. "Chieftain, come hither to my foot, you great numb'd whelp," said John. Chieftain came. John pointed with his finger to the ground, "Fetch that, I say, sir, you stupid idiot—bring that back. Away!" The dog scented slowly about on the ground for some seconds, but soon began to mend his pace, and vanished in the darkness. "Bring her back—away, you great calf!" vociferated John, with a voice of exultation, as the dog broke to the hill; and as all these good dogs perform their work in perfect silence, we neither saw nor heard any more for a long time. I think, if I remember right, we waited there about half an hour; during which time, all the conversation was about the small chance that the dog had to find the ewe, for it was agreed on all hands, that she must long ago have mixed with the rest of the sheep on the farm. How that was, no man will ever be able to decide. John, however, still persisted in waiting until his dog came back, either with the ewe or without her; and at last the trusty animal brought the individual lost sheep to our very foot, which the man took on his back, and went on his way rejoicing. I remember the dog was very warm, and hanging out his tongue—John called him all the ill names he could invent, which the animal seemed to take in very good part. Such language seemed to be John's flattery to his dog. For my part, I went home, fancying I had seen a miracle, little weeting that it was nothing to what I myself was to experience in the course of my pastoral life, from the sagacity of the shepherd's dog.

My dog was always my companion. I conversed with him the whole day—I shared every meal with him, and my plaid in the time of a shower; the consequence was, that I generally had the best dogs in all the country. The first remarkable one that I had was named Sirrah. He was beyond all comparison the best dog I ever saw. He was of a surly unsocial temper—disdained all flattery, and refused to be caressed; but his attention to his master's commands and interests never will again be equalled by any of the canine race. The first time that I saw him, a drover was leading him in a rope; he was hungry, and lean, and far from being a beautiful cur, for he was all over black, and had a grim face striped with dark brown. The man had bought him of a boy for three shillings, somewhere on the Border, and doubtless had used him very ill on his journey. I thought I discovered a sort of sullen intelligence in his face, notwithstanding his dejected and forlorn situation; so I gave the drover a guinea for him, and appropriated the captive to myself. I believe there never was a guinea so well laid out; at least I am satisfied that I never laid out one to so good purpose. He was scarcely then a year old, and knew so little of herding, that he had never turned sheep in his life; but as soon as he discovered that it was his duty to do so, and that it obliged me, I can never forget with what anxiety and eagerness he learned his different evolutions. He would try every way deliberately, till he found out what I wanted him to do; and when once I made him to understand a direction, he never forgot or mistook it again. Well as I knew him, he very often astonished me, for when hard pressed in accomplishing the task that he was put to, he had expedients of the moment that bespoke a great share of the reasoning faculty. Were I to relate all his exploits, it would require a volume; I shall only mention one or two, to prove what kind of an animal he was.

I was a shepherd for ten years on the same farm, where I had always about 700 lambs put under my charge every year at weaning-time. As they were of the short, or black-faced breed, the breaking of them was a very ticklish and difficult task. I was obliged to watch them night and day for the first four days, during which time I had always a person to assist me. It happened one year, that just about midnight the lambs broke, and came up the moor upon us, making a noise with their running louder than thunder. We got up and waved our plaids, and shouted, in hopes to turn them, but we only made matters worse, for in a moment they were all round us, and by our exertions we cut them into three divisions; one of these ran north, another south, and those that came up between us straight up the moor to the westward. I called out, "Sirrah, my man, they're a' away;" the word, of all others, that set him most upon the alert, but owing to the darkness of the night, and blackness of the moor, I never saw him at all. As the division of the lambs that ran southward were going straight towards the fold, where they had been that day taken from their dams, I was afraid they would go there, and again mix with them; so I threw off part of my clothes, and pursued them, and by great personal exertion, and the help of another old dog that I had besides Sirrah, I turned them, but in a few minutes afterwards lost them altogether. I ran here and there, not knowing what to do, but always, at intervals, gave a loud whistle to Sirrah, to let him know that I was depending on him. By that whistling, the lad who was assisting me found me out; but he likewise had lost all trace whatsoever of the lambs. I asked if he had never seen Sirrah? He said, he had not; but that after I left him, a wing of the lambs had come round him with a swirl, and that he supposed Sirrah had then given them a turn, though he could not see him for the darkness. We both concluded, that whatever way the lambs ran at first, they would finally land at the fold where they left their mothers, and without delay we bent our course towards that; but when we came there, there was nothing of them, nor any kind of bleating to be heard, and we discovered with vexation that we had come on a wrong track.

My companion then bent his course towards the farm of Glen on the north, and I ran away westward for several miles, along the wild tract where the lambs had grazed while following their dams. We met after it was day, far up in a place

called the Black Cleuch, but neither of us had been able to discover our lambs, nor any traces of them. It was the most extraordinary circumstance that had ever occurred in the annals of the pastoral life! We had nothing for it but to return to our master, and inform him that we had lost his whole flock of lambs, and knew not what was become of one of them.

On our way home, however, we discovered a body of lambs at the bottom of a deep ravine, called the Flesh Cleuch, and the indefatigable Sirrah standing in front of them, looking all around for some relief, but still standing true to his charge. The sun was then up; and when we first came in view of them, we concluded that it was one of the divisions of the lambs, which Sirrah had been unable to manage until he came to that commanding situation, for it was about a mile and a half distant from the place where they first broke and scattered. But what was our astonishment, when we discovered by degrees that not one lamb of the whole flock was wanting! How he had got all the divisions collected in the dark is beyond my comprehension. The charge was left entirely to himself from midnight until the rising of the sun; and if all the shepherds in the Forest had been there to assist him, they could not have effected it with greater propriety. All that I can say farther is, that I never felt so grateful to any creature below the sun as I did to Sirrah that morning.

I remember another achievement of his which I admired still more. I was sent to a place in Tweeddale, called Stanhope, to bring home a wild ewe that had strayed from home. The place lay at the distance of about fifteen miles, and my way to it was over steep hills, and athwart deep glens;—there was no path, and neither Sirrah nor I had ever travelled the road before. The ewe was brought in and put into a barn over night; and, after being frightened in this way, was set out to me in the morning to be driven home by herself. She was as wild as a roe, and bounded away to the side of the mountain like one. I sent Sirrah on a circular route wide before her, and let him know that he had the charge of her. When I left the people at the house, Mr Tweedie, the farmer, said to me, "Do you really suppose that you will drive that sheep over these hills, and out through the midst of all the sheep in the country?" I said I would try to do it. "Then, let me tell you," said he, "that you may as well try to travel to yon sun." The man did not know that I was destined to do both the one and the other! Our way, as I said, lay all over wild hills, and through the middle of flocks of sheep. I seldom got a sight of the ewe, for she was sometimes a mile before me, sometimes two; but Sirrah kept her in command the whole way—never suffered her to mix with other sheep—nor, as far as I could judge, ever to deviate twenty yards from the track by which he and I went the day before. When we came over the great height towards Manor Water, Sirrah and his charge happened to cross it a little before me, and our way lying down hill for several miles, I lost all traces of them, but still held on my track. I came to two shepherd's houses, and asked if they had seen any thing of a black dog, with a branded face and a long tail, driving a sheep? No; they had seen no such thing; and, besides, all their sheep, both above and below the houses, seemed to be unmoved. I had nothing for it but to hold on my way homeward; and at length, on the corner of a hill at the side of the water, I discovered my trusty coal-black friend sitting with his eye fixed intently on the burn below him, and sometimes giving a casual glance behind to see if I was coming:—he had the ewe standing there, safe and unhurt.

When I got her home, and set her at liberty among our own sheep, he took it highly amiss. I could scarcely prevail with him to let her go; and so dreadfully was he affronted, that she should have been let go free after all his toil and trouble, that he would not come near me all the way to the house, nor yet taste any supper when we got there. I believe he wanted me to take her home and kill her.

He had one very laughable peculiarity, which often created no little disturbance about the house—it was an outrageous ear for music. He never heard music, but he drew towards it; and he never drew towards it, but he joined in it with all his vigour. Many a good psalm, song, and tune, was he the cause of spoiling; for when he set fairly to, at which he was not slack, the voices of all his coadjutors had no chance with his. It was customary with the worthy old farmer with whom I resided, to perform family worship evening and morning; and before he began, it was always necessary to drive Sirrah to the fields, and close the door. If this was at any time forgot or neglected, the moment that the psalm was raised, he joined with all his zeal, and at such a rate, that he drowned the voices of the family before three lines could be sung. Nothing farther could be done till Sirrah was expelled. But then! when he got to the peat-stack knowe before the door, especially if he got a blow in going out, he *did* give his powers of voice full scope, without mitigation; and even at that distance he was often a hard match for us all.

Some imagined that it was from a painful sensation that he did this. No such thing. Music was his delight: it always drew him towards it like a charm. I slept in the byre-loft—Sirrah in the hay-nook in a corner below. When sore fatigued, I sometimes retired to my bed before the hour of family worship. In such cases, whenever the psalm was raised in the kitchen, which was but a short distance, Sirrah left his lair; and laying his ear close to the bottom of the door to hear more distinctly, he growled a low note in accompaniment, till the sound expired; and then rose, shook his ears, and returned to his hay-nook. Sacred music affected him most; but in either that or any slow tune, when the tones dwelt upon

the keynote, they put him quite beside himself; his eyes had the gleam of madness in them; and he sometimes quitted singing, and literally fell to barking. All his race have the same qualities of voice and ear in a less or greater degree.

The most painful part of Sirrah's history yet remains; but, in memory of himself, it must be set down. He grew old, and unable to do my work by himself. I had a son of his coming up that promised well, and was a greater favourite with me than ever the other was. The times were hard, and the keeping of them both was a tax upon my master which I did not like to impose, although he made no remonstrances. I was obliged to part with one of them; so I sold old Sirrah to a neighbouring shepherd for three guineas. He was accustomed, while I was smearing, or doing any work about the farm, to go with any of the family when I ordered him, and run at their bidding the same as at my own; but then, when he came home at night, a word of approbation from me was recompense sufficient, and he was ready next day to go with whomsoever I commanded him. Of course, when I sold him to this lad, he went away when I ordered him, without any reluctance, and wrought for him all that day and the next as well as ever he did in his life. But when he found that he was abandoned by me, and doomed to be the slave of a stranger for whom he did not care, he would never again do another feasible turn. The lad said that he ran in among the sheep like a whelp, and seemed intent on doing him all the mischief he could. The consequence was, that he was obliged to part with him in a short time; but he had more honour than I had, for he took him to his father, and desired him to foster Sirrah, and be kind to him as long as he lived, *for the sake of what he had been*; and this injunction the old man faithfully performed.

He came back to see me now and then for months after he went away, but afraid of the mortification of being driven from the farm-house, he never came there; but knowing well the road that I took to the hill in the morning, he lay down near to that. When he saw me coming, he did not venture near me, but walked round the hill, keeping always about two hundred yards off, and then returned to his new master again, satisfied for the time that there was no more shelter with his beloved old one for him. When I thought how easily one kind word would have attached him to me for life, and how grateful it would have been to my faithful old servant and friend, I could not help regretting my fortune that obliged us to separate. That unfeeling tax on the shepherd's dog, his only bread-winner, has been the cause of much pain in this respect. The parting with old Sirrah, after all that he had done for me, had such an effect on my heart, that I have never been able to forget it to this day; the more I have considered his attachment and character, the more I have admired them; and the resolution that he took up, and persisted in, of never doing a good turn for any other of my race, after the ingratitude that he had experienced from me, appeared to me to have a kind of heroism and sublimity in it. I am, however, writing nothing but the plain simple truth, to which there are plenty of living witnesses. I then made a vow to myself, which I have religiously kept, and ever shall, never to sell another dog; but that I may stand acquitted of all pecuniary motives,—which indeed those who know me will scarcely suspect me of,—I must add, that when I saw how matters went, I never took a farthing of the stipulated price of old Sirrah. I have Sirrah's race to this day; and though none of them has ever equalled him as a sheep dog, yet they have far excelled him in all the estimable qualities of sociality and humour.

A single shepherd and his dog will accomplish more in gathering a stock of sheep from a Highland farm, than twenty shepherds could do without dogs; and it is a fact, that, without this docile animal, the pastoral life would be a mere blank. Without the shepherd's dog, the whole of the open mountainous land in Scotland would not be worth a sixpence. It would require more hands to manage a stock of sheep, gather them from the hills, force them into houses and folds, and drive them to markets, than the profits of the whole stock would be capable of maintaining. Well may the shepherd feel an interest in his dog; he it is indeed that earns the family's bread, of which he is himself content with the smallest morsel; always grateful, and always ready to exert his utmost abilities in his master's interest. Neither hunger, fatigue, nor the worst of treatment, will drive him from his side; he will follow him through fire and water, as the saying is, and through every hardship, without murmur or repining, till he literally fall down dead at his foot. If one of them is obliged to change masters, it is sometimes long before he will acknowledge the new one, or condescend to work for him with the same willingness as he did for his former lord; but if he once acknowledge him, he continues attached to him till death; and though naturally proud and high-spirited, in as far as relates to his master, these qualities (or rather failings) are kept so much in subordination, that he has not a will of his own.

My own renowned Hector, [\[A\]](#) was the son and immediate successor of the faithful old Sirrah; and though not nearly so valuable a dog, he was a far more interesting one. He had three times more humour and whim; and though exceedingly docile, his bravest acts were mostly tinged with a grain of stupidity, which showed his reasoning faculty to be laughably obtuse.

I shall mention a striking instance of it. I was once at the farm of Shorthope, in Ettrick head, receiving some lambs that I

had bought, and was going to take to market, with some more, the next day. Owing to some accidental delay, I did not get final delivery of the lambs till it was growing late; and being obliged to be at my own house that night, I was not a little dismayed lest I should scatter and lose my lambs, if darkness overtook me. Darkness did overtake me by the time I got half way, and no ordinary darkness for an August evening. The lambs, having been weaned that day, and of the wild black-faced breed, became exceedingly unruly, and for a good while I lost hopes of mastering them. Hector managed the point, and we got them safe home; but both he and his master were alike sore forefoughten. It had become so dark, that we were obliged to fold them with candles; and after closing them safely up, I went home with my father and the rest to supper. When Hector's supper was set down, behold he was wanting! and as I knew we had him at the fold, which was within call of the house, I went out, and called and whistled on him for a good while; but he did not make his appearance. I was distressed about this; for, having to take away the lambs next morning, I knew I could not drive them a mile without my dog, if it had been to save me the whole drove.

The next morning, as soon as it was day, I arose, and enquired if Hector had come home. No; he had not been seen. I knew not what to do; but my father proposed that he would take out the lambs and herd them, and let them get some meat to fit them for the road; and that I should ride with all speed to Shorthope, to see if my dog had gone back there. Accordingly, we went together to the fold to turn out the lambs, and there was poor Hector sitting trembling in the very middle of the fold door, on the inside of the flake that closed it, with his eyes still steadfastly fixed on the lambs. He had been so hardly set with them after it grew dark, that he durst not for his life leave them, although hungry, fatigued, and cold; for the night had turned out a deluge of rain. He had never so much as lain down, for only the small spot that he sat on was dry, and there had he kept watch the whole night. Almost any other colley would have discerned that the lambs were safe enough in the fold; but Hector had not been able to see through this. He even refused to take my word for it, for he durst not quit his watch, though he heard me calling both at night and morning.

Another peculiarity of his was, that he had a mortal antipathy at the family mouser, which was ingrained in his nature from his very puppyhood; yet so perfectly absurd was he, that no impertinence on her side, and no baiting on, could ever induce him to lay his mouth on her, or injure her in the slightest degree. There was not a day, and scarcely an hour, passed over, that the family did not get some amusement with these two animals. Whenever he was within doors, his whole occupation was watching and pointing the cat from morning to night. When she flitted from one place to another, so did he in a moment; and then squatting down, he kept his point sedulously, till he was either called off or fell asleep.

He was an exceedingly poor taker of meat, was always to press to it, and always lean; and often he would not taste it till we were obliged to bring in the cat. The malicious looks that he cast at her from under his eyebrows on such occasions, were exceedingly ludicrous, considering his utter incapability of wronging her. Whenever he saw her, he drew near his bicker, and looked angry, but still he would not taste till she was brought to it; and then he cocked his tail, set up his birses, and began a-lapping furiously, in utter desperation. His good nature was so immovable, that he would never refuse her a share of what he got; he even lapped close to the one side of the dish, and left her room—but mercy as he did ply!

It will appear strange to hear a dog's reasoning faculty mentioned, as it has been; but I have hardly ever seen a shepherd's dog do any thing without perceiving his reasons for it. I have often amused myself in calculating what his motives were for such and such things, and I generally found them very cogent ones. But Hector had a droll stupidity about him, and took up forms and rules of his own, for which I could never perceive any motive that was not even farther out of the way than the action itself. He had one uniform practice, and a very bad one it was, during the time of family worship,—that just three or four seconds before the conclusion of the prayer, he started to his feet, and ran barking round the apartment like a crazed beast. My father was so much amused with this, that he would never suffer me to correct him for it, and I scarcely ever saw the old man rise from the prayer without his endeavouring to suppress a smile at the extravagance of Hector. None of us ever could find out how he knew that the prayer was near done, for my father was not formal in his prayers; but certes he did know,—of that we had nightly evidence. There never was any thing for which I was so puzzled to discover a reason as this; but, from accident, I did discover it, and, however ludicrous it may appear, I am certain I was correct. It was much in character with many of Hector's feats, and rather, I think, the most *outré* of any principle he ever acted on. As I said, his chief daily occupation was pointing the cat. Now, when he saw us all kneel down in a circle, with our faces couched on our paws, in the same posture with himself, it struck his absurd head, that we were all engaged in pointing the cat. He lay on tenters all the time, but the acuteness of his ear enabling him, through time, to ascertain the very moment when we would all spring to our feet, he thought to himself, "I shall be first after her for you all!"

He inherited his dad's unfortunate ear for music, not perhaps in so extravagant a degree, but he ever took care to exhibit it on the most untimely and ill-judged occasions. Owing to some misunderstanding between the minister of the parish and the session clerk, the precenting in church devolved on my father, who was the senior elder. Now, my father could have sung several of the old church tunes middling well, in his own family circle; but it so happened, that, when mounted in the desk, he never could command the starting notes of any but one (St Paul's), which were always in undue readiness at the root of his tongue, to the exclusion of every other semibreve in the whole range of sacred melody. The minister gave out psalms four times in the course of every day's service, and consequently the congregation were treated with St Paul's, in the morning, at great length, twice in the course of the service, and then once again at the close—nothing but St Paul's. And, it being of itself a monotonous tune, nothing could exceed the monotony that prevailed in the primitive church of Ettrick. Out of pure sympathy for my father alone, I was compelled to take the precentorship in hand; and, having plenty of tunes, for a good while I came on as well as could be expected, as men say of their wives. But, unfortunately for me, Hector found out that I attended church every Sunday, and though I had him always closed up carefully at home, he rarely failed to make his appearance in church at some time of the day. Whenever I saw him, a tremor came over my spirits; for I well knew what the issue would be. The moment he heard my voice strike up the psalm, "with might and majesty," then did he fall in with such overpowering vehemence, that he and I seldom got any to join in the music but our two selves. The shepherds hid their heads, and laid them down on the backs of the seats wrapped in their plaids, and the lasses looked down to the ground and laughed till their faces grew red. I disdained to stick the tune, and therefore was obliged to carry on in spite of the obstreperous accompaniment; but I was, time after time, so completely put out of all countenance by the brute, that I was obliged to give up my office in disgust, and leave the parish once more to their old friend, St Paul.

Hector was quite incapable of performing the same feats among sheep that his father did; but, as far as his judgment served him, he was a docile and obliging creature. He had one singular quality, of keeping true to the charge to which he was set. If we had been shearing, or sorting sheep in any way, when a division was turned out, and Hector got the word to attend to them, he would have done it pleasantly, for a whole day, without the least symptom of weariness. No noise or hurry about the fold, which brings every other dog from his business, had the least effect on Hector, save that it made him a little troublesome on his own charge, and set him a-running round and round them, turning them in at corners, out of a sort of impatience to be employed as well as his baying neighbours at the fold. Whenever old Sirrah found himself hard set, in commanding wild sheep on steep ground, where they are worst to manage, he never failed, without any hint to the purpose, to throw himself wide in below them, and lay their faces to the hill, by which means he got the command of them in a minute. I never could make Hector comprehend this advantage, with all my art, although his father found it out entirely of himself. The former would turn or wear sheep no other way, but on the hill above them; and though very good at it, he gave both them and himself double the trouble and fatigue.

It cannot be supposed that he could understand all that was passing in the little family circle, but he certainly comprehended a good part of it. In particular, it was very easy to discover that he rarely missed aught that was said about himself, the sheep, the cat, or of a hunt. When aught of that nature came to be discussed, Hector's attention and impatience soon became manifest. There was one winter evening, I said to my mother that I was going to Bowerhope for a fortnight, for that I had more conveniency for writing with Alexander Laidlaw, than at home; and I added, "But I will not take Hector with me, for he is constantly quarrelling with the rest of the dogs, singing music, or breeding some uproar."—"Na, na," quoth she, "leave Hector with me; I like aye best to have him at hame, poor fallow."

These were all the words that passed. The next morning the waters were in a great flood, and I did not go away till after breakfast; but when the time came for tying up Hector, he was wanting—"The deuce's in that beast," said I; "I will wager that he heard what we were saying yesternight, and has gone off for Bowerhope as soon as the door was opened this morning."

"If that should really be the case, I'll think the beast no canny," said my mother.

The Yarrow was so large as to be quite impassable, so that I had to go up by St Mary's Loch, and go across by the boat; and, on drawing near to Bowerhope, I soon perceived that matters had gone precisely as I suspected. Large as the Yarrow was, and it appeared impassable by any living creature, Hector had made his escape early in the morning, had swum the river, and was sitting, "like a drookit hen," on a knoll at the east end of the house, awaiting my arrival with much impatience. I had a great attachment to this animal, who, with a good deal of absurdity, joined all the amiable qualities of his species. He was rather of a small size, very rough and shagged, and not far from the colour of a fox.

His son, Lion, was the very picture of his dad, had a good deal more sagacity, but also more selfishness. A history of the one, however, would only be an epitome of that of the other. Mr William Nicholson took a fine likeness of this latter one, which that gentleman still possesses. He could not get him to sit for his picture in such a position as he wanted, till he exhibited a singularly fine picture of his, of a small dog, on the opposite side of the room. Lion took it for a real animal, and, disliking its fierce and important look exceedingly, he immediately set up his ears and his shaggy birses, and fixing a stern eye on the picture, in manifest wrath, he would then sit for a whole day, and point his eye at it, without moving away or altering his position.

It is a curious fact, in the history of these animals, that the most useless of the breed have often the greatest degree of sagacity in trifling and useless matters. An exceedingly good sheep-dog attends to nothing else but that particular branch of business to which he is bred. His whole capacity is exerted and exhausted on it, and he is of little avail in miscellaneous matters; whereas, a very indifferent cur, bred about the house, and accustomed to assist with every thing, will often put the more noble breed to disgrace in these paltry services. If one calls out, for instance, that the cows are in the corn, or the hens in the garden, the house-colley needs no other hint, but runs and turns them out. The shepherd's dog knows not what is astir; and, if he is called out in a hurry for such work, all that he will do is to break to the hill, and rear himself up on end, to see if no sheep are running away. A bred sheep-dog, if coming ravening from the hills, and getting into a milk-house, would most likely think of nothing else than filling his belly with the cream. Not so his initiated brother. He is bred at home, to a more civilized behaviour. I have known such lie night and day, among from ten to twenty pails full of milk, and never once break the cream of one of them with the tip of his tongue, nor would he suffer cat, rat, or any other creature, to touch it. This latter sort, too, are far more acute at taking up what is said in a family. There was a farmer of this country, a Mr Alexander Cuninghame, who had a bitch that, for the space of three or four years, in the latter part of her life, met him always at the boundary of his farm, about a mile and a half from his house, on his way home. If he was half a day away, a week, or a fortnight, it was all the same; she met him at that spot, and there never was an instance known of her going to wait his arrival there on a wrong day. If this was a fact, which I have heard averred by people who lived in the house at that time, she could only know of his coming home by hearing it mentioned in the family. The same animal would have gone and brought the cows from the hill when it grew dark, without any bidding, yet she was a very indifferent sheep-dog.

The anecdotes of these animals are all so much alike, that were I but to relate the thousandth part of those I have heard, they would often look very much like repetitions. I shall therefore only mention one or two of the most singular, which I know to be well authenticated.

There was a shepherd lad near Langholm, whose name was Scott, who possessed a bitch, famed over all the West Border for her singular tractability. He could have sent her home with one sheep, two sheep, or any given number, from any of the neighbouring farms; and in the lambing season, it was his uniform practice to send her home with the kebbed ewes just as he got them.—I must let the town reader understand this. A kebbed ewe is one whose lamb dies. As soon as such is found, she is immediately brought home by the shepherd, and another lamb put to her; and this lad, on going his rounds on the hill, whenever he found a kebbed ewe, immediately gave her in charge to his bitch to take home, which saved him from coming back that way again, and going over the same ground he had looked before. She always took them carefully home, and put them into a fold which was close by the house, keeping watch over them till she was seen by some one of the family; and then that moment she decamped, and hasted back to her master, who sometimes sent her three times home in one morning, with different charges. It was the custom of the farmer to watch her, and take the sheep in charge from her; but this required a good deal of caution; for as soon as she perceived that she was seen, whether the sheep were put into the fold or not, she conceived her charge at an end, and no flattery could induce her to stay and assist in folding them. There was a display of accuracy and attention in this, that I cannot say I have ever seen equalled.

The late Mr Steel, flesher in Peebles, had a bitch that was fully equal to the one mentioned above, and that in the very same qualification too. Her feats in taking home sheep from the neighbouring farms into the flesh-market at Peebles by herself, form innumerable anecdotes in that vicinity, all similar to one another. But there is one instance related of her, that combines so much sagacity with natural affection, that I do not think the history of the animal creation furnishes such another.

Mr Steel had such an implicit dependence on the attention of this animal to his orders, that whenever he put a lot of sheep before her, he took a pride in leaving it to herself, and either remained to take a glass with the farmer of whom he had made the purchase, or took another road, to look after bargains or other business. But one time he chanced to commit a drove to her charge at a place called Willenslee, without attending to her condition, as he ought to have done. This farm

is five miles from Peebles, over wild hills, and there is no regularly defined path to it. Whether Mr Steel remained behind, or took another road, I know not; but on coming home late in the evening, he was astonished at hearing that his faithful animal had never made her appearance with the drove. He and his son, or servant, instantly prepared to set out by different paths in search of her; but on their going out to the street, there was she coming with the drove, no one missing; and, marvellous to relate, she was carrying a young pup in her mouth! She had been taken in travail on the hills; and how the poor beast had contrived to manage her drove in her state of suffering, is beyond human calculation; for her road lay through sheep the whole way. Her master's heart smote him when he saw what she had suffered and effected; but she was nothing daunted; and having deposited her young one in a place of safety, she again set out full speed to the hills, and brought another, and another, till she brought her whole litter, one by one; but the last one was dead. I give this as I have heard it related by the country people; for though I knew Mr Walter Steel well enough, I cannot say I ever heard it from his own mouth. I never entertained any doubt, however, of the truth of the relation, and certainly it is worthy of being preserved, for the credit of that most docile and affectionate of all animals—the shepherd's dog.

The stories related of the dogs of sheep-stealers are fairly beyond all credibility. I cannot attach credit to those, without believing the animals to have been devils incarnate, come to the earth for the destruction of both the souls and bodies of men. I cannot mention names, for the sake of families that still remain in the country; but there have been sundry men executed, who belonged to this quarter of the realm, for that heinous crime, in my own time; and others have absconded, just in time to save their necks. There was not one of these to whom I allude who did not acknowledge his dog to be the greatest offender. One young man, in particular, who was, I believe, overtaken by justice for his first offence, stated, that after he had folded the sheep by moonlight, and selected his number from the flock of a former master, he took them out, and set away with them towards Edinburgh. But before he had got them quite off the farm, his conscience smote him, as he said, (but more likely a dread of that which soon followed,) and he quitted the sheep, letting them go again to the hill. He called his dog off them; and mounting his pony, rode away. At that time he said his dog was capering and playing around him, as if glad of having got free of a troublesome business; and he regarded him no more, till, after having rode about three miles, he thought again and again that he heard something coming up behind him. Halting, at length, to ascertain what it was, in a few minutes his dog came up with the stolen drove, driving them at a furious rate to keep pace with his master. The sheep were all smoking, and hanging out their tongues, and their driver was fully as warm as they. The young man was now exceedingly troubled; for the sheep having been brought so far from home, he dreaded there would be a pursuit, and he could not get them home again before day. Resolving, at all events, to keep his hands clear of them, he corrected his dog in great wrath, left the sheep once more, and taking his dog with him, rode off a second time. He had not ridden above a mile, till he perceived that his dog had again given him the slip; and suspecting for what purpose, he was terribly alarmed as well as chagrined; for the daylight approached, and he durst not make a noise calling on his dog, for fear of alarming the neighbourhood, in a place where both he and his dog were known. He resolved therefore to abandon the animal to himself, and take a road across the country which he was sure his dog did not know, and could not follow. He took that road; but being on horseback, he could not get across the enclosed fields. He at length came to a gate, which he closed behind him, and went about half a mile farther, by a zigzag course, to a farm-house where both his sister and sweetheart lived; and at that place he remained until after breakfast time. The people of this house were all examined on the trial, and no one had either seen sheep, or heard them mentioned, save one man, who came up to the young man as he was standing at the stable-door, and told him that his dog had the sheep safe enough down at the Crooked Yett, and he needed not hurry himself. He answered, that the sheep were not his—they were young Mr Thomson's, who had left them to his charge; and he was in search of a man to drive them, which made him come off his road.

After this discovery, it was impossible for the poor fellow to get quit of them; so he went down and took possession of the stolen property once more, carried them on, and disposed of them; and, finally, the transaction cost him his life. The dog, for the last four or five miles that he had brought the sheep, could have no other guide to the road his master had gone, but the smell of his pony's feet.

It is also well known that there was a notorious sheep-stealer in the county of Mid-Lothian, who, had it not been for the skins and sheep's-heads, would never have been condemned, as he could, with the greatest ease, have proved an *alibi* every time on which there were suspicions cherished against him. He always went by one road, calling on his acquaintances, and taking care to appear to every body by whom he was known; while his dog went by another with the stolen sheep; and then on the two felons meeting again, they had nothing more ado than turn the sheep into an associate's enclosure, in whose house the dog was well fed and entertained, and would have soon taken all the fat sheep on the Lothian Edges to that house. This was likewise a female, a jet-black one, with a deep coat of soft hair, but smooth-

headed, and very strong and handsome in her make. On the disappearance of her master, she lay about the hills and the places he had frequented; but never attempted to steal a drove by herself, nor yet any thing for her own hand. She was kept a while by a relation of her master's; but never acting heartily in his service, soon came to an untimely end. Of this there is little doubt, although some spread the report that one evening, after uttering two or three loud howls, she had vanished!

FOOTNOTE:-

[\[A\]](#)See the Mountain Bard.

THE END.

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Transcriber's Note

Some punctuation errors were corrected.

The following apparent printer's error was addressed.

Page 146 advenure changed to adventure.
(my escape after the adventure)

The word saacred was spelled thus in both volumes and was left unchanged.

[End of *The Shepherd's Calendar, Vol. II*, by James Hogg]