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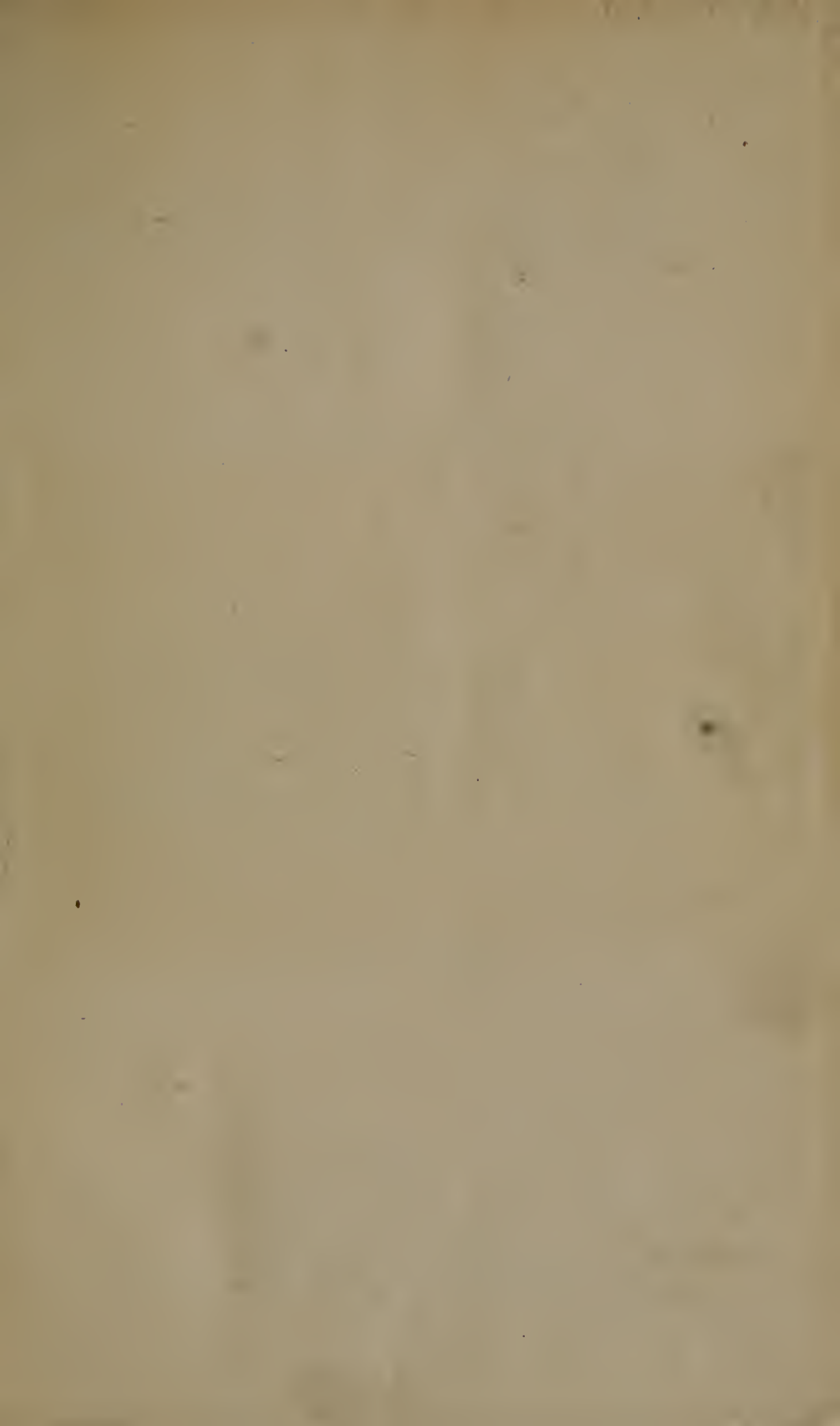
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THE  
WHITE COCKADE;

OR,

FAITH AND FORTITUDE.

BY

JAMES GRANT,

AUTHOR OF

“THE YELLOW FRIGATE,” “SECOND TO NONE,”  
“THE KING’S OWN BORDERERS,” “THE ROMANCE OF WAR,”  
ETC., ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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## PREFACE.

IN my former novel, "The King's Own Borderers," I endeavoured, in the characters of Lord and Lady Rohallion, to depict Jacobitism in its decline, or rather when it had become identified only with the senility and weakness of enthusiastic old age; but in the following story I have sought to pourtray it in the zenith of its strength, and before it had degenerated, into mere sentimental loyalty to a race of dead monarchs—of all loyalty perhaps the most pure and unselfish.

In the progress of my tale, I have had to introduce several points of local history, a branch of study which, I am sorry to say, is now usually the last element thought of in Scottish popular education.

Scotsmen, and Englishmen too, have long

since learned the value of that treaty, which made them equally subjects of a vast united empire, on whose flag the sun never sets; but Sir Baldred Otterburn will represent a numerous class, who existed even until after the beginning of the present century, and who bitterly resented the Act of Union.

“The English adherents of the Stuarts had nothing to say against it,” says a recent writer; “but the Scottish Jacobites could scarcely find words sufficiently strong to express their hatred and horror of a measure which, to their excited patriotism, seemed to be the consummation of all ruin and disgrace, and the utter annihilation of Scotland as a free and independent country;”\* and singularly enough, a bill for its total repeal in June, 1713, was only lost by a majority of *three* in the House of Lords.

As a proof of how the two countries, by previous animosity, obstructed each other's progress, the year 1867 has proved that the revenue of England, since 1707, has increased tenfold, and that of Scotland more than sixtyfold! (Vide Debate on the Reform Bill in March.)

\* Dr. Charles Mackay. Preface to “Jacobite Songs,” &c.



The character of Balcraftie is neither a solitary one, nor entirely original, for such a composite rogue, the famous Deacon Brodie, actually figured among the Town Councillors of Edinburgh, in the end of the last century, and expiated his many crimes on a gallows, constructed by himself, for the use of the Criminal Court.

It must be pretty apparent to any student of History, that had the *whole* fighting force of the Highlands followed Charles Edward, we might never have heard of a battle of Culloden; and it is somewhat amusing to observe how the thousands who remained quietly at home, and all their descendants too, have readily adopted the laurels of the little band in whose faith and valour they had no share whatever.

In all the military details of my story, I have striven to be correct, and have consulted the War Office Records of most of the regiments engaged at Falkirk and Culloden; and if, in entering somewhat into the spirit of the time, I have written with a little bitterness about the barbarities that followed the extinction of the Insurrection, it has been simply in the genuine hatred of all cruelty

and tyranny—oppression and hypocrisy—for “the last expiring wave of Jacobitism has long since broken, and left not even a ripple upon the shore; and a poet, or a reader, may be a Jacobite in literature, without being in the smallest degree a Jacobite in politics.

June, 1867.

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OF  
THE FIRST VOLUME.

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# THE WHITE COCKADE.

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## CHAPTER I.

‘L’ETOILE DE LA MER.’

“The ship is sailing, the moon is shining ;  
Low on a level with the deck,  
She swims through the white cloud breakers leaping  
About her hull as about a wreck.

“The ship is sailing, my heart is sinking ;  
Ned, you never knew me thus before :  
We’re home at last ! but I wish ’twere morning—  
There’s something waiting for me ashore.”

*Good Words*, 1866.

ON a bright morning in May, a long, low, black lugger was creeping along the German Sea, about thirty miles off the mouth of the Firth of Forth.

Sharply prowed and pinck-built, having a round stern finished (by a continuation of the bulwarks aft) with a narrow square part above ; she had two large quadrilateral or four-cornered sails, each bent to a strong yard, and confined by well-greased parrels to the slender and taper masts, which were raked well aft. The size of those long sails, suggested that great care was requisite

in lowering and shifting them, which was necessary at every tack, for the lugger was one of unusual tonnage for her rig, and was decked and armed with two brass guns and several pateraroes or swivels along her gunnel.

Forward and amid-ships, a mixed crew of sixteen Scotsmen and Dunkirkers, sat smoking or chewing pigtail, with their backs to the morning breeze. They were all rough, weatherbeaten, and bushy-whiskered fellows. Their hair, long and dirty, was served round with spun-yarn to keep it tidy, or out of their eyes if they went aloft. All wore coarse pea-jackets and short kilt-like trowsers of canvas, well japanned with tar. They had long knives, with shark-skin sheaths in their girdles, and wore broad square metal buckles on their shoes.

Though few in number, these men were bold and reckless in aspect and bearing; for their craft was the 'Etoile de la Mer,' a notorious contraband vessel of Dunkirk, and they were sailing on the sea, at a time when smugglers, if taken, had seldom the option of entering the king's service. In their own phraseology, they sailed "with halters round their necks," and when captured were usually strung up to the yard-arm.

That his majesty's ship, the 'Fox,' was now on the look-out for the lugger, in those very waters, was an exciting circumstance of which some friendly fisherman had duly informed them over

night ; thus a sharp look-out was kept by Captain Scupperplug and his men, as they crept slowly towards the estuary, being in no hurry to enter until after sunset, and ere that time, a long summer day, they knew, must intervene, so every sail of any apparent size was carefully edged away from.

I am doubtful whether the real name of this famous old Scottish smuggler was ever recorded, as, among seamen, he was always known as Captain Sanders Scupperplug, or old Puerto-de-la-Plata, having been one of the *five* British seamen who took that place by surprise—an event in his life, concerning which, he spun many a tough yarn, over his can of grog ashore, and in the long watches of the night at sea.

He was a thick-set, stunted, and truculent, but withal, seaman-like personage ; he wore a low three-cocked hat, edged with tarnished lace ; his thick grizzled hair, of no particular colour, was crusted with saline particles and queued with spunyarn. He had a short blue, stiff-skirted and collarless coat, buttoned up to his throat, and garnished with several rows of gilt buttons on the wide cuffs and square flapped pockets. A broad leather belt girt his waist, and sustained a long knife or dagger.

The slash of a cutlass had traversed his right cheek, imparting a sinister glare to his eyes, by the consequent contraction of the muscles, and

his nose having been carefully slit by the Spaniards, when he was a prisoner in Hispaniola, made his aspect unusually repulsive. He looked like a genuine pirate—a sea-faring bull dog on his hind legs; and had all the bearing of one who had been, as he sometimes boasted in his cups, a powder-monkey on board the ‘Vulture,’ under Captain William Kidd, who was hanged (for piracy and levanting with a king’s ship) at Execution Dock in the year 1701, as all the world knew then.

The distant and dim blue wavy ridges that rose, on either bow, from the German Sea, were the hills of Fife and of Eastern Lothian, and far away towards them, the green billows rolled merrily in the sunshine of the early morning. The sails which appeared at the horizon were chiefly coasters, hugging the land as they crept along, for we were at war with France then, and no vessel of any size or value, unless a privateer or letter of marque, ventured seaward without a convoy.

“De vind is veering bore aft,” snivelled the mate, Vander Pierboom, who was steering. He was a short, squat and ferocious-looking Hollander, who might very well have passed for the twin brother of his captain, as his nasal protuberance had been hopelessly smashed by a half-spent shot at Puerto-de-la-Plata, and his cheeks had been spritsail-yarded by an arrow on the coast of Africa.



“More aft,” exclaimed Scupperplug, with one of the dreadful and useless oaths then in vogue; “and it is freshening too; Mahoun! we’ll be inside the bay before the middle watch is over, and that winna suit our plans. Lower the yards!—take in sail; and, hearkee, you young limb of Satan, Jule Leroux—”

“Yes, sare,” cried a little French mulatto boy, tumbling hurriedly out of the boat where he had been asleep.

“Shake loose the ensign.”

“Which, monsieur?”

“The union,—d—n it, and you too! Up with it, chock-a-block.”

From a bundle of bunting, composed of the flags of *all* nations, the boy hurriedly and nervously, as if he already felt the captain’s colt across his tawny shoulders, selected one, bearing the red cross of England, behind the white saltire of Scotland (the emerald isle had, as yet, no share in that parti-coloured conglomeration of crosses, the Union Jack), and it was run up to the head of the taper main-mast, for Captain Scupperplug was prepared to pass himself off as a trader from Lerwick, Thurso, or the Hans Towns, if questioned by any one in authority, for ships’ logs and papers were not kept so strictly then as now.

Hitherto the gallant Captain Scupperplug had been sailing under a most cunningly devised as-

sortment of colours which belonged to no nation in particular, and were only intended to mystify, at a distance, any king's officer, but more especially Captain Beaver of the 'Fox' frigate, whom it was now the smuggler's chief object to avoid, as in addition to a contraband cargo, he had on board two passengers, who were eminently obnoxious to the British government, and after landing whom in safety, a certain authority at Dunkirk, was to pay him the sum of fifty louis d'or, over and above all expenses.

Great Britain was then, I have said, at war with France. She had been so since 1744, and also with Spain since 1739—at war, moreover, for sundry remarkable causes which did not concern the simple and tax-paying people of these realms a single jot.

The emperor, Charles VI. of Germany, had died in 1740, and the French caused the Bavarian elector to be crowned in his place, thus stripping of her inheritance, his daughter, the famous empress Queen of Hungary. Prussia pounced on Silesia; France, Saxony, and Bavaria, attacked the rest of her dominions; but Britain with Holland, and soon after, Russia, united in her favour.

We islanders had no apparent cause to meddle in this continental squabble; but then the good and well-being of Hanover, and the security of that petty Electorate, so well beloved at the Court

of St. James', depended upon a nice balance of the hostile interests of the German Empire. The servile English ministry were willing to gratify George II. and his hideous mistresses by making an essay in its favour. A few millions of gold, a few thousand British lives, were nothing when Hanover was menaced; so to war we went, with a will, as usual. Our troops soon made a diversion in favour of Maria Theresa, and the nominal emperor had to fly to Frankfort, where he lived in obscurity—all of which, being history, is perhaps not new to the reader.

Hanover was preserved, the real object of our interference; but still the war went on by sea and land, a state of affairs which made no difference to the adventurous Captain Scupperplug, who, favoured by a fog, had stolen out of Dunkirk, and escaping the fleet of Rear-Admiral Byng, then cruising off the north and east coasts of Scotland, had arrived safely, as yet, with a good cargo of brandy and sherry, almost within sight of the Isle of May.

“If overhauled by a shark of a king's ship, these passengers of ours will add muckle to our risk o' being tacked up by the craig,” remarked the captain, in a growling tone, to his mate; “and in this bit lugger we canna hide them. Mahoun take it! the cabin is little better than the saut-bucket o' the Crail fisher boat.”

“Hide dem—no, unless under de vater, vid a

gannon shot at dere veet," suggested the cruel Dutchman; "dree time, hab I said, dey had bedder valk de plank, dan add to our beril by dere bresence aboard!"

"No—no, d——n it, Vander Pierboom; think of the fifty louis d'or; they are worth that muckle, ye dour Dutch devil."

"Bud who de Henkers, are dey?"

"Dinna fash your thumb anent that, mate, They are some o' those will turn the world upside doon, I hope ere long, and then, Mahoun! we shall have nae ships o' the German Elector poking their snouts in Scottish waters. The mangy white horse o' Hanover—may the devil gie it the glanders!—will have to keep ashore, or on its ain side o' the German sea."

"Oho—I zee—I zee," said the mate, putting a thick finger to where his nose once had been; "dey are Jagobites—vat you call—eh?"

"Aye, aye, just sae—but keep her away, Vander Pierboom," said Scupperplug, who had been looking long and intently through an old battered telescope, well served round with spun-yarn, at a grey object that was slowly rising from the horizon: "keep the coast of East Lothian well aboard, for that is the May already, or I'm a Dutchman!"

"Bearing about dwendy vive mile off, or so," said the Hollander, whose flattened nose sorely impeded his pronunciation.

“Exactly—sae keep her away three points more to the south’ard—par los infernos, the mair sea-room we gie our bit barky the better,” added the captain, whose language was a strange compound of English and Scotch, interspersed with foreign oaths, picked up chiefly in the Spanish main; “with the hail o’ a lang summer day before us, every hour adds to our danger, so keep a bright look-out, lads, or by the Henker’s horns, we may never see the auld timmer forts o’ Dunkirk again! Jule Leroux, are those gentlemen below stirring yet?”

“Oui—Monsieur le Capitaine,” replied the boy, eying the colt, a piece of knotted rope which hung half out of the skipper’s right hand pocket.

“Then get ready some coffee, dashed with Nantz; and look sharp, ye French baboon, or it will be the worse for ye!”

He now took up his heavy pistols (which were barrelled and mounted with brass) from the binnacle; after looking carefully to the flints and priming, he placed them in his broad black leather girdle, and buttoned his rough pilot coat over them. He then bellowed something hoarsely down the companion hatch into the little cabin of the lugger.

Voices responded cheerfully from below, and two gentlemen soon after hurried on deck; and, with faces expressive of joy and animation, bade him and Mynheer Vander Pierboom good morning,

all unaware of the latter's kind suggestion for dropping them quietly overboard, each with a cold shot at his heels.

They then looked eagerly around at the bright green waves dancing merrily past in the summer sunshine, and at the stripe of distant coast, that rose on either bow, as the lugger, under her reduced canvas, bore slowly, but steadily on, rolling a little from side to side, as she was now trimmed before the wind.

## CHAPTER II.

## ATTAINED.

“O, the tod rules owre the Lion,  
 And the midden’s aboon the moon,  
 So Scotland maun cower and cringe  
 To a fause and foreign loon :  
 O weary fa’ the piper chiel  
 Wha sells his breath sae dear ;  
 And weary fa’ the evil time  
 The Orange Prince cam’ here.”

*Old Song.*

IN stature both these strangers were above the middle height, and were well built and well knit in figure. One wore his light brown hair unpowdered, and simply tied by a white ribband ; he was dark-blue eyed, and oval-faced, eminently handsome, courtly in bearing, and certainly not more than five-and-twenty years of age.

The other, who wore a Ramillies wig and jack boots, which seemed to have seen better days, was stouter in form and darker in complexion, having been bronzed by exposure to the weather in many a foreign land. His forehead was well marked by the lines of thought, and his dark eyes wore usually a stern, sharp, and enquiring expression,

though the form of his mouth signified extreme good nature. He was more than twenty years the senior of his companion, like whom he wore a plain light green frock, without lace or ornament on the pockets or loose wide cuffs, fastened in front by a row of silver clasps, and girt at the waist by a plain black leather girdle, at which hung his sword and a pair of small silver mounted pistols, from two steel hooks. From the chasings of these pistols, a coat of arms had been carefully effaced.

Though simply known as Captains Douglas and Mitchell—"Captain"—as Gibbet has it—"being a good travelling title, and one that kept waiters and ostlers in order,"—the younger was Henry Douglas, Lord Dalquharn,\* of the Holm, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, a near kinsman of the gallant Viscount Kenmure, who perished on the scaffold for the House of Stuart; and the elder was Sir John Mitchell, Bart., of Pitreavie, in former times a Captain of the Scots Grey Dragoons—both attainted and outlawed for their steady adherence to their native line of kings—and both now returning to Scotland on a mission fraught with peril to themselves, for if discovered, the axe and gibbet awaited them.

Each lifted his little low triangular hat with studious politeness to the squat skipper, and then waved it as if in welcome to the distant coast.

\* Pronounced *Dalwharn*, in Scotland.



“So land is in sight at last, my old cock of Puerto-de-la-Plata?” exclaimed Sir John Mitchell.

“The Lammer-Muir, Captain Douglas, will soon rise on the port bow; yonder is the Isle of May, and a point or so further north, are Fifeness and Kilmeinie Craig: I daresay you’ll ken them, Captain Mitchell,” said the smuggler, good naturedly, for he was too much of a Scotsman not to sympathise with the expression which he read in the handsome faces of the returning exiles as they looked towards the land of their birth and of their dearest hopes.

“Fifeness and Kilmeinie,” repeated Sir John Mitchell thoughtfully, as he shook his head.

“Aye, sir—coming from the other side o’ the sea—running south frae the Red Head of Angus, or the Inchcape Rock, we’ve to gie that long reef the Carr-rocks a wide berth—north longitude  $56^{\circ} 16'$ , west latitude  $2^{\circ} 34'$ . Hech, sirs! mony a stout ship as ever sailed the sea, hath had her timbers torn on those devil’s teeth.”

Without hearing the skipper’s remarks, the eyes of the elder passenger were fixed earnestly on the dim blue stripe of coast.

“For thirty years,” said he, in a low voice, “my eyes have looked on other lands; and now—now I cannot tell what is coming over me, but my heart is very full, Dalquharn—very full, indeed! Egad—so many things have happened, and I have

seen so much of the busy world, that ages seem to have elapsed since I was out with my Lord the Earl of Mar in the '15, and now I hope we are on the eve of going *out* again."

Lord Dalquharn smiled at this significant phrase, which is always used in Scotland to express having joined the House of Stuart, just as in Ireland, to say having been "up," signified being engaged in the affair of '98; but Lord Dalquharn's smile was a bitter one, and his ungloved hand was tightly clenched in the carved steel hilt of his slender little walking sword, a farewell gift from Prince Charles Edward.

The late Lord, his father, had first embroiled himself with the intrigues of the cabinet of St. Germain's at the time of the accession of George II.; some thirteen years before, he had also in his place in Parliament as a representative peer, resented too bitterly the severe and shortsighted proceedings of the ministry in the matter of the Porteous mob, and used such strong language in his protest against the removal of the gates and portes of Edinburgh, that he had to make his escape from London. A summons from the privy council he treated with disdain, and repairing to St. Germain's with his lady (a Gordon of the House of Kenmure) and their son, the little Master of Dalquharn; ere long he found his title forfeited, his name proscribed, and his estates gifted to a truculent whig-noble, who had been

deeply implicated in the Glencoe Massacre and the Treaty of Union, having sold his vote for the same sum as the patriotic Lord Chancellor Seafield—to wit £490.

Now, his only hope and heir stood a beggar and a fugitive on the deck of an obscure smuggling lugger, but full of anticipations of better and more glorious days, when, as his companion—whose hostility to the government was of much older date—phrased it, “King Jamie should cock up his beaver in old Holyrood.”

“You are very silent, Dalquharn,” said Mitchell; “of what are you thinking?”

“I am thinking of my father and of my mother, who sleep by old King James’s side in the chapel of St. Germain-en-Laye.”

“Loyal still in death!”

“Yea—loyal still! If the dead king were to come forth, he might hold royal state again, so many true and gallant Scottish and Irish hearts are mouldering near him—that is, if their blessed spirits do not, as I hope, find eternal rest.”

“Come, come, Gadamercey! you must not sink into a dolorous mood, with the land in sight and Byng’s fleet we know not where. Egad! I can smell the hot coffee of our little yellow friend, Leroux.”

“I have not your elasticity of spirits, my dear Sir John, though twenty years your junior,” replied the young lord. “Viewing my country as I do, through the medium of her past history,

with all her wrongs and romance, her heroes and their struggles against the aggressive kings of England—through the medium of her poetry and her music—glorying as I do in the name of a Scottish man, never more than when exiled as a loyal cavalier and desperate soldier of fortune, enduring penury, obloquy and affronts, feeding myself in foreign camps and cities, with the last relic of my inheritance, my sword, the prince's gift,—I now feel swelling up within me a flood of enthusiasm—a crowd of thoughts too deep for utterance, on seeing again those dear old mountains rising from the sea, though we are returning, it may be, but to find our graves among them.”

“Thoughtless as you deem me, Dalquharn,” said the other, as he caught something of the young lord's enthusiasm, “I felt once like you; I was a boy then, a gallant and joyous boy, at an age when no grief could crush hope, and no sneering monitor could quell or damp the glorious glow of ambition and romance! Now—”

“Well—and now?”

“Matured, saddened and soured by stern experience, and many a time by grinding poverty, I view the world with very different eyes; yet am I hopeful still, otherwise I should not have come in such doubtful guidance, on this, our desperate errand. But zounds! e'en now, man, I think I can see Pitreavie, my old ancestral home in the cosy East Neuk of Fife, embosomed among deep

primeval woods. I can hear the rooks cawing on its huge square chimneys, and the creak of the vanes on its turret tops, mingling with a song my mother used to sing to me long, long ago—to me and my three brave brothers who fell at Sheriffmuir for King James. Black dool and woe be on that day, and yet *she* grudged them not in such a cause, for she was a Kirkaldy of the House of Grange. The old song is in my ears, and in my heart now,

“ ‘ And with it comes a broken fount  
Of tears I deemed was dry ;  
Auld faces, voices, come as wont,  
And will not pass me by ! ’ ”

“ Yet with God’s help and King James’s favour, we may all brook our own lands again, and lie at last in our forefathers’ graves, Sir John.”

“ So time will prove, my lord ; I think the cold-blooded massacre in Glencoe, the bankruptcy of Darien, when two thousand Scotchmen perished to gratify Spanish cruelty and English jealousy, the studied violations of the treaty of union, the restoration of patronage, our defeats at Carthagena and elsewhere, have surely given Scotland a surfeit of Dutch stadtholders and German electors ! ”

The homely odour of fried ham and eggs, ascending from the little cabin of the lugger, coupled with the captain’s warning that breakfast awaited them, now lured the friends below. As they descended, Vander Pierboom, who had been

watching them attentively as they stood far aft on the pinck built stern, and who had been endeavouring to follow their conversation, of which, however, he could make nothing, now twitched one of the captain's wide cuffs as he was about to descend backwards into the cabin.

“Sgupperblug,” snivelled the noseless Dutchman in a whisper, “you are to get fifty Louis ober and above your bassage money for dese gentilmensh—eh?”

“Yes—fifty Louis, and what then?” growled his commander impatiently.

“You might get de Louis at Dunkirk, and ebber so ver moch more here, if—”

“If what, you infernal Dutch lubber—out with it, hand owre hand.”

“You zold 'em to de government as voreign spiesh—dis would be to gain doubleonsh on both handsh.”

“Nae mair o' this to me, mate, and whisper but a word o't among the crew, and I'll make shark's meat o'ye! Mahoun—what? sell the puir fellows to the Elector's shambles, when within sight o' their ain peat reek!” he added, with a terrible imprecation upon his own eyes and limbs. “Na, na—damme! I done mony a strange thing in my time in the Spanish main and elsewhere; but I'll never be Judas enough to act like a vile Scotch whig, and sell the man who trusts me.

Keep a sharp look out while I'm below, Vander Pierboom—haul out the jib to keep her steady, and keep silence forward, or *cuidado del cuchilla*—as we used to say on the Plate river, which in plain Scots, means, beware the jagg o' a Kilmaur's whittle!"

With this significant threat, and a very sinister flash in his eyes, Captain Scupperplug's ugly visage vanished through the companion hatch.

An angry scowl passed over the flat face of the avaricious Dutchman, and he dragged his hat by the fore cock, sullenly over his eyes. He made no reply as he slunk aft, but he had his own thoughts and intentions nevertheless.

He seated himself on the taffrail, lit his huge pipe, and proceeded to consider how, without involving himself with his captain, of whom he had a wholesome terror, he could convert the two unsuspecting "bassengers," into the current coin of Great Britain.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE YARN OF CAPTAIN SCUPPERPLUG.

“ Oft had he shewn, in climes afar,  
Each attribute of roving war ;  
The sharpened ear, the piercing eye,  
The quick resolve in danger nigh ;  
The speed, that in the flight or chase  
Outstripped the Charib’s rapid race ;  
On Arawaca’s desert shore,  
Or where La Plata’s billows roar,  
When oft the sons of vengeful Spain  
Tracked the marauder’s steps in vain.”

*Rokeby.*

To avoid all questioning as to their plans or objects in returning home, the two companions were pursuing a course they had conjunctly adopted during their rapid and hitherto safe voyage from Dunkirk, by enquiring of Captain Scupperplug the adventures of his early life, and thus being generally full of himself and his own affairs, he was never weary of “ spinning yarns ” of a very savage nature, certainly, but incident to his voyages in the West Indies and along the Spanish Main between the Isthmus of Panama and the Serpent’s Mouth.



With these episodes of reckless piracies by sea, of open cities sacked by land, of vast treasures, plate, jewels, doubloons and pieces of eight, buried on lonely isles, among the sands of Peru or the palm forests of Tortuga—buried with a murdered Spaniard or Negro, whose spirit was supposed to haunt and guard the spot:—stories of

“Adventurous hearts ! who bartered bold  
Their English steel for Spanish gold,”

he mingled superstitions, wild, and gloomy, of haunted ships that sailed in the wind’s eye with all their canvas set, or were manned by demon crews ; of the Flying Dutchman, and St. Elmo’s Light ; of bags of magic wind, sold by “black and midnight hags,” in the Scottish Hebrides or Scandinavian Fiords ; and many a tale he told them, too, of the ferocious Buccaneers with whom he had served in the Windward Isles ; of the terrible reprisals made on each other by the English and Spaniards, when no mode of cruelty, of mutilation or torture was deemed too exquisite or terrible ; and of men marooned on the lonely keys off the mountainous Isle of Hispaniola, or in the mangrove creeks of Tobago, for transgressing the iron statutes of the Buccaneers, and there left to perish miserably of hunger and thirst, or by wild animals.

“A rare ruffian this !” said Dalquharn, in a whisper to his friend ; “I would we were on shore, or safe out of his hands.”

His favourite reminiscence, one to which he was never tired of recurring, was the capture of Puerto de la Plata in South America; and on this morning, when after liberally dashing his coffee with Nantz, he took to imbibing Nantz alone, or very slightly dashed with water, he was unusually fluent on the subject.

“Ye are to ken, sirs,” said he, “that in the year after war was declared against Philip V. of Spain, I had shipped on board the ‘Rothesay Castle’ a Privateer of Glasgow, Captain John Hall, master and owner, a stout mariner and near kinsman to the Laird of Dunglas. She carried eight carriage and fourteen swivel guns, with a crew of forty men, the very flower of the Clyde. By yellow fever, and the fortune (or rather misfortune) of war, our crew had dwindled down to only twenty-five hands, when in the spring of the year, we found ourselves cruising off the mouth of the Plate River; but we had aboard plenty of ammunition, powder, and shot, which we took out of a Spanish sloop, that we scuttled with all her hands in her, off the east end of Hispaniola.”

“What—with all her hands on board?” said Lord Dalquharn; “did they make no resistance?”

“Troth did they; but a cold pistol barrel applied to ilka man’s ear, and a couple shot down for example, made them mute as herrings,” replied the captain, who relinquished much of his local dialect, as he warmed with his subject;

“so down went the ‘San Antonio de las Animas,’ with all her crew.”

“The poor creatures would swim, of course?”

“May be aye, and may be no,” said the other, laughing.

“How?”

“They might have swam for a time, had we not tied them back to back. Mahoun, sirs! the loons were only Spaniards, and they sune droon ye ken. Well—then we were off the Puerto de la Plata, and though we had only twenty-five hands on board, Captain Hall resolved to capture the town. Yet it had a petty fort, and about a thousand of a white population.”

“With only twenty-five followers?” exclaimed Sir John Mitchell, incredulously.

“He did it with *four*, of whom I was one, and Vander Pierboom might have been another, but he was our gunner, and was required aboard. Blazes! we weren’t to eat even the Elector’s mouldy biscuits, for nothing, and we kenned weel, sirs, that there was a mighty mint of treasure,—gold, silver, and ingots, to say nothing of some black-eyed Spanish wenches, to be had in the town, when once we had made ourselves masters of the port, that commanded it, on a bit knowe, nae bigger than Berwick Law.

“The weather was hot—so hot that we could scarcely drink our grog, for the water became as bilge in the casks, so we mixed it by the rule of

thumb, which gave us three parts of rum to one of water. We were like parched peas ; our pistol barrels grew hot in our girdles, and our cutlass blades in their leather sheaths. The butter was served out by the purser in pint stoups, and all alive wi' cockroaches, fireflies, and weevils, so we longed for a day's run ashore among the wine shops, and our mouths watered, when we thought of the purple grapes and juicy melons, of bright doubloons, and brighter Spanish eyes in La Plata.

“ Under French colours, the three *fleurs-de-lys*, we came to anchor with a spring upon our cable, within cannon shot of the town. We had our guns double-shotted with round and grape, but kept all the ports closed, and all the hands, save seven, were sent below, when Captain Hall quitted the ship (which had all the appearance of a quiet merchant trader), taking with him in the jolly boat only four men, of whom, as I have said, I was one.

“ We went straight to the *Caza de la Villa*, which, in the Spanish lingo, means the town house, and there we saw the Alcalde and Archbishop of La Plata, to whom the captain gave himself out to be trader from Martinique in the Windward Isles, laden with a mixed cargo, which he was anxious to sell speedily, to save it from the rascally British privateers, particularly from the ‘*Rothesay Castle*,’ of Glasgow, which had

done such damage to the Spanish shipping among the Bahamas, and in the Gulf of Mexico—and I could see, that at the name of our ship, the Spaniards twisted up the moustachios and ground their teeth.

“The Captain invited the Archbishop and Alcalde to come on board, and, as our boat was small, and would hold only those two, in addition to ourselves, they were simple enough to come off alone with us.

“When seated in the cabin, over a glass of Alicant, Captain Hall enquired, as if casually, ‘what manner of man, the governor of the fort was—and whether they thought he would purchase a portion of the cargo.’

“Suspecting no evil and believing in Captain Hall’s French, which, to say the least of it, was queer enough, the Alcalde wrote a letter to the Señor Gobernador, whom he averred to be a brave and true Hidalgo from old Spain; and the moment he pouched it, Captain Hall blew his whistle! Then before our two Don Spaniards knew exactly what had happened, they were both tied back to back, gagged with ropeyarn, and stowed away in the cable-tier, with their legs padlocked in the bilboes.

“Taking the letter of introduction, Captain Hall and the four of us, all armed with our cutlasses and each with two pair of long Scots iron pistols under our coats, shoved off once more

in the jolly boat. Round his waist, the Captain wore a British ensign, by way of a sash.

“ ‘Now my lads,’ said he, ‘stand by for squalls, when you see this flying on the fort. Vander Pierboom, have the ports triced up, the guns run out, and ready to heave shot, shell, crossbar, slugs and stinkballs into the town, and fear not, shipmates, the place will be our own, for as long as we want it.’ ”

“ Though the town had only about a thousand Spanish inhabitants, they possessed sixty times that number of Tributary Indians ; in the neighbourhood were many rich mines, and the revenue of the Archbishop was estimated at eighty thousand ducats yearly.

“ We had, ilk man of us, a stiff jorum of new England rum under our belts, sweet with molasses, fiery and strong ! We were in high spirits and ready to face Mahoun himself, so away we went to the fort, an old stronghold of the Buccaneers, which the Spanish government had rebuilt and strengthened.

“ Our captain was introduced to the Spanish commandant, a tall, sallow fellow, with long black moustachios, solemn eyes, and a doublet of sad coloured serge slashed with white cotton for coolness. He carefully read the letter of the chief magistrate, made the Captain several low bows, invited him to luncheon, while we kicked our heels in the verandah without and counted

the Spanish guard, which we found to consist of twenty ill-armed men—exactly one for each pistol shot we could give.

“The moment the Captain and Governor were alone, the former clapped a pistol to the head of the latter, and swore that he would blow his brains out, if he made the least sound or resistance.

“The Don sullenly gave up his sword, and permitted his hands and his mouth too, to be secured by a few fathoms of line which the Captain had in his pocket. We then rushed on the soldiers of the guard, who, never expecting an attack, were smoking drowsily under the shady verandah. We shot down all who failed to escape; closed the gates and hoisted the Union in place of the Red and Yellow of Castile and Leon. Then we heard a cheer from the ‘Rothesay Castle,’ mingling with a murmur from the people in the town below.

“‘Hurrah, my lads!’ cried the Captain, ‘you’ll find this better work than loading with boucan at Monte Video, and filling the forehold with hides and horns!’

“The privateer’s ports were now instantly triced up and all her battery brought to bear on the town, while we opened a fire from the guns of the fort. The inhabitants finding themselves exposed to a cannonade by sea and land, and ignorant of the force in possession of the castle, fled from the

place in great numbers, and in less than ten minutes, our shells and rockets set the town in flames. We then spiked the guns in the fort, threw all the arms into a deep well, blew up the magazine, and on being joined by a party of the crew, plundered the town at our leisure, the cowardly Spaniards flying before us in all directions.

“ For twelve hours we were masters of La Plata—we twenty-five British seamen !

“ By shot and shell, we killed more than two hundred persons in the streets, and spared none who came in our way, for you must bear in mind, sirs, that those same Spaniards had cut off the noses, ears and lips of many of our countrymen, and thereafter, hanged, drowned, or roasted them, for it was the fashion to use English prisoners so, in that part of the world, and will be so while this war lasts.

“ We got fifty wedges of silver and dollars to the value of £6000 sterling. My own share was but five hundred pistoles, with a gold cup and some silver crucifixes which I found in the cathedral; but I soon lost all my plunder among the slop-dealers and dickybirds at home, who in three hours, stripped me of what took as many years of privateering to gain.

“ We brought off a few Spanish girls, but we soon tired of their company and sent them ashore, some days after, together with the Alcalde



and the Archbishop, as we rounded the Cabo de Santa Maria, where the old Tower of the Wolves stands; and then bidding good-bye to the River of Silver, we hauled up for Britain, and bore away with every inch of canvas spread, for if taken, after our late prank, every man of us would have been strung up, or sent in chains to dig in the mines of San Luis de Potosi.

“After a splendid run of about six weeks we cast anchor in the Clyde, our pockets well lined with Spanish, and luckily just as the last allowance of mouldy biscuit and rancid boucan beef was brought from the storeroom; so that’s my yarn, gentlemen, of how we took Puerto de la Plata.”\*

Captain Scupperplug had barely concluded his story of an event which made a great noise in its time, when the deep bass voice of the Dutch mate came hollowly down the companion hatch.

“Below there?”

“Hilloah!” responded his commander.

“A large square rigged vessel is standing down

\* “If Captain Hall,” says a journalist of the time, when writing of this remarkable affair, “could take the town and fort of *Porto de la Plata* with four men only, why are not some land forces immediately sent him? Is there any reason in the world to doubt, but that such a brave and experienced officer, with a file or two of musketeers, which might easily be spared off St. James’s Guard, would soon make himself master of all the Spanish dominions in America, and thereby enable us to command a peace upon our own terms?” — *Scots Magazine*, 1740.

the river close hauled wit all her larboard tacks aboard ; and may I never zee de Keyzers Graght of Amsterdam, or smoke a bibe at de Haarl Poort again, if she be not de Vox Vrigate !”

“ The Fox frigate !” said Mitchell.

“ The devil !” exclaimed Dalquharn.

This startling announcement made Captain Scupperplug and his two passengers spring on deck, and there sure enough, about ten miles distant, was a large square rigged ship, exhibiting a great spread of canvas which shone white as snow in the sunshine against the blended blue of sea and sky. She was running south-east on the larboard tack, towards the coast of Haddingtonshire, and did not display a pennant, but, by the telescope, a broad scarlet ensign could be discovered at her gaff peak, and ere long her tier of guns, her three great poop-lanterns, and a colour flying on the jack-staff, which all large vessels had then rigged on the bowsprit, just above the cap or spritsail yard-appertenances, somewhat too man-o'-war like to be pleasant.

This alarming sight created some consternation on board the lugger ; noon was barely past, and she had been creeping slowly up the Firth, with her lugsails half hoisted to gain time, ere night fell.

“ *On* a wind she could never overtake us,” said Scupperplug, who alone preserved his confidence, for even the faces of Lord Dalquharn and Sir

John Mitchell wore an expression of extreme concern.

“If she should prove to be the ‘Fox,’ and insist on over-hauling us?” suggested the latter apprehensively.

“I’ve nae wish to come within range of her guns, for some of our hands might be pressed,” the skipper replied in a low voice, “and then there is no saying *what* the devil, or the hope of escape, might lead them to discover. Bear away towards Tynningham Sands! By the horns o’ Mahoun, I’ll beach the lugger and then blow her up, rather than surrender!”

“Her boats might pursue you into shoal water,” suggested Lord Dalquharn, whose thoughts ran chiefly on his being taken prisoner, and the blasted hopes, the deadly perils that would be sure to follow such a catastrophe, for already the castle of Edinburgh and the Tower of London held in thralldom several of the suspected.

“Boat or no boat, if yawl or pinnace were to come off wi’ marines and small-arm men, I wadna strike my colours without fighting—d—n me if I would!” exclaimed Scupperplug, whose eyes shot fire, while his face crimsoned with rage, and the sword-cut in his right cheek grew almost black, for he had all the courage of a bull-dog; and his spirit seemed to rise in proportion to the danger; “mast-head the yards—sail trimmers to the tacks and braces; bring the sheets more aft,

and keep in shore for Tynningham Sands. Cast loose the guns—load wi' a round shot, and a bag of nails and musket bullets in each! Quick, Vander Pierboom; and bring up the small arms, lads, hatchets and pikes; we'll be ready anyway, for we dinna ken what kind o' night-birds may await us in shore, and for a' we see, we may be running out of the latitude of Hell, into that of Hecklebirnie—a place that is hotter still!”

The great quadrilateral sails of the lugger were fully hoisted now, and her course was trimmed more southward; the perpendicular cliffs of the Isle of May, all whitened by sea-birds, began to grow fainter on her lee quarter, while the steep green cone of North Berwick Law, the giant precipices of the Bass Rock, and all the iron-bound shore that rises between Tynningham Sands and Tantallon, became more defined and dark ahead.

Already the bluff promontory of Dunbar, with the red round towers of its ancient castle, and the wild waves foaming white against its rugged rocks, could be discerned, when to the great relief of all on board—of none so much, perhaps, as Lord Dalquharn and his friend, though they were without secret papers or cyphers of any kind to compromise them—save one concealed in the former's scabbard—the headsails of the large ship they were so anxiously avoiding, were seen to shiver in the wind; the jib sheet was let fly; her tacks

and sheets were lifted; and her yards swung round in rapid succession, as they were braced on the other tack. She altered her course, bearing away to the northward; and long before the lugger had crept past the promontory, still marked by the old ruined tower of Scougal, and where, as the old legend avers, St. Baldred's boat remained fixed as a rock amid the surf, she was hull down, and had melted into the evening sea and sky.

## CHAPTER IV.

## FATHER TESTIMONY.

“ Old Linstock, I swear, you are no fair weather spark,  
Your bulldogs, my bleacher, must bite if they bark,  
We soon may fall in with a custom-house shark,  
Success to the free trade for ever !

“ I’ve landed the stuff when the tempest howled high,  
Not a light on the beach, nor a star in the sky ;  
The cruisers !—the lubbers, they’re all in my eye,  
Good luck to the free trade for ever !”

*David Vedder.*

THE sun had sunk beyond the Lomond hills, and the long, lovely and undulating line of the Fifeshire coast looked dark and gloomy ; but the vast expanse of the estuary still reflected the ruddy flush that lingered in the western sky, when the lugger passed through the deep channel that lies between the stupendous Bass Rock and the formidable bluff, which is crowned by an open and roofless ruin, that in its prouder and earlier days had been a chief stronghold of the turbulent Douglasses. The wild and rugged precipices here

are of the darkest iron hue, their summit covered by the vast fortress,

“Broad, massive, high and stretching far,  
And held impregnable in war ;”

their bases, whitened in the foam of the ever restless German Sea.

The lugger had fallen to leeward and lost much way, during the supposed chase or escape from the suspected war-ship, and she was now standing up the Firth of Forth, which there is some twelve miles abroad, before a very faint breeze, for the wind had almost died away as the sun went down. The coast was line rapidly becoming dark as indigo against the horizon, but here and there red-lights twinkled in the windows of the cottages and farm-houses, along the cliffs.

As she stood along the rocky shore, Captain Sanders Scupperplug and his flat-nosed mate, Mynheer Vander Pierboom, swept it in vain, again and again with their telescopes, for a certain little red flag on Scougal point, or on Tantallon ruins, which lie a Scottish mile further to the westward, and also, as the twilight deepened, for a lantern which was usually waved in a secret and mysterious manner at Bainslaw, to indicate that the coast was clear for a safe run of their cargo into the cavern at Seacliff, and certain other places better known to the smuggler than to the collectors of His Majesty's customs. They were now round-

ing the dangerous sunken rocks of Greenlesly, and already the lights of the little town of North Berwick were twinkling on their larboard bow.

The total absence of all the expected signals filled the two worthies with a perplexity which found vent in numerous oaths and imprecations uttered against themselves, and a personage whom they designated "old Father Testimony."

By the Treaty of Union, Scotland had immediately to cease importing wine, brandy, fruit, and everything else produced by France, a nation which the Jacobites were fond of boasting, had been her ally for nearly eight hundred years, or since Charlemagne surrounded the red lion with its double tressure of lilies. To replace this loss, there was no remedy save that which the smugglers supplied. A great branch of her commerce was destroyed; much bitterness was consequently excited, and to cheat the English exciseman to any extent was considered patriotic and perfectly justifiable.

In their hatred of the obnoxious malt tax, which was thrust upon the Scots in 1724, and in opposition to which, so much blood was shed in Glasgow and elsewhere, the people saw but little harm in smuggling a few runlets of French brandy duty free. Every facility was afforded to the *contrabandistas*, and some of the very men who, in open daylight, glorified most in the Protestant succession as by law established, under cloud of



night, while the cargo was being safely run in some lonely islet or secluded cave on the sea-shore, consoled themselves by the reflection, that they were only cheating the English who were their ancient enemies, and the Hanoverian elector, who ruled where he had no right to be.

“Ready the ground tackle, mate!” cried the still perplexed captain of the lugger, “bend the cable to the anchor, coilaway warps, and look out for breaking bulk. We’ll have to start and run the cargo somewhere before daybreak, e’en should we heave it into the Firth, with the runlets strung to a buoy-rope! Launch the boat—”

“Vor what burbose?” growled the mate, through his nose, or rather through what remained of it.

“That ye shall see,” replied Scupperplug, with one of his useless oaths; “stand by the fall-tackle—jump in, Leroux, you French devil, and clear the falls!—hoist and lower away—handsomely a wee bit—bear the boat off the side—push off!”

The boat was speedily lowered, and again the mate enquired for what reason.

“The reason is this, ye Dutch lubber—I am pledged to one in Dunkirk, I wad be fain to please, to land these two gentlemen, our passengers, safe on Scottish ground, and it shall be done at once. If we are in dool and danger, I shall keep them out o’ both if I can.”

“ I thank you, Captain,” said Lord Dalquharn, who overheard the explanation ; “ I regret to find that you deem yourself in peril, for sooth to say, the presence of myself and friend on board, can but add to it.”

“ I thocht as muckle !” exclaimed Scupperplug, taking the hand of the young lord in his hard and dingy palm ; “ but ye must have a glass of grog wi’ me ere ye go, gentlemen, to drink success to the good old cause, and the king owre the water ! To Hanover say I, or to Hecklebirnie (and that is farther *ben*) wi’ the Elector, his excise, and his malt tax too ! ”

“ Why do you apprehend danger ? ” asked Sir John Mitchell, who now perceived that the whole crew were completely armed with cutlasses and with pistols, which they carefully loaded and flinted, securing all the ramrods with a lanyard, in man-o’-war fashion.

“ Nae signal has been made along the shore, by one who awaits us, and who must have seen us dodging about in the Firth since sunrise—sae we kenna how the night may end,” he added, sullenly.

“ I hope you will avoid bloodshed — at least while we are in your hands,” said the baronet, laughing.

“ I have nae wish, Captain Mitchell, to slay ony o’ God’s creatures, if English excisemen can be reckoned as such. But they shall hae a bluidy

lyke-wake wha meddle wi' me! Since this vile incorporating Union, an anker o' brandy on the sea, or a sheep on a hillside, hae been valued at the price o' a Scottish man's life;—but a' things will be righted when King Jamie comes hame!"

"I hope so," whispered Lord Dalquharn to his companion; "but I shall thank heaven when we are rid of those repulsive wretches."

A voice was now heard hailing the lugger, and a boat pulled by two men, came sheering alongside.

"Lugger, ahoy!—ahoy, Sanders Scupperplug!"

"Who hails?"

"One you may be blithe to see in time, old Puerto-de-la-Plata," replied the other, as he dexterously caught the slack of a rope which was thrown to him, and, after making it fast to a ring-bolt in the bow of his boat, assisted his companion to scramble on deck.

"By my soul, it's auld Father Testimony himself!" exclaimed the smuggler, as this man, who was muffled in a dark roquelaure, and wore a voluminous wig, over which his hat (unflapped evidently for disguise) was secured by a large silk handkerchief. "Why, in the name of Mahoun," he added, as they shook hands, "did ye show us neither light nor signal?"

"Because the Philistines are along the whole shore frae Scougal Point to the Castle Hill—Gage, the exciseman, tide-waiters, red-coats, and

all! But we shall weather the murdering gang yet. Ye maun e'en run for the auld place outside Craigleith, and lie to, under the lee o' the island."

"They have a ten-oared boat, with a pateraro in its bow, named after Jack Gage himself."

"Yes—but the pateraro was spiked, and the boat scuttled, at Garvy Point last night," replied the stranger with a chuckling laugh. "There will be no moon, and the Lord be thanked for a dark and gloomy night!"

"And there are red-coats, say you!"

"Even sae, Sanders."

"A curse upon the English Sorners—what seek they here?" exclaimed the smuggler, bitterly.

"Our brandy stoups, Sanders, and ourselves, I warrant. But we'll weather the limmers yet, I say—we'll weather them yet!" said this strange visitor, striking his cane emphatically on the deck. "They are levying black mail like sae mony hie-land caterans oure a' the country side, in the shape o' victuals and drink, which neither they nor their king will ever pay for, I fear."

"What is the news along shore?"

"There was a lunar rainbow three nights ago, and that aye forebodes something in these times of ours."

"What can it forebode, you daft carle?"

"Heaven forefend, that it bode not a rising o'

the clans, a plague in the lowlands, or something to the Pagan who ruleth in Rome.”

“And so we musn’t haul up for Canty Bay?”

“No, no.”

“And why?”

“The shore is watched, and the garrison of the Bass are on the alert. If they saw our lights they might fire on speculation, and alarm the hail country-side.”

“And the auld cove at Seacliff?”

“Waur and waur still, Sanders!”

“How so?”

“It is guarded by Captain Wyvil, with a party of Howard’s foot.”

Deep oaths were muttered by all the crew at this intelligence, but he whom they called “Father Testimony,” said:—

“Then Craigleith it must be, or to sink the kegs somewhere wi’ a buoy-rope; and you maun e’en haul your wind, Sanders—heave and weigh, get out o’ this the moment the cargo is run.”

“I fully meant to do so; but wherefore the warning, Father Testimony?”

“The ‘Fox’ man-o’-war was off Fifeness, this morning——”

“Was that sail to windward of us really a king’s ship after all?”

“Yes; a hawk o’ the Elector’s.”

Again a chorus of oaths was uttered by the

smugglers, who were all Jacobites, so far as opposition to the laws went.

“She is heavily armed, and her captain is a Tartar.”

“When she altered her course, as if to overhaul us, my heart went tick-tack, like old Mother Von Soaken’s Dutch clock at the Haarl Poort. But her crew must either have failed to see, or to suspect us.”

“’Twas an escape, for ‘were ye swifter than eagles, and stronger than lions,’ as David said of Saul and Jonathan, she had overtaken you.”

“Clap a stopper on your preaching tackle, old Testimony,” said the skipper impatiently.

“And now, captain, to land de bassenger,” said the Dutch mate, coming forward.

“Passengers! passengers!” replied he of the wig and unflapped hat, in great trepidation, now perceiving, for the first time, the two travellers, who appeared each with his sword at his side, his pistols hooked to his girdle, and carrying his mail, or small portmanteau. “Where, or how, in the name o’ madness, got ye passengers, Sanders?”

“At Dunkirk, Father Testimony — at Dunkirk.”

“Was it wise or beseeming to hae them on board?” asked the other with great asperity.

“I dinna ken much about the wisdom o’ the proceeding, nor do I care either; but they are

gentlemen, who have behaved and paid as such—paid in good rix-dollars, as ever were picked up in the Spanish Main.”

“If they land, they may fa’ into the hands o’ those you would be loth should question them,” whispered the other, in a low, fierce voice. “Keep them under hatch; knock them on the head—do with them as ye will, but land them not, I say, here, at all events!”

“By the hand o’ my body, but you are as bad as the mate,” replied the smuggler; “but landed they shall be,” he added, with one of his terrible oaths, “and in safety, too!”

“Do you ken the value o’ your neck, Sanders Scupperplug?”

“Troth, do I! Zounds, man! before I could seize a breaching to a ring-bolt or becket a royal, I learned to ken *that*; for even as a biscuit-nibbler, under Captain Kidd, I served wi’ a halter round it. I never kenned a larned lingo, but I can prick off the luggers course on the chart; I can handle the tiller as weel as the cutlass—and what mair is needed by me?”

“But, Sanders—if Gage, the English excise-man——”

“Silence, I say!” thundered the other, “and tempt me not to be a greater devil than I am. I have a’ the danger, and you mair than an honest man’s share o’ the doubloons. Farewell, gentlemen,” he added, turning to Lord Dalquharn and

Mitchell, who had overheard a portion of this conversation, without in the least comprehending it, “we part here, never to meet again likely—but success to you!”

Scupperplug presented his right hand to each, and with his left took off his old battered cocked hat as they descended into the boat.

“Pull quietly in shore, Vander Pierboom,” said he over the side, “land then near the auld kirk on the rocks—the tide is far out now: then pull hard for the craig,—we’ll need every hand when the hatches are open.”

The time was now close upon the hour of nine in the evening; heavy clouds obscured the sky, and a thick vapour from the east overspread alike the sea and land, most fortunately for the operations of the smugglers, whose lugger stood, slowly and unseen, past the little town of North Berwick, and lay to, close by the north side of Craigleith, one of the four desolate and rocky islets, which are situated about a mile from the mainland. The others are named the Ibris, the Fidra, and the Lumbay, and all are the resort of the puffin or coulternib, the jackdaw and the black rabbit.

There in some fissure known only to themselves, the lugger’s crew resolved to conceal the cargo, while the small boat, pulled by Vander Pierboom and little Jules Leroux, landed their two passengers at the place indicated by the captain, a long flat reef of rocks, covered by seaweed, which at



low tide extends for several hundred yards seaward, to the east of the old ruined church of North Berwick; and it was not until they heard the oars dipping in the water, as the Dutchman and French mulatto boy pulled away into the mist (the treacherous intentions of the former personage being baffled in the hurlyburly of running the cargo), that the two forlorn wanderers felt fully aware that they were at last on *terra firma*, after a long and exciting day—a day of anxiety, risk and peril beyond what they were quite aware of; and they little knew, moreover, that their troubles were only beginning.

## CHAPTER V.

## ON SHORE.

“——I understand you  
 And wish you happy in your choice ; believe it,  
 I'll be a careful pilot to direct  
 Your yet uncertain bark to a port of safety.  
*Margaret.* So shall your honour save two lives, and  
 bind us,  
 Your slaves for ever !”

*New Way to Pay Old Debts.*

“ ON Scottish ground at last !” exclaimed Lord Dalquharn ; “ I was the first to leap ashore, and so I bid you welcome, Sir John Mitchell, ere long I hope, to be again of Pitreavie.”

“ And I thank you, my Lord Dalquharn of the Holm,” replied the other, lifting his little feather-bound hat with a politeness that was *not* all jest, as he grasped his young friend's hand and shook it with genuine warmth. “ God bless the dear old land we tread on—the land of our forefathers and our forefathers' graves ! 'Tis thirty years ago since I stood on a Scottish hill-side or heard the waves of a Scottish sea, Dalquharn ; but all

the dreams of many a weary day are not *yet* realised.”

“There are times for all things; and the time for our long-hoped for realisation will come anon.”

“Ah, Dalquharn, I cannot describe to you, how my heart was stirred within me, when on the march near Ter Tholen in Zeeland, I came upon a broom bush, growing by the way-side, with all its golden bells! It made my thoughts, my heart rush home to the green braes and the haunts and hills of my boyhood—to many a place I never more might see. Balmerino and I each plucked a sprig and stuck them in our hats, and, egad, my lord, I think, they gave us more spirit than a horn of Skiedam, when three days after, we found ourselves under the cannon of Bergen-op-Zoom! But,” he added, after a pause, “we are our own lacqueys, having our cloaks and mails to carry—we are afoot; and now which way tend we, for this house of Auldhame?”

“Precisely the matter I was considering;—and zounds! but the night groweth dark and stormy apace.”

For some hundred yards they had to scramble inland, over great and rugged masses of red sandstone rock, which the ebb-tide had left uncovered, and which were slimy and wet, covered by tufts of seaweed, star-fish and incrustations of limpets. The lugger had disappeared in the thick mist

which had settled over the sea ; but through the vapour, as through a curtain of gauze, there flared at times a gleam from the ancient lighthouse on the Isle of May, nine Scottish miles distant. There, on the summit of a tower forty feet in height, a fire of coals was kept constantly burning by night. This tower had been built by a humane Laird of Barns, in the days of Charles I. ; but his unfortunate architect, when returning after the completion of his work, was drowned in a tempest raised by certain malevolent witches, who expiatedt he alleged crime at the stake on Gulane Links.

A little to the right of the impromptu landing-place, between the two exiles and the gloomy sky, rose the pointed gable of a ruined church, upon a ridge of steep and insulated rock. This was the fragment of what is traditionally called "the Auld Kirk" of North Berwick, of which the massive porch and the font, are alone remaining now. Then it was surrounded by graves, which year by year the stormy waves of the encroaching German Sea have torn away. Even the great slab which long marked the resting-place of the Lauders of the Bass, and under which the good Sir Robert, the comrade of Wallace lay, has lately been swallowed up by the ocean, and the gothic vault in which lay the stone coffin and leaden seal of some forgotten knight, "Willelmi de Douglas," has gone too.

The white waves were breaking wildly over the beach and amid the graves of the old church ; the shore beyond looked black, desolate and undefined in outline ; but the two friends at last reached the stripe of land that borders the Eastern Links, (or downs as they would be called in England) where a high and grassy knoll, still named the Castle Hill, bears the foundations of a fortress whose name has long since gone to oblivion. The aroma of the yellow flowers (crow's-foot and lady's-bed straw) which grow there among the rushes and purple-heath bells, filled the night air ; the place was intensely lonely, and no sound broke its stillness, but the white waves climbing the adjacent rocks, or the pipe of the solitary sand-rail among the brown sea ware.

“ I have been at Auldhame in my boyhood,” said Lord Dalquharn, “ and think I should know my way there again ; we are only three miles or so from the place, and there, as I have stated to you often, my father's friend, Sir Baldred Otterburn, a staunch old cavalier and true man, will receive us blithely and hospitably.”

“ And our path—”

“ Lies eastward, by the old Temple-house of Rhodes, past the Hairlaw, the village of Castle-ton, and the highway that leads to the ancient Hold of Tantallon.”

“ I am glad you know our whereabouts so well, my lord ; for Egad ! on being landed thus, we

seemed not unlike two Robinson Crusoes, or a couple of those marooned pirates, of whom our late friend with the euphonious name, told us so many yarns over his flip can o' nights."

"Your pistols are loaded, I hope?"

"Yes—and yours, my lord?"

"Are charged carefully and flinted with agates; they were a present from the Count de Saxe at Dunkirk, so I prize them highly."

"Arms are, unfortunately, necessary, even in our own beloved land, for we know not what night hawks may be abroad; but lead the way, my lord."

The two friends, each carrying his leathern mail, with his roquelaure flung over his left shoulder, now struck into the highway, which was bordered by hedgerows, avoiding the town, which was sunk in silence, and darkness too, for not a light was visible at any of its windows; not a dog barked; all was still save the dashing of the waves on the rocks of the little harbour, and even these died away as the travellers proceeded inland, feeling as they trod on, with anxious, but yet with happy and hopeful hearts, that this was but the beginning of a great end, for they were somewhat important units in the scheme for organising a rising in favour of the House of Stuart—a rising, which they well knew, was to take place in the north, ere the summer of that year—the memorable 1745—was past.

Erelong the road they were pursuing turned to the eastward, and they found themselves again in sight of the sea, and of the dim and distant pharos that flared in the night wind upon the summit of the Isle of May.

They had barely proceeded half a mile in this direction, when a man, carrying a lantern, appeared suddenly in front.

“Yoho, brothers—stand!” he shouted roughly.

“’Sdeath, but this is passing strange—a foot-pad, and with a light!” said Dalquharn, as he drew a pistol from his belt; but Sir John Mitchell, his superior in years and experience, quickly seized his arm, for several other men, six at least, started from the hedgerows, and the blades of their cutlasses, and the butts of their pistols, were seen to glitter in the rays of the lantern.

In short the two gentlemen found themselves confronted, surrounded and compelled to submit to a very humiliating interrogation, the end of which they could not foresee.

“Who are you, sirs, that we find so close to the seashore, and at this time of night?” asked he of the lantern in a pure English accent.

“And harkee, fellow, who the devil are you, that dare to ask a question so absurd?” demanded Lord Dalquharn haughtily.

“We are those who have the right to do so,” replied the other firmly and quietly.

“The right—we are yet to learn that!” exclaimed the young noble furiously.

“Surrender—we must search those mails you carry; if you are, as you seem to be, gentlemen, it is strange to find you afoot here, with your own cloak bags to carry,” said the other, who had the aspect and dress—the sunburned visage, the low cocked hat, the peajacket, and loose canvas slops—of a seafaring man. “Surrender,” he added, placing his cutlass between his teeth, and very deliberately cocking a large ship-pistol.

“Surrender—zounds! and in whose name?” enquired Lord Dalquharn.

“The name of the law, which we are sworn to maintain.”

“The law be ——” Mitchell was beginning angrily with a hand on his sword, when the Englishman said,

“In the name of the king, then.”

“Agreed—we have nothing either to discover or conceal,” said Lord Dalquharn; “I capitulate, provided you do not disarm us.”

“Agreed, sirs—for we may be under a mistake after all.”

“’Tis a rascally press-gang, I believe,” said Sir John, as he blew the priming from his pistol locks.

“We are not, sir,” replied the man with the lantern.

“Then, who in the devil’s name are you, and of what do you suspect us?”



“We are custom-house officers, who have all day watched a black lugger in the offing, and we suspect you of having left her—that is all, my masters,” said a surly fellow, who had hitherto remained silent.

For a moment the two friends gazed at each other irresolutely. There was much for them to fear in falling into the hands of any one in authority, and to resist might be dangerous, though the Tacksmen of the customs and their officers, being chiefly Englishmen, were most unpopular functionaries, and were not unfrequently destroyed when opportunities offered. There were then no coast-guard or preventive service, but the shore-masters, tide-waiters, and other officials, were always well armed; and those into whose custody our friends were now taken, had close at hand a few seamen of the ‘Fox’ frigate.

At this time, every man who came from abroad,—especially from France,—was an object of intense suspicion to the authorities in England, and still more to those in Scotland, as he was supposed to be infallibly a secret emissary of the Cabinet of St. Germain, or of the Pope; and, moreover, was not unlikely, if a Scotsman, to be an apostate from, and enemy to that gloomy form of religion, established by the hero of Glencœ, and secured by the treaty of union.

Britain was at war with France from whence they had just come; hence Lord Dalquharn

and his friend found themselves in a very awkward predicament, when seized by those custom-house officials, who had been waiting and watching the lugger from about Canty Bay and Seacliff, where she was usually wont to run her cargoes.

“I assure you, gentlemen,” said Lord Dalquharn, “that your detention of us is quite illegal——”

“These mails——”

“Are merely our personal baggage—a change of linen or so.”

“Then in that case you have nothing to fear from their examination.”

“Nothing!”

“You have come from abroad, I think?”

“We have,” said Dalquharn, with chilling hauteur.

“And were landed by that lugger of old Puerto de la Plata—of Sanders Scupperplug—eh?”

“Yes—‘L’Etoile de la Mer,’ of Dunkirk—but we were mere passengers, lawful travellers.”

“You have papers, no doubt——”

“Letters—signed and vizzied by the conseruator of Scottish privileges at Campvere, and the British ambassador—what the devil, fellow, would you have more?”

“Many a pirate sails under false colours, gentlemen, so you must come along with us. The

admission that you have sailed aboard of Captain Scupperplug, is almost a hanging matter in itself. But where is that precious lugger now?"

"Afloat, I hope, amid yonder mist."

"Much useful information that is! But you must come with us before Mr. Balcraftie."

"Who is he?"

"The senior magistrate in the Burgh—a sanctimonious old Scotch Put, who will sift you in a fine fashion, so sure as my name is Jack Gage."

"Let us lose no further time, but go at once," said Lord Dalquharn, with increasing irritation, as they surrendered their mails and roquelaures.

"An infernal scrape!" muttered Sir John Mitchell; "'Sdeath, I would we were well out of it!"

"And this is our first welcome home to Scotland—to be taken neck and heels, before some prickeared cur—a canting, psalm-singing Bailie!" exclaimed Lord Dalquharn, with irrepressible bitterness, as they retraced their steps along the dark road, towards North Berwick. "Our first night may be spent as criminals in a Tolbooth—by heavens, a Tolbooth, Sir John."

They had but two things calculated to excite suspicion as to their character and politics—their swords, the blades of which were inscribed with the words, *No Union*, and which had in the cut-

steel work of their shells, the letter S., for Stuart, marks by which Scottish gentlemen of the Jacobite faction were wont to distinguish each other at once, as readily as if they wore the forbidden badge, the white cockade of King James—the white rose of York—in their hats.

## CHAPTER VI.

BAILIE REUBEN BALCRAFTIE.

*“Leonato.*—I must leave you.

*Dogberry.*—One word, sir: our watch, sir, have, indeed, apprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

*Leon.*—Take their examination yourself, and bring it me; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.”

*Much Ado about Nothing.*

PASSING by a wooded and sequestered lane, near the ancient parish church of St. Andrew, a fane more famous in the annals of diablerie than those of religion, as the reputed rendezvous of the wizards and witches of the three Lothians, and where, in the days of James VI., Satan was wont to preach to them from the pulpit, the Excise officials, with their two prisoners, turned to the right, and soon found themselves in the centre of the little town of North Berwick, which then consisted simply of two streets, crossing each other at right angles.

A quaint and quiet little place, its houses were chiefly thatched, and had outside stairs, and picturesque outshots overhanging the street on beams of wood and pillars of stone. It had been made a royal burgh by Robert III., a port in the time of his predecessor, and was once a place of trade, but *when* no one knows now. It once possessed a castle, the site of which, as I have said, is only marked by the green knoll overlooking the East Links.

“Had I taken the road by the Blackdyke, instead of the path along the shore, we had escaped those fellows,” said Lord Dalquharn; “on what trifles may the fate of a man rest!”

“True, my lord, and of empires too!”

“Yes—even of empires; but for the Molehill—the work of the little man in black velvet who worked underground, a certain white horse had not stumbled, and the Hero of Glencoe and Darien had not died before his time.”

Threading their way in the dark among carts, piles of peat and other fuel which stood in rows before the doors of the street, ere long they found themselves before the mansion of Bailie Reuben Balcraftie, a two-storied edifice slated with stone; still conspicuous by its round tower and turnpike stair, it stands opposite a building which was then an inn or change-house, and bore the Otterburn arms, creaking in the wind from an iron rod.

There were lights in the magistrate's windows. The massive iron risp on the door was sharply applied to by Gage the exciseman, and immediately on this a loud and nasal voice was heard at a distance within the house singing a verse of the fifth psalm, from Andro Hart's edition in Scottish metre, and quaveringly it came on the gusts of wind :

“ But let all joy wha trust in thee,  
And still make shouting noise ;  
For them thou seest, let all that love  
Thy name in thee rejoice.”

“ By George !” exclaimed Mr. Jack Gage impatiently, “ it is shouting with a vengeance ; the crop-eared Covenanter will keep us waiting here all night !”

Another querulous voice now gave out a verse of the next psalm, and again several persons raised their pipes in mingled and discordant whines :—

“ I with my groaning weary am,  
And all the night my bed  
I caus-ed for to swim ; with tears  
My couch I water-ed.”

Then the discord of ill-attuned voices was heard for a time, rising and falling on the wind that coursed through the panelled passages and stone-paved corridors of the house, and mingling with the chafing of the now flowing tide, on the rocks that gird the harbour.

A storm of pistol butts now clattered on the

door, while the excisemen and tidewaiters swore with impatience. On this, the singing ceased; the shield of an eyelet hole was withdrawn on the inside; an eye was seen to vizzy them carefully, while a querulous and ill-natured female voice demanded,

“Wha tirls at the pin?”

“Open the door, you infernal Scotch witch—open—open in the king’s name, and say that Mr. Gage of the Customs would speak with old Squaretoes—with Bailie Balcraftie.”

Almost immediately after this, the ponderous bolts and bars were shot back, the door was opened, and the magistrate himself, in an accurate suit of black broad cloth, with enormous cut steel buttons, a vast wig, long sleeve ruffles, and huge shoe buckles, appeared with a candle flaring in each hand. He displayed neither surprise nor offended dignity at the noisy and untimely visit to his house; but bowed and smirked with considerable obsequiousness and servility.

“Your servant, Mr. Gage—a thousand pardons, sir, and a thousand mair! I fear you’ll liken me to that lord who had charge of the gate at Samaria, to keep you sae long at the door; but family worship, ye ken—family worship, above all earthly considerations, must have place; and, oh, but it is sweet and beseeming, too, so to close a long day of hard and honest labour!”

“We are in danger,” whispered Mitchell to his



companion ; “ this man is a false villain—I know it ! ”

“ How ? ”

“ By the whine of him . ”

“ But, heyday ! Mr. Gage, what in the name of the world and of misrule brings you here at this time o’ night ? ”

“ We have here two suspicious characters whom we fear are connected with the lugger we have watched all day. In fact, they admit to having been landed by that notorious rascal old Scupper-plug, not two hours since . ”

“ Suspicious characters — smugglers — smugglers, said you ? Defrauders o’ the revenue and o’ their fellowmen ? Let me have a look at the chieils—bring them ben into the office, and I’ll talk to them, I warrant ! Smugglers, indeed, and at this time o’ night ! ” continued the magistrate, with growing indignation.

At the first sound of his voice, our two friends started and exchanged glances.

“ Where have I heard, or where before, met this man ? ” said Lord Dalquharn in a whisper.

“ Send for the burgh officer and the Gudeman o’ the Tolbooth , ” resumed the Bailie. “ We’ll have them laid by the heels instanter, Mr. Gage ; as sure as I am a pardoned sinner . ”

“ Harkee, sirrah—take care what you are about , ” said Lord Dalquharn, with a loftiness of bearing peculiar alike to his class and the time ;

“for so sure as there is a heaven above us, I may requite this, by hanging you at your own market-cross !”

The threat or the tone in which it was uttered were not without a due effect upon the magistrate, who grew deadly pale, and darted at the speaker a covert glance of wrath and spite. He hastily shut the door and ushered the whole party into a low ceiled room, in the centre of which was a black oak table, littered with docquets, books, and papers. On the walls, which were panelled with plain white wood, hung charts, maps, bills of lading, and various printed documents.

The advertisements of “a weekly waggon to leave the Grassmarket of Edinburgh for Inverness every Tuesday God willing, but on Wednesday *whether or no* ;” the salvage of a sloop wrecked at the Yellow Craig ; and a cornetcy in Gardiner’s Dragoons, “presently quartered in the Canongate, and to be had cheap,” showed the multifarious nature of the Bailie’s transactions.

There was a large placard to the effect, that “the Spirit of the Lord had appointed Reuben Balcraffie to hold forth to the God-fearing folk of the Burgh, at 5 o’clock that afternoon, and, *D.V.*, he would do it, at the ‘Auld Kirk.’”

Close by this, hung the “Orders of the Provost, Bailies, and Council of North Berwick, to be observed by all constables in the discharge of their duties—to arrest all night-walkers, papists, sus-

pected priests, and Egyptians; all persons, not gentlemen, wearing pistols or daggers; all swearers and banners in close and wynd, and to commit them to ward in the Tolbooth."

Now, as the magistrate seated himself in a black leather easy chair, and set down the candles, which were in square stands of oak, carved, turned, and mounted with brass, Lord Dalquharn and Sir John Mitchell had an opportunity of examining the face of this personage—the senior Bailie, who, in absence of that other potentate, the Provost, was to decide upon their fate.

As Reuben Balcraftie plays a somewhat important part, in this our story, some elaboration is necessary in pourtraying him.

He wore a stiff solid tie wig, (of that fashion introduced by Lord Bolingbroke) the curls of which appeared as if hardened into rollers, while the pendant lumps of hair were tied at the end like horse-tails at a fair. From amid this cumbersome and ugly substitute for hair, his face looked forth, in singular repulsiveness. The small-pox, a dreadful scourge in those days, the destroyer alike of life and beauty, in his earlier years, had seamed the rugged visage of Reuben Balcraftie, rendering him rather more hideous than even freakish Dame Nature had intended him to be.

Fully past fifty now, his figure was thick set, and he had a considerable stoop in his broad and muscular shoulders; his eyes, dull, pale-blue and

watery, were always more busy than his thin, cruel lips ; they usually had a film over them ; quiet, heavy, stealthy and watchful, they were the eyes of a human vulture, and seemed to lurk under fierce and shaggy brows of grizzled hair. He was not exactly a vulgar man, being quiet in his general demeanour, but he was of low extraction, as his great hairy hands, and huge feet showed, for his father had been the Gudeman of the Tolbooth, and his mother a gypsy prisoner—a poor wretch, who had her sentence of drowning in the sea, deferred for a time, that she might bring him into the world.

He was undoubtedly a sharp man of business, a wonderful arithmetician, but a noisy and ostentatious holder forth on religion, being, moreover, the ruling elder in the Parish Kirk. He was ever restless in the acquisition of money ; yet his whole household consisted of a half-starved clerk, an old and devoted house-keeper, and a slip-shod servant girl. He was miserly, miserable and savage to the poor ; he could drink hard, yet never was known to get tipsy, and he gloried in, and gloated over the possession of several bonds and wadsets, over more than one broad estate in the fertile Constabulary of Haddington.

While he opened his oak lettron or desk, fussily spread a sheet of paper before him, thriftily smoothed back his huge ruffles under his wide square cuffs to keep them down, and dipped a

great quill in the inkhorn to take Mr. Gage's deposition, Sir John Mitchell, who had been eyeing him attentively, drew nearer to Dalquharn.

"Ah, my lord," he whispered, "is the land that is so productive of such worms—of such sanctimonious wretches as this, worth fighting for, or worth returning to?"

"Under favour, my dear Sir John, hypocrisy is not peculiar to any country," urged the young peer.

"But by all the gods, of late years, hypocrisy has thriven on Scottish earth, like a green bay tree, and seems likely to do so, world without end!"

To Gage, a frank, open featured, jolly looking Englishman, with a ruddy visage and a rough flaxen wig, who stood twirling his hat upon the forefinger of his left hand, waiting with impatience to speak, the Bailie, pointing to his religious placard, said—

"I saw you not at the preaching o' the word, Mr. Gage, when I expounded this evening."

"I had other matters in hand, off Scougal point; but come, come Bailie Balcraftie—the night wears apace, and I should have been trussed up in my hammock ere now. Stick to what I've come about. You won't convert me, and I think my evil ways, as you call them, are a deuced deal jollier than your sad ones," said the Englishman laughing.

The Bailie raised his watery vulture-like orbs to the ceiling, slowly saying,—

“Whatever will become of sic a sinner as you, is clean beyond my comprehension; yet a day will arrive, when you may remember the blessed words o’ the scripture, ‘Thou art my hiding place.’”

“I wonder in what creek, cave, islet or other hiding place along shore, those Scotch and French devils of old Scupperplug stowed the stuff to-night,” said Gage, polishing his pistol butts, with his great square cuff; “I warrant these gentlemen can tell us, if we make ’em.”

The Bailie gave him and them a sharp covert scowl, and replied,—

“Ye are all brands destined for the burning.”

A prospect under which, the Englishmen seemed quite easy.

“As for your prisoners, Mr. Gage, they look as little like smugglers, as Egyptians or popish priests; yet wha kens; the vestments, the trinkets and the cruciformed hammer o’ Belzebub, may be found in their mails. And so, sirs, you actually and unblushingly admit having landed from the craft o’ that nefarious loon—the Captain of the ‘Etoile de la Mer,’ of Dunkirk, for whose seizure and apprehension the Lord Advocate, and the Commissioners of His Majesty’s Customs at Edinburgh, are offering a most princely reward?”

“We do, sir,” replied Dalquharn, while an evi-

dent change came over the visage of the questioner.

“ And last from Dunkirk ?”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ I trust ye are not spies of that hellicate King of France, Louis XV., or,” continued the Bailie, growing more and more serious, “ of that man of Moab, who calls himself James VIII., and that youth of Belial, his pretended son ?”

Mitchell laughed aloud at this, as if really amused ; but Lord Dalquharn made a gesture of impatient scorn.

“ Sirs, I deal not in words that are idle or unprofitable ; neither do I smile much, and laugh, yea, but rarely,” resumed Balcraftie ; “ but hand me their papers, Mr. Gage,” he added to that functionary, who, after searching the mails of both prisoners, found only a species of passport in each, but no letters or other documents.

“ These are our papers,” said Lord Dalquharn, with a hauteur and loftiness of bearing, before which the heavy vulture eyes of the truculent magistrate quailed ; “ they are duly signetted by the British ambassador at the Hague, by the Conservator of our Scottish Privileges at Campvere, and shew sufficiently who, and what we are.

“ By George, I believe the poor fellows are no smugglers or spies either, but merely exiled Scottish gentlemen,” they heard Gage whisper to

his men; "I wish we had taken the other road, and not come athwart their hawse; for if they be as I suspect, 'Sdeath, but I wish them God speed!"

"Thou art a worthy fellow, my English friend," said Lord Dalquharn, as he shook the exciseman's hand; "I wish that some of my countrymen had half thine honesty, thy John Bull courage and generosity."

"My father was gunner aboard the Duke of York's ship, on many a day when they were teaching the Dutch lubbers to take off their hats on the high seas—to lower their jacks to us, from Van Staten to Cape Finisterre, and I ain't forgotten *that*, sir—I ain't," replied the Englishman with a peculiar glance.

"I ay suspected you o' being a Jacobite in sceret, Mr. Gage," said the Bailie, "and now as sure as I'm a pardoned sinner, I ken it. You two gentlemen are officers of the Scotch-Dutch?"

"On the half-pay of their High Mightiness, the States General, and late of the regiment of Brigadier Mackay, son of the Lord Reay."

"But how came ye by the way o' Dunkirk, a port now watched by the British fleet?"

"A long explanation may be necessary," replied Lord Dalquharn, evasively.

"Your coming here aboard o' Sanders Scupper-plug, is a bad end to a cloudy beginning, sirs;



but whither were ye bound, when arrested by Mr. Gage and his concurrents?"

"For the house of a friend."

"'Twouldna be likely, for the house o' a foe; but can ye not name that friend?"

"We were on our way to the house of Sir Baldred Otterburn of Auldhame and Seacliff."

Another indescribable change came over the features of the Bailie, and the friends who knew not how to construe the expression of his dull, watery, avaricious eyes, felt rather uncomfortable. He seemed fidgety, and for a time sat pondering, while muttering,

"They may be massmongers, Mr. Gage—Jesuits in disguise, for a' that we ken; those sons of the Prince of the power of the air—of the crooked and slimy serpent—of the roaring lion that goeth about, seeking whom he may devour, take all manner of shapes."

"Egad, sir," said Sir John Mitchell, with a burst of laughter, in which Gage and his mates joined; "I thought I was too old a soldier to be mistaken for a churchman; and as to my friend, Captain Henry Douglas here, he does not look much like a Jesuit."

"Beware, Mr. Balcraftie," said Lord Dalquharn, whose wrath was fast increasing.

"And why should I beware, sir—I, a magistrate—a free burgess and Bailie of North Berwick—an elder in the Kirk, too?"

“It seems to us, that we have all met before.”

The vulture eyes opened and shut, and then opened wider than before ; a piteous expression of fear, mingled with spite and rage, passed over the Bailie’s face, and, perceiving his advantage instantly, the young lord turned to Gage and said, with a smile,

“I hope we are not to be compelled to say *where* the black lugger is just now, and *where* her cargo of brandy and sherry is being landed, in care of Father Testimony ?”

“Undoubtedly not,” said Bailie Balcraffie, with precipitation, as he rose from his lettron or desk ; “the laws admit of no compulsion. And now, sirs, that I am satisfied, that ye are captains o’ the gallant Scotch-Dutch, and bound on a visit to my worthy friend, Sir Baldred Otterburn, at Auldhame, whither I shall have the high honour o conducting you to-morrow, I dismiss the charge, Mr. Gage. I shall be answerable for our friends, if called upon. For to-night they shall tarry wi’ me, and to-morrow we will set forth together ; and as a bit of advice to you, Mr. Gage, be not sae ready to seize on strangers again ; remember ‘thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.’”

“Egypt be blistered !—never was there, though I’ve been at old Gib, and in the Levant with

Rear-Admiral Byng," said the bewildered exciseman, as he and his party were hurriedly bowed out; and the Bailie, with a fierce expression in his stealthy eyes, and something more like a curse than a blessing on his cruel lips, carefully bolted his strong and massive door behind them.

After a hasty supper, as the hour was late, the companions, who were now the honoured guests of Mr. Reuben Balcraftie, retired to the chamber he had provided for them—a double-bedded one, having two of those oak-panelled recesses, called box beds, which are still used in some parts of Scotland.

"Adieu for this night, gentlemen," said the Bailie, as he deposited the candles on a dressing-table, whereon were a bible and "night-cap"—*i.e.*, a silver tankard of spiced ale; "to-morrow, we shall set forth betimes, after a broiled haddie, a rasher o' bacon, and a dish o' tea, for Auldhame."

"Thanks, and a good night to you, most worthy host," said Dalquharn, with one of his quiet smiles; "Gad, we live in times of change!"

"Aye, of a verity, as the preacher saith, 'when the sun is brightest, the stars are darkest; so the clearer our light, the more gloomy our life with deeds of darkness. Former times were like Leah, blear-eyed but fruitful; the present like unto Rachel—fair but barren.' Aye, truly, we live in sinful and troublesome times."

The moment he was gone, Sir John Mitchell secured the door and placed a table against it. He carefully reprimed his pistols, and placed them below his pillow. With the hilt of his sword, he sounded all the panels and flooring, to assure himself there was no secret entrance to the room. He then opened the window, to examine the means of escape, if necessary, and saw, that from the roof of a stable, the ground could easily be reached, for a long life of peril and exile had made him alike suspicious and cautious.

“Wherefore all this care, Sir John?” asked Dalquharn.

“I have an intense distrust of our landlord.”

“And I have more than that—a thorough conviction.”

“The canting, prickeared cur! I can read in his face the lines of an assassin.”

“And I am convinced, or nearly so, that he, and the man in the unflapped hat, who boarded the lugger—in short, that he and Father Testimony, are one and the same person!”

\* \* \* \* \*

Luckily, only indistinct sounds reached the huge ear of Reuben Balcraftie, which at that moment was placed against the door of their chamber. Of their conversation he could make nothing; but as he glided away with a cat-like step, a bright but malevolent gleam was in his

cruel eyes, and he rubbed his great coarse hands together with satisfaction.

“Jacobites,” he muttered, “returned Jacobites, and bound for Auldhame too! The work gangs bravely on—I’ll hae the auld knight in my toils, and Miss Bryde too—my bonnie *bride* that is to be!”

## CHAPTER VII.

## THEY SET FORTH.

“ May, sweet May, again has come,  
May that frees the land from gloom ;  
She is in the greenwood shade,  
Where the nightingale hath made  
Every branch and every tree  
Ring with her sweet melody,  
Sing ye, join the chorus gay ;  
Hail this merry month of May.”

*From the German.*

UNDER the sun of a lonely forenoon in May, the sea and land wore their brightest hues, when the Lord Dalquharn and his friend set forth for Auldhame, accompanied by Bailie Reuben Balcraftie, whose society they would rather have been without, and who—although he knew them simply as Captains Douglas and Mitchell—strongly suspected that they bore a higher rank. They were preceded by his half-starved clerk, who carried their mails and roquelaures.

The shrewd Bailie, who had a secret purpose of his own to serve, was not ill pleased to have an excuse for visiting Auldhame, where, as we shall shew ere long, he was *not* always a welcome visitor.

On this occasion, he proved a decided bore alike to Lord Dalquharn and Sir John Mitchell, neither of whom knew how, in his presence, to introduce themselves under their plain titles of Captains Douglas and Mitchell, to Sir Baldred Otterburn.

Noon was well advanced before they quitted the mansion of the magistrate, who was detained in his office adjudicating on a case of alleged witchcraft, though that crime had almost disappeared since the union.

Eight fisher boats had come into the harbour that morning from the herring ground; two of these had netted over one hundred crans of fish, the rest only averaging twelve crans among them. In consequence of this unequal fortune, an angry scene ensued, and the house of the pious and upright Bailie was beset by the less lucky fishermen and their families, who alleged that their rivals had succeeded by mere witchcraft, through the devilish spells of an old hag who dwelt at Aldbottle, opposite the Rock of Fidra, and that she had the power of driving the herrings into the nets of her friends, by placing in their boats certain little stones which she found in the ruined chapel of St. Nicholas, on the islet before her hut.\*

A general riot in the high street of the borough

\* Similar accusations were made by the fishermen of Ardersier against "Cluaigh, the Witch of Petty," in the September of 1866.—See *Scotsman* and *Dundee Advertiser*.

was the sequel. Such doings had not been known in the country side, the sufferers alleged, since the time when the Wise Woman of Keith, Agnes Simpson, the Gyre Carlin, or Mother Witch of all Scotland, had landed with two hundred of her compatriots in cives and riddles, and danced on the shore of North Berwick, prior to meeting the devil in the church of St. Andrew, where they opened the graves and desecrated the dead, committing many other enormities, all of which she confessed to King James in the winter of 1590.

The enraged fishermen assaulted the town-officer, broke his halbert and rent his livery, and the case against them having been aggravated by the circumstance that they had drank some ale at forbidden hours, they were all punished, some by being chained to the jousing-rod in the tol-booth, put in the stocks at the town-end, or whipped through the streets and expelled the burgh; and it was against the ale drinkers that our upright Bailie inveighed most bitterly, as he drained a good stiff horn of brandy and water, and assumed his tie-wig, large cocked hat, and walking staff, which he termed “a wand—a sma’ wand, sirs, such as David had, when he went forth to warsle wi’ Goliath the mighty.”

“Were you not somewhat severe on those poor fellows?” said Dalquharn, who had been reflecting that if ever he found himself in his place as a



peer of the realm, such tyranny as this should be curbed.

“Severe, Captain Douglas?—ca’ you justice severity?”

“No; but it may be harshly administered.”

“Sir,” replied the other, while shaking out his ruffles, erecting the forecock of his hat, and planting his cane emphatically on the causeway, “I am a bailie and a justice o’ the peace in our constabulary of Haddington; it beseems not, that I should be cowed by a vile mob o’ fisher loons, and fear the face o’ a feeble human creature, for the judgment delivered is the Lord’s, and no mine. I should respect no persons in judgment, saith Deuteronomy, but hear the small as well as the great. As a bailie, I must act wi’ honest intentions—even as one in the sight o’ the Omniscent, whose eyes behold me, and whose eyelids try the children of men.”

These quotations he whined in an intoned voice, with his watery eyes half-closed, and a self-satisfied smirk on his coarse visage, while at every second step, he struck the pavement firmly with his cane.

“And you actually whipped and banished from the burgh, those poor fellows, for drinking ale at the ‘Auldham Arms?’” exclaimed Sir John Mitchell, with surprise.

“Indubitably, Captain Mitchell; and what for no, sir,—but no chiefly for that. By our law once, no man durst be found in a tavern within a

burgh, after the nine-hour bell had been rung, under pain o' the tolbooth ; but that warning was given an hour later by desire o' the Regent Arran's countess, after whom it was named 'the lady's bell;' but *now* people are punished according to their quality, for public drinking at untimeous hours. A nobleman payeth twenty pounds Scots, and sae on, down to a serving-man, who payeth twenty shillings *toties quoties*, one half o' ilk fine to go to the pious purposes o' the parish, and the other half to the informer."

"And the poor toper, who hath spent his last penny on ale, and cannot pay your fine—"

"We punish in their person; and so, sirs, I whipped those loons forth the toun, when I might hae nailed their lugs to the cross."

The appearance of the town piper (every burgh had one then, with a small allotment of land, still called the "piper's croft") put a stop to the Bailie's monotonous talk, as the musician struck up "The Braes of Yarrow," and played before them through the streets so far as the Well-tower-mill, where he received a largesse from Dalquharn, and retired bonnet in hand.

There, in the bright sunshine, was one of those features, which, in those days, and until a very recent period, made every roadside horrible—a malefactor's corpse, half reduced to a skeleton, with the black crows wheeling around and alighting upon it.

“Gad-a-mercy!” said Mitchell, “here is a gibbet, to show that we are in a civilised land—a land where justice, or more probably law, is sternly administered.”

“A Border Egyptian 'loon,” said the Bailie, pointing to the corpse with his cane, “hanged by the lords of justiciary, for hamesucken and burning a barn-yard at Dirlton. He asked for a cog of ale before he was turned off the ladder, and drank to the health o' the popish pretender, the black devil, and King George.”

“I don't think, egad, that the old country is much changed since I fought at the battle of Sheriff-Muir!”

“You have served, sir?” began the Bailie, turning sharply round.

“In the Scots' Grey Dragoons,” replied Mitchell, haughtily.

“Aye, sirs, the country is no much changed even since that bluidy day at Dunblane—verily, it is a vale fu' o' slime pits,” whined the Bailie, “even as the vale o' Siddam was, when the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled!”

The Bailie's voice ascended into a roar, as a beggar, one of the king's beadsmen, in his long blue weed, approached them silently, but bonnet in hand. Sir John Mitchell gave the poor man a small coin; in doing so, he did not throw it as some might have done, but handed it with politeness.

“This gentleman is in poverty,” thought the quick-witted magistrate; “none but those akin to beggary slip money sae deftly into a beggar’s palm.”

Perhaps he was right, for the poor are usually the kindest to the poor.

Nearly a thousand feet above the road they traversed, rose the steep, vast, isolated, and volcanic cone of North Berwick, on whose summit many a beacon has glared in the war-like times of old. It was covered on every side with the richest verdure, and rose amid spacious fields where the young grain was sprouting, and the birds were swarming in the thick old hedgerows. The sky was clear, and the atmosphere light and balmy. High into mid-air ascended the smoke from many a moss-roofed cottage chimney, and many a snug farmhouse, secluded among ancient timber, in all the leafy glory of summer.

Broad on their left stretched away for leagues, its waters mingling with the German Sea, the noble estuary of the Forth, with all its green and rocky isles, the chief of which, with all its myriad gannets wheeling in the sunshine, and whitening its cliffs, towered the stupendous cliffs of the “storm-defying Bass,”—the giant fragment of a former world—the Bastile of the covenanters—with a little red standard, just barely discernible, fluttering on its western ramparts, for it was still

garrisoned by a little party furnished yearly by the Scots Foot Guards.

In the offing the 'Fox' frigate was visible about four miles distant, standing across the estuary before a gentle breeze, but with all her canvas set, even to her royals, and like a giant bird with all its white pinions spread, she shone in a strong relief upon the expanse of blue. Farther off in distance the lug sails of a fleet of fisher-boats, marked the faint line where cloud and ocean met.

By referring frequently to the state of affairs on the continent, such as the armaments at Dunkirk, the siege of Fribourg, and investment of Tournay, the wily Bailie sought to learn the views, intentions, and politics of his companions ; but they seemed on the alert, and generally contrived to appear much more interested in the local intelligence he could afford them : such as the Edinburgh mail-bags having being found in the Tyne at Hailes' Castle — the post-boy and his horse having perished when crossing the river at a treacherous ford ; and then of a herd-laddie at Tynninghame, who had been sorely tormented by an evil spirit in the shape of a hoodie-crow, until released therefrom by the pious offices of the Reverend Mr. Carfuffle, the minister of Whitekirk. While the Bailie gabbled of these things, Sir John Mitchell had become silent and thoughtful, and solaced himself by smoking a handsome

silver mounted tobacco pipe, which had been presented to him by His Grace the Duke of Berwick, whose aid-de-camp he had the honour to be till that fatal day when the duke was killed by a cannon-ball in the trenches at Philipsburg.

“When were you last at Auldhame, Captain Douglas?” asked the Bailie, still anxious to gratify his curiosity.

“Not since my boyhood, some years ago; and then but for a short time. Sir Baldred has a son—”

“He *had*.”

“You speak in the past tense, Mr. Balcraftie!”

“Sorry am I to do sae,” said the Bailie in an altered voice.

“Dead—is the heir of Auldhame dead?” exclaimed Lord Dalquharn.

“Even sae, sir; he was shot through the head—assassinated, when riding home from the bank at Edinburgh some years ago. On that dolefu’ night, the spectre drummer was heard and seen in the avenue of Auldhame by the Reverend Mr. Carfuffle, as you may see duly minuted in the records o’ the Kirk Session; for whenever evil or fate are nigh the line of Otterburn, ’tis said they have their warning in that form.”

“This is most sad—I heard not of it, for I was far away in French Flanders,” said the young lord in a tone of real sorrow; “one stout hand

—one gallant heart less in the coming fray, Sir John,” he whispered to his friend.

“He left a daughter.”

“True, Bailie, I remember the little girl Bryde Otterburn — a flaxen haired romp — a genuine Scottish lassie with a wealth of lint white locks.”

“Even sae, sir, but her locks are something between gold and chesnut now. She is the apple o’ the auld Baronet’s eye, but she hath sair, sair longings after the leaven o’ Prelacy and Episcopacy, if not, as Mr. Carfuffle fears, after the Babylonian scarlet woman, despite a’ that I, a usefu’ friend o’ the house, can say, though a hopefu’ and a pardoned sinner.”

Indeed this woman in scarlet was the pretended bugbear, the religious *bête-noir* of Reuben Balcraffie’s life, as she has been of many a Scottish saint before and since.

After passing the ruins of Tantallon Castle on the left, they diverged from the bridle path they had hitherto pursued, into a footway through the fields, so narrow that they had, as Sir John said, “to march in Indian file,” with the Bailie in front.

“How comes Sir Baldred, a man on whom *our friends* in exile, rely so much, to have dealings or acquaintance with such a scurvy fellow as this!” said Dalquharn in a low voice.

“Some money difficulty hath doubtless brought it to pass; the Bailie has hinted as much—perhaps

wadsets to raise the wind, and lay some devil in the shape of a creditor. Zounds! I used to have enough of such things in my time, before I went out in '15. This fellow with the pale vicious eyes, seems a true blue cropear, as scurvy a patch, as if he had sold Montrose or King Charles—or had danced ankle deep in human blood at Philiphaugh or Dunavertie. I warrant him as genuine a Scottish whig as ever shared the compensation gold at the Union! A rare example of the liberal-minded Scot of the eighteenth century — Cromwell's curse on all such! It is odd, however, that such as *he*, should be our first acquaintance and guide hither, returning as we do, and on *such an errand*."

Doubtless had Bailie Balcraftie adorned the present century instead of the last, he would have been an active Sabbatarian, a vehement opposer of Sunday trains, of bands, Botanic Gardens, and all rational amusements, even to walking in the sunny fields on "the sabbath," and would have put little boys in the stocks for daring on that day to whistle in the streets. He would have enforced the tyrannical "Forbes Mackenzie act," as rigidly as we have seen him do the nineteenth act of the first parliament of King Charles II. held at Edinburgh in 1661; he would have foisted up missions to the heathen; shone on the rostrum at revivals, and extorted money on all hands for the evangelization of Bokhara and the South Sea



Islands, and been charitable only in printed lists when his name appeared in full for the edification of his neighbour and the glorification of himself.

The fires of a hundred warlike tribes have been quenched in the glens; the Highlands are a wilderness from Lochness to Lochaber; but the great family of Balcraftie is still the most flourishing of the Scottish clans!

After a walk of somewhat less than three miles, Lord Dalquharn recognized the venerable mansion of Auldhame rising before them at the end of a long avenue, and situated at the edge of a steep green bank that sloped downwards to the sea.

On the south, north and west, a species of barbican wall defended the house. The large gate in this enclosure was of hammered yetlan iron, and the portal in which it hung, was surmounted by a kind of Palladian entablature with mouldings of the time of James VI. Several oval loopholes for musketry perforated this massive defence; but long unused for warlike purposes, they were now almost hidden by the luxuriant ivy, the clematis and fragrant honeysuckle.

The sudden apparition of an infantry soldier, in his red undress jacket, very leisurely pipe-claying his belts in the sunshine, within the open grating of the iron gate, caused our friends to change colour visibly, and a deep smile to twinkle in the cunning and watchful eyes of the Bailie.

“Hey-day—what have we here—soldiers?” exclaimed Lord Dalquharn starting back.

“Even sae, my gude sir,” replied Balcraftie; “a party o’ Howard’s Foot are quartered at Auldhame and Tynninghame—”

“For what purpose?” asked Sir John Mitchell with some asperity; and again the eyes of the Bailie twinkled.

“To aid the officers of excise in watching for smugglers, for many a keg<sup>s</sup> o’ brandy and Hollands, that never pay duty to King George, are hidden whiles, in the caves along shore, and even in that under the Bass; so Captain Wyvil and Lieutenant Egerton have been invited by Sir Baldred to reside here, where I warrant they find themsels in clover.”

In fact, the appearance of Captain Wyvil’s grenadiers of the Kentish Buffs, marching down the avenue in their Prussian sugar-loaf caps and Ramillie wigs, a little drummer in front, rattling on the same drum with which he had beaten the “Point of War,” a year or two before, at Dettin-gen and Fontenoy, had been a source of excitement at Auldhame, quite as great, as when my Lady Helen Hope, the Countess-Dowager of Haddington, came, as she was wont to do, once yearly, on a state visit, in a gilt coach like a huge apple-pie, with six grey horses, with white roses at their ears, a page of the sirname of Hamilton on each step, Sir John of Trabrown as her master

of the horse, and six armed serving men, all of the name of Hamilton, with the dexter-hounds on their sleeves, riding round her.

Among the honeysuckle and ivy, which half shrouded the gate, could be seen, about five feet from the ground, the jugs,\* or iron collar, in which refractory vassals were wont to be confined, and above the entrance carved in stone, the arms of the family, three otters' heads, with a chevron between, and on a chief *azure*, a crescent *or*, the coat-armour of the old Otterburns of Redhall and Auldhame. To these were added the arms of Nova Scotia, the Scottish baronetage having been founded to promote the colonization of that province.

\* From *jugum*, a yoke.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## AN OLD SCOTTISH CAVALIER.

“I saw the Stuart race thrust out—nay more,  
I saw my country sold for English ore ;  
Such desolations in my time have been,  
I have the end of all perfection seen !”

*Epitaph at Dunkeld, 1728.*

PAINFUL misgivings crossed the mind of Lord Dalquharn on learning that government troops were not only cantoned on the barony of Sir Baldred Otterburn, but that their officers were his guests, and had been, as the Bailie said, for a week past.

Why or how was this ?

Had Sir Baldred changed his political views and gone over to the interests of one, whom he had hitherto deemed and stigmatised as a foreign usurper ; or was it mere kindness and hospitality that led him to offer Captain Wyvil and Lieutenant Egerton of the Kentish Buffs, better quarters than the thatched village hostelry could have afforded them ?

If otherwise, Dalquharn's mission was a fruit-

less one, and he had only lured his friend Sir John Mitchell to his doom. For some moments a sickening palsy of the heart came over the young Lord. At Paris they had bade adieu to Prince Charles Edward Stuart, who had come thither from Rome, for the purpose of putting himself at the head of the Duc de Roqueseuille's baffled expedition; he was then projecting, and had confided to them, his intended rising in the north, and they had resolved to precede him as a species of *avant-couriers* to certain of the loyal noblesse in the Lowlands, on whose adherence he could depend; and on old Sir Baldred Otterburn, a friend of his deceased father, the young Lord Dalquharn of the Holm, chiefly relied, for assistance and advice.

As for Sir John Mitchell, thirty years of exile had made him almost a stranger in the land of his birth. Those who were aged men in 1715, were now in their graves, and the friends and companions of his youth, had ceased to remember him in many instances; in others, were dead, or changed in thought and action. Apart from the painful doubts excited by the presence of red coats at Auldhame, Dalquharn remembered the danger, that accrued to himself and his friend, should the officers suspect, or detect in them, two attainted, forfeited and out-lawed men.

Mr. John Birniebousle, the elderly red-faced butler, who wore a suit of black broad cloth, with

vast cut steel buttons on his sleeves and pocket flaps, and who, like his betters, indulged himself in wearing an old fashioned bag-wig, received them with many reverential bows, at the door of the mansion—a door that was studded with huge nails, as if it closed a prison, and was guarded moreover, by many locks and bars and loop holes for musketry.

“Sir Baldred was within, and would see them immediately,” Mr. Birniebousle said, as he conducted them through the paved entrance hall, which was vaulted with solid stone.

There in an ambre, also formed of carved stone, and chained to the niche for security, stood an antique silver flagon, of rare and curious workmanship, from which King James VI., the Scottish royal pedant, had drunk a pint of burnt-sack, when in April, 1603, he passed by Auldhame gate, on his way to the throne of England; and after shaking hands with the then Laird, an aged knight, who had served his royal mother well and valiantly on the field of Langside, passed on to the castle of Dunglass, the residence of my Lord Home, with all his retinue of five-hundred horse; and it is reported, that as the king departed, the old Laird hid his face in his bonnet and wept, while repeating the ancient prophecy,

“A French wyfes the sonne will be,  
Shall bruik all Britain round by sea.”

for now the time had come, and Scotland's kings were to pass away.

His grandson, the present Baronet, to whom the reader is about to be introduced, was a fine example of an old Scottish gentleman of his time, one who lived on his own estate, and farmed his own lands, drinking beer and eating bread, that had been made under his own roof; proud of his ancient ancestry because their shield was stainless, and they had all been loyal and honorable men; quiet and loving to his people, gentle to the poor, and faithful *a la mort*, to a race of kings who were in exile, loving them for the heroic valour and patriotic virtues of their forefathers, rather than their own merits—a cavalier full of old and glorious memories, who loved his country not for what she was, but what she might have been; a devout and simple believer in the right divine of monarchs, yet sorely hopeless of ever seeing that fantasy triumphant.

Born in 1670, when prelacy with its reckless troopers rode rough shod over “a broken covenant and persecuted kirk,” as a boy he had seen Claverhouse's Life Guards flying from Drumclog, and the unfortunate and maddened Covenanters plant their flag in vain on Bothwell Bridge. But even as a boy his sympathies were with the oppressors rather than the oppressed, who sold their king, for he had been baptised by Archbishop Sharp, who was slain on Magus Moor in 1679, and by desire of

his father, an old cavalier of the Montrose wars, he was named Baldred, after the apostle and patron saint of East Lothian. In infancy he had been dandled on the knees of the "bloody" Duke of Lauderdale; in early years he had been the friend and fellow student of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun: thus their sentiments were the same, and like the clerical acquaintance of Sir Walter Scott, who for fifty years was never known to preach a sermon, without having "a fling at the vile incorporating union," it was a fruitful source of complaint to our querulous old Scottish tory, who seldom omitted an opportunity of committing all its promoters to the infernal gods.

Of the three last Stuart kings, he could not in his heart approve, but still less could he approve of their foreign successors, and he was still willing to give the old race a trial again, for the sake of those who had fallen in many a battle for Scotland, and who lay in their graves in Dunfermline and Holyrood.

Tradition had rendered him more loyal to dead than to living royalty, and many have been so in Scotland since. "'Tis a wonder to any one who looks back at the Stuart family, to think how they kicked their crowns from them," says the author of 'Esmond;' "how they flung away chances after chances; what treasures of loyalty they dissipated, and how fatally they were bent on consummating their own ruin. If ever men had



fidelity, 'twas they; if ever men squandered opportunity, 'twas they; and of all the enemies they had, they themselves were the most fatal."

And most true this is, of the Stuart Kings in England, or after the union of the crowns.

It is Sir Baldred Otterburn of whom we read a quaint anecdote in Wodrow's 'Analecta.' Chancing to ride through Jedburgh, when the whig magistrates were proclaiming the Orange Prince, as "King William the Second of Scotland and Third of England," at the Market Cross, they asked him to drink his health.

"No, sirs," replied the Baronet; "but I will take a glass of wine with you nevertheless."

So a little round glass was handed to him, as he sat on horseback, with his gold stamped gambadoes buckled to his girdle, his holster pistols before him and a long rapier by his side.

"As surely, sirs, as this glass will break," he exclaimed aloud, "I drink confusion to William of Orange, and hail the restoration of our lawful King and his son!"

With these words he drained the wine and dashed the glass from him, but it rolled down the steps of the cross, harmlessly and *unbroken!*

A bailie picked it up, impressed his seal upon it with wax; and as its escape was deemed a great Presbyterian miracle, it was sent, adds the Reverend Robert Wodrow "with ane attested account to King William."

Sir Baldred galloped off, followed by the jeers of all “the prick-eared curs,” as he called them. The incident, alike singular and ominous, added fuel to the fire that burned within him; he joined the Lord Viscount Dundee in the Highlands, and served with him in the victorious, but useless campaign of Killycrankie.

Some there were who averred, that when the post boy—(a boy, by the way, in his fiftieth year)—was attacked on Hedderwick Muir, on the evening of the 16th August, 1696, by two mounted gentlemen, in black velvet masks, wearing, one a grey silk coat, with brown buttons, and the other disguised in “a white English coat, with wrought silver thread buttons,” and with cocked pistols, carried off His Majesty’s mails, which contained papers of importance for the Scottish Privy Council, and left the said post boy, tied by the heels to his own horse—some there were, we say, who averred, that although one was known to be a son of the Viscount Kingston, that the other was certainly the fiery young baronet of Auldhame.

A leg broken when hunting on Luffness Muir, had luckily prevented him from joining the Earl of Mar in 1715, and so saved his estate and title; but since the death of his only son and chief hope, he had become somewhat of a changed man, and invariably wore black velvet.

Sir Baldred’s heir had been coming from the

bank of Scotland, at Edinburgh, with a large sum in notes, which he carried in a maroquin or scarlet leather case, stamped with the Otterburn arms. He was accompanied by Bailie Balcraftie, and when riding in the twilight at a lonely part of the road, where it crossed Luffness Muir, then an open and desert waste, they were attacked by footpads. The Bailie narrowly escaped a bullet, as a hole in his beaver attested; but young Otterburn was pistolled from *behind*, and dying on the spot, was robbed of all the money he carried.

The loss compelled Sir Baldred to raise a sum on a wadset (or bond) from Mr. Balcraftie, and it was a singular circumstance—a very singular one, indeed—that he paid it mostly in the notes of which the poor young gentleman had been plundered, and all of which had come into his hands in the way of business. Hence these murderous footpads were supposed to be in the neighbourhood; but no one answering the description given of them by the indefatigable magistrate could ever be discovered.

On the night of this foul assassination, his widow, who did not long survive, declared that she heard the solemn sound of the spectres' warning drum in the avenue; while others declared that the noise was produced by the hollow roaring of the sea upon the rocks known as the Carr and St. Baldred's Boat.

Funeral expenses were then enormous, and

when the heir of Auldhame was buried by torch-light in the chapel of St. Baldred, near the sea-shore, there was given in the mansion a *dredgie*, which lasted a month ; cooks and pastrymen were brought from Edinburgh to provide for the guests, and all the pipers in the Three Lothians came and went at their pleasure, drinking claret, ale and usquebaugh, in such quantities, that John Birniebousle, the thrifty old butler, danced on his bobwig in sheer despair. On the night of interment, the funeral procession on foot and horseback was a mile in length. In those days, a chief mourner, who failed almost to ruin himself, was voted a sorry fellow ; for *then as now*, people lived for appearances.

And now this good old Scottish gentleman, the sole hope of whose existence was his charming grand-daughter, the orphan Bryde Otterburn, came forth to the door of the chamber-of-dais, holding back the old russet and green tapestry, out of which the moths were fluttering, and a fine subject for the pencil of Vandyke he would have formed, as the visitors saw him, then in his seventy-fifth year, his grave and handsome face furrowed alike by time and care, though his dark grey eyes were clear and bright. He wore a dark flowing cavalier wig ; his long doublet and slops were of the days of the revolution—all of black velvet, faced, trimmed, and tied with purple ribbands, with knots of the same on each shoulder ;

a white lace cravat encircled his neck, with the ends drawn through his grandfather's thumb-ring.

A broad shoulder scarf of purple and black velvet sustained his steel-hilted rapier (for he was never unarmed, even at his own fireside), and his sturdy old legs were encased in black boots, square toed, with high red heels, and furnished with large silver spurs; and a fine picture, we say, he formed, as he threw back the arras, and came forth, making three of those grand old bows peculiar to his time.

This costume of black velvet and purple satin was his general dress, though he varied it by wearing a crape scarf and black feather, on the anniversary of the abdication of King James VII., on which occasion, with somewhat childish loyalty, he would grind an orange under his heel, just as his exuberance led him to give a joyous dinner party, and drink a deep, deep stoup of prime old burgundy on the 10th of June, the birth of the old chevalier.

Sir Baldred bowed, and then held forth his hand, the flowing curls of his black cavalier wig, which he wore in direct opposition to the *white* perukes of the Georgian era, waving gracefully to and fro as he did so; and he managed them well, for, as a quaint writer says, "*how* to wear a wig was then part of the education of a man of the world, and not to be learned in books. Those who know what witchcraft there is in the handling of

a fan, what dexterity in the nice conduct of a clouded cane, will imagine the wits and gentlemen of old did not suffer the wig to overshadow their temples; and many a country squire must have tried in vain to catch the right toss of the head; to sport a playful humour in those crisp curls; to acquire the lofty carriage of the fore-top, or the significant trifling with some obtrusive lock; and felt as awkward in his new wig as a tailor on horseback, or a fat alderman with a dress-sword dangling between his legs."

## CHAPTER IX.

## DALQUHARN'S MISSION.

“ You run, my lord, no hazard.  
 Your reputation shall still stand as fair  
 In all good men's opinions as now :  
 For though I did contemn report myself  
 As a mere sound, I still will be so tender  
 Of what concerns you, in all points of honour,  
 That the immaculate whiteness of your fame  
 Shall ne'er be sullied with one taint or spot.

*New Way to pay old Debts.*

SIR BALDRED met them in a corridor hung with portraits. There might be seen Miss Bryde Otterburn's mamma, as a shepherdess in powder, with hooped skirt, a crook with ribbons, and her lambs frisking about her ; and near it was a full length of Sir Baldred's bride by Sir Peter Lely, as Diana with a crescent on her brow, a short cymar looped at the right knee, a bow bent in her hand, and a view of Auldhame and the Bass Rock in the background.

The vulture eyes of the Bailie were now intently watching the meeting of the baronet and his visitors.

“Twa friends o’ yours, most worthy Sir Baldred, whom I have had the high honour to guide hither,” said the Bailie, hat in hand, while perpetrating a series of obsequious bows that threatened, each time, to cast his cumbrous tiwig at the feet of the tall old cavalier, who made rather a chilling response. “Captain Douglas and Captain Mitchell of the Scots Brigade in Holland, Sir Baldred.”

“They are welcome,” said the other, presenting his hand with sudden warmth to each; “right heartily welcome to Auldhame—your humble servant, sirs. But you must have been long absent from these parts, or have come from a distance surely, to require a guide.”

“Aye—mony ask the road they ken fu’ well,” said the Bailie, rather sarcastically; but he cowered beneath an angry glance from Sir Baldred.

“We are from Dunkirk *last*, where we saw a dear and mutual friend, who commends himself unto you,” said Dalquharn, in a hurried whisper, as he pressed the hand of Sir Baldred, and they exchanged a quick glance full of intelligence; but quick though it was, it did not escape the vulture eyes, nor did the whisper elude the large attentive aural appendages of Balcraftie, who knew too well that the mutual friend referred to, could be no other than Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the heir of these realms.

“We will speak of our *friend* anon, and when



more at leisure," said Sir Baldred, casting an unmistakably impatient glance at Balcraftie, who lingering irresolute, and cringing in aspect, strove to light up his cold malignant eyes, with a vapid smile.

"Captain Douglas is, I believe, an auld friend o' yours and o' the house o' Auldhame," said he, still sifting and watching. It was a fine thing, a fact soothing to his malevolent spirit, and promising future profit, to have two such gallant looking men as the strangers, and perhaps the proud old cavalier too, who seldom concealed the scorn he felt, in *his* power, so he resolved to be wary and watch closely!

"An old friend, Captain Douglas cannot be," said Sir Baldred smiling, "for he is but a youth, and I am——"

"Like unto Isaac, 'being old and full of days.'" "

"To speak in your own cant, bailie, the years of my pilgrimage are verging on seventy-five now," responded the other sharply.

"Yet, Sir Baldred," said Dalquharn, in a low and mellow voice, "I had the honour to be once before under your hospitable roof."

"When?"

"At that memorable time when Parliament directed the demolition of the gates of Edinburgh, after the affair of the Porteous mob."

"Just ten years ago come the next eighth o'

September," said the Bailie, braving another wrathful glare from Sir Baldred.

"In that year I was here with — my poor father and mother," said Dalquharn, lowering his voice.

"And she, Captain Douglas," said Sir Baldred, "and she——"

"Was, as you may remember, nearly related to two unfortunate gentlemen—the Earl of Dumbar-ton and the Viscount Kenmure."

"Great heaven, my—do I?—is it possible? Excuse me, Captain Douglas, but I remember me now," said Sir Baldred hurriedly, and a sudden flush crossed his grave old visage, as he again took Dalquharn's hand—a flush of pleasure at the recognition, oddly mingled with anger, that one whom they dared not trust, stood by observant of all—"she and your noble father are both dead—I know that much."

"Alas—yes."

"You shall be my guests—you and your friend; bailie, will you oblige me by seeing Mrs. Dorriel, the housekeeper, and also the butler? they would gladly confer with you anent several wants in cellar and buttery; we have other visitors just now, and a few kegs of French sherry and brandy — you understand — were welcome here. See to it at once I pray you, and join us anon at dinner."

With a deep smile on his inscrutable face, the

Bailie, though he knew that he had failed to discover *who* "Captain Douglas" really was, withdrew to dispatch, without delay, his business with Dame Dorriel Grahame, and Mr. Birniebousle, the butler, while Sir Baldred led his visitors into the chamber-of-dais, or great dining-room, and carefully closed the solid oak door, and draped over it the thick arras, which represented the slaughter of the famous wild boar of Gulane.

"Though young enough to be my grandson, you do me high honour, my Lord Dalquharn of the Holm, in visiting my poor house thus," said the fine old courteous gentleman, as he almost embraced the young peer. "Begad! but thou'st grown a tall and proper fellow—dark and handsome, and like thy father, too! Welcome, and all the more welcome, as I guess the errand on which thou hast come—but I fear 'twill be a bootless one. And your friend——"

"Sir John Mitchell of Pitreavie and that ilk in Fifeshire; a baronetcy of the same year as your own."

"Gadso! Sir John, your humble servant. I knew your good father well — stout old Sir William of Pitreavie, whilom Chamberlain of Fife and Captain of Burntisland. Many a jolly runlet of claret and sack we have drank together, to the confusion of the Union and all its abettors, in Hughie Blair's tavern in the Parliament Close. Many a constable we've bilked there, and many a

tavern bully we've pinked and trounced together ! You were in the army ?”

“ First, under her majesty, the good Queen Anne, of glorious memory, in the Scots' Greys, then commanded by John Earl of Stair. You are doubtless aware, Sir Baldred, that on the night after the battle of Malplacquet, I, when a mere boy in his teens, a cornet, rashly challenged the Duke of Marlborough to meet me with sword and pistol for coarsely reflecting on my country, while I delivered to him a dispatch from Prince Eugene of Savoy. That challenge wrought my ruin in the service ! So my Lord Balmerino and I went out with the Earl of Mar in 1715, and since the ill-fated battle of Sheriffmuir, I have been, like too many others, a broken and a landless man !”

“ Landless and homeless,” said Sir Baldred bitterly ; “ how many a noble peer and gentleman of that ilk have been so, since that fatal time when England first relinquished her unavailing sword, to insert a golden wedge in the foundations of our Scottish throne ?”

The old baronet was now on his hobby, and might have ridden it for an hour, but Dalquharn said :—

“ We are, I trust, the heralds of a brighter era. Ere long, Sir Baldred, his royal highness the Prince of Wales will land in the Highlands——”

“May the blessed God in heaven prosper him!” exclaimed the old man, while his eyes filled with tears, as he raised his trembling hands upward, and the deep earnest loyalty of those days, when the sword and the gibbet were its test, gushed up in his true old Scottish heart.

“In the north we can reckon upon the loyal clans to a man! Of the lowlands I am very doubtful. Of England—save the border counties and some friends in London—I am totally so.”

“Unless we strike a good blow first on Scottish ground,” said Sir Baldred, cheerfully.

“The affair of '15 has taught us some wise, but bitter lessons. Little is committed to writing. We carry on our tongues, and in our hearts, the instructions we are to communicate to you, the Earl of Kilmarnock, old Lord Lovat, and all on whom His Majesty King James and the Prince of Wales can rely.”

“Call him Duke of Rothesay, I pray you, my lord.”

“One of the chief objects of this earlier mission of Sir John and myself is to see about the establishment of a cavalry force, France furnishing the arms, harness, and accoutrements, as we have been promised commissions in the Life Guard of James VIII., so soon as it has been formed by the Lord Elcho.”

“By what fatality, my lord, did our long expected Dunkirk expedition come to pass away?”

The accounts given us, in the 'Caledonian Mercury,' were most meagre."

"Prince Charles Edward left Rome disguised as a courier, for everywhere the Elector had his hawks and spies abroad. Reaching Paris undiscovered, he had a long audience with King Louis——"

"Long, long have his family been the dupes of France! In all ages that nation hath deceived them!" exclaimed Sir Baldred emphatically.

"France seemed serious then; fifteen thousand infantry were assembled at Dunkirk, under the immediate orders of His Royal Highness, while the Brest fleet, consisting of twenty-three sail, manned by more than ten thousand seamen, entered the Channel, under the flag of Admiral the Duc de Roquefeuille, to take them on board. Spies soon informed the ministry of these measures, and when off Dungeness the fleet of Admiral Norris was in sight. Sir John and I were on board 'Le Neptune' of 74 guns, commanded by the Chef d'Escadre Monsieur de Carnilly, and saw the alarm and confusion of the French at the superior aspect of the British fleet."

"In plain words, my lord, the Duc de Roquefeuille turned tail and fled?"

"We got under sail at sunset, and stood down the Channel. That night a dreadful storm came on, and we reached Brest in a sorely crippled condition, while many of our transports perished

with all on board. So the scheme of a sudden descent under the superintendence of the Count de Saxe was completely frustrated."

"All the better, sirs," said Sir Baldred; "I like not this French intervention in our affairs. If the House of Stuart is ever to be restored to the British throne, I vow that I should like to see it done by British hands."

"And so thinks His Royal Highness!" said Sir John Mitchell; "the fearless little boy, whom I, myself, have seen pursuing the cannon balls as they ricocheted past the tent of the Duke of Berwick, and who lately served in the campaign in Flanders, is now a tall and gallant gentleman, the model of a prince, and fortunately for those he hopes to govern, his temper and spirit have been taught moderation by exile, for he has learned many a stern lesson in adversity."

"Before winter be past, he has sworn to be in Holyrood, or in his grave!" said Dalquharn, in a low but earnest voice; "his banner, like that which Montrose unfurled at Invercarron, shall have a crown and a coffin, as symbols that he comes to seek one or the other."

"Woe is me!" said Sir Baldred; "I am old and poor; I can neither aid His Majesty's service or purpose by men or with my sword; but money he shall have, if that bloated miser Reuben Balcraftie hath it to give, even at 50 per cent. A cheque on our Scottish Treasury may, one day, repay it all; if

not, there was mair tint at Sheriffmuir—eh, Sir John? 'Tis a hard time for us this; I can scarcely get a penny of rent, in consequence of the terrible cattle plague, which during the last four years hath swept away all our herds. We have empty byres over all the barony, and in the house a half empty pantry, as Mrs. Dorriel the housekeeper will tell you. Bowie and Kirn are alike empty in all the farm-towns, and our poor cottar folk have sore times, sir—sore times; but the king is coming, and we shall have less taxes and no more German wars! Every man owes something to his lawful king and to the land that bore him; the talents of some; the industry, the gold, and the valour of others! But as the old song says—

“Cock up your beaver, and cock it fu' sprush,  
We'll over the Borders and gi'e them a brush;  
The Southrons there shall learn better behaviour,  
And each true-hearted cavalier cock up his beaver!”

At that moment the arras was withdrawn, the door opened, and the Bailie entered, on which the three gentlemen affected to continue a very animated discussion on the appearance of the weather, and the prospect of rain, though the May-day sky was without a cloud.

“Soho! here come Bryde and her English cavaliers!” exclaimed Sir Baldred, looking from a window (which, like all the rest in Auldhame, was secured from intrusion by a basket grating), as a lovely fair-haired girl in a blue riding habit,



with a white hat and long ostrich feather, dashed up the long shady avenue, on a splendid bay, attended by two grooms in the Otterburn livery, and accompanied by two officers—Captain Wyvil and Lieutenant Egerton of Howards—who, in their Ramillie wigs and Kevenkuller hats, square skirts and crimson sashes, worn in what was called the German fashion (round the waist), looked as stiff and odd as infantry officers usually do, even in the present day, when mounted.

“Ah! they have been so far as Spott. God be good to us! It seems like yesterday when I rode over to Spott-loan, on an October evening in the year 1705, with Sir William Mitchell of Pitreavie and my Lord Kingston, to see half a dozen poor old women burned in one huge fire—a pile of tar-barrels—for witchcraft! We have put dinner back an hour for those loiterers; but John Birniebousle shall now ring the house-bell.”

To find that his father's venerable friend was still true to “the good old cause,” though certain redcoats were received as guests at Auldhame, had lifted a great load of suspicion and anxiety from the heart of the young and enthusiastic Lord Dalquharn.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE HOUSE OF AULDHAME.

“Auldhame! the wall-flower’s scented bloom,  
Grows lovely on thy turrets grey,  
And, like the rose strewn on a tomb,  
A fragrance sheds around decay.  
No harps are murmuring in the hall;  
No armour glittering on the wall;  
For gone are knight and seneschal,—  
The voice of man is dumb!  
And nought but ghosts, so gaunt and tall,  
At dreary midnight come.”

*St. Baldred of the Bass.*

THE Otterburns of Auldhame were one of the oldest families in the constabulary of Haddington, though they took their name from a place which is now merely a farm at Longformacus in the Merse; but the race could trace themselves into the remoter ages of Scottish history; and Sir Baldred was fond of boasting over his flagon of Burgundy or pint of burnt-sack; that Allan Otterburn had been secretary to Murdoch, Duke of Albany, when James I. was crowned at Scone; and that, in the time of James II., Nicholas Otter-

burn of that ilk was “Clericus Rotolorum Regni Nostri;” and he never failed to remember Sir Adam Otterburn of Auldhame, who was one of the first fifteen senators of the College of Justice, and who, in 1544, was Provost of Edinburgh, which he valiantly defended against the English till it was in flames in eight places, repulsing them at the cannon’s mouth; for he inherited all the valour of his father, who fell at Flodden.\*

Overlooking the sounding sea from its steep green slopes, in view of picturesque and rugged Dunbar, the towering Bass and Tantallon on its precipitous cliffs, that rise like ribs of bronze from waves of snowy foam, Auldhame, though not built for a long defence, unlike most of our old Scottish mansions, had never been assailed save once, when General Monk’s cannoniers, on their way to attack the castle of Tantallon, fired a few twelve-pound shot at the barbican wall, in a spirit of mere mischief: and Sir Baldred had heard his mother tell, with mingled wrath and fun, “how the crop-eared Puritans of England, in their steeple-crowned hats and falling collar-bands, calves’ leather boots and russet doublets, robbed the hen-roosts, and drained the cellars, and sung psalms with the kitchen wenches;” but they did no more; for Cromwell’s brave fellows—like himself—behaved very well while in Scotland.

\* *Vide* Haig and Brunton.

Still more unlike our feudal mansions, the annals of Auldhame were darkened by no memorial of violence, treachery, or crime. The family had never been wealthy enough, or sufficiently powerful, to take much share in the great, desperate, and bloody game of political parties, which was for ever being played in Scotland, till the rapid progress of events, and the abolition of their hereditary jurisdictions in 1747, saved the land from its chief curse, the intrigues of a degraded, envious, grasping, venal, and treacherous nobility; thus, no feud, or raid, or midnight foray, no deed of blood, except one in war, cast a shadow on the hospitable hearth of the Otterburns of Auldhame.

The family had a death-warning, so local gossips say, in the shape of a spectre-drummer, who beat round the house, up the long shady avenue, or along the solitary sea-shore at midnight, "when fate was nigh" the line of Otterburn; and this was alleged to have been the case, ever since Sir Nicholas, who fell at Flodden, slew in cold blood, three days before the battle, a drummer of the Lord Surrey's army.

The corbelled turrets at the angles of the walls were meant more for decoration or utility than resistance: yet each had an arrow-hole in its window sill, and the steep roofs of grey slabbed stone, were thickly spotted with green lichens, which gave a tone of venerable antiquity to the whole edifice.

With its gablets covered with scutcheons and initials, the old mansion formed a heraldic history of the alliances of its successive inmates, cut in solid stone; and in several places appeared the fess-cheque, for Lady Jean Stuart, daughter of John, third Earl of Athol, the wife of John Otterburn, who carried the king's banner at Solway Moss.

Many a family festival, kept as such festivals were only kept, in the hearty rough old times—many a Hallow eve, with its tales of witches and glamour; many a frosty yule, with its green holly branches and red berries, and many a New Year's feast, when the snow lay deep on the far stretching Lammermuirs, and the steep slopes of Dunpender; many a marriage with its jollity; many a birth, with all its hopes and tenderness, and many a death, with its noisy dredgie, and its long funeral torchlight procession, have those old walls witnessed.

Some little conspiracies too, as when John Otterburn was official of Lothian in 1477, and the ambassador of Pope Julius II. came to wheedle James IV. to send troops to the Italian wars; and in much more recent times, all Haddingtonshire knew, that there was a mighty burnishing up of old holster pistols and snap-lock muskets, and that many a blunted pikehead and notched broadsword were put on the whirring grindstone, on that memorable night in the March of 1708,

when the Chevalier de Fourbin, the Marechal Duc de Matignon, King James VIII., with the gallant Irish brigade and French troops, to the number of fifteen thousand bayonets, were all off the Red Head of Angus, and half the money for which Scotland was sold, lay yet in the castle of Edinburgh!

The quaint old garden, with its formal grass walks and high yew hedges, stone terraces, and leaden gods and goddesses, was stocked with herbs by the famous Holyrood seedsman, Millar of Craigan Tinnie, less because they were of the best Dutch kind, than because he, worthy Quaker, was hereditary master gardener to the King of Scotland; for Sir Baldred was loyal even to the carrots and turnips that garnished his platter of Bass-fed mutton; but Miss Bryde's flower parterres suffered sorely from the cold blasts of the east, or as the gardener was wont to stigmatise it, "the Hanoverian wind;" for Sir Baldred affirmed, that it had blown over the German sea, more keenly than ever, since the accession of the House of Guelph.

In defiance of the lord advocate, many engravings of "the king owre the water," and of his family, with all their royal titles below, were to be found in the rooms of Auldhame.

Westward of the ancient gate by which Lord Dalquharn and Sir John Mitchell approached the mansion, there was then a grove of giant trees,

the remnant of one of those old forests wherein our hardy ancestors hunted, perhaps, before the world was redeemed, and when its shades formed the home of the Coille-donean or men of the woods. Now, it was locally known as the Deil's Loan (Anglice, Devil's-lane), for there his satanic majesty was alleged to promenade on certain gloomy evenings, when the sky was black and lowering, and the sea mews fled inland; and his terrible presence was always heralded by loud and angry gusts of wind, so stormy that they frequently laid flat some of the ancient trees, tore the thatch from the cottage roofs, rent the cabers from the walls, and hurled the waves in wild tumult against the ruins of the "auld kirk" at North Berwick, at each recession, sucking the dead from their graves, to strew their bones upon the beach.

Then, "Auld Mahoun," was known to be at his trysting-place, and more than one ill-favoured old woman, in the hamlets of Tynninghame and Auld-hame, was averred to be waiting to receive him and to obey his commands to work mischief by land and sea.

The chamber-of-dais, or dining-room, wherein Sir Baldred now spent many an hour, telescope in hand, watching the passing ships (chiefly that cruising hawk of the Elector's, the 'Fox' frigate), as he was too old for much out-of-door exercise, and had altogether relinquished hunting,

was carpeted with rush-work; the recessed windows had velvet cushions on the stone seats, and these were covered with pretty needlework by Bryde's industrious little fingers. A large iron grate stood on a square stone block, within the wide fire-place, on each side of which were two caryatides of Egyptian aspect, with quiet, solemn and stupid faces, supporting a great lintel, inscribed,

**Sanct. Baldred blis zis Hobse,**

a legend which the Reverend Mr. Aminadab Carfuffle, of Whitekirk, and Bailie Balcraftie, had more than once hinted the expediency of obliterating, as savouring of popery and the scarlet woman; but Sir Baldred had once sworn in his cups, that "the loon who defaced a letter of it, should be nailed by the lugs to the outer gate!"

The ceilings were of that delicate white pargetted plaster work, so common in Scottish mansions which have been repaired during the time of James VI.; and a cornice of alternate lions and unicorns *passant*, can still be traced on the time-worn walls.

There hung the suit of tempered plate armour, with the two-handed sword and barred helmet of Sir Adam Otterburn, who, as we have already stated, so stoutly defended the Scottish capital, when the warlike Earl of Hertford landed with the savage orders of his master, the Royal Blue-Beard, "to utterly raze it, and to spare no living



thing—nor woman nor youngling, nor even the household dogs ;” but who was driven down Leith Wynd, faster than he came up, leaving nearly all his culverins, sakers and other brass cannon, behind him ; and though he ultimately burned the city, these were long after shown in the castle of Edinburgh as trophies of the war of 1544.

Opposite the armour hung a full length of Sir Baldred, in the then uniform of the royal company of archers, a tartan coat faced with white, a white silk scarf, a blue bonnet, with a St. Andrew’s cross above his black cavalier wig ; for he had, in latter years, been a crack shot among that remarkable body, into which none were admitted save known adherents of the House of Stuart, as their real object was to learn openly the use of arms without suspicion, and hence this chartered company of bowmen, was merely a secret school to educate officers for the Jacobite cause, though in the happier reign of Victoria, it figures as “The Queen’s Body Guard for Scotland.”

## CHAPTER XI.

## BRYDE OTTERBURN.

“ How oft in musing mood my heart recalls,  
From grey-beard father Time’s oblivious halls,  
The modes and maxims of my early day,  
Long in those dark recesses stow’d away ;  
Drags once more to the cheerful realms of light  
Those buckram fashions, long since lost in night,  
And makes, like Endor’s witch, once more to rise  
My gorgeous grandames to my raptured eyes !

*Salmagundi.*

WHILE the sunset of a bright May evening, streaming over the fertile fields and waving woodlands, came through the tall windows of Auldhame, and lighted up gaily the picturesque old chamber-of-dais, dinner was served there, and with the last clang of the great copper bell that dangled from from one of the gables without, Sir Baldred and his guests sat down to a sumptuous and varied feast, the presiding queen and goddess of which was his grand-daughter, Miss Bryde Otterburn, who had just arrived from a gallop with the two English visitors, and now appeared with her natural bloom and radiance, greatly enhanced by exercise.

When at Auldhame ten years ago, as a mere lad (a time and visit concerning which the curious Bailie Balcraftie resolved to inquire in other quarters), Lord Dalquharn had left Bryde Otterburn a little flaxen-haired girl, who nursed a waxen doll, gathered flowers by the wayside, and shells on the sea-shore. Now he found her a full grown belle of twenty. Ten years had made a wonderful difference in them both !

To please the deceased Lady Dalquharn, who was her mother's dearest friend, she had been called after St. Bryde, of Kildare, the ancient patron of the house of Douglas, hence her quaint name ; and for this trifling circumstance, as well as certain traits of character, chiefly her gay and happy spirit, poor Bryde was rather—shall we call it “tabooed”—by the more rigid ladies of East Lothian, her family having always had rather vague ideas of Presbyterianism, with decided leanings towards Prelacy.

Her eyes and hair were exactly of the same chesnut hue—the former very soft, but clear and deep : the latter very silky and ripply. Her manner was animated, and though her features were not regular, she possessed the “best essence of beauty—expression,” for her clear hazel eyes were full of intelligence, always varying, but ever gentle, winning, and feminine.

From the colour of her eyes, and their long dark lashes, some might have called Bryde Otter-

burn a brown beauty, though she had a wonderful brilliance and fairness of complexion. Some there were who thought her laughing, good-humoured mouth a little too large for the rest of her soft features; but none could deny the cherry tint of her beautifully cut lips.

Bryde had been well educated, according to the ideas of the time in Scotland, having been boarded with Madam Straiton, a fashionable "mistress of manners," in the Canongate of Edinburgh, whose house adjoined that of His Grace of Queensberry, where she had shared the society of the Earl of Haddington's grand-daughters, the Ladies Rachel and Grizel, afterwards Countess of Stanhope; and where, with several other demoiselles of good family, she had been taught to dance the minuet and other measures, how to carry her vast hoop and long train, to sing the songs of Mr. Allan's Ramsay's 'Tea Table Miscellany,' to play on the virginals or spinnet, to paint on satin, to make wax fruits, and fligree work of gilt paper; in addition to which accomplishments, she had also been taught spinning and cookery, and how to oversee the pantry and brew-house, like the noble dame, her mother, before her.

In fact, it was to his darling grand-daughter Bryde, that the confiding old Laird of Auldhame gave almost the entire charge of his property in many instances; certainly the whole control of his household, the care of his tenants, and of the

poor in the hamlet, so Bryde had her pretty little hands quite full, you may be assured ; and a lively time she and old Dorriel Grahame, the housekeeper, had of it, when the kain (or tribute) was collected from the tenants, such as a score of meadow geese on old Michaelmas day, and as many fat hens on Fastern's Even, before Shrove Tuesday.

On this day at dinner, Bryde's beautiful soft hair was unpowdered, and in all its natural glory, fell rippling over her shoulders, from under one of those tiny lace mob-caps, which were then in fashion. A black satin apron, with a ruche of white ribband round it, and round the pocket-holes, formed an important portion of her attire ; but even the long stomacher and enormous hoop fardingale under her blue silk dress (the breast and flounces of which were covered by innumerable little knots of white ribband) were unable to spoil the grace and beauty of her form.

Among the men of those days the hoop was objected to, quite as much as the crinoline of more recent times ; but it also had its defenders, and among others the gentle Allan Ramsay, who says—

“ If Nelly's hoop be twice as wide,  
As her two pretty legs can stride ;  
What then ? will any man of sense  
Take umbrage or the least offence ?

“ Do not the handsome of our city,  
The pious, chaste, the kind and witty,  
Who can afford it, great and small,  
Regard a well-shaped fardingale ? ”

A very housewife-like bunch of keys hung at her chatelane, and with them a silver pomander ball, perforated by small holes to let out the scent. All her ornaments were chiefly valued because they had been her mother's: an etui and little round, embossed gold watch, a cut-steel set of mosaics, necklet, bracelets, and girdle of the time of Louis Quatorze.

Sir John, simply known as yet by all save his host and hostess as Captain Mitchell, handed her to dinner, and sat by her side. Dalquharn sat near Sir Baldred, and the other seats were occupied by Bailie Balcraftie and the two English officers, who were both handsome, pleasant, and gentlemanly men, though the Jacobite emissaries could very well have dispensed with their presence.

Captain Marmaduke Wyvil, the senior in years and rank, was the *beau ideal* of a suave, polished, and good-humoured English officer. He had seen much of the world, and was the eldest son of Squire Wyvil, of Hurstmonceaux, in the county of Salop. He had a slight halt in his gait, having been wounded at Fontenoy in the preceding year.

Talbot Egerton, his subaltern, was a Londoner, somewhat *etourdi* in his bearing, not liking the Scots much—in fact, perhaps, hating them, like every “true-born Englishman” of his time; but he was well enough bred to keep his opinions entirely to himself, moreover the national acrimony

of future years had not been developed by Wilkes, the *North Briton*, and the scurrility of Churchill's provincial pastorals.

They wore their uniform (which then no military man ever went without, even when on half-pay), the ample, flowing, and richly laced coats of the Kentish Buffs, with flap-waistcoats, and knee-breeches, both of buff-coloured silk. Their white and well-powdered wigs were of the regimental pattern; and to these gentlemen of the sword, Sir Baldred had simply introduced his secret visitors as "Captains Mitchëll and Douglas—friends of mine, fresh from Holland, after vanquishing the French and the buxom toasts and beauties of Haarlem and Amsterdam."

Captain Wyvil and Sir John soon fraternised as old soldiers, who had tasted salt water and smelled gunpowder, and they courteously exchanged snuff-boxes; but Egerton, who affected to be somewhat of a beau, or blood, the "fast man" of a very slow age, eyed Dalquharn distrustfully and coldly, and doubtless he had good reason.

For the entire past week in Auldhame he had been the favoured cavalier of Miss Bryde Otterburn, and had her society all to himself; but now this stranger in the green frock, with his fair hair queued back by a blue ribband—this Captain Douglas, who had dropped suddenly among them, as if from the clouds, engrossed all, or nearly all her attention; and to make matters worse, they

seemed quite old friends, with ample and mutual recollections of a former intimacy.

Though the conversation of this little dinner party was general, the Bailie was reserved and watchful, with his pale watery eyes usually fixed on Miss Otterburn and Dalquharn, while his host eyed him grimly, and thought—

“Egad! in my young days, such a carle as Reuben Balcraftie must have drunk his thin ale out of a pewter stoup below the salt; now, sink him! he drinks claret and sherry out of well cut crystal, at the same board with his betters.”

Sir Baldred asked a blessing; he was afraid to let the Bailie (or “Swivel-eyes,” as Mr. Egerton called him) do so, lest the viands should be cold, ere he had relieved, by a long out-pouring, his thankful spirit; and then the meal proceeded briskly, old Birniebousle the butler in his bob wig, and several powdered liverymen, being in attendance. Mr. Birniebousle who wore hodden grey in general, was attired in his holiday suit of black broadcloth.

Sir Walter Scott was quizzed by an English critic, for “always feeding his heroes well,” but it must be borne in mind, that dinners *à la Russe*, and of kickshaws, were unknown a century ago in Scotland and in England too.

Before Bryde towered a great pasty of venison stalked in Binning Wood, and at the lower end, was a gallant grey salmon from the Tyne; on



one side a capon with pease-pottage; on the other a steak pie of dainty mutton, esteemed all the more for being fed on the Island of the Bass; then the second course consisted of fried sweet-breads, a platter of roasted powts, or young muir-fowl, a jugged hare and fricasseed rabbits with custard pies and puddings; while sherry, port, claret and brandy were all going round the table pell mell: and there was present *one* small dish which excited universal comment—potatoes—a strange root introduced from Ireland into East Lothian, only four years before, by Hay of Aberlady, as a garden rarity, and sent as a present from him to Auldhame himself!

“Salmon are unco’ scarce in the Tyne, Auldhame,” observed the Bailie.

“Everything hath been so, since the Union,” said Sir Baldred; “but anent the salmon, the seals have been swimming about the river mouth, and that is the chief reason. ’Odsheart! I know the Tyne well, and have fished every foot of it, from the Firth up to Middleton Muir, bailie, thirty good Scottish miles; but these days are over with me now. I’ve twinges of rheumatism in the leg which I broke in the year ’15, when rushing my horse at a feal-dyke. ’Sdeath! I protest, I don’t think that dour auld carle Andrew Brown of Dolphinton, though a great medicinar in his time, set that same leg right. He bled me like a sheep, I can remember, and gave me a powder,

pulverised from the moss that grew on a human skull in his library! His lodging was then opposite the mint, in the Cowgate, a genteel, but rather busy thoroughfare. Ugh! how I wearied of my sojourn there, till I came home by easy stages in my Lady Haddington's glass coach. Pass round the wine, John—Captain Wyvil's glass is quite empty."

While the dinner proceeded, Dalquharn and Bryde were talking of old times, or rather their younger days, and of some of his adventures since, all of which were full of interest to her; so poor Mr. Egerton found that he quite failed to attract her by an anecdote about "Sparkish and Sir Timothy Tawdry of ours, who in an eating house at Charing Cross, met with two subalterns of Barrel's regiment, who had just come home after Fontenoy; that a quarrel ensued about kissing the barmaid—a rosy-cheeked wench, and it all ended in a game of sharps—yes, begad, madam—by the rule of steel, at the back of Montague House, and in both those bucks of Barrel's, being pinked and taken home on shutters by the watch!" and so forth.

Wyvil and Mitchell were fighting Malplaquet over again, and snuffing prodigiously over their reminiscences; so Egerton was reduced to endure the conversation of Bailie Balcraftie, whom he only half understood, and wholly detested, and who bored him by elaborate details of the great

rinderpest which was then destroying the cattle in all parts of Britain, and which he called "a plague sent by the Lord to carry awa' the bestial of Jew and Gentile alike."\*

Talbot Egerton, like other young men of his position in society, had made the "grand tour," between the time of leaving Cambridge and joining the Kentish Buffs in the Balearic Isles; he was fond of gaiety, and he who had been sick of service in Scotland—as sick as any of Cæsar's Legionaries were long ago—and who had longed for London, with its bustle and society, its coffee-houses, Drury Lane, and Covent Garden and the Mall—to be beating the watch and scouring St. Giles with other young bloods of fire and good-breeding—longing too for cocking matches at Chelsey and other matches at Hockley-in-the-Hole, had suddenly become quite reconciled to his country quarters, under the influence of Bryde Otterburn's society for a week, and had said much less to Wyvil about odious mountain scenery, Scotch mists, cheek bones, oat-meal and brimstone; and now to make amends for her inattention, she began to rally him upon permitting the smugglers to escape last night.

\* This cattle plague was equally fatal on the Continent in 1745-6. In September of the latter year, the London papers state that "in Essex alone, upwards of 6000 cattle died of it before the 1st of            last," and that 60,000 perished in Denmark before the middle of December.

On this, he proceeded to inform Lord Dalquharn, with considerable minuteness, that he and Captain Wyvil, had undergone great annoyance, and no small amount of personal peril, when patrolling the dangerous coast between Tantallon and the rocks known as St. Baldred's Cradle, amid a dense mist, as a run of smuggled goods was expected to be made, by a Dunkirk lugger, which Mr. Gage was unable to board, as all the fisher-boats were at sea, and his own, with her swivel gun, had been scuttled and destroyed by some of the smuggler's confederates on shore.

Dalquharn and Mitchell covertly smiled at each other, and the uneasiness of the Bailie was only too discernible to them both.

"Talking of that affair," said Captain Wyvil, setting down his glass of Burgundy, and playing with his ruffles, "I vow, Miss Otterburn, that I am almost glad the Sanders Scupperplug (or whatever is his name) escaped us."

"Why, Captain Wyvil?" asked Bryde, laughing at the odd name.

"I can forgive the old fellow anything, as one of the five brave British seamen who took the little fort of Puerto-de-la-Plata and burned the town."

"But from all I have heard, he must have some confederates in the neighbourhood, and bold ones too, Captain Wyvil."

"He has, Miss Otterburn, and I'd give a

month's pay to find 'em out," exclaimed Mr. Egerton.

"Because you are tired of this secluded place and of us," suggested Bryde, "and long to change your quarters."

"Ah don't say so, I pray you, madam," implored Mr. Egerton, actually blushing nearly as red as his coat, while the Bailie's face during this little colloquy was an amusing picture to those who like Dalquharn and Sir John Mitchell could read it. They smiled to each other again, and the latter took a pinch of rappee from a Sevres box, presented to him by the Duke of Berwick.

"Scupperplug is no doubt a *nom de guerre*, and egad, it is a droll one!" said Egerton, who having made "the grand tour" in charge of a bear-leader (as travelling tutors were named) had picked up a little French, a language then very properly despised, as Mr. Wilkes might have told us, by all loyal and true-born Britons, as being fitted only for frog-eaters, dancing-masters, barbers, and catgut-scrappers, who wore wooden shoes and adhered to the Pope, the devil, and the Pretender. "The whole district hereabout," resumed the Lieutenant, "is deeply interested in the smuggling business, so that I fear we shall have to make short and sharp work with all who fall into our hands and come to the cold iron, without reference to riot acts and so forth."

"Riot acts—man alive! don't talk of them,"

exclaimed Sir Baldred, with sudden irritation. "In Scotland, in my time, in the pursuit of a lawful feud or family quarrel, we could keep the crown of the causeway with sword and pistol, if we so wished, against all comers—sack a farm-town, burn a grange, or blow up a tower; make a tulzie at kirk or market, on the highway, or in burgh, and there was no more about it; but now since the accession of this House of Hanover, we have had a riot act passed by the united parliament, expressly to prevent what they termed the disorders, which might be occasioned by that accession, the proclamation of which, in Edinburgh, I well remember, for it was made to the people under the cannon's mouth, every gun in the castle being double-shotted and turned on the city, while the Lyon King and his heralds were at the cross! and so, now a Douglas sits down at the same table with a Hamilton, a Scot with a Kerr, and have no occasion to leave their swords with the butler or tapster, for they cut their coats peaceably now according to the English fashion."

Captain Wyvil laughed good humouredly at this odd view of matters taken by the baronet, whose boyhood went back to the days of King Charles the Second, and certainly of all the many grievances of which he complained, the restrictions of good government were the most singular; but after Miss Otterburn had retired amid the low bows of all present, and after the removal of the

cloth, Mr. Birniebousle brought in long clay pipes for tobacco, and the soothing Nicotian weed became the order of the evening, while the pretty heiress of Auldhame sighed alone over her tea-board and its best equipage in the drawing-room.

Fresh decanters and jugs of wine were brought with certain curious old drinking glasses, massive and dwarfish, each with a small gold coin of Francis and Mary, king and queen of France and Scotland, blown into the stem. The butler also, as a matter of custom, placed a tankard of pure water at his master's right hand.

"Fill your glasses, gentlemen—a bumper to the king!" said Sir Baldred, passing his glass *over the water*, and thus, with a clear conscience and a loyal heart, drinking mentally to his lawful king, who was in France beyond the sea.

"This loyal toast is the first always drunk at my good father's table," said Captain Wyvil, who thought he detected something doubtful in the mode Dalquharn drank it. "The old squire was wont to ride once yearly, from Hurstmonceaux to London, for the sole purpose of kissing the hand of King William."

"Ah—the late Prince of Orange," said Dalquharn.

"He *was* originally Prince of Orange," replied Captain Wyvil, still smiling, for he was quite a man of the world.

“ Yes, when he lurked behind a shutter at the Hague, and saw the assassination of the De Witts, Cornelius, and John the pensionary of Holland,” said Sir Baldred, with great bitterness, “ and when he beheld the rascal mob, as the History of the United Provinces\* tells us, ‘ drag their naked bodies to the common gibbet, where they hung them by the feet and cut off their noses, ears, and fingers, which were sold in the circumjacent parts. Nay, some of the populace cut large pieces of their flesh, which they broiled and eat.’ When those fine doings went on at the Hague, he was Prince of Orange ; but he was the ‘ pious, glorious, and immortal King William,’ when he massacred the Clan Donald in cold blood at Glencoe, and sent a warrant here, to torture in the steel boots, and nigh unto death, the poor Englishman, Neville Payne ; and when he betrayed our Scottish colonists of New Caledonia to the murdering and merciless Spaniards, he was king assuredly *Dei Gratia*, and Defender of the Faith !”

Captain Wyvil, who was used to these little outbursts on the part of his old host, again smiled with that imperturbable good humour which is peculiarly English.

“ We shall drop King William,” said Captain Wyvil. “ We English, less loyal than you Scots, taught the House of Stuart the bitter lesson, that kings were made for their subjects, not subjects for

\* London, 1705.



their kings; but I think you must admit that this new war with France is most just?" he added, to change the topic.

"Of course," said his lieutenant; "egad, a war with France must always be so."

"Especially when waged, like this, in defence of our beloved Electorate of Hanover," said Lord Dalquharn, unguardedly.

"Nay, Captain Douglas," replied Wyvil, eying him sharply; "I think His Majesty, King George, was quite right to declare war after King Louis's notorious breach of all treaties by building the new forts at Dunkirk, by hostilities committed against our fleets in the Mediterranean, and that most insolent affront, by receiving at his court of Versailles, the son of the Popish Pretender—under favour, gentlemen Scots—I shall call him the young chevalier, for I bear the king's commission, and can say no more," added the Captain, on seeing the angry flush that crossed three of the faces present, while even the old butler knit his brows and paused, napkin in hand, looking very much as if he would have liked to punch the captain's head. "Then there was the embarkation actually made, of a body of troops, with the Lords Middleton, Dalquharn, and other attainted Scots, at that same devilish place Dunkirk, to fight for the so-called James VIII. of Scotland, and—but zounds! but I am getting quite warm on the subject," said the Englishman, checking

himself with a little good-humoured laugh, when he saw how the colour came and went in the cheek of old Sir Baldred, whom he was too polite and amiable to offend.

So there was an awkward pause here, which the Bailie sought to fill up, by stupidly remarking that every day brought fresh tidings of a projected landing “among the Highland Ishmaelites, by that infatuated young gentleman, the Chevalier (he dared not call him Pretender in the presence of Sir Baldred, and feared to say Prince in the hearing of two king’s officers, so he steered the middle course, like many equally cautious and better men), but believed that he would be, like his father, the victim of Jesuit priests, of artful women and hot headed Irishmen. And only three days ago, when in Edinburgh,” he added, “I saw Sir Hector Maclean and Mr. Bleau, of Castlehill, apprehended by the town guard in the Canongate, and sent in chains to London in a king’s yacht, by order of the Lord Advocate.”

“And for what?” asked Lord Dalquharn, whose brow lowered angrily.

“Suspicion of being in the French service,” said the other, slowly, and watching the effect of his words, “and of enlisting idle loons for the Pret—Chevalier. Wae is me, that men should meddle wae’ siccan affairs, for ‘better is he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city!’”

“’Twill come to the musket ere long, I fear,”

said Captain Wyvil, shaking his head sorrowfully; "the Highlands are all unchanged since that flash in the pan at Sheriff Muir."

"Pass the wine, Bailie," said Sir Baldred, impatiently.

"Gude French claret, this," said the Bailie, whose bad breeding appeared pretty often; "twa shillings the bottle, I suppose—thin bodied, though—I'll try the white wine, Sir Baldred. I'se warrant," he added, smacking his thin wicked lips, "ye pay a shilling the mutchkin for that, John Birniebousle?"

"Drink, Bailie, and welcome; what my butler pays, or does not pay, can matter little to my guests," said Sir Baldred, haughtily.

"In the outer hall we've a butt o't on tap, Bailie, ready for all comers, when sic folks as the Scougals o' that ilk, keep but a barrel o' two-penny ale," said the old butler with commendable pride.

"Sneer not at Scougal, John," said his master angrily; "he lost much in that d—nable Revolution of '88."

"And now, sirs," said Sir John Mitchell, rising, "shall we join Miss Otterburn at a dish of tea?"

On this, Lord Dalquharn and Mr. Egerton, whose thoughts had been in the with-drawing-room, for some time past, rose with equal alacrity, and hastened towards the door, the arras of which

was withdrawn by the butler, and though heavy drinking was then the fashion—and more so among the Jacobites than the more cautious whigs—I am glad to record that not one of the six gentlemen were in a state to make pretty Bryde blush, or tremble for the safety of her tea equipage, though their clothes and perriwigs smelt most odiously of tobacco.

she still thought with terror of the day, when she must have perished, on a boating expedition to the Bass, had he not borne her up bravely, and kissed her, and besought her not to be afraid!

The handsome boy who had trussed and plumed her hawks, and trained her long-eared and pug-nosed Bologna spaniel to play a score of pretty tricks; behind whom she had often ridden on a pillion to hear Mr. Carfuffle preach in White-kirk, and once to Edinburgh to see the Tolbooth, after it had been attacked by the Porteous mob; and for whom she had wept herself to sleep on the bosom of old Dame Dorriel, many a night, after he went far away to France, beyond the sea, had come to visit them again, a tall, winning, and—she must acknowledge it—an extremely well-favoured man, with a gravity of carriage, a somewhat sad expression of eye, but with a studious politeness and calm reserve beyond his years; but all the result of an early life of peril, of political intrigue, of exile, and, perhaps, of—poverty.

It seemed to her, like some of the fairy stories or romances she had read—this unexpected visit. She thought of Amadis de Gaul, of Glorianna, and of Urganda the unknown, and the heroes and heroines of other works, which had been lent to her in secret, by my Lady Haddington, as they both feared Mr. Carfuffle, who hated a romance, because the name was nearly akin to Romanism.

Glancing at the mirror (and seldom did it reflect a more winning face or more lovely figure), she smoothed her bright brown hair, and shook out her hoop, which, Heaven knows, was ample enough. She opened and shut her fan impatiently, arranged and re-arranged the tiny cups of Dresden china upon the mahogany tea-board, which stood on a large buhl gueridon, or tripod table. The water hissed in the silver urn. On one massive silver salver was a pile of currant "scones," or cakes, the work of Bryde's own hands, and on another rose a pyramid of *petits-gatelles-gateaux*—a species of short-cake, still called by the Scots, in homely fashion, "petticoat-tails."

And now, as the voices of Sir Baldred and his guests were heard in the corridor, Bryde gave a last glance round the drawing-room, the chairs of which were covered with blue Flanders damask, the walls being tapestried at each end and wainscotted elsewhere; the wax-lights in the pale bronze chandelier were burning brightly, and all her peculiar domain looked elegant and cheerful, as the gentlemen entered, with the usual apologies for lingering over the bottle; and a charming picture the little heiress of Otterburn made, as she sat in an antique chair, her feet in tiny white slippers with high red heels, resting on a velvet tabourette, and the rich damask curtains festooned as a back-ground, while she dispensed from the

gueridon table, the beverage called tea, in the smallest of cups and saucers.

Tea was still somewhat of a rarity in Scotland, and had first been brought into that country towards the close of the preceding century by Sir Andrew Kennedy, who was Lord Conservator of the <sup>r</sup>Scottish Privileges at Campvere, and had received a small parcel of it, as a present from the Dutch East India Company.

“I am assured that Miss Otterburn must have thought us very ungallant in leaving her so long alone,” said Mr. Egerton, with his most insinuating smile, as he placed himself at once, by her side.

“But we were talking of politics, Miss Otterburn,” added Dalquharn, “and they grow more interesting every day.”

“Especially to *us*,” she replied by an arch glance.

“Yes—to us, indeed,” said Dalquharn, with a smile.

“And you were drinking toasts, doubtless, Mr. Egerton, amid loyal and hickupping cheers—oh, I understand.”

“No, indeed, we were not,” he replied, earnestly.

“Then I must give you one,” said she, lowering her voice and stooping towards Egerton, who had humbly seated himself on a tabourette similar to that on which her little feet were resting.

“ You, madam ? ”

“ Yes—I ; do you think it droll ? ”

“ And your toast is, prythee— ”

“ Long live King James VIII., ” whispered the pretty rogue, almost into the side curls of Egerton’s wig, half-closing her merry brown eyes, and half-stooping towards him ; and as she held aloft a little Dresden cup, displaying a round and taper arm of marvellous whiteness and beauty, bare, save its bracelet, to the dimpled elbow, which emerged from a short sleeve edged by a long fall of lace of Malines, she looked beautiful, brilliant and droll ! “ Dost hear me, sir ? Ah that I were a man, and wore a sword and perriwig, instead of this mob-cap and fardingale ! Long live King James VIII., the brother of the good Queen Anne ! ”

“ I dare not, Miss Otterburn—I protest to you—I dare not drink it, even in this stuff called tea, ” urged poor Egerton, colouring, and glancing nervously towards Captain Wyvil.

“ Well, I cry you mercy, sir, and crave pardon. ”

“ Pardon of me, ” said he, looking quite radiant.

“ Yes ; it was wrong and ungenerous of me to think of putting you in a false position, even in jest. ”

“ *A la santé de la bonne cause !* ” said Egerton, draining his cup, and laughing ; “ I think that hath the true ring of the Court of St. Germain—eh ? ”

Good Captain Wyvil looked smilingly towards



them, and shook his large wig, while saying, "Egad, don't seek to seduce my subaltern from his allegiance, Miss Otterburn, though I fear many a more loyal man than he hath figured in St. Giles round-house before now. Come, Talbot, though a sprightly spark, don't forget that your father was a grave whig, a leading member in the Calve's-head Club, and figured sword in hand in the famous riot that was dispersed by the Foot Guards and the King's Musketeers."

"Another cup of tea my—Captain Douglas?" Bryde hesitated and blushed, she had almost addressed him by his title.

"I thank you, yes," said Dalquharn, his sword tilting up, as he made a low bow.

"My—my what? *her* Captain Douglas!" thought Egerton and the Bailie too, as their eyes met by chance.

"A rare and beautiful china this!" observed Dalquharn.

"Oh, sir, 'tis very poor, be assured," said Bryde, colouring; "and yet it was my mother's marriage gift from the exiled Earl Marishal."

"I have seen a set that looked less beautiful, and for which a king gave a regiment of horse," said Sir John Mitchell to Captain Wyvil.

"Yes; I too have seen it at Dresden, in the Neustadt; it was given to the Elector Augustus II., by Frederick I. of Prussia, in exchange for a regiment of Cuirassiers fully equipped. He was

then founding the military force of his kingdom, and so was parting even with his beloved china."

And now Bryde when she saw the two attainted Jacobites and the two red-coat officers all so blithe and pleasant together, wondered if the time would really come, and she trembled for it, when they might be cutting each other's throats on the battlefi-eld!

A volume of the 'Orpheus Caledonius' of Allan Ramsay, presented by him to her mother, and dedicated by the poet to the Princess of Wales, Wilhilmina Caroline, of Brandenburg-Anspach (Sir Baldred had torn out *that* leaf) stood open on the music-stand.

Our simple grandmothers—aye, and even our mothers too in England, but still more in Scotland, knew no other songs than those of their native island; and had neither the "snobbery," nor the bad taste to imitate foreign *artistes* by attempting opera, or to impose bad German or worse Italian, on an audience which knew, perhaps, not a word of either. Such high accomplishment, or vagaries were all unknown at Madam Straiton's establishment, "opposite His Grace of Queensberry's lodgings in the Canongate;" so now Bryde Otterburn ran her white fingers over the keys of the wiry-sounding spinnet (an instrument sorely inferior to one of Collard's grand tri-cord pianos), and sang the march of the Viscount Kenmure, just as her mother had taught her—she to whom the

handsome cavalier, so young and gay, had waved a farewell with his plumed hat, as he rode forth with his troop of two hundred gallant Galwegian yeomen for England, to return no more, for he sealed his loyalty with his blood on Tower-hill, after the memorable rising of 1715.

“ O Kenmure is on and awa, Willie,  
 O Kenmure is on and awa!  
 And Kenmure’s Lord is the bravest Lord,  
 That ever Galloway saw ! ”

We are sorry to admit that this song being a national one, would only be sung now in the kitchen of Bryde’s descendants ; but it was not so then, and the hearts of the two returned exiles were stirred within them, by a deep and earnest emotion, while the lively girl sang, and especially at the last verse—

“ Here’s to him that’s far awa, Willie,  
 Here’s victory owre his foes ;  
 And here’s the flower that I lo’e best,  
 The Rose, the snow *white* Rose ! ”

As she sang, the Bailie, into whose huge but meanly moulded brain, the good wines he had imbibed were mounting, hovered near the spinnet, with his hands vulgarly thrust under his square, buckram-stiffened coat-tails, and with a strange, half-tipsy and half-gloating expression in his pale, cunning eyes, while he regarded the bright, laughing girl, who, without waiting either for applause or invitation, dashed at once into the “ Bonnie briar bush,” another high cavalier song,

in which its snowy blossoms are likened to the white cockades of the loyalists ; and he seemed to see two lovely heads, each crowned by a waggish mob-cap, and four white arms, with gemmed hands, running swiftly over the keys.

“ Well, Bailie,” said Lord Dalquharn, who had been eying him narrowly ; “ how like you the song ? think you not that in our national music Miss Otterburn excels ? ”

“ Excels ! ” repeated the Bailie, somewhat startled by Dalquharn’s cool, but lofty manner ; “ excels—O—O—O ! ” he exclaimed with one of those prolonged howls, peculiar to a certain class of canters when quoting Scripture, “ ‘ Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all,’ Bryde Otterburn, and weel may the words o’ the Proverbs be applied to you.”

Bryde, who did not “ see ” the application, smiled so proudly and disdainfully, that the vulture eyes shut and opened, while their proprietor drew back a little way.

The lofty bearing of the two passengers, who had come so mysteriously, and to his great annoyance by the ‘ Etoile de la mer,’ puzzled him ; his brain was not in its clearest state at that moment, but he felt convinced that they were something more than mere captains in the Dutch service—in fact, that they were, according to the phraseology of the time, “ persons of quality,” *gens de marque*, or men of condition. Bryde’s glance to Dalquharn

at the line about "the snow white rose" conveyed a volume, a clue if one were wanting, and he would follow it up!

"A fearless little Jacobite it is!" said Captain Wyvil smiling, as he presented his gold snuff-box to Sir Baldred, who sat in his easy chair, beating time on the hilt of his sword, and a bright expression lighting up his old wrinkled face.

But now the party was to separate for the night. Dalquharn and Mitchell both looked weary, and a stirrup cup of mulled port was ordered, then another and another followed; and it is with some shame we have to record that on this night the poor old baronet got rather disreputably tipsy, proposed "the health of his sacred Majesty Charles II., now reigning," and insisted on singing some very rebellious songs to Captain Wyvil who laughed, good humoured, as he and the butler helped him to bed, where he dosed off to sleep, singing, in a quavering voice—

"To wanton me, to wanton me,  
Oh, ken ye what maist would wanton me?  
To see King James at Edinburgh Cross,  
Wi' fifty thousand foot and horse;  
Oh, that is what maist would wanton me!"

Dalquharn was not without fears that he and his companion might be unwittingly betrayed. To drink deep was one of the sins of that time, when "a man of fashion (to quote a great writer) often passed a quarter of his day at cards, and another quarter at drink. I have known many a pretty

fellow, who was a wit too, ready of *reparté*, and possessed of a thousand graces, who would be puzzled if he had to write more than his own name."

The two English officers took their swords, and set forth to visit the village of Auldhame, and ascertain whether their men were all in quarters, if not abed, and the Bailie took his departure, staff in hand, to return to North Berwick, a three miles' walk, in the moonlight.

We have said, that this most wily and watchful personage could drink without ever getting quite inebriated; on this occasion however, it was apparent to Mr. Birniebousle, as he somewhat contemptuously slammed the iron barbican-gate on ushering him out, that the magistrate and elder set forth on his pilgrimage, to what he termed "his tents and his flesh pots of Egypt," with his tie perriwig, very much over his eyes, and that he seemed to be sorely troubled by the breadth, rather than the length of the road, for even saints and patriarchs "have had their weak moments, long since Father Noah toppled over after discovering the vine."

"Gin ye tyne the gate and gae owre Tantallan Craigs into the sea, 'twere but a sma' misfortune to the country side," thought the old Butler with a saturnine grin, as the Bailie, whom he liked as little as his master, went unsteadily down the dark avenue, with a mind full of vague ideas that he had a great Jacobite plot to discover—ideas

sharpened by avarice, covetousness and jealousy.

Yes, 'strange as it may appear, this earthly worm felt a scorching jealousy alike of Dalquharn and Egerton, whom he had left, too evidently as rivals, in possession of the fair fortress at Auldhame!

## CHAPTER XIII.

## IN VINO VERITAS.

“*Davy*.—Shame, sir! He’s a soldier, a man of pleasure. A wife would be too heavy luggage for him to carry about with him.”

*The Highland Fair, an opera, 1731.*

SAFE in the dwelling of a friend, although that dwelling also received two persons who might soon be mortal foes, Lord Dalquharn of the Holm, and Sir John Mitchell, had no need to look to the charges of their pistols on this night.

Mrs. Dorriel Grahame the housekeeper, with a wax candle in each hand, conducted his Lordship, whom she did not recognise, though he remembered her well of old, with her Flemish coif, its long lappets and black silk band, her grey stuff gown and large white neckerchief, her motherly kindness and her quaint garrulity.

He remembered the room perfectly too, with its gilt leather hangings, manufactured some fifty years before by the celebrated Bailie Brand of Edinburgh, and its antique pillard oak bed, placed on three steps and canopied like a tomb, the curtains being, as Dame Dorriel told him, “shewit



wi' pearling on cramozie by the bonnie white hands o' her ain doo Miss Bryde," which no doubt greatly enhanced their interest in his eyes; "it was a feather bed, mairowre, wi' double Scottish blankets, forbye twelve others in the house," she added, with laudable pride; "but nane she feared, were cosy or soft enough, for the twa English captains, deevil byde them!"

Dalquharn looked earnestly at the old woman, and smiled, as one in a dream. It seemed but yesterday since he last heard her voice and beheld her hale old face, which had not one wrinkle more. She trembled at the idea of ghosts and warlocks, yet wore on one of her fingers a ring made of a coffin hinge as a spell against cramp, and had been cured of a tumour by nine strokes of a dead man's hand at sunrise—the hand of the poor wretch who hung in chains at the town-end of North Berwick; and had at her bed head a hag-stone, or perforated pebble, slung on a red-thread, to prevent night-mare by evil spirits sitting on her stomach.

She saw that the stranger was a comely and handsome young man, and so, surveying him kindly, bade him good night, hoped he would sleep sound, and backed out of the chamber with a low old fashioned courtesy.

How well Dalquharn remembered this apartment, for it had been that of his father and mother, with its walls stamped over with alternate

thistles and fleurs-de-lys, in heavy gilding, and the deep stone fireplace with its elliptical arch and massive Scottish mouldings, the keystone, being a shield, charged with the three otters' heads of Otterburn.

In that room, they had slept for months, those beloved parents, and on those pillows, where his own was to lie, their revered heads had reposed—heads lying low enough now, beneath the pavement of the royal chapel at St. Germain, and as he looked around, their figures seemed to rise before him. Nothing here was change save himself, for many years more than were his, seemed to have passed since then—years of stirring action, hot hate and passion, deep intrigue and care—years of wandering and hope, battle and disaster!

“I shall dream of bright, laughing Bryde Otterburn,” thought he, as he laid his head on the pillow, “and think only how lovely my little friend of other times has grown.”

Meanwhile Bryde, who was reposing in her pretty bed, and thinking perhaps of Dalquharn, could little know that she was the subject of a lively conversation elsewhere.

The new moon was shining high, sharp and clearly, in the blue sky, its pale light mingling with the last red flush of the May sunset, which still lingered beyond the Fifeshire hills; for the hour was not yet ten; but people were usually early abed in those days, especially in the country.

Captain Wyvil and Lieutenant Egerton were returning from the village and home-farm of Auldhame (a quaint old picturesque house is the latter, and still remarkable for its square and massive chimneys), after having seen Colour-Sergeant Tony Teesdale, and found all their gallant Buff's in quarters; and now as they proceeded homeward, Captain Wyvil discovered that his subaltern was a little in liquor, and very much in love.

Egerton had drunk quite enough at dinner, and of the stirrup cup after, to have his tongue loosed, and his steps made a little unsteady, on issuing into the open air. At some distance they passed Bailie Balcraftie, as he quitted the avenue and stumbled along the highway towards Castleton, on his way home.

“There goes old Swivel-eyes,” said Egerton; “let us avoid him, and strike through the fields to reach home. I hate that sly Scot; and, gad, I feel somehow that he hates me—yes, rot him, hates me! But to return to what we were saying. Well, Marmaduke Wyvil, what think you of our little Scots beauty here.

“How now, what mean you? Think?”

“Yes.”

“I think she hath smitten you, friend Talbot.”

“Egad, I vow, I protest, that I am quite astonished! Steady—eyes front!” stammered Egerton, making a lurch against the captain, and nearly tearing one of his epaulettes off. “As for the

people of this country, I hate 'em, as every true-born Englishman should."

"Well?" said Wyvil, a little impatiently.

"I came here with some of our old English traditions and family notions in my head. You know that my mother is a grand-daughter of Sir Anthony Weld, who writ a pleasant book of travels in Scotland, which he described to be a wild and mountainous country, infested, however, 'by no monsters, except women?' Well, when I heard that the old 'laird of that ilk,' as the people here call him (whatever the devil it may mean), had a pretty granddaughter, I thought she might solace me during our banishment in this land of bondage and brimstone, smugglers and psalm-singers. I fancied her a freckled, red-headed Scots wench, in neat's leather shoes, and yarn stockings of her own spinning, a linsey-woolsey petticoat, with a calimanco and high wooden pattens for wet weather; but, begad sir! surprised I was indeed to find her in laced slippers, with high French red heels and fine silk clocks; a hoop like Queen Anne's, some six yards wide at least; and her hair, at times, done over a toupee—all as fine, forsooth, as any lady of quality in Piccadilly, who drinks tea and takes snuff 'à la Pompadour.'"

"Nay, nay, snuffs she none, my friend; but I repeat that you are too evidently smitten in that quarter," said Wyvil, taking the young fellow's arm to steady him.

“Smitten? Well, perhaps I am.”

“And with a little Scots girl.”

“What a joke! I can fancy the dismay at our house in Piccadilly. My father, mother, and sisters, fancy that we are among cannibals here; and yet for fashion and bearing this girl might vie with any woman in town.”

“So you have surrendered to this Caledonian Sacharissa, this Lindamira, who bakes, brews, and spins; who is great in the manufacture of scented waters and elder-flower wine; who is as gay and as waggish as any noble shepherdess at the Court of Louis XV.; and, by Jove, she looks very like one, when she wears powder!”

“Surrendered! Not quite yet; nor have I even brought her to the point. I have often tried to do so, during the short time we have been here; but we have so many disputes on politics, and then I think she only tolerates me. Tolerates *me*, forsooth! And, egad! Wyvil, I can't help thinking that if things progress as they are doing, between Lowlander and Highlander, we Englishmen here may ere long find ourselves between the hawk and the buzzard. Concerning his nationality, our old friend the Squire of Auldhame is as mad as a March hare.”

“Not more mad than you are, Egerton. You cannot expect him to turn Englishman and adopt *your* views, which are quite as provincial as his own. You judge of him harshly, too: he is but

a man of the old school, and such a school has existed in all ages. Perhaps the first Briton who begirt his netherman with a sheepskin, and built him a wigwam, was despised as effeminate by some noble savage of the old school, who contented him with a coat of blue paint, and a cheap residence in the root of a tree."

"A queer old cock it is!" continued Egerton, who, being tipsy, was irate, jealous, and droll by turns. "He actually swore and was indignant because I gave vails to his servants, and they were offended too!"

"And yet we deem these Scots avaricious and poor, though 'tis a land where all men work and all disdain to beg."

"Then, who is this Captain Douglas? Some poor devil of a Scot, with all his income on his back, or in the plated hilt of his hanger. Gad! I wonder if he knoweth *carte* and *tierce*, and can handle that same hanger?"

"To judge by the lack of lace on his frock, I fear me that Douglas *is* poor," said Captain Wyvil, gently.

"Poor! I should think so," resumed Egerton, waxing more wroth with the conviction that Bryde on this evening had considerably slighted himself; "all his demmed countrymen are; but there is mischief brewing among them here; I could see it even in the brown eyes of that girl to-night. The devil!—a proud, prinked-up bag-

gage it is, and, for all I know, perhaps as slippery in the tail as handsome !”

“Talbot !” exclaimed Captain Wyvil, “beware of letting your jealousy run riot thus.”

“When I first came here,” continued the ill-used Mr. Egerton, “I thought to kiss and slop the maids as we do elsewhere ; but, by Jove, sir, I had my face slapped and a good Ramillie wig torn by a cheek-boned cockatrice, who threatened me with the minister and the ‘Kirk Session,’ whatever that may be ; and then, when I said to the Squire, ‘demme, old boy, that maid of Miss Bryde’s is decidedly pretty—I rather like her,’ he reddened like a turkeycock, and laid a hand on the old-fashioned rapier that is never from his side—I fancy he sleeps with it—and then begged pardon with a Frenchified bow, saying, that he should not forget I was his guest. But Miss Otterburn is charming !” added the Lieutenant, relapsing into the maudlin state. “You know, as Defoe says, ‘we are forbidden at Highgate to kiss the maid when we may kiss the mistress ;’ and when I see her hanging about her old grand-dad’s neck and kissing *him*——”

“A very pretty sight. Her filial love quite enchants me,” said honest Wyvil.

“It doth me too, Marmaduke—it doth me too ! but I can tell you it sets my heart on fire, and I should like to share some of those filial kisses. Yet, if I do but take her hand, she turns from me

with such a touch-me-not cock of her pretty nose, looks superb, and sweeps away with her hoop inflated, till she well-nigh shows her garters."

"A sight which, I suppose, makes the matter worse," said Wyvil, laughing outright at the aggrieved tone of his friend and brother officer; "but harkee, Beau Egerton—take care that our brown-eyed Scots girl don't make a Jacobite of thee."

"In which case——"

"You may lose your head as well as your heart. The best recruiting serjeants of the Pretender are the fair sex; every woman seems to think she hath an order to beat up in his cause, here in Scotland at least. Be warned by me. I have been in many a garrison town, my friend, in Flanders, and at home in England beyond the Border, so my heart is not likely to catch fire here in Scotland," said Wyvil, with less gallantry than he would have exhibited in Bryde's presence. "Suppose the girl would marry you, could you settle down here?"

Egerton steadied himself and took a tipsy survey of the fields that stretched far away westward in the clear cold moonlight, the dense woodlands, and the old house, whose quaint turrets rose above them.

"Here — demme, no! I might hunt my harriers, and lead a kind of respectable jogtrot life like a turnspit-dog, or a squirrel in a cage,



till the old boy died ; then I should sell off the whole place—house, lands, everything, and invest in England, in Surrey, somewhere near London—go into parliament, perhaps—who can say what I might do ; but as for a living death in this region of pride and hypocrisy, sour-visaged sabbatarians, oatmeal and brimstone, it ain't to be thought of ! The very idea of the thing makes me long for London, with its gaieties, its pretty bar-keepers in the taverns and chocolate houses at Covent Garden and Whitehall. Fancy this old tory Put, Sir Baldred, having such a couple of rakehells in his house !”

“ Talbot, you speak for yourself,” said Wyvil, seriously.

“ Nay, I speak for you too, slyboots !” exclaimed Egerton, giving Wyvil a most vigorous poke in the ribs, as they passed through the barbican gate ; “ but I must bring matters to an issue—I shall propose to my little Scots charmer on the first opportunity—by Jove, I shall !”

## CHAPTER XIV.

## BRYDE'S FOUR LOVERS.

“ Oh lady, lady ! that dear place,  
 Though poor of soil, and scant in space,  
 Where she we love, the girl whose grace  
 Has with sweet bondage blessed the breast.  
 That spot, where she in pomp doth hide,  
 However mean, o'er all beside,  
 Empires of power, and lands of pride,  
 Is sweetest, richest, fairest, best.”

*Tennant's Poems.*

THE opportunity so coveted by Mr. Talbot Eger-ton, of the Kentish Buffs, did not, however, come very readily.

The acquaintance of Bryde with her early friend Lord Dalquharn, now rapidly ripened into friendship, and from friendship it expanded on both sides to a growing—love !

Three days in each other's society sufficed to achieve this, and already Dalquharn felt that Bryde Otterburn was to be his *fate*. When a man of five-and-twenty, good looking, handsome, courageous, and experienced, makes up his mind thus, matters are pretty sure to progress rapidly.

Yet knowing the deadly game he had to play—

the perilous errand on which he had come, Dalquharn was not without painful doubts, fears, and compunction, about revealing his growing passion to Bryde Otterburn.

There were actually times, when he almost made up his mind to leave her and Auldhame, and return no more, until the intended rising in the North had been decided for weal or for woe, and until his own destiny was known, for he trembled to involve poor Bryde and the good old enthusiast, her grandfather, in the ruin which too surely fell on all who adhered to the unhappy House of Stuart.

Thus, many times did this brave and generous young noble struggle with his heart and resolve to go, but the charm, the infatuation of his love for Bryde, was too sweet, too powerful; and a word, a smile, a touch of her fairy hand, dissipated his greatest resolutions. Daily he said, "I shall leave her!" and day after day found him still lingering at Auldhame.

The arrival of the two friends, from abroad, too, was an event of the first magnitude, in the usually dull life led by Bryde Otterburn. Books there were few then published in Edinburgh; dull romances were imported from England and read in secret; duller books of devotion were read in public, a little ostentatiously, perhaps. There were few journals to give an account of affairs at home or abroad, and the 'Scots Magazine,' under its coarse blue cover, was not very

lively with its “summary of public affairs—proceedings of the political club—and domestic history.” Still less lively were the columns of that dingy little quarto, the ‘Caledonian Mercury,’ which the riding postboy, or the carrier, brought to Auldhame, every second or third day after its publication, and to which Sir Baldred adhered faithfully, because it was always in the interest of the good old cause, and had been so since the restoration.

Unless in exile, France was forbidden ground to the Scottish gentry now, and a residence at home within the narrow circle of their mountains and glens, contracted their minds and filled them with strange, morose and gloomy prejudices, unknown to their forefathers a few generations back, when the gay ambassadors of France, Spain, and Austria, had their hotels in that fashionable region, the Cowgate of Edinburgh!

Poor Bryde saw only the world at church, and what a dismal little world it was! Yet weekly, it was something to look forward to—the ride to Whitekirk—in all weathers, to hear the Reverend Aminadab Carfuffle expound in nasal tones on the glories of Judea, and the terrors of a certain place with a warmer climate, for two hours by the pulpit sand glass.

With her grandfather’s prelatical instincts, named as he had been, Baldred, after the patron saint of the district and of his race, and named as *she* had been Bryde, by Dalquharn’s mother (who was

a catholic of the House of Kenmure), the gentle girl, though stunned and bewildered by the harsh and stormy theology of Mr. Carfuffle, and the expostulations of the Bailie, could never be thought to think much evil of the ancient creed, as the mass of her countrymen did, when she remembered how many good and pure, true and loyal men and women had died in the faith of their Christian forefathers. In that faith did William Wallace die, and Robert Bruce bequeath his heart to the Holy Sepulchre.

The family always went mounted to church; the baronet and two grooms wearing their swords with holster pistols, while Bryde rode her favourite pad. She would have disdained alike as too effeminate, the use either of a sedan, like the Lady Haddington, or of a glass coach, like the Laird of Newbyth; and as for her grandfather, he would as soon have thought of going in a palanquin or an air balloon (had he ever heard of them) as in either of those conveyances, while he had a good nag in his stable; and when she went thus abroad, as veils were not then worn, Bryde had her charming face concealed by a little velvet masque.

When she first appeared at church, escorted by Dalquharn, who looked so handsome and distinguished, he quite divided the attention of the congregation, with my Lady Haddington's little blackamoor in a Spanish dress, with a silver collar round his neck—a creature she had bought

at Glasgow market, to attend her at service and in her walks abroad ; to carry her muff, fan or bible ; to feed her marmoset and parrot, and comb out the breed of spaniels given to her mother by Charles II.

Withal, Bryde was a happy and busy creature, and in working at her spinning-wheel, in colouring satin, making wax flowers and embroidery, or tambour-work, in playing on her spinnet (one of Fenton's best), when she picked up a new song by Mr. Allan Ramsay, she had always employment enough.

Egerton, who, like most well-bred men of those days, played pretty fairly upon the violin and flute, frequently accompanied her at the spinnet ; and with all his secret and ill-concealed dislike of Scotland and the Scots, he had soon found the impossibility of not striving to please a beautiful young girl ; and, as she knew no other airs than those of her own country, he was compelled to make, what he deemed, a merit of necessity, and acquire them, which he did very readily.

After the arrival of Lord Dalquharn, there was a change in all this, for save in the evening, and when the iron gates were closed for the night, the spinnet was rarely opened. Between the brown-eyed heiress and the young attainted lord, there was a mutual bond of national and political sympathy, which the young English officer could not comprehend—a secret intelligence of which

he could make nothing, save that it piqued his pride, wounded his somewhat inordinate self-esteem, and, while it confirmed his passion for Bryde, also filled him with a jealous fury.

Egerton presented her with a silver-mounted flageolet, and in the gallantry of the day, the mouth-piece was obstructed by a piece of paper, on examining which, she found it contained a copy of verses addressed, as it were, by the happy instrument to her coral lips and slender fingers. These had been copied, we are sorry to say, wholesale by Egerton from the 'London Magazine,' wherein a poetical strephon had sighed them forth, to his real or imaginary Chloe or Lindamira. Innocent Bryde never doubted that they were the rogue's own production, and declared them to be "vastly pretty!"

But when Dalquharn presented her with a bronze medal, which but two months before, he had received from a certain royal hand, that gift she prized much more, and kissed with the devotion of a pilgrim, who beholds the reliques he has trod a thousand miles to see.

It bore the effigy of "Charles Prince of Wales, 1745," and on the reverse, AMOR ET SPES around a figure of Britannia standing erect, with a fleet in the background.

All the purposes and hopes of the royal exiles, the intentions of himself and Sir John Mitchell, he had to narrate to her again and again. He had

also to describe the king, the young Prince of Wales and his brother Henry, the Duke of York and Albany (they were studious in giving every title, those sturdy Jacobites), also her majesty the Queen, Maria-Clementina, whom he had often seen, the mother of that "bonnie Prince Charlie," who was yet to be embalmed in the hearts and the songs of the people, daughter of Prince James Sobieski, and granddaughter of the Liberator. Their appearance, their sayings, their eyes, their hair, &c., all he had to describe and relate, for Bryde was never weary of the theme, and listened to him with her loyal heart beating high, the colour in her soft cheek deepened and her brown eyes sparkling; and all these things had to be spoken of, when they were alone, or at least when Wyvil and Egerton were *not* present, so between the two young visitors, there was now a most decided, though as yet unacknowledged, rivalry.

Talbot Egerton had become even more than usually careful of his hitherto scrupulous toilet; a greater slave to his mirror, to puffing his regimental wig with powder, to the arrangement of his ruffles, his choice of sleeve-links, kneebuckles and brooch, his fall of point-d'Espagne; and nearly drove his valet, a stolid Yorkshire grenadier, crazy, by the adjustment of his side curls and the black silk bag or flash, that hung between his shoulders; but poor Egerton arrayed himself in vain for conquest now, as Dalquharn, in his some-



what faded green suit, with his own fair hair simply queued by a ribband (like the young Prince Charles, whom he was fond of thinking he resembled), his soft and tender but manly eyes, his bearing so gallant, earnest, and at times pre-occupied and sad, seemed to Bryde the beau-ideal of all she had read or heard sung, that a hero or prince should be—the magnificent young princes of those dear old fairy tales, which have charmed so many generations of boys and girls, and whose authors are scarcely known.

Egerton's quotations from Ovid, or from the vapid 'Poetical Essays' of the London Magazine, then published at "the three Flower-de-luces, in St. Paul's Churchyard," or from the poems of Mr. Edmund Waller, whose works he greatly admired, were not always either apt or happy, and his citations from the latter, by frequently exciting her laughter, greatly annoyed him, for he deemed the author of 'The Gentle Shepherd,' not worthy to tie the shoe-string of him, who sang of Sacharissa.

When Egerton would quote,

"While in the park I sing, the listening deer  
Attend my passion, and forget to fear;  
When to the beeches I report my flame,  
They bow their heads, as if they felt the same:  
To gods appealing, when I reach their bowers,  
With loud complaints they answer me in showers.  
To *thee* a wild and cruel soul is given,  
More deaf than trees, and prouder than the heaven!"

Bryde would laugh merrily at the poor poet being rained on, and at that overstrained hyperbole, which seemed to the amorous Lieutenant of the Buffs, a singular combination of grandeur and tenderness. Then, as no lover likes to be laughed at, he would leave her in a pêt, or by blundering or committing mistakes, by talking of the Pretender and the rebels (ever a sad error in Scotland), he would irritate the girl he was most desirous of pleasing.

“This young gentleman hath served a popgun campaign or so, in Flanders; but he will never be a hero,” he once remarked, chiefly to pique “Captain Douglas,” who stood near them.

“A hero, perhaps not,” said Bryde, who saw the sudden and painful flush that crossed the cheek of the attainted lord: “had he a heart that knew neither genuine love or honest hatred, he might be like your adored Prince of Orange; pity nor fear, he might equal the greatest of your regicides, Cromwell; and if he were without regret or remorse, he might be greater than either; but being a brave young gentleman of five-and-twenty, pretending to nothing—”

“Save as a Catholic to the crown of these Protestant realms, my dear madam.”

“Enough, sir; let us talk no more of this,” Bryde would say, filled with sudden anger, planting her high heel on the floor, and ruffling out her flounces, as she turned away in wrath from the

laughing Englishman, who really cared not a rush for the matter, till he saw that he was only widening the breach between them.

“On my honour—on my knees, if you prefer it, I crave your pardon, Miss Otterburn,” the good-natured fellow would exclaim; “it is indeed most difficult for an Englishman to speak about anything in Scotland, without giving offence to some one.”

“How so, sir?”

“It is a land of—such devilish whims.”

“What hath made it so?” said Bryde, opening and shutting her fan vigorously.

“May I die if I can ever tell you.”

“Then I shall—your southern interference, open and secret for centuries, alike with church and state, have split, severed and divided the people; but a time shall come anon, when these things shall be amended,” the fiery little Jacobite would add.

Then with the air of a tragedy queen, she would give Egerton her ungloved hand to kiss, and he would bow his head over it, like a courtly young gentleman, as he certainly was, at times, and for a little space, he would be gay and hopeful again.

A few days passed away thus, quietly, rapidly, and pleasantly at the secluded old manor house of Auldhame.

Egerton, who was extremely anxious to please, played picquet, cribbage, back-gammon, and the knightly game of chess with Sir Baldred, to whom he talked much of the new game of billiards, which had not as yet crossed the Tweed. He delighted most, however, in a quiet game of primero, at a little side gueridon, with Bryde. This was a game of Spanish origin, played by two, one shilling stake, and three for rest—*i.e.*, pool—and the cards used were longer and narrower than those of the present day; but in this pleasure he was seldom indulged, and on each occasion had been interrupted by the appearance of the odious Bailie Balcraftie, with his stealthy eyes and cat-like step, or by the sour Mr. Carfuffle, and had to relinquish the game in haste, as both minister and elder were in duty bound to rebuke such a sinful waste of time, with a reference to the notorious Colonel Charteris, the gambler and warlock.

But the reader may imagine with what astonishment and dismay Bryde, in her simple ideas of propriety, heard Captain Wyvil mention that he had frequently lost large sums to General Wade, at cards, in public, at the gaming-tables of the Countesses of Mordington and Cassilis, in London, and that he had been present when these noble dames resisted the intrusive peace officers in the preceding year, claiming the privilege of peerage for doing so, a claim, however, refused by the House of Lords.

“A Douglas of Mordington—a Countess of Cassilis!” exclaimed Miss Otterburn, in actual dismay, at such a prostitution of rank and position.

“My dear, wee lassie,” her grandfather said cynically; “the wives of those who sold their country, may surely add to their illgotten gains, by cheating a little at cards.”

Long absent as he had been from his native land, and accustomed to the sallow women of France, it was impossible for Sir John Mitchell to be long insensible to the blooming beauty of Bryde Otterburn, or not to be charmed as an enthusiastic Scotsman and true-hearted cavalier by her rebellious *abandon*, her blunt, open, and fearless loyalty, for she claimed all the dangerous privilege of her sex to say whatever she thought; and, moreover, it was impossible for him not to be stirred by her native songs, which she sang with great sweetness and power.

Though more than twice her age, poor Mitchell would soon have learned to love her more truly, and tenderly than the thoughtless Egerton, whose love, perhaps, began in *ennui*; but he saw that she was the secret object of Dalquharn’s heart, and strove to crush the rising flame, that he might prove the more useful subject and soldier to his exiled king.

So Bryde had actually *four lovers* in her little household circle, and almost unknown to herself.

## CHAPTER XV.

## BALCRAFTIE ON THE SCENT.

“ The fair Matilda dear he loved,  
A maid of beauty rare ;  
Even Margaret on the Scottish throne,  
Was never half so fair !

“ Lang had he woo’d, lang she refused,  
With seeming scorn and pride ;  
Yet oft her eyes confessed the love,  
Her fearful words denied.”

*Sir James the Rose.*

No softer emotions lessened the deep and fervent zeal of Sir John Mitchell. Every horse he passed afield or on the highway, he examined with critical eye, that he might ascertain whether it was fitted for mounting cavalry, dragging light artillery, the siege-train, or the heavy baggage, services the owner had never reckoned it should perform. Every feature of the landscape, and every turn of the road suggested a position to be attacked or defended.

“ Among those green whin bushes,” he would say, “ the line of skirmishers would lurk unseen ; on yonder grassy knolls would be the field-pieces, unlimbered and loaded ; along the ridge between, would be the first line of infantry, with colours

flying; and in the hollow beyond would be the reserve and the cavalry, ready to advance at a moment's notice; while yonder bog would cover the right flank, and the bridge of the Tyne, if blown up, would secure the other."

But Sir Baldred would wince at this suggestion, as he had built, at his own expense, the bridge referred to.

Mitchell loved merry Bryde, but her bright, laughing eyes never lured him to forget, even for a moment, the great mission he had come upon. He had already paid several visits to influential Jacobites in Edinburgh and its vicinity, absenting himself studiously from the spells of the little enchantress at Auldhame, and, as the sequel proved, happy would it have been for the young Lord Dalquharn had he done so too!

Sir John with Sir Baldred's horses freely and frequently rode more than forty miles a day on the king's service, each time returning to Auldhame with a ruddied cheek, a bright eye, and a brave heart, that beat gaily and anxiously with loyal hope and joy, for he had cheerful tidings to communicate.

Archibald Stewart, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and some of the magistrates (though they were mounting new cannon on the walls and increasing the city guard), Lieutenant-General Joshua Guest, the new English governor of the Castle, sent specially to supersede old General Preston,

because the latter was a Scot, and could not be trusted (though he proved the truer Hanoverian in the end), some of the officers of his garrison, Lieutenant-General Peregrine Lascelles' regiment (47th), these and many others in and around the capital were all, as their future conduct evinced, in the interest of the house of Stuart, and who could doubt of success !

Like the Scots of all classes, Sir Baldred grumbled incessantly at his share of the English taxes, consequent to the union. Prior to that event, Scotland, though she had borne her share in the wars of Flanders and the Spanish succession, had no national debt. That millstone, round the neck of England, dated from a much earlier period than 1707. Of the fourteen years of the reign of William of Orange, ten were years of uninterrupted war, waged chiefly for the defence of Holland. Of the thirteen years of Anne, twelve were years of a war that ended only by the disgraceful treaty of Utrecht ; and next, the house of Hanover led us into disastrous wars on behalf of that pitiful Electorate. William, a king totally reckless of posterity, spent more than forty-four millions in war ; “and after all the blood and treasure expended, his ambition and revenge remained unsatisfied, and the ostensible object of the war, the curbing the ambition of Louis XIV., unattained.”\*

\* The Extraordinary Black Book.



Smollet says of the strife which ended at the treaty of Ryswick, "Such was the issue of a long and bloody war, which had drained England of her wealth and people, almost entirely ruined her commerce, debauched her morals, by encouraging venality and corruption, and entailed upon her the curse of foreign connections, as well as a national debt, which was gradually increasing to an intolerable burthen."

Sir Baldred abhorred the heavy taxation and restrictions those foreign strifes imposed—taxation for which the equivalent paid by England to Scotland at the union was no recompense, when the total ruin of the east coast trade is considered; and he looked forward to an imaginary time, when once again, the Otterburns of Auldhame, and other gentlemen along the sea-border, might import their own damask, taffeta, and ironwork from Flanders, and their claret and brandy from France, without the obnoxious interference of a custom-house officer, or a king's cruiser.

"Sir John," said he, after a long visit the latter had paid to Edinburgh, "are you equally well assured that London swarms with those who are true to the good cause?"

"Yes—with Jacobites, known and secret, who wait but the prince's advance with a Scottish force; we have them in the navy—the Lord Muskerry for one we can rely on—and in the army, some, 'tis said, in all regiments, but chiefly among

our Irish and National corps, the Greys, the Scots Guards, the Fusileers, and Edinburgh regiment—aye, even among Semples canting Cameromians. We have them among the merchant princes of London, the privy council, and the officers of state,” continued poor Sir John, for on such delusive hopes, did the few unfortunate loyalists in Scotland rely, undeterred by the bitter experiences of 1715. “Here we may count upon the dukes of Douglas, Athole, and Hamilton—I would to heaven we could add Argyle; but that may never be; the feud between the Campbells and the Stuarts, is too deeply rooted. Let the prince but land, as his father’s regent, and the nation, long weary of German wars and Hanoverian subsidies, will rise as one man, and long ere the snows of Yule are on the mountains, the bells of Holyrood shall have rung for a coronation, and the Elector, with his hideous mistresses, may be smoking the pipe of peace, over a mug of beer in Herrenhausen.”

“Pray heaven, this may be so, and no tale of a tub,” said Sir Baldred, earnestly.

“Something is certainly afoot among the people,” said Captain Wyvil, one day, soon after this conversation; “and I hope it hath no reference to the rash young gentleman, who aspires so highly.”

“How so, sir—mean you the young Chevalier?” asked Sir Baldred, wheeling his easy chair half

round, and fronting the Englishman, whose face wore a somewhat grave expression.

“Yes, good Sir Baldred; Tony Teesdale, my serjeant, was at the smith’s shop in the hamlet, getting the head of his halbert riveted anew, and there in a corner he espied—what think you? A goodly bundle of sword blades, some long Scots pistols, and so forth.”

“In my young days, ’twas nothing uncommon to see the iron graith of war in a Scot’s smithy; but *now*, Captain——”

“What now?”

“This vile incorporating union hath taken alike the honey from the bee, and the sting from the wasp.”

“I am a loyal man,” replied Wyvil, “and cannot help beholding the indications of the time, with emotions of sadness and alarm.”

“Sir, you are loyal to those who are on the throne, and I think you not the less a man of honour. I am loyal to the distant and the dead—to kings in exile and kings in the grave, and whilk think you is the most unselfish loyalty of the two?”

“Yours, of course,” said Wyvil, smiling; “but I pray you, most worthy friend, to let this matter drop, and——”

“We shall have a pint—a Scot’s pint—of claret on the head of it!”

In his secret heart, or that ingenious piece of

mechanism, which an anatomist would term so—Bailie Reuben Balcraftie far from regretted, he even rejoiced that his acquaintance (he presumed not to term him, friend), Sir Baldred, was compromised, as he felt morally certain he was, by the presence of two Jacobite emissaries in his house. Balcraftie liked to have people in his power, no matter whom or how; they might be turned to profit in some way, so he determined to wait and watch well.

Too old to take the field himself, and unable to send men, Sir Baldred resolved to raise some money for the prince's service, and asked the monyclender to accommodate him with five hundred pounds, a sum equal to thrice its present value, or more.

“Money again, Auldhame?” said the Bailie, whose curiosity was at once roused.

“Yes, money!”

“But how in the name o' misfortune cometh it to pass, that I find you again like the unthrifty virgins, who had nae oil in their lamps? And in what wild Darien scheme, or South Sea bubble are you proposing to sink the money?”

“You ask too many questions, Mr. Balcraftie,” replied Sir Baldred, sternly. “You can give me the money, I suppose, or a wadset, over the land of Halflongbarns?”

“True,” said the other, twisting his tie wig about; “but the sum is an unco large one—and

what want you wi' the siller, for sae sure as I am a pardoned——”

“What is it to thee, fellow, if I require the wretched dross, and pay a usurious interest for it?”

“Your son's funeral, puir fallow, cost enough, I mind, to ruin a barony,” said the Bailie, still “angling” to discover the baronet's purpose.

“My son's funeral!” retorted the other, with flashing eyes; “what is that to thee, either, wretch? *Thy* lyke wake will cost less, I warrant! I remember the funeral of Scougal of Whitekirk; there were the Lords of Council and Session, the advocates and clerks to the Signet, and the macers with crape-covered maces, all in mourning, on foot or on horseback, present, and dost think I would give my murdered boy a lesser cortege than his?”

The Bailie changed colour, and his cunning eyes quailed beneath the fiery glance of the old gentleman, yet he ventured to remark,

“This money would outrig a troop of horse.”

“Perhaps,” said the other, drily; “but if you have not the money, I must apply to old Johnny Screwdriver, the clerk to the Signet, in Craig's Close, and he, I warrant——”

“Ye shall hae the money, Auldhame, ye shall hae the money,” said the other, hastily; “I've just had that identical sum repaid me by Colonel Gardiner, of Bankton, that pious and Christian

soldier, who pores daily over that wonderfu' book, 'Heaven taken by Storm.' "

"He must have a lively time of it," said Sir Baldred, who had a great contempt for the gallant officer in question.

"False carle!" thought the Bailie, as he withdrew, "thy pride shall hae a sorrowfu' fa', or my name is no Reuben Balcraftie!"

The heavy wadset or bond which he already held over a portion of the Auldhame estate, and which has already been referred to, as consequent to the assassination and robbery of Bryde's father, gave him a certain hold, or influence over the worthy old baronet, otherwise he, Reuben Balcraftie, though Bailie of North Berwick, and elder of St. Andrew's church, had never been tolerated beyond the corridor or housekeeper's room, by the proud Laird of Auldhame, who was now, somehow, constrained to receive him as an occasional guest at his own table.

How such a creature as Balcraftie, a man in his fiftieth year at least, a smuggler, hypocrite and usurer, a cringing slave to the rich, a grinding tyrant to the poor; a canting, whining, coarse, and burly fellow, with his sleek bearing, his bushy eyebrows, and dull pale watery eyes, thin lips, huge feet and hands, his massive stooping shoulders and stealthy gait, could ever hope to win even one favourable glance from such a girl as Bryde Otterburn; or how he dared to imagine

that she could ever view him otherwise than with simple aversion, it is difficult to conceive. So is it hard to comprehend the confidence that made him think of putting himself in competition with two handsome young men like Talbot Egerton and the Lord Dalquharn; one he knew to be of a good old English family, and the other having all the bearing of what he shrewdly suspected him to be, the scion of some noble Scottish house. Yet those there are and have been, whose incongruities or idiosyncrasies of character have led them to nurse schemes, or visions, as wild and desperate.

Balcraftie's jealous hate alternated between the two; as for Sir John Mitchell, he never thought of him as a competitor, as he seldom saw him in Bryde's society, either at home or abroad. Having heard "Captain Douglas" state that he had been at Auldhame ten years ago, the Bailie had a perilous clue to his identity, he followed it up like a snake and soon discovered him.

"So, so," said he, depositing his tie-wig on a wig-block in his office, and proceeding to polish his bald pate vigorously with a yellow bandanna (one of a bale that had come by the 'Etoile de la Mer'), "Henry Douglas, Master of Dalquharn, was here ten years syne, wi' the lord and lady his parents, at the very time Jock Porteous was hung on the Dyer's tree! Ho, ho, my Lord Dalquharn, umquhile of the Holm, I have you fast, my brave man, I have you fast! I hope, ere long, to

see the black hoodie-craws flapping their wings owre the hausc banes and harn-pans o' you and a' sic popish traitors—ilk ane spikcd on a yettlan jagg!" he added, grinding his sharp fangs. Then a smile stole over his coarse visage—a leer of avarice, and something of lasciviousness—and he muttered, while rubbing his huge hands together with nervous glee: "Tak' patience, Reuben, 'Better is he who ruleth his spirit, than him who taketh a city.' Patience yet a while, and a' shall be thine, their tents and their flesh-pots, their gold and their spoils, Auldhame main and farm, lee and woodland—and what is better, the bonnie bird Bryde hersel'!"



## CHAPTER XVI.

‘ YOURS ONLY AND EVER !’

“ A promise in the oriel won,  
To crown my growing bliss ;  
A drooping head, a circled waist,  
And such a binding kiss !  
Oh, happy time ! oh, happy time !  
It never has its fellow—  
The one green leaf that hangs among  
So many sere and yellow.”

THOUGH I have but to tell “ the old, old story ” of a true love, the course of which was neither so smooth as glass, or so swift as an express train (for we could never have a story worth telling without the element of love) the events to be recorded, happened long ago, and have in them points which are decidedly strange and startling.

Bryde and Lord Dalquharn had all their old haunts to revisit ; she had no mother to direct or control her actions, and thus they could steal away by a little postern gate, and pass down the glen towards the sea, unknown to all, even to the

jealous Egerton, for jealous he was becoming, decidedly now !

They visited the ewe-bughts, where they had been wont to see Bryde's ewes milked for the making of cheese, and those bughts are the pleasant theme of many a Scottish song. The Deil's Loan, with its sombre old trees, the avenue with its gloomy story of the Spectre Drummer, the old tower of Scougal, of which, but a fragment now remains; St. Baldred's Well near Tantallon, his cradle as a deep fissure in the rocks near Whitberry Point is named, and his boat, now a rock at the mouth of Auldhame Bay, asserted by tradition to have been once a dangerous obstruction far at sea—these were each and all, visited in turn.

“The blessed Baldred,” (according to the History of the Caldees, a hermit who died amid the solitude of the Bass Rock, on the 6th March, 607, when Ewen IV. was King of the Scots,) “moved with pity by the number of wrecks and disasters, occasioned by this rock, ordered that he should be placed upon it. This being done, at his nod the rock was immediately lifted up, and like a ship driven by a favourable breeze, proceeded to the nearest shore, and henceforth remained in the same place as a memorial of this miracle,” at the mouth of Auldhame Bay, where in rough weather, the fanciful assert still that it is rocked by the waves and winds. These, and

many other legends of East Lothian, well calculated to

“Deepen the murmur of the falling floods,  
And shed a browner horror o’er the woods,”

were all well known to Bryde Otterburn, and thus beyond even the charms of her person and manner, Dalquharn found her a delightful companion. Many a volume of poetry they conned together, as they walked through the ripening fields, where Bryde’s quick eye espied the prettiest wild-flowers, with which she would make such charming posies, as few others could have done.

Many of these walks had been taken, but deterred by the trammels of his personal and political circumstances, Dalquharn, had not as yet, made known his love to Bryde.

She led him to many a fairy ring, long since obliterated by plough and forgotten, but where divers persons in those days of simplicity and old belief in the marvellous, averred the little fairies, or gude neighbours in green, danced on the eve of St. John, while the murmur of their tiny harps and voices softly attuned, in the silence of the place and time, mingled sweetly with the gurgle of the mountain burn, that wound under the leafy gorse and flourishing broom towards the sea.

At St. Baldred’s Well she shewed him the place where Monk’s cannon had breached the

ramparts of Tantallon, and when the most of his soldiers, who perished in the attack, had fallen.

“Many a poor wounded and dying Englishman must have lain here on the green brae side, my lord,” said Bryde, as her tender eyes filled with emotion at the ideas her vivid fancy suggested. “Ah, I hope that the golden broom-bells and the wild guelder roses grew here then, just as they do now !”

“Why, Miss Otterburn ?”

“That their beauty and their sweet perfume, may have soothed the last hours of those whose spirits passed away.”

“They were sour and morose Puritans, Miss Otterburn,” replied Dalquharn, “and doubtless cared but little for such tranquillising influences in their parting moments.”

A day had been set apart at Dalquharn’s earnest wish, for a visit to the old chapel of St. Baldred, and the very evening of this day, Egerton had made up his mind to address Miss Otterburn, if he had an eligible opportunity, and if none offered, to seek a formal interview.

She was just quitting her ivory-mounted spinning-wheel, which usually stood in one of the drawing-room windows, as Egerton entered, after having made a most careful toilet, and was about to speak, all unaware that Dalquharn, who had been superintending the spinning, was half hidden by the drapery of a little oriel.

Bowing low and reverentially, Egerton touched her hand lightly, and something in the action and the expression of the young man's face, gave her an intuitive dread of what he was about to say, for she said hurriedly to her companion:—

“Captain Douglas, have you—have you forgotten our proposed pilgrimage?”

“To the old Chapel?—how could I forget it?” replied Dalquharn, suddenly appearing to Talbot Egerton's intense chagrin.

“I have but to get my gloves, fan, and capuchin—they are in the library, and then I shall show you the tomb of him who won the old chalice of St. Baldred from the fairies,” said Bryde, laughing and looking very like a bright fairy herself. “You must know,” she continued with some precipitation and confusion, “that long, long ago, a castle stood by the lonely and rugged shore near North Berwick, on the summit of the great green knoll near the mouth of the mill-burn, and therein, below the ruins, the fishermen allege, that Anlaf the Dane, who burned and plundered all the country hercabout, stored up his treasure, which was equal in value to the ransom of three crowned kings.

“The first Otterburn of Auldhame was riding thence homewards on St. John's Eve, after dining with the Goodman of North Berwick, and in the moonlight he saw a multitude of grotesque little dwarfs, and beautiful fairies with long

golden hair, dancing hand in hand among the heaps of treasure that were visible through an opening in the side of the ruined castle hill.

“Being a stout and brave-hearted fellow, he reined in his horse, and shouted to them lustily. On this there came forth a quaint, stunted and bandy-legged little elf, about only eighteen inches in height. He wore a conical red cap, a short red mantle, and bore a large silver cup, under the weight of which he seemed to totter.

“‘Sir Knight,’ quoth he, ‘drink with us, a stirrup cup ere ye go?’

“Otterburn courageously took the cup; its weight was ponderous, for it seemed as if full of molten gold, so dense and thick was the yellow liquid which gleamed and bubbled within it—a liquid but little to the liking of the horseman. Firmly he grasped the cup, and dashing the contents full into the eyes of the fairy man, he clapped spurs to his horse, and with an invocation of ‘God and St. Baldred!’ on his lips, galloped away.

“With what manner of liquor the cup was filled no man could say, but the few drops that fell on the knight’s horse, burned into the bone, through flesh and skin. With shrill shouts and elvish outcries, all the fairies rushed from a thousand holes in the hillside, in hot pursuit; but as the fugitive leaped his maddened horse over the mill-burn, the running water stopped their course,

as no evil thing can cross a flowing stream, and he bore home the cup, which proved to be the beaker of Anlaf the Rover, and which he gifted to the chapel of St. Baldred, where it remained to the Reformation. After that event it was brought hither, and is now chained to the stone ambre in the hall, where you may still see it, but none have drank from it since King James VI. passed here on his way to England. I know you don't care much for such stories, my dear Mr. Egerton; thus our ramble would have no charm for you; but after tea, we shall have some of our usual music—shall we not?"

Egerton gave a sickly smile and bowed in silence, for it was perhaps unwise, if not a little provoking in Bryde, to hint thus broadly that he was *not* required to accompany them; but indeed, the young man had not the slightest intention of offering to do so.

On getting her walking gear, she thrust the masses of her fair hair between her soft cheek and her black velvet capuchin or little hood which was lined with pale blue satin; drew her tight kid gloves on her small and well-shaped hands, and went forth with a bow and a bright smile that sank deep in Egerton's heart and filled him with a jealous fury, as the lovers retired together.

He had come to make a declaration of love, and was left as if turned to stone, without a word having passed his lips, though he smiled as they

left him—smiled to cloak the chagrin, the bitterness and wounded pride that galled him, and the fury that made him nearly tear the silver knot from his sword hilt.

She was gone, and with another, but her voice yet lingered in his ear!

“I may have some chance yet,” thought the infatuated young fellow; “Douglas and she may not speak of love. He may be, as I half suspect, a Jacobite plotter, and women, like Jesuits, are ever the favourite agents of that party; and then perhaps, egad, the man may be married already!”

Thoughts like these, gave him false hopes and delusive courage, and he became for a time, a little more composed; but still resolved, that, come what might, he would yet have his interview with Bryde, and from her own lips, learn the secret of his fate, not that we fear, however, Mr. Eger-ton’s heart would have been broken in the least, by a rejection of his suit.

On this evening, as on a score of others the secret of *his* love, was hovering on the lips of Dalquharn; but a sentiment of generosity to Bryde, and a fear lest he might involve her, and perhaps her family, in his most unmerited poverty and political ruin, sealed them up and filled his heart with mingled emotions of love for her and bitterness at fate! and yet they spoke of the expected landing of the Prince, an event which Dalquharn, who shared that vast and vital secret,



knew was drawing nearer and nearer every day. Speaking of his own present poverty :—

“ I am rich,” said he, “ only in love of country and in loyalty to our rightful king. Deprived of these inspirations and incentives to a glorious future, I should be poor indeed ! But if I fall, I shall do so, without dishonour,” and he continued bitterly, “ at times I feel so weary even of my young life, that, as a change, I would almost welcome death !”

“ On Towerhill, where the noble Derwentwater and your kinsman, the brave Kenmure, died—or at the gates of Carlisle ?”

“ Nay, on neither place, Miss Otterburn—but on the field of battle.”

“ Woe is me, my dear friend, talk not thus !”

“ Where else,” he exclaimed proudly, “ should a Douglas die ? I shall leave few, none perhaps, to lament me, for I am the last of my race—the old line of the Douglasses of the Holm, and as Orlando says in the play, in departing, I shall ‘ do the world no injury, for in it I have nothing ; only in the world I fill up a place, which may be better supplied, when I have made it empty !’ ”

“ Then, if you speak thus bitterly, let me add with Rosalind ‘ the little strength I have, I would it were with you,’ that you might wrestle the better with your fate,” said Bryde, with one of her loveliest smiles, as she caressingly patted the arm on which she leaned ; “ you see that I have

read the book of the great English dramatist as well as you, my lord.”

As they walked on, Egerton's presence in the house they had quitted, even his very existence was forgotten by Bryde and her lover. They passed through the shrubberies and close-clipped hedge-rows, and proceeded towards the venerable fane of Auldhame, which had been built, no man knows when, upon the Seacliff that overhangs the waves of the Firth, but it was old, even in the days of the gracious Duncan, who gifted it to God and St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne.

Dalquharn was silent, for his heart and his eyes were full of love as he gazed from time to time, on his alluring and confiding companion.

It was an evening of June, and a lovely one! The purity of the air, the breeze from the far expanse of blue sea that stretched away towards the dark bluff of St. Abb; the bright sunshine and the odour of the fresh meadows; the birds that carolled aloft or twittered in the old green hedge-rows, and the gay wild flowers that grew by the wayside, all conduced to soothe the hearts of Dalquharn and the young girl, and fill them with a sense of joy and lightness.

Within the ruined chapel on the Seacliff, they lingered long.

Impressed, perhaps, by the solemnity of the place, they went hand in hand now, when decyphering the epitaphs and other inscriptions,

which the stern hand of time, the storms from the sea and the hammers of the gloomy iconoclasts of 1559 had spared. The walls were time-worn, and covered in some places by emerald green moss; in others by luxuriant masses of ivy.

Though the vaulted roof yet remained, in some parts the pavement beneath it, was sunk and irregular, as if the graves below [had fallen in, and the rank grass, the dock and nettle grew up between the slabs, which were covered by quaint Saxon letters, and bore incised marks, where shields and crosses of monumental brass had been torn away by gipsies and peasants for the mere value of the metal.

Under an arched vault, profusely decorated with otters' heads, lay the effigy of a knight (with his mailed feet resting on an otter crouching) since the days of the Reformation, minus his helmetted head, clasped hands and sword hilt; but an inscription, still traceable, requested the visitor to pray for the soul of "Sir Nicolas Otterburn, umquhile of Auldhame, slayne in battel be ye Inglis, anno [1513," for it was he who had brought the calamity of the Spectre Drummer upon his posterity.

A new rail surrounded this tomb, and Bryde, in a voice which grew low and tremulous, informed Dalquharn, that therein her mother and her murdered father lay. Her head drooped

sadly on one side as she spoke, and somehow, the young lord's arm, went caressingly, in sympathy around her, while his heart rose to his lips.

"Miss Otterburn—Bryde, dear, dear Bryde," said he, "I have a solemn thing to say to you, and what place so fitting as this?" He paused and she trembled, for too well she knew what was about to come. "I love you—I, homeless, houseless, landless and attainted, am, I know, most guilty in telling you this; but I do love you tenderly, Bryde—and—and you are the first and only woman, to whom I have ever said so."

Bryde was silent, very pale, and trembling violently. A shower of tears would have been a great relief, but no tears came.

"Speak, Bryde—dearest, speak?" he urged.

"Oh, my lord!" she began, and instead of withdrawing her hand from his, their clasp seemed to tighten mutually, as if she sought support.

"Lord me not, Bryde Otterburn—call me Henry Douglas, as ten years ago, in this very place, you were wont to do," said he, tenderly.

"In—in my heart I have long called you so."

"May I hope that you—you love me then!" he exclaimed, in a transport of joy.

"Hush," said she, glancing hastily around, as if even the dead might hear her, and blushing

painfully : “ you know that I do—would I have come here with you else—and alone ? ”

Her voice was barely audible.

One kiss now, and overcome by the excess of long pent-up emotion, they tottered as if intoxicated, towards a fragment of the ruined wall, when he seated her beside him. Her face was crimsoned by one continued blush ; but it was hidden in Dalquharn’s breast. His cheek rested on the tresses of her soft brown hair, for her hood had fallen back, and his strong sustaining arm was round her.

Then he took her fair head caressingly between his hands, and again turned the sweet face upwards to his—and—somehow, their lips met again, and they trembled in the very excess of their newborn joy, as they looked into each other’s winking eyes, and it might be, into each other’s hearts, too.

They were long silent and bewildered now, for words no longer came.

The green leaves rustled pleasantly in the midsummer breeze, that passed through the open mullions and tracery of the ruined windows ; the merry birds flew in and out, as they sang and twittered among the wild roses and sweet-briar that grew in masses over all the chancel arch, and where of old the altar stood ; the sound of the sea was heard as its white waves climbed the volcanic rocks of the adjacent shore, and the

lovers sat long in silence, while time seemed to pause, though, in reality, with them it went swifter than ever.

Words come anon, and then confessions were made, and mental impressions related; coincidences of thought and wishes—coincidences that seemed truly miraculous! How and why had their spirits been apart so long? How long they had sighed for and thought of each other! Their strange dreams, their moments of doubt, of sorrow and of sadness; their former, almost childish days of joyous companionship, with all their dim foreshadowings of the present time of ecstasy, were re-called and compared with all their minutiae, as indicating the hour that had come; and never were the pure illusions of youthful life and love, more brilliant to the poor attainted loyalist, than at this time, when Bryde Otterburn, in the full flush of her blooming beauty, her girlhood and her passion, reclined her head on his breast, and acknowledged that she loved him, though he had only—sorry we are to confess it—his entire estate, a few Louis d'ors in his pocket!

“And now it is, that I tremble for you, my own beloved Bryde, whose fate is linked with such a man as an attainted Jacobite—an outlaw whom any man may kill, without the commission of a crime.”

“And I tremble for you, dear Henry, and my poor old grandfather, who lives so completely in

the past. Alas, Henry! you know me to be loyal—loyal unto death; but is not the cause of the Elector too strong for King James to subvert it? oh, if you should—if you should—;” she failed to conclude the sentence, for tears choked her utterance.

“Fear not for me,” said he, with assumed gaiety; “I could deny you nothing, but my loyalty to the king, beloved Bryde—Bryde in name and purpose—is it not so?”

Could poor Egerton have seen them then!

It was almost sunset, (and the June evenings are long,) when they left the ruined chapel and returned towards the house, hand in hand, in silence and full of happiness, and then Bryde, anxious for solitude, and to enjoy a quiet flood of tears, rushed away to her own room.

On her engaged finger she had a strange ring, which was inscribed

*Yours only and Ever.*

It had been the betrothal ring given by Dalquharn’s father to his mother, blue-eyed Jessie Gordon, of the loyal House of Kenmure, and could a Scottish cavalier desire a better golden hoop to place on the finger of his affianced bride?

On the morrow, Dalquharn would inform Sir Baldred of what had occurred, and crave pardon

for abusing his hospitality by seeking to rob him of his granddaughter.

Alas! he little knew the terrible events, which a few short hours, would bring to pass!



## CHAPTER XVII.

## MR. EGERTON PROPOSES.

“Chloe! my precious! why so coy!  
Thou dear provoking jewel!  
Why wilt thou still suspend my joy,  
And still continue cruel?”

“Thus armed with snuff-box, cane and ring,  
And twenty pretty fancies,  
Glib nonsense from my tongue shall spring,  
In *a-la-mode* advances.

“However, if these methods fail,  
And have no power to win ye,  
I’ll only turn about my tail,  
And think the devil’s in ye!”

*Scot’s Magazine, 1739.*

NEITHER Captain Wyvil nor Mr. Egerton graced her teaboard by their presence in the drawing-room on this evening. Mr. John Gage, the English exciseman, had come hurriedly to Auld-hame, announcing that there were rumours of the black lugger having been seen outside the Isle of May, and patrols under Sergeant Teesdale were required at certain points, as the ‘Fox’ frigate had run up the river to St. Margaret’s Hope, for

repairs. Sir John Mitchell, into whose custody Sir Baldred had placed the five hundred pounds obtained from Balcraftie, was in Edinburgh, on what errand need scarcely be explained.

Bryde when tea was over found that she was left alone. Dalquharn had swiftly stolen one sweet salute and retired to the library, having to write letters, which he meant to dispatch in person, at a quiet post-house, about two miles distant. They were for the Lords Elcho and Balmerino, and were in cypher, the addresses being "Mr. David Wemyss" and "Captain Arthur Elphinstone," to the care of the Conservator of Scottish Privileges at Campvere.

Sir Baldred had fallen asleep in his wide easy chair, with his black wig and sword-belt hung on the knobs thereof, and he wore a purple silk cap pulled over his eyes; so she kissed the good old man, kindly and tenderly, and issued into the garden, which, in the style of those days was a labyrinth of close walks and yew-hedges; and which, though it covered but four acres or so, would have taken a stranger at least two hours to perambulate and explore.

Her mind and step were buoyant with happiness. Her thoughts were turned inward, and she mentally rehearsed again and again the visit to the ruined chapel, with all its delightful details, while seated on a stone sofa, with her drooping head resting on her left hand, her brown hair falling in

bright masses over it, all golden in the light that yet lingered in the west. Her right hand toyed unconsciously with her fan; there was a bright smile playing about her parted lips; and she was all unconscious that Egerton stood by, surveying her with admiration and a passion that did not require wine to inflame it.

He little knew of what had passed, or of what was then in her heart; but pique, and the wine, of which he had been partaking too freely, gave him a false courage, and a bearing that by turns was jaunty, gay, maudlin, sad, and bitter; so when he did ultimately attract Bryde's attention and address her, she had but one idea, that he—bored her.

Poor Egerton had been at Lucky Scougal's change-house in Auldhame, where some of the farmers, or yeomen of the Lord Haddington, would insist on sharing with him more than one bottle of good wine, as they were jolly fellows, and simply because he was an English soldier.

“Many people in East Lothian at that time were Jacobites, and they were most forward to mix with the soldiers,” says Carlyle of Inveresk, in his co-temporaneous autobiography. “The commons in general, as well as two-thirds of the gentry, had no aversion to the family of Stuart; and could their religion have been secured, would have been very glad to see them on the throne again.”

“Drinking smuggled wine! ’Twas smuggled, no doubt, in a rascally Scot’s change-house, when, this very night twelvemonth, I was at a *ridotta* in the Haymarket, with more than fifteen hundred fashionables, after seeing Mr. Pritchard, Mrs. Clive, and Macklin, at the play. Demme, how the world wags!” He was muttering this, when he suddenly came upon the young lady seated in the garden, and immersed in happy thoughts as she has just been described—the flush of delight that thrills in the heart of a young and romantic girl on first being assured that an ardent and handsome lover is hers, and hers only!

Jealousy, pride, and confidence, now prompted Egerton to test his future fate—to put all upon the hazard of the die; so he at once seated himself by the side of Miss Otterburn, who would gladly have avoided him at such a time and in such a private place, lest Dalquharn might come forth in search of her, and suspect her of coquetry.

“Has Wyvil told you, Miss Otterburn, that—that in three days only, we in all probability march from this, on our return to head-quarters?” he asked.

“I have not seen Captain Wyvil all day,” she replied, rather coldly, and in no way moved by the tidings of their approaching departure, to Egerton’s intense chagrin.

“Ah! I forgot; he has been sending three corporals, with patrols, along the coast, to assist the

officers of excise in their search for smugglers; but, most probably, in three days, your amiability and hospitality will be no longer taxed by our presence."

"Taxed—dear Mr. Egerton? Pray do not talk so. If we have served in any way to lessen the too evident tedium of Scottish quarters to you and good Captain Wyvil, we shall only consider ourselves too happy."

"Won't you be sorry, though, when we are all gone?" asked Egerton, adjusting his wig and hat, which, sooth to say, were both somewhat awry, so much so, that Bryde's merry eyes were laughing at him mischievously over her fan. Though her sweet mouth was hidden, he knew that he was the object of her merriment, and said, with pique in his tone,

"Egad, madam, you are very cruel!"

"Cruel! How so, sir?"

"Ah! don't say *sir*."

"You called me *madam*."

"But your expression chills me," he continued, twirling his sword knot.

"Well—and I am cruel—a veritable cockatrice perhaps; but in what way?"

"To dally—to trifle thus, with one who you—you know too well, loves you."

"Sir!" exclaimed Bryde, in an unmistakable flutter, shutting her great green fan, and re-opening it.

“Sir, again! Pray call me friend—chum—what you will: surely my words merit some kindness.”

“Well, my friend,” said Bryde, whose recent and much more momentous interview with Lord Dalquharn had given her more decision of manner and independence of spirit than she would otherwise have possessed at such a crisis as this, “what *do* you mean, Mr. Egerton?”

“Bryde—Miss Otterburn, I mean—will you pardon me; but, egad, there is something I *must* say to you before I go, and—and you shall hear me now.”

Egerton took her left hand between his own, and she was so much agitated that she could not withdraw it, though a heavy, yet stealthy, step was heard on the gravel of an adjacent walk.

“In three days we shall march, as I said, too probably, and I shall never be here again—unless—unless——”

“What, sir? Oh, speak quickly, pray!”

“You should wish me.”

“I——?”

“You, Bryde; for into your hands I commit my heart, my fate, my future existence! Bryde Otterburn, I am a straightforward fellow: do you think that you could love—could like me—well enough to marry me. There, egad, the words are out at last!”

Bryde was flushed, breathless, and silent. Eger-

ton mistook these for symptoms of yielding, and became more vehement while the eavesdropper drew nearer.

“You have but *one* word of three little letters to say, Bryde!”

“Oh, Mr. Egerton, I pray—I pray——”

“Or say you will try to like me—or learn to like me, well enough to be my wife; or that you would have me wait a little until you considered it—a day, a week if you will; but say something to give me a little hope, however slender?”

Stunned and bewildered now, Bryde knew not what to say; but as Egerton’s disengaged hand was menacing her waist, she started up and withdrew a pace or two, trembling with agitation; for it is not often that a young lady, even one so charming as our Bryde Otterburn, receives two such offers in one day.

“Pardon me if I give you pain, my dear sir,” said she, looking down while she spoke; “but I can never love you—can never marry you, nor, if you knew all, any man who wears a scarlet uniform,” she added, to take away the sting of rejection on political grounds.

“Of course,” replied Egerton, with a sudden tinge of bitterness in his manner; “the colour is not popular here I know; yet it was worn by all your regiments and guards, horse and foot, long before this Union, which we find a pill so bitter here that I marvel Sawney ever swallowed it,

though that same pill was pretty well gilded by John Bull for the purpose."

It was now Bryde's turn to be piqued by this suddenly-assumed banter.

"Why should an English gentleman wear the colours of the German-Elector like you?" she asked.

"'Tis His Majesty's will and pleasure, madam, that the uniform of the Kentish Buffs be scarlet, laced with silver and faced with buff," said Egerton, into whose head the wine mounted at times, and made him quaint and absurd; "but, egad, madam, I am independent of the service. My old granddad—God bless him!—left me two thousand a year clear, from good land in Cheshire. I shall resign, quit, sell out, to please you, Miss Otterburn. Bryde, dearest Bryde! do you hear me? though I know my mother and sisters will all take to hysterics and Hungary water on hearing of my marriage with a Scots girl——"

"Poor gentlewomen!" said Bryde, laughing, when she had him half-melted by his earnestness; "I should be *so* sorry to offend their fine feelings. But you address me in vain, Mr. Egerton; my heart is not my own, nor, perhaps, my hand either, if Sir Baldred is consulted on the subject."

"Then, I have no hope," said the blunderer, sadly.

"None; but yet let us be friends, my dear Mr. Egerton."



“ Friends, oh yes, for ever and whatever may happen,” he exclaimed, and raising his hat, he knelt down and kissed her proffered hand, with great tenderness.

It was at this very juncture, that the steps which had been crashing among the gravel, approached the end of the walk, where the stone-sofa stood between the hedgerows, and then, at an arch cut through the dense old yews, Bryde saw the mischievous visage of Bailie Balcraftie appear for a moment.

“ Enough,” said she ; “ rise Mr. Egerton, and let this matter be recurred to no more.”

She hurriedly withdrew her hand, and with a glance of scorn and anger at the intruder—a glance which Egerton mistook as being meant for *him*—sailed away, fanning herself vigorously, with her hooped-train sweeping the gravel behind her.

“ Aye—aye, Mr. Egerton, and you, my fine madam ! ” muttered the Bailie, as he slunk away ; “ sets the wind in that quarter ? Sae, sae, it is you—you, Mr. Egerton, in the king’s livery, the red coat and cocked hat, I maun beware o’, and no the sae called Captain Douglas ! But I’ll mar your game, I’ll mar your game, or my name is no Reuben Balcraftie ! ”

He continued to mutter thus, while striding away, a fierce gleam passing over his vile visage in the starlight. His hands were clutching convulsively the square skirts of his coat unconsciously,

as it were, for jealousy, stung and disappointed, maddened him.

Between an opening in the walk, Bryde, when just about to enter the house, could see Egerton still kneeling by the garden seat, like one bewildered. She sighed and feared that she might unwittingly have pained the poor fellow, who had been such a pleasant inmate of Auldhame, her friend and companion too, now for several weeks ; and it was well that she had those gentle thoughts of pity, even for a moment, as she was fated *never again* to hear the pleasant voice of Talbot Egerton.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE QUARREL.

“ He is quick ! ”

His point and eye do go together ! Scarce  
 You are marked, you're hit ! his sword is part of him,  
 Grows to his hand, sir, as his hand to his wrist ;  
 The very moment that your weapons touch,  
 He is here, and there, and in ! his lounge, a shot  
 You see not till 'tis home ! ”

*Woman's Wit.*

THE mistaken glance of Miss Otterburn roused all Egerton's pique, pride, and jealousy. He started to his feet, and thrust his silver-laced Kevenhuller hat firmly down upon his curly regimental wig, nearly tearing away its upright feather and black cockade in doing so.

“ Oh ! ” he exclaimed in mingled sorrow and anger ; “ 'tis very well, madam, demme ! You Scots have the pride of Lucifer ! What has a plain English squire, like Talbot Egerton, to hope for, when such a spruce Scottish jockey as this Captain Douglas comes into the field ? He will have a pedigree beyond the flood, no doubt, for whether pedlar, with his pack, or a peer of the

realm, every Scot hath *that* by right of inheritance. But I'd have you to know, Miss Otterburn, that the Egertons were Lords of Malpas and Egerton; when your James I. was twangling on his ghittern in the Tower of Windsor, and that was not yesterday! And she can treat me so! Ah," he added after a pause, "if I had been a great man with a star on my coat, or a handle of any kind to my name—even a laird of some black rocks and red heather, and 'of that Ilk' (instead of my fertile acres in Cheshire), more than all, if I were a rebel, a Jacobite, a Jesuit's toady, an outlaw, a Scots cattle stealing thief, perhaps——"

"What on earth means this farrago, Talbot?" asked Captain Wyvil, who, at that moment, came upon his comrade soliloquizing angrily in the garden; "is this a comedy you are rehearsing?"

"A comedy, 'sdeath! no—'tis more like to prove a tragedy," replied the other, greatly ruffled, especially at having been surprised in this state of irritation.

"Prythee, man, what is the matter—you have been taking too much wine; is it not so?" asked the good humoured Wyvil.

"Like Jack Freelove, in the 'Spectator,' who was 'murdered by Melissa, in her hair,' this fair Scottish lass, in her unpowdered locks, hath fairly murdered me!"

"Come, come, Talbot, rouse thee, man," said the Captain, taking his arm, for Egerton's steps

were now becoming unsteady; "don't be a moon-struck fool. We shall, too soon, I fear, have *other* work cut out for us among the misty Scottish mountains, than falling in love, and sighing like furnaces; and other work even than searching a wild and rocky shore, and by rugged roads in Indian file, for smugglers' secret haunts and hoards."

"Captain Douglas—a pretty fellow, no doubt!" muttered Egerton, talking to himself; "I'll have him out to a game of sharps, though—I'll have him with sword and pistol!"

"Aha, I see how it is," said Wyvil; "our new friend from Holland has turned your flank, my poor beau, Egerton."

The latter replied only by an incoherent expletive.

"Well, Talbot, after being, as I and all our mess have known you to be, madly in love with sundry queens, princesses, and fairies of Covent Garden and old Drury, carrying even their sedans at night, and after parading Sir Timothy Tawdry and others of ours at the back of Montague House about them, I do marvel that even the blooming freshness of this Scots heather belle hath dazzled you; but——"

"This way! down the avenue—come with me," said Egerton, hurriedly; "I'll have it out with him—I tell you, Marmaduke, I'll have it out with him," he threatened for the fourth time, as he saw Dalquharn approaching, with his head

bent on his breast, and apparently full of thought. He was walking quickly, being in haste, to post the letters he had just penned to two of the leading men of his party.

He was evidently in deep reverie, as one might well be, whose mind saw in the future crumbling thrones and the strife of kings, bloody fields, and all the horrors of a civil war, the flames of which his own hand was seeking, or aiding to kindle. He saw neither Wyvil nor Egerton, against whom he stumbled, or by whom he was roughly jostled, for both started and surveyed each other with considerable irritation.

“ You will apologise, Captain Douglas, *if* Captain Douglas you are indeed ? ” said Egerton, with undisguised hauteur.

“ I apologise ! most assuredly not *now* ; but I demand an *amende honorable* from you, Mr. Egerton, for your offensive bearing and direct insinuation. ”

“ Good, demme ! ” said Egerton, fiercely, cocking his hat over his right eye ; “ you demand satisfaction, do you ? ”

“ This to me ? ” said Dalquharn, greatly ruffled, as he came forward a pace.

“ To you, or any other man ! ”

“ Zounds, sirrah ! — ”

“ And I say zounds, my pretty Scot, as the player says, ‘ I shall tickle your catastrophe ! ’ You are welcome to a tune on your own Cale-

donian cremona, and demme, if I don't make you dance to it. On guard!" cried Egerton, who now seemed mad with fury, and to become intoxicated by his own words, as he drew his sword, and smoothed his long lace ruffles back from the wrist of his right hand.

"Have the goodness to lend me your hanger, Captain Wyvil!" said Dalquharn, "I have nothing, as you see, but a riding rod."

"Talbot—Talbot Egerton, are you mad!" exclaimed Wyvil; "is this bearing courteous—this rashness seemly?"

"I care not what they are, so that they suit my humour. On guard, I say! lend him your sword, Marmaduke, or I'll spit him like a spring chicken."

"Never shall my sword be drawn in quarrels such as this—so put up yours," said Wyvil, angrily.

It was fortunate that Dalquharn was unarmed, for every vein tingled, and every nerve quivered with rage.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," exclaimed Bailie Balcraftie, now hurrying forward, and no doubt extremely glad to see those men—the two who stood exactly in the path of his intended plans against Bryde—ready to tilt at each other's throats; "keep the king's peace! would ye draw in the avenue o' Auldhame, and close to the very door o' your friend and host, Sir Baldred? A bonnie fray it is, and beseeming, too!"

“As a magistrate, aid me, Mr. Balcraftie—you are an alderman——”

“A bailie, sir!” said the other, perking up his head and planting his cane on the ground.

“Well, Bailie, aid me to keep the peace here,” said Captain Wyvil.

“Beware, ye sirs,” said the Bailie, thus urged; “for if one person assaults another wi’ a lethal weapon, either in design to slay, or in heedlessness o’ the bluidy result, the act is held as felony and murder by our Scottish law.”

“Chut! out upon your Scots law; what is it to me? I am a free-born Englishmen, and don’t value your Scots law a brass farthing—not even a tester!”

“But the Lord Advocate may teach you to your cost, my gay spark, what forethocht-felony is,” said the Bailie, shaking his stick; “and know ye not, that they who live by the sword, shall perish by the sword? Mairoure, it is weel nigh hamesücken to draw blades here!”

“I draw mine whenever, and wherever I am insulted,” said Egerton, still standing on his defence.

“I have no blade to draw,” said Dalquharn, with growing rage, “or this hour would be a dear one for thee, mad fool! However, my friend Captain Mitchell——”

“A Scots rebel like yourself, I doubt not,” thundered Egerton, injuriously, and still blindly bent on quarrel and bloodshed.



“Nay, sir—a man of the most unspotted honour!”

“Well—and your Captain Mitchell!”

“He, on the morrow, shall arrange a fitting time and place for our meeting. Enough of this, Mr. Egerton. You must see, Captain Wyvil, that he is quite beside himself to-night, and I should encounter him, even in the starlight, to his decided disadvantage.”

Egerton laughed scornfully.

“Be assured that, when next we meet, there shall be none to separate us, till one lies stiff on his mother earth!”

With these impressive words, which were regretfully remembered at another time, Dalquharn lifted his hat, bowed with great loftiness of bearing, and hastily quitted the avenue, while Balcraffie followed stealthily a few paces, to learn which way he had gone.

Dalquharn’s heart was burning with rage, and agitated by alarm, for a duel or brawl might lead to his discovery, arrest, and the total destruction of all his hopes, and those of others at this great political juncture. But he knew that he must fight now, and that his honour required it.

“If I fall on the morrow,” thought he, “I shall die as plain Captain Douglas, and shall compromise no one; but if I had been killed to-night, with the letters and cyphers of Elcho and Balmerino upon me, how fatal to the cause of the king!”

“’Sdeath, and the devil!” exclaimed Egerton; “I’ll after that fellow, and send him home with his ears in his pocket.”

“To-morrow, my rash friend, this matter shall be settled, but in presence of selected witnesses,” said Captain Wyvil, sternly, “I for one, though ever opposed to duels; but one word more of this matter to-night, Talbot, and you will make *me* your enemy.”

“My old buck, Marmaduke, to-morrow then be it,” replied Egerton, who was now completely sobered, and shook the captain’s hand; “I shall then give our Scottish friend a lesson in *carte and tierce*, that will serve him for the remainder of his life.”

“A deuced unpleasant thing it is, however, to have a fracas with Sir Baldred’s most favoured guest, and, apparently, his most particular friend,” said Wyvil, “and to run that friend through the body, is but a poor return for the old man’s kindness during our long visit here. What the devil possessed thee to-night, Talbot? Other three days had seen us on the march to head-quarters.”

“I am a perfect swordsman——”

“Few better in England, as I know well.”

“And I shall kill him and every man who stands between me and Bryde Otterburn, now that my hand is in for the game!”

“Hush, for heaven’s sake, and don’t let that cool-headed fellow, Balcraftie, hear you—see, he

comes this way," whispered Wyvil; but the Bailie *did* hear the melo-dramatic threat, which seemed to confirm the scene he had witnessed at the garden seat, and it made his craven heart wince, for he both feared and hated the bold and reckless young Englishman, who now said hurriedly,

"Good night, Wyvil—zounds! I can't stay here. Why is it that my heart is always strangely stirred, and that my very flesh creeps, whenever the cold fishy eyes of that canting Scotsman fall upon me! Good night, friend Marmaduke, and remember—to-morrow."

To-morrow!

Egerton hurried away. Wyvil and the Bailie thought that he had gone through the garden hedge-rows to the mansion of Auldhame; but the acute magistrate soon discovered that he had returned to the change-house of Lucky Scougal, in the hamlet, to assuage his wrath by one bottle more of her good smuggled Spanish wine.

When the gardener came a few minutes after, to secure the garden gate, he found one of his best spades missing. It was a new one, fresh from Edinburgh, by the cart of the Dunbar carrier; he searched everywhere among his flower-beds; but a thief had evidently been there, for his new implement of husbandry could nowhere be found.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## MYSTERY.

“The afternoon grows dark betimes ;  
The night winds ere the night are blowing ;  
And cold grey mists from out the sea,  
Along the forest moor are going :  
And now she paces through the room ;—  
And ‘ he will come anon,’ she sayeth ;  
And then she stirs the sleeping fire,  
Sore marvelling why he thus delayeth.”

*The Hunter's Linn.*

NEXT morning, when the little party assembled at breakfast, in the chamber-of-dais, or dining room, Bryde Otterburn was absent, but sent a message to the effect that her presence must be excused, as she found herself too ill on that morning to leave bed, and her doting grandfather, who became seriously alarmed about the nervous and hysterical state in which he found her, despatched a servant on horseback, with a led horse, for the barber-surgeon of North Berwick, who bled, blistered, and drew teeth, as well as shaved, curled perriwigs, and dressed toupees, as his striped pole and gilt bason served to inform all who passed through the High Street.

Mr. Birniebousle officiated at the tea and coffee board; Captain Wyvil presided over the ham, fowl, and other edibles: and now it was found that another seat was vacant—that of Mr. Egerton.

Could he be so silly as to sulk, and not to appear purposely? thought Wyvil.

The meal proceeded rapidly, but silently; Bryde with her smiling, brown eyes, quick small hands, and pretty morning dress, with its frills all plaited (as if by the fingers of the Brownie), was not there to shed radiance over all.

Wyvil's idea was soon dissipated by the butler, who announced with some astonishment, that Mr. Egerton was not in the house, that he had not been abed, nor had he been seen since last night! Captain Mitchell had not yet returned from Edinburgh. Wyvil glanced enquiringly at Dalquharn, and was astonished by the change in his face, and appearance generally, since last night. He was paler and actually older looking; his dark blue eyes were bloodshot, and he seemed to have passed a sleepless night. He drank little and ate less. He was feverish and nervous, and to the observant eyes of Wyvil, he seemed to have an intense difficulty in commanding or fixing his ideas. In short, his once strong, but keen nervous system, seemed completely unstrung, like one who was recovering from a long and deep debauch.

Can this young man be afraid of Egerton, and of the proposed hostile meeting? thought the cap-

tain next, and with some contempt in his tone, he again asked if Captain Mitchell had returned.

Dalquharn, in a voice that was barely audible, replied, that he had not. Sir Baldred was fidgety and alarmed, but knew not why.

“Egad,” he muttered, “I shall have two patients on my hands apparently. Any word of Mr. Egerton yet?” he asked, as the butler returned from making fresh enquiries.

He had been last seen with Captain Wyvil in the garden and avenue; thieves were supposed to have been about last night, as the gardener had one of his best shovels stolen, and there were marks of strange feet among the tulip-beds.

Wyvil now became seriously alarmed. He remembered that he had heard his grandfather (an old colonel of the Ironsides) relate many a time at Hurstmonceaux, how Cromwell’s men in Scotland, during the first two or three years of their service there, had been slain like reptiles by the peasantry. His blood boiled up; he stuck his loaded pistols in his girdle, and went forth to urge the scrutiny in person.

The day passed slowly on; Mitchell returned in the evening, and joined in the search with Dalquharn and others; the sun drew westward, but still no trace was found of the missing man.

Woodlands and highways, corn-fields and hedges, were searched and examined; every flight of crows was deemed ominous that he was lying

in the spot towards which they winged their way. Could he have fallen over the rocks into the sea, or otherwise have committed suicide? Wyvil loudly asserted that he was not the man to be guilty either of such folly or such wickedness. Had he been waylaid by Egyptians (as the gipsies are named in Scotland), by footpads, for the value of his watch and rings, or by revengeful smugglers, for Scupperplug's sable craft was alleged to have been seen in the offing?

Sergeant Tony Teesdale, who, with all the grenadiers of the detachment, made a close and vigorous pursuit, averred that he had not seen him at Auldhame hamlet; and Lucky Scougal asserted that he had quitted her house about half-past nine, or in the early part of the gloaming, and that he was then not quite sober, but was flushed with wine and excitement.

Suspicious of the worst kind seemed verified when Sergeant Teesdale and the drummer arrived at the house about nightfall, with a lace sleeve ruffle and golden link, and with the buff-faced cuff of a uniform coat, having thereon six flat buttons of plain silver. Though regimental buttons bore no number or device until 1767, it was at once recognised as Egerton's, and seemed to have been rent away by violence, like the ruffle, which was spotted with blood!

It was taken to Bryde, who shuddered and wept over it, for she knew the ruffle only too

well, by some stitches she had put in it a day or so past, at the request of the wearer, who was then in a gay and flirting mood. These relics had been found on the highway, near the avenue gate, but this might not indicate the scene of violence, as they seemed to have been blown hither and thither by the last night's wind.

Their discovery added greatly to the growing excitement; the search was resumed with greater vigour, and even Bailie Balcraftie, who arrived with the Esculapian shaver from North Berwick, took part therein.

“My brave young friend must have been the victim of some foul treachery,” exclaimed Captain Wyvil; “he was one of the best swordsman in all London!”

“Alake the day!” moaned the Bailie; “I aye feared that English lad would come to an evil end!”

“Wherefore thought you so, sir?” asked Captain Wyvil, sternly; “there was not a more harmless fellow in the Buffs, or in all the king's service.”

“May be sae, but I warrant he never knelt to the blessed book, and as the song says,

“‘He downie sing at the Psalm  
For spoiling his mim mim mou;  
And the lips that sing na to God  
Should never a maiden woo.’”

“Excuse me, sir—but d——n your song!”



said Wyvil, fiercely, as he adjusted his sleeve ruffles.

“And then he was sorely addicted to card-playing, to twangling on the vial, to dancing and blowing on the flute—vain snares o’ the man o’ sin, and in nae way suiting the man o’ God.”

Wyvil could not speak; he only gave the magistrate a withering glance of silent and profound scorn.

“Gude forgive me, a weak and erring creature, if I misjudge the youth, Captain,” continued the Bailie; and then lifting up his face, and closing his pale and cunning eyes, he crossed his hands meekly on his walking cane, and whined out, “‘Oh judge not, lest ye be judg—éd!’ and ‘oh cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?’”

Another day passed, and still there came no tidings of Egerton.

The spinnet stood open in the drawing-room, with some leaves of Scottish music on the stand, and there lay the poor fellow’s flute; with which but two or three days ago, he had been accompanying Bryde, and striving hard to please that beautiful and wilful young lady, by attempting a Jacobite air, ‘The auld Stuart’s back again,’ which would have cost him his commission, and more perhaps, if those in authority had heard him. And now Wyvil looked sadly at the instrument, and at the tiny flageolet, which had been

the player's gift to Miss Otterburn in a happier hour; and the honest and true hearted captain sighed, for he loved his young subaltern sincerely, and in Scotland, Englishmen still felt as if they were somewhat in a foreign country.

“Can she have loved him after all—and what means all this horrible mystery?” exclaimed the captain, who on hearing that the young lady was still unwell and abed, craved that he might have an interview with her for a few moments; but Mrs. Dorriel Grahame assured him in language, which to Wyvil was barely intelligible, that she was far too ill to see anyone.

She had been recovered with difficulty from a succession of fainting fits, by burnt feathers being placed under her nostrils, and by having poured between her lips, the distillation known as Hungary water, being wine flavoured with rosemary, after the recipe written about 1659 by Elizabeth, queen of Hungary.

She was now pale, speechless, and did nothing but moan, weep, and refuse all food. It may be added, that the ring which bore the significant motto,

*Yours only and ever,*

the ring placed upon her finger in that delicious hour at St. Baldred's chapel by Dalquharn, was already withdrawn from her hand.

Why was this?

An inexplicable change had also come over the

bearing of Lord Dalquharn. Was it the result of the unavenged insults and defiances hurled at him on that eventful evening, or was it the anxiety for the fate of his foe, which caused this too apparent alteration. He had now a wistful expression of eye, and did not exert himself much in the search, so thought the sharpsighted and now suspicious Wyvil—or he did so in a hopeless and mechanical way, as if the inquiry would have no result.

To Sir Baldred it always seemed as if there was something which the young lord wished to say, but lacked the heart or energy to do so; or he was always interrupted by the inopportune arrival or presence of Balcraftie, of Wyvil, and of inquiring country friends, who poured from all quarters into Auldhame, to eat and drink, condole, suggest, and speculate upon the mystery.

There were times when Dalquharn thought himself unobserved, or when Balcraftie was present, and when the cold but vulture-like eyes of that individual were upon him, that his pallor—he was very pale now—increased, when a spasm would pass over his handsome features, and even an uncontrollable convulsive shudder shake his frame.

Once he was seen gnawing his lips, with a glare in his blood-shot eyes; he frequently sighed heavily, and, strange to say, those indications of violent emotion were also exhibited by Sir John Mitchell (that usually jovial and equable guest of Sir Baldred), with whom Lord Dalquharn was

now almost hourly in conversation and earnest consultation, apart from the rest of the household.

By orders from Sir John Cope, the Lieutenant-General commanding in Scotland, Captain Wyvil delayed marching his detachment to headquarters, till more stringent inquiries were made concerning the missing officer; but these, like the rest, were all urged in vain.

Old Dorriel Grahame was never weary now of discanting on the many good qualities possessed by "puir Maister Aigerton," as she named him, and made Bryde more feverish and wretched by her noisy lamentations for his supposed death, on which she dilated with all the morbid *minutiæ* of her class.

"That pawky auld kimmer, Lucky Scougal, should ken something o' this black business," said the Bailie, sententiously.

"Why so?" asked Captain Wyvil.

"She may have cast her evil eye upon the puir lad, for the carlin hath but a bad repute in the parish."

Wyvil knew not what this meant; but it was averred in the district that the keeper of the change-house Egerton had last quitted, was one of those who practised witchcraft in secret, and who levied a species of black mail upon the peasantry, in the shape of meal, barley, and cheese, to shield them from the power of the evil eye, or, as the phrase is still in the country, to make her *een look kindly*.

“ We must seek aid o’ the sheriff, the Procurator-Fiscal, and the Lord Advocate,” said Balcraffie, who was apparently unremitting in his efforts, and certainly suffered all the sorrow of—a mute at a funeral.

“ Malediction on the Lord Advocate !” said Sir Baldred ; “ I have seen the loon at Edinburgh cross, flaunting it with an orange cockade in his hat. Woe is me !” he added sadly ; “ the winter rime of many years hath whitened my auld p<sup>o</sup>w, but never to a guest of mine did such a calamity as this occur before, and no such hour of evil, save when my dear and only son died by the hand of a black and unknown traitor ! ’Tis strange,” continued the old baronet, musingly, “ that the greatest calamities usually occur between night and morning, especially if the wind be high.”

According to the superstitions of the good folks in and about Auldhame, the mystery involving the fate of Talbot Egerton was heralded or accompanied by as many omens of evil as might have presaged the fate of a more important personage, than a heedless and half-tipsy young subaltern of the Kentish Buffs ; but then, the Scots of those days doted dearly on the marvellous.

In the gloaming, the bittern, now no longer an inhabitant of the wilds and marshes of the lonely Lammermuirs, had been heard—

“ to sound its drum  
Booming from the sedgy fallow.”

The voice of "the hedge-pig" had been heard at times near the close-clipped yew fences of the home-farm, and been taken for the moaning of a disturbed spirit; and about midnight there came a storm of wind, accompanied by such a roaring and bellowing noise in the Firth, as had not been heard, Sir Baldred affirmed, "since the night the union was signed, when more than fifty whales came up, madly careering and plunging with the tide, which, at its ebbing, left more than thirty of these monsters stranded and rolling on the flat sands of Kirkaldy and Tynninghame next morning—that morning when not a cock in all Scotland had been heard to crow!"

"The whales were no bad omen of the future, surely?" said Captain Wyvil, smiling.

A description of Egerton's personal appearance and dress, fairly written in round text by Maister Scoutherdoup, parochial schoolmaster and precen-tor of St. Andrew's kirk, was displayed at the market-cross of North Berwick, beside Bailie Balcraftie's notice of a preachment thereupon; and, by the voice of the town-drummer, a reward of fifty guineas (to which the Bailie added ten) was offered for information concerning him, but all in vain; and his wonderful disappearance formed the staple subject of a great discourse, delivered with singular fluency by the Bailie on Midsummer eve, to a great multitude, on the Links, near the sea; and there he failed not to in-

veigh against the scarlet woman of Babylon (who was then as great a bugbear to the children of Scotland, as the Boo-man and Napoleon Bonaparte in later times), then came prelacy, episcopacy, and all the backslidings of the times, after which he gave thanks to heaven that *he* was not as other men are, and the multitude dispersed.

In the sweet long evenings of June, at the song-trystes, when some twenty or thirty lads and lassies met by agreement at some farm or cot-house, for song-singing and merriment, as was the custom, and at the milking of the ewes, Egerton's dark tragedy formed the subject of many a sad ballad and quaint speculation, in which our old friends the fairies figured, for there were not a few of the sturdy plough-lads and shepherd-lassies at the ewe bughts of Auldhame and Tynninghame, and Whitekirk too, who thought that the elves might have spirited away the handsome Englishman, as all the world knows they did our gallant King James, and the great King Arthur.

But a short time elapsed before the occurrence of other events of a more startling nature, committed the brief story of Talbot Egerton to oblivion.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE DEIL'S LOAN.

“Is't guilt alone convicted that keeps silence?  
 Guilt, saucy guilt, that dares to break the law  
 Of God and man? Remember you no case  
 Where innocence accused hath all at once  
 Been stricken dumb? Appalled to undergo  
 The charge of sin, that never could endure  
 The thought of sin?”

*Sheridan Knowles.*

How was it that, crushed in spirit, and subdued in bearing, the once proud and lofty Dalquharn had now almost a terror of Reuben Balcraftie, when before he had only disgust and contempt? Why was it that he and Bryde were so suddenly changed, and that, although he knew it not, his ring was no longer worn by her; and what was the cause or origin of that grievous and mysterious illness which had so suddenly prostrated her in body and mind, and which baffled alike the skill of the poor excited barber-surgeon of North Berwick, and the deeper wit and greater dexterity of the most learned of the physicians of Edinburgh, whose Royal College was then situated at the foot of the Fountain Close?



On the night that Egerton disappeared, Bryde by an appointment was to meet Dalquharn at the end of the avenue, as he returned from despatching his letters at the post-house near Castleton. Luckily for the lovers, all in Auldhame had retired early to rest; the gloaming of the June evening was clear and beautiful; the air ambient and calm. She tied her capuchin lightly over her soft brown hair; locked up her spaniel lest his barking might betray her; and issued forth from the private gate, with a flushed cheek, a sparkling eye, a light step, and a joyous heart; for never had the innocent young girl kept a lover's tryste before.

She looked at her tiny gold watch by the light of the clear, cold, crescent moon, which was now high in the deep blue sky, above the flood of amber that still steeped the western clouds. She was almost too late! Already Dalquharn must be at the trysting-place, and awaiting her, she thought, and hurriedly she traversed the walk that led outside the garden wall to the long and dark avenue, an umbrageous and leafy tunnel, at the western end of which, and apparently at a vast distance (though but a few miles off), the acute cone of Berwick Law rose in dark and opaque outline against the lighted sky.

Dalquharn was not at the gate, each pillar whereof was surmounted by a stone otter, the paws of which rested on a quaint, old-fashioned shield.

She looked out upon the highway ; its far extent, stretching away in dim perspective, between hedge-rows, showed no sign of any living thing, save, perhaps, an occasional rabbit or hare flitting across from field to field. The summer night was intensely calm and still, and not a sound was heard now save an occasional drop of dew, as it fell heavily, from a yielding and overcharged leaf, on the thick green sward below.

On her left lay the deep, dark shadows of the Deil's Loan. She turned her back upon it with a kind of tremor, for it had ever possessed a species of superstitious terror for her since infancy, as memories of the old Druid days and their rites of blood had come down in the shape of calcined bones found in strange clay urns under a mossy cairn, adders'-heads and elf-arrows, with strange ornaments of bronze and ivory, that told of other races of men and of other times ; and there too, in rank luxuriance, grew the large yellow witch-gowan, the stalk of which is filled with a pernicious sap, which, when placed on the eye-lids, was supposed to cause instant blindness.

Again she looked at her watch ; more than half an hour had elapsed since Dalquharn should have been at the gate, and why did he not come ? Was it lover-like to tarry ?

She knew that the errand on which he had returned to Scotland was indeed a perilous one, and that if discovered or betrayed, he was a lost

man! She also knew that he was brave, proud, and high-spirited—even reckless; and she now remembered with a thrill of alarm that he had gone forth without arms, without pistols, or even his walking sword; for she had seen him to the door, and bade him a tender adieu.

Just as this recollection occurred to her, she seemed to hear his voice on the still air, and it came to her ear in tones of anger.

From whence? She listened again; but the quick beating of her anxious little heart, and the tingling of her ears, though she drew back her hood and her thick, heavy hair, scarcely permitted her to hear.

Again his voice, and louder still!

It came—too surely it came, from that unhalloved spot the Deil's Loan! She remembered that her dress was dark, and that the moonlight was but faint, and thus, without a moment's hesitation—for, though gentle as a lamb, she was a brave and high-spirited girl—she crept along under the shadow of the hawthorn hedge, till she found herself close to the gloomy and sombre grove of ancient trees.

She could distinguish figures as well as voices now; but she felt her blood alternately glow in a fever heat, and then become icy with apprehension, while a nameless horror, a vague and irresistible perception that something was wrong, grew strong in her heart.

She drew nearer, and shrunk almost down on her knees as she peeped through the hedge, and saw between her and the pale moonlight a figure which she knew to be that of Dalquharn, and with his the form of another man, bearing a third person between them—a person dead—a person whom she instantly knew to be Talbot Egerton, by his sword and sash, and by his costume, particularly his pale buff waistcoat, which was covered with black stains ; but his face she could not see, as his head had fallen back, and was trailed heavily along the grass !

For one moment she remained as if spell-bound, gazing on this horrible vision. The next beheld her flying along the avenue, overcome by a terror that gave wings to her speed, and yet caused her many times to stumble, to fall, and creep breathlessly on her tender hands and knees.

Had some fierce national quarrel or political duel ensued, or was it a vile and vulgar murder under cloud of night ?

How she reached home, and secured the postern gate, how she ascended to her own room, and got to bed, she never knew ; for she was as if in a dream—till the winds of a stormy midnight shook the tall chimneys and turrets of the house, and roared sullenly among the old woodlands, when a fever seized her, and ere the stars paled out, and the dawn came in, she was delirious.

Already was the light bubble burst, already was

the cup of happiness dashed from her lips, and already was the sunshine of her young love overclouded in its dawn, and long ere it reached the maturity of noon!

Bryde's illness was naturally enough coupled by her friends with Egerton's disappearance, and added to the excitement of that sequestered locality. My Lady Haddington, in her two-wheeled Italian chaise, preceded by two outriders; the Scougals of that ilk, in their lumbering coach, drawn by four black Flemish mares; and Mr. Carfuffle of Whitekirk, on his nag-tailed cob, and many more, came dutifully to offer their kind aid and advice; but Bryde obstinately refused to see any one but her old nurse Dorriel Grahame.

When sense returned, and the fever passed away, she could not speak of the events of the night without inculpating Lord Dalquharn and another whom she knew not; and as her lover could not visit her room, in the severely decorous ideas of the time, they could have no mutual explanation of that terrible mystery.

"Could it be a dream?" she often asked of herself; but she remembered how the wind blew, and how the pale grey dawn replaced the short twilight of the June night: "a dream!—impossible; for I never slept!"

Then Egerton's disappearance was a dreadful corroboration of the episode she had witnessed. Was there indeed blood on the hands of her loved

Henry Douglas? and who was that *other*, by whom the body of the victim was borne? He was too short in stature to be Sir John Mitchell, and too sturdy in figure to be—another dreadful thought—her aged grandfather; for a duel, the result of some political dispute, was ever hovering before her.

Three days the poor girl fevered and raved, and at times seemed on the eve of losing her senses; and now, leaving her for a time, with affectionate old Sir Baldred wringing his withered hands, and worthy nurse Dorriel weeping over her, let us follow the movements of Lord Dalquharn on the night in question—that night so fruitful in events.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE DEATH SHOT.

“A falcon towering in his pride of place,  
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed!”

*Macbeth.*

It was, as already related, the twilight of a glorious evening in June. The lark had gone to its nest in the woodlands, and the stag was in his lair among the long green feathery ferns in Binning Wood; the dew was falling softly, and so gentle was the wind that it would scarcely have stirred the downy beard of the wild thistle by the wayside. The stars were coming out clear and bright, and in the streams the grey salmon and the bull trout were leaving their deep, dark pools for the shallower places.

It was indeed an evening for two lovers to meet, and Dalquharn as he hastened on his secret errand, with those letters which he could entrust to no other hand, though still ruffled by his recent angry interview with Egerton, and deeply regretting the hostile contingency of the morrow, felt his own happiness in the love of Bryde so much, that he trembled for the perils that might menace

it; or was this tremor but a dim forshadowing of the future? Perhaps so, for there is no emotion that is so sensitive as true affection.

He felt all the luxurious joy of being a successful lover, and trembled lest he should be wakened roughly from his delicious dream.

With a prayer almost on his lips for the success of the great matter in hand, he left the enigmatical letters for the two Jacobite lords at the post-house, and hurried back to meet Bryde as he expected, at the gate which had the two heraldic otters' heads.

When passing the skirts of the old thicket known as the Deil's Loan, the dark trees of which stood up like masses of bronze against the amber coloured sky, he suddenly heard a shot, and almost immediately afterwards, a pistol, as if hurled towards him by an unseen hand, fell at his feet. He picked it up, and the barrel was still warm with the recent discharge. It was a rough weapon, of common aspect, with a brass butt, and seemed to be of that kind usually called a ship-pistol, as the ramrod was secured to the stock by a lanyard of tarry twine.

All was still after this, and never did Dalquharn more deeply regret the thoughtlessness, which, on this occasion, brought him forth unarmed; but he was naturally too brave to pass on without ascertaining what was the meaning of a shot fired in such a time and place, and clubbing



the pistol as a weapon for defence, he forced a passage through the hedge, and went boldly towards the spot from whence the report had come.

He had not proceeded twenty yards through the fern, gorse and thick grass which grew under the old trees, when he came upon the body of a man, in a scarlet coat, lying on his face, quite dead.

It was Talbot Egerton, weltering in his blood—killed by a shot through the head!

Horror and astonishment were the first emotions of Dalquharn; sorrow and alarm were the next—sorrow for the fate, so untimely and sudden, of this young and gallant Englishman, and alarm lest he might personally be compromised by the event or its discovery. He was not left long in doubt as to the latter, for the sound of footsteps was heard, and Bailie Balcraftie appeared, armed with a *spade*.

“In the name of heaven, Mr. Balcraftie,” exclaimed Dalquharn, “who has done this foul act!”

The other started, raised the spade as if to defend himself, but recovering from his emotion, whatever it was, he replied very calmly:—

“It ill becomes *you, sir*, to ask sic a question, seeing that you stand by his side, and armed mairoure by the very weapon that has cost the puir young gentleman his life, as sure as I’m a pardoned sinner!”

“ Bailie Balcraftie !”

“ Oh, waes me, puir Mr. Egerton ! truly, truly in the midst o’ life we are in death, and as for man, his days, as the blessed Psalmist saith, are as grass—yea, as a flower o’ the field so he perisheth.”

“ Canting villain !” exclaimed Dalquharn, hurling the empty pistol with such violence at the Bailie’s head, that had he not eluded it, by adroitly ducking, he had assuredly been stretched by the side of the dead man ; “ villain, I repeat, dare you attempt to fix your odious crime on me ?”

“ My odious crime !” chuckled the other with an obnoxious grin ; “ weel, weel, you are a bold man to say this to me, a merchant o’ substance, a magistrate and elder, senior bailie, nae less o’ the royal burgh o’ North Berwick ! Ken you the worth o’ your head, or the length o’ your neck, that you daur to breathe a word o’ sic an aspersion ?”

“ Then who has done it ?” said Dalquharn, almost staggered by the Bailie’s self-possession ; “ you heard the shot I presume ?”

“ I am coming through the wood, I hear the explosion o’ firearms ; I come further on and find—what, sir ? Mr. Egerton dead, and the so-called Captain Douglas bending over him wi’ a pistol in his hand ! Yea I beheld him,” whined Balcraftie, lifting up his eyes and hands, “ as if ‘ I beheld Satan as lightening fa’ frae heaven ;’ wae’s me !

and then I bethink me of the bitter and deadly words uttered in the hearing o' the worthy Captain Wyvil, no two hours sin syne, that you and Mr. Egerton would '*meet when there would be none to separate you, until one lay stiff on his mother earth!*' Ye have met, and behold the awful end!"

"Silence, fellow—silence, lest I strangle thee!" said Dalquharn, who felt his flesh creep, while a clamorous fluttering came about his bold heart, at the apprehension these words and this mysterious crime aroused.

"Do you daur again to threaten a bailie—a magistrate, an elder o' the kirk, sir?"

"Reuben Balcraftie, there is no greater villain than thee under the canopy of heaven or the keystone of hell! What diabolical motive has induced you to commit this crime, I know not; but I can laugh to scorn your wicked attempt to inculcate me with a deed so dark and bloody. Moreover, Sirrah, I know that this is not the first crime of which you have been guilty."

Dalquharn referred merely to the smuggling and to his appearance in disguise on board the lugger; but the poet tells us that—

"Many a shaft at random sent,  
Finds mark the archer never meant,"

so these words had a wonderful effect on Balcraftie, whose visage grew pale and became suffused with beads of perspiration which almost glittered

in the moonlight, as it streamed between the still and drooping foliage of the wood. His eyes wore a startled expression of rage and alarm, and he raised the spade, as if he meant to cleave the speaker down.

“Attempt to strike at your peril,” said Dalquharn; “stand off, fellow—you know not whom you speak to!”

“I ken owre weel, may be,” replied the other, taking off his hand and making a mock bow, with the most profound insolence; “a cavalier, a Jacobite in disguise, a popish plotter against kirk and law, as is most likely.”

“Oh that I had my sword!” exclaimed Dalquharn, in a low voice of concentrated passion; and then losing all sense of caution, “Back dog,” he thundered out, “I am Henry Douglas, Lord Dalquharn of the Holm!”

“I kenned as muckle three weeks ago,” replied the Bailie, changing his bearing entirely, relinquishing his sanctimonious whine, and adopting a bearing which somewhat reminded Dalquharn of that of Scupperplug, or of the Dutch mate, Vander Pierboom. “Noo stand ye there, my Lord Dalquharn o’ the Holm, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, and obey me, lest I denounce ye—obey me I say!” he added, assuming an air of ferocious authority, as he tore open his coat, and shewed that he had beneath it, a pair of double-barrelled pistols in a broad leathern girdle. “It

will be a hard thing for you, I doubt not, if just on the eve o' a rising whilk you hope may be successful, you lose your head, your title, and, for a' that I ken, your braw leman at the Loan-end, Bryde Otterburn, and a' by a word frae my mouth—eh?"

Dalquharn clenched his hand and groaned, for he felt himself more and more in the power or the toils of this human snake. He stooped over Egerton, and felt his hands and pulse, cold and still; poor corpse! the heart had quite ceased to beat.

"This evening he was in the garden, on his knees before bonnie Bryde Otterburn—ha! ha! —on his knees—he is lower noo, and a bluidy tryste hath it been," chuckled Balcraftie.

"Her name on your foul lips may drive me mad!" exclaimed the young lord, furiously, as he remembered the interrupted meeting, and was about to spring upon his tormentor, when quick as lightning, that personage cocked and levelled one of his double-barrelled pistols straight at his head.

"The grave to be dug here, will haud twa, as weel as ane," said Balcraftie; "but I'm no done wi' you yet, my braw man. You have been at the Post-house near Castleton?" he asked, categorically, and keeping his pistol still levelled at the young peer's head; "speak!"

"I have—but how know you that?"

“ I saw you go, after your last fatal threat to this pair fellow—go to post letters, doubtless, addressed to *Captain Elphinstone* and *Mr. David Wemyss*, in answer to those you received some three days gane by, from the attainted traitors, Balmerino and Elcho—letters o’ whilk the *duplicates* are now in my office, where your answers will be duly inspected to-morrow morning, and a braw sum the Lord Advocate and the Secretary o’ State will pay for your correspondence. Oh, my gallant Lord Dalquharn, I ken you weel, but I wouldna like to stand in your lordship’s boots.”

“ If I must condescend to reply to such a reptile as you, I may inform you, that the letters to which you refer, and to which you have had access, by most villanously tampering with the mail-bags, are worthless ever to you, without the cypher—”

“ But that I possess, my gay birkie—that I possess.”

“ Impossible ! ”

“ I have heard o’ sic things as secret papers being wrapped round a sword-blade, and so hid in the scabbard.”

Dalquharn started and felt the blood rush back upon his heart.

“ I examined *yours*, my lord, when you were at breakfast in my house, and left sword and belt, like an unwary fule in your bedroom. The cypher was wrapped round the blade, and could be left

there or drawn forth at pleasure, and on the blade I read the motto, *no union*; we a' ken what that means. The cypher I copied and restored, ere we set out for Auldhame; and noo I hae in my grip you and a score o' others, proud, braw, noble and handsome as ye deem yoursel's,—ha! ha! unco galling a' this maun be to you, nae doubt, nae doubt; but there'll be balm in Gilead, I suppose, balm in Gilead, even for hellicate cavaliers," he added, with a touch of his general manner and character, for, as we have shown, this pillar of "the kirk and state," had two—a public and a private one.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## IN THE TOILS.

——“ 'Tis not impossible,  
 But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground,  
 May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute,  
 As Angelo ; even so may Angelo,  
 In all his dressings, characts, titles, forms,  
 Be an arch-villain : believe it, royal prince,  
 If he be less, he's nothing ; but he's more,  
 Had I more name for badness.”

*Measure for Measure.*

LORD Dalquharn was, for a time, completely silenced, and filled by a horror and alarm, which increased every moment, the more he realised and considered his situation, and the conviction that so many gallant gentlemen, whose names were in his letters—men of high birth and long descent, of great estates and irreproachable loyalty—were thus compromised, and placed in the power of a wretch so venal and corrupt as this man, Reuben Balcraftie.

In his dread of what might be their fate, and the fortune even of the Prince's intended attempt that summer, he forgot his present peril, he forgot



his tryst with Bryde Otterburn, he forgot all but the desire for vengeance, and sprang across the dead body of Egerton, intending to close in with his more wary tormentor; but the latter, who possessed more strength than his youthful assailant could have imagined, thrust him furiously back, with the barrels of his loaded pistols, for he had one in each hand now, and never was the life of Dalquharn in greater jeopardy than at that moment.

“Stand, I bid you—stand off and harken,” said Balcraftie, sternly; “outlawed and attainted as you are, even as your father was before you, for adherence to a popish and perjured tyrant—a double-dyed traitor to the House o’ Hanover, I might lay you dead beside him who lies here, and nae man in a’ the land, frae Tweed tó Thule, could ask me why or wherefore! I could, this instant if I chose, shoot you dead through the brain-pan, and cast these pistols beside him and you, and after *what passed* in the garden, and these awfu’ words uttered in the hearing o’ Captain Wyvil, forby and attour other mair moving political causes, would the procurator fiscal, or ony man in his senses, doubt, when your bodies and weapons were found, that ye had perished otherwise than in a just and lawfu’ duel? It’s a braw thocht—a braw thocht and a tempting one!” and his eyes shone and his teeth too, as he grinned a horrible smile.

“Subtle villain,” exclaimed Dalquharn, with sudden despair in his gallant heart; “fire, if you dare!”

“And lose the price o’ your lordship’s head, when the time comes to exchange it for a cheque on the Treasury; oh no—Reuben Balcraftie is a prudent and a wary man too.”

Dalquharn was almost suffocating: he felt himself to be completely and utterly in this man’s power, for the future, as well as the present, perhaps; and for the present he had no resource but to comply with his orders.

“In the meantime I’ll lend you a hand to hide your braw night’s work from the gleds and hoodie-craws,” said Balcraftie, still affecting to implicate Dalquharn in the commission of that crime, for which the young lord yet failed to comprehend the motive. “Suppose you did it, my Lord,” he continued, seeing the start of passion given by the other, “I only say *suppose*, my Lord—I may gie you a title here, whar nae human ears can hear us, what matter is it, whether you killed him here or in the field of battle? ’Twill come to gunpowder ere lang, I suppose, and he’ll sleep just as weel here in the Deil’s Loan, as if he lay on Penrith Moor; on the braes o’ Dumblane, or Glenshiel, or wherever else you Jacobites hae crossed steel with King George’s red coats.

While the Bailie said this he had replaced his pistols in his girdle, and after compelling his com-

panion to stand some paces distant, he proceeded adroitly to cut and roll over some large and tough green sods, keeping apparently one stealthy eye on his work, and the other on Dalquharn, whose slightest movement he watched, and every half minute his hands were on the pistols again. The soil was soft, and he scooped out a grave about a foot deep, scattering each shovel of earth far and wide, tossing it even over the tree tops, while Dalquharn looked on as one in a dreadful dream; but vowing again and again, that whatever might come of it he would yet avenge, with his own hand, perhaps, the foul murder of the young English officer.

“This night he was birling the cogue and drinking the bluid red wine at untimeous and unlawfu’ hours in Lucky Scougal’s,” said Balcraftie, with somewhat of his usual conventional whine; “and noo—noo, here stark and stiff in the Deil’s Loan! Truly, man’s days are as grass; but alake, sir, help me to lift the body?”

Dalquharn folded his arms, drew himself up to his full height, and gave the speaker a frown of hatred and disgust.

“Help me to lift the body in here,” said Balcraftie, in a low hissing voice, while cocking a pistol; “or, by heaven and by hell, I lay you beside him, and leave ye baith, as I threatened, together!”

Thus constrained, Dalquharn, with something

like a sob in his throat—a sob of sorrow, rage, and humiliation, turned poor Egerton on his back, and felt his heart deeply moved at the sight of his pale face, the fallen jaws, full of coagulated blood, the ice-cold lips, the glazed and open eyes, which he had last seen sparkle with animation and fury against himself—eyes which he had seen beaming with frolic and merriment in many an idle hour.

Seizing the dead body brutally by the throat, with his right hand, Balcraftie now, with a pistol in the left, covered Dalquharn, who took up Egerton's feet, but, overcome by conflicting emotions, let them drop upon the grass.

“Hist and harken!” said Balcraftie, starting, and in a fierce whisper; “something stirred by the hedge side!”

In fact, the sound at that moment was caused by Bryde Otterburn, who had peeped fearfully through, and then fled, like a startled fawn, in terror and despair, towards the avenue gate.

Again the threatening pistol was levelled at his head, and once more compelled to stoop to his odious task, Dalquharn assisted Balcraftie to lay Egerton in his scantily scooped grave, over which the latter carefully deposited the green sods, with the spade, and beat them down. He then tore a branch from a tree, and brushed all the grass round for several feet, to remove any traces of footsteps or blood that might remain, after which, with a caution, which showed he was

no new hand in such nefarious work, he tossed the spade from him, far among the growing corn of a neighbouring field, where he knew it would remain undiscovered till the reapers came in harvest time.

“ My Lord Dalquharn, we now ken the terms o’ our mutual silence anent this black night’s wark. I shall speak not o’ your secret character, if you venture not to speak o’ mine; but if you would take heed o’ yoursel’, quit Auldhame without delay, for the countryside may soon be owre hot for you; and now gude night, my Lord, gude night, I am your Lordship’s maist humble servitor.”

With a species of mock salute, and a cruel glare in his horrid eyes, Bailie Balcraftie departed for his home, on the way to which he discovered, with some consternation, that he had dropped his breeches Bible during his recent occupation—dropped it, perhaps, near the scene of his crime; and on a fly-leaf of it were his autograph, address, and a short prayer, or invocation in his own handwriting!

\* \* \* \* \*

How Dalquharn reached his apartment in Auldhame, somewhat like poor Bryde (from whose misery he was only separated by a wall), he scarcely knew; but his altered bearing on the morrow has thus been sufficiently accounted for.

To Sir John Mitchell he related all that had

occurred, and long and earnest were the consultations they held together; but mutual dread of the future, and of Balcraftie's great local power and influence, sealed their lips. To denounce him, to accuse him of the crime, and say where the body of his victim lay—to accuse *him*, an active whig magistrate, unwearying in his search after Papists, Jacobites, and all manner of recusants, a leading elder, and zealous and rather noisy professor of religion, in whose household every day began and ended with prayer—could but serve to bring the wrath of an incredulous neighbourhood upon themselves. It might, moreover, lead to a suspicion that they were the criminals, and not he; while, in revenge, he might anticipate the coming catastrophe by denouncing them and their friends to the Lord Advocate, including Sir Baldred, whom they deemed too old, blundering, and unwary to entrust with the key they possessed to the secret life of his money-lending acquaintance.

There were times when Dalquharn and Mitchell actually conceived the rash idea of visiting the reptile Balcraftie, and pistolling him on his own hearthstone, after the fashion of some of the wild Scottish raiders of the preceding century; or, to use a more modern term, to “lynch him,” as an act of retributive justice, and so end the game of villany he was playing, and the terror he gave them.

But cooler reflection showed that little would be gained by an act so reckless and perilous, while their letters, or the copies of them and of the cypher, remained among the papers of this man, who added to his many other perquisites and means of acquiring money and power, the then lucrative one, of being a Scottish government spy.

The five hundred pounds borrowed by Sir Baldred, at usurious interest, over the lands of Half-longbarns, for the Prince's use and service, were still in Sir John's hands ; but if a portion of this sum, or even the whole of it (then equal to more than a thousand pounds in the present day), were offered to Balcraftie as a bribe for the papers he possessed, they knew he was too wary to give up the originals, or *all* the copies he might possess ; he would pocket the money, and betray them still !

With all these anxieties, there was a crowning one—he might already have been in communication with the Government officials on the subject, and, like the sword of Damocles, the terror of arrest hung hourly over the heads of both.

When Dalquharn took his friend Mitchell next day to the place in the thicket where the missing man lay in his lowly bed, he could scarcely recognise the exact spot, for four reasons : the turfs had been very carefully relaid, rain had drenched the ground, after the wind had swept it, and the strong gusts of midnight had overthrown a large tree, the summer foliage, branches, and ruin of which lay

immediately over poor Talbot Egerton's unhallowed grave ; and from the evil reputation which the wood possessed, there was but little chance of any stroller, gamekeeper, or even poacher passing near the place of his last repose.

H. E. Cottrell



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE ARLED BRIDE.

“No more upon these lips of mine  
Shall lover’s kiss be pressed ;  
No more held fast within his arms,  
And folded to his breast,  
Shall my heart find a hiding place  
To nestle down and rest.  
And I must check the thoughts as sin,  
Which bade my heart rejoice,  
Whene’er I heard, like some sweet chord,  
The music of his voice.”

THESE lines describe somewhat of the emotions of poor Bryde Otterburn, after the terrible discovery which she believed she had made on that eventful night of Egerton’s disappearance. Was Dalquharn actually implicated in the deed of slaughter? It was impossible to discredit the evidence of her own senses ; and by his strange employment about the body, he seemed to be at least art and part in the affair, and that involves the penalty of death by the law of Scotland !

Oh, never more should his hand touch hers, for the blood of that unfortunate English stranger, their household guest, was on it ! But could he

actually be guilty of such a deed—he so nobly born and highly bred, so gallant, so gentle and kind? She felt that imperatively she must love him no more, but thrust his image from her heart; and if he was the vile person appearances made him, it should not be difficult to do so; and yet—and yet the wrench, the effort, cost her a terrible pang, and many a flood of bitter, bitter, silent, and unseen tears.

Never more must she listen to his once loved voice; and Bryde hoped, when on the seventh or eighth day she left her chamber and appeared in the drawing-room, that he would be gone; but it was not so; the guests were all there, save Eger-ton, and now it seemed that doubt, fear, and wrath hovered in the atmosphere of Auldhame, and these emotions were all most visibly to be read by turns in the **grave** expressive faces of Mitchell and Dalquharn.

Bryde quailed beneath the loving and enquiring eye of the latter, and shuddered when he touched her shrinking hand. She dared not speak of what she had seen, and she dared not denounce him, without discovering his real name, rank, and purpose, and thereby inculpating her dear, doting old grandfather, and breaking her own heart.

At the first glance as they met, Dalquharn saw that there was some other mystery to torture him, for his ring was no longer on her engaged finger; her whole manner and appearance were

changed from laughing brightness and espièglerie, to pale, chilling, and statuesque coldness; and now a sickening fear came over his soul, that she had, after all, in her secret heart, loved the lost Egerton!

Old Dorriel Grahame believed that her pet-mistress was under some warlock's evil spell, and insisted on tying round her white and delicate neck a string of roman-berry heads, and she hung over the watch-pocket in her bed-curtains, an elf-cup, a most approved charm against cantrips, being one of those little stones which are perforated by friction, and were believed to be the workmanship of the elves, though they are usually found under waterfalls.

These and other charms of equal value and power were placed around her, but in vain, for Bryde continued to be, after all, pale, wan, pre-occupied, and listless.

Dalquharn, though acting his part in the search for Egerton, was somewhat in the same condition; and there were times when, like a phantasmagoria of the brain, the memory of the terrible episode of that fatal night came before him so vividly, that he almost imagined himself to have had a share in the death of Egerton; and to be the custodier of such a secret, would have maddened him, had he not made his friend, Sir John Mitchell, a participator of it; and like himself, the sturdy baronet longed intensely for

the time when they might with safety denounce and punish Balcraftie, whose dreaded denunciation of themselves tied up their tongues at present, and filled them with perpetual alarm.

To be at the mercy of this man, whom they deemed the living embodiment of all the vilest qualities of the venal, subtle, and canting Lowland whig of that age—false to king, to country, and to God—ready alike to sell all to the highest bidder, even as his party had sold Montrose, King Charles, and their national name and fame, was galling, indeed, to such proud and restless spirits as those of Lord Dalquharn and his compatriot.

He was burning for action—for some excitement without, to counteract the rage and shame, the terror and sorrow, that gnawed his heart within; rage and shame for his false position, even in his own eyes, a terror of Balcraftie's ulterior purpose, and a deep sorrow for the cold blight that had come upon his once successful love.

A dozen of times at least were the searchers close upon the humble grave of Egerton, but it was passed unnoticed and unheeded, for the rain and wind of the subsequent night, and the fallen tree completely concealed all trace that the sods had been broken. A bloodhound would soon have solved the mystery; but these dogs were no longer used in the Lowlands; and now, puzzled and piqued by Bryde's unexpected and

unexplained coldness, and dreading Balcraftie's threats, Dalquharn resolved to take his departure from Auldhame at an early period, and in some loyal household in the North, to await the landing of Prince Charles Edward.

He came to this conclusion, as he walked to and fro in the garden, alone, on the evening of the seventh or eighth unhappy day.

In great sullen masses of unpurpled brown, the clouds were gathered in the westward over the hills of Fifeshire, and beneath those masses, the red sun of June glared through bars of fiery vapour, as its great disc sank slowly behind the darkening ridges. It shone with crimson sheen on the foam-flecked waters of the Forth, and the summer wind, which waved the ripening corn, rustled pleasantly among the heavy foliage of the old copsewood.

As Dalquharn turned into one of those soft and smoothly trimmed grass-walks which were so common in old Scottish gardens, his heart leaped, as he came suddenly upon Miss Otterburn, who was standing sunk in reverie, sadly, and alone, near the pedestal of a dancing fawn. She was playing with a large moss rose, plucking it to pieces, leaf by leaf, and apparently unconscious of what she did, for her eyes were bent on the grass, or rather on vacancy. They were reddened by recent tears, but they were seldom otherwise now.

How beautiful she looked ! She had no head-

dress, and on the summer wind, the masses of her right brown hair rippled and waved over her shoulders.

The sad preoccupation of her manner told plainly the tenor of her thoughts; but Dalquharn jealously construed it after a fashion of his own.

Henceforth—thought poor Bryde—must love be dead in her heart—the love of *him* at least; but could she live without it, or ever admit the love of another? So the first passionate dream of her romantic and girlish heart was passing away; its joy changed to sorrow; its brilliance to blackness and gloom. In the sweet spring time of life, she already felt the autumn of the heart. Oh this horrible mystery! Was Dalquharn guilty? If not, why was he so silent and so reserved? Why did he not address her as of old, and seek that explanation of *her* coldness to which their mutual relation entitled him?

As if in echo to her thoughts, at that moment—

“Bryde!” said a voice that thrilled tenderly in her ear; “Miss Otterburn, why are you so changed to me—why are we so altered to each other? Surely grief for the loss of a—a mere friend, cannot alone, have done this?”

“It has not—it has not,” said Bryde, after a slight cry of alarm had escaped her, and then without looking at the speaker, she covered her face with her handkerchief.

Dalquharn leaned against the pedestal and regarded her with mournful interest.

“Miss Otterburn—Bryde,” said he, putting his lips so near her, that her hair touched them, as the wind lifted it; “have you—have you already ceased to love me?”

“Oh no—oh no—but would to heaven that I did!” replied Bryde, in a voice half stifled by her tears.

“You love me still!”

Her voice was gone now, but her sobs were deeper.

“Why this enigma—what means this change?” said he gently and tenderly, as he attempted to fold one of her hands in his; but she shrank from him saying, hurriedly, almost angrily,

“Do not, I pray you, touch me!”

She withdrew a pace or two; the hectic of a moment crossed the face of Dalquharn, and he said with measured calmness,

“Your changed demeanour towards me, fills my heart with the deepest grief, and believe me, Bryde Otterburn, that if you knew all—all the black sorrows it suffers already, you would, perhaps, spare it these pangs; but I do not mean to upbraid you now, or torment you longer by my presence here, as I leave Auldhame to-morrow.”

“To-morrow!”

“Yes.”

“And for whence, my Lord?”

“ I scarcely know, being, as you are aware, alike landless and homeless ; but if the fate of a poor wanderer such as I, can interest one so fickle, my steps shall be bent northward, for the house of the loyal and aged Keppoch, or the Castle of Mingarry ; though others change, I change not, and shall wait with patience the arrival of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.”

Bryde’s clear and beautiful deep brown eyes were bent earnestly and enquiringly on his, as if she would search his soul. The eyes of Dalquharn were full of sadness and of great sweetness too ; and after a deep sigh which seemed to pain him, for he placed his right hand within the breast of his coat, the same faded green one, in which he had come from Dunkirk, he said,

“ If grief for the fate of poor Mr. Egerton, has in any way lessened your regard for me, or if the mystery that involves it, has developed, as I rather suspect it has, some secret passion greater than you professed for me, and greater than you were aware of possessing, I shall only do my duty in disclosing to you, the secret of his story ; though by doing so, if your discretion fail me, I shall perhaps covet my own ruin.”

It was now Bryde’s turn to flush for a moment, but only a moment, for her marble paleness returned, while her enquiring eyes seemed to dilate with surprise at this remarkable preamble.

“ Come this way, and be seated,” said he, point-



ing to a bower of sweet-briar, roses and ivy ;  
“ permit me to lead you.”

Still she withheld her hand, on which he lifted his hat, and bowing with studious politeness, placed it under his arm, saying,

“ As you will, madame—as you will ! I am perhaps not worthy to touch one so good and pure as you.”

This extreme humility, while it seemed to corroborate her suspicions, grieved and distressed her. She seated herself in the bower and looked up at him with earnest and beseeching eyes, her lips half parted, her chesnut hair rolling in shining masses over her graceful shoulders, her white hands folded on her knees to stay their trembling, while her blue satin skirt, being partly lifted by her hoop, shewed one taper ankle and pretty foot that beat the turf with impatience.

“ As my presence, Miss Otterburn, appears now to excite only repugnance in your breast and impatience in your manner, I shall be as brief as I can in my narrative, and then, trouble you no more.”

“ I too have a secret, which, alas ! may break my poor heart in the keeping of it, for I have none now, with whom to share my sorrow.”

“ Not even me ?”

“ Not even you !”

Dalquharn clasped his hands.

“ Say on, sir—you were about to explain—”

“My reason for failing to meet you in the avenue on that unhappy night. You remember that we were to have met there?”

“Too well—alas, too well!”

Dalquharn stood in the entrance of the bower, and looking down upon her, with eyes expressive of great love and grief, related the whole story of his quarrel with Egerton, and the threats exchanged between them, in the presence of Captain Wyvil and Bailie Balcraftie; he thence passed to his return from the post-house, the shot he heard in the wood, and the assassination (as he could not doubt it must have been) by the hand of Balcraftie, whose mischievous face Bryde now remembered to have seen in the garden walk, at the moment when Egerton knelt to kiss her hand; and she recalled too, that the very peculiar expression of that coarse visage had startled and impressed her at the time.

She flushed with indignation at that part of the narrative, in which, under threats of instant death or future shame, the hypocrite and dissembler compelled Lord Dalquharn to obey his obnoxious orders implicitly; and she shed abundance of silent tears, when he related the manner of Egerton's interment, and described the place where his poor remains lay hidden, unhonoured and unurned.

“At that terrible moment, you heard a sound—near the hedge, did you not?” she asked.

“ Yes—and it thoroughly alarmed the watchful villain, whose victim I am likely to be next.”

“ ’Twas I, who was there.”

“ You—you, Bryde ?”

On this, she related rapidly the share she had borne in the adventures of the night, and holding forth her hands to him, added in a voice, touching and tremulous with emotion,

“ Forgive my thoughts, Dalquharn—forgive me! my love—my own love, I am not worthy of you, for had I loved you with truth and tenderness, I could not, even for a moment, have mistrusted you. Oh, assuredly, it is only perfect love that casteth out all fear !”

And Bryde clung to him sobbing, caressing his face and hair with her kind little hands, as he knelt down by her side.

“ I am your *arled bride*,” she added, using a plaintive Scottish phrase, “ your own betrothed Bryde Otterburn. Kiss me and pet me, Henry, to show that you forgive me—I have been so miserable—so heart-broken !” and she laid her head upon his shoulder.

“ I dread your discretion in keeping this secret, on which our lives, and even the success of the good cause, in some measure depend,” said he after a time.

“ Oh trust me—trust me !”

“ But Balcraftie—”

“ Horror ! I shall dissemble, even to him.”

“A canting hypocrite, with the stamp of perdition on his forehead!”

“Dead—dead—poor Mr. Egerton dead!” murmured Bryde with a fresh burst of tears; “he, so merry and so handsome, to be so foully slain, and we shall never, never see him more! And must he lie in that horrid place—”

“Till things are settled and vengeance done, dear bride; and then my own hands, if heaven spares me amid the dangers that are to come, shall lay Talbot Egerton in a worthier tomb.”

“And you leave us for the Highlands, you said?”

“Not if you wish me to stay.”

“And yet, my own love, Henry, you might be safer there than here, and from thence, by letter, you could denounce this Reuben Balcraftie, and say where the body of his victim is hidden.”

“All of which would be deemed as proofs that I—or we, poor Jack Mitchell and I—rebels and outlaws, had murdered a king’s officer, adding thus to our crime of *treason*, by seeking to fix the stigma of our guilt upon a wealthy, pious, and irreproachable magistrate and stout upholder of kirk and king, as by law established. It would never do, sweet ladybird Bryde; besides, my silence is at present the price of his withholding from government, the letters and papers of which he has surreptitiously possessed himself, and these concern deeply the safety of many gallant

gentlemen, and the success of King James's cause."

"Oh, that we could, by any means, get those papers from Balcraftie!"

"One might as well hope to take a lamb gently from a famished wolf."

From that evening, Bryde's health and spirit seemed to improve; she became content now and even placid. Old Dorriel Grahame was convinced that the roman-berry necklet and the elf-cup had wrought the charm, and said so to Sir Baldred, whose affectionate old heart became joyous again in the sunshine of his grand-daughter's face; he took a deeper horn of wine at night, and again engaged Captain Wyvil in more than one dispute concerning the merits and demerits "of the vile, unnatural, and incorporating Union."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## DEPARTURE OF WYVIL.

“Oh spare the living, judge them leniently,  
 Exact not all the honour that is due:—  
 The cold exterior and the calm proud eye  
 Hide many a gnawing, rankling grief from view.  
 Thou see'st but the outward act and deed,  
 The motive and the thought thou canst not read;  
 Oh, spare the living, judge them leniently!”

*Thistledown.*

“WOUNDS heal rapidly in a heart of two-and-twenty,” says the worthy Colonel Esmond; “hopes revive daily, and courage rallies in spite of a man.” Dalquharn was five and twenty, and three years more experience of life had not lessened the natural buoyancy of his spirit. He was now much happier, or at least more resigned to the course of events, when he knew and felt assured how much Bryde still loved him; and one morning, after breakfast, he resolved to have an explanation with Captain Wyvil, whose marked coldness of manner, and whose bearing, which amounted to ill-concealed aversion and suspicion, galled and fretted the proud and generous spirit of Lord Dalquharn.

But the time was awkwardly chosen, for the

captain and his host were then engaged in a high dispute—high, at least, on the part of the latter, concerning his great grievance the Union, and the total ruin it had brought upon all the cities and towns of the east coast, the, as yet, non-development of trade on the west; the desertion of the capital where the grass was growing around the market cross, and before the porch of Holyrood.

Some satirical remarks and coarse national reflections copied by the ‘Caledonian Mercury,’ from an old number of ‘Fog’s Journal,’ had put the old cavalier on his mettle, and he was enraged to a pitch, that required all the captain’s bonhomie and general good humour to enable him to keep his ground; and Bryde’s playfulness, which whilom was wont to turn their arguments into laughter, by a verse of a droll Jacobite song, was no longer in existence. Sir Baldred was particularly severe on the king and ministry, for permitting the London press to be constantly reviling, without cause, their Scottish fellow subjects. He boasted of the time when King James VI. had sent a Scottish herald to the Duke of Pomerania, demanding the life of a Pole, who wrote a book against the Scots, and how the duke immediately hung the audacious scribbler in the city of Dantzic; there was no such sharp justice now, he added, and on George II. he was bitter to the verge of ferocity.

“But loyalty, my dear sir,” urged the captain,

“loyalty should prevent you speaking thus, and equity too, for the king cannot control all the quills in Grub Street.

“To whom should I be loyal—the Elector of Hanover?”

“To the king on the throne of Great Britain.”

“Know you not, sir,” said Sir Baldred, adjusting his black wig angrily with one hand, and striking his cane on the floor with the other.

“Know you not, sir, that the House of Hanover came to the throne of these realms by the mutual treaty of union. Now, every article of that treaty which was for the good of Scotland, hath been broken by the overwhelming majorities of the so-called British parliament—witness the restoration of patronage which hath split the kirk in twain; hence the treaty is null; I say null, for no treaty can be binding on *one* party only. Then, where is the right of your Elector, though he swears by his coronation oath to keep it inviolate?”

“These are dangerous words, sir, especially at such a time when the whole air teems with rumours of Jacobite plots and conspiracies,” said the captain, smiling at the fervour of the old man, for whom he was really no match on these subjects.

“We were not wont to choose and pick our words in my young days, Captain.”

“But, my dear Sir Baldred, as brother Britons——”



“We are brother Britons when you wish to wheedle us out of men and money for the wicked wars in Germany, but ’tis all oatmeal and brimstone, and beggarly Scots, at other times. I tell you, sir, ‘the name of Briton suits Welshmen only—we were born Scots, and Scots we shall remain.’ That was the shout of the Union Mobs on that terrible night, when the High Street of Edinburgh was all aflame with tarbarrels and rockets, and when I saved the vile Lord Chancellor Seafield, just as the rioters tore him from his coach by the throat, and would have rent him limb from limb in the face of all the Grey Dragoons and Foot Guards; but I and a few members of the opposition, with our armed valets, rescued him at swords point, yet minus coat and wig, and he fled for England next morning, like a craven as he was. But we shall be Scots, Captain Wyvil, like our forefathers—even as our old land charters say, while grass grows and water runs !”\*

\* It is impossible now to imagine the rancour which the Treaty of Union excited in the minds of the Scots. In the language of De Foe—“The Jacobite and the Presbyterian, the prelatie Nonjuror and the Cameronian, the Papist and the Protestant, parleyed together, joined interest and concerted measures against the Union.” Curses and execrations followed everywhere the King’s commissioner and its promoters, and driven from place to place by a mob (whom the Scottish troops failed to resist), it was ultimately signed by them in an obscure tavern in the High Street of Edinburgh. So blind were our ancestors to the advantages of this Union, which saved the Scots from *themselves* !

And effectually, to prevent the captain making any of his jocular responses, the old gentleman walked away, punching the floor with his cane as emphatically as if the Elector and all Grub Street were under it. It was now that Dalquharn, who took no part in the discussion, and who had been looking dreamily from a window at the sea, where some Dutch and Norwegian schooners were beating into the river against a fresh west wind, came forward, just as Captain Wyvil was assuming his hat and sword, apparently as if about to go abroad.

“Captain Wyvil—may I have a few words with you?” he asked.

“’Servant, sir — servant — certainly,” said Wyvil, curtly and haughtily, while smoothing his upright regimental feather, which was stuck into the black silk cockade of the house of Hanover.

“Captain Wyvil,” said Dalquharn without heeding his stiff, dry manner, “you are I know an English gentleman of good family, and a man of honour.”

“I trust so, sir; I have served in the four quarters of the globe and borne His Majesty’s commission these twenty years, without reproach,” replied the officer bowing still more stiffly; “but what have I done to merit the flattery of so distinguished a person as—as Captain Douglas of—excuse me, but I don’t quite know the regiment?”

“ I pass over the too evident sneer in your tone.”

“ ’Tis well you do, sir ; but to the point ? I am in haste, my men parade in the hamlet at eleven, (here the Captain looked at his watch) and we march from this in half an hour after.”

“ The knowledge of that, makes me feel that I can no longer delay, and that I must confide in you and cast myself upon your generosity.”

The Captain coughed dubiously, and again toyed with the feather in his hat, so Dalquharn added—

“ I know the fate of your friend Mr. Egerton, and have known it all this while.”

“ Even when assisting us—”

“ In that mock search—yes.”

“ I suspected as much—death and the devil, sir, I suspected as much !” said the Captain, sternly, but otherwise quite unmoved.

“ Suspected it—by what ?”

“ Your change of manner since the catastrophe ; your abstraction, your paleness and so forth. I heard your quarrel and his insulting defiance ; you killed him in a fair duel I hope, for if so, tell me ? In the heat of duelling, we cannot always have our wits about us. Not that I ever fought a duel, nor ever shall, with God’s help and guidance, for like my friend Colonel Gardiner of the Light Dragoons, I have religious objections to all such tests of the divine favour. So you killed him ?”

“ We are alone and none can hear us now, so do not misunderstand me, sir.”

“Do you threaten me, egad!” exclaimed the Captain, changing colour.

“Far from it,” said the other gravely and firmly; “but I am about to trust to your honour and generosity. In me, Captain Wyvil, you see an attainted peer of Scotland—Henry Douglas, the Lord Dalquharn.”

The Captain started, and then bowed low, saying,

“By my soul I always suspected something of that kind too—that you were one of those luckless gentlemen who adhere so obstinately to a fated cause; to this unhappy House of Stuart in its downfall; but, be assured, my lord, that your secret at least, is safe with Marmaduke Wyvil—safe as if I sheltered you in my own house at Hurstmonceaux, where, though we are old rumpers and whigs, more than one cavalier friend hath found safe hiding, as many a sliding pannel and secret stair, had they tongues, could testify.”

“And Heaven will reward your house for the succour it gave to the unfortunate in the hour when treason triumphed.”

“My grandfather defended Wem in old Noll’s time, when there were little else within its walls but women and children as a garrison, hence to this day, the milkmaid in Salop sings how

“ ‘The women of Wem and a few musketeers,  
Beat the Lord Capel and his cavaliers.’

But, concerning my poor friend Egerton?”

“He was most foully murdered!”

“Murdered?” exclaimed Wyvil in a low and earnest voice, as he laid his hand on his sword.

“I say so, with sincere sorrow; I saw him as he lay dead, and scarcely cold, at my feet.”

“Yours?”

“Yes.”

“And yet you made no effort to succour or defend him?”

“I was without arms—even a walking cane, as you may remember, on the night in question.”

“True, now that I bethink me; but by whom was he murdered?”

“To tell you by whom he was shot down in cold blood, or to say where now he lies, would but serve to imperil my own safety and liberty—even my life, and the lives and liberties, the estates and titles of many dear friends, which are all at the mercy of him who slew Egerton.”

“’Tis an enigma this, and all High Dutch to me!” said the Captain in great wrath.

“But if you will trust me so far, Captain Wyvil, as to believe in me implicitly, I swear to you by my hopes of heaven, by my father’s and mother’s bones in their distant graves—graves which are now, alas! my sole inheritance—that in three months’ time, I may explain all this to you, and avenge your countryman openly.”

“Three months,” said Wyvil pausing and

pondering; “but in doing this do I not condone a crime, and obstruct the ends of justice; hence I know not if I am bound to abide—”

“By your word of honour that you would keep my secret?” urged Dalquharn, anxiously.

“True—odd though this compact is, Zounds, I’ll agree to it,” replied the confiding Englishman.

Ere the time stated, Dalquharn hoped that the standard of the prince—the same standard which he had seen some fair and royal fingers embroidering at Versailles—would be floating over the palace of Holyrood, and that the wiles and espionage of Balcraftie would be futile.

“I could not see you march from here, Captain, viewing me as you did, with cold and suspicious eyes, without having this explanation; and, as a pledge of my truth, I have placed my personal safety in your hands.”

“And you may trust me; I shall be true to you, as this blade to its hilt,” exclaimed Wyvil presenting his hand. “Come—Egad! though our good old friend here, will storm and argue with me, because I cannot see Scottish affairs from *his* point of view, I have a kindly feeling at times for your countrymen. When I served in 1741, under Vernon and Wentworth, on that unfortunate expedition to Carthagena, where, after the battle of St. Lazare, the army was so reduced by fever, that in two short April days

more than three thousand four hundred and forty men died under canvas, I too had perished, but for the exertions of a Scots surgeon's mate of the 'Elizabeth,' seventy gun ship, one Tobias Smollet, a native of Dunbartonshire, who tended me well and kindly; and with him, I remember, this same Union was a very sore subject, and when I was well, he sent me a challenge for d—ning it and the Scots too, which, in a moment of anger, I had done with all my heart. Then, as for your Highlanders, I think them fine, manly fellows, for I served with some of them against the Indians in Carolina and Georgia, and I shall be truly sorry if there is another rising in the north for King James. I was on the staff of his Excellency General Wade in the Highlands in 1727, when we all took to the trade of making roads and building bridges, and I remember when first his coach and six came along the highways, the astonishment it excited among the poor, simple fellows, who all took off their bonnets with the greatest respect to the coachman—but to him only."

"You will then trust me, sir, until this dark matter is cleared up, by myself."

"I shall; we march for Stirling, and we may be at least four days en route. There are rumours of expected disturbances north of the Highland frontier—disturbances of which you are, perhaps, unfortunately too cognisant. I

shall be some time, no doubt, in Stirling Castle, where any letters addressed to Captain Wyvil, Howard's Foot, or the Old Buffs, will be sure to find me."

It was long before Dalquharn was able to communicate the truth to Wyvil, and before they both learned the secret *motive* which animated the assassin of Egerton.

Sir Baldred was too hospitable and too warm-hearted to part without regret from his English antagonist in so many games of chess and primero, and so many political discussions; and now he ordered the butler to broach a runlet of rare old wine that had lain among cobwebs and dust in a deep, dark binn of the cellar since 1715—ever since His Grace John Duke of Mar (for duke he was always styled by the Jacobites, as his patent was signed at St. Germain) marched to Sheriffmuir "to haud the Whigs in order."

Mitchell was again in Edinburgh; indeed, the worthy fellow absented himself as much as possible to avoid the witchery of Bryde's society; for, in secret, he loved this gentle and loveable girl, and dreaded to become the rival of his friend.

Thus, like Orlando, he was feeling how

"His passion hangeth weights upon his tongue,

He cannot speak to her should she urge conferences;"

And that his friendship for Dalquharn hung weights thereon that were heavier still.

Home-brewed ale, bread, and bannocks of barley-



meal, were liberally supplied to the soldiers, who filled their canvas havresacks, and drank to the health of Sir Baldred—" 'toward Squoire," as most of them called him—with three hearty English cheers for the "yoong ladie;" and the old baronet's face lit up with kindness and enthusiasm as he saw them for the last time; for with him, at heart, it was not that he "loved England less, but Scotland *more*."

"A long farewell, Miss Otterburn, and God be wi' ye," Wyvil said, as he lifted his hat and kissed Bryde's hand. "Adieu, Captain Douglas; may our next meeting be as peaceful as our parting. Farewell, my brave old cavalier," he added, waving his hat to Sir Baldred; "with all your antique ways, egad, I can't help liking you; and I hope some day to crack a bottle of good old port, or drain a crown bowl of punch with you, at my old manor of Hurstmonceaux, and there return your many hospitalities."

Sergeant Teesdale advanced his halberd; the drum and fife struck up; and the fine grenadiers of the old Buffs, with their knapsacks and cross-belts, their square-skirted coats buttoned back to display their pipe-clayed small clothes, their sugar-loaf caps, queues, ruffles, and long black gaiters, once more made a brave show, with their sloped arms and fixed bayonets flashing in the sun, as they marched down the long shady avenue, and wheeled to the right upon the highway to Castle-

ton, where the sound of their drum soon died away in the distance, as they trod to their route towards the land of the Gael, leaving, we may presume, the usual number of soft and sorrowing hearts behind them.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## BRYDE'S ENTERPRISE.

“Gae tell thy master, frae this arm  
Mine answer will I gi'e ;  
Remind him of his tyrant deeds,  
And bid him answer me.

“Wha was't that slew my father dear ;  
That bared my castle wa' ?  
Wha was't that bade wild ruin bruid  
Whar' pipes did glad the ha' ?”

*Old Ballad.*

NOTWITHSTANDING the full explanation which had taken place between Bryde and Lord Dalquharn, and between the latter and Captain Wyvil, even after the departure of that officer and his grenadiers, a cloud seemed to hover darkly above the little circle at Auldhame. It was not the secret of an unhallowed grave close by their baronial gates, or of an unavenged crime alone, that caused this general gloom, but the incessant doubt and dread lest Balcraftie, who had them all at his mercy, might put a climax to his villany by betraying Dalquharn, Mitchell, and many others, through the simple act of placing the intercepted

correspondence in the hands of the authorities, which he was quite likely to do, the moment that a sum sufficiently tempting was offered him, though the act would destroy for ever his chances of again setting foot within the door of Auldhame, in his present capacity at least.

Anticipation of misfortune is often worse than the reality thereof. "Imaginary evils," says Dean Swift, "soon become real ones by indulging our reflections on them; as he who, in a melancholy fancy, sees something like a face on the wall or wainscot, can, by two or three touches of a lead pencil, make visible, and agreeing with what he had seen."

Singular to say, the Bailie still daringly continued his visits to Auldhame, but at longer intervals. He conceived his terrible secret was known only to Dalquharn, but he found himself avoided by all save Sir Baldred, who was totally ignorant of all this underplot, and was too old, and had too little discretion, to be trusted with it. Forced by policy to dissemble the intense repugnance with which his presence inspired her, Bryde grew pale, stern, and all but ill, when the Bailie appeared; and at such times, she observed now, that his cringing smile, his cat-like attempts to gain her favour, failed him—and that even his diabolical courage seemed quite to die away.

"Why do you wince and shrink from me now, Bailie?" she once asked, with her eyes half-

closed in disdain, and her head thrown haughtily back, as if she felt her advantage and power—the power of birth, innocence, and purity, over lowly station, when combined with black guilt and subtle hypocrisy.

“I dinna ken, Miss Otterburn; but times there are when—when——”

“When what, sir?” she asked impatiently, and making her spinning-wheel fly as she spoke.

“You remind me sorely o’ one who hath gane to his place of rest. O—o—oh! blessed are the dead who——”

“I remind you of my poor father, you would say?”

“Ye’—yes—puir young man!”

“I am thought to be like him; for his hair was a light brown, and his eyes hazel, with black lashes.”

“Even sae, Miss Otterburn,” murmured the Bailie, while smoothing the nap of his huge triangular beaver, and lowering his stealthy eyes.

“It was an evil night that on which you and he rode homeward from the Bank of Scotland, Reuben Balcraftie.”

“Evil was it indeed!” he rejoined, cowering still more beneath the keen flashing glance of her beautiful eyes, in which a strange light was now shining; “but Luffness Muir hath the reputation o’ being a fatal spot to the Otterburns of Auldhame, as you ken weel. To-morrow,” he

added hurriedly, to change the subject, " I am to attend a meeting o' the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, anent that flagrant violation o' the Treaty of Union—the restoration o' kirk patronage, Sir Baldred."

The baronet did not care much about *that* special violation, as it restored to his family the patronage of the ancient parish church of St. Baldred, which they had possessed since the Reformation and plunder of the temporalities, during the regency of Mary of Guise; but a reference to the Union was quite sufficient to make him mount his hobby, and begin an angry dissertation, which the Bailie evidently preferred to continuing the conversation on that midnight ride over Luffness Muir.

Bryde had remarked this more than once—the Bailie's reluctance to speak of an episode that would certainly have formed a natural subject for morbid relish to one so vulgar as he, and it set her thinking.

The Synod met in Edinburgh; the Bailie, she expected, would be absent at least two days from his house in the Burgh-town, and Bryde resolved to visit it and reconnoitre.

" You take horse for Edinburgh to-morrow, Bailie?" she asked, making a violent effort, and addressing him again.

" By eight hours o' the morning, *Deo Volente*, I shall be going forth on a pious and righteous

errand, Miss Otterburn," he replied, bowing low, while tilting up the ties of his huge wig, and planting the heels of his square-toed shoes together on the carpet; "I shall tarry at Ramsay's stables in the Horse Wynd. Can I do aught for you in the Lawn-market, Miss Otterburn; though I can but little anent à la modes and lustrings, pompons and pearlings?"

Even while shrinking from him with loathing, Bryde smiled at her own thoughts, as she retired to join Dalquharn, who could not abide the presence of Balcraftie, if he could by any means avoid it; and while the latter looked after her retreating figure admiringly, till the dining-room door closed over it, there came into his pale eyes an avaricious glitter. Then he turned to the woodlands, and the yellow fields, which, from the windows, could be seen stretching far eastward in the sunshine, and he rubbed his hands and muttered,

"The estate shall be mine, mine — MINE! Tower and fortalice, kirk and doocot, main and farm, bake and brewhouse, outfang thief and infang thief, sae surely as the field o' Ephron, which was in Machpelah, and a' the trees which were in that field, were given unto Abraham! and mair than a', you shall be mine too, madam, for a hand-fast, a bond-maiden, it may be, for wi' a' your pride, your scorn and braw airs, Reuben Balcraftie may see you at his feet yet!"

The attainder of Auldhame (to which he confi-

fidently looked forward) on the one hand, his secret services to the government, and the wadsets he personally held on the other, would ensure him a strong chance of obtaining possession of the whole, and thus Bryde would be placed by poverty and humility, completely in his power; so, like a coiled-up snake, he bided the time "to hurl at once his venom and his strength"—bided slowly, surely, greedily and warily!

About five hours after the Bailie and Mr. Carfuffle, of Whitekirk, took horse next day at the Otterburn Arms, and set out for Edinburgh, Bryde ordered her pad to be saddled, and an armed groom to accompany her, as she meant to ride a few miles.

Without acquainting her grandfather or Dalquharn of her purpose, she stole away by the private door, holding up the gathered skirt of her riding habit, which was light blue trimmed with silver, a white ostrich feather floating from her broad hat behind her, and her riding switch pressed against her rosy lips, as if she would impress silence on herself. There was a flush in her now usually pale cheek, and a sparkle in her clear brown eye, that made her face, though an irregular one, full of glorious beauty.

"Praise be blest! my bonnie lamb—my ain cushie-doo, the roses are coming back to your cheeks again!" said Dorriel, as she saw her setting forth, and whip up her pad to a gallop, as she sped



towards Castleton, followed by a trusty fellow, the butler's oldest son, Archie, armed with a hanger and pair of holster pistols.

Her purpose, that forenoon, was to visit the house of Balcraftie in his absence, and endeavour by force, if bribery or stratagem failed her, to secure those dangerous papers, which might cause alike the ruin of her lover, her own family, and, perhaps, the prince's cause.

Where their personal feelings are so keenly, so terribly excited as those of Bryde were, women, being generally given more to sudden impulse than to subtle casuistry, are not apt to consider nicely or maturely, how the law may view their proceedings; thus, to Bryde Otterburn's mind, to commit invasion on the premises of Bailie Balcraftie, risking even the charge of *hame-sucken* and violence, even to the wrenching open of his most secret places, seemed but an act of fair reprisal, retributive justice and patriotism in King James's cause.

“Balcraftie is a villain, and worse than a villain!” she kept repeating, while whipping her horse; “then why dally, delay or trifle with him? Time presses and such an opportunity may not occur again.”

She neither armed herself with a loaded pistol or sharp poniard; neither was she furnished with a sleeping drug, a dark lantern, or any of the melodramatic accessories usually adopted by ladies of

high enterprise in sensational romance. She was simply resolved to see what she could do, at all personal risks, to recover those dangerous documents.

Her heart beat painfully with growing excitement, as she approached the little town, with its ruined church on the rocks beside the sea ; and checking the pace of her horse, she permitted the reins to drop on his neck.

The noon of the summer day was bright and beautiful : the woods tossed on the wind their dense green foliage ; the bearded grain was yellowing in the sun, and the black crows were cawing in the quaint belfry of the parish church, whose shadow falls on the grave of many a martyr and resolute covenanter ; and they were wheeling in flights above the turrets and walls of the old Cistercian nunnery, which Malcolm Macduff, son of Duncan, Earl of Fife, built and consecrated to the blessed Virgin Mary, when Alexander II. filled the Scottish throne—a shattered ruin, at the altar of which, three fair young ladies of her house, at different times, had taken the veil, when their lovers fell in battle for their country at Sark, at Arkinholme and Pinkeycleugh ; and Bryde thought of them sadly, and of their sorrows begun and ended, all so long ago, when, in this age of utility and desecration, she saw the corn of the thrifty Presbyterian farmer (who was not troubled by many poetical compunctions), growing deepest

and richest, where, in the days of old, the convent graveyard lay.

There was a great bustle in and around the narrow main street of the quaint little town of North Berwick, and the beating of a hoarse, ill-braced drum was heard at times. At the market cross, there stood, by sentence of the Lords of Justiciary, a degraded merchant burgess, with his hands tied behind his back, which was bared to the long lash of the public executioner, while a placard on his breast, bore the following, in capital letters :

“Convicted of withdrawing His Majesty King George’s weights, and using false ones, in place thereof.” Underneath was written in the hand of Balcraftie, the text so well known, “Render unto Cæsar,” &c.

The town-drummer beat a roll, and the first of twenty stripes to be administered, drew a yell from the culprit, and a varied murmur from the crowd ; at the same time, it made Bryde gallop on to the mansion of Balcraftie.

Dismounting and telling the groom to take the horses to the Otterburn Arms, and await her there, she advanced straight to the house of her foe, with her heart beating every moment more painfully and rapidly.

With several other gossips, whose presence and observation Bryde would rather have avoided, the housekeeper of Balcraftie, a shrivelled and wrinkled

crone, whose hooked nose and prominent chin (under her close crimped curchie, with its black band,) met like nutcrackers, stood on the steps of his door, curiously and morbidly observant of the bustle and punishment at the cross, though the good folks of those days, were treated, at very short periods, to the sight of hanging, lashing, nailing of ears and boring of tongues, for various crimes, and drumming of scolding wives, through the streets at a cart-tail.

She received the young lady of Auldhame with a profusion of smiles and low curtsies.

The Bailie, she said, a little pompously, had just ridden that morning to Edinburgh, with the worthy Mr. Carfuffle, to attend a meeting of the Synod, anent the abomination of Patronage, and would be absent two, may be, three days; but Jabez Starvieston (the poor anatomy was well named) his clerk, was at the cross, reading the sentence on the dealer with false weights—a vile Seceder loon, who upheld the ‘ Marrow of Modern Divinity ’—but Jabez would be back anon to attend to her ladyship’s pleasure.

Annoyed by the fawning manner and repeated curtsies of this wrinkled crone, Bryde said briefly that she did not require the clerk, a poor starveling and slave, whose shrunken limbs and cadaverous aspect she had often pitied, the pittance he received from his hard task-master, affording but few of the necessaries, and certainly none of the luxuries

of life ; she would write a note for the Bailie, and with the good dame's permission, would step into his office and make use of his writing materials.

The old housekeeper, with all the officiousness, loquacity, and gossip of her class, accompanied Bryde into that celebrated apartment which the reader may, perhaps, remember, the same in which Mr. Gage and the armed tidesmen brought Dalquharn and Mitchell before the Dionysius of North Berwick ; and had the young lady not dismissed her peremptorily, by remarking that she must be left alone, and would be some time in writing, she might as well have tarried in Auld-hame, as have hoped to investigate the archives of Balcraftie without observation or interruption.

The housekeeper hurried back to rejoin the gossips on the steps outside, their conversation now having new food in the discussion of Miss Otterburn's appearance, bearing, and dress ; and the instant she was gone, our heroine turned the key in the door, and looked curiously and anxiously about her.

She remembered the room and all its gloomy features but too well, for she had been in it more than once, when poor Sir Baldred had come hither in the hard times and dear years, during the cattle disease and bad crops and so forth, to screw money out of the grasping usurer's ill won hoards.

Its windows were barred like those of a prison, and faced the wide expanse of sand, the rocky isle

of Craigleith, which so closely resembles a vast lion, with its chin resting on its fore paws; the ceiling was low, and discoloured by stains; the grate was rusty, and full of waste paper, carefully torn into very minute bits, and a damp and earthy odour, like that of a tomb, pervaded the place. Vague ideas of alarm came over Bryde, and she shuddered, she knew not why.

Those documents of such vast consequence to the lives of those she held most dear, might be—nay, must be, Bryde knew—within arm's length of her; but where, in what drawer, in what coffer, in what exact spot? Could her eyes but pierce those boxes and pannels.

What if Balcraftie had on that day taken the papers with him to Edinburgh, either to secure or surrender them? Even at that moment he might be in conference with the crown officials concerning them; to-morrow the warrants might be out, and the criminal officers and a guard of horse might secure all the avenues from Auldhame. There was despair in that thought!

Off her nervous little hands, which seemed so white and babyish for the work to be done, she drew her tight and well-fitting riding gauntlets, and cast them with her switch on the black oak table. It was littered by books, docquets, and musty papers; but she knew too well that those she longed for, would not be lying openly there.

On the maps and charts by Herman Moll, the

bills of wreckage, salvage, of the weekly waggon, and the Bailie's next preachment on the links, "Deo Volente," and so forth, her eyes wandered rapidly.

His oak lettron, or desk, massively bound and fenced about with brass, was before her; might the papers be there?

An old fashioned bureau, which surmounted a mahogany chest of drawers, with hanging handles of brass—a piece of double furniture still to be seen in remote Scottish country houses—stood in an arched recess, that, somehow, suggested security. She stepped towards it; the sloping-lid of the bureau was locked, and now a sound startled her. It was only a mob hooting the culprit at the market cross.

The drawers of this bureau were all unfastened save one. She pulled them all open, and shut them in quick succession, not because she expected the papers to be there, but rather in nervous anxiety to be doing something before the clerk returned. They were crammed with bundles of old invoices, accounts, bills of lading, and other written rubbish, tied up with red tape, and seemed of no value, as they referred to long past transactions.

The lower one was locked; this excited alike the suspicion and irritability of Bryde, and she exerted all her strength to pull it open. The wood was old, worm-eaten, and rotten; the lock fell into

the drawer, which came suddenly out, and seemed empty. Bryde was about to shut it when something caught her eye, which made her cheek grow pale, and her heart to die away in her breast.

She drew it forth—that something, the sight of which almost suffocated her with emotion.

Covered with the dust of years, and faded in hue, it was a small maroquin case, or pocket-book, of scarlet leather, which bore the arms of the Otterburns of Auldhame stamped thereon, in gold. It was originally wont to be fastened by a curious clasp of steel, which she remembered well, but this means of security had been rent completely away. Trembling in every limb, Bryde opened it, and saw on the inside the autograph of her father, in whose hands she had many times seen this case—the identical one of which he had been robbed, with all its contents, on the night when he was so foully slain by a shot from behind, on Luffness Muir!

The dark spots upon it—his blood, doubtless—filled her heart with emotions of rage and sorrow.

“This pocket-book — how came it into Balcraftie’s possession? How, but with the notes it contained!” she whispered in her heart.

Another black link in the secret life of Balcraftie was here taken up, and, swift as light, a hundred suspicions now flashed on the mind of Bryde. She now knew beyond a doubt, that Reuben Balcraftie, incited by robbery and avarice, was the



author of her father's assassination, and, by that deed, the breaker of her mother's heart.

She remembered the long night of suspense and anxiety that preceded the knowledge of the crime ; the alarm and dismay that the cold grey morning brought to all their hearts ; her mother, dishevelled and wild with grief, embracing the stiffened corpse, as it was borne by sorrowing vassals into Auldhame, muffled in a roquelaure pale, and covered with hideous blood gouts.

What if the author of that foul crime were to return now, and find her with the proofs of it in her possession ! Quick, quick, she thought, there is no time to lose !

“Traitor !” she exclaimed, “ corrupt and hypocrite as you are, and cunning and wary though you be, I shall make you suffer torments yet, greater than you have ever caused to the hearts of those who were good, gallant, and true ! We shall yet be revenged on thee, wretch !”

She remembered the expression which Balcraffie at times alleged he had seen in her face, a something that reminded him of her father, and which bewildered and terrified him ; and she remembered too of the wadset which had been principally paid in some of the same notes of which her father had been robbed. To her it was all as clear now as sunshine at noon !

There is something mysterious in the persistence of *impressions*. “There is reason to believe

that no idea which ever existed in the mind can be lost," says a modern writer; "it may seem to ourselves to be gone, since we have no power to recall it, as is the case with the vast majority of our thoughts. But numerous facts show that it needs only some change in our physical or intellectual condition to restore the long lost impression;" and in the mind of Bryde, a flood of past thoughts and suspicions gathered or returned with fresh intensity.

Nerved thus anew, and thereby with less repugnance than ever, she looked about for some lever, wherewith to wrench open the bureau, and every other lock-fast place in this assassin's den. In the cautious Scottish fashion of the preceding century, the fire-irons were chained to the jambs of the mantle-piece, not so much to prevent their abstraction as the dangerous use of them in any sudden brawl, so they could not avail her.

She looked anxiously round, for time was most precious and was passing quickly.

The rusty head of an old halbert (broken in some row or tulzie in the burgh), with about three feet of the shaft adhering to it, lay in a corner, and Bryde found that it would suit her purpose exactly.

The strong steel head she inserted under the sloping lid of the bureau for some inches, and then bending upon it with all her weight, the wood parted from the lock with a great crash, and

the slab of mahogany fell at her feet. A double row of pigeon-holes, filled with docquets of letters, was now visible, and many bundles of paper, tied and labelled, lay on the desk of the bureau, and to these, while her temples throbbed and her hands trembled, she addressed herself in rapid succession.

The old wadset over a portion of the home-farm of Auldhame and other places, with the more recent one for money for the Prince's service, borrowed over the land of Halflongbarns, met her eye, and these she might have taken and destroyed; but they were carefully recorded in the sheriff court books of the Counting of Haddington, so their destruction would have availed little; besides, Bryde had other views.

“Hah—what is this?” she exclaimed, as a foolscap document came to her hand, recently written, at some length and docquetted thus:

“Information for His Majesty's Advocate for His Majesty's Interest, anent Dalquharn and Mitchell, emissaries of the Popish Pretender and Spies of the French King, with evidence that they came from Dunkirk last, in the ‘Etoile de la Mer’ smuggler, in time of war, eluding the fleet of Admiral Byng. Cyphers and intercepted correspondence between the aforesaid forfeited traitors, and the Lords Balmerino, Lovat, Elcho, the Earl of Kilmarnock, and the (so-called) Duke of Perth and Melfort, numbered from one to twelve,

together with an account of the secret murder of an English officer, Lieutenant Egerton, of Howard's Foot, and the complicity of Sir Baldred Otterburn therewith, as the body is now buried near his mansion of Auldhame, &c."

This document was dated but yesterday, and the ink was barely dry! Tied up with red tape, and ready for transmission to the hands of the Public Prosecutor at Edinburgh, the docquet was bulky.

Bryde had now all she wanted; she threw her riding skirt over her left arm to conceal the papers and the recovered pocket-book, and grasping her riding-switch, as if it was a weapon for defence, sallied from the house like one in a dream, and reached the innyard, where the armed groom awaited her with the horses.

Ten minutes more beheld her flying homeward with her spoil, almost at racing speed. The poor girl's heart and head seemed alike on fire! She cared not what might be thought of the adventure, which the Bailie's household would soon make known over all the country; for all those noble peers, whose names were mentioned in the correspondence, and some of whose holograph letters were there, "numbered from one to twelve," were saved by her from immediate destruction; her lover too, the brave and devoted Dalquharn, Sir John Mitchell too, and though mentioned last, not least her poor old, loving grandfather, whom

this man Balcraftie had robbed and so deeply wronged.

Sir Baldred she resolved not to consult, as yet, on this discovery; his impatience and impotent wrath would be too great even for the occasion, and might seriously affect his health. She enquired for Lord Dalquharn the moment she reached Auldhame, breathless by her ride, and alternately flushed by her triumph, and then pallid at the contemplation of the danger they all escaped, and by her courage and prudence alone.

Lord Dalquharn was no where to be found, though evening was at hand, and the dinner bell had long since been rung. He had gone forth with Mr. John Gage, the English custom-house officer, taking with him his sword and pistols, and had not returned.

“Whither had he gone—in what direction?” she asked. Some said towards Tantallan; others said, towards Tynninghame, in the opposite direction; in short, no one knew with certainty.

The evening drew on, and Bryde’s anxiety became, ere long, an agony. She had gained a great victory, and he in whose cause the essay had chiefly been made, was not here to share her triumph or her secret—the new and terrible secret, that she had discovered the assassin of her father!

To Sir John Mitchell, Bryde related, with all

its details, the story of her adventure. He read over the "Information for His Majesty's Advocate," while his brows were knit with rage and fury; for they had all been toppling on the brink of a precipice, from which Bryde's hand had saved them, but he laughed and kissed it, and could he have dared so great a liberty, he would have pressed the dear girl to his breast, as she hung with a species of sisterly regard on his arm, and looked into his kind eyes for approbation of her courage and conduct, which he praised loudly.

"And now my dear and gallant Miss Otterburn," said he, "as we never know what a moment may bring forth, these papers must all, with your permission, be put out of existence."

"Before Dalquharn sees them?"

"Yes, and especially before *others* might see them. I have not lived in exile since the battle of Sheriffmuir, without learning caution, my dear young lady."

Procuring a light from the silver tinder box, which, as a habitual smoker, he always carried for using his pipe, they were speedily torn to shreds and blazing in the dining-room grate. He and Bryde stood by watching the conflagration in silence, until the last glowing spark of redness had flickered out and died away among the black and impalpable ashes, and then he again caressed Bryde's delicate hand, tenderly, and bent his lip upon it. Mitchell could do so in safety then, for

the secret that he loved her, with all the affection of lover, brother and friend, was known to himself alone.

As the light of the burned papers passed away, the two lookers on became aware how far the twilight had advanced, and that Lord Dalquharn was still unaccounted for.

He had never before been absent so long, without some known and just excuse, and was so regular in his habits, that the present affair seemed extraordinary, and rapidly became alarming; for the night drew on, and still there was no appearance of him. Sir Baldred dispatched a mounted servant to the residence of Mr. Gage, a pretty cottage in the westgate of North Berwick, to make enquiries, but that official had not returned either; however, as his habits were somewhat erratic and nocturnal, in consequence of his peculiar avocation, his absence created little alarm in the mind of his buxom little English wife, who seemed to have no doubt that "he would turn up somewhere between the night and morning—he always 'ad 'itherto."

Absent—absent, even as Egerton had been—he had gone forth into the darkness of the night, and leaving only wild surmise and mystery behind; so thought Bryde, who had a very active imagination, with a great aptitude for tormenting herself. Oh, what had happened now? Scotland and England, too, were still somewhat

lawless; there were no regular police, and the roads were often beset by broken-men, gypsies, foot-pads and sturdy beggars; and human life and human suffering were both of much less account than they are now.

Why was he absent thus from her who loved him as her own soul? Once again her tears were falling fast and bitterly. He might have heard of danger, Mitchell kindly suggested, and so, have fled somewhere for concealment, "and in that case," added the baronet, "we shall soon hear of him, for though the post-boys appear to be strangely tampered with, he would not leave you in suspense and me in the lurch."

It could not be a danger menaced by Balcraftie, as the perilous papers no longer existed; but what business could he have had with Mr. Gage, an Englishman—a government official? It was very perplexing.

So the night passed away at Auldhame without Lord Dalquharn appearing; it was, though, a midsummer one, a long—long night of tears and apprehension to Bryde Otterburn, who heard every hour and half hour, chimed in dreary monotony by the old brass clock in the chamber-of-dais.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE SEQUEL.

“Fell spectre of the haggard eye,  
Wild gesture and erected hair,  
Quick from my presence fly!  
Ease—ease awhile my heart opprest,  
Lest, lost and woebegone, Despair  
Should seal me for her own,  
And reason banished from her throne,  
To madness should resign my tortured breast.”

*Ode to Terror.*

LATE that night Bailie Balcraftie came galloping home, and to the great surprise of his small household, presented himself at an hour, when he and other members of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, were supposed to be sitting round a snug crown-bowl of steaming whiskey punch at Ramsay the vintner's in St. Mary's Wynd. He had returned, he said briefly, for some papers of importance; in fact, for a right royal sum, he had agreed to place in the hands of the Lord Advocate (of course an unscrupulous ministerial placeman) the carefully numbered correspondence, and the precious “information” which Mitchell, had, a short time before, quite as carefully committed to

the flames ; thus the Bailie, had preferred a ride in the dark, even by Gulane Links and Luffness Muir, to enjoying a pipe and bowl, and the society of such men as Home, the author of 'Douglas,' Blair who wrote 'The Grave,' the witty Carlyle of Inveresk, and others among whose society his profound hypocrisy enabled him to move.

In the hurry of his arrival and in the lust of gratified avarice, and the triumph of anticipated revenge on Dalquharn, Mitchell and Sir Baldred, all of whom he cordially hated in his heart, he failed to observe at first, the pale terror and painful tribulation of Mr. Jabez Starvieston his clerk, a poor, famished and overtasked creature, whose services were rewarded by the reversion of the Bailie's wardrobe, and the crumbs that fell from his table, and whose pale watery eyes and cunning leer gave him a resemblance so close to our enterprising magistrate, that a few evil-minded persons—'Tories and nonjurors—were wont to affirm that there was a very near relationship between them, more especially as in babyhood, the starveling clerk had been found one morning tied in a bundle of rags, to the of the risp Bailie's front door.

This abject creature, who regarded Balcraftie with a strange fear, and stranger regard, blended with the most abject submission, the result of long force of habit, after having his intellects brightened by a smart application from a rattan

wielded unsparingly by Balcraftie, informed him that Miss Otterburn had been there that day.

“Here—Bryde Otterburn, here?” exclaimed Balcraftie, astonished by a circumstance so unusual.

“Yes—in the office, saying she would—would—would leave a note, but—but—”

“But, what—speak, you gomeral—you puir cockle-headed loon!”

Jabez could only gasp like a dying cod-fish, and cower under the uplifted rattan.

“A licht, Lucky a licht!” said the Bailie, snatching a candle from his scared housekeeper, and hurrying into his sanctum. He hastened instinctively to the bureau; it was open; the halberd head was lying among the littered papers with it, and split in two, the lid lay on the floor.

A film passed over his eyesight; a sickness came into his avaricious heart; and he would have sunk down, for his knees gave way beneath him, but he clung to the bureau.

His precious papers, the double instruments of wealth and triumph were gone—gone—gone!

And Bryde had taken them! There was no note, for none had been written; it was all a snare, a pretence to take advantage of his absence, on that expedition to Edinburgh, of which he had so carefully informed her; and there lay her tiny gloves, just where she had cast them on the table, and forgotten them in the hurry of her departure.

He tore them with his teeth ; he trod them under foot, in his impotent rage—trod them as he would have done her own slender neck had it been there.

Then came the bitter reflection, that had he but taken the papers when he went to town that morning, her scheme would have been baffled ; but now she had confounded and defeated him.

“Curses on her !” he gasped out hoarsely and huskily, as he sank into his black leather elbow chair, which never felt so uncomfortable as at that particular moment ; “curses on her !” he repeated while depositing his wig on the wig-block, for his brain seemed on fire ; “how came she to do this a deed sae bauld and tough—she, a delicate woman, barely past her lassiehood, wi’ her saft hazel eyen, and her a’ but bairn’s face ? *Curse her !*” he added, more deep and hoarsely, as he clenched his sharp fangs, and his great coarse and misshapen hands.

When the first paroxysm of fury was past, Jabez Starvieston, who wore a scratch wig made of a dog-skin, which did not improve his lean and hunger-eyed visage, drew timidly nigh, with the whispered information, that the lugger of Sanders Scupper-plug had been seen in the offing from Scougal Point.

The Bailie groaned, and then said, after a pause, “Was a lantern hung out in the gloaming, to shew that the coast was clear, and the pestilent red coats departed ?”

“Aye, and at Whitberry, and I shewed the red flag on Tantallan for weel nigh five minutes.”

“Five minutes owre lang, for that English loon Gage, hath the eyen o’ a lynx; in this matter you have dune your best; in the other you werena to blame. But get me my night gear, and we shall gae forth; the run will be made mair than three miles frae this.”

Groaning again, as he recurred to his loss—

“She hath been guilty o’ rank hamesucken,” said he; “and I shall hae the law o’ her—the law if it is to be had in braid Scotland!”

There was no family worship, and no psalm sung that night in the house of Reuben Balcraftie.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next morning came, but brought with it no tidings of Lord Dalquharn to Auldhame. With the first blush of sunrise, Bryde left her couch sleepless as when she had lain down upon it. She issued into the garden, where the brightness of the summer morning, the perfume of the opening flowers, and the music of the merry birds soothed and revived her. She clung to Sir John Mitchell’s idea, that urged by some alarm, Dalquharn had fled somewhere for concealment; but she was impatient to despatch another horseman to the house of Mr. Gage, to learn how and when that person had seen his Lordship last.

She heard the sound of hoofs upon the distant highway; a horse was approaching at a gallop

her heart bounded more and more with expectation—with mingled hope and alarm—when the change of sound distinctly announced that the horse was coming down the avenue. She rushed to the garden gate, and was met face to face by—  
Bailie Balcraftie!

That personage dismounted from his Galloway cob, and grasping the reins, stood some six paces distant, surveying her with a daring glance of hate and spite in his pale and now colourless face. Could a glance have slain, Bryde had been reduced to tinder on the spot! Balcraftie had regained much of his external composure, but the fires of unsatisfied vengeance and of disappointed avarice were yet smouldering in his heart.

Her becoming morning toilet, a rich *négligée*; her slender waist and curved bust being charmingly defined by a long and well-shaped boddice; her masses of bright brown hair, gathered carelessly and hastily in rippling waves behind, so as to shew her delicately formed ears, and the long sparkling pendants, which her great grandmother had worn at the coronation of King Charles, in Scone; her paleness and the alluring character of her beauty—for Bryde was beautiful, though her nose was in the faintest degree *retroussé*, and the envious alleged that her mouth was too large—all failed to affect the Bailie, or move his stubborn heart, while her extreme apparent self-possession infuriated him.

“He dare not assault me, I presume,” thought Bryde, so she confronted him calmly, boldly, and scornfully.

“’Sdeath, madam,” he hissed through his set teeth. “You are the very person I came hither to see.”

“And to what am I indebted for the honour of this early visit from the worthy and excellent Mr. Balcraftie?” she asked, carefully keeping her hand on the lock of the garden gate, ready to close it in an instant, for she feared this man, and knew not what his purpose might be there at an hour so early, and when so few of the household were stirring.

“I am come to dispel your vapours, madam, as you shall ken ere long, and your pride too.”

Bryde laughed, though her poor fluttering heart grew sick with apprehension.

“You committed an invasion o’ my premises yesterday morn, breaking lockfast places—hamesucken, felony—and had you committed slaughter, even as Ishbosheth was slain by felons and hamesuckers in his ain dwelling, it would barely aggravate the crime, as we find in second Samuel,” said he, in measured and stern tones; “but I’ll hae you precognosed before the Fiscal, and I’ll try it on the floor of the Parliament House if he fails me, for I’ll hae vengeance and justice, if they are to be got out o’ the wigs o’ the fifteen Judges!”

“Begone sir, or I shall order the keeper to let loose the dogs on you, and I know we have one mastiff at least, whose tusks will not respect your rank as a bailie, or your position as an elder.”

Balcraftie surveyed her with a terrible expression, but the girl laughed scornfully and bitterly.

“You would like to strangle me, I know,” said she.

“Yes,” he said through his grinding teeth; “that I should, indeed!”

“Or marry me?—eh, assassin! Oh, we know each other perfectly. My dear father’s pocket-book, which I found in the lower drawer of your bureau yesterday, told me a terrible story.”

At these words, which detailed another abstraction of which he was before ignorant, the perspiration started in cold drops upon the brow of Balcraftie. What species of folly or insanity was it, which caused him to omit the destruction of that record of his crime?

“Where is that pocket-book?” he asked, hoarsely.

“Safe in Auldhame house,” said she, closing the gate of iron bars, for he made a pace towards her with more of menace in his cruel eyes. “And now I shall give you my terms of secrecy.”

“We understand each other,” said he, pale and trembling with suppressed passion, hate, and fear; “and your terms——”



“Are, the instant release of the two wadsets, which you hold over the lands of Auldhame—each release to be fully and truly written by a notary-public, and stamped; and that you quit Scotland for ever, within a week from this date.”

“Otherwise——?”

“I shall hand over that bloodspotted pocket-book to the sheriff at Haddington, that he may elucidate how it, and the bank notes it once contained, came into *your* possession; and with it shall be given a statement, signed by Lord Dalquharn and myself, of your last deed of blood in yonder thicket, for I too was there on that fatal night, and saw your murderous hands on Mr. Egerton.”

“You—you?” he exclaimed, in a voice like a scream, for he knew not how much or how little she knew.

But for the pomander ball which she raised at times from her chatelain to her nostrils, the girl must have fainted during this obnoxious colloquy, yet she bore up bravely.

“Ha, ha!” she said; “so, wretch, the money for which you hoped to sell us to the Lord Advocate and the Marquis of Tweeddale,\* has turned into dried leaves like that of the witches or fairies! But now begone, and pollute this place no longer by your infamous presence. You know my terms! Begone, I say,” she continued, stamping the

\* Secretary of State for Scotland from 1742 till 1746.

ground with her foot, "or I shall summon the servants, John Archie, Hob, and the old butler, with whips and dogs. I should like to see a bailie baited as well as a badger, especially where the burn is deepest; and we have more than one man here, who cares as little for risking his life, as for taking the life of another in the service of the House of Otterburn—especially of such a worm as thee! More than all, beware how you come under the hands of the Lord Dalquharn!"

"Frae sic hands as his, I, at least, am safe enough," replied Balcraftie, with a glare of malignant triumph in his eye. "Ken you where this other gay leman is now?"

"Would that I could know?"

"Shall I tell you where?"

Bryde shuddered as he spoke—for his bearing chilled and appalled her.

"He is chained like a wild beast in the prisons on the Bass!" said he, pointing northward with his left hand.

"It is false!"

"It is true—true as that the sun shines owre us."

"On what charge?" she asked, faintly.

"Charges o' treason and murder; are they enough for you. I kent your pride would hae a fa', and the hour is come! ha! ha!" cried Balcraftie, as he mounted and galloped away.

Bryde had acted her part gallantly while face to face with the foe; but now that he had gone, and in departing had planted this Parthian shot in her heart, her spirit broke completely down; her sobs and tears refused to come, and she sank fainting and breathless on the garden walk.

END OF VOL. I.

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