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THE
KING'S OWN BORDERERS.

VOL. I.

THE
KING'S OWN BORDERERS.

A Military Romance.

BY

JAMES GRANT,

AUTHOR OF

"SECOND TO NONE," "THE ROMANCE OF WAR," "THE YELLOW FRIGATE,"
ETC. ETC.

"Memories fast are thronging o'er me,
Of the grand old fields of Spain;
How he faced the charge of Junot,
And the fight where Moore was slain.
Oh the years of weary waiting
For the glorious chance he sought,
For the slowly ripened harvest
That life's latest autumn brought."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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P R E F A C E.

IN the following volumes I have endeavoured to delineate the career of a soldier—and of a character that has not as yet, I think, figured in the pages of our military novelists—a Gentleman Volunteer, serving with a line regiment in time of war, according to a custom which survived even the memorable battles of the Peninsula.

As the scene of his adventures (some of which are not quite fictitious), I have chosen the expedition under the gallant and ill-fated Sir John Moore, as it has scarcely, if ever, been made the theme of a military romance.

No history of the 25th Foot is in existence; hence, as the brief outline of its early career in the first volume is substantially correct, it may prove of interest to some readers.

I may add that the 94th regiment mentioned

12 Aug 53

Mr. R. R. 24 Dec 53 Chichester = 3V.

occasionally, is the *old* 94th or "Scots Brigade," which came from the service of the States General, and was disbanded after Waterloo.

The corps at present bearing the same number in the Army List was also, however, raised in Scotland, but in December, 1823; and on that occasion the green standard of the old brigade of gallant memory was borne through the streets, from the castle of Edinburgh, by a soldier of the Black Watch.

26, DANUBE STREET,
EDINBURGH.

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THE
KING'S OWN BORDERERS.

CHAPTER I.

LADY WINIFRED.

“Thick, thick—no sight remains the while,
From the farthest Orkney isle,
No sight to seahorse or to seer,
But of a little pallid sail,
That seems as if ’twould struggle near,
And then as if its pinion pale
Gave up the battle to the gale.”

LEIGH HUNT.

ON the afternoon of a lowering day in the November of 1798, a square-rigged vessel—a brig of some three hundred and fifty tons—was seen in the offing, about twelve miles distant from the bluff, rocky headland of Rohallion, on the western coast of Carrick, beating hard against a head-wind and sea, that were set dead in shore; and, as a long and treacherous reef, locally known as the Partan Craig (*Anglicè*, Crab-rock), lies off the headland, many fears were loudly expressed by on-lookers, that if she failed to gain even better sea room, ere night-fall, the gale, the waves, and the

current might prove too much for her in the end, and the half-sunken reef would finish the catastrophe.

Over the craig the angry breakers of the Firth of Clyde were seen to boil and whiten, and the ridgy reef seemed to rise, at times, like a hungry row of shark's teeth, black, sharp, and shining.

With royal yards on deck, with topsails lowered upon the caps, her fore and maincourses close-hauled, with a double reef in each, the stranger was seen to lie alternately on the port and starboard tack, braced so close to the wind's eye as a square-rigged craft dared be; but still she made but little way to seaward.

From Rohallion there were two persons who watched her struggles with deep interest.

"The turn of the tide will strengthen the current, my lady, and bring her close to the craig, after all," said one.

"Under God's favour, John Girvan, I hope not!" was the fervent response.

"There is an eddy between the craig and the coves of Rohallion as strong as the whirlpool of Corryvreckan itself."

"Yes, John; I have seen more than one poor boat, with its crew, perish there, in the herring season."

"Look, look, my lady! There is *another* vessel—a brig, I take her to be—running right into the Firth before the wind."

The speakers were Winifred Lady Rohallion and her husband's bailie or factor, who stood together at a window of the castle of Rohallion, which crowns the summit of the headland before mentioned, and from whence, as it is a hundred and fifty feet in height, and rises almost sheer from the water, a spacious view can be obtained of the noble Firth of Clyde, there expanding into a vast ocean, though apparently almost landlocked by the grassy hills and dales of Cunninghame, the princely Isle of Bute (the cradle of the House of Stuart), the blue and rocky peaks of Arran, the grey ridges of Kintyre; and far away, like a blue stripe that bounds the Scottish sea, the dim and distant shores of Ireland.

A few heavy rain-drops, precursors of a torrent, plashed on the window-panes, and with a swiftness almost tropical, great masses of cloud came rolling across the darkening sky. Under their lower edges, lurid streaks between the hill-tops marked the approach of sunset, and thunder began to grumble overhead, as it came from the splintered peaks of Arran, to die away among the woody highlands of Carrick.

Aware that when the tide turned there would be a tremendous swell, with a sea that would roll far inshore, the fishermen in the little bay near the castled rock were all busily at work, drawing their brown-tarred and sharp-prowed boats far up on the beach, for there was a moaning in the sea

and rising wind that foretold a tempestuous night : thus, they as well as the inhabitants of Rohallion Castle were at a loss to understand *why* the strange brig, instead of running right up the firth in search of safe anchorage under some of the high land, strove to beat to windward.

The conclusion therefore come to was, that she was French, or that her crew were ignorant of the river navigation ; there were no pilots then, so far down the firth, and when the fishermen spoke among themselves of running down to her assistance or guidance, they muttered of French gun-brigs, of letters of marque, and privateers—shrugged their shoulders, and stood pipe in mouth under the lee of the little rocky pier to watch the event.

At the drawing-room windows of the more modern portion of the old stronghold of Rohallion, the lady of that name, and her bailie, stood watching the ship, by the dim light of the darkening afternoon.

Lady Winifred was a woman of a style, or rather of a school, that has passed away for ever out of Scotland.

Tall and stately, but gentle, homely, and motherly withal, her quaint formality was tempered by an old-fashioned politeness, that put all at their ease.

Now though verging on her fiftieth year, she was still very handsome, albeit where dimples once

laughed, the wrinkles were appearing now. She had been an Edinburgh belle in those days when the tone of society there was very stately and aristocratic; when the city was the winter resort of the solid rank and real talent of the land; when it was a small and spirited capital instead of a huge "deserted village," abandoned to the soothing influences of the church, the law, sabbatarianism, and the east wind.

Her lofty carriage and old-fashioned courtesy reminded one of what is described of the ladies of Queen Anne's time; she possessed a singular sweetness in her smile, and every motion, even of her smooth, white hands, though perfectly natural, seemed studies of artistic grace. Her eyes were dark and keen; her features straight and noble; her complexion brilliantly fair. Though powder had been wisely discarded by Her Majesty, the Queen Consort, and the six Princesses, their doing so was no rule for Lady Rohallion, who was somewhat of a potentate in Carrick, and still wore her hair in that singular half-dishevelled fashion, full and flowing, as we may see it depicted in Sir Joshua's famous portrait of her, which is to be hung on the walls of the Scottish National Gallery, when cleared of some of their local rubbish.

Thus, the white powder which she retained in profusion, formed a singular but not displeasing contrast to her black eyebrows, black eyes, and

long dark lashes—silky fringes, from which, some five-and-twenty years before, she had shot more than one perriwigged sub, who had come unscathed from the dangers of Bunker's-hill and Brandywine.

On the present occasion, her visitor, who bore the somewhat unaristocratic name of Mr. John Girvan, or, at times, Girvanmains, was a short, thickset, weatherbeaten man about sixty years of age, and in whom any one could have discerned at a glance the old soldier, by the erect way in which he carried his head. He wore an old military wig that had once been white, but was quite unpowdered now and was bleached yellow; and he had a jolly good-humoured face, rendered so red by exposure to the weather and by imbibing whisky-toddy, that, as he once said himself, "it might blow up a gunpowder magazine, if he came within a mile of it."

He had been the Quartermaster of Lord Rohallion's regiment, the 25th Foot, and after long service with it in America and elsewhere, had settled down on his colonel's estates in the capacity of land-steward, ground-baillie, and general factotum, and in this capacity had snug apartments assigned to him in a part of the old castle.

"While looking at yonder ship, my lady, you forget the letters I have brought you from Maybole," said he, producing a leathern pouch

having the Rohallion arms stamped in brass on the outside ; “ the riding-postman, with the mail-bags, arrived just as I was leaving the Kirkwynd Tavern. Waes me ! what a changed place that is now. Many a crown bowl of punch have poor Robbie Burns and I birlled there ! ”

“ True, John, the letters ; unlock the bag, and let me see what the news is from Maybole.”

This ancient burgh-of-barony was the little capital of the old baillewick of Carrick.

Opening the pouch, Girvan tumbled on the table a number of letters and newspapers, such as the Edinburgh “ Courant ” and “ Chronicle,” which then were about a quarter of the size of the journals of the present day, and were printed on very grey paper, in such very brown ink, that they had quite a mediæval aspect.

The first letter Lady Winifred opened was from her chief friend and gossip, the Countess of Eglinton, with whom she had been at school, when she was simply Winifred Maxwell, and when the Countess was Eleanora Hamilton, of Bourtreehill. Her letter was somewhat sorrowful in its tenor :—

“ I wish you would visit me, my dear friend,” it ran ; “ Eglinton Castle is so dull now, so very *triste* ! My good lord the earl (whom God preserve !) has been appointed Colonel of the Argyle Fencibles, one of the many kilted regiments now being raised, lest we are invaded by the French

and their vile Corsican usurper; so he hath left me. My second boy, Roger, too, hath sailed lieutenant of a man-o'-war, and sorely do I opine that never mair shall my old hand stroke his golden curls again—my own brave bairn! (Her forebodings were sadly verified when, soon after, this favourite son died of fever at Jamaica.) I send you Mrs. Anne Radcliffe's novel, 'The Mysteries of Udolpho,' in five volumes, which I am sure will enchant you. I send you also the last book of the fashions, which I received by the London mail three weeks ago. Carriage robes are to have long sleeves, and the jockey bonnets are trimmed with green feathers; white satin mantles, trimmed with swansdown, of the *exile style*, are considered the most elegant wraps for the opera. You will see by the papers that our brave Lord Nelson hath been created Duke of Bronte, but returns from Naples with the odious woman Lady Hamilton. Tell Bailie Girvan ('Quartermaster,' I think he prefers,) that I thank him for the hawslock-wool* he sent to Eglinton; my girls and I are spinning it with our own hands. Also I thank your sweet self for the lace mittens you knitted for me on Hallowe'en. Your little friend—it may soon be ward—Miss Flora Warrender, is now with us, and seems to grow lovelier and livelier every day. I have Madame Rossignal, an *emigré*, the fashion-

* The finest wool, being the locks that grow on the throat.

able mistress of dancing, from Fyfe's Close, Edinburgh, with me just now, teaching my girls; but for a child of eight years, the little Warrender excels them both. Her father goes abroad in command of his regiment, and her poor mother is almost brokenhearted."

"If she is lonely at Eglinton, with her daughters the Ladies Jane and Lilius, how much more must I be, whose husband is absent, and whose only son is with the army!" exclaimed Lady Winifred.

"A letter from Rohallion himself!" said the old Quartermaster in an excited tone, handing to the lady a missive which bore her husband's seal and coronet.

"From him, and I read it *last!*" said she reproachfully, as she opened it.

It was dated from White's Coffee-house, in London, whither he had gone as a representative peer, and it contained only some news of the period, such as comments on Lord Castlereagh's or Mr. Pitt's speeches about the Irish Union; ("which is to be carried by English gold and guile, like our *own*," said the Quartermaster, parenthetically;) the hopes he had of getting command of a brigade in Sir Ralph Abercrombie's proposed Egyptian expedition; he related that their son Cosmo, the master of Rohallion, then serving with the Guards, was well, and stood high in favour with the Prince of Wales.

“A doubtful compliment, if all tales be true,” commented Lady Winifred.

“If Rohallion goes on service, I’ll never stay at home behind him,” exclaimed old Girvan; “it would ill become me.”

“*All* the Highland regiments in Great Britain, second battalions as well as first, are under orders for immediate foreign service,” continued his lordship’s letter; “this looks like work, Winny dear, does it not?”

He added that Parliament was to be prorogued in a day or two, and that he would return by sea in one of the Leith smacks, which were then large and heavy passenger cutters, of some two hundred tons or so; they were all armed with carronades, and as their crews were secured from the pressgangs, they manfully fought their own way, without convoy, with the old Scots flag at their mast-head.

“He comes home by sea,” said Lady Rohallion aloud, glancing nervously at the offing, where the coast of Ireland had disappeared, and where the clouds were gathering black and rapidly.

“By sea!” repeated Girvan.

“Now, the Lord forbend, at this season of the year!”

“And when so many French and Spanish privateers infest the seas, led by fellows who, in daring, surpass even Commodore Fall or Paul Jones,” exclaimed Girvan.

As if to echo or confirm their fears, a booming sound pealed from a distance over the sea.

“What noise is that?” asked Lady Rohallion, starting up, while her pale cheek grew paler still.

“A gun—a cannon shot to seaward!” exclaimed the old soldier, pricking up his ears, while his eyes sparkled on recognising the once too familiar sound.

“’Tis that vessel in distress,” said Lady Rohallion, as they hurried once more to the windows which overlooked the sea. “Away to the clachan, John; get all our people together, and have the boats launched.”

“That will be impossible with such a heavy sea coming rolling in, my lady—clean impossible!” replied the other, as he threw up a window and levelled a telescope at the vessel, while the wild blast against which she was struggling made the damask curtains stream like banners, and frizzed up, like a mop, the Quartermaster’s old yellow wig.

“What do you see, John? Speak, Girvan-mains!”

“There go her colours; but I can’t make them out.”

“Twenty guineas a man to all who will aid her!” exclaimed Lady Rohallion, taking a key from her gold chatelaine, and hurrying to a buhl escritoire, while gun after gun pealed from a dis-

tance over the stormy sea; but they came from *two* vessels, one of which was hidden in a bank of dusky vapour.

The lady grasped the old Quartermaster's arm, and her white hands trembled nervously as she exclaimed in a whisper—

“Oh, my God, John Girvan! what if Rohallion should be on board of *her*, with a foe on one hand and a lee shore on the other?”

CHAPTER II.

THE PARTAN CRAIG.

“Prone on the midnight surge with panting breath,
They cry for aid, and long contend with death;
High o'er their heads the rolling billows sweep,
And down they sink in everlasting sleep.
Bereft of power to help, their comrades see
The wretched victims die beneath the lee!”

FALCONER'S *Shipwreck*.

INSPIRED by fears, perhaps, similar to those of his lady, the Quartermaster made no immediate reply, but continued to watch with deep interest, and somewhat of a professional eye, the red flashes which broke from the bosom of that gloomy bank of cloud, which seemed to rest upon the surface of the water, about six miles distant.

The wind was still blowing a gale from the seaward. Through the fast-flying masses of black and torn vapour, the setting sun, for a few minutes, shed a lurid glare—it almost seemed a baleful glow along the crested waves, reddening their frothy tops, and lighting up, as if with crimson flames, the wet canvas of the brig; but lo! at the same instant, there shot out of the vapour, and into the ruddy sheen of the stormy

sunset, *another* square-rigged craft, a brig of larger size, whose guns were fired with man-o'-war-like precision and rapidity.

The first vessel, the same which for so many hours had been working close-hauled in long tacks to beat off the lee shore, now relinquished the attempt, and, squaring her yards, hoisting her topsails from the cap, stood straight towards Rohallion, her crew evidently expecting some military protection from the castle on the rock, or deeming it better to run bump ashore, with all its risks, than be taken by the enemy.

The fugitive was snow-rigged, a merchant brig apparently by her deep bends, bluff bows, and somewhat clumsy top and hamper; the British colours were displayed at her gaff peak. The other was a smart gun-brig or privateer with the tricolour of France floating at her gaff, and a long whiplike pennant streaming ahead of her, as she fired her bow chasers. Twice luffing round, she let fly some of her broadside guns, and once she discharged a large pivot cannon from amidships, in her efforts to cripple the fugitive. But as both vessels were plunging heavily in a tempestuous sea, the shot only passed through the fore and main courses of the merchantman, and were seen to ricochet along the waves' tops ahead, ere they sunk amid tiny waterspouts to the bottom. Thus the violence of the gale rendered the cannonading of the Frenchman nearly futile.

Neglected, or ill-protected at times by warship and batteries, as the whole Scottish coast was during the war against France, such episodes as this were of frequent occurrence. There was no cruiser in the vicinity, so the flight and pursuit in the offing went on interrupted, notwithstanding the fury of the gale, which was increasing every moment.

Although our fleets successfully blockaded the great military ports of France, in the beginning of the war, her privateers infested all the broad and narrow seas, and frequently made dashes inshore. Only seventeen years before the period of our story, the *Fearnought*, of Dunkirk, cannonaded Arbroath with red-hot shot; and much about the same time, the notorious renegade Paul Jones kept all the Scottish seaboard in alarm with his fleet.

Now the wild blast that tore round the sea-beaten cliff on which the castle stood, increased in fury; the waves grew whiter as the lurid sun went down, enveloped in clouds; the sky grew darker and the guns flashed redder, as they broke through the murky atmosphere, while their reports were brought by the wind, sharply and distinctly, to the ears of those who so anxiously looked on.

“Oh, if Rohallion should be there!” exclaimed Lady Winifred, wringing her hands again and again. .

“This will never do!” exclaimed the old Quartermaster, wrathfully; “a Frenchman in the very mouth o’ the Clyde and dinging a Scottish ship in that fashion! I must fire a gun, and get the volunteers to man the battery.”

Suddenly the sails of the merchantman were seen to shiver, and she seemed in danger of losing her masts, for a shot had carried away her rudder, and consequently she became unmanageable!

Both vessels were now so near the land, that the Frenchman probably became alarmed for his own safety; so changing his course, he braced his yards sharp up, and beating to windward, speedily disappeared into the gloom from which he had so suddenly emerged, and was seen no more; but the unfortunate victim of his hostility drifted fast away before the wind, partly broadside on, towards that lee and rocky shore.

“She will be foul o’ the Partan Craig, so sure as my name is John Girvan!” exclaimed the Quartermaster.

“There is death in the air, Girvanmains,” added Lady Rohallion, in a low voice that was full of deep emotion; “I heard the moan of the sea and wind—the deep sough of coming trouble—in the coves below the house this morning, and I never knew the omen fail—oh, look there—*all is over!*” she exclaimed with a shudder, as the drifting vessel struck with a crash, they seemed to hear, on the long white ridge of the Partan Craig.

For a moment her masts were seen to sway from port to starboard, then away they went to leeward, a mass of entangled ruin, rigging, yards, and sails, as she became a complete wreck bulged upon the reef, with the roaring sea making tremendous breaches over her, washing boats, booms, bulwarks, and everything from her deck ; and thus she lay, helpless and abandoned to the elemental war, within a mile of the shore.

By the naked eye, but more particularly by means of a telescope, the crew could be seen making frantic signals to those on shore, or lashing themselves to the timber heads and the stumps of the masts ; and near her bows there was a man bearing in his arms a child, whom he sought to shield from the waves that every moment swept over the whole ship.

“A father and his child,” exclaimed Lady Rohallion, in deep commiseration ; “oh, my God, the poor things will perish ! I will give a hundred guineas to have them saved.”

“The national debt wouldn’t do it,” replied the old quartermaster, grimly, with something in his throat between a sob and a sigh.

In those days there were no lifeboats, no rocket apparatus to succour the shipwrecked, and in such a wild night of storm and tempest—for now the chill November eve had deepened into night—the hardy fishermen, who alone could have ventured forth to aid the drowning crew, thought and spoke

of their wives and little ones, whose bread depended on their exertions and on the safety of their clinker-built boats, now drawn high and dry upon the beach; and thus compelled by prudence to remain inactive, they remained with their weather-beaten faces turned stolidly seaward to watch the helpless wreck.

That those who were thereon did not despair of succour from the shore was evident, for on the stump of their mainmast the red glaring light of a tar-barrel was soon seen burning to indicate where they were, for as the darkness increased, even the snow-white foam that boiled over the Partan Craig became invisible.

Then the fishermen's wives wrung their hands, and exclaimed in chorus—

“The puir man wi' his bairn—oh the puir man wi' his bairn! God save and sain them!”

Flaring steadily like a great torch, the light of the blazing barrel shed a weird gloom upon the wreck, and defied for a time even the seas that swept her to extinguish it, while the heartrending cries of the poor fellows who were lashed to the timber-heads and belaying pins, were brought to the listeners' ears, from time to time, on the stormy gusts of wind.

To add to the wildness of the scene, the sea-birds, disturbed in their eyries among the rocks by the cries, the recent firing, and the blazing barrel now came forth, and the spotted guillemot

(or sea-turtle), the red-throated northern douker, the ravenous gull, and the wild screaming mews went swooping about in flocks on the blast.

A loud and despairing cry that was echoed by all on shore arose from the wreck, as the fire-barrel was extinguished by one tremendous breaker; and now local knowledge alone could indicate the place where the bulged ship was perishing amid the gloom. Soon after this, the cries for succour ceased, and as large pieces of timber, planking, bulwarks, spars and masts were dashed upon the pier and rocks by the furious sea, it was rightly conjectured that she had gone to pieces, and that all was at an end now, with her and her crew.

Accompanied by the village dominie, Symon Skail, a party of fishermen, farm labourers and servants from the castle, Mr. John Girvan, with a shawl tied over his hat and yellow wig, searched the whole beach around the little bay that was overshadowed and sheltered by the castle-rock, and the coves or caverns that yawned in it, hoping that some poor wretch might be cast ashore with life enough remaining to tell the story of his ship; but they searched long and vainly. Pieces of wreck, cordage, torn sails, broken spars and blocks alone were left by the reflux of the waves, and the flaring of the searchers' torches on the gusty wind, as seen from the Castle of Rohallion, made them seem like wandering spirits, or something cer-

tainly uncanny and weird to the eyes of Lady Winifred.

So the night wore on, the storm continued unabated; heavily the rain began to lash the sea-beat rocks and castle walls; louder than ever roared the wind in the caves below, and more fiercely boiled the breakers over the Partan Craig, as if the warring elements were rejoicing in their strength, and in the destruction they had achieved.

Wet, wearied, breathless, and longing particularly for a glass of that steaming whisky-toddy, which they knew awaited them in the castle, the dominie and the quartermaster, whose flambeaux were both nearly burned out, just as they were about to ascend a narrow path that wound upward from the beach, heard simultaneously a sound like a wild gasping sob—a half-stifled cry of despair and exhaustion—from the seaward. Shouting lustily for assistance, they gathered some of the stragglers, and by the united glare of their torches, upheld at arm's length, they beheld a sight that roused their tenderest sympathies.

Struggling with that wild sea, whose waves were still rolling inshore, about twenty feet from where the spectators stood, a man's head could be seen amid the white surf, bobbing like a fisher's float, as he swam, combating nobly with the waves, but with one hand and arm only; the other hand and arm sustained *a child*, who seemed already dead or partially drowned.

“ Oh, weelawa, it was na for nocht that the sealghs were yowling on the Partan Craig yestreen !” cried Elsie Irvine, a stout and comely matron ; but from that haunt the seals have long since been scared by the river steamers.

“ Oh, the bairn—save the bairn—the puir wee lammie—the puir wee doo !” chorussed the women, whose maternal instincts were keenly excited, and led by Elsie’s husband, several men rushed into the water, grasping each other hand-in-hand to stem alike the flow and backwash of the waves ; but paralysed now by past exhaustion and by the extreme cold of the sea and atmosphere, the poor man, who was clad in a light green frock, laced with gold, could do no more to save either himself or his burden ; and thus lay floating passively on the surface, drawn deep into the black trough one moment, and tossed upon the white froth of a wave-summit the next, but always far beyond the reach of those who sought to rescue him and his boy, and wild and ghastly seemed his face, when, at times, it could be seen by the light of the upheld torches.

Uttering a short, sharp cry of exhaustion and despair, he suddenly seemed to stand, or rise erect in the water ; then he cast the child towards the beach, threw up his hands as if human nature could endure no more, and sank—sank within twenty feet of where the spectators stood.

Irvine, the fisherman, cleverly caught hold of

the child, which a wave fortunately threw towards him, and the little fellow, senseless, cold and breathless, was borne away in the plump, sturdy arms of his wife, to be stripped, put in a warm bed, and restored, if possible, to heat and animation.

Great exertions were meanwhile made, but made in vain, to rescue the body of his father, for it was never doubted that such was his relationship by those who witnessed his severe struggles, his love, and his despair.

The storm was passing away; wet, weary, and very much "out of sorts" by their unwonted exertions, the quartermaster and the village dominie, a thickset, sturdy old fellow, clad in rusty black, with a tie perriwig and square buckled shoes, a very wrinkled and somewhat careworn face, arrived at the Castle to make their report to Lady Rohallion, who had anxiously awaited the events of the night.

With that love of the marvellous and the morbid peculiar to their class, her servants had every few minutes brought intelligence of the number of corpses, gashed and mangled, which strewed the beach; of treasures and rich stuffs which came ashore from the wreck, and so forth; but, by reading her letters and other occupations, she had striven to wean herself from thinking too much of the terrors that reigned without, though every gust of wind that howled round the old

tower brought to mind the bulged ship, and made her sigh for the absence of her husband and son, both far away from her; and now starting up, she listened to the narrative of Dominie Skail and his gossip, Mr. Girvan.

“Ugh!” concluded the latter; “I’ve never had such a soaking since I tumbled into the Weser, in heavy marching order, the night before Minden; and drowned I should have been, but for the ready hand of Rohallion.”

“But this child you speak of—where is it?” asked Lady Winifred.

“Wi’ auld Elsie Irvine, down by the coves, my lady,” replied the dominie, with one of his most respectful bows.

“The poor little thing is alive, then?”

“Yes—alive, warm, and sleeping cosily in Elsie’s breast by this time—cosily as ever bairn o’ her ain did.”

“Bring this child to me in the morning, dominie—you will see to it?”

“Yes, my lady.”

“A boy, you say it is?”

“Yes.”

“And what is he like, John Girvan?”

“Just like other bairns, my lady.”

“How?”

“With yellow hair and a nose above his chin,” replied the quartermaster, wiping the water out of his neck and wig.

“A bonnie golden-haired bairnie as ever you saw, Lady Rohallion,” replied the dominie, with a glistening eye, for he had a kinder heart for children than the old bachelor Girvan; “and he minded me much of your ladyship’s son, the master, when about the same size or age.”

“And this poor child is the sole survivor of the wreck?”

“So far as we can learn, the sole—the only one!”

“Heaven help us! this is very sad!” exclaimed the lady, while her eyes filled with tears. “Many a mother will have a sore heart after this storm, and more than one widow may weep for a husband drowned.”

“Ay, madam, in warring wi’ the elements, we feel ourselves what the Epicureans of old dreamed they were—scarcely the creation of a benevolent Being, so helpless and infirm is man when opposed to them.”

“Bother the Epicureans, whoever they were; wring the water out of your wig, dominie,” said the quartermaster.

“Any bodies that come ashore must be noted, examined, and buried with due reverence.”

“Yes, my lady,” replied the dominie; “we’ll have to see the minister and the sheriff anent this matter.”

“Dominie, the butler will attend to you and Mr. Girvan. You are quite wet, so lose no

time in getting your clothes changed; and bring me in the morning this little waif of the ocean, whom I quite long to see. Until we discover his parentage, he shall be my peculiar care."

"That shall I do, my lady, joyfully," replied the dominie, bowing very low; "and that you will be unto him all that the daughter of Pharoah was to the little waif she found in the ark of bulrushes, I doubt not."

"Now, dominie," said the quartermaster, testily, "grog first—Exodus after."

"I have the honour to wish your ladyship a very good night; and we shall drink to your health a glass for every letter of your name, like the Romans of old, as we find in Tibullus and Martial," said the solemn dominie, retiring and making three profound bows in reply to Lady Rohallion's stately courtesy.

"Good night, dominie. You, Girvanmains, will tell me the last news in the morning."

The old quartermaster made his most respectful military obeisance as he withdrew, on receiving this patronymic; for though he had begun life in the ranks of the 25th, or old Edinburgh regiment, like every Scot he had a pedigree, and claimed a descent from the Givrans of Girvanmains and Dalmorton, an old Ayrshire stock, who were always adherents of the Crawfords of Rohallion, either for good or for evil, especially in their feuds with the Kennedies of Colzean; and thus he was

disposed to be more than usually suave, when the lady addressed him as "Girvanmains," or more kindly and simply as "John Girvan," a familiarity which won entirely the heart of the worthy old soldier, for he had followed her husband to many a battle and siege, and, under his eye and orders, had expended many a thousand round of John Bull's ball ammunition in the Seven Years' war and in the fruitless strife with our colonists in America.

CHAPTER III.

THE CASTLE OF ROHALLION.

“Hast thou seen that lordly castle,
That castle by the sea?
Golden and red above it,
The clouds float gorgeously;
And fain it would stoop downward,
To the mirrored wave below,
And fain it would soar upward,
In the evening’s crimsong low.”—LONGFELLOW.

THE baronial fortalice in which our story has opened stands, as we have stated, upon a cliff, at least one hundred and fifty feet in height above the ocean, or where the estuary of the Clyde widens thereunto, on the Carrick shore; but since 1798 it has undergone many alterations, not perhaps for the better.

In that year it consisted of the old Scottish Keep, built in the reign of James I. by Sir Ranulph Crawford, of Rohallion, his ambassador, first to Henry VI. of England, and afterwards to Charles VII. of France, for which services he was created Keeper of the Royal Palace of Carrick. Adjoining this grim tower, with its grated windows, machicolated ramparts, and corner tourelles, was

the more modern mansion built in the time of James VI., by Hugh, third Lord Rohallion, who slew the gipsy king in single combat at the Cairns of Blackhinney. It had crowstepped gables, dormer windows, gabled and carved with dates, crests, and quaint monograms, and many a huge chimney, conical turret, and creaking vane, added to its picturesque appearance. To this was added a wing in the time of Queen Anne, somewhat unsightly in its details, yet the general aspect of the whole edifice was bold and pleasing, chastened or toned down as it was by time and the elements.

On one side it overlooked the Firth, then opening to a stormy sea, with the ruins of Turnberry in the distance—the crumbling walls wherein the conqueror of the proud Plantagenet first saw the light, and learned “to shake his Carrick spear.” On the other, its windows opened to the most fertile portion of the bailiewick—wooded heights that looked on the banks and braes of the Doon, where the scenery wakened a flood of historical or legendary memories; where every broomy knowe and grassy hill, every coppice and rushy glen, grey lichened rock and stony corrie, were consecrated by some old song or stirring tale of love or local war—the fierce old feudal wars of the Kennedies, the Crawfords, and the grim iron Barons of Auchindrane; and, more than all, it was the birthplace, the home of

Robert Bruce and of Robert Burns—the one the warrior, and the other the bard of the people. From the windows of Rohallion could be seen the very uplands, where, but a few years before, the latter had ploughed and sown, and where, as he tells us in his filial love of his native soil, when he saw

“The rough burr-thistle spreading wide,
 Among the bearded bear;
 I turned the weeding-hook aside,
 And spared the emblem dear!”

The scenery from whence he drew his inspiration looked down on the old tower of Rohallion, which contained on its first floor the stone-paved hall, that had witnessed many a bridal feast and Christmas festival, held in the rough old joyous times, when Scotland was true to herself, and ere sour Judaical sabbatarianism came upon her, to make religion a curse and a cloak for the deepest hypocrisy; and ere her preachers sought “to merit heaven, by making earth a hell.”

It presented the unusual feature (in a baronial edifice) of a groined roof, having at least six elaborately carved Gothic bosses, where the ribs that sprang from beautiful corbels placed between the windows intersected each other. On the frieze of the high-arched fireplace was a shield *gules*, with a fess *ermine*, the old arms of the Crawfords, Lords of Crawford, in Clydesdale (a family ancient as the days of William the Lyon), from whom the peers of Rohallion—whose patent

was signed by James IV. on the night before Flodden—took their bearings and motto, *Endure Furth!* Though, certainly, it was but little they were ever disposed to endure with patience, if displeased with either king or commoner.

Stags' skulls, antlers, a few old barred helmets, dented corslets, rusty swords and pikes, decorated this great stone apartment. Its furniture was massive and ancient, but seldom used now, so there the busy spiders spun their webs all undisturbed, across the grated windows, and the moss grew in winter on the carved jambs of the great fireplace, within which, according to tradition, for ages before these days of unbelief, the little red brownie of Rohallion was wont to come o' nights when all were abed, and warm himself by the smouldering *grieshoch*.

Lady Rohallion preferred the more modern rooms of Queen Anne's reign, where the buhl and marqueterie furniture was more to her taste.

There, the double drawing-room with its yellow damask curtains, high-backed chairs and couches, its old bandy-legged tabourettes, slender guéridon work-tables; its old-fashioned piano, with perhaps "H.R.H. the Duke of York's Grand March" on the music-frame; its Delft-lined fireplace and basket-grate set on a square block of stone, a spinning-wheel on one side, and cosy elbow-chair, brilliant with brass nails, on the other, was the beau-ideal of comfort, especially on a tempestuous

night, such as the last we have described ; nor was it destitute of splendour, for its lofty panelled walls exhibited some fine pictures. There were some gems by Greuze, of golden-haired boys and fair full-bosomed women in brilliant colours ; one or two ruddily-tinted saints by Murillo ; one or two dark Titians, and darker Vandykes representing Italian nobles of cut-throat aspect, in gilt armour, with trunk breeches and high ruffs. Then there were also some of the Scottish school ; the Lord Rohallion (who opposed the surrender of Charles I. to the English) by Jameson ; his son, a vehement opposer of the Union, attired in a huge wig and collarless red coat, by Aikman ; and the father of the present lord, by Allan Ramsay, son of the poet.

This Lord in 1708 left his country in disgust, swearing that “ she was only fit for the Presbyterian slaves who sold her ;” and for several years he solaced himself at the head of a Muscovite regiment against the Turks on the banks of the Danube—as the Scots whigs had it, “ learning to eat raw horse and forget God’s kirk, among barbarians in red breeks.”

Near the castle, and forming indeed a portion of it, was a platform, facing the little sandy bay, where the fishing boats were beached, and thereon were mounted twelve iron twenty-four pounders, part of the spoil of *La Bonne Citoyenne*, a French privateer, which was cast away on the Partan

Craig ; and there, as the old lord and representative peer (whose wife is awaiting him) still retained his military instincts, being a retired general officer, he had all the able-bodied men of his tenantry drilled to the use of sponge and rammer as artillerymen, for rumours of invasion were rife ; gunboats were being built at Boulogne, and those who then looked across the Straits of Dover, could see the white tents of the Armée d'Angleterre, under the Irish soldier of fortune, Kilmaine, covering all the hostile shore of France. So all Britain was bristling with bayonets ; from Cape Wrath to the Land's End in Cornwall, every man who could handle a musket was a volunteer, if not otherwise enrolled in the line, militia, or Fencibles.

On this battery the flag was hoisted and a salute loyally and joyously fired every 4th of June, in honour of His Majesty George III., by the Rohallion volunteers ; and there with loud hurrahs they drank confusion to France and to his enemies, Tom Paine, the Pope, and the Devil, and very frequently in the best French brandy, which somehow found its way quite as often as our good Farintosh or Campbellton whisky, duty free, into the sea coves beneath the castle rock.

These twelve twenty-four pounders protected the approach to the bay on one side, and to the gate of the castle on the other—the haunted gate of Rohallion, as it was named, from the

circumstance that there the old village dominie, Symon Skail, when going home one morning (night he affirmed it to be) in midsummer, after topering with Mr. John Girvan, saw a very startling sight. Clearly defined in the calm still twilight of the morning, there stood by the gate the tall and handsome figure of John, Master of Rohallion, who was known to be then serving with the Foot Guards under Cornwallis, in America. He wore his scarlet regimentals, his brigadier wig, his long straight sword, and little three-cocked hat; but his face was pale, distorted by agony, and blood was flowing from a wound in his left temple.

Ere the affrighted dominie could speak, the figure—the *wraith*—melted into the twilight, and not a trace of it remained by the arched gate, where the birds were twittering about in the early morning. A note was made of this singular vision, and it was found that at that hour, the Master of Rohallion had been shot through the head, when leading on his company of the Guards at the attack on Long Island.

Such, in 1798, was the old Scottish mansion of Rohallion, the residence of Reynold, sixth Lord of that ilk, which, by the events of the last night's storm, has become the starting-place, or, as the quartermaster might phrase it, the *point d'appui*, of our story.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHILD OF THE SEA.

“’Tis gone—the storm has past,
’Twas but a bitter hail shower, and the sun
Laughs out again within the tranquil blue.
Henceforth, Firmilian, thou art safe with me.”

ARTOUN.

To the eyes of those who surveyed the beach beneath the castle walls next morning, a lamentable spectacle was displayed. The wreck upon the Partan Craig had been completely torn to pieces by the fury of the waves, and now shattered masts and yards, blocks and rigging, casks, bales, planks and other pieces of worn and frayed timber were left high and dry among the shells and shingle by the receding tide, or were dashed into smaller fragments by the surf that beat against the castle rock.

Several dead bodies were also cast ashore, sodden with the brine, and partly covered with sand; and, though all had been but a short time in the water, some were sadly mutilated by having been dashed repeatedly against the sharp and abutting rocks of Rohallion, by the furious sea last night.

All looked placid and calm, and by the position of their limbs, nearly all seemed to have been drowned in the act of swimming. By a portion of the sternboard that came on shore, the vessel's name appeared to have been the *Louise*; but of what port, or from where, remained unknown, for, save the little child, there remained no tongue or record to tell the story of that doomed ship, or the dreadful secrets of that eventful night.

The mutterings of the fishermen and the lamentations of the women of the little hamlet, were loud and impressive, as they rambled along the beach, drawing the dead aside to remain in a boat-shed till that great local authority, the parish minister, arrived. Everything that came drifting ashore from the wreck was drawn far up the sand, lest the returning tide should wash it off again.

There were no Lloyds' agents or other officials in the neighbourhood of Rohallion, so each man made a lawful prize of whatever he could lay hands upon and convey to his cottage. The people at work close by relinquished plough and harrow, and harnessed their horses to the masts and booms for conveyance through the fields. Others brought carts to carry off the plunder; and thus, long before midday, not a trace remained of the shattered ship, save the pale dead men, who lay side by side under an old sail in the boat-shed; but for many a night after this, Elsie Irvine and others averred that

they could see the pale blue *corpse-lights* dancing on the sea about the Partan Craig, to indicate where other men lay drowned, uncoffined, and unprayed for.

Among other bodies discovered on the beach next morning was that of a man in whom, by his costume—a light green frock, laced with gold—all recognised the father, or supposed father, of the little boy he had striven so bravely to save, and whom all had seen perish by the light of their torches.

The poor man was lying among the seaweed, stark and stiff, and half covered with sand, within a few yards of the cottage where his little boy, all unconscious of his loss, of the past and of the future, lay peacefully asleep in Elsie Irvine's bed.

And now the quartermaster and Dominie Skail, who had given his schoolboys a holiday, in honour of the excitement and the event, arrived at the scene of operations, with Lady Rohallion's orders that the child should be brought to her.

Old John Girvan looked at the corpse attentively.

"This poor fellow has been a soldier," said he; "I can perceive that, by a glance. Lift him gently into the shed, lads, though it's all one to him how he's handled now!"

The corpse seemed to be that of a tall, well-formed, and fine-looking dark-complexioned man, in the prime of life; his dark brown hair, from

which the white powder had all been washed away, was already becoming grizzled, and was neatly tied in a queue by a blue silk ribbon. In the breast-pocket of his coat, there were found a purse containing a few French coins of the Republic, but of small value, and a plated metal case, in which were some papers uninjured by the water. On the third finger of his left hand was a signet ring on which the name "Josephine" was engraved; so with these relics (while the body was placed with the rest in the boat-shed) John Girvan and the dominie, accompanied by Elsie, bearing the child, repaired to the presence of Lady Rohallion, who received them all in her little breakfast-parlour, the deeply embayed and arched windows of which showed that it had been the bower-chamber of her predecessors, in the feudal days of the old castle.

"Come away, Elsie, and show me your darling prize!" she exclaimed, as she hurried forward and held out her hand to the fisherman's wife, for there was a singular combination of friendly and old-fashioned grace in all she did.

"There is no a bonnier bairn, my leddy, nor a better, in a' the three Bailiwicks o' Kyle, Carrick, and Cunninghame," said Elsie, curtsying deeply, as she presented the child.

"Yes, ma'dam," added the dominie; "the bairn is as perfect an Absalom as even the Book of Samuel describeth."

“But I dinna understand a word he says,” resumed Elsie; “hear ye *that*, madam?”

“Ma mère, ma mère!” sobbed the child, a very beautiful dark-eyed, but golden-haired and red-cheeked little boy of some seven or eight years of age, as he looked from face to face in wonder and alarm.

“Faith! ’tis a little Frenchman,” said the dominie.

“A Frenchman!” exclaimed Elsie, placing the child somewhat precipitately on Lady Rohallion’s knee, and retiring a pace or two. “I thocht sae, by his queer jargon of broken English, wi’ a smattering o’ Scots words too; but French folk speak nae Christian tongue. Maybe the bairn’s a spy—a son, wha kens, o’ Robespierre or Bonaparte himsel!”

“Elsie, how can you run on thus?”

“Ah, mon père—mon père!” said the child, sobbing.

“Hear till him again, my leddy,” exclaimed Elsie; “the bairn can speak French—that coves a’!”

“He cries for his father—poor child—poor child!” said Lady Rohallion, whose eyes filled with tears.

“Father—yes, madame; my father—where is he?” said the boy, opening his fine large eyes wider with an expression of anxiety and fear, and speaking in a lisping but strongly foreign accent;

“take me to him—take me to him, madame, if you please.”

“The bairn speaks English well enough,” said the dominie; “he’ll hae had a French tutor, or some sic haverel, to teach him to play the fiddle, I warrant, and to quote Voltaire, Rousseau, and Helvetius, when he grows older.”

“What is your name, my dear little boy?” asked Lady Rohallion, caressingly; but she had to repeat the question thrice, and in different modes, before the child, who eyed her with evident distrust, replied, timidly:

“Quentin Kennedy, madame.”

“Kennedy!” exclaimed all.

“A gude auld Ayrshire name, ever since the days of Malcolm the Maiden!” said the quartermaster, striking his staff on the floor.

“Rohallion’s mother was a Kennedy,” said the lady, a tender smile spreading over her face as she surveyed the orphan, “so the bairn could not have fallen into better hands than ours.”

“Indubitably not, my lady,” chimed in the dominie; “nor could he find a sibber friend.”

“And your father, my dear child—your father?” urged Lady Rohallion.

“My father—oh, my father is drowned! He went down into the sea with the big ship. Oh, ma mère! ma mère!” cried the little boy, in a sudden passion of grief, and seeking to escape from them, as the terrors of the past night, with

a conviction of his present isolation and loneliness, seemed to come fully upon him.

“And your mamma, my little love?” asked the lady, endearingly.

“She is far away in France.”

“Where—in what town?”

“Hélas, madame, I do not know.”

He sobbed bitterly, and Lady Rohallion wept as she kissed and fondled, and strove to reassure him by those caresses which none but one who has been a mother can bestow; but sometimes he repelled her with his plump little hands, while his dark eyes would sparkle and dilate with surprise and alarm. Then he would ask for his father again and again, for the child knew neither what death or drowning meant; and it was in vain they told him that his father had perished in the sea. He could not understand them, and to have shown the child the poor pale, sodden corpse that lay in the boat-shed on the shore would have been a useless cruelty that must have added to his grief and terror.

Lady Rohallion, pointing upward as he sat on her knee, told him that his father was in heaven, and that in time he would meet him there; for, of such as he was, poor orphan, was the kingdom of heaven made; but in heaven or in the sea was all one for a time to little Quentin Kennedy, who wept bitterly, and noisily too, till he grew weary, or became consoled, by the winning ways of his

gentle protectress, for of course the poor child knew not the nature of his awful loss and bereavement.

While the boy, already temporarily forgetful of his griefs, was stretched on the soft, warm hearth-rug before the fire that blazed in the parlour grate, and occupied himself with the gambols of a wiry Skye-terrier, JOHN GIRVAN handed to Lady Rohallion the relics he had found on the drowned man.

“A ring!” said she; “this is painfully interesting; and it has an inscription.”

“Yes, madame, it is like the *annuli* worn by the legionary tribunes in the Punic war,” added Dominie Skail, who never lost an opportunity of “airing” his classics.

“It bears a crest; that speaks of gentle birth,” said Lady Rohallion, who had a great veneration for that fortuitous circumstance. “And there is a name, *Josephine*.”

“Mamma—ma mère!” exclaimed the child, starting and looking up at the, no doubt, familiar sound.

“His mother’s name, I am sure; poor little fellow, he has heard his father call her so,” said Lady Rohallion, as she opened the plated case and drew forth the documents it contained. One was on parchment, the other two were letters.

“A military commission—Girvanmains, look here!”

It was the commission of Quentin Kennedy, *gentilhomme Ecossais*, to be captain in the Royal

Regiment of Scots, in the service of His Most Christian Majesty, and was signed by the unfortunate Louis XVI., as the date showed, in the year before his execution.

“So this poor drowned man has eaten his bread by tuck of drum!” exclaimed the old quartermaster, with a kindling eye, as he stooped to caress the orphan’s golden curls. “Puir fellow—puir fellow! He has been a commissioned officer like myself, so I’ll e’en turn out the Rohallion Volunteers, and he shall be borne to his grave as becomes a soldier, with muffled drums and arms reversed—eh, dominie?”

“Yes, and the spoils of war shall be cast on the pile, as we read in the eleventh book of the *Æneid*; and they shall march like the Thebans, striking their weapons one on another, to the sound of the trumpet—eh, quartermaster?”

“I’d batoon the first lout I caught doing aught so unsteady or so unsoldierlike,” was the indignant response.

“But how came this Scotsman to be serving the French King,” asked the dominie; “as such was he not a renegade soldier, such as the Romans were wont to stab and leave unburied, as we find in Tacitus?”

“He had been in the foreign brigades, the Scottish and Irish,” replied the lady. “One of these letters is from Monsieur the Comte d’Artois, and it praises the courage of the Scottish Captain

Kennedy, of the Regiment de Berwick, in the campaigns upon the Meuse and Rhine. The other letter is from his poor wife, and is subscribed Josephine. Ah me, how sad! the name that is on the ring."

They spoke in low tones, as if loth to disturb the child, who was still playing with the terrier.

"What says it, my lady?" asked the dominie, "for though well versed in the dead languages, praised be Providence and the auld pedagogy of Glasgow, I know little of the living—French especially, the language of Voltaire, Diderot, and Helvetius—of democrats, levellers, revolutionists, and the slaves of the Corsican tyrant."

"The letter has no date, dominie," replied the lady, smiling at this outburst; "the cover also is wanting, but it runs thus."

Standing one on each side of her chair, each with a hand at his ear to listen, the two old men heard her translate with ease the following letter:

"MY OWN DEAR, DEAR QUENTIN,—

"This is the last letter you will receive in France from your own Fifine. The next I shall address to you, as you may direct, to Scotland. Ah, mon Dieu! how sad—how terrible to think that we are to be separated, and at such a time! But madame my mother's illness pleads for me with all, and more than all with you, Quentin. You, as a Scotsman and royalist officer, and our

poor child, for the very blood it inherits from his mother, would be welcome victims to the shambles of the great Republic ; for the first Consul B. and Citizen M. his secretary of state, would not spare even a child at this crisis, lest it should grow into an aristocrat and an enemy.* Every hour the hatred of Britain grows stronger here, and the mode in which we treat the prisoners taken in Flanders and elsewhere, makes my blood alternately glow and freeze, Frenchwoman though I am ! But I have not forgotten the Place de la Grève, or the horrors of that day, when my father's blood moistened the sawdust of a scaffold, just wetted by the blood of Marie Antoinette.

“ Enough of this, however, dear Quentin ; 'tis safer to speak than to write of such things, though this letter goes by a safe and sure hand, our dear friend, the Abbé Lebrun, for in this land of spies the post is perilous. Destroy it, however, the moment you receive it, for we know not what mischief it might do us all, though the ship by which you sail, goes, you say, under cartel, and by the rules of war can neither be attacked nor taken.

“ Rumour says that Monsieur Charles Philippe, the Comte d'Artois, is now with his suite at Holyrood, the old home of those Scottish kings with whom his fathers were allied ; and that the ancient

* The initials no doubt refer to Bonaparte and the secretary Hugues Bernard Maret, who assisted so vigorously in the 18th Brumaire.

Garde du Corps Ecosais is to be re-established for him there. I pray God it may be so, as in that case, dearest, Monsieur will not forget you and your services on the Rhine and elsewhere, and your steady adherence to his family in those days of anarchy, impiety, and sin.

“ Kiss our little cherub for me. I am in despair when I think of him, though he is safer with you than with me, in our dreadful France—no longer the land of beauty and gaiety, but of the bayonet and guillotine. He must be our hostage and peace-offering to your family, and I doubt not that his innocent smiles and golden curls may soften their hearts towards us both. La Mère de Dieu take you both into her blessed keeping and hasten our reunion. Till then, and for ever after, I am your own affectionate little wife,

“ FIFINE.”

This letter, we have said, was undated, but the postscript led Lady Rohallion to suppose it came from a remote part of France. It ran thus :

“ Your own petted Fifine sends you a hundred kisses for every mile this has to travel ; as many more to little Quentin, as they wont add a franc to the weight in the pocket of M. l'Abbé.”

So ended this letter, so sad in its love and its tenor, under the circumstances. With that of the

Comte d'Artois, the commission, purse, and ring, Lady Rohallion carefully put it past in her antique buhl escritoire, for her husband's inspection on his return; and, on leaving the castle, the old quartermaster kept his word.

True to his inbred military instincts and impulses, he had the Rohallion company of Volunteers duly paraded, in their cocked hats, short swallow-tailed red coats, white leggings, and long black gaiters; and, with arms reversed, they bore the dead soldier of fortune, shoulder-high, from the old castle-gate, where the scarlet family standard, with its fess *ermine*, hung half-hoisted on the battery.

Mournfully from the leafless copse that clothed the steep sides of the narrow glen in which the old kirk stood, did the muffled drums re-echo, while the sweet low wail of the fifes sent up the sad notes of the dead march—"The Land o' the Leal."

At one of the drawing-room windows, Lady Rohallion sat, with the child upon her knee—little Quentin Kennedy, our hero, for such he is; and her motherly heart was full, and her kindly tears fell fast on his golden hair, when three sharp volleys that rung in the clear cold air above a yawning grave, and the pale blue distant smoke that she could see wreathing in the November sunshine, announced the last scene of this little tragedy—that the poor drowned wanderer, the

Scottish soldier of fortune, who adhered to King Louis in his downfall, had found a last home in his native earth ; and that, *perhaps*, all his secrets, his sorrows, and the story of his life were buried with him.

Then with a burst of sympathy and womanly tenderness, she pressed her lips to the soft cheek of the child, whose eyes dilated with inquiry and wonder, as he heard those farewell volleys that rung in the distant air, but little knew that they were fired above his father's closing grave !

CHAPTER V.

THE PAST.

“ Still shall unthinking man substantial deem
The forms that flit through life's deceitful dream,
Till at some stroke of Fate, the vision flies,
And sad realities in prospect rise ;
And from Elysian slumbers rudely torn,
The startled soul awakes, to think and mourn.”

BEATTIE'S *Elegy*, 1758.

SUCH is the buoyant thoughtlessness of childhood, that a few days sufficed to console, to soothe, and to reconcile the poor boy to his new friends and his new habitation. The kindness, tenderness, and attention of Lady Rohallion did much, if not all, to achieve this ; and doubtless she would have succeeded very well in the same way with an older personage than little Quentin Kennedy, for she fully possessed, together with great amiability and sweetness of disposition, those requisites which Sir William Temple affirmed to be the three great ingredients of pleasant conversation, viz., good sense, good humour, and wit.

Secluded and retiring in her habits, simple and old-fashioned in her tastes, she preferred residing quietly among her husband's tenantry at Rohallion, to figuring, as had been her wont, in the

great world of fashion, such as it was to be found in the London of old King George's days, or in the smaller circle of the Scottish metropolis ; and even when parliamentary business compelled Lord Rohallion to proceed southward, he could scarcely prevail upon her to accompany him, for travelling was not then the swift and easy process we find it *now*, in these days of steam and railways.

Thus the advent of her little protégé was quite a boon to her, and while rapidly learning to love the child, who had a thousand winning and endearing ways, she relinquished all idea of attempting to discover his mother till the return of her husband, though the notion was scarcely conceived, when it was abandoned as simply impossible, from the want of a distinct clue as to her residence, and the existence of the bitter and revengeful war that had been waged between France and Britain for five years now, ever since the siege of Toulon. Consequently there seemed nothing for it, as Quartermaster Girvan said, but to make a good Scotsman of the little Frenchman, (if French, indeed, he was)—and the dominie failed not to quote Cicero, “ anent the *adoptio* of the Romans.”

So Lady Rohallion learned to love the child, and the child to love her with a regard that was quite filial; and his pretty prattle in broken English was her chief solace and amusement after the hours of attendance and *surveillance* she daily be-

stowed, like a good housewife and châtelaine of old, upon her household and her husband's tenantry; for there was not "a fishwife's bairn" in the hamlet below could be pilled or powdered for the measles or hooping-cough, without a due consultation being first held with my lady in the castle.

Sensation novels were then unknown, and Walter Scott was still in futurity, save as a translator of German ballads. Our respectable old friends, "Tom Jones," "Roderick Random," and "Peregrine Pickle," were still in the flush of their fame; but Lady Rohallion preferred the works of Mr. Richardson, and deemed the sorrows of Clarissa Harlowe, and of Fielding's "Amelia," to be sorrows indeed.

Being Winifred Maxwell of the gallant but attainted House of Nithsdale, her Jacobite sympathies were keen and intense; thus, ten years before the date of our story she suffered a real grief, and had worn a suit of the deepest black, on tidings coming from Maybole that Prince Charles Edward, with whom her mother had flirted in Holyrood, and for whom her uncles had shed their blood on the fatal field of Culloden—that the Bonnie Prince Charlie of so many stirring memories, so many Scottish songs, and so many faithful hearts, an old, soured, and disappointed man, had been gathered to his fathers, and was lying cold and dead in his tomb, beneath the dome of St. Peter.

Though she had somewhat strong ideas on the

subject of keeping up "the old spirit of the Crawfords of Rohallion," a good deal of which, we are sorry to say, meant looking down on their neighbours: and though she had an intense estimation for people of "that ilk," and for coats, quarterings, and family claims, and that kind of blood which the Scots designated as *gude*, and the Spaniards as *blue*, she was weak enough, as Lady Eglinton phrased it, to treasure immensely a copy of very flattering verses, addressed to her in her beauty and girlhood, by a certain democratic Ayrshire ploughman, named Mr. Robert Burns, for whose memory she had a very great regard.

She was full of the proud and fiery ideas of a past and manly age, for she was old enough to remember when the beaus and bloods of Edinburgh in their periwigs and square-skirted coats of silk or velvet, squired her and Eleanora Eglinton up the old Assembly Close, with links flaring and swords flashing round their sedans, swearing, with such large oaths as were then fashionable, to whip through the lungs any scurvy fellow who loitered an instant in their way.

But the first years of the present century saw a new world closing round her, and innovations coming fast, though the old language in which our laws are written yet lingered in the pulpit and at the bar.

To her aristocratic ideas, and to those of her friends, it seemed as if the malign influence of

the French revolution tainted the very air, especially in Scotland, where, by the tendency of their education and religion, the people are naturally democratic in spirit; and it was pretty apparent, that the decapitation of Robert Watt at Edinburgh, and the persecution of "citizen Muir" and his compatriots by the Government, in no way cooled the real ardour of the Friends of the People.

To Lady Winifred, it appeared also, that while, on one hand, the humbler classes were less genuinely affectionate and less deferential to the upper, on the other, they were less kindly and less courteous to each other. Everything seemed to be done in a hurry too, though the mail-coaches carrying four inside, usually took a week or more in rumbling between Edinburgh and London, with the varieties of an occasional break-down when fording a river, or receiving the contents of a robber's blunderbuss in a lonely part of the way.

Holidays were kept in a hearty old fashion, and there was no sour sabbatarianism to excite the wrath of the liberal-minded Scots, and the wonder and derision of their English neighbours. There were democrats and demagogues in every village, it is true; but patriotism, and a genuine British spirit rendered their revilings innocuous and all but useless.

Where now the dun deer rove in the desert glens, the Highland Clans existed in all their hardihood and numerical strength, to fill by

thousands the ranks of our kilted regiments. The flags of "Duncan, Nelson, Keppel, Howe, and Jervis" were sweeping the sea. Beacons studded all the hills, and every village cross was the muster-place of volunteer corps; and there are yet those alive who remember the great night of the *false alarm* when it was supposed the French had landed, when the bale-fire on Hume castle sent its blaze upon the midnight sky; when the alarm-drum, the long roll which a soldier never forgets, was beat in town and hamlet, and all Scotland stood to arms: and when the brave Liddesdale yeomanry swam the Liddle, then in full and roaring flood, every trooper riding with his sword in his teeth, as if to show that the old spirit yet lived upon the Borders, unchanged as in those days when the Lords Marchers blew their trumpets before the gates of Berwick or Carlisle.

And as it came to pass, it was in those stirring times of war and tumult—times not 'now very remote, good reader—that our little hero found a home in the old manor of Rohallion.

His mother sorrowed for him in sunny France beyond the sea, where she may never see him more, or know that he survived the wreck in which her husband perished; and now daily another received his morning kiss, and watched his footsteps and gambols; and nightly hushed him to sleep, smoothed the coverlet, caressed his ruddy cheeks and golden hair; yet that poor bereaved mother

was never absent from the thoughts of good Lady Rohallion, who had now taken her place.

Of his many kisses and caresses, she felt that she was robbing that poor unknown, the affectionate "Fifine" of the dead man's letter; but how to find her, how to restore him, stultified and rendered every way impossible as all such attempts must be, by the war now waged by every sea and shore between the two countries?

Though little Quentin, we grieve to say, was gradually forgetting his own mother and learning to love his adopted one, there were *times* when, nathless all Lady Rohallion's sweetness and tenderness, he felt that there was something lacking—something he missed; he knew not what, unless it were that he longed

"For the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still."

A fortnight had passed away since the letter of Lord Rohallion had been brought by John Girvan from Maybole, and still there were no further tidings of his return; so the lady became sad and anxious, for she trembled at the idea of his returning by sea.

On one of the first nights of December, when the wind was moaning about the old walls of the castle, and the angry hiss of the sea was heard on the rocks below, she sat alone, by Quentin's little bed. He had just dropped asleep.

He occupied the same cot in which her own

son Cosmo, Master of Rohallion, had been wont to sleep when a child about the same age. It was prettily gilt and surmounted by a coronet; the curtains were drawn apart, and by the subdued light of a night-lamp, she could see the pure profile and rosy cheeks of the boy, as he reposed on a soft white pillow, in the calm sleep of childhood.

She could almost imagine that her son Cosmo, the tall captain of the Guards, was again a child and sleeping there, or that she was a young wife again and not an old woman, and so, as thoughts that came unbidden poured fast upon her, she began to recal the years that had rolled away.

Then out of the thronging memories of the past, there arose a vision of a fair-haired and handsome young man—one who loved her well before Rohallion came—his younger brother; and with this image came the memory of many a happy ramble long, long ago, in the green summer woods of pleasant Nithsdale, when the sunshine was declining on the heights of Queensberry, or casting shadows on the plains of Closeburn or the grassy pastoral uplands through which the blue stream winds to meet the Solway—and where the voices of the mavis, the merle, and the cushat-dove were heard in every coppice.

She thought of those sunset meetings, and of one who was wont to sit beside her then for hours, lost in love and happiness. Lady Rohallion loved her husband well and dearly; but there were

times when conscience upbraided her, and she pitied the memory of that younger brother whom she had deceived and deluded, and whom, like a thoughtless young coquette, she had permitted—it might be, lured—to love her.

In fancy she traced out what her path—a less splendid one, assuredly—might have been, had Rohallion not won her heart, and most unwittingly broken his brother's, for so the people said. And thus, while “speculating on a future which was already a *past*,” the handsome, the gallant, and earnest young Ranulph Crawford, the lover of her girlhood, rose before her in fancy, and her eyes grew moist as she thought of his fatal end, for he died, a self-made exile, an obscure soldier of fortune, in defence of the Tuileries, and the public papers had recorded the story of his fall—not in the flowery language of the present, but in the cold brevity of that time—“as one Captain Crawford, a Scot, whose zeal outran his discretion, who in charging the populace, was wounded, taken, and beheaded by them.”

“Clarissa Harlowe” had fallen from her hand, and the mimic sorrows of the novel were forgotten in the real griefs of Lady Winifred's waking dream. From these, however, she was roused by the clatter of a horse's hoofs at the haunted gate beside the gun-battery, and almost immediately after a servant announced the glad tidings,

“My Lady Rohallion, his lordship has arrived!”

CHAPTER VI.

LORD ROHALLION.

“ She gazed—she reddened like a rose—
 Syne pale as ony lily ;
 She sank within my arms and cried,
 ‘ Art thou my ain dear Willie ?’
 ‘ By Him who made yon sun and sky,
 By whom true love’s regarded,
 I am the man !’ and thus may still
 True lovers be rewarded.”—BURNS.

HASTENING to the drawing-room, she immediately found herself in the arms of her husband, who was throwing off his drab-coloured riding-coat, with its heavy cape, his small triangular Nivernois hat, boot-tops, and whip, to his favourite valet and constant attendant, old Jack Andrews.

Rohallion kissed his wife’s hand and then her forehead, for he had not outlived either affection or respect, though verging on his fifty-fifth year ; and he had all that gentleness of bearing and true politeness which the Scottish gentlemen of the old school, prior to, and long after the Union, acquired from our ancient allies, the French.

“ And you returned from London——”

“ By sea, Winny—by sea,” said Rohallion.

“After all my entreaties!”

“Zounds! Winny, I can't abide the mail, and am too old to post it now, as my old friend Monboddo used to do yearly, to kiss the king's hand; and so preferred the 'Lord Nelson' smack, from London to Leith, armed with twelve carronades, and sailing without convoy.”

“And the voyage was pleasant?”

“A head-wind, a fourteen days' run, and an exchange of shots with a French privateer off Flamborough Head. At Edinburgh I took the stage to Ayr, and from thence Andrews and I jogged quietly home on horseback.”

Still a handsome man, though portly in person, as became his years, Reynold Crawford, Lord Rohallion, had features that were alike noble in character and striking in expression. The broad, square forehead indicated intelligence and candour, his mouth, good humour; and the form of his closely shaved chin, spoke of decision and perseverance. His nose was perhaps too large, but his eyes were dark grey, gentle and soft, usually, in expression. He wore his own hair, which was still thick and wavy, powdered white as a cauliflower, and tied with a broad ribbon, having a double bow at the back.

He still adhered to the frilled shirt, and had a large pearl brooch in the breast thereof; his long waistcoat was of scarlet cloth, edged with silver; his coat of bright blue broadcloth, with large, flat

steel buttons, had a high rolling collar, small cape, and enormous lapels. Hessian boots, with tassels of gold and spurs of steel, and tight buff pantaloons for riding, showed to advantage his stout, well turned limbs, and completed his costume. He had a ruddy complexion, a hearty laughing manner, and a jolly *brusquerie* about him that smacked more of the soldier or the agriculturist than the peer of the realm.

“And now, Rohallion, tell me about our Cosmo—how is he looking?”

“Twice as well as ever I did at the same age, and that is saying something—eh, Winny? Why he is the pattern man of the Household Brigade, but a strange boy withal. Duty about the Court has increased that cold hauteur which always marked his character. I don’t know where the deuce he picked it up—not from you or me, Winny. But the butler says that an early supper is served——”

“Yes, dearest—in my little parlour.”

“Egad! the snuggest billet in the house, and I can assure you that I am as well appetised as ever I used to be when a hungry ensign in Germany. Permit me, madam,” said he, drawing her hand caressingly upon his arm; “and now tell me, how do you like the mode in which my hair is queued?”

“Why, Reynold?”

“’Tis a new fashion taught to Jack Andrews by old Hugh Hewson, of St. Martin-in-the-

Fields—the Scotch hairdresser—you have heard of him, of course?”

“The original of Dr. Smollett’s Hugh Strap—who has not?” said she, laughing; “well, his dressing is very smart! I see now, Andrews, his lordship looks quite a beau!”

“I *was*—or had the reputation of being so, when first I wore that gorget at Minden, a boy of fifteen or thereabouts; and before I saw you, Winny, dear.”

“I have a surprise for you——”

“Supper first, Winny, egad! I don’t like surprises; we had enough of them in Holland, and they were not at all to our taste. Eh, Jack Andrews—do you remember our night march for Valenciennes?” he asked, turning to his old valet, who grinned an assent as he deposited a pair of silver-mounted holster pistols in a mahogany case. To Rohallion this veteran, Jack Andrews, was all that Corporal Trim was to Uncle Toby (both of whom, according to Sterne, had served in the 25th Foot, then known as Leven’s Regiment), a servant, and at times friend and companion, and perpetual resort or reference on military matters. Long and hard service together, community of sentiment on most matters, combined the sympathy of camaraderie with the steady faith of a Scottish servitor of the old school in Andrews, who was a sour-featured, thin, and erect old fellow, in a powdered wig

(though, by the Act of 1795, hair powder cost a guinea per head), with a pigtail, and the family livery, grey faced with scarlet; and somehow on old Jack it always looked like a *uniform*.

Attended by this valet, both well mounted, and having holster pistols at their saddles, he had ridden from Ayr, through Maybole, and was now ready for supper, braced by the keen December blast, and feeling happy and jovial to find himself once more at home from London, which, so far as travelling and the ideas of the time are concerned, was then nearly as distant from the Scottish capital as Moscow is to-day; and a perfect picture they formed, that gentle, high-bred, and loving old couple in powdered hair, seated at supper, with their antique equipage, conversing in the plain old Scottish accent, which was still used, with a Doric word here and there, by the Scottish aristocracy.

“Andrews and I would have been here an hour earlier,” said his lordship, slicing down a daintily-roasted capon, “but the old piper of Maybole, in the burgh livery, would play before us all the way through the town and two, miles beyond it, according to use and wont—a glass of wine, Andrews—but Pate is growing old, Winny, now; he fairly broke down in playing ‘Lord Lennox March,’ so I think we must add something to his piper’s-croft and cow’s-mailing. They scarcely keep the poor fellow, when meal, malt, and everything are at such prices. I had, moreover, to inspect

the Maybole volunteers. I say, Andrews, did you see how they shouldered arms?"

"Ay, my lord; knocking all their fore-and-aft cocked hats off, as they canted their firelocks from right to left," replied the valet, with a grim smile.

"Then we had to see an effigy of Tom Paine burned in front of the Tolbooth, with a copy of the 'Rights of Man,' while we drank Confusion to the French, the Friends of the People, the National Convention, and Charles Fox. So you see, Winny, my time was fully occupied."

The wax lights in the silver candelabra and crystal girandoles, and the fire that blazed in the polished brass grate, diffused a warm and ruddy glow through the cosy old-fashioned parlour, with its pink damask chairs and curtains; and speedily the old general dismissed his supper and glass of dry sherry.

Then, Andrews, as if according to use and wont, without requiring to be told, removed the decanters, and placed before his master the "three elements," whisky, hot water, and sugar, and Rohallion, with ladle and jug, proceeded to make a jorum of hot steaming toddy.

"Now, Andrews, my man," said he, "make a browst like this for yourself in the butler's pantry, and then turn in; neither you nor I are so young as we have been, and you've had a long journey to-day. Good night. I require nothing more."

Andrews gave a military salute, wheeled round,

as if on a pivot, so that his pigtail described a horizontal circle, and withdrew.

“Now, what is the surprise you have for me, Winny?” asked Rohallion, as he filled her ladyship’s glass, a long one, with a white worm in its stem.

“Tell me first the news from London.”

“Well, gudewife Winny, nobody speaks of anything but this expedition to Egypt, and the expected surrender of Malta. Then if all goes right, ere long General Abercrombie will have about 15,000 men with him in the Bay of Marmorice.”

“I am so glad our Cosmo did not think of going on foreign service.”

“Why?”

“Can you ask me, Reynold—our only son?”

“I had been ten times under fire before I was half his age. He was most anxious to go, and I wished him too; but, as the staff appointments were all filled up, and his battalion of the Guards will soon be detailed for service, I thought it a pity that the boy should lose his regimental rank.”

“Cosmo will be twenty-five on his next birth-day,” said Lady Rohallion, thoughtfully, a remark probably suggested by the term “boy;” “our only son, Rohallion; we must indeed be careful of him.”

“Careful of a strapping Guardsman like Cosmo!”

“There are times—when—when——”

“What, Winny?”

“I regret his having gone into the army at all.”

“Odds my heart! then he would be the first Crawford of Rohallion that ever was out of it. His battalion may soon go to Ireland; the people there are more than ever discontented with the proposed union, and hope that the First Consul, the upstart Bonaparte, may enable them to cut a better figure than they and their allies under Humbert did at Ballnamuck last summer. I don't think the Horse Guards used me well in refusing me a brigade for service; so I don't return to London for some time, having paired off with our friend Eglinton, who is to put himself at the head of his Fencibles.”

“Oh, I am so happy to hear this!” exclaimed Lady Winifred, clasping her plump white hands, the rings on which sparkled through her black lace mittens.

“Despite all I could urge, my old comrade, Jack Warrender of Ardgour, goes to Egypt in command of the Corsican Rangers.”

“So Lady Eglinton wrote to me.”

“And if he is knocked on the head,—which God forbid!—his daughter, Flora, will be long under trust, so her estate will be a fair one; and now, Winny, when I add that Mr. Fox and the Opposition are having their hair dressed *à la*

Brutus, in imitation of the Parisian rabble, you have all my news."

"And now for mine," said she, with a delightful smile.

"Your surprise?"

"Yes—but you must come with me."

"Where?"

"To the nursery."

"That which was once the nursery, you mean."

"And which has become so *again*," she replied, laughing at his bewilderment.

Passing her arm through his, she led him to the sleeping-room, which adjoined their own, and desired him to look into Cosmo's little cot. Rohallion did so, and great indeed was his surprise to find a beautiful little boy, whose hair, all golden and curly, and whose form of face, rich bloom, and long dark eyelashes, powerfully reminded him of what Cosmo had been at the same age, when sleeping in the same chamber and in the same cot.

"Zounds, Winifred, what in the world does this mean?" said he, with a droll expression twinkling in his dark grey eyes; "whose little fellow is this? Not *ours*, certainly; you can't have been stealing a march on me now-a-days."

"'Tis a long story and a sad one; but return with me to the parlour, and I shall tell you all about it," she replied, while selecting the key of her escritoire from the huge, housewife-like bunch that glittered at her *chatelaine*.

“Egad, then I’ll brew another jug of punch the while; and now, Winny, I am all attention.”

She related all that the reader knows: the storm on that gloomy November night; the attack made by the armed Frenchman, and the consequent flight of the British ship; her wreck on the Partan Craig and the loss of the crew, with the recovery of the child from a state of insensibility, and the burial of his father, by the ground bailie, John Girvan.

“My worthy old quartermaster did right—’twas like my good comrade!” said Lord Rohallion, while his eyes glistened; “I can imagine I see him marching up the glen at the head of the funeral party, erect as ever he marched under fire—a trifle more, maybe. The old Borderer did just what I should have done myself!”

Lady Winifred now laid before her husband the ring, the purse with its few franc pieces, and the papers of the drowned stranger, and all of these he examined with interest and commiseration, for he was a kind, generous, and warm-hearted man.

“This is sad—very sad, indeed!” he muttered.

“By the handwriting, Rohallion, and by the crest on the ring——”

“A lily, stalked and leaved, rising from a coronet.”

“Yes.”

“Well, Winny?”

“I should say they must have been people of figure and fashion—of good quality, at least.”

“An old fashioned phrase that, and going out now, like our fathers’ swords and our mothers’ hoops; call them aristocrats—eh, Winny?”

“Undoubtedly, and under suspicion, too, by the tenor of the poor lady’s letter.”

“‘Josephine,’” said he, reading the inscription upon the ring; “why, that is the name of the widow Beauharnais, who three or four years ago married the First Consul to escape the guillotine! You must preserve these relics with care, Winny; and as for the poor bairn, Rohallion must be his home till we find his mother, a task very unlikely to be accomplished, if ever at all, in these times, when France is at war with all the world, and her scaffolds are drenched daily with the blood of women, children, and priests, as well as of brave and loyal gentlemen. But into no better hands than ours, Winny, could this poor waif of misfortune have fallen. He is the child of a faithful royalist soldier, too—we must always remember that.”

Like his worthy wife, Lord Rohallion inherited with his blood a strong dash of Jacobitism, thus his sympathies were all with the humbled royalty of France.

The worthy old Defender of the Faith, who muddled away his time at Windsor, and his son, the “first gentleman” in Europe, who spent his

days and nights less reputably in his Pavilion at Brighton—Thackeray's man of waistcoats, wigs, and uniforms—had perhaps no truer servant than Major-General Reynold Lord Rohallion, K.C.B., &c. Yet among the "Stuart Papers," which, in 1807, found their way into the royal archives, there was discovered a correspondence between a certain peer whose initial was R. and "His Majesty Henry II. of Scotland and IX. of England," which rather excited the surprise of the ministry and privy council; but like the same secret correspondence of many other nobles of both kingdoms, it was deemed only wise and charitable to commit it to oblivion, for the grave had closed over the good old Cardinal Duke of York—the last of the Stuarts—and few knew why, for a year and a day, the hilt of Rohallion's sword was covered by a band of crape.

CHAPTER VII.

OUR STORY PROGRESSES.

“Here he dwelt in state and bounty,
Lord of Burleigh fair and free;
Not a lord in all the county,
Is so great a lord as he.”—TENNYSON.

KIND old Rohallion was deeply interested in and attracted by the little boy, who had many winning and endearing ways about him; and he particularly excelled in a bright and captivating smile, that was joyous in its perfect innocence.

He seated him on his knee at the breakfast-table in the library, and strove, by all the art he was master of, to draw from him some clue, as to the part of France in which his mother resided, but save a knowledge of his own name, Quentin's recollections were few prior to the terror he had experienced on the wreck. All beyond that seemed vague, and his reminiscences were an odd jumble of a large town with a cathedral where his mamma took him to hear Abbé Lebrun preach or say mass—good M. l'Abbé Lebrun, who always gave him *bon-bons*, and wore such large spectacles. Then there was a river with boats,

a bridge and a great mountain with a windmill, where he used to go with his nurse when she visited the miller.

Then, there was a Chanoinesse who gave him painted toys; there were some wicked soldiers, who burned a street and dragged away all the people to die, and of these same soldiers he had a peculiar dread and aversion. But whether they were ugly toys, or actors in some scene the child had witnessed, Rohallion could not tell; he supposed the affair referred to was some grim reality incident to the late revolution. He could gather nothing more that afforded a clue; and now as these memories were wakened in him, the faces of *others* came with them; tears filled the child's fine dark eyes, and he entreated piteously to have his mother brought to him and his nurse Nanette, or have his father brought to him out of the sea; and thus perceiving that nothing of certainty or value could be gleaned from him, his protectors tacitly agreed to let the subject drop.

Breakfast was just over when Andrews announced Quartermaster Girvan and Dominic Skail, two individuals, who are perhaps bores in their way, but are nevertheless necessary to us in the course of this narrative.

They had heard of his lordship's arrival, and had "come to pay their dutiful reverence," for something of the old feudal sentiment lingered yet in Carrick, and a journey to Calcutta is a mere

joke or pleasure trip now, when compared with how the Scots of 1798 viewed one to London, few prudent people attempting it without previously making a will, and settling all their earthly affairs.

“Welcome, Girvan, and welcome, dominie,” said Rohallion, shaking each by the hand cordially; “I am glad to be at home again among you.”

“Yea,” replied the dominie, while rubbing one hand over the other, and smiling blandly, as perhaps his scholars seldom saw him smile; “your lordship has come back like Cincinnatus after the defeat of the Volci and the Æqui, to plough turnips and plant gude kail on haugh and rig—so welcome hame to Carrick, my lord.”

The dominie had on his Sunday coat, with its huge flapped pockets; his best three-cornered hat, bound with black braid, was under his arm, and his square shoe-buckles shone like silver.

“And our little Frenchman has become quite a friend with your lordship, I see,” said Girvan, patting the child on the head.

“Quite—a splendid little fellow he is!”

“But call him not a Frenchman,” said the dominie, “when he bears the gude auld Carrick name of Kennedy.”

“Aye, dominie; it used to find an echo here-about, in the old trooping and tramping times,” replied Girvan.

“And has so still,” added Rohallion, laughing; “for I am half a Kennedy, and often have I heard my mother sing—

“’Twixt Wigton and the town of Ayr,
Portpatrick and the Cruives of Cree,
Nae man may hope in peace to bide,
Unless he court Saint Kennedie.”

“Like the Maxwells in Nithsdale, the Kennedies had all their own way here in those days,” said Lady Winifred, as she drew off her lace mittens, and prepared to adjust her ivory-mounted spinning-wheel.

“But to return to the present time, tell me, John Girvan, did that French ship actually come within range of our gun-battery?”

“Yes, my lord—or nearly so.”

“And what were *you* about, John, to stand with your hands in your pockets at such a time? Egad, ’twas not like an old 25th man?”

The quartermaster reddened:

“There was a tremendous gale from the seaward,” said Lady Rohallion, coming to his assistance; “a storm—a tempest——”

“And she came only within a mile of the Partan Craig, where the unfortunate merchantman was in sore peril—a foe on one side, a lee shore on the other—eh, dominie?”

“‘*Here* Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
Tremendous port—abhorred by men and gods,
And *there* Charybdis,’

as old Homer hath it," replied the dominie, promptly.

"Even had the battery been manned, my lord, I am doubtful—I am doubtful if these old twenty-four pounders would pitch shot so far; and she scarcely appeared, before she hauled her wind and disappeared into the mist," said Girvan, giving his old yellow wig an angry twist.

"Some of these small craft are growing very saucy," said Lord Rohallion, to change the subject, which he saw was distasteful to his old comrade. "It was only the other day that a lieutenant with fourteen men from one of our gun-brigs landed on the coast of France to distribute royalist manifestoes of the Comte d'Artois, dated from Holyrood, but he and his men were taken by a party of dragoons who surrounded an *auberge* in which they were imprudently drinking. They were instantly hanged as spies, by order of General Monnet, and the bodies are to be seen on fifteen gibbets, a mile apart, along the coast between Boulogne and Cape Grisnez."

"Poor men! How horrible!" exclaimed Lady Winifred.

"Such barbarities were not committed in our time, my lord, except among the Indians."

"Quartermaster—but we are getting old fellows now," said Rohallion, with something between a laugh and a sigh. "We have often stopped the march of the French with fixed

bayonets, but we can't arrest the march of *time*."

"Aye, aye, my lord," said the old soldier, warming, and answering a friendly smile from old Jack Andrews, who was removing the breakfast equipage; "but, when at Minden, and while the French gun brigade was bowling through the six British regiments that stood there in division, we little thought that we would live to drink our grog in^d Rohallion, forty years after, hale carles, and hearty ones, too."

"If we ever *thought* at all, Girvan, which is not likely; reflection troubles a young soldier seldom, and, egad! we were beardless boys then."

"And those who were boys like ourselves then, and those who were grey-haired grenadiers of Fontenoy and Culloden—who had no need to powder their white hair—were alike mowed down together, and lay like herrings in a landing net," said Girvan, sadly.

"It was a day on which the ripe fruit and the blossom were gathered together," said Lady Rohallion, as her wheel revolved rapidly, and little Quentin sat at her feet to watch it.

"Your ladyship's speech savoureth of poetry," said the dominie, bowing; "it is even as my old friend Burns—puir Robbie Burns—would have expressed himself."

"It is ten years since the Scots Horse Guards were amalgamated with the new Life

Guard Regiments," said Rohallion, commencing a familiar topic.

"Just twelve years this summer, my lord," replied Girvan.

"And though moving slowly up the list of generals, Girvan, I have not had a regiment since."

"Among the Romans——" began the dominie.

"A regiment! it is a brigade you should have," interrupted the quartermaster, ruthlessly.

"Among the Romans," began the dominie again, when Lord Rohallion, who was full of his grievance (was there ever an old soldier without one?) spoke with something of irritation.

"I have actually been refused a brigade for service, though senior to more favoured officers; but a time may come when Government may be glad to avail themselves of my services, though I am afraid, John, that I'm getting owre auld in the horn, as the drovers say. Besides, they think that we old fellows of Minden and Bunker's Hill are as much out of date as the snap-musquets and matchlocks of King William's time. And zounds, man! there are not wanting in the Lower House certain disloyal spirits, termed financial reformers, who grudge the old soldier the day's pittance which he has won by blood and sweat, and by wasting the flower of his days among the swamps of the Helder, the fevers of the West Indies, and elsewhere."

“The devil take all fevers and reformers together—amen,” said the quartermaster; “but I believe this intended Egyptian business will be only a flash in the pan when compared with what *we* have seen.”

“Among the Romans the soldiery at first received no *stipendium*,” said the dominie, raising his voice and speaking very fast, lest he should be interrupted; “but every man served at his own proper charges.”

“That would suit our modern whigs to a hair, dominie,” said Lord Rohallion, laughing.

“Yea, even to the vinegar which he mixed with spring water as his daily drink, did he furnish all, in the early days of the Roman army.”

“Vinegar grog!” exclaimed the quartermaster with disgust; “Heaven be thanked I was not born a Roman. Such beggarly tippie would never have suited the 25th. And now, my lord, when you are at leisure, I wish to shew you a new farmstead I have erected at the Cairns of Blackhinney, and also how bravely the young trees are thriving in the oakwood shaw.”

“Glad to hear the latter, Girvan, for I agree with my worthy friend, Admiral Collingwood, that every British proprietor should plant as many oak trees as he can, to keep up our navy. ‘I wish everybody,’ said he, in one of his letters, ‘thought on this subject as I do, they would not

walk through their farms without a pocketful of acorns to drop in the hedges, and let them take their chance,' and so keep up the future wooden walls of old England."

Neither Rohallion nor the gallant old Admiral could foresee the days, when those famous "wooden walls," would be represented by screw propellers, armour clads, cupola ships, and steam rams!

Rohallion assumed his walking cane and Nivernois hat, to which he still adhered, though it had been long out of fashion, and had the flaps fastened up to its shallow crown by hooks and eyes; and, bowing ceremoniously, left the dominie to confer with the lady concerning the course of study on which little Quentin Kennedy was soon to enter, while he issued forth with his old comrade the factor to look over the estate.

Close by the haunted gate lay a fine old beech, on which a cavalier Lord of Rohallion hanged as a traitor one of his vassals whom he discovered serving as a soldier in an English regiment. It now lay prostrate, for the storm had torn it up by the roots.

"Have this removed as soon as possible, Girvan," said the old lord; "for, ugh! I never see a fallen tree, but I think of that devilish abattis we fell into at Saratoga, when the Yankees would have made an end of me, had it not been for Jack Andrews and others of the 25th."

"Aye, my lord, and some of the 17th Light

Dragoons too—under Corporal O'Lavery—you remember him?"

"Who could ever forget him that served there—who could ever forget him or his story?" exclaimed the old general flourishing his silver-headed cane; "not I, certainly. It was he who was entrusted by my Lord Rawdon as a military courier (*estafette*, the French term it), to bring me an important despatch concerning the movements of the regiment, and this despatch the Yankees were determined I should not receive, for spies had informed them of the bearer and his route. so the way was beset by riflemen. The soldier who accompanied him fell mortally wounded; O'Lavery was riddled by bullets too, yet he rode manfully on, until from loss of blood he fell from his saddle. Then Girvan, resolved that the important paper which he bore should never fall into the hands of the Yankees, he crumpled it up and thrust it into one of his wounds. I discovered it, when next morning we came upon him dying in the bush, and he had just life sufficient left to point to the fatal place where Rawdon's letter was concealed.* As one of our greatest orators said, when Martius Curtius to sacrifice himself for his country leaped into the gulf of the forum,

* "The surgeon declared the wound itself not to be mortal; but rendered so by the insertion of the despatch. Corporal O'Lavery was a native of the county of Down, where a monument, the gratitude of his countryman and commander Lord Rawdon, records his fame."—*Records of the 17th Lancers.*

he had all Rome for his spectators ; but the poor Irish corporal was alone in the midst of a desert—I quote at random, quartermaster. And yet, after all the brave deeds and service of those days to refuse me this brigade for service—zounds ! it was too bad—too bad !”

But Rohallion survived his disappointment, and the two following years glided peacefully away, at his old castle in Carrick.

CHAPTER VIII.

QUENTIN'S CHILDHOOD.

“ Ah, happy time! ah, happy time!
 The days of mirth and dream;
 When years ring out their merry chime,
 And hope and gladness gleam.
 Then how we drink the storied page,
 In boyhood's happy home:
 The marvels of the wondrous age
 Of old Imperial Rome.”—*All the Year Round.*

THE New Year's day of 1801 passed over at Rohallion amid feasting and revelling, for in the good old fashion the worthy lord, as his fathers had done before him, entertained all his people in the great hall of the tower. There the trophies were hung with green holly and scarlet berries; there the Yule log still smouldered on the hearth, and there he shook the powder from his hair, while footing it merrily with the wives and daughters of the fishers and cottars, while old Girvan hobbled away in his brigadier wig, the dominie screwing up his fiddle to discourse sweet music with the piper of Maybole, while as an interlude came the drums and fifes of the Rohallion Volunteers, to make the old castle ring to

the cheering sounds of "Lady Jean o' Rohallion's Rant;" and this hearty homeliness, together with a free distribution of gifts on "auld handsel Monday," made the lord and lady of the manor adored by their tenantry. On that day there was something for every one: to the dominie a snuff-mull, which he received with many bows, reminding the donor how "Tacitus affirmed that Tiberius prohibited the bestowal of new year gifts, which was a great saving of expense to the knights and senators." To the quartermaster a gilt-bound "Army List," to keep him in reading and reference for the ensuing year; to Elsie at the coves a lace-curchie, and to little Quentin a gallant rocking-horse. So all danced the new year in hand-in-hand, to the old song,—

"Now Yule has come and Yule has gane,
 And we hae feasted weel!
 Sae Jock maun to his flail again,
 And Jenny to her wheel."

In the ensuing spring, when fresh flowers and budding leaves came "to deck the dead season's bier;" when the aroma of fertility, warmth, and verdure came from the sunny upland slopes, and the mountain burns, as they bore brown leaves along, seemed to brawl louder over their stony beds towards the Firth of Clyde; when greener tints spread over the pastoral hills and glens about Rohallion; when the sky, long chilled by the

frost of the past winter, had a richer tone and colour; when the air was warm and pleasant as it fanned the new-turned sods—when this sweet season came, we say, the old Lord had ceased to lament having been refused a brigade in the expedition to Egypt.

By that time he had heard of the fall of his old friend and brother officer, the gallant Sir Ralph Abercrombie, and how war and disease had thinned the ranks of his army. He sorrowed for this: but his old spirit blazed up anew when he heard of how the 28th or Gloucestershire Slashers, in the Temple of the Sun, faced their rear rank about when surrounded, and defended themselves like a double wall of fire; how the Gordon Highlanders, at the bayonet's point, carried the cannon of the foe at the Tower of Mandora; how the Black Watch destroyed the boasted Invincibles, and won their scarlet plumes; and how the shrill pipes of the Highland Brigade rang in fierce defiance along the embattled heights of Nicopolis!

One name in the list of casualties made him start.

It was that of his old friend and neighbour, Colonel John Warrender of Ardgour, who fell, sword in hand, when leading the Corsican Rangers to a victorious bayonet charge against the 61st Demi-brigade.

“Oh, what a heart-stroke this is for his poor wife, Winny!” he exclaimed.

“ And Flora—poor little Flora, their daughter,” added Lady Rohallion, with her eyes full of tears.

“ She is too young to know fully the calamity that has befallen her. Order the carriage, Andrews; we’ll drive up the glen to Ardgour in an hour after this.”

“ Poor Mrs. Warrender!—she did so love her husband, and had sore misgivings that they were parting for the last time.”

“ A sad morning this will be for her, indeed!” said Lord Rohallion, laying the gazette upon the breakfast-table and gazing into the clear, bright fire, full of thought, as the battle of Alexandria seemed to come in fancy before his practised eye.

“ Now Rohallion, bethink you, if circumstances had been reversed,” said she, laying a hand caressingly on his neck, “ and if she had been reading *your* name in that paper, what my feelings would have been.”

“ The carriage would be ordered at Ardgour instead of Rohallion,” said the old Lord, with an affectionate smile; “ they may need me yet—but egad! I am *now*, perhaps, better pleased that the brigade was refused me. Warrender gone—poor Jack! and Abercrombie, too—I knew him when in command of the 69th.”

“ He died on board the flagship, my lord,” said Andrews, who, in virtue of his years and peculiar position, ventured to gratify his irrepres-

sible curiosity, by taking up the paper, to skim it at his master's back; "they landed and formed line in the water, bayonets fixed and colours flying," he continued, with a nervous voice and kindling eye; "28th and 42nd—Foot Guards and Royal Scots—I think I see them all—whoop! d—n it—why weren't *we* there?—I beg pardon, my lady," he added, in some confusion, as he proceeded in haste to remove the breakfast equipage, stumping vigorously on his left leg—in which he received a bullet at Saratoga—as he hurried away to order the carriage for the proposed visit of condolence, to which we need not invite the reader.

The treaty of Amiens which followed soon after the Egyptian campaign brought about a peace for fourteen months, and during that time, Lord Rohallion wrote repeatedly to our Ambassador at Paris concerning the little protégé who had now found a home in Carrick; but at a period when all the powers of Europe were only, as it were, taking breath and gathering strength for a greater and more deadly contest, such a trivial matter as the fate of a shipwrecked boy could gain but little attention. His lordship's letters remained unanswered, and by the 18th of May, 1803, Britain and France again drew the sword, which was never to be sheathed save on the plains of Waterloo.

Time had made little Quentin as thoroughly

at home in the castle and with the family of Rohallion, as if he had been born there.

The absence of her son with the Guards (Carlton House and the Pavilion at Brighton were decidedly more amusing than that old castle by the sea), created a void in Lady Rohallion's heart; so the strange child came just in time to fill it, and she loved him tenderly and fondly. The old Lord was never weary of chatting and playing with Quentin; and he was the especial pet and occasionally tormentor of the quartermaster, grey-haired Jack Andrews, and of old Dominie Skail, who had been long since inducted to the honourable post of tutor, and as such, after his scholastic duties were over, he daily visited the castle, in which a room was set apart for study.

The following years saw Quentin Kennedy growing up into a fine and manly boy, bold in spirit and frank in nature; yet he retained even after his tenth year much of the chubby bloom, the rosy cheeks, the plump white skin, and the golden curls of his infancy.

Lady Rohallion and her visitors thought him a perfect Cupid; but her husband and the quartermaster—particularly the latter—vowed he was a regular imp, who always broke his tobacco-pipes, tied explosives to the end of his pigtail, and played him a hundred other tricks, the result of Jack Andrews' secret education.

The dominie often shook his bag-wig solemnly,

for the boy's ways were at times very erratic and required reprehension ; but his constant friend and adherent was Lady Rohallion, who, when beholding his beauty, his gambols, and grace, or when listening to his prattle, and watching all his waggish little ways, could never think but with a sigh of the widowed and unknown mother whom all these would have gladdened, and who was, perhaps, still sorrowing for the child who had forgotten her and transferred his filial love and faith to a stranger—if, indeed, the royalist sympathies of that unfortunate mother had not been long since expiated under the guillotine.

Quentin's only annoyance existed when the Master of Rohallion, then a captain in the Guards, came home on leave, which, sooth to say, the Honourable Cosmo Crawford did as seldom as possible, the gaieties of London, club-life, the opera, and the atmosphere which surrounded the Prince of Wales, proving greater attractions than any to be found among the Highlands of Carrick. On these occasions, the boy felt sensibly how secondary a place he bore in the affections of the lady, and clung more to his friend the quartermaster.

In addition to a cold and chilling stateliness of manner, the Master—a handsome and gallant soldier, however—disliked children generally, and half-grown boys in particular ; thus if he ever spoke to Quentin, it was merely to quiz him as a

young Frenchman (a nationality which the boy angrily repudiated), to call him a frog-eater, or little Boney, a name which, through some childish memory of the past, always roused his anger.

The Master was not popular in Carrick; on his home visits, the piper of Maybole never ventured to play before *him* as before his father; no mendicant held forth his hand in hope of charity when he passed the kirk-stile on Sunday; the tenantry never gathered to welcome him back, and he had been heard to speak of a recently deceased prince as "the late Pretender," a horrible heresy in the house of Rohallion, and almost a solecism in Scottish society yet.

But our young friend was always relieved of his presence when the shooting season was over, when the summer drills of the Guards began, or when urgent letters from great but unknown friends required his return to London; and whither he departed with baggage enough for a regiment, and his English valet, whose finery, foppery, and town airs always excited the risible faculties of Lord Rohallion, and the grim contempt of the cynical veteran, Jack Andrews.

Though bright and intelligent, Quentin was too erratic to be an industrious or plodding scholar; thus his Euclid and Cornelius Nepos, &c., were frequently left to themselves, that he might act the "truant," and have a day's fly-fishing in the Girvan or the winding Doon: or a ramble with

his friend the gamekeeper through the preserves, where the deer came out of the fir woods to steal the dominie's turnips, and where the dark plover and the golden pheasant lurked among the sombre whin or feathery bracken bushes.

Then the "Life of Valentine and Orson," with the achievements of gallant Jack, the foe of all giants, together with similar ancient lore, in which the ex-quartermaster indulged him (generally about the time when his poor half-pay became due) together with the pungent military yarns of Jack Andrews, always proved sad opponents to the ponderous classics of Dominie Skail; and, as Quentin grew older, Cornelius Nepos, Tacitus, Æschylus, and others, were alike neglected, and frequently neither entreaties or threats would substitute them for the pages of Smollett and Fielding—the Dickens and Thackeray of the preceding age.

Then the dominie would grow wrathful; but all without avail, for the boy was droll and loveable in his ways, and as the old Lord said, "would wind them all round his little finger." Thus in the oddly-assorted society of that sequestered castle he picked up a strange smattering of knowledge on many subjects.

Sometimes he was present when Lord Rohalion and John Girvan had long consultations concerning farming and stock management, arable and pastoral; planting belts of pine for sheltering

corn and deer; draining bogs and swamps; embanking or reclaiming; thatching farm-towns anew, and so forth—consultations which always ended in a jorum of hot toddy, and a reference to the war and chances of invasion, which naturally led to a mental parade of his majesty's 25th Foot, and old personal reminiscences, varying from the days of Minden down to Saratoga, Bunker's Hill, and Brandywine, with Corporal O'Lavery of the 17th, and Lord Rawdon's famous despatch. *Then* agriculture and its patron, the Baronet of Ulbter, were voted a double bore, and everything gave place to "shop" and pipeclay.

At other times Quentin was present when curious arguments ensued over a pipe and glass of grog between his preceptor and the ruddy-visaged quartermaster, who was wont to treat the ancients and their modes of warfare with supreme contempt. Thus, if he extolled Brown Bess and her bayonet, which the French could never withstand, Dominic Skail brought the Parthians into the field, and told him how at close quarters with the Roman Legion they were broken; but how the troops of Crassus broke those same legions in turn, by the dexterity with which they used their bows, never failing to wind up with a reference to the Caledonian warriors who routed the Romans in the days of old, and the schiltrons or massed spearmen of Wight Wallace in later times, for the dominic had all the history of Harry

the Minstrel by heart, and like the quartermaster, his patriotism had been no way lessened by many a jovial night spent with their friend Burns in his old farm-house of Lochlea or Mossiel.

Thus Quentin's mind became gradually imbued by quaint ideas, and filled with a curious mixture of military, legendary, and historic lore. The very air he breathed was full of patriotism, for he was in the land of Burns—in Carrick, the ancient lordship of the kingly Bruces; and many a story the dominie told him of the time when the Earls of Cassilis, the Lords of Rohallion, the Lairds of Blairquhan, and other noblesse of Carrick, had their town mansions in Maybole; when love was made through barred helmets, and when there were hunting, and hosting and foraying; when castles were stormed and granges burned; when the Black Vault of Dunure saw Danish blood stream from its gutters after Largs was won; and the Abbot of Corseregal roasting on an iron grille ten years after the Reformation. But the story that Quentin loved best was of the Gipsy King who lured away the fair Countess of Cassilis, and of the long years of captivity she spent in the grim old tower of Maybole, where, to this day, we may see the likenesses of herself and her rash lover, carved in stone upon the upper oriel.

Many a day they spent together, this patient dominie and his playful pupil, wandering among

the ruins of the Castle of Kilhenzie, in feudal times a stronghold of the Kennedies, and there for hours they were wont to sit, under the aged and giant tree which still stands near its southern wall—a tree twenty-two feet in girth, and so vast that it covers nearly the eighth of an acre.

“On that tree many a bold reiver, gipsy loon, and landlouping Southron has been hung in his boots by the auld Kennedies o’ Kilhenzie,” the dominie would say; “they were a dour, stern, and warlike stock, boasting themselves to be kean-na-tigh, or, as the name bears, ‘head of the race;’ and who can say, Quentin, but *you* may be their lineal descendant, and if every head wears its ain bonnet, be Laird of Kilhenzie yet? yea, restored to your proper estate after all your wanderings, even as Telemachus was, who in childhood was also saved miraculously from the sea.”

Then the boy would look up to the ivy-covered masses of the crumbling wall, with its gaping windows, through which the gleds and hoodie-crows were flying, and feel strange throbbings and emotions wakened in his heart by the dominie’s words; and there he often came alone to loiter, and think and dream over what his friend had said, till his musings took a tangible form, and ultimately, in all his day-dreams, he came to identify the old castle with *himself*—he knew not why.

When Quentin was brought first to Rohallion, he was wont to pray to his "blessed Mother who was in heaven," and to lisp the name of "la Mère de Dieu" with great reverence, to the utter scandal and bewilderment of Dominie Skail, who smelt the old leaven of Prelacy and Popery strong in this, for he believed only in the Kirk of Scotland as by law established, confirmed by the Revolution Settlement and Treaty of Union (though sadly outraged by the restoration of patronage in 1712); and such language, he averred, was rank hanging matter in an adult!

Quentin's dark eyes were wont to sparkle and flash on hearing these rebukes, or France abused, as she was pretty sure to be, daily, by every one in those days; but after a time all these emotions and ideas gave place to local influences, and he settled down into a quiet little Scottish schoolboy, though, as we have said, somewhat of a truant withal.

His mind sobered and changed even as his clustering golden curls grew into dark and shining chestnut though dreamlike memories would still steal upon his mind—memories that came he knew not whence.

Once when the dominie pointed to a Vandyke that hung in the great hall, representing Lady Jean of Rohallion, and told him that "she was an evil-minded woman, who persecuted the saints of God in her time; and that the cross at her

girdle was the hammer of Beelzebub, and an emblem of her damnable apostasy from the pure and covenanted Kirk of Scotland," the boy's eyes would assume their gleam, and then a pure, soft smile, as he said that "his mother in France wore just such a cross as that, and that he would love the picture for her sake."

Then Dominie Skail would groan in spirit over "the bad bluid" that boiled in a heart so young and tender, and stamping up and down the hall in his square-toed shoes, would openly express his fears that "the bairn was a veritable young Claverhouse!"

On other occasions, and they were many, when Quentin was alone, and gazing on the sea that frothed so white about the Partan Craig, out of the perplexing mists of memory came the dream-like incidents of the wreck on that gloomy November night; his loving father's pale and despairing face, when the ship went down and left them all struggling amid the cold waves of a dark and stormy sea; and with these memories came others beyond that time, softer and dearer, like the recollections of a prior existence.

There was the cathedral, with its lights and music at mass; the bridge, the river, and the windmill; how surely he should know them all again! And so pondering and dreaming thus, he would lie for hours on the sunny bank that sloped southward from the cliff of Rohallion, while the

blue Firth of Clyde that chafed upon the rocks below, came faintly and dreamily to his ear.

Thus his vision was turned inward, though his eyes were perhaps fixed on the blue ether overhead, where the sea mews were revolving and the great eagle soaring aloft; or on the distant tower and Tolbooth of Maybole that stood clear and dark against the sunset-flush—the wavy undulations of the Carrick hills: the blue peaks of Arran that rose afar off, or the nearer coast of Cunninghame, chequered by golden light on violet coloured shadow.

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUARTERMASTER'S SNUGGERY.

“Ambition is dead within me: but there is some satisfaction in a queen’s commission, with half-pay at the end of t.”—*Once a Week*.

QUENTIN KENNEDY loved the venerable dominie, but was undoubtedly bored by his pedantry, and to escape it, once actually disappeared for three entire days, to the utter dismay of the whole household at Rohallion, when it was naturally supposed that he had been kidnapped by gipsies, or carried off by the smugglers, who frequented the coves in the rocks when the nights were dark and gusty; that he had been carried off by the pressgang from Ayr, or had fallen over the cliffs when bird-nesting, until Elsie Irvine arrived at the castle, in tears and tribulation, to announce that he had cunningly secreted himself in the “saut-bucket” of her husband’s clinker-built boat, and gone with the little fleet from the adjacent bay to the herring fishery.

When Lady Winifred’s old friend and school companion, Eleonora Hamilton (then Countess of Eglinton) visited the castle with her two un-

married daughters, the Ladies Liliass and Mary—which she did once yearly—it was always a happy time for Quentin; for then he had two little companions with whom to romp and swing in the old terraced gardens; for whom to gather birds' eggs and butterflies in the old woods of Rohallion, and before whom he could exhibit his boyish skill in shooting at the butts, or hooking a brown trout in the Girvan or the Doon; but of the two, his chief friend and playmate was the fair-haired, blue-eyed, and softly-voiced little Lady Mary, with whom he generally opened the dance at the annual kirn, or harvest-home, which Lord Rohallion always gave to the field-labourers in the great barn of the home-farm, and on these occasions, the brightest ribbons that Maybole could produce, together with the dominie's violin and Pate's pipes, were in full requisition.

On a November night, about four years after the boy's arrival at Rohallion, his two friends, the dominie and ex-quartermaster, were seated in the latter's apartment discussing, which they did very frequently, the boy's pranks and progress, with a pipe of tobacco and a jug of hot toddy at the same time.

John Girvan's "suuggery," as he termed it, was in a square tower at an angle of the barbican wall of the old castle. The loopholes for defence by arrows or arquebusses yet remained under the window-sills, to enfilade all approach to the gate-

way. They had been made with special reference to the English and the Kennedies of Kilhenzie ; but there was a chance now that "the French might come by the same road."

The chamber was small, but very cosy, papered with a queer old pattern over the wainscoting ; the walls were of vast strength, the windows arched, the fire-place deep, and lined with shining Delft squares of the Puritan times, representing bulbous-shaped Dutch skaters, and the instructive old Scriptural story of Susannah and the Elders.

The dark oak floor was minus a carpet, for the quartermaster had been long enough under canvas and in barracks to despise such a luxury.

Over the mantelpiece was a gaudily-coloured print of the Marquis of Cornwallis in full uniform, with a huge wig and cocked hat, New York and a hecatomb of slaughtered Yankees in the distance. Under this work of art hung the quartermaster's old regimental sword, with its spring shell, his crimson sash and gilt gorget, graven with a thistle, and the (to him) magic number "25"—his household *lares*, as the dominie called them.

Bound with iron, an old baggage-trunk, that had been over half the habitable globe, bore the same number and regiment.

Pipes, whips, and spurs and boot-tops, dog-eared Army Lists and empty bottles, littered all the

mantelshelf and window-bunkers, and with some very wheezy-looking old chairs made up the appurtenances of the room, through which the fire shed a blaze so cheerful, that the dominie had no desire, when he heard the wind moaning through the battlements above, to face the blast which howled down the lonely glen that lay beyond the haunted gate.

A broiled poor man o' mutton and fried trout from the Girvan smoked on the table beside the toddy jugs, and all within looked cheery, as these two oddly-assorted friends, who had scarcely an idea in common, sat down to supper.

"Aye, dominie, it *is* a dreich night!" said the quartermaster, filling his pipe; "but your jug is empty, brew again; and now wi' a' your book-learning, can you tell me the name o' the man who invented this same whisky?"

"Many a night in Mossgiel, wi' Burns, we've drank to his memory, whoever he was," replied the dominie; "but odds my heart! John Girvan, I have scarcely got the better o' the fright that brat o' a laddie gave us, when he disappeared and ran off to the herring fishery."

The quartermaster laid down his pipe gravely, for he and the dominie had a perpetual disagreement about how Quentin was to be educated. The former laboured hard to teach him the use of fire-arms (Brown Bess in particular), to box, and to handle the pistol and broadsword, saying, that

without such knowledge he would never be a man; while the poor dominie laboured still harder to infuse in his nature a love for literature and the arts of peace, and though compelled to console himself for Quentin's rapid progress in those of war, by some musty quotation concerning the Actian games which were instituted in honour of the victory over Marc Antony, he could not resist asking,

“To what end do you teach the laddie all this military nonsense—this use of sword and musket, John?”

“For drill and discipline, dominie—drill and discipline.”

“Both excellent things in their way, quartermaster; the Romans, who conquered all the world——”

“South of Forth and Clyde—haud ye there, dominie!”

“Well, they conquered by the force of their discipline, and as that declined, so did their power; but to what profitable end, I say, teach the bairn all these havers about wars, battles, and bombshelling? Do you wish to make of him a tearing, swearing, tramping dragoon, such as we read of in the days of that atrocious Claverhouse?”

“Not at all, dominie.”

“Then,” asked Skail, angrily, “what would ye make of him?”

“A man, where you would make him a Molly.”

The dominie shook his head, and as he did so the bag of his wig shook pendulously behind him.

“John Girvan, bairns should be taught early to delight, not in arts which conduce to the destruction of human life, but in such as lead to charity, mercy, benevolence, and humanity.”

“Quite right, dominie, and for utterly ignoring all these, I know a man of peace who had his lugs cropped off his head.”

“Cropped?”

“Shaven clean off his head by a knife.”

“Barbarous! barbarous!”

“But just, dominie—strictly just. Did you ever hear how our 28th, or North Gloucestershire, came to be called *the Slashers*?”

“Sooth to say, John, I never heard o’ them at all.”

“Well, pass the bottle, and I care na if I tell you. A company of otrs was quartered with them in a town on the Canadian frontier. It was during the winter of ’79, when the atmosphere was so cold that the hoar-frost on our sentries’ greatcoats made them look for a’ the world like figures round a bridecake; stiff half-and-half grog froze before you could drink it; the bugles froze with the buglers’ breath; flesh came off if you touched a swordblade or musket barrel, and the air was full of glittering particles. We had to saw our ration beef in slices, and half roast our loaves before we could cut them.

Men were found dead in the snow every day—stiff and frozen; in fact, there was no way of keeping ourselves warm, do what we might. I don't know how many degrees it was *below* the freezing point, but the cold was awful, and it seemed as if the mercury was frozen too!

“Amid the severity of that Canadian winter, the mayor of the town, a democratic and discontented ruffian, refused billets to the soldiers' wives, and the poor women and helpless children of the 28th nearly all perished in the streets; in the mornings they were found frozen like statues, or half-buried among the snow; but severely was the mayor punished, for one day as he sat at dinner the table was suddenly surrounded by a party of savages, in war-paint, with hunting shirts, fur cloaks, moccassins, and wampum belts. They whooped, yelled, brandished their tomahawks, and then dragging the mayor from the table, sliced off both his ears. After this they at once disappeared, and it was not known for some days that these pretended savages were soldiers of the 28th whose wives had perished through his inhumanity. It was for this that we first called them ‘slashers,’ a title which their bravery in the war fully confirmed.”

“The wretch was rightly served,” said the dominie; “and truly did our old friend Rob write of ‘man's inhumanity to man making countless thousands mourn.’”

“Aye, dominie, that poem is as gude as any sermon that ever was written!” exclaimed the quartermaster.

“But to return to Quentin, it is wi’ such barbarous stories as that you have told me you fill the bairn’s head, John, at an age when his mind should be impressed wi’ ideas of charity and mercy. How noble it was of the great Constantine, to employ his son, as soon as he could write, in signing pardons and granting boons. Under favour, John, the pen is a nobler instrument than the sword.”

“Then how about Wight Wallace and the Bruce of Carrick, dominie, eh? Had they never learned to handle aught but a goosequill, where would our auld mother Scotland have been to-day; so shut pans, ye auld gomeril, and brew your toddy.”

The dominie chuckled and said,

“I have worn a red coat mysel’, quartermaster, for when Thurot was off the west coast, I was a year in the volunteers under the Earl o’ Glencairn.”

“The best year of your life, dominie!”

“I had a sword, a musket and a bayonet. ‘Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just.’”

“And how did you feel when you saw the beacons blazing on the Carrick hills, and heard the drums dinging before you, on the night o’ the *false alarm*?” asked the old soldier with a sly smile.

“I shouted like Julian when sent to war, ‘Oh Plato! Plato! what a task for a philosopher.’”

“The deevil you did!” exclaimed Girvan, puffing vigorously; “and what then?”

“Glencairn fined me twenty merks Scots, for speaking in the ranks.”

“Fined—I’d have flogged you at the drum-head wi’ the cat-o’-nine-tails.”

“The Romans used a vine sapling, as we find in Juvenal, and——”

“Bother those Romans, whoever they were, if they really ever existed at all! You are ever and aye stuffing Quentin wi’ these Romans and their sayings and doings.”

“Indubitably, and I would that I could teach him all that was ever known to the seven wise men o’ Greece.”

“And who were they?”

“Bias, Pittacus, Solon, Chilo, Periander, Cleobulus, and Thales,” replied the dominie with singular volubility; “all men who flourished before the Christian era.”

“Powder and pipeclay! Egad, I’m glad they don’t flourish now. Their names sound just like those of a regiment of niggers we had at the siege of Boston. Pardon, dominie,—but I must have my joke. I wish I could teach Quentin something of fortification,” he added thoughtfully, as he watched the pale smoke from his pipe curling up towards the ceiling.

“It is an art almost coeval wi’ man,” responded the other approvingly.

“True,” rejoined the quartermaster; “for did not Cain build a city with a wall round it on Mount Libuan, and call it after his son Enoch?”

“Right, quartermaster, right!” said the pedant, rubbing his hands with pleasure. “Yea, and the Babylonians, after the waters of the flood, built them cities, and wi’ strong ramparts encompassed them about; but I hope, if I live, to hear Quentin Kennedy expound on all that and more, in the pulpit of Rohallion kirk.”

“What!” roared the quartermaster, in a tone that made the dominie start back; “make a minister of him?”

“Yea, John Girvan; and wherefore not?”

“He has about as much vocation for the kirk as I have. Would you have him drag out his life like a drone in a Scotch country manse, when a’ the warld is up and stirring? Quentin is a penniless lad wi’ a proud spirit, so he must e’en follow the drum, as his father followed it before him.”

“His father before him, say ye? Some puir fellow, the son o’ an outlawed Jacobite, doubtless. I dinna think, quartermaster, that *he* made much o’ the trade o’ war; a trade that is clean against scripture in every respect.”

“Dominie, did not Richard Cameron, who fell bravely, battling for the right, at Airs Moss, only a hundred and twenty years ago, know every cut of his good broadsword, as well as the texts of his Bible? A man’s hands should always be

ready to keep his head ; thus, whatever may be before him, I have taught Quentin to fence and to shoot."

"No harm, perhaps, in either, for I remember me," replied the inveterate quoter, "that Bishop Latimer says of himself 'my poor father was as diligent to teach me to shoot, as to learn any other thing.' But anent Quentin Kennedy, you and I will never be able to agree, John, so——"

"We'll e'en leave the lad's future to himself, dominie. I think he has some right to be consulted, and, odds heart ! he is but a bairn yet ; a bairn, though, that can handle his pistol as well as my other pupil, the Master Cosmo."

"Fie, fie, John Girvan ! and a most sinfu' use has the Master made o' his skill."

"He has paraded a good many bucks and bullies by daylight ; but what would you have an officer to do ? If insulted, he must challenge ; if challenged, he must go out, or quit the service and society too."

The dominie shook his head solemnly in deprecation of such sentiments, and said—

"I fear me muckle the Master will meet wi' his match some day, and a black one it will be for the house o' Rohallion ; but now for my *deoch an doruis*. Pass the dram bottle. Ugh ! the road down the glen will be eerie to-night, and I can never forget that awfu' morning, John, when I saw the wraith of Cosmo's uncle, standing at the

castle-gate, in his wig, cocked hat, and red coat, silent and grim, even as the ghost of Cæsar, on the night before Philippi."

"Wi' a' the whisky you had under your belt, I wonder you didna see *twa* o' them."

"Jest not—jest not," said the dominie, with, we are sorry to say, half-tipsy solemnity, as he drained his *deoch* to the last drop, tied a large yellow bandanna over his three-cornered hat and under his chin, assumed his walking-staff, and prepared to depart. "I hope the servant-lass will air the night-cap that she puts wi' the Bible at my bedside every night."

The quartermaster laughed slily, as he knew that the cap referred to was a stoup of strong ale, which, in the old Scottish fashion, the dominie's servant always placed with the Bible on a stool near his bed.

The poor dominie's potations mounted to his head as he began to move, and, striking his cane emphatically as he stepped away, he sung, in somewhat uncertain tones :—

"My kimmer and I lay down to sleep,
 Wi' twa pint stoups at our bed's feet :
 And aye when we wakened we drank them dry,
 Sae what think ye o' my kimmer and I?
 Toddlin' butt and toddlin' ben,
 When round as a neep ye come toddlin' hame!"

And so he departed in the dark, in a mood that neither brownie nor bogle could scare.

CHAPTER X.

FLORA WARRENDER.

“Lovely floweret, lovely floweret,
Oh! what thoughts your beauties move—
When I pressed thee to my bosom,
Little did I know of love.
In Castile I never entered—
From Leon too, I withdrew,
Where I was in early boyhood,
And of love I nothing knew.”

Poetry of Spain.

So without change, the joyous and dreamy period of Quentin's boyhood glided rapidly away, in studies, amusements, and occasionally mischief, such as throwing kail-castocks down the dominie's *lum*, and blowing tam-o'-reekies* through his keyhole, until about his seventeenth year, when the Castle of Rohallion became the home of another inmate.

Mrs. Warrender of Ardgour, widow of Lord Rohallion's old friend and companion-in-arms, Colonel John Warrender, who, as we have related, fell at the head of the Corsican Rangers in the Egyptian expedition, died in London,

* Lighted tow blown through a cabbage-stock.

bequeathing to the care, tuition, and trust of Lady Winifred her only daughter, in charge of whom Lady Eglinton arrived from England in the summer of 1806, accompanied by her two unmarried daughters, Liliás and Mary, now growing up into tall and handsome young women, with whom Quentin could scarcely venture to romp and race as in former days.

It was evening when an outrider, as a sort of *avant-courier*, arrived from Maybole to announce that the Countess was coming with her charge; so Lady Rohallion assumed her black silk capuchin, her husband his cane and jaunty old-fashioned triangular Nivernois (to which he rigidly adhered, despite the almost general adoption of the present form of round hat), and summoning Quentin, who was busy among the fire-arms in the gun-room, they set forth for a stroll along the avenue to meet their friends.

“Poor Jack Warrender!” said Lord Rohallion, musingly; “I wonder whether his girl resembles him?”

“I should think not,” replied Lady Winifred, smiling, as her recollections of the late Colonel’s personal appearance were not flattering.

“I have not seen the child for four or five years.”

“Flora will be past sixteen now. She had her mother’s forehead, and soft, dovelike eyes; the Colonel was a stern and rough-featured man.”

“But a good-hearted fellow, Winny, as ever cracked a joke or a bottle. I saw him first as a jolly ensign, carrying the union colour of his regiment, at Saratoga, and, egad, my dear, that wasn't yesterday.”

“Flora's mother died of a broken heart.”

“She was always delicate,” said Lord Rohal-lion.

“Ah, like most men, you don't believe in that kind of death; but she never recovered the shock of her husband's fall in Egypt, and thus, after five years' constant ailing and pining, she has passed away to her place of rest.”

“Poor woman!”

“What is the difference of age between Flora and our Cosmo?”

“A suggestive question.”

“How?”

“Never mind, my lord.”

“Some sixteen years or more, I think. You should remember best, Winny, their ages.”

After this they walked on in silence, the lady, already match-making and scheming out certain matters with reference to the young heiress of Ardgour, had her mind bent on futurity; while the old lord's thoughts were with the past, full of other days and other scenes, when youth and hope went hand in hand—days, which, in the wars of Napoleon, were being fast forgotten by the world at large.

The evening was beautiful ; the air was still and calm, though at times a breeze stirred gently the foliage of the sycamores of that stately avenue which led from the haunted gate to the ancient highway from Maybole—trees which had cast their shadows on many a generation of the Crawfords of Rohallion, who had gambolled along that avenue in infancy, and tottered down it in age ; and since the days of King James VI. they had seen many a son of the house go forth with his sword and return no more, for many of them have fallen in domestic feuds and foreign wars.

On the uplands the golden grain was waving, but there was no sound in the air save the voice of the corncrake in the fields, the hum of the summer bee, the plaintive notes of the cushat-dove among the foliage of the oak-wood shaw, or the flash of the bull-trout in the linn that bubbled on one side of the avenue, and disappeared under a quaint arch, on each side of which stood two moss-grown lions sejant, the armorial supporters which the family of Rohallion inherited from Sir Raynold Crawford, high sheriff of Ayrshire, the uncle of Sir William Wallace of Elderslie.

Quentin, who had been in advance with a couple of barking terriers, now came running back, waving his hat, to announce that Lady Eglinton's carriage was coming bowling along the dusty road ; and just as he spoke it wheeled into the echoing

avenue, where the horses' hoofs crashed among the gravel.

The driver, who was seated on a splendid ham-mercloth (with the dragons, *vert*, vomiting fire) reined up on perceiving Lord and Lady Rohallion, and the servants at once threw down the steps as their mistress desired to alight.

Assisted by her host, she stepped down, a stately woman of a noble presence, considerably older than her friend, Winifred Maxwell, being past her sixtieth year, but still bent on being young despite wrinkles and other little indications of "the enemy." She wore the then fashionable little bonnet of green and blue, or union velvet, as it was named, in honour of Ireland, a large chequered Burdett kerchief over her neck and shoulders, and her whole person was redolent of hair powder and perfume, as her black satin robe swept over the gravel.

Her two daughters sprang forth after her, accompanied by the new visitor, (of whom more anon,) all three handsome and lady-like young girls, faultless in symmetry, delicacy, and refinement, and all possessed of considerable beauty, and looking happy, blooming, and smiling, in their Leghorn gipsy hats, which were wreathed with flowers.

"Welcome, my dear Lady Eglinton," said Rohallion, bowing like an old-fashioned courtier of Versailles or Holyrood, as he planted his little

Nivernois under his left arm, and gave his right hand to the Countess to lead her up the avenue ; “unlike your humble servant, egad, madam, you grow younger every day—and then your travelling costume—I vow it is charming.”

“My lord,” said the old lady, smiling, “you are still quite a Lothario, and as complimentary as ever. My girls at least have the latest London fashions, but I prefer the bonnet of 1801, as being more becoming my style—perhaps I should say, my years.”

We question whether this amiable lady and her daughters in “the latest London fashion,” would have been in the mode now, as their narrow skirts made them exactly resemble the figures we see in the little Noah’s ark.

“And this is Flora Warrender,” said Lord Rohallion (after the usual greetings were over), kissing the girl’s hand and forehead with kindness and regard ; “welcome here, child, for the sake of your father. Many a day Jack Warrender and I have been under fire together, and often we have shared our grog and our biscuit—long before you saw the light, Flora.”

Her fine eyes filled as the old Lord spoke, and a beautiful expression passed over her soft, fair face. She was in second mourning—muslin with black spots ; and her gipsy hat with its crape bows gave her a very picturesque look. She had sandalled shoes on her feet, that, like her

hands, were small and very finely shaped. Her ear-rings and bracelets were of brown Tunbridge wood, then the simple fashion when not in full dress.

“We have brought a sweet companion for you, Quentin,” said Lady Mary, laughing, as she presented both her hands to her young friend; “won’t she be quite a little wife for you?”

“Mary!” said her mamma, in an admonitory tone.

“Of course, mamma, you know I am much too old for Quentin.”

“Too tall, at least, to talk nonsense,” replied Lady Eglinton, whose ideas of deportment belonged to the last century, and whose old-fashioned stateliness always abashed Quentin, who blushed like a great schoolboy as he was, and played nervously with his little hat.

“What, mamma!” persisted Mary, “mayn’t I still flirt with Quentin?”

But her mother, who, with all her kindness of heart, had always doubts about the wisdom of lavishing so much attention on a strange child (whose future and antecedents were alike obscure), as the Rohallion family bestowed on poor Quentin Kennedy, turned away to speak with her host and hostess, leaving the young people to themselves, while the carriage, with its double imperial, was driven round to the stable court.

"I hope you have had a pleasant journey from the South?" said Lady Rohallion.

"We had a break-down at York, and I was sorely tired when we reached Edinburgh. There I was somewhat recompensed by hearing Kemble in *Macbeth*, and Mrs. Kemble sing the new fashionable ballad, 'The Blue Bells of Scotland,' at the conclusion of the piece; but the candle-snuffers neglected our box so much, that, before the farce, we were driven to the card assembly in the new room in George-street, where, for a dull little town, there was a pretty genteel assemblage; though the dresses of the women were five years behind London, I was glad to see hair-powder still worn in such profusion."

"Since the Union," said Lady Rohallion, "Edinburgh has been a city of the dead, and very different from what our grandmothers described it."

"A veritable village, where one meets none above the rank of mere professional men, struggling hard, poor fellows, to keep up appearances."

"But at the assembly, mamma, there was *one* person of position," said Lady Jane.

"True, child—the young Earl of Aboyne, whose name was unfortunately associated with that of the late unhappy Queen of France, Marie Antoinette."

"Ah, yes," said Rohallion, laughing, "I remember that the Polignacs spoke maliciously of

her dancing *Ecossaises* with him at the balls of Madame d'Ossun."

"We went with him to Corri's Concerts, which are led by Signor Stablini, and also to see the storming of Seringapatam, opposite the New College, 'the wonder of the English metropolis, for the last twelve months,' as the papers have it. I have brought your ladyship the 'Last Minstrel,' the new poem of that clever gentleman, Mr. Walter Scott, which has just appeared; Mr. Constable's shop at the Cross was quite besieged by inquirers for it; and for your lordship I have the Gazettes detailing the captures of Martinique and Guadaloupe."

"I thank you—they will be a rare treat for me and for old John Girvan, who enjoys the reversion of all my military literature."

"At Edinburgh we had quite a chapter of accidents. One of Lord Eglinton's favourite horses came in dead lame at the Leith Races; then my abigail left me abruptly, having gained a prize of two thousand guineas in the State lottery, and with it an offer of marriage from a dissenting minister. A wheel came off the carriage just as we were descending that steep old thoroughfare named the West Bow, and by this accident all our new bonnets from the Gallery of Fashion in the High-street were destroyed; it also caused a fracas between our poor coachman and a lieutenant of the City Guard, who, with his silver epaulettes on, and all the airs of office,

was drumming a woman out of town. The fracas caused a three days' detention, as one of the bailies, a democratic grocer, threatened to send our coachman on board the pressing-tender at Leith for contumacy; but ultimately and happily, the name of Lord Eglinton terrified the saucy patch into complaisance. Then we heard of foot-pads infesting the Lanark-road, but fortunately we had the escort of some of the Scots Greys who were conveying French prisoners to the West Country, so we reached Maybole without any untoward accident."

While the Countess was rehearsing the adventures of her journey, Lord Rohallion, partly oblivious of her and of her daughters, had been absorbed by Flora, in whose soft features he sought in vain for the stern eyebrows, the high nose and cheekbones of her father the colonel.

Lady Rohallion glanced at their ward, from time to time, with mingled satisfaction and interest, as she had certain views regarding her, and these were nothing less than a marriage, a few years hence, between her and Cosmo, the Master, an idea which had strengthened every day she looked towards Ardgour, the well-wooded heights of which were visible from the windows of Rohallion.

"But man proposes, and God disposes," says the proverb. How these views were realized, we shall come in time to see.

All unaware of the plots forming against her in the busy brain of her mother's friend, Flora had already drawn near Quentin, and, surveying him with something of wonder and interest in her fine eyes, she said—

“So you are the little boy of whom I have heard so much in the letters of Lady Rohallion to mamma?”

“I am Quentin Kennedy, Miss Warrender.”

“Who was rescued from that horrible wreck?”

“Yes.”

“You are not so *very* little, though.”

“I am taller than *you*,” replied our young friend, in a tone of pique.

“But I look the eldest.”

“We are much of an age; I heard Lady Rohallion say so.”

“I think I shall like you.”

“I am sure that I shall like you very much!” responded Quentin, blushing in spite of himself. “You know that we are to be companions, and learn our studies together?”

“And such delightful walks we shall have in this old avenue,” said she, looking up at the grand old sycamores, between which the golden sunset fell in flakes of warm light.

Thus the boy and girl were friends at once.

About five was then the fashionable dinner-hour: thus, as Lady Eglinton had arrived later, a few friends and neighbours came to sup at Rohallion.

The conversation all ran on rents, agriculture, and politics; high-toryism had full sway. Thus Napoleon, the Corsican tyrant—who was averred to have copied Alexander in Egypt, Cæsar in Italy, and Charlemagne in France, no bad example surely—together with Sir Francis Burdett, and the atrocious opposition party, were very liberally devoted to the infernal gods.

The younger ladies idled over the piano, in the old-fashioned yellow damask drawing-room. The faithless Quentin, apparently quite oblivious of the presence of his former friend, Lady Mary, was quite fascinated by the new visitor, whom he had innumerable matters to tell and to show.

The worthy Lord smiled benignantly as he watched them, and, while taking a pinch of the Prince's mixture from the gold-enamelled box, which had been presented to him by H.R.H. the Duke of York, he remarked to an old friend, who, in powder, wide cuffs, pigtail, and knee-breeches, seemed the counterpart of himself, that "truly we lived in rapid and wonderful times."

Poor Lord Rohallion! he could little foresee the time when posterity would be flying over Europe at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and when, instead of powdering his cherished pigtail, he might have it cut by machinery—the Victorian age of Crystal Palaces, crinoline, and chloroform—of spirit-rapping, wordy patriotism, and paper collars.

CHAPTER XI.

LOVE, AND MATTERS PERTAINING THERETO.

“They would sit and sigh,
And look upon each other and conceive
Not what they ailed; yet something did they ail,
And yet were well—and yet they were *not* well;
And what was their disease they could not tell.”

ACCORDING to a recent novelist, “the happiest portions of existence are the most difficult to chronicle.” As we approach that period of Quentin’s career, which was indeed his happiest, we experience something of this difficulty; and having much concerning his adventures to relate, must glance briefly at the gradual change from boyhood into youth—from youth to manhood, almost prematurely, for, by the course of events, misfortunes came early; and somewhat abruptly was Quentin thrust forth into the great battle of life.

But we anticipate.

At that happy time, when he had neither thought nor care—no past to regret, and no future to dread, Flora Warrender and Quentin were in the bloom of their youth. The girl was already

highly accomplished ; but Dominic Skail, when acting as tutor to the lad, strove to imbue *her* with some love for classical lore, and he bored her accordingly.

In winter especially, the old castle was dull and visitors were few. The old quartermaster talked to her of Minden and Saratoga ; of proceeding for leagues upon leagues in heavy marching order up to the neck in snow ; of scalp-hunting Choctaws and Cherokees, tomahawks and war-paint. The parish minister, fearing that she had become "tainted with Episcopacy during her sojourn in the English metropolis," dosed her with such gloomy theology as can be found nowhere out of Scotland, mingled with local gossip, which often took the form of scandal ; the dominie prosed away "anent" the Romans, or of chemical action, the laws of gravitation, the dogmas of Antichrist, and the dreadful views of society taken by the Corsican usurper and his blood-smeared Frenchmen, till the young heiress felt her head spin. Lord Rohallion, whose ideas were chiefly military, and Lady Winifred, whose thoughts ran chiefly on housewifery and acting doctor to all the children on the estate, were not very amusing either, so she turned with joy and pleasure to her new friend Quentin Kennedy, who was ever ready for a gallop into the country, a ramble in the woods, or a romp in the garden.

Long and many were the confidences between

them, for both were orphans, and they had thus many emotions in common.

He told her in detail what she had already heard, and what all in the Bailiewicks of Carrick, Kyle, and Cunninghame knew, the story of his being saved from the wreck of an unknown ship, whose whole crew perished, and that his father, who had been a Scottish officer in the service of Monsieur, was drowned with them; that *now*, he could barely shadow out his thin spare figure, and pale and anxious face, it seemed so long since then; that save the Crawfords of Rohallion, he had no friends on earth that he knew of, and that he was to become a soldier, he believed—at least his good friend Mr. Girvan always said so, and that it was his own wish.

“A soldier!” repeated Flora; “my poor papa was one, and those horrid French killed him. Oh that I were a man, to join with you in a life of such peril and adventure! But Lady Rohallion says I am to be a soldier’s wife,” she added, smiling, and burying her pretty nostrils in a thick moss rose.

“To be married?”

“Yes; she says that the Master of Rohallion is to marry me, whenever he returns home.”

“And do you love him, Flora?”

“I don’t know,” she replied, blushing as red as the rose in her hand, and casting down her dark eyelashes.

“ Why ?”

“ Because, Quentin, I never saw him.”

“ Not even at Ardgour ?”

“ No, nor in London, for when my dear mamma was there, the Master was always at Windsor or Brighton with the Guards.”

“ Then why are you to marry him ?” persisted Quentin.

“ Because I am told that it will be very convenient for all parties, as the lands of Rohallion and those of Ardgour march together for miles over hill and glen,” replied Flora, using the Scottish phrase for “ adjoin.”

Then she would tell him, with all the kindness and friendship of Lady Rohallion, how sorely she missed the extreme tenderness and gentleness of her own dear mother, and how that beloved parent sunk like a bruised reed, nor ever rallied since the terrible morning when news came to Ardgour that her father had fallen in battle under Abercrombie, and his general's letter and the Duke of York's too, alike failed to afford the consolation they expressed.

There was no love-making in confidences such as these ; but both were young ; the lad was handsome, sturdy, and impetuous. Flora was winning in manner and delicately beautiful, with soft dove-like dark eyes of violet-grey, and lashes that were almost black like her hair ; and such intercourse, if it was pleasant and delightful, was

perilous work, and apt to lead to the development of a friendship that certainly would *not* be platonic.

When climbing the beetling cliffs that overhung the waves, the sea-pinks and wild flowers that grew in such dangerous places, were always culled, and the rare birds'-eggs, that lay in the cliffs and crannies, were gathered by Quentin for Flora.

His whole desire and study were Flora Warrender and the anticipation of her every want and wish. Many of his sports, the trout pools in the Girvan, the fishing boats in the bay, the otter holes by the Doon, the covers where the golden pheasant lurked among the green and feathery fern, were neglected now for places nearer home—for the sycamore avenue, the terraced garden, the yew-hedge labyrinth, for wherever Flora was to be found, *he* was not far off.

Her soft and modulated voice was full of music, it had a chord in it that vibrated in his heart, so the lad sighed for her and knew not why.

Could it be otherwise when they were always together? They admired and sketched the same scenery—the cliffs of Rohallion and the gaping caverns below, where the sea boomed like thunder when the tide was coming in; the ruins of Killhenzie; the old kirk in the wooded glen, where the golden broom and blue harebells grew; the long and stately avenue of sycamores, and the Lollard's linn that poured in white foam under its ancient bridge. When Flora drew, he was always there to

marvel at the cunning of the lovely little hand that transferred all to paper so freely and so rapidly. They repeated the same poetry; they conned the same tasks, loved the same lights and shadows on glen and mountain, sea and shore; they had the same objects and haunts, and so they grew dear to each other, far dearer than either knew or suspected.

In those days, our young ladies, when singing, neither attempted to foist bad German or worse Italian on their listeners; neither did they dare to excel in opera, or run out into "artistic agonies." Like her mother before her, Flora contented herself with her native songs, which she sung with great sweetness (thanks to Corri's tuition), and Quentin was always at hand by the harp or piano to turn over the music, as all well-bred young men have done, since time immemorial.

How swiftly flew those days of peace and joy in that old castle by the sea, when each was all the world to the other! And is it strange, that situated as they were, a deep and innocent love should steal into their young hearts?

The old tenantry, particularly Elsie Irvine, who always considered Quentin her own peculiar pet; the quartermaster and the dominie blessed them in their hearts, and called them "man and wife," which made them blush furiously; but nothing of this kind was ever said in the hearing of Lady Rohallion, for they had early learned intuitively that such jests would displease her; though those

worthy souls could never gather *why*, until a period of our story yet to come.

Their friendship and regard grew with their years, and they never had a quarrel. The dominie likened them to Pyramus and Thisbe, and quoted largely from Ovid ; but they were much more like their prototypes, Paul and Virginia.

Lord and Lady Rohallion seemed to forget that the time was coming rapidly when Quentin would cease to be a boy, and Flora a girl. Had they thought of this, much misery might have been spared to all ; but though many around them saw their progress, and marvelled where it would all end, the worthy old couple saw nothing to alter in the matter.

Two years more gave a manliness to the beauty, form, and character of Quentin Kennedy, while Flora, even when on the verge of womanhood, never lost the sweet and childlike sensibility of expression, which was the chief characteristic of her fair and delicate face.

In all this pleasant intercourse they had never known the true character, or the actual depth of their attachment for each other, until one day when Quentin was verging on eighteen.

They had been wandering in the leafy summer woods, far beyond the Girvan, which was in full flood, as rain had been falling heavily for some days previous. Fed by a thousand runnels from the Carrick hills, there was a *spate* (*Scottice*, tor-

rent) in the stream, and at a part of it, about a mile distant from the castle of Rohallion, they heard old Jack Andrews tolling the dinner-bell, an ancient copper utensil which hung on the north gavel of the keep, where, in the days of old, it had frequently been rung for a less peaceful purpose than to announce that the soup was ready, or the sirloin done to a turn.

To make the circuit necessary to cross by the rustic bridge at the Kelpie's-pool (where, as all in Carrick know, a belated wayfarer was drowned by the river fiend) would have kept them too late, so Quentin took Flora in his arms to bear her through the stream, at a ford which was well known to him, and when the water was about four feet in depth.

"Dear Quentin, you will never be able to carry me," said Flora, laughing heartily at the arrangement; "I am sure that I am much too heavy."

"Not for me, Flora—come, let us try."

"Should you fall?"

"Well, Flora?"

"You will be swept away and drowned."

"I care not if *you* are safe," said he, gallantly; and, like a brave lad, he felt what he said.

"But I would be drowned too, you rash boy," said she, with a charming smile.

"Then a ballad would be made about us, like so many lovers we have heard of and read about.

Perhaps the Kelpie would be blamed for the whole catastrophe," replied Quentin, laughing, as he clasped her tightly in his arms. He was confident and bold, and the kind of training he underwent at the hands of our military friend, Mr. John Girvan, the gamekeeper, and others, made him hardy and strong beyond his years, yet he felt his fair Flora a heavier weight than he had quite reckoned on.

His high spirit gave him strength, however, and bearing her high upon his breast and shoulder, with her skirts gathered tightly round her, he boldly entered the rushing stream.

Then for the first time, when he felt her soft warm arm and delicate hand clasping his neck, half fearfully and half caressingly; when her cheek was close to his; when her breath mingled with his own, and her thick dark hair swept over his face, a strange and joyous thrill ran through him—a new and giddy emotion took possession of his heart.

Mysterious longings, aspirations, and hopes glowed within him, and in mid-stream, even when the foaming water swept past with stones and clay, and roots of aged trees, Quentin did what he had never done before, he pressed his lips—and his soul seemed on them—again and again to those of Flora Warrender, and he murmured he knew not what in her ear, and she did not repel him.

Her excitement, perhaps, was too great; but

we suspect that she was partly frightened and partly pleased. He landed her safely on the opposite bank, and again the castle-bell was heard waking the echoes of the woods.

The Girvan was passed now, and to speak metaphorically, that classic stream, the Rubicon, too!

They had divined the great secret of their hearts, and, hand in hand, in happy but thoughtful silence—Quentin, however, seeming the most abashed—they returned to Rohallion, both powerfully agitated by the new and sudden turn their affection seemed to have taken.

When their eyes met, their pulses quickened, and their colour came and went.

From that hour a change came over them; they were more reserved, less frank, apparently, and, outwardly, less joyous. In the presence of Flora, Quentin grew timid, and he became more earnestly, but quietly, assiduous to her than before.

Each, in absence, thought more of the other's image or idea; and each weighed the words, and treasured the stolen smiles and tender tones of the other.

They were lovers now!

It was the voice of nature that spoke in their hearts. Flora had long loved her young companion without exactly knowing it. The episode of the river had brought the passion to a culminating point, and the veil was raised now. She

saw his position and her own; and, while experiencing all a young girl's pride and rapture in the assurance that she has a lover, a strange sense of trouble came with her new emotion of joy.

As for Quentin, he slept but little that night; yet it was not his wetting in the river that kept him awake. He felt himself a newbeing—he trod on air! He rehearsed to himself again and again the adventure of the flooded stream, and went to sleep at last, with the memory of Flora's kisses on his lips, and murmuring the conviction which brought such delight to his young heart—

“She loves me! Dear, dear Flora loves me!”

CHAPTER XII.

A LAST KISS.

“Yes; open your heart! be glad,
Glad as the linnet on the tree:
Laugh, laugh away—and merrily
Drive away every dream that’s sad.
Who sadness takes for joy is mad—
And mournful thought
Will come unsought.”

AFTER the climax recorded in our last chapter, events succeeded each other with great rapidity at the castle of Rohallion.

At that period of our story, Flora Warrender had attained her full stature—the middle height. In form, she was round, firm, and well developed—plump, to speak plainly—yet she was both symmetrical and graceful. Her eyes, we have said, were a kind of violet grey, clear, dark and exquisitely soft. Long lashes, and the remarkable form of her white lids, doubtless gave them this expression. Her forehead was low and broad, rather than high; her smile won all, and there was a charming air of delicacy and refinement in her manner, over all her person, and in all she said or did. The form of

her hand and foot alone sufficed to indicate her station, family and nurture.

“There is a mysterious character, heightened, indeed, by fancy and passion, but not without foundation in reality and observation, which lovers have ever imputed to the object of their affections,” says Charles Lamb; and viewed through this most favourable medium, to the mind of Quentin Kennedy, young and ardent as he was, Flora Warrender, in all the bloom of her beauty and girlhood, seemed indeed something “exceeding nature.”

Thus it was with a heart filled with painful anticipations of coming trouble, that he heard Lord Rohallion, one morning at breakfast, when Jack Andrews emptied the contents of the letter-bag before him, exclaim,—

“A letter from Cosmo! It is for you, Winny—the careless young dog, he has not written here for six months—not even to thank me for paying that precious gambling debt of his, lost among those popinjays of the 10th Hussars. Then there was that devilish scrape with the French dancer, whom he took down to Brighton with Uxbridge’s son, Paget of the 7th, and that set——”

“Hush—remember Flora!” whispered Lady Rohallion.

“And the duel, too,” persisted the old lord; “pah! in my time we didn’t fight about such

trumpery ware as French dancers. But what says Cosmo?"

"He comes home by the next mail," replied Lady Rohallion, a bright and motherly smile spreading like sunshine over her face; "how I shall rejoice to see him—the dear boy!"

"A *dear* boy, indeed!" said his lordship; "his Guards' life has cost me ten thousand guineas, if it has cost me a sixpence, Winny."

"Cosmo is coming," said Lady Rohallion, pointedly; "do you hear, Flora?"

"Yes, madam," replied Flora, colouring, and casting a furtive glance at Quentin, who appeared to be solely occupied with his coffee and kippered salmon.

"Cosmo writes that he has succeeded, by a death-vacancy, to the majority of his battalion of the Guards, which, of course, gives him the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the army."

"As captain he has enjoyed that for some years."

"He has therefore applied for the command of a line regiment."

"That will be simple enough, as so many second battalions are being raised just now for this projected expedition to Spain."

"The Duke of York has promised that his wish shall be gratified, and he has obtained a few months' leave, to come down here and see us—to have, as he says, a shot at the birds and a day's

fly-fishing with John Girvan, in the Doon, before he returns to active service."

"And we shall see him, then——"

"In three days—three days at furthest, Flora," she added, with a glance at Miss Warrender.

"Bravo! you shall see something like a soldier, Flora, when Cosmo returns—something like what I was, about the time of Saratoga; eh, Jack Andrews?"

"Yes, my lord," responded Andrews, "coming to attention," as well as a man might with a hissing tea-urn in his hand.

"Send up the housekeeper, Andrews," said Lady Rohallion, "we must have the Master's rooms put in order, and also one for his valet; for I suppose he comes here with him."

"If so fine a knight of the shoulder-knot can tolerate Rohallion," said his lordship, laughing.

"Come with me, Flora; I know, child, how glad you will be to assist me," added Lady Winifred taking Miss Warrender's hand, and leading her away, while Quentin, whose heart beat painfully, appeared to be busy with a newspaper. It detailed how forty thousand Frenchmen were being foiled before Zaragoza's walls of mud, yet it seemed all a maze to poor Quentin, and he saw not how Flora's rich colour deepened as she withdrew.

The Master was coming to Rohallion!

Quentin remembered that gentleman's cold and haughty manner, and the half-concealed dislike

which he ever manifested towards himself. He remembered what Flora had more than once told him two years ago of Lady Rohallion's intentions or hopes regarding her, and his heart grew sick with apprehension of a rival so formidable. He thought perhaps Cosmo might have formed an attachment elsewhere ; but that would not prevent him from making love to Flora, were it only to kill time ; and in her lover's eyes, she seemed so beautiful, that the Master would certainly find it impossible to oppose the desire of his mother ; and Quentin dreaded her yielding to the united influence of the family, and the advantages a suitor of such rank, experience and position could offer.

He saw it all, and considered Flora lost to him !

Pride made him silent on the subject, and Flora, who with female acuteness divined what was passing in his mind, deemed it unnecessary or unwise to speak of it. She pitied Quentin, for she soon perceived how pale and miserable he looked ; while he misconstrued her reserve and became fretful, even petulant with her.

As if to add to his trouble, with that obtuseness of intellect (shall we call it petty malice ?) peculiar to their order, some of those same persons, who long ago were wont to annoy Flora and make Quentin blush, by jestingly calling them " man and wife," *now* taunted him with his

too probable loss on the arrival of the Master, a boy's love being almost deemed, beyond any other, a legitimate subject for banter.

These stinging remarks made Quentin's heart swell with pride and jealousy, doubt and alarm, for now he heard the matter referred to daily in the course of conversation.

"So, my dear lady," he heard the parish minister say, when paying his periodical visit, "local rumour says that the Master is coming home to obtain a final answer from a certain young lady, before rejoining the army."

Lady Rohallion merely bowed and smiled, as much as to say that local rumour was right.

"They have an old man's blessing," he added blandly, as he departed on his barrel-bellied Galloway cob, and thought of an augmented stipend in futurity.

"The Master's coming home to enter for the heiress, and have a shy at the grouse and ptarmigan," the gamekeeper said, while cleaning the arms in the gunroom.

"He'll walk the course—won't he, Mr. Quentin?" added the groom, while preparing the stables for more horses.

"To carry the fortress, and leave *you* to march off with the honours of war," said the quartermaster at one time.

"A braw day will it be for Rohallion!" remarked the dominie at another. "There shall

be dancing and feasting, scattering of nuts as we find in Pliny, with shooting of cannon, and shouts of *Io Hymen Hymenæe!*”

“My puir Quentin,” said Elsie Irvine, while, pondering on such rumours, he wandered moodily enough “by the sad sea wave,” “so you’re gaun to lose your wee wifie at last?”

Thus every one seemed to discuss the affair openly and laughingly, and their remarks and mock condolences, were as so many pins, needles, daggers, what you will, in the poor lad’s heart, so that his doubts and fears became a veritable torture.

So great was the bustle of preparation in the castle, that the evening of the third day—the day so dreaded by Quentin—drew nigh without him obtaining a suitable opportunity of conversing with Flora; for so much did Lady Rohallion occupy that young lady’s time, that he scarcely met her, save at meals, or in the presence of others. But on this evening he suddenly saw her walking before him in the avenue, and hastening forward, he joined her in silence.

Flora seemed weary, but rosy and smiling. Quentin was nervously excited, but pale and unhappy in expression. Neither spoke, as they walked slowly forward, and he did not take her hand, nor did she take his arm, according to their usual custom, and the omission stung Quentin most. Frankness seemed at an end between them, as if three days had changed alike their

nature and the relation that existed between them.

Flora looked very beautiful and piquante in her gipsy hat wreathed with roses, with her hair dark and wavy floating over her shoulders, while a blush mantled from time to time in her soft cheek, and her dark liquid eyes stole furtive glances from under their long lashes at her young lover, fond glances of pity mingled with coquetry, but all unseen by him, for Quentin's gaze was fixed on vacancy.

At length they reached the lower end of the avenue near the Lollard's Linn, where there still stands a sombre thicket of very ancient thorn trees, that were coeval, perhaps, with the first tower of Rohallion.

According to local tradition, this place was haunted by a spectre-hound, which no one could attempt to face or trace with safety, even if they had the courage to attempt it. Its form, that of a great, lean, lanky staghound, black as jet, was usually visible on clear nights, gazing wistfully at the moon; and in storms of wind and rain, its melancholy baying would be heard to mingle with the blast that swept through the ancient sycamores. It molested none; but if assailed, it became terrible, swelling up to nearly double its usual size, with back and tail erect like those of a pole-cat, its jaws red as blood, and its eyes shooting fire.

Those who saw the dog-fiend in this state became idiots, and sickened or died soon after. Tradition went further, and asserted that the spectre-hound was nothing else than the spirit of Lady Jean of Rohallion (whose grim portrait by Vandyke, with a hawk on her wrist and a gold cross at her girdle, hung in the ancient hall), a high-flying cavalier dame, by whose order, after the battle of Kilsythe, several fugitive Covenanters had been shot down in cold blood, and buried in that thicket, where her unquiet soul was condemned to guard their remains in this canine form until the day of doom.

At all events, the old thorn trees where the spectre was wont to appear, looked particularly gloomy on this evening, and as the lovers passed near it, Flora drew closer to Quentin, and then she perceived that his eyes were full of tears.

“Quentin—Quentin dear!” she exclaimed in a tone of earnest question and expostulation. It was the first time, almost, that she had addressed him since Cosmo’s letter came, and now her voice thrilled through him. He threw his left arm round her, and clasping her right hand within his own, pressed it to his heart, which beat tumultuously, and while the long avenue seemed whirling round them, he said,—

“So Lady Rohallion has made up her mind that—that—you shall marry the Master, Flora?”

“So it is the fear of this that distresses you?”

Pride sealed Quentin's lips.

"My poor Quentin," resumed Flora, looking tenderly and innocently into his eyes, "you love me very much, don't you?"

"Love you—love you, Flora!" he stammered.

"Yes."

"I love you better than my life!" he exclaimed passionately.

"Well," said she, with a beautiful smile and a gaiety of manner that he did not quite relish; "I will never marry any man but he whom I choose myself—certainly not he who is chosen by others."

"Darling Flora!"

"There—there—*stop*—and perhaps, Quentin, I mayn't marry *you*. 'Tis said people change when they grow older, and we are very young, you know; but Quentin, dear, I love you very, very much, be assured of that."

Her head dropped on his shoulder, and he kissed her passionately—the LAST time he was ever to do so in the old avenue of Rohallion.

At that moment the clatter of hoofs was heard, and ere they could part or regain their composure, two horsemen, one in advance of the other, both riding fast, with brown leather saddle bags and long holsters—the first in a fashionable riding-coat with a cape, the latter in livery, and both in top-boots and spotless white breeches, passed up the avenue at a hand-gallop.

Both had seen our lovers near the thorn thicket, and the first horseman, whom Quentin's heart rightly foreboded to be the dreaded Master of Rohallion, turned in his saddle, and said something to his groom, indicating the pair with his whip. They both looked back and laughed immoderately, as they dashed through the ivy-clad arch of the haunted gate.

Separating in haste and confusion, Quentin and Flora hurried away to calm their excitement and seek the drawing-room.

CHAPTER XIII.

COSMO THE MASTER.

"Why make I friendships with the great,
 When I no favour seek?
 Or follow girls seven hours in eight—
 I need but once a week?
 Luxurious lobster night's farewell,
 For sober studious days!
 And Burlington's delicious meal,
 For salads, tarts, and peas."—POPE.

THE first rider was indeed the Master of Rohal-lion, who had arrived with a punctuality that was more military than personal, as the Honourable Cosmo Crawford was somewhat erratic, and, as the Guards Club said significantly, "nocturnal," in his habits; and here it may be well to inform the English reader, that his haughty title of MASTER he obtained in right of his father being a Scottish baron, the custom being older than the reign of James IV.

In ancient times, the heirs apparent of Scottish nobles were not discriminated according to their father's rank by the titles of marquis,

viscount, earl, or lord, but were simply styled as the Masters of Marischal, Glencairn, Glamis, Lindsay, Rohallion, and so forth, a custom existing in Scotland to the present day, in most houses, under ducal rank.

Cosmo Crawford was tall and strongly built, but handsome and graceful, with a cold and stately manner, that sometimes degenerated into banter, but seldom perfect suavity, and he had a somewhat cruel and sinister grey eye. The pupils of the latter feature had a peculiarity worth noticing. They possessed the power of shrinking and dilating like those of a cat. His hair was curly and worn in the Prince Regent's profusion, but without powder, that being already considered almost Gothic, or decidedly behind the age, the curls on one side being so arranged as to conceal a very palpable sword-cut. Like that of his valet, to whom he flung his riding-whip, hat, and coat, his garments were all of the latest Bond Street cut, and he lounged towards the yellow-damask drawing-room as coolly and leisurely as if he had only left it two hours instead of two years ago, according but a cold stare to the warm smile and respectful salute of poor old Jack Andrews, who, throwing open the door, announced,

“The Master, my Lord!”

“Welcome home, boy—God bless you!” shouted the hearty old lord, springing towards

him ; but Lady Rohallion anticipated him, and received Cosmo in her arms first.

“ Dear mother, glad to see you,” said he, kissing her forehead ; “ father, how well, how jolly and hale you look !”

“ Hale,” repeated the white-haired peer ; “ don’t like to be called *hale*, it smacks, Cosmo, of breaking up ; looking well, only for one’s years, and so forth.”

“ And my Lady Rohallion,” said Cosmo, kissing his mother’s hand, “ what shall I say of you ?

“ ‘ With curious arts dim charms revive,
And triumph in the bloom of fifty-five.’ ”

“ Arts, you rogue,” said his father ; “ it’s no art, but the pure breeze from our Carrick hills and from the Firth of Clyde, with perhaps earlier hours at night and in the morning than you keep in London.”

“ Well, I am sorry my compliments displease you both,” said he, laughing ; “ I am unfortunate, but pray be merciful ; I have bade adieu to the Guards, to London, and all its glories to rusticate among you for a time. So, so, here comes Miss Warrender of Ardgour, I presume, and Quentin Kennedy ; I saw you both in the avenue, I think,” added Cosmo, the pupils of his pale eyes shrinking as he concentrated his gaze and knit his dark brows, which nearly met in one, over a straight and handsome nose. “ Flora, you are charming ! May I——”

The kiss he bluntly gave her seemed to burn a hole in Quentin's heart, for it may readily be supposed that he saluted the lovely young girl with much more *empressement* than he did the worthy lady his mother. Flora blushed scarlet, and glanced at Quentin imploringly, as much as to say, "don't be angry, dearest—you see that I cannot help this;" but he felt only rage to see the little cherry-lip, which his own had so lately touched in tremulous love and reverence, roughly and eagerly saluted by this *brusque* and *blasé* guardsman. Rapid though Flora's glance was, the latter detected it.

"And this is Quentin?" said he, surveying him through his eyeglass, with a deepening knit in his dark brows, and a smile on his haughty lips; "what a great hulking fellow he has become! Begad, he is tall enough for a rear-rank grenadier; and why is he not set to do something, instead of idling about here, and no doubt playing the devil with the preserves?"

There was some sense in the question, but coming from such a quarter, and the tone in which it was spoken, cut Quentin to the quick.

"He is barely done with his studies," urged Lord Rohallion, coming to his favourite's rescue.

"Before I was his age, I had mounted my first guard at St. James's Palace."

"And I mine on the banks of the Weser," said his father.

Quentin looked steadily at the cold, keen face of the Master, who was not yet six-and-thirty—but his Guards' life made him look much older; thus, to a lad of Quentin's years, those of the Master seemed quite patriarchal; a time came, however, when he thought otherwise, and removed the patriarchal period of life a few years further off.

“Well, Cosmo, talking of age,” said Lord Rohallion, slapping his tall son on the back, “to be lieutenant-colonel of a line regiment at six-and-thirty, with the Cross of the Bath, for doubtless you will get it——”

“Of course, father, of course—one thing follows the other—well?”

“Is being decidedly lucky,” said Lady Winifred, closing his lordship's sentence, and glancing at Flora, to see what she thought of it.

“With the prospect of a long war before him, too.”

“Yes, father, and I hope that the luck in store will belie the prophecy of my old foster-mother, Elsie Irvine, at the Coves, who used to allege, that when I *first* left your room, mother, a puling and new-born brat, I was carried *down* a stair instead of up, a certain token that I should never rise in the world. I have often made the Prince Regent, Paget, and other fellows laugh at that story; yet I have always had a fair run of success in everything I undertake.”

“Which should make you in future avoid all

affairs at Chalk Farm, and so forth; you have had three men out there in three years, Cosmo."

"And winged them all. My dear lord, don't talk. Some small sword affairs of yours, when Leicester fields was the fashionable place, are still remembered in London."

"Yes—I ran two friends of Mr. Wilkes fairly through the body there one morning, for permitting themselves to indulge in national reflections, and would do so again if the same cause were given me: but, zounds! what else could we do in those days of the 'North Briton?' By-the-bye, is this new movement about the stuff called gas spreading in London?"

"Yes; I wish you had been there on the 28th of January, 1807, and seen Pall-Mall actually lighted with it—by a man named Winsor, the Cockney call him a mad man for thinking of such a scheme!"

"Did you pass through Edinburgh?"

"I was obliged to do so, my lord, unfortunately."

"Did you make any stay there?"

"Stay! I should think not—only long enough to dine with some jolly fellows of the Cinque Ports Dragoons, at the new barrack, built some fifteen years ago at Piershill—"

"Once Colonel Piers' place—Piers, of the old Scotch 17th—Aberdour's Light Dragoons."

"Exactly, and then to get a relay of post-horses at Ramsay's stables. But as for staying

in Edinburgh, egad ! it would be intolerable to me, with its would-be dandies and its freckled women, whose faces have that sweet expression imparted by the soothing influences of Presbyterianism and the east wind ; and then its one street, or only half a street to promenade in, who the devil would stay there that could stay out of it ? Why, not even the rhyiming gauger who hailed it as ‘Edina, Scotia’s darling seat.’ ”

As his son concluded with a loud laugh, Lord Rohallion shook his powdered head, for he could not endorse this unpatriotic depreciation of the Scottish metropolis, and poor Lady Winifred sighed as she glanced at a black silhouette by Miers, presented to her by the bard of Coila, with a copy of his verses in her honour ; and then remembering the fancied glories of the Old Assembly Close, as she and her friend, Lady Eglinton, had seen them in their girlhood, she said :

“ In my time, Cosmo, Edinburgh was wont to be gay enough.”

“ A sad gaiety. Thank God, mother, the Guards can never be quartered in so dull a provincial town.”

“ Its dulness is the effect of the Union, which removed court, council, parliament, revenue, and everything,” said Lord Rohallion.

“ I thought most people had ceased to consider *that* a grievance,” said his son, laughing again ;

“but I think that if Edinburgh has been dull since 1707, it must have been truly diabolical before it.”

“Cosmo,” said his mother, reproachfully, “I know not what some of your ancestors who fought at Flodden and Pinkey would have thought of you.”

“The more fools they to fight at such places.”

“Not so,” said the old lord rising, with some asperity in his tone; “God rest all who ever fought or died for Scotland and her kings; and I must tell you, Cosmo, that you will never be the better or the truer Briton for being a bad or false Scotsman !”

The Master gave another of his sinister laughs; and, finding that the conversation had suddenly taken an uncomfortable turn, his father said with a smile—

“I was about to express a hope, Cosmo, that with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, you mean to settle at last, and become quiet.”

“What, my lord—have I been drawing too heavily upon you and old John Girvan of late?”

“I mean, that pranks which passed well enough in a subaltern, wont do in one who looks to the command of a regiment.”

“Pelting the rabble with rotten eggs at Epsom, and so forth, you mean? No; in my days a sub, after pulling off half the knockers in Piccadilly, breaking all the oil lamps in Pall Mall,

getting up a cry of fire in the Haymarket, and bringing out the engines to pump on the rascally mob; having, at least, one set-to with the rough and muscular democrats of the watch, would finish off by a champagne supper somewhere, and thus bring to a close a reputable London day, which, in our corps, usually begins after evening parade. Ah, my lord, you slow fellows of the King's Own Borderers knew nothing of such pranks, with your long pigtails, your funny regimentals, and Kevenhüller hats."

"The reason, perhaps, we cocked those same hats so bravely on many a field," retorted his father. "In my days the army was the school of good-breeding, sir—but here's Jack Andrews announcing tea and devilled grouse in the inner drawing-room."

"Cosmo, give your arm to Flora, if Quentin can spare her," said Lady Rohallion, smiling. "They are gréat friends and companions."

"Oh—ah—indeed," said the Master, sarcastically, as he gave Flora Warrender his arm. "I think I saw them exchanging strong marks of their mutual goodwill as I rode up the avenue."

Quentin grew scarlet, and Flora painfully pale at this remark, which stung her deeply, and roused her indignation.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN ABRUPT PROPOSAL.

“Wherefore dwell so sad and lonely,
By the desolate sea-shore;
With the melancholy surges
Beating at your cottage door?
You shall dwell beside the castle,
Shadowed by our ancient trees!
And your life shall pass on gently,
Cared for and in rest and ease.”

For two days after his arrival the Master strove to engross as much of Flora's time as she would yield, or as he could spare from the study of his betting-book, the pages of the “Sporting Magazine,” playing billiards right hand against the left, quizzing the dominie, who paid him a ceremonious visit, and in relating to the quartermaster certain military “crammers” about the alterations and improvements in the service since *his* time, some of which were astounding enough to make the old fellow's pigtail stand on end, with wonder and dismay, lest the said service was going to the deuce, or further.

Quentin he seldom favoured with more notice

than a cool and insolent survey through his eyeglass.

There were times when the Honourable Cosmo was moody, ennuyéed, and irritable, and none knew why or wherefore; but he had frequent recourse to Mr. Spillsby, the butler, for brandy and rare dry old sherry; and he smoked a great many cigars, which were a source of marvel to all who saw them, tobacco, in that form, being almost unknown in England, till the close of the Peninsular War.

It was not ambition, or a desire to see active service that made the haughty and somewhat *blasé* Master propose to leave the household troops and begin the sliding scale from the Guards to the line; nor was it any desire to settle in life that made him enter at once and so readily into his mother's old and favourite scheme of a marriage between him and their ward, the heiress of Ardgour.

While he could not be insensible to the fresh budding beauty of Flora Warrender, the conviction that he had impaired his finances, anticipated his heritage, and had calculated to a nicety the value of all the oak, pine, and larch woods upon the estate—that each and all were numbered and known to certain hook-nosed, long-bearded, and dirty children of Judah in London—all, even to the venerable lines of sycamores in the long avenue, the pride of his father's heart—trees that for

centuries had cast their shadows on his ancestors in youth, in prime, and age. While this conviction, we say, filled him with as much shame, sorrow, and repentance as he could feel, with it came the knowledge that Flora's fortune, which had accumulated during her minority, and, indeed, ever since her father's fall in Egypt, would afford him a most seasonable escape from shipwreck on several rocks which he saw ahead.

"Hah!" said Cosmo, as he tossed away the end of his cigar, "some one says truly—don't know who the devil he is—that if we could look into each other's breasts, there would be no such thing as envy in the world. Egad! I'll enter for the country heiress."

He roused himself and resolved to make the effort, all the more willingly, that to a half, or wholly *blasé* guardsman like himself, long used to the glittering banquets, the late orgies, and startling scenes of Carlton House and the Pavilion at Brighton, the bloom, beauty, and country freshness of Flora Warrender, were indeed charming.

Flora, instinctively, and in a feminine spirit of pride and opposition to Lady Rohallion's plots and plans, kept somewhat studiously out of the Master's way—a somewhat difficult task, even in a mansion so spacious and rambling as the old castle; but on the evening of the second day after his arrival, from the stone balustraded

terrace of the antique Scoto-French garden where he was smoking, Cosmo saw her light muslin dress fluttering among the narrow green alleys of the old and carefully clipped yew labyrinth, and then he hastened to join her, to the infinite mortification and chagrin of Quentin Kennedy, who had not seen her for the entire day ; and who, just as he was approaching the garden, found himself anticipated, so he at once retired, leaving the field in possession of the enemy.

An older or more experienced lover would have joined them, and thus, perhaps, might have marred the plans of the Master, who, to do justice to his coolness and courage, lost no time in opening the trenches.

Midsummer was past now ; the foliage of the tall sycamores, of the oakwood shaw, and other copses of Rohallion, though leafy and green, were crisped and dry ; in the haughs or low-lying meadows, the mower had already relinquished his scythe ; the green corn rigs were yellowing on the upland slopes "that beaked forment the sun ;" next month they would be golden, brown and ready for the sickle ; on bush and spray the black-bird sang cheerily, and the plover's note came shrilly out of the green and waving fern.

The sun was setting, and the screech of the white owl would ere long be heard, as he blinked and looked forth for the moon from the ivied windows of Kilhenzie. The white smokes of the

hamlet on the shore of the little bay, passing up among the trees, curled into the clear air and melted over the ocean. The flowers that whilome had endured the scorch of the noonday sun, were drooping now, as if pining for the coming dew; and the stately peacocks sat listlessly, with their broad tails, argus-eyed, upon the balustrades of the garden terrace.

Inspired by the beauty of the evening, lulled by the summer hum of insect life among the flowers, and all unaware that her lover, with his gun on his shoulder and wrath in his young heart, was plunging pitilessly through some one's corn, Flora was musing or dreaming, as only a young girl dreams or muses, on what fate had in store for her now, with this new inmate of her present home. Mr. Walter Scott's new poem "Marmion" had fallen from her hand, which was ungloved, and so, pure in whiteness and delicacy, was half hidden among her dark and wavy hair, as she reclined with her elbow upon the arm of a moss-grown seat, which yet bears the date, 1590, with the Roballion arms and coronet, upon a hanging shield. The fingers of her left hand were playing unconsciously with the strings of her gipsy hat, which lay upon the gravel at her feet; and as the Master approached her, the young lady seemed the perfection of bloom and beauty, as she sat enshrined in the glory of the sunset that streamed along the alley of the labyrinth.

His costume was very accurate, for the gentleman and the tradesman did not then, as now, dress exactly alike, and wear exactly the same stuffs; and certainly Cosmo was looking his best, as he seated himself by her side and very deliberately took possession of her left hand, saying in a voice which he meant to be, and which had often enough proved elsewhere to be, very seductive.—

“I fear, my dear Miss Warrender, that this gloomy old barrack is not a place for you to vegetate in.”

“How so, sir?” she asked, while regarding him with a quiet smile.

“It too evidently influences your naturally joyous temperament; and pardon me, you look *triste*.”

“Oh, no—your mother is quite one to me, and I love Rohallion very much.”

“Then as for Ardgour, I think it gloomier still.”

“Some parts of Ardgour—the vaults, I believe—are said to be coeval with the Bruce’s castle of Turnberry; at least so the dominie told me. Mamma so loved it; and for her sake, I love it too.”

“Very proper, and very pretty; but the world of fashion—a brilliant world, of which you know nothing—should be your sphere, my dear Miss Warrender. London, Brighton, the Prince’s balls at Carlton House, the parks, the theatre, the opera! You must come forth from your shell,

my dear Flora, like—like—like (he thought of Venus rising from the sea, but the simile was not apt)—for you know it is absurd, positively absurd, that you should be buried alive in this horrid old-fashioned Scotch place, among rocks and rooks, ivy and ghost stories. Egad! were the house mine, I'd blow it up, and build one more suitable to the present time and its requirements."

"What! would you really uproot this fine old place of so many historic memories?"

"To the last stone! What the devil—pardon me—do old memories matter now, my dear girl? *En avant!* we should look forward—never back."

"I am sorry that your sentiments are so prosaic," said Flora, coldly.

"I trust that my mother has not filled your dear little head with her usual nonsense about Scotch patriotism, the defunct Pretender, the unlucky Union, and so forth—eh? I always said that the verses addressed to her by her rhyming friend Burns, the democratic gauger, turned her head; and this new man, Scott, with his *Marmions* and *Minstrels*, bids fair to make the disease chronic. You have no idea, Miss Warrender, how we laugh at all such stuff in London. Patriotism indeed! It doesn't pay, so Scotchmen don't adopt it, and they are wise. All patriotism *not* English is purely provincialism, and any man holding other opinions in Parliament would be as much out of place as a crusader

or a cavalier. But to return to what I was saying. I should like to show you the great world that lies beyond the Craigs of Kyle and the rocky hills of Carrick—to take you back again to London.”

“London is to me full of sad memories.”

“Sad—the deuce—how?”

“For there my dear mother died,” said Flora, lowering her voice and withdrawing her hand, while her eyes and her heart filled with emotion.

After a pause :

“I love you, dear Flora,” said Cosmo, again taking possession of her hand, and placing his lips close to her shrinking ear. “Our marriage is the dearest wish of my mother’s heart, as it was of yours—and, may I add, that it is the dearest hope of mine?”

This was coming to the point with a vengeance !

Instead of being mightily flattered or overcome, as he not unnaturally expected, Flora, without withdrawing her hand, as if its retention mattered little, turned half round, and said, with a quiet, calm smile :

“Remember how little I have known you, sir, save through your parents, my guardians.”

“True ; the duties of honour at Court, and—ah, ah!—my profession, Flora, called me elsewhere ; but you don’t refuse me, eh ? My dear girl—the deuce!—you surely can’t mean that?”

Flora grew pale and hesitated, for with all her love for Lady Rohallion, she had a kind of awe of her, and Cosmo was eyeing her coldly and steadily through his glass.

“Nay, speak, Flora,” said he, with, perhaps, more irritation than tenderness in his tone. “I have, perhaps, not much personally to recommend me to a young girl’s eye, and this wound, which I got at the Helder, when assisting to compel those Dutch devils to hoist the colours of the Prince of Orange—a sabre-cut across the face—has not improved me; but speak out, Flora Warrender; notwithstanding the ties between us, you refuse me?”

“This proposal possesses all the abruptness of a scene in a drama.”

“Well, what is life but an absurd drama? ‘All the world’s a stage, and the men and women merely players.’”

“Well, I am not inclined to play the part you wish.”

“You refuse me?” he reiterated, his eyes the while assuming their wicked and luring expression.

“I do, Cosmo Crawford,” she replied, trembling very much, but speaking, nevertheless, firmly; “I do once and for ever refuse you.”

Young and inexperienced though the girl was, the abrupt and systematic proposal of the Master rather insulted than flattered her.

“No *tie*,” she added, “save a fancied one made by Lady Rohallion, ever bound us; so there are no pledges to return, no bonds, nor—I can’t help laughing—hearts to break.”

“And this desire to—to——” he stammered.

“It was your mother’s idea alone.”

“Say not so, Miss Warrender, it is mine also. Though I know that my good mother, because she jilted some fellow in her youth—my father’s younger brother, I believe—thinks she makes atonement to the gods, or whoever rule these little matters of love and marriage, by making as many miserable matches, and marrying right off as many persons as she can.”

“Miserable matches! So she conceived one for us. You are very encouraging and complimentary to say so just after your offer to me.”

“Pardon me; but consider, my dear Flora,” he resumed, while rallying a little, though sorely provoked to find himself confused and baffled by a country girl, of whose rejection he felt actually ashamed to tell his own mother, “are you not labouring under some deuced misconception in giving this very decided, and, I must say, very extraordinary refusal?”

“How?”

“Is it not, that to the affection and rank I proffer, you prefer the absurd love of a silly upstart, who shall go hence as he came hither, no one knows or cares how—a waif cast on the shore

like a piece of dead seaweed, or the drowned renegade his father—a creature whose past affords no hope of a brilliant future! Speak, girl,” he exclaimed, while almost savagely he grasped her wrist; “is it this that prevails with you, in opposition to the wishes of your dead mother and the whole family of Rohallion?”

“What if it is, sir?” asked Flora, haughtily, for his categorical manner offended her deeply.

“What if it is!” he repeated with lowering brow.

“Yes, sir.”

“Then the cool admission ill becomes Flora Warrender of Ardgour, whose forefathers bear so high a place in the annals of their country!”

“Oh, but they were mere provincials, and their bravery or patriotism are unworthy the regard of such a citizen of the world as the Master of Rohallion,” said Flora.

He sullenly threw her hand from him; but she did not retire, being loth that his family, especially the old Lord, whom she dearly loved and respected, should know of this scene; and loth, too, that it should end in this unseemly fashion.

“Cursed be my mother’s dotting folly!” thought he, while his pale eyes alternately shrunk and dilated; “so—so, nothing but an heiress will suit our foundling, our ‘Tom Jones,’ for a charmer—it’s vastly amusing. Confound it, a little more of this presumption will make me wring the brat’s head off!”

While his cool insolence piqued Flora, her decided rejection roused all his wrath and pride; he thought of his pecuniary interest, too, so both sat silent for a time.

“ Well, begad ! this passes my comprehension ! ” he exclaimed at length, as he buttoned his accurately fitting straw-coloured kid gloves.

“ To what do you refer, friend Cosmo ? ” asked Flora, looking at him almost spitefully.

“ To this whole matter. Do you know, my fair friend, that you are perhaps the first young lady of your age that, in all my experience, ever took a fancy to a hobbledehoy lad in preference to a man ; so while you reconsider the offer, you will perhaps permit me ? ” He bowed, and conceiving her consent given, proceeded to light a pipe, by the then very elaborate process of a small flint, steel and matches in a little silver tinder-box, on the lid of which his coat of arms was engraved. “ And so you studied together, I presume, under that absurd Dominie Skail, with the knee-breeches and huge shoe-buckles (like a heavy father at Old Drury), keen grey eyes, and Scotch cheek bones onemighthangone’s hat on, eh ? ”

“ Yes,” replied Flora, tying the ribbons of her gipsy hat under her dimpled chin with an angry jerk.

“ And you learned Latin, Coptic, and Sanscrit together, I suppose,” he continued in his cool sneering tone ; “ and to conjugate the verb *to love*, in all.”

“Exactly so, and in Greek, Chaldaic, and Chinese, and ever so many more languages, so that we became very perfect in grammar,” replied she, smiling wickedly, while the grim Master’s cat-like eyes filled with a very baleful green light; yet he had not the sense to see that his operations were conducted on a wrong plan before such a fortress as the fair lady of Ardgour.

“Come, Miss Warrender, whatever we do, hang it, don’t let us quarrel, and so make fools of ourselves.”

“I have not the least intention of quarrelling, and trust that you have none.”

“Then allow me to kiss you once, and we shall become better friends, I promise you.”

“Kiss *me*!” exclaimed Flora, starting.

“Yes—whynot—what does a little kiss signify?”

“So little that you shall never have one from me, were it to save your life,” said Flora, with a burst of laughter.

“Perhaps your fair cheek has become sacred since that beggarly little rival of mine saluted it? It is a capital joke, is it not?”

“Perhaps,” said Flora, reddening, and rising to withdraw; “and what then?”

“If so, I would say you were as great an idiot as my old grandmother Grizel Kennedy, of Kilhenzie, was.”

“Respectful to her and polite to me! And she——”

“After Prince Charles Edward kissed her at

the Holyrood ball, she never permitted the lips of mortal man—not even those of my worthy grandfather Cosmo, Lord Rohallion, K.T., and so forth, to salute her, lest the charm of the royal kiss should be broken; and their married life extended over some forty years and more.”

At this apocryphal story, which has been told of more old ladies in Scotland than Grizel of Rohallion, Flora laughed heartily, as well she might; and her merriment made the Master excessively provoked.

“We are, I hope, at least friends?” said he, presenting his hand with great but grim suavity.

“Oh yes, Cosmo, the best of friends—do excuse my laughing so; but nothing more, remember, nothing more,” she replied, and withdrawing her hand, which he attempted to kiss, she darted through the labyrinth towards the house, leaving “Marmion” forgotten on the gravel behind her.

“By Jove! to be baffled, laughed at, and by a chick like this!” muttered Cosmo with an oath which we care not to record, as he gave the volume a kick, and strode angrily away, full of bitter and dark thoughts, and inspired with rage at a rivalry which, in truth, he was ashamed to acknowledge, even to himself.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BLOW.

“Take comfort : he no more shall see my face ;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seemed Athens as a paradise to me :
Oh, then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turned a heaven unto a hell !”

Midsummer Night's Dream.

A VERY dark idea crossed the Master's mind, and then another, darker still !

A few guineas judiciously bestowed among the smugglers, who, when the nights were dark and gusty, frequented the coves near the castle (and when some person or persons unknown hung a lantern over the rocks to guide their steerage through a narrow cleft in the Partan Craig), might for ever rid him of Quentin Kennedy. They could land him on the sands of Dunkirk or Boulogne, or, or—what ?

Oh, no ! he thrust away the *next* idea as too horrid, though *such* things had been done of old in Carrick by the lawless lairds of Auchindrane, and to denounce them, in one terrible instance, had not the sea given up its dead ?

He thought of despatching a line to the lieutenant commanding the pressgang at Ayr, by whose agency poor Quentin might be shipped off for seven years' sea service in the East or West Indies, but dread of exposure, and the outcry consequent thereto, made him relinquish such kidnaping ideas of revenge, though they were practical enough in the days when George III. was king.

Revolving these thoughts, with brows knit and his stealthy eyes fixed on the ground, Cosmo quitted the garden and entered the avenue, where the evening shadows under the sycamore trees were gloomy and dark; and there as he strode forward, with a quick and impatient step, he stumbled roughly against some one, who, like himself, seemed lost in reverie.

"Quentin Kennedy!" he exclaimed in a hoarse voice, as this collision brought all his readily excited fury to the culminating point; "confound it, fellow, is this *you*?"

"I beg pardon, sir—I did not see you—I was lost in thought," replied Quentin.

"Lost in thought, were you?" repeated Cosmo, in his most insulting tone; "you were loitering near the labyrinth in the garden?" he added with almost fierce suspicion.

"I was down in the oakwood shaw, two miles off."

"Hah—indeed! and what have *you* been doing with that gun?"

"Sir!" stammered Quentin, his natural indig-

nation rising as he perceived the other's resolute intention of insulting him.

"I say, what the deuce have you, or such as you, to do with that gun, and on these grounds?"

Quentin drew back, haughtily, in growing anger and surprise, and fearing that the Master was mad or intoxicated, and that he was about to make an assault, he very naturally brought the fowling-piece to the position of charging.

"What, you scoundrel! would you charge me breast high?" cried the Master, choking with rage; "would you shoot me as the poacher Campbell shot Lord Eglinton on his own lands, here in Ayrshire too? I'll teach you to know your proper place, you scurvy young dog!"

With these injurious words, and before even Quentin, who was completely astounded by the wantonness of the whole affair, could be aware of his purpose, Cosmo rushed upon him, wrenched the gun away, and clubbing it, dealt the poor lad a terrible blow on the head with the heavy iron butt, stretching him senseless on the grass. Then uttering a heavy malediction, the fierce Master, still boiling with unappeased rage, passed through the ivied-gateway and entered the mansion. Having the fowling-piece in his hand, force of habit led him towards the gun-room, where he proceeded to draw the charge, for it was still loaded, and to leave it for the under-game-keeper to clean.

Perceiving that there was blood on the lock and also on his straw-coloured kid gloves, he carefully wiped the former, and threw the latter into a stove. Regret he had none for the atrocity just committed; but he disliked the appearance of blood, it looked ugly, he thought—dangerous, and deuced ugly.

“Egad, I hope I haven’t killed the young rascal!” he muttered; “how the deuce am I to explain the affair to the old people?—they will be certain to blame me.”

Stepping from the gun-room into the library, which adjoined it, he was suddenly met by Lady Rohallion, who gave him an affectionate glance, which suddenly turned to one of anxiety, as she surveyed him by the last light of the sunset, that streamed through a deeply-embayed window. With an assumed smile and some commonplace remark, he was about to pass on, shame and mortification compelling the concealment of what he had done, when she laid her hands on his arm, and said tenderly,

“Dearest Cosmo, what *has* happened—you look extremely pale?”

“Do I, mother—pale, eh?”

“Yes, and quite ruffled too,” she added.

“Well, perhaps so—your friend Flora is the cause.”

“Flora Warrender?”

“Yes.”

“ Explain, Cosmo, explain ?” she asked with evident uneasiness.

“ I had a long conversation with her in the garden, and it was decidedly more animated than amatory in the end.”

“ You quarrelled ?”

“ Not at all—I proposed,” he replied, with a strange smile.

“ And were accepted ?”

“ The reverse.”

“ Rejected—you—*my* son, rejected ?”

“ Finally so—or for the present shall we say ?” replied Cosmo, lighting a pipe by the old and elaborate process, to conceal his agitation. “ A wilful little jade she is as ever I knew. Evidently has no fancy for me, or for increasing the number of his Majesty’s lieges under canvas, or for seeing the world in a baggage-waggon, as a lady attached to a regiment of the line.”

The courtly old lady gazed at her son almost mournfully ; for this mocking *brusquerie*, acquired in the Pavilion of the Prince Regent, but ill accorded with her old-fashioned ideas of gentle bearing.

“ You have been wrong, Cosmo,” said she gravely ; “ you have been too hasty—too abrupt.”

“ Now, faith, do you think so, really ?”

“ It was absurd to propose for any girl, especially a young lady of family and fortune, after a two days’ acquaintance.”

“Egad, my most respected mamma, in London, I’ve known a score of women of the first fashion, who would have eloped with me for better or worse, and taken post horses for Gretna, on a two hours’ acquaintance.”

“Oh, Cosmo!”

“So I am wrong, you think, my lady mother?”

“Decidedly; but I trust that time will put all right. I do not despair.”

“Neither do I, be assured,” said he, with one of his strange smiles.

“The silly girl, of course, felt flattered by your offer?”

“Not at all—one might think such matters were of daily occurrence with her.”

“Did she make no consideration of our family and its antiquity?” she asked, bridling up.

“My dear mother, it seems to be of very little importance to Flora Warrender whether the said family flourished at the court of old King Cole, from whose grave Kyle takes its name, or at that of his Majesty of the Cannibal Islands; at all events, she wont have me. Confound it!” he exclaimed, as if talking to himself; “to think that I, almost the pattern man of the Household Brigade—chosen by many a proud peeress to squire her through the crush of the opera; by the fighting men of the corps as their second in every affair of honour; by the Prince Regent to arrange his *déjeûners*, afternoon receptions, and

crack suppers ; I, the star of Fops' Alley—deemed the best stroke at billiards in London—the best hand on a tiller at Cowes, or to pull the bow-oar to Richmond ; chosen to ride the most vicious brutes at Epsom and Melton, and who can hit a guinea at twenty yards with a saw-handle and a hair-trigger—that I, I say, should be outflanked by a country booby passes my comprehension, unless, as in old King James's days, there be witchcraft again in the Bailiwick of Carrick ! To be jockeyed by a country lout and a lass of eighteen—deucedly disgusting ! Thank heaven ! this can never be known in town, or how would the lady-killing Cosmo be roasted ! I think I hear Paget of the Hussars, and the rest of our set laughing over it ; and, by Jove, they would laugh too, until I had one or two of them *out* at Chalk Farm for a morning appetiser."

"How this little rebuff nettles you ! Take courage, Cosmo," said his mother, almost laughing at his angry and odd enumeration of his many good qualities.

"Well, I have changed my mind many times ; so do women, and so may Flora. This is a boy's love ; she will tire of his *idea*, and then is my time to cut in and win in a canter. You, my dear mother, yourself once loved, before my father proposed——"

"Stay," said Lady Rohallion, interrupting, with sudden agitation, and hastening angrily to change

the unwelcome topic; "a sudden light breaks upon me! Cosmo, on the night you arrived, it seemed to me you spoke very oddly of Flora Warrender and Quentin Kennedy."

"How—about something in the avenue, was it?"

"Yes; that you had seen them exchanging marks of their mutual good will, or words to that effect."

"Exactly so, my Lady Rohallion," said Cosmo, slowly emitting the smoke of his pipe.

"What *did* you mean, Cosmo?" she demanded, with increasing asperity.

"Much more than I said, mother."

"That you saw Quentin kissing Flora?"

"Or Flora kissing Quentin, my dear lady mother, I don't think it makes much difference," said he, with an angry laugh, while she almost trembled with indignation; "but what do you think of your amiable ward and your protégé—a lively young fellow, isn't he?"

"I ought to have been prepared for this," said Lady Rohallion; "indeed, Eleonora Eglinton forewarned me that something of this kind might happen. A separation by school, college, or something else, should have been made whenever Flora came here. I must consult Rohallion, and have such arrangements made for Quentin as shall prevent his interference with the views we have so long cherished for our only son. The foolish girl—the presumptuous boy—to be actually kissing her!"

"Shameful, isn't it?" said Cosmo, who had been despatched somewhat precipitately into the Guards for making love to his mother's maids.

"Such vagaries must be controlled and punished."

"He should have been gazetted a year ago to a West India Regiment, or one of the eight Hottentot Battalions at the Cape; they are quite good enough for such as he; or send him still-hunting with a line regiment into Ireland, where slugs from behind a hedge may send him to the devil before his time."

"Oh fie, Cosmo, you are cruel and unjust;" but she added bitterly as pride of birth, her only failing or weakness, got the mastery for the moment; "no unknown waif, no nameless person like this youth Kennedy shall come between my son, the Master of Rohallion, and our long cherished purpose—no, assuredly! Andrews," she added, raising her voice, as the thin, spare military valet passed through the library, "desire Miss Warrender to speak with me in the yellow drawing-room, before the bell rings for supper."

Then leaving her son, Lady Rohallion swept out of the library to have a solemn interview with her ward.

The last flush of sunset had died away, and one by one the stars were shining out.

The night wore on, and nothing was seen or heard of Quentin. Indeed, save the Master, as

yet no one missed him ; but as he did not appear when the supper-bell clanged in the belfry of the old keep, Cosmo, with several unpleasant misgivings in his mind, hastened unseen into the avenue, down the long vista of which the waning moon shed a broad and pallid flood of radiance, ere, in clouds that betokened a rough night, it sunk beyond the wooded heights of Ardgour.

Cosmo went to the place where so savagely he had struck the poor lad down ; but Quentin was gone ; the grass where he had lain was bruised, and on the gravel was a pool of blood about a foot in diameter—blood that must have flowed from the wound in his head ; but other trace of him there was none !

CHAPTER XVI.

EXPOSTULATION.

“Pledged till thou reach the verge of womanhood,
And shalt become thy own sufficient stay!
Too late I feel, sweet orphan! was the day
For steadfast hope the contrast to fulfil;
Yet still my blessing hover o'er thee still.”

WORDSWORTH.

LADY ROHALLION had so frequently spoken to Flora Warrender on the subject of the proposed or expected marriage with Cosmo, that she had little diffidence generally in approaching the subject; but now there was a new and unexpected feature in the matter—a lover, a rival—thus she felt aware that the adoption of some tact became requisite.

What the good lady could hope to achieve, where her enterprising son had failed in person, it is difficult to imagine; nevertheless, she resolved to remonstrate with Flora.

“She is too young to judge for herself, and must therefore let others judge for her,” said she, half aloud.

“You wished to see me, madam,” said Flora,

entering with an air of annoyance, only half concealed by a smile, as she correctly feared this formal summons had reference to the recent scene in the garden.

Seating Flora beside her on a sofa, she took her by the hand, and while considering what to say, played caressingly with her dark wavy hair, and said something in praise of her beauty, so the girl's heart foreboded what was coming next.

"You are rich, dear Flora," said Lady Rohallion, insinuatingly, "but most, perhaps, in beauty."

"I am often told so, especially by you," replied Flora, laughing.

"An heiress, too."

"But what of it, madam?" she asked, gravely.

"You know, dear Flora, that money is the key to a thousand pleasures—it is alike the object of the avaricious, and the ambition of the poor."

"True, Lady Rohallion," replied Flora, smiling again; "but, as we say in Scotland, a tocherless lass, though she may have a long pedigree, may have a pleasure that no heiress can ever enjoy."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; the most flattering and glorious conviction!"

"Pray tell me?"

"She can prove to her heart's content that she is loved for herself, and herself alone. Poverty makes all equal——"

"True; but so does wealth," interrupted Lady

Rohallion, annoyed by her own mismanagement in the beginning. "You are rich, but my son is also rich, and he loves you, Flora, well, truly, and devotedly."

"And have two days sufficed to summon all this truth and devotion?"

"Flora, Flora, you are well aware that it has been an old purpose and hope, between your parents and his, to unite or cement their old hereditary friendship by a stronger tie, and that this intended marriage has been an object of solicitude to all——"

"Save to those most interested in it—myself especially."

"Do not say so, my dear child—the match is most suitable."

A gesture of annoyance escaped Flora, but Lady Rohallion resumed :

"Our families have known each other so long ; it has been a friendship of three generations—Cosmo and you suit each other so admirably ; and then the Ardgour lands run the whole length of the Bailiwick with our own."

"The most convincing argument of all," replied Flora, in a tone which made Lady Rohallion colour deeply, and the secret annoyance of both was gradually rising to a height, though each strove to conceal it.

"Consider our family, Flora !" exclaimed Lady Winifred, haughtily ; "look at that gilded vane

on yonder turret. It bears a date—1400; in that year, Sir Ranulph, first baron of Rohallion, was made Hereditary Admiral of the Firth of Clyde, from Glasgow Bridge to Ailsa Craig, by the Regent Duke of Albany. We are not people of yesterday!”

Flora failed to perceive what this aqueous office had to do with her or her affairs.

“In three years,” she began, “I shall cease to be your ward——”

“Three, by your father’s will, Flora.”

“So do not let us embitter those three remaining years, my dear madam, by this project, a constant recurrence to which serves but to excite and pique by the attempt to control me.”

“I trust, my dear but wilful Flora, that we have not been unjust stewards in the execution of the trust your worthy parents bequeathed to us, and if the hope of a nearer and dearer connexion——”

“Your son, the Master, is a brave and noble gentleman, I grant you,” interrupted Flora, with quiet energy; “but save in name, we have been almost strangers to each other, and he is so many years my senior, that when we last met he treated me quite as a little girl—a child! Our tastes, habits, manners, and temper are all dissimilar; ah, madam, pardon me, but I never could love him!”

“Never love Cosmo—*my* Cosmo?” said Lady Rohallion, with indignant surprise.

“Never as a husband, though dearly as a friend.”

“Fancy, all! You would love him with all a true wife’s devotion ere long. In girls of your age, love always comes after marriage, it is unnecessary before it. You little know how dear and loveable he is, and how gallant too! What wrote Sir Ralph Abercrombie to the Duke of York concerning him, after that affair at the Helder? ‘The bravery of the Honourable Captain Crawford, of the 3rd Guards, in the action of the 27th instant, forms one of the most brilliant episodes of the war in Holland!’”

Flora gave an almost imperceptible shrug of her white shoulders, for praises of Cosmo’s valour at the Helder had been a daily story of the old lady for some time past. Slight though the shrug and the smile that accompanied it, Lady Rohallion detected them, and her eyes sparkled brightly with anger. She arose with ineffable hauteur, and shook out her flounces, as a swan ruffles its pinions, to their fullest extent.

“Miss Warrender,” said she, with her hands folded before her, and her powdered head borne very erect indeed, “is it possible that this strange opposition alike to the earnest wishes of the living and of the dead, arises from a cause which I have hitherto disdained to approach or allude to—as a species of midsummer madness—a love for the luckless lad to whom for so many years we

have extended the hand of protection, Quentin Kennedy?"

At the name which concluded this formal exordium, a deep blush suffused the delicate neck of Flora; but, as her back was to the lighted candles, the questioner did not perceive it, though scrutinising her keenly.

"And why, madam, may I not love poor Quentin, if I choose?" asked the wilful Flora, bluntly.

"Because he is, as you justly named him, *poor*," replied the other, with calm asperity.

"But I am rich," urged Flora, laughing through all her annoyance, with an irresistible desire to pique Lady Rohallion.

"He is nameless."

"How know we that, madam? Kennedy is as good a name as Warrender."

"True, when borne by an Earl of Cassilis, by a Laird of Colzean, of Kilhenzie, or Dunure; but not by every landless waif who bears the name of the clan or family. God knoweth how in my heart I dearly love that boy; yet this fancy of yours passes all bounds of reason, and all my expectations, in its absurdity. I have destined you for my son, Cosmo, and none other shall have you!" she added, almost imperiously.

"Destined," said Flora, with mingled laughter and chagrin, "because the march-dyke of Rohallion is also the march-dyke of Ardgour."

“Nay, nay, think not so unworthily of us; *we* need to covet nothing and to court none; but destined you are, because it was your dear mother’s dying wish.”

“To make me miserable?”

“To make you happy, foolish girl; dare you speak of misery with *my* son?”

“So you would actually have me to marry a man I don’t like, and scarcely ever saw? It is a common sacrifice in the great world, I am aware; but my sphere has been rather small——”

“You would not marry a boy, surely?”

“I may at least love him,” replied Flora, simply; “and I have no wish to marry at all—just now, at least.”

“This is the very stuff of which your novels are made!” exclaimed Lady Rohallion, crimsoning with passion, and raising her voice in a manner quite unusual to her. “Mercy on me! I wonder why I have never detected Quentin at your feet, on his knees before you, for that I believe is the true and most approved mode; but we know nothing of him, he may be base-born for aught that we can tell, and Lord Rohallion shall learn that Quentin Kennedy—a brat, a very beggar’s brat—shall never come between our own son and his success; and so, young lady, your humble servant!”

And inflamed by genuine passion, Lady Rohallion, as she uttered this unpleasant speech,

(which, to do her justice, was scarcely uttered ere repented for,) in a loud and imperious tone, swept away with a haughty bow, in all her amplitude of black satin, and with that hauteur of bearing which made the Scottish gentlewomen of her day so stately and imposing.

Her words, the fiery glance of anger she darted at Flora, and the tenor of the expostulation proved too much for the temper or the nerves of that young lady, who on being left to herself, burst into a passion of tears.

But a hand was laid on the lock of the door, as if some one was about to enter; and fearing it might be the Master, she started up and escaped by another door to her own apartment.

CHAPTER XVII.

FORTH INTO THE WORLD.

"This nicht is my departing nicht,
 For here nae langer I maun stay ;
 There's neither friend or foe o' mine,
 But wishes me away.
 What I hae dune through lack o' wit,
 I never, never can reca' ;
 I hope you're a' my friends as yet—
 Gude nicht, and joy be wi' ye a'."

Johnnie Armstrong's Good Night.

THE knock-down blow given to Quentin by the butt-end of the clubbed fowling-piece, beside inflicting a severe wound which bled profusely, stunned him completely for a time, and in this condition he was found by the quartermaster, who was returning from having a jug of punch and a quiet rubber with our quaint friend the dominie at his little thatched cottage in the village.

Great were the alarm and concern of the kind-hearted veteran when he found his young friend and favourite in a condition so pitiable. He raised him, tied a handkerchief over his wound to stanch the bleeding; then gradually as consciousness returned, Quentin remembered all that

had occurred, and told Girvan of his meeting with the Master—the unmerited and unexpected insolence of the latter, his sudden assault, and that was all he knew.

The disquiet of the ex-quartermaster was greatly increased on hearing of a *fracas* so unseemly and so dangerous, and he knew in a moment that it contained *more* elements of discord than Quentin admitted or perhaps knew; though he was ignorant of the Master's abrupt proposal, the garden-scene, and of the subsequent expostulation, which was in progress at that moment, and which we have detailed in the preceding chapter.

“I can't blame you, my boy,” said the old soldier, half communing with himself, and shaking his head till his pigtail swung like a pendulum; “I can't blame ye,” he repeated, as he gave Quentin his arm, and together they walked slowly towards the castle; “ye are young—the temptation is great, though I hae long since forgotten all of such matters, save that love-making tendeth to mischief.”

“Quartermaster,” stammered Quentin, “I don't understand, what——”

“But I do! The devilment first began in Father Adam's garden, and it will go on so long as the world wags.”

Quentin coloured deeply, and his heart leaped with mingled rage and exultation—rage at the

Master for the injury he had done him, and exultation for its cause—jealousy, by which he was assured that Flora loved him, despite all the attention and the greater attractions of the *blasé* guardsman.

But what was to be done now ?

To remain longer under the same roof with the Master of Rohallion was impossible ; but whither was he to go ? The quartermaster, without adverting further to what he too well knew to be the secret spring or moving cause of a quarrel so sudden and unbecoming in its details, hurried Quentin to his secluded little quarters, “the snugery,” already described as existing in a tower of the castle. There he gave him a glass of sherry and water as a reviver ; sponged and cleansed, with ready and kindly hands, his face and hair from the clotted blood which disfigured them, applied with soldierlike promptitude a piece of court-plaster to the cut, and brushed a lock or so gently over to conceal it.

That Lady Rohallion must be informed of the encounter and have it explained away, if possible ; that the Master should be urged to apologise to Quentin (a very improbable hope) ; and that they should be made to shake hands and commit the affair to oblivion, was the mode in which the worthy ground-bailie proposed to solder up this untoward affair. Quentin was long inexorable, and with the fury of youth vowed to have some

mysterious and terrible revenge; but gradually the inexpediency, the impropriety, and impossibility of obtaining reparation by the strong hand dawned upon him, and he consented to leave the matter in the hands of Girvan—to have it explained gently to Lady Rohallion, and leave her to be the mediator between them.

On being informed by Jack Andrews that she was in the yellow drawing-room, and as there was still an hour to spare before the supper bell rang, they proceeded thither to have an interview with her.

While passing through the outer drawing-room, which was quaintly furnished with *marqueterie* cabinets, tables, and bookcases, with chairs and *fauteuils* of Queen Anne's time, they heard voices in the inner apartment, and one of them was Lady Rohallion's, pitched in a louder key than was her wont, so they paused, unfortunately, only to hear the LAST words of her conversation with Flora—words which fell like molten lead on the ears and in the heart of the listener, whom they most concerned.

“—We know nothing of him—he may be base-born for aught that we can tell, and Lord Rohallion shall learn that Quentin Kennedy—a brat, a very beggar's brat—shall never come between our own son and his success—and so, young lady, your humble servant !”

These bitter, bitter words—words such as he

had never heard from *her* lips before, made Quentin reel as if stunned, so that with the effect they produced upon him, added to that of the recent blow, he would have fallen had not the quartermaster caught him in his arms, and held him up, surveying him the while with a kind and father-like expression of solicitude and bewilderment in his old and weather-worn visage.

Rousing himself, with his teeth set and his eyes flashing, he made three efforts to turn the door handle and enter the room.

It was *his* hand that Flora had heard upon the lock when she started from the sofa and fled to her own apartment in a passion of tears, so that when he entered the inner drawing-room it was empty, and thus Quentin knew not—though his heart foreboded—to whom the injurious words of Lady Rohallion had been addressed; but their tenor decided him at once in a preconceived intention of leaving, and for ever, the only home he had now in the world, and almost the only one of which he had any distinct memory.

“This is no longer a place for me, John Girvan, and so sure as God sees and hears me, I shall leave it this very night!” he exclaimed, as with his eyes flashing and full of tears, and his heart now filled only by new, and hitherto unknown emotions of sorrow, bitterness, and mortification (unknown to him at least) he walked to and fro upon the gun-battery, where the 24-pounders of

La Bonne Citoyenne faced the waves of the Firth, on which the last rays of a waning moon were shining coldly and palely, especially on the ridge of foam that boiled for ever over the Partan Craig.

“And whither would ye go, Quentin?” asked Girvan, who felt in his honest heart an intense commiseration for the lonely lad, knowing that were he to remain after the insult he had received, and the words he had heard, it would argue a poverty of spirit he would be loth to find in Quentin; “whither would ye go?”

“Away to France, to seek my mother.”

“Impossible—it’s hostile ground, and once on it you would be made a prisoner by the authorities, and shut up in Bitche, Verdun, or Brisgau, if they did not hang you as a spy, or send you to serve as a private soldier in the *Corps Etranger*. You must think of another scheme, less rash and romantic.”

“I know of none.”

“In all the wide world, Quentin,” said Girvan, with his nether lip quivering, “ye have no home but this.”

“*This!*” repeated Quentin, grinding his teeth.

“Yes.”

“Well—I care not; I will go anywhere from it—the farther away the better!” (And Flora? suggested his heart.)

In vain the quartermaster urged him to do

nothing rashly, and to await the return of Lord Rohallion, who had ridden over to Eglinton castle, to visit his old friend and American comrade, Earl Hugh, who had just returned from London; but pride and passion, with a conviction that the mother's unwonted bitterness was only a supplement to the son's insulting conduct, seemed to dissolve all the ties that had bound Quentin to Rohallion and its family.

These emotions of anger had full swing in his heart. What Lady Rohallion had said, the old Lord must, he argued, have heard repeatedly, and may often have thought; and so, forth—forth to seek his bread elsewhere, he would go before the clocks struck midnight.

Mentally he vowed and resolved, that the first hour of another morning should see him far in search of a new home.

Deluding good John Girvan by some excuse, he slipped to his own room and packed a few necessaries in a small portmanteau, feeling, while he did so, a sense of mortification that they were the gifts of those whom, in justice to himself, he was compelled to leave. His watch, a ring, a breast-pin, and other trinkets given to him by Lady Rohallion, he laid upon his dressing-table, leaving them in token that he took with him nothing but what was absolutely necessary.

The time was an hour and a-half from midnight. Unheeding he had heard the supper-bell

clanged long ago, and cared not what any one—Flora excepted—thought of his absence now. Opening a window, he looked forth upon the night. The moon had waned, and the atmosphere was thick and gusty—yea, nearly as stormy and as wild as on that night when he had been washed ashore on the sand of the bay below Rohallion.

Putting his purse in his pocket—it contained but a half-guinea, he gave a last glance at his bed-room—to leave it with all its familiar features cost him a pang; there were some of Lady Rohallion's needlework, and sketches by Flora, books lent him by the dominie, gloves and foils that had borne the dint of many a bout between him and John Girvan; quaint shells given to him by Elsie Irvine, and many little trophies of his shooting expeditions with the gamekeeper, and so forth. He quitted the room with a sigh, and slipping downstairs reached the hall-door unseen by any of the household.

“And now a long farewell to Rohallion!” he exclaimed, as he reached the ivied arch of the haunted gate.

“Not so fast, Quentin,” said a voice, and the rough hand of the worthy quartermaster grasped his.

“John Girvan,” said Quentin, with emotion.

“I thought it would come to this. So you are really about to take French leave of us—to levant in the night, and without beat of drum?”

“ Yes.”

“ To go out into the wide world ?”

“ Yes.”

“ I knew it would be thus, for I knew your spirit, Quentin, and so have been keeping guard here at the gate.”

“ Guard—for what purpose ? To stop me ?”

“ No.”

“ What then ?”

“ To aid and help ye, Quentin, laddie,” said Girvan, placing a heavy purse in his hand. “ I have saved something here, forty guineas or so, off my half-pay, take them and use them cautiously, wi an auld man’s blessing—an auld soldier’s, if you like it better.”

“ Girvan—John Girvan,” said Quentin, with a very troubled voice ; “ I cannot—I cannot——”

“ What ?”

“ Deprive you of what I may never be able to repay.”

“ Ye must and ye shall take the money, or I’ll fling it into the Lollard’s Linn !” said the other, impetuously. “ It was I who laid your father’s head in the grave, laddie, in the auld kirkyard yonder in the glen, and ill would it become auld John Girvan, of the 25th, to let his son go forth to seek his fortune in this cold hard world, portionless and penniless, while there was a shot in the locker—a lad I love, too !”

“ But the repayment, John Girvan, the repayment.”

“ Heed not that—it will come time enough ; and if it never comes I’ll never miss it ; but ye’ll write to me from the next burgh-town, won’t ye, Quentin, laddie ?”

“ I shall, John—I shall,” replied Quentin, now so softened that he sobbed with his face on the old man’s shoulder.

“ God bless ye, my bairn—God bless ye !”

“ And you, John.”

“ You’ll think o’ me sometimes.”

“ Oh, could I ever forget ?”

“ Sorely will *she* repent this at my lord’s home-coming,” said Girvan, bitterly.

“ My father was an ill-starred wanderer, and perished miserably, poor man ! What right have I to hope for, or to look for, a better fate than he ? My mother, too. . . . Do they see me now ; and know of all this ? . . . And Flora—dear Flora, whom I shall see no more !”

“ Take a dram ere you go, laddie, for the night is dark and eerie,” said Girvan, producing a flask from his pocket ; “ ‘ a spur in the head is weel worth twa on the heels,’ says an auld Scots proverb.”

“ You will bid the dominie good-bye for me.”

“ That shall I, laddie—that shall I.”

“ And tell—tell *her*, that I have gone forth to seek my fortune, and—and——”

His voice failed him, so he slung his little

portmanteau on his shoulder, and wrung the hand of his kind friend for the last time. Hurrying away, he disappeared in the darkness, and, as he did so, a sound that followed on the wind made him pause, but for an instant.

It was the old quartermaster sobbing like a child.

* * * *

So, thus went Quentin Kennedy forth into the world.

“Few words,” says a charming writer, “are more easily spoken than *He went forth to seek his fortune*; and what a whole world lies within the narrow compass! a world of high-hearted hopes and doubting fear; of noble ambition to be won and glorious paths to be trod, mingled with tender thoughts of home and those who made it such. What sustaining courage must be his who dares this course, and braves that terrible conflict—the toughest that ever man fought—between his own bright colouring of life, and the stern reality of the world. How many hopes has he to abandon—how many illusions to give up. How often is his faith to be falsified and his trustfulness betrayed; and, worst of all, what a fatal change do these trials impress upon himself—how different is he from what he had been.”

Bitterness tinged the spirit of Quentin Kennedy with an impression of fatalism, and he marched mournfully, doggedly on.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNAVAILING REGRET.

“ Ay waken oh!
 Waken and wearie ;
 Sleep I canna get
 For thinking o’ my dearie.
 When I sleep I dream,
 And when I wake I’m eerie ;
 Rest I canna get,
 For thinking o’ my dearie.”

Old Scots Song.

WHEN, three days after these events, Lord Rohallion returned home from his visit to Eglinton and to his brave old comrade—the “ Sodger Hugh” of ‘Burns’ poem—he found the members of his household in a considerable state of consternation and excitement. This was consequent to the sudden and mysterious disappearance of his favourite, Quentin Kennedy ; but gradually the whole story came out in all its details, even to the crushing observation, so unfortunately and unintentionally overheard by the lad and the quartermaster in the outer drawing-room.

Lord Rohallion was very indignant with his son for making an attack so unprovoked as the

affair in the avenue, which, to do him justice, the Master described truly enough. He was seriously angry with Lady Winifred for speaking so ungenerously of his young favourite, and with the quartermaster too, for permitting, even aiding him in the means of flight.

Now, three days had elapsed and no tidings had been heard of him; but there were no railroads or steamers in those days, or other means of locomotion than the occasional stage-coaches and carriers' waggons, so the family supposed that he could not be very far off.

The Master was sullen, resenting all this interest as an insult to himself, so he spent the whole day abroad in search of grouse and ptarmigan, and had even ordered his valet to pack up and prepare for returning to London, an order which that powdered gentleman of the aiguillette heard with extreme satisfaction, "the hair of Hayrshire by no means agreeing with his constitution," while the "red hands and big beetle-crushers of the women were by no means to his taste."

It was evident to Cosmo that Flora entertained a horror of him; and now that her anger had fully subsided and emotions of alarm replaced it, Lady Rohallion mourned for the poor lad, repenting of the past, and trembling for the unknown future.

"A plague on your planning and mâtch-

making, Winny," said her husband, as they sat together on the old stone seat in the garden, late on the third evening after Quentin had disappeared; "I never knew any good come of that sort of thing."

"You know, Reynold, how long this proposed marriage has been a favourite scheme of ourselves and the Warrenders," she urged, gently.

"But you were—pardon me, Winny, dear—too officious or energetic; and Cosmo has been most reprehensibly rash!"

"Ah, don't say so!"

"I must! Had you left the girl to herself, this romantic fancy for her early playmate had soon been forgotten, or merged in a woman's love for Cosmo, and his proposal had been accepted, as I hope it yet shall be. Women change, don't they, sometimes?" he added, with a sly twinkle in his eyes.

"Yes; but there must be reasons," said she, hesitatingly.

"Of course—of course."

"From the hints that Cosmo gave of what he had seen or overheard, I deemed it right to interfere."

"An error, I think; couldn't you let the young folks alone? Heaven knows, many a girl I kissed, in my first red coat and epaulettes," said Rohallion, while knocking the gravel about with his silver-headed cane.

"But Cosmo does so love that girl."

"Love her?" said Rohallion, laughing.

"Yes."

"Then it must be after some odd fashion of his own."

"How, my lord?"

"Why, zounds! Cosmo has passed unscathed through the perils of too many London seasons to be bird-limed by a country belle like Flora, beautiful though she be. She is not the style of girl that passes muster with the Household Brigade, I fear."

"Flora Warrender?"

"I mean that she is too genuine—too unsophisticated—in fact, I don't know what I mean,—somewhat of a character, if you will; and then, Quentin—poor Quentin——"

"Poor dear boy! pray don't upbraid me more, Reynold," she urged with tears.

"I do not mean to do so, Winny."

"I remember him only as the sweet little prattling child, saved from the wreck on that wild and stormy night; and I love him dearly, as if he were our own; he was full of affection and gentleness!" she continued, covering her face with her handkerchief.

"And yet you trampled on him, Winny," said Lord Rohallion, taking a pinch of Prince's mixture with great energy, and making his hair-powder fly about like a floury halo, "trampled

upon him as if he had been a beggar's cur—he a soldier's son!”

“Oh, Reynold, upbraidings again!”

“It wasn't like you, Winny, dear—it wasn't like you.”

“My deep interest in Cosmo's welfare, provocation at Quentin, and the extreme wilfulness of Flora, all served to bewilder me. I own that I was wrong and not quite myself; but the dear bairn is gone, Reynold, gone from our roof-tree, and sorrow avails not.”

“He was so good, so gentle, of so sweet a disposition,” said Lord Rohallion, musingly; “always doing kind offices for everybody. Egad! I've seen him carrying horse-buckets for the old groom in the stable-court, because the man was feeble and ailing; but here come the dominie and John Girvan—perhaps they have news. Good evening, dominie. Any tidings of the deserter, Girvan?”

The kind-hearted dominie, who since Quentin's disappearance had been as restless as if his galligaskins had been lined with Lieutenant James's horse-blister, shook his head mournfully, while lifting his old-fashioned three-cornered hat, and bowing thrice to the lady, who presented him with her lace-mittened hand.

“I have just been telling Lady Rohallion that I thought she was unnecessarily severe, and I regret very much, Girvan, that Quentin overheard

those casual words in the drawing-room—words lightly spoken, and not meant for him to hear.”

“Poor lad! as for his falling in love with Miss Warrender, it was quite natural,” said the quartermaster; “how could you expect aught else, my lady?”

“True—true,” replied Lady Winifred, with an air of extreme annoyance at having private family matters openly canvassed by dependents; but the affair had gone beyond their own control now; “propinquity is frequently fatal.”

“Prop—what? I dinna quite comprehend, my lady; but this I know, that if a winsome young pair are left for ever together——”

“That is exactly what I mean, Girvanmains,” interrupted the lady, with cold dignity.

“Well—it is pretty much like leaving a lighted match near gunpowder; there will be a blow-up sometime when least expected.”

“May you not be all wrong in your views of this matter?” said Lord Rohallion, who somewhat shared his wife’s feeling of annoyance; “I must question Miss Warrender herself; I feel assured that she will conceal nothing from me.”

“Not even that she allowed this sprightly young fellow to kiss her in the avenue, eh?” said the sneering voice of the Master, who appeared suddenly at the back of the stone chair, which he had approached unseen, and whereon he lounged with a twig in his mouth, and a Newmarket hat

knowingly depressed very much over his right eye. "It was very pretty and becoming, wasn't it, dominie? ha! ha!"

"Cosmo!" exclaimed his mother, with positive anger.

"*Osculatio*—a kissing-match—eh, dominie?"

"There may be no harm in a kiss, my good sir," said the pedant, gravely, for though mightily shocked, as became the precentor of Rohallion kirk, on hearing of such undue familiarity, he felt himself bound to defend his young pupil and friend.

"No harm, you think?"

"Indubitably not."

"A rare old put it is! But what do such little favours lead to?"

"They may lead to reconciliation, as when the king kissed Absalom; or be the token of welcome, as when Moses kissed his father-in-law; or they may indicate homage, as we find in the book of Esther."

"And what about the kiss of Judas, dominie, when on such matters?" continued the sneering Cosmo.

"That I leave you, sir, to discover; but that there may be nothing wrong in the act itself, I can refer you to Genesis, Hosea, and all the sacred writings, which abound in solemn salutes by the lip, so that the kiss of Quentin may have been a pure and sinless one."

The dominie gave the fore-cock of his hat a twist with his hand, as if he had settled the matter, while Lord Rohallion, notwithstanding his annoyance, could not but join his son in a hearty laugh at the serious earnestness of the defence.

“You will have a vigorous search made for Quentin Kennedy,” said he; “despatch messengers in every direction, John Girvan; spare neither trouble nor money, but bring the young rogue back to us.”

“That shall I do blithely, my lord,” replied the quarter master, as he and the dominie made their bows and retired, while Cosmo curled his thin lips; and after a pause, uttered one of his harsh and unpleasant mocking laughs.

“The Master has the eyebrows of a wicked man, or I am no physiognomist—grieved am I to say so, dominie,” whispered Girvan, as they walked away together.

“Ye are right, John, the *intercilium* is covered with hair, whilk I like not, though Petronius and Ovid call such eyebrows the chief charm of the other sex;

“‘Ye fill by art your eyebrows’ vacant space,’

saith the latter. It is an auld—auld notion that beetle-brows indicate an evil temper—a crafty and fierce spirit; and of a verity, the Master Cosmo hath both.”

“Who the deuce could have anticipated such a blow-up as this?”

“About a woman! Pah! women,” said the dominie, cynically, “according to a German philosopher, are only like works carved of fine ivory; nothing is whiter or smoother, and nothing sooner turns *yellow*.”

“Are ye sure he was not a Roman philosopher?” asked the quartermaster, drily.

“I am; yet Petronius and Ovid both say——”

“Bother them both, dominie! leave Greek roots and Latin verbs alone, *now* that the poor boy is gone—God bless and watch over him! I know he’ll ever have a warm corner in his heart for us both, and that, go wherever he may, he’ll neither forget you nor the poor old quartermaster; but now to have a glass of grog, and then to set about this search that my lord has ordered—a search which I know right well will prove a bootless one.”

A vigorous pursuit and inquiry along all the highways were now instituted. Girvan, the dominie, the gardener, gamekeepers, grooms, Jack Andrews, Irvin the fisherman, the running footman, the parish minister on his puffy Galloway cob, and even Spillsby, the portly and unwieldy butler, were all despatched in various directions to the neighbouring farms, mansion sand villages, without avail.

John Legat, usually known in the Bailiwick

as *Lang Leggie*, the running footman (for one of those officials still lingered in the old-fashioned household of Rohallion), scoured all Kyle and Cunninghame, with hard boiled eggs and sherry in the silver bulb that topped his long cane, scarcely pausing to imbibe these, his sustenance when on duty; and though he returned thrice to the castle, he was despatched like a liveried Mercury, thrice again, but without hearing tidings of the missing one.

Since the last Duke of Queensberry ("old Q.") who died in 1810, Lord Rohallion was perhaps the last Scottish peer who retained such an old state appendage as a running footman.

Long did they all, save the sullen Master, hope, and even flatter themselves, that the wanderer would return; but days became weeks, and no trace could be discovered and no tidings were heard of him anywhere.

An armed lugger that did not display her colours, but was very foreign in her build and in the rake of her masts, had been seen standing off and on near Rohallion-Head. About midnight she was close in shore, steering clear of the Partan Craig, and burning a blue light. By sunrise she was far off at sea: could he have gone with *her*?

There had been a numerous and somewhat lawless body of gipsies encamped near the oak-wood shaw on the night of his disappearance, for

the ashes of their night-fires had been found, together with well-picked bones and broken bottles, the usual *débris* of their suppers *al fresco*; but there were other traces more alarming: several large pools of blood, which showed that there had been a fight—perhaps murder—committed among them. These wanderers had departed by sunrise, and passed beyond the craigs of Kyle, where all traces of them were lost. The quartermaster thought of the money he had given Quentin, and trembled lest the gold had only ensured his destruction, till the dominic reassured him by remembering that there were more Kennedies than Faas among those gipsies, and the former would be sure to protect him for the sake of his name.

On that night, too, the pressgang from Ayr had been more than ten miles in land, in search of certain seamen who had sought refuge as farm labourers; so this knowledge was another source of fear, as there was a great demand for men, and the officers were not very particular.

There had been a recruiting party beating up for various regiments in the Bailiwick of Cunninghame, and it had been at Maybole on the night after Quentin fled. The party had marched, no one could say whether for Edinburgh or Glasgow. Could Quentin have enlisted?

The night was a dark and stormy one; could he have lost his way and perished in the Doon

or the Girvan, both of which were swollen by recent rains? This was barely possible, as he knew the country so well.

There were no electric wires to telegraph by, no rural police to apply to, and no penny dailies to advertise in. People travelled still by an armed stage or the carrier's waggon, just as their great-grandfathers did in the days of Queen Anne. Twanging his horn as he went or came, the Riding Post was still, as in Cowper's *Task*,

“——the herald of a noisy world,
With spattered boots, strapped waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumbering at his back.”

Posts came and went from the capital of the Bailiwick, but there were no tidings of Quentin, so the Master of Rohallion laughed in secret at all the exertions, doubts, and fears of those around him.

Every alarming idea was naturally suggested. The quartermaster's early instincts made him think most frequently of the recruiting party; but he grieved at the idea of the friendless and homeless lad, so delicately nurtured and gently bred, enduring all he had himself endured—the hardships and privations of a private soldier's life; while the kind-hearted dominie actually shed tears behind his huge horn barnacles at the bare thought of such a thing, and mourned for all his wasted classic lore.

Aware that she had been in some measure the

primary cause of Quentin's expulsion from Rohallion, Flora Warrender had rather a difficult part to play now. To conceal entirely that she mourned for him would be to act a part which she disdained; but when she spoke with sorrow or anxiety, she excited the sarcasms of Cosmo, and even a little pique in Lady Winifred, who more than once said to her, almost with asperity, "Flora, you should have known your own position, and made Quentin remember his; then all these unseemly events had never taken place."

"How, madam?"

"You should at once have put an end to his mooning and tomfoolery. Do you hear me?"

"Yes, madam," sighed Flora, who seemed to be intent on a book, though she held it upside down.

"How cool—how composed you are!"

"Less so, perhaps, than I seem," replied Flora, who felt that tears were suffusing her eyes.

"Young ladies took these matters very differently in my time; but since this revolution in France, manners are strangely altered. (Here we may mention that the epoch referred to was now superseding the Union in Lady Rohallion's mind.) Tears!" she continued; "I am glad to see them, at least for your own sake."

"They are *not* for my own sake, Lady Rohallion, but for the sake of poor Quentin, who has fallen under the displeasure of you all, and who,

through my unwitting means, has—has—become——”

“What?”

“Homeless, friendless, and alone! Oh, it must be so sad to be alone in the world—all alone!”

Lady Winifred lowered her eyes, and her irritation passed rapidly away.

She had somewhat changed since that stormy night on which we first introduced her to the reader, and had altered, as people do with increasing years, so as to be at times—shall we say it?—almost selfish in much that related to her own immediate hearth and household, and more especially in all that concerned the still more selfish Cosmo, on whom she doted, and in whom she could see no imperfection. Yet she could not but reproach herself bitterly when thinking of Quentin Kennedy, and the harsh, cutting words he had overheard.

Then as his smiling, loving, and handsome face came vividly in memory before her, she would ask of herself, “Is it thus, Winifred Rohallion, you have treated the strange orphan, the helpless child once, the mere lad now, who was cast by fate, misfortune, and the waves of that bleak November sea, years ago, at your door and at your mercy? Was it generous to cast forth upon the cold world the friendless, poor, and penniless youth, who loves you—ay, even as your own son *never* loved you? And what answer is

to be given if, at some future day, his mother, who may be living yet, should come hither and demand him of you—you who stung and galled his proud spirit by taunts, upbraiding and unmerited reproach?" And so she would whisper and think what she dared not say aloud; though "perhaps the lowest of our whispers may reach eternity, for it is not very far from any of us, after all."

By the past memories of her early life—by those of *one* whose face came at times unbidden before her, and by the pleasant days of *their* youth in pastoral Nithsdale—by those evenings when the sunset glowed so redly on the green summits of Mouswald and Criffel, while the Nith brawled joyously over its pebbled bed, and the white hawthorn cast its fragrance and its blossoms on the soft west wind—by all these, it might be asked, had she no compassion for the young love she was seeking to mar and crush?

She had alike compunction and compassion; but in this instance she deemed it the mere love of a boy for a girl, and not quite such as Rohallion's brother, Ranulph Crawford, had for her some seven-and-thirty years before.

Seven-and-thirty! a long vista they were to look back through now; but the events of her youth seemed clearer at times than those of her middle age, and as we grow older they always are so in dreams.

Quentin would soon forget the affair, she was assured, and self-interest and love for her own son blinded her to the rest—to all but a sorrow for the lost youth, and a craving to know his fate, where he was now, and with whom.

Thus many a night after his disappearance her heart upbraided her keenly ; and many a lonely hour, unseen by others, she wept and prayed—prayed for the welfare and safety of the unknown lad she might never see or hear of more, for as a mother she had been to him, and he had been ever tender, loving, and kind as a son to her—much more than ever the Master had been in the days of his infancy and boyhood, for he was always cold, cruel, and headstrong ; and now Quentin's place was vacant among them, as completely as if he was in the grave.

And Flora Warrender, though mentioned last, her sorrow was not the least. How lonely and how tiresome the old castle seemed to her now ! All their favourite walks—the long, shady avenue by the foaming Lollard's Linn ; the grand old garden with its aged yew hedges ; the kelpies' haunted pool, where first she learned that he loved her, and felt his kiss upon her cheek ; the ivied ruins of Kilhenzie, and every old trysting-place, seemed deserted now indeed.

She had no companion now in her rambles to touch up her sketches, to compare notes with in reading, to hover lovingly by her side at the

piano, and so forth : thus Flora's "occupation" seemed, like the warlike Moor's, to be gone indeed !

The sunny August mornings came, but there came not with them Quentin, to meet her fresh and ruddy from a gallop along the shore, with a dewy bouquet from the garden, or with a basket of speckled trout from the river.

Slowly passed each lingering day, and evening followed ; but there was no one to ramble with now by starlight in the terraced garden—to linger with by the sounding sea that surged upon the shore below and foamed upon the distant rock, or to share all her thoughts, and anticipate every wish.

She hoped he would return when his money was spent and when his passion cooled, or his love for her obtained the mastery. So did Lady Rohallion and the old lord—that honest, worthy country gentleman and gallant peer — never doubted it ; but the quicker-seeing quartermaster did ; so day followed day until they began to count the weeks, and still there came no news of the lost Quentin Kennedy.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN OLD SOLDIER'S STORY.

"If he was of Leven's," said the lieutenant.

"I told him your honour was."

"Then," said he, "I served three campaigns with him in Flanders."—*Tristram Shandy*.

A LAST glance at his old friends before we go in pursuit of Quentin.

"I fear me," said the quartermaster, shaking his old yellow wig, which still survived, and letting a long stream of tobacco smoke escape from his mouth, as he and the dominie lingered over their toddy-jugs one evening in "the snug-gery," "I fear me much that the Master's London debts and liabilities are more than his father, worthy man, reckons on, and that Rohallion, wood and haugh, hill and glen, main and farm-town, will all be made ducks and drakes of within a week after the old Lord is carried through the haunted gate and up the kirk loan yonder."

"Wae is me that I should hear this," said the dominie, sadly.

"I speak in confidence, dominie," said the

quartermaster, laying his "yard of clay" lightly on the other's arm, and lowering his voice.

"Of course—of course. But how different hath the Master's life been from his father's! Wasting his patrimony among London bucks and bullies—among parasites and flatterers, even as Timon of Athens wasted his substance, till he was driven to seek sustenance by digging for the poorest roots of the earth."

"Our old Lord has ever acted wisely, dominie; when not on active service, he has ever been resident on his ain auld patrimonial property—wisely so, I say, for it beseems not that the great names of the land should die out of the memory of those who inhabit it; d—n all absentees, say I!"

And as the quartermaster buried his red nose in his toddy-jug, the concluding anathema became an indistinct mumble.

"Bankruptcy and disgrace are before the Master, I fear," he resumed with a sigh, as he snuffed the long candles, which were placed in square-footed holders of carved mahogany, mounted with silver rings on the stems; "war may save him for a time, but only if he leaves the Guards."

"War, say ye?"

"Yes—for if he owed sums that surpassed the national debt, his creditors could never touch him while under orders for foreign service."

"But at his home-coming?"

"Ay, there's the rub, dominie. A fine story

it would be to have the Master of Rohallion—he, the heir of a line that never was disgraced—ever stainless and true—arrested by a dog of a bailiff—arrested, perhaps, at the head of his regiment, it might be after fighting the battles of his country! Zounds, dominie, it would be enough to make all the old oaks in Rohallion wood drop their leaves and die, as if a curse had come upon the land! It would break his father's heart, and, much as I love the family, I would rather that Cosmo was killed in action, than that he had to endure such disgrace, or that after facing the French, as I know he will do bravely (for there never came a coward of the Crawford line), he had to flee ignobly to Holyrood, and become an abbey laird, that he might snap his fingers at the laws of both Scotland and England, until, perhaps, he got the lands of Ardgour."

The dominie was truly grieved to hear such things, for he had all the old Scottish patriarchal love of the family, under whom his forefathers—stout men-at-arms in their time, had been trusted dependents, through long dark ages of war and tumult; so he drew a long sigh, took a deep draught from his toddy jug, and asked in a low voice—

"If aught were to happen unto the Master, how would the title go?"

"I scarcely ken, dominie; by the death of Ranulph Crawford in a foreign land, it would probably fall to some far-awa cousin, after the

lands had been frittered among disputants in the Court of Session, and the auld patent that King James signed on a kettle-drum head, had been hacked to rags by a Committee of Privileges. Confound the law, say I, wi' a' my heart! However, the old Lord, Heaven bless him! is a hale man and strong yet, so let us not anticipate evils, which are sufficient for their own day."

"Four weeks—a whole month to-night, John, since we last saw Quentin," said the dominie, to change the subject.

"Poor Quentin!"

"As a bairn how bonnie he was—yea, beautiful as Absalom!"

The quartermaster sighed with impatience, it might be with a little air of disappointment, as he pushed his toddy-jug aside, and proceeded energetically to refill the bowl of his pipe. Why, thought he, has Quentin never written to me, according to his promise?

It was September now. The bearded grain that had been yellowing on the long corn-rigs of Rohallion was already gathered in; the harvest-kirn or home had been held in the great barn of the Home Farm, and the tawny stubbles gave the bared land a sterile aspect, till they disappeared as the plough turned up the shining furrows, where the black ravens flapped their wings, and the hoodie-crows sought for worms. The leaves were becoming brown and yellow as sienna tints

spread over the copsewood, and the sound of the axe was heard at times, for now the husbandman looked forward to the closing year, and remembered the rhyming injunction :—

“ Ere winter preventeth, while weather is good,
For galling of pasture get home with thy wood ;
And carry out gravel to fill up a hole,
Both timber and furzen, the turf and the coal.”

“ Four weeks—ay, it is September now,” said the quartermaster.

“ And I fear me the lad will return no more.”

“ Say not so, dominie ; he may come upon us when we least expect him.”

“ It may be, for, of a verity, life is full of strange coincidences.”

“ Strange, indeed ! I have told you many a soldier's yarn, dominie ; but did you ever hear of the strange meeting I had with an old man of the clan Donald ?”

“ Where—in the Highlands ?”

“ No, in America.”

The dominie shook his head as a negative.

“ Then fill your pipe, brew your toddy, draw your chair nearer the fire, and I'll tell you about it.

“ Ye see, dominie, it was in the winter of '75, when Rohallion was lieutenant in the Light Company, and I but a corporal, that, with a detachment of ours, we joined Major Preston and Captain — afterwards the unfortunate Major — André in the stockaded fort of St. John, on the

Richelieu River, in Lower Canada. In the fort were seven hundred rank and file, chiefly of the Cameronians and the 7th or Royal Fusiliers, and our orders were to defend the place to the last!

“ We were soon attacked with great vigour by the American General Montgomery, at the head of Lord knows how many rebellious Yankees and yelling Indian devils; but like brave men we defended ourselves till the whole place was unroofed and riddled by shot and shell—defended ourselves, amid the snows of severe winter, on half-rations, and what was worse, on half-grog, till our ammunition was expended. Then, but not till *then*, we were compelled to surrender, and give up our arms, baggage, and everything to the foe.

“ Disheartened by defeat, and denuded of everything but our regimentals, we were marched up the lakes by Ticonderoga. As I had no desire for remaining a prisoner during a war, the end of which none could foresee, and not being an officer, having no parole to break, I resolved to escape on the first available opportunity, and did so very simply, on the night-march along the borders of Lake George. There was a halt, during which I contrived to creep unseen into a thick furzy bush, and there I remained, scarcely daring to breathe, till the prisoners fell into their ranks an hour before daybreak, and surrounded by their escort of triumphant Yankees and Indians in

their war paint, proceeded on their sad and heartless journey into the interior.

“After the poor fellows had departed and all was still, while the ashes of the watch-fires smouldered and reddened in every breath of wind that passed over the snowy waste—and keen and biting blasts they were, I can tell ye, dominie—I slipped out of my friendly bush, stealthily as a snake might have done, and crawled away on my hands and knees from the vicinity of the deserted halting-place, for I dreaded to encounter some straggler of the escort, and still more did I dread some rambling Indian, who would have swooped down upon me with his scalping knife, and I had not the slightest ambition to see my natural wig added to the other grizzly trophies on a warrior’s hunting shirt.

“Arms I had none, and was scarcely clothed. I was hungry, weary, and, on finding myself alone, I began to reflect whether I had acted wisely in escaping to face individually the perils that awaited me, for my tattered red coat marked me as an enemy, and in the stern frost of an American winter, you may believe, it was not to be discarded or cast aside without a substitute. Such a garb increased my perils, and we all know what it cost poor Major André, of the Cameronians, when caught in his uniform within the American lines.

“The cold seemed to freeze my faculties, and

vaguely endeavouring to retrace the way we had come, I hoped by some chance, and by the care of Providence, to reach the junction of the Sorrel or the Richelieu with the St. Lawrence, for there I knew that Colonel Maclean was posted with the royal regiment of Scottish Emigrants, but concerning how far I was from thence, and how I was to reach it, I knew no more than of what the man in the moon may be about at this moment.

“Vainly I toiled on till day dawned fully on the vast extent of snow-covered country. Then I found myself among the high and wooded hills that look down upon the bosom of the Hudson. Far in the distance lay Fort St. John which we had so long defended, and which had the Stars and Stripes where the Union Jack waved before. On the other hand, Lake George, a sheet of snow-covered ice, with all its isles, lay like a map at my feet, far down below.

“Cold, cold, ice, frost, snow, a biting wind everywhere! I sighed and shuddered with misery, and longed for any other garment than my fatal red coat, that I might approach a house or homestead, and crave a morsel of food, and permission, for a minute, to warm myself by the kitchen fire; but to make the attempt was too rash, and, though my prospects were not cheering, I had no desire to court a rifle-shot from some loophole or upper window.

“As I stumbled on by the skirts of a fir copse,

which somewhat sheltered me from the biting north wind, and while the drowsy numbness of exhaustion was stealing over me, I heard a loud and sonorous voice commanding me to 'stop;' I turned and saw a man approaching me.

"His form was powerful and athletic, apparently, rather than tall, and he seemed about fifty years of age or more; very brown and weather-beaten in visage, and his hair was white as the snow around us. He had on a thick fur cap, the warm earlaps of which were tied under his chin; and over a yellow Indian hunting-shirt he wore a seaman's pea-jacket, with two rows of large white horn buttons in front. It was girt by a belt of untanned leather, in which were stuck a hunting-knife, a pair of brass-mounted pistols, and a rusty basket-hilted Highland broadsword. He was evidently one of the insurgents—'Mr. Washington's rebels,' as we named them. He carried a long rifle, and wore a pair of large deer-skin boots, that came well over his sturdy thighs, and were strapped to his waist-belt. His whole appearance and bearing indicated a state of bodily strength, hardihood, confidence, and warmth, all of which, at that particular moment, I greatly envied. With his right hand on the hammer and his left on the barrel of his rifle, as if about to cock it, he said, in a voice that was both sharp and deep in tone—

" 'Stand, Englishman, if you would not be shot

down, as many a time I have seen your countrymen shoot others, in cold blood.'

"'I don't think even death could make my blood colder than it is already,' said I, with chattering teeth; 'but you accuse us unjustly of outrage.'

"'Do I?' said he, with a fierce sneer; 'by your doings at Lexington, I don't think the Redcoats are much changed since I saw them in Lochaber.'

"'I am not an Englishman,' said I, glancing at the sword in his girdle.

"'Then, what the devil *are* you?' he asked, sharply.

"'I am a Scotsman, as I rather think you are,' I added, for he had a Skye-terrier look about the face that indicated a West Highlander.

"'Indeed,' said he, in an altered tone, placing the butt of his rifle on the ground, greatly to my satisfaction and general ease of mind; 'you are one of the force that defended Fort St. John, under Major Preston and Captain André?'

"'Yes.'

"'And how, then, are you here?'

"'I was a prisoner, but escaped; and so great is my misery, that I beg of you to make me a prisoner again, if you are in the American interest.'

"'By your yellow facings, you are not one of the King's Fusiliers.'

"'I am a 25th man,' said I.

"'A 25th man?' he repeated, coming nearer,

and looking hastily about to see if we were observed, but all around the vast landscape seemed desolate and tenantless; 'I will screen and save you if I can, for the sake of the old country neither of us may ever see again; but, more than all, for the sake of the *number* on your buttons. Here, taste this first, and then follow me.'

"He drew a leather hunting-bottle from the pocket of his rough pea-jacket, and gave me a good dram of Jamaica rum, but for which, I am sure, I should have died there, for the cold was fast overpowering me.

"'So you are a 25th man?' said he, surveying me with considerable interest; 'well, for that reason, if it were for nothing else, I shall befriend you. Come this way.'

"I was too cold—too intensely miserable—to question his meaning, but accompanied him through the wood, by a narrow path where the snow lay deep, and where, in some places, it had fallen in such a manner over the broad, horizontal and interlaced branches of the pine trees as to form quite a covered passage, where the atmosphere felt mild—even warm, compared with the temperature elsewhere. After a time, we reached an open plateau, on the slope of the hills that look towards Lake George, where we found his hut, a comfortable and warm little dwelling, sheltered by stupendous pines, and built entirely of fir logs, dressed and squared by the hatchet,

and pegged each down into the other through holes bored by an auger. It had a stone chimney, within which a smouldering fire soon shot up into a ruddy blaze as he cast a heap of crackling fir cones on it, and then added some dry birch billets, that roared and sputtered cheerily, and threw showers of sparks all over us.

“He gave me some food, broiled venison, hard biscuits, and a good can of Jamaica grog; and he also gave me that which I needed sorely—warm clothing, in the shape of an old frieze coat, lined with martin skins, in lieu of my poor, faded and tattered regimentals, which, for security’s sake, we cast into the fire and burned.

“Three days I remained with the trapper or hunter, for such he seemed to be, and on the fourth, after having carefully reconnoitred all the neighbourhood, he announced his intention of conducting me to Colonel Maclean’s outposts upon the Richelieu; and being now thoroughly refreshed, I was glad to hear the tidings.

“‘I shall never forget your kindness to me,’ said I; ‘and I value it all the more, because you are one of those who are in arms against the king.’

“‘It is maybe not the first time I have been so,’ said he, with a deep smile puckering all his eyelids.

“‘And you saved my life simply because I was a 25th man?’

“‘Yes—because one of your regiment—it was

Lord Leven's—no, Lord Semple's then—saved *mine*, at a harder pinch, some thirty years ago,' said he, gravely, as he marched on before me through the snow, with his long rifle sloped on his shoulder.

“ ‘ You have been a soldier, then ?’

“ ‘ Like yourself, Lowlander, for I know you are southland bred by your tongue.’

“ ‘ In what regiment ?’ I asked.

“ ‘ In the clan regiment of Macdonald of Kep-poch. Rest him, God !’ he exclaimed, taking off his cap and looking upward, while his keen grey eyes glistened, it might be in the frosty wind, under his bushy eyebrows.

“ ‘ When was this—and where ?’

“ ‘ Can you be so dull as not to guess ? It was in the ever-memorable and ever-glorious campaign under His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, whom heaven long preserve ! It was in 1746, just thirty years ago. Look at these scars,’ he added, showing me several sword wounds that were visible among his thick white hair. ‘ I got these at Culloden, from Bland’s dragoons, when fighting for Scotland and King James VIII.’

“ ‘ You must be an old man ?’ said I.

“ ‘ Old,’ he exclaimed ; ‘ I am barely fifty— young enough to fight and ripe enough to die for my new home, this land of America, to which I was banished as a slave with many more of my clan and kindred.’ He was now warming with his

subject and the recollections of the past. ‘There is,’ he resumed, ‘a pass in the hills here that reminds me of my native glen in Croy. Often I go there and sit on the 16th April, as the fatal day comes round, when outnumbered, three to one, by British and Hanoverians, the Highland swordsmen went down like grass on Culloden moor, before the withering fire of grape and musketry! Then the river that flows into Lake George seems the Nairn—the water of Alders; yonder open moorland seems the plain of Drummossie, and the distant farm among the pine-trees passes for Culloden House. Afar off in the distance the bastions of Ticonderoga become those of Fort George, that jut into the Moray Firth, and yonder wooded mountain, as yet without a name, seems to me like wild Dun-daviot; and then as with the eyes of a seer, it all comes before me again, that April day, with its terrible memories! Then,’ he continued, with flashing eyes, as he pointed across the plain, ‘then I seem to see the white battle-smoke rolling over the purple heather, and the far extended lines of the hell-doomed Cumberland reaching from Bland’s scarlet horse on the right to the false Lord Ancrum’s blue dragoons upon the left—these long and steady lines of infantry, Barrel’s, Munro’s, the Fusiliers, the Royals, and all the rest, in grim array, three ranks deep, the colours waving in the centre, the bayonets glittering in the sun.

On the other,' his voice failed him, and almost with a sob, he continued, 'on the *other* hand, I see the handsome Prince, the idol of all our hearts, on his white horse, half shimmering through the smoke and morning mist, and then the loyal clans in all their tartans, with target and claymore: Murray on the right, and Perth on the left, in the centre Athol, Lochiel, Appin, Cluny, and Lovat, Keppoch, Glengarry, and others, with wild Lord Lewis and old Glenbucket in the rear! Then once again from yonder pine forest I seem to hear the war-pipes playing the onset, and a thrill passes over me. I feel my sword in my hand"—he dashed down his rifle and drew his claymore—"I draw down my bonnet; I hear the wild cheer, the battle cry of *Righ Hamish gu bragh!* pass along the line, as with heads stooped and targets up, we burst like a thunderbolt through the first line of charged bayonets! In a moment it is dispersed and overborne—it is all dirk and claymore, cutting, hewing and stabbing. On yet, on—and whoop! we break through the second line; on yet, through the *third*, and the day may be our own! Its fire is deadly and concentrated; I am beside the aged and white-haired Keppoch, my chief—all our people have fallen back in dismay before the fire of musketry and the treachery of the Campbells, who turned our flank. Keppoch waves his bonnet; again I hear him cry My God! my God! have the children of my

tribe forsaken me? Again the bullets seem to pierce me, and we fall to the earth together—and so the wild vision passes away!’

“While pouring forth all this, the Highland exile seemed like one possessed, and in his powerful imagination, I have no doubt that while speaking, the present snow-clad landscape passed away, and in fancy he saw the moor and battle of Culloden all spreading like a bloody panorama before him. Until he sheathed his sword I was not without uneasiness lest he might fill up the measure of his wrath by cutting and carving on me.

“‘At last it was all over,’ he resumed quietly and sadly; ‘and then came the butchery of the wounded by platoon firing and the desecration of the dead. Sorely wounded and faint with loss of blood, I found myself on the skirt of the field near the wall which the Campbells had broken down to enable the light dragoons to turn our right flank.

“‘Weary with the battle of the past day, a soldier was leaning against the wall, screwing a fresh flint into the lock of his musket. On seeing me move, he mercifully gave me a mouthful of water from his wooden canteen, and bound up my head with a shred torn from my plaid. I then begged him to help me a little way out of the field, as I was the sole support of an aged mother, and must live if possible. The good fellow said it was as much as his life was worth, were it

known that he had spared mine; but as he, too, had an old mother in the lowlands far away, for her sake he would run the risk of assisting me.

“ ‘The morning was yet dark and we were unseen. He half carried, half dragged me for more than a mile, till we reached a thicket where I was in safety from the parties who were butchering the wounded. Some of these burned my mother’s hut and bayoneted her on the threshold.

“ ‘I offered the soldier the tassels of my sporran or the silver buttons of my waistcoat as a reward, but he proudly refused them. I then pressed upon him my snuff-mull, on the lid of which my initials were engraved——’

“ ‘And he took it?’ said I, eagerly.

“ ‘He did, but with reluctance; and then I asked his name, that I might remember it in my gratitude——’

“ ‘And he told you that he was John Girvan of Semple’s Foot—the 25th,’ said I.

“ ‘Yes—yes; but how know *you* that?’

“ ‘Because that friendly soldier was *my father*. He served against the Prince at Culloden (*four* Scotch regiments did so that day), and often have I heard him tell the story of how the mull came into his possession, and of the brave Highlander who adhered to old Keppoch when all the clans fell back before the mingled shock of horse and foot in front and flank!’

“ ‘Your father!—that brave man your father?’

I thank God who has thus enabled me to repay to you the good deed done to me on that dark morning on Culloden Moor,' said the Highlander with deep emotion, as he shook my hand with great warmth.

" 'Here is the mull,' said I, producing it, 'and you are welcome to a pinch from it again.'

" 'It is indeed like an old friend's face,' said he, looking with interest at his initials, D. McD., graven on the silver top. 'I made and mounted it, in my mother's hut in Croy. Woe is me! How many changes have I seen since that day thirty years ago, when last I held it in my hand? And your father, soldier—I hope that brave and good man yet lives?'

" 'Alas! no,' said I, sadly; 'he entered the Royals fifteen years after Culloden, and volunteered, as a serjeant, with the forlorn hope, at the storming of the Moro Castle. He fell in the breach, and the mull was found in his havresack by the men who buried him there.'

" The Highlander took off his cap and muttered a prayer, crossing himself the while very devoutly.

" 'But for him,' said he, 'instead of being a lonely trapper here by the shore of Lake George, the heather bells of thirty summers had bloomed and withered over my grave on the fatal moor of Culloden; but God's blessed will be done.'

" After this unexpected meeting with one of whom I had so often heard my worthy father

speak when I was but a bairn, we became quite as old friends, and parted with regret when we reached the outposts of the Royal Scottish Emigrants, close to which he guided me, and then took his departure to join General Montgomery, who deemed Donald Macdonald the chief of his marksmen.

“I never heard of him more; and as for the snuff-mull, I was robbed of it by some Germans, who cut the knapsack off my back as I lay wounded in the skirmish at Stoney Point, in the State of New York, in 1776; but this chance meeting with its original proprietor, shows us, dominie, what unexpected things come to pass in the world. Life, as I said, is full of strange coincidences, and we may meet with Quentin Kennedy or hear sure tidings of him, when least expected.”

“I pray Heaven it may be so,” sighed the dominie, over his empty toddy-jug, as he tied an ample yellow bandanna over his old three-cornered hat, and under his chin; and then assuming his cane, prepared to depart.

“Jack Andrews has brought your pony round to the private door; take care o’ the Lollard’s Linn, for the night is dark; and now for the *deoch*—the stirrup-cup.”

“Whilk the Romans ever drank in honour of Mercury, as I do now—that he may bestow a sound night’s sleep,” said the dominie, smacking his lips as the dram went down.

CHAPTER XX.

THE WAYFARER.

“On, on! through the wind and rain,
With the blinding tears and burning vein!
When the toil is o’er and the pain is past,
What recks it *all* if we sleep at last.”

All the Year Round.

WHEN we last saw him, we said that Quentin was going forth into the world to seek his fortune, though, perhaps, his chief idea or emotion was to get as far away as possible from the vicinity of Rohallion, its haughty lady, and the cold and crafty Master. As he passed through the ivied archway, he dashed aside the tears that his farewell with the old quartermaster had summoned.

“How often,” thought he, “have I read in novels and romances, in dramas and story-books, of the heroes doing *this*—setting out on the vague and hopeful errand that was to lead to fame and fortune; but how little I ever expected to experience the stern reality, or believe that it would be my own fate! And now the hour has come—oh, it seems so strange now-a-days!”

Passing down the avenue, the stately trees of

which were tossing their branches wildly in the gathering blast, he issued upon the highway, and proceeded along it without caring, and perhaps without considering, whether he went to the right or to the left.

Intense was the loneliness, and bitter the irritation of mind in which he pursued his aimless way, by the old and narrow road, which was bordered by ancient hedgerows where brambles and Gueldre-roses were growing wild and untrimmed, and where the wind was howling now among the old beech-trees, as an occasional drop of rather warm rain that fell on his face, or plashed in the dust under foot, gave warning for a rough and comfortless night for a belated wayfarer.

Again and again he looked back to the picturesque, turreted, and varied outline of Rohallion, and saw its many lighted windows, *one* which he knew well, in the crowstepped gable of the western wing. It was the sleeping-place of Flora Warrender.

She would be there now—her head resting on her pillow, perhaps, sleepless and weeping for him, no doubt, and for the probable results of a quarrel, the end of which she could not foresee—weeping for the young heart that loved her so truly, so he flattered himself; and in the morning she would find that his room was tenantless, his bed unslept in, and that he was gone—*gone* no one knew whither!

Hope had scarcely yet risen in Quentin's breast ; he felt but the stern and crushing knowledge that he was leaving his only home where all had loved, and where he truly loved all save *one*, to launch out upon an unknown world, and to begin a career that was as friendless as it was shadowy.

He had no defined plan, where to proceed, or what to essay. He naturally thought of the army ; but, as he had ever anticipated a commission, he shrunk from enlisting, and thereby depriving himself of all liberty of action, and perhaps of forfeiting for ever the place which he felt himself, by birth and education, entitled to take in society.

Of business or the mode of attaining a profession, he was as ignorant as of the contents of the Koran, the Talmud, the Shasters, or the books of Brahma ; and had he dropped from the moon, or sprung out of the turf, he could not have felt more lonely, friendless, and isolated in the world.

He was now passing the old ruined church, with its low and crumbling boundary-wall that encloses the graveyard, where, long ago, his drowned father had been reverently laid by the Rohallion Volunteers and the worthy old quartermaster.

How well Quentin knew the spot amid the solemn obscurity ! he could see it from the time-worn foot-stile where he lingered for a

moment. *He* was lying beside the ancient east window, near the Rohallion aisle, where dead Crawfords of ages past, even those who had fallen in their armour at Flodden and Pinkey, Sark and Arkinholme, were buried. No stone marked the spot; but now the rough-bearded thistle, the long green nettle, the broad-leaved dock, and the sweetbriar, mingled mournfully over the humble last home of the poor dead wanderer.

Quentin felt his heart very full at that moment.

Did the father *see* his son to-night? Was he looking upon him from some mysterious bourne among the stars? Did he know the tumult, the sorrow, and the half-despair that were mingling in his breast?

Quentin almost asked these questions aloud, as, with a mind deeply agitated by conflicting thoughts, the poor fellow journeyed on.

A strong regard for the home he had left (of any *other* he had no memory now save a vague and indistinct dream), with painful doubts lest he had been ungracious, ungrateful, or unkind to any there, beset him, after the soft revulsion of feeling excited by the solemn aspect of the midnight churchyard.

Then came dim foreshadowings, the anxious hopes—a boy's certainty of future fame and distinction; but how, where, and in what path?

His romance-reading with Flora and the yarns of the quartermaster had filled his mind with much false enthusiasm and many odd fancies. He had misty recollections of heroes expelled or deserting from home under circumstances pretty similar to his own, who had flung themselves over awful precipices, when their bones were picked white (a doubly unpleasant idea) by the Alpine eagles or bears of the Black Forest: or who had thrown themselves upon their swords, or drowned themselves (the Lollard's Linn was pouring not far off; but the night was decidedly *cold*), yet none of these modes of exit, suited his purpose so well as walking manfully on, and imagining, with a species of grim satisfaction, the surmises and so forth at Rohallion, when the supper-bell rang and he did not appear; when Jack Andrews, with military punctuality, closed the old feudal fortress for the night, and still he was not to be found; and then the next day, with its increased excitement, was a thought that quite cheered him!

But there was Flora—sweet Flora Warrender, with all her winning little ways; and her image came upbraidingly before him despite the smarting of the wound given him by the Master, and the deeper sting of Lady Rohallion's words.

As glittering fancies rose like soap-bubbles in the sunshine; as the *Châteaux en Espagne* rose too, and faded away into mud-hovels and even prisons, love and affection drew his thoughts *back*

and seemed to centre his hopes in and about Rohallion. Flora's face, the memory of past years of love and kindness experienced from Lady Winifred, and from the old Lord, melted his heart, or filled it with regard and gratitude towards them, and he felt that, go where he might, Rohallion could never be forgotten. A verse of Burns that occurred to him, seemed but to embody his own ideas and emotions—

“The monarch may forget his crown,
That on his head an hour hath been;
The bridegroom may forget the bride,
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The mother may forget her child,
That smiles so sweetly on her knee;
*But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And all that thou hast done for me.*”

From an eminence above the oakwood shaw, he turned to take his last view of the old dwelling-place; but he could only see its lights twinkling like distant stars, for the night was obscure and murky; the clouds were rolling in great masses; the wind came in fierce and fitful gusts from the Firth of Clyde, while the rain began to descend steadily.

Bodily discomfort soon recalled all his emotions of hate and anger at the Master, and with eyes that flashed in the dark, he turned his back, almost resentfully, on the old castle, and resumed his aimless journey.

“There is sometimes,” says a writer, “a

stronger sense of unhappiness attached to what is called being hardly used by the world, than by a direct and palpable misfortune, for though the sufferer may not be able even in his own heart to set out with clearness one single count in the indictment, yet a *general* sense of hard treatment, unfairness, and so forth, brings with it a great depression and feeling of desolation."

"Why was I orphaned in youth?" thought Quentin, bitterly, as this sense of unfairness and depression came over him; "why was I cast on the bounty, the mercy, of strangers? Why did I love Flora—why do we love each other so vainly, and why are we to be hopelessly separated?"

All these questions remained unanswered; but the blinding rain was now coming down in sheets, and he felt the necessity of seeking shelter without delay.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE VAULT OF KILHENZIE.

"Through gloomy paths unknown,
 Paths which untrodden be,
 From rock to rock I go
 Along the dashing sea.
 And seek from busy woe,
 With hurrying steps to flee ;
 But know, fair lady ! know,
 All this I bear for thee !"

Ancient Poetry of Spain.

ON passing the long thicket or copse, known as the oakwood shaw, a number of fires burning on the heath beyond, and sheltered by the oaks from the west wind, at once indicated to Quentin that a gipsy camp was there. Indeed, he could see their figures flitting darkly to and fro around the red fires, on which they were heaping wood that smoked and sputtered in the wind and rain. He could also see the little tents or wigwams which were simply formed by half circular hoops stuck in the earth, and covered by canvas or tarpaulin.

Their miserable ponies were picquetted on the open heath, where, with drooping ears and comfortless aspect, they cropped the scanty herbage

or chewed the whin bushes. Aware that these people were to be sedulously avoided, and that he must neither risk the loss of his portmanteau, or the money so generously lent him by the quartermaster, he clutched his walking-cane, turned hastily aside, and passing up a lane between hedge-rows, proceeded towards a farm-house, the occupants of which he feared might know him; but he was resolved to risk recognition, for the weather was becoming pitiless, and he had no alternative.

A watchdog barked furiously and madly, straining on his chain and standing on his hind-legs, open-mouthed, as Quentin approached the house, which was involved in darkness and silence.

The rain was dashing on the closed windows, washing the bleak walls and gorging the spouts and gutters, as he handled vigorously and impatiently a large brass knocker, with which the front door was furnished. After the third or fourth summons, a window was opened in the upper story, and by the light within the room Quentin could perceive the face and figure of the irate farmer, Gibbie Crossgrane, in a white night-cap and armed with a gun or musket, for Gibbie was one of the Rohallion volunteers.

“Wha are ye, and what do ye seek at this time o’ night?” he demanded.

“Shelter——” Quentin began.

“Shelter!” shouted the other; “my certie!

do ye take this for a change-house, or an ale-wife's, that ye rap sae loud and lang?"

"I have lost my way, Mr. Crossgrane——"

"Then ye are the mair fule! But be off," he added, cocking his piece; "I warrant ye are nae better than ye should be. This is the third time I hae been roused out o' my warm bed this blessed night by yon cursed tinkler bodies, that hae been fechting and roost-robbing about Kilhenzie a' day, so be off, carle, I say, or aiblins I'll shoot ye like a hoodiecrow, ye vagrant limmer."

With these threatening words, which showed that he was determined to consider his visitor one of the gipsies, he slapped the butt of his gun significantly, and sharply closed the window ere poor Quentin could explain or reply.

"Churlish wretch!" he sighed, as he turned away, and revenged himself by hurling a huge stone at the yelling watch-dog, which, like a cowed bully, instantly plunged into his kennel, where he snapped and snarled in spite and anger.

Aware of the futility of making any further attempt in this quarter, Quentin returned to the high road, when, passing the ruins of Kilhenzie, he conceived the idea of taking shelter in one of the remaining vaults, wherein he knew that Farmer Crossgrane was wont to store straw and hay for his cattle.

Though the memory of John the Master's wraith, the spectre-hound of the holly thicket,

and other dark stories somewhat impressed him at this hour, and awed him as he approached the ruined walls, he hastened to avail himself of their shelter, quickening his pace to a run as he passed the giant tree of Kilhenzie, on the branches of which, the quartermaster and dominie averred, so many men had taken their leave of a setting sun.

He went straight to an arched vault which he knew well, as it opened off the grass-grown barbican, and finding it, as he expected, full of dry straw, he burrowed among it for warmth, and placing his portmanteau under his head, strove to avoid all thoughts of the gloomy ruin in which he had a shelter, and to sleep, if possible, till dawn of day.

The old stronghold was a familiar place, endeared to him by the memory of many an evening ramble with Flora Warrender, with whom he had explored every turret, nook, and corner of it; and with the dominie, too, whose old legends of the fiery Kennedies of Kilhenzie—with whom he always loved to connect his pupil—were alike strange and stirring.

“Ah, if I should indeed prove to be the Laird of Kilhenzie—I who lurk here like a beggar to-night!” said Quentin, and then the quaint figure of his tutor the dominie, with his long ribbed galligaskins drawn over the knees of his corduroy breeches, came vividly before him.

He thought of the stately Lady Eglinton, who

had always ridiculed this ideal descent, and of her daughters, but chiefly his old playmate, the gentle Lady Mary, and wondered whether they would mourn when they heard of what had befallen him. But Quentin was fated never to see the fair Montgomerys more ; for Lady Mary died in her youth, and Lady Liliias died far away in Switzerland, where she was interred in the same grave with her husband.

It was now, after his recent rude repulse at the farmhouse, that he felt himself indeed a wanderer and an outcast !

Wet and weary, he shuddered with cold ; the loss of blood he had suffered rendered him weak and drowsy, and but for the brandy so thoughtfully given him by old John Girvan, he could not have proceeded so far on his aimless journey.

He strove hard, with his nervous excitement, to sleep, and to find in oblivion a temporary release from thoughts of the happy days of past companionship and of love-making—days that would return no more—moments of delight and joy never to be lived over again ! Flora's voice, as low and sweet as ever Annie Laurie's was ; her clear and smiling eyes, her ringing laugh, so silvery and joyous, were all vividly haunting him, with the memory of that dear and—as it proved—*last* kiss in the ancient avenue.

All these were to be foregone now, it too probably seemed for ever, and Cosmo, with his

thousand chances, had the field to himself, nor would he fail to use them.

Despite his strong and almost filial love for Lord and Lady Rohallion, Quentin felt in his heart that he hated the cold and haughty Master as the primary cause of all his misery, and the memory of the degrading blow, so ruthlessly dealt by his hand, burned like a plague-spot on his soul, if we may use such a simile.

Gradually, however, sleep stole upon him, but not repose, for he had strange shuddering fits, nervous startings, and perpetual dreams of vague and horrible things, which he could neither understand nor realize.

Once he sprang up with a half-stifled cry, having imagined that the hand of a strange man had clutched his throat! So vivid was this idea, that some minutes elapsed before he fully recovered his self-possession.

“The wound on my head and the consequent loss of blood cause these unusual visions,” thought he, not unnaturally. “Oh, that I could but sleep—sleep soundly, and forget everything for a little time!”

The rain and the wind had ceased now, and he heard only the cawing of the rooks in the echoing ruin. He could see the morning star shining with diamond-like brilliance, but coldly and palely, through a loophole of the vault, and with a sigh of impatience for the coming day he was com-

posing himself once more to sleep, when suddenly his hand came in contact with the fingers of *another*, protruding from the straw near him—the straw on which he was lying!

His first emotion was terror at being there with some person unknown, without other weapon than a walking-cane.

His next thought was flight from this silent companion, whom he addressed thrice without receiving other reply than the echo of his own voice reverberating in the vault.

It had been no dream; a hand must indeed have been on his throat—a hand that if he stirred or breathed might clutch him again; but *whose* hand?

Prepared to make a most desperate resistance, he listened, but heard only the beating of his heart, and the drip, drip, dripping of moisture from the ivy leaves without, or the occasional rustle of the straw within the vault. Fearfully he put forth his hand to search again, for a streak of dim light was glimmering through a loophole, and again his hand came in contact with the other. Cold, rigid, motionless, it was, he knew, with a thrill of horror, the hand of a corpse!

With an irrepressible and shuddering cry, Quentin sprang up, and as he did so he could now see, half-hidden amid the straw on which he had slept, and literally beneath him, the dead body of a man—the features white, pale, and pinched;

the hands half-upraised, as if he had died in the act of resistance or in agony. A bunch of wooden ladles, porridge spurtles, and horn spoons that lay near, all covered with blood, showed that he was a gipsy, who had been slain in one of the scuffles which were of frequent occurrence between adverse tribes of those lawless wanderers, and that he had been concealed in the vault of Kilhenzie, or had crawled there to die. Quentin conceived the former to be the most probable cause for the body being there.

All that the foregoing paragraph has embraced Quentin's eye and mind took in with the rapidity of a flash of lightning, and snatching his portmanteau, he sprang out of the vault, rushed down the slope on which the old castle stands, and shivering with disgust, affright, and the cold air of the damp morning, found himself again on the highway that led to Maybole.

The birds were singing and twittering merrily in the green hedgerows and among the dew-dripping trees, as the August day came in. Already the roads were almost dry, and as a blue-bonneted ploughboy passed with a pair of huge Clydesdale horses afield, whistling gaily, Quentin shrunk behind a hedge, for his clothes, damped by the rain over-night, were nowise improved in aspect by the bed he had selected; and now on examining them, he perceived to his dismay and repugnance that they exhibited several spots of

blood, and his hands wore the same sanguine hue. Whether these ominous marks had come from his own veins or from those of the corpse near which he had so unpleasantly lain, Quentin knew not, but in great haste he sought a runnel that gurgled by the wayside, and there with the aid of a handkerchief he removed the stains with as much dispatch and care as if they had been veritable signs of guilt and shame.

We have said that blood gouts had been found in the gipsy bivouac, and Farmer Crossgrane had mentioned incidentally that the vagrants had been fighting. They were notorious for the free and reckless use of their knives and daggers, so doubtless, the body lying in Kilhenzie was the result of a recent affray. Quentin now discovered that he had lost his walking-cane, and that in his flight from the ruin he had left it in the vault beside the dead man. He regretted this, as the cane was a present from Lord Rohallion, and had his initials graven on its silver head; but he could not overcome his repugnance sufficiently to face again his ghastly bedfellow, or to return, and so hastened from the vicinity of the old castle.

He had not, however, proceeded two miles or so, before the alarming idea occurred to him, that this cane, if found beside the dead man, might serve to implicate him in the affair; and through the medium of his active fancy he saw a long train of circumstantial evidence adduced against

him, and in his ruin, disgrace, it might be death, a triumph given to Cosmo Crawford which even *he* could not exult in.

These terrible reflections gave the additional impulse of fear to urge him on.

The morning was sunny, breezy, and lovely; the sky a pure deep blue, and without a cloud; the light white mists were rising from the shady glens and haughs where the wimpling burns ran through the leafy copse or under the long yellow broom, when from an eminence Quentin took his last farewell of scenery that was endeared to him by all his recollections of childhood and youth, and heavy, heavy grew his heart as he did so. He could see the glorious Firth of Clyde opening in the distance, and all the bold and beautiful shore of Carrick stretching from the high Black Vault of Dunure away towards the bluff and castle of Rohallion.

Dunduff and Carrick's *brown* hill had mist yet resting on their summits, and afar off, paling away to greyish blue, was Ailsa Craig, rising like a cloud from the water—the white canvas of many a ship, homeward-bound or outward-bound, merchantman, privateer and letter-of-marque, like sea birds floating on the bosom of the widening river. On the other side he saw the rich undulations that look down on the vast and fertile plains of Kyle and Cunninghame, and in the middle distance Maybole, amid the golden morn-

ing haze, the quaint little capital of Carrick, with its baronial tower and Tolbooth spire.

There he considered himself as certain of being recognised by some of the vintners, ostlers, or by Pate, the town piper, for the place had been a favourite turning point with him and Flora Warrender in their evening rides; and he also knew that if he were *not* recognised, the smallness of his portmanteau suggested that the estimate which might be formed of him by Boniface, by waiters and others, would not be very high.

He therefore resolved to avoid that ancient Burgh-of-Barony altogether, and the carrier for Ayr coming up at that moment, he struck a bargain with him for conveyance thither. Remembering how Roderick Random and other great men had travelled by this humble mode of locomotion, he gladly took his seat by the side of the driver, a lively and cheerful fellow, who knew all the cottars and girls on the road, and who whistled or sang incessantly varying marches, rants, and reels, with Burns' songs, every one of which he knew by heart—and he knew Burns too, having, as he boasted, “flitted the poet from Irvine to Mossgiel in '84—just four-and-twenty years sinsyne.”

He blithely shared his humble breakfast of sour milk in a luggie, barleymeal bannock and Dunlop cheese, with our hero, whose spirits seemed to rise as the morning sun soared into the cloud-

less sky, and he seemed to feel now the necessity of ceasing to mope, of becoming the maker of his own fate, the arbiter of his own destiny, and he determined, if possible, to “wrestle with the dark angel of adversity till she brightened and blessed him.”

When left to himself, however, lulled by the monotonous rumble of the waggon wheels, he lay back among the carrier’s bales, and gave himself up to day-dreams and his old trade of airy castle-building.

He had forty guineas in his pocket, he was sound wind and limb, and had all the world before him !

All tinted in rosy and golden colours, he saw the future scenes in which he was to figure—kings being at times but accessories and “supers” of the grouping. He held imaginary conversations with the great, the noble, and the wealthy ; he was the hero of a hundred achievements, but whether on land, on sea, or in the air, he had not as yet the most remote idea ; but they all tended to one point, for his fancies, ambitions, and hopes seemed, not unnaturally, to revolve in an orbit, of which Flora Warrender and Lady Rohallion—for he dearly loved her too—were the combined centre of attraction.

Full of himself and of the little world of fancy he was weaving, he cared not where he went or how the time passed, for he was just at that de-

lightful and buoyant period of life when novels and tales of adventure fill the mind with sentiments and imageries that seem quite *realities*; thus, he felt assured that like some of the countless heroes, whose career he had studied at times in history but much oftener in fiction, he was destined for a very remarkable and brilliant future.

Travelling in the corner of a carrier's waggon, after sharing the proprietor's sour milk and home-baked bannocks, did not look very like it; but was not this simply *the beginning of the end*?

When again they met, how much would he have to tell Flora, commencing with the very first night of his departure, and that horrible adventure in the vault of Kilhenzie.

But how if she married the Master, with his sneering smile and cat-like eyes?

This fear chilled him certainly; but he felt trustful. Hope inspires fresh love as love inspires hope, for they must grow and flourish together; and so on and on he dreamed, until a sudden jolt of the waggon roughly roused him, and he found that it was just crossing "the auld brig o' Ayr," the four strong and lofty arches of which first spanned the stream when Alexander II. was king.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE QUEEN ANNE'S HEAD.

“ Well, suppose life be a desert ? There are halting-places and shades, and refreshing waters ; let us profit by them for to-day. We know that we must march on when to-morrow comes, and tramp on our destiny onward.”—THACKERAY.

HAVING amply satisfied the worthy carrier, Quentin quitted the waggon, and proceeded through the bustling, but then narrow, unpaved, and ill-lighted streets of Ayr, towards one of the principal inns, the Queen Anne's Head, the only one in the town with which he was familiar, as Lord Rohallion's carriage occasionally stopped there. It was a large, rambling, old-fashioned house, with a galleried court, ample stabling, low ceiled rooms ; with dark oak panels, heavy dormant beams, and stone fire-places ; wooden balconies projecting over stone piazzas, tall gables, and turret-like turnpike stairs ; and a mouldered escutcheon over the entrance door showed that in palmier days it had been the town mansion of some steel-coated lesser baron.

Hotels were still unknown in the three bailiwicks of Carrick, Kyle, and Cunninghame ; thus in

the yard behind the Queen Anne's Head, the stage coach, his majesty's mail (whose scarlet-coated guard bore pistols, and a blunderbuss that might have frightened Bonaparte), the carrier's waggon, the farmer's gig, and the lumbering, old-fashioned coaches of my Lord Rohallion, or the Earls of Cassilis and Eglinton, with their wooden springs and stately hammercloths, might all be seen standing side by side. Though war rendered the continent a sealed book to the English, Sir Walter Scott's poems and novels had not as yet opened up all Scotland to the tourists of Europe and Cockneydom. The kingdom of the Jameses could not be "done" then as now, by Brown, Jones, and Robinson, with knapsack on back (with Black's Guide and Bradshaw's Table, tartan peg-tops and paper collars), in a fortnight by rail and steam; hence a traveller on foot, and portmanteau in hand, was apt to be considered in the rural districts as an English pedlar or worse. Indeed, Scotland and England were then very little changed from what they had been in the days of William and Mary, and but for worthy old James Watt they might have been so *still*.

"I'll be extravagant—I'll have a jovial dinner and a glass of wine," thought Quentin, who, though pale and weary, had the appetite of a young hawk, notwithstanding all his doubts and troubles. "Which way?" he inquired of a surly-looking waiter, who stood at the inn door, with a

towel over his arm; but this official, instead of replying, very leisurely surveyed Quentin from head to foot, and then glanced superciliously at his portmanteau.

His wetting over night, his repose among the straw, and the subsequent journey among the carrier's bales and butter firkins had not improved his external appearance. Quentin felt aware of this, and reiterated angrily.

“Which way—did you not hear me?”

“You've taen the wrang gate, my friend, I'm thinking,” replied the waiter, shaking his head.

“Wrong way! What do you mean, fellow?”

“Nae mair a fellow than yoursel’,” said the waiter, saucily. “The ‘Blue Bell,’ doon the next wynd, or the ‘Souter Johnnie,’ opposite the Tol-booth, will better suit ye than the ‘Anne's Head.’ They are famous resorts for packmen and dustifute bodies.”

“I mean to remain where I am. Show me to a bedroom, and order dinner for me in the dining-room,” said Quentin, flushing up with sudden passion. “The best in the house, and lose no time!”

“Some military gentlemen are in the best chamber,” urged the waiter, whom this manner did not fail to impress, as he lingered with his hand on the lock of a door.

“If the devil himself were there, what is it to me? Do as I order, or I will kick you into the street!”

The waiter, who, as tourists and idle travellers were then unknown in Ayr, was utterly at a loss to make out the character of this new guest, bowed and ushered him into a bedroom, after which, he hastened away, no doubt to report upon the dubious kind of occupant, who had almost forced his way into No. 20.

Though the contents of Quentin's portmanteau were limited, he speedily made such an improvement in his toilet, that when he came forth he received a very gracious bow from Boniface, who had been hovering about the corridor on the watch; and he was ushered into the principal dining-room of the establishment, a long and rather low-roofed apartment, having several massive tables and oval-backed old-fashioned chairs, a gigantic sideboard, within the brass rail of which stood three upright knife and spoon cases, several plated tankards, salvers, and branch candlesticks of quaint and antique form.

The room was decorated with prints of Nelson's victories, the Siege of Gibraltar, the Battle of Alexandria, and other recent glories of our arms by sea and land; while over the mantelpiece was one of Gillray's gaudily-coloured political caricatures, which were then so much in vogue—for he was the H. B. and *Punch* of the Regency.

Two officers in undress uniform, with blue facings (their swords, sashes, and caps lying on

the table beside them) were lounging over some brandy and water, and laughing at Gillray's, not over-delicate print, while Quentin retired to a remote corner of the room, and smarting under the waiter's impertinence, now felt more lonely and depressed than he had done since leaving home. He could remember that his last reception in that very house had been so different, when, in Lady Rohallion's carriage, he and Flora Warrender had driven up to the door and ordered luncheon.

One of the military guests was a tall, weather-beaten, soldier-like man, about thirty-five years of age, a lieutenant apparently by the bullion of his epaulettes; the other was slender, fair-haired, and rather plainly featured, and proved to be the ensign of his recruiting party, which was then beating up at Ayr. As the churlish waiter passed them after putting some wine before Quentin, the lieutenant asked, in a low voice—

“What is *he*?”

“Who, sir?”

“That young fellow in the corner.”

“Too proud for a recruit—an officer, I think,” said the waiter, with a grin.

“A sheriff's officer?—that boy, do you mean?”

“No, sir—in the army,” whispered the waiter, with a still more impertinent grin, and retired before Quentin could hurl the decanter at his head, which he felt very much inclined to do.

He was seriously offended, but affected to look

out of the window, while the two subalterns, turning their backs on him, resumed their conversation as if he had not been present.

“And so, Pimple,” said the senior, “when you proposed for the Bailie’s daughter you were deep in love—”

“Yes—very.”

“And in debt and drink, too?”

“I was in love, I tell you,” said the ensign, angrily.

“For the *twenty-fifth* time, eh?”

“Not exactly, Monkton; but you are aware that fathers have flinty hearts, and seldom see with—with—”

“With what—cut with it, old fellow.”

“Their charming daughters’ eyes,” sighed the ensign.

“True, or I should have been seen to advantage long ago. But an ensign under orders for foreign service is not the most eligible of sons-in-law.”

“True—but in *my* case, at least,” continued the ensign, who was quite serious, while his senior officer was purple with suppressed laughter, “in my case, as a young gentleman possessed of moderate fortune, moderate accomplishments——”

“And moderate virtue—eh, Pimple?”

“You are very impertinent, Monkton,” remonstrated the other, upbraidingly.

“But truthful, my dear boy, very truthful,”

said the quizzing lieutenant, for half the conversation was mere "barrack-room chaff," to use a phrase then unknown; "and if old Squaretoes——"

"Who do you mean?"

"Mean? why this rich old flax-spinner, the father of your fair one. If he should come down handsomely, we fellows of the 25th would consider you quite as our factor—eh, Pimple?"

On hearing this number, which was so familiar to his ear, Quentin Kennedy turned to observe the speakers more particularly, when a third officer, a very handsome man, about forty years of age, with a nut-brown cheek, a rollicking blue eye, and a hearty laugh, a square, well-built form, clad in full regimentals, scarlet-faced and lapelled with green and gold to the waist, and wearing large loose epaulettes, burst into the room, noisily and without ceremony. As he did so, he threw his arms round a very pretty chambermaid, who was tripping past with something from the sideboard, and kissing the girl, who was half pleased and half scared, he shouted in a tragicomic manner, a passage from the *Merchant's Wife*, a now forgotten play:—

"Woman thou stol'st my heart—just now thou stol'st it,
A cannon-bullet might have kissed my lips
And left me as much life!"

"If the sour-visaged landlord catches you

kissing any of his squaws"—suggested the lieutenant.

"It is a custom we learned in the Dutch service," replied the new comer, laughingly.

"Have you got the route for to-morrow, Warriston?" asked the lieutenant.

"All right," said the other, flourishing an oblong official paper; "it was brought by an orderly dragoon—here it is. His majesty's will and pleasure, &c., to civil (query, uncivil) magistrates and others and so forth, to provide billets for the noisy, carriages for the drunken, and handcuffs for the disorderly, of three officers, three sergeants, and seventy rank and file, proceeding by Muirkirk and Kirknewton to Edinburgh—a seventy miles' march."

"Ugh!" groaned the lieutenant.

"So, Pimple, your love affair must be off like ourselves, by beat of drum to-morrow."

The ensign heaved a kind of mock sigh, and raised his white eyebrows.

"Now, waiter, quick with dinner—the best in larder and cellar," said the captain to that churlish attendant, who laid a knife and fork for Quentin at the extreme end of the long table.

"Who is the solitary or exclusive person that is to be carved for there, half a mile off?" asked the captain.

The waiter glanced towards Quentin.

"Nonsense," said the Captain of the 94th,

“lay his cover with ours—absurd to dine alone at the end of this devilish long table. You’ll join us, eh?”

“With pleasure,” said Quentin, bowing.

“A glass of wine with you. What are you drinking?”

“Sherry.”

They filled their glasses, bowed, and drank, after which Quentin came forward and joined them.

“I’m Dick Warriston, 94th. My friends, Mr. Monkton and Mr. Boyle, 25th.”

“Mr. Kennedy,” said Quentin, introducing himself, with a heightened colour.

Quentin soon learned from their conversation that the captain had been recruiting for the 94th, and the other two officers for the 25th, in Ayrshire, with considerable success; that they had obtained a sufficient number of men, and were under orders to march for the head-quarters of their respective corps by daybreak on the morrow. He also heard, incidentally, some of the little secrets of recruiting, and the tricks played by knowing sergeants to trepan men into paying smart-money, and so forth; that the lieutenant had been “rowed” with a threat of being summoned to head-quarters for enlisting men beneath the proper height, his sergeant having supplied them with false heels, five feet seven being the minimum for “the Borderers;” and next, that he

had narrowly escaped a court-martial for sending some half-dozen O'Neils and O'Donnells (all Irish) to the regiment, as MacNeils and MacDonnells from the Western Isles.

The three officers, in their jollity, thoughtlessness, laughter, and general lightness of heart, formed a strong contrast to poor Quentin's dejection of spirit. He envied them, and asked of himself why was he not happy and merry too—why was he not one of them?

Richard Warriston, the senior, had begun life as a subaltern in General Sir Ralph Dundas's Regiment of the Scots-Dutch, as they were named—the famous old Scots brigade of six battalions, which served their High Mightinesses the States of Holland from the days of James VI. to those of the French Revolution—in all the bloody wars of two centuries, bearing themselves with honour and never losing a standard, though they had captured many from every army in Europe. They volunteered, as the 94th Foot, into the British service about the end of the last century, and came back to Scotland clad in the old Dutch yellow uniform; hence Warriston's stories and memories were all of Holland and Flanders, Prussia and Austria, and many a strange anecdote he had to tell at times.

Desirous of showing the suspicious landlord and impertinent waiter how *other* persons viewed him, Quentin ordered another bottle of wine.

“The deuce!” he heard the captain whisper to Monkton; “we can’t permit this mere boy to treat us to wine.”

“*Two* bottles, and be sharp, waiter,” said Quentin, whose pride the well-meaning officer had piqued.

“He is a regular trump,” said Monkton, adjusting his napkin.

“A gentleman—a phrase I prefer,” added War-riston in the same undertone, as he proceeded to slice down a gallant capon; for he could perceive at once, by Quentin’s bearing at the dinner-table—the truest and best test—that he knew all its etiquette and had been used to good society. As the wine circulated and reserve thawed (not that there was much of it, certainly, in the present quartett) Quentin asked Monkton if he remembered an officer named Girvan in his corps.

“Girvan—Girvan—remember him?—yes; an old quartermaster—rose from the ranks, didn’t he?”

“Yes.”

“He left us on a half-pay commission in the year I joined, during Lord Rohallion’s lieutenant-colonelcy. (By-the-bye, his lordship lives somewhere hereabout; should leave our cards for him, but have no time.) Girvan was a queer old fellow, who always wore a yellow wig—do you know him?”

“Intimately. I have known him from my

childhood," said Quentin, his eyes sparkling and heart swelling with pleasure, that he could speak of some one at home.

"Any relation of yours?" asked Monkton; and so weak is human nature that Quentin blushed that any one should think he was so, and then blushed deeper still that he was ashamed of his true and sterling old friend.

"Perhaps he is your father?" suggested the ensign, mischievously.

"Sir, I said my name is Kennedy; my father was a captain of the Scots Brigade in the French service."

"Ah—indeed!" said Warriston, becoming suddenly interested; "is he still alive?"

"Alas, sir, no!"

"Killed in action, likely?"

"He was drowned at sea, after an engagement with a French ship off the mouth of the Clyde."

"And where have you come from, that you travel thus alone?"

"I cannot say."

"Then where are you going to?" asked the ensign.

"I don't know," replied Quentin, sadly.

"Can't say and don't know!" said the captain of the Scots Brigade; "then my advice would be to stay where you are."

"That is not possible."

"You are an odd fellow—quite an enigma," said Monkton, laughing.

“Perhaps I am,” replied poor Quentin, with a sickly smile.

“Do you know, my young friend, that I have been observing you closely for some time (pardon me saying so), but with something of friendly interest, and I perceive an air of dejection about you that shows there is something wrong—a screw loose somewhere,” said Captain Warriston, kindly.

“Wrong?” repeated Quentin, flushing, and in doubt how to take the remark.

“Yes; I have seen so much of the world that I can read a man’s face like an open book.”

“And the reading of mine——”

“Is satisfactory; but there is something in your eyes that tells me you are in a scrape somehow—at home, perhaps?”

“Home!” exclaimed Quentin, in a voice that trembled, for the wine was affecting him; “I have *none!*”

The three officers glanced at each other, and the fair-haired ensign’s white eyebrows went up rather superciliously.

“I find that I must talk with you, my young friend,” said Warriston—“will you have a cigar?” he added, offering his case after the cloth was removed.

“Thank you—no; I am not a smoker.”

In fact, Quentin had never seen the soothing “weed” in such a form, until his foe, the Master, came to Rohallion.

“Waiter, bring candles—another bottle, and then be off; these decanters are empty—fill again; le Roi est mort—vive le Roi!”

“In short, Mr. Kennedy, you have run from college or home, I fear,” said Monkton; “what have you been about—making love to some of your lady-mother’s maids, and got into a double scrape, or what? See how he flushes—there has been some love in the case, at least.”

“Were *you* never in love?” asked Quentin, who certainly did redden, but with annoyance.

“Who—I—me?—what the devil—in love!” and the bulky lieutenant lay back in his chair and fairly laughed himself crimson, either at the idea or the simplicity of the question. “I have long since learned that there is nothing so variable in the world as woman’s temper.”

“The Horse Guards excepted,” said Warriston; “the great nobs there never know their own minds for three days consecutively; witness all the vacillation about who is to command the Spanish expedition.”

“Then, Mr. Pimple,” began Quentin, “have you ever——”

“Mr. Kennedy,” said the ensign, angrily, “I’ll have you to know, sir, that my name is Boyle—Ensign Patrick Boyle, at your service.”

“So it is,” said the lieutenant, choking with laughter, on perceiving that Quentin looked quite bewildered; “but we call him Pimple at the mess

for being only five feet and an inch or so. He is not big enough to be a Boyle, though he is one of a tall Ayrshire stock. Is not it so, Pat, old boy? Perhaps you are some relation of the famous chemist?"

"Which—who?"

"I mean Robert Boyle was seventh *son* of the Earl of Cork, and became *father* of chemistry. Now, don't think of calling me out, Pat, for, 'pon my soul, I wont go. The 25th couldn't do without us. You must know, Warriston, that Pimple was in the Royals before he joined us; but he had always a fancy for the Borderers. You used to pass yourself, in mufti, as a 25th man; didn't you, Pimple?—long before you had the honour to admire that blessed number on your own buttons—eh?"

Though hearty, hospitable, and jovial, to Quentin it seemed that Monkton had an irrepressible desire to quiz the ensign, even to rudeness, and the latter took it all good-naturedly enough till the fumes of the wine mounted into his head.

"But, to return to what we were talking of," said Warriston, earnestly and kindly. "Can I advise you in any way, my friend? Are you already a prodigal, who has neither a herd of promising pigs, nor the husks wherewith to feed them?"

"Excuse me entering much into my own affairs. My father, I have told you, is dead. I have no

mother—no friends—to counsel me,” he continued, in a tremulous voice, “and I know not whether to join the service or drown myself in the nearest river.”

“The Ayr is not very deep,” said Monkton, despite a deprecatory glance from his senior; “why don’t you say hang yourself?”

“Well, then, or hang myself,” said Quentin, bitterly.

“And the alternative is joining the service?”

“Yes.”

“You pay his Majesty and his uniform a high compliment,” said Warriston, with a hearty laugh, in which Quentin, seeing the ungraciousness of his remark, was fain to join; “but as for entering the ranks, you must not think of that. Why not do as I did, and many better men have done—join some regiment of Cavalry or Infantry, as a gentleman volunteer?”

A new light seemed to break upon Quentin with these words—a new hope and spirit flashed up in his heart.

“How, sir,” he asked, “how, sir? Explain to me, pray.”

“Zounds, man! it is very simple. A letter of recommendation to the officer commanding any regiment now under orders for the seat of war, a few pounds in your pocket to pay your way till under canvas or before the enemy, are all that is necessary.”

“Thanks to a dear friend, I have money enough and to spare; but the letter——”

“We have too many volunteers already with both battalions of the Scots Brigade,” said Warriston, reflectively.

“But you can give him a letter to our commanding officer,” interposed Monkton.

“Why not give him one yourself, Dick?”

“Old Middleton would never believe in any person who was warmly recommended for the first vacant commission by such a fellow as I.”

“Egad, you are perhaps right,” said Warriston, laughing; “get me ink and paper, Pimple——”

“Boyle,” said the ensign, sullenly.

“Beg pardon, Boyle, I mean—thanks. Here goes for all the virtues that were ever recorded on a rich man’s tombstone.” With great readiness Captain Warriston wrote a letter of introduction and recommendation for Quentin to the officer commanding the 25th Foot, in which he gave him as many good qualities as the sheet of paper could contain, and wrote of him as warmly as if he had known him from boyhood. It was unanimously approved of by all present—by none more than Quentin himself, and after it was duly sealed, he pocketed it as carefully as ever Gil Blas did his patent of nobility.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NEW FRIENDS.

“Why unite to banish care?
 Let him come our joys to share;
 Doubly blest our cup shall flow
 When it soothes a brother's woe;
 'Twas for this the powers divine
 Crowned our board with generous wine.”
 TANNAHILL.

“THE first skirmish, perhaps, and the first general action certainly, will see you an officer; you shall be one yet, my boy, and a gallant one, I hope,” said Warriston, shaking Quentin's hand.

The weird sisters' prophecy was not more grateful to the ears of the Scottish usurper than these words were to Quentin Kennedy; but he asked,—

“If I should be disabled before appointment?”

“Ah, the devil! don't think of that; you would get only a private soldier's pension.”

“That is not very encouraging.”

“'Tis better for the volunteer to be shot outright than merely mutilated. But remember, that many of our best officers have joined the army as simple volunteers. There was Lord

Heathfield, the gallant defender of Gibraltar, began life as a volunteer with the 23rd at Edinburgh; and one of our Highland regiments, the 71st, I think, had as many as fifteen such cadets serving in its ranks during the American war, and splendid officers they have all become. I did not serve in America, for our corps was then in the Dutch service. The Prussian army under old Frederick was the Paradise of such volunteers, and I know one instance in which a soldier of my father's regiment was made a general in one year, by Frederick's mere caprice."

"A general!" exclaimed Monkton, who was somewhat soured by the slowness of his promotion.

"It was at the battle before Prague, and while my father, John Warriston of that ilk, then a very young man, commanded the senior battalion of the Prussian Foot Guards, that Marshal Daun forced Frederick to raise the siege and retire. As the Prussians fell back, their left wing became confused by the fury of the Austrian advance. Frederick's aides-de-camp were all killed, and he was compelled to gallop about, giving his own orders, accompanied by a single orderly, Strutzki, the old Putkammer Hussar, in whose arms he died thirty years after. The ground was rough and his horse was weary, so it stumbled suddenly and threw him at a place where the field was covered by the killed and wounded of my father's battalion, which was then retreating, but in good

order. As Frederick gathered himself up, a soldier who lay near him wounded, exclaimed,—

“ ‘Sire, sire, get a brigade of guns into position on yonder eminence, or it is all up with your left wing!’

“ ‘How so, fellow?’ asked the king, whose temper was no way improved by his tumble.

“ ‘Because there is an ambuscade in the valley beyond it.’

“ ‘I have twice tried to make a stand, comrade.’

“ ‘Try a third time, Father Frederick.’

“ ‘Why?’

“ ‘A third chance is ever the lucky one.’

“ ‘Good; I’ll throw forward the Putkammer Hussars, and let the brigade of Seydlitz support them.’

“ ‘But try the effect of a few round shot in the defile,’ persisted the wounded man. ‘A devil of a day this for us, Father Frederick! Macchiavelli, in his ‘Art of War,’ declares the invention of gunpowder a mere matter of smoke, not to be deemed of the smallest importance. Ach, Gott! I wish he was here before Prague with this Austrian bullet in the calf of his leg.’

“ ‘What, my friend, you are a reader as well as a soldier?’

“ ‘Yes, sire, I have had the honour to read all the works of your majesty.’

“ ‘A man of sense!’ said Frederick, taking a pinch of rappee; ‘your name?’

“ ‘Peter Schreutzer, of Colonel Warriston’s battalion of the Guards.’

“ Frederick drew from one of his fingers a ring of small value (he was not a man given to trinkets or adornment), and gave it to the soldier, saying :

“ ‘If you escape this field of Prague, bring this ring to me yourself, comrade Peter.’

“ Mounting his horse, he galloped after his retreating army, and overtaking a few pieces of artillery he posted them on the height indicated by Schreutzer, and opened fire on the wooded defile—a measure which dislodged a great ambuscade of Marshal Daun’s infantry, and saved from destruction the Prussian left wing, the retreat of which was nobly covered by the Warriston battalion.

“ Three months after this, when Frederick was seated in his tent, surrounded by his staff and dictating orders, a private of the Guards limped in, supported by a stick, and kneeling presented him with a ring.

“ ‘Ach, Gott, what is this?’ said Frederick ; ‘Oho, ’tis my student of Macchiavelli ; well, comrade, I followed your advice and saved my left wing.’

“ ‘Thank God, who inspired me with the idea !’ said Schreutzer.

“ ‘For that day’s work I name you a captain in the Line,’ exclaimed the king.

“ At Rosbach, where in the same year Frede-

rick defeated the French, Peter gained his majority in the morning and his lieutenant-colonelcy in the evening. Then came the affair of Dresden, where the advice given by him at a council of war was so sound and skilful that he was appointed major-general. What think you of that, my young volunteer—in one year to have the private's shoulder-knot replaced by the aiguillette of a general officer?"

"It was talent, but strangely favoured by kingly caprice," said Monkton.

"Schreutzer succeeded my father in command of the Guards, when he fell under Frederick's displeasure and quitted the Prussian service in disgust. Remind me on the march to-morrow to tell you how that came about, for it is rather a good story."

"And now to bed," said Monkton, who had imbibed a considerable quantity of wine; "at last we may put our 'beating orders' in the fire, for march is the word!"

"What are they?" asked Quentin.

"Warrants to raise men by beat of drum," explained the captain, politely. "They are originally signed by the royal hand, but copies are taken from them and signed by the secretary of state for war, and without them no officer can beat a recruiting drum anywhere. You have raised nearly a hundred men here, Dick, and must have made something of it."

“Much need,” grumbled the lieutenant, making ineffectual attempts to buckle on his sword, as if he was going to bed with it. “I am Dick Monkton, of Monkton in Lothian, of course; but in name only, for those paternal acres are so covered by original sin in the shape of mortgages that never a penny comes to me; so I am compelled to live and be jolly on six shillings and sixpence per diem, less the infernal income-tax; and being a fellow of a generous disposition, I am always losing my heart and my money among the fair sex.”

“Good night, Mr. Kennedy,” said Captain Warriston; “if you are still in the same mood of mind to-morrow, you may turn my letter to some account. The drum will beat at daybreak.”

“Put your pride in a knapsack or wherever else it can be conveniently carried, my boy,” said Monkton, making a fearful lurch over a chair; “volunteer and come with us to fight Nap and his Frenchmen.” Then he began to sing, tipsily:

“‘ Since some have from ditches
And coarse leather breeches
Been raised to be rulers and wallowed in riches,
Prythee, Dame Fortune, come down from thy wheel;
For if the gipsies don't lie
I shall be a general at least ere I die!’

“Ah, damme, but we are not in the Prussian service, like that old cock, Peter Shooter, or what's his name?”

Monkton was becoming seriously tipsy, so

Quentin, on receiving a warning glance from Captain Warriston, took his candle and retired to No. 20 for the night, feeling sensibly that he had imbibed more wine than he was wont to do after supper at Rohallion.

He could not sleep, however, till the night was far advanced, and the knowledge that drum was to beat by daybreak kept him nervously wakeful, lest he might not hear it, and perhaps be left behind. The drum was to beat, and *for him!* There was a strange charm in the idea: it seemed to realize somewhat of his old day-dreams and romantic aspirations. Already he felt himself a soldier, and bound for service and adventure! How much would he have to relate when he wrote to the good old quartermaster, announcing that he was off to join the army, and *his own* old corps, the 25th, whose memory he so treasured, though his name, alas! was long since forgotten in its ranks.

And there was Flora—dear, loving, gentle Flora. When was he to write to her, and through what channel? Ah, if he could calculate on promotion like that of Peter Schreutzer! He had only been absent from Flora a night and a day, just four-and-twenty hours, and already weeks seemed to have elapsed, (what would months—what would years seem?) while the arrival of Cosmo and long prior events seemed to have happened but yesterday. Under these circumstances, sever-

ance frequently causes the same inverted ideas of *time*, that a sudden death or other great calamity occasion.

At the moment Quentin was dozing off to sleep, and to dream of past pleasures or of future triumphs (the ensign being long since in deep slumber on a sofa), he heard his two new friends parting in the corridor after having had one bottle more.

“I say, Warriston, old boy, see me to my door, and just shove me in—there’s a good fellow—here it is—thanks,” stammered Monkton; “may you not have been rash in giving such a fi—fi—fiery old Turk as Middleton of ours, a letter for—for—damme, a perfect stranger—perfect stranger?”

“Not at all,” he heard Warriston reply; “the lad has a bearing I like, and on his own good and unerring conduct as a gentleman and volunteer must depend his chances of ever wearing these honourable badges on his shoulders. (He shook his large gold epaulettes as he spoke.) One o’clock—in three hours the drum will beat! I hope we shall have a fine day; last night the rain fell as if old Noah had hove up his anchor again. Good-night, Monkton—sleep if you can.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE YOUNG VOLUNTEER.

“ When I was an infant, gossips would say
I'd when older be a soldier ;
Rattles and toys I'd throw them away,
Unless a gun or sabre.
When a younker up I grew,
I saw one day a grand review,
Colours flying set me dying,
To embark in a life so new.
Roll drums merrily—march away !

Old Song.

QUENTIN had been asleep—to him it seemed but five minutes, though two hours had elapsed—when he started as if he had received an electric shock. The warning drum was being beaten loudly and sharply under his window, and soon after followed the long roll, whose summons admits of no delay, even to the most weary soldier.

Half asleep and half refreshed, he sprang from bed ; grey daylight was stealing faintly in, and all Ayr seemed yet a-bed, the shutters closed, the chimneys smokeless. The morning mist was curling in masses along the slopes of the uplands ; the summits of the town steeples and the gothic tower of St. John were reddened by the first rays

of the sun that was yet below the horizon, and the little drummer boy, as he paced slowly to and fro, in heavy marching order, with a black glazed knapsack strapped on his back, and a white canvas havresack slung crosswise over his pipeclayed swordbelt, seemed to be the only person abroad in the streets as yet.

“Rouse!” cried a voice, which Quentin knew to be that of Captain Warriston, who knocked sharply on the room door; “pack your traps, Kennedy, as quickly as you can. My man will put your portmanteau on the baggage-cart. A cup of hot coffee awaits you in the dining-room. Never march with an empty stomach, unless you can’t help it.”

While dressing hurriedly, Quentin heard the worthy captain rousing his lieutenant, which seemed a process of some difficulty, and productive of considerable banter and vociferation. As for the ensign, he had never undressed or been in bed, so he was already awake, and accoutred with sword, sash, and gorget, and looked very pale and miserable as he swallowed his hot coffee in the twilight of the wainscoted dining-room.

The early morning air was chilly, and Quentin, but half awake, felt his teeth chattering as he issued into the street. The reflection flashed on his mind that it was not yet too late to retrace his steps, and alter his intentions. But why do so? asked reason. What other course was open

to him? On this morning, with his new friends and patrons—particularly Warriston, for whom he had conceived a great friendship—he felt his position was very different from what it was yesterday, when, without views, objects, or a defined future, he awoke among Gibbie Crossgrane's straw in the vault of Kilhenzie.

Already the soldiers of the recruiting-parties, with their various recruits, were falling in. There were three sergeants, three corporals, three privates, three drummers, and three fifers of the 25th, the 90th (Lord Lynedoch's Greybreeks), and the 94th, with fifty-five recruits, all sturdy rustics, with cockades of tricoloured ribbon streaming from their bonnets, for that most hideous of head-dresses, the round hat, was almost unknown then among the peasantry of Scotland.

All seemed sleepy, heavy-eyed, and were yawning drowsily, as they shouldered against each other, and shuffled awkwardly while forming line and answering to their names, which were called over by Monkton's sergeant, a portly old halberdier, named Norman Calder.

"Now then, Master William Monkton, are we to march without you, or must I detail a fatigue party to tumble you out of bed?" cried Warriston, angrily, in the hall of the inn. "There goes the last roll of the drum, and all are present but *you!*"

"Ugh!" said the lieutenant, as he came forth adjusting his regimentals in the street, tying his

sash, and buckling his sword-belt, and certainly not looking the better for his potations overnight; “as Scott of Amwell says, ‘I hate that drum’s discordant sound’—’pon my soul, I do! Such a restless dog you are, Warriston! Two hours hence would have done just as well for you, and immensely better for all, than this. Half-past four, A.M.—damme!” he added, glancing up at a church-dial which was glittering in the rising sun; “this is a most unearthly proceeding, and likely to be the death of poor Pimple. Good morning, Kennedy, my young volunteer; how do you like this kind of work?”

Quentin felt bound to say that he enjoyed it very much.

“Bah! after being two hours in bed, having to tumble up in this fashion, is just as pleasant as having to go out with a dead shot in the honeymoon, or in the morning on which you have made an assignation with a pretty girl on your way home; or having a bill returned on your hands; a horse lamed when the starting-bell rings, or when you are about to ride a steeple-chase, or lead a charge; or any other thing that annoys you, by jingo!”

As Quentin had never experienced any of the five grievances enumerated by Monkton, he could only laugh, and ask—

“Then what about ‘the lark at Heaven’s gate’—has his voice no charms?”

“I'd rather hear his morning reveille when going home to my quarters.”

The scene had now become very animated. The soldiers, fifteen in number, were all in heavy marching order, with only their side-arms, however, and were all sturdy, weatherbeaten fellows, with whom Quentin found himself rather an object of interest, as he had given Sergeant Calder a couple of guineas to enable them all to drink his health.

Many of the townspeople were crowding round to see them depart; and many a repentant recruit now bade a last farewell to sobbing parents, to brother, or sister, or sweetheart, all deploring the step which they deemed would lead him to ruin and death, for there were no marshal's batons to be found in the knapsacks of the 25th or 94th, as in those of “the Corsican Tyrant,” whose name was as that of a bogle for nurses to scare their children with.

While Warriston, an indefatigable officer, bustled about, getting the motley party into something like military order, and detailed a corporal and three men to take charge of the impressed cart which was to carry their baggage, with some of the soldiers' wives and children, his lieutenant lounged at the door of the Queen Anne's Head, smoking a pipe, with his shako very much over one of his wicked eyes, as he joked and bantered those about him.

“Come, landlord,” said he to the sulky Boniface, who made his appearance with a red Kilmarnock nightcap on his head; “give us a farewell smile, do, there’s a good fellow; I’ll take a kiss from your wife, too, on credit (I’m her debtor a long way already), and you may put both in the bill when next we halt here. Gad, Kennedy, these people hate the sight of a billet-order as the devil hates holy water. Those who grudge the British soldier a night’s lodging should have a trial of a few Cossacks or Austrians; but it all comes of the levellers, the opposition, and the democrats, damme! So Pimple, my boy, have a dram—you have had your run of flirtation with the flax-dresser’s daughter, and yet have got off without having to propose for the *passée* heiress, or go out about sunrise with the incensed parent.”

“Yes,” replied the ensign, playing with the tassels of his sash, and assuming a would-be gallant air; “close run, though—once thought I was nearly in for it.”

“Ah, you’re safe now; but what says the couplet?”

“What couplet? I don’t know.

“It says that to you, my friend,

“From wedlock’s noose thus once by fate exempt,
The next may prove, alas! a noose of hemp!”

The ensign was about to make an angry retort, when Warriston gave the command,

“Threes right—quick march! come, come,

move off, gentlemen." The sharp drums and shrill fifes struck up merrily in the echoing streets (it was the unvarying 'Girl I left behind me'); a lusty cheer from the departing recruits was loudly responded to by the people around and from those at many a window. Others followed, loud, long, and hearty, and catching the spirit of enthusiasm from those about him, Quentin felt every pulse throb, every nerve and fibre quicken, as his heart became light and joyous, and as Warriston drew his arm through his own, and falling into the rear of the party, they departed from the inn.

How different were Quentin's emotions now, when compared to the sense of dejection and desolation, with which, portmanteau in hand, he had entered that ancient caravanserai yesterday!

"Now for your first day's march, Kennedy," said the captain; "never mind the *past*—it is gone for ever, and is useless now."

"Unless it afford me some hint to guide me for the future."

"Right," said the captain; "faith! boy, I like your spirit and reflective turn."

The cheers of the people and the rattle of the drums, as the party marched over the new bridge of Ayr, defied every attempt at conversation. All viewed the departing band with interest, for, ere long, they would be all sent to the seat of war, and be before the enemy; and of those blue-bonneted recruits who were leaving the banks

and braes of Ayr, and old Coila's hills and glens, few or none might ever return. But there was then a high spirit in all the British Isles.

The long dread of invasion from France, political and religious rancour, with years of continued victory by sea and land—the glories and the fall of Nelson and Abercrombie, the brilliant but terrible career of Napoleon following close on the atrocities of the French Revolution—all conspired to fill honest Mr. Bull's heart with a furore for military fame; he ceased to smoke the pipe of peace, and the worthy man's funny red coat and warlike pigtail were never off. Gillray's coloured caricatures of French soldiers in cocked hats and long blue coats, and of their "Corsican tyrant," in every ridiculous and degrading situation that art could conceive or malevolence inspire, filled every print-shop; and the press, such as it was, groaned alternately under puffs of self-glorification and scurrilous abuse of France and its emperor, with a systematic expression of true British contempt for anything foreign and continental. Thus the whole country swarmed with troops of every arm, and all Britain was a species of garrison, from London to Lerwick, and from Banff to Bristol.

They had been some hours on the march before Quentin thought of obtaining a very requisite piece of information—to wit, their destination, when he was informed by Captain Warriston that

the three recruiting parties were to embark at Leith on board an armed smack or letter-of-marque, for Colchester barracks in England, where the three Scottish regiments were stationed.

“After I travel so far,” said Quentin, “I do sincerely hope the commanding officer will approve of me.”

“Rest assured that he will,” replied Warriston, confidently; “he is a plain, sometimes rough old soldier, but he knows me well.”

“Who is colonel of the regiment?”

“Lieutenant-General Lord Elphinstone is our colonel,” said Monkton; “and our lieutenant-colonel being aged—an old Minden officer, indeed—has permission to sell out. Jack Middleton, the major, is in command at present, and as he is too poor to purchase, he is revenging himself upon the regiment.”

“How?” asked Quentin, with surprise.

“Though our corps is a crack one (what corps is not so in its own estimation?) he harangues us daily on the bad discipline and disorder in which his predecessor has left us; so all have gone to school again, from the oldest captain down to the youngest fifer.”

“Indeed,” said the bewildered volunteer; “that is very hard!”

“So it is, damme! but old fellows who smelt powder against Washington at Brandywine, and

under the Duke in Holland, at Alkmaar and Egmont-op-Zee, are now at the goose-step and pacing-stick ; and woe to the private who fails to have the barrel and lock of his musket bright as silver, and his pouch bottled to perfection, so that he might shave or dress his pigtail in it. We have punishment parades, extra drills, kit-inspections, drums beating, bugles sounding all day, and often check-rolls thrice in the night, and orderlies flying all over the barracks like madmen, and all because old Jack Middleton has not enough of tin to purchase the lieutenant-coloneley. There is little Pimple—by Jove ! he'll not be in Colchester a week before the major frightens him into the measles."

"Who is to succeed the lieutenant-colonel?" asked Warriston, who laughed at the subaltern's angry description of the state of matters at headquarters.

"The Horse Guards, those Fates who sit on high over the British soldier, alone know. Some good kind of fellow, I hope, before I rejoin ; for rather than serve under old Middleton (excuse me, Warriston, as he is a friend of yours) I'd send in my papers—go recruiting for the 2nd West India at Sierra Leone, or join that fine body of men, the York Rangers !"

"What are they?"

"A condemned corps, named for the good duke ; but whose officers, damme, sleep at night

with loaded pistols under their pillows, for fear of their own men."

"This is not very cheering for you, Kennedy," said Warriston, laughing heartily; "but you must not mind all Monkton says."

"No matter; I have given my word, and go I shall."

It was evident that Monkton was a little soured, for he alternately vowed himself tired of the service and then an enthusiast for it, and his corps in particular; but he was rather blue-devilled this morning, and uncheered by the blue sunny sky and golden cornfields, the songs of the birds and mild morning breeze, he swore at the long dusty road and grumbled at the slowness of his promotion, and that by circumstances beyond his control, after fifteen years' service and having seen much fighting, he was only a lieutenant still; "but you will learn, ere long, Kennedy," he added, "that the lieutenants are the salt of the service, and do all the actual work. Middleton will judge of you, not from others, but from yourself alone. The battalion will likely go abroad under his orders; a month more may see us before the enemy, and you in possession of your epaulettes, if some poor sub—say Pimple here—is knocked on the head."

"Thank you," said Boyle; "why not suggest yourself—one sub is the same as another."

"Not all—not at all; it would be no use. They never hit me seriously in Flanders or Den-

mark, and they won't do it in Spain or North Holland."

"My old friend Middleton must have changed sorely to have become the Tartar and martinet you describe him," said Warriston; "if so, he would have suited old Frederick of Prussia to a hair."

"You told us to remind you of a story which was worth telling."

"About Frederick and my father?"

"Exactly," said Quentin.

"And how he and I came to be in the Dutch service. Well, the story has something droll in it, and though some may have heard the affair, as it found its way into the newspapers, I shall give you the version which I gave to Mr. Thomas Holcroft, when he was preparing that very light and most readable work on the Life, Times, and Works of the Great Frederick, in thirteen huge royal octavo volumes."

"Then it is to be found there?"

"On the contrary, he omitted it, not considering it quite a feather in his hero's cap."

"And the story——"

"Occurred in this way."

But the story with which Warriston beguiled a few miles of the morning march deserves, perhaps, a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PRUSSIAN GRENADIER.

“ There was a criminal in a cart
A-going to be hanged ;
Respite to him was granted,
And cart and crowd did stand,
To know if he would marry a wife
Or rather choose to die ;
‘ Tother’s the worst, drive on the cart,’
The criminal did reply.”—*Old Ballad.*

You have all heard I presume (the captain began), of the singular predilection which the late King of Prussia had for tall swinging grenadiers, how he raked all Germany and Pomerania to procure them, and had them formed into corps and companies, sparing nothing in their equipment to add to their vast stature and warlike aspect—giving them the highest of heels to their boots, the tallest bearskin caps, and the longest and largest feathers that could be worn with safety to the neck and vertebral column. Those cross-belted Goliaths were quite a passion with him, and the first battalion of his Foot Guards, which my worthy father had the honour to command, was, no doubt, the most gigantic regiment in the

Prussian army, perhaps in Europe; and to see its twelve companies of giants marching past in review order, and in open column, on that little meadow near Halle, which, from the time of the old Dessauer,* has been the training ground of the Prussian infantry, was truly a sight to marvel at and remember.

The Battalion Von Warriston was, to Frederick the Great, his pet band—the flower and pattern corps of his carefully-trained and well-developed army!

Now it chanced that one day, about the year 1780, he had been riding in the environs of Berlin, attended only by Strutzki, his old Puttkammer orderly, with the gunpowder-spotted visage. As he pottered along on his old shambling horse, with a pair of large spectacles on his nose—the royal nose, I mean—one eye was fixed on his bridle and the other on Herr Doctor Johann Georg Zimmerman's then famous but dreary work on Solitude, with his flap pockets stuffed with letters from Voltaire and Hume, general orders, proof-sheets of plays, and other rubbish, he suddenly saw something in the opinions of the Herr Doctor which displeased him, and jotting off a note on the subject, he despatched it by Strutzki.

Then resuming his meditations he rode on

* Prince Leopold, of Anhalt Dessau, born there in 1676, the bravest of three generations who held the highest rank in the Prussian army.—*General Seydlitz's Life*.

alone into the fields, smoking a pipe which had belonged to his old and faithful comrade, Seydlitz, and which he had picked up on the field of Rosbach, when that general gave his usual signal for the Hussars to charge by flinging his pipe into the air.

In a lonely place he came suddenly upon a peasant girl who possessed remarkable beauty, but that which he greatly preferred, astonishing stature. She was fully six feet, and so splendidly proportioned that Frederick reined up his horse and slung his pipe at his button-hole to observe her, which he could do for some time unobserved, as she was busy twining creepers and flowers over the front paling of a cottage named the Wild Katze, a wayside tavern.

“Bey'm Henker!” thought he, “could I but get you married to one of my grenadiers, my long-legged Fraulein, what sons you might have! What recruits—what a progeny of giant children to recruit the next generation of my guards!”

The tall girl now perceived the king observing her, and curtsied and laughed, for she had no idea of his rank. His horse furniture was shabby, and his own appearance was far from being stately or imposing. He stooped about the shoulders, and had a snuffy drop at the end of his nose. Over his uniform and decorations he wore a greasy old military surtout-coat of blue cloth, lined with white merino, its buttons, sleeves, and all of the

plainest kind ; an old battered cocked-hat, with what had once been a white feather binding the edge of it, and its rim being perforated by musket-shot ; a pair of common dragoon pistols in holsters without flaps, and a pair of rusty spurs on long jack-boots that had never been blackened since they left the maker's hands, though they were greased by Strutzki every morning.

“ What is your name, my handsome fraulein ? ” he inquired, while lifting his hat.

“ Gretchen Viborg, ” replied the tall beauty.

“ Are you married ? ” he asked with increasing suavity.

“ No, mein herr. ”

“ But anxious to be, doubtless, ” said Frederick, perpetrating a wink.

Then the girl, supposing that this funny old man was about to make some proposal to her, burst into a fit of laughter, in which the king good-humouredly joined, and then asked,

“ How old are you ? ”

“ Nearly twenty, mein herr. ”

“ Good. Are you the keeper of the Wilde Katze ? ”

“ No—my father is. ”

“ Would you like to earn easily a rix-dollar ? ”

“ That will I do readily, mein herr, ” said the girl, coming briskly forward, for a rix-dollar was then about the value of four of our guineas.

“ Then you must deliver a note for me ? ”

“Where?”

“In the city.”

“And to whom, mein herr?”

“To the Colonel von Warriston at the palace near the Wiese Saal.”

The girl, little suspecting what was in store for her, curtsayed and signified her readiness, while the king, drawing forth his tablets, and using his holster for a desk, wrote to my father in this manner:—

“MY DEAR COLONEL VON WARRISTON,

“On receipt of this order, you are to marry *the tallest* of your grenadiers to the bearer thereof, taking particular care to have the ceremony performed in your own presence; and for the execution of this, I hold you responsible.

“FRIEDRICH.”

“P.S.—If he refuse, to Spandau with him, until further orders.”

“Can you read, fraulein?” asked he, while folding this remarkable order.

“No, mein herr.”

“Good; then there is the less use for a seal, which I have not here.” He placed the note and the rix-dollar in the large fair hand of the girl, and added, “I have noted this place—the Wilde Katze in my tablets, and I trust to your honesty and fidelity, Gretchen, in delivering my

note without delay, as the matter is of great consequence to me, and may not prove unpleasant to yourself." And giving her a look that somehow impressed her, he put spurs to his old charger, and shambled off.

As ignorant of the contents of the letter as of the exalted rank of its writer, Gretchen Viborg was hurrying along the road towards Berlin, when she suddenly remembered that she had to keep an appointment with her lover, a remarkably jealous little fellow, who had a mill on the Spree—an assignation which the delivery of this note would completely mar! While pausing to consider this dilemma, honesty impelling her forward, and love or fear staying her steps, she met an old crone who was employed by her at the Wilde Katze, to till the ground, carry wood and do other out-door work; and supposing it was all one *who* delivered the note, provided that it safely reached its destination, she offered her a ducat to bear it to the palace near the White Hall.

Now this old crone could read; she scanned the note, saw the whole bearings of the case, and knew who the writer was in an instant. She grinned a horrible grin of intense satisfaction, undertook the mission, and already beheld in prospect her victim—the tallest grenadier!

This cunning hag was past fifty years of age, and one of her legs was shorter than the other leg at least by half an inch; she stooped in gait and

was not much more than four feet high, and was remarkably hideous, even for a continental woman, her face being a mass of wrinkles, her pointed chin covered with wiry sprouts of grey hair, while her teeth were reduced to a few yellow fangs; thus, great was my father's astonishment, when he perused the note which she gave him faithfully at the palace-gate, just as he was mounting his charger to join the evening parade of his boasted battalion of the Guards.

He was too familiar with the handwriting of the great Frederick to doubt for a moment the authenticity of the note; but he could by no means reconcile its singular contents with the extreme years and appalling aspect of the old witch who brought it, and he surveyed them alternately for some time, in utter bewilderment, till the "P. S." about Spandau, that formidable state prison in Brandenburg, made him dread a trip there in person, if the king's orders were trifled with or delayed; so turning with repugnance from the woman, who continued to grin and drop endless curtsies by his side, he summoned the sergeant-major.

"Who is the tallest of our grenadiers?" he asked.

"Otto Vogelwiede," replied the sergeant, with a profound salute.

"How tall is he?"

"Six feet, eight inches and a quarter."

“Is he on parade with his company?”

“No, Herr Colonel—on duty.”

“Where?”

“With the guard at the Zeug-haus.” (This was the arsenal on the narrow bridge over the Spree.)

“Have him relieved by the next file for duty, and brought here immediately.”

Private Vogelwiede, a sturdy Silesian campaigner, who had been wounded at Cunnersdorf, and had served under my father in all the great battles of the Seven Years' War, soon appeared at the palace, with a mingled expression of surprise and alarm on his large visage, supposing that some misdemeanour was to be alleged against him; but this soon changed into downright horror, when my father, with a manner oddly indicative of half comicality and entire commiseration, read the king's peremptory order, and pointed to the blooming bride.

“Sturm und Gewitter!” swore the luckless grenadier in great wrath; “do you mean to say, Herr Colonel, that I am to marry this old bag of bones—this very shrivling?”

“My poor Vogelwiede, it is marry, or march to Spandau.”

“Ach Gott, what an old vampire it is!” said Vogelwiede, shuddering.

“I am utterly bewildered, comrade,” said my father.

“In mercy to me, Herr Colonel, tell me *what* I have done that I am to be punished thus?”

“I can’t say, my poor fellow, that I understand the affair in any way; but we all know our father Frederick, and that the dose, however nauseous, must be swallowed. You must either be chained to her, or to a thirty-six pound shot in Spandau—a companion you will not get rid of, even by day.”

“Der teufel! der teufel!” groaned the grenadier, who was actually perspiring with the idea of the whole affair, while the old woman, with her grey hairs, yellow fangs, and grimy wrinkles, grinned like some gnome sent by the Ruberzahl, or a witch from the Blocksberg; and to him it seemed as the sentence of death when my father said,—

“Send for the chaplain of the brigade, and desire him to bring his prayer-book and surplice.”

“Oh, Colonel, remember Cunnersdorf, and how when a boy I held Velt-marshal Keith dying in my arms at Hochkirchen—I was his favourite orderly,” urged poor Vogelwiede, melted almost to tears; but it was espouse or Spandau, and he was married in the military chapel, to his own intense misery, to the utter bewilderment of his comrades, who knew not what to make of the affair, and to the exulting joy of the hideous old crone.

Six months after, Frederick returned from

the reviews at Halle to Berlin, and desired my father to bring before him the couple who had been married by his orders.

“Ach Gott!” he exclaimed, on seeing the grinning hag and the miserable grenadier, who already looked grey and worn; “what the devil is this you have done, Herr Colonel?”

“I obeyed your majesty’s singular command,” replied my father, haughtily.

“Is this the woman to whom you have married Otto Vogelwiede, the premier grenadier of my Guards?”

“’Tis the woman who bore your majesty’s somewhat peremptory order, as all the corps can testify.”

“Der teufel! she is no more to compare to the one who received it, than a cup of Dresden china is to a bowl of Bunzlau clay! But I shall find her out yet, and married she shall be to the next tallest man in the battalion, so sure as Heaven hears me! and as for you, Colonel—dummer teufel—as for you——”

“No more dummer teufel (blockhead) than yourself, Frederick of Prussia,” exclaimed my father, furiously. “This to me? Have you forgotten my services, and that day at Amoneburg, when side by side we built up breastworks of the fallen dead, and fired over them?”

“I have not Herr Colonel; but potztausend!——”

“Remember that I am the well-born Warriston

von Warriston, which in plain Scottish means *of that ilk*, and I shall not be sworn at even by a king of Prussia.”

Frederick danced with rage in his old jack-boots, and dashed his Rosbach pipe upon the floor, exclaiming—

“Out of my sight, sir! Begone to your Bergschotten.* I have done with you!”

Whether Gretchen Viborg was married to the next tallest grenadier, or to the miller on the Spree, I know not, for that very day my father doffed the uniform of which he was so proud—the trappings of the 1st Guards—the same uniform in which Frederick was buried six years after at Potsdam, and resigned his commission, in which he was succeeded by Peter Schreutzer, the king's new favourite. Entering the service of the States General, he was made Colonel-in-Chief of their Scots Brigade, then consisting of six battalions, in one of which I obtained a cadetship; so you may perceive the strange chain of events by which—because Gretchen Viborg had to meet her miller, and her note found another bearer—I ultimately find myself a captain in His Britannic Majesty's 94th Foot, and in the service of my native country.”

We shall have other marches of more import

* Scots Highlanders; this is a true anecdote of Frederick's caprice.

ance to detail than the first essay of our young volunteer, who, though cheered from time to time by the merry music of the drums and fifes (which, in fact, are more inspiring and martial than any brass band can ever be), found the route weary enough by the pre-macadamite roads of those days, which were somewhat like the dry beds of mountain burns. So marching was rough and weary work, yet Quentin never flinched, as they proceeded by the dark, heathy, and solitary hills of the Muirkirk-of-Kyle, by Carnwath, where a party of the Gordon Highlanders, under Logan of that ilk, joined them, and by Kirknewton, where, from an eminence over which the roadway wound, he saw, for the first time, the wooded expanse of the beautiful Lothians, with the swelling outline of Arthur's Seat, the blue Firth, widening to a sea, the fertile hills of Fife, the lordly Ochil mountains, and those of thirteen counties, stretching far away even to the distant Lammermuirs, and in the middle distance, grey, dim, and smoky, the "Queen of the North, upon her hilly throne."

Then the soldiers hailed her with a cheer and a roll on the drums, announcing that there ended their last day's march.

CHAPTER XXVI.

COLCHESTER BARRACKS.

“Hail, sweet recruiting service, pleasing toil,
Ball-room campaigns, tea-parties, dice and Hoyle!
Ye days when dangling was my only duty,
Envied by cits, caressed by every beauty;
Envied by cits, so scared by every glance,
Shot at their daughters, going down the dance.”

Military Magazine, 1812.

FAITHFUL to his promise, before embarking, Quentin Kennedy wrote from Edinburgh to his friend the old quartermaster, informing him of the step he had taken, of the lucky chance that had turned up for him in the Queen Anne's Head at Ayr, and that he was off to join the army as a simple volunteer; but being resolved to owe all to himself and to his own spirit, courage, and energy, and to prevent his old friend, Lord Rohallion, from doing anything, strange to say, he did not mention what regiment of the line he had chosen, though he knew well that the mystical No. 25 would have made the hearts of the veteran general and the quartermaster leap within them, while poor old Jack Andrews would be certain to get helplessly groggy in honour of the occasion.

He sent no messages or memories to any one, for the letter was indited amid the hurly-burly of Poole's gay and then well-known military coffee-house in Prince's-street, nearly opposite the North Bridge; and Captain Warriston, who was standing fully accoutred with a group of other officers of various Scottish regiments, all talking, laughing, and smoking, urged him "to be sharp," as they had not a moment to lose before the mail started, and that the smack, *Lord Nelson*, had her topsail loose; so he sent no remembrance to his dear Flora Warrender, though he sealed his letter with a sigh, and his soul seemed to go with it to her.

Sailing in an armed Leith ship, without convoy, Captain Warriston's detachments of recruits, after beating against a head wind for two weeks, but without encountering a storm, a gale, or an enemy's ship of war, made the coast of Essex, landed at Harwich, and marched to Colchester Barracks, where each subaltern reported himself to his commanding officer, and handed over his detachment of recruits, doubtless glad to be rid of them.

How often were the last scene with Flora, those last words and those last kisses, under the old sycamores in the avenue, rehearsed over and over again.

"Ah," thought he, "could I but persuade myself that she will not entirely forget me; that some tender recollections, some soft memory of

the poor lonely and friendless lad, who loved her so well, will remain in her heart, now that I am far away—gone she knows not where, but gone for ever! For ever!—then what will love or memory avail me?”

The novelty of his situation, the sudden and remarkable change of scene, the short sea voyage, the crowded and somewhat noisy barracks of Colchester, then filled with troops, preparing by hourly training, prior to their departure for the seat of war; squads undergoing manual, platoon, and pacing-stick drill, others worked up in companies, battalions, and brigades, the general bustle and light-heartedness of all around him; the new occupation, new faces and new episodes, all so different from his former monotonous life in that old castle by the Firth of Clyde—a life that seemed like a dream now—soon weaned Quentin from his sadder thoughts, and he was startled to find that, after a time, instead of brooding over Flora's image and idea perpetually, he could only think of her occasionally, and ere long, that he began to take an interest in the crowds of ladies who came to view the evening parades, to promenade with the officers who were not on duty, and to hear the bands play. “Love sickness, according to our revised medical code, is nothing more than a disarranged digestion,” says a writer; so, in this year of the world—five thousand and odd; according to Genesis, and Heaven knows how

many more according to geology—no one dies of love, and, in the jovial barracks of Colchester, our friend Quentin showed no signs of the malady.

But we are anticipating.

The battalion of the 25th, or the King's Own Borderers, to which he was attached, occupied a portion of the stately and spacious barracks, which were built for the accommodation of ten thousand infantry, and had a fine park of artillery attached to them. These have all been since pulled down by an absurd spirit of mistaken economy, so that there are barely quarters for a single regiment in the town.

On the day after his arrival, anxious to create a good impression, he made a most careful toilet, and with a throbbing heart was introduced by Monkton to the officer commanding, the irritable Major Middleton, of whom he had heard so much, and to whom he presented the letter of introduction and recommendation given by his good friend Captain Warriston, who unfortunately was compelled to be absent elsewhere.

The major was a fine-looking old man, who had entered the service from the militia somewhat late in life, and hence the extreme slowness of his promotion, for he was now near his sixtieth year. He had a clear, keen, and bright blue eye; a suave, but grave and decided manner, with a deep and authoritative tone of voice. He still

wore his thin hair queued, though after being reduced to seven inches in length, by the general order of 1804, by another order in 1808, the entire army was shorn of those appendages.

Fearing a mutiny, or something like it, the obnoxious mandate was countermanded the next day, but, Ichabod! the glory had departed. The regimental barbers had done their fatal work, and not a pigtail remained in the service, from the Life Guards to the Shetland Volunteers, save among a few privileged men of the old school, who stuck to it in defiance alike of taste and authority, and one of these was Major Middleton, who now appeared in full uniform, with his snow-white shirt-frill peeping through his gorget,—a badge retained till 1830—and a spotless white waistcoat covering the comely paunch, while his queue, seven inches long, with its black silk rosette, wagged gracefully at the back of his fine old head, which was powdered by time to a whiteness his servant could never achieve with the puff.

He cordially shook hands with Quentin and with Monkton, and welcoming the latter back to head-quarters, bowed them to chairs with great formality, his sword and pigtail going up and down like pump-handles the while, and then with his sturdy back planted against the chimney-piece, he proceeded to read over the letter of Warriston, Quentin in the meantime undergoing the pleasant process of being occasionally eyed

askance with those clear, keen eyes—and a steady glance they had—the glance of one who had often been face to face with death and danger, in the East Indies and the West, in America, and wherever conquests were to be added to Britain's growing empire.

“My old friend Warriston recommends you highly, Mr. Kennedy—very highly indeed,” said the major, as he folded the letters and again shook Quentin by the hand; “but I hope that the step you are taking has the full concurrence of all who are interested in your welfare?”

With a heightened colour, Quentin begged the worthy major to be assured that it had.

“I need not tell you, my young friend, that no ordinary bravery is required of the gentleman volunteer, for something more dashing than mere service in the ranks is necessary to win the notice of those in authority and to obtain a commission in His Majesty's service. I trust, therefore, that you have weighed well and examined your mind, and are assured that you possess the qualifications necessary for the profession—I may well say, the perilous career—on which you are about to enter.”

“Qualifications, sir?” stammered Quentin, who was somewhat oppressed by the major's exordium, and began to think of Dominic Skail's Greek and Latin roots.

“Yes; for the task before you requires a

daring spirit, and a most stoical indifference to privation, to suffering, and to death, as you will have to bear a voluntary part in every dangerous or arduous enterprise, on every desperate duty; and have to volunteer for every forlorn hope and reckless adventure."

"I have weighed well, major, and I shall shrink from nothing! I long only for the opportunity of showing that I shall be—shall be what my father was before me," said Quentin, with flashing eyes and quivering lips, while he felt that these were not the kind of men to boast before.

The old major regarded the lad attentively, and said—

"Give me your hand again; I like your spirit, and hope ere long to wet your commission and welcome you as a brother officer. I enforce the strictest obedience, and some term me severe, yet I hope you will like me; for, if pleased with you, your future prospects shall be my peculiar care."

"I thank you, sir," said Quentin, with a very full heart.

"I like to regard the regiment as one large family; and when we consider the manifold dangers we dare, and the sufferings we endure together, all soldiers—officers and men alike—more than any *other* human community, have reasons for strong mutual attachment, and for feeling themselves indeed brothers. There are some of the brotherhood, however, over whom I

have, at times, to keep a tight hand—yourself, for instance—Dick Monkton, eh !”

“ True, major, the adjutant has come to me in his harness more than once for my sword ; but like a good fellow, you always sent it back again,” said Monkton, laughing.

“ Two remarks of the great General Monk should always be borne in mind by those who enter the service,” said the major, who seemed a well-read and intelligent officer ; “ and in youth I learned them by rote, and so have never forgotten them since. ‘ War, the profession of a soldier, is that of all others which, as it conferreth most honour upon a man who therein acquitteth himself well, so it draweth the greatest infamy upon one who demeaneth himself ill ; for *one* fault committed can *never* be repaired, and *one* hour causeth the loss of that reputation which hath been thirty years acquiring !’ Elsewhere he says, ‘ A soldier must be always ready to confront extremity of danger by extremity of valour, and overtop fury with a higher resolution. A soldier ought to fear nothing but *God and Dishonour*, and the officer who commands should feel for him as a parent does for his child !’ And now, to become more matter of fact, Monkton will tell you, Mr. Kennedy, all about a volunteer’s outfit ; the plainer, and the less there is of it, the better.”

“ Thanks, sir ; you are most thoughtful.”

“ You shall have to carry the arms and ac-

coutrements of a private, and a knapsack too, perhaps, under some circumstances, till luck turns up a commission for you. In all respects you will be treated as a gentleman; but doing the duty and yielding the implicit obedience of a private soldier. Do you understand me?"

"Perfectly, sir," replied Quentin, cheerfully.

"As for the knapsack," said Monkton, "its weight matters little if your heart be light, my friend."

Quentin smiled, as if he meant to confront fortune boldly, and the future too.

"We are now under orders to hold ourselves in readiness for foreign service, and a fortnight at farthest will see the regiment on board ship."

"For where?" asked Monkton.

"The continent of Europe."

Quentin was glad to hear this, as he knew that his funds would not last him long in Colchester, and if reduced to his volunteer pay of one shilling per diem, current coin of this realm, what would become of him then?

"You shall dine with me at the mess to-day as my guest, Mr. Kennedy," said the major, "and I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to the corps."

"And as my guest to-morrow, Quentin," said Monkton; "it is the last time we shall have our legs under its blessed mahogany, as it is to be broken up."

“What—the table?”

“No, the mess. Adieu till the drum beats, major.”

With Monkton, Quentin quitted Middleton’s quarters, extremely well-pleased with his interview, convinced that the lieutenant must have quizzed him about the major’s alleged severity, and now with satisfaction feeling himself in some manner a member of the corps and of the service, a part or portion of the 25th Foot.

His uniform, a plain scarlet coatee, faced, lapelled and buttoned like that of an officer, with two little swallow-tails nine inches long (then the regulation), though destitute of lace or epaulettes, with his other requisites, made a sad hole in his little exchequer; and, as he sat in his room that night, and counted over the fifteen that remained of the good quartermaster’s guineas, he felt something like a miser, and trembled for the future.

However, fifteen guineas were more than a subaltern’s pay for a month; he was only to be two weeks in barracks, and when once in camp, a small sum with rations would go a long way. He had a subaltern’s quarters assigned him, with an officer’s allowance of coal, candle, and barrack furniture—to wit: one hard wood table; two ditto chairs, of the Windsor pattern; an elegant coal-box, like a black iron trough, bearing the royal arms, and the huge enigmatical letters B.O.,

of which he could make nothing ; a pair of bellows, fire-irons, fender, and an iron candlestick, unique in form and colour.

These, with a pallet, formed his principal household gear, and for two at least of the remaining fourteen days, he would have the luxury of the festive mess, the perfection of a dinner table ; and thereafter, as he had been told, it would be broken up, its rich old plate and appurtenances consigned to iron-bound chests, and left behind in the barrack stores, and many who dined therewith might never meet around that jolly table more, for war and peril were before them, and the dust would be gathering on the forgotten mess chests, as the grass would be sprouting on the graves of the slain.

But little thought "The Borderers" of that—for the soldier, luckily for himself, is seldom of a very reflective turn—when the orderly drum and fife struck up "The Roast Beef" in front of the mess-house to announce that dinner was being served ; and there Quentin hurried, in company with the major and Monkton.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LOST LETTER.

“And when they talk of him, they shake their heads,
And whisper one another in the ear:
And he that speaks doth grip the hearer’s wrist,
Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.”

SHAKESPEARE.

As Quentin’s heart foreboded, the Master of Rohallion made the best use of his time with Flora Warrender; but without much avail. Late events had engendered in her breast a spirit of obstinacy and antagonism to his proposals, together with a desire for freedom of thought and liberty of action that proved very damaging to the cause of Cosmo, and in a fit of spleen he departed for a week or two, to visit Earl Hugh at Eglinton; for though by no means a marrying man, the Honourable Cosmo, as we have stated, conceived that, in the present state of his finances, he might get through the world,—“battle the watch,” as he phrased it,—pretty well, if he obtained the lands of Ardgour, the accumulated rents of which had been so long under trust, and would prove to him a very lucky accession, even though encumbered by Flora Warrender as a wife

or appendage. But on obtaining the command of a regiment of the line, with all the perquisites which then attended that appointment, he did not despair of ultimately getting rid of his *bêtes noires*, the children of Judah.

Thus his cold hauteur and nonchalance on one hand, and Lady Rohallion's steady resolve on the other to bend her to their will, together with sorrow for Quentin, whom she viewed as a victim, rendered Flora Warrender inexorable in her opposition, and, as Lord Rohallion said, their own mismanagement still continued to spoil the whole affair.

After an absence of some days Cosmo returned, and resolved to make a last effort with Flora, and thought to pique her by praises of the fair daughters of Earl Hugh, the Ladies Jane, Liliás, and Mary; but this artifice was so shallow that she merely laughed when she heard him, while poor simple Lady Rohallion feared that his heart had really been affected in another quarter.

"And so you really admire Lady Liliás Montgomery, our old friend's daughter?" she asked, as they sat in the bay window of the old yellow drawing-room.

"I always did so," replied the Master; "there is certainly an exquisite air of refinement about the girl, and she has a splendid seat on horseback."

"Her air is peculiar to all the Montgomeries; I remember me well of Earl Alexander, who was shot by the villain Mungo Campbell, and he had the air of a prince! But what do you think of Lady Liliás?"

“Think?” pondered Cosmo, dreamily, as he lay back in a satin fauteuil, and gazed on the far-stretching landscape that was steeped in sunny haze.

“Yes,” said his mother, anxiously.

“I think she has *not* the lands and rental of Ardgour, or their equivalent.”

“Cosmo, Cosmo,” said Lady Rohallion, with asperity, “I would have you to love Flora for herself, and herself only.”

“My dear mother, you old-fashioned folks in Carrick here are sadly behind the age; but I am booked for foreign service, and a wife would only prove a serious encumbrance after all.”

“Flora Warrender may change, or, what would be better, she may know her own mind before, or long before, you come back.”

“Perhaps,” sucered Cosmo; “love of change or change of love effects miracles in the female heart at times. Till *then*, we must content ourselves with drawing stakes, while I march off, not exactly with the honours of war, but with the band playing ‘the girl I left behind me’—very consoling it is no doubt, damme!”

“Do you really love that girl, Cosmo?” asked the old lady, looking up from a mysterious piece of needlework, with which she always believed herself to be busy, and mistaking Cosmo’s wounded self-esteem for a softer sentiment.

“Love her—yes, of course I do—that is, well enough, perhaps, to marry her, as marriage goes now-a-days; but” (and here he spoke with con-

centrated passion) "I *hate* the beggar's brat who has come between her and me!"

"Oh, Cosmo, don't say so, I implore you?" said Lady Rohallion, sighing bitterly; "after all the past, and with the doubt and mystery that overhang his future, I cannot bear to hear our lost Quentin spoken of thus."

"Poor chick—our lost darling!" said Cosmo; "but after seventeen years spent in the Household Brigade, to be out-manœuvred by a country Dolly such as Flora and a fellow like this Quentin of yours, is simply and decidedly absurd!" he added, with fierce grimace, while his father, who entered at that moment and overheard him, laughed heartily at his chagrin.

And now about this time John Legate, the tall spindle-shanked running footman, brought, among other letters from Maybole, one for the Master, endorsed "on His Majesty's Service," and another for Mr. John Girvan, so worn, frayed, and covered with postage-marks, that the good man was quite puzzled by its appearance, and thrice wiped his spectacles to decipher all the names and dates, until the dominie, who was seated by him, beside a friendly jug of toddy, suggested that candles should be procured, as the twilight was deepening into night, and the interior of the missive would resolve all their doubts and expectations.

It was opened, and proved to be from Quentin Kennedy—from Quentin, and dated at Poole's Military Coffeehouse, Edinburgh, more than a

month back ! He had addressed it simply to the castle of Rohallion, and it had gone by mail and stage over all Britain, until some chance hand, endorsing "try Ayrshire," sent it to its destination.

"Awa soldiering as a volunteer ! Wae is me, wae is me, but this is pitiful, exceedingly 'pitiful !' exclaimed the dominie, lifting up his hands and eyes ; "think of my wasted latinity !"

"Dominie, you are a gowk ! I like the lad's spirit, and respect it," said the quartermaster, whose eyes were so full that he could scarcely peruse the letter ; "but he's ower young, he's far ower young for such hard work. I mind well of what I had to go through in my time in Germany and America."

"Ower young, think ye ?"

"But he is hardy and mauly."

"According to Polybius, in his sixth book, the Romans could be soldiers, indeed, *had* to be soldiers, in their seventeenth year."

"Bother your Romans ! fill your jug—a steaming brimmer, and drain it to Quentin's health and success, and his safety too."

Then standing up erect, the quartermaster drained his jug at a draught, a process promptly followed by the dominie ; but after what they had imbibed already, it had the effect of rapidly multiplying the lights and other objects, and also tended to make their utterance thick and indistinct.

"I must away to my lord wi' this braw news," said Girvan ; "the puir lad ! he didna deceive me

after all, but wrote when he had time. And this Captain Warriston who befriended Quentin—(God bless him, say I!)—befriended him, dominie, because he was a soldier's son. Ah, dominie, dominie!—that is the *freemasonry of the service*, which makes all in it brothers—the true spirit of camaraderie! Another jorum to the health of this captain, whoever he be.”

“Bring forth the *amphora*—the greybeard o' whisky; but John, John,” said the dominie, shaking his old wig sententiously, “what saith Habakkuk?”

“How the deevil should I ken? and it is but little I care,” added the irreverent quartermaster.

“He saith, ‘Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth a bottle to him, and maketh him drunken,’” said the dominie, balancing himself by turns on each leg; and opening and shutting each eye alternately.

“Drunken, you whaislin precentor?”

“Yea, as thou, wicked quartermaster, hast made me, and when we are close on the hour ‘o' night's black arch the keystone,’ as puir Burns has it.”

“Never mind, dominie, the night is dark, and naebody will see you,” stammered Girvan; “stick your knees into the saddle—gie your powny the reins, and he'll take you straight home, as he usually does. But I must away to my lord with this news; and so good-night. Now, dominie, steady—eyes front if you can!—hat cocked for-

ward, cockade over the left eye—queue dressed straight with the seam of the coat—head up, little finger of each hand on the seam of the breeches—left foot thrown well out—pike advanced—forward, march! and hip, hip, hurrah for Quentin the volunteer!”

And arm in arm the two old toppers quitted the “snuggery,” the dominie to go home in care of his pony, and his entertainer to seek Lord and Lady Rohallion before they retired for the night.

That sure tidings had come of Quentin’s safety occasioned the noble and worthy couple sincere joy.

“So, so,” said the old Lord; “it is as I feared—the poor lad has joined the service.”

“As a volunteer,” added Girvan, with great empressement.

“As a poor, friendless volunteer, Winny; think of that, when one line from me to the Duke of York would give him an ensigney. We have cruelly mismanaged this boy’s prospects! I would that we knew the regiment he has joined; but, strange to say, he omits to mention it.”

In his joy and hurry, the quartermaster had never thought of the omission.

“This officer, Warriston, whom he mentions, must be a right good fellow, and his name may be a clue. We shall search the Army List tomorrow, John; till then, good-night.”

Tidings that a letter had come from Quentin at last, spread through the castle like wild-fire,

and it was the first news with which Flora's maid greeted her, when, an hour before the usual time, she tapped on her bedroom door, and, as the reader may imagine, the abigail was despatched at once to the quartermaster for a sight of the all-important letter, which she took care to read before it reached the hands of her impatient young mistress. Flora read it over twice or thrice, examining all the successive postmarks which indicated its devious wanderings. In the text there was no mention of her. She was disappointed at first, but after reflecting, she deemed that his silence was delicate and wise.

There were great and genuine rejoicings in the servants'-hall, where the gamekeepers, grooms, the gardeners, Mr. Spillsby the butler, John the running-footman, the housemaids, and old Andrews, made such a clatter and noise that they kindled the somewhat ready wrath of the Master, who rang his bell furiously to "still the infernal hubbub," as he lay a-bed reading his missive, which was not quite to his taste; and, as for the veteran Jack Andrews, he got most disreputably tipsy by imbibing a variety of drams to Quentin's health in Mr. Spillsby's pantry; and in short, the quartermaster's letter proved a nine days' wonder in Rohallion.

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