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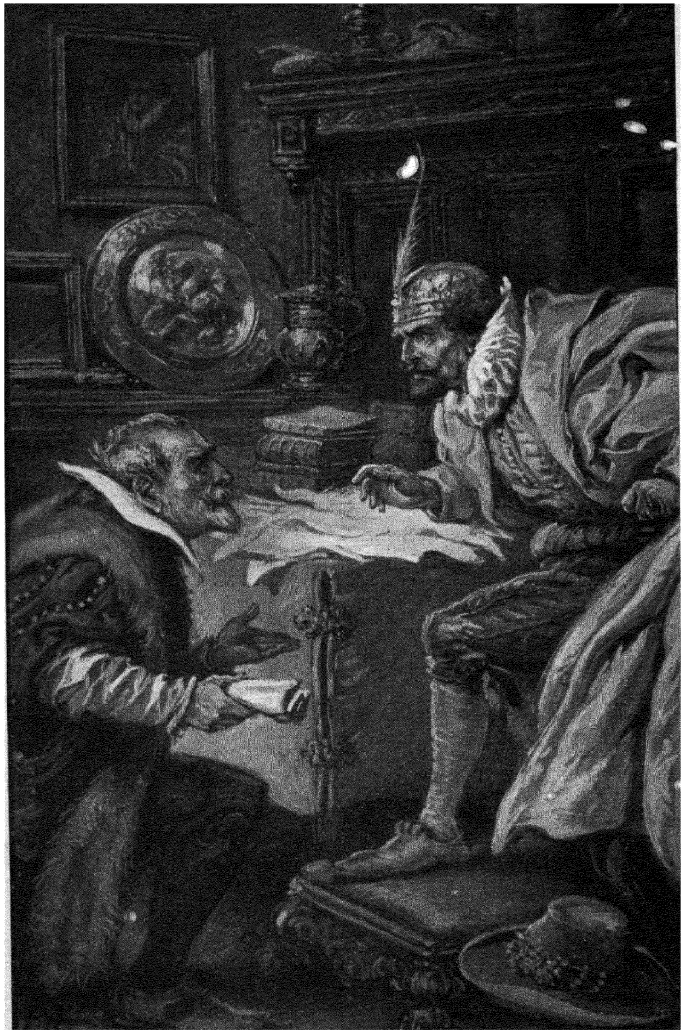
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THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL



HERIOT PRESENTS LORD GLENVARLOCH'S PETITION TO THE KING.—*See p.* 30.

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT

ADAPTED FOR USE IN SCHOOLS

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
PAUL HARDY



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THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

CHAPTER I

THE long-continued hostilities which had for centuries separated the south and the north divisions of the island of Britain, had been happily terminated by the succession of the pacific James I. to the English crown. But although the united crown of England and Scotland was worn by the same individual, it required a long lapse of time, and the succession of more than one generation, ere the inveterate national prejudices which had so long existed betwixt the sister kingdoms were removed, and the subjects of either side of the Tweed brought to regard those upon the opposite bank as friends and as brethren.

These prejudices were, of course, most inveterate during the reign of King James. The English subjects accused him of partiality to those of his ancient kingdom; while the Scots, with equal injustice, charged him with having forgotten the land of his nativity, and with neglecting those early friends to whose allegiance he had been so much indebted.

While these heart-burnings were at the highest, there flourished in the city of London an ingenious but whimsical and self-opinioned mechanic, much devoted to abstract studies, David Ramsay by name,

who, whether recommended by his great skill in his profession, as the courtiers alleged, or, as was murmured among his neighbours, by his birthplace in the good town of Dalkeith, near Edinburgh, held in James's household the post of maker of watches to his Majesty. He scorned not, however, to keep open shop within Temple Bar, a few yards to the eastward of Saint Dunstan's Church.

The shop of a London tradesman at that time, as it may be supposed, was something very different from those we now see in the same locality. The goods were exposed for sale in cases, only defended from the weather by a covering of canvas, and the whole resembled the stalls and booths now erected for the temporary accommodation of dealers at a country fair, rather than the established shop of a respectable citizen.

At the period when such was the universal custom of the most respectable, as well as the most inconsiderable, shopkeepers in London, David Ramsay, on the evening to which we solicit the attention of the reader, retiring to more private labours, left the administration of his outer shop, or booth, to two sharp-witted, active, able-bodied, and well-voiced apprentices, namely, Jenkin Vincent and Frank Tunstall.

Vincent had been educated at the excellent foundation of Christ's Church Hospital, and was bred, therefore, as well as born, a Londoner, with all the acuteness, address, and audacity which belong peculiarly to the youth of a metropolis. He was now about twenty years old, short in stature, but remarkably strong made, eminent for his feats upon holidays at foot-ball, and other gymnastic exercises; scarce

rivalled in the broadsword play, though hitherto only exercised in the form of single-stick.

Jenkin's companion was the younger apprentice, though perhaps, he might be the elder of the two in years. At any rate, he was of a much more staid and composed temper. Francis Tunstall was of that ancient and proud descent who claimed the style of the " unstained " ; because, amid the various chances of the long and bloody wars of the Roses, they had, with undeviating faith, followed the House of Lancaster, to which they had originally attached themselves. He was tall and handsome, with fair hair, and well-formed limbs, good features, well opened light blue eyes, a straight Grecian nose, and a countenance which expressed both good-humour and intelligence, but qualified by a gravity unsuitable to his years, and which almost amounted to dejection. He lived on the best terms with his companion, and readily stood by him whenever he was engaged in any of the frequent skirmishes which often disturbed the city of London about this period.

Such were the two youths, who, in a fine April day, having first rendered their dutiful service and attendance on the table of their master and his daughter, Mistress Margaret, at their dinner at one o'clock, and, having regaled themselves upon the fragments, in company with two female domestics, one a cook and maid-of-all-work, the other called Mistress Margaret's maid, now relieved their master in the duty of the outward shop ; and, agreeably to the established custom, were soliciting, by their entreaties and recommendations of their master's manufacture, the attention and encouragement of the passengers.

In this species of service it may be easily supposed

that Jenkin Vincent left his more reserved and bashful comrade far in the background. The latter could only articulate with difficulty, and as an act of duty which he was rather ashamed of discharging, the established words of form—"What d'ye lack?—What d'ye lack?—Clocks—watches—barnacles?—What d'ye lack?—Watches—clocks—barnacles?—What d'ye lack, sir?—What d'ye lack, madam?—Barnacles—watches—clocks?"

But this dull and dry iteration, however varied by diversity of verbal arrangement, sounded flat when mingled with the rich and recommendatory oratory of the bold-faced, deep-mouthed, and ready-witted Jenkin Vincent—"What d'ye lack, noble sir?—What d'ye lack, beauteous madam?"—he said, in a tone at once bold and soothing, which often was so applied as both to gratify the persons addressed, and to excite a smile from other hearers.—"God bless your reverence," to a beneficed clergyman; "the Greek and Hebrew have harmed your reverence's eyes—Buy a pair of David Ramsay's barnacles. The King—God bless his sacred Majesty!—never reads Hebrew or Greek without them."

"But here comes a guess customer. Look at that strange fellow—see how he gapes at every shop, as if he would swallow the wares. How call you that pageant, Frank?"

"A raw Scotsman," said Tunstall; "just come up, I suppose, to help the rest of his countrymen to gnaw old England's bones."

"Even so, Frank," answered Vincent; "just as the poet sings sweetly—

> In Scotland he was born and bred,
> And though a beggar, must be fed.

" He comes nearer still ; I will have at him."

"' And if you do," said his comrade, " you may get a roken head—he looks not as if he would carry oals."

" A rig for your threat," said Vincent, and instantly ddressed the stranger. " Buy a watch, most noble orthern Thane—buy a watch, to count the hours of lenty since the blessed moment you left Berwick ehind you. Buy barnacles, to see the English gold hich lies ready for your grip. Buy what you will, you hall have credit for three days ; for, were your pockets s bare as Father Fergus's, you are a Scot in London, nd you will be stocked in that time." The stranger ooked sternly at the waggish apprentice, and seemed o grasp his cudgel in rather a menacing fashion. Buy physic," said the undaunted Vincent, " if you ill buy neither time nor light—physic for a proud omach, sir ; there is a 'pothecary's shop on the other de of the way."

The bonny Scot had given full scope to the play of is small artillery of city wit by halting his stately ace, and viewing grimly, first the one assailant and hen the other, as if menacing either repartee or more iolent revenge. But phlegm or prudence got the etter of his indignation, and, tossing his head as one ho valued not the raillery to which he had been xposed, he walked down Fleet Street, pursued by the orse-laugh of his tormentors.

" The Scot will not fight till he see his own blood," aid Tunstall, whom his north of England extraction ad made familiar with all manner of proverbs against hose who lay yet farther north than himself.

" Faith, I know not," said Jenkin ; " he looks angerous, that fellow—he will hit some one over the

noddle before he goes far. Hark !—hark !—they are rising."

Accordingly, the well-known cry of " 'Prentices—'prentices—Clubs—clubs ! " now rang along Fleet Street ; and Jenkin, snatching up his weapon, which lay beneath the counter ready at the slightest notice, and calling to Tunstall to take his bat and follow, leaped over the hatch-door which protected the outer shop, and ran as fast as he could towards the affray, echoing the cry as he ran, and elbowing, or shoving aside, whoever stood in his way. His comrade, first calling to his master to give an eye to the shop, followed Jenkin's example, and ran after him as fast as he could, but with more attention to the safety and convenience of others ; while old David Ramsay, with hands and eyes uplifted, a green apron before him, and a glass which he had been polishing thrust into his bosom, came forth to look after the safety of his goods and chattels, knowing by old experience that, when the cry of " Clubs " once arose, he would have little aid on the part of his apprentices.

CHAPTER II

THE ancient gentleman bustled about his shop, in pettish displeasure at being summoned hither so hastily, to the interruption of his more abstract studies.

He was interrupted by the entrance of a grave citizen of a most respectable appearance, who, saluting him familiarly by the name " Davie, my old acquaintance," demanded what had put him so much out of sorts, and gave him at the same time a cordial grasp of his hand.

The stranger's dress was, though grave, rather richer than usual. His paned hose were of black velvet, lined with purple silk, which garniture appeared at the slashes. His doublet was of purple cloth, and his short cloak of black velvet to correspond with his hose; and both were adorned with a great number of small silver buttons richly wrought in filigree. A triple chain of gold hung round his neck; and, in place of a sword or dagger, he wore at his belt an ordinary knife for the purpose of the table, with a small silver case, which appeared to contain writing materials. He might have seemed some secretary or clerk engaged in the service of the public, only that his low, flat, and unadorned cap, and his well-blacked shining shoes, indicated that he belonged to the city. He was a well-made man, about the middle size, and seemed firm in health, though advanced in years. His looks expressed sagacity and good-humour; and the air of respectability which his dress announced was well supported by his clear eye, ruddy cheek, and grey hair. He used the Scottish idiom in his first address, but in such a manner that it could hardly be distinguished whether he was passing upon his friend a sort of jocose mockery, or whether it was his own native dialect, for his ordinary discourse had little provincialism.

In answer to the queries of his respectable friend, Ramsay groaned heavily, answering by echoing back the question, "What ails me, Master George? Why, everything ails me! I profess to you that a man may as well live in Fairyland as in the Ward of Farringdon Without. Here has been a cry of thieves or murder, and I have been interrupted in the deepest calculation ever mortal man plunged into, Master George."

"What, man!" replied Master George, "you must take patience—You are a man that deals in time, and can make it go fast and slow at pleasure; you, of all the world, have least reason to complain if a little of it be lost now and then.—But here come your boys, and bringing in a slain man betwixt them, I think—here has been serious mischief, I am afraid."

"The more mischief, the better sport," said the crabbed old watchmaker. "I am blithe, though, that it's neither of the twa loons themselves. What are ye bringing a corpse here for, ye fause villains?" he added, addressing the two apprentices, who, at the head of a considerable mob of their own class, some of whom bore evident marks of a recent fray, were carrying the body betwixt them.

"He is not dead yet, sir," answered Tunstall.

"Carry him into the apothecary's, then," replied his master. "D'ye think I can set a man's life in motion again, as if he were a clock or a time-piece?"

"For God's sake, old friend," said his acquaintance, "let us have him here at the nearest—he seems only in a swoon."

"A swoon?" said Ramsay; "and what business had he to swoon in the streets? Only, if it will oblige my friend Master George, I would take in all the dead men of Saint Dunstan's parish. Call Sam Porter to look after the shop."

So saying, the stunned man, being the identical Scotsman who had passed a short time before amidst the jeers of the apprentices, was carried into the back shop, and there placed in an arm-chair till the apothecary from over the way came to his assistance.

When they were rid of Master Raredrench the apothecary, the charitable efforts of Jenkin and

Francis to divest the patient of his long grey cloak were firmly resisted on his own part—" my life suner—my life suner," he muttered in indistinct murmurs. In these efforts to retain his upper garment, which was too tender to resist much handling, it gave way at length with a loud rent, which almost threw the patient into a second syncope, and he sat before them in his under garments, the looped and repaired wretchedness of which moved at once pity and laughter, and had certainly been the cause of his unwillingness to resign the mantle, which, like the virtue of charity, served to cover so many imperfections.

The man himself cast his eyes on his poverty-struck garb, and seemed so much ashamed of the disclosure, that, muttering between his teeth, that he would be too late for an appointment, he made an effort to rise and leave the shop, which was easily prevented by Jenkin Vincent and his comrade, who, at the nod of Master George, laid hold of and detained him in his chair. The patient next looked round him for a moment, and then said faintly, in his broad northern language—

" My name is Richie Moniplies ; and I come of the old and honourable house of Castle Collop, weel ken'd at the West Port of Edinburgh ; and my master is the young Lord Glenvarloch."

Master George testified surprise at the name.—" *You* one of the young Lord Glenvarloch's followers, and in such a condition ? Where does your master lodge ? "

" We pit up, an it like your honour," replied the Scot, " in a sma' house at the fit of ane of the wynds that gang down to the water-side, with a decent man, John Christie, a ship-chandler, as they ca't. His

father came from Dundee. I wotna the name of the wynd, but it's right anent the mickle kirk yonder ; and your honour will mind that we pass only by our family name of simple Master Nigel Olifaunt, as keeping ourselves retired for the present, though in Scotland we be called the Lord Nigel.

" It is wisely done of your master," said the citizen. " I will find out your lodgings, though your direction be none of the clearest." So saying, and slipping a piece of money at the same time into Richie Moniplies's hand, he bade him hasten home, and get into no more affrays.

CHAPTER III

THE next morning found Nigel Olifaunt, the young Lord of Glenvarloch, seated, sad and solitary, in his little apartment, in the mansion of John Christie, the ship-chandler ; which that honest tradesman, in gratitude perhaps to the profession from which he derived his chief support, appeared to have constructed as nearly as possible upon the plan of a ship's cabin.

It was situated near to Paul's Wharf, at the end of one of those intricate and narrow lanes which, until that part of the city was swept away by the Great Fire in 1666, constituted an extraordinary labyrinth of small, dark, damp, and unwholesome streets and alleys, in one corner or other of which the plague was then as surely found lurking, as in the obscure corners of Constantinople in our own time. But John Christie's house looked out upon

the river, and had the advantage, therefore, of free air, impregnated, however, with the odoriferous fumes of the articles in which the ship-chandler dealt, with the odour of pitch, and the natural scent of the ooze and sludge left by the reflux of the tide.

Upon the whole, except that his dwelling did not float with the flood-tide, and become stranded with the ebb, the young lord was nearly as comfortably accommodated as he was while on board the little trading brig from the long town of Kirkcaldy, in Fife, by which he had come a passenger to London. He received, however, every attention which could be paid him by his honest landlord, John Christie.

Such as we have described him, Nigel Olifaunt, or rather the young Lord of Glenvarloch, was, when our narrative takes him up, under great perplexity respecting the fate of his trusty and only follower, Richard Moniplies, who had been despatched by his young master, early the preceding morning, as far as the court at Westminster, but had not yet returned.

Olifaunt, at last tired of waiting, flung his cloak on one shoulder, and was about to belt on his rapier, when first the voice of Richie Moniplies on the stair, and then that faithful emissary's appearance in the chamber, put the matter beyond question.

"Now, in Heaven's name, what is the matter?" said Nigel Olifaunt.—"Where have you been, or what have you been about? You look as pale as death. There is blood on your hand, and your clothes are torn. What barns-breaking have you been at? You have been drunk, Richard, and fighting."

"Fighting I have been," said Richard, "in a small way; but for being drunk, that's a job ill to manage in this town, without money to come by liquor; and

as for barns-breaking, the deil a thing's broken but my head. But, however," he added, assisting his description with the thumb and the two forefingers of his right hand, thrust out after the fashion of a bird's claw, while the little finger and the ring-finger were closed upon the palm, "to the court I went, and my friend that promised me a sight of his Majesty's most gracious presence, was as gude as his word, and carried me into the back offices, where I got the best breakfast I have had since we came here. But I see," he added, stopping short, "that your honour waxes impatient."

"By no means, Richie," said the young nobleman, with an air of resignation, for he well knew his domestic would not mend his pace for goading; "you have suffered enough in the embassy. Only let me pray for the name of the friend who was to introduce you into the king's presence. You were very mysterious on the subject, when you undertook, through his means, to have the supplication put into his Majesty's own hands, since those sent heretofore, I have reason to think, went no farther than his secretary's."

"Weel, my lord," said Richie, "I did not tell you his name and quality at first, because I thought you would be affronted at the like of him having to do in your lordship's affairs. But mony a man climbs up in court by waur help. It was just Laurie Linklater, one of the yeomen of the kitchen, that was my father's apprentice lang syne. Laurie is as honest a lad as ever lifted a ladle, not but what I dare to say he can lick his fingers like other folk, and reason good. But, in fine, for I see your honour is waxing impatient, he brought me to the palace, where a' was astir for the king going out to hunt or hawk on Blackheath, I think they ca'd

it. And there was a horse stood with all the quarries about it, a bonnie grey as ever was foaled; and the saddle and the stirrups, and the curb and bit, o' burning gowd, or silver gilded at least; and down, sir, came the king, with all his nobles, dressed out in his hunting-suit of green, doubly faced, and laid down with gowd. I banged in right before him just as he mounted, and crammed the sifflication into his hand, and he opened it like in amaze; and just as he saw the first line, I was minded to make a reverence, and I had the ill luck to hit his jaud o' a beast on the nose with my hat, and scaur the creature, and she swarved aside, and the king, that sits na mickle better than a draft-pock on the saddle, was like to have gotten a clean coup, and that might have cost my craig a raxing—and he flung down the paper amang the beast's feet, and cried, 'Away with the fause loon that brought it! Gie him a copy of the proclamation, and let him go down to the north by the next light collier, before waur come o't.'"

Lord Nigel read the proclamation, and he coloured deep with shame and indignation as he read; for the purport was, to his injured feelings, like the pouring of ardent spirits upon a recent wound.

"Hark ye, Richard," said Nigel Olifaunt, "in this paper the Lords of the Council set forth, that 'in consideration of the resort of idle persons of low condition forth from his Majesty's kingdom of Scotland to his English court—filling the same with their suits and supplications, and dishonouring the royal presence with their base, poor, and beggarly persons, to the disgrace of their country in the estimation of the English; these are to prohibit the skippers, masters of vessels, and others, in every part of Scotland, from

bringing such miserable creatures up to court, under pain of fine and imprisonment.' "

Their conversation was here interrupted by a knocking at the door. Olifaunt looked out at the window, and saw an elderly, respectable person whom he knew not. Richie also peeped, and recognised, but recognising, chose not to acknowledge, his friend of the preceding evening.

CHAPTER IV

THE young Scottish nobleman received the citizen with distant politeness, expressing that sort of reserve by which those of the higher ranks are sometimes willing to make a plebeian sensible that he is an intruder. But Master George seemed neither displeased nor disconcerted. He assumed the chair, which, in deference to his respectable appearance, Lord Nigel offered to him, and said, after a moment's pause, during which he had looked attentively at the young man, with respect not unmingled with emotion —" You will forgive me for this rudeness, my lord; but my errand is almost done when I have said that my name is George Heriot, warmly befriended, and introduced into the employment of the royal family of Scotland, more than twenty years since, by your excellent father; and that, learning from a follower of yours that your lordship was in this city in prosecution of some business of importance, it is my duty—it is my pleasure—to wait on the son of my respected patron; and, as I am somewhat known both at the court and in the city, to offer him such aid in the

furthering of his affairs as my credit and experience may be able to afford."

"I have no doubt of either, Master Heriot," said Lord Nigel, "and I thank you heartily for the good-will with which you have placed them at a stranger's disposal; but my business at court is done and ended, and I intend to leave London, and, indeed, the island, for foreign travel and military service. I may add, that the suddenness of my departure occasions my having little time at my disposal."

"Your lordship has not yet had time," said the citizen, still attempting to sustain the conversation, "to visit the places of amusement,—the playhouses, and other places to which youth resort. But I see in your lordship's hand one of the new invented plots of the piece which they hand about of late—May I ask what play?"

"Oh, a well-known piece," said Lord Nigel, impatiently throwing down the proclamation, which he had hitherto been twisting to and fro in his hand,—"an excellent and well-approved piece—*A New Way to Pay Old Debts*."

Master Heriot stooped down, saying, "Ah, my old acquaintance, Philip Massinger"; but, having opened the paper and seen the purport, he looked at Lord Nigel Olifaunt with surprise, saying, "I trust your lordship does not think this prohibition can extend either to *your* person or your claims?"

"I should scarce have thought so myself," said the young nobleman; "but so it proves. His Majesty, to close this discourse at once, has been pleased to send me this proclamation in answer to a respectful supplication for the repayment of large loans advanced by my father for the service of the State, in the king's utmost emergencies."

"It is impossible," said the citizen—"it is absolutely impossible!—If the king could forget what was due to your father's memory, still he would not have wished—would not, I may say, have dared—to be so flagrantly unjust to the memory of such a man as your father, who, dead in the body, will long live in the memory of the Scottish people."

"I should have been of your opinion," answered Lord Nigel, in the same tone as before; "but there is no fighting with facts."

"But by whom was this supplication presented, my lord?" said Heriot; "for the distaste taken at the messenger will sometimes extend itself to the message."

"By my servant," said the Lord Nigel.

"By your servant, my lord?" said the citizen. "Can I speak with him?"

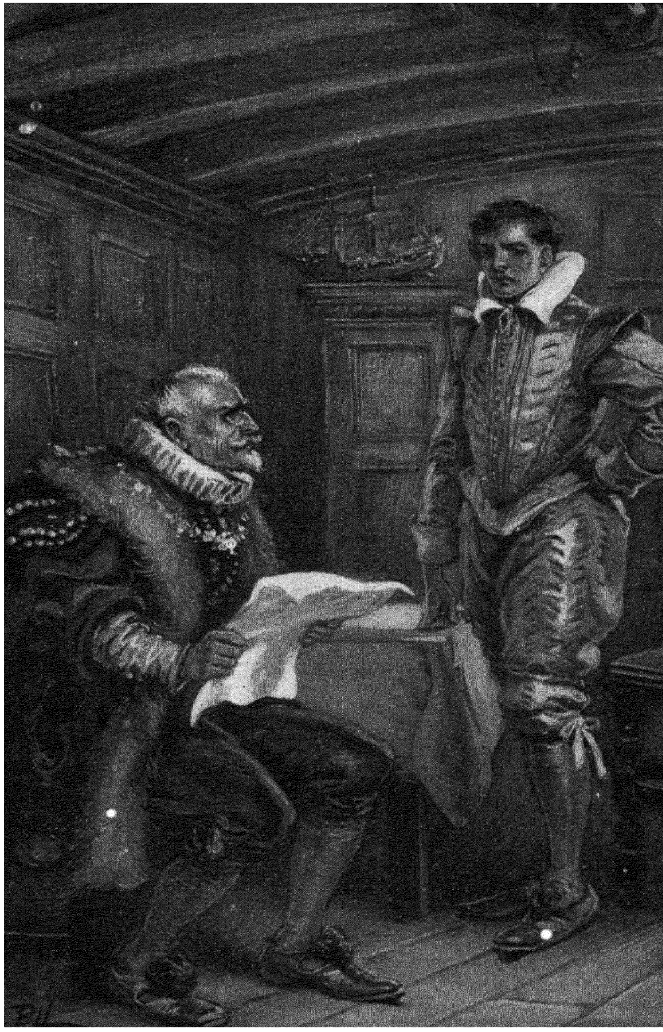
"I see little good it can do," answered the young lord; "but the interest you take in my misfortunes seems sincere, and therefore——" He stamped on the floor, and in a few seconds afterwards Moniplies appeared, wiping from his beard and moustaches the crumbs of bread and the froth of the ale-pot, which plainly showed how he had been employed.

"Will your lordship grant permission," said Heriot, "that I ask your groom a few questions?"

"Stay, fellow," for Moniplies, muttering somewhat about finishing his breakfast, was beginning to shamble towards the door, "answer me this question—When you gave your master's petition to his Majesty, gave you nothing with it?"

"Ou, what should I give wi' it, ye ken, Master George?"

"That is what I desire and insist to know," replied his interrogator.



"BY WHOM WAS THIS SUPPLICATION PRESENTED, MY LORD?"

"Weel, then, I am not free to say, that maybe I might not just slip into the king's hand a wee bit sifflication of mine ain, along with my lord's, just to save his Majesty trouble—and that he might consider them baith at ance. It's a lang story to tell—but the upshot is, that it's a scrape of an auld account due to my father's yestate by her Majesty, the king's maist gracious mother, when she lived in the Castle, and had sundry providings and furnishings forth of our booth, whilk nae doubt was an honour to my father to supply, and whilk, doubtless, it will be a credit to his Majesty to satisfy, as it will be grit convenience to me to receive the saam."

"What string of impertinence is this?" said his master.

"Every word as true as e'er John Knox spoke," said Richie; "here's the bit double of the sifflication."

"Go," said his master, "and get out of my sight."

Richie made his grumbling exit, with the tone much rather of one who has sustained an injury, than who has done wrong.

"Permit me to take this supplication," said the citizen, "I will have it suitably engrossed, and take my own time (and it shall be an early one) for placing it, with more prudence, I trust, than that used by your follower, in the king's hand—I will almost answer for his taking up the matter as you would have him—but should he fail to do so, even then I will not give up the good cause."

"Sir," said the young nobleman, "your speech is so friendly, and my own state so helpless, that I know not how to refuse your kind proffer, even while I blush to accept it at the hands of a stranger."

"My lord, your frankness leads me a step farther,"

said Master George. "I—I owed your father some moneys; and—nay, if your lordship looks at me so fixedly, I shall never tell my story—and, to speak plainly, for I never could carry a lie well through in my life—it is most fitting that, to solicit this matter properly, your lordship should go to court in a manner beseeming your quality. I am a goldsmith, and live by lending money as well as by selling plate. I am ambitious to put an hundred pounds to be at interest in your hands till your affairs are settled."

"Master Heriot," said the Lord Nigel, "your favour is generously offered, and shall be frankly accepted. I must presume that you see your way through this business, though I hardly do; for I think you would be grieved to add any fresh burden to me, by persuading me to incur debts which I am not likely to discharge. I will therefore take your money under the hope and trust that you will enable me to repay you punctually."

"I will convince you, my lord," said the goldsmith, "that I mean to deal with you as a debtor from whom I expect payment; and therefore you shall, with your own good pleasure, sign an acknowledgment for these moneys, and an obligation to content and repay me; and now I wish you good-morrow, my lord."

CHAPTER V

MASTER GEORGE HERIOT, after finishing his business with Nigel Olifaunt, was bound to Whitehall, in order to exhibit a piece of valuable workmanship to King James, which he deemed his Majesty might

be pleased to view or even to purchase. He himself was therefore mounted upon his caparisoned mule, that he might the better make his way through the narrow, dirty, and crowded streets; and while one of his attendants carried under his arm the piece of plate, wrapped up in red baize, the other two gave an eye to its safety.

As Master Heriot paced forth westward with this gallant attendance, he paused at the shop-door of his countryman and friend the ancient clockmaker, and, having caused Tunstall, who was in attendance, to adjust his watch by the real time, he desired to speak with his master; in consequence of which summons, the old time-meter came forth from his den, his face like a bronze bust, darkened with dust, and glistening here and there with copper filings, and his senses so bemused in the intensity of calculation, that he gazed on his friend the goldsmith for a minute before he seemed perfectly to comprehend who he was, and heard him express his invitation to David Ramsay, and pretty Mistress Margaret, his daughter, to dine with him next day at noon, to meet with a noble young countryman.

His invitation accepted, Master Heriot again turned his mule's head westward, and crossed Temple Bar, at that slow and decent amble which at once became his rank and civic importance, and put his pedestrian followers to no inconvenience to keep up with him.

At last Whitehall received our traveller, who passed under one of the beautiful gates designed by Holbein.

The goldsmith to the royal household, who, if fame spoke true, oftentimes acted as their banker,—for these professions were not as yet separated from each other,—was a person of too much importance to

receive the slightest interruption from sentinel or porter; and, leaving his mule and two of his followers in the outer court, he gently knocked at a postern-gate of the building, and was presently admitted, while the most trusty of his attendants followed him closely, with the piece of plate under his arm.

An usher signed to Heriot to advance, and the honest citizen was presently introduced into the cabinet of the sovereign.

The scene of confusion amid which he found the king seated, was no bad picture of the state and quality of James's own mind. There was much that was rich and costly in cabinet pictures and valuable ornaments; but they were arranged in a slovenly manner, covered with dust, and lost half their value, or at least their effect, from the manner in which they were presented to the eye. The table was loaded with huge folios, amongst which lay light books of jest and ribaldry; and amongst notes of unmercifully long orations, and essays on kingcraft, were mingled miserable roundels and ballads by the Royal Prentice, as he styled himself, in the art of poetry, and schemes for the general pacification of Europe, with a list of the names of the king's hounds, and remedies against canine madness.

The king's dress was of green velvet, quilted so full as to be dagger-proof—which gave him the appearance of clumsy and ungainly protuberance; while its being buttoned awry communicated to his figure an air of distortion. Over his green doublet he wore a sad-coloured nightgown, out of the pocket of which peeped his hunting-horn. His high-crowned grey hat lay on the floor, covered with dust, but encircled by a carcanet of large balas rubies; and he wore a blue velvet night-cap, in the front of which was placed the plume of a

heron, which had been struck down by a favourite hawk in some critical moment of the flight, in remembrance of which the king wore this highly-honoured feather.

Such was the monarch, who, saluting Heriot by the name of Jingling Geordie (for it was his well-known custom to give nicknames to all those with whom he was on terms of familiarity), inquired what new clatter-traps he had brought with him to cheat his lawful and native prince out of his siller.

"God forbid, my liege," said the citizen, "that I should have any such disloyal purpose. I did but bring a piece of plate to show to your most gracious Majesty, which, both for the subject and for the workmanship, I were loath to put into the hands of any subject until I knew your Majesty's pleasure anent it."

"Body o' me, man, let's see it, Heriot; though, by my saul, Steenie's service o' plate was sae dear a bargain, I had 'maist pawned my word as a royal king, to keep my ain gold and silver in future, and let you, Geordie, keep yours."

"Respecting the Duke of Buckingham's plate," said the goldsmith, "your Majesty was pleased to direct that no expense should be spared, and——"

"What signifies what I desired, man? when a wise man is with fules and bairns, he maun e'en play at the chucks. But you should have had mair sense and consideration than to gie Baby Charles and Steenie their ain gate; they wad hae floored the very rooms wi' silver, and I wonder they didna."

George Heriot bowed, and said no more. He knew his master too well to vindicate himself otherwise than by a distant allusion to his order; and James, with whom

economy was only a transient and momentary twinge of conscience, became immediately afterwards desirous to see the piece of plate which the goldsmith proposed to exhibit, and despatched an usher to bring it to his presence. In the meantime he demanded of the citizen whence he had procured it.

"From Italy, may it please your Majesty," replied Heriot, as he hastened to relieve the usher, and to place the embossed salver, for such it was, and of extraordinary dimensions, in a light favourable for his Majesty's viewing the sculpture.

"Saul of my body, man," said the king, "it is a curious piece, and, as I think, fit for a king's chalmer; and the subject, as you say, Master George, vera adequate and beseeming—being, as I see, the judgnent of Solomon—a prince in whose paths it weel becomes a' leeving monarchs to walk with emulation. A'thegither it is a brave piece;—and what is the price of it, man?"

The goldsmith replied, "A hundred and fifty pounds sterling, if it pleases your Majesty to make present payment."

"A hundred and fifty punds, man! and as mony witches and warlocks to raise them!" said the irritated monarch. "My saul, Jingling Geordie, ye are minded that your purse shall jingle to a bonnie tune!—How am I to tell you down a hundred and fifty punds for what will not weigh as many merks? and ye ken that my very household servitors, and the officers of my mouth, are sax months in arrear!"

The goldsmith stood his ground against all this objurgation, being what he was well accustomed to. and only answered that, if his Majesty liked the piece, and desired to possess it, the price could be easily

settled. It was true that the party required the money, but he, George Heriot, would advance it on his Majesty's account, if such were his pleasure and wait his royal convenience for payment, for that and other matters; the money, meanwhile, lying at the ordinary usage.

"By my honour," said James, "and that is speaking like an honest and reasonable tradesman. And now that we are secret, my good auld friend Geordie, I do truly opine, that, speaking of Solomon and ourselves, the hale wisdom in the country left Scotland when we took our travels to the Southland here. Ud's death, Geordie, there is not a loon here can deliver a supplication as it suld be done in the face of Majesty."

"I would I knew the most fitting and beseeming mode to do so," said Heriot, "were it but to instruct our poor countrymen in better fashions."

"By my halidome," said the king, "ye are a ceevil-eesed fellow, Geordie, and I carena if I fling awa as much time as may teach ye. And, first, see you, sir—ye shall approach the presence of Majesty thus—shadowing your eyes with your hand, to testify that you are in the presence of the Vicegerent of Heaven. Vera weel, George, that is done in a comely manner. Then, sir, ye sall kneel, and make as if you would kiss the hem of our garment, the latch of our shoe, or such like. Vera weel enacted—whilk we, as being willing to be debonair and pleasing towards our lieges, prevent thus—and motion to you to rise;—whilk, having a boon to ask, as yet you obey not, but, gliding your hand into your pouch, bring forth your supplication, and place it reverentially in our open palm." The goldsmith, who had complied with great accuracy, with all the prescribed points of the ceremonial, here com-

pleted it, to James's no small astonishment, by placing in his hand the petition of the Lord of Glenvarloch. "What means this, ye fause loon?" said he, reddening and sputtering; "hae I been teaching you the manual exercise, that ye suld present your piece at our ain royal body? Now, by this light, I had as lief that ye had bended a real pistolet against me, and yet this hae ye done in my very cabinet, where nought suld enter but at my ain pleasure."

"I trust your Majesty," said Heriot, as he continued to kneel, "will forgive my exercising the lesson you condescended to give me in the behalf of a friend?"

"Of a friend!" said the king; "so much the waur, so much the waur, I tell you. I kenna," continued the placable monarch; "the world goes daft, I think—thou art my old and faithful servant, that is the truth; and were't anything for thy own behoof, man, thou shouldst not ask twice."

"I think, if your Majesty," said the citizen, "will cast your eye on the paper in your hand, you will recollect his name."

"Ay!" said the king, "say ye sae, man?—Lord Glenvarloch—and what does he want with us?"

"The settlement," answered the citizen, "of a large debt due by your Majesty's treasury, for money advanced to your Majesty in great state emergency, about the time of the Raid of Ruthven."

"I mind the thing weel," said King James—"Od's death, man, I was just out of the clutches of the Master of Glamis and his complices, and there was never siller mair welcome to a born prince—the mair the shame and pity that crowned king should need sic a petty sum. But what need he dun us for it, man, like a baxter at the breaking? We aught him the

siller, and will pay him wi' our convenience, or make it otherwise up to him, whilk is enow between prince and subject."

"Alas! an it please your Majesty," said the goldsmith, shaking his head, "it is the poor young nobleman's extreme necessity, and not his will, that makes him importunate; for he must have money, and that briefly, to discharge a debt due to Peregrine Peterson, Conservator of the Privileges at Campvere, or his hale hereditary barony and estate of Glenvarloch will be evicted in virtue of an unredeemed wadset."

"How say ye, man—how say ye!" exclaimed the king impatiently; "the carle of a Conservator, the son of a Low Dutch skipper evict the auld estate and lordship of the house of Olifaunt?—God's bread, man, that maun not be!—we maun suspend the diligence by writ of favour, or otherwise. I will pay the lad if you get me the loan—I wonnot haggle on the terms; and, between you and me, Geordie, we will redeem the brave auld estate of Glenvarloch. But wherefore comes not the young lord to court, Heriot—is he comely—is he presentable in the presence?"

"No one can be more so," said George Heriot; "but——"

"Ay, I understand ye," said his Majesty—"I understand ye—puir lad—puir lad!—and his father a right true leal Scots heart, though stiff in some opinions. Hark ye, Heriot, let the lad have twa hundred pounds to fit him out."

And the king, who from long experience was inured to dealing with suspicious creditors, wrote an order upon George Heriot, his well-beloved goldsmith and jeweller, for the sum of two hundred pounds, to be

paid presently to Nigel Olifaunt, Lord of Glenvarloch, to be imputed as so much debts due to him by the crown; and authorising the retention of a carcanet of balas rubies, with a great diamond, as described in a catalogue of his Majesty's jewels, to remain in possession of the said George Heriot, advancer of the said sum, and so forth, until he was lawfully contented and paid thereof.

"And has he ony lair, this Lord Nigel of ours?" said the king.

George Heriot could not exactly answer this question; but believed "the young lord had studied abroad."

"He shall have our own advice," said the king, "how to carry on his studies to maist advantage; and it may be we will have him come to court, and study with Steenie and Baby Charles. And, now we think on't, away—away, George—for the bairns will be coming hame presently, and we would not as yet they ken'd of this matter we have been treating anent."

Thus ended the conference betwixt the gentle King Jamie and his benevolent jeweller and goldsmith.

CHAPTER VI

THE good company invited by the hospitable citizen assembled at his house in Lombard Street at the "hollow and hungry hour" of noon, to partake of that meal which divides the day; being about the time when modern persons of fashion, turning themselves upon their pillow, begin to think, not without a great many doubts and much hesitation, that they will by and by commence it. Thither came the

young Nigel, arrayed plainly, but in a dress, nevertheless, more suitable to his age and quality than he had formerly worn, accompanied by his servant Moniplies, whose outside also was considerably improved.

Master David Ramsay, that profound and ingenious mechanic, was safely conducted to Lombard Street, according to promise, well washed, brushed, and cleaned from the soot of the furnace and the forge. His daughter, who came with him, was about twenty years old, very pretty, very demure, yet with lively black eyes, that ever and anon contradicted the expression of sobriety, to which silence, reserve, a plain velvet hood, and a cambric ruff had condemned Mistress Marget, as the daughter of a quiet citizen.

There were also two citizens and merchants of London, men ample in cloak and many-linked golden chain, well to pass in the world, and experienced in their craft of merchandise, but who require no particular description. There was an elderly clergyman also, in his gown and cassock, a decent venerable man, partaking in his manners of the plainness of the citizens among whom he had his cure ; and a decent, elderly, somewhat severe-looking female, in a coif, who, by the name of Aunt Judith, did the honours of Master Heriot's house and table.

Nigel was beginning to tire of his company, for the old citizens were speaking with his host of commercial matters in language to him totally unintelligible when a trampling of horse was heard without, and one of the guests suddenly exclaimed—" By my faith, Master George, you had better go look to shop ; for here comes Knighton, the Duke of Buckingham's groom, and two fellows after him, as if he were my lord Duke himself."

Heriot left the room to ascertain the cause of this visit, and met his cash-keeper coming up the stairs, with some concern in his face. "Why, how now, Roberts," said the goldsmith, "what means all this, man?"

"It is Knighton, the duke's man, Master Heriot. He brought back the salver you carried to Whitehall, and bade me tell you the king would have none of your trumpery."

The name of the Duke of Buckingham struck some anxiety into the party, who had overheard the cash-keeper's words. He was more feared than beloved, and, if not absolutely of a tyrannical disposition, was accounted haughty, violent, and vindictive. It pressed on Nigel's heart that he himself, though he could not conceive how nor why, might be the original cause of some resentment of the duke against his benefactor.

The two merchants now took brief leave, as if under consciousness that something was wrong. Mistress Margaret, her bodyguard of 'prentices being in readiness, plucked her father by the sleeve, and, rescuing him from a brown study, wished good night to her friend Mistress Judith, and received her god-father's blessing, who, at the same time, put upon her slender finger a ring of much taste and some value. Thus honourably dismissed, and accompanied by her escort, she set forth on her return to Fleet Street.

CHAPTER VII

WHEN the rest of the company had taken their departure from Master Heriot's house, the young Lord

of Glenvarloch also offered to take leave; but his host detained him for a few minutes, until all were gone excepting the clergyman.

"My lord," then said the worthy citizen, "we have had our permitted hour of honest and hospitable pastime, and now I would fain delay you for another and graver purpose, as it is our custom, when we have the benefit of good Master Windsor's company, that he reads the prayers of the Church for the evening before we separate. Your excellent father, my lord, would not have departed before family worship—I hope the same from your lordship."

"With pleasure, sir," answered Nigel; "and you add in the invitation an additional obligation to those with which you had loaded me. When young men forget what is their duty, they owe deep thanks to the friend who will remind them of it."

While they talked together in this manner the serving-men had removed the folding tables, brought forward a portable reading-desk, and placed chairs and hassocks for their master, their mistress, and the noble stranger. Another low chair, or rather a sort of stool, was placed close beside that of Master Heriot; and, though the circumstance was trivial, Nigel was induced to notice it, because, when about to occupy that seat, he was prevented by a sign from the old gentleman, and motioned to another of somewhat more elevation. The clergyman took his station behind the reading-desk. The domestics, a numerous family both of clerks and servants, including Moniplies, attended with great gravity, and were accommodated with benches.

The household were all seated, and, externally at least, composed to devout attention, when a low knock

was heard at the door of the apartment; Mistress Judith looked anxiously at her brother, as if desiring to know his pleasure. He nodded his head gravely, and looked to the door. Mistress Judith immediately crossed the chamber, opened the door, and led into the apartment a beautiful creature, whose sudden and singular appearance might have made her almost pass for an apparition. She was deadly pale—there was not the least shade of vital red to enliven features which were exquisitely formed, and might, but for that circumstance, have been termed transcendently beautiful. Her dress was of pure white, of the simplest fashion, and hiding all her person excepting the throat, face, and hands. In contradiction of the extreme plainness of all the rest of her attire, she wore a necklace which a duchess might have envied, so large and lustrous were the brilliants of which it was composed; and around her waist a zone of rubies of scarce inferior value.

So soon as this singular female had taken up the prayer-book which was laid upon her cushion, she seemed immersed in devotional duty; and although Nigel's attention to the service was so much disturbed by this extraordinary apparition, that he looked towards her repeatedly in the course of the service, he could never observe that her eyes or her thoughts strayed so much as a single moment from the task in which she was engaged. When the service was concluded he saw only the skirt of her white mantle as she left the apartment.

The domestics then rose and dispersed themselves—wine and fruit and spices were offered to Lord Nigel and to the clergyman, and the latter took his leave. The young lord would fain have accompanied him,

in hope to get some explanation of the apparition which he had beheld, but he was stopped by his host, who requested to speak with him in his compting-room.

"I hope, my lord," said the citizen, "that your preparations for attending court are in such forwardness that you can go thither the day after to-morrow. It is, perhaps, the last day, for some time, that his Majesty will hold open court for all who have pretensions by birth, rank, or office to attend upon him. On the subsequent day he goes to Theobald's, where he is so much occupied with hunting and other pleasures, that he cares not to be intruded on."

"I shall be in all outward readiness to pay my duty," said the young nobleman, "yet I have little heart to do it. The friends from whom I ought to have found encouragement and protection have proved cold and false—I certainly will not trouble *them* for their countenance on this occasion—and yet I must confess my childish unwillingness to enter quite alone upon so new a scene."

"It is bold of a mechanic like me to make such an offer to a nobleman," said Heriot; "but I must attend at court to-morrow. I can accompany you as far as the presence-chamber, from my privilege as being of the household. I can facilitate your entrance, should you find difficulty, and I can point out the proper manner and time of approaching the king. But I do not know," he added, smiling, "whether these little advantages will not be over-balanced by the incongruity of a nobleman receiving them from the hands of an old smith."

"From the hands rather of the only friend I have found in London," said Nigel, offering his hand.

"Nay, if you think of the matter in that way," replied the honest citizen, "there is no more to be said—I will come for you to-morrow, with a barge proper to the occasion."

CHAPTER VIII

WE must now introduce to the reader's acquaintance another character, busy and important far beyond her ostensible situation in society—in a word, Dame Ursula Suddlechop, wife of Benjamin Suddlechop, the most renowned barber in all Fleet Street.

It was on the evening of the day on which Lord Nigel Olifaunt dined with the wealthy goldsmith, that we must introduce Ursula Suddlechop upon the stage. She had that morning made a long tour to Westminster, was fatigued, and had assumed a certain large elbow-chair, rendered smooth by frequent use, placed on one side of her chimney, in which there was lit a small but bright fire. Here she observed, betwixt sleeping and waking, the simmering of a pot of well-spiced ale, on the brown surface of which bobbed a small crab-apple, sufficiently roasted, while a little mulatto girl watched, still more attentively, the process of dressing a veal sweetbread in a silver stewpan, which occupied the other side of the chimney. With these viands, doubtless, Dame Ursula proposed concluding the well-spent day, of which she reckoned the labour over, and the rest at her own command. She was deceived, however; for just as the ale was fitted for drinking, and the little dingy maiden intimated that the sweetbread was ready to be eaten, the thin

cracked voice of Benjamin was heard from the bottom of the stairs.

"Why, Dame Ursley—why, wife, I say—why, dame—why, love, you are wanted more than a strop for a blunt razor—why, dame——"

"I would some one would draw the razor across thy windpipe, thou bawling ass!" said the dame to herself, in the first moment of irritation against her clamorous helpmate; and then called aloud—"Why, what is the matter, Master Suddlechop? I am just going to slip into bed; I have been daggled to and fro the whole day."

"Nay, sweetheart, it is not me," said the patient Benjamin, "but the Scots laundry-maid from neighbour Ramsay's, who must speak with you."

At the word sweetheart, Dame Ursley cast a wistful look at the mess which was stewed to a second in the stewpan, and then replied with a sigh—"Bid Scots Jenny come up, Master Suddlechop. I shall be very happy to hear what she has to say."

The Scots laundress entered accordingly, made her reverence with considerable respect, and said, her young mistress had returned home unwell, and wished to see her neighbour, Dame Ursley, directly.

"And why will it not do to-morrow, Jenny, my good woman?" said Dame Ursley; "for I have been as far as Whitehall to-day already, and I am well-nigh worn off my feet, my good woman. But there, I'll carry over the little bit of supper that I was going to eat. For dinner I have tasted none, and it may be my young pretty Mistress Marget will eat a morsel with me; for it is mere emptiness, Mistress Jenny, that often puts these fancies of illness into young folk's heads." So saying, she put the silver

posset-cup with the ale into Jenny's hands, and, assuming her mantle with the alacrity of one determined to sacrifice inclination to duty, she hid the stewpan under its folds, and commanded Wilsa, the little mulatto girl, to light them across the street. She moved forward with hasty strides until she arrived at the watchmaker's habitation. The attendant admitted them by means of a pass-key. At length they attained, by a very narrow staircase, pretty Mistress Margaret's apartment, where she, the cynosure of the eyes of every bold young bachelor in Fleet Street, sat in a posture which hovered between the discontented and the disconsolate. For her pretty back and shoulders were rounded into a curve, her round and dimpled chin reposed in the hollow of her little palm, while the fingers were folded over her mouth; her elbow rested on a table, and her eyes seemed fixed upon the dying charcoal, which was expiring in a small grate. She scarce turned her head when Dame Ursula entered, and when the presence of that estimable matron was more precisely announced in words by the old Scotswoman, Mistress Margaret, without changing her posture, muttered some sort of answer that was wholly unintelligible.

"Go your ways down to the kitchen with Wilsa, good Mistress Jenny," said Dame Ursula, who was used to all sorts of freaks on the part of her patients or clients, whichever they might be termed; "put the stewpan and the porringer by the fireside, and go down below—I must speak to my pretty love, Mistress Margaret, by myself—and there is not a bachelor betwixt this and Bow but will envy me the privilege."

The attendants retired as directed, and Dame Ursula, having availed herself of the embers of charcoal

to place her stewpan to the best advantage, drew herself as close as she could to her patient, and began in a low, soothing, and confidential tone of voice to inquire what ailed her pretty flower of neighbours.

"Nothing, dame," said Margaret, somewhat pettishly, and changing her posture so as rather to turn her back upon the kind inquirer.

"Nothing, lady-bird!" answered Dame Suddlechop; "and do you use to send for your friends out of bed at this hour for nothing?"

"It was not I who sent for you, dame," replied the malcontent maiden.

"And who was it, then?" said Ursula; "for if I had not been sent for, I had not been here at this time of night, I promise you!"

"Hear me," said Margaret, "and mind what I say. —This day I dined abroad——"

"I can tell you where," answered her counsellor,— "with your god-father the rich goldsmith—ay, you see I know something."

"Well," continued Margaret, "there dined with us a nobleman——"

"A nobleman! the maiden's mad!" said Dame Ursula.

"There dined with us, I say," continued Margaret, without regarding the interruption, "a nobleman, a Scottish nobleman, Lord Glenvarloch, whom they call Lord Nigel Olifaunt."

"Marry, Heaven forfend!" exclaimed Dame Suddlechop; "this is the very devil and something worse!"

"How mean you?" said the damsel, surprised at the vivacity of her exclamation.

"Why, know ye not," said the dame, "what powerful enemies he has at court!"

"He *is* unfortunate, then?" said Margaret; "I knew it—I divined it—there was sorrow in his voice when he said even what was gay—there was a touch of misfortune in his melancholy smile—he had not thus clung to my thoughts had I seen him in all the midday glare of prosperity."

"Of that I can say no great matter, as yet," answered Dame Ursula; "only I know the most powerful among his own countrymen are against him, and also the most powerful at the court here. But I will learn more of it; for it will be a dim print that I will not read for your sake, pretty Mistress Margaret. So good-night and sweet dreams to you; and you shall hear tidings of me within four-and-twenty hours. And, once more, I commend you to your pillow, my pearl of pearls and Marguerite of Marguerites."

So saying, she kissed the reluctant cheek of her young friend, or patroness, and took her departure with the light and stealthy pace of one accustomed to accommodate her footsteps to the purposes of despatch and secrecy.

CHAPTER IX

On the morning of the day on which George Heriot had prepared to escort the young Lord of Glenvarloch to the court at Whitehall, it may be reasonably supposed that the young man, whose fortunes were likely to depend on this cast, felt himself more than usually anxious. He rose early and made his toilet with uncommon care.

At the appointed hour, the barge of Master George

Heriot arrived, handsomely manned and appointed, having a tilt, with his own cipher and the arms of his company painted thereupon.

On they glided, by the assistance of the oars of four stout watermen, along the Thames, which then served as the principal high road betwixt London and Westminster; for few ventured on horseback through the narrow and crowded streets of the city, and coaches were then a luxury reserved only for the higher nobility, and to which no citizen, whatever was his wealth, presumed to aspire. They landed at Whitehall Stairs, and entered the palace after announcing their names, —the guards paying to Lord Glenvarloch the respect and honours due to his rank.

The young man's heart beat high and thick within him as he came into the royal apartments. Heriot had taken care to give the necessary password to the ushers, so they passed on without interruption into a large and splendid withdrawing-room, communicating with the presence chamber, into which anteroom were admitted those only who had right to attend the court, as men entitled to pay their respects to their sovereign.

"The door of the presence is about to open," said the goldsmith, in a whisper, to his young friend; "my condition permits me to go no farther with you. Fail not to present yourself boldly, according to your birth, and offer your supplication; which the king will not refuse to accept, and, as I hope, to consider favourably."

As he spoke, the door of the presence-chamber opened accordingly, and, as is usual on such occasions, the courtiers began to advance towards it, and to enter in a slow, but continuous and uninterrupted stream.

As Nigel presented himself in his turn at the entrance, and mentioned his name and title, Maxwell, the usher, seemed to hesitate. "You are not known to any one," he said. "It is my duty to suffer no one to pass to the presence, my lord, whose face is unknown to me, unless upon the word of a responsible person."

"I came with Master George Heriot," said Nigel, in some embarrassment at this unexpected interruption.

"What is the matter?" said an old Scottish nobleman, who had been speaking with George Heriot, after he had separated from Nigel, and who now came forward, observing the altercation betwixt the latter and Maxwell. "What!—the son of my gallant old opponent, Ochtred Olifaunt?—I will introduce him to the presence myself."

"Too loud, my Lord of Huntinglen," whispered a gentleman of the chamber. "The King! the King!"

The old earl (for such he proved) took the hint, and was silent; and James, advancing from a side-door, received in succession the compliments of strangers, while a little group of favourite courtiers, or officers of the household, stood around him, to whom he addressed himself from time to time. Some more pains had been bestowed on his toilet than upon the occasion when we first presented the monarch to our readers; but there was a natural awkwardness about his figure which prevented his clothes from sitting handsomely, and the prudence or timidity of his disposition had made him adopt the custom, already noticed, of wearing a dress so thickly quilted as might withstand the stroke of a dagger, which added an ungainly stiffness to his whole appearance, contrasting oddly with the frivolous, ungraceful, and fidgeting motions with which he accompanied his conversation. And yet, though the

king's deportment was very undignified, he had a manner so kind, familiar, and good-humoured, was so little apt to veil over or conceal his own foibles, and had so much indulgence and sympathy for those of others, that his address, joined to his learning, and a certain proportion of shrewd mother-wit, failed not to make a favourable impression on those who approached his person.

When the Earl of Huntinglen had presented Nigel to his sovereign, a ceremony which the good peer took upon himself, the king received the young lord very graciously, and observed—"Weel, my young springald, and what make you so far from the north?"

"To pay my homage to your Majesty," said the young nobleman, kneeling on one knee, "and to lay before you," he added, "this my humble and dutiful supplication."

The presenting of a pistol would certainly have startled King James more, but could (setting apart the fright) hardly have been more unpleasing to his indolent disposition.

"And is it even so, man?" said he; "and can no single man, were it but for the rarity of the case, ever come up frae Scotland, excepting on set purpose, to see what he can make out of his loving sovereign? To our Secretary with that gear, my lord—to our Secretary with that gear."

"I have already offered my humble supplication to your Majesty's Secretary of State," said Lord Glenvarloch—"but it seems——"

"That he would not receive it, I warrant?" said the king, interrupting him; "by my saul, our Secretary kens that point of king-craft, called refusing, better than we do, and will look at nothing but what he likes

himsell—I think I wad make a better Secretary to him than he to me.—Weel, my lord, you are welcome to London; and, as ye seem an acute and learned youth, I advise ye to turn your neb northward as soon as ye like, and settle yoursell for a while at Saint Andrews, and we will be right glad to hear that you prosper in your studies."

While the king spoke thus, he held the petition of the young lord carelessly, like one who only delayed till the supplicant's back was turned, to throw it away, or at least lay it aside to be no more looked at. The petitioner, who read this in his cold and indifferent looks, and in the manner in which he twisted and crumpled together the paper, arose with a bitter sense of anger and disappointment, made a profound obeisance, and was about to retire hastily. But Lord Huntinglen, who stood by him, checked his intention by an almost imperceptible touch upon the skirt of his cloak, and Nigel, taking the hint, retreated only a few steps from the royal presence, and then made a pause. In the meantime, Lord Huntinglen kneeled before James, in his turn, and said—"May it please your Majesty to remember, that upon one certain occasion you did promise to grant me a boon every year of your sacred life?"

"I mind it weel, man," answered James, "I mind it weel, and good reason why—it was when you unclasped the fause traitor Ruthven's fangs from about our royal throat, and drove your dirk into him like a true subject."

"Even so, gracious sovereign," said the old earl, "and may I yet further crave to know if I have ever exceeded the bounds of your royal benevolence?"

"By my word, man, no!" said the king; "I cannot

remember you have asked much for yourself, if it be not a dog, or a hawk, or a buck out of our park at Theobald's, or such like. But to what serves this preface ? "

" To the boon to which I am now to ask of your Grace," said Lord Huntinglen ; " which is, that your Majesty would be pleased, on the instant, to look at the placet of Lord Glenvarloch, and do upon it what your own just and royal nature shall think meet and just, without reference to your Secretary or any other of your Council."

" By my saul, my lord, this is strange," said the king ; " ye are pleading for the son of your enemy ! "

" Of one who *was* my enemy till your Majesty made him my friend," answered Lord Huntinglen.

" Weel spoken, my lord ! " said the king ; " and with a true Christian spirit. And, respecting the supplication of this young man, I partly guess where the matter lies ; and in plain troth I had promised to George Heriot to be good to the lad.—But then, here the shoe pinches. Steenie and Baby Charles cannot abide him—neither can your own son, my lord ; and so, methinks, he had better go down to Scotland before he comes to ill luck by them."

" My son, an it please your Majesty, so far as he is concerned, shall not direct my doings," said the earl, " nor any wild-headed young man of them all."

" Why, neither shall they mine," replied the monarch ; " by my father's saul, none of them all shall play Rex with me—I will do what I will, and what I ought, like a free king."

" Your Majesty will then grant me my boon ? " said the Lord Huntinglen.

" Ay, marry will I—marry will I," said the king ;

"but follow me this way, man, where we may be more private."

He led Lord Huntinglen with rather a hurried step through the courtiers, all of whom gazed earnestly on this unwonted scene, as is the fashion of all courts on similar occasions. The king passed into a little cabinet.

The king hastily looked over the petition or memorial, every now and then glancing his eye towards the door, and then sinking it hastily on the paper, ashamed that Lord Huntinglen, whom he respected, should suspect him of timidity.

"To grant the truth," he said, after he had finished his hasty perusal, "this is a hard case; and harder than it was represented to me, though I had some inkling of it before. And so the lad only wants payment of the siller due from us, in order to reclaim his paternal estate?" So saying, he hastily wrote an order on the Scottish Exchequer for the sum in question, and then added, "How they are to pay it, I see not; but I warrant he will find money on the order among the goldsmiths, who can find it for every one but me. And now you see, my Lord of Huntinglen, that I am neither an untrue man, to deny you the boon whilk I became bound for, nor a mere nose-of-wax, to be twisted this way and that, by favourites and counsellors at their pleasure. I think you will grant now that I am none of those?"

"You are my own native and noble prince," said Huntinglen, as he knelt to kiss the royal hand—"just and generous, whenever you listen to the workings of your own heart."

Lord Huntinglen hastened from the cabinet, having first carefully pocketed the important sign-manual. No sooner had he entered the presence-room,

than he hastily sought Lord Glenvarloch, who had withdrawn into the embrasure of one of the windows, from the general gaze of the surprised and curious courtiers, and, taking him by the arm, without speaking, led him out of the presence-chamber into the first anteroom.

They found the worthy goldsmith, who approached them with looks of curiosity, which were checked by the old lord, who said hastily, "All is well. Is your barge in waiting?" Heriot answered in the affirmative. "Then," said Lord Huntinglen, "you shall give me a cast in it, as the watermen say, and I, in requital, will give you both your dinner; for we must have some conversation together."

They both followed the earl without speaking, and were in the second anteroom when the important annunciation of the ushers, and the hasty murmur with which all made ample way as the company repeated to each other,—"The Duke—the Duke!" made them aware of the approach of the omnipotent favourite.

He entered, that unhappy minion of court favour, sumptuously dressed in the picturesque attire which will live for ever on the canvas of Vandyke, and which marks so well the proud age, when aristocracy, though undermined and nodding to its fall, still, by external show and profuse expense, endeavoured to assert its paramount superiority over the inferior order. The handsome and commanding countenance, stately form, and graceful action and manners of the Duke of Buckingham, made him become that picturesque dress beyond any man of his time. At present, however, his countenance seemed discomposed, his dress a little more disordered than became the place, his step hasty, and his voice imperative.

"My lord Duke," said Lord Huntinglen, "I desire you to know Nigel Olifaunt, Lord Glenvarloch, representative of one of the most ancient and powerful baronial houses in Scotland.—Lord Glenvarloch, I present you to his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, representative of Sir George Villiers, knight, of Brookesby in the county of Leicester."

The duke coloured still more high as he bowed to Lord Glenvarloch scornfully, a courtesy which the other returned haughtily, and with restrained indignation. "We know each other, then," said the duke, after a moment's pause, and as if he had seen something in the young nobleman which merited more serious notice than the bitter raillery with which he commenced—"we know each other—and you know me, my lord, for your enemy."

"I thank you for your plainness, my lord Duke," replied Nigel; "an open enemy is better than a hollow friend."

Buckingham only replied by throwing on his bonnet, and shaking its lofty plume with a careless and scornful toss of the head. They parted thus; the duke walking onwards through the apartments, and the others leaving the palace and repairing to Whitehall Stairs, where they embarked on board the barge of the citizen.

CHAPTER X

WHEN they were fairly embarked on the Thames, the earl took from his pocket the supplication, and, pointing out to George Heriot the royal warrant endorsed thereon, asked him if it were in due and

regular form. The worthy citizen hastily read it over, thrust forth his hand as if to congratulate the Lord Glenvarloch, then checked himself, pulled out his barnacles (a present from old David Ramsay), and again perused the warrant with the most business-like and critical attention. "It is strictly correct and formal," he said, looking to the Earl of Huntinglen; "and I sincerely rejoice at it."

"I doubt nothing of its formality," said the earl; "the king understands business well, and, if he does not practise it often, it is only because indolence obscures parts which are naturally well qualified for the discharge of affairs. But what is next to be done for our young friend, Master Heriot? You know how I am circumstanced. Scottish lords living at the English court have seldom command of money; yet, unless a sum can be presently raised on this warrant, matters standing as you hastily hinted to me, the mortgage, wadset, or whatever it is called, will be foreclosed."

"My noble—my worthy friends, who have taken up my cause so undeservedly, so unexpectedly," said Nigel, "do not let me be a burden on your kindness. You have already done too much where nothing was merited."

But he was silenced by Lord Huntinglen, who declared he would not hear a word on that topic, and proposed, instead, as they reached the private stairs leading to the gardens of the handsome hotel which he inhabited, that they should take a turn in the pleached alley or sit upon the stone bench which overlooked the Thames until his son's arrival should give the signal for dinner.

"I desire to introduce Dalgarno and Lord Glen-

varloch to each other," he said, "as two who will be near neighbours, and I trust will be more kind ones than their fathers were formerly."

"Lord Dalgarno is in high grace with his Highness and the Duke of Buckingham?" observed the goldsmith.

"He is so," answered the earl. "I pray it may be for the advantage of them all. The prince is just and equitable in his sentiments, though cold and stately in his manners, and very obstinate in his most trifling purposes; and the duke, noble and gallant, and generous and open, is fiery, ambitious, and impetuous. Dalgarno has none of these faults, and such as he may have of his own may perchance be corrected by the society in which he moves—See, here he comes."

Lord Dalgarno accordingly advanced from the farther end of the alley to the bench on which his father and his guests were seated, so that Nigel had full leisure to peruse his countenance and figure. He was dressed point-device, and almost to extremity, in the splendid fashion of the time, which suited well with his age, probably about five-and-twenty, and with a noble form and fine countenance, in which last could easily be traced the manly features of his father, but softened by a more habitual air of assiduous courtesy than the stubborn old earl had ever condescended to assume towards the world in general.

The old earl presented his young acquaintance Lord Glenvarloch to his son, as one whom he would have him love and honour. Lord Dalgarno received his new acquaintance with the open frankness and courtesy which makes conquest at once, and it need hardly be told that his friendly address met equally ready and cheerful acceptation from Nigel Olifaunt.

The two young men walked together on the terrace which overhung the river, and talked on the topics which Lord Dalgarno, the elder, and the more experienced, thought most likely to interest his new friend.

These naturally regarded the pleasures attending a court life; and Lord Dalgarno expressed much surprise at understanding that Nigel proposed an instant return to Scotland.

"There is no great gaiety in the prospect before me, I confess," said Lord Glenvarloch, "even if your father and good Master Heriot should succeed in putting my affairs on some footing of plausible hope. And yet I trust to do something for my vassals, as my ancestors before me, and to teach my children, as I have myself been taught, to make some personal sacrifices, if they be necessary, in order to maintain with dignity the situation in which they are placed by Providence."

"And where is he whose affairs are settled, or whose income is less than precarious, that is to be found in attendance on the court?" said Lord Dalgarno; "all are either losing or winning. Those who have wealth come hither to get rid of it, while the happy gallants who, like you and I, dear Glenvarloch, have little or none, have every chance to be sharers in their spoils."

"I have no ambition of that sort," said Nigel, "and if I had, I must tell you plainly, Lord Dalgarno, I have not the means to do so. I can scarce as yet call the suit I wear my own; I owe it, and I do not blush to say so, to the friendship of yonder good man."

"I will not laugh, if I can help it," said Lord Dalgarno. "But, Lord! that you should have gone to



"THE YOUNG MEN WALKED TOGETHER."

a wealthy goldsmith for your habit—why, I could have brought you to an honest, confiding tailor, who should have furnished you with half a dozen, merely for love of the little word 'lordship' which you place before your name;—and then your goldsmith, if he be really a friendly goldsmith, should have equipped you with such a purse of fair rose-nobles as would have bought you thrice as many suits, or done better things for you."

"I do not understand these fashions, my lord," said Nigel, his displeasure mastering his shame. "Were I to attend the court of my sovereign, it should be when I could maintain, without shifting or borrowing, the dress and retinue which my rank requires."

"Which my rank requires!" said Lord Dalgarno, repeating his last words; "that, now, is as good as if my father had spoke it. But the dinner-bell is going to sound, and my father looks our way—we must not be late for the grace, or we shall be in *dis*grace, if you will forgive a quibble which would have made his Majesty laugh. But you shall see better cheer to-morrow. Where lodge you? I will call for you. I must be your guide through the peopled desert, to certain enchanted lands, which you will scarce discover without chart and pilot. Where lodge you?"

"I will meet you in Paul's," said Nigel, a good deal embarrassed, "at any hour you please to name."

CHAPTER XI

On the following morning, while Nigel, his breakfast finished, was thinking how he should employ the day,

there was a little bustle upon the stairs which attracted his attention, and presently entered Dame Nelly Christie, the fair wife of his host, blushing like scarlet, and scarce able to bring out—"A young nobleman, sir—no one less," she added, drawing her hand slightly over her lips, "would be saucy—a young nobleman, sir, to await on you!"

And she was followed into the little cabin by Lord Dalgarno, gay, easy, disembarrassed, and apparently as much pleased to rejoin his new acquaintance as if he had found him in the apartments of a palace. Nigel, on the contrary (for youth is a slave to such circumstances), was discountenanced and mortified at being surprised by so splendid a gallant in a chamber which, at the moment the elegant and high-dressed cavalier appeared in it, seemed to its inhabitant yet lower, narrower, darker, and meaner than it had ever shown before.

Nigel offered refreshments with some hesitation. Lord Dalgarno had long since breakfasted, but had just come from playing a set of tennis, he said, and would willingly taste a cup of the pretty hostess's single beer. He reached a seat, and, placing another for Lord Glenvarloch, in spite of his anxious haste to anticipate this act of courtesy, he proceeded in the same tone of easy familiarity—

"We are neighbours, my lord, and are just made known to each other. Now, I know enough of the dear North, to be well aware that Scottish neighbours must be either dear friends or deadly enemies—must either walk hand-in-hand, or stand sword-point to sword-point; so I choose the hand-in-hand, unless you should reject my proffer."

"How were it possible, my lord," said Lord

Glenvarloch, "to refuse what is offered so frankly, even if your father had not been a second father to me?" And, as he took Lord Dalgarno's hand, he added—"I have, I think, lost no time, since, during one day's attendance at court, I have made a kind friend and a powerful enemy."

"The friend thanks you," replied Lord Dalgarno, "for your just opinion; but, my dear Glenvarloch —or rather, for titles are too formal between us of the better file—what is your Christian name?"

"Nigel," replied Lord Glenvarloch.

"Then we will be Nigel and Malcolm to each other," said his visitor; "and my lord to the plebeian world around us. But I was about to ask you whom you supposed your enemy?"

"No less than the all-powerful favourite, the great Duke of Buckingham."

"You dream! What could possess you with such an opinion?" said Dalgarno.

"He told me so himself," replied Glenvarloch; "and, in so doing, dealt frankly and honourably with me."

"Oh, you know him not yet," said his companion; "the Duke is moulded of an hundred noble and fiery qualities, that prompt him, like a generous horse, to spring aside in impatience at the least obstacle to his forward course. But he means not what he says in such passing heats—I can do more with him, I thank Heaven, than most who are around him; you shall go visit him with me, and you will see how you shall be received."

"I told you, my lord," said Glenvarloch firmly, and with some haughtiness, "the Duke of Buckingham, without the least offence, declared himself my enemy, in the face of the court; and he shall retract

that aggression as publicly as it was given, ere I will make the slightest advance towards him."

"You would act becomingly in every other case," said Lord Dalgarno, "but here you are wrong. In the court horizon, Buckingham is lord of the ascendant, and as he is adverse or favouring, so sinks or rises the fortune of a suitor. In the meantime, I have to propose to you to take the advantage of the flood-tide, to run up the river for pastime; and at noon I trust you will dine with me."

Nigel acquiesced in a plan which promised so much amusement; and his new friend and he took possession of Lord Dalgarno's wherry, which, with its badged watermen, bearing his lordship's crest on their arms, lay in readiness to receive them. The air was delightful upon the river; and the lively conversation of Lord Dalgarno added zest to the pleasures of the little voyage. He could not only give an account of the various public buildings and noblemen's houses which they passed in ascending the Thames, but knew how to season his information with abundance of anecdote, political innuendo, and personal scandal; if he had not very much wit, he was at least completely master of the fashionable tone, which in that time, as in ours, more than amply supplies any deficiency of the kind.

As they returned down the river the boat put into the landing-place at Blackfriars. Lord Dalgarno sprung ashore, and, flinging his cloak and rapier to his page, recommended his companion to do the like. "We are coming among a press of gallants," he said; "and if we walk thus muffled, we shall look like your tawny-visaged Don, who wraps him close in his cloak, to conceal the defects of his doublet."

"Tell me now, my dear Malcolm," said Nigel, "where we are bending our course, and whether we shall dine at an apartment of yours?"

"An apartment of mine—yes, surely," answered Lord Dalgarno, "you shall dine at an apartment of mine, and an apartment of yours, and of twenty gallants besides; and where the board shall present better cheer, better wine, and better attendance, than if our whole united exhibitions went to maintain it. We are going to the most noted ordinary of London."

"That is, in common language, an inn, or a tavern," said Nigel.

"An inn, or a tavern, my most green and simple friend!" exclaimed Lord Dalgarno. "An ordinary is a late invented institution, where the choicest noble gallants of the time meet with the first and most ethereal wits of the age,—where the wine is the very soul of the choicest grape, refined as the genius of the poet, and ancient and generous as the blood of the nobles. And then the fare is something beyond your ordinary gross terrestrial food! Sea and land are ransacked to supply it; and the invention of six ingenious cooks kept eternally upon the rack to make their art hold pace with, and if possible enhance, the exquisite quality of the materials"

"By all which rhapsody," said Lord Glenvarloch, "I can only understand, as I did before, that we are going to a choice tavern, where we shall be handsomely entertained, on paying probably as handsome a reckoning."

"No, no," answered Lord Dalgarno; "there is a sort of ceremony which my chevalier's friends and intimates understand, but with which you have no business at present. There is, as Majesty might say,

a *symbolum* to be disbursed—in other words, a mutual exchange of courtesies takes place betwixt Beaujeu and his guests. He makes them a free present of the dinner and wine, as often as they choose to consult their own felicity by frequenting his house at the hour of noon, and they, in gratitude, make the chevalier a present of a jacobus. Then you must know that the Goddess of Fortune is frequently worshipped at Beaujeu's, and he, as in reason he should, hath a considerable advantage from a share of the sacrifice."

"In other words," said Lord Glenvarloch, "this man keeps a gaming-house."

"A house in which you may certainly game," said Lord Dalgarno, "as you may in your own chamber, if you have a mind."

"For all this, Malcolm," said the young lord gravely, "I cannot dine with you to-day at this same ordinary."

"And wherefore should you draw back from your word?" said Lord Dalgarno.

"I do not retract my word, Malcolm; but I am bound, by an early promise to my father, never to enter the doors of a gaming-house."

"I tell you this is none," said Lord Dalgarno; "it is but, in plain terms, an eating-house, arranged on civiller terms, and frequented by better company, than others in this town; and if some of them do amuse themselves with cards and hazard, they are men of honour, and who play as such, and for no more than they can well afford to lose. It was not and could not be such houses that your father desired you to avoid. The difference is, that where we go we may happen to see persons of quality amusing themselves with a game; and in the ordinary houses you will meet bullies and sharpers, who will strive

either to cheat or to swagger you out of your money."

"I am sure you would not willingly lead me to do what is wrong," said Nigel; "but my father had a horror of games of chance, religious, I believe, as well as prudential. He judged, from I know not what circumstance, a fallacious one, I should hope, that I had a propensity to such courses, and I have told you the promise which he exacted from me."

"Now, by my honour," said Dalgarno, "what you have said affords the strongest reason for my insisting that you go with me. A man who would shun any danger should first become acquainted with its real bearing and extent, and that in the company of a confidential guide and guard. Do you think I myself game? No, no—these are sports for the wealthy Southron, not for the poor Scottish noble. The place is an eating-house, and as such you and I will use it. If others use it to game in, it is their fault, but neither that of the house nor ours."

CHAPTER XII

THE ordinary, now an ignoble sound, was, in the days of James, a new institution, as fashionable among the youth of that age as the first-rate modern club-houses are amongst those of the present day. It differed chiefly in being open to all whom good clothes and good assurance combined to introduce there. The company usually dined together at an hour fixed, and the manager of the establishment presided as master of the ceremonies.

Monsieur le Chevalier (as he qualified himself) Saint Priest de Beaujeu was a sharp, thin Gascon, about sixty years old, banished from his own country, as he said, on account of an affair of honour, in which he had the misfortune to kill his antagonist, though the best swordsman in the south of France.

When Nigel entered the mansion of this eminent person, which had been but of late the residence of a great baron of Queen Elizabeth's court, who had retired to his manors in the country on the death of that princess, he was surprised at the extent of the accommodation which it afforded, and the number of guests who were already assembled. Feathers waved, spurs jingled, lace and embroidery glanced everywhere; and, at first sight at least, it certainly made good Lord Dalgarno's encomium, who represented the company as composed almost entirely of youth of the first quality.

Nigel had very little time to make observations, for the entrance of Lord Dalgarno created an immediate bustle and sensation among the company, as his name passed from one mouth to another. Some stood forward to gaze, others stood back to make way—those of his own rank hastened to welcome him—those of inferior degree endeavoured to catch some point of his gesture, or of his dress, to be worn and practised upon a future occasion, as the newest and most authentic fashion.

Dinner was announced, and the two friends, being seated in the most honourable station at the board, were ceremoniously attended to by the chevalier, who did the honours of his table to them and to the other guests, and seasoned the whole with his agreeable conversation.

In short, the company and conversation was so agreeable that Nigel's rigour was softened by it, even towards the master of ceremonies, and he listened with patience to various details which the Chevalier de Beaujeu, seeing, as he said, that milor's taste lay for the 'curieux and l'utile,' chose to address to him in particular, on the subject of cookery.

Nigel Olifaunt's life for several weeks may be thus described. The ordinary was no bad introduction to the business of the day; and the young lord quickly found, that if the society there was not always irreproachable, still it formed the most convenient and agreeable place of meeting with the fashionable parties, with whom he visited Hyde Park, the theatres, and other place of public resort. Neither did he entertain the same scrupulous horror which led him originally even to hesitate entering into a place where gaming was permitted; but, on the contrary, began to admit the idea, that, as there could be no harm in beholding such recreation when only indulged in to a moderate degree, so, from a parity of reasoning, there could be no objection to joining in it, always under the same restrictions. But the young lord was a Scotsman, habituated to early reflection, and totally unaccustomed to any habit which inferred a careless risk or profuse waste of money. Profusion was not his natural vice, or one likely to be acquired in the course of his education; and in all probability, while his father anticipated with noble horror the idea of his son approaching the gaming-table, he was more startled at the idea of his becoming a gaining than a losing adventurer.

It chanced, or, perhaps, according to the common belief, his evil genius had so decreed, that Nigel's

adventures were remarkably successful. He was temperate, cautious, cool-headed, had a strong memory, and a ready power of calculation; was, besides, of a daring and intrepid character, one upon whom no one that had looked even slightly, or spoken to though but hastily, would readily have ventured to practise anything approaching to trick, or which required to be supported by intimidation. While Lord Glenvarloch chose to play, men played with him regularly, or, according to the phrase, upon the square; and, as he found his luck change, or wished to hazard his good fortune no further, the more professed votaries of fortune, who frequented the house of Monsieur le Chevalier de Saint Priest Beaujeu, did not venture openly to express their displeasure at his rising a winner. But when this happened repeatedly, the gamesters murmured amongst themselves equally at the caution and the success of the young Scotsman; and he became a far from popular character among their society.

It was no slight inducement to the continuance of this most evil habit, when it was once in some degree acquired, that it seemed to place Lord Glenvarloch, haughty as he naturally was, beyond the necessity of subjecting himself to further pecuniary obligations, which his prolonged residence in London must otherwise have rendered necessary. He had to solicit from the ministers certain forms of office, which were to render his sign-manual effectually useful; and these, though they could not be denied, were delayed in such a manner as to lead Nigel to believe there was some secret opposition, which occasioned the demur in his business.

His own impulse was, to have appeared at court

a second time, with the king's sign-manual in his pocket, and to have appealed to his Majesty himself, whether the delay of the public officers ought to render his royal generosity unavailing. But the Lord Huntinglen, that good old peer, who had so frankly interfered in his behalf on a former occasion, and whom he occasionally visited, greatly dissuaded him from a similar adventure, and exhorted him quietly to await the deliverance of the ministers, which should set him free from dancing attendance in London.

There were other changes in Lord Glenvarloch's situation, which require to be noticed. His present occupations, and the habits of amusement which he had acquired, rendered his living so far in the city a considerable inconvenience. He may also have become a little ashamed of his cabin on Paul's Wharf, and desirous of being lodged somewhat more according to his quality. For this purpose he had hired a small apartment near the Temple. He was, nevertheless, almost sorry for what he had done, when he observed that his removal appeared to give some pain to John Christie, and a great deal to his cordial and officious landlady.

Everybody likes marks of personal attachment, and Nigel, whose heart really smote him, as if in his rising fortunes he were disdaining the lowly accommodations and the civilities of the humble friends which had been but lately actual favours, failed not by every assurance in his power, and by as liberal payment as they could be prevailed upon to accept, to alleviate the soreness of their feelings at his departure; and a parting kiss from the fair lips of his hostess sealed his forgiveness.

Richie Moniplies lingered behind his master, to ask whether, in case of need, John Christie could help a canny Scotsman to a passage back to his own country; and receiving assurance of John's interest to that effect, he said at parting, he would remind him of his promise soon.—"For," said he, "if my lord is not weary of this London life, I ken one that is, videlicet, mysel'; and I am weel determined to see Arthur's Seat again ere I am many weeks older."

CHAPTER XIII

RICHIE MONIPLIES was as good as his word. Two or three mornings after the young lord had possessed himself of his new lodgings, he appeared before Nigel, as he was preparing to dress, having left his pillow at an hour much later than had formerly been his custom.

As Nigel looked upon his attendant, he observed there was a gathering gloom upon his solemn features, which expressed either additional importance, or superadded discontent, or a portion of both.

"My lord,"—said Richie, and then stopped to cough and hem, as if what he had to say stuck somewhat in his throat.

"I guess the mystery," said Nigel, "you want a little money, Richie; will five pieces serve the present turn?"

"My lord," said Richie, "I may, it is like, want a trifle of money; and I am glad at the same time, and sorry, that it is mair plenty with your lordship than formerly."

"Glad and sorry, man!" said Lord Nigel, "why, you are reading riddles to me, Richie."

"My riddle will be briefly read," said Richie; "I come to crave of your lordship your commands for Scotland."

"For Scotland!—why, art thou mad, man?" said Nigel; "canst thou not tarry to go down with me?"

"I could be of little service," said Richie, "since you purpose to hire another page and groom."

"Why, thou jealous ass," said the young lord, "will not thy load of duty lie the lighter? You know well enough, that, had I twenty serving-men, I would hold the faithful follower that stood by me in my distress the most valued of them all."

"My lord," said Richie, "in declaring your trust in me, you have done what is honourable to yourself, if I may with humility say so much, and in no way undeserved on my side. Nevertheless, we must part."

"Body of me, man, why?" said Lord Nigel; "what reason can there be for it, if we are mutually satisfied?"

"My lord," said Richie Moniplies, "your lordship's occupations are such as I cannot own or countenance by my presence."

"How now, sirrah!" said his master, angrily.

"Under favour, my lord," replied his domestic, "it is unequal dealing to be equally offended by my speech and by my silence. If you can hear with patience the grounds of my departure, it may be, for aught I know, the better for you here and hereafter—if not, let me have my license of departure in silence, and so no more about it."

"Go to, sir!" said Nigel; "speak out your mind—only remember to whom you speak it."

"Weel, weel, my lord—I speak it with humility"

(never did Richie look with more starched dignity than when he uttered the word); "but do you think this dicing and card-shuffling, and haunting of taverns and playhouses, suits your lordship—for I am sure it does not suit me. And when I hear of your lordship winning the siller that some poor creature may full sairly miss—by my saul, if it wad serve your necessity, rather than you gained it from him, I wad take a jump over the hedge with your lordship, and cry 'Stand!' to the first grazier we met that was coming from Smithfield with the price of his Essex calves in his leathern pouch!"

"You are a simpleton," said Nigel, who felt, however, much conscience-struck: "I never play but for small sums."

"Ay, my lord," replied the unyielding domestic, "and—still with reverence—it is even sae much the waur. If you played with your equals, there might be like sin, but there wad be mair warldly honour in it. Your lordship kens, or may ken, by experience of your ain, whilk is not as yet many weeks auld, that small sums can ill be missed by those that have nane larger; and I maun e'en be plain with you, that men notice it of your lordship, that ye play wi' nane but the misguided creatures that can but afford to lose bare stakes."

"No man dare say so!" replied Nigel, very angrily. "I play with whom I please, but I will only play for what stake I please."

"That is just what they say, my lord," said the unmerciful Richie, whose natural love of lecturing, as well as his bluntness of feeling, prevented him from having any idea of the pain which he was inflicting on his master; "these are even their own very words."

"Hark you, sirrah," said his master, "I have borne with you thus far, for certain reasons; but abuse my good-nature no farther. Since London pleases you so little, I will bid you a short farewell; and you may go down to Edinburgh until I come thither myself, when I trust you will re-enter into my service. Here is to pay your journey." So saying, he put gold into his hand.

"Now, Heaven bless you, my lord," said Richie Moniplies with uplifted eyes; "for that word sounds more like grace than ony has come out of your mouth this fortnight.—I give you godd'en, my lord."

So saying, he thrust forth his immense bony hand, seized on that of Lord Glenvarloch, raised it to his lips, then turned short on his heel, and left the room hastily, as if afraid of showing more emotion than was consistent with his ideas of decorum. Lord Nigel, rather surprised at his sudden exit, called after him to know whether he was sufficiently provided with money; but Richie, shaking his head, without making any other answer, ran hastily down stairs, shut the street-door heavily behind him, and was presently seen striding along the Strand.

His master almost involuntarily watched and distinguished the tall raw-boned figure of his late follower from the window, for some time, until he was lost among the crowd of passengers. Nigel's reflections were not altogether those of self-approval. It was no good sign of his course of life (he could not help acknowledging this much to himself), that so faithful an adherent no longer seemed to feel the same pride in his service, or attachment to his person, which he had formerly manifested. Neither could he avoid experiencing some twinges of conscience, while he felt in some degree the charges which Richie had

preferred against him, and experienced a sense of shame and mortification, arising from the colour given by others to that, which he himself would have called his caution and moderation in play.

Thought after thought rushed on him; but, upon the whole, Lord Glenvarloch was so little satisfied with the result of his own reflections that he resolved to dissipate them by a walk in the Park, and, taking his cloak and beaver, went thither accordingly.

The park of Saint James's, though enlarged, planted with verdant alleys, and otherwise decorated by Charles II., existed in the days of his grandfather as a public and pleasant promenade; and, for the sake of exercise or pastime, was much frequented by the better class.

Lord Glenvarloch repaired thither to dispel the unpleasant reflection which had been suggested by his parting with his trusty squire, Richie Moniplies, in a manner which was agreeable neither to his pride nor his feelings.

There was a considerable number of company in the Park when he entered it, but, his present state of mind inducing him to avoid society, he kept aloof from the more frequented walks towards Westminster and Whitehall, and drew to the north, or, as we should now say, the Piccadilly verge of the enclosure, believing he might there enjoy, or rather combat, his own thoughts unmolested.

In this, however, Lord Glenvarloch was mistaken, for, as he strolled slowly along, a low respectful murmur arose among the numerous groups of persons which occupied the lower part of the Park. They first clustered together, with their faced turned towards Whitehall, then fell back on either hand to give place

to a splendid party of gallants, who, advancing from the palace, came onward through the Park; all the other company drawing off the pathway, and standing uncovered as they passed.

Most of these courtly gallants were dressed in the garb which the pencil of Vandyke has made familiar, even at the distance of nearly two centuries; and which was just at this period beginning to supersede the more fluttering and frivolous dress which had been adopted from the French court of Henri Quatre.

The whole train were uncovered excepting the Prince of Wales, afterwards the most unfortunate of British monarchs, who came onward, having his long curled auburn tresses, and his countenance, which, even in early youth, bore a shade of anticipated melancholy, shaded by the Spanish hat and the single ostrich feather which drooped from it. On his right hand was Buckingham, whose commanding, and at the same time graceful, deportment threw almost into shade the personal demeanour and majesty of the prince on whom he attended,

The prince, with his train, advanced, and was near the place where Lord Glenvarloch had stood aside, according to form, in order to give the prince passage, and to pay the usual marks of respect. Nigel could now remark that Lord Dalgarno walked close behind the Duke of Buckingham, and, as he thought, whispered something in his ear as they came onward. At any rate, both the prince's and Duke of Buckingham's attention seemed to be directed by some circumstance towards Nigel, for they turned their heads in that direction and looked at him attentively—the prince with a countenance, the grave, melancholy expression of which was blended with severity; while

Buckingham's looks evinced some degree of scornful triumph. Lord Dalgarno did not seem to observe his friend, perhaps because the sunbeams fell from the side of the walk on which Nigel stood, obliging Malcolm to hold up his hat to screen his eyes.

As the prince passed, Lord Glenvarloch bowed, as respect required; but the prince returned his obeisance with such a frown as is only given by those whose frown is authority and decision.

Lord Glenvarloch had difficulty to restrain an indignation to which, in the circumstances, it would have been madness to have given vent. He started from where he stood, and followed the prince's train, so as to keep them distinctly in sight; which was very easy, as they walked slowly. Nigel observed them keep their road towards the palace, where the prince turned at the gate and bowed to the noblemen in attendance, in token of dismissing them, and entered the palace, accompanied only by the Duke of Buckingham, and one or two of his equerries. The rest of the train, having returned in all dutiful humility the farewell of the prince, began to disperse themselves through the Park.

All this was carefully noticed by Lord Glenvarloch, who, as he adjusted his cloak, and drew his sword-belt round so as to bring the hilt closer to his hand, muttered, "Dalgarno shall explain all this to me, for it is evident that he is in the secret!"

CHAPTER XIV

It was not long ere Nigel discovered Lord Dalgarno advancing towards him in the company of another

young man of quality of the prince's train; and as they directed their course towards the south-eastern corner of the Park, he concluded they were about to go to Lord Huntinglen's. They stopped, however, and turned up another path leading to the north; and Lord Glenvarloch conceived that this change of direction was owing to their having seen him, and their desire to avoid him.

Nigel followed them without hesitation by a path which, winding around a thicket of shrubs and trees, once more conducted him to the less frequented part of the Park. He observed which side of the thicket was taken by Lord Dalgarno and his companion, and he himself, walking hastily round the other verge, was thus enabled to meet them face to face.

"Good-morrow, my Lord Dalgarno," said Lord Glenvarloch sternly.

"Ha! my friend Nigel," answered Lord Dalgarno, in his usual careless and indifferent tone, "my friend Nigel, with business on his brow?—but you must wait till we meet at Beaujeu's at noon—Sir Ewes Haldimund and I are at present engaged in the prince's service."

"If you were engaged in the king's, my lord," said Lord Glenvarloch, "you must stand and answer me."

"Here is a proper business!" said Dalgarno, turning as if to appeal to Sir Ewes Haldimund; "do you see this angry ruffler, Sir Ewes? A month since, he dared not have looked one of yonder sheep in the face, and now he is a prince of roisterers, a plucker of pigeons—and in gratitude for my having shown him the way to the eminent character which he holds upon town, he comes hither to quarrel with his best friend,

if not his only one of decent station. Let us pass on, my lord; and if you want further explanation, seek some other time and fitter place."

"No time can be better than the present," said Lord Glenvarloch, whose resentment was now excited to the uttermost by the cold-blooded and insulting manner in which Dalgarno vindicated himself,—"no place fitter than the place where we now stand. Those of my house have ever avenged insult at the moment, and on the spot, where it was offered, were it at the foot of the throne.—Lord Dalgarno, you are a villain! draw and defend yourself." At the same time he unsheathed his rapier.

"Are you mad?" said Lord Dalgarno, stepping back; "we are in the precincts of the court!"

"The better," answered Lord Glenvarloch; "I will cleanse them from a calumniator and a coward." He then pressed on Lord Dalgarno, and struck him with the flat of the sword.

The fray had now attracted attention, and the cry went round, "Keep the peace—keep the peace—swords drawn in the Park!—What, ho! guards!—keepers!—yeomen rangers!" and a number of people came rushing to the spot from all sides.

Lord Dalgarno, who had half drawn his sword on receiving the blow, returned it to his scabbard when he observed the crowd thicken, and, taking Sir Ewes Haldimund by the arm, walked hastily away, only saying to Lord Glenvarloch as they left him, "You shall dearly abye this insult—we will meet again."

Lord Glenvarloch made hastily towards the issue from the Park by Saint James's Palace, then Saint James's Hospital. The hubbub increased behind him; and several peace-officers of the royal household came

up to apprehend the delinquent. Fortunately for Nigel, a popular edition of the cause of the affray had gone abroad. It was said that one of the Duke of Buckingham's companions had insulted a stranger gentleman from the country, and that the stranger had cudgelled him soundly. A favourite, or the companion of a favourite, is always odious to John Bull, who has, besides, a partiality to those disputants who proceed, as lawyers term it, *par voye du fait*, and both prejudices were in Nigel's favour. The officers, therefore, who came to apprehend him, could learn from the spectators no particulars of his appearance, or information concerning the road he had taken; so that, for the moment, he escaped being arrested. At length he got out of the Park, and had a little more leisure to consider what he was next to do.

Whitefriars, adjacent to the Temple, then well known by the cant name of Alsatia, had at this time, and for nearly a century afterwards, the privilege of a sanctuary, unless against the writ of the Lord Chief-Justice, or of the Lords of the Privy Council. Indeed, as the place abounded with desperadoes of every description,—it was both difficult and unsafe for the officers of the law to execute warrants, emanating even from the highest authority, amongst men whose safety was inconsistent with warrants or authority of any kind. This Lord Glenvarloch well knew; and odious as the place of refuge was, it seemed the only one where, for a space at least, he might be concealed and secure from the immediate grasp of the law, until he should have leisure to provide better for his safety, or to get this unpleasant matter in some shape accommodated.

Meanwhile, as Nigel walked hastily forward towards

the place of sanctuary, he bitterly blamed himself for suffering Lord Dalgarno to lead him into the haunts of dissipation; and no less accused his intemperate heat of passion, which now had driven him for refuge into the purlieus of profane and avowed vice and debauchery.

As Lord Glenvarloch formed these prudent resolutions, he entered the Temple Walks, whence a gate at that time opened into Whitefriars, by which, as by the more private passage, he proposed to betake himself to the sanctuary.

As Nigel hesitated, a young gentleman of the Temple advanced towards him, whom he had often seen, and sometimes conversed with at the ordinary, where he was a frequent and welcome guest, being a wild young gallant, indifferently well provided with money, who spent at the theatres, and other gay places of public resort, the time which his father supposed he was employing in the study of the law. Such was Reginald Lowestoffe, shrewd, alert, and well acquainted with the town, through all its recesses, but in a sort of disrespectable way. This gallant, now approaching the Lord Glenvarloch, saluted him by name and title, and asked if his lordship designed for the chevalier's this day, observing it was near noon, and the woodcock would be on the board ere they could reach the ordinary.

"I do not go there to-day," answered Lord Glenvarloch.

"Which way, then, my lord?" said the young Templar, who was perhaps not undesirous to parade a part at least of the street in company with a lord, though but a Scottish one.

"I—I"—said Nigel, desiring to avail himself of

this young man's local knowledge, yet unwilling and ashamed to acknowledge his intention to take refuge in so disreputable a quarter, or to describe the situation in which he stood—"I have some curiosity to see Whitefriars."

"What! your lordship is for a frolic into Alsatia?" said Lowestoffe. "Have with you, my lord—you cannot have a better guide than myself."

While Lowestoffe spoke, he pulled Lord Glenvarloch along with him into his chambers, where he had a handsome library, filled with all the poems and play-books which were then in fashion. The Templar then despatched a boy, who waited upon him, to procure a dish or two from the next cook's shop.

The outward door of the chambers was barred so soon as the boy had re-entered with the food; the boy was ordered to keep close watch, and admit no one; and Lowestoffe, by example and precept, pressed his noble guest to partake of his hospitality. His frank and forward manners, though much differing from the courtly ease of Lord Dalgarno, were calculated to make a favourable impression; and Lord Glenvarloch, though his experience of Dalgarno's perfidy had taught him to be cautious of reposing faith in friendly professions, could not avoid testifying his gratitude to the young Templar, who seemed so anxious for his safety and accommodation.

"You know, my lord," said Master Lowestoffe, "that we Templars are a power and a dominion within ourselves, and I am proud to say that I hold some rank in our republic, was treasurer to the Lord of Misrule last year, and am at this present moment in nomination for that dignity myself. But hark—what is that?"

The sound by which Master Lowestoffe was interrupted, was that of a distant horn, winded loud and keenly, and followed by a faint and remote huzza.

"There is something doing," said Lowestoffe, "in the Whitefriars at this moment. That is the signal when their privileges are invaded by tipstaff or bailiff; and at the blast of the horn they all swarm out to the rescue as bees when their hive is disturbed. Jump, Jem," he said, calling out to the attendant, "and see what they are doing in Alsatia."

The good-natured and thoughtless young Templar then led the way into his little bedroom, where he began to select the articles which he thought more suited effectually to disguise his guest in venturing into the lawless and turbulent society of Alsatia.

CHAPTER XV

IT is necessary that we should leave our hero Nigel for a time, although in a situation neither safe, comfortable, nor creditable, in order to detail some particulars which have immediate connection with his fortunes.

It was but the third day after he had been forced to take refuge in the house of old Trapbois, a noted usurer of Whitefriars, commonly called Golden Trapbois, when the pretty daughter of old Ramsay the watchmaker, after having piously seen her father finish his breakfast (from the fear that he might, in an abstruse fit of thought, swallow the salt-cellar instead of a crust of the brown loaf), set forth from the house as soon as he was again plunged into the depth of calculation,

and made her way to Lombard Street, and disturbed, at the unusual hour of eight in the morning, Aunt Judith, the sister of her worthy god-father.

The venerable maiden received her young visitor with no great complacency ; for, naturally enough, she had neither the same admiration of her very pretty countenance, nor allowance for her foolish and girlish impatience of temper, which Master George Heriot entertained. Still, Mistress Margaret was a favourite of her brother's, whose will was to Aunt Judith a supreme law ; and she contented herself with asking her untimely visitor, " what she made so early with her pale, chitty face, in the streets of London ? "

" I would speak with the Lady Hermione," answered the almost breathless girl, while the blood ran so fast to her face as totally to remove the objection of paleness which Aunt Judith had made to her complexion.

Aunt Judith bent an earnest, suspicious, and inquisitive glance on her young visitor. " You might make me your secretary, my lassie," she said, " as well as the Lady Hermione. I am older, and better skilled to advise. I live more in the world than one who shuts herself up within four rooms, and I have the better means to assist you."

" O, no—no—no ! " said Margaret eagerly, and with more earnest sincerity than complaisance ; " there are some things to which you cannot advise me, Aunt Judith. It is a case—pardon me, my dear aunt—a case beyond your counsel."

" I am glad on't, maiden," said Aunt Judith, somewhat angrily ; " for I think the follies of the young people of this generation would drive mad an old brain like mine."

She went away, and shortly returned with a dry—"Mistress Marget, the lady will be glad to see you; and that's more, my young madam, than you had a right to count upon."

Mistress Margaret hung her head in silence, too much perplexed by the train of her own embarrassed thoughts, for attempting either to conciliate Aunt Judith's kindness, or, which on other occasions would have been as congenial to her own humour, to retaliate on her cross-tempered remarks and manner. She followed Aunt Judith, therefore, in silence and dejection, to the strong oaken door which divided the Lady Hermione's apartments from the rest of George Heriot's spacious house.

The life which Lady Hermione led in George Heriot's house, was so singular as almost to sanction many of the wild reports which went abroad. The house had in former times belonged to a powerful and wealthy baronial family, which, during the reign of Henry VIII. terminated in a dowager lady, very wealthy, very devout, and most inalienably attached to the Catholic faith. The chosen friend of the Honourable Lady Foljambe was the Abbess of Saint Roque's Convent, like herself a conscientious, rigid, and devoted Catholic. When the house of Saint Roque was despotically dissolved by the *fiat* of the impetuous monarch, the Lady Foljambe received her friend into her spacious mansion, together with two vestal sisters. For their residence, the Lady Foljambe contrived, with all secrecy—for Henry might not have relished her interference—to set apart a suite of four rooms, with a little closet fitted up as an oratory, or chapel; the whole apartment fenced by a strong oaken door to exclude strangers, and accommodated with a turning-

wheel to receive necessaries, according to the practice of convents.

About two years and a half before our history opened, when Heriot was absent upon an expedition to the Continent, he sent special orders to his sister and his cash-keeper, directing that the Foljambe apartment should be fitted up handsomely, though plainly, for the reception of a lady, who would make it her residence for some time; and who would live more or less with his own family according to her pleasure. He also directed that the necessary repairs should be made with secrecy, and that as little should be said as possible upon the subject of his letter.

When the time of his return came nigh, Aunt Judith and the household were on the tenterhooks of impatience. Master George came, as he had intimated, accompanied by a lady, so eminently beautiful, that, had it not been for her extreme and uniform paleness, she might have been reckoned one of the loveliest creatures on earth. She had with her an attendant or humble companion, whose business seemed only to wait upon her. This person, a reserved woman, and by her dialect a foreigner, aged about fifty, was called by the lady Monna Paula, and by Master Heriot and others, Mademoiselle Pauline. She slept in the same room with her patroness at night, ate in her apartment, and was scarcely ever separated from her during the day.

These females took possession of the convent of the devout abbess, and, without observing the same rigorous seclusion, according to the letter, seemed well-nigh to restore the apartment to the use to which it had been originally designed. The new inmates lived and took their meals apart from the rest of the family.

With the domestics, Lady Hermione, for so she was termed, held no communication, and Mademoiselle Pauline only such as was indispensable, which she despatched as briefly as possible. Frequent and liberal largesses reconciled the servants to this conduct ; and they were in the habit of observing to each other, that to do a service for Mademoiselle Pauline was like finding a fairy treasure.

To Aunt Judith the Lady Hermione was kind and civil, but their intercourse was rare ; on which account the elder lady felt some pangs both of curiosity and injured dignity.

There was one person in the world who, it was thought, could (if she would) have said more of the Lady Hermione than any one in London, except George Heriot himself ; and that was the said David Ramsay's only child, Margaret.

The girl was not much past the age of fifteen when the Lady Hermione first came to England, and was a very frequent visitor at her god-father's, who was much amused by her childish sallies, and by the wild and natural beauty with which she sung the airs of her native country. Spoilt she was on all hands ; by the indulgence of her god-father, and the absent habits and indifference of her father, and the deference of all around to her caprices, as a beauty and as an heiress. But the little lass had sense and shrewdness enough to keep her failings out of sight of her god-father, to whom she was sincerely attached ; and so high she stood in his favour, that, at his recommendation, she obtained permission to visit the recluse Lady Hermione.

The singular mode of life which that lady observed ; her great beauty, rendered even more interesting by

her extreme paleness; the conscious pride of being admitted further than the rest of the world into the society of a person who was wrapped in so much mystery, made a deep impression on the mind of Margaret Ramsay; and though their conversations were at no time either long or confidential, yet, proud of the trust reposed in her, Margaret was as secret respecting their tenor as if every word repeated had been to cost her life.

At the earlier period of their acquaintance, the Lady Hermione was wont to reward the attentions of her little friend with small but elegant presents, and entertain her by a display of foreign rarities and curiosities, many of them of considerable value. As Margaret became older, her communications with the recluse assumed a different character. She was allowed, if not encouraged, to tell whatever she had remarked out of doors, and the Lady Hermione, while she remarked the quick, sharp, and retentive powers of observation possessed by her young friend, often found sufficient reason to caution her against rashness in forming opinions and giddy petulance in expressing them.

CHAPTER XVI

When Mistress Margaret entered the Foljambe apartment, she found the inmates employed in their usual manner; the lady in reading, and her attendant in embroidering a large piece of tapestry, which had occupied her ever since Margaret had been first admitted within these secluded chambers.

Hermione nodded kindly to her visitor, but did not speak; and Margaret, accustomed to this reception, and in the present case not sorry for it, as it gave her an interval to collect her thoughts, stooped over Monna Paula's frame, and observed, in a half-whisper, "You were just so far as that rose, Monna, when I first saw you—see, there is the mark where I had the bad luck to spoil the flower in trying to catch the stitch—I was little above fifteen then. These flowers make me an old woman, Monna Paula."

"I wish they could make you a wise one, my child," answered Monna Paula, in whose esteem pretty Mistress Margaret did not stand quite so high as in that of her patroness; partly owing to her natural austerity, which was something intolerant of youth and gaiety, and partly to the jealousy with which a favourite domestic regards any one whom she considers as a sort of rival in the affections of her mistress.

The Lady Hermione turned, and looked earnestly at Margaret, then paused for a moment, and finally commanded Monna Paula to carry her frame and embroidery into the antechamber. When they were left alone, she desired her young friend to come from behind the chair, on the back of which she still rested, and sit down beside her upon a stool.

"I will remain thus, madam, under your favour," answered Margaret, without changing her posture; "I would rather you heard me without seeing me."

"In God's name, maiden," returned her patroness, "what is it you can have to say, that may not be uttered face to face, to so true a friend as I am?"

Without making any direct answer, Margaret only replied, "You were right, dearest lady, when you said I had suffered my feelings too much to engross me

of late. I have done very wrong, and you will be angry with me—so will my god-father, but I cannot help it—he must be rescued."

"*He?*" repeated the lady, with emphasis; "that brief little word does, indeed, so far explain your mystery;—but come from behind the chair, you silly popinjay! I will wager you have suffered yonder gay young apprentice to sit too near your heart. I have not heard you mention young Vincent for many a day—perhaps he has not been out of mouth and out of mind both. Have you been so foolish as to let him speak to you seriously? I am told he is a bold youth."

Margaret had hitherto suffered the lady to proceed, under the mistaken impression which she had adopted, simply because she could not tell how to interrupt her; but pure despite at hearing her last words gave her boldness at length to say, "I crave your pardon, madam; but neither the youth you mention, nor any apprentice or master within the city of London——"

"Margaret," said the lady in reply, "the contemptuous tone with which you mention those of your own class (many hundreds, if not thousands, of whom are in all respects better than yourself, and would greatly honour you by thinking of you) is, methinks, no warrant for the wisdom of your choice—for a choice, it seems, there is. Who is it, maiden, to whom you have thus rashly attached yourself?—rashly, I fear it must be."

"It is the young Scottish Lord Glenvarloch, madam," answered Margaret, in a low and modest tone, but sufficiently firm considering the subject.

"The young Lord of Glenvarloch!" repeated the lady, in great surprise—"Maiden, you are distracted in your wits."



"IT IS THE YOUNG LORD GLENVARLOCH."

"I knew you would say so, madam," answered Margaret. "It is what another person has already told me—it is, perhaps, what all the world would tell me—it is what I am sometimes disposed to tell myself. But look at me, madam, for I will now come before you, and tell me if there is madness or distraction in my look and word, when I repeat to you again, that I have fixed my affections on this young nobleman."

"If there is not madness in your look or word, maiden, there is infinite folly in what you say," answered the Lady Hermione sharply. "When did you ever hear that misplaced love brought anything but wretchedness? Seek a match among your equals, Margaret, and escape the countless kinds of risk and misery that must attend on affection beyond your degree.—Sit down and tell me your tale. It is true you are a fool, and a pettish fool to boot; but then you are a child—an amiable child, with all your self-willed folly, and we must help you, if we can. Tell me how you come to suppose that you have fixed your heart unalterably upon a man whom you have seen, as I think, but once."

"I have seen him oftener," said the damsel, looking down; "but I have only spoken to him once. I should have been able to get that *once* out of my head, though the impression was so deep that I could even now repeat every trifling word he said; but other things have since riveted it in my bosom for ever. He is unfortunate, madam—most unfortunate—and surrounded by snares of different kinds, ingeniously contrived to ruin his character, destroy his estate, and, perhaps, to reach even his life. These schemes have been devised by avarice, originally, but they are now followed close by vindictive ambition, animated, I

think, by the absolute and concentrated spirit of malice; for the Lord Dalgarno is the wickedest man who lives. Under pretence of friendship, he introduced the Lord Glenvarloch to a gambling-house, with the purpose of engaging him in deep play; but he with whom the perfidious traitor had to deal was too virtuous, moderate, and cautious to be caught in a snare so open. What did they next but turn his own moderation against him, and persuade others that, because he would not become the prey of wolves, he herded with them for a share of their booty! And, while this base Lord Dalgarno was thus undermining his unsuspecting countryman, he took every measure to keep him surrounded by creatures of his own, to prevent him from attending court, and mixing with those of his proper rank."

The lady smiled sadly at Margaret's vehemence, but sighed the next moment, while she told her young friend how little she knew the world she was about to live in, since she testified so much surprise at finding if full of villainy.

"But by what means," she added, "could you, maiden, become possessed of the secret views of a man so cautious as Lord Dalgarno—as villains in general are?"

"Permit me to be silent on that subject," said the maiden; "I could not tell you without betraying others—let it suffice that my tidings are as certain as the means by which I acquired them are secret and sure. But I must not tell them even to you."

"You are too bold, Margaret," said the lady, "to traffic in such matters at your early age. It is not only dangerous, but even unbecoming and unmaidenly."

"I knew you would say that also," said Margaret,

with more meekness and patience than she usually showed on receiving reproof; "but, God knows, my heart acquits me of every other feeling save that of the wish to assist this most innocent and betrayed man. He charged his false friend with treachery, and drew on him in the Park, and is now liable to the fatal penalty due for breach of privilege of the king's palace."

"This is indeed an extraordinary tale," said Hermione; "is Lord Glenvarloch then in prison?"

"No, madam, thank God, but in the sanctuary at Whitefriars—it is matter of doubt whether it will protect him in such a case—they speak of a warrant from the Lord Chief Justice. A gentleman of the Temple has been arrested and is in trouble for having assisted him in his flight.—Even his taking temporary refuge in that base place, though from extreme necessity, will be used to the further defaming him. All this I know, and yet I cannot rescue him—cannot rescue him save by your means."

"By my means, maiden!" said the lady—"you are beside yourself!—What means can I possess, in this secluded situation, of assisting this unfortunate nobleman?"

"You *have* means," said Margaret eagerly; "you have those means, unless I mistake greatly, which can do anything—can do everything, in this city, in this world—you have wealth, and the command of a small portion of it will enable me to extricate him from his present danger."

"Tarry yet a little," said the lady, "and tell me what resource you have to assist this youth if you were supplied with money to put it in motion."

"It is superfluous to ask me the question, madam," answered Margaret, "unless you purpose to assist me;

and if you do so purpose, it is still superfluous. You could not understand the means I must use, and time is too brief to explain."

"I know not what to do," said the Lady Hermione; "it is perhaps incautious and inconsiderate in me to aid so wild a project, yet the end seems honourable, if the means be sure.—What is the penalty, if he fall into their power?"

"Alas, alas! the loss of his right hand!" replied Margaret, her voice almost stifled with sobs.

"Are the laws of England so cruel? Then there is mercy in Heaven alone," said the lady, "since, even in this free land, men are wolves to each other. Compose yourself, Margaret, and tell me what money is necessary to secure Lord Glenvarloch's escape."

"Two hundred pieces," replied Margaret; "I would speak to you of restoring them—and I must one day have the power—only that I know—that is, I think—your ladyship is indifferent on that score."

"Not a word more of it," said the lady; "call Monna Paula hither."

CHAPTER XVII

By the time that Margaret returned with Monna Paula, the Lady Hermione was rising from the table at which she had been engaged in writing something on a small slip of paper, which she gave to her attendant.

"Monna Paula," she said, "carry this paper to Roberts the cash-keeper; let him give you the money mentioned in the note, and bring it hither presently."

Monna Paula left the room, and her mistress proceeded—

"I do not know," she said, "Margaret, if I have done, and am doing, well in this affair. My life has been one of strange seclusion, and I am totally unacquainted with the practical ways of this world—an ignorance which I know cannot be remedied by mere reading—I fear I am doing wrong to you, and perhaps to the laws of the country which affords me refuge, by thus indulging you; and yet there is something in my heart which cannot resist your entreaties."

The lady was silent for a moment, and then went on—

"Margaret, I am about to repose a high confidence in you. You are no longer a child, but a thinking and a feeling woman. You have told me as much of your secret as you dared—I will let you know as much of mine as I may venture to tell.

"My father," she said, "was a merchant, but he was of a city whose merchants are princes. I am the daughter of a noble house in Genoa, whose name stood as high in honour as any inscribed in the Golden Register of that famous aristocracy.

"My mother was a noble Scottish woman. She was descended—do not start—and not remotely descended, of the house of Glenvarloch—no wonder that I was easily led to take concern in the misfortunes of this young lord. He is my near relation, and my mother, who was more than sufficiently proud of her descent, early taught me to take an interest in the name. My father, in the course of his commerce, resided more at Barcelona than in his native country, though at times he visited Genoa.

"It was at Barcelona that he became acquainted with my mother, loved her, and married her; they

differed in faith, but they agreed in affection. I was their only child. In public I conformed to the doctrines and ceremonial of the Church of Rome; but my mother, by whom these were regarded with horror, privately trained me up in those of the reformed religion; and my father, either indifferent in the matter, or unwilling to distress the woman whom he loved, overlooked or connived at my secretly joining in her devotions.

"But when, unhappily, my father was attacked, while yet in the prime of life, by a slow, wasting disease, which he felt to be incurable, he foresaw the hazard to which his widow and orphan might be exposed, after he was no more, in a country so devoted to Catholicism as Spain. He made it his business, during the two last years of his life, to realise and to remit to England a large part of his fortune, which, by the faith and honour of his correspondent, the excellent man under whose roof I now reside, was employed to great advantage. Had my father lived to complete his purpose, by withdrawing his whole fortune from commerce, he himself would have accompanied us to England, and would have beheld us settled in peace and honour before his death. But Heaven had ordained it otherwise. He died, leaving several sums engaged in the hands of his Spanish debtors; and in particular, he had made a large and extensive consignment to a certain wealthy society of merchants at Madrid, who showed no willingness after his death to account for the proceeds.

"We went therefore to Madrid. I was then, my Margaret, about your age, young and thoughtless, as you have hitherto been.—We went, I say, to Madrid, to solicit the protection of the court and of the king,

without which, we were told, it would be in vain to expect justice against an opulent and powerful association.

" Our residence at the Spanish metropolis drew on from weeks to months. For my part, my natural sorrow for a kind, though not a fond father, having abated, I cared not if the lawsuit had detained us at Madrid for ever. I was as gay, Margaret, and thoughtless—I again repeat it—as you were but lately, and my attention, like yours, became suddenly riveted to one object, and to one set of feelings.

" The person by whom they were excited was young, noble, handsome, accomplished, a soldier, and a Briton. So far our cases are nearly parallel ; but may Heaven forbid that the parallel should become complete. This man, so noble, so fairly formed, so gifted, and so brave—this *villain*, for that, Margaret, was his fittest name, spoke of love to me, and I listened.

" You have heard of the bitterness of the ancient Scottish feuds, of which it may be said, in the language of Scripture, that the fathers eat sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge. Unhappily —I should say *happily*, considering what this man has now shown himself to be—some such strain of bitterness had divided his house from my mother's, and she had succeeded to the inheritance of hatred. When he asked her for my hand, she was no longer able to command her passions—she rejected his proposal of alliance, as if it had come from the basest of mankind.

" My lover retired in passion ; and I remained to weep and murmur against fortune, and—I will confess my fault—against my affectionate parent.

" While I was in this humour, my lover sought a renewal of our intercourse. We met repeatedly in

the house of a friend, who, in levity, or in the spirit of intrigue, countenanced our secret correspondence. At length we were secretly married—so far did my blinded passion hurry me. My lover had secured the assistance of a clergyman of the English Church.

" I was soon summoned to other scenes: my poor mother's disease drew to a conclusion.—Happy I am that it took place before she discovered what would have cut her to the soul.

" In Spain you may have heard how the Catholic priests, and particularly the monks, often obtain from the dying bequests for the good of the Church. I have said that my mother's temper was irritated by disease, and her judgment impaired in proportion. She avowed the religion she had so long concealed; loaded the astonished priests with reproaches, and commanded them to leave her house. They went in bitterness and rage, but it was to return with the inquisitorial power, its warrants, and its officers; and they found only the cold corpse left of her, on whom they had hoped to work their vengeance. As I was soon discovered to have shared my mother's heresy, I was imprisoned in a solitary cloister in a small and a poor convent, and situated among the mountains of Guadarrama.

" I was very ill, and my recovery was long doubtful.

" One day, as I was walking in the convent garden, to which I had been lately admitted, a miserable old Moorish slave, who was kept to cultivate the little spot, muttered as I passed him, but still keeping his wrinkled face and decrepit form in the same angle with the earth—' There is Heart's Ease near the postern.'

"I knew something of the symbolical language of flowers, once carried to such perfection among the Moriscoes of Spain; but if I had been ignorant of it, the captive would soon have caught at any hint that seemed to promise liberty. With all the haste consistent with the utmost circumspection—for I might be observed by the Abbess or some of the sisters from the window—I hastened to the postern. It was closely barred as usual, but when I coughed slightly, I was answered from the other side—and, O Heaven! it was my husband's voice which said, 'Lose not a moment here at present, but be on the spot when the vesper bell has tolled.'

"I retired in an ecstasy of joy. I was not entitled or permitted to assist at vespers, but was accustomed to be confined to my cell while the nuns were in the choir. Since my recovery, they had discontinued locking the door; though the utmost severity was denounced against me if I left these precincts. But let the penalty be what it would, I hastened to dare it.—No sooner had the last toll of the vesper bell ceased to sound, than I stole from my chamber, reached the garden unobserved, hurried to the postern, beheld it open with rapture, and in the next moment was in my husband's arms. He had with him another cavalier of noble mien—both were masked and armed. Their horses, with one saddled for my use, stood in a thicket hard by, with two other masked horsemen, who seemed to be servants. In less than two minutes we were mounted, and rode off as fast as we could through rough and devious roads, in which one of the domestics appeared to act as guide.

"The hurried pace at which we rode, and the anxiety of the moment, kept me silent, and prevented

my expressing my surprise or my joy save in a few broken words. It also served as an apology for my husband's silence. At length we stopped at a solitary hut—the cavaliers dismounted, and I was assisted from my saddle, not by M—— M—— my husband, I would say, who seemed busied about his horse, but by the stranger.

"'Go into the hut,' said my husband, 'change your dress with the speed of lightning—you will find one to assist you—we must forward instantly when you have shifted your apparel.'

"I entered the hut and was received in the arms of the faithful Monna Paula.

"We were soon mounted again, and my utmost exertion was necessary to keep my place on the saddle, until we suddenly (it was now very dark) saw a strong light before us.

"My husband reined up his horse and gave a signal by a low whistle twice repeated, which was answered from a distance. The whole party then halted under the boughs of a large cork tree, and my husband, drawing himself close to my side, said, in a voice which I then thought was only embarrassed by fear for my safety—'We must now part. Those to whom I commit you are *contrabandists*, who only know you as Englishwomen, but who, for a high bribe, have undertaken to escort you through the passes of the Pyrenees as far as Saint Jean de Luz.'

"'And do *you* not go with us?' I exclaimed, with emphasis, though in a whisper.

"'It is impossible,' he said, 'and would ruin all.—See that you speak in English in these people's hearing, and give not the least sign of understanding what they say in Spanish—your life depends on it; for

though they live in opposition to, and evasion of, the laws of Spain, they would tremble at the idea of violating those of the Church—I see them coming—farewell—farewell.'

"The last words were hastily uttered—I endeavoured to detain him yet a moment by my feeble grasp on his cloak.

"'You will meet me, then, I trust, at Saint Jean de Luz?'

"'Yes, yes,' he answered hastily, 'at Saint Jean de Luz you will meet your protector.'

"He then extricated his cloak from my grasp, and was lost in the darkness. His companion approached, kissed my hand, which in the agony of the moment I was scarce sensible of, and followed my husband, attended by one of the domestics."

The tears of Hermione here flowed so fast as to threaten the interruption of her narrative.

"I told you, I think, that one domestic followed the gentlemen," thus the lady continued her story, "the other remained with us for the purpose, as it seemed, of introducing us to two persons whom M—— I say, whom my husband's signal had brought to the spot. A word or two of explanation passed between them and the servant, in a sort of *patois*, which I did not understand; and one of the strangers taking hold of my bridle, led me towards the light, which I have already said was the signal of our halting.

"When we reached the fire, the gipsy figures of those who surrounded it, with their swarthy features, large sombrero hats, girdles stuck full of pistols and poniards, and all the other apparatus of a roving and perilous life, would have terrified me at another moment. But then I only felt the agony of having

parted from my husband almost in the very moment of my rescue.

"These are dreadful recollections, Margaret. Yet would I rather dwell on these hazardous events than tell that which awaited me at Saint Jean de Luz."

"But you arrived there in safety?" said Margaret.

"Yes, maiden," replied the Lady Hermione; "and were guided by the chief of our outlawed band to the house which had been assigned for our reception, with the same punctilious accuracy with which he would have delivered a bale of uncustomed goods to a correspondent. I was told a gentleman had expected me for two days—I rushed into the apartment, and, when I expected to meet my husband—I found myself in the presence of his friend!"

"The villain!" exclaimed Margaret, whose anxiety had, in spite of herself, been a moment suspended by the narrative of the lady.

"Yes," replied Hermione calmly, though her voice somewhat faltered, "it is the name that best—that well befits him. He, Margaret, for whom I sacrificed all—whose love and whose memory were dearer to me than my freedom, when I was in the convent—than my life, when I was on my perilous journey—had taken his measures to shake me off, and desert me for ever.

"His friend at least acted the part of a man of honour. He directed how we should journey to Paris, and furnished me with money for the purpose of our journey. From the capital I wrote to Master Heriot, my father's most trusted correspondent; he came instantly to Paris on receiving the letter; and—— But here comes Monna Paula, with more

than the sum you desired. Take it, my dearest maiden—serve this youth if you will. But O, Margaret, look for no gratitude in return."

The Lady Hermione took the bag of gold from her attendant, and gave it to her young friend, who threw herself into her arms, kissed her on both the pale cheeks, over which the sorrows so newly awakened by her narrative had drawn many tears, then sprung up, wiped her own overflowing eyes, and left the apartment with a hasty and resolved step.

CHAPTER XVIII

We left Nigel, whose fortunes we are bound to trace by the engagement contracted in our title-page, sad and solitary in the mansion of Trapbois the usurer, where he had taken refuge.

He went to the window of his apartment, and found the street enveloped in one of those thick, dingy, yellow-coloured fogs which often invest the lower part of London and Westminster. The prospect was too tiresome and disagreeable to detain Lord Glenvarloch at his station, so, turning from the window, he examined with more interest the furniture and appearance of the apartment which he tenanted.

Much of it had been in its time rich and curious—there was a huge four-post bed, with as much carved oak about it as would have made the head of a man-of-war, and tapestry hangings ample enough to have been her sails. There was a huge mirror with a massy frame of gilt brass-work, which was of Venetian manufacture, and must have been worth a considerable

sum before it received a tremendous crack, which, traversing it from one corner to the other, bore the same proportion to the surface that the Nile bears to the map of Egypt. The chairs were of different forms and shapes, some had been carved, some gilded, some covered with damasked leather, some with embroidered work, but all were damaged and worm-eaten.

He was chiefly interested in the state of the grate, a huge assemblage of rusted iron bars which stood in the chimney, unequally supported by three brazen feet, moulded into the form of lion's claws, while the fourth, which had been bent by an accident, seemed proudly uplifted as if to paw the ground; or as if the whole article had nourished the ambitious purpose of pacing forth into the middle of the apartment, and had one foot ready raised for the journey. A smile passed over Nigel's face as this fantastic idea presented itself to his fancy.—"I must stop its march, however," he thought, "for this morning is chill and raw enough to demand some fire."

He called accordingly from the top of a large staircase which gave access to his own and other apartments, but receiving no answer to his repeated summons, he made his way down the stairs, and into a little low, dark parlour, containing a well-worn leathern easy-chair, before which stood a pair of slippers, while on the left side rested a crutch-handled staff; an oaken table stood before it, and supported a huge desk clamped with iron, and a massive pewter inkstand. Around the apartment were shelves, cabinets, and other places convenient for depositing papers. A sword, musketoon, and a pair of pistols hung over the chimney, in ostentatious display, as if to intimate

that the proprietor would be prompt in the defence of his premises.

"This must be the usurer's den," thought Nigel; and he was about to call aloud, when the old man, awakened even by the slightest noise, for avarice seldom sleeps sound, soon was heard from the inner room, speaking in a voice of irritability, rendered more tremulous by his morning cough.

"Ugh, ugh, ugh—who is there? I say—ugh, ugh—who is there? Why, Martha—ugh, ugh—Martha Trapbois—here be thieves in the house, and they will not speak to me—why, Martha!—thieves, thieves—ugh, ugh, ugh!"

Nigel endeavoured to explain, but the idea of thieves had taken possession of the old man, and he kept coughing and screaming, and screaming and coughing, until Martha entered the apartment, and, having first outscreamed her father, in order to convince him that there was no danger, and to assure him that the intruder was their new lodger, and having as often heard her sire ejaculate—"Hold him fast—ugh, ugh—hold him fast till I come," she at length succeeded in silencing his fears and his clamour, and then coldly and dryly asked Lord Glenvarloch what he wanted in her father's apartment.

Her lodger had, in the meantime, leisure to contemplate her appearance. She was dressed in what was called a Queen Mary's ruff and farthingale. Her figure was tall, thin, and flat, with skinny arms and hands, and feet of the larger size, cased in huge high-heeled shoes, which added height to a stature already ungainly.

Such was Mistress Martha Trapbois, whose dry "What were you seeking here, sir?" fell again, and

with reiterated sharpness, on the ear of Nigel, as he gazed upon her presence, and compared it internally to one of the faded and grim figures in the old tapestry which adorned his bedstead. It was, however, necessary to reply, and he answered, that he came in search of the servants, as he desired to have a fire kindled in his apartment on account of the rawness of the morning.

"The woman who does our char-work," answered Mistress Martha, "comes at eight o'clock—if you want fire sooner, there are faggots and a bucket of sea-coal in the store closet at the head of the stair—and there is a flint and steel on the upper shelf—you can light fire for yourself if you will."

"No—no—no, Martha," ejaculated her father. "The gentleman shall not have the trouble to put on a fire—ugh, ugh. I'll put it on myself, for a con-si-de-ra-tion."

"For shame, father," said Martha; "that must not be. Master Grahame (for such was the name Nigel had assumed in his place of refuge) will kindle his own fire, or wait till the charwoman comes to do it for him, just as likes him best."

"No, child—no, child. Child Martha, no," reiterated the old miser—"no charwoman shall ever touch a grate in my house; they put—ugh, ugh—the faggot uppermost, and so the coal kindles not, and the flame goes up the chimney, and wood and heat are both thrown away. Now, I will lay it properly for the gentleman, for a consideration, so that it shall last—ugh, ugh—last the whole day."

"I am not wont either to thrust myself upon acquaintance, madam, or to give trouble," said Nigel; "nevertheless, I shall need the assistance of a domestic

to assist me to dress.—Perhaps you can recommend me to such ? "

" Yes, to twenty," answered Mistress Martha, " who will pick your purse while they tie your points, and cut your throat while they smooth your pillow."

" I will be his servant, myself," said the old man, whose intellect, for a moment distanced, had again in some measure got up with the conversation. " I will brush his cloak—ugh, ugh—and tie his points—ugh, ugh—and clean his shoes—ugh—and run on his errands with speed and safety—ugh, ugh, ugh, ugh—for a consideration."

" Good-morrow to you, sir," said Martha to Nigel, in a tone of direct and positive dismissal. " It cannot be agreeable to a daughter that a stranger should hear her father speak thus. If you be really a gentleman, you will retire to your own apartment."

" I will not delay a moment," said Nigel respectfully, for he was sensible that circumstances palliated the woman's rudeness. " I would but ask you, if seriously there can be danger in procuring the assistance of a serving-man in this place ? "

" Young gentleman," said Martha, " you must know little of Whitefriars to ask the question. We live alone in this house, and seldom has a stranger entered it ; nor should you, to be plain, had my will been consulted. Look at the door—see if that of a castle can be better secured ; the windows of the first floor are grated on the outside, and within, look to these shutters."

She pulled one of them aside, and showed a ponderous apparatus of bolts and chains for securing the window-shutters, while her father, pressing to her side, seized her gown with a trembling hand, and said, in a low

whisper, "Show not the trick of locking and undoing them. Show him not the trick on't, Martha—ugh, ugh—on *no* consideration." Martha went on without paying him any attention.

"I therefore warn you of the life you must lead, young gentleman; the poor woman who does the char-work will assist you so far as is in her power, but the wise man is his own best servant and assistant."

"It is a lesson you have taught me, madam, and I thank you for it—I will assuredly study it at leisure."

"You will do well," said Martha; "and, as you seem thankful for advice, I, though I am no professed counsellor of others, will give you more. Make no intimacy with any one in Whitefriars—borrow no money, on any score, especially from my father, for, dotard as he seems, he will make an ass of you. Last, and best of all, stay here not an instant longer than you can help it. Farewell, sir."

"A gnarled tree may bear good fruit, and a harsh nature may give good counsel," thought the Lord of Glenvarloch, as he retreated to his own apartment.

A little while later the old charwoman, who, to add to her efficiency, was sadly crippled by rheumatism, hobbled into the room, to try if she could gain a small gratification by waiting on the stranger. She readily undertook to get Lord Glenvarloch's breakfast, and, as there was an eating-house at the next door, she succeeded in a shorter time than Nigel had augured.

As his solitary meal was finished, one of the Temple porters, or inferior officers, was announced, as seeking Master Grahame on the part of his friend, Master Lowestoffe; and, being admitted by the old woman to his apartment, he delivered to Nigel a small mail-trunk, with some clothes he had desired should be sent

to him, and then, with more mystery, put into his hand a casket, or strong-box, which he had carefully concealed beneath his cloak. "I am glad to be rid on't," said the fellow, as he placed it on the table.

To satisfy the scruples of the messenger, Lord Glenvarloch opened the casket in his presence and saw that his small stock of money, with two or three valuable papers which it contained, and particularly the original sign-manual which the king had granted in his favour, were in the same order in which he had left them. At the man's further instance, he availed himself of the writing materials which were in the casket, in order to send a line to Master Lowestoffe, declaring that his property had reached him in safety.

CHAPTER XIX

NIGEL had already formed his own plan to extricate himself, at whatsoever risk, from his perilous and degrading situation. He could only amuse himself by looking through such parts of his baggage as had been sent to him from his former lodgings, in order to select a small packet of the most necessary articles to take with him, in the event of his quitting his lodgings secretly and suddenly, as speed and privacy would, he foresaw, be particularly necessary, if he meant to obtain an interview with the king, which was the course his spirit and his interest alike determined him to pursue.

While he was thus engaged, he found, greatly to his satisfaction, that Master Lowestoffe had transmitted not only his rapier and poniard, but a pair of pistols,

which he had used in travelling. He felt an emotion of confidence approaching to triumph, as, drawing his own good and well-tried rapier he wiped it with his handkerchief, examined its point, bent it once or twice against the ground to prove its well-known metal, and finally replaced it in the scabbard, the more hastily, that he heard a tap at the door of his chamber, and had no mind to be found vapouring in the apartment with his sword drawn.

It was his old host who entered, to tell him, with many cringes, that the price of his apartment was to be a crown per diem; and that, according to the custom of Whitefriars, the rent was always payable per advance, although he never scrupled to let the money lie till a week or fortnight, or even a month, in the hands of any honourable guest like Master Grahame, always upon some reasonable consideration for the use. Nigel got rid of the old dotard's intrusion, by throwing down two pieces of gold, and requesting the accommodation of his present apartment for eight days, adding, however, he did not think he should tarry so long.

Lord Glenvarloch then applied to old Deborah the charwoman, by whose intermediation he was provided with a tolerably decent dinner; and the only embarrassment which he experienced was from the almost forcible entry of the old dotard his landlord, who insisted upon giving his assistance at laying the cloth.

Having at length obliged him to relinquish his purpose, he could not help observing that the eyes of the old dotard seemed still anxiously fixed upon the small table on which lay his sword and pistols; and that, amidst all the little duties which he seemed officiously anxious to render to his guest, he took every opportunity of looking towards and approaching these

objects of his attention. At length, when Trapbois thought he had completely avoided the notice of his guest, Nigel, through the observation of one of the cracked mirrors, on which channel of communication the old man had not calculated, beheld him actually extend his hand towards the table in question. He thought it unnecessary to use further ceremony, but, telling his landlord in a stern voice, that he permitted no one to touch his arms, he commanded him to leave the apartment, on which the old man withdrew grumbling and muttering.

The old woman asked if there was aught else to be done for his accommodation; and, indeed, it had hitherto seemed as if the pleasure of serving him, or more properly the reward which she expected, had renewed her youth and activity. Nigel desired to have candles, to have a fire lighted in his apartment, and a few faggots placed beside it, that he might feed it from time to time, as he began to feel the chilly effects of the damp and low situation of the house, close as it was to the Thames. But while the old woman was absent upon his errand, he began to think in what way he should pass the long solitary evening with which he was threatened.

The old housewife returned shortly afterwards with faggots and some pieces of half-burnt wax candles, the perquisites, probably, real or usurped, of some experienced groom of the chambers, two of which she placed in large brass candlesticks of different shapes and patterns, and laid the others on the table, that Nigel might renew them from time to time as they burnt to the socket.

He looked out at the window; but the night was rainy, with gusts of wind; he tried to coax the fire,

but the faggots were green, and smoked without burning; and, as he was naturally temperate, he felt his blood somewhat heated by the canary sack which he had already drunk, and had no further inclination to that pastime. He next attempted to compose a memorial addressed to the king, in which he set forth his case and his grievances; but, speedily stung with the idea that his supplication would be treated with scorn, he flung the scroll into the fire, and, in a sort of desperation, retired to bed.

There was a slight fever in Nigel's blood, occasioned by the various events of the evening, which put him, as the phrase is, beside his rest. Perplexing and painful thoughts rolled on his mind like a troubled stream, and the more he laboured to lull himself to slumber, the farther he seemed from attaining his object.

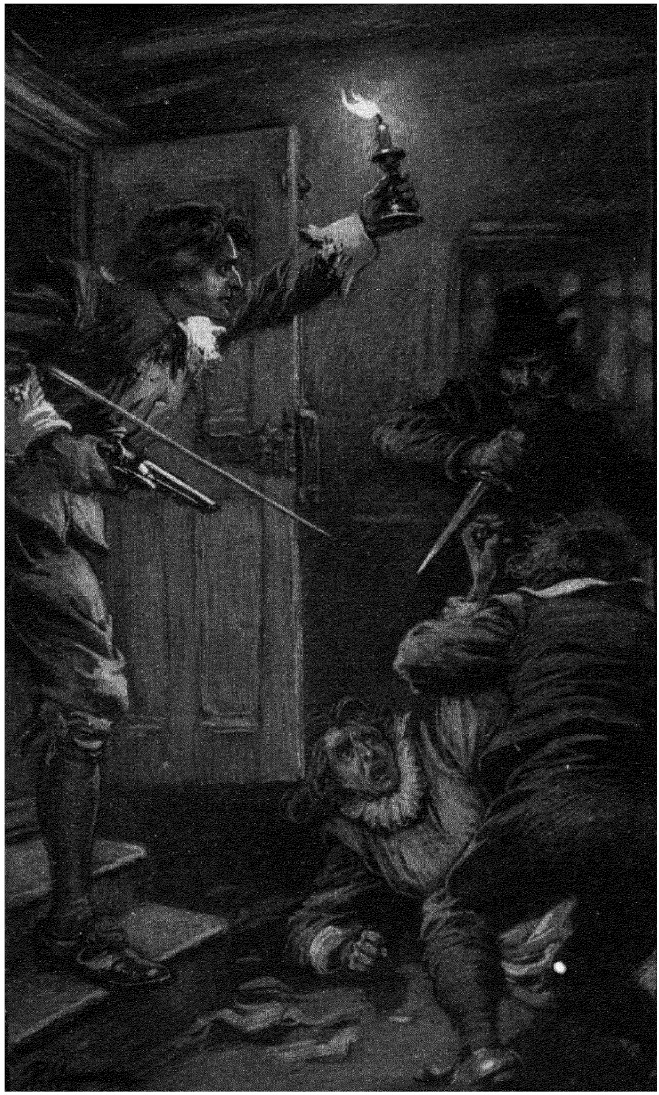
Suddenly, however, came a sound which startled him at once. It was a female shriek. He sat up in his bed to listen, then remembered he was in Alsatia, where brawls of every sort were current among the unruly inhabitants. But another scream, and another, and another, succeeded so close, that he was certain, though the noise was remote and sounded stifled, it must be in the same house with himself.

Nigel jumped up hastily, put on a part of his clothes, seized his sword and pistols, and ran to the door of his chamber. Here he plainly heard the screams redoubled, and, as he thought, the sounds came from the usurer's apartment. He hastened back to his room, and succeeded with some difficulty in lighting a candle, powerfully agitated by hearing the cries repeated, yet still more afraid lest they should sink into silence.

He rushed down the staircase, guided by the noise, which now burst more wildly on his ear; and at its foot he heard the stifled voices of men, encouraging, as it seemed, each other.—"Strike her down—silence her—beat her brains out!"—while the voice of his hostess, though now almost exhausted, was repeating the cry of "murder" and "help." At the bottom of the staircase was a small door, which gave way before Nigel as he precipitated himself upon the scene of action,—a cocked pistol in one hand, a candle in the other, and his naked sword under his arm.

Two ruffians had, with great difficulty, overpowered, or, rather, were on the point of overpowering, the daughter of Trapbois, whose resistance appeared to have been most desperate, for the floor was covered with fragments of her clothes and handfuls of her hair. It appeared that her life was about to be the price of her defence, for one villain had drawn a long clasp-knife, when they were surprised by the entrance of Nigel, who, as they turned towards him, shot the fellow with the knife dead on the spot, and, when the other advanced to him, hurled the candlestick at his head, and then attacked him with his sword. It was dark, save some pale moonlight from the window; and the ruffian, after firing a pistol without effect, and fighting a traverse or two with his sword, lost heart, made for the window, leaped through it, and escaped. Nigel fired his remaining pistol after him at a venture and then called for light.

"There is light in the kitchen," answered Martha Trapbois, with more presence of mind than could have been expected. "Stay, you know not the way; I will fetch it myself.—Oh! my father—my poor



NIGEL . . . PRECIPITATED HIMSELF UPON THE SCENE OF ACTION.

father !—I knew it would come to this—and all along of the accursed gold !—They have MURDERED him ! "

CHAPTER XX

IT was a ghastly scene which opened upon Martha Trapbois's return with a light. Her own haggard and austere features were exaggerated by all the desperation of grief, fear, and passion—but the latter was predominant. On the floor lay the body of the robber, who had expired without a groan, while his blood, flowing plentifully, had crimsoned all around. Another body lay also there, on which the unfortunate woman precipitated herself in agony, for it was that of her unhappy father. In the next moment she started up, and exclaiming—" There may be life yet ! " strove to raise the body. Nigel went to her assistance, but not without a glance at the open window ; which Martha, as acute as if undisturbed either by passion or terror, failed not to interpret justly.

" Fear not," she cried, " fear not ; they are base cowards, to whom courage is as much unknown as mercy. If I had had weapons, I could have defended myself against them without assistance or protection. —Oh ! my poor father ! protection comes too late for this cold and stiff corpse.—He is dead—dead ! "

While she spoke, they were attempting to raise the dead body of the old miser ; but it was evident, even from the feeling of the inactive weight and rigid joints, that life had forsaken her station. Nigel looked for a wound, but saw none. The daughter of

the deceased, with more presence of mind than a daughter could at the time have been supposed capable of exerting, discovered the instrument of his murder—a sort of scarf, which had been drawn so tight round his throat as to stifle his cries for assistance in the first instance, and afterwards to extinguish life.

She undid the fatal noose; and, laying the old man's body in the arms of Lord Glenvarloch, she ran for water, for spirits, for essences, in the vain hope that life might be only suspended. That hope proved indeed vain.

"It is in vain—it is in vain," said the daughter, desisting from her fruitless attempts to recall the spirit which had been effectually dislodged, for the neck had been twisted by the violence of the murderers; "it is in vain—he is murdered—I always knew it would be thus; and now I witness it! Stranger, whom heaven has sent to forward the revenge reserved for this action, go to Hildebrod's—he is the Duke or Chief of Alsatia—bid him come hither—he is bound by his duty, and dare not, and shall not, refuse his assistance, which he knows well I can reward. Why do ye tarry?—go instantly."

"I would," said Nigel, "but I am fearful of leaving you alone; the villains may return, and——"

"True, most true," answered Martha, "he may return; and, though I care little for his murdering me, he may possess himself of what has most tempted him. Keep this key and this piece of gold; they are both of importance—defend your life if assailed, and if you kill the villain I will make you rich. I go myself to call for aid."

Nigel would have remonstrated with her, but she

had departed, and in a moment he heard the house-door clank behind her.

It was no pleasant situation for one unused to such scenes to remain in the apartment with two dead bodies, recently those of living and breathing men, who had both, within the space of less than half an hour, suffered violent death ; one of them by the hand of the assassin, the other, whose blood still continued to flow from the wound in his throat, and to flood all around him, by the spectator's own deed of violence, though of justice. Nigel turned his face from those wretched relics of mortality with a feeling of disgust, mingled with superstition, and went to the window, when he was much cheered to observe the light of several torches illuminating the street, and followed, as the murmur of voices denoted, by a number of persons, armed, it would seem, with firelocks and halberds, and attendant on Hildebrod, who (not in his fantastic office of duke, but in that which he really possessed of bailiff of the liberty and sanctuary of Whitefriars) was on his way to inquire into the crime and its circumstances.

Old Hildebrod seemed much shocked at what he beheld, and his proceedings, in consequence, had more in them of regularity and propriety than he might have been supposed capable of exhibiting upon any occasion whatever. The daughter was first examined, and stated, with wonderful accuracy and distinctness, the manner in which she had been alarmed with a noise of struggling and violence in her father's apartment. On her entrance, she had seen her father sinking under the strength of two men, upon whom she rushed with all the fury she was capable of. She remembered little more except the firing of shots,

until she found herself alone with her guest, and saw that the ruffians had escaped.

Lord Glenvarloch told his story as we have given it to the reader. The direct evidence thus received, Hildebrod examined the premises, and next sent for an Alsatian surgeon, whose vices, undoing what his skill might have done for him, had consigned him to the wretched practice of this place. He made him examine the dead bodies, and make a proper declaration of the manner in which the sufferers seemed to have come by their end. Then, having listened to all that could be heard or conjectured on the subject, the learned judge commanded the door of the apartment to be locked until next morning.

While Duke Hildebrod went from place to place to see the windows fastened, and the doors of the apartment locked up, a young man, dressed in a green plush jerkin, with a badge on the sleeve, and having the appearance of a waterman, approached and took Nigel aside. He intimated in a courteous whisper to Nigel, that Master Lowestoffe prayed him to consult his safety by instantly leaving Whitefriars, for that a warrant from the Lord Chief-Justice had been issued out for apprehending him, and would be put in force to-morrow, by the assistance of a party of musketeers, a force which the Alsatians neither would nor dared to resist.

"And so, squire," said the aquatic emissary, "my wherry is to wait you at the Temple Stairs yonder, at five this morning, and, if you would give the bloodhounds the slip, why, you may."

"Why did not Master Lowestoffe write to me?" said Nigel.

"Alas! the good gentleman lies up in lavender for

it himself, and has as little to do with pen and ink as if he were a parson."

"Did he send any token to me?" said Nigel.

"Token!—ay, marry did he—token enough, an I have not forgot it," said the fellow; then, giving a hoist to the waistband of his breeches, he said, "Ay, I have it—you were to believe me, because your name was written with an O, for Grahame. Ay, that was it, I think.—Well, shall we meet in two hours, when tide turns, and go down the river like a twelve-oared barge?"

"Where is the king just now, knowest thou?" answered Lord Glenvarloch.

"The king! why, he went down to Greenwich yesterday by water, like a noble sovereign as he is, who will always float where he can. He was to have hunted this week, but that purpose is broken, they say; and the prince, and the duke, and all of them at Greenwich, are as merry as minnows."

"Well," replied Nigel, "I will be ready to go at five; do thou come hither to carry my baggage."

"Ay, ay, master," replied the fellow, and left the house, mixing himself with the disorderly attendants of Duke Hildebrod, who were now retiring.

Nigel then returned to the kitchen, to which the unhappy woman had retired, her hands still clenched, her eyes fixed, and her limbs extended like those of a person in a trance. Much moved by her situation, and with the prospect which lay before her, he endeavoured to awaken her to existence by every means in his power, and at length apparently succeeded in dispelling her stupor, and attracting her attention. He then explained to her that he was in the act of leaving Whitefriars in a few hours—that his future

destination was uncertain, but that he desired anxiously to know whether he could contribute to her protection by apprising any friend of her situation or otherwise.

"You are going hence, you say, instantly—carry me with you," said the unhappy woman. "By my own efforts, I shall never escape from this wilderness of guilt and misery."

"Alas! what can I do for you?" replied Nigel. "My own way, and I must not deviate from it, leads me, in all probability, to a dungeon. I might, indeed, transport you from hence with me, if you could afterwards bestow yourself with any friend."

"Friend!" she exclaimed—"I have no friend—they have long since discarded us. A spectre arising from the dead were more welcome than I should be at the doors of those who have disclaimed us; and, if they were willing to restore their friendship to me now, I would despise it, because they withdrew it from him—from him"—(here she underwent strong but suppressed agitation, and then added firmly)—"from *him* who lies yonder.—I have no friend." Here she paused; and then suddenly, as if recollecting herself, added, "I have no friend, but I have that will purchase many—I have that which will purchase both friends and avengers.—It is well thought of; I must not leave it for a prey to cheats and ruffians.—Stranger, you must return to yonder room into which I will show you a secret passage. Pass through it boldly to his—that is, to the sleeping apartment; push the bedstead aside; beneath each of the posts is a brass plate, as if to support the weight, but it is that upon the left, nearest to the wall, which must serve your turn,—press the corner of the plate, and

it will spring up and show a keyhole, which this key will open. You will then lift a concealed trapdoor, and in a cavity of the floor you will discover a small chest. Bring it hither; it shall accompany our journey, and it will be hard if the contents cannot purchase me a place of refuge."

Lord Glenvarloch took the key, and, as he lighted a lamp to show him the way, she read in his countenance some unwillingness to the task imposed.

"You fear," she said—"there is no cause; the murderer and his victim are both at rest. Take courage, I will go with you myself—you cannot know the trick of the spring, and the chest will be too heavy for you."

They conveyed the strong-box betwixt them into Lord Glenvarloch's sleeping apartment. "It must pass," she said, "as part of your baggage. I will be in readiness as soon as the waterman calls."

She retired; and Lord Glenvarloch, who saw the hour of their departure approach, tore down a part of the old hanging to make a covering, which he corded upon the trunk, lest the peculiarity of its shape, and the care with which it was banded and counter-banded with bars of steel, might afford suspicions respecting the treasure which it contained. Having taken this measure of precaution, he changed the rascally disguise, which he had assumed on entering Whitefriars, into a suit becoming his quality, and then, unable to sleep, though exhausted with the events of the night, he threw himself on his bed to await the summons of the waterman.

CHAPTER XXI

GREY, or rather yellow light, was beginning to twinkle through the fogs of Whitefriars, when a low tap at the door of the unhappy miser announced to Lord Glenvarloch the summons of the boatman. He found at the door the man whom he had seen the night before, with a companion.

"Come, come, master, let us get afloat," said one of them, in a rough, impressive whisper; "time and tide wait for no man."

"They shall not wait for me," said Lord Glenvarloch; "but I have some things to carry with me."

One of the men was soon sufficiently loaded, in his own estimation at least, with Lord Glenvarloch's mail and its accompaniments, with which burden he began to trudge towards the Temple Stairs. His comrade, who seemed the principal, began to handle the trunk which contained the miser's treasure, but pitched it down again in an instant, declaring, with a great oath, that it was as reasonable to expect a man to carry Paul's on his back. The daughter of Trapbois, who had by this time joined them, muffled up in a long dark hood and mantle, exclaimed to Lord Glenvarloch—"Let them leave it if they will—let them leave it all; let us but escape from this horrible place."

Nigel was a very athletic young man, and, impelled by a strong feeling of compassion and indignation, he showed his bodily strength singularly on this occasion, by seizing on the ponderous strong-box, and, by means of the rope he had cast around it, throwing it on his shoulders, and marching resolutely

forward under a weight which would have sunk to the earth three young gallants, at the least, of our degenerate day. The waterman followed him in amazement, calling out, "Why, master, master, you might as well gie me t'other end on't!" and anon offered his assistance to support it in some degree behind, which, after the first minute or two, Nigel was fain to accept. His strength was almost exhausted when he reached the wherry, which was lying at the Temple Stairs according to appointment; and, when he pitched the trunk into it, the weight sank the bow of the boat so low in the water as well-nigh to overset it.

"We shall have as hard a fare of it," said the waterman to his companion, "as if we were ferrying over an honest bankrupt with all his secreted goods.—Ho, ho! good woman, what are you stepping in for?—our gunwale lies deep enough in the water without live lumber to boot."

"This person comes with me," said Lord Glenvarloch; "she is for the present under my protection."

They got into the stream-way accordingly, and, although heavily laden, began to move down the river with reasonable speed.

Meanwhile Lord Glenvarloch asked his desolate companion if she had thought on any place where she could remain in safety with her property. She confessed that her father's character had left her no friends; and that what she now wished was, in the first place, to obtain the shelter of a decent lodging, and the countenance of honest people, however low in life, until she should obtain legal advice as to the mode of obtaining justice on her father's murderer.

After ascertaining from his companion that she

could form no better plan of her own, Nigel recommended to her to take up her lodging for the time at the house of his old landlord, Christie the ship-chandler, at Paul's Wharf. The poor woman received advice so grateful to her in her desolate condition with an expression of thanks, brief indeed, but deeper than anything had yet extracted from the austerity of her natural disposition.

Lord Glenvarloch then proceeded to inform Martha, that certain reasons, connected with his personal safety, called him immediately to Greenwich, and, therefore, it would not be in his power to accompany her to Christie's house, which he would otherwise have done with pleasure; but, tearing a leaf from his tablet, he wrote on it a few lines, addressed to his landlord, as a man of honesty and humanity, in which he described the bearer as a person who stood in singular necessity of temporary protection and good advice, for which her circumstances enabled her to make ample acknowledgment. This note he subscribed with his real name, and, delivering it to his *protégée*, who received it with another deeply uttered "I thank you," which spoke the sterling feelings of her gratitude better than a thousand combined phrases, he commanded the watermen to pull in for Paul's Wharf, which they were now approaching.

"We have not time," said one of them; "we cannot be stopping every instant."

But, upon Nigel insisting upon his commands being obeyed, and adding, that it was for the purpose of putting the lady ashore, the waterman declared he would rather have her room than her company, and put the wherry alongside of the wharf accordingly. Here two of the porters, who ply in such places, were

easily induced to undertake the charge of the ponderous strong box, and at the same time to guide the owner to the well-known mansion of John Christie.

The boat, much lightened of its load, went down the Thames at a rate increased in proportion. But we must forbear to pursue her in her voyage for a few minutes, since we have previously to mention the issue of Lord Glenvarloch's recommendation.

Mistress Martha Trapbois reached the shop in perfect safety.

Master Christie was not able to assist her, but with the assistance of Richie Moniplies, who had come to John Christie's house in quest of his master, Martha was accommodated in a respectable lodging, and here we must leave her to follow the fortunes of our hero.

CHAPTER XXII

We left Lord Glenvarloch, to whose fortunes our story chiefly attaches itself, gliding swiftly down the Thames.

He sat, wrapped in his cloak, in the stern of the boat, with his mind entirely bent upon the probable issue of the interview with his sovereign, which it was his purpose to seek; for which abstraction of mind he may be fully justified, although perhaps, by questioning the watermen who were transporting him down the river, he might have discovered matters of high concernment to him.

At any rate, Nigel remained silent till the wherry approached the town of Greenwich, when he commanded the men to put in for the nearest landing-place,

as it was his purpose to go ashore there, and dismiss them from further attendance.

As he spoke, they approached the landing-place, where Nigel instantly jumped ashore. The waterman placed his small mail-trunk on the stairs, observing that there were plenty of spare hands about, to carry it where he would.

Lord Glenvarloch soon received, as the boatman had assured him, the offer of an idle bargeman to transport his baggage where he listed; and he desired to be guided to a certain eating-house, where he trusted to receive some information as to the best mode of introducing himself into the royal presence. Lord Glenvarloch found, in the host with whom he communed, the consequential taciturnity of an Englishman well to pass in the world. Ned Kilderkin spoke as a banker writes, only touching the needful.

While Nigel was thus engaged in discussing his commons, but raising his head at the same time whenever he heard the door of the apartment open, a personage entered and began to hold earnest colloquy with the publican, who thought proper to carry on the conference on his side unbonneted. This important gentleman's occupation might be guessed from his dress. A milk-white jerkin, and hose of white kersey; a white apron twisted around his body in the manner of a sash, in which, instead of a warlike dagger, was stuck a long-bladed knife, hilted with buck's horn; a white nightcap on his head, under which his hair was neatly tucked, sufficiently portrayed him as one of those priests of Comus whom the vulgar call cooks; and the air with which he rated the publican for having neglected to send some provisions to the palace, showed that he ministered to royalty itself.

His eye, falling upon Lord Glenvarloch, he stopped his harangue and showed symptoms of embarrassment which induced Ned Kilderkin to ask him what he ailed and whether he would take anything.

"Ail nothing," replied Master Linklater, "nothing—and yet I would taste a glass of your dame's famous cordial." "I will fetch it," said Ned, giving a nod, and his back was no sooner turned, than the cook walked near the table where Nigel was seated, and, regarding him with a look of significance, where more was meant than met the ear, said, "You are a stranger in Greenwich, sir. I advise you to take the opportunity to step into the park—the western wicket was ajar, when I come hither."

Nothing makes men's wits so alert as personal danger. Nigel took the first opportunity to discharge his reckoning, and readily obtained a direction to the wicket in question. He found it upon the latch, and perceived that it admitted him to a narrow footpath, which traversed a close and tangled thicket, designed for the cover of the does and the young fawns. He conjectured it would be proper to wait; nor had he been stationary above five minutes, when the cook arrived almost breathless, and with his pass-key hastily locked the wicket behind him.

Ere Lord Glenvarloch had time to speculate upon this action, the man approached with anxiety, and said—"Good Lord, my Lord Glenvarloch!—why will you endanger yourself thus? Know you not that there are warrants out against you?"

"You know me, then, my friend?" said Nigel.

"Not much of that, my lord—but I know your honour's noble house well.—My name is Laurie Linklater, my lord."

"Linklater!" repeated Nigel. "I should recollect——"

"Under your lordship's favour," he continued, "I was 'prentice, my lord, to old Mungo Moniplies, the flesher at the wanton West Port of Edinburgh, which I wish I saw again before I died. And your honour's noble father having taken Richie Moniplies into his house to wait on your lordship, there was a sort of connection, your lordship sees."

"Ah!" said Lord Glenvarloch, "I had almost forgot your name, but not your kind purpose. You tried to put Richie in the way of presenting a supplication to his Majesty?"

"Most true, my lord," replied the king's cook. "I had like to have come by mischief in the job; for Richie, who was always wilful, 'wadna be guided by me,' as the sang says. But nobody amongst these brave English cooks can kittle up his Majesty's most sacred palate with our own gusty Scottish dishes. So I e'en betook myself to my craft, and concocted a mess of friar's chicken for the soup, and a savoury haggis, that made the whole cabal coup the crans; and, instead of disgrace, I came by preferment."

"I am truly glad," said Nigel, "to hear that you have not suffered on my account. But tell me, how am I to get to sight and speech of the king?"

"To the sight of him readily enough," said Linklater; "he is galloping about these alleys, to see them strike the hart. To the speech of the king you will not come so easily unless you could either meet him alone, which rarely chances, or wait for him among the crowd which goes to see him alight."

The honest cook lingered, but a burst of horns apprised him that there was no time to lose; and.

acquainting Nigel that he would leave the postern-door on the latch to secure his retreat in that direction, he bade God bless him, and farewell.

Nigel traversed more than one alley, guided by the sounds of the chase, but still there was no appearance of James, or any of his courtiers, and Nigel began to think whether, at the risk of incurring disgrace similar to that which had attended the rash exploit of Richie Moniplies, he should not repair to the palace gate, in order to address the king on his return, when Fortune presented him the opportunity of doing so, in her own way.

He was in one of those long walks by which the park was traversed, when he heard the rapid approach of hoofs; then a distant halloo, warned by which he stood up by the side of the avenue, leaving free room for the passage of the chase. The stag, reeling, his nostrils expanded as he gasped for breath, made a shift to come up as far as where Nigel stood, and, without turning to bay, was there pulled down by two tall greyhounds of the breed still used by the hardy deer-stalkers of the Scottish Highlands.

A single horseman followed the chase, upon a steed so thoroughly subjected to the rein, that it obeyed the touch of the bridle as if it had been a mechanical impulse operating on the nicest piece of machinery; so that, seated deep in his demi-pique saddle, and so trussed up there as to make falling almost impossible, the rider, without either fear or hesitation, might increase or diminish the speed at which he rode, which, even on the most animating occasions of the chase, seldom exceeded three-fourths of a gallop, the horse keeping his haunches under him, and never stretching forward beyond the managed pace of the academy.



A SINGLE HORSEMAN FOLLOWED THE CHASE.

The security with which he chose to prosecute even this favourite, and, in ordinary case, somewhat dangerous amusement, as well as the rest of his equipage, marked King James. No attendant was within sight; indeed, it was often a nice strain of flattery to permit the sovereign to suppose he had outridden and distanced all the rest of the chase.

"Weel dune Bash—weel dune Battie!" he exclaimed, as he came up. "By the honour of a king, ye are a credit to the Braes of Balwhither! Haud my horse, man," he called out to Nigel, without stopping to see to whom he had addressed himself, "haud the rein easy, dinna let him swerve—now, haud the stirrup—that will do, man, and now we are on *terra firma*." So saying, without casting an eye on his assistant, gentle King Jamie, unsheathing the short, sharp hanger, which was the only thing approaching to a sword that he could willingly endure the sight of, drew the blade with great satisfaction across the throat of the buck, and put an end at once to its struggles and its agonies.

"And wha may ye be, friend?" the king said, now finding leisure to take a nearer view of Nigel, and observing what in his first emotion of sylvan delight had escaped him—"Ye are nane of our train, man. In the name of God, what the devil are ye?"

"An unfortunate man, sire," replied Nigel, "whom necessity makes bold to avail himself of an opportunity which may never again occur."

King James looked; his blood left his cheek, though it continued stained with that of the animal which lay at his feet, he dropped the knife from his hand, cast behind him a faltering eye, as if he either meditated flight or looked out for assistance, and then

exclaimed,—" Glenvarlochides ! as sure as I was christened James Stuart. Here is a bonnie spot of work, and me alone, and on foot too ! " he added, bustling to get upon his horse.

" Forgive me that I interrupt you, my liege," said Nigel, placing himself between the king and the steed ; " hear me but a moment ! "

" I'll hear ye best on horseback," said the king. " I canna hear a word on foot, man, not a word ; and it is not seemly to stand cheek-for-chowl confronting us that gate. Bide out of our gate, sir, we charge you, on your allegiance.—The deil's in them a', what can they be doing ? "

" By the crown which you wear, my liege," said Nigel, " and for which my ancestors have worthily fought, I conjure you to be composed, and to hear me but a moment."

That which he asked was entirely out of the monarch's power to grant. The poor king was frightened at once and angry, desirous of securing his safety, and at the same time ashamed to compromise his dignity ; so that, without attending to what Lord Glenvarloch endeavoured to explain, he kept making at his horse, and repeating, " We are a free king, man —we are a free king—we will not be controlled by a subject.—In the name of God, what keeps Steenie ? And, praised be His name, they are coming—Hillo, ho —here, here—Steenie, Steenie ! "

The Duke of Buckingham galloped up, followed by several courtiers and attendants of the royal chase, and commenced with his usual familiarity—" I see Fortune has graced our dear dad, as usual—but what's this ? "

" What is it ? It is treason, for what I ken," said

the king; "and a' your wyte, Steenie. Your dear dad and gossip might have been murdered, for what you care."

"Murdered? Secure the villain!" exclaimed the duke. "By Heaven, it is Olifaunt himself!" A dozen of the hunters dismounted at once, letting their horses run wild through the park. Some seized roughly on Lord Glenvarloch, who thought it folly to offer resistance, while others busied themselves with the king. "Are you wounded, my liege—are you wounded?"

"Not that I ken of," said the king, in the paroxysm of his apprehension (which, by the way, might be pardoned in one of so timorous a temper, and who, in his time, had been exposed to so many strange attempts)—"Not that I ken of—but search him—search him. I am sure I saw firearms under his cloak. I am sure I smelled powder—I am dooms sure of that."

Lord Glenvarloch's cloak being stripped off, and his pistols discovered, a shout of wonder and of execration on the supposed criminal purpose arose from the crowd, now thickening every moment.

"Away with the wretch—the parricide—the bloody-minded villain!" was echoed on all hands; and the king, who naturally enough set the same value on his own life at which it was, or seemed to be, rated by others, cried out, louder than all the rest, "Ay, ay—away with him. I have had enough of him, and so has the country. But do him no bodily harm—and, for God's sake, sirs, if ye are sure that ye have thoroughly disarmed him, put up your swords, dirks, and skenes, for you will certainly do each other a mischief."

Nigel, in charge of a pursuivant-at-arms, was pushed and dragged through the small town, all the inhabitants of which, having been alarmed by the report of an attack on the king's life, now pressed forward to see the supposed traitor. Amid the confusion of the moment, he could descry the face of the victualler, arrested into a stare of stolid wonder. He thought that he also had a glimpse of his waterman in the green jacket.

He had no time for remarks, being placed in a boat with the pursuivant and two yeomen of the guard, and rowed up the river as fast as the arms of six stout watermen could pull against the tide. They passed the groves of masts which even then astonished the stranger with the extended commerce of London, and now approached those low and blackened walls of curtain and bastion, which exhibit here and there a piece of ordnance, and here and there a solitary sentinel under arms, but have otherwise so little of the military terrors of a citadel. A projecting, low-browed arch, which had lowered over many an innocent, and many a guilty head, in similar circumstances, now spread its dark frowns over that of Nigel. The boat was put close up to the broad steps against which the tide was lapping its lazy wave. The warder on duty looked from the wicket, and spoke to the pursuivant in whispers. In a few minutes the Lieutenant of the Tower appeared, received, and granted an acknowledgment for the body of Nigel, Lord Glenvarloch.

CHAPTER XXIII

"I AM a prisoner," Nigel said, the words escaping from him almost unawares; "I am a prisoner, and in the Tower?"

The Lieutenant bowed—"And it is my duty," he said, "to show your lordship to your chamber, where, I am compelled to say, my orders are to place you under some restraint. I will make it as easy as my duty permits."

Nigel only bowed in return to this compliment, and followed the Lieutenant to the ancient buildings on the western side of the parade, and adjoining to the chapel, used in those days as a State prison, but in ours as the mess-room of the officers of the guard upon duty at the fortress. The double doors were unlocked, the prisoner ascended a few steps, followed by the Lieutenant and a warder of the higher class. They entered a large, but irregular, low-roofed, and dark apartment, exhibiting a very scanty proportion of furniture. The warder had orders to light a fire, and attend to Lord Glenvarloch's commands in all things consistent with his duty; and the Lieutenant, having made his reverence with the customary compliment, that he trusted his lordship would not long remain under his guardianship, took his leave.

Nigel would have asked some questions of the warder, who remained to put the apartment into order, but the man had caught the spirit of his office. He seemed not to hear some of the prisoner's questions, though of the most ordinary kind, did not reply to others, and when he did speak, it was in a short and sullen tone, which, though not positively disrespectful,

was such as at least to encourage no further communication.

Nigel left him, therefore, to do his work in silence, and proceeded to amuse himself with the melancholy task of deciphering the names, mottoes, verses, and hieroglyphics, with which his predecessors in captivity had covered the walls of their prison-house. There he saw the names of many a forgotten sufferer, mingled with others which will continue in remembrance until English history shall perish. It was like the roll of the prophet, a record of lamentation and mourning, and yet not unmixed with brief interjections of resignation, and sentences expressive of the firmest resolution.

In the sad task of examining the miseries of his predecessors in captivity, Lord Glenvarloch was interrupted by the sudden opening of the door of his prison-room. It was the warder, who came to inform him that, by order of the Lieutenant of the Tower, his lordship was to have the society and attendance of a fellow-prisoner in his place of confinement. Nigel replied hastily, that he wished no attendance, and would rather be left alone; but the warder gave him to understand, with a kind of grumbling civility, that the Lieutenant was the best judge how his prisoners should be accommodated, and that he would have no trouble with the boy, who was such a slip of a thing as was scarce worth turning a key upon.—"There, Giles," he said, "bring the child in."

Another warder put the "lad before him" into the room, and, both withdrawing, bolt crashed and chain clanged, as they replaced these ponderous obstacles to freedom. The boy was clad in a grey suit of the finest cloth, laid down with silver lace, with a buff-coloured cloak of the same pattern. His cap, which

was a Montero of black velvet, was pulled over his brows, and, with the profusion of his long ringlets, almost concealed his face. He stood on the very spot where the warder had quitted his collar, about two steps from the door of the apartment; his eyes fixed on the ground, and every joint trembling with confusion and terror. Nigel could well have dispensed with his society, but it was not in his nature to behold distress, whether of body or mind, without endeavouring to relieve it.

"Cheer up," he said, "my pretty lad. We are to be companions, it seems, for a little time—at least, I trust your confinement will be short, since you are too young to have done aught to deserve long restraint. Come, come—do not be discouraged. Your hand is cold, and trembles! the air is warm, too—but it may be the damp of this darksome room. Place you by the fire.—What! weeping-ripe, my little man? I pray you, do not be a child. You have no beard yet, to be dishonoured by your tears, but yet you should not cry like a girl. Think you are only shut up for playing truant, and you can pass a day without weeping, surely."

The boy suffered himself to be led and seated by the fire, but, after retaining for a long time the very posture which he assumed in sitting down, he suddenly changed it in order to wring his hands with an air of the bitterest distress, and then, spreading them before his face, wept so plentifully, that the tears found their way in floods through his slender fingers.

"Tell me who and what you are, my pretty boy," said Nigel. "Consider me, child, as a companion, who wishes to be kind to you, would you but teach him how he can be so."

"Sir—my lord, I mean," answered the boy, very timidly, and in a voice which could scarce be heard even across the brief distance which divided them, "you are very good — and I — am very unhappy——"

A second fit of tears interrupted what else he had intended to say, and it required a renewal of Lord Glenvarloch's good-natured expostulations and encouragements to bring him once more to such composure as rendered the lad capable of expressing himself intelligibly. At length, however, he was able to say—"I am sensible of your goodness, my lord—and grateful for it—but I am a poor unhappy creature, and, what is worse, have myself only to thank for my misfortunes.

"I left my father's house without leave, to see the king hunt in the park at Greenwich; there came a cry of treason, and all the gates were shut—I was frightened, and hid myself in a thicket, and I was found by some of the rangers and examined—and they said I gave no good account of myself—and so I was sent hither."

"I am an unhappy, a most unhappy being," said Lord Glenvarloch, rising and walking through the apartment; "nothing approaches me but shares my own bad fate! Death and imprisonment dog my steps, and involve all who are found near me. Yet this boy's story sounds strangely. You say you were examined, my young friend.—Let me pray you to say whether you told your name, and your means of gaining admission into the park—if so, they surely would not have detained you!"

"Oh, my lord," said the boy, "I took care not to tell them the name of the friend that let me in; and as

to my father—I would not he knew where I now am for all the wealth in London ! "

" There is something singular about you, my young friend," said Lord Glenvarloch, withdrawing with a gentle degree of compulsion the hand with which the boy had again covered his eyes. " Do not pain yourself with thinking on your situation just at present—your pulse is high, and your hand feverish—lay yourself on yonder pallet, and try to compose yourself to sleep. It is the readiest and best remedy for the fancies with which you are worrying yourself."

" I thank you for your considerate kindness, my lord," said the boy ; " with your leave I will remain for a little space quiet in this chair—I am better thus than on the couch. I can think undisturbedly on what I have done, and have still to do ; and if God sends slumber to a creature so exhausted, it shall be most welcome."

So saying, the boy drew his hand from Lord Nigel's, and, drawing around him and partly over his face the folds of his ample cloak, he resigned himself to sleep or meditation, while his companion, notwithstanding the exhausting scenes of this and the preceding day, continued his pensive walk up and down the apartment.

He attempted to consider his own situation coolly, but was crossed at every turn by conjectures which intruded themselves, and which all regarded the sleeper rather than himself. He was angry and vexed, and expostulated with himself concerning the overweening interest which he took in the concerns of one of whom he knew nothing, saving that the boy was forced into his company, perhaps as a spy, by those to whose custody he was committed—but the spell could not

be broken, and the thoughts which he struggled to dismiss continued to haunt him.

CHAPTER XXIV

SOME time passed, and Lord Glenvarloch began to think it extraordinary that the boy should sleep so soundly. Was he well—was he only feigning sleep? He went close to him to make his observations, and perceived that he had wept, and was still weeping, though his eyes were closed. He touched him gently on the shoulder—the boy shrunk from his touch, but did not awake. He pulled him harder, and asked him if he was sleeping.

"Do they waken folks in your country to know whether they are asleep or no?" said the boy, in a peevish tone.

"No, my young sir," answered Nigel; "but when they weep in the manner you do in your sleep, they awaken them to see what ails them."

"It signifies little to any one what ails me," said the boy, "and I will not tell you who I am."

"You will keep your secret to yourself, then, peevish boy," said Nigel, turning from him, and resuming his walk through the room; then, stopping suddenly, he said—"And yet you shall not escape from me without knowing that I penetrate your mystery."

"My mystery!" said the youth, at once alarmed and irritated,—"what mean you, my lord?"

"Only that I can read your dream without the assistance of a Chaldean interpreter, and my exposition is—that my fair companion does not wear the dress of her sex."

"And if I do not, my lord," said his companion, hastily starting up, and folding her cloak tight around her, "my dress, such as it is, covers one who will not disgrace it."

"Many would call that speech a fair challenge," said Lord Glenvarloch, looking on her fixedly; "women do not masquerade in men's clothes, to make use of men's weapons. What circumstances can have forced you into so doubtful a situation, I know not; but I feel assured there is, and can be, nothing in them of premeditated wrong, which should expose you to cold-blooded insult. From me you have nothing to dread."

"I expected nothing less from your nobleness, my lord," answered the female. "My adventure, though I feel it was both desperate and foolish, is not so very foolish, nor my safety here so utterly unprotected, as at first sight, and in this strange dress, it may appear to be. I have suffered enough, and more than enough, by the degradation of having been seen in this unfeminine attire, and the comments you must necessarily have made on my conduct—but I thank God that I am so far protected, that I could not have been subjected to insult unavenged."

When this extraordinary explanation had proceeded thus far, the warder appeared, to place before Lord Glenvarloch and his companion a meal, which, for their present situation, might be called comfortable, and which, if not equal to the cookery of the celebrated Chevalier Beaujeu, was much superior in neatness and cleanliness to that of Alsatia. Their conversation was, of course, limited by the presence of the warder to the business of the table: but Nigel had, long ere the cloth was removed, formed the resolution, if possible, of making himself master of

this young person's history, the more especially as he now began to think that the tones of her voice and her features were not so strange to him as he had originally supposed.

At length the prison meal was finished, and Lord Glenvarloch began to think how he might most easily enter upon the topic he meditated, when the warder announced a visitor.

"Soh!" said Nigel, something displeased, "I find even a prison does not save one from importunate visitations."

He prepared to receive his guest, however, while his alarmed companion flew to the large cradle-shaped chair which had first served her as a place of refuge, drew her cloak around her, and disposed herself as much as she could to avoid observation. She had scarce made her arrangements for that purpose when the door opened, and the worthy citizen, George Heriot, entered the prison-chamber.

He cast around the apartment his usual sharp, quick glance of observation, and, advancing to Nigel, said—"My lord, I wish I could say I was happy to see you."

"The sight of those who are unhappy themselves, Master Heriot, seldom produces happiness to their friends—I, however, am glad to see you."

He extended his hand, but Heriot bowed with much formal complaisance, instead of accepting the courtesy, which in those times, when the distinction of ranks was much guarded by etiquette and ceremony, was considered as a distinguished favour.

"You are displeased with me, Master Heriot," said Lord Glenvarloch, reddening, for he was not deceived by the worthy citizen's affectation of extreme reverence and respect.

"Hem! hem! I say, ahem! My lord, as my French politeness may not carry me far, I would willingly know whether I am to speak as a friend, since your lordship is pleased to term me such; or whether I am, as befits my condition, to confine myself to the needful business which must be treated of between us?"

"Speak as a friend, by all means, Master Heriot," said Nigel; "I perceive you have adopted some of the numerous prejudices against me, if not all of them. Speak out, and frankly—what I cannot deny I will at least confess."

"And I trust, my lord, redress," said Heriot.

"So far as is in my power, certainly," answered Nigel.

"Ah, my lord," continued Heriot, "that is a melancholy, though a necessary restriction; for how lightly may any one do an hundred times more than the degree of evil which it may be within his power to repair to the sufferers and to society! But we are not alone here," he said, stopping, and darting his shrewd eye towards the muffled figure of the disguised maiden, whose utmost efforts had not enabled her so to adjust her position as altogether to escape observation. More anxious to prevent her being discovered than to keep his own affairs private, Nigel hastily answered—

"'Tis a page of mine; you may speak freely before him. He is of France, and knows no English."

"I am then to speak freely?" said Heriot, after a second glance at the chair; "perhaps my words may be more free than welcome."

"Go on, sir," said Nigel; "I have told you I can bear reproof."

"In one word, then, my lord—why do I find you in this place, and whelmed with charges which must blacken a name rendered famous by ages of virtue?"

"Simply, then, you find me here," said Nigel, "because, to begin from my original error, I would be wiser than my father."

"It was a difficult task, my lord," replied Heriot; "your father was voiced generally as the wisest and one of the bravest men of Scotland."

"He commanded me," continued Nigel, "to avoid all gambling; and I took upon me to modify this injunction into regulating my play according to my skill, means, and the course of my luck."

"Ay, self opinion, acting on a desire of acquisition, my lord—you hoped to touch pitch and not to be defiled," answered Heriot. "Well, my lord, you need not say, for I have heard with much regret, how far this conduct diminished your reputation. Your next error I may without scruple remind you of — My lord, my lord, in whatever degree Lord Dalgarno may have failed towards you, the son of his father should have been sacred from your violence."

"You speak in cold blood, Master Heriot, and I was smarting under a thousand wrongs inflicted on me under the mask of friendship."

"That is, he gave your lordship bad advice, and you——" said Heriot.

"Was fool enough to follow his counsel," answered Nigel.—"But we will pass this, Master Heriot, if you please. I pray you to pass on to some other charge."

"My lord, "answered Heriot, "my errand is spoken, so far as it relates exclusively to your lordship; what remains, is matter of business of a more formal kind."

"Let us proceed to it without delay," said Lord Glenvarloch. "I would hear of the affairs of any one rather than of my own."

"You cannot have forgotten, my lord," said Heriot,

"the transaction which took place some weeks since at Lord Huntinglen's—by which a large sum of money was advanced for the redemption of your lordship's estate?"

"I remember it perfectly," said Nigel; "and your present austerity cannot make me forget your kindness on the occasion."

Heriot bowed gravely, and went on.—"That money was advanced under the expectation and hope that it might be replaced by the contents of a grant to your lordship, under the royal sign-manual, in payment of certain monies due by the crown to your father.—I trust your lordship understood the transaction at the time—I trust you now understand my resumption of its import, and hold it to be correct?"

"Undeniably correct," answered Lord Glenvarloch. "If the sums contained in the warrant cannot be recovered, my lands become the property of those who paid off the original holders of the mortgage, and now stand in their right."

"Even so, my lord," said Heriot. "And your lordship's unhappy circumstances having, it would seem, alarmed these creditors, they are now, I am sorry to say, pressing for one or other of these alternatives—possession of the land, or payment of their debt."

"They have a right to one or other," answered Lord Glenvarloch; "and as I cannot do the last in my present condition, I suppose they must enter on possession."

"Stay, my lord," replied Heriot; "if you have ceased to call me a friend to your person, at least you shall see I am willing to be such to your father's house, were it but for the sake of your father's memory. If you will trust me with the warrant under the sign-

manual, I believe circumstances do now so stand at court, that I may be able to recover the money for you."

"I would do so gladly," said Lord Glenvarloch, "but the casket which contains it is not in my possession. It was seized when I was arrested at Greenwich."

"It will be no longer withheld from you," said Heriot; "for, I understand, my master's natural good sense, and some information which he has procured, I know not how, has induced him to contradict the whole charge of the attempt on his person. It is entirely hushed up; and you will only be proceeded against for your violence on Lord Dalgarno, committed within the verge of the Palace—and that you will find heavy enough to answer."

"I will not shrink under the weight," said Lord Glenvarloch. "But that is not the present point.—If I had that casket——"

"Your baggage stood in the little anteroom, as I passed," said the citizen; "the casket caught my eye. —Ho! warder, bring in Lord Glenvarloch's baggage." The officer obeyed. Seals had been placed upon the trunk and casket, but were now removed, the warder said, in consequence of the subsequent orders from court, and the whole was placed at the prisoner's free disposal.

Desirous to bring this painful visit to a conclusion, Lord Glenvarloch opened the casket, and looked through the papers which it contained, first hastily, and then more slowly and accurately; but it was all in vain. The sovereign's signed warrant had disappeared.

"I thought and expected nothing better," said

George Heriot bitterly. "The beginning of evil is the letting out of water. Here is a fair heritage lost, I daresay, on a foul cast at dice, or a conjuring trick at cards!—My lord, your surprise is well played. I give you full joy of your accomplishments. I have seen many as young brawlers and spendthrifts, but never so young and accomplished a dissembler.—Nay, man, never bend your angry brows on me. I speak in bitterness of heart, from what I remember of your worthy father; and if his son hears of his degeneracy from no one else, he shall hear it from the old goldsmith. To sum the matter up," he said, rising from his seat, and walking towards that occupied by the disguised female, "for our matters are now drawn into small compass, you shall as soon make me believe that this masquerading mummer, on whom I now lay the hand of paternal authority, is a French page, who understands no English."

So saying, he took hold of the supposed page's cloak, and, not without some gentle degree of violence, led into the middle of the apartment the disguised fair one, who in vain attempted to cover her face, first with her mantle, and afterwards with her hands; both of which impediments Master Heriot removed, something unceremoniously, and gave to view the detected daughter of the old clockmaker, his own fair god-daughter, Margaret Ramsay.

"Here is goodly gear!" he said; and, as he spoke, he could not prevent himself from giving her a slight shake.—"How comes it, minion, that I find you in so shameless a dress, and so unworthy a situation? Nay, your modesty is now mistimed—it should have come sooner. Speak, or I will——"

"Master Heriot," said Lord Glenvarloch, "what-

ever right you may have over this maiden elsewhere, while in my apartment she is under my protection."

"Your protection, my lord!—a proper protector!—And how long, mistress, have you been under my lord's protection? Speak out, forsooth."

"For the matter of two hours, god-father," answered the maiden, with a countenance bent to the ground, and covered with blushes; "but it was against my will."

"Two hours!" repeated Heriot, "how, in Heaven's name, came you here?"

"Sir," answered Margaret, "since I must speak, I went to Greenwich this morning with Monna Paula, to present a petition to the king on the part of the Lady Hermione."

"Mercy-a-gad!" exclaimed Heriot, "is she in the dance too? Could she not have waited my return to stir in her affairs? But I suppose the intelligence I sent her had rendered her restless. Ah, woman, woman!—he that goes partner with you had need of a double share of patience, for you will bring none into the common stock.—Well, but what on earth had this embassy of Monna Paula's to do with your absurd disguise? Speak out."

"Monna Paula was frightened," answered Margaret, "and did not know how to set about the errand, for you know she scarce ever goes out of doors—and so—and so—I agreed to go with her to give her courage; and, for the dress, I am sure you remember I wore it at a Christmas mumming, and you thought it not unbeseeming."

"Yes, for a Christmas parlour," said Heriot, "but not to go a-masking through the country in."

"Just as we reached the gate of the park," continued

Margaret, " the cry of treason was raised. I know not what became of Monna, but I ran till I fell into the arms of a very decent serving-man called Linklater ; and I was fain to tell him I was your god-daughter, and so he kept the rest of them from me, and got me to speech of his Majesty, as I entreated him to do."

" It is the only sign you showed in the whole matter that common sense had not utterly deserted your little skull," said Heriot.

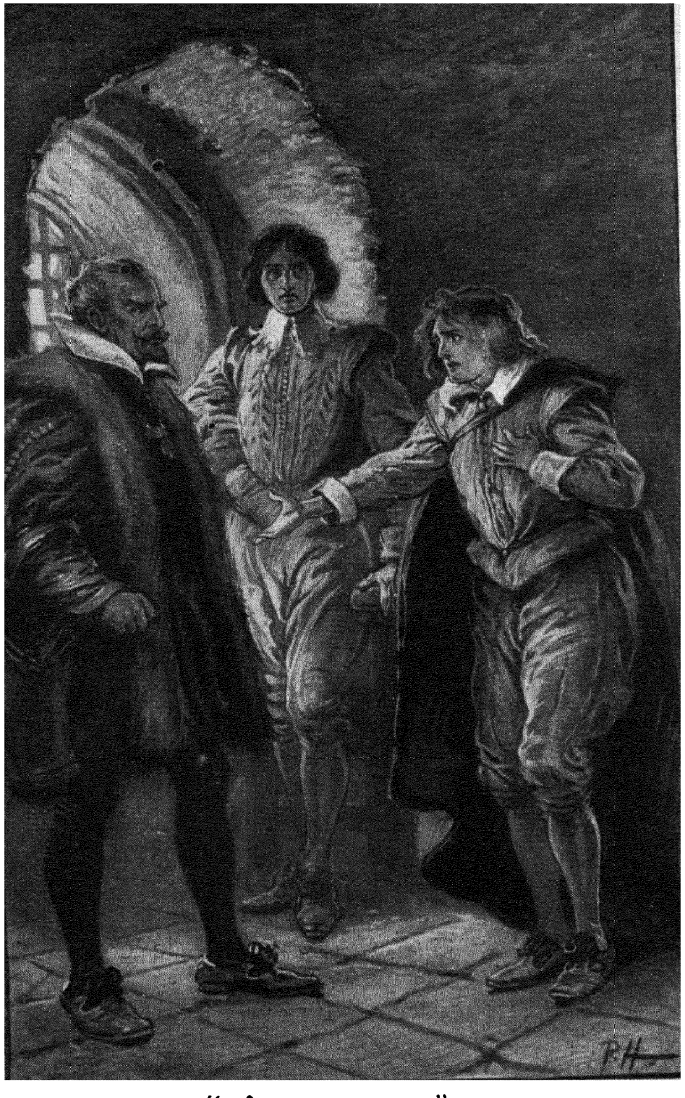
" His Majesty," continued the damsel, " was so gracious as to receive me alone, though the courtiers cried out against the danger to his person, and would have searched me for arms, God help me, but the king forbade it. I fancy he had a hint from Linklater how the truth stood with me."

" Well, maiden, I ask not what passed," said Heriot ; " it becomes not me to pry into my master's secrets."

" I know not what you mean, sir," answered Margaret. " His Majesty was most kind and compassionate, but said I must be sent hither, and that the Lieutenant's lady, the Lady Mansel, would have a charge of me, and see that I sustained no wrong ; and the king promised to send me in a tilted barge, and under conduct of a person well known to you ; and thus I come to be in the Tower."

" But how, or why, in this apartment, nymph ? " said George Heriot—" Expound that to me, for I think the riddle needs reading."

" I cannot explain it, sir, further than that the Lady Mansel sent me here, in spite of my earnest prayers, tears, and entreaties. I was not afraid of anything, for I knew I should be protected. But I could have died then—could die now—for very shame and confusion."



"I CANNOT EXPLAIN."

"Well, well, if your tears are genuine," said Heriot, "they may the sooner wash out the memory of your fault. Here, warder! Permit us to pass to the Lady Mansel's apartment."

CHAPTER XXV

MASTER GEORGE HERIOT and his ward, as she might justly be termed, for his affection to Margaret imposed on him all the cares of a guardian, were ushered by the yeoman of the guard to the lodging of the Lieutenant, where they found him seated with his lady. They were received by both with that decorous civility which Master Heriot's character and supposed influence demanded, even at the hand of a punctilious old soldier and courtier like Sir Edward Mansel. Lady Mansel received Margaret with like courtesy, and informed Master George that she was now only her guest, and no longer her prisoner.

"She is at liberty," she said, "to return to her friends under your charge—such is his Majesty's pleasure."

"And I," said George Heriot, "will humbly pray of Lady Mansel, that she will lend some of her hand-maiden's apparel to this giddy-brained girl; for I shall forfeit my reputation if I walk up Tower Hill with her in that mad guise—and yet the silly lassie looks not so ill in it neither."

"I will send my coach with you instantly," said the obliging lady.

"Faith, madam, and if you will honour us with such courtesy, I will gladly accept it at your hands,"

said the citizen, "for business presses hard on me, and the forenoon is already lost, to little purpose."

The coach, being ordered accordingly, transported the worthy citizen and his charge to his mansion in Lombard Street. There he found his presence was anxiously expected by the Lady Hermione, who had just received an order to be in readiness to attend upon the Royal Privy Council in the course of an hour.

Nigel meanwhile could not succeed in banishing Margaret from his slumbers, when, after having spent a weary day, he betook himself to a perturbed couch. Her form mingled with the wild mass of dreams which his late adventures had suggested. At length nature was exhausted, and Nigel slept, and slept soundly, until awakened in the morning by the sound of a well-known voice, which had often broken his slumbers about the same hour.

These sounds were no other than the grumbling tones of Richie Moniplies's voice.

Nigel for some time could not help believing that he was still in a dream, so improbable did it seem that his domestic, whom he supposed to be in Scotland, should have found him out, and obtained access to him, in his present circumstances. Looking through the curtains, however, he became well assured of the fact, when he beheld the stiff and bony length of Richie, with a visage charged with nearly double its ordinary degree of importance, employed sedulously in brushing his master's cloak, and refreshing himself with whistling or humming, from interval to interval, some snatch of an old melancholy Scottish ballad tune. Although sufficiently convinced of the identity of the party, Lord Glenvarloch could not help expressing his surprise

in the superfluous question—"In the name of Heaven, Richie, is this you?"

"And wha else suld it be, my lord?" answered Richie; "I dreamna that your lordship's levee in this place is like to be attended by ony that are not bounden thereto by duty."

"I am rather surprised," answered Nigel, "that it should be attended by any one at all—especially by you, Richie; for you know that we parted, and I thought you had reached Scotland long since."

"I crave your lordship's pardon, but we have not parted yet, nor are soon likely so to do; for there gang twa folk's votes to the unmaking of a bargain, as to the making of ane. Though it was your lordship's pleasure so to conduct yourself that we were like to have parted, yet it was not, on reflection, my will to be gone. To be plain, if your lordship does not ken when you have a good servant, I ken when I have a kind master; and, to say truth, you will be easier served now than ever, for there is not much chance of your getting out of your bounds."

"I am indeed bound over to good behaviour," said Lord Glenvarloch, with a smile; "but I hope you will not take advantage of my situation to be too severe on my follies, Richie?"

"Ill luck be in my feet if I do," said Moniplies,—"I am not the lad to leave your lordship in foul weather, when I followed you and fed upon you through the whole summer day. And besides, there may be brave days behind, for a' that has come and gane yet; for—

It's hame and it's hame, and it's hame we fain would be,
Though the cloud is in the lift, and the wind is on the lea;
For the sun through the mirk blinks blithe on mine e'e,
Says—'I'll shine on ye yet in your ain countrie!'"

Having sung this stanza in the manner of a ballad-singer, whose voice has been cracked by matching his windpipe against the bugle of the north blast, Richie Moniplies aided Lord Glenvarloch to rise, attended his toilet with every possible mark of the most solemn and deferential respect, then waited upon him at breakfast, and finally withdrew, pleading that he had business of importance, which would detain him for some hours.

The magnanimous Richie Moniplies soon reached Tower Wharf. Here, after looking with contempt on several scullers by whom he was plied, and whose services he rejected with a wave of his hand, he called with dignity, "First oars!" and stirred into activity several lounging Tritons of the higher order, who had not, on his first appearance, thought it worth while to accost him with proffers of service. He now took possession of a wherry, folded his arms within his ample cloak, and, sitting down in the stern with an air of importance, commanded them to row to Whitehall Stairs. Having reached the palace in safety, he demanded to see Master Linklater, the under-clerk of his Majesty's kitchen. The reply was, that he was not to be spoken withal, being then employed in cooking a mess of cock-a-leekie for the king's own mouth.

"Tell him," said Moniplies, "that it is a dear countryman of his, who seeks to converse with him on matter of high import."

"A dear countryman?" said Linklater, when this pressing message was delivered to him. "Well, let him come in. Ha! Richie Moniplies, man, is it thou? And what has brought ye here? If they should ken thee for the loon that scared the horse the other day!——"

"No more o' that, neighbour," said Richie. "I am just here on the auld errand—I maun speak with the king. Ye maun befriend me this time, and get this wee bit sifflication slipped into his Majesty's ain most gracious hand. I promise you the contents will be most grateful to him."

"I will have neither hand nor foot in the matter," said the cautious clerk of the kitchen; "but there is his Majesty's mess of cock-a-leekie just going to be served to him in his closet—I cannot prevent you from putting the letter between the gilt bowl and the platter; his sacred Majesty will see it when he lifts the bowl, for he aye drinks out the broth."

"Enough said," replied Richie, and deposited the paper accordingly, just before a page entered to carry away the mess to his Majesty.

In a few minutes Maxwell himself arrived in the apartment, and demanded hastily who had placed a writing on the king's trencher. Linklater denied all knowledge of it; but Richie Moniplies, stepping boldly forth, pronounced the emphatical confession, "I am the man."

"Follow me, then," said Maxwell, after regarding him with a look of great curiosity.

They went up a private staircase—even that private staircase, the privilege of which at court is accounted a nearer road to power than the *grandes entrées* themselves. Arriving in what Richie described as an "ill redd-up" anteroom, the usher made a sign to him to stop, while he went into the king's closet. Their conference was short, and as Maxwell opened the door to retire, Richie heard the conclusion of it.

"Ye are sure he is not dangerous?—I was caught once. Bide within call, but not nearer the door than

within three geometrical cubits. If I speak loud, start to me like a falcon—If I speak loun, keep your lang lugs out of ear-shot—and now let him come in."

Richie passed forward at Maxwell's mute signal, and in a moment found himself in the presence of the king. Most men of Richie's birth and breeding, and many others, would have been abashed at finding themselves alone with their sovereign. But Richie Moniplies had an opinion of himself too high to be controlled by any such ideas; and, having made his stiff reverence, he arose once more into his perpendicular height, and stood before James as stiff as a hedge-stake.

"Have you gotten them, man? have ye gotten them?" said the king, in a fluttered state, betwixt hope and eagerness, and some touch of suspicious fear. "Gie me them—gie me them—before ye speak a word, I charge you on your allegiance."

Richie took a box from his bosom, and, stooping on one knee, presented it to his Majesty, who hastily opened it, and, having ascertained that it contained a certain carcanet of rubies, he could not resist falling into a sort of rapture, kissing the gems as if they had been capable of feeling, and repeating again and again with childish delight—"Ah, my bright and bonnie sparklers, my heart loups light to see you again." He then turned to Richie, upon whose stoical countenance his Majesty's demeanour had excited something like a grim smile, which James interrupted his rejoicing to reprehend, saying, "Take heed, sir, you are not to laugh at us—we are your anointed sovereign. How cam ye by our jewels, man?—cam ye on the part of George Heriot?"

"In no sort," said Richie. "May it please your Majesty, I come as Harry Wynd fought, utterly for

my own hand, and on no man's errand; as, indeed, I call no one master, save Him that made me, your most gracious Majesty who governs me, and the noble Nigel Olifaunt, Lord of Glenvarloch, who maintained me as lang as he could maintain himself, poor nobleman!"

"Glenvarlochides again!" exclaimed the king; "by my honour, he lies in ambush for us at every corner!"

"My liege," answered Richie Moniplies, "the owner of these moneys places them at your Majesty's command, free of all pledge or usage, as long as it is your royal pleasure, providing your Majesty will condescend to show some favour to the noble Lord Glenvarloch, presently prisoner in your royal Tower of London."

"How, man—how, man—how, man!" exclaimed the king, reddening, and stammering, but with emotions more noble than those by which he was sometimes agitated—"What is it that you dare to say to us?—Sell our justice!—Sell our mercy!—and we a crowned king, sworn to do justice to our subjects in the gate, and responsible for our stewardship to Him that is over all kings?" Here he reverently looked up, touched his bonnet, and continued with some sharpness, "We dare not traffic in such commodities, sir; and but that ye are a poor ignorant creature, that have done us some not unpleasant service, we would have a red iron driven through your tongue, to the terror of others. Awa' with ye!"

In obedience to the royal mandate, the abashed petitioner was hurried out of the presence, and out of the palace.

CHAPTER XXVI

MASTER GEORGE HERIOT now entered the king's apartment, and James inquired of Maxwell if the Earl of Huntinglen was in attendance, and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, desired that he should be admitted. The old Scottish lord having made his reverence in the usual manner, the king extended his hand to be kissed, and then began to address him in a tone of grave sympathy.

"We told your lordship in our secret epistle of this morning, written with our ain hand, in testimony we have neither pretermitted nor forgotten your faithful service, that we had that to communicate to you that would require both patience and fortitude to endure."

"Please your Majesty," said Lord Huntinglen, "if your Majesty delays communicating the bad news with which your honoured letter threatens me, until I am capable to read Hebrew like your Majesty, I fear I shall die in ignorance of the misfortune which hath befallen, or is about to befall my house."

"You will learn it but too soon, my lord," replied the king. "I grieve to say it, but your son Dalgarno, whom I thought a very saint, as he was so much with Steenie and Baby Charles, hath turned out a very villain."

The king then thrust into the old nobleman's hand a paper, containing the story of the Lady Hermione, with the evidence by which it was supported, detailed so briefly and clearly, that the infamy of Lord Dalgarno, the noble by whom she had been so shamefully deceived, seemed undeniable. But a

father yields not up so easily the cause of his son.

"May it please your Majesty," he said, "why was this tale not sooner told? This woman hath been here for years—wherefore was the claim on my son not made the instant she touched English ground?"

"Tell him how that came about, Geordie," said the king, addressing Heriot.

"I grieve to distress my Lord Huntinglen," said Heriot; "but I must speak the truth. For a long time the Lady Hermione could not brook the idea of making her situation public; and when her mind became changed in that particular, it was necessary to recover the evidence of the false marriage, and letters and papers connected with it, which, when she came to Paris, and just before I saw her, she had deposited with a correspondent of her father in that city. He became afterwards bankrupt, and in consequence of that misfortune the lady's papers passed into other hands, and it is only a few days since I traced and recovered them. Without these documents of evidence, it would have been imprudent for her to have preferred her complaint, favoured as Lord Dalgarno is by powerful friends."

"Ye are saucy to say sae," said the king; "I ken what ye mean well eneuch—ye think Steenie wad hae putten the weight of his foot into the scales of justice, and garr'd them whomle the bucket—ye forget, Geordie, wha it is whose hand uphaulds them."

"The Lady Hermione," said George Heriot, "has always done the utmost justice to the conduct of the duke, who supplied her with the means of extricating herself from her difficulties."

"It was e'en like himsel'—blessings on his bonnie face!" said the king; "and I believed this lady's tale the mair readily, my Lord Huntinglen, that she spake nae ill of Steenie.—And to make a lang tale short, my lord, it is the opinion of our council and ourself, as well as of Baby Charles and Steenie, that your son maun amend his wrong by wedding this lady, or undergo such disgrace and discountenance as we can bestow."

"It is long," said the embittered father, "since I saw he was selfish and hard-hearted; but to be a perjured liar—I never dreaded that such a blot would have fallen on my race! I will never look on him again."

"Hoot ay, my lord, hoot ay," said the king; "ye maun tak him to task roundly. As for not seeing him again, and he your only son, that is altogether out of reason. I tell ye, man (but I would not for a bodle that Baby Charles heard me), that he might break the hearts of half the lasses of Lunnon, ere I could find in my heart to speak such harsh words as you have said of this Dalgarno of yours."

"May it please your Majesty to permit me to retire," said Lord Huntinglen, "and dispose of the case according to your own royal sense of justice, for I desire no favour for him."

"Aweel, my lord, so be it; and if your lordship can think," added the monarch, "of anything in our power which might comfort you——"

"Your Majesty's gracious sympathy," said Lord Huntinglen, "has already comforted me as far as earth can; the rest must be from the King of kings."

"To Him I commend you, my auld and faithful servant," said James, with emotion, as the earl with-

drew from his presence. The king remained fixed in thought for some time, and then said to Heriot—

"And now, Geordie, man, we will to this culprit, and hear what he has to say for himself, for I will see the job cleared this blessed day. Ye maun come wi' me, for your evidence may be wanted."

The king led the way, accordingly, into a larger apartment, where the prince, the Duke of Buckingham, and one or two privy councillors were seated at a table, before which stood Lord Dalgarno, in an attitude of as much elegant ease and indifference as could be expressed, considering the stiff dress and manners of the times.

All rose and bowed reverently, while the king, to use a north country word expressive of his mode of locomotion, *toddled* to his chair or throne, making a sign to Heriot to stand behind him.

"We hope," said his Majesty, "that Lord Dalgarno stands prepared to do justice to this unfortunate lady, and to his own character and honour?"

"May I humbly inquire the penalty," said Lord Dalgarno, "in case I should unhappily find compliance with your Majesty's demands impossible?"

"Banishment frae our court, my lord," said the king; "frae our court and our countenance."

"Unhappy exile that I may be!" said Lord Dalgarno, in a tone of subdued irony—"I will at least carry your Majesty's picture with me, for I shall never see such another king."

"My lord," said James, "we will not be longer trifled with.—You will instantly take this lady to your wife, in our chapel. Come, my lords, we will ourselves see this blithesome bridal."

"*Statim atque instanter*," answered Lord Dalgarno;

"for, I perceive, by doing so, I shall obtain power to render great services to the commonwealth."

They reached the chapel by a private entrance, which communicated from the royal apartment. The Bishop of Winchester, in his robes, stood beside the altar; on the other side, supported by Monna Paula, the colourless, faded, half-lifeless form of the Lady Hermione. Lord Dalgarno bowed profoundly to her, and the prince, observing the horror with which she regarded him, walked up and said to her with much dignity—"Madam, ere you put yourself under the authority of this man, it is for you to consider whether you will put your fortune and happiness into the hands of one who has shown himself unworthy of all trust."

The lady, with much difficulty, found words to make reply. "I owe to his Majesty's goodness," she said, "the care of providing me some reservation out of my own fortune, for my decent sustenance. The rest cannot be better disposed than in buying back the fair fame of which I am deprived, and the liberty of ending my life in peace and seclusion."

"The contract has been drawn up," said the king, "so buckle them, my Lord Bishop, as fast as you can."

The Bishop accordingly opened his book, and commenced the marriage ceremony, under circumstances so novel and so inauspicious. When it was concluded, Lord Dalgarno advanced as if to salute the bride, but, seeing that she drew back in fear and abhorrence, he contented himself with making her a low bow; after which, bowing around him, he withdrew; while all present, oppressed, and, as it were,

overawed by his determined effrontery, found they could draw breath more freely when he at length relieved them of his society. Lord Huntinglen, applying himself to comfort his new daughter-in-law, withdrew with her also; and the king, with his Privy Council, whom he had not dismissed, again returned to his council chamber, though the hour was unusually late. Heriot's attendance was still commanded, but for what reason was not explained to him.

CHAPTER XXVII

JAMES had no sooner resumed his seat at the council board, than he began to hitch in his chair, cough, use his handkerchief, and make other intimations that he meditated a long speech. The council composed themselves to the beseeming degree of attention. Charles, as strict in his notions of decorum as his father was indifferent to it, fixed himself in an attitude of rigid and respectful attention; while the haughty favourite, conscious of his power over both father and son, stretched himself more easily on his seat, and, in assuming an appearance of listening, seemed to pay a debt to ceremonial rather than to duty.

"My lords," said the monarch, "we are to pray your wisdom to consider the case of this unhappy youth, Lord Glenvarloch, and see whether, consistently with our honour, anything can be done in his favour."

"I am surprised at your Majesty's wisdom making the inquiry," said the duke; "it is plain this Dalgarno hath proved one of the most insolent villains on earth,

and it must therefore be clear that, if Lord Glenvarloch had run him through the body, there would but have been out of the world a knave who had lived in it too long. I think Lord Glenvarloch hath had much wrong; and I regret that, by the persuasions of this false fellow, I have myself had some hand in it."

"Ye speak like a child, Steenie—I mean my Lord of Buckingham," answered the king, "Though it may have been a good deed to have sticked Lord Dalgarno, being such as he has shown himself, anywhere else, yet it fell under the plain statute, when violence was offered within the verge of the court. For, let me tell you, my lords, the statute against striking would be of small use in our court, if it could be eluded by justifying the person stricken to be a knave."

"What your Majesty says," replied Prince Charles, is marked with your usual wisdom—the precincts of palaces must be sacred as well as the persons of kings, which are respected even in the most barbarous nations. But your Majesty's will can control the severity of this and every other law, and it is in your power, on consideration of his case, to grant this rash young man a free pardon."

"Know, my lords," said the king, "that we have, by a shrewd device and gift of our own, already sounded the very depth of this Lord Glenvarloch's disposition. I have caused them to make a listening-place up at the State prison of the Tower yonder—and communicating with the arras behind the lieutenant's chamber, where we may sit and privily hear the discourse of such prisoners as are pent up there for State offences, and so creep into the very secrets of our enemies."

The prince cast a glance towards the duke, expressive

of great vexation and disgust. Buckingham shrugged his shoulders, but the motion was so slight as to be almost imperceptible.

"Weel, my lords, ye ken the fray at the hunting yestermorn—I shall not get out of the trembling exies until I have a sound night's sleep—just after that, they bring ye in a pretty page that had been found in the park. We were warned against examining him ourselves by the anxious care of those 'around us; nevertheless, holding our life ever at the service of these kingdoms, we commanded 'all to avoid the room, the rather that we suspected this boy to be a girl. Weel, my lords, we questioned this maiden in male attire ourselves, and I profess it was a very pretty interrogatory, and well followed. For, though she at first professed that she assumed this disguise in order to countenance the woman who should present us with the Lady Hermione's petition, for whom she professed entire affection; yet when we did put her to the very question, she was compelled to own a virtuous attachment for Glenvarlochides, in such a pretty passion of shame and fear, that we had much ado to keep our own eyes from keeping company with hers in weeping. Also, she laid before us the false practices of this Dalgarno towards Glenvarlochides, inveigling him into houses of ill resort, and giving him evil counsel under pretext of sincere friendship, whereby the inexperienced lad was led to do what was prejudicial to himself and offensive to us. But, however prettily she told her tale, we determined not altogether to trust to her narration, but rather to try the experiment whilk we had devised for such occasions. And, having ourselves speedily passed from Greenwich to the Tower, we constituted ourselves eavesdropper, as it is called, to ob-

serve what should pass between Glenvarlochides and this page, whom we caused to be admitted to his apartment, well judging that if they were of counsel together to deceive us, it could not be but something of it would come out. Aweel, my lords, for all temptation of sore distress and evil ensample, this poor lad never loosed his tongue on us to say one unbecoming word—which inclines us the rather, acting always by your wise advice, to treat this affair of the Park as a thing done in the heat of blood, and under strong provocation, and therefore to confer our free pardon on Lord Glenvarloch."

"I am happy your gracious Majesty," said the Duke of Buckingham, "has arrived at that conclusion, though I could never have guessed at the road by which you attained it."

"I trust," said Prince Charles, "that it is not a path which your Majesty will think it consistent with your high dignity to tread frequently."

"Never while I live again, Baby Charles, that I give you my royal word on. Let our warrant of mercy to Lord Glenvarloch be presently expedited, and he put to his freedom; and as his estate is likely to go so sleeveless a gate, we will consider what means of favour we can show him.—My lords, I wish you an appetite to an early supper—for our labours have approached that term.—Baby Charles and Steenie, you will remain till our couchee.—Geordie Heriot, a word with you apart. See this chield Moniplies, sir, and tell him what we have done for Lord Glenvarloch, in whom he takes such part, out of our own gracious motion, though we refused to do it on ony proffer of private advantage.

"And now, bairns," said the king, "what do you look upon each other for?—and what have you got to ask of your dear dad and gossip?"

" Only," said the prince, " that it would please your Majesty to command the lurking-place at the prison to be presently built up—the groans of a captive should not be brought in evidence against him."

" What ! build up my listening-place, Baby Charles ? —And yet, better deaf than hear ill tales of one's self. So let them build it up, hard and fast, without delay, the rather that my back is sair with sitting in it for a whole hour. And now let us see what the cooks have been doing for us, bonnie bairns."

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE experienced reader may have already remarked that the last chapter was employed in sweeping out of the way the last obstacle to a blithe bridal.

In truth, it would be unpardonable to pass over slightly what so deeply interested our principal personage, King James. That learned and good-humoured monarch made no great figure in the politics of Europe ; but then, to make amends, he was prodigiously busy when he could find a fair opportunity of intermeddling with the private affairs of his loving subjects ; and the approaching marriage of Lord Glenvarloch to Mistress Margaret Ramsay was matter of great interest to him. He had been much struck (that is, for him, who was not very accessible to such emotions) with the beauty and embarrassment of the pretty Peg-a-Ramsay, as he called her, when he first saw her, and he glorified himself greatly on the acuteness which he had displayed in detecting her disguise, and in

carrying through the whole inquiry which took place in consequence of it.

He laboured for several weeks, while the courtship was in progress, with his own royal eyes, so as well-nigh to wear out, he declared, a pair of her father's best barnacles, in searching through old books and documents, for the purpose of establishing the bride's pretensions to a noble though remote descent, and thereby remove the only objection which envy might conceive against the match. In his own opinion, at least, he was eminently successful; for, when an old courtier, Sir Mungo Malagrowther, one day, in the presence-chamber, took upon him to grieve bitterly for the bride's lack of pedigree, the monarch cut him short with, "Ye may save your grief for your ain next occasions, Sir Mungo; for, by our royal saul, we will uphauld her father, Davy Ramsay, to be a gentleman of nine descents, whase great gudesire came of the auld martial stock of the House of Dalwolsey, than whom better men never did, and better never will, draw sword for king and country."

"Your Majesty had best give auld Davie a coat-of-arms as well as a pedigree," said Sir Mungo.

"It's done or ye bade, Sir Mungo," said the king; "and I trust we, who are the fountain of all earthly honour, are free to spirt a few drops of it on one so near our person, without offence to the Knight of Castle Girnigo. We have already spoken with the learned men of the Heralds' College, and we propose to grant him an augmented coat-of-arms, being his paternal coat charged with the crown-wheel of a watch in chief for a difference; and we purpose to add Time and Eternity for supporters, as soon as the Garter King-at-Arms shall be able to devise how Eternity is to be represented.

"We mention these things at the mair length, because we would have you all to know, that it is not without due consideration of the circumstances of all parties, that we design, in a small and private way, to honour with our own royal presence the marriage of Lord Glenvarloch with Margaret Ramsay, daughter and heiress of David Ramsay, our horologer, and a cadet only thrice removed from the ancient House of Dalwolsey. Jingling Geordie, as ye stand to the cost of the marriage feast, we look for good cheer."

Heriot bowed, as in duty bound. In fact, the king, who was a great politician about trifles, had manœuvred greatly on this occasion, and had contrived to get the prince and Buckingham despatched on an expedition to Newmarket, in order that he might find an opportunity in their absence of indulging himself in his own gossiping habits, which were distasteful to Charles, whose temper inclined to formality, and with which even the favourite, of late, had not thought it worth while to seem to sympathise. When the levee was dismissed, Sir Mungo Malagrowther seized upon the worthy citizen in the courtyard of the palace, and detained him, in spite of all his efforts, for the purpose of subjecting him to the following scrutiny :—

"This is a sair job on you, Master George—the king must have had little consideration—this will cost you a bonnie penny, this wedding dinner ?"

"It will not break me, Sir Mungo," answered Heriot ; "the king hath a right to see the table which his bounty hath supplied for years, well covered for a single day."

Sir Mungo contrived to get invited, or commanded, to attend on the bridal, at which there were but few

persons present ; for James, on such occasions, preferred a snug privacy which gave him liberty to lay aside the encumbrance, as he felt it to be, of his regal dignity. The company was very small, and indeed there were at least two persons absent whose presence might have been expected. The first of these was the Lady Dalgarno, the state of whose health, as well as the recent death of her husband, who had been killed by robbers while journeying to the North, precluded her attendance on the ceremony. The other absentee was Richie Moniplies, whose conduct for some time past had been extremely mysterious. Regulating his attendance on Lord Glenvarloch entirely according to his own will and pleasure, he had appeared regularly at his bedside in the morning, to assist him to dress, and at his wardrobe in the evening. The rest of the day he disposed of at his own pleasure, without control from his lord, who had now a complete establishment of attendants. Yet he was somewhat curious to know how the fellow disposed of so much of his time ; but on this subject Richie showed no desire to be communicative.

The reader must fancy the scattered flowers which strewed the path of the happy couple to church—the loud music which accompanied the procession—the marriage service performed by a bishop—the king, who met them at Saint Paul's, giving away the bride,—to the great relief of her father, who had thus time, during the ceremony, to calculate the just quotient to be laid on the pinion of report in a timepiece which he was then putting together.

When the ceremony was finished, the company were transported in the royal carriages to George Heriot's, where a splendid collation was provided for the marriage guests in the Foljambe apartments. The

king no sooner found himself in this snug retreat, than, casting from him his sword and belt with as much haste as if they burned his fingers, and flinging his plumed hat on the table, as who should say, Lie there, authority! he swallowed a hearty cup of wine to the happiness of the married couple, and began to amble about the room, mumping, laughing, and cracking jests, not of the wittiest, but accompanied and applauded by shouts of his own mirth, in order to encourage that of the company. Whilst his Majesty was in the midst of this gay humour, and a call to the banquet was anxiously expected, a servant whispered Master Heriot forth of the apartment. When he re-entered, he walked up to the king, and, in his turn, whispered something, at which James started.

"He is not wanting his siller?" said the king shortly and sharply.

"By no means, my liege," answered Heriot. "It is a subject he states himself as quite indifferent about, so long as it can pleasure your Majesty."

"Body of us, man!" said the king, "it is the speech of a true man and a loving subject, and we will grace him accordingly—what though he be but a carle—a twopenny cat may look at a king. Swith, man!—have him.—Moniplies?—They should have called the chield Monypennies, though I sall warrant you English think we have not such a name in Scotland."

As he spoke, the door flew open, and in entered, to the astonishment of Lord Glenvarloch, his late serving-man Richie Moniplies, now sumptuously, nay, gorgeously attired in a superb brocaded suit, and leading in his hand the tall, thin, withered, somewhat distorted form of Martha Trapbois, arrayed in a complete dress of black velvet, which suited so

strangely with the pallid and severe melancholy of her countenance, that the king himself exclaimed, in some perturbation, "What has the fellow brought us here? Body of our regal selves! it is a corpse that has run off with the mort-cloth!"

"May I sifflicate your Majesty to be gracious unto her?" said Richie, "being that she is, in respect of this morning's wark, my ain wedded wife, Mistress Martha Moniplies by name."

"Saul of our body, man! but she looks wondrous grim," answered King James. "Art thou sure she has not been in her time maid of honour to Queen Mary, our kinswoman of red-hot memory?"

"I am sure, an it like your Majesty, that she has brought me fifty thousand pounds of good siller, and better; and that has enabled me to pleasure your Majesty and other folk."

"Ye need have said naething about that, man," said the king; "we ken our obligations in that sma' matter, and we are glad this rudas spouse of thine hath bestowed her treasure on ane wha kens to put it to the profit of his king and country."

"It is the daughter of old Trapbois, who has been missed so long," said Lowestoffe, who was one of the guests. "Where could you mew her up so closely, friend Richie?"

"Master Richard, if it be your will," answered Richie, "or Master Richard Moniplies, if you like it better. For mewing of her up, I found her a shelter, in all honour and safety, under the roof of an honest countryman of my own—and for secrecy, it was a point of prudence, when wantons like you were abroad, Master Lowestoffe."

There was a laugh at Richie's magnanimous reply,

on the part of every one but his bride, who made to him a signal of impatience, and said, with her usual brevity and sternness—"Peace, peace! I pray you, peace. Let us do that which we came for." So saying, she took out a bundle of parchments, and, delivering them to Lord Glenvarloch, she said aloud—"This paper is your property—take it, but spare me the question how it came into my custody."

The king had bustled forward beside Lord Glenvarloch, and, fixing an eager eye on the writing, exclaimed—"Body of ourselves, it is our royal sign-manual for the money, which was so long out of sight!—How came you by it, Mistress Bride?"

"It is a secret," said Martha dryly.

"A secret which my tongue shall never utter," said Richie resolutely—"unless the king commands me on my allegiance."

"I do—I do command you," said James, trembling and stammering with the impatient curiosity of a gossip; while Sir Mungo, with more malicious anxiety to get at the bottom of the mystery, stooped his long thin form forward like a bent fishing-rod, raised his thin grey locks from his ear, and curved his hand behind it to collect every vibration of the expected intelligence. Martha in the meantime frowned most ominously on Richie, who went on undauntedly to inform the king, "that his deceased father-in-law, a good careful man in the main, had a touch of worldly wisdom about him, that at times marred the uprightness of his walk; he liked to dabble among his neighbour's gear, and some of it would at times stick to his fingers in the handling."

"For shame, man, for shame!" said Martha; "since the infamy of the deed must be told, be it at

least briefly.—Yes, my lord," she added, addressing Clenvarloch, "the money for your rent was not the sole bait which brought the miserable old man to your chamber that dreadful night — his object, and he accomplished it, was to purloin this paper. A wretched scrivener was with him that morning, and, I doubt not, urged the doting old man to this villainy, to offer another bar to the ransom of your estate. If there was a yet more powerful agent at the bottom of the conspiracy, God forgive it to him at this moment, for he is now where the crime must be answered!"

"Amen!" said Lord Glenvarloch, and it was echoed by all present.

"For my father," continued she, with her stern features twitched by an involuntary and convulsive movement, "his guilt and folly cost him his life; and my belief is constant, that the wretch who counselled him that morning to purloin the paper left open the window for the entrance of the murderers."

Everybody was silent for an instant; the king was first to speak, commanding search instantly to be made for the guilty scrivener.

"But, Richie," said Sir Mungo, "it seems to me that this bride of yours is like to be master and mair in the conjugal state."

"If she abides by words, Sir Mungo," answered Richie, "I thank Heaven I can be as deaf as any one; and if she comes to dunts, I have twa hands to paik her with!"

"Weel said, Richie, again," said the king; "you have gotten it on baith haffits, Sir Mungo.—Troth,

Mistress Bride, for a fule, your gudeman has a pretty turn of wit."

"There are fools, sire," replied she, "who have wit, and fools who have courage—ay, and fools who have learning, and are great fools notwithstanding.—I chose this man because he was my protector when I was desolate, and neither for his wit nor his wisdom. He is truly honest, and has a heart and hand that make amends for some folly. Since I was condemned to seek a protector through the world, which is to me a wilderness, I may thank God that I have come by no worse."

"And that is sae sensibly said," replied the king, "that, by my saul, I'll try whether I canna make him better. Kneel down, Richie—somebody lend me a rapier—yours, Master Langstaff (that's a brave name for a lawyer)—ye need not flash it out that gait, Templar-fashion, as if ye were about to pink a bailiff!"

He took the drawn sword, and with averted eyes, for it was a sight he loved not to look on, endeavoured to lay it on Richie's shoulder, but nearly stuck it into his eye. Richie, starting back, attempted to rise, but was held down by Lowestoffe, while, Sir Mungo guiding the royal weapon, the honour-bestowing blow was given and received: "*Surge, carnifex.*—Rise up, Sir Richard Moniplies, of Castle-Collop!—And, my lords and lieges, let us all to our dinner, for the cock-a-leekie is cooling."

NOTES

P. 10. BARNACLES.—Spectacles.

P. 12. BAT.—Club.

P. 13. PANED.—Slashed, or slit, to show a brighter coloured material underneath.

P. 15. WYNDS.—Narrow lanes or alleys.

P. 19. MY CRAIG A RAXING.—Literally, "my neck a stretching.

P. 27. CARCANET.—A chain or collar of precious stones. BALAS RUBIES are of a pale rose colour, sometimes inclining to orange.

P. 27. MERK = mark.—The value of this coin was 13s. 4d.

P. 33. LAIR.—Learning.

P. 37. ZONE.—Girdle.

P. 52. PLEACHED ALLEY.—A path roofed over by intertwined branches, as of climbing roses.

P. 53. POINT-DEVICE.—In the height of fashion.

P. 56. ROSE-NOBLE.—A coin issued by King James I., of the value of 6s. 8d.

P. 63. ENCOMIUM.—Praise.

P. 67. VIDELICET (Lat.).—Namely. This word is generally shortened to "viz."

P. 74. A PLUCKER OF PIGEONS.—In this sense, one who gambles only with those who are unlikely to win.

P. 76. PAR VOYE DU FAIT (Fr.).—By force.

P 80. CHITTY FACE.—Thin or pinched face.

P. 97. CONTRABANDISTS.—Smugglers.

P. 101. DAMASKED LEATHER.—Leather stamped with a pattern, generally in gold or silve

P. 102. RUFF.—A double collar of muslin or linen, crimped or fluted.
FARTHINGALE.—A wide skirt supported on light hoops, like the crinoline of Early Victorian days.

P. 125. FRIAR'S CHICKEN.—Chicken broth with eggs in it.
COUP THE CRANS.—Literally, "go to wreck," like a pot on the fire when the crane on which it stood is upset.

P. 130. SKENE.—A dagger. The SKEAN DHU was the particular type of dagger carried by the Scottish Highlanders.

P. 151. COCK-A-LEEKIE.—A soup, made from a chicken, boiled with leeks—a favourite Scottish dish.

P. 156. GARR'D THEM WHOMLE THE BUCKET.—Upset their plans.

P. 157. BODLE.—A copper coin, value the sixth part of an English penny.

P. 168. CARLE.—A base or low-bred fellow.

P. 169. MORT-CLOTH.—A funeral pall.

P. 172. DUNTS.—Blows.
PAIK.—Strike or beat.

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