

## CHAPTER XI.

Wi' merry sangs and friendly cracks,  
I wat they didna weary ;  
And unco tales, and funny jokes,  
Their sports were cheap and cheery.

BURNS.

“Noo, Lowrie,” said Bawby o’ Brigstanes, nodding her head towards Lowrie o’ Lingigart, “geng on wi’ dy story, an’ ill trift be ta her füil face dat pat dee aff o’t.”

“Weel,” resumed Lowrie, “da neist wonderful thing dat happened aboot da hoose wis da wife’s claes. Whin shü deid her claes wis a’ pairted ; da eldest dochter got some, an’ her sisters got some, an’ a auld aunt got sae muckle ; bit ae mornin’ whin dey wauken’d a’ da claes wis amissin’, an’ dey tocht dat da claes hed been stown, but wha da tief cud be naebody kent ; an’ da wonderful thing wis dat da claes wis stown oot o’ every ane o’ da houses da sam nicht. Bit dere’s nae mair o’ dis till ae day dat da eldest dochter happened ta lift da lid o’ da midder’s kist, whin, da Lord preserve a’, wisna every stick’ o’ da claes lyin’ faulded as neat as da haand o’ man cud dü it.

“Den dey hed a coo dat da wife got fae her ain midder, an’ efter shü (dat’s Robbie’s wife dat wis taen awa, I mean) efter shü died dis coo wis shifted fae da baand dat shü wis tied wi’ til anidder baand, bit in da mornin’ da kie wis fund shifted, an’ hir coo tied in her ain baand ; an’ dis happened ower an’ ower agen, till dey didna shift her ony mair. Every nicht dere wis some disturbunce aboot da hoose, an’ da things a’ shifted fae da wy dey wir left whin the folk guid ta bed. Da lame<sup>2</sup> wid be taen oot o’ da rack an’ set upo’ da table, an’ da fire kindled, an’ da tae pot standin’ upo’ da hertstane, as if some-

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<sup>1</sup> Stitch.

<sup>2</sup> Crockery.

body wis gaen ta mak tae. Ae time da muckle kettle wis fun i' da mornin' staandin' atween da doors half fu' o' bluid an'——"

"Noo, Lowrie," again exclaimed Girzzie o' Glufftoon, "if du says anidder wurd, du'll pit me oot o' my judgment."

"Weel trath, Girzzie," said Lowrie, "I tink du hes na far ta geng, bit I'm düne noo; an' sae just settle dee doon, an' mak dy sock fir supper time, an' den if du's feared ta geng hame, I'll rape dee athin a büddie, an' tak dee hame upo' my back."

"I'm shüre du's no able," said Girzzie; "du'll eat seven saut barrels yet afore du's able to carry me fae here ta Glufftoon."

"Weel," responded Lowrie, "I'll waager dee dis ane" (taking hold of his ear), "dat I'll tak dee upo' da tap o' a büddie o' meal, an' carry dee fae here ta da yard deck o' Glufftoon."

"Weel, weel!" interposed Bawby, "du'll hae ta geng ta da mill fir da büddie o' meal first, Lowrie; an' whin du comes up wi' her, I ken du'll gie Bawby a güid plate fu' oot o' her first, an' du'll be weel blyde du did dat afore du gets ta Glufftoon wi' Girzzie upo' da tap o' her; bit feenish dy story first, my bairn."

"O, I'm just dune, Bawby," continued Robbie, "except dis, dat Robbie never hed da corage ta dü as he wis tell'd in his draems; an' I canna help ca'in him a simple, coordly snüil, fir if it hed a been me, I wid a geen an' met her, altho' da ert hed been swarmin' wi' hill-folk, as tick is ever I'm seen da rabbits i' da links in a münlicht nicht; but whaa's neist, Bawby? I tink I'm düne my pairt."

"I'm shüre du's düne dat, my bairn," said Bawby; "an' noo it's dy turn, Willie. I ken du hes tales enoch if du laeks ta tell dem; sae come awa, my dear bairn."

"I! I!" exclaimed Willie Bigiltie o' Broonknowes, "I'm shüre I kenno what ta tell you, unless it be annider hill-folk's story, or I'll tell you twa or tree short anes ta mak up fir

Lowrie's lang anc. Weel, den, dere wis ae time dat dere wis a lock o' hill-folk dat cam inta a hoose upo' da nicht, an' ane o' da hill-folk's wives büor a bairn, an' whin dey luiked aboot da hoose fir water ta wash da bairn in, dey cud fin' nane, except some blaand in a kirn ; sae dey tüik some o' dis blaand and washed da bairn wi', and den dey tümed it back agen in da kirn, and said, 'Dat'll learn you a lesson da neist time ye geng ta bed an' no lave water i' your hoose ;' sae fae dat day ta dis, naebody iver wis kent ta geng ta bed an' no lave water i' da hoose ower da nicht.

"Anidder story, an' a true ane, fir my midder kent da man as weel as shü kent her ain fedder. Da first nicht dat he güid ta see his lass, just as he left his ain folk's hoose, an' güid doon by da peat stack, a great company o' hill-folk cam doon fae da idder side o' da stack, an' followed him a' da wy ta da hoose whaur da lass bedd ;<sup>1</sup> bit afore dey cam dere, dey hed ta cross a burn, an' he said, 'Lord save him,' as he heard da plash o' der feet i' da water as dey cam efter him just as veevilly<sup>2</sup> as he heard himsell speakin whin he wis tellin da story. Whin he cam ta da hoose, dey güid up alang da tae side o' da stack, an' he güid up alang da tidder, an' whin he cam oot a' da hoose ta geng hame agen, dey met him at da fit o' da stack, an' followed him fit for fit until he cam till his ane peatstack, whin he saw nae mair o' dem ; bit he never güid back again ta da sam lass, fir he tocht it wis a ill sign."

"Dud he ever say what leak dey wir ?" inquired Bawby ; "whin dey followed him a' dat gate he cudna bit see veevily enouch da potridge<sup>3</sup> o' dem."

"Weel, he said dey wir just laek bairns tree or four year auld, bit winderful sma' an' pirjink aboot da legs, an' a' clead in green claes, just neepid<sup>4</sup> inta da skin, an' den upo' der heads dey wüor capes o' da sam colour, heich

<sup>1</sup> Resided.

<sup>3</sup> Portrait.

<sup>2</sup> Clearly.

<sup>4</sup> Pinched, narrow.

an' dwimishin<sup>1</sup> awa ta a sma trointie<sup>2</sup> at da tap like a flossiecape,<sup>3</sup> or like Auld Midder Hubbard's hat in da peerie pictur books. Dey wir awfully soople, an' whin dey danced it wis just like as mony wind baa's jimpin' fae da ert. Dey whirled, an' cleekit, and jinket sae lichtly, it wis a graand sicht ta see dem wi' a briht münlicht nicht. Auld Eddie Edemson o' Oootvoe wis as weel acquainted wi' dem as he wis wi' his ain folk, an' great companies o' dem wid a followed him at nicht ony wy dat he güid; an' whin he met onybody an' wanted da hill-folk ta lave him at wance he wid a just strucken his staff ipa da ert, an' said--

'Skeet howe hame, *güid* folk !'

an' whin he said dis every ane vanished in a meenit. Bit whin he wanted dem ta geng hame at their leasir he hed a kind o' rime dat he said, an' as he keepit sayin' it dey slowly vanished awa; an' dis wis da rime—

Da twal, da twal apostles,  
 Da elewan, da elewan evengilists,  
 Da ten, da ten commanders,  
 Da nine da brazen sheeners,  
 Da eicht da holy waters,  
 Da seven starns i' da heavens, *no*  
 Da ~~six~~ creation mornins,  
 Da five da tumblers o' my bools,  
 Da four da gospel makers,  
 Da tree triddle trivers,  
 Da twa lily-white boys dat clothed demsells in green, boys;  
 Da ane, da ane, dat walks alon, an' now ye a' geng hame, boys.'

*Green Grow the R.*

“Da hill-folks wis gude enough whin ye pleased dem, an' ca'd dem '*güid folk*,' an' no hill-folk, fir dey never laeked dat; bit when dey wir ill-pleased dey wir very vicious, an' da warst was takin' awa kie and sometimes bairns, an' auld folk as weel. A'body kent dat Eric Yunson hed a bairn dat wis taen awa; it just began an' wüor up, an' wüor up, till it wis a perfect vee-sion; an' somebody gae dem coonsel ta swüip it oot among da

<sup>1</sup> Tapering.

<sup>2</sup> End or snout.

<sup>3</sup> Cap made of rushes.

ase just i' da first dim-rivin', an' den keep da door open, an' watch fir dey saw a bairn comin' in, when dey wir ta draw a ring roond about it an' say :—

‘ Outside da ring your power may ye tine,  
Inside da ring, Lord, keep me an' mine.’

Sae dey did as dey wir tauld, an' ae morning' just i' da first dim-rivin' dey swüped dis eemage oot among da ase, an' oot trow da door, and den dey waited a peerie start, an' in comes a beautiful bairn wi' yallow curlin' hair, an' just da very face o' what der ain bairn sud a been ; an' sae, as ye may tink dey wirna lang in sayin' da wirds ; bit in a meenit do hoose wis filled wi' a kind o' wind dat blew everything aboot da hoose ; an' dis was da hill-folk, whin dey cudna get inside da ring, dey blew der breaths upo' da bairn an' da folk : an' da niest mornin' der skins wir a' blistered, but efter a while dat a' wüer awa, an' da bairn grew up ta be a fine luikin' woman. Bit it's noo time ta me ta be düne, I tink ; an' sae wha's neist, Bawby ? I'ts you dat luiks efter dat.”

“ Yea, I sall luik efter you a', my bairns,” said Bawby ; “ bit I'm tinkin' it's just my ain Leezie dat's sittin' at dy side dat's gaen ta gie wis a sang noo.”

“ O, Bawby, ye nicht pass me,” said Leezie Lowrie o' Langgate, “ for I never ken what ta sing.”

“ Dat's just because du hes sae mony o' dem, my bairn,” replied Bawby ; “ bit du can gie wis ‘ Willie da Sailor ;’ dat's a bonnie sang, an' we'll a' be blyde ta hear it.”

“ O, dat anc,” said Leezie, smiling ; “ I'm shüre I never ken if I mind it a' ; bit if I miss ony o' da verses ye can tell me.” And Leezie sang in a soft clear voice this ballad :—

‘ It was in the month of fair July  
When wild flowers bloom most pleasantly,  
And the sun shone bright in a summer sky  
When we abroad were walking.

I said, “ My charming Mally dear,  
I cannot wed you now, I fear ;

For my ship to distant lands must steer,  
 And so we must be parting.

And then when I am far from you,  
 You'll forget your jolly sailor true,  
 And give your heart to another blue,  
 Who may be a deceiver."

"Oh William, William!" aloud she cries,  
 While tears came streaming from her eyes,  
 "Your faithful loving Mally dies,  
 The day you from her wander.

When you are gone, my William dear,  
 Beneath the waves I shall disappear,  
 And the dark sea-weed shall be my bier,  
 And soft shall be my slumber."

My arms her waist then did entwine,  
 I wiped her cheeks and kissed her then;  
 Cheer up, cheer up, love, you shall be mine,  
 I've said all this to try you.

Here is a ring for your lily hand,  
 Here's gold to buy what you may command,  
 For to-morrow joined in wedlock band  
 We shall no more be parting.'

"Ay, dat's a right sang, Leezie," said Tammie o' Tùm-heads. "I aye laek ta hear a sang dat ends weel."

"Den I hoop du hes ane ready dat'll end weel, Tammie," said Leezie, "for it's dy turn neist."

"O! an' so it is!" exclaimed Tammie. "I wis just firyattin' dat. Weel, I'll gie you da 'Boatman's Sang,' fir dat ane baith begins an' ends weel enouch."

#### THE BOATSMAN'S SONG.

'Janny, get my sea bread;  
 I hoop du hes it clare;<sup>1</sup>  
 Da sky is saftly marled ower,  
 A sign o' wadder fair.

Fir I'm gaen ta da far haaf,  
 Because the wadder's fair,  
 An' a bonnie lock o' fish we'll hae  
 Ta lay upo' da ayre.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ready.

<sup>2</sup> Beach.

Get me my biiddie made o' gloy,<sup>1</sup>  
 Dat hings ahint da door ;  
 My skinjub an' my sea-breeks,  
 An' see dey're hale afore.  
 Fir I'm gaen ta da far haaf, &c.

Pit in my mittens an' my dags,<sup>2</sup>  
 An' mind a keg o' blaand ;  
 Ta slock<sup>3</sup> my trist,<sup>4</sup> fir weel du kens  
 Da wark we hae in haand,  
 Whin we ir at da far haaf, &c.

My sea biitts<sup>5</sup> an' my kütikens,<sup>6</sup>  
 Just see dey're in da biiddie ;  
 My mussel-draigs, my lempit<sup>7</sup> pick,  
 An' sae my lempit cuddie.<sup>8</sup>  
 Fir I'm gaen ta da far haaf, &c.

My snüids<sup>9</sup> an' handlin rex me doon  
 Dey're dere upo' da lame,  
 An noo dat's a', Lord be wi' dee,  
 Fir I maun geng fae hame,  
 An' geng ta da far haaf, &c.

Da pirr<sup>10</sup> o' wind is fae da wast,  
 An' we'll heist up da sail,  
 Until we come ta fishin' grund  
 Whaur we can set an' hail.  
 Whin we come ta da far haaf, &c.

Bit first geng out an' meet wi' me,  
 Just as I leave da door ;  
 Fir weel I ken dy fit hes luck,  
 As I hae fun' afore,<sup>11</sup>  
 Whin I gaed ta da far haaf, &c.

Sae Lord be wi' dee noo, an' keep  
 Baith dee an' a' da bairns ;  
 He kens dat baith fir dee an' dem  
 My very heart it yerns,  
 Whin I am at da far haaf, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Stiff oat straw.    <sup>2</sup> Half mittens.    <sup>3</sup> Quench.    <sup>4</sup> Thirst.    <sup>5</sup> Boots.    <sup>6</sup> Socks.

<sup>7</sup> Small iron chisel for removing limpets from the rocks.

<sup>8</sup> Small creel for collecting limpets in.

<sup>9</sup> The thin lines put next the hooks in the gear for fishing the sethe.

<sup>10</sup> Slight breeze gently ruffling the surface of the water.

<sup>11</sup> See note O. Superstitions of fishermen.

Keep up dy hert an' dīnna greet  
 As aft doos dīne afore ;  
 Bit tink upo' da lock o fish  
 We're shūre to bring ashore,  
 Whin we come fae da far haaf, &c.'

"Dy turn neist, Sandy," said Tammie, as he finished his song and gave young Sandy Flaws o' Flattriggs a nudge with his elbow. "Du dat haes sae muckle laer can gie us sontin' graand ; sae come awa noo, an' get up ta dy feet, an' say it laek a minister."

"Dy skimp<sup>1</sup> is wilcome," said Sandy ; "bit since du wants me ta gie dee sontin' in da minister's line, I'll gie da 'Lost Boat,' an dat's better den mony a sermon du'll hear fae da poopit ; an' sae I hoop ye'll a' pay attention, an' sit as quiet as ye wid dū i' dā kirk," saying which Sandy rose to his feet, pushed back his chair, and gave the following recitation, which was listened to by the whole circle of lads and lasses with breathless attention :

#### THE LOST BOAT.

' The summer eve was still and beautiful,  
 The placid bay lay hushed in calm repose,  
 And tiny wavelets broke in murmur sweet  
 Upon the silvery sand. O'er Thule's hills  
 The radiant western sky, with fleecy clouds,  
 Was beauteous fair ; all Nature sweetly smiled,  
 And grey-haired sage, full deep in weather lore,  
 Could not discern of danger in the skies.  
 The anxious fisher hied him to the beach  
 To launch his boat upon the buoyant wave,  
 Spreading his sail before the gentle breeze,  
 To seek his finny prey in waters deep.  
 At many a cottage door a loving wife,  
 Mother, or blushing artless maiden stood,  
 Watching the tiny bark recede from sight  
 That bore away all dear on earth to them.  
 And when just lost to view a falling tear,  
 Or inward earnest prayer to Him  
 Who calms the seas, and rules the raging storms,  
 That He would keep them in His heavenly care,  
 And safely guide them on the pathless deep.

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<sup>1</sup> Irony.



The sun now sinks beneath the western wave,  
 The lines are set, the boat lies gently rocked  
 Upon the bosom of the placid deep,  
 Waiting the midnight turning of the tide  
 That brings the fish to many a tempting bait.  
 But look ! what mean those sudden swelling waves,  
 While yet the air is still and calm around ?  
 It is the prelude of a coming storm,  
 Told by the scudding clouds athwart the sky.  
 Dull souching sounds are borne across the wave  
 That tell the tempest follows hard behind.  
 The anxious crew now ply the bending oar,  
 And " hail " their lines with energetic speed.  
 But soon the breaking waves and lashing spray  
 Force them to cut away the straining line.  
 The close-reefed sail now hoisted to the gale,  
 The well-tried skipper, of unrivalled skill,  
 With lips compressed, and strong and sinewy arm,  
 Seizes the helm and draws the dripping sheet ;  
 Fast through the hissing waves the boat she flies,  
 Rushing and bounding like a thing of life.  
 With watchful eye, and quick and steady hand,  
 The skilful pilot runs to lee and weather  
 Of towering waves that soon would overwhelm  
 His fragile bark beneath the swelling foam.  
 Oft from the jaws of death he quickly glides :  
 The yawning grave beneath the crested wave,  
 In clamouring rage wide opens for its prey.  
 Alas ! to tell the tale : On that sad day,  
 A noble crew thus battled with the storm ;  
 A father, two sons, and a son-in-law—  
 A braver crew not found on Thule's shore.  
 When just in sight of land, a mighty wave  
 Swept quick their boat beneath its surging tide,  
 And left them struggling on the raging foam.  
 Now on the slippery keel at last they cling,  
 Oft deep submerged beneath the angry waves ;  
 Rising again into the raging blast,  
 The lashing spray beats on them furiously.

Ah ! who can tell the agonising thoughts  
 Of home and dear ones to be seen no more,  
 That nerved the stiffening forms and *numbed* grasp

Of heroes battling with remorseless fate.  
Inscrutable decree ! what dare we say ?  
Though ties are broken by the angry wave,  
No tempest rages on that peaceful shore  
Where tears flow not, and parting is unknown.  
With early dawn upon the dizzy heights,  
Mothers, sisters, and wives are seen  
Straining their tearful eyes upon the sea  
Still raging wild with foaming billows white ;  
And as each speck of sail appears in view  
Is raised aloud a cry of hope and fear.  
At last, all one by one, the tempest-tossed,  
They round the point and safely gain the strand,  
Except, alas ! that one which never more  
Shall fill its place upon the shingly beach.  
In vain, mother, sister, and a loving wife  
Still gaze upon the sailless watery waste,  
Their slender forms bending 'gainst the blast,  
While flitting to and fro along the cliff.  
Again and again, in wild despair  
Return they to their friends upon the beach  
To hear false hopes as kindly oft repeated  
By lips trembling by sympathetic grief.  
But, ah ! the dread hour at last must come  
When hope dies out, and whispering groups  
Betray the fatal truth.  
By friendly arms supported, sorrowfully  
They reach the cheerless home, now desolate ;  
And then is heard the shriek of agonizing woe !  
Bursting hearts, and eyes that will not weep,  
For grief has made those friendly fountains dry.  
Is there on earth a beating human heart  
That all unmoved could see such human woe,  
Could hear that wail of lamentation deep,  
And not sob out his sympathizing grief ?  
O ! Thou who temper'st to the shorn lamb  
The chilling winds of early vernal spring,  
Come with the balm of thine own consolation,  
And pour it on the wounded, bleeding heart ;  
And in the shadow of this vale of tears  
Shine bright upon the mourners' lonely path,  
And point them to that heavenly home  
Where friends are not lost but gone before.'

To kirk or manse hoo fair to see  
 A score o' pairs geng leadin' ;  
 Wi' ribbins fleein' an' fiddles playin',—  
 Just every week a weddin'.

Wi' merry heels at rants an reels,  
 Da barn flürs wis shakin' ;  
 “*But*” ower the muckle pot boils brown,  
 Sic castin'<sup>1</sup> scones an' bakin'.

Pork hams, skenk houghs,<sup>2</sup> an' reisted<sup>3</sup> geese,  
 Dried saucer<sup>4</sup>-meet an' spaarls ;  
 Milky scones an' soonie scones,  
 Heat burstan bread an' faarls<sup>5</sup>.

Der wis a fouth o' meat an' drink,  
 An' welcome a' might chance in,  
 To sit doon at the festive board  
 Or join the fun an' dancin' !

But lit wis leave da weddin' folk,  
 Ta dance an' reel till mornin' ;  
 An' geng roond by the stane yard deck,  
 Dat hes da screws o' corn in.

Dere Eddie Tam hes killed his grice,  
 An' Eppie puddins makin' ;  
 Baith black an' white, da meal an' seam,  
 Shü heans<sup>6</sup> na weel ta pack in.

Den in da pot wi' careful haand,  
 Shü plumps dem ane by ane in ;  
 An no ta lit dem spleet or spue,  
 Fast ower she pricks a<sup>p</sup>pin in.

But near da lum twa triky cheelds,  
 A while dey hae been watchin',  
 An' if dey're lucky, as dey tink,  
 Some queer fish dey'll be catchin'.

Fir four ling huiks, like mussel draig,  
 Wi' lead an' string fir lowerin',  
 Dey'll quietly slip doon i' da pot,  
 Whin Eppie taks ta snorin'.

<sup>1</sup> Making pancakes.<sup>4</sup> Dried sausages.<sup>2</sup> Beef houghs.<sup>5</sup> Thin bannocks.<sup>3</sup> Smoked.<sup>6</sup> Spares.

Ay, there gengs ane up through da reek,  
 O' puddins clare fir eatin',  
 While Eppie snores, and Eddie glowers,  
 Just whaur he's sweein' da feet in.

An' dere goes twa, tree, four, and five,  
 Da sixt da huik aff jumped,  
 And doon da height o' lum it fell,  
 An' in da kettle plumped.

Da splash sent oot a waterspoot  
 Ower Eppie's fit and brunt it ;  
 When oot shiit roars, " My Lord, my fit,  
 My hoose wi' ghosts is hunted."

Up jimps auld Eddie roong in haand,  
 An' oot da door gengs spangin',  
 An' swears he'll catch da puddin' tieves,  
 An' end da sport by hangin'.

But aff da riggin' quick as cats,  
 An' ower da yard-deck fleein',  
 As weel might Eddie chase twa ghosts,  
 Or try if he could see ane.

A merry day wis Auld Yule Day,  
 An' up we aye got early,  
 To try wir New Yule suits o' claes,  
 An' see dey fitted fairly.

Fine corduroy or moleskin grey,  
 Wi' buttons brichtly shinin' ;  
 Nae prince in a' da laand e'er tocht  
 His robes he luiked mair fine in.

Wir güid Scots bonnets, red an' black,  
 In cheques aboot da brim wis ;  
 Da tap a bunch o' flashy red,  
 An' in da croon a rim was.

Noo see Yule mornin's brakwist set,  
 Da table weel is heaped  
 Wi' scones an' cakes, boiled cocks and drakes,  
 Da bottle an' da teapot.

Loaf bread an' biscuit fae da toon  
 O Lerick fills a basket ;  
 An' bairns tak whate'er dey like,  
 An' never need to ask it.

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<sup>6</sup> Spares.

Ay, there gengs ane up through da reek,  
 O' puddins clare fir eatin',  
 While Eppie snores, and Eddie glowers,  
 Just whaur he's sweein' da feet in.

An' dere goes twa, tree, four, and five,  
 Da sixt da huik aff jumped,  
 And doon da height o' lum it fell,  
 An' in da kettle plumped.

Da splash sent oot a waterspoot  
 Ower Eppie's fit and brunt it ;  
 When oot shii roars, " My Lord, my fit,  
 My hoose wi' ghosts is hunted."

Up jimps auld Eddie roong in haand,  
 An' oot da door gengs spangin',  
 An' swears he'll catch da puddin' tieves,  
 An' end da sport by hangin'.

But aff da riggin' quick as cats,  
 An' ower da yard-deck fleein',  
 As weel might Eddie chase twa ghosts,  
 Or try if he could see ane.

A merry day wis Auld Yule Day,  
 An' up we aye got early,  
 To try wir New Yule suits o' claes,  
 An' see dey fitted fairly.

Fine corduroy or moleskin grey,  
 Wi' buttons brichtly shinin' ;  
 Nae prince in a' da laand e'er tocht  
 His robes he luiked mair fine in.

Wir güid Scots bonnets, red an' black,  
 In cheques aboot da brim wis ;  
 Da tap a bunch o' flashy red,  
 An' in da croon a rim was.

Noo see Yule mornin's brakwist set,  
 Da table weel is heaped  
 Wi' scones an' cakes, boiled cocks and drakes,  
 Da bottle an' da teapot.

Loaf bread an' biscuit fae da toon  
 O Lerick fills a basket ;  
 An' bairns tak whate'er dey like,  
 An' never need to ask it.

Da brakwist ower—wi' baa' an' gun  
 Aff ta da links we run fast,  
 An' gled to fin' whin we cam dere  
 Dere wis nane o' da fun past.

Dere scores o' boys wi' bang an' noise,  
 Da wind baa's keeps careerin' ;  
 While shots fae guns wi' big touch holes  
 Gae some poor gunners sair een.

A' dey lang, bang gengs da baas,  
 Sic fechtin', faain', an' racin',  
 Dat new claes maks us sairly dread  
 At hame ta shaw wir face in.

Wi' legs weel tired at close o' day  
 We slept da nicht sae soondly ;  
 Bit still in draem da licht wind baa'  
 Kept iver dancin' roondly.

Auld sober sense, an' prime soor dook  
 Micht ca' da day a fùle day,  
 Bit ta da hert o' sprichtly youth  
 A glorious day wis Yule Day.

An' noo amid dis world's change  
 In scenes far distant lyin',  
 Whaur art o' man wi' fairest forms  
 O' Nature ever viein' ;

Da sweetest strains o' music heard  
 Wi' a' da pomp an' graander,  
 O' city wi' its pleasures gay,  
 Whaur youthful choice may wander :—

Yet I can see dey've pleased me no ;  
 An' aft ta cure my chagrin,  
 I've wissed ance mair for *Auld Yule Day*  
*My leaden guns and baa' green."*

“Weel, I be hanged,” exclaimed Johnnie o' Greentaft, slapping his thigh and rubbing it with his hand, “if dat's no da best we've heard da nicht ; it's really capital ! Man, whaur fell du in wi' dis, an' fu can du mind on it, sic a length as it is? Ay! da wrater o' dat is been a Shetlandman, an' no mistake. He kens a' about it ; an' weel he can tell his tale.”

“I’m blyde ye’re a’ pleased wi’ it,” said Walter ; “bit wha’s neist ta carry on da glory o’ it ?”

“O, it’s dee, Girzie, my jewel ; come awa an’ gie us sontin’ sweet,” added Walter, as he put his arm around her waist, and tried to give her a kiss.

“Geng awa an’ kiss Jeannie o’ Voe,” cried Girzie Güillet, as she drew herself away from Walter, and lifted her hand to give him a slap on the cheek.

“O, mercy !” exclaimed Walter, as he covered his ears with his hands ; “hae mercy upo’ me dis time, an’ I’ll never dü it agen ; bit come awa, my dautie, an’ gie us dy bonnie sang, an’ I sall be best man at dy weddin’ ; an’ den, as Hill Robbie said, ‘ I’ll get drams an’ get kiss o’ bride enko ! ’”

“Ay, come awa, my bairn,” said Bawby, “an’ gie us ‘ Da Auld Wife’s Fireside ;’ dat’s ane fir me, du kens.”

“Weel,” said Girzie, “ I’ll try an’ sing dat sang just ta your ainsel, Bawby ; bit if I cud help it, dis füil sinner dat’s sitten at my side sudna hear a wurd o’ it,” she added, as she sang in a clear merry voice

#### THE AULD WIFE’S FIRESIDE.

‘ Da wind is roarin’ i’ da lum,  
 Dere’s snawdrifts deep on every side ;  
 Bit what cares shü for wind or snaw,  
 Wi’ comfort at her fireside ?  
     Da auld wife’s fireside,  
     Wir auld grannie’s fireside ;  
     Na place in a’ da world wide  
     Sae cosy as her fireside.

Her dog an’ cat upo’ da heart  
 In friendship dear dey aye confide,  
 An’ puss purrs ower his waggin’ tail  
 By da auld wife’s fireside.  
     Da auld wife’s fireside, &c.

Her hoose as clean as ony preen,  
 An’ things dat wir her midder’s pride  
 Are dere, nae warr yet o’ do wear,  
 By da auld’s wife fireside.  
     Da auld wife’s fireside, &c.



## SHETLAND FIRESIDE TALES.

Her wheel rins roond wi' muckle din,  
 Her fingers ower da yarn slide ;  
 Da cairds, da wheel, da knitten' wires  
 Ne'er slacken at her fireside.

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

Her teapot's mask'd four times a day,  
 Da truth she dūsna need ta hīde,  
 Fir a drap o' tae is just her life  
 An' comfort o' her fireside.

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

Wi' airs o' meal, an teats o' 'oo  
 Shū says " da Lord will her provide ;"  
 Fir aye shū fan' His promise true  
 Sin first shū hed a fireside.

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

In winter nichts aroond her fire  
 Da lads an' lasses laek ta bide ;  
 Fir kind wirds aye shū hes ta say,  
 Ta a' dat's roond her fireside.

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

Sic fairy tales as shū can tell  
 An' giants dat tree miles cud stride ;  
 Wi' ghosts an' goblins maks you grue  
 At nicht ta leave her fireside.

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

An' whiles shū tink's o' days gane by,  
 An' when shū wis a bonnie bride,  
 Sic tochts maks tears come trinklin' doon,  
 When lanely at her fireside.

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

Bit trials tho' mony shū hes hed,  
 At Providence shu does na chide ;  
 Tho' a' are noo laid i' da mīld,  
 Dat ance wir roond her fireside.

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

Her Bible den her only joy,  
 In days whin shū wis sairly tried ;  
 An' still shū seeks da " Promised Laand "  
 In it, oft by her fireside,

Da auld wife's fireside, &c.

## CHAPTER XIII.

The nicht drave on wi' sangs and clatter.

BURNS.

"LORD bless dy sweet voice, my bairn!" exclaimed Bawby; "a bonnie fireside indeed! May we a' seek dat Promised Laand, an' den we'll no mis dis weary world;" and Bawby clasped her hands, looking devoutly up to the lum. "Noo, my bairns," she added, "da nicht's spendin', sae ony ane dat's neist say awa. Ay, it's dee Jamie; du'll tell wis a story, an' I ken dere's nane i' da hoose dat can beat dee at dat."

"Oh, you manna skimp me," said Jamie M'Kennie o' Scartness; "bit whidder or no, I sall tell you ane o' da best I mind apon; an' no ta hae ony lees in it, I'll geng nae farder awa den last simmer, when I wis rowin' at dat Ness sea."

### JAMIE'S TALE.

"Da saith<sup>1</sup> hed begun ta get a kind o' clumpsed, an' shü widna lift i' da scrüiff idder, fir wing<sup>2</sup> or skag, an' draigin,<sup>2</sup> excep fir bait, wisna wirt tryin', sae wir men tocht dat we wid hae a shot wi' da tows. Weel, we made a' ready, an' wi' a lock o' stanes i' da efter shot, an' a single reef i' da sail, we ran oot an' east till we hed da Toogs<sup>3</sup> afore da widder, an' den we tüik doon an' set aff; and whin we flang wir ooter bow,<sup>4</sup> we

<sup>1</sup> Bait cut from the belly of a fish near the gills.

<sup>2</sup> Fishing sethe by running the line to the bottom (sometimes they are fished in the surface).

<sup>3</sup> A fisherman's "meethe" or landmark, by which he knows where to find a particular fishing ground.

<sup>4</sup> Buoy.

hed da Hammer o' Scord<sup>1</sup> at Noness. We den ran ta wir inner bow an' began ta hail, an' efter we hed about a packie an' a half in, da tow began ta snore heavy upo' da cabe.<sup>2</sup> Says I ta Eddie Maikimson dat wis hailin', 'Ye're shürelly i' da grund,<sup>3</sup> Eddie,' says I. 'Na, faith, boy,' says he, 'dere's a fish apo' me, an' a heavy ane tü.'

"'Andoo<sup>4</sup> aise, boys,' says Eddie ta da men dat wir upo' da fore taft ; an' den in a peerie start he cries agen, *shoo* ;<sup>5</sup> an' wi' dat a perfet monster o' a turbot rises i' da scrüiff, wi' da tows wuppled an' wuppled roond about 'im ; sae we managed ta get his head upo' da gunnel,<sup>6</sup> an', if ye'll believe me, wir keel wis nearly oot o' da water afore we got him in ower ; an' den, Lord save me, as his tail lay i' da eft stammeron,<sup>7</sup> an' his head across da fore taft, an' as fat as he cud lie within da hide. A peerie while efter we got him in he gies a awful fluffer, till da boat shüick anunder him agen, an oot he spues a great muckle ling, wi' a winderful muckle belly. Eddie taks da tullie ta see what dis is dat's in 'im, an' just as he rits up da fish, oot flees a kittywake.<sup>8</sup> Shü jimps upo' da mid taft, flapps her wings, an' spues up twa bricht skags, an' aff shü flees skeet-ip-a-leerie."

"O, Jamie, Jamie!" exclaimed Rasmie Rudderhead, "du's a boy!"

"Düs du mean ta say dat I'm tellin' a lee?" inquired Jamie with well-feigned surprise.

"Du, du," replied Rasme ; "no a wird o' a lee ever du tell'd a' dy days ; an' sae we'll no fa' oot about it, as Geordie here is just waitin' ta gie's a sang."

"Ay, come awa, my hairn," said Bawly, "an' sing wis dat bonnie sang I mind dee singin' here ae time last year. Da wirds o' it I tink wis, 'Hoo happy wir da days o' my early youth.'"

"O ay, dat's no a bad sang, if I cud only sing it richt," said Geordie Oman, smiling bashfully ; "I'm bit a puir haand

<sup>1</sup> Another "meethe."

<sup>2</sup> Thowl.

<sup>3</sup> Rocky bottom.

<sup>4</sup> To pull slowly.

<sup>5</sup> Pull backwards.

<sup>6</sup> Gunwale.

<sup>7</sup> Double knee in the stern and prow of a boat. <sup>8</sup> Kittiewake (*Larus Tridactylus*).

at singin' onything, Bawby."

"O, haud dy tongue, Geordie," exclaimed Bawby ;  
 "dere's no a better singer i' da hoose ; sae just come awa noo,  
 an' nae mair about it."

"Dere's nae üse o' me sayin' no ta you, Bawby," said  
 Geordie, as he cleared his throat, and gave in a fine musical  
 voice,—

THE SONG.

' How happy were the days of my early youth,  
 When my heart was joyous and free,  
 As I stood on the shore of my native isle  
 And gazed on my native sea !

When its murmuring waves sung a lullaby  
 Like the mermaid's evening tune ;  
 When she sweetly plays on her coral harp  
 By the light of the silvery moon.

How sweet was the scene, when at the evening serene  
 Those murmuring waves were at rest,  
 As quietly they lay in a slumber sweet,  
 Like a babe on its mother's breast.

When no voice was heard from the silent shore,  
 Nor sound from the silent sea,  
 Save the evening cry of the caloo bird,<sup>1</sup>  
 With its soft wild melody.

"Coo a coo a caloo," sang the lonely bird,  
 At the close of a summer's day,  
 When its sweet wild notes o'er the calm still sea  
 In the distance melted away.

I've tasted such pleasures as life can afford,  
 And sweetest of music I've heard ;  
 But none of them all e'er my heart could enthrall  
 Like that song of the caloo bird.

For the sun of my life was then rising serene  
 And my heart was a stranger to care ;  
 And the murmuring waves and the sea bird's cry  
 Were the music that charmed my ear.

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<sup>1</sup> *Heralda Glacialis.*

When mine eyes close last on this changing scene,  
 And life's sounds in mine ear melt away ;  
 Let me hear the voice of the caloo bird  
 At the close of a summer day.

Let me hear the waves as they murmur past  
 And whisper " life's tempest is o'er ;"  
 Let them hush me to sleep in a slumber deep  
 By my own dear native shore.'

" O dear a dear," exclaimed Bawby, " what a sweet sang dat is ! Dat verse aboot da caloo aye maks me laek ta greet, fir it brings back ta my mind da time whin I was a peerie lass staandin' afore my fedder's door in a fine calm sinmer's evenin', hearin' da caloos far awa ower da still sea. It was just laek da sweet music o' fairyland, as da saying is. Bit, Ellie, it's dee neist, my bairn,"

5/2. " O Bawby, ye manna ax me ta sing," said Ellie Inkster, " fir I'm hearse wi' da cauld ; bit I'll tell you a story, an' dis is, I tink, da best ane I can mind upon.

10. " Dere wis ance apon a time whin robbers wis gaen aboot da kuntry, an' naebodie wis safe even i' der hooes, unless dey hed strong doors an' bolts, an' plenty o' guns an' swirds aboot dem. A jantleman's hoose stüd by itsel in a lonely pairt o' da kuntry, an' da family wir a' awa excep ae servant dat wis left ta keep da hoose, an' shü wis tauld whin da family güid awa ta lit naebodie in da hoose, idder nicht or day. Sae der's nae mair o' dis till aboot a ouk or sae efter da family hed left, whin ae nicht efter it wis fairly dark, an auld begger wife cam ta da door shiverin' wi' cauld, an' her teeth clatterin' da taen upo' da tidder.

" O, my dear lamb," says da auld wife, ' I'm lost my wy, an' I'm just laek ta fa' doon wi' cauld an' hunger ; an' if ye wid just lit me in ta your ketchin ta warm mysell, I widna bide lang.'

" O," says da lass, ' ye can come in ;' fir shü tocht dat a auld begger cud dü na ill ta onybody ; sae shü taks her in an' sets her in a shair at da side o' da fire, an' gies her a het drink ; an' sae wi' da heat o' da fire an' da heat o' da drink,

efter a peerie while shü notices dat da hegger begins ta get sleepy laek ; an' den in a while agen shü's fairly soond asleep, snorin' wi' her head back ower, an' da auld cloak shü hed about her a kind o' open wys. Da lass tinks shu'll luik an' see what kind o' claes da bodie has on anunder dis auld cloak ; an' shü lifts up ane o' da sides o' it carefully, whin, Lord preserve us, if shü düsna see a man's coat wi' a ledder belt on, an' a' sticket fu' o' pistols an' daggers ; an' whin shü luiks at da face it's a man's face wi' a' da whiskers shaved aff. When shü saw dis shü nearly screeched oot, bit it wis a mercy fae da Lord dat shü didna dü it, fir hed shü waukened da robber shü wid-a shüne been a corp in a short time. Shü clespet her haands, an' luiked wildly aboot ta see hoo shü cud escape, bit der wis nae wy ta her ta flee, fir dere wis shure ta be robbers outside waitin' fir a signal, as shü saw da robber hed a whissel fir dis purpose. By dis time his head wis mair back ower, an' he wis lyin' snorin' wi' his mooth open, sae just in a moment shü grippet da boilin' tae-kettle aff da fire, an' poored da bulderin' watter doon his craig. He sprang ta his feet wi' a wild gron, an' den fell flat on his face upo' da flüir. An' a kind o' tremel güid ower his body fir a minit, an' den a' was still. Da püir lass wis noo laek to geng oot o' her judgment ; shü didna ken what ta dü, an' shü prayed ta da Lord ta strenten her as shü drew ane o' da pistols fae da robber's belt, an' took da whissel fae his breast. Shü noo guid tae da ooter door o' da hoose, an' luikin' trow da key-hole shü saw tree men walkin' aboot a piece awa fae da door ; shü den gie a lood whissel, an' in a minit da biggest ane o' da tree men cam up close ta da door, an' held his lug close ta da key-hole. Shü kent dis, fir shü heard da sough o' him drawing his breath. Shü noo cocked da pistol an' emmd as near whaur aboot his head wis as shü cud, den shü fired, an' just as da ball güid thro' da door shü heard a heavy fa' an' a gron outside. Shü now luiked thro' da holl da ball hed made i' da door, an' saw

twa men rinnin' awa as fast as der legs cud carry dem.

"Shü cud dü nae mair noo fir daylight cam, fir shü wis far awa fae ony idder human habitation. Sae shü güid an locked hersell into a upstairs room, an' sat dere till da daylight cam in. Shü den ran ta da neerest toon an' gae da alairm, an' shüne dere wis a number o' officers at da hoose, an' fan da twa dead robbers lycin', ane i' da kitchen, an' da idder ane oot-side da door, whaur he hed fa'en. Da idder twa wis caught shüne efter, an' dey wir haith hanged.

"Whin her mester cam hame he wis dat owerjoyed he sed he widna lit her be a sirvant ony mair, bit just be da sam as ane o' his ane family; an' sae shü bedd' wi' him fir some years efter dis, until shü wis mairried to a graand jantleman, an' her mester made her a graand weddin', an' settled mony upon her dat shü got sae muckle o' every year as lang as shü lived; an' sae my tale is düne."

During the time Ellie was telling her story she was listened to with breathless attention. The lasses ceased knitting, and let their hands fall on their laps, and the lads were equally absorbed in mentally following the heroine in so bravely defending her master's house. Bawby from time to time gave inaudible expression to her feelings by clasping her hands and looking up to the roof of the cottage.

"Eh, it wis a awfal death fir da sinner ta dee at last," she exclaimed; "but what cud da püir lass dü; shü hed nae idder wy o' savin' her ain life bit by takin' his. I mean da ane dat shü killed wi' da heat watter, fir shuttin' wis no sae awful laek, tho' it mebbe wis as <sup>at</sup> easy ta dee da tae wy as da tidder. Ay, we sud a' be tankful dat wi' can sit anunder wir ain vine and fig-tree, an' nane daurin' ta mak wis afraid, as da Scripture says; bit, Nannie, it's dee neist, my bairn."

"Ae story pits anidder in a body's mind," said Nannie Ollie o' Ootvoe; "an' sae I'll just tell you anidder robber's story."

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<sup>1</sup> Remained.

## CHAPTER XIV.

As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,  
The minutes winged their way wi' pleasure.

BURNS.

“Dis wis a jantleman’s hoose da sam wy as Ellie’s story,” said Nannie Ollie, as she held her knitting between her and the light, and tried to recover a slipt loop, “bit da mistress wis left at hame hersell wi’ twa servants, fir shü hed newly been mairried, an’ da jantleman hed gane awa fae hame apon some business. Ae nicht efter dark, whin da mistress wis sittin’ in her room up da stair, shü heard a awful noise i’ da kitchen, an’ den twa fearful screechs, an’ shü ran doon stairs, an’ da first dat met her sicht, wis baith her servants lyin’ upo’ da flüir wi’ da red blüid gushin’ fae der breests, an’ five robbers standin’ wi’ drawn daggers i’ der haands. As shüne as dey saw da mistress, dey closed roond aboot her, and sed, ‘Your money or your life! We want da deys o’ da jewel kist dats i’ da strong celler.’

“‘O,’ says da mistress, ‘ye sall get da keys an’ a’ dat’s in da kist, fir my husband is very rich, an’ we’ll never miss it; so come wi’ me,’ shü says, ‘an’ I’ll tak you ta da celler.’

“Sae awa she gengs doon a stair, an’ da robbers efter her, till dey cam till a great muckle room, an’ in da flüir o’ dis room wis a hatch dat opened inta da celler aneath, whaur da jewel kist wis. Sae shü opened dis hatch, an’ tüik a licht in her haand, an’ güid doon da ledder an’ four o’ da robbers efter her, fir dey left ane at da tap o’ da hatch to staand watch. Shü noo tüik her kees oot o’ her pocket, an’ tryed da lock o’ da kist; bit nane o’ dem wid open it. ‘O,’ says shü, ‘dear a me! I’m left da key in



my room upstairs—just wait a minute an' I'll fetch it.' Sae awa shü trips up da ledder, an' gengs past da man, fir he heard what shü wis gean fir, an' sae never lüiked efter her. Da room wis a' dark, except da licht dat cam up trow da hatch, sae da man cudna hae seen her far, even if he hed lüiked ; sae just as shü passed by her, shü wheeled aboot an' ran agenst him, wi' da whole poor o' her body, an' doon he fell head foremost ! an' doon güid da hatch as quick as light-enin', an' as it fell it locked wi' a spring, sae dere dey a' wir fast an' ticht."

"O Lord be praised !" exclaimed Bawby, unable longer to restrain her feelings ; "I wis just trimblin' fir da püir woman, tinkin' every moment what wis gaen ta come o' her. O da vagabonds, it saired dem weel ; I hoop dey niver got oot till dey wir hanged."

"Ye're just guessed it, Bawby," said Nanny, "dey wir a' truly hanged. Püir woman, shü spent a oorie nicht, her twa murdered servants lyn' ae pairt o' da house, and five blüidy ruffians in anidder pairt o' da hoose ; it wid a pitten mony a woman oot o' her reason ; bit as shü sed efter, da Lord stüd by her, an' da mornin licht brocht help ; for some bodie on da rod hed seen da geng gaen da wy for dis hoose, an' sent wird ta da toon ; sae dat by daylight, dere wis offichers at da hoose axin if ony robbers hed been seen, whin da mistress cud tell dem da happy news dat shü hed dem a' secure ; sae dey wir taen up an hanged, as I'm sed already."

"Ay, an' saired dem richt," said Bawby, "or ony murderin' villans laek dem, dat wid tak da life o' twa püir innocent lasses ; bit wha is neist, bairns, fir we maun be moovin' trow, ye ken ?"

"It's my turn, Bawby," said Rasme Smith ; "bit unless I tell you anidder robber story, dere's naethin' else I mind upon ; an' dis is about a robber dat wis made up laek a pack o' güids, an' left at a fairmer's hoose.

(fermar)

“Ae nicht, just i’ da mirkenin’, dere cam a packman ta da fairmer’s door, an’ sed dat he wis tired wi’ carryin’ his pack sae far, an’ ower late ta reach ta neist toon; an’ sae he wid be blyde if dey wid just lit his pack lie atween da doors a’ nicht, an he wid try an’ get lodgins fir himsell wi’ some o’ da fairm servants. ‘O,’ said da fairmer. ‘he wis trully welcome ta lit his pack lie dere a’ nicht, fir it dü nae hairm ta onybody.’ Sae he lays doon da pack, an’ dere’s nae mair o’ dis, fir da peerie boy comes in dat lüiked efter da kie. Dis boy hed gotten a auld gun ta frichten da craws wi’, an’ he happened ta hae a shot o’ pooder an’ lead in it at da time. Sae he comes ta his maester, an’ says he, ‘What kind o’ a pack is yon dat’s lyin’ inside da door dere?’ Says his maester, ‘It’s just a pack like ony idder pack, I’m tinkin’—cloth an idder kind o’ güids, shürelly.’ ‘Na, na,’ says da boy, ‘der’s mair in it den dat, fir I saw it moovin’.’ ‘Du saw it movin’,’ says his maester; ‘du undüimious’ leer dat du is; fu can du tell me dat?’ ‘Yae, dat I trully did,’ says da boy, ‘I saw it movin’, an’ I’m gaen ta fire dis shot in it,’ at da sain time aimin’ da gun fir da pack. ‘Lord preserve me!’ says da fairmer, ‘is da boy red mad? Is he gaen ta destroy da man’s güids?’ Bit afore da wirds wir oot o’ his mooth, aff gengs da gun wi’ a rumble; an’ oot spoots a gush o’ red blüid wi’ a awful gron. Baith da boy an’ his maester wir laek ta fa’ doon wi’ fricht, bit efter dey cam ta demsells, dey rins an’ opens da pack, whin what sees dey bit a robber sittin’ dead in a box wi’ pistols an’ swirds at his belt; an’ he hed a whissel i’ da tae haand, an’ a knife i’ da tidder, an’ dis knife wis ta rit up da pack an’ lat himsell oot, whin he wis ta whissel as a signal fir da idder anes dat wis ta wait ootside. Sae, as ye may believe, da maester tocht muckle o’ his boy, an’ bocht him a fine new foolin’-piece as a present. Da dead robber wis taen awa wi’ da offichers da neist day an’ buried at a road-side, pack an’ a’, just as he lay; an’ dat wis his end. O, it wis awful times den a

<sup>1</sup> Great, unlimited.

days.—I mind a story o' a man dat tüik lodgins in a kind o' a kuntrie inn ae nicht, an' he hed a dog wi' him, sae efter da man guid ta bed, da dog cam ta da foreside o' da bed an' began ta whinge, an' aye he jimped up wi' his fore feet upo' da bed, an' den shived his head anunder da bed. Da man tried ta get da dog ta lie doon, bit da mair he spak till him da mair he whinged,<sup>1</sup> till da man tocht he wid get up an' see if dere wis ony thing anunder da bed, when, Lord preserve us, what sees he bit a man lycin' murdered dere wi' his troat cutted fae lug ta lug! Sae, as nicht be tocht, he wisna lang in gettin' on his claes an' fleein' oot o' da hoose fir his life as fast as he cud, an' his dog wi' him."

"Noo, Bawby," exclaimed Girzie o' Glufftoon, "as da Lord made me, I'll never leave your hoose dis nicht; every bit o' me is just quakin'; my very flesh is pipperrin'<sup>2</sup> upo' my banes wi' faer wi' hearin' sae mony awful stories."

"Weel, weel, my bairn," rejoined Bawby, "du can sleep aside me a' nicht, an' den na bokies<sup>3</sup> 'll touch dee; bit I tink we'll hae a sang noo, an' dat'll pit da gluff aff o' wis agen. An sae bairns, just sae awa—wha's neist? O, it's dee, Eric; come awa den like a man, an' gie's Grannie Thule. I ken du can sing dat weel, an' a bonnie tüne it is."

"O, Bawby," said Eric Moad, "I tink ye're skimpin' me, fir ye ken weel enouch I'm timmer-tüned; bit never mind, I'll dü as weel as I can, an' da best can dü nae mair," saying which Eric cleared his throat, and sang in a good bass voice,

#### THE TRIALS O' GRANNIE THULE.<sup>4</sup>

' Thule, an auld wifie wha lives on da "Rock,"<sup>5</sup>  
 Shü spins on her wheel, an' shü knits at her sock,  
 Shü gets help fae the laand, shü gets help fae the sea,  
 An' shü cheers up her hert wi' a cup o' strong tea.

<sup>1</sup> Moaned.

<sup>2</sup> Trembling.

<sup>3</sup> Bogles, ghosts.

<sup>4</sup> Allusion is made in these verses to the various acts of oppression to which the Islands have been subjected since they were added to the Scottish Crown.

<sup>5</sup> A name sometimes familiarly applied to Shetland.

But, waes me, piir Grannie, sair trials shü hes had,  
 An' tho' aft shü smiles, in her heart shü is sad,  
 When shü tinks o' the wy lang syne shü wis üsed,  
 An' a' her lang life been misca'ed an' abüsed.  
 O weel may shü ban whin shü tinks o' the loon  
 Dat gaed her awa ta da auld Scottish-croon ;  
 Fir fae dat dey ta dis shü's been cheat an' oppressed  
 In her hoose an' her hadden been sairly distressed.  
 In da first o' her days her pund *was a pund*,  
 Her bairns hed aye der ain bit o' grund.  
 Her lespun' o' butter weighed sixteen pund neat,  
 An' her bysmer naebody cud sae wis a cheat.  
 But da auld pechan laird, in a stammer an' stutter,  
 Ae day let it oot dat he wanted mair butter ;  
 An' he said it need cause her bit little surprise  
 If her lespun' wis altered ta *double* da size.  
 Grannie said shü hed nae grit objection ta dat  
 If da siller was *double* o' last dat shü gat.  
 But he said nae deil plack wad he raise i' da price,  
 Though her lespun' o' butter wis da weight o' her grice.  
 He said mair den dat, he cud weel understand  
 Hoo her bairns wir spoilt by bein' lairds o' der land ;  
 An' he hed just a mind ta add ta his ain,  
 What "grippin'" by fair means or foul cud obtain.  
 Whin da laird hed said dis he straddled awa,  
 An' puir Grannie's check was bleached like da snaw.  
 But shü just gaed ben ower an' sat in her chair,  
 An' grat lang an' sair till shü cudna greet mair,  
 Den her hens an' her cocks dat shü liked sae weel,  
 It made her hert sair ta hear der lood squeel,  
 Whin packed in a biiddie by her auldest son Gawen,  
 An' aff ta da laird's ta get der necks trawn.  
 Den Eric, puir fellow, he hated da haaf,  
 An' ta Greenland whaal fishing' he just wid be aff,  
 But his fedder was fined in a pound an' a shillin',  
 Dat, piir man, ta pay he was sairly unwillin'.  
 As weel nicht be tocht, Grannie needed her tea,  
 An' tar fir da boat an' lines fir da sea.  
 Bit nae shot daur shü geng near tho' cheaper by far  
 Den da laird's baith fir tea, an' fir lines, an' fir tar ;  
 Neist, her fish he maun hae at a price o' his ain,  
 Dat he sells ta da Dons an' da Papists o' Spain.  
 An' if shü gets four, whin o' pounds he got twenty,

He tocht da auld bodie hed just gotten plenty ;  
 But it's nae üse o' tellin' a' shü's hed ta try her,  
 Her troubles hae followed like sparks fae de fire  
 An' her feeble auld nerves hae got sic a shock,  
 Shü nidder can spin nor knit at her sock ;  
 Her teeth clatters awful wi' faer an' wi' fricht,  
 An' her friends ir just fearin' shü'll niver come richt.  
 Sae bairns, hame an awa, da question whidder,  
 In da hours o' distress ye'll forsake your auld midder.  
 No ! loud raise your voice, let it ring o'er da sea,  
 An' shüre help 'ill come to Grannie Thule.'

“Puir bodie!” cried Bawby, shürelly shü hed her trials ; bit I wis aye tinkin ta spür dee, Eric, if du kens wha dis Grannie Thule wis. Da sang says shü lived on da rock ; dat wad be da name o' da toon shü lived in ; bit dere's nae place o' dat name in dis perrish. Wid it be awa at da Nord Isles, tinks dü ?”

“O, it's no a auld wife ava, Bawby,” said Eric ; “it's just a sang made up about Shetlan', an tellin' da wy folk wis ill üsed lang sine syne ; an' trath, as we a' ken, some o' dem is no muckle better üsed yet. Bit wha sings neist ?”

“O, I'm just tinkin,” replied Bawby, “it's peerie Jamie dat's sittin' dere i' da corner, bit he's mebbe dat bashful dat he'll no sing onything ; sae some ane o' you 'ill hae ta gie wis a sang fir him.”

“Weel, ye a' ken,” said Sandy Flaus, “dat I cauna sing ony ; bit I'll gie you anidder recitation. It's ca'ed 'Winter Thoughts on Thule,' an' it wis composed by da sam man dat wrote 'Da Lost Boat ;' an' dis is it—

#### WINTER THOUGHTS ON THULE.

' Dear Thule ! home of my early youth,  
 Bleak thy hills, and dark with many a seamy scaur,  
 Around thy rugged shores the wintry tempest raves,

And wild tempestuous waves, with thunderous roar,  
 Dash full against thy adamantine rocks.  
 Earth's fairest scenes beneath Italian skies,  
 The orange grove, the graceful drooping palm,  
 The clustering vine, in many a verdant vale,  
 With all the glories of those sunny climes,  
 Though spread in sweet enchantment to my view,  
 Could not emotions half so sweet awake  
 As do thy wintry winds and raging waves,  
 O Thule !

Those winds that whistled in the cottage door,  
 And sighed deep through thy lonely hills and vales ;  
 When stern old Winter, armèd took the field,  
 And loud declared his elemental war,  
 Shaking his icy spear and snowy mantle  
 With angry grasp full in the northern blast ;  
 Then seated by the homely cottage hearth,  
 The tempest loud was music in mine ear ;  
 The whistling wind, like some Æolian harp  
 Of sweetest strain, charmed the hours away.  
 The blazing fire—the homely frugal fare  
 A regal feast by sweet contentment made ;  
 The heart no sorrow knew—no wordly cares  
 O'er youth's bright day had yet their shadows cast.  
 Life, like a golden dream just new begun,  
 Knew only joy ; and scowling winter's wildest rage  
 Was scarcely heard 'mid sounds of youthful mirth.

When perched upon the summit of some lofty rock,  
 How much I loved to watch thy mighty waves,  
 And see them sport their wild fantastic forms  
 As on with awful force they madly rushed  
 To dash against the quivering rock.  
 Then in the dread recoil, in dazzling white,  
 The seething foam like angry Maelstrom boiled  
 (That rages wild near Norway's rocky shore),  
 And whirling tempest raised the churnèd froth  
 Like drifting clouds of winter's flaky snow,  
 Fast chasing onward in the murky air.

On high with pinions spread, in graceful ease  
 The sea-gull soared upon the wintry blast,  
 To watch the tossings of the angry deep,

Which heaved from ocean's bed the struggling fish,  
And, darting down, swift carried off her prey.

On that same rock, lashed by the briny spray  
And driving sleet, oft have I watched  
The curving waves, broke by th' impetuous wind ;  
And in their shadows dark I fondly thought  
I saw the outline of some mighty wreck  
Which soon upon the shelving beach might lie,  
And I the owner of the glorious spoil.

Dear Thule ! home of my infancy and youth,  
How bright on memory's page those records stand  
Which tell the story of my early days !  
Thy rugged grandeur, and thy stormy waves,  
My mind inspired with noble and heroic thoughts,  
And my young heart did fondly wish the day  
When I might do some mighty deed of valeur ;  
Best school to teach true manhood's nobler aims  
Where Nature spreads her soul-inspiring page,—  
Rocks, hills, and vales, with storms and raging waves  
All whisper deep instruction to the mind—  
Solemnly impressed with awe and veneration.  
And youth so taught, oft in the race of life  
Outstrips compeers, learned and refined,  
And at the goal triumphant wins the prize.

How true this is, Thule, thou bearest witness  
In many of thy sons who leave thy shores  
To traverse wide the stormy pathless main,  
Or seek their fortunes in far distant climes,—  
An honour to the land that gave them birth.

## CHAPTER XV.

A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large.  
BURNS.

"OH, dat's a graand piece," exclaimed Bawby, as the last speaker finished his recitation; "bit da nicht is wearin' awa, sae wha's neist, my bairns?" she added.

"It's Maikie here, I tink," said Johnnie o' Greentaft.

"Weel, bairns," said Maikie o' Moorigarth, "ye'll mebbe no believe me, bit I can nedder sing, nor hae I da wirt o' a story ta tell you; bit I'll read you ane oot o' a peerie book I hae i' my pooch here. It's juist ower lang a story, bit ye can tell me whin ta leave aff."

So saying, Maikie opened his book and read as follows:—

### BLACK ERIC; OR, THE MAN WITH THE IRON STAFF.

Fitful Head is one of those powerful barriers by which Nature fortifies her works, and, in accordance with her great design of combining utility and beauty, forms the most striking feature in the wild, romantic scenery which characterises the western shores of the northern group of the British Isles.

The mighty internal forces which upheaved those islands from ocean's bed were under the reign of law; and that law, directed by the unerring wisdom and foreknowledge of the Divine Architect, made provision against the power of the Atlantic waves, and the destructive agency of those huge icebergs of the glacial period which were borne from west to east by strong ocean currents; and this provision lay in the hardness and durability of the rock, and the height of the headland or cliff being exactly such as should effectually resist the destructive forces by which they were to be assailed.



Situated near the southern extremity of the mainland, Fitful Head occupies a position exposed to the powerful currents of the Atlantic and German Oceans, which sweep round its base with resistless force ; and during a western hurricane the Atlantic rolls itself into mighty waves against those cliffs with the force of ten thousand battering rams.

Nature, therefore, in raising this bulwark, performed one of her greatest feats, for she seems to have cleft a mountain in two in order to obtain the proper combination of strength and beauty—placing the green slope of the mountain towards the east till its lowest extremity fringes the western shore of the loch of Spiggie, and its frowning rocky section towards the west to bid defiance to the ocean waves. The traveller, in ascending this headland, would therefore suppose that he is climbing a hill which must have a corresponding slope on its western side, but, on reaching the summit, he is appalled to find that he is standing on the verge of an abyss, the sight of which makes his very blood to curdle. Such is a faint description of Fitful Cliff, in which once dwelt, in an unknown cave, the subject of my tale.

Black Eric, as he was called by the country people, owing to his swarthy complexion and his dark matted hair, which hung in wild profusion around his shoulders, was a man of gigantic stature and proportions. Whether he belonged to the Celtic or Scandinavian race was a point which no one was ever able to determine, as, from the lawless life he led, and his constant exposure to the severities of the climate, all distinctive traces of races were so obliterated that he seemed to have a closer affinity to the ourang-outang or gorilla, than to any tribe of the human family. Beneath his shaggy eyebrows gleamed his deep-set, wolfish eyes, his beard and breast resembled that of the grizzly bear, and when enraged he showed a formidable set of clenched teeth which gave a horrible expression to his whole countenance.

His dress consisted of a buttonless jacket or "skinjuip," made of untanned calf-leather, with breeches of the same material tied with thongs at the knee. On his feet he wore unclipt "rivelins" of cow-hide, and on his head a dingy Fair Isle cap of many colours and strange pattern. He walked with a lithe slouching gait, with both hands resting on his haunches, and in them grasping a heavy iron bolt or staff, one end having a sharp point and the other a heavy knob. This formidable weapon he constantly carried with him, and, when asleep (for he frequently slept in the open air in the summer season), he placed his iron staff under his shoulders in such a way that it could not be touched without awakening him. He subsisted entirely by sheep-stealing, and, being as fleet of foot as a native colt, could run them down with the greatest ease. When making his incursions into the neighbouring hills, he generally left his cave after sunset, and when he knew no one was astir, and having secured a pair of the fattest sheep he could select, would bind their feet together, and raising them to his shoulders, by putting his iron staff between their fore and hind legs, march, by long and rapid strides, to the top of Fitful Cliff. How he descended this pathless steep with such a burden is a mystery which never can be solved, nor can any better opinion be formed regarding it than that which prevailed at the time,—and the popular belief then was, that Black Eric was in league with the powers of darkness, and that the demon Tangie was in his service, conveying him nightly between the top of the cliff and his cave-dwelling. This demon, well known to the natives of Shetland, always appeared in the form of a black horse, and as if grazing quietly by the side of lonely paths during the night-time. If the benighted traveller, mistaking him for a real animal, mounted upon his back with the view of being carried a certain distance on his way, Tangie, favoured by the darkness of the night, would carry his rider to the nearest cliff, who, happily becoming aware of his danger by

hearing the sound of the breaking waves below, would leap off and stand horror-stricken to see his horse vanish over the cliff in a flash of blue flame. One remarkable circumstance in favour of the popular opinion regarding Black Eric's connection with the demon Tangie was, that frequently during the night blue lights were seen by boats at the haaf-fishing, ascending and descending between the top of a cliff and a point below where Eric's cave was supposed to be; and the hour of the night when these mysterious lights were seen was found to correspond with the time he was known to leave or return to the cliff.

One of the greatest sufferers by the depredations of Black Eric was Sandy Breamer, who occupied a cottage on the eastern slope of the Wart Hill, and was one of the largest sheep-owners in that district. Accustomed to look carefully after his flocks, and keeping them always in good condition, they all the more readily excited the cupidity of the sheepstealer; scarcely a week passed but one or two "gimmers" or fat "hogs" were found to be amissing. Although a peaceably-disposed man, Sandy could not submit to have his property carried off in this manner by a desperate outlaw who was the terror and scourge of the whole country side; partly therefore on his own account, and partly in the interests of the public, he resolved to capture the thief, or perish in the attempt.

From the time Sandy determined on this desperate enterprise, to that night in which he carried it into execution, it seemed to absorb his whole being with an intensity which almost banished every other thought from his mind; but he carefully kept his own secret, and when listening to the complaints of others, who suffered like himself, he never allowed any expression to escape his lips which could indicate his own inward emotions. At his own fireside his manner was less reserved, nor could he altogether conceal from his wife the fact that there was something more than usual occupying his mind

and deeply absorbing his thoughts. She had observed this, and that on his return from the fishing he did not caress his little children as was his wont, but would sit with his arms folded looking abstractedly into the fire, the inward perturbation of his mind showing itself by his compressed lips and knit brow, and the swelling muscles of his powerful arms, and heaving chest, as in thought he called up the immense resources of physical power by which he was endowed, and the great purpose of his life which was now to be accomplished by it.

On such occasions his wife would startle him from his reverie by placing her hand gently on his arm and saying, "Sandy, what is du tinkin aboot, dat du's aye sittin' stoorin' i' da fire? Lord hae a' care o' dee, is dere ony thing da maitter wi' dee? Is du vexed aboot da loss o' twa or tree gimmers, whin I'm shüre du kens we hae enouch left? O, Sandy, Sandy! da tocht sometimes comes into my mind dat du may be temped ta geng ta dat evil place, Fitful Head, an fa' in wi' dat foul fiend Black Eric. O! my Sandy, whin I tink o' dis it maks my flesh creep, and sets a feichtin' ta my hert, dat I'm like ta fa' doon; may He dat made us preserve us, an' set a watch roond us, an' a' dat belongs ta us! but dey say dat he gengs ower da banks every nicht wi' Tangie, in a blue lowe, for da men at da sea hae aften seen blue lichts gaen up an' doon da face o' da banks lang after dayset. O! Sandy, if ony thing was ta happen ta dee, what wid come o' me an' dis twa infants? We wad hae ta geng an' beg wir bit fae door to door; for du kens dere is nane idder upo' dy side or mine dat wid tak me ta der fireside."

"Toot, toot," Sandy would say, forcing a smile on his handsome face. "Annie, what i' da wörld pits sic nonsense i' dy head? du's aye frichtenin da bairns wi' Black Eric, an' noo I tink du's frichtened for him dysel. Keep up dy heart, lass, naethin will happen me till God's time comes. Sae get du da tae ready as fast as du can, for I'm baith tired an' hungry, and tinkin little eيدر

about da sheep or Black Eric, I can assure dee." Thus Sandy would throw off his abstracted air and speak kindly to his wife, whom he loved dearly, and whose fears he was anxious to quiet, but still his purpose was never for a moment shaken, and it was his hope and study to carry it out without his wife's knowledge. Being no believer in demonology, he looked upon Black Eric merely as a beast of prey, which in the interests of society ought to be destroyed, and had the fullest confidence in himself that this task he was able to accomplish.

Sandy Breamer was a man in prime of life ; his blue eyes and flaxen hair showed his true Scandinavian descent. His hair, parted in the middle and plaited in a tail of considerable length, which hung down his back according to the prevailing fashion of the time, gave his handsome countenance an almost feminine expression when animated by the gentle passions of social endearments ; but when aroused in anger, that same face would have well represented one of David's "two lion-like men of Moab." A sight of his full-developed chest and powerfully knit arms would have rejoiced the heart of any artist painting a Hercules. Indeed, it was a common remark in the district where he was best known that "Sandy Breamer never knew his own strength," for in none of his ordinary avocations by sea or land did there ever arise an occasion to fully test the resources of his tremendous muscular power. His ordinary dress was sailor's duck trousers, worn without braces, and a knitted worsted frock, with alternate stripes of black and grey, which, fitting tight around his body, showed off his athletic frame to great advantage. On his head he wore a striped knitted cap, and on his feet the ordinary cowhide "rivelins."

The sun an hour ago had sunk beneath the western wave, the dim grey outline of Foula Isle lay like a fragment of cloud against the distant horizon, and the mariners' guiding star shone out in the dark-blue sky with a twinkling serene lustre. The slumbering Atlantic lay hushed in rest, and no sound broke the

stillness of the night save the tiny wavelets on Rerwick Sands, or as they gently lapped against the dark rocky masses which lined the shore, or gurgled amongst the tangled seaweed which hung in dense masses around the base of stack or cliff. Man and beast had retired to rest, but Sandy Breamer slept not. The time had come for entering upon the hazardous enterprize which had so long occupied his thoughts, and rising gently from the side of his sleeping wife and innocent babes he quickly dressed, and when ready to quit the cottage he turned to take a last look of those dear ones, lying like emblems of purity and innocence, breathing softly in the slumber of peace and health. His heart yearned over them, and fondly would he have kissed their parted lips, fair as dew-wet rose-buds, but he dared not awaken them, and, summoning all his courage, with a softly whispered "God bless you," he gently lifted the latch of the door, and was soon on his way toward the dark-frowning mass of Fitful Head. Descending the slope of Lunnabist, he crossed the Vadle Brigg, and striking along the western shore of the loch of Spiggie, ascended Fitful Head, keeping far to the east, and then taking a westerly direction along the edge of the cliff until he came within a hundred yards of the spot where the blue lights had been so often observed by boats at the fishing, as had been already mentioned. There crouching down, he crept on silently over the smooth turf, now covered by a thick-falling dew. Pausing, and looking between him and a streak of light in the western sky, his heart bounded as he thought he saw the outline of a cowering figure resting on a fragment of rock a few yards from the edge of the cliff. Holding his breath and creeping on his hands and knees, as the distance between him and the dark object lessened, his belief increased that the lawless freebooter, the inveterate sheepstealer, the unholy consorter with demons and devils, was at last within his grasp. It is evident that demons, like mortals, are subjected to erratic movements, for the hour had long since passed when Tangie

should have been in attendance on his patron in order to convey him to his rocky cave ; but now the grey dawn was beginning to show itself over Noness Head, and Black Eric still rested on his stone seat, apparently in a deep slumber. His appearance in the dim twilight was like a huge baboon sitting in a crouching attitude, his head resting on his shaggy bosom, and his long sinewy arms folded and resting on his knees. Before him, and within a few feet of the rock on which he sat, lay his iron staff with the pointed end towards the cliff. To this object Sandy noiselessly crept, and, grasping firmly the heavy end of the bolt, sprang to his feet. Instantly, like a serpent uncoiling itself, Black Eric shot up from his seat on the rock, and with a growl, like that of the Polar bear, bounded towards Sandy, making a desperate clutch at his iron staff ; but the latter, holding the weapon in his left hand, dealt his adversary such a tremendous blow with his right as sent him reeling for several yards along the smooth turf. Quickly recovering himself, he again rushed forward, muttering curses between his clenched teeth ; but Sandy, taking a step or two in advance to meet him, said in a firm, deep-toned voice, “ Stop dere, Eric, here is dy staff ; but as dy last 'oor is come, du'll need her no more, an' so here she goes,” —with which Sandy hurled the bolt over the cliff. Again turning to Black Eric, he continued, “ Noo, Eric, we are baith alaek, haand ta haand an' fit ta fit, wi' a' dy strent sell dy life as dearly as du can, for I swear by heaven aboon us dat nigger 'Tangie nor Brownie, nor a' da devils o' hell, sall save dee noo ; dey'll get dee when I'm dūn wi' dee, an' soon eneuch dat'll be, as du'll fin' ta dy cost.” To this Black Eric uttered not a word, for he was almost choked with rage. He stood to his full height, his powerful sinewy arms curved and drawn towards his sides, his huge bony hands clenched as if in mortal agony, his set teeth exposed with a horrible grin, and his wolfish eyes gleaming hate and revenge from beneath his shaggy eye-brows,

looking altogether the very incarnation of evil. Why Sandy did not at once rid the world of such a being, which he could so easily have done by the great weapon he had just thrown over the cliff, may appear strange ; but Sandy Breamer, though a plain man and dressed in a homely garb, was ennobled by that which alone distinguishes the truly great—he possessed all the high-souled chivalry of the knights of the olden time, and scorned to take any undue advantage of even such a depraved and desparate character as Black Eric the sheepstealer. Sandy considered it was the natural right of every creature possessing life to defend that life to the last, and that the conflict between him and his adversary should be on equal terms, and the victory gained by the strongest arm. As the crouching tiger contracts his powerful muscles, and gathers up his strength for the flying leap, which shall fasten him upon his prey ; as the hungry wolf on the snowy wastes of Siberia flies at the throat of the benighted traveller, so did Black Eric, with all the enormous strength of his giant frame, bound towards his antagonist, and attempt to grapple him by the throat. But Sandy was on his guard, and ere the ruffian could fix his grasp, a powerful blow from the right arm of the former fell on his chest, with an almost metallic ring, which made him throw a backward somersault, and roll over almost to the edge of the cliff. There he lay motionless for a few seconds, and then rising slowly, and affecting a limping gait, he advanced a few steps towards his assailant, who was again on his guard, for he knew the cunning of this wild beast in a human form, and that what he could not do by main force he would try to accomplish by stratagem—and this was too soon proved, for passing Sandy, and moving in the direction of the stone seat already alluded to, he suddenly wheeled round, and, eluding the heavy blow aimed at his head, locked his giant arms round Sandy's waist and bore him to the earth. And now a fearful struggle began. Rolling his antagonist under him, Sandy tried to disengage



himself from his fiendish embrace, but Black Eric had learned that he was no match against the swing of the fisherman's powerful arms in a free fight, and therefore he clung to his adversary with the tenacity of a jaguar. As they quickly rolled over each other like two fierce tigers, Black Eric endeavoured to shift his grasp so as to encircle Sandy's chest with the intention of crushing him, as the boa-constrictor crushes the buffalo ; but Nature, in constructing Sandy's physical frame, had used no sparing hand ; his capacious chest, as if ribbed with bars of iron, yielded not beneath the savage hug of his fiendish antagonist. By a superhuman effort, he now rolled his enemy beneath him, and, grasping him fiercely by the throat, forced him to unlock his arms, and as they fell by his side Sandy sprang to his feet without the least symptom of fatigue.

Black Eric also leaped from the ground, exclaiming, with the words hissing through his teeth, " Curse dee, du Norwegian dog, but my next grip will brak every bane i' dy ugly carcase, and fling dee ower that black rock as I flung da picked banes o' dy fattest sheep."

" Black Eric," said Sandy, in firm measured sentences, " it was my wish ta gie dee a fair death, or else I could hae pinned dee ta da spot whaur du stands whin dy iron staff wis i' my haand ; bit it's little gratitude du shaws for my kindness, an' nae mair du sall hae at my haands. Dy days are numbered, wi' a' dy sins upo' dy guilty head ; repent noo if du can, even at the elevent hour. Tink whaur du's gaen, an' dat da master du has served sae lang can gie dee nae better fare den he has ta himsell. Du sees dat streak o' licht i' da cast sky, an' dat licht tells dee dat da glorious sun is followin' efter it, but du will never see his licht again. Before he glints ower the green girss o' Sumbro' Head, dy body will be stark an' stiff, an' dy püir soul in bitter torment, unless noo, at dy last moments, du cries for mercy."

“Fause cantin’ villian,” exclaimed the outlaw, foaming with rage, and his eyes gleaming with a lurid glare as if the horrors of perdition were already kindled with his soul; “curse dy preachin’, I will preach dee sixty fathoms doon ower da banks dere, and see dee lowin’ in heil, an’ bricht enouch to shaw me da road afore I come!” With these words he advanced closer to where Sandy stood, and, before the latter could parry the stroke, the miscreant dealt him a savage blow across the face, and the blood trickled down his breast.

Like another Samson in the fields of Timnah when the young lion roared against him, the spirit came mightily upon Sandy, his blood was at last fairly up, and he felt a superhuman strength shoot through his giant frame. Rushing upon his assailant, his blows fell with the force and rapidity of two sledge hammers driven by steam, beating the retreating savage almost to the edge of the cliff, and whose sinewy frame seemed to quiver beneath the frightful thuds which were showered thick and fast upon him; but when within a few feet of the awful precipice, he suddenly threw himself flat upon the ground, and darting out his long gorilla, arms, he clutched Sandy by the feet, which brought him to the earth. The miscreant now sprang to his feet, and with a fiendish glare in his eyes, holding his victim by the legs, attempted to hurl him over the cliff. Sandy, having nothing to grasp, was dragged along the smooth grass, and just as Black Eric, with all the savage strength he could exert, bent back so as to swing Sandy fairly over the precipice, the latter, by a tremendous effort, dragged his left foot from his grasp, and struck him such a blow on the pit of the stomach as sent him rolling heels over head down the precipice. As he fell, Sandy held his breath, and listened with a sense of awful horror to hear a faint splash in the eddying waters far below; but no sound broke upon his ear, and rising to look over the cliff to ascertain the fate of the miserable wretch, he was almost horror-stricken at the apparition which

glared upon him. A few feet from the top of the cliff, clinging to a fragment of rock, Black Eric was still safe ; and, with a spring like a panther, vaulted again to his feet on the grass in front of his adversary, once more to renew the struggle.

The unexpected appearance of his enemy, and his bound from the rock he had clung to being quick as a flash of lightning, Sandy was for the moment off his guard, and before he could strike down the black, grizzly paw of his enemy, he felt his throat in his iron grasp. Almost suffocated, Sandy grasped the wrist of the savage, crushing flesh and bone, which loosened his grasp, and extorted from him a howl of agony. At the same moment, Sandy in turn grappled him by the throat, and they both rolled on the earth together. The injury Sandy had suffered in the dreadful conflict had steeled his heart with revenge, and though the wretch, now in his death grasp, twisted and quivered in the most frightful contortions, he relaxed not his hold. Black Eric's strength now began to fail, and his protruding tongue and glazing blood-shot eye-balls showed that the last moments of the sheepstealer were fast falling away, when suddenly a flash of light passed over Sandy's head, and looking up he saw a black horse galloping in a circle around him. Around the head of the animal was a halo of phosphoric light, and from his feet flew flashes of blue flame when they touched the earth. As Sandy's eye followed the circling course his speed grew faster, and as the children make a ring of fire with a burning stick, so did the dark form of the mysterious beast melt in the fiery ring. A strange dizziness now came over Sandy as the earth seemed to be flying around under him, and the luminous ring turned blue, then green, then black, and in its darkness he remembered no more.

How long he remained in this state he knew not, but on awakening he found himself resting on his side on the soft turf which around him bore marked traces of a dreadful struggle; but his enemy had vanished. Raising himself

on his elbow, his heart was gladdened by the glorious light of the sun now risen in the east, casting a ruddy glow over the surrounding landscape, and the dew-laden grass sparkled with countless shining gems as the slanting mellow rays shot athwart the verdant headland. Rising to his feet, he felt refreshed by the gentle morning breeze which fanned his cheeks and cooled his fevered brow; and the fierce passions of his soul, which had raged like a tempest during the awful midnight scene through which he had passed, now heard the gentle voice of Nature whispering, "Peace, be still." Like Samson, he felt that the Spirit of the Lord had not departed from him, for as he stretched forth his powerful arms and paced about in the warm sunlight, he felt his strength returning, and he thanked God for this, and for preserving him through such a conflict to see the light of day once more. The thought of his wife and children now shot through his heart like an arrow, and with a deep sigh, and a tear trickling down his manly cheek, he turned his face towards his cottage on the hill side.

Walking along the smooth, velvety carpet which Nature so richly spreads over those headlands, Sandy felt deeply impressed with a sense of God's goodness, in adorning the earth with so much beauty. Around him on every side grew myriads of wild flowers of every form and hue, giving out their sweet perfume in the balmy morning air, and reminding him of the beautiful language of Scripture, which he had so often read and admired—"Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God so clothe the grass which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

Sandy felt that he was one of those of little faith, and he prayed that it might be strengthened, and that he might get a clearer view of the ways of Providence, which to his inquiring

mind had often suggested dark doubts and difficulties. "Why," said he to himself, "amid all this beauty, order, and harmony, should man be the only creature whose presence is so often a plague-spot upon the fair face of creation? and, even at his best, being 'made to mourn,' he mars the beauty of Nature with his tears.

"Over the edge of the cliff yonder, the gulls and kittiwakes are sailing with outspread, snowy pinions on the gentle, morning breeze. How gracefully they float with motionless wings! circling in playful flight, and greeting each other with familiar cries as they pass. How happy they must be! no regrets for the past, no anticipation of evil to come; far below their aerial flight lies the great sea which they know gives them food, and safe on the ledge or in the fissure of the rock, dwells their callow brood, and beyond these objects they know no care and feel no sorrow.

"The lark, like a dark speck against yon silvery cloud, is warbling out a gushing flood of music. How clear and full it is, as if the sweet songster was just near at hand, and not so far away as to be almost lost in the distance; surely this bird is happy! Its joy is full in the knowledge that its little nest is safe on the earth below, and hidden, as it is, by a few tall blades of grass which grow beside it. There is a humble bee flitting from flower to flower, humming its droning tune of pleasure as it fills its honey-bag with the treasures of many a flower, and carries the day's gathering to its humble storehouse, there to be laid up and enjoyed when the drifting ocean spray, the howling tempest, and the snow drifts sweep over every verdant, flowery spot which now smiles with beauty in all the loveliness of a summer morn.

"Flowers, birds, and insects, no dark midnight scenes with you; no fierce conflicts in which you engage, no demon spirit dwells in you to make you a curse to the earth, and the terror and dread of your species. Alas! why then was I made

a man, and not a bird or an insect? for then would the brief span of my existence have been spent in joy, and no fierce passion would have raged in my breast, nor brought me in conflict with the powers of darkness manifested in man, accursed of God, and sold to the prince of the powers of darkness." Such were the musings that passed rapidly through Sandy's mind, as with hurried steps he took his way homeward. He felt a gloom resting on his soul, and the dark enigma of his being pressed more heavily on his spirits than ever it had done before. "What is the end and object of my life," inquired he; "does it begin and end here? Ah! that is the question; here is only the beginning, and the end is lost in the infinite. That is the reason I have sorrow, and trouble, and a knowledge of evil in this life, because those are the means by which I must be trained for the life to come. Yes, this is light shining in a dark place, and I thank God for it."

Sandy was now crossing the Vadle Brigg, and, turning to the left, quickly ascended the road to Scousburgh. Passing through the village, he came in sight of his cottage, and as he came near it he saw his wife emerge from the door with outstretched arms, and her loose hair floating in the breeze. He ran to meet her, and caught her in his arms, as with a wild shriek she exclaimed, "O my Sandy!" and would have fallen at his feet had he not supported her. Lifting her gently, as he would have done a child, he bore her into the cottage, and placing her in a chair, tried all the means he could use to bring her back to consciousness. His little boy, on whose sunny locks only three summers had shone, clung to his mother's skirt, and looking up to his father's face with his large, wondering, clear eyes suffused in tears, asked if "mam widna waaken." His little sister, two years younger, fair as a rosebud, and a sweet miniature of her mother, slid down from the chair which she was leaning against, and tried to creep to her mother, who, slightly recovering consciousness, looked with bewildered gaze

at her husband, as if to make sure that it was really him she saw. But happening to catch a glimpse of the blood which had stained his white trousers, she went off in a wild hysteric fit, her rapid sobs alarming the children and wringing Sandy's very heart with grief and alarm for her safety. Gradually getting calmer, Sandy tried by every endearing expression to soothe her.

"Annie! Annie!" exclaimed he, "be calm, love; I'm safe an' soond; du's frightenin' da bairns oot o' der senses. Dunna noo, dunna geng on dat wy; canna du see dat der's naethin' da <sup>tar/</sup> maitter wi' me; tak' up da bairn noo, an' haud dy tongue."

"O, cruel Sandy," at last sobbed his wife, "Why did du lave me? du's murdered; yea, I ken du's murdered, tho' du winna tell me."

"O, sic nonsense, Annie," said Sandy; "hoo can I be murdered, an' yet here beside dee, an' spaekin' ta dee?"

"Yea, yea, yea, yea!" continued Annie, in a low dolorous tone, and without noticing his last remark, "I kent somethin' wis gaen ta happen. Dis is my drame o' wirkin' i' green girss; an' da black corbie dat fled ower wir hoose da streen i' da mirkenin'."

"O! niver mind nedder drames or corbies, Annie, as lang as I'm safe an' weel," said Sandy, who at last succeeded in calming his wife.

For several days she tried to get from him where he had been, and what had happened; but he always put her off with the remark, "Dat it wisna o' ony consequence, an' he wid tell her a' about it sometime."

Several months passed, and the subject seemed to be forgotten, as Sandy was anxious it should be, especially as from the night of the conflict with Black Eric, none of Sandy's flock were missed. At the same time there was undoubted evidence that the sheepstealer was still alive, and visiting his old haunts, but with greater caution, and with a more sparing hand of his neighbour's property than formerly. A remarkable circum-

stance, however, occurred at the time, which seems to have entirely changed the mode of Black Eric's life, and which will be gathered from a conversation which took place between Jenny Pennon and Ellie o' da Hill.

Jenny was well known far and wide as a collector and vendor of all sorts of gossip—good, bad, and indifferent ; and one day calling on Ellie, who was an old maid, and lived alone in a small cottage outside the hill dykes, she found the latter at home. Coming in softly over the floor, in a quiet undertone she announced her appearance with “Gude day be here.”

“Gude day be ta you,” returned Ellie. “O!” recognising her, “is dis dee, Jenny? Come in trow ; surely dat's a stranger. Tak a share, an' slip aff o' dy feet an' set dem up ta da fire.”

“Na, mony tanks ta dee,” responded Jenny ; “bit niver du anse my feet, fir I'm shure der ower weel ; na, no a grain o' weet is upo' dem,” she added, as she drew her hand over the tops of her neatly-clipt rivelins.

“Fu's a' hame wi' dee,” inquired Ellie ; “nae unkin news about you, I'se warren.”

“Yea, alaek ! der's been a hantle o' unkin news dis while. Du'll be heard o' Sandy Breamer's feict wi' Black Eric o' Fitful?”

“I !” exclaimed Ellie, “no a whist am I heard ; du sees I geng nae wy ta hear news.”

“Weel,” continued Jenny, “dey say it wis a awful feicht. Sandy wrastled wi' him da whole nicht, an' da tief wid niver hae gotten oot o's hands leevin' if Tangie hed na come an' pitten some glamour ower Sandy, an' taen his strent fae him. Bit Lord be tanked if a' be true dat's sed, da foul fiend is oot o' Shetlan', an' niver micht his feet tak him back agen, an' du an' I be hale an' weel. Du wid a kent Rasmie i' da Stanes, da fiddler? Weel, as a' body kens, he wis aye taen awa every Yule-e'en ta play ta da hill-folk, an' sometimes tü whin dey hed a weddin'. He aye slipped awa' i' da mirknin', wanderin' among da muckle grey stanes an' ferrie knowes



aboon his hoose ; an' if dis wis aboot da middle o' da ouk he widna be seen agen till da Monaday efter, an' den he wis aye fun staandin' afore a muckle grey stane wi' his fiddle anunder his airm, perfectly benumbed. Weel, as I wis gaen ta tell dee, aboot twa ouks sinsyne, Rasmie guid awa' ta ane o' da ferrie knowes ta see what hed cum ower dem, as he never hed heard o' a weddin' for iver sae lang afore dat. Weel, whin he comes in, wha sees he bit an auld wife sittin' hurklin' upo' da heartstane. Says Rasmie, says he, 'Fu's a' wi' you, an' fu's a' da rest?' 'O, dool an' sorro!' dool an' sorro!' says shü ; 'I'm a' dat's left noo, lammit, i' da Isles o' Shetlan' o' wir kind. Wir folk is a' fled to Faroe, an' dey tocht dat I wis dat auld an' dat cripple dat dere wis nae üse o' me followin dem.' 'An what's pitten dem awa?' says Rasmie. 'O!' says da auld wife, 'da Gospel hes spread sae muckle dis while back dat dey cudna hide ony langer in Shetlan'. An' sae, Rasmie,' says shü, 'ye see a blate fireside noo whaur mony a happy yule-e'en ye're seen spent. O, dool an' sorro'! dool an' sorro'! dat ever I sud a lived ta see dis day.'"

"O haud dy tongue noo, Jenny, an' say nae mair," exclaimed Ellie, looking furtively over the back of her chair towards the dark end of her hut,—“du'll pit me clean oot o' my judgment wi' faer, du's made me perfectly oorie.”

“Na ! Lord hae da poor o' dee,” ejaculated Jenny, “an' a' dat belongs ta dee ; an' Lord be my blest helper (sneezing), der's naething ta mak dee oorie. As I wis sayin', Rasmie fan dat a' da hill folk hed left Shetlan' an' gean ta Faroe, an' mony says dat baith Brownie an' Tangie hes followed dem. Tangie hesna been seen fir monts, and sin Gaawn o' da Blate left da claes i' da mill fir Brownie, he's never been seen sinsyne. As mony a ane says, he sud a been mair spairin' o' his gifts, an' geen da claes ta dem dat hed mair need.”

The demon Brownie here alluded to, and who scarcely deserves the bad-sounding prefix to his name, was a useful, if

not an amiable, member of the fraternity to which he belonged. His mission was to attend water mills during the night ; and before the invention of the hopper, he supplied the eye of the upper millstone with the corn, so all that was necessary for any one having corn to grind was to leave it in the mill, shut the door, and lift up the water-sluice to set the mill in motion. In the morning the corn was found ground, and the meal ready for being carried home. Those who chanced to get a sight of Brownie describe him as having the appearance of a tall young lad, but always in a state of nudity ; hence the good-natured Gaawn, alluded to by Jenny Pennon, took pity on him and left him a suit of clothes one night, along with the quantity of corn to be ground ; but, as the sequel showed, it turned out to be a case of ill-judged philanthropy, resulting in the loss of Brownie's services ever after.

Tangie, as it will have been seen, had left the islands. This was evident, not only from the discovery made by Rasmie o' the Stanes, but the blue lights in Fitful banks, so long seen by the fishing boats, had entirely disappeared, and Black Eric, deprived of his demon horse, could no longer reach his rocky cave, and therefore had to content himself with less comfortable and less safe quarters. Sometimes hiding in the more accessible parts of the cliff, and sometimes sleeping in the open air, he seems to have led a more unsettled kind of life since his escape from the hands of Sandy Breamer ; but at last the Fates decreed that the wicked and singular life of the bold outlaw of Fitful Head should be brought to a close, and in a way that, while it served the ends of justice, avoided the dangerous and painful necessity of personal conflict.

The autumn had far advanced, and the horses employed in bringing home the winter-fuel from the hills during the summer months were now allowed to run at large over the green slopes of Fitful, and to improve their condition by feeding on its rich grass. Sandy Breamer owned a splendid animal,

a cross between the Arabian and pure Shetland breed, and going one morning at early dawn to bring home this horse, for the purpose of "leading" home hay from the meadows, he met with a strange adventure, by which he at last accomplished that great object of his life—viz., the capture of Black Eric.

Finding the animal grazing quietly on the eastern slope of the headland, Sandy mounted on his back, and, taking a northerly course, moved along at an easy trot, keeping at a short distance from the edge of the cliff. When within a short distance of the memorable scene of his former conflict, what was his amazement to see, in a hollow just before him, his old enemy Black Eric, lying at full length, apparently in a deep slumber, with the veritable iron staff as a pillow, which Sandy had long believed was resting beneath the deep waters which washed the dark, frowning rocks of Fitful Head. Black Eric lay with his cap drawn down over his eyes, his arms folded across his face, and his knees slightly drawn up. Gazing in breathless silence on the prostrate figure now before him, Sandy could scarcely believe his eyes. Cautiously dismounting, and taking his horse by the head, he moved with noiseless steps over the soft mossy turf which yielded like feathers beneath the horse's hoofs. In a moment he stood at Black Eric's feet, and uncoiling a strong rope tether which he carried in his hand, he deftly passed the end under the legs of his captive, and casting a running noose, fixed the other end of the rope around his own waist. He now sprang on his horse, and bending forward, firmly grasped the neck of the animal (for he had no saddle), and whispering, "Check, check, check," in his ear, he bounded like an arrow down the declivity. The moment the rope tightened around Black Eric's ankles, he awakened and sprang to his feet with a savage growl ; but as the horse sprang forward he was instantly tripped, coming to the earth with a frightful thud. Again and again, as he glided over the smooth turf with almost lightening speed, he bounded from the earth, vainly

attempting to clutch the streaming tail of the flying animal ; but ere his curved fingers could grasp it he was brought down with terrific force, and each time as he fell a tempest of curses and imprecations were hurled at his flying captor. Sandy, however, heeded not, but urged the animal to his utmost speed, and, directing his course towards the Vadle Brigg, soon saw a number of fishermen, who were on their way to the beach, coming running to meet him. Being now on the sandy plat which fringes the western shore of the loch, and just as the men met him, he leaped from his horse, and Black Eric was instantly surrounded.

“God be praised !” exclaimed Eddie o’ Clavel, who had suffered much by the depredations of the sheepstealer ; “du’s caught da tief at last, Sandy. Noo haud ’im fast, men, or Tangie may help ’im tae gie you da slip ance mair yet.”

Black Eric now seeing that all resistance was hopeless, passively allowed his arms to be pinioned behind his back. He uttered not a word, but looked with a sullen, savage scowl on those around him.

“We’ll tak’ ’em ta da büth, boys,” said Eddie o’ Clavel ; “an’ Lowrie o’ Lumpfield, du an’ I’ll watch ’em a’ nicht ; an’ Sandy geng du hame ta dy hoose, du’s hed enouch ta dü already wi’ da ill-faured tief.”

On reaching the booth, which stood near the fishing station of Spiggie, the two fishermen entered with their captive, intending to man a boat next day and convey him to Lerwick for the purpose of lodging him in the Tolbooth prison.

Sandy again mounted his horse and rode back to the spot where he had captured Black Eric, for the purpose of securing his iron staff, which he wished to keep in his possession as a trophy. Arriving at the spot, he found the mysterious weapon where he left it, and dismounting, he threw it over his shoulder, and, taking his horse by the bridle, again descended the slope on his way to his cottage on the hill-side.

Eddie o' Clavel and Lowrie o' Lumpfield kept watchful guard over their prisoner. Being two powerful men, they had no fear of him bound as he was, and they had still less fear of his escape, seeing that the door of the booth was locked on the inside, and he placed on a bench between them. As the day advanced, Black Eric appeared more crest-fallen, and bitterly complained of the cords, which he said were too tightly seized round his wrists.

"We nicht aise da tow," said Eddie, "bit wha kens what nicht happen, du's sic a foul tief dat we canna trust dee."

"Trust me!" echoed Black Eric, in a whining tone; "ye cruel monsters, is na da door locked? an' gif my haands were loose a'tagedder, I can get nae farder."

"I tink, hoy, we nicht slacken 'em a bit," said Lowrie o' Lumpfield.

"Weel, boy, just plase dysel," replied Eddie.

Lowrie now proceeded to undo the knot of the cord that bound Black Eric's hands, taking the precaution, however, not to slip out the ends, but merely to slacken it a little; but while accomplishing this, the wily outlaw suddenly drew his hands through the cord, and dashing from his keepers, went through the door like a bomb-shell, making it fly in fragments before him—the door being an old and frail one—and this he had noticed on entering. Before Eddie or Lowrie could recover from their surprise, Black Eric was several yards in advance of them, taking a southerly direction, and then toiling up the heights to his old haunts. His pursuers strained every nerve to make up with him, but his long practice on the hills in running down sheep now stood him in good stead. By the time he gained the edge of the cliff, he had left his pursuers at least fifty yards behind him. They saw him disappear over the brow of the banks, but at a point where they knew he could find little shelter, and they therefore strove hard to reach the cliff, before he could gain the next gio, where the nature of the rock

would have afforded him a better chance for baffling his pursuers, for at this part of the headland the cliff is not perpendicular as is the case further south, but is broken up into gios or creeks, which have shelving slopes of loose rock running midway to the sea. As they anticipated, just as they gained the head of the gio into which Black Eric descended, he was attempting to swing himself round a dangerously projecting rock which jutted out in a point between the two gios or creeks already spoken of, and, excepting a few narrow ledges, formed a sheer descent of several hundred feet. When the men saw him, they yelled a wild "hey!" which echoed through the surrounding cliffs; and whether by this means he was startled, or had the fatigue he had gone through shaken his nerves and weakened the tenacity of his hold, could not be known; but, horrible to relate, as he made the desperate swing, clinging to the ledge with both hands, and his right foot resting on a narrow ledge below, his foot slipped and he fell. As his hands slipped, he seemed to bound from the face of the rock, and with extended arms, down, down he went! his dark form lessening to the sight of the appalled fishermen as it sped in its awful flight to the dark waters below. They see it plunge, a tiny jet of spray mounts up, falls, and settles in a small spot of frothy bubbles which soon vanish. The eddying waters gurgle a low, murmuring requiem, and the water sprite dances with fiendish glee over the spot where lies fifty fathoms deep the stiffened corse of Black Eric the sheepstealer.

"Dis is da Lord's düin'," exclaimed Eddie o' Clavel, as he smote his hands together; "his blüid be on his ain head, an' da Lord hae mercy on his soul, tho' Lord forgie me for sayin' it, for dat prayer is noo ower late. Lat's geng hame, Lowrie, an' tell what's happened."

The two men now descended the headland, and arriving at the village of Scousburgh, told the startling news that Black Eric had fallen over the banks, which seemed to produce a

mingled feeling of horror and thankfulness in the minds of the community—horror at the awful termination of the life of this wicked man, and thankfulness that the peace of the district would no more be disturbed by his presence, nor its interests suffer by his depredations.

Years rolled on, and the sheepstealer of Fitful Head seemed to be almost forgotten, and his iron staff rested quietly, with a thick coat of rust on it, in an obscure corner of Sandy Breamer's cottage. About this time, however, a water-mill owned by Sandy required to undergo some repairs, and among other things required a new iron spindle ; but the village smith had not a piece of iron suitable for the purpose, and in the dilemma, Sandy bethought him of the useless trophy still in his possession, and that it could not be applied to a better purpose than to make a spindle for the mill. It was therefore at once handed to the smith, who with little workmanship made it serve a more useful purpose than ever it had done before.

The mill was finished and set a-going, and it so happened to be on a Halloween. All went well till the moon shown over a point on Trosswickness, which showed that it was twelve o'clock, when all of a sudden a noise like that of thunder passed over the roof of the mill, and was quickly followed by low, moaning sounds, and the "collie" which lighted the mill instantly went out, and in the darkness the awful apparition of Black Eric was seen standing upon the top of the flying mill-stone with his finger pointing to the iron spindle below. Olly o' Vinsgart and his son, who had the use of the mill that night, fled in terror through the open door, and for several days remained speechless and in a state of stupefaction.

None after this occurrence ever again had the courage to visit the mill. It long remained deserted—at last fell into ruins, and a heap of lichened stones is all that now remains as a memento of Black Eric of Fitful Head.