

*John and Charles Phillips.
October 12th 1830*

THE
HIGHLANDERS:

A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE HERMIT IN LONDON, HERMIT ABROAD, &c.

"Wherever I wander, wherever I roam,
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart's with my home."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

PUBLIC favour, like sunshine, is apt to weaken while it warms, and therefore the wise never remain too long under its influence; nor do they forget to calculate that upon man himself, as upon all his works, it must one day decline. A nameless Hermit may be supposed to have upon this subject nothing to regret and nothing to dread; but such is not the case; for, as the sunshine of public kindness has long cheered the author of the following pages through the Hermit's cloak, he would not wish that the gratitude which that warmth has excited, should be without a due and becoming expression.

In appearing before the public in a new form, he comes with all its attendant anxieties, together with the added fear, lest a veteran in another field, should lose in the wildness of Highland scenery and customs and the portraiture of Highland life, the laurels with which he has been hitherto rewarded. All that he can say for himself is, that he has observed carefully, and sketched honestly; and while he hopes that he has not written a line with which the manly heart cannot feel sympathy, he trusts that he has not allowed to slip from his pen a word at which the modest cheek can have cause to blush. In observation, in zeal, in honesty, and in decorum, he hopes still to be found

THE HERMIT IN LONDON.

THE HIGHLANDERS.

CHAPTER I.

By yon castle wa', at the close of the day,
I heard a man sing, though his head it was grey ;
And as he was singing, the tears fast down came :—
There will never be peace—till Jamie come hame.

BURNS.

It was on a fine morning in that season of the year, when the warmth of the highland day has not abated, but when, shortened by at least three or four hours, it derives additional heat from the condensation, that the venerable

Chieftain of Glenmore harnessed himself for his favourite sport on the field, or in the flood, as it might happen. He had summoned Duncan, his game-keeper, with the two trusty dogs of the genuine old Scottish breed, and the double barrell'd fowling-piece, which in its time had done terrible execution in the moors; and his henchman stood by with the three-pronged liester to transfix the pride of the river. He cast a wistful glance towards the boat-house on the other side, and saw the little ferry-boat launched, and rowing toward the beach below his majestic but time-worn dwelling. The glance which he cast toward the boat was one of mixed anxiety and hope,

and it held him rivetted to the spot, to await the message of weal or of woe which might be wafted across.

The Castle of Glenmore is one of the most picturesque in the whole romantic land of the North ; and though different parts of it are in different styles of architecture, yet that which promises to last the longest, carries its date beyond even the dawnings of tradition. It stands upon a rock, overhanging one of those long and sinuous arms of the sea, which, in the West Highlands, are denominated lochs. That rock is, in its beetling front, altogether perpendicular, and both it and the great tower or keep of the Castle, which rises from its very brow, are of the primitive granite, encrusted with

lichen, and hoary through time ; and, seen from a little distance, they appear as if erected by the same builder and at the same instant. The rock rises to the height of at least two hundred feet, and close by its base the restless waves of the Atlantic, green and transparent as that stone which is named after them, alternately ripple and thunder among the clean and variegated pebbles. On the rock itself they make no impression. It stands like a man, whose story and whose centre are in himself ; and who, like the long line of Chieftains, of whom the Castle has been the dwelling, dares all external powers to do their worst. You gaze upon it,—it carries you back to the beginning of time, and for-

ward to the end. It says, it was an integrant part of the globe, ere the waters of Noah covered the earth ; and seems to give promise that it will be an integrant part of the renovated globe, after the organized remains of this one shall be, like those of the former, enshrined in the rock, and entombed in the bowels of the antient hills.

By one flank of the castle dashes the Awinmore, or principal stream of the glen ; while the other side is separated from the mountain behind, by a deep ravine, the work partly of nature, and partly of art. Thus situated, the Castle of Glenmore was, in the olden time, impregnable to the assaults of the bold warriors of the mountains ; and even at this day, a slender garrison could

hold it for months against a host. From its insulated situation, it is majestic, view it on which side you will. Seen from the opposite shore of the loch, its grey form hangs upon the side of the brown mountain, in that fearful and undefinable appearance which the Highland bards give to the spirits of departed heroes. When you approach it by the ferry, it soon flings its bold contour upon the sky, and assumes, as it may well assume, the attitude and the station of guardian sentinel to the lovely glen of which it keeps the entrance. If you come near to it on either of the land sides, its effect is equally sublime; and when you look at the loneliness with which it is now surrounded, and contemplate the result

of the repeated but ineffectual attempts which have been made to pull it down, it stands a giant in the wilderness, unbending and unsubduable Lord of the desert. The only approach to it is by a rude bridge, formed of unhewn trees laid across the ravine; and in the olden time, these had been contrived so as that they could be drawn up or let down at pleasure, thus insulating the Castle or connecting it with the neighbouring land, as emergency might require.

The top of the insulated mass of rock was of considerable extent, of such extent indeed, as that, during the inroads of the Scandinavian pirates, or the predatory excursions of the neighbouring clans, when the *Sliobh nan*

more could not keep itself with its broad-sword in the remote passes, every living thing, rational or irrational, belonging to the clan, could be secured in the fortress of its Chief. This area formed a spacious court. On the side toward the ravine—the north-east one—was a row of low buildings, strongly arched, and loop-holed in their jutting buttresses, so as to defend the rude drawbridge and the gate. At the southern termination of these rose the great tower or keep, the walls of which were of immense thickness—so that the concealments and even the sleeping apartments were in the centre of them. Each floor consisted of a single hall, that on the ground story serving in times of need, both as the general

kitchen and the rendezvous of the serfs of the clan, while the next above it was the grand hall or audience chamber. The uppermost roof of this tower was arched and paved with stones of an immense thickness. It commanded a view of the whole glen, and one part of it had been a hearth for the beal-fires, when danger came by the way of the sea. Immediately adjoining this tower, was the modern hall of large dimensions, having its roof of carved frame work, and its floor of chequered planking, both formed of the native and indestructible oaks of Glenmore. Adjoining to this again were the apartments, which, in later and less perilous times, had been the residence of the Glenmores, their families, and the

numerous visitors whom the beauty of their lands, and the known hospitality of their board, had constantly drawn around them, not very much to the advantage of the patrimonial inheritance. So long, however, as the feudal system continued, even in its fragments, Glenmore had no want but that which his native ground could supply, and no ambition but the welfare of his people, and the honour of his name. Near those latter buildings there was a parade-ground, or place of observation, upon the summit of the rock, and it was here that we left the venerable chieftain looking down upon the loch, and the little boat, while he was waiting its arrival, and we were becoming the ciceroni of the external part of his

dwelling to the reader ; and as the keel of the little boat is yet some hundred yards from the pebbly strand, we should wish that reader just to turn with us, and look down the slope towards the river, upwards into the glen, and backwards to the huge brown mountain which frowns on the opposite side. Let him remark the lovely grounds, which, though limited in extent, are yet nearly boundless in beauty, and which stretch to the brow of that precipice, almost half the height of the rocks, which were wont to repel the attacks of hostile men, and are yet proof against the insidious underminings of the river. Here were the gardens of Glenmore ; and those cherry-trees, of immense size, which now bear no fruit, and hardly any

leaves, were at one period the gift of a Papal Nuncio, when he visited the proud inhabitants of this remote and almost inaccessible rock. Upon this little slope of ground, which does not extend to above two or three acres, there are the traces of at least ten generations of the forest; and one may judge, from the fallen trunks and crumbling roots, of the majesty in which they appeared during the prosperous days of the house. In the middle of this romantic garden, a spring of water, as cool as ice, and as clear as crystal, issues living from the rock; and in times of siege, afforded to the inhabitants an ample and refreshing supply, which the most daring enemy could neither cut off, nor command. Upwards, along the river, the glen ap-

pears as a half-opened book, defended on each side by mountains, piercing the clouds, and admitting of hardly any entrance, save close by the Castle, and by the long, tedious, and difficult mountain-path, at the opposite extremity. In so lonely a land, one could not hope to see so much greenness and fertility ; but in truth the whole bottom of the glen seems like a velvet carpet of the liveliest emerald, with the river, like a thread of untarnished silver, seaming it down the middle. From the mountain behind, a brawling stream dances, and bounds, and foams from pool to pool, and from rock to rock. Now it widens into a dark and dipling expanse, over which the mountain-ash alternately waves its white blossoms and its scarlet berries,

and in which the weeping birch is ever and anon laving its perfumed and pendant branches: now it twines through the gorge of the rock, in a space over which a child might leap without the least hazard; and anon it shoots away from the precipice in a cascade, which, dashing in thunder as it falls, flings the greater part of its parent stream in smoke upon the atmosphere, and limns the mountain-side with all the glories of the rainbow: lastly, amid bushy trees, and broken fragments of rock, it hides its troubled waters in the soft but sweeping flood of the Awinmore.

The prow of the little skiff touched the strand; the hardy boatman bounded to the shore, hurried up the slope, passed the wild bridge and the time-

worn gate ; and brief space elapsed, ere, bowing low, and with bonnet in hand, he delivered to the Chieftain a pacquet of letters. Having received his wonted guerdon, he sped him back, and again shot across the loch.

The Chieftain looked first at the superscription, then at the seal, and breaking open the pacquet, devoured the contents with more than ordinary greediness. A smile of unwonted satisfaction lit up his features ; he eyed the glowing sun upon the grey towers of his Castle, as though that, and yet more the intelligence he had received, were the omens of returning glory to his declining house. Turning hastily to his two trusty domestics, he said :—

“Uncouple the dogs ; put by the gun and the spear ; let a feast be prepared ; let the best of the clan be invited ; let our old banners be hung out ; let the piper be in readiness : run and ride ; and above all, fetch over the laird of Castle Craighy. Tell him I have received news, which he will rejoice to hear. We shall this day be merry.”

The domestics hastened to obey the father of their race ; and he stood rivetted to the spot, taking a second perusal of his letters, the contents of which seemed at first sight too delightful for actual truth.

At this moment, the notes of a harp resounded from the window of the ancient keep, and they were soon followed

by a voice, sweet but sorrowful, which the Chieftain knew well to be that of his beloved and lovely daughter—his only child—the last stay of his years—and the latest depositary of his name. Her notes had more of the touch of nature, than of the twittering of art, in them; but they, as well as the words, were her own:

“ The braid sea rows and the wide land spreads
Between my love and me;
And the trackless hills lift up their heads,
So that him I may not see.

Yet here I'll weep, and the watch I'll keep
O'er this fond heart of mine;
And I'll prove true as the turtle doo,
To the lad that is over the brine.

Return, O return,—it is Flora that calls,—
Return to your own native shore,
Return and enliven our father's old hails,
And wander for glory no more.

For, ah ! what is glory ? a rainbow at best,
Moving faster as fast we pursue :
The charm of the world is with friends to be blest,
Its glory—a heart that is true.”

The father listened with equal pleasure to the notes and the resolution of his daughter, till she had finished her song, and then he called to her,—

“ Flora, my love, come down to your father ; I have received a messenger of joy, and I can have none in which you do not partake.”

Lightly did “ the bud of beauty and innocence,” as she was termed in the fond and figurative language of the Clan, skip down the ancient staircase, and across the area, and fling herself into the arms of her father.

“ I have a packet from Naples,

Flora," said he ; " and our fondly expected may soon be in his native land."

A tinge of crimson, more deep and more lovely than even that which it usually displayed, burned upon the cheek of Flora. She turned to hide it from her father, and was about to ask for particulars, but he stopped her, saying,

" We must rejoice to day. I have sent to invite our kinsmen ; do you invite our kinswomen ; we shall dine, and we shall dance in the hall to-night. The tree of our name is hung out upon the battlements ; let all who belong to it put on its garb ; and let the *Sliobh nan more*, though they be few and

faded, yet prove themselves of the stock of better times.”

Flora retired, and the Chieftain entered his hall, or, as he called it, his armoury, which, like its master, told a “tale of other times.” It was ragged and battered as the banner of a veteran corps, but as upon that, the marks of desolation upon it might be regarded as the insignia of honour. Its richer furniture had all gone, and though it had many of the characteristics of former strength, it had few of those of present opulence. Over the great chimney-piece hung, upon the branching antlers of a red deer, that tough and dinted target—of which a foe had never seen the unstudded side;

that sword which had never been unsheathed in aggression, nor put up till its avenging had been full; that dirk which had kept the roof-tree of Glenmore from machinations and plots; and that purse, which had never received the wages of bribery, or refused to disburse the reward of fidelity. The ornaments, if ornaments they might be called, of the other parts of the room, were homely: uncouth battle-axes, clumsy bows, huge swords, iron-hilted pistols, long and rusty spears, and all the other insignia of ancient and demi-savage war. Nor was it without the trophies of the chase; for it contained skins of all the mountain birds of prey, from the proud eagle to the rapacious kite, and of all ravenous

beasts, from the shaggy wolf to the lank weasel. The chairs and tables were in accordance,—such as a highland cabinet-maker could form with saw and axe, and such as time chose to preserve after the lapse of more than one century.

Glenmore paced the oaken floor of this grand but gloomy apartment with augmented self-satisfaction. He thought of his daughter; he thought of his intelligence; and he thought of both in conjunction. Moving up to the fierce and frowning picture of Alister Mac Mhic Alister, his great great grand-sire, habited in a huge cuirass under his plaid, and with an eagle plume loftier than ever furnished the wing of the bird, in his bonnet, he could not help

saying, "Abating a little of the martial air, and the martial eye, that is the exact picture of my Flora."

We had almost forgotten to mention, that in one part of the room, and that, as it was supposed, the post of honour, there was a portrait of Prince Charles Edward, surmounted by a diadem, with a rosette of white ribbons, which was renewed on the 10th of June, annually; and that in addition to Alister Mac Mhic Alister, there were twenty other family portraits, which were little indebted to the painter, but which were endeared by tradition, and now very decently clad in mourning.

Such were the furnishings of that part of the Castle of Glenmore, which

the Chieftain regarded as peculiarly his ;
and, like himself, they had felt the vi-
cissitudes of fortune and the corrosions
of time.

CHAP. II.

“O spread the board in Lord Airly’s hall,
In Lord Airly’s cellar broach the wine ;
And run and ride, bid the Ogilvies all
With good Lord Airly to dance and dine.”

OLD SONG.

No sooner had the invitation of Glenmore sped with the rapidity of the fiery cross through the dwellings of his people, than all was bustle and preparation for the renewal of that festivity, which the reverses of fortune had for many days chased from the roof-tree of their name. The contributions which, during the two preceding days, the

chosen huntsmen of the clan had levied upon field and flood, took their departure for the Castle, accompanied by all who could assist in the preparation of the banquet; and the clansmen and clanswomen, eager for the entertainment and the dance, attired themselves in their best, that is, their most characteristic attire, and followed with fleet limbs and willing hearts.

Meanwhile the domestic attendants were mustered in what was termed the library,—a ghastly apartment, which had once contained a valuable collection of books; but as necessity had driven these towards Edinburgh, that great whale of Scottish wealth and Scottish learning, there now remained little else but baize, once green, but now

fallen into the “sear and yellow leaf” —hiding empty shelves, together with some Missals, the poems of Ossian and Burns, Buchanan’s history, copies of the principal classics, a few old French romances, an English dictionary, (not compiled by Dr. Johnson), and that oracle of the glen, Buchan’s Domestic Medicine.

The domestics were, Allan Glass, who officiated in the compound capacity of henchman, seneschal, butler, and valet de chambre ; and who had made his *debut* in the family as tutor to that only son, whose death yet sat heavy upon the recollection of the Chieftain. Next was Duncan, the game-keeper, a person of stronger frame, but less cultivated mind, than

the henchman. Then came *Callum Dhu*, the piper, equally renowned for the length of his wind, and his legends; and the muster was closed by an invalid fisherman, who was a pensionary of the family, and, by common consent, allowed to have lived so long, as that the sight, which had waxed rather dim to the things of the present hour, gave him a clear and distinct perception of the future. The remaining member of the establishment, who officiated as groom, and as gardener, had ridden to fetch from his little ruined tower, at the top of the loch, the Laird of Castlecraighy, who was prime guest at the Castle, as being that branch of the family which was nearest the grand stem.

Those chosen domestics, being mus-

tered, had severally a roster of their duty given them, and were sent off to prepare themselves for the important doings of the day. Allan Glass was to receive the guests at the door of the hall, and usher them into the presence of the Chief; to assign each his station at the table, according to the joint at which he sprouted off from the genealogical tree; and to settle to an inch the position of the *salt* which was to separate the unmingled blood of Glenmore from the common kernes of his race. Furthermore, he was to have charge generally of the feast, and to see that the whole, down to the ragged boys and girls who were to gnaw the bones outside upon the green, had abundance to eat and to drink. The gamekeeper was for the

day to assume the office of butler, and to bear the *tass* of Glenmore—made of the family tree, and richly adorned with silver—to all whom the Chieftain might design to pledge in that capacious cup. The piper was to clean and oil the *pipe more*, fasten the pennon of the clan to it, and see that neither at dinner nor at dance, there was lack of sound from drone or from chanter. The department assigned for old Rory Bain, was to take up the tales and legends of the family, where the memory of the Chief or that of his guests might fail; and also to penetrate the curtain of the future, when it became too dark for their ungifted vision.

They were all instructed to renew the ancient, and rather out of date

honours and decorums of the clan. The piper was, till the hour of dinner, to parade in front of the castle, and sound, with the loudest pitch of his lungs and his bagpipe, the Gathering of the clan. The gamekeeper was, upon the health of him from whom the packet had been received being given, to make nine discharges of the falcon, or little old rusty gun, upon the battlements, till rock and mountain should echo again ; and, in short, there was no ceremony performable with so *short a tail*, to be left unperformed upon the occasion.

Glenmore having issued his orders, retired to habit himself in full costume as Chief of his clan, and he soon returned to the chamber of presentation,

in all the pomp of an ancient Highlander. The broad bandings of the tartan, which had not seen the sun for a year, shone out with gorgeous lustre in the war-jacket, the trews, and the well-braided and sweeping plaid. Two eagle's feathers, emulating those in the bonnet of Alister Mac Mhic Alister, upon the canvass—as far as any thing in those degenerate days could emulate them—rose from the blue bonnet of the Chief, at a point in front, where was a thistle, formed of Scotch amethysts, set in silver, and in the middle of a white cockade of no ordinary dimensions. The huge claymore—a genuine Ferrara, with a hilt, by the celebrated blacksmith of Isla, hung from the black shoulder-belt,

with studded buckle ; the *sporan* shewed the entire skin of a goat ; the dirk upon the one side, with its hilt fantastically carved, ornamented with silver, and topped by a large cairngorum, was exactly in the state in which it had been given to his father from the hand of the Stuart ; the antique pistol on the other, was the same which had done such execution at Killiecrankie ; the silver brooch, and the cairngorum ring, were brought forth from their concealment, and the two family snuff-mulls of twisted horn, and with crystal tops, set in silver, were replenished, and lodged in the pockets of the Chief. Nor did he forget the gay gold chain and whistle, which, though sometimes borrowed for a

pretty obvious purpose by a kind agent in Inverness, yet had somehow or other found their way back again, in order to sound the wine ho-hoop upon this joyous occasion. In short, Glenmore was invested with all the ornaments and *insignia* of a Chief; and though the display of these, at the period of Highland history to which we allude, had something in it like a recalling from the dead, yet Glenmore, though not the vainest of men, felt not a little proud of them. It is true, that his glory lay more with the dead than the living. His domain had been impoverished by his own bounty, and the avarice of others; his clansmen had been diminished by accident and by emigration; and of those immediately

sprung from him, all that remained was his favourite Flora. But there is a tendency in man to fall back upon the past, when the present is gloomy and desolate ; and it may be, that it was this tendency which made the entertainment at Glenmore Castle a sort of resurrection in the Highlands.

Clansmen and Clanswomen arrived in *Kylochs*, on ponies, and on foot ; the banner waved from the highest turret of the Castle ; and the din of the piper's gathering, shook and astonished the air, far and wide. Castlecreaghy and the other gentlemen of the clan, took their positions above the salt ; Flora, in the bloom of health and the blush of beauty, was seated on her father's right hand ; and upon his left,

stood an empty chair, having a scarf of the tartan of another clan thrown across it ; but still, according to its due usage, furnished with its plate, its knife, and its fork. Towards that chair, Flora would sometimes cast an anxious glance ; but her smiles and her attentions were very generally and courteously given to all her kinsfolks.

No man may describe the din of the feast. The deafening roar of the bagpipe, the clanking of knives and forks, lifted from the table above the salt, and drawn from the sheath under it,—the rejoicings over the viands,—the pledging of healths,—the collision of *quaighs*,—and the clatter of black-jacks, drinking horns and glasses. The feast was substantial, comprising every thing

that Highland land or Highland water could afford, and the welcome was such as a fond father gives to his dutiful children. At the lower end of the table, no measure was taken of the ale and whisky ; and above the salt, the choice old Bourdeaux wine flowed freely and copiously.

When no more solids could be made to disappear within the hall, the fragments were carried to the equally joyous feasters, who filled the area without ; and after two or three healths, never forgotten by such people on such occasions, that of him whose symbol was the empty chair, was given with loud mirth, and amid the din of the falcon on the Castle-roof. This was too much for Flora ; and she retired,

blushing, bowing to the company, and leaning upon the shoulder of a fair kinswoman, whom her father retained in the family to cheer his daughter in those hours when himself had to be absent. The retreat of Flora was a signal for mirth, more loud and tumultuous than would have been seemingly while she was present. Song now followed song, tale answered to tale, and legend was heaped upon legend, till both the backward recollection and the forward perception of old Rory Bain were strained to their utmost. High and hearty was the roar of the singing, and loud and lofty were the boastings of feats performed on muir and mountain, by lake and river, with hound and pointer, with

bow and musket. Nor were they confined to those sylvan sports, which formed, and still in part form, the occupation of the Highlander during peace. They talked of deeds with brand and with battle-axe, against rebels at home, and invaders from abroad. Tibbermoor, and Aldearne, had yet their honour and their boast; Prestonpans, its tale of victory, and hapless Culloden, her note of discomfiture and of woe. Nor were they confined to deeds done in the land of their fathers, but extended to every age, and to every country, where a Highland warrior had drawn the sword, or pointed the bayonet; for, in every period, and through every clime, some or other of that clan had distinguished themselves under one

banner or another, national or foreign : the heart which beat under the tartan, always kept the same time, and continually panted for glory, no matter how hardly earned, or how dearly bought. The ambition seemed not to be to have overcome, but to have fought ; not to have gained the victory, but to have deserved it. Now, times were compared, and the more ancient were created above the more modern ; again, the hardships of war were revived,—the toils and dangers of the rock, the cataract, and the all but impenetrable forest, were detailed ; or the ardours of the sporting field served as a relief to the darker recitals of battles and of blood. Friend shook hand with friend, and kinsman renewed the plight of his

faith to kinsman,—not, however, without a few sad reminiscences of the faded glory of their house. Then came a dozen pæans ; and glorious memories without number were toasted, standing with the glass in one hand, and the dirk in the other, till the delirium of excitement became so strong, that the Chief, in order to mitigate its fervour, proposed that songs should again be the order of the meeting.

“ Our Chief, in the first place, deserves of his true and faithful followers,” said Castlecreaghy, “ that we should first have a tass to his health, his roof-tree, the flower of his hope—not forgetting ourselves, his humble tail and followers : “ *per varias casas, per tot discriminæ rerum,*” added he,

in order to shew that his fagging at the King's College of Aberdeen, in his youth, had not been wholly unproductive.

This motion could not be seconded, from the hurry with which each man grasped and filled his glass, from the deafening roar of the piper, and from the yet louder shouting and clamour below the salt, and without the hall. But they were at once on their legs; at once their glasses were drained to the bottom; and at once the whole were joining in one commingled and tremendous din.

Glenmore waited till it was over; bowed to his clansmen without rising, drained his glass to the bottom, and tossing it over his shoulder, grasped

the hands of his two kinsmen who were next him, and they grasping the next and so on, made it "hand to hand, and heart in one," throughout the whole assemblage. Perhaps Glenmore should have here made a speech; but the ardours of the feast had left him little of tongue, and his friends less of ears. However, as is common with Highlanders, he thought more than he spoke, and felt more than both. The shadow of other times carried him back to the substance. A hundred years were at once lopped from the world's history; and Glenmore and his people were in the spirit, and with the spirits of their fathers.

To calculate the extent to which this boisterous expression of feeling and

attachment might have been carried, is beyond the power of Saxon arithmetic, and as that science forms no part of the original lore of the Highlands, the solution must for ever remain a mystery ; the more especially, that it was cut short by a message, such as the brave and the warm-hearted can seldom resist—to join with the ladies, and in the dance. This was not indeed told to the Chief ; for any command, save his own, issued in his hearing, would have been downright rebellion ; but he winked at the insubordination, well knowing that it came from a quarter in which he was not the man to see any thing wrong. His province was not to take the lead in matters of mere sport, though he might sometimes condescend to honour

the festivities of his people, by leading a select damsel through the mazes of the reel.

The younger clansmen, however, gladly obeyed the summons, and thronged to the dancing apartment, each being more anxious than another for the honour of Flora's hand ; but she contrived to please all her kinsmen without an undue share of flattery to any.

As soon as all the company had retired, save the Chieftain and the Laird of Castlecreaghy, the former beckoned the latter nearer to him, and said :

“Castlecreaghy, we are here in thankfulness for the well being of him, to whom we must look for the preservation of our name, and our honours,

when we are gone ; but before we talk of that, let us take one cup to Highland hospitality, and “ May the Highlander never disgrace his father’s door—or darken that of a stranger.”

They drank, drew their chairs together, and while Castlecreaghy put himself in an attitude of hearing, Glenmore began to unfold matters much too important for coming in at the end of this chapter, and therefore we shall reserve the recital of them for the next.

CHAP. III.

And the Chieftains drained their goblets dry,
And the dancers had their glee,
And the old Seer said, 'In my boding eye,
A stranger's form I see.'

'And its guard you weel, ye ladies fair,
O guard you weel, say I;
For a false, false voice is on the air,
Whereat you may one day cry.'

BALLAD OF SIR NEILL.

"It is a thrice-told tale to you, my dear cousin," said Glenmore; "but where should the narration of our misfortunes find a hearer, but in the ear of a friend?"

"And Glenmore will speak long ere

Castlecreaghy weary," said his cousin, nodding assent, and putting himself in the attitude of listening.

Glenmore repeated the tale of the fidelity of his house to the favoured but fugitive Stuart, and the misfortunes which their devoted attachment to his hapless cause, had entailed upon them. He spoke of the brave band, which, led on by his father, had, upon the fatal muir of Drumrossie, hewed down the first line of Cumberland's army, turned the second, and stood, till but the Chief and three others, who could find no death even on that bloody field, were left remaining, to follow the fugitive and tell the tale. He spoke of the cruelties perpetrated by the conqueror upon the scattered, and then unoffend-

ing remnants of a devoted people, who had drawn their swords, not in the cause of rebellion, but in that of hospitality,—not in aid of a foreign invader, but for him whom they considered bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh. He depicted the smoking huts, and the scattered and starving inhabitants, that were given over to the fury of those, who, while the sword was yet in the hand of the clans, and their strength unbroken, had sneaked, crouching and cowardly, into holes and hiding places. He talked of the ancient Castle, coeval with the origin of his race, which had been pillaged of its furniture, and would have been burned to the ground, if the fire itself had not refused to do its cruel office. It was thus, not of

will, but of necessity, that that pile was saved from total destruction, and it was not till other hopes and other wars had occupied and blended together the different parties in the nation,—till the waters of oblivion had passed over the royal house, — and till necessity had done that which was refused to justice or even to pity, that the Chieftain was allowed to return from that exile, in which he had been born,—in which he had spent the morning of his life, and in which his parents had found untimely graves. He told how, returning from this long and lonely exile, he found his people persecuted, straying, and impoverished; the house of his fathers tenanted by daws and rooks; and the whole country falling backward

into a state of depopulation, poverty, and misery. He touched lightly upon his own efforts to readorn the house, and reanimate the heritage, and give to his children an education worthy their rank; and how he would have fallen in the struggle, had it not been for the kindness of the neighbouring and kindred clan of Strathantin; whose youthful chief, having completed his education and his travels, was now about to return to his native country, and unite the houses and the domains into one heritage, by asking the hand of Flora, to whom he had been long attached.

“It is the prospect of his return,” continued he, “which has induced me

thus to bring our friends together ; and when I see my Flora safe under his protection, the cares and the toils of old Glenmore will be ended ; and he will lay himself with satisfaction in the narrow house of his fathers. ”

“ Glenmore shall not die—he shall not die, by ——,” said Castlecreaghy, filling a large bumper of wine. “ Here is a health to him, and may he live till a better comes in his place ; and that will be long enough—so long, indeed, that crazy Castlecreaghy will never live to see it.”

“ Thank you, my dear cousin,” said Glenmore ; “ I shall live all the longer for your good opinion, and my heart shall feel the lighter for my having un-

bosomed it to you ; but the *children* will be looking out for me, and we must go to witness their sport.”

“ Just one large tass, and one little toast, with your chieftainship’s leave,” said Castlecreaghy ; “ and let it be of the mountain dew from the mountain shell.” With that he staggered towards the old sideboard, dislocating the legs of sundry chairs as he went, brought out the wooden vessel of the family, filled it to the brim, and then, as well as he could, pronounced his little toast—
“ To the health, and long life, and happiness, and welfare, of Eon Mac Alister Mac Mhic Allister Mhor Mhic Rannald Mhor, of Glenmore—to all those who love Glenmore—to those whom he loves—to those who love him—to the

friends of Glenmore—to those who befriend the friends of Glenmore—to all that are ready to stand by him and his—his kith and kin—his clan and clansmen's kith and kin—those who never turned their backs or their coats—those who never disgraced the feather, or stained the tartan—those who never drew the dirk in a fool's cause, or put it up at a fool's bidding,—to the lads who fear no foe, and the lassies that love no stranger,—may the blessing of heaven be upon all whom Glenmore blesses, and the curse of hell upon all whom he curses,—and may the black spald, the rot foot, and the red murrain, fall upon the substance, and the ill-meeting attend the children of all the enemies of his name—may the ill-deed be

upon them and their's, root and branch, leaf and flower, kith and kin, seed and generation, man and beast, in the house, and on the hill, by day and by night, on the land and on the water, while the sun rides in the firmament, the Awinmore runs to the sea, and the chieftain of Glenmore is the glory of his people."

This toast, as is sometimes said of an itinerant preacher's grace, was a good deal longer than the entertainment; for the same echo which repeated the last word of it, caught up the sound of the tass, as, after its second discharge, it was slapped down upon the table; and the chieftain and his cousin, were, through the abundance of their love and their libations, forced to work their way to

the dancing-room, "shoulder to shoulder,"—as true Highlanders go, when they are said to beat the devil.

The entrance of the Chieftain caused a momentary suspension of the sport; and the piper ushered his master to that chair, which had been placed for his reception; playing the while, in his loudest breath, the characteristic air of "Wat you that Glenmore's coming."

"Go on, my children," said Glenmore; "do not let my presence spoil that which I come to enjoy."

"Och, na," said an old man with hair white as snow, who was looking with delight upon the lively boundings of his great grandchildren—"Och, na," and, in an under tone, "may be Glenmore hersel, will be shakin her ain

shieftain's foot. Mony and lang's ta day, I hae seen her do't afore noo ; and God grant that she may do't mony a time, when I'll no' be leevin to see't."

Glenmore could not resist this appeal to the elasticity of his limbs, although he knew that it was an organized plan, and that the old man had taken that upon him, which none of his juniors durst venture. Castlecreaghy, too, although his head and his heels were, from his zeal to do honour to the feast, quite unsettled which should be ultimate ascendants for the night, fought away at the Highland fling, if with little grace or success, at least with much good will and good humour.

When all had wearied themselves in the dance, the seneschal again an-

nounced a renewal of the feast, and the piper led the way to the banquetting hall, sounding the onset of the clan, as loud as he was able.

In its abundance, the supper emulated the dinner ; and though the “little children” had retired, an accession of brawny youths and buxom lassies rendered the company to the full as numerous. Indeed, it was rather more so ; and for the first time in their lives, and, as it turned out, for the last, at least half a dozen, were promoted to seats above the salt. The wine was now too cold and thin, even for the leading men of the clan, and nothing could match the hearts of the company, either in fire or in strength, but the unadulterated dew of the mountains.

Castlecreaghy vowed that he would vanquish all the whisky in Glenmore ; but he fell, and fell gloriously, in the strife, and was borne off the field by four stout Highlanders, the piper playing the “ Lament ” after him, which rather gave umbrage to the Chieftain. It was no time for taking offence, however ; so, after seeing his kinsman duly cared for, Glenmore returned to the hall ; but finding that the new impulse given to the head, had so far extended itself to the heels, as to make dancing again the order of the night, he followed his kindred to the dancing apartment, led off the first reel with Ishbel Mackay, the blooming companion and cousin of his daughter, and leapt as lightly, and snapt his fingers with as hearty glee, as the youngest of them all.

The renewed dance made many of the clansmen warm, the warmth made them dry, and, as nothing would do now but whisky, not a few participated in the fall and the honours which had been awarded to Castlecreaghy.

The glee of the remainder knew no bounds; and the chieftain himself, throwing off the restraints of his high station, which, when his blood was warm, sat but heavily upon him, was the most zealous and the most active. In the judgment of the happy party, the night, long though it was in absolute measure, might have been squeezed into a nutshell; and it was not without expressions of sorrow, that they received notice through a rent in the thick tartan curtains, and even a crevice in

the wall, that the sun had begun his journey for another day.

“Never mind the sun,” said Glenmore, looking toward the slanting ray which stole in at the crevice; “if there be a breach in the roof, let us have none under it. The same sun which shines upon our festivity, will shine upon our cairns; and as the night is the time for parting, let us spend the day together, but let each spend it in his own fashion,—we may hunt, we may fish, we may boast of the past, we may hope of the future, and those who cannot watch one night for Glenmore, may go to sleep.”

“If it is all the same to Glenmore,” said Castlecreaghy, entering the room,

rubbing his eyes and shaking off his last yawn,—“if it is all the same to Glenmore, we would rather have our morning dram and our morning breakfast. The sun is high and clear over Benfuair, and the man that would sleep till he be lost in the west, is unworthy of a chieftain’s board or a chieftain’s blessing.”

“And Castlecreaghy ’ill be speaking the truth,” said old Rory Bain. “It ’ill need to be watch man and watch woman ; for a stranger’s foot has been sounding in my ear, and a stranger’s form flitting afore my eye the hale night. I could not sleep for him now, and gin we dinna a’ watch for oursels, and pray God to watch for us, some may greet that are now laughing, and

some may repent that are now thinking little about it."

"Do not alarm us with your prophecies," said Castlecreaghy; "the *Sblioh nan More* never turned their backs upon an enemy, or let down the latch against a stranger; and, under God and the Chief, what should we fear now?"

"Your ain will, gentlemen," said Rory. "When it's done, it'll be done, but mind I have tell'd you."

It was not long ere the stranger's foot was in other ears than the dreaming ones of old Rory Bain. For loud as were the half-exhausted roars of the night's merriment, they were soon lost amid a din still louder, in which dogs of all breeds and breedings, and want of breeding, of all depth of

mouths and dissonance of yelping, set up a howling, more mighty and more mingled than if the whole inhabitants of Babel had joined in one general scold.

“ I tell’t you sae,” said Rory. “ She’s comin noo, and the very dogs dinna like her ; and how can the grace o’ God sain that which canna be borne o’ a brute beast ! ”

“ Most likely it will be somebody that has gone *will* upon the mountain, and come here for shelter,” said Allan, looking towards his master, as if asking permission to usher the wanderer to the hospitalities of the house. Glenmore took no notice, but sat silent with his eyes fixed upon the floor, and whirling the one thumb about the other, as if his mind were too much occupied

for knowing what his hands were doing. "The blood of a Glenmore is not in him, whatever he may be," said the gamekeeper: "the dogs o' Glenmore ken better than to bark at their ain clan."

While the domestics and guests let off their wonder, in saws and proverbs after his fashion, the clamour of the dogs became still louder and louder, and the prancing of a horse's feet was heard upon the bridge, and their echo under the arch of the portcullis-room.

Glenmore started from his reverie: "If it were himself now!"

"Impossible!" rejoined Flora, though the word fell in an accent so gentle as to escape every ear but that of her father.

Scarcely were these words uttered, when the stranger was heard in the court and near to the gate of the apartments. “Run, Allan Glass, and welcome the stranger, whoever he is, and speed Donald and Duncan to take charge of his horses. Flora, my love, you must come with me into the armoury, and Ishbel, my little favourite, you must accompany your cousin. Glenmore may be seen hand to hand and heart to heart with his kinsmen, but toward a stranger he must keep his state; and even if it is he whom we all wish it to be, it would be too much for him to meet so many of his friends together at first.” Saying this, Glenmore, leaving Castlecreaghy as his vice, took his daughter under the

one arm and his niece under the other, and walked toward the armoury. Putting them into a closet adjoining, so that they might be ready if their presence were required, he seated himself in the chair of state, under the picture of Charles Edward, that he might receive, as became the Chieftain of Glenmore, a stranger, who, from the alarm he had created among the canine division of the clan, promised to be something more than ordinary.

It was not the curiosity of those quadrupeds alone which had been excited. The kernes of the clan had come out of their beds in the old vaults, and from their bivouacs in the garden, and stood gazing with wide mouth, wandering eyes, legs astride, and hands lifted

up, at the unwonted costume of the rider, the form and furnishings of his horse, and the gaudy dresses of his train. Even those who had been left in the dancing-room, peopled the windows with their heads; and though Flora could not bear the stimulation of hope and the anxiety of disappointment, which alternately agitated her bosom, Ishbel Mackay was posted at the lattice as a scout. Wonder held her mute for some time, and female curiosity, which usually runs to the tongue with abundant swiftness, ran so fast to that of Ishbel, that each word tripped up the heels of another, till at least, a couple of dozens were lumped into one *feu de joie* of amazement. The strain, however, was that of astonishment rather

than that of delight, and from this, Flora concluded, and concluded rightly, that the stranger who had arrived, was not that stranger for whose arrival she was most solicitous. Recovering, she stole to the lattice, leaned upon the arm of her cousin, and both gazed upon the stranger, as he paused to dismount.

His was indeed a form upon which ladies might have been proud to gaze, and it was one upon which they often had gazed, and that fondly, in the most crowded circles of the capital; it was therefore no wonder that it drew the attention of two simple girls in a highland solitude, and sent a wistful and wild pulse to the heart, at least to one of them, which yet had found no resting place among the sons of men.—

The stranger sat upon his horse with peculiar grace, and while he contrived to make the noble animal paw as though he had no desire to stand still, he contrived to shew himself off to no common advantage. He was about the middle size, but of powerful, though at the same time graceful mould. His face was of the most perfect oval, and his neck, which had the truly Grecian contour, was carefully exposed. A Turkish fur cap, while it added dignity to the expression of his head, left bare an expansion of brow more ample than falls to the lot of common men. An Albanian cloak, thrown carelessly over his shoulders, was so placed, as to exhibit a leg and foot very symmetrically formed. His saddle was of more

splendid appearance than had been witnessed by any one at the Castle, excepting perhaps by Glenmore himself at the court of France ; and his holsters (for he rode armed), were richly ornamented and emblazoned with crests and coronets.

“ I’ll wager it’s King George hersel come to see Glenmore,” said an old clansman ; “ ye a’ ken that there’s naebody sae fit for being king, gin George were to die.” “ And,” added another, “ there’s nae saying, but there’s royal blude, the blude o’ the auld Stuart hersel, in the veins of Glenmore ; for we a’ ken whan the leddy his mither was delivered o’ him ; and naebody wad expect that the name o’ a king wud dee out like that o’ a puir

man wha had nae house but a crazy shealing, and nathing to fight for him but his ain dirk."

After this fashion ran the whispers of the wondering Highlanders; but, partly from respect, partly from fear, they were kept at a due distance; and he, attended by his own train, dismounted his horse, was received by Allan Glass, and marshalled into the audience chamber of the great Glenmore.

As he disappeared, the two females stood wavering between the wish, that he had halted a little longer, and that he had not halted so long; and as he entered the gate, when there was little chance of being observed by him, Rory Bain, fortified by his preterna-

tural agency, stepped forward before the rest to reconnoitre his rear. - Observing a discrepancy in the length of his legs, and also that the boot upon the one which had been turned from the ladies while he was yet on horseback, was circular, Rory set up a dismal groan, and, being a good catholic, drew a circle round him with his staff, and made as many signs of the cross upon himself, and towards the castle, and every man and beast he could observe, as would, on ordinary occasions, have served the whole clan in devotion for a month. The astonished clansmen drew round the seer, while he stood within his mystic fortification, anxious to know the cause why he had taken such formidable precautions.

“ Ough ! ‘ she is the deevil hersel , ’ said Rory ; “ didna I saw her cloven feet ? it’s no a black leather shoe that can keep the deevil’s feet frae the sight o’ Rory Bain ! But I’ll cross her malice , ” — and with that he fell to repeating the *abacadabra* and all the other untranslateable words, at the sound of which the devil is said either to put down his hoofs, or draw in his horns. —

Seeing that the feet of the attendants were formed like those of ordinary men, the more hardy and incredulous of the clan, showed some scepticism of the seer, to which he replied : —

“ Did ye no saw that their faces were no the faces o’ earthly creatures ? for they had twa horns sticking out at ilka

side o' their nose, and I'll be bound that when ye get a sight o' their heads, ilka ane o' them will hae twa horns there too. Och, Och, I tellt you a' this, but the chief wadna believe. I wish Duncan wad just try gin he could shoot ane o' the men, ane o' the horses, or, at ony rate, ane o' the dogs wi' a siller saxpence; for I'll be bound the lead is no melted out o' the stane yet, that wad prick a hole in a single part o' them."—

The belief of old Rory was farther confirmed by the extreme swarthinness of every part of the retinue: the servants of the stranger being all foreigners of saffron complexion, and with dark mustachoes, greased and stiffened till the imagination of a man

more knowing in the labours of the toilet than honest Rory, might have considered them as in some respect or other belonging to the horned tribe. The feet, however, were a little puzzling, and it was resolved that trial should be made by tramping on the boot of one of the strangers, to ascertain if there were any toes in it. This was done, if not with more energy than was intended, at least, with more than was agreeable to the object of the experiment, who fell a-swearing in a language, which, as the clansmen knew not to be Gaelic or English, they naturally concluded it to be the Hebrew, the tongue which the devil and his emissaries are always supposed to make use of, when peculiar circum-

stances do not require them to use another, seeing it was that in which the Chief of the *Clann Dhiaoul* succeeded in tempting Eve. In the course of this confirmation, another was made. The cap of the toe-trodden fiend tumbled off, and displayed his black hair turned upward to a point at each of his temples, which discovery instantly confirmed the credulous part of the clan in their belief of his connection with the nether world; and produced among themselves a general crossing and retreating.

The horses next were examined; but their feet were found not to be divided, and, as the sign of the cross, marked upon their sleek black sides with white chalk, did not shew the

least symptom of disappearing, and as they did not start at sacred names, it was concluded that they at least were things of this world, and were entitled to the rites of equestrian hospitality. Partly to admire their size and beauty, and partly to propitiate their supposed satanic masters, every serf of the clan was more assiduous than another in doing for them all the kind offices in his power.

Allan Glass, having finished his high duty of introducing the single and the dignified stranger, into the audience-chamber of the great Glenmore, returned to complete his charge, by bringing the attendants of the stranger into the room, where the middle rank of the clan were assembled. The re-

ception which they met with there, was very different from that which they had met from the superstitious serfs without ; for in the full belief that the master himself was King George, who had waited upon the Chieftain to settle some mighty affair of the state, and, very likely, to invest the Highlander with the crown in reversion, they received the valets and lacqueys with as much ceremony, as though they had been Ministers of State. Rory, indeed, broke into the apartment, to share his own fears with those of the tenants ; but various facts were in direct contradiction of his doctrines. The men, indeed, could hold no converse with the strangers, except by signs ; but one of the latter, having

occasion to pull off his boots, showed, not only human feet, but human feet of very respectable dimensions, with toes peeping through the stockings. Another, pulling off, not only his hat, but his wig, showed a head to the full as free of horns as any Chieftain in the Highlands; and a third, upon receiving the proffered glass of whisky, not only crossed himself ere he drank it, but pronounced the name of Jesus Christ, in such a manner as to be understood by all present. The rumour of these anti-demoniac symptoms soon spread itself over the whole court of the castle; and that, in conjunction with the test which the horses had stood, not only made the clansmen give up all belief of satanic visitation, at least,

on the part of the retinue; but fall into the more flattering opinion, that the grand stranger was actually King George, and that the others were his henchmen, his gilly-casflue, and the other component parts of his royal tail; and they attributed its shortness to a conviction on his part, that muster it how he would, it could not equal in length, the extended caudal furnishing of their renowned chief.

CHAP. IV.

“ Lord Ogilvy rose up from his chair of state,
From his chair of state, with courtesy,
And he welcomed the stranger into his hall,
To his hall of hospitality.

And much did the lady wish to know
Of his name and his rank, and the place where
he stayed,
But the goblet must flow in Lord Ogilvy's halls,
Before to a stranger a question be made.”

LORD OGILVIE'S GARLAND.

WHILE those waves of alternate credulity and scepticism, those ebbings and flowings of opinion, were passing over the clansmen, in the court of the castle, and in its more common apartment, the stranger was doing reverence to the Chief. As he entered the hall, the courtly eye of Glenmore—for he had

not yet forgotten the lessons taught him in his youth at St. Germain's, soon discovered that his visitor was not one of that common herd of the rich vulgar, whom a few spare weeks, and a number of spare pounds, send to idle pilgrimage over the Scottish mountains,—not for the purposes of profiting by new views of nature or of man, but to conquer the ennui which hangs over them, if condemned to linger in London while every body else is out of town.

The greeting was most hearty on the part of Glenmore, and most polite, though somewhat dignified and haughty, on that of his guest; and there sat upon the features of the latter an expression which told, that whatever

might be his claims to the consideration of either, he was not wholly at peace either with man or with himself.

He apologised for his intrusion ; and the honest hospitality of Glenmore would have cut the apology short, had not his politeness prompted him to give the stranger full license in his explanation, while the language in which that explanation was delivered, afforded him a feast of phrase and sentiment to which he was not at all accustomed among his rude neighbours. The first sight of the stranger convinced him that his rank was above that of ordinary men ; and the frankness, the force, and the freedom of his speech, afforded a similar

proof that his talents and the cultivation of them, were to the full as lofty and as conspicuous as his rank.

He spoke of the adventures of the night, rather as a tale of the history of others, than any thing which had brought suffering, or even inconvenience, to himself. “The mountains should have known me,” said he, “for in my youth I was among them, though not of them; but a hill, like a lady, has two sides, and the chance is that a man will take the wrong one; I have done so, and my dwelling, for a few brief hours’ shelter from the rain, was in an edifice which, but that it was not made of Gopher-wood, I should have mistaken for Noah’s ark. In one place rested an old man, as brawny,

nearly as naked, and almost as drunk, as that great ship-builder himself.”—Glenmore stared—“ Then if there were not all the fowls that fly in the open firmament of heaven, there were at least a considerable number of four-footed beasts, and very many creeping things ; and if there was not every thing clean, there was at least a number of things unclean. I have been with the Tyrolese hunter upon the Alps, with the Lazzaroni in the Neapolitan forests, and with the Albanian and the Sulliot in their degraded but daring country ; but I know not that among the knives of the first, the poniards of the second, or the daggers of the third, there was any thing so formidable as that dirk, which, red with the blood of a sheep,

most likely of a stolen one, lay upon the heather pillow of your wild man of the mountains."

"I know well where you have been," said Glenmore: "Donald Kennedy, or, as we call him, *Donuil Dhu na' Bidag*, is a far safer man for a stranger than for a neighbour. You must know, that one of our Scottish kings sent his race from the Lowlands, for the purpose of civilizing us *savages* of the mountains; but that they began by being thieves, and ended by being hanged, with the exception of this individual and his family, who still live as a sort of freebooters, and seldom spend two weeks in the same habitation. We—that is, we who were once the friends of him who is not—have a

sort of love for Donald ; for though his father ultimately forfeited his life at Inverness, for stealing from the sheriff of the county a cow not worth forty shillings, he not only disdained to give the Stuart up to his enemies, but actually gave him safe keeping for many days, and safe convoy for many miles, when the price set upon his head might have purchased for Donald the Castle which is now honoured by your presence, together with the whole patrimony of Glenmore, and all the vassals and wadsetters of his house,—which often happened to be in the market—in consequence of what others called the rebellion, and we called the true loyalty of him, whose son, heir, and unworthy representative, now receives you under

his decayed, and, I had almost said, his degraded roof.”

“ Nothing from without can degrade any man,” said the stranger ; “ and nothing within will ever degrade a Highlander. I knew from the goodness of the branch, which I stept across during the night, that the tree which the morning shewed to me could shelter one more worthy than myself.”

Glenmore bowed—“ He’s not of our tree, and yet I wish it may never bear worse fruit.”

“ Some say that the tree is known by its fruit,” said the stranger ; “ but I would turn the aphorism the other way, and say that the fruit is known by its tree.”

“ *De gustibus non disputandum*

est,” said Glenmore, summoning up his learning to cover the retreat of a random twinge of offence which stole across him at this additional sporting, on the part of the stranger, with that which himself had never been taught to regard as an object of sport; and, before the stranger could pluck out of the reproof, the sting, which, gentle though it was, he evidently perceived in it, breakfast was announced, and the Chieftain led his guest to the hall of refreshment.

Glenmore ushered his guest into the apartment, and introduced him to the gentlemen of the clan, who played off their best bows upon the occasion. The stranger bowed and smiled again and again to all, and again and again

he pressed the hand of his noble-hearted entertainer. The stranger felt the honest and unstudied benevolence of the Chieftain ; and it so far overcome him, as to produce an oral, or rather a professional gratitude ; but a slight observance by any other person than a hospitable and unsuspecting Highlander, would have found out that this was repugnant to his ordinary course of acting.

The horses, the attendants, and the baggage of the stranger, were provided for in the best style that the Castle could afford—although sundry shifts, not of the most convenient kind, had to be resorted to for this purpose. The varying opinions of the satanic, the regal, and the lordly rank of the

stranger, flitted among the wondering domestics and the astonished clansmen ; but old Rory persisted in saying, that “ if she was na’ jeust the *graat Dhiaoul* hersel’, surely she was something no canny ; an’ like ane wha wad bring the black murrian upon some o’ the kith an’ kin’ o’ Glenmore, though the Chief hersel’, God bless her, might be sained frae the skaith.”

Even to an acute person within the hall, there might have appeared, in the purpose of the stranger, if not in the object and direction of that purpose, something to corroborate the prognostic of the old seer. He smiled and he bowed ; but high pride and haughty disdain sat upon his lowering forehead ; contempt for man hung

upon his upturned lip ; and his piercing and inquiring, but inscrutable and incomprehensible eye, seemed to keep watch upon all around him like a sleepless and restless sentinel. The old crimson velvet chair, which had been kept through many viscissitudes, was set for him, but the air with which he sunk into it seemed as though he scorned himself for mingling in the hospitalities, or being seen in the company of other men. Nor did he regard the piles of Highland fare, under which the breakfast-table groaned, with one jot more of favour. This was not indeed the aversion of the fop, who quarrels with the kind or the cooking of the food, but rather a sort of Timon-like misanthropy, which scowled

because he was constrained to eat with other men, and even because he was constrained to eat at all. Though his strange dress did set off his person to very great advantage, it did not seem as if at all intended for that purpose; and, in short, he appeared as though he held in the most sovereign contempt all those passions and gratifications about which the mass of human beings are occupied. Passion, indeed, seemed the leading part, if not the whole of his being and his character; but it was passion sublimed from the common dross, and either raised immeasurably above, or sunk immeasurably below, that of mankind. Still, however, his conduct toward the Chief and his kinsmen was that of the most

finished politeness, and every remark which he made, was so plausible in its logic, and so powerful in its expression, that it instantly gained the belief, and drew forth the admiration of the party. He glanced around the hall, and saw, with unaltered features, the massy carving of the pannels, and the time-mutilated state of the tapestry, representing battles and hunting-matches—in which the universal, but silent destroyer, had disposed of more heads and limbs, than brand, and bow, and battle-axe.

“Your current has run long, to run still so clear,” said he, turning to Glenmore; “there are few men who can look upon the roll of their ancestors, or can bear to have themselves looked

upon by those who come after ; but I have at last found one of the number.”

Glenmore bowed, the clansmen were delighted, and Castlecreaghy would have run over the whole family history instanter, only it was rather long for a man who had not got his morning's dram ; and that he durst not take till it was offered to him by the Chief. An opportunity did, however, present itself, which the Laird could not resist, even though he went upon his duty with, as himself would have said, “an empty *heart*.” The stranger, casting a very ambiguous glance towards a huge pair of antlers over the chimney-piece, asked how long they had been in the family.

Glenmore's cheek was slightly red-

dened, but all offence was cut off at the very springing, by Castlecreaghy's tumbling before the company (or rather before the stranger, for all the rest knew it well enough before) the whole genealogical history of the Clanmore, from Eachan Dhu ; who, in the days of Moses, had stolen one of the maids of honour of Pharaoh's daughter : when the great *Brute* had carried off the princess, having let his compass fall overboard about Tunis, he was drifted through the strait of Gibraltar ; and instead of making Madeira, as he intended, had his land-fall upon the west coast of Argyllshire, and there founded at once the city of Berigonium, and the empire of the Celts. Upon this favourite topic, the Laird went on for

the space of ten minutes, in so condensed and continuous a way, that no man (or even devil) could reduce it to print, there not being room for either a comma or *m* quadrat in the whole. He had, however, just got his foot upon the buck, and was proceeding to cut off the antlers, to bring them home in triumph, and place them in that situation where they had arrested the stranger's attention, when something more attractive than houses and pedigrees arrested his tongue, or rather withdrew the attention of his hearers.

Flora and her cousin entered the apartment. The former was cast in the mould of symmetry itself, and the simple tartan morning-dress, in which she was wrapped, shewed off her figure

to more advantage than if it had been hung with all the flouncings and furbelows, and frosted with all the lace of a damsel of the most expensive fashion. Her height was the *maximum* allowed to handsome women; her neck was beautifully turned; her waist finely tapered; and her limbs had at once the firmness and the fleetness of those of the mountain roe. Her profusion of dark brown glossy locks was snooded up in a simple bandeau of tartan, upon the side of which was stuck a little white rosette, not more emblematic of her Clan's warm attachment to the exiled house, than of her own spotless innocence. Her forehead was high and polished. You could not call it alabaster, for even upon it there went

and came a touch of peach-blossom, although too delicate for being perceived by a distant observer. Her eyes,—large, full, and of the deepest hazel, were set in beautifully fringed eye-lids, and overhung by brows, which, though finely arched in their placid position, yet moved like lightning, either in the bending of dignity, the tension of thought, or the fall of melancholy. Her nose was such as a Grecian sculptor would have chosen for his model; and her mouth had an expression at once of conscious dignity and inconceivable sweetness. Her beauty was heightened, as well by that confusion which a fond daughter ever feels, when she has to do the honour of her father's table before an illustri-

ous guest, as by a tone of melancholy, which was perhaps natural to it, and a twinge of disappointment, which had been imparted on the present occasion.

Ishbel Mackay was of shorter stature and fairer complexion; and her light-blue eyes, plump and blooming cheeks, and smiling lips, shewed that her heart was unchained by sentiment, and her peace unruffled by care. In air and in dress, she was much gayer than her companion, but to the eye of discernment, she was not half so attractive.

At the entrance of the ladies, the whole company rose from their seats; and their presence seemed for a moment to have chased the moody pride

and the man-contemning sneer from the face of the stranger. They were introduced to him, the one as the daughter, and the other as the niece, of his entertainer; and the seating of one of them on his right hand and the other on his left, acted upon him with a power far beyond either the courtesy of Glenmore, the communicativeness of Castlecreaghy, or the abundance which awaited him, after the hazard and hunger of a night on the mountains.

For a time he seemed to strive with himself; but beauty had a control over him which he could not quell, and perhaps did not altogether comprehend; and so, in as far as his situation in which he was placed, and his external haughtiness allowed, he was the devoted

slave of the two specimens before him. But although his external and voluntary attentions were pretty equally shared by both, it was not so with those attentions, which, having their original and permanent seat in the heart, come not for a time abroad, so as to act upon the tongue or the hands. To both the ladies he devoted an equal portion of his conversation, and to both of them he offered an equal quantity of all the dainties within his reach ; but his eye told that it wished to enter into a conversation with the daughter of the Chief, in which her cousin was not in the mean time to be a sharer. But even his eagle glance could discover in the eye or on the features of Flora, no indication of a wish to enter into that con-

versation. The former, generally bent downwards in native modesty, was occasionally raised in perfect tranquillity, except from a lurking perturbation which had lasted longer than a day; and though the latter glowed with a blush every time they were looked upon, that blush was an omen against, rather than in favour of, his scrutiny.

Still the stranger was not a man who could be looked upon with indifference. The antique simplicity of his costume, and its novelty and peculiarity, the perfect symmetry of his features, the great eloquence of his words, the greater eloquence of his looks, the high and comprehensive, and, as it seemed at times, superhuman mind which animated him, and even the trace of languor from

the fatigue of the night, with which he struggled,—all tended to make him an object of the most intense interest. That interest was heightened by the visible curiosity of all present, to ascertain who and what he was ; but, as the hospitality of the house forbade any question, or even hint, upon these subjects, while a single right that could conduce to the removal of hunger and fatigue, was unpaid, no allusion whatever was made to the subject.

He became the sole object of attention ; and the side-long glances which he darted towards Flora, were repaid back upon himself by her cousin. The only person in the company who seemed not quite at his ease, was Castlecreaghy, whose recital had been cut

off at the very point, where, in his opinion, it was of the very first importance ; and, under the rose, he would have seen both the *Sassenach* and the ladies far enough ; the former, because he had not sought a renewal of the important history, and the latter, because they had drawn the attention of the stranger from the recital of the heroic deeds of men, to the mere appearance of women. He even wished to divert their attention to other matters, in order that that of the stranger might be left open for a renewal of his attack ; but he was disappointed, and relapsed into a sullen silence, except when it was broken by a remark to one or other of the clansmen upon the important achievements of their race.

Breakfast was concluded ; and the stranger, after a most courteous invitation to rest for the day, and an assurance that such humble fare as the Castle could afford, would be waiting him at a time of the evening, later by two hours than the ordinary period of dinner, he was conducted to the best chamber by the Chief, and consigned to the care of his valet and his repose.

CHAP. V.

Whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say ;
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day.

CHILDE HAROLD.

No sooner had the great stranger been escorted to his chamber by the chief, and his train showed to their resting-places by the renowned Allan Glass, the only member of the establishment who could favour them with a single word of which they could at all guess the meaning, than the clansmen sallied forth to reconnoitre the horses, the furnishings, and the baggage. It was instantly pronounced by Castle-

creaghy, that the horse rode by the stranger, beat that which, while he attended College at Aberdeen, gained, upon the *links* or downs near that city, the duke of Gordon's prize of forty pounds Scots (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* sterling), though that was a seven years' talk, and a seven years' wonder, throughout the northern counties; and the chief himself admitted that no charger of finer appearance was to be found in the train even of *le grand Monarque* himself.

“She's King George hersel, and naebody doots it,” said one of the serfs, pointing to the coronet upon the holsters, and comparing it with the stamp upon a piece of money which

one of the lacqueys had awarded for his zeal in the service of the Castle.

“Try her wi’ the sign o’ the cross,” said Róry, looking to the money; “they say the deil’s siller wunna stand that;” but the half-crown went through the ordeal, without the least sign of blackening; and Glenmore, having feasted his own eyes, and permitted his clansmen to feast theirs, gave orders for a renewal of the banquet.

Immediately, gun and dog, spear and drag-net, were summoned to go a-campaigning by field and by flood, and, for the honour of the roof-tree of Glenmore, an abundant supply was brought into the Castle in good time to be dressed for dinner. To prepare for

this general levy upon the *feræ naturæ*, the clansmen of Glenmore required no sleep ; for, in times of emergency, the mountain dew was to them not only food and clothing, but also repose ; and that which has thrown many a lowlander and sassenach off his legs, only set them the more firmly upon theirs.

It had produced nearly the same effect upon the stranger's lowest servant, —a sort of half Briton, half foreigner, —who, during the march, took charge of the heavy baggage ; and hardly were the hunters and fishers gone, when he threw the whole court into a state, if not of hostility, at least of uproar. In his cups he had offered some indignity toward one of the Janets of the clan,

which was resented by a Highlander, who held her mountain charms in great esteem. The semi-sassenach called Donald, a “breechless Highland rascal ;” and Donald laid his hand upon his dirk, swearing that he would “spit her like a plover.” And the first clamour was encreased by an attempt, on the part of the other clansmen, to prevent the execution of this summary and Celtic justice.

That clamour brought down another of the stranger’s attendants, who, in language as English as he could make it, asked who had dared to draw a weapon against one of my Lord’s men. A single combat was demanded on the part of the demi-Briton ; who, pulling off his coat, put himself in that

attitude of defence, which is peculiar to a species of duelling, called manly in England, and blackguard every where else over the world. But, though the servant mustered all the legs and arms he possessed in battle array, and sounded the onset by swearing that he would "serve out" his opponent; yet Donald, who stood hesitating between the dirk as the weapon of a "shentleman," and the toe of his brogue as the fit chastiser of an underling, appeared the most likely to gain the day, and doubtless would have gained it, but that another antagonist laid the enemy flat, ere Donald's brogue could reach him. The whisky, which had raised the courage of the man, also contrived not only to lay that, but also

to lay himself fairly upon his back, in the stupor of intoxication.

Glenmore, who had heard the clamour, came into the court enquiring what was the matter.

“Dat sauvage there has put de insult upon one of Milor’s men, vich I vill not suffer from any sans-culotté in de land of de barbaritie.”

The man did not at first perceive that he spoke to the master of the Castle; and though the discovery was followed by fifty bows, and as many apologies, these did not altogether satisfy the Chieftain, who had, in the meantime, learned that the primary cause of the disturbance, was an insult offered to a female domestic, by the menial who now lay slain of the mountain

dew. “Who is *your* Lord?” said he. “Milor Gerald de Brook, veri much at votre service,” said the man, bowing again, and promising that his fellow-servant should make “one grand apologie to madame, as soon as he came out of de liquors.” At the same time he begged that no notice might be taken of the matter to his Lordship, who was so “verie particulaire,” that he would without fail discharge the servant. Glenmore Castle was not a place at which resentment was harboured either for high or for low, and so the request of the apologist was granted ere it was asked; but the Chieftain could not help hinting, that there was some impropriety in servants

thus making a noise, which might awaken their master when he had so much need of rest. He went softly toward the apartment of his guest, to ascertain whether this had been the case.

Lord Gerald had been awakened, but not by the noise of the servants. To him, sleep, like man, seemed an inconvenience,—a thing, which, though not wholly avoidable, was yet to be indulged in as little as possible. He had slept one short hour. He had heard the noise, but his haughty mind, and the object with which it was now occupied, prevented him from taking any notice of it. Glenmore opened the door of his chamber very softly ;

but, upon perceiving that he was already dressed, and busily occupied at his writing-desk, the Chief apologised as if for a mistake, and withdrew, in order that himself, his household, and his entertainment, might give a fit reception to Lord Gerald at the appointed hour of dinner. Time waits for no man, and least of all for the busy; and so it soon brought round the hour at which this great personage was again to meet the Highland family.

Lord Gerald's personal habits were those of one who neglects dress, but, on the present occasion, he had, either by design or by accident, been a little more attentive to the graces of appearance and decoration than was customary with him. His wish to please was

evident ; and he wore a suavity of manner, which his bearing on his arrival, and even the lines of his countenance, showed to be somewhat put on ; but in spite of those contradictions, of which the warfare could not be altogether concealed, his manner was soft, gentle and insinuating, and his language humble and silvery to such a degree, that the menials of the family began now to rank him among the inhabitants of an end of creation the very opposite of that which they had allotted him at the beginning ; and even his own servants could not help expressing, by their looks, a little surprise at his unusual deportment. He was again seated between the two young ladies, and though his marked prefer-

ence of Flora over her cousin could not be concealed, yet still there was a wish to attract both in all he looked, all he said, all he did, and apparently all he meant.

In the course of the dinner, the specific object for which the festivities had on the preceding day been begun, could not keep itself entirely out of the notice of the clansmen. The favourite of their Chief—the hope of their clan—was nearer their hearts than ten Lord Gerald de Brook, and forty black Arabian horses, with all the *et cæteras* of the train which had occasioned them so many conjectures ; and so they could not help frequently mentioning the name of Strathantin. They did this first in whispers at the lower end of

the table ; but as the joys of the feast began to operate upon their hearts and tongues, it became louder, and ascended higher ; and the cloth had not been long removed, before a bumper was craved to Strathantin's health.

Lord Gerald's ear caught the sound with an expression different from that of mere curiosity ; and, turning to the Chief, he asked who might be that happy man who dwelt so much upon the hearts of the great Clan-More ?

“Happy, indeed !” exclaimed Castlecreaghy, and was about to reveal at once the story of Strathantin, but Glenmore darted towards him the look of a Chief's injunction, which, as a vassal, though a favourite one, he durst not break. It was, however, partly re-

vealed in another quarter, and to a sense of his Lordship, which was in the mean time to the full as much on the alert. A deep blush played across the face of Flora, which for a moment ruffled all the placidity of his Lordship; but the ruffling, and she whose emotion had occasioned it, were gone in an instant.—Lord Gerald resumed his prepossessing expression of countenance, and Flora retired, leaning upon the arm of her cousin.

As soon as the ladies had withdrawn, the health of the titled stranger was repeated in a full bumper by all present, and accompanied by that sort of look from the clansmen, which told his Lordship that they would be glad to know something more of him than the

mere name which they had learned by accident, and almost by stealth. As the communicating of this information suited the secret purpose of his Lordship himself, he was not slow in gratifying them. Having previously thanked his host again and again for his hospitality, and the clan for their attention ; praised their warm-heartedness, their loyalty, and all those qualities for which they most value themselves, and having proved his fondness for the Highlands, by calling for a bumper to the tartan, in its own native nectar, he repeated his name, told them his rank, and explained the object of his visit to the land of the North. He was an admirer of lofty mountains, and lofty minds,—loved the warm shelter of the

Highland glens, and yet warmer shelter of Highland hospitality,—sick of the heartless trifling of great cities, where even Lords have no kinsmen and no clan, he was proud to be in a country where a family extended over a circumference of many miles, and comprised many thousand children. As for himself, he had, during the life of his mother, been a spoiled child; and though the simple and martial attire, and the single attendant of the Highlander, would be far more congenial to him than the train of idle lacqueys, and the lumber of state, which custom forced upon him, yet he could not at once break away from these follies of art, and enjoy the manly and heart-pleasing simplicities of nature. “I have these

fellows, collected from different nations, about me," said he, " but they are to me no better than so many mere utensils, and I speak not to them except when I command."

The Highlanders stared ; and each of the servants in the room glanced their eye toward the Chief, to perceive if there was in him any thing in unison with the haughtiness of his guest ; but Glenmore, to convince them that he was still their father as well as their master, turning to Allan Glass, said in Gaelic, " Allan, my cousin, bring me our family cup ; your father and my father have emptied it together in times of trouble ; may your son and my son empty it together in times of peace."

The cup was brought, tasted by the

Chieftain, handed to the stranger, and the pledge went through every clansman in the room down to the lowest menial. Lord Gerald looked arrogant in the extreme, and turned his eye ashamed from the reality of that Highland hospitality of which he had so recently praised the name; but, ere this was perceived, he mastered his features, drilled them into a smile, and went on to compliment, in very powerful and touching strains, the picturesque scenery of the Highlands, and the romantic attachment of the Highlanders to their country and to each other. Glenmore said a thousand civil things in return, and these led to the proposal of a bumper to Lord Gerald de Brook's "fire-side and clan." His Lordship refused the honour.

“ I have,” said he, “ no fire-side, in your sense of the term : clan I have none, and, except as I find them in these mountains, I have no friend. It is true I have relatives, because no man can come into the world without them ; it is also true I have acquaintances, because no man can help being at times fastened on by fools ; and it is true I have followers, for a man, at whom fortune throws a title, never fails to have abundance of sycophants thrown along with it. I may say, with Childe Harold,—

“ And none did love him—tho’ to hall and bower,
He gathered followers from far and near ;
He knew them flatterers of the festal hour,
The heartless parasites of present cheer.”

“ Instead, therefore, of my fire-side and clan, which are really unknown to

myself, and of those with whom I associate, who are really unworthy the notice of hearts, possessing so much honour as Glenmore and his friends, I would beg leave to substitute what is worthy of all attention—a bumper to the all elegant, accomplished, and enchanting Flora.”

This was of course accepted: the chief felt flattered, the clan felt honoured, and as for Castlecreaghy, he felt elevated not only in his mind, but in his person, for he got upon his legs and began a regular set speech, calling Flora, “the snow-drop of innocence—the violet of retiring modesty—the rose of all roses—the flower of all the Highlands,” till his imagination and

his words fairly broke down under the influence of his feelings.

“ I admire the ardour of your friendship and your eloquence in expressing it,” said Lord Gerald, giving his hand to Castlecreaghy ; but there lurked a bitter sneer in his curling lip as he spoke ; at the same time he reverted to the subject of Strathantin, in which he appeared to take an incomprehensible interest : but his gratification was again disappointed, by an announcement, that his favourite black charger was indisposed, very seriously indeed.

“ Let him be shot,” said Lord Gerald, filling up his glass with nonchalance, as his servant retired with a look of perfect obedience ; “ and now,

if you please, we will drink to the memory of—if not of my relation, at least one of my best friends.” The Highlanders were astonished, first at the stern and summary command which his Lordship had given for the death of an animal, which had in the morning been the object of so much praise; and, secondly, at the sacrilegious proposal of bestowing upon a horse, however fine, an honour which they reserve for great men.

Perceiving that the clansmen, in their turn, hung fire, he concluded, and concluded rightly, that both his purpose and his proposal had given offence, and, as offence was not his cue, he set himself to the work of explain-

ing it away, which, with his powers, and the warm-hearted credulity of his hearers, was an easy matter.

“Why, as to the horse,” said he, “he has been indisposed for some time. I saw that his malady was gaining on him ; and I would not that so noble an animal should suffer pain. It is sufficient that man add to his native sufferings the artificial sufferings of the doctor, and pray for life even at the expense of the paleness and pain of a sick-bed. That may be a fit retribution for his sins ; but, as a horse knows no sin, he should feel no sorrow. He should die without languishing, just as your countrymen and kinsmen have fallen in battle, and I

may add, as he serves man and they man's masters, it is a good riddance to both."

The flattering touch to the national pride, which had regained the favour of the Highlanders, was completely neutralised by the disloyalty couched under the expression which followed; and so Lord Gerald gained, upon the whole, but little by his explanation. Nor did the execution of his command gain him more renown in the court, than the issuing of it did in the Castle, though in both places an idea of haughty and ungovernable power was inculcated. As the noble animal, whose disease was indeed incurable, was led forth to execution, a murmur of horror ran through the serfs of

Glenmore; and old Rory, who was first in all cases of fear or foresight, instantly pronounced that the black meeting was prepared for the Chief, the red fire for his roof, and that ere morning the *bodach glas* would rap rudely at the Castle gate, and give them all an invitation to the narrow house.

After this affair of the horse, Glenmore's guests slipped off one by one;—even Castlecreaghy himself, casting a last look at the wine, as much as to say, “were it not for this stranger, I should have another trial with you, for overcoming me last night,” made his retreat; and Lord Gerald was left *tete à tete* with his hospitable landlord.

The generous heart of the latter

conspired with the wine, and the habits of his countrymen, to make him disclose to his guest all the secrets of his bosom, and to make him reveal to him all the connections, concerns and prospects of his family. When he came to that point which touched upon the approaching return of Strathantin, and his union with Flora, the internal feelings of Lord Gerald, fairly overcame the external expression. His countenance first turned pale as ashes, then it curled into a sneering purpose, as much as to say, “I have it;” anon the storm was over—his brow resumed its tranquillity—his eye its mildness, and, replenishing his glass, and grasping the hand of Glenmore, he said,—

“Hospitable entertainer of an un-

worthy guest, (for what is the empty title bestowed by a King, to the high honour of being the father of a people?) I rejoice at the return of prosperity to a house which has suffered so much, so nobly and yet so undeservedly."

Glenmore was not sure about the idea of slighting an honour bestowed by a King, but still the other part of the sentence was so flattering, and so cordial, that he replied, "Lord Gerald, I hope, I entreat, if I durst say, I command (for you must know that we Chiefs command every body within our territory,) that you remain here until my son, that is to be, return, and our happiness be complete."

Lord Gerald bowed, but was silent; and Glenmore, naturally enough, tran-

slating the bow into an acquiescence, proceeded : " Yes, my Lord, you shall be an eye-witness to all our felicity."

The cloud was again upon the features of Lord Gerald ; and he " looked daggers," but the look was transient and unperceived by the Chief.

" Let us adjourn to the ladies," said Lord Gerald ; " the conversation naturally leads us there." Glenmore yielded for once the right of command, but not till after three *last* glasses had been discussed, in the way of tightening the nascent friendship, by a thorough wetting.

Upon Lord Gerald's entering the room, Flora suddenly changed countenance. The feeling was momentary, yet Castlecreaghy perceived it, although the chief did not ; who, by this time,

had his vision so much increased, as to see two Floras, two Ishbels, two kinsmen, two Lord Gerald's, double happiness, double prospects of fortune, and almost a double self. To the pointed and polished attentions of Lord Gerald, Flora was cold, though civil; but as the crumbs were bestowed upon her cousin, her cheek burned, and her pulse danced with very considerable and very visible joy. The evening was passed in the recital of long legends by Castlecreaghy, in which as many battle-axes were broken, broad swords drawn, bucks slain and ghosts raised, as would have filled a reasonable county. The Chief was in excellent talking humour, though sometimes a little wide of the mark. Lord Gerald was the most polite and playful

being in the universe ; and, after he had retired, which was rather at an early hour for him, the family could not refrain from congratulating one another, that chance had sent them so noble and so engaging a guest.

Just before they retired to rest, a single rap was given to the outer gate, which echoed through the Castle, like a peal of thunder.

“ The *bodach glas!*” exclaimed Rory Bain, who had, for that night, taken up his abode in the entrance hall. “ I knew it would be this, when the cruel Sassenach Lord would be shooting the bonnie black horse. The ill meeting to him ; there will be sair heads and cauld hearts, afore he leave the Hiellands.”

“Peace, you old fool,” said Glenmore, whom the noise had brought to the hall; “you are always prophecying some nonsense or other; and now you cross us with your abominable predictions, at the very threshold of our happiness.”

“A man may fa’ at the threshold wha has keepit his feet a’ the journey,” said Rory; “and gin the *bodach glas* will clap at the door, Glenmore hersel canna keep her out.”

“Then I shall let her in,” said Glenmore, lifting the latch, (for bolting of doors was no part of the Highland system, lest some stranger exposed at night on the hill, should be precluded from the shelter of the house.)

The *bodach glas*, to which Rory alluded—that mysterious being, who

comes to bid men to their last repose, and never makes his appearance till that he near at hand, did not appear ; but the visitor was in appearance, size excepted, as near a counterpart to him as this world could afford. It was black Kennedy of the Cave, with whom Lord Gerald had passed part of a night, and who now delivered a packet for his Lordship, which, he said, had been brought to him by he knew not whom, and departed, refusing the wonted guerdon of a horn of whiskey.

The gate was closed ; the family retired, and the *bodach glas* did not renew his visit.

CHAP. VI.

“O ride with the tidings to the Lady Lindesay’s bower,
And tell her to sigh till her heart it be sore ;
And tell her to weep till her days shall be o’er,
For a tale of such woe she ne’er heard of before.”

BALLAD OF LORD LINDESAY.

THE morning had not been far gone, when a circumstance was revealed to the Glenmore family, which would have gone far to confirm a less credulous people in the belief of old Rory’s vision of the *bodach glas*. The packet, which Kennedy had brought, was carried to Lord Gerald’s apartment as soon as his Lordship was astir, and he was, as we have said, no lingerer in bed. It

had not been long with him, ere he sent notice to Glenmore, that he felt too much indisposed for waiting upon his worthy entertainer, but would be happy if the Chief would immediately honour him with his presence, adding, that he had something to communicate which was of the deepest importance.

Glenmore obeyed the summons ; and, upon entering the room, he found Lord Gerald perusing the last line of a letter which seemed to give him great mental affliction ; and which, upon Glenmore's entrance, he crushed together and put in his pocket. Glenmore, struck with his disturbed appearance, stepped up to him, and taking him by the hand, said, " My Lord, do not afflict yourself over-much : We are all

born to sorrows, and bound to alleviate them ; and whatever comfort the Castle of Glenmore can afford, is at your command.”

“ Keep your philosophy to yourself, my gallant Chief,” said Lord Gerald ; “ it is likely now to be your only consolation, and I would not deprive you of that.”

“ What !” said Glenmore, unable to finish the sentence, but his looks spoke a volume.

“ Enough to drain your patience and my pity to the very dregs,” replied Lord Gerald. “ You would perceive that when the name of Strathantin was mentioned, I was eager to ascertain your interest in him ; and you may have perceived the agitation of my

mind when you communicated to me the intended alliance between him and your matchless daughter.”

Glenmore again attempted to interpolate a question ; but again he stopped at the word “ what.”

“ Be calm,” said Lord Gerald;—
“ painful as it is to recite, and more painful as it must be to hear, the communication is imperious. When you announced to me this anticipated happy event, I had my fears that there was a bar in the way more fatal than mortal hands could remove, and those fears are now confirmed by a packet which I received this morning.

This prefatory hesitation, which might have borne the construction of fitting Glenmore for the main recital,

only served to stretch his feelings upon that most cruel of all racks—suspense. Floundering among the thousand half-formed ideas which the uncommunicated intelligence had crowded into his mind, he stumbled upon one, and put the question, “Is he false?”

“Be patient and we shall arrive at the result,” replied his Lordship, still sporting with the outworks of the communication. “Patience, my dear Guardian, (for in the mean time I will call you that),—you will need patience, and you will need fortitude. Disappointment is the lot of man—dire disappointment and deep disgust have been mine ; therefore, whatever it may be mine to tell you, think not that you alone are wretched ; nay, rather hope—

believe, that relief and comfort may in the end spring from the source, whence they are in the mean time the least expected. But to proceed, and the way to the end of my sad tale is but short,—he in whom the hearts of your clansmen are bound up—he in whom the fondest hopes of your heart are centred—he to whom the hand of your lovely daughter was, and, no doubt, in your fond expectation so soon to be given, is——no—is *not*.” Here he paused—“ He is not for the bower or the bridal chamber—he is for oblivion and the worms.”

These were fearful words for the ear of a father. He slapped both his hands on his forehead, as if rousing his mind to the very bent of its strength. “ Fate,

do what thou wilt now !” said he, and in a moment continued his enquiry, in a voice which would have been manly, had feeling allowed, and womanly, had not his manhood been great. “ Continue your narrative, my Lord,” said he ; “ it cannot touch me now. Glenmore has seen and suffered much, and what he has yet to see and suffer he cannot tell ; but he has a tough heart, else it had been broken ere now ; and as your Lordship put it to the proof at the outset, the details will fall the lighter.”

“ I regret,” answered the other, “ that it has fallen upon me to tell you this ; but the fact is, your secluded situation and unsuspecting heart have held you in a delusion, the breaking

of which is medicinal, though, like all medicines, it be bitter. The fact and the circumstances of this young man's death have been before the world for some time. Look at your letters, and you will find the date distant. Next mail would have brought you the same news which I communicate; and the new fact furnished to me by this morning's packet, did not bear upon the truth of this statement, but upon the identity of the person, and that it has placed beyond doubt. Yes, I say the very next packet would to a certainty have brought you a circumstantial account of his untimely end."

"How? where? when?" cried the half-frantic Glenmore.

"You forget your promise of calm-

ness," rejoined his Lordship; " but the narrative must have its way. Pray, have you no recollection of an account which lately appeared in all the newspapers, of a young Englishman being murdered in the streets of Naples ?"

" I do recollect the circumstance," said Glenmore, hope rekindling in his eye; " but the victim there was an *Englishman*, and he was said to be killed in a gaming-house brawl; and young Evan of Strathantlin, was not an Englishman, neither would he brawl in a gaming-house."

" All Britons are Englishmen abroad, and there is gaming in all houses at Naples," replied Lord Gerald. " As to the man, it is but too true,—as to the circumstance, there is a little mistake.

It was no common gaming transaction, but, I am sorry to say it, one which has blasted the happiness of the first blood in that country: The woman must have been an artful woman; it could have been no fault of the poor young man."

The words of the last sentence, and yet more the tone of interrogation in which they were put, cut to the heart of Glenmore like a knife; and in a mixture of agonies, he exclaimed, "Explain, explain."

"Why, then, since you are calm," said the narrator, obviously sneering at the effect he had produced,—“the fact is one of common occurrence,—a little affair of a Neapolitan Princess. A certain worthy *Principessa*, the

adored of a weak and an accommodating spouse, spread the ample meshes of her charms, and fairly caught this promising young fly, which you have so fondly cherished as your Evan of Strathantin.” [The dawn of anger was on the brow of the Chief, as a storm is in its gloomy cloud.] “The intrigue, though successfully carried on for some time, was at length discovered ; proof was unequivocal, for the Principe assailed your Evan in the very bed-chamber of the Principessa ; dragged him into the street, all confused as he was ; and there, in a paroxysm of jealousy and rage, stabbed him to the heart !”

During this communication, Glenmore had stood still and rivetted as a

post, his hands were twined around each other, as if each meant to wring its fellow from the wrist; his foot was beating time as if to music; and his eye glared dimly on vacuity. At last he started, manned himself, took three strides across the room, and putting on—it was but put on—an air of defiance, he said “Well, he met with his desert,—I do not regret him,—perish he—perish his name—perish every one who dishonours his neighbour’s couch.” [The dart which Lord Gerald had thrown, here recoiled, and struck itself up to the very barb in his own heart; and it was well that Glenmore was in no mood for observing]. “Yes, let Strathantin’s name perish, as mine is lost, and my hope faded,

for ever. I would weep for no man. I will not be sorry for him—but Flora—poor Flora—how shall we communicate it to her, and how can she bear it when it is communicated!—Your advice here, my good Lord Gerald.”

“My advice,” said his lordship, “is, that you should keep this intelligence from your daughter as long as possible; that you should first communicate it to your most trusty kinsman, in order to relieve your own mind; and that it should come to her in rumours gradually more and more distinct, preparing her for the event, by making known to her the circumstances which led to the catastrophe, thereby breaking the force of that catastrophe itself; and as, in the mean time, you can have little dis-

position to come abroad, and as, if you do, the sad truth is too new to sit comfortably upon your memory, you had better take some time for private meditation and mustering your philosophy. I, in the mean time, will impute the message I sent you, to melancholy news of some relation of my own, and I will ascribe your absence to slight indisposition,—say, for instance, a twinge of the gout, though that be but a stranger in your active solitudes.”

“Any thing, my dear Lord,” replied the chief; “any thing, and I am sure your penetration and kind heart will not think it labour to smooth, for my poor daughter, the approach to this dismal pitfall of woe.”

“You may depend on that,” said

his lordship, offering his arm, and leading the chief to his apartment, where he threw himself on a couch, and, as soon as Lord Gerald had gone, felt, to his bitter experience, that what he suffered was no slight twinge of indisposition.

Lord Gerald, having presented the cup of bitterness to the lips of Glenmore, and made him quaff it to the very bottom, left him to its effects, and sallied out, with a face expressing exultation wrapt in woe, to find Flora and her cousin. He saw them in the garden. Their conversation was of himself. He listened and heard distinctly the terms of high admiration which were bestowed on him by the latter. Flora did not contradict her cousin ;

but she seemed more anxious to know why the stranger had sent her father so pressing an invitation, and why they had been so long together, than to profit by that muster of his perfections which Isabella was piling mountain-high.

When he judged the moment most fit, he made his approach, with his countenance hung in sackcloth for the occasion.

Flora bowed and blushed; “You have been long with my father, Lord Gerald; you have not brought him with you; and you look vexed. Nothing serious to him—to any body, I hope?”

Lord Gerald gave no direct reply;

but hinted that her father was slightly indisposed, and that, as for himself, though he had received news, which were rather distressing, it was what man must submit to, and bear alone, unless when lovely woman consented to bear it with him ; and then, by bearing only a little part, she could turn the remaining woe into joy.”

Isabella could not help pulling her cousin by the arm, and whispering that this was very fine ; but Flora was more anxious to discharge her duty to her father, whatever might be his affliction, than to admire the most flattering speech that the tongue even of a Lord Gerald could frame. He saw this, and it mortified him not a little ; but he bore

it with dignified though affected placidity.

Before she went, she turned and put a paper into his hand, saying, "Your Lordship must have dropped this letter ; I return it to you, sorry that I had not an earlier opportunity of doing so ; but I hope your politeness will pardon this *seeming* neglect." A strong emphasis being laid on the word "seeming," it produced a momentary and rather puzzling pause on the part of his Lordship. During that pause, he framed his studied and courtly reply. "You can err in nothing. You may be trusted even to trifles. I thank you for the care you have taken of this letter, which regards my private affairs, though it is now of less importance to me than when

it was written. Then it had a deep interest ; but the hope of that interest has been extinguished by information communicated to me by your worthy and honourable father.”

Flora took her leave silently, but heightened in grace from the agitation into which she had been thrown by the mention of her father's indisposition, which, however slight, was to her a subject of the deepest interest—at least the deepest of which she could give any external indication.

Lord Gerald looked after her with a twinge of severity, which went off as he turned his glance upon Isabella. That glance touched her vanity, if it went no deeper. The practised nobleman saw the emotion with triumph ; but he

was too practised for displaying that triumph. He talked of indifferent matters—of the morning—the weather—the mountains—the heart of woman—and upon each he suited his words, as nearly as he could judge, (and that was very nearly,) to the feeling and fancy of his hearer. The heart of man, he said, was like a rock, solid and sublime, yet hard to be moved; but he knew well that the heart of woman, whether she be an inhabitant of the black mountain or the fertile plain, of the rugged cliff or the level shore, of the dingy city, or the delightful solitude, is of no rocky substance; and he felt convinced, that that of Isabella was susceptible even to weakness, and with that weakness he resolved farther to sport.

The round of compliments which he paid to the unsuspecting Isabella, planted in her bosom a tree of vanity, which soon shooting up to more than ordinary height, bore the accustomed fruits of passion on the one side, and jealousy on the other. Her own admiration of Lord Gerald de Brook, produced by the first of these, was, by the second, transferred to her cousin, from whom her affections were in an instant alienated. She even went the length of wishing Glenmore a long, though not a serious illness, in order that Flora might be out of the way ; and she prayed for a fire or a murrain among the sheep of Castlecreaghy, so that her friends, finding occupation elsewhere, might leave her to complete the conquest of his Lordship in her own

way. He having made short work in the gaining of her affections, made as short work of their morning promenade.

CHAP. VII.

“Miseries, like men, are most easily lost in a crowd.”

THE PARSON OF CULT.

ALTHOUGH it was impossible long to conceal from Flora the tidings of Strathantin's death, yet her father, upon second consideration, would not consent to usher it in with the preparation which Lord Gerald had suggested ; for though he himself felt shocked at the idea of his intended son-in-law's depravity, yet he saw no reason either for tarnishing the honour of a respectable clan, or lacerating the heart of a

favourite child, by a recital of that which could now do no good. He therefore requested of Lord Gerald to allow the vice, or, as his Lordship was pleased to term it, the folly of Evan to be buried with him in the grave ; and, to substitute accidental death by the hand of a bravo, for retribution at the hand of a husband, however worthless the wife. He gave directions for smoothing the avenue, by which the sad event was to find its way to his daughter's breast. But in spite of all the solicitude of a father,—in spite of the fondling of her relatives, and the flattery of her clan,—in spite of the glowing speeches of Lord Gerald de Brook,—and haply not in spite of the drop of gall, which that personage

contrived to squeeze into his cup of consolation,—the shock was still too much for poor Flora, and its effect was, after a brief struggle between her feelings as a woman, and her firmness as a Chief's daughter, to throw her on a bed of sickness, exhausted, dejected, unhinged, and brought to the very brink of the grave. In this state she lay for a considerable time,—her looks wild and varying,—her speech incoherent,—her face alternately pale as snow, and flushed with a hectic, rivalling, in its intensity, the utmost bloom of youth. Her malady was a malady of the heart; and the blood, retreating to strengthen that citadel, left her brain, her organs of sense, and her limbs wild, without power, without government, and, at in-

tervals, without strength. True, her bosom was a stranger to even the idea of guilt, but it was not on that account the less a stranger to peace. Sleep shunned her eye-lids ; repose was nowhere to be found ; her imagination was ever wandering and ever wakeful ; the image of her departed lover dogged it at every step, and if in one fleeting moment an infant hope was born, its swathing band was a sepulchral mantle, and the grave received it ere it yet looked on the light. Her state was, in short, such as some may feel, but none can describe,—the hopes, the joys, the anticipations, which one little “ he is dead,” had whelmed in utter and irreversable oblivion, were with her things not of experience but of

the very phantasy of the imagination ; and as is the case with some saint, dreaming of the unseen joys of the celestial world, they were magnified beyond all powers of utterance. In proportion to the height of the bliss which had been swept away, was the depth of the misery that remained. There was no escaping the pit: Flora sunk in it, from misery to misery, from woe to woe. The hopes of her father, the happiness of her people, and her own fond joys, nearest the heart though farthest from the tongue, had sped away like thistle-down before the wind of autumn, and her old father, and herself, seemed left alone in cold and in desolation, to be pelted by the storm.

“The balsam of life,” says the proverb, “is at the bottom of the pitcher of death ; and the crown of joy lies under the lowest rag of misery ;” but the life is only at the bottom, and the crown only under the lowest rag, and it was not until Flora came to these,—till anguish had wrung every chord of her heart, and racked every faculty of her mind, and till its concomitant disease had nipped every bloom on her countenance, and reft her form of every grace, that the spoilers staid their destroying hands, and, glutted of their ravage, said to each other, “Hold, it is enough.”

But, as the struggle had been dreadful, and as the parting of those two fellest of human foes had seemed almost

fatal, so the cessation of their positive hostility was the signal for a springing up of life, as rapid as it appeared to be unsought for. It seems to be the lot of man, and also that of woman, that that which we grasp at most eagerly speeds the fastest from our wishing bosoms and our grasping fingers. Many would live ; but death only clutches them the faster for the wish : Flora, bating one little silken thread of love which bound her to her father, would have died, but the bony king shut his gates upon her ;—life clasped her in his arms, and brought her back to re-visit the sun and the sky ; the rose of life returned to her cheek—her lip found its lost ruby—the beam of her eye shone out again as a star when the cloud has

passed ; and, from the violence of a fit, which had been the counterfeit of death, she awoke, herself again ; and, conscious of what she was doing, a tear of gratitude from her embracing parent fell upon, and obliterated the hand-writing of despair, ere its last and blackest ink was dry.

There was now nothing but joy in the Castle of Glenmore, and “ Flora is recovering,” was repeated by a countless number of tongues a countless number of times every day. Still those hopes were a little clouded, and that recovery a little impeded, by that calm and settled grief for the first and only object of her affections, which had succeeded to the more feverish paroxysms of that subduing passion, and

boding apprehension of that adversity which she dreaded would be the portion of the author of her existence. Isabella kept up a semblance of attention ; but, as Flora was now released from her pre-engagement, every charm that re-opened its blossom, and every grace which returned to its native abode, was considered by that doating and jealous girl, as aiming a dagger at the heart of her fondest expectations ; the circumstance of the returned letter was a mystery to her, and the state of Flora's health still precluded the putting of any question which could clear it up ; and much as Isabella liked to be in the company of Lord Gerald, and anxiously as she listened to the compliments which he paid her, she

could not venture to question him on any subject, far less upon one where her own fears whispered to her that the truth might be mortifying.

What, however, gave her the deepest uneasiness, was, the repeated proposal of Lord Gerald to quit Glenmore Castle and the Highlands ; “ leave the paradise of nature,” as he said, and bury himself in the moving sepulchre of the fashionable world, which, at the Court-end of London was as tainted without, and fully as rotten within, as any sepulchre in the world. The Chief uniformly resisted those proposals ; and as his lordship had practised, with no common success, the art of making himself agreeable, (an art in which his attendants displayed hardly less suc-

cess among the clan's folks,) he had become, as it were, if not a necessary element of the domestic establishment, at least an agreeable adjunct, in alleviating its present sufferings and repelling the anticipated picture of those which were to come. As he professed to have nothing to do elsewhere, but to be miserable, and acknowledged great happiness where he was, the chief pressed him to continue and afford to a family, which had so much need of them, that consolation and wiling of them from their woes, of which they stood so much in need. He consented to remain for an indefinite time, and his attentions to the convalescent Flora and her blooming kinswoman, tended not a little to avert the sorrows of the

former, and encrease the hopes, not without an occasional embittering of the fears, of the latter. He hunted with the Chief, drank healths with the visitors, escorted the ladies on all their visitings and promenades, read books and recited poetry to them, played on the lute, described the fashions and follies of the *beau monde*, and, in short, did every thing which was calculated to please, and so nicely did he balance his *petits soins* between the two, that neither the one nor the other could discern that she was the peculiar object of his esteem. There was this difference, however, that Flora regarded his attentions to her cousin as a relief, and the cousin considered his attentions to Flora as a robbery.

In the midst of this domestic happiness, or rather beguiling of domestic misery, old Rory, who had before been perplexed with the actual appearance of the Devil, and annoyed by visions of the *bodach glas*, was disturbed by a dream. This dream, he, in virtue of his assumed office and prerogative, would needs tell to the Chief. The purport of it was, that the stranger had set fire to the castle, Flora and her cousin were involved in the smoke, and carried off, and a black spirit, of gigantic size and unsightly form, hovered over the ruins, portending and communicating death and destruction to the whole Clanmore. Firmly impressed with the speedy fulfilment of this dream, he in the most earnest manner

begged of the Chief to get rid of his guest ; but as that would not only have been an infraction of the established laws of Highland hospitality, but a breaking of the Chief's own promise, and an abridgement of the pleasures of his family, at a time when they were but few, the counsel of the dreamer was not only disregarded, but the seal of authority was set upon his lips, lest he should alarm the ignorant and credulous portion of the clan.

Post day followed post day, and wonder after wonder expired, and still there was not one syllable farther from Naples as to the particulars of Strath-antin's death, nor did the Edinburgh agent of that gentleman give any reply to the anxious enquiries of Glenmore

as to the fate of the young Chief, or to his hints and inuendos respecting the disposal of his property. While hope was thus gradually sinking, like a vessel which has received one blow on the rock, ruin reared his front, like a precipice against which that vessel was to be broken to shivers. The only hope of Glenmore had been the union of his family with that of Strathantin, and that seemed now for ever lost.

One morning, after an absence of several days, Castlecreaghy called at an earlier hour, and with a more business-weeded face than was usual. He craved a private audience with the Chief, and told him that he had just been at Inverness, where Mr. Mac Skinner, the great lawyer—the terror and con-

sumer of Highland lairds,—who frightened them as the rattlesnake does the little birds, but like him charmed them within his deadly fangs, and their estates into his ever-craving maw—had read him, from the newspapers, a paragraph of the following import:—

“ The eccentric Lord Gerald de Brook has been for some time a hunting on the Scottish moors, and the choice game he has *bagged* is a Highland lady of interminable pedigree, indescribable beauty, and undiscovered fortune. Report says, that he is to lead this paragon of pedigree, prettiness, pride and poverty, to the Hymeneal altar. We shall believe it when it happens.”

Castlecreaghy described this paragraph as forming the whole subject of conversation at Inverness (no great wonder to those who know the numbers and *nous* of the inhabitants), and he further declared, that the whole blood of the Highlands—meaning the un-shed part of it—would be forthcoming in wrath, were Flora so soon to forget one who was regarded as the pride of the Highlands, for a Sassenach Lord, who, whatever might be his blood, was ascertained to have none of the great follower of Brute in his veins; but was really a sort of hy-brid between the fag-end of a Norman family of England, and a Norse family from the sources of the Don. He concluded, by entreating the Chief to remonstrate with his

Lordship, send a gilly to London forthwith to dirk the fabricator of this slanderous piece of intelligence ; and ; in short, do summary and complete vengeance, according to the good old times, when every Chief planted his own gallows for all who had attempted to cut a notch in the stem of the great Clan-more.

Glenmore saw the affair in a light somewhat different from that in which it was seen by his cousin ; and while he promised that every thing should be done for the honour of the clan, he could not help hinting, that he, as well as they, in the mean time stood in need of something else than blood—that, in fine, a man of Lord Gerald's fascinating manners and reputed wealth, might

“carry the branch,” and transmit the stem, with perfect honour to the tree, although his blood were a compound of an Edinburgh writer to the Signet and the daughter of an exciseman—persons, who, in the opinion of Castlecreaghy, and many other of his countrymen, once stood, and still stand, some deservedly and others not, at the very worst end of the catalogue of two-legged existences.

At this resolution on the part of the Chief, Castlecreaghy was silent; although his silence was not acquiescence, but rather astonishment, or even horror; as he knew not the strong impulse of necessity which would have goaded on Glenmore thus to sacrifice the blood for the saving of the flesh; and he

took his leave with less satisfaction than usual. Glenmore was clannish, but he loved his clansmen as men, and therefore he was anxious to bring about an alliance in his family which would promote their interest as such; although he had resolved in his own mind, that, in the event of a marriage between Flora and his Lordship, which he then saw in vision for the first time, though he wondered why he had not seen it before, she should be Chief in her own right of *Bhan Tigherna* during her life-time, and be careful to provide two sons, whereof the second should wield the whole titles and tail of Alister Mhic Mac Alister, without the smallest admixture of Sassenach honours or Sassenach appellation.

The first favourable opportunity of questioning Lord Gerald was embraced ; and the attack, though carried on under a mask of anger at the insulting paragraph, had for its ultimate object the *reconnoissance*, if not the reduction, of Lord Gerald himself. But he, too, was a masker of far more experience than the open-hearted Chief, who had put on his mask very awkwardly, and as a last attempt for the honour of his clan, and the advantage of his daughter ; and so his Lordship's answer might be translated, either capitulate or retreat, according to the wish of whoever heard it.

“ The idle gossips of the town,” said he, “ marry me to somebody at least once a month ; and, whatever

may have been their former awards, they have, in the present instance, done infinite honour both to my judgment and my taste."

Glenmore felt the force of the compliment, and thought he had fastened in Lord Gerald de Brook the hook, which in the mean time grappled only himself. But, like every man who does a cunning thing for the first time, he imagined he had "done his do," and so he resolved to rest for a little, till time should mature and develope an attachment, to which, under his circumstances, he could see no reasonable objection.

CHAP. VII.

“ Plague on those warrants—the curse of poor old Scotland for these hundred years.”

ROB ROY.

ALTHOUGH the kind of warrants here alluded to had, for several years previous to the date of this history, ceased to be the plague of the Highland lairds ; yet, other warrants, less sounding in the name, and less heroic in the opposition, but quite as efficient, if not against their lives, at least against their goods and chattels, had begun to be pretty familiar. We already hinted at the difficulties in which the Glenmore estate was involved, and those difficulties now became urgent, in proportion as

the hope of relief by the Strathantin match faded away. The Chief not only groaned under the pressure of what, in that country, is known by the name of "original sin,"—an hereditary mortgage, and his was for one yet owing to the representatives of the York Buildings Company, who had purchased the lands of Glenmore from the commissioners of the forfeited estates—but he had added sundry "actual transgressions" of his own, having dipped the remaining items of the estate pretty deeply, in order to keep up an establishment, educate his daughter, maintain his poor relations, and keep up appearances worthy of that rank of which he was, for one generation, life-renter. Not only this; but

his kindness, and sometimes his vanity, had induced him to become security for the debts of others ; and now that there was no absolute certainty of money coming in by the door of alliance, the Chief, and also his creditors, were thrown into no small alarm. It was but too plain, indeed, that the first demand of any considerable magnitude would produce a change at the Castle ; as there was nothing remaining, by the sale of which its edge could be turned, —the furniture of the Castle being worth very little in the opinion of any person save the proprietor ; the firwood in the *balloch* being so situated as that he could not pay the expense of land-carriage, and the old trees about the Castle being good for little or

nothing. It was this impending danger, which made Glenmore think of the *possibility* of an union between his daughter and Lord Gerald; and the probability is, that had it not been for the strong restraint of pride, he might have made as warm advances as decorum would well bear.

The first overt act which threw the Castle into alarm, or rather which threw the Chief into alarm, as he kept it pretty much to himself, was a very mild and oily letter from Messrs. Mac-Skinner, and Mac-Fleecer, writers to his Majesty's signet, in Great King Street, Edinburgh; the which oily letter from persons of their craft and description, might very fairly be compared to one of those treacherous hal-

cyon days, that wile unskilful mariners out to sea, in order that they may be cast away in the storm, of which the said treacherous day is the sure harbinger. Messrs. Mac Skinner and Mac Fleecer, couched their epistle to the great Glenmore in these terms:—

“ Great King Street, Edinburgh.

HONOURED SIR,

It gave us the liveliest and most heartfelt satisfaction to learn from our Mr. Mac Skinner’s father, Mr. Mac Skinner, sen., that you and your fair daughter had been reinstated in your wonted health and spirits; and that both you and she had happily recovered from the shock of that dire and awful calamity, which so lately afflicted your noble house. This calamity is

the more deeply to be deplored, seeing that we had looked towards that joyful union and matrimonial alliance as the means of paying off some of those incumbrances, of which Mr. Mac Skinner, sen. has advised us by letter, which now hamper the lands of Glenmore; and more particularly we would allude to the Wadset Proper, which was assigned a few days ago by Murdoch Mac Quirk Esq. of that Ilk to Mr. Mac Skinner, sen., conform to disposition and assignation in favour of the latter; and which is now hereby intimated to you. By a letter, received by last night's post from Inverness, we think it our bounden duty towards you and Mr. Mac Skinner, sen. to state that the term of payment has been

long past ; and although we would, on no possible account, put you to the slightest inconvenience in the payment of principal, or annual rent due thereon ; yet as money at present is very scarce, and times are but precarious, we would feel highly honoured by a draft for the amount now, as on the 12th instant, as per state of debt annexed. In the mean time it may be proper to mention, that we have thought it our duty, for mutual behoof, to sue out a form of diligence, called *Literæ Cornuationis*, together with another consequent thereon, styled a *Captio*, or *Literæ Carceris*, both of which steps of procedure are needful and proper under the circumstances of the case. If you would rather prefer an *adjudicatio in imple-*

mentatum, advise us per return of post.
We both beg most respectful compliments to Miss Flora and your worthy self; and, hoping all good things,

We have the honour to be,

With due respect,

Honoured Sir,

Your very obedient, humble servants,

H. MAC SKINNER, W. S.

H. MAC FLEECER, W. S.

Glenmore of Glenmore,

Glenmore Castle.

This symptomatic epistle was not the only thing which alarmed Glenmore; for as the attentions which Lord Gerald paid to Flora were visible to the clansmen, they soon spread over the country, and roused the pride of

the Highland Lairds, one or two of whom had paid unsuccessful addresses to that lady. These and their relations cried shame, at the idea of Strathantin's being so soon forgotten, while others spoke about the taint which the blood of the Glenmores would receive from this mixed alliance.

In the midst of these perplexities, the twelfth of the month came round, and with it came old Mr. Mac Skinner, together with Mr. Mac Fleecer, the doer, and two "most particular friends" of the latter gentleman. Nothing could equal the civility, nay, even the obsequiousness, which the first two of these personages practised toward Glenmore; and the other two stood dangling their hats, as if too modest for entering a

castle upon any pretext whatever. It was obvious, however, that the little ferret's eye of Mac Skinner, as it squinted out from the broad expanse of his dark and cadaverous face, took very suspicious measure of the Castle and every thing within it, and that the *doer* exchanged some very significant leers both with him and with his own two friends.

Glenmore, with that frankness natural to himself and his countrymen, asked the four to dinner, which invitation they readily accepted. In the mean time, however, Mac Fleecer hinted that, just for the sake of form, and to save Glenmore from trouble at the hands of any one else, it might be as well, since they were there at any rate,

to take an inventory or list of his moveable gear and effects. This was rather more than a chieftain could altogether relish ; but as he could not see how a scratch, even of an Edinburgh doer's pen, could transfer the said goods either to that city or to Inverness, he submitted with the best grace possible, and as the "particular friends" lent their kind assistance in this labour of civility, the whole was completed in good time for their all assembling at the festive board.

The new guests did not seem to suit exactly the taste of the old one, for Lord Gerald drew back from the proffered fist of Mac Skinner, not only with a scowl which sent the whole posse half way back to the door, but

with a remark, loud enough to be heard by all present, that, in *such* company, each had best shake his own hand.

The bowels of the four worthies, however, seemed to yearn more toward the dinner which was now on the table ; and so they took their seats, the chief having mentioned them to his guest as Mr. Mac Skinner of Inverness, Mr. Mac Fleecer of Edinburgh, with two most particular friends of the latter.

Lord Gerald again disconcerted them a little by his looks, and a little more by saying, that he thought the gentlemen would, like Falstaff, be all the better if they knew where “a commodity of good names” could be purchased. The only shield which they lifted aga

this attack was a spoon a piece, which they thrust into a rich soup, that, being prevented from steaming by a sort of cream on the top, gave no external sign of the surcharge of caloric that was below, until the "two particular friends," at one and the same instant, transferred a large shovel-full of it into their dusky mouths. But the sensation which it produced was so powerful, as to occasion a gnashing of the teeth, and a sending of the liquid, in a burning torrent, through these and the nostrils, till it bespattered all their corner of the table. This exhibition rather disturbed the muscles of the whole company, with the exception of Lord Gerald, who, putting on a face of the most sympathising nature, went up to the sufferers with a

large mustard-pot in his hand, recommended a copious application of it to take out the fire, and, ere any of the company could interpose, he had them discharging a very reasonable allowance of that, by the same orifices which had emitted the soup, and roaring in all the agonies of premature damnation. Thus tormented, the “most particular friends” declined all future attack on the viands above the salt, and were fain to console their grilled palates with a bason of water gruel, prepared at the express injunction of the benevolent Allan Glass.

In the course of the dinner, Mac Skinner who was seated near Glenmore, was extremely polite and attentive. Every thing which the chief said, was the most wise ; every thing he pro-

posed, the most correct ; every smile that Flora put on, the most exquisite, and, as Mac Skinner would needs smell a rat, even Lord Gerald's wicked application to "the most particular friends" was set down a master-stroke of innocent amusement.

Mac Skinner had not much mercy upon Glenmore's wine, which also had a share of his admiration, and he contrived that Glenmore himself should have still less ; and when he found that the heart of the chief had been won and warmed to the proper extent, he proposed that the chief should set off for Inverness next morning, in company with himself, Mac Fleecer, and one of the "most particular friends ;" that they should remain there till Glenmore's

affairs were settled to his own satisfaction, and, as soon as this was done, they would return, and, along with the other “most particular friend,” spend another day at Glenmore Castle, and see that all its inhabitants were happy, after they had done for them such kind offices, as were in the power of persons so very much their inferiors. This sage counsel sounded well; and so Mac Fleecer saddled his *ass*, and the whole rode off by the grey dawn of the next morning.

As the chief had left his Castle in such good company, and as the henchman and the good wishes of the whole clan went along with him, there was little alarm in the Castle for the first five days,—that is, two days for the journey

there, one day to rest, and two days for the henchman to return. During the interim, the distance between Lord Gerald and the "most particular friend" waxed daily greater and greater ; and the friend was indeed so curious in his examination of all the furniture and chattels about the Castle, that the whole inhabitants became curious to know his quality. His reply was, that he was a probationer in holy orders, meaning a parson who had not yet been inducted to a Church living. Sunday was the last of the days, during which no message had come, and, on the morning of that day, Lord Gerald, tossing down a guinea to the stranger, in the most authoritative and even contemptuous manner, said, "Mr. Parson, there

is your fee, and I insist that you forthwith assemble the inhabitants of this Castle to divine service.”

It was in vain that the man pleaded his ignorance of the Gaelic: Lord Gerald maintained that it was doubly imperious on him to exercise his sacred function, as all the serfs of the clan were Catholics, and had to be won from that damnable heresy ; while he himself had been thirsting after the word for many days. Even this, however, might not have proved enough, if Lord Gerald had not put two auxiliary arguments, of very considerable force. The first was, that four of his own mustachioed foreigners stood under the windows with a blanket, into which his Lordship threatened to pitch the

reluctant parson, and have him shaken till the costive divinity was loosened ; and the second, and perhaps the more powerful one, was a demand of restitution of the guinea.

Finding that he had no alternative, the poor stranger was forced to go upon the duties of his real or assumed functions ; the ladies, however, refused to be present at the exhibition ; and there had well nigh been a mutiny among the servants of the castle, because of the indignity offered to a guest of Glenmore's, in his absence. This last, however, was dispelled by the response of old Rory, the oracle upon all such occasions, who replied to the intriguing clansmen : " Ough, let the Saxon deevil tak her nain will o'

the other deevil's bairn ; for I'll be bound that they baith came to Glenmore's castle, without being sent for, and the'll baith leav't without being sorrowed after." Thus admonished, the clansmen encircled round as spectators of the coming exhibition, and even the women, though sorely scandalized at the profanation, could not help peeping out at windows, and round the corners of walls.

When the supposed parson had been hoisted into an empty oatmeal cask—the readiest substitute for a pulpit—he made his last, and, as he thought, most powerful fetch, by declaring that he had no bible.

"No bible !" said Lord Gerald ; "why man, you are worse than a Turk ! for a

'Turk, if he get a scrap of paper upon which there are any written or printed characters, no matter in what language, it will suggest to him not only all the Koran, but all the commentaries of the Mufti. There's an old letter for you ; and, as you may probably not understand the language in which it is written, it will not disturb your meditations."

"Na, Na," said the man, "'gin I maun preach without a bible. I maun hae some bit of paper that I can understand, at ony rate;" and with that he lugged out of the breast pocket of his coat a greasy piece of sheep's-skin ; and out of that again he took a tolerably sized bundle of papers, which a scholar might have mistaken for

Hebrew—as he instinctively turned to the last page. Having conned it for a little, he began to read, “In the name of—in the name of—Amen—I, Thomas Touchit, mes— parson—at arms—(“You are a member of the church militant, eh!” said Lord Gerald)—by virtue of a horn—(“A guinea,” said Lord Gerald)—horning, do, in authority of his Majesty King George”—“Treason to Glenmore,” said one of the clansmen, drawing his dirk, but Lord Gerald’s eye rebuked him—“In the name of God—do not murder me—do command and charge to make payment of the sum of —”

“The sum of the deevil’s meeting to you,” said the henchman, who at this moment entered the court-yard,

and, applying his cudgel to the hinder parts of the parson, made him and his cask spin half-way down the garden ; and had it not been that they were arrested by one of the old cherry-trees, they would have gone over the precipice. “ Why do you meddle with the parson, fellow ? ” said lord Gerald.

“ Parson ! ” replied the henchman ; “ she’s a thief, a limmer, an arms at messenger, cum to teuk the Castle, and sell her at Edinbro’, and the Chief hersel is i’ the prison at Inverness, a’ by that filthy deevil, Mac Skinner.”

The note of sorrow sped fast over the clan, and was instantly answered by the note of vengeance.

“ Hang her up at the Castle-gates ! ” was the cry ; and the threat would,

perhaps, have been put in execution ere Lord Gerald could have prevented it, had not the terror-excited messenger clambered to the top of the old tree with the celerity of a cat. It was sometime ere Lord Gerald could make the clansmen understand the danger to which this rash conduct, on their part, would expose both themselves and their Chief; and he could not accelerate their conviction by an application to Flora, as some delicacy would be required, even for his own purposes, in breaking to her the unpleasant news of her father's captivity. The clansmen were, however, at last appeased, and it was agreed, that for the honour of the clan, this officer should be allowed to depart under his assumed

character of parson ; and as such it was deemed prudent to give him safe convoy under the escort of one of Lord Gerald's servants, who kept him from the dirks, although not from the curses, of the Clan-More.

CHAP. VIII.

On Cannaby links the trooper was bauld,
And his braid sword saw the air;
But in Carlisle Castle his blood was cauld,—
He had time to bethink him there.

“O where have ye ridden, my merry merry men,
And where be ye drivin, the deer?
And where be ye, too, my friends o’ the glen?
O will naebody speak to me here?”

JOHNNY MAXWELL’S LAMENT.

SOMEWHAT analogous to those of the trooper, were the ejaculations of Glenmore, as he paced his cold and ill-furnished cell, of eleven feet by seven, in the dark, dirty, and comfortless jail of Inverness. But we beg the reader’s

pardon ; we forgot to tell how he got there.

The letter of H. Mac Fleecer, esq. writer to his Majesty's signet, was, as many a letter of the kind has before and since been, precisely analogous to the setting of a pointer, by which the birds are made to sit till the fowler be ready with his net, or the slaughterer with his gun. It was intended to lull the credulity of the Chief, and yet to expedite the steps of the law, so as that the Mac Skinner should have the first pounce at him ; and the friendly visit of the elder Mac Skinner and Mac Fleecer, with their two " most particular friends," (who, by the bye, were, as our readers must have already discovered, neither more nor

less than two of that fraternity, of whom, according to Phillips, the names are not known in heaven, but who are “ of men, yclept catchpoles,”—that is to say, two of the worthies, whom the law, in its mercy, saves from the gaol or the gallows, to be the immediate instruments of any thing cruel which it has to perform, and which would, in the performance, be too much for the feelings of tender *doers* and W. S.’s, or haply, according to the right reading, too little for their ever-craving pockets,)—was for the real purpose of ascertaining whether as many of the effects of the Laird could be poinded, and poinded with safety, as would satisfy the claim of Mac Skinner, sen., and pay the expense incurred in obtaining that satis-

faction. As the poind, however, appeared to be of little value, and as the lifting of it might have been attended with danger, which these learned persons could ill meet, and as the distance, to which the few goods that were in the Castle must have been carried for sale, rendered the poind an unadvisable step, the wily lawyers took the other *horn* of the dilemma, and keeping the function of their “most particular friends” more secret from the family of the Castle than we have been able to do from the reader, induced the Laird to accompany them, and said not one word about their purpose till they had him safe in the Celtic capital.

When they had arrived safe there, instead of going to the house with Mac

Skinner, as had been originally proposed, they adjourned to the inn, and while the two lawyers were taking some refreshment, at the expense of the Chief, the “most particular friend,” who had previously separated from them, returned with his staff of office and his concurrents, and, without much ceremony, intimated to the Chief that he was a prisoner, in the name of our Sovereign Lord King George, and at the instance of C. Mac Skinner, esq., solicitor, of Inverness, to whom the said King had sent *greeting* for that especial purpose.

At this intimation, the Chief felt instinctively for his dirk, but it had been left in another apartment; and though the fists of the henchman, who had taken the alarm, levelled one of the

concurrents ; yet the catchpole disarmed all opposition, by breaking his staff of office, and swearing he was deforced ; whereupon the learned baillie Mac Verger, haberdasher and tea-dealer to Glenmore, of Glenmore, at a very decent percentage, consigned the poor henchman to twelve hours' solitary confinement in the rat-cellar, under the prison-house of the Borough. Nor was the henchman allowed to have any intercourse with his master, although the gentle-hearted baillie, out of pure love for the Chief as a customer, graciously permitted him to be the bearer of a dispatch.

Nor was this the only act of kindness shewn to Glenmore by the magistrate ; for that worthy person waited

upon him in *limbo*, and after many bows and speeches, as unctuous as the appearance of his face, intimated to him, that he, the said baillie Mac Verger, standing creditor to the Laird in the sum of thirteen pounds, five shillings and fourpence halfpenny, would be very glad to dispose of any trinket or valuable property which the Laird might have about him, unknown to the incarcerating creditor; and, after retaining for his own use the above-mentioned sum, to pay over to Glenmore himself, the balance, if any, towards his maintenance, during the time of his captivity.

The tender-hearted baillie Mac Verger, was not the only personage who offered Job's consolation to Glenmore in the days of his trouble. For

one morning, the gaoler, bowing lowly, and entering the apartment stern-foremost, introduced a gentleman who appeared to have earned at least the fame of the Rhodian, in "eating many an ox, and drinking many a flagon of wine," and, having discharged this duty, he retired. "What, my dear fellow," said the stranger, grasping the chieftain by the hand—"what the devil has brought you to this shop? Doubtless the Highland blood has been up, and there has been some broken head, some fellow thrown out of a window, or some hostility between clan and clan, and you are standing out; but come, come, do not be so stubborn; we must all yield a little to the law; say that you will sign a bond to

keep the peace, and I will be—no, egad, that would not be so safe—I will not be your security, but we will beat the bushes, and find half a score of Macrories and Mackrosteys, who will undertake any thing for a chief of your tail. Hey-day, Glenmore *in limbo*; why the deuce—it beats Macpherson at the gallows' tree to sticks."

Glenmore did not relish the levity of this speech, though his own pride, and a sense of propriety, prevented him from checking the current of it. During the course of it, he had folded his arms and knitted himself into an attitude of mingled contempt and indignation, and, at its close, he stood wistful what to reply. We shall improve his silence by giving the reader

a glimpse of the character of him by whom that silence was occasioned.

The stranger was the son of a merchant, and had, in early life, been met by Glenmore on the continent, and even introduced by him at the French court. The stranger was then profuse in money, and a leader in all sorts of dissipation. But one morning tidings came, not only that his father was a bankrupt and ruined, but that himself was involved in some part of the transactions which had rather a fraudulent aspect. Glenmore relieved him from his temporary embarrassments; secreted and supported him as long as the first was necessary, carried him with him, first to London and then to the Highlands; entertained him hos-

pitably there, and ultimately fitted him out for the West Indies, where he had amassed a very considerable fortune, with which he had returned to spend the evening of his days in Britain. An estate in the neighbourhood of Inverness advertised for sale, had been recommended to him as a good bargain ; he had come down to enquire after it, and he had called upon Glenmore, expecting that he could be useful in giving him information. Such was the friend, who, in his youth, had owed every thing to Glenmore, that now came into his prison chamber, with so very incoherent and improper a speech ; and no wonder that the consideration of the man and the speech were for a

few minutes, too much even for Glenmore.

“ I am no brawler,” said the Chief ;
“ I am here for debts—burdens, which I have imposed on my estate, with the intention, if not the effect, of serving others.”

Either there was something emphatic in the last two words, or it had this effect upon the stranger. He felt a momentary twinge of compunction, and had it continued, it might have ripened into compassion. It was, however, but a twinge and away.

“ Tell me the amount of your embarrassment,” said he. “ One of your retired and plain habits, cannot owe much, and you must have something owing to you.”

Glenmore bowed ; and the stranger would have coloured, only his natural hue was deeper than that of any recorded blush.

“ The sum for which I am here,” replied Glenmore, “ is five hundred pounds ; and if I could get six hundred (for which, indeed, I could not now grant any thing but personal security) I think I could, as we say in the Highlands, win the shelter stone, and wait till the wind wearied.”

“ Six hundred pounds !” said the other ; “ Six hundred pounds is money, as the world goes. Let me see—I cannot lift that twenty thousand pounds, because I may not get such interest again. I cannot touch the fifteen thousand pounds ; there’s twenty thou-

sand pounds at Coutts's—fifteen thousand pounds at Morland's—but let me see—this estate—twenty-five thousand pounds—five thousand pounds for plate and furniture, two thousand pounds for an equipage—and one cannot be altogether empty handed. Well, well, never mind; I shall consult my solicitor. But how stands it with the lands of Glenmore? Are they afloat? Are they free, or are they entailed? Perhaps they would suit me; and I could come down with the price instantly, if not too high. I shall send Mr. Catchclause to you this instant."

"You may spare yourself and me all trouble on that subject," said Glenmore, turning on his heel; and in the mean time he heard no more of

the friend of his youth; and thereby furnished another proof of the truth of the adage, "If you would have a man serve you, promise; if not, do."

Such visitors did not tend to reconcile the haughty, though kind-hearted Glenmore, to his humiliating situation; a situation to him the more humiliating, that in the whole chain of circumstances which had brought him to it, there was not one in which he could accuse himself of having squandered for his own personal gratification. True, he had kept state as became a Chief, when his means would have squared better with the establishment of a vassal; but the Chiefship, in all its pomp and circumstance, had been transmitted to him from the beginning.

of time, or at least of tradition, and he deemed that it so became him to transmit it to the end. His situation was, indeed, abundantly gloomy. The lord of fifty mountains and a hundred rivers—he who could chase the roe from dawn to dusk upon his own soil—he who could angle for the little trout in the mountain brook, and drag the sea shore for the salmon, had his peregrinations circumscribed by four walls, and the whole of his lakes and streams bottled up in a single *caraffe*, scantily supplied for use; he, who strutting along the halls of his fathers, looked upon the portraits of plumed chiefs, and mailed warriors, now had nothing wherewithal to feast his eyes, save the memorials of his predecessors in cap-

tivity, traced in charcoal upon the walls, or engraved with a hot poker upon the wainscoat. His name formed the last of a list which might have carpeted the whole High street of Inverness, and so he could not brook the idea of its being added to this dingy catalogue. For the first day or two, he fumed, fretted, and stormed; but as the heart of Alister Mackeylock was of iron, as well as his face, the wrath of the chief produced not the smallest impression upon either.

In the end, however, it produced an impression upon himself, or rather, his pride made him scorn his own indignation; and, if he stood not with submission in the presence of those who had brought him there, he became respectful to himself, and as he could

not make of the world what he wished, he condescended to allow it to have that scope peaceably, which it was evidently taking, reckless of all the resistance he could offer. In this frame of mind, he wrote to the Castle—detailed to his daughter the circumstances of his captivity—admonished her to bear up under it as became her rank and her name; and begged of Lord Gerald to remain during his absence, and afford to his family and his clan that protection which, in the mean time, they could not receive at his own hands.

Poor Flora, notwithstanding all her father's admonition, received the sad news as a woman—as a fond daughter, who, now that her heart was returned from one who had held it, felt herself

bound to give it all to the author of her being. Still, the doing of the honours of the house to a titled stranger now lay wholly upon her, except when Castlecreaghy, or any of the chief men of the clan, came to her assistance ; and as there was little congeniality of manner and feeling between them and Lord Gerald, they came as seldom as civility and clanship would admit. Flora was therefore left much alone ; and that solitude which had braced up the firmness of the father, completed the daughter in grief. Many of her secret hours were given to weeping ; the tint of health again fled from a cheek which was a sure index to the heart ; and brief space elapsed ere the partially-re-

covered Flora was again stretched on a bed of sickness.

It would be settling a point rather dangerous for casuists of the human heart—namely, whether affection for a lover or a father be the stronger of the two—to decide, whether the recent or the present indisposition of Flora was the most severe in its origin ; but, without cutting this Gordian knot in female psychology, we may be permitted to say, that the second sickness had some adjuncts of woe, peculiar to itself : there was now no father's bosom, upon which to repose either her confidence or her head ; and what was perhaps, during its momentary impulse, as galling, there was no kind-

hearted cousin to dry her eyes, or weep in concert, according to the tone and touch of her misery. Glenmore was in a distant prison-house; and Isabella Mackay, the companion of her youthful steps—the dependant on her father's bounty, whose lively disposition had long animated her hopes, and whose kindness had, on the late occasion, done much to assuage her grief, seemed now to visit her sick-chamber with reluctance, and to hurry from it with more eagerness than was consistent with the decorum even of a hireling nurse.

The reader must have already seen the cause of this: Lord Gerald had been playing with the warm heart of the giddy and unsuspecting girl; all

unawares, she had lost it during the play ; and she now sought opportunities of being, though guardedly, in his presence, either to ask it back again, or to put him in mind that he had it. The passion of love, when it is excited in the bosom of the young and innocent, is continually shaping every object in a rival to its own hopes. It does this the more readily, the more nonsensical it is in itself, and the more airy that these hopes are ; and therefore there is no wonder, though Isabella saw a rivalry in Flora, whose personal attractions, mental accomplishments and rank, were all so much superior to her own. This jealousy was increased, by the attention which Lord Gerald paid to Flora, previously to

her confinement in her chamber, and also by the kind enquiries that he made after her during the time she was there. Upon all the nine points (our female readers know well what they are) of female partiality, Isabella saw cause to love Lord Gerald ; and seeing this, dislike, if not absolute hatred, of her cousin, followed by no very remote consequence.

But his Lordship, though not so ardent or so open a gamester as Isabella, was yet a little deeper ; and, as gamesters say, he took “ the odds both over and under ;” for, while he kept amusing himself with the affections of Isabella, he resolved to make his attack upon Flora in more measured terms,—as he judged that these would accord

best with the state of her mind. For this purpose he wrote her, during her convalescence, a second letter. We need hardly tell the reader, that the letter which Flora found was a first one; nor need we copy it, as the lady herself gave it no very careful perusal. But the second is worthy of a glance.

“MADAM,

If, upon my first having the pleasure of seeing you—a pleasure which, not in degree only, but in kind, proved to me altogether new, I could not refrain from addressing to you that letter, which, under the existing circumstances, you very properly returned to me, how can I now resist making a similar application? My vanity would willingly ascribe your conduct then to a

feeling which does infinite honour to you, and makes you much more worthy; but the cause of that feeling, unhappily for you, though I would fain add happily for me, has yielded to the common frailty of all human engagements. I respected the strength of your attachment; I did honour to your grief; and it is only now that I may have the pleasure of stepping in, and offering such assistance as the best of fathers merits on his own account, as well as on that of the most lovely of daughters, that I now thus obtrude myself upon your notice. Do not imagine that I can have the least wish to ruffle for you, either by recollections or anticipation, that pillow, which, could prayers smooth it, should be smoother

than the pillow of a queen ; but as I would entreat of you not to decide my fate too rashly ; and as I could not bear to look upon you while tortured in the agony of suspense, I have sent you this at such a time as will enable you to reflect maturely upon it. That I have sent it to you at all, is a proof of my anxiety to elect you as the chosen one of your sex. Bid me not despair, and you may consider the present difficulty of your reverend father, and indeed all the difficulties of your house as being at an end. Consider, therefore, of how many persons, leaving my insignificant self altogether out of the question, the happiness hinges upon the answer which you return. God give me speed, and you and yours prosperity.

DE BROOKE."

This *billet-doux*, somewhat lengthy, but pretty well adapted to the circumstances, was folded up, sealed with the impression of a heart transfixcd by an arrow, with the motto, “ Je cheris ma peine,” and conveyed to Flora’s apartment, unknown to her cousin or any of the family.

After having thus furnished morning’s meditations for one of the ladies, he proposed that the other and himself should walk up the bank of the rivulet, and feast their eyes with the majestic scenery of the loch. As they journeyed along, his lordship contrived to say a number of those soft things which are more pleasing to silly girls than to sage readers ; and, though Isabella so far got the better, both of her fears and

her discretion, as to hint at her partiality for his supposed rival, he contrived to silence yet to keep alive the suspicion. He hinted that the house had strong claims on his sensibility,—that Flora might resent his neglect upon one whom he held dear. The time, however, would come when she might feel herself elevated in rank and in property, far above even the Clan-More.

Isabella understood this, and with that tact natural even to the most inconsiderate of women, she would have drawn even something more explicit; but his lordship, aware of the danger, affected surprise at the lateness of the hour, alluded to the suspicions which their longer absence might excite; and

so they hurried homewards and entered the Castle by different ways, as though they had not been together.

Isabella found her cousin in musing melancholy, with the miniature of her lost lover in the one hand, and an affectionate letter from her imprisoned father in the other. Isabella was now both elevated and comparatively at rest in consequence of the inuendo of Lord Gerald, and, therefore, she approached her cousin with more kindness than she had displayed for some time ; but under that kindness there was an expression of condescension, so new to Isabella, that her unsuspecting cousin did not perceive it. She hailed the returning kindness of her playmate as a boon ; attributed her recent absence

to the alleged cause—the pain of being present, took her blooming relative again to her arms, and again they wept together over the woes of the house of Glenmore.

Lord Gerald went to his apartment, not to sympathize with suffering—for the suffering of others served but to point the arrows of his derision, but to gratify his curiosity, and haply something worse than curiosity, by a perusal of that favourable answer which he never doubted would be awaiting him from the melancholy and deserted daughter of the absent Chief. Of the strain and tendency of that answer the reader must judge.

“MY LORD,

As my father's guest, I have treated you with respect ; as my father's daughter, I know you will treat me with the same. Your first proposal, even though unengaged, I would have rejected, because it was made ere you could know me, or I could know you. Your second proposal is unreasonable, both on account of the greenness of that sorrow which I cherish much more fondly than any thing which the world has now to offer me, and of the unfortunate absence of that father, whose will, under any circumstances, must now be the arbiter of my conduct. Allow me, therefore, to consider both proposals in the same light as if they had never been made, and very res-

pectfully to add a hope that another one may never be made.

FLORA.”

Hackneyed as was Lord Gerald in the ways of womankind, and successful as he had been in his inroads upon their peace, his pride was stung to the quick at having those powers foiled by a simple lass in a Highland glen, which had done notable disservice among the finished and manœuvring dames in the squares of the metropolis. Pride and policy, however, both conspired in concealing his disappointment, and as the cards of female conduct sometimes turn up odd chances, he resolved to abide his time, and if possible, profit by it, when it came.

But the affair of the money requisite for Glenmore's relief, rather puzzled him, as he was left but the two alternatives of sacrificing it or sacrificing his promise. He redoubled his enquiries and his politeness. Flora got better, and in a short time Castlecreaghy was the bearer of good news.

Some person, unknown, having lodged the requisite sum of money in the hands of the sheriff, the doors of the prison were thrown open, and the Chief, without saying farewell either to Mac Skinner or the Baillie, was on his way to the Castle. "Some generous incognito," said Castlecreaghy, fixing his eyes upon Lord Gerald, "has done this deed, and gained the blessing of the whole clan."

Lord Gerald blushed, and Castlecreaghy, setting himself down for a wizard, instantly prepared for the reception of the Chief. The banner was hung out, the clan was mustered, tears and whisky mingled in torrents in the kitchen ; all the horses were put in requisition, that the gentlemen, including Lord Gerald, should ride, and the gillies girded themselves to run on foot, in order that the Chief might be received at the boundary of his dominions. Old Chirstan, the cook, threw her old brogue at the party to procure good luck ; old Rory lifted the curtain of the future ; and Hope threw her thickest mantle over the past.

Glenmore came, and the meeting

on all sides was joyous; but the joy was of but short duration. The females of the clan began to avoid the castle, and dark whispers went abroad that Flora had been walking by moonlight, and in solitary places, with the stranger Lord, which was an injury, both to the memory of Strathantin, and to the laws of Highland decorum. Written hints to the same effect were occasionally sent in; and messages were ever and anon arriving to put the Chief in mind, that all his debts were not yet paid. It was in vain that the gillies swore, that if ever another "most particular friend" should come near the castle, they would "meet her at the *scridan*, and give her beef to the crows;" the admonitory letters were

not on that account one the fewer. Among these, there was one dated Inverness, but without any clue to the author, which excited a considerable degree of uneasiness, as well from the frankness with which it was written, as from the strength of the accusations which it pointed against their guest. It ran thus:—

“ CREDULOUS GLENMORE,

The castle of your illustrious ancestors is disgraced by crime. Ingratitude and seduction inhabit your walls ; intrigue passes under your very eyes, blinded as they are by interest and ambition ; your foes insult you, while your real friends are kept aloof, and blush. Distant as we are from the great and dissipated metropolis, we are not igno-

rant of its inhabitants, and their manners. Be upon your guard :

Latet anguis in herba !

This snake will mar your peace and sully the honour of your name. Be watchful : nay, spurn him from your gate. Many are the women whom he has already deceived ; and one lady in particular has committed self-destruction on his account. He is a very demon—a second Don Juan. Away with him ere it be too late. Can you frame no excuse ? Can't you leave your castle to visit a friend ? Every instant is precious. Meantime, question and command your daughter ; examine your servants ; and clear, if you can clear,

your sullied character. Such is the advice of

A SON OF THE MOUNTAIN.

P.S. You are offending your creditors as well as your friends; therefore have a care.

CHAP. IX.

“ My father he fell sick, and my Jamie was at sea,
And auld Robin Gray came a courting o’ me.”

It was well, both for Glenmore and his gratuitous monitor, that they stood not face to face during the reading of this epistle ; for then most assuredly it had been the death-warrant of one of them. It was a libel on his name, —on his family ; it was unjust, it was uncalled for ; it was an insult. Dishonour was not of his clan ; and, as for Flora, he could see nothing in her but purity and propriety. It must have arisen from malevolence, or from the wounded pride of some disappointed

female; and yet, where was the man that could with justice harbour a malevolent feeling towards Glenmore, and where the woman that could presume to come in competition with his daughter? Not within the range of Highland intelligence.

Still, however, he could not feel easy; and so he resolved to consult not only with his usual confidant Castlecreaghy, but even with Lord Gerald himself. Toward the latter consultation, he had indeed pretty strong inducements, because it afforded a pretext for sounding his lordship upon the sincerity of that affection for Flora, to the consummation of which the chieftain would not have had much objection.

Still there was an *anguis* or snake in the letter as well as in the grass,—the allegation that Lord Gerald had caused a lady to fall by her own hand : and the chief and his friend, upon resolving to submit the anonymous epistle to his lordship's perusal, fixed upon the temper with which he should read this passage, as the touchstone at once of his character and the truth of the letter.

That letter was accordingly given to him ; but, though he grinned in derision over it, it stirred no perceptible sediment of remorse.

“Psha ! some idle trifler,” said he ; “if there be no fools in this country, folly is, at least, imported. But, neither you nor your daughter, must heed such things : they are the price you pay for

superlative merit. With regard to myself, this idle story of the lady's suicide has been repeated till almost even the very carmen whistle it. Yet, what is it to me ? If a lady did die of decline, and say it was all for the love of your humble servant, 'she never told her love;' it was babbled about by gossiping dowagers; and, if she had taken it into her head to fall in love with me, and execute sentence of death upon herself for the crime without my knowledge, how can I possibly be involved in the matter?"

This reasoning was perfectly satisfactory to Glenmore;—Castlecreaghy declared, that Lord Gerald was not only a very wealthy, but a wise and wondrous man; and, after his lordship withdrew,

the chief and he had a speculation, *tete-a-tete*, as to the honour and happiness which would result from the match, should circumstances fortunately bring it about.

On the same day, however, a cloud obscured this prospect, by his lordship's announcing, that but three days more, and he must leave happiness and the Highlands, and again banish himself into the crowded solitude of the fashionable world. This produced a depression in the spirits of Isabella, which was attributed by Glenmore to a wrong cause—that of sorrow at the interrupting, if not the final destruction of, the anticipated honour to him and his house. Glenmore, however, anxious to be honest with his guest, but, at the

same time, to fix an interest in him, took him apart, explained all the circumstances and causes of his late arrest, and, in fact, laid open the whole catalogue of miseries which hung over him and his family,—adding, that he wished to take his lordship's advice, as to whether the life-rent of a chief could not be made the basis of a temporary loan.

Lord Gerald said the point was important—begged to talk over it with him alone next day, and again retired.

“There goes a real friend,” said the chief; “he will never deceive us. He is none of your Mac Skinners or your Baillie Mac Vergers, or your fellows who have whipt thousands of pounds out of the backs of slaves in the West Indies.”

“That he isn’t,” rejoined Castlecreaghy; “and only think how he (for it *must* have been he) paid down the price of this very wadset, about which the old rascal Mac Skinner came so long a journey, without so much as one scrape of a pen, or even saying a word about it. I like the open heart and the open hand. He is half a Highlander already, and the sooner he becomes a whole Highlander the better. Speak, —would not that ugly badger-sounding title, De Brooke, merge in the grand patronymic of Glenmore, if he were to be married to our *Bhan Tighierna*?”

These were points which Glenmore, skilled as he was in Highland etiquette and Highland pedigree, could not solve altogether upon the nonce, and so

they too were adjourned until the next day.

It has been observed, that the night often brings, without any apparent cause, a change of feeling both to the joyous and the sorrowful ;—when the head of affliction is laid down on the pillow, that pillow will sometimes preach peace, nay, even hope ; and the head of joy not unfrequently presses a pillow which, ere morning, is the pillow of care. It was thus with Glenmore : he retired to his chamber full, not only of Lord Gerald, but of Lord Gerald's character. But, as the reveries of the night gave different trains to his ideas, they exhibited that character in different lights,—or perhaps it would suit better with the scene and the

changes to say, different shades of darkness. The first exhibition was that of a generous guest, of a high-born spirit, proffering an honourable alliance; but anon came the cold indifference which his lordship had displayed, when human suffering was the topic; the levity with which he had treated sacred feelings and sacred subjects, and the cruelty that he had exercised toward a noble animal, which had but just before been, in all probability, the means of saving his own existence. Glenmore made a syllogism: "The good man regardeth the life of his beast," said he: "but Lord Gerald de Brooke did not regard the life of his beast; *ergo*, Lord Gerald is not a good man."

What with syllogism, what with sentiment, Glenmore passed a sleepless night, and was up by grey dawn, resolving that the mountain air should so brace his faculties, as that he might settle the question between the hopes of the evening, and the suspicions of the night. The sun rose upon him, and as the suspicions were far more congenial to darkness and demi-sleep, than to the exhilarating brightness of the rising sun and the kind heart of the Chief, the hopes triumphed, and he returned to the castle, anxious for the appointed meeting with his Lordship.

Lord Gerald had that morn breakfasted in his own apartment, although he sent notice that he was quite well,

and would be happy to receive the Chief there. Glenmore obeyed the summons, and was not a little astonished to find his guest arrayed in the full costume of the Clan ; and, bating the unequal length of the new-made Highlander's legs, he could not help paying him some compliments on his personal appearance.

“ You may well be surprised, my much honoured Chief, and kind and hospitable entertainer,” said his Lordship, “ at finding one of the degenerate and town-made nobility, putting on the garb of those who date their origin from the beginning of memory, and derive their honours from nature herself ; but the time which I have spent among your Clan, though felt

short in the spending, will be long and imperishable in the remembrance ; and therefore, though I could not bear to put the tartan upon my enervated limbs, during the time of my happy sojourn with you, yet may I be pardoned for appearing in it on the eve of my departure, just to shew, that though I soon return to be among the heartless idlers of the court, I retain at least an external badge of the generous spirit and manly feeling of the mountains.”

“ Your Lordship does us honour,” replied Glenmore ; “ a very imposing and a very worthy clansman you would make.”

“ May I presume to suggest an amendment on the last word but one,” said his Lordship, bowing, taking

Glenmore by the hand, and seating him by his side.

After they were seated, he continued, "My dear Glenmore, (for you are dearer to me than I can express, and for reasons which haply I dare not express) if we are not now of the same Clan, we are of the same garb, and we are the same in suffering."

"What!" interrupted Glenmore, hastily, having two reasons for the exclamation, "has your Lordship received bad news? and must you, too, for all your rank, and all your generosity, be at the mercy of some Mac Skinner?"

"There you mistake me," rejoined his Lordship; "I believe I am safe from the Mac Skinners, and I earnestly

hope and seriously trust, that you too are the same ; but my sorrow lies a little deeper,—it is in a region which all the Mac Skinners in the world cannot reach, and cannot heal.”

Glenmore lent his ear, but spoke not. Lord Gerald drew his chair nearer to him—laid his hand upon his shoulder, and said, “ My malady admits but of one physician, and that physician I know is under your control. I reck not what else I part with, provided I could call Flora of Glenmore mine.”

It was some time ere the Chieftain could return an answer. For though this was a declaration which he wished, and almost expected, he felt rather singular at its being made. The grass

upon Strathantin's grave would not yet be green,—memory had wept for him but one little month,—Flora had not, at least in so far as her father knew, been consulted; and it might be possible that Lord Gerald was not precisely the man he seemed. The reveries of the night again came over the Chief, and they came with this addition, that high and rich as was the proposed match, there was something mercenary in it—it looked very like a selling of his daughter for the saving of his house. Had he replied at that instant, perchance, the reply had been a negative; but Lord Gerald, who interpreted his looks more quickly than the Chief could interpret words, hastened to bar so perilous a consequence.

“ Yes,” said he, “ twenty thousand pounds, which I can well spare, will relieve all your difficulties, and the hand of Flora will supply all that I can wish for ; but mark me, my dear Glenmore, our marriage, which shall be performed at De Brooke Abbey, must be secret ; for one hundred thousand pounds, in ready cash, hangs upon the will of an old uncle of mine, and he has declared, that he will give it to another, unless I marry, not with his approbation merely, but one of the heartless and headless turfs of nobility, which he shall be pleased to select for me. This is too much to lose for forms’ sake. Our private marriage will be just as binding ; indeed, where the heart is bound, the mere legal tie

adds no security—and when the uncle pleases to walk off, where he cannot carry his wealth along with him, then shall Flora of Glenmore shine out in all the splendour of Lady de Brooke ; a splendour, which, though catching in the eyes of fools, can never rival that in which she shines by her own native worth and your honorable connection.”

Glenmore looked a little stern, and looked as though he thought one hundred thousand pounds too small a price for the private marriage of his daughter. Lord Gerald, again perceiving the stumbling-block, again made an effort to remove it.

“ I care nothing for the filthy lucre myself,” said he, “ but you know as well as I, how necessary it is when we

have a clan. I know the nobility of your blood ; but think you, my pound-amassing uncle can judge of the redness of that ? Nay, nay ; he judges of nobility by the book—looks into the muster-roll of patents ; and you know that to those mean collectors and hoarders up of pelf, those blind idolators of Mammon, an angel would plead in vain.”

Glenmore was not altogether satisfied. He hesitated ; said something about the memory of Strathantin ; the delicacy of breaking the matter to Flora ; put an absolute *veto* upon the secret marriage, and concluded by a sentiment which tended not a little to undo all the others—viz. that, though highly improper to hint at the subject to her at present, it might be

done without impropriety at some future period. Lord Gerald bowed submissively, and they separated.

The result of this conversation was, to leave Glenmore in circumstances of greater embarrassment than it had found him. True, Lord Gerald made a formal declaration of his love for Flora, but he had clogged it with the unpleasant qualification of a private marriage; true again, he had assigned a reason for this clog, worth a hundred thousand pounds; but true, he had gone off without pressing the subject with that warmth which Glenmore could have wished; true, a fourth time, he had been bred in the fashionable circles, where etiquette kept the feelings in subjection, and the very choicest cha-

racters had to play even their most virtuous parts in masks ; but true, also, that Lord Gerald had declared his detestation of that world and all its practices.

Such were a few of the doubts which disturbed the Chief, and made him pause ere he sought an *eclaircissement* with his daughter. He knew that she had been devoted to Strathan-tin while alive, and that she cherished his memory with fondness ; he knew too, that the match, if made up at the present time, would be set down, not only by his neighbours, but by his own clan, as one of heartless ambition and needless haste ; but while he knew those things, he saw the storm which was gathering around him, and, saving that hand, which, though stretched out

for him in the dark, he fancied he could not have mistaken, he could think of none other that would be raised for his relief. To advise, and far more to command Flora, to this projected union, might be a serious laceration of her feelings, and through them, of his own ; and to reject it, or even to leave Lord Gerald to the hundred loop-holes of London and absence, might be involving him, herself and the whole honour of his house, in irretrievable ruin. The thought of being parted from his only child, was painful to him, and brought to his recollection the memory of her who had given him this daughter at the expense of her own life ; and while he wished that his daughter could be

placed above the reach of pecuniary want, there was a feeling, he knew not what, or whence it came, that whispered to him a doubt as to Lord Gerald's being the best person for affording her this security.

Perplexed by these thoughts, it was long ere he could summon resolution sufficient to see Flora; and after he had seen her, it was longer ere he could summon resolution to broach the subject—so long, indeed, that we must pause, and tell it in the next chapter.

CHAP. X.

“ — — One sad losel stains a name for aye.”

CHILDE HAROLD.

IN order that Glenmore might the better break to his daughter the proposal relative to Lord Gerald, he invited her to walk with him by the bridge, and along the bank of the foaming rivulet, which descended from the hill. Having gained a considerable elevation, the father and the daughter looked down upon that venerable pile, which had, for so many generations, been the habitation of their race; and

the Chief, who knew not well how to break the subject, dwelt in raptures upon the ancient seat, and the importance of preserving it and the clan ; and this naturally led to the melancholy recollection most at his daughter's heart.

When the mind is deeply tinged with melancholy—when we treasure up a cherished sorrow, and hug it to our hearts, the most acceptable comfort flows from conversation upon the sad but dear subjects, from blending our own sympathies with those of them whom we love, and having our sighs echoed by the sighs of those who we know will neither deride nor deceive us.

Aware of the truth of this, the fond

parent, ere he attempted to hint at any future alliances, dwelt upon the sad loss which his daughter and himself had so recently sustained,—expatiated on the virtues of Strathantin, paid a just tribute of praise to his memory, and deplored the fatal consequences of his untimely fall. Such topics were well suited to the gentle though dark gloom, which had now succeeded to the storm of affliction in the breast of Flora : for, as Providence “tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,” so are our woes and trials marked out to us, that when their first pressure ceases to bend us under its seemingly insupportable weight, there succeeds an aching feeling, mingled with that hope of the just, which tells us that our sorrows

are but for a season ; and that, though no rest remain for us upon earth, we shall find a resting-place in the mansions of everlasting peace.

From those topics Glenmore turned to his own blighted hopes, by the loss of him to whom he had looked with such fond anticipation for the building up of his fortunes and his house,—to that fatal casualty which had almost placed him in the world, “ like a brotherless hermit, the last of his race :” for, after his own demise, and that of his Flora, the castle and the lands would go to a distant branch of the family, who would be unable to remove the incumbrances, or sustain the honour of the Glenmores.

He dwelt upon this melancholy sub-

ject ; and yet further upon that more touching one, that the clan would see no young buds from the genuine old tree ; and it was this hope alone which could enable his people to struggle with, or to survive their difficulties.

Either the exquisite tact of Flora saw the mark at which this pointed, or she had knowledge of the dalliance which her father had had, respecting the proffered suit of Lord Gerald ; for she shrunk from the idea as the sensitive plant does from the touch, and declared, that now the sole object of her affections was “ in the cold grave,” she would never be joined in wedlock to any one breathing.

This was enough for Glenmore, for he had too much, both of delicacy and

of sensibility, to probe into the uncicatrised wound, which he but too plainly saw would bleed afresh at the least touch ; and which was even now pouring its purple tide of sorrow over the fondled recollection of every youthful scene, every point which marked a growing attachment, and every object and event which recalled a plighted, and, as Flora still believed, unshaken and unsullied constancy. Hence he instantly changed the subject, and, while he commended the fidelity of his daughter, which remained true even in death, and blossomed over the grave, he took occasion to inculcate resignation, and put her in mind of the affections of her father and her people. These filled not up the

void which Flora felt in her bosom, but they were all that a father and a kindred had to offer, and, as she knew their sincerity, she appreciated their worth.

This had consumed more time than either the father or the daughter was aware ; and, upon their return, the former might have found Lord Gerald pacing his room with much anxiety, and weighing the chances of success in his conquest. Of this, indeed, he would, but for the calm indifference with which Flora had received his attentions, and returned his billet, have had but little doubt ; for his opinion of women, drawn from the ranks of heartless and fashionable levity, was

not high. With these he had uniformly succeeded, although they were inured to manœuvring and intrigue; and, as he was not aware that there existed in the female bosom any steady principles of resistance to vanity and pleasure, he could not well imagine that arts, which had again and again succeeded, with dames accustomed to flattery and schooled in all the ways of the town, could be inefficient with a simple and unsuspecting daughter of the mountains. He saw Glenmore enter the Castle with his daughter hanging fondly upon his arm; and as he never doubted the success of the proposal which he had made, backed as it was by the necessities of the fa-

ther, he grinned triumph as he heard the sound of footsteps approaching his apartment.

His hand was already at his purse to toss a guinea to the messenger, in case it should be one of the domestics, when the white locks of old Rory caught his eye. There was an air of triumph in the old man, which Lord Gerald had never before seen ; and he triumphed over the haughty peer, while he said, “ Glenmore bade me to tell the *Sassenach* lord, that she has returned to the Castle, and will see her by and by.”

This message was, however, merely a *ruse de guerre* ; for when the chief returned, he felt that he was expected to make a communication, and having one

not of the most agreeable description to make, he was not a little embarrassed. Never doubting that the heart of Lord Gerald was as honourable as his own, and that his overtures towards Flora were of that kind, which, granted or not, should always be treated with respect, it cost him no small deliberation. The result of that deliberation was a letter to Lord Gerald, couched in the most respectful terms, but yet stating firmly, that the sentiments of Flora were not only such as to preclude all hope in the meantime, but to render any further allusion to the subject improper. This letter was committed to Allan Glass, who, with his best bow, laid it upon his Lordship's table.

The pride of Lord Gerald was deeply

wounded ; but there was in his nature a masterly duplicity, which could not be thrown off its guard—a hate of mankind, which no suffering on the part of his victim could disarm—an “*odio in longum jacens*,” which no time could efface—and a power of feature, which was fearfully deceitful, and which no internal working of the spirit could disturb. So that, instead of giving way to the working of disappointment, he brightened up ; and, when the dinner-bell rang, he was the first to enter the hall ; and he met with many members of the family with a gaiety of heart that astonished all who were in the secret,—at the same time that it delighted the deluded Isabella, who, though she was not wholly in the

secret, was yet aware that there had been a cloud upon her good fortune, which now appeared to be removed. To Flora it might have been indifferent ; but the character of Lord Gerald was too strong for allowing the exercise of that feeling. Under the mask of his studied civilities, there was the scowl of contemptuous anger, and the half-smile of haughty coldness ; his politeness was an evident mockery ; his assumed condescension was an indirect insult ; and the whole of his acted part marked insolence and vindictive disappointment.

The following day he sent off all his retinue, save one servant and three horses ; and, having done so, he affected a levity and carelessness, which,

to those who viewed him in the character of a disappointed lover, were wholly inexplicable. When the hour of retiring to rest drew near, he shook Glenmore by the hand, saying,

“I feel the kindness which you have done me, and it has, in part, reconciled me to man, of whom I have long had cause to be sick. I must now leave you, to find solitude in crowds, and disgust in the hollow rites of fashion. Allow me to pass unheeded, for there is something in the words, “Fare thee well,” which I never could, and never can bear. I shall never forget you,—but forget me if you can, for Gerald de Brooke is not worthy of your remembrance.” Saying this, he bowed most gracefully to Flora, but accompanied

his bow with a look of withering scorn ; and, when he took his leave of her fair cousin, it was with two or three half articulated words of a language which the family did not understand, but which brought the blood to her cheek, and made her cast toward Flora a glance of conscious superiority, which was ill placed and worse merited.

As his lordship retired, he caused his trusty mameluke to give large presents to the servants of the castle, with an injunction that they were to take no notice of his starting for an early ride. Pleased with this personal mark of the bounty of him, who was, by common consent, allowed to be the unknown friend who had delivered Glenmore from the jail of Inverness ; under

those circumstances, their taking no notice of so trivial an occurrence as an early ride, could not be regarded as a breach of fidelity to their chief.

During the latter part of the night, the sleep of Glenmore had been disturbed and broken; he had been awakened a little after midnight, by sounds, as if his Castle had been assailed by a hostile clan; and the whole early morning after, he lay in a reverie, between sleeping and awake, ever and anon starting at what seemed the sound of clashing swords and crackling flames. At last he went to the casement, and looked out, first upon the court of his Castle, and then upon the loch,—all was still on the former, and he saw nothing, save the bold out-

line of the towers, projected by moonlight upon the wide area. The loch, too, was in a state of the most perfect tranquillity,—not a breeze ruffled its surface, not even a smuggler's skiff divided its waters, and the fires of the mountaineers along its shores were all out. There was, in short, so mild and so perfect a stillness upon the face of nature, that Glenmore himself seemed the only thing out of accordance with the scene. He chided himself for his womanishness, and again went to his pillow, but sleep was not there. Uncouth sounds filled his ears, and formless visions of sorrow flitted before his eyes; a hand pressed against each ear was no shield against the former, and his eyelids could not conceal the

latter from his sight. Glenmore, having been educated abroad, was not deeply imbued with the superstitions of his countrymen ; but still it was impossible to live among them and love them as he did, without, at least, a leaning toward those superstitions,—the more so, that he was continually put in mind of them by Rory the seer, who saw more visions, dreamed more dreams, and gave more interpretations, than an ancient Chaldean.

The state of Glenmore's mind and affairs gave fearful force to the visions of the night. The fondest hope of himself and his daughter was in the grave, all untimely, and under circumstances which could be concealed, but not contemplated with pleasure. A

second hope, and that too momentary, yet not the less flattering, while it lasted, had been cut down in its earliest leaf. The levity which Lord Gerald had shown, immediately upon hearing that refusal, which would have touched any other man to the quick ; the haste with which he had prepared to be gone ; his going without either the exacting of an adieu, or any hint that he wished an acquaintance, which had been begun by hospitable kindness to him, to be continued by both ; and perhaps above all, the belief, that he had been a benefactor in time of extremity, under circumstances which made it a matter of extreme delicacy, if not of utter impossibility, to return thanks ; all

stung the bosom of the kind-hearted and lofty-minded Chief.

The trains of thought which passed through his mind, were such as to beggar all description. Shreds of half-formed resolutions were worked into a strange mental mosaic, with patches of dreams; and the whole made the very nearest approach to those rackings of the mind, amid the reveries of strong imagination, and weltering insanity, when the state of the judgment is clouded, and the rudder of the understanding knocked from its hinges.

In the midst of these unformed phantoms of thought, old Rory rushed into the apartment of his Chief, wringing his

hands in the very bitterness of agony and despair :—

“ Och Glenmore ! oh, my kind and honoured Chief ! ” exclaimed he, falling upon his knees at his master’s bedside, while the pale moonlight which made him dimly visible, conspired with his own wasted and haggard form, to give the emphasis of a thing not of earthly mould—“ Och Glenmore ! I have again seen the *bodach glas* ! and she has come and rapped at the castle yett, and the yett has been opened, and the wraiths of Strathantin, and the ledly and yoursel’, have gane wi’ him, upon black horses, and a black road. The house of Glenmore is i’ the dust ; and, Och ! that pour auld Rorie, wha’ has had

his bit and his drink, his coat and his covering, so long and so well in these halls, should have been the man to tell of it! Oh! if my dear Chief, or my young lady—if the powerful stem or the lovely blossom had been but spared, little would it have signified, though auld Rory Bain, the seared branch, had been cut away!”

“Silence, you old disturber!” said Glenmore; “in my own real state, I am troubled enough; and why would you tell all the nonsense of your idle visions?”

“Och, spurn not the auld man; make not light of the voice of Providence; hang me up upon the gallows tree to-morrow, and welcome, if it be your will, but hear me this night, and take

council and conduct from wisdom greater than mine !”

“I will do you no harm, Rory,” replied Glenmore, softly ; “but,” added he, in a more stern voice, “I am your chief ; and, as your chief, I command you instantly to go back to your own rest, and leave me to mine.”

“The blessing of heaven upon you !” said Rory ; “it shall never be said that I disobliged my chief. O, take your rest, you will need it ; and mine, yours, that of all your race, will soon be for ever.”

So saying, Rory left the apartment of his master, to vent his sorrows and read his dreams to the drowsy ear of night ; and the chief again tried, and again failed, to find repose.

CHAP. XI.

“ O hey gar ride, and how gar rin,
And haste and find thae traitors agen ;
For scho’s he brunt, and he’s be slain.”

THE WEARIFU’ GABERLUNZIE-MAN.

IF there be any thing in external nature which can bring life to a heart that is rending, and calm a head that has found no rest upon its pillow, most assuredly it is the first sparkle of the morning dew, and the first undulation of the morning breeze,—the tear-drop which is flung from the opening eyes of the young day, and the earliest sigh which he heaves at the anticipation of that mass of human calamity and

crime, which he must witness ere he be permitted to hide his head in the silence of the west.

Glenmore felt the truth of this, as, at grey dawn, he measured, with hasty strides, the little esplanade in front of his Castle. There the strength of his mind returned to him ; and with that, also, even a little of its weakness. All the revolting shapes in which the darkness had arrayed his noble visitor, were gone ; and he now appeared in the character of a high and noble spirit, who had done good so completely by stealth, as to avoid the blush of finding it fame ; and who, rather than invade the grief of Flora, or weary her with the repetition of addresses of the most honourable kind, and which any lady

might deem an honour, had gone mourning into banishment, and yet had the dignity and delicacy to conceal the bitterness of his disappointment from those who had been the cause of it.

Under this impulse, the chief sought the chamber of his titled guest, to hold some farther communings, or, at any rate, to insist that their parting should be according to the best usage of Highland hospitality; and, that a stranger who had done so much credit to the Castle, and who had made to its heiress the highest compliment that a man could make, should not leave the Castle without the stranger's cup and the stranger's convoy. He tried to open the door of Lord Gerald's chamber,—

it was locked: he called again and again, but there was no answer. "I must wait a little," said he; "for why should I break to others that sleep which has been broken to myself?"

So saying, he descended the staircase, at the bottom of which he met his trusty factotum, Allan Glass, who informed him that Lord Gerald had gone early for a morning's ride. "It must have been early, indeed," thought Glenmore to himself; "for the clock has numbered, in my own ear, every hour upon this side midnight."

"I shall ride too," said he to Allan; "and haply we may meet," added he to himself. The horses were brought, and as wide a circuit taken as the rites of hospitality at home would permit;

but the return was made without any tidings of Lord Gerald, or any knowledge of the route which he had taken.

On his return, he found his daughter in the breakfast parlour, ready to preside over such a morning's feast as Glenmore gave to his friends. Her brow was unclouded, and the *eclaircissement*, which had so lately taken place, had conduced not a little to the tranquillizing of her mind and the renewal of her beauty; for next to the enjoyment of a beloved object itself, is the possession, the secure possession of our grief for it; and, as Flora was now to be allowed to indulge fully in that for her lover, it proved a pleasure of no common sort. The father told of his gloomy and disturbed night, and of

the untimely visit of the seer ; and the daughter endeavoured to sooth and comfort him till the usual hour of breakfast had so long gone by, that the chief began to talk of not waiting for his guest ; before he did so, however, he sent out a scout to see whether he, for whom they were waiting, was in the way ; and, added he, “Go, Flora, my love, fetch your cousin ; if we have not the company of the stranger, we may yet be all together ourselves.”

Flora went upon this message of friendship, but found the same reception that her father had met with at the chamber of Lord Gerald,—the door was locked, and no answer was made to her calling.

“And has she gone upon a morning’s ride too?” said the chief: “if she has, it must have been an early one,—so early as to pass for a *moonlight flitting*. She, however, had no horse of her own, and she could not catch a sheltie in the copse; so look if the old mare be in the stable;—for that is the only means of removal that she could command.”

The little stable was locked, and the old mare was resting her bones in such a manner, as made it clear that she had not been disturbed during the night; nor had any one of the servants heard the least symptom of Isabella’s departure, although some corroborated Rory’s tale of the *bodach glas* having, just as twelve struck, knocked

at the Castle gate ; all admitted the participation of the stranger's gold ; and one heard him and his servant mount their horses and ride off, not very long after the visit of the *bodach glas*.

The cry was now, " Where is Isabella ?" but nothing answered to it save empty walls. The chamber was burst open—she had not slept there for the night ; Lord Gerald's was then burst open—as little had he slept in it ; and it afforded no trace of him save a slip of paper, upon which these lines were written :—

" Fare ye well—perchance for ever ;

Fate commands, and friends must sever."

These lines were a sort of indirect proof that Lord Gerald had taken his final de-

parture, and had taken it in the night, to spare the feelings of the family as well as his own; and here the chief burst out into an encomium upon the delicacy of his guest, not unmingled with regret that he had thus gone, and haply a hint or two to put Flora in mind of her coldness to the haughty stranger. “Well, but my dear father, where is Isabella all this time?” said Flora, with much sweetness, and no inconsiderable emotion.

“And what has that to do with the departure of Lord Gerald de Brook? who, among the fox-hunting gentry of his own country, would be said to have ‘stolen away,’ but, in our plain language, may, I fear, be said to be ‘scorned away.’” As he uttered the last part

of this sentence, he fixed a very scrutinizing look upon his daughter. It produced nothing, and revealed nothing ; for, in the same strain of feeling, she said :—

“ Nothing, my dear father, but that they have happened at the same time, and possibly——”

“ Possibly ! nonsense !” said her father, interrupting her, and at the same time endeavouring to interrupt the suspicion which he was now ashamed of himself for not having at first entertained ; “ but how would she go with him, who so lately made so honourable a proposal to you ?” “ And was so very little affected by the rejection of it, that he has derided me in every word and every look since,” said Flora.

Conviction gained upon the chief ; but he threw up, at the very point of surrendering, a defence of despair,—“ She had no horse,” said he.

“ Lord Gerald had *three* horses,” replied Flora.—“ And the deevil a foot o’ them is in the stable noo !” exclaimed the henchman, who, at that moment, entered the room.

Conviction now set its seal to the black deed. Flora, who had borne up, in hopes that her fears might be unfounded, now gave way to grief for the fall and loss of a relation, who, though lately estranged, had once been the fond companion of her amusements, and her faithful confidant in her honourable love. She fainted as the words, “ Poor lost Isabella !” escaped

from her blanching lips,—and had to be carried to her own chamber.

The brow of Glenmore darkened for revenge ; the clan were summoned ; and a pursuit of the fugitives was agreed upon. Battle was to be offered forthwith, in case of resistance ; and the great Glenmore vowed not to return to his dwelling ere he had seen a marriage performed, and the stain wiped from the name and honour of his race. So much time, however, elapsed in preparing for the pursuit, that the fugitives had the start by at least twelve hours, and even then they were better mounted than their pursuers. The road was, however, taken, without any certainty of its being the right one ; and, after an hour or two of

hard riding, they met Donald Kennedy, who told them that they were wrong, for “ twa shentlemens in ta tartan o’ Clanmore,” whom he took for “ ta great Glenmore hersel, an’ the bra’ bonnie laird of Strathantin, come hame wi’ a kistfu’ o’ siller to coort ta leddy Flora, were riding fast for Innerneish along wi’ ta leddy hersel, to be married in ta mickle kirk.”

We need not inform the reader of the part which Donald Kennedy had played in this game ; nor who was the *bodach glas* that had a second time alarmed old Rory ; but Glenmore and his clansmen were not in possession of this information ; so they listened to the tale, and pursued the wrong road, till hunger and mutiny as to the faith

to be put in Donald, brought them and night to the castle together. It is true, indeed, that neither the hunger nor the mutiny would have damped the ardour of Glenmore, or prevented him from following the deceiver of his clanswoman ; but it chanced that Donald, who had undertaken to pilot them the (wrong) way, hinted that “ Ta Sassenach deevil might be comin’ to the castle when they were frae hame, and brought awaa ta led dy Flora hersel.” There was danger in this ; and they sped their return as rapidly as they had advanced.

Neither the honour, nor the military skill of the clan, however, were to be foiled in this single enterprise ; for, though the chief was constrained to remain at home with his daughter, retain-

ing as many men as should keep both her and the castle from the visitation of any more *Sassenach* lords, or “most particular friends” of Edinburgh, writers to the signet; yet Castlecreaghy swore upon his dirk, to “follow the *limmer* to the world’s end, and force *her*, dead or alive, to make an honest woman of the chief’s kinswoman and relation.”

But the protecting powers of Glenmore were destined soon to be paralysed. His anxiety, his fatigue, the wretched prospects which hung over him, so preyed upon him, that he was soon stretched upon a sick bed, and delirious from the violence of an inflammatory fever, which, to a man of his temper and habits, was of the most im-

minent danger. Every attention which a child could bestow upon a parent, was bestowed upon the suffering Glenmore by his suffering daughter; but to all consciousness, and, indeed, to all hope, it was bestowed in vain; nor was the skill of the Highland Esculapiuses of more avail. The chief's fever continued to increase, and the aberration of his mind knew no moment of interval; and the only articulate sounds which he for many days uttered, were, "What has become of my poor orphan Isabella? and what shall become of my poor orphan Flora?"

While the chief of the Clanmore thus lay upon a bed of fearful sickness, his clansmen pursued their journey to Inverness, but without hearing of one

trace of the fugitives ; and long ere they arrived, the shepherd brought to Flora a letter, which Donald Kennedy had given him, saying he had it from a *Sassenach*, upon a great horse. It had no date or post-mark, but it was in the hand-writing of Isabella.

“ MY DEAR AND AMIABLE COUSIN,

“ Forgive your poor, but now happy Isabella’s want of candour ; forgive her husband’s seeming inconsistency. They were practised to try my constancy, and please my Gerald, who, though the wildest, is the kindest of men. Bless Glenmore for me. Tell him that my Gerald blesses him, and blesses you, for having made this

addition to his happiness. He is the friend of the orphan, and the orphan's friend will never desert him. I can write no more, for my husband calls me. The smiles of heaven be upon your roof. Your

ISABELLA.

“ P. S. Address to the Countess de Brook, St. James's Hotel, London.”

Flora was so delighted with this *genuine* letter, that she did not analyze it more carefully ; and she was more delighted, when, upon entering the chamber of her sick father, his reason had returned. He called her to his bed-side, heard the letter with approbation, ordered wine, drank to the

health of Lord and Lady de Brooke, and gave orders that the pursuit should be given up. Flora was more overjoyed at the rapidity of his recovery than she had been cast down at the soreness of his malady; and she was about to leave the room for the purpose of communicating the pleasant tidings, when he called her back, to lay something on his feet, for they were very cold. At this moment, the light fell upon the chief's face more fully than it had for some time done, and his eye seemed intently fixed upon the picture of Flora's mother. Floraspoke to him, —his lips moved, but not his eye, and there was no voice. She felt his hand —it was chilly; his forehead—it was bedewed with cold and clammy drops;

his breast—but no heart beat there !
Glenmore had paid Nature's last debt ;
and his orphan daughter was the child
of sorrow not to be told.

END OF VOL. I.