

**ВАЛЬТЕР
СКОТТ**

THE HEART OF
MID-LOTHIAN,
VOLUME 2

Вальтер Скотт

The Heart of Mid-Lothian, Volume 2

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Walter Scott

The Heart of Mid-Lothian, Volume 2

CHAPTER FIRST

Isab. – Alas! what poor ability's in me
To do him good?

Lucio. – Assay the power you have.

Measure for Measure.

When Mrs. Saddletree entered the apartment in which her guests had shrouded their misery, she found the window darkened. The feebleness which followed his long swoon had rendered it necessary to lay the old man in bed. The curtains were drawn around him, and Jeanie sate motionless by the side of the bed. Mrs. Saddletree was a woman of kindness, nay, of feeling, but not of delicacy. She opened the half-shut window, drew aside the curtain, and, taking her kinsman by the hand, exhorted him to sit up, and bear his sorrow like a good man, and a Christian man, as he was. But when she quitted his hand, it fell powerless by his side, nor did he attempt the least reply.

"Is all over?" asked Jeanie, with lips and cheeks as pale as ashes, – "and is there nae hope for her?"

"Nane, or next to nane," said Mrs. Saddletree; "I heard the Judge-carle say it with my ain ears – It was a burning shame to see sae mony o' them set up yonder in their red gowns and black gowns, and to take the life o' a bit senseless lassie. I had never muckle broo o' my gudeman's gossips, and now I like them waur than ever. The only wiselike thing I heard onybody say, was decent Mr. John Kirk of Kirk-knowe, and he wussed them just to get the king's mercy, and nae mair about it. But he spake to unreasonable folk – he might just hae kept his breath to hae blawn on his porridge."

"But *can* the king gie her mercy?" said Jeanie, earnestly. "Some folk tell me he canna gie mercy in cases of mur in cases like hers."

"*Can* he gie mercy, hinny? – I weel I wot he can, when he likes. There was young Singlesword, that stickit the Laird of Ballenclench, and Captain Hackum, the Englishman, that killed Lady Colgrain's gudeman, and the Master of Saint Clair, that shot the twa Shaws,¹ and mony mair in my time – to be sure they were gentle blood, and had their, kin to speak for them – And there was Jock Porteous the other day – I'se warrant there's mercy, an folk could win at it."

"Porteous?" said Jeanie; "very true – I forget a' that I suld maist mind. – Fare ye weel, Mrs. Saddletree; and may ye never want a friend in the hour of distress!"

"Will ye no stay wi' your father, Jeanie, bairn? – Ye had better," said Mrs. Saddletree.

"I will be wanted ower yonder," indicating the Tolbooth with her hand, "and I maun leave him now, or I will never be able to leave him. I ferna for his life – I ken how strong-hearted he is – I ken it," she said, laying her hand on her bosom, "by my ain heart at this minute."

"Weel, hinny, if ye think it's for the best, better he stay here and rest him, than gang back to St. Leonard's."

"Muckle better – muckle better – God bless you! – God bless you! – At no rate let him gang till ye hear frae me," said Jeanie.

"But ye'll be back belive?" said Mrs. Saddletree, detaining her; "they winna let ye stay yonder, hinny."

¹ [In 1828, the Author presented to the Roxburgh Club a curious volume containing the "Proceedings in the Court-Martial held upon John, Master of Sinclair, for the murder of Ensign Schaw, and Captain Schaw, 17th October 1708."]

"But I maun gang to St. Leonard's – there's muckle to be dune, and little time to do it in – And I have friends to speak to – God bless you – take care of my father."

She had reached the door of the apartment, when, suddenly turning, she came back, and knelt down by the bedside. – "O father, gie me your blessing – I dare not go till ye bless me. Say but 'God bless ye, and prosper ye, Jeanie' – try but to say that!"

Instinctively, rather than by an exertion of intellect, the old man murmured a prayer, that "purchased and promised blessings might be multiplied upon her."

"He has blessed mine errand," said his daughter, rising from her knees, "and it is borne in upon my mind that I shall prosper."

So saying, she left the room.

Mrs. Saddle-tree looked after her, and shook her head. "I wish she binna roving, poor thing – There's something queer about a' thae Deanses. I dinna like folk to be sae muckle better than other folk – seldom comes gude o't. But if she's gaun to look after the kye at St. Leonard's, that's another story; to be sure they maun be sorted. – Grizzie, come up here, and tak tent to the honest auld man, and see he wants naething. – Ye silly tawpie" (addressing the maid-servant as she entered), "what garr'd ye busk up your cockemony that gate? – I think there's been enough the day to gie an awfa' warning about your cockups and your fallal duds – see what they a' come to," etc. etc. etc.

Leaving the good lady to her lecture upon worldly vanities, we must transport our reader to the cell in which the unfortunate Effie Deans was now immured, being restricted of several liberties which she had enjoyed before the sentence was pronounced.

When she had remained about an hour in the state of stupified horror so natural in her situation, she was disturbed by the opening of the jarring bolts of her place of confinement, and Ratcliffe showed himself. "It's your sister," he said, "wants to speak t'ye, Effie."

"I canna see naebody," said Effie, with the hasty irritability which misery had rendered more acute – "I canna see naebody, and least of a' her – Bid her take care o' the auld man – I am naething to ony o' them now, nor them to me."

"She says she maun see ye, though," said Ratcliffe; and Jeanie, rushing into the apartment, threw her arms round her sister's neck, who writhed to extricate herself from her embrace.

"What signifies coming to greet ower me," said poor Effie, "when you have killed me? – killed me, when a word of your mouth would have saved me – killed me, when I am an innocent creature – innocent of that guilt at least – and me that wad hae wared body and soul to save your finger from being hurt?"

"You shall not die," said Jeanie, with enthusiastic firmness; "say what you like o' me – think what you like o' me – only promise – for I doubt your proud heart – that ye wanna harm yourself, and you shall not die this shameful death."

"A *shameful* death I will not die, Jeanie, lass. I have that in my heart – though it has been ower kind a ane – that wanna bide shame. Gae hame to our father, and think nae mair on me – I have eat my last earthly meal."

"Oh, this was what I feared!" said Jeanie.

"Hout, tout, hinny," said Ratcliffe; "it's but little ye ken o' thae things. Ane aye thinks at the first dinnle o' the sentence, they hae heart enough to die rather than bide out the sax weeks; but they aye bide the sax weeks out for a' that. I ken the gate o't weel; I hae fronted the doomster three times, and here I stand, Jim Ratcliffe, for a' that. Had I tied my napkin strait the first time, as I had a great mind till't – and it was a' about a bit grey cowl, wasna worth ten pund sterling – where would I have been now?"

"And how *did* you escape?" said Jeanie, the fates of this man, at first so odious to her, having acquired a sudden interest in her eyes from their correspondence with those of her sister.

"*How* did I escape?" said Ratcliffe, with a knowing wink, – "I tell ye I 'scapit in a way that naebody will escape from this Tolbooth while I keep the keys."

"My sister shall come out in the face of the sun," said Jeanie; "I will go to London, and beg her pardon from the king and queen. If they pardoned Porteous, they may pardon her; if a sister asks a sister's life on her bended knees, they will pardon her – they *shall* pardon her – and they will win a thousand hearts by it."

Effie listened in bewildered astonishment, and so earnest was her sister's enthusiastic assurance, that she almost involuntarily caught a gleam of hope; but it instantly faded away.

"Ah, Jeanie! the king and queen live in London, a thousand miles from this – far ayont the saut sea; I'll be gane before ye win there."

"You are mistaen," said Jeanie; "it is no sae far, and they go to it by land; I learned something about thae things from Reuben Butler."

"Ah, Jeanie! ye never learned onything but what was gude frae the folk ye keepit company wi'; but! – but!" – she wrung her hands and wept bitterly.

"Dinna think on that now," said Jeanie; "there will be time for that if the present space be redeemed. Fare ye weel. Unless I die by the road, I will see the king's face that gies grace – O, sir" (to Ratcliffe), "be kind to her – She ne'er ken'd what it was to need a stranger's kindness till now. – Fareweel – fareweel, Effie! – Dinna speak to me – I maunna greet now – my head's ower dizzy already!"

She tore herself from her sister's arms, and left the cell. Ratcliffe followed her, and beckoned her into a small room. She obeyed his signal, but not without trembling.

"What's the fule thing shaking for?" said he; "I mean nothing but civility to you. D – n me, I respect you, and I can't help it. You have so much spunk, that d – n me, but I think there's some chance of your carrying the day. But you must not go to the king till you have made some friend; try the duke – try MacCallummore; he's Scotland's friend – I ken that the great folks dinna muckle like him – but they fear him, and that will serve your purpose as weel. D'ye ken naebody wad gie ye a letter to him?"

"Duke of Argyle!" said Jeanie, recollecting herself suddenly, "what was he to that Argyle that suffered in my father's time – in the persecution?"

"His son or grandson, I'm thinking," said Ratcliffe, "but what o' that?"

"Thank God!" said Jeanie, devoutly clasping her hands.

"You whigs are aye thanking God for something," said the ruffian. "But hark ye, hinny, I'll tell ye a secret. Ye may meet wi' rough customers on the Border, or in the Midland, afore ye get to Lunnon. Now, deil ane o' them will touch an acquaintance o' Daddie Ratton's; for though I am retired frae public practice, yet they ken I can do a gude or an ill turn yet – and deil a gude fellow that has been but a twelvemonth on the lay, be he ruffler or padder, but he knows my gybe² as well as the jark³ of e'er a queer cuffin⁴ in England – and there's rogue's Latin for you."

It was indeed totally unintelligible to Jeanie Deans, who was only impatient to escape from him. He hastily scrawled a line or two on a dirty piece of paper, and said to her, as she drew back when he offered it, "Hey! – what the deil – it wanna bite you, my lass – if it does nae gude, it can do nae ill. But I wish you to show it, if you have ony fasherie wi' ony o' St. Nicholas's clerks."

"Alas!" said she, "I do not understand what you mean."

"I mean, if ye fall among thieves, my precious, – that is a Scripture phrase, if ye will hae ane – the bauldest of them will ken a scart o' my guse feather. And now awa wi' ye – and stick to Argyle; if onybody can do the job, it maun be him."

After casting an anxious look at the grated windows and blackened walls of the old Tolbooth, and another scarce less anxious at the hospitable lodging of Mrs. Saddletree, Jeanie turned her back on that quarter, and soon after on the city itself. She reached St. Leonard's Crag without meeting

² Pass.

³ Seal.

⁴ Justice of Peace.

any one whom she knew, which, in the state of her mind, she considered as a great blessing. "I must do naething," she thought, as she went along, "that can soften or weaken my heart – it's ower weak already for what I hae to do. I will think and act as firmly as I can, and speak as little."

There was an ancient servant, or rather cottar, of her father's, who had lived under him for many years, and whose fidelity was worthy of full confidence. She sent for this woman, and explaining to her that the circumstances of her family required that she should undertake a journey, which would detain her for some weeks from home, she gave her full instructions concerning the management of the domestic concerns in her absence. With a precision, which, upon reflection, she herself could not help wondering at, she described and detailed the most minute steps which were to be taken, and especially such as were necessary for her father's comfort. "It was probable," she said, "that he would return to St. Leonard's to-morrow! certain that he would return very soon – all must be in order for him. He had enough to distress him, without being fashed about warldly matters."

In the meanwhile she toiled busily, along with May Hettly, to leave nothing unarranged.

It was deep in the night when all these matters were settled; and when they had partaken of some food, the first which Jeanie had tasted on that eventful day, May Hettly, whose usual residence was a cottage at a little distance from Deans's house, asked her young mistress, whether she would not permit her to remain in the house all night? "Ye hae had an awfu' day," she said, "and sorrow and fear are but bad companions in the watches of the night, as I hae heard the gudeman say himself."

"They are ill companions indeed," said Jeanie; "but I maun learn to abide their presence, and better begin in the house than in the field."

She dismissed her aged assistant accordingly, – for so slight was the gradation in their rank of life, that we can hardly term May a servant, – and proceeded to make a few preparations for her journey.

The simplicity of her education and country made these preparations very brief and easy. Her tartan screen served all the purposes of a riding-habit and of an umbrella; a small bundle contained such changes of linen as were absolutely necessary. Barefooted, as Sancho says, she had come into the world, and barefooted she proposed to perform her pilgrimage; and her clean shoes and change of snow-white thread stockings were to be reserved for special occasions of ceremony. She was not aware, that the English habits of comfort attach an idea of abject misery to the idea of a barefooted traveller; and if the objection of cleanliness had been made to the practice, she would have been apt to vindicate herself upon the very frequent ablutions to which, with Mahometan scrupulosity, a Scottish damsel of some condition usually subjects herself. Thus far, therefore, all was well.

From an oaken press, or cabinet, in which her father kept a few old books, and two or three bundles of papers, besides his ordinary accounts and receipts, she sought out and extracted from a parcel of notes of sermons, calculations of interest, records of dying speeches of the martyrs, and the like, one or two documents which she thought might be of some use to her upon her mission. But the most important difficulty remained behind, and it had not occurred to her until that very evening. It was the want of money; without which it was impossible she could undertake so distant a journey as she now meditated.

David Deans, as we have said, was easy, and even opulent in his circumstances. But his wealth, like that of the patriarchs of old, consisted in his kine and herds, and in two or three sums lent out at interest to neighbours or relatives, who, far from being in circumstances to pay anything to account of the principal sums, thought they did all that was incumbent on them when, with considerable difficulty, they discharged the "annual rent." To these debtors it would be in vain, therefore, to apply, even with her father's concurrence; nor could she hope to obtain such concurrence, or assistance in any mode, without such a series of explanations and debates as she felt might deprive her totally of the power of taking the step, which, however daring and hazardous, she felt was absolutely necessary for trying the last chance in favour of her sister. Without departing from filial reverence, Jeanie had an inward conviction that the feelings of her father, however just, and upright, and honourable, were

too little in unison with the spirit of the time to admit of his being a good judge of the measures to be adopted in this crisis. Herself more flexible in manner, though no less upright in principle, she felt that to ask his consent to her pilgrimage would be to encounter the risk of drawing down his positive prohibition, and under that she believed her journey could not be blessed in its progress and event. Accordingly, she had determined upon the means by which she might communicate to him her undertaking and its purpose, shortly after her actual departure. But it was impossible to apply to him for money without altering this arrangement, and discussing fully the propriety of her journey; pecuniary assistance from that quarter, therefore, was laid out of the question.

It now occurred to Jeanie that she should have consulted with Mrs. Saddletree on this subject. But, besides the time that must now necessarily be lost in recurring to her assistance Jeanie internally revolted from it. Her heart acknowledged the goodness of Mrs. Saddletree's general character, and the kind interest she took in their family misfortunes; but still she felt that Mrs. Saddletree was a woman of an ordinary and worldly way of thinking, incapable, from habit and temperament, of taking a keen or enthusiastic view of such a resolution as she had formed; and to debate the point with her, and to rely upon her conviction of its propriety, for the means of carrying it into execution, would have been gall and wormwood.

Butler, whose assistance she might have been assured of, was greatly poorer than herself. In these circumstances, she formed a singular resolution for the purpose of surmounting this difficulty, the execution of which will form the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER SECOND

'Tis the voice of the sluggard, I've heard him complain,
"You have waked me too soon, I must slumber again;"
As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed,
Turns his side, and his shoulders, and his heavy head.

Dr. Watts.

The mansion-house of Dumbiedikes, to which we are now to introduce our readers, lay three or four miles – no matter for the exact topography – to the southward of St. Leonard's. It had once borne the appearance of some little celebrity; for the "auld laird," whose humours and pranks were often mentioned in the ale-houses for about a mile round it, wore a sword, kept a good horse, and a brace of greyhounds; brawled, swore, and betted at cock-fights and horse-matches; followed Somerville of Drum's hawks, and the Lord Ross's hounds, and called himself *point devise* a gentleman. But the line had been veiled of its splendour in the present proprietor, who cared for no rustic amusements, and was as saying, timid, and retired, as his father had been at once grasping and selfishly extravagant – daring, wild, and intrusive.

Dumbiedikes was what is called in Scotland a single house; that is, having only one room occupying its whole depth from back to front, each of which single apartments was illuminated by six or eight cross lights, whose diminutive panes and heavy frames permitted scarce so much light to enter as shines through one well-constructed modern window. This inartificial edifice, exactly such as a child would build with cards, had a steep roof flagged with coarse grey stones instead of slates; a half-circular turret, battlemented, or, to use the appropriate phrase, bartizan'd on the top, served as a case for a narrow turnpike stair, by which an ascent was gained from storey to storey; and at the bottom of the said turret was a door studded with large-headed nails. There was no lobby at the bottom of the tower, and scarce a landing-place opposite to the doors which gave access to the apartments. One or two low and dilapidated outhouses, connected by a courtyard wall equally ruinous, surrounded the mansion. The court had been paved, but the flags being partly displaced and partly renewed, a gallant crop of docks and thistles sprung up between them, and the small garden, which opened by a postern through the wall, seemed not to be in a much more orderly condition. Over the low-arched gateway which led into the yard there was a carved stone, exhibiting some attempt at armorial bearings; and above the inner entrance hung, and had hung, for many years, the mouldering hatchment, which announced that umquhile Laurence Dumbie of Dumbiedikes had been gathered to his fathers in Newbattle kirkyard. The approach to this palace of pleasure was by a road formed by the rude fragments of stone gathered from the fields, and it was surrounded by ploughed, but unenclosed land. Upon a baulk, that is, an unploughed ridge of land interposed among the corn, the Laird's trusty palfrey was tethered by the head, and picking a meal of grass. The whole argued neglect and discomfort; the consequence, however, of idleness and indifference, not of poverty.

In this inner court, not without a sense of bashfulness and timidity, stood Jeanie Deans, at an early hour in a fine spring morning. She was no heroine of romance, and therefore looked with some curiosity and interest on the mansion-house and domains, of which, it might at that moment occur to her, a little encouragement, such as women of all ranks know by instinct how to apply, might have made her mistress. Moreover, she was no person of taste beyond her time, rank, and country, and certainly thought the house of Dumbiedikes, though inferior to Holyrood House, or the palace at Dalkeith, was still a stately structure in its way, and the land a "very bonny bit, if it were better seen to and done to." But Jeanie Deans was a plain, true-hearted, honest girl, who, while she acknowledged all the splendour of her old admirer's habitation, and the value of his property, never for a moment

harboured a thought of doing the Laird, Butler, or herself, the injustice, which many ladies of higher rank would not have hesitated to do to all three on much less temptation.

Her present errand being with the Laird, she looked round the offices to see if she could find any domestic to announce that she wished to see him. As all was silence, she ventured to open one door – it was the old Laird's dog-kennel, now deserted, unless when occupied, as one or two tubs seemed to testify, as a washing-house. She tried another – it was the rootless shed where the hawks had been once kept, as appeared from a perch or two not yet completely rotten, and a lure and jesses which were mouldering on the wall. A third door led to the coal-house, which was well stocked. To keep a very good fire was one of the few points of domestic management in which Dumbiedikes was positively active; in all other matters of domestic economy he was completely passive, and at the mercy of his housekeeper – the same buxom dame whom his father had long since bequeathed to his charge, and who, if fame did her no injustice, had feathered her nest pretty well at his expense.

Jeanie went on opening doors, like the second Calender wanting an eye, in the castle of the hundred obliging damsels, until, like the said prince errant, she came to a stable. The Highland Pegasus, Rory Bean, to which belonged the single entire stall, was her old acquaintance, whom she had seen grazing on the baulk, as she failed not to recognise by the well-known ancient riding furniture and demi-pique saddle, which half hung on the walls, half trailed on the litter. Beyond the "treviss," which formed one side of the stall, stood a cow, who turned her head and lowed when Jeanie came into the stable, an appeal which her habitual occupations enabled her perfectly to understand, and with which she could not refuse complying, by shaking down some fodder to the animal, which had been neglected like most things else in the castle of the sluggard.

While she was accommodating "the milky mother" with the food which she should have received two hours sooner, a slipshod wench peeped into the stable, and perceiving that a stranger was employed in discharging the task which she, at length, and reluctantly, had quitted her slumbers to perform, ejaculated,

"Eh, sirs! the Brownie! the Brownie!" and fled, yelling as if she had seen the devil.

To explain her terror it may be necessary to notice that the old house of Dumbiedikes had, according to report, been long haunted by a Brownie, one of those familiar spirits who were believed in ancient times to supply the deficiencies of the ordinary labourer —

Whirl the long mop, and ply the airy flail.

Certes, the convenience of such a supernatural assistance could have been nowhere more sensibly felt than in a family where the domestics were so little disposed to personal activity; yet this serving maiden was so far from rejoicing in seeing a supposed aerial substitute discharging a task which she should have long since performed herself, that she proceeded to raise the family by her screams of horror, uttered as thick as if the Brownie had been flaying her. Jeanie, who had immediately resigned her temporary occupation, and followed the yelling damsel into the courtyard, in order to undeceive and appease her, was there met by Mrs. Janet Balchristie, the favourite sultana of the last Laird, as scandal went – the housekeeper of the present. The good-looking buxom woman, betwixt forty and fifty (for such we described her at the death of the last Laird), was now a fat, red-faced, old dame of seventy, or thereabouts, fond of her place, and jealous of her authority. Conscious that her administration did not rest on so sure a basis as in the time of the old proprietor, this considerate lady had introduced into the family the screamer aforesaid, who added good features and bright eyes to the powers of her lungs. She made no conquest of the Laird, however, who seemed to live as if there was not another woman in the world but Jeanie Deans, and to bear no very ardent or overbearing affection even to her. Mrs. Janet Balchristie, notwithstanding, had her own uneasy thoughts upon the almost daily visits to St. Leonard's Crag, and often, when the Laird looked at her wistfully and paused, according to his custom before utterance, she expected him to say, "Jenny, I am gaun to change my condition;" but she was relieved by, "Jenny, I am gaun to change my shoon."

Still, however, Mrs. Balchristie regarded Jeanie Deans with no small portion of malevolence, the customary feeling of such persons towards anyone who they think has the means of doing them an injury. But she had also a general aversion to any female tolerably young, and decently well-looking, who showed a wish to approach the house of Dumbiedikes and the proprietor thereof. And as she had raised her mass of mortality out of bed two hours earlier than usual, to come to the rescue of her clamorous niece, she was in such extreme bad humour against all and sundry, that Saddletree would have pronounced that she harboured *inimicitiam contra omnes mortales*.

"Wha the deil are ye?" said the fat dame to poor Jeanie, whom she did not immediately recognise, "scouping about a decent house at sic an hour in the morning?"

"It was ane wanting to speak to the Laird," said Jeanie, who felt something of the intuitive terror which she had formerly entertained for this termagant, when she was occasionally at Dumbiedikes on business of her father's.

"Ane! – And what sort of ane are ye! – hae ye nae name? – D'ye think his honour has naething else to do than to speak wi' ilka idle tramper that comes about the town, and him in his bed yet, honest man?"

"Dear Mrs. Balchristie," replied Jeanie, in a submissive tone, "d'ye no mind me? – d'ye no mind Jeanie Deans?"

"Jeanie Deans!" said the termagant, in accents affecting the utmost astonishment; then, taking two strides nearer to her, she peered into her face with a stare of curiosity, equally scornful and malignant – "I say Jeanie Deans indeed – Jeanie Deevil, they had better hae ca'ed ye! – A bonny spot o' wark your tittie and you hae made out, murdering ae puir wean, and your light limmer of a sister's to be hanged for't, as weel she deserves! – And the like o' you to come to ony honest man's house, and want to be into a decent bachelor gentleman's room at this time in the morning, and him in his bed! – Gae wa', gae wa'!"

Jeanie was struck mute with shame at the unfeeling brutality of this accusation, and could not even find words to justify herself from the vile construction put upon her visit. When Mrs. Balchristie, seeing her advantage, continued in the same tone, "Come, come, bundle up your pipes and tramp awa wi' ye! – ye may be seeking a father to another wean for ony thing I ken. If it warn that your father, auld David Deans, had been a tenant on our land, I would cry up the men-folk, and hae ye dookit in the burn for your impudence."

Jeanie had already turned her back, and was walking towards the door of the court-yard, so that Mrs. Balchristie, to make her last threat impressively audible to her, had raised her stentorian voice to its utmost pitch. But, like many a general, she lost the engagement by pressing her advantage too far.

The Laird had been disturbed in his morning slumbers by the tones of Mrs. Balchristie's objurgation, sounds in themselves by no means uncommon, but very remarkable, in respect to the early hour at which they were now heard. He turned himself on the other side, however, in hopes the squall would blow by, when, in the course of Mrs. Balchristie's second explosion of wrath, the name of Deans distinctly struck the tympanum of his ear. As he was, in some degree, aware of the small portion of benevolence with which his housekeeper regarded the family at St. Leonard's, he instantly conceived that some message from thence was the cause of this untimely ire, and getting out of his bed, he slipt as speedily as possible into an old brocaded night-gown, and some other necessary garments, clapped on his head his father's gold-laced hat (for though he was seldom seen without it, yet it is proper to contradict the popular report that he slept in it, as Don Quixote did in his helmet), and opening the window of his bedroom, beheld, to his great astonishment, the well-known figure of Jeanie Deans herself retreating from his gate; while his housekeeper, with arms a-kimbo, fist clenched and extended, body erect, and head shaking with rage, sent after her a volley of Billingsgate oaths. His choler rose in proportion to the surprise, and, perhaps, to the disturbance of his repose. "Hark ye," he exclaimed from the window, "ye auld limb of Satan – wha the deil gies you commission to guide an honest man's daughter that gate?"

Mrs. Balchristie was completely caught in the manner. She was aware, from the unusual warmth with which the Laird expressed himself, that he was quite serious in this matter, and she knew, that with all his indolence of nature, there were points on which he might be provoked, and that, being provoked, he had in him something dangerous, which her wisdom taught her to fear accordingly. She began, therefore, to retract her false step as fast as she could. "She was but speaking for the house's credit, and she couldna think of disturbing his honour in the morning sae early, when the young woman might as weel wait or call again; and to be sure, she might make a mistake between the twa sisters, for ane o' them wasna sae creditable an acquaintance."

"Haud your peace, ye auld jade," said Dumbiedikes; "the warst quean e'er stude in their shoon may ca' you cousin, an a' be true that I have heard. – Jeanie, my woman, gang into the parlour – but stay, that winna be redd up yet – wait there a minute till I come down to let ye in – Dinna mind what Jenny says to ye."

"Na, na," said Jenny, with a laugh of affected heartiness, "never mind me, lass – a' the world kens my bark's waur than my bite – if ye had had an appointment wi' the Laird, ye might hae tauld me – I am nae uncivil person – gang your ways in by, hinny," and she opened the door of the house with a master-key.

"But I had no appointment wi' the Laird," said Jeanie, drawing back; "I want just to speak twa words to him, and I wad rather do it standing here, Mrs. Balchristie."

"In the open court-yard! – Na, na, that wad never do, lass; we mauna guide ye that gate neither – And how's that douce honest man, your father?"

Jeanie was saved the pain of answering this hypocritical question by the appearance of the Laird himself.

"Gang in and get breakfast ready," said he to his housekeeper – "and, d'ye hear, breakfast wi' us yoursell – ye ken how to manage thae porringers of tea-water – and, hear ye, see abune a' that there's a gude fire. – Weel, Jeanie, my woman, gang in by – gang in by, and rest ye."

"Na, Laird," Jeanie replied, endeavouring as much as she could to express herself with composure, notwithstanding she still trembled, "I canna gang in – I have a lang day's darg afore me – I maun be twenty mile o' gate the night yet, if feet will carry me."

"Guide and deliver us! – twenty mile – twenty mile on your feet!" ejaculated Dumbiedikes, whose walks were of a very circumscribed diameter, – "Ye maun never think o' that – come in by."

"I canna do that, Laird," replied Jeanie; "the twa words I have to say to ye I can say here; forby that Mrs. Balchristie"

"The deil flee awa wi' Mrs. Balchristie," said Dumbiedikes, "and he'll hae a heavy lading o' her! I tell ye, Jeanie Deans, I am a man of few words, but I am laird at hame, as well as in the field; deil a brute or body about my house but I can manage when I like, except Rory Bean, my powny; but I can seldom be at the plague, an it binna when my bluid's up."

"I was wanting to say to ye, Laird," said Jeanie, who felt the necessity of entering upon her business, "that I was gaun a lang journey, outby of my father's knowledge."

"Outby his knowledge, Jeanie! – Is that right? Ye maun think ot again – it's no right," said Dumbiedikes, with a countenance of great concern.

"If I were ance at Lunnon," said Jeanie, in exculpation, "I am amaist sure I could get means to speak to the queen about my sister's life."

"Lunnon – and the queen – and her sister's life!" said Dumbiedikes, whistling for very amazement – "the lassie's demented."

"I am no out o' my mind," said she, "and sink or swim, I am determined to gang to Lunnon, if I suld beg my way frae door to door – and so I maun, unless ye wad lend me a small sum to pay my expenses – little thing will do it; and ye ken my father's a man of substance, and wad see nae man, far less you, Laird, come to loss by me."

Dumbiedikes, on comprehending the nature of this application, could scarce trust his ears – he made no answer whatever, but stood with his eyes rivetted on the ground.

"I see ye are no for assisting me, Laird," said Jeanie, "sae fare ye weel – and gang and see my poor father as aften as ye can – he will be lonely enough now."

"Where is the silly bairn gaun?" said Dumbiedikes; and, laying hold of her hand, he led her into the house. "It's no that I didna think o't before," he said, "but it stack in my throat."

Thus speaking to himself, he led her into an old-fashioned parlour, shut the door behind them, and fastened it with a bolt. While Jeanie, surprised at this manoeuvre, remained as near the door as possible, the Laird quitted her hand, and pressed upon a spring lock fixed in an oak panel in the wainscot, which instantly slipped aside. An iron strong-box was discovered in a recess of the wall; he opened this also, and pulling out two or three drawers, showed that they were filled with leathern bags full of gold and silver coin.

"This is my bank, Jeanie lass," he said, looking first at her and then at the treasure, with an air of great complacency, – "nane o' your goldsmith's bills for me, – they bring folk to ruin."

Then, suddenly changing his tone, he resolutely said, – "Jeanie, I will make ye Lady Dumbiedikes afore the sun sets and ye may ride to Lunnon in your ain coach, if ye like."

"Na, Laird," said Jeanie, "that can never be – my father's grief – my sister's situation – the discredit to you"

"That's *my* business," said Dumbiedikes; "ye wad say naething about that if ye werena a fule – and yet I like ye the better for't – ae wise body's enough in the married state. But if your heart's ower fu', take what siller will serve ye, and let it be when ye come back again – as gude syne as sune."

"But, Laird," said Jeanie, who felt the necessity of being explicit with so extraordinary a lover, "I like another man better than you, and I canna marry ye."

"Another man better than me, Jeanie!" said Dumbiedikes; "how is that possible? It's no possible, woman – ye hae ken'd me sae lang."

"Ay but, Laird," said Jeanie, with persevering simplicity, "I hae ken'd him langer."

"Langer! It's no possible!" exclaimed the poor Laird. "It canna be; ye were born on the land. O Jeanie woman, ye haena lookit – ye haena seen the half o' the gear." He drew out another drawer – "A' gowd, Jeanie, and there's bands for siller lent – And the rental book, Jeanie – clear three hunder sterling – deil a wadset, heritable band, or burden – Ye haena lookit at them, woman – And then my mother's wardrobe, and my grandmother's forby – silk gowns wad stand on their ends, their pearl-lace as fine as spiders' webs, and rings and ear-rings to the boot of a' that – they are a' in the chamber of deas – Oh, Jeanie, gang up the stair and look at them!"

But Jeanie held fast her integrity, though beset with temptations, which perhaps the Laird of Dumbiedikes did not greatly err in supposing were those most affecting to her sex.

"It canna be, Laird – I have said it – and I canna break my word till him, if ye wad gie me the haille barony of Dalkeith, and Lugton into the bargain."

"Your word to *him*," said the Laird, somewhat pettishly; "but wha is he, Jeanie? – wha is he? – I haena heard his name yet – Come now, Jeanie, ye are but queering us – I am no trowing that there is sic a ane in the warld – ye are but making fashion – What is he? – wha is he?"

"Just Reuben Butler, that's schulemaster at Liberton," said Jeanie.

"Reuben Butler! Reuben Butler!" echoed the Laird of Dumbiedikes, pacing the apartment in high disdain, – "Reuben Butler, the dominie at Liberton – and a dominie depute too! – Reuben, the son of my cottar! – Very weel, Jeanie lass, wilfu' woman will hae her way – Reuben Butler! he hasna in his pouch the value o' the auld black coat he wears – But it disna signify." And as he spoke, he shut successively and with vehemence the drawers of his treasury. "A fair offer, Jeanie, is nae cause of feud – Ae man may bring a horse to the water, but twenty winna gar him drink – And as for wasting my substance on other folk's joes"

There was something in the last hint that nettled Jeanie's honest pride. – "I was begging nane frae your honour," she said; "least of a' on sic a score as ye pit it on. – Gude morning to ye, sir; ye hae been kind to my father, and it isna in my heart to think otherwise than kindly of you."

So saying, she left the room without listening to a faint "But, Jeanie – Jeanie – stay, woman!" and traversing the courtyard with a quick step, she set out on her forward journey, her bosom glowing with that natural indignation and shame, which an honest mind feels at having subjected itself to ask a favour, which had been unexpectedly refused. When out of the Laird's ground, and once more upon the public road, her pace slackened, her anger cooled, and anxious anticipations of the consequence of this unexpected disappointment began to influence her with other feelings. Must she then actually beg her way to London? for such seemed the alternative; or must she turn back, and solicit her father for money? and by doing so lose time, which was precious, besides the risk of encountering his positive prohibition respecting the journey! Yet she saw no medium between these alternatives; and, while she walked slowly on, was still meditating whether it were not better to return.

While she was thus in an uncertainty, she heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs, and a well-known voice calling her name. She looked round, and saw advancing towards her on a pony, whose bare back and halter assorted ill with the nightgown, slippers, and laced cocked-hat of the rider, a cavalier of no less importance than Dumbiedikes himself. In the energy of his pursuit, he had overcome even the Highland obstinacy of Rory Bean, and compelled that self-willed palfrey to canter the way his rider chose; which Rory, however, performed with all the symptoms of reluctance, turning his head, and accompanying every bound he made in advance with a sidelong motion, which indicated his extreme wish to turn round, – a manoeuvre which nothing but the constant exercise of the Laird's heels and cudgel could possibly have counteracted.

When the Laird came up with Jeanie, the first words he uttered were, – "Jeanie, they say ane shouldna aye take a woman at her first word?"

"Ay, but ye maun take me at mine, Laird," said Jeanie, looking on the ground, and walking on without a pause. – "I hae but ae word to bestow on ony body, and that's aye a true ane."

"Then," said Dumbiedikes, "at least ye suldna aye take a man at *his* first word. Ye maunna gang this wilfu' gate sillerless, come o't what like." – He put a purse into her hand. "I wad gie you Rory too, but he's as wilfu' as yoursell, and he's ower weel used to a gate that maybe he and I hae gaen ower aften, and he'll gang nae road else."

"But, Laird," said Jeanie, "though I ken my father will satisfy every penny of this siller, whatever there's o't, yet I wadna like to borrow it frae ane that maybe thinks of something mair than the paying o't back again."

"There's just twenty-five guineas o't," said Dumbiedikes, with a gentle sigh, "and whether your father pays or disna pay, I make ye free till't without another word. Gang where ye like – do what ye like – and marry a' the Butlers in the country gin ye like – And sae, gude morning to you, Jeanie."

"And God bless you, Laird, wi' mony a gude morning!" said Jeanie, her heart more softened by the unwonted generosity of this uncouth character, than perhaps Butler might have approved, had he known her feelings at that moment; "and comfort, and the Lord's peace, and the peace of the world, be with you, if we suld never meet again!"

Dumbiedikes turned and waved his hand; and his pony, much more willing to return than he had been to set out, hurried him homeward so fast, that, wanting the aid of a regular bridle, as well as of saddle and stirrups, he was too much puzzled to keep his seat to permit of his looking behind, even to give the parting glance of a forlorn swain. I am ashamed to say, that the sight of a lover, ran away with in nightgown and slippers and a laced hat, by a bare-backed Highland pony, had something in it of a sedative, even to a grateful and deserved burst of affectionate esteem. The figure of Dumbiedikes was too ludicrous not to confirm Jeanie in the original sentiments she entertained towards him.

"He's a gude creature," said she, "and a kind – it's a pity he has sae willyard a powny." And she immediately turned her thoughts to the important journey which she had commenced, reflecting

with pleasure, that, according to her habits of life and of undergoing fatigue, she was now amply or even superfluously provided with the means of encountering the expenses of the road, up and down from London, and all other expenses whatever.

CHAPTER THIRD

What strange and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a lover's head;
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

Wordsworth.

In pursuing her solitary journey, our heroine, soon after passing the house of Dumbiedikes, gained a little eminence, from which, on looking to the eastward down a prattling brook, whose meanders were shaded with straggling widows and alder trees, she could see the cottages of Woodend and Beersheba, the haunts and habitation of her early life, and could distinguish the common on which she had so often herded sheep, and the recesses of the rivulet where she had pulled rushes with Butler, to plait crowns and sceptres for her sister Effie, then a beautiful but spoiled child, of about three years old. The recollections which the scene brought with them were so bitter, that, had she indulged them, she would have sate down and relieved her heart with tears.

"But I ken'd," said Jeanie, when she gave an account of her pilgrimage, "that greeting would do but little good, and that it was mair beseeming to thank the Lord, that had showed me kindness and countenance by means of a man, that mony ca'd a Nabal, and churl, but wha was free of his gudes to me, as ever the fountain was free of the stream. And I minded the Scripture about the sin of Israel at Meribah, when the people murmured, although Moses had brought water from the dry rock that the congregation might drink and live. Sae, I wad not trust mysell with another look at puir Woodend, for the very blue reek that came out of the lum-head pat me in mind of the change of market days with us."

In this resigned and Christian temper she pursued her journey until she was beyond this place of melancholy recollections, and not distant from the village where Butler dwelt, which, with its old-fashioned church and steeple, rises among a tuft of trees, occupying the ridge of an eminence to the south of Edinburgh. At a quarter of a mile's distance is a clumsy square tower, the residence of the Laird of Liberton, who, in former times, with the habits of the predatory chivalry of Germany, is said frequently to have annoyed the city of Edinburgh, by intercepting the supplies and merchandise which came to the town from the southward.

This village, its tower, and its church, did not lie precisely in Jeanie's road towards England; but they were not much aside from it, and the village was the abode of Butler. She had resolved to see him in the beginning of her journey, because she conceived him the most proper person to write to her father concerning her resolution and her hopes. There was probably another reason latent in her affectionate bosom. She wished once more to see the object of so early and so sincere an attachment, before commencing a pilgrimage, the perils of which she did not disguise from herself, although she did not allow them so to press upon her mind as to diminish the strength and energy of her resolution. A visit to a lover from a young person in a higher rank of life than Jeanie's, would have had something forward and improper in its character. But the simplicity of her rural habits was unacquainted with these punctilious ideas of decorum, and no notion, therefore, of impropriety crossed her imagination, as, setting out upon a long journey, she went to bid adieu to an early friend.

There was still another motive that pressed upon her mind with additional force as she approached the village. She had looked anxiously for Butler in the courthouse, and had expected that, certainly, in some part of that eventful day, he would have appeared to bring such countenance and support as he could give to his old friend, and the protector of his youth, even if her own claims were laid aside.

She knew, indeed, that he was under a certain degree of restraint; but she still had hoped that he would have found means to emancipate himself from it, at least for one day. In short, the wild and wayward thoughts which Wordsworth has described as rising in an absent lover's imagination, suggested, as the only explanation of his absence, that Butler must be very ill. And so much had this wrought on her imagination, that when she approached the cottage where her lover occupied a small apartment, and which had been pointed out to her by a maiden with a milk-pail on her head, she trembled at anticipating the answer she might receive on inquiring for him.

Her fears in this case had, indeed, only hit upon the truth. Butler, whose constitution was naturally feeble, did not soon recover the fatigue of body and distress of mind which he had suffered, in consequence of the tragical events with which our narrative commenced. The painful idea that his character was breathed on by suspicion, was an aggravation to his distress.

But the most cruel addition was the absolute prohibition laid by the magistrates on his holding any communication with Deans or his family. It had unfortunately appeared likely to them, that some intercourse might be again attempted with that family by Robertson, through the medium of Butler, and this they were anxious to intercept, or prevent if possible. The measure was not meant as a harsh or injurious severity on the part of the magistrates; but, in Butler's circumstances, it pressed cruelly hard. He felt he must be suffering under the bad opinion of the person who was dearest to him, from an imputation of unkind desertion, the most alien to his nature.

This painful thought, pressing on a frame already injured, brought on a succession of slow and lingering feverish attacks, which greatly impaired his health, and at length rendered him incapable even of the sedentary duties of the school, on which his bread depended. Fortunately, old Mr. Whackbairn, who was the principal teacher of the little parochial establishment, was sincerely attached to Butler. Besides that he was sensible of his merits and value as an assistant, which had greatly raised the credit of his little school, the ancient pedagogue, who had himself been tolerably educated, retained some taste for classical lore, and would gladly relax, after the drudgery of the school was over, by conning over a few pages of Horace or Juvenal with his usher. A similarity of taste begot kindness, and accordingly he saw Butler's increasing debility with great compassion, roused up his own energies to teaching the school in the morning hours, insisted upon his assistant's reposing himself at that period, and, besides, supplied him with such comforts as the patient's situation required, and his own means were inadequate to compass.

Such was Butler's situation, scarce able to drag himself to the place where his daily drudgery must gain his daily bread, and racked with a thousand fearful anticipations concerning the fate of those who were dearest to him in the world, when the trial and condemnation of Effie Deans put the copestone upon his mental misery.

He had a particular account of these events, from a fellow-student who resided in the same village, and who, having been present on the melancholy occasion, was able to place it in all its agony of horrors before his excruciated imagination. That sleep should have visited his eyes after such a curfew-note, was impossible. A thousand dreadful visions haunted his imagination all night, and in the morning he was awaked from a feverish slumber, by the only circumstance which could have added to his distress, – the visit of an intrusive ass.

This unwelcome visitant was no other than Bartoline Saddletree. The worthy and sapient burgher had kept his appointment at MacCroskie's with Plumdamas and some other neighbours, to discuss the Duke of Argyle's speech, the justice of Effie Deans's condemnation, and the improbability of her obtaining a reprieve. This sage conclave disputed high and drank deep, and on the next morning Bartoline felt, as he expressed it, as if his head was like a "confused progress of writs."

To bring his reflective powers to their usual serenity, Saddletree resolved to take a morning's ride upon a certain hackney, which he, Plumdamas, and another honest shopkeeper, combined to maintain by joint subscription, for occasional jaunts for the purpose of business or exercise. As Saddletree had two children boarded with Whackbairn, and was, as we have seen, rather fond of

Butler's society, he turned his palfrey's head towards Liberton, and came, as we have already said, to give the unfortunate usher that additional vexation, of which Imogene complains so feelingly, when she says, —

"I'm sprighted with a fool – Sprighted and anger'd worse."

If anything could have added gall to bitterness, it was the choice which Saddletree made of a subject for his prosing harangues, being the trial of Effie Deans, and the probability of her being executed. Every word fell on Butler's ear like the knell of a death-bell, or the note of a screech-owl.

Jeanie paused at the door of her lover's humble abode upon hearing the loud and pompous tones of Saddletree sounding from the inner apartment, "Credit me, it will be sae, Mr. Butler. Brandy cannot save her. She maun gang down the Bow wi' the lad in the pioted coat⁵ at her heels. —

I am sorry for the lassie, but the law, sir, maun hae its course —

Vivat Rex,
Currat Lex,

as the poet has it, in whilk of Horace's odes I know not."

Here Butler groaned, in utter impatience of the brutality and ignorance which Bartoline had contrived to amalgamate into one sentence. But Saddletree, like other prozers, was blessed with a happy obtuseness of perception concerning the unfavourable impression which he sometimes made on his auditors. He proceeded to deal forth his scraps of legal knowledge without mercy, and concluded by asking Butler, with great self-complacency, "Was it na a pity my father didna send me to Utrecht? Havena I missed the chance to turn out as *clarissimus* an *ictus*, as auld Grunwiggin himself? – Whatfor dinna ye speak, Mr. Butler? Wad I no hae been a *clarissimus ictus*?– Eh, man?"

"I really do not understand you, Mr. Saddletree," said Butler, thus pushed hard for an answer. His faint and exhausted tone of voice was instantly drowned in the sonorous bray of Bartoline.

"No understand me, man? *Ictus* is Latin for a lawyer, is it not?"

"Not that ever I heard of," answered Butler in the same dejected tone.

"The deil ye didna! – See, man, I got the word but this morning out of a memorial of Mr. Crossmyloof's – see, there it is, *ictus clarissimus et perti – peritissimus*– it's a' Latin, for it's printed in the Italian types."

"O, you mean *juris-consultus* – *Ictus* is an abbreviation for *juris-consultus*."

"Dinna tell me, man," persevered Saddletree, "there's nae abbreviates except in adjudications; and this is a' about a servitude of water-drap – that is to say, *tillicidian*⁶ (maybe ye'll say that's no Latin neither), in Mary King's Close in the High Street."

"Very likely," said poor Butler, overwhelmed by the noisy perseverance of his visitor. "I am not able to dispute with you."

"Few folk are – few folk are, Mr. Butler, though I say it that shouldna say it," returned Bartoline with great delight. "Now, it will be twa hours yet or ye're wanted in the schule, and as ye are no weel, I'll sit wi' you to divert ye, and explain t'ye the nature of a *tillicidian*. Ye maun ken, the petitioner, Mrs. Crombie, a very decent woman, is a friend of mine, and I hae stude her friend in this case, and brought her wi' credit into the court, and I doubtna that in due time she will win out o't wi' credit, win she or lose she. Ye see, being an inferior tenement or laigh house, we grant ourselves to be burdened wi' the *tillicide*, that is, that we are obligated to receive the natural water-drap of the superior tenement, sae far as the same fa's frae the heavens, or the roof of our neighbour's house, and from thence by the gutters or eaves upon our laigh tenement. But the other night comes a Highland quean of a lass, and

⁵ The executioner, in livery of black or dark grey and silver, likened by low wit to a magpie.

⁶ He meant, probably, *stillicidium*.

she flashes, God kens what, out at the eastmost window of Mrs. MacPhail's house, that's the superior tenement. I believe the auld women wad hae agreed, for Luckie MacPhail sent down the lass to tell my friend Mrs. Crombie that she had made the gardyloo out of the wrang window, out of respect for twa Highlandmen that were speaking Gaelic in the close below the right ane. But luckily for Mrs. Crombie, I just chanced to come in in time to break aff the communing, for it's a pity the point suldna be tried. We had Mrs. MacPhail into the Ten-Mark Court – The Hieland limmer of a lass wanted to swear herself free – but haud ye there, says I."

The detailed account of this important suit might have lasted until poor Butler's hour of rest was completely exhausted, had not Saddletree been interrupted by the noise of voices at the door. The woman of the house where Butler lodged, on returning with her pitcher from the well, whence she had been fetching water for the family, found our heroine Jeanie Deans standing at the door, impatient of the prolix harangue of Saddletree, yet unwilling to enter until he should have taken his leave.

The good woman abridged the period of hesitation by inquiring, "Was ye wanting the gudeman or me, lass?"

"I wanted to speak with Mr. Butler, if he's at leisure," replied Jeanie.

"Gang in by then, my woman," answered the goodwife; and opening the door of a room, she announced the additional visitor with, "Mr. Butler, here's a lass wants to speak t'ye."

The surprise of Butler was extreme, when Jeanie, who seldom stirred half-a-mile from home, entered his apartment upon this annunciation.

"Good God!" he said, starting from his chair, while alarm restored to his cheek the colour of which sickness had deprived it; "some new misfortune must have happened!"

"None, Mr. Reuben, but what you must hae heard of – but oh, ye are looking ill yoursell!" – for the "hectic of a moment" had not concealed from her affectionate eyes the ravages which lingering disease and anxiety of mind had made in her lover's person.

"No: I am well – quite well," said Butler with eagerness; "if I can do anything to assist you, Jeanie – or your father."

"Ay, to be sure," said Saddletree; "the family may be considered as limited to them twa now, just as if Effie had never been in the tailzie, puir thing. But, Jeanie lass, what brings you out to Liberton sae air in the morning, and your father lying ill in the Luckenbooths?"

"I had a message frae my father to Mr. Butler," said Jeanie with embarrassment; but instantly feeling ashamed of the fiction to which she had resorted, for her love of and veneration for truth was almost Quaker-like, she corrected herself – "That is to say, I wanted to speak with Mr. Butler about some business of my father's and puir Effie's."

"Is it law business?" said Bartoline; "because if it be, ye had better take my opinion on the subject than his."

"It is not just law business," said Jeanie, who saw considerable inconvenience might arise from letting Mr. Saddletree into the secret purpose of her journey; "but I want Mr. Butler to write a letter for me."

"Very right," said Mr. Saddletree; "and if ye'll tell me what it is about, I'll dictate to Mr. Butler as Mr. Crossmyloof does to his clerk. – Get your pen and ink in initialibus, Mr. Butler."

Jeanie looked at Butler, and wrung her hands with vexation and impatience.

"I believe, Mr. Saddletree," said Butler, who saw the necessity of getting rid of him at all events, "that Mr. Whackbairn will be somewhat affronted if you do not hear your boys called up to their lessons."

"Indeed, Mr. Butler, and that's as true; and I promised to ask a half play-day to the schule, so that the bairns might gang and see the hanging, which canna but have a pleasing effect on their young minds, seeing there is no knowing what they may come to themselves. – Odd so, I didna mind ye were here, Jeanie Deans; but ye maun use yoursell to hear the matter spoken o'. – Keep Jeanie here till I come back, Mr. Butler; I winna bide ten minutes."

And with this unwelcome assurance of an immediate return, he relieved them of the embarrassment of his presence.

"Reuben," said Jeanie, who saw the necessity of using the interval of his absence in discussing what had brought her there, "I am bound on a lang journey – I am gaun to Lunnon to ask Effie's life of the king and of the queen."

"Jeanie! you are surely not yourself," answered Butler, in the utmost surprise; – "*you* go to London —*you* address the king and queen!"

"And what for no, Reuben?" said Jeanie, with all the composed simplicity of her character; "it's but speaking to a mortal man and woman when a' is done. And their hearts maun be made o' flesh and blood like other folk's, and Effie's story wad melt them were they stane. Forby, I hae heard that they are no sic bad folk as what the Jacobites ca' them."

"Yes, Jeanie," said Butler; "but their magnificence – their retinue – the difficulty of getting audience?"

"I have thought of a' that, Reuben, and it shall not break my spirit. Nae doubt their claiaths will be very grand, wi' their crowns on their heads, and their sceptres in their hands, like the great King Ahasuerus when he sate upon his royal throne fornent the gate of his house, as we are told in Scripture. But I have that within me that will keep my heart from failing, and I am amaist sure that I will be strengthened to speak the errand I came for."

"Alas! alas!" said Butler, "the kings now-a-days do not sit in the gate to administer justice, as in patriarchal times. I know as little of courts as you do, Jeanie, by experience; but by reading and report I know, that the King of Britain does everything by means of his ministers."

"And if they be upright, God-fearing ministers," said Jeanie, "it's sae muckle the better chance for Effie and me."

"But you do not even understand the most ordinary words relating to a court," said Butler; "by the ministry is meant not clergymen, but the king's official servants."

"Nae doubt," returned Jeanie, "he maun hae a great number mair, I daur to say, than the duchess has at Dalkeith, and great folk's servants are aye mair saucy than themselves. But I'll be decently put on, and I'll offer them a trifle o' siller, as if I came to see the palace. Or, if they scruple that, I'll tell them I'm come on a business of life and death, and then they will surely bring me to speech of the king and queen?"

Butler shook his head. "O Jeanie, this is entirely a wild dream. You can never see them but through some great lord's intercession, and I think it is scarce possible even then."

"Weel, but maybe I can get that too," said Jeanie, "with a little helping from you."

"From me, Jeanie! this is the wildest imagination of all."

"Ay, but it is not, Reuben. Havena I heard you say, that your grandfather (that my father never likes to hear about) did some gude langsyne to the forbear of this MacCallummore, when he was Lord of Lorn?"

"He did so," said Butler, eagerly, "and I can prove it. – I will write to the Duke of Argyle – report speaks him a good kindly man, as he is known for a brave soldier and true patriot – I will conjure him to stand between your sister and this cruel fate. There is but a poor chance of success, but we will try all means."

"We *must* try all means," replied Jeanie; "but writing winna do it – a letter canna look, and pray, and beg, and beseech, as the human voice can do to the human heart. A letter's like the music that the ladies have for their spinets – naething but black scores, compared to the same tune played or sung. It's word of mouth maun do it, or naething, Reuben."

"You are right," said Reuben, recollecting his firmness, "and I will hope that Heaven has suggested to your kind heart and firm courage the only possible means of saving the life of this unfortunate girl. But, Jeanie, you must not take this most perilous journey alone; I have an interest in you, and I will not agree that my Jeanie throws herself away. You must even, in the present

circumstances, give me a husband's right to protect you, and I will go with you myself on this journey, and assist you to do your duty by your family."

"Alas, Reuben!" said Jeanie in her turn, "this must not be; a pardon will not gie my sister her fair fame again, or make me a bride fitting for an honest man and an usefu' minister. Wha wad mind what he said in the pu'pit, that had to wife the sister of a woman that was condemned for sic wickedness?"

"But, Jeanie," pleaded her lover, "I do not believe, and I cannot believe, that Effie has done this deed."

"Heaven bless ye for saying sae, Reuben," answered Jeanie; "but she maun bear the blame o't after all."

"But the blame, were it even justly laid on her, does not fall on you."

"Ah, Reuben, Reuben," replied the young woman, "ye ken it is a blot that spreads to kith and kin. – Ichabod – as my poor father says – the glory is departed from our house; for the poorest man's house has a glory, where there are true hands, a divine heart, and an honest fame – And the last has gane frae us a."

"But, Jeanie, consider your word and plighted faith to me; and would you undertake such a journey without a man to protect you? – and who should that protector be but your husband?"

"You are kind and good, Reuben, and wad take me wi' a' my shame, I doubtna. But ye canna but own that this is no time to marry or be given in marriage. Na, if that suld ever be, it maun be in another and a better season. – And, dear Reuben, ye speak of protecting me on my journey – Alas! who will protect and take care of you? – your very limbs tremble with standing for ten minutes on the floor; how could you undertake a journey as far as Lunnon?"

"But I am strong – I am well," continued Butler, sinking in his seat totally exhausted, "at least I shall be quite well to-morrow."

"Ye see, and ye ken, ye maun just let me depart," said Jeanie, after a pause; and then taking his extended hand, and gazing kindly in his face, she added, "It's e'en a grief the mair to me to see you in this way. But ye maun keep up your heart for Jeanie's sake, for if she isna your wife, she will never be the wife of living man. And now gie me the paper for MacCallummure, and bid God speed me on my way."

There was something of romance in Jeanie's venturous resolution; yet, on consideration, as it seemed impossible to alter it by persuasion, or to give her assistance but by advice, Butler, after some farther debate, put into her hands the paper she desired, which, with the muster-roll in which it was folded up, were the sole memorials of the stout and enthusiastic Bible Butler, his grandfather. While Butler sought this document, Jeanie had time to take up his pocket Bible. "I have marked a scripture," she said, as she again laid it down, "with your kylevine pen, that will be useful to us baith. And ye maun tak the trouble, Reuben, to write a' this to my father, for, God help me, I have neither head nor hand for lang letters at any time, forby now; and I trust him entirely to you, and I trust you will soon be permitted to see him. And, Reuben, when ye do win to the speech o' him, mind a' the auld man's bits o' ways, for Jeanie's sake; and dinna speak o' Latin or English terms to him, for he's o' the auld warld, and downa bide to be fashed wi' them, though I daresay he may be wrang. And dinna ye say muckle to him, but set him on speaking himself, for he'll bring himsell mair comfort that way. And O, Reuben, the poor lassie in yon dungeon! – but I needna bid your kind heart – gie her what comfort ye can as soon as they will let ye see her – tell her – But I maunna speak mair about her, for I maunna take leave o' ye wi' the tear in my ee, for that wouldna be canny. – God bless ye, Reuben!"

To avoid so ill an omen she left the room hastily, while her features yet retained the mournful and affectionate smile which she had compelled them to wear, in order to support Butler's spirits.

It seemed as if the power of sight, of speech, and of reflection, had left him as she disappeared from the room, which she had entered and retired from so like an apparition. Saddletree, who entered immediately afterwards, overwhelmed him with questions, which he answered without understanding them, and with legal disquisitions, which conveyed to him no iota of meaning. At length the learned

burgess recollected that there was a Baron Court to be, held at Loanhead that day, and though it was hardly worth while, "he might as weel go to see if there was onything doing, as he was acquainted with the baron bailie, who was a decent man, and would be glad of a word of legal advice."

So soon as he departed, Butler flew to the Bible, the last book which Jeanie had touched. To his extreme surprise, a paper, containing two or three pieces of gold, dropped from the book. With a black-lead pencil, she had marked the sixteenth and twenty-fifth verses of the thirty-seventh Psalm, – "A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of the wicked." – "I have been young and am now old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread."

Deeply impressed with the affectionate delicacy which shrouded its own generosity under the cover of a providential supply to his wants, he pressed the gold to his lips with more ardour than ever the metal was greeted with by a miser. To emulate her devout firmness and confidence seemed now the pitch of his ambition, and his first task was to write an account to David Deans of his daughter's resolution and journey southward. He studied every sentiment, and even every phrase, which he thought could reconcile the old man to her extraordinary resolution. The effect which this epistle produced will be hereafter adverted to. Butler committed it to the charge of an honest clown, who had frequent dealings with Deans in the sale of his dairy produce, and who readily undertook a journey to Edinburgh to put the letter into his own hands.⁷

⁷ By dint of assiduous research I am enabled to certiorate the reader, that the name of this person was Saunders Broadfoot, and that he dealt in the wholesome commodity called kirn-milk (*Anglice*, butter-milk). – J. C.

CHAPTER FOURTH

"My native land, good night."

Lord Byron.

In the present day, a journey from Edinburgh to London is a matter at once safe, brief, and simple, however inexperienced or unprotected the traveller. Numerous coaches of different rates of charge, and as many packets, are perpetually passing and repassing betwixt the capital of Britain and her northern sister, so that the most timid or indolent may execute such a journey upon a few hours' notice. But it was different in 1737. So slight and infrequent was the intercourse betwixt London and Edinburgh, that men still alive remember that upon one occasion the mail from the former city arrived at the General Post-Office in Scotland with only one letter in it.⁸

The usual mode of travelling was by means of post-horses, the traveller occupying one, and his guide another, in which manner, by relays of horses from stage to stage, the journey might be accomplished in a wonderfully short time by those who could endure fatigue. To have the bones shaken to pieces by a constant change of those hacks was a luxury for the rich – the poor were under the necessity of using the mode of conveyance with which nature had provided them.

With a strong heart, and a frame patient of fatigue, Jeanie Deans, travelling at the rate of twenty miles a-day, and sometimes farther, traversed the southern part of Scotland, and advanced as far as Durham.

Hitherto she had been either among her own country-folk, or those to whom her bare feet and tartan screen were objects too familiar to attract much attention. But as she advanced, she perceived that both circumstances exposed her to sarcasm and taunts, which she might otherwise have escaped; and although in her heart she thought it unkind, and inhospitable, to sneer at a passing stranger on account of the fashion of her attire, yet she had the good sense to alter those parts of her dress which attracted ill-natured observation. Her chequed screen was deposited carefully in her bundle, and she conformed to the national extravagance of wearing shoes and stockings for the whole day. She confessed afterwards, that, "besides the wastrife, it was lang or she could walk sae comfortably with the shoes as without them; but there was often a bit saft heather by the road-side, and that helped her weel on." The want of the screen, which was drawn over the head like a veil, she supplied by a *bon-grace*, as she called it; a large straw bonnet like those worn by the English maidens when labouring in the fields. "But I thought unco shame o' mysell," she said, "the first time I put on a married woman's *bon-grace*, and me a single maiden."

With these changes she had little, as she said, to make "her kenspeckle when she didna speak," but her accent and language drew down on her so many jests and gibes, couched in a worse *patois* by far than her own, that she soon found it was her interest to talk as little and as seldom as possible. She answered, therefore, civil salutations of chance passengers with a civil courtesy, and chose, with anxious circumspection, such places of repose as looked at once most decent and sequestered. She found the common people of England, although inferior in courtesy to strangers, such as was then practised in her own more unfrequented country, yet, upon the whole, by no means deficient in the real duties of hospitality. She readily obtained food, and shelter, and protection at a very moderate rate, which sometimes the generosity of mine host altogether declined, with a blunt apology, – "Thee hast a long way afore thee, lass; and I'se ne'er take penny out o' a single woman's purse; it's the best friend thou can have on the road."

⁸ The fact is certain. The single epistle was addressed to the principal director of the British Linen Company.

It often happened, too, that mine hostess was struck with "the tidy, nice Scotch body," and procured her an escort, or a cast in a waggon, for some part of the way, or gave her a useful advice and recommendation respecting her resting-places.

At York our pilgrim stopped for the best part of a day, partly to recruit her strength, – partly because she had the good luck to obtain a lodging in an inn kept by a countrywoman, – partly to indite two letters to her father and Reuben Butler; an operation of some little difficulty, her habits being by no means those of literary composition. That to her father was in the following words. —

"Dearest Father, – I make my present pilgrimage more heavy and burdensome, through the sad occasion to reflect that it is without your knowledge, which, God knows, was far contrary to my heart; for Scripture says, that 'the vow of the daughter should not be binding without the consent of the father,' wherein it may be I have been guilty to tak this wearie journey without your consent. Nevertheless, it was borne in upon my mind that I should be an instrument to help my poor sister in this extremity of needcessity, otherwise I wad not, for wealth or for world's gear, or for the haill lands of Da'keith and Lugton, have done the like o' this, without your free will and knowledge. Oh, dear father, as ye wad desire a blessing on my journey, and upon your household, speak a word or write a line of comfort to yon poor prisoner. If she has sinned, she has sorrowed and suffered, and ye ken better than me, that we maun forgie others, as we pray to be forgien. Dear father, forgive my saying this muckle, for it doth not become a young head to instruct grey hairs; but I am sae far frae ye, that my heart yearns to ye a', and fain wad I hear that ye had forgien her trespass, and sae I nae doubt say mair than may become me.

The folk here are civil, and, like the barbarians unto the holy apostle, hae shown me much kindness; and there are a sort of chosen people in the land, for they hae some kirks without organs that are like ours, and are called meeting-houses, where the minister preaches without a gown. But most of the country are prelatists, whilk is awfu' to think; and I saw twa men that were ministers following hunds, as bauld as Roslin or Driden, the young Laird of Loup-the-dike, or ony wild gallant in Lothian.

A sorrowfa' sight to behold! Oh, dear father, may a blessing be with your down-lying and up-rising, and remember in your prayers your affectionate daughter to command,

"Jean Deans."

A postscript bore, "I learned from a decent woman, a grazier's widow, that they hae a cure for the muir-ill in Cumberland, whilk is ane pint, as they ca't, of yill, whilk is a dribble in comparison of our gawsie Scots pint, and hardly a mutchkin, boiled wi' sope and hartshorn draps, and toomed doun the creature's throat wi' ane whorn. Ye might try it on the bauson-faced year-auld quey; an it does nae gude, it can do nae ill. – She was a kind woman, and seemed skeely about horned beasts. When I reach Lunnon, I intend to gang to our cousin Mrs. Glass, the tobacconist, at the sign o' the Thistle, wha is so ceevil as to send you down your spleuchan-fu' anes a year; and as she must be well kend in Lunnon, I doubt not easily to find out where she lives."

Being seduced into betraying our heroine's confidence thus far, we will stretch our communication a step beyond, and impart to the reader her letter to her lover.

"Mr. Reuben Butler, – Hoping this will find you better, this comes to say, that I have reached this great town safe, and am not wearied with walking, but the better for it. And I have seen many things which I trust to tell you one day, also the muckle kirk of this place; and all around the city are mills, whilk havena muckle wheels nor mill-dams, but gang by the wind – strange to behold. Ane miller asked me to gang in and see it work, but I wad not, for I am not come to the south to make

acquaintance with strangers. I keep the straight road, and just beck if onybody speaks to me ceevilly, and answers naebody with the tong but women of my ain sect. I wish, Mr. Butler, I kend onything that wad mak ye weel, for they hae mair medicines in this town of York than wad cure a' Scotland, and surely some of them wad be gude for your complaints. If ye had a kindly motherly body to nurse ye, and no to let ye waste yoursell wi' reading – whilk ye read mair than enugh wi' the bairns in the schule – and to gie ye warm milk in the morning, I wad be mair easy for ye. Dear Mr. Butler, keep a good heart, for we are in the hands of Ane that kens better what is gude for us than we ken what is for oursells. I hae nae doubt to do that for which I am come – I canna doubt it – I winna think to doubt it – because, if I haena full assurance, how shall I bear myself with earnest entreaties in the great folk's presence? But to ken that ane's purpose is right, and to make their heart strong, is the way to get through the warst day's darg. The bairns' rime says, the warst blast of the borrowing days⁹ couldna kill the three silly poor hog-lams.

"And if it be God's pleasure, we that are sindered in sorrow may meet again in joy, even on this hither side of Jordan. I dinna bid ye mind what I said at our partin' anent my poor father, and that misfortunate lassie, for I ken you will do sae for the sake of Christian charity, whilk is mair than the entreaties of her that is your servant to command,

"Jeanie Deans."

This letter also had a postscript. "Dear Reuben, If ye think that it wad hae been right for me to have said mair and kinder things to ye, just think that I hae written sae, since I am sure that I wish a' that is kind and right to ye and by ye. Ye will think I am turned waster, for I wear clean hose and shoon every day; but it's the fashion here for decent bodies and ilka land has it's ain landlaw. Ower and aboon a', if laughing days were e'er to come back again till us, ye wad laugh weel to see my round face at the far end of a strae *bon-grace*, that looks as muckle and round as the middell aisle in Libberton Kirk. But it sheds the sun weel aff, and keeps uncivil folk frae staring as if ane were a worrycow. I sall tell ye by writ how I come on wi' the Duke of Argyle, when I won up to Lunnon. Direct a line, to say how ye are, to me, to the charge of Mrs. Margaret Glass, tobacconist, at the sign of the Thistle, Lunnon, whilk, if it assures me of your health, will make my mind sae muckle easier. Excuse bad spelling and writing, as I have ane ill pen."

The orthography of these epistles may seem to the southron to require a better apology than the letter expresses, though a bad pen was the excuse of a certain Galwegian laird for bad spelling; but, on behalf of the heroine, I would have them to know, that, thanks to the care of Butler, Jeanie Deans wrote and spelled fifty times better than half the women of rank in Scotland at that period, whose strange orthography and singular diction form the strongest contrast to the good sense which their correspondence usually intimates.

For the rest, in the tenor of these epistles, Jeanie expressed, perhaps, more hopes, a firmer courage, and better spirits, than she actually felt. But this was with the amiable idea of relieving her father and lover from apprehensions on her account, which she was sensible must greatly add to their other troubles. "If they think me weel, and like to do weel," said the poor pilgrim to herself, "my father will be kinder to Effie, and Butler will be kinder to himself. For I ken weel that they will think mair o' me than I do o' mysell."

Accordingly, she sealed her letters carefully, and put them into the post-office with her own hand, after many inquiries concerning the time in which they were likely to reach Edinburgh. When this duty was performed, she readily accepted her landlady's pressing invitation to dine with her, and remain till the next morning. The hostess, as we have said, was her countrywoman, and the

⁹ The last three days of March, old style, are called the Borrowing Days; for, as they are remarked to be unusually stormy, it is feigned that March had borrowed them from April, to extend the sphere of his rougher sway. The rhyme on the subject is quoted in the glossary to Leyden's edition of the "Complaynt of Scotland" —[March said to Aperill, I see three hogs upon a hill, A young sheep before it has lost its first fleece. But when the borrowed days were gane The three silly hogs came hirplin hame.]

eagerness with which Scottish people meet, communicate, and, to the extent of their power, assist each other, although it is often objected to us as a prejudice and narrowness of sentiment, seems, on the contrary, to arise from a most justifiable and honourable feeling of patriotism, combined with a conviction, which, if undeserved, would long since have been confuted by experience, that the habits and principles of the nation are a sort of guarantee for the character of the individual. At any rate, if the extensive influence of this national partiality be considered as an additional tie, binding man to man, and calling forth the good offices of such as can render them to the countryman who happens to need them, we think it must be found to exceed, as an active and efficient motive, to generosity, that more impartial and wider principle of general benevolence, which we have sometimes seen pleaded as an excuse for assisting no individual whatever.

Mrs. Bickerton, lady of the ascendant of the Seven Stars, in the Castle-gate, York, was deeply infected with the unfortunate prejudices of her country. Indeed, she displayed so much kindness to Jeanie Deans (because she herself, being a Merse woman, *marched* with Mid-Lothian, in which Jeanie was born), showed such motherly regard to her, and such anxiety for her farther progress, that Jeanie thought herself safe, though by temper sufficiently cautious, in communicating her whole story to her.

Mrs. Bickerton raised her hands and eyes at the recital, and exhibited much wonder and pity. But she also gave some effectual good advice.

She required to know the strength of Jeanie's purse, reduced by her deposit at Liberton, and the necessary expense of her journey, to about fifteen pounds. "This," she said, "would do very well, providing she would carry it a' safe to London."

"Safe!" answered Jeanie; "I'se warrant my carrying it safe, bating the needful expenses."

"Ay, but highwaymen, lassie," said Mrs. Bickerton; "for ye are come into a more civilised, that is to say, a more roguish country than the north, and how ye are to get forward, I do not profess to know. If ye could wait here eight days, our waggons would go up, and I would recommend you to Joe Broadwheel, who would see you safe to the Swan and two Necks. And dinna sneeze at Joe, if he should be for drawing up wi' you" (continued Mrs. Bickerton, her acquired English mingling with her national or original dialect), "he's a handy boy, and a wanter, and no lad better thought o' on the road; and the English make good husbands enough, witness my poor man, Moses Bickerton, as is i' the kirkyard."

Jeanie hastened to say, that she could not possibly wait for the setting forth of Joe Broadwheel; being internally by no means gratified with the idea of becoming the object of his attention during the journey,

"Aweel, lass," answered the good landlady, "then thou must pickle in thine ain poke-nook, and buckle thy girdle thine ain gate. But take my advice, and hide thy gold in thy stays, and keep a piece or two and some silver, in case thou be'st spoke withal; for there's as wud lads haunt within a day's walk from hence, as on the braes of Doune in Perthshire. And, lass, thou maunna gang staring through Lunnon, asking wha kens Mrs. Glass at the sign o' the Thistle; marry, they would laugh thee to scorn. But gang thou to this honest man," and she put a direction into Jeanie's hand, "he kens maist part of the sponible Scottish folk in the city, and he will find out your friend for thee."

Jeanie took the little introductory letter with sincere thanks; but, something alarmed on the subject of the highway robbers, her mind recurred to what Ratcliffe had mentioned to her, and briefly relating the circumstances which placed a document so extraordinary in her hands, she put the paper he had given her into the hand of Mrs. Bickerton.

The Lady of the Seven Stars did not indeed ring a bell, because such was not the fashion of the time, but she whistled on a silver call, which was hung by her side, and a tight serving-maid entered the room.

"Tell Dick Ostler to come here," said Mrs. Bickerton.

Dick Ostler accordingly made his appearance; – a queer, knowing, shambling animal, with a hatchet-face, a squint, a game-arm, and a limp.

"Dick Ostler," said Mrs. Bickerton, in a tone of authority that showed she was (at least by adoption) Yorkshire too, "thou knowest most people and most things o' the road."

"Eye, eye, God help me, mistress," said Dick, shrugging his shoulders betwixt a repentant and a knowing expression – "Eye! I ha' know'd a thing or twa i' ma day, mistress." He looked sharp and laughed – looked grave and sighed, as one who was prepared to take the matter either way.

"Kenst thou this wee bit paper amang the rest, man?" said Mrs. Bickerton, handing him the protection which Ratcliffe had given Jeanie Deans.

When Dick had looked at the paper, he winked with one eye, extended his grotesque mouth from ear to ear, like a navigable canal, scratched his head powerfully, and then said, "Ken! – ay – maybe we ken summat, an it werena for harm to him, mistress!"

"None in the world," said Mrs. Bickerton; "only a dram of Hollands to thyself, man, an thou wilt speak."

"Why, then," said Dick, giving the head-band of his breeches a knowing hoist with one hand, and kicking out one foot behind him to accommodate the adjustment of that important habiliment, "I dares to say the pass will be kend weel enough on the road, an that be all."

"But what sort of a lad was he?" said Mrs. Bickerton, winking to Jeanie, as proud of her knowing Ostler.

"Why, what ken I? – Jim the Rat – why he was Cock o' the North within this twelmonth – he and Scotch Wilson, Handle Dandie, as they called him – but he's been out o' this country a while, as I rackon; but ony gentleman, as keeps the road o' this side Stamford, will respect Jim's pass."

Without asking farther questions, the landlady filled Dick Ostler a bumper of Hollands. He ducked with his head and shoulders, scraped with his more advanced hoof, bolted the alcohol, to use the learned phrase, and withdrew to his own domains.

"I would advise thee, Jeanie," said Mrs. Bickerton, "an thou meetest with ugly customers o' the road, to show them this bit paper, for it will serve thee, assure thyself."

A neat little supper concluded the evening. The exported Scotswoman, Mrs. Bickerton by name, ate heartily of one or two seasoned dishes, drank some sound old ale, and a glass of stiff negus; while she gave Jeanie a history of her gout, admiring how it was possible that she, whose fathers and mothers for many generations had been farmers in Lammermuir, could have come by a disorder so totally unknown to them. Jeanie did not choose to offend her friendly landlady, by speaking her mind on the probable origin of this complaint; but she thought on the flesh-pots of Egypt, and, in spite of all entreaties to better fare, made her evening meal upon vegetables, with a glass of fair water.

Mrs. Bickerton assured her, that the acceptance of any reckoning was entirely out of the question, furnished her with credentials to her correspondent in London, and to several inns upon the road where she had some influence or interest, reminded her of the precautions she should adopt for concealing her money, and as she was to depart early in the morning, took leave of her very affectionately, taking her word that she would visit her on her return to Scotland, and tell her how she had managed, and that summum bonum for a gossip, "all how and about it." This Jeanie faithfully promised.

CHAPTER FIFTH

And Need and Misery, Vice and Danger, bind,
In sad alliance, each degraded mind.

As our traveller set out early on the ensuing morning to prosecute her journey, and was in the act of leaving the innyard, Dick Ostler, who either had risen early or neglected to go to bed, either circumstance being equally incident to his calling, hollowed out after her, — "The top of the morning to you, Moggie. Have a care o' Gunderby Hill, young one. Robin Hood's dead and gwone, but there be takers yet in the vale of Bever. Jeanie looked at him as if to request a farther explanation, but, with a leer, a shuffle, and a shrug, inimitable (unless by Emery¹⁰), Dick turned again to the raw-boned steed which he was currying, and sung as he employed the comb and brush, —

"Robin Hood was a yeoman right good,
And his bow was of trusty yew;
And if Robin said stand on the king's lea-land,
Pray, why should not we say so too?"

Jeanie pursued her journey without farther inquiry, for there was nothing in Dick's manner that inclined her to prolong their conference. A painful day's journey brought her to Ferrybridge, the best inn, then and since, upon the great northern road; and an introduction from Mrs. Bickerton, added to her own simple and quiet manners, so propitiated the landlady of the Swan in her favour, that the good dame procured her the convenient accommodation of a pillion and post-horse then returning to Tuxford, so that she accomplished, upon the second day after leaving York, the longest journey she had yet made. She was a good deal fatigued by a mode of travelling to which she was less accustomed than to walking, and it was considerably later than usual on the ensuing morning that she felt herself able to resume her pilgrimage. At noon the hundred-armed Trent, and the blackened ruins of Newark Castle, demolished in the great civil war, lay before her. It may easily be supposed, that Jeanie had no curiosity to make antiquarian researches, but, entering the town, went straight to the inn to which she had been directed at Ferrybridge. While she procured some refreshment, she observed the girl who brought it to her, looked at her several times with fixed and peculiar interest, and at last, to her infinite surprise, inquired if her name was not Deans, and if she was not a Scotchwoman, going to London upon justice business. Jeanie, with all her simplicity of character, had some of the caution of her country, and, according to Scottish universal custom, she answered the question by another, requesting the girl would tell her why she asked these questions?

The Maritornes of the Saracen's Head, Newark, replied, "Two women had passed that morning, who had made inquiries after one Jeanie Deans, travelling to London on such an errand, and could scarce be persuaded that she had not passed on."

Much surprised and somewhat alarmed (for what is inexplicable is usually alarming), Jeanie questioned the wench about the particular appearance of these two women, but could only learn that the one was aged, and the other young; that the latter was the taller, and that the former spoke most, and seemed to maintain an authority over her companion, and that both spoke with the Scottish accent.

This conveyed no information whatever, and with an indescribable presentiment of evil designed towards her, Jeanie adopted the resolution of taking post-horses for the next stage. In this,

¹⁰ [John Emery, an eminent comedian, played successfully at Covent Garden Theatre between 1798 and 1820. Among his characters, were those of Dandie Dinmont in *Guy Mannering*, Dougal in *Rob Roy*, and Ratcliffe in the Heart of *Mid-Lothian*.]

however, she could not be gratified; some accidental circumstances had occasioned what is called a run upon the road, and the landlord could not accommodate her with a guide and horses. After waiting some time, in hopes that a pair of horses that had gone southward would return in time for her use, she at length, feeling ashamed at her own pusillanimity, resolved to prosecute her journey in her usual manner.

"It was all plain road," she was assured, "except a high mountain called Gunnerby Hill, about three miles from Grantham, which was her stage for the night.

"I'm glad to hear there's a hill," said Jeanie, "for baith my sight and my very feet are weary o' sic tracts o' level ground – it looks a' the way between this and York as if a' the land had been trenched and levelled, whilk is very wearisome to my Scotch een. When I lost sight of a muckle blue hill they ca' Ingleboro', I thought I hadna a friend left in this strange land."

"As for the matter of that, young woman," said mine host, "an you be so fond o' hill, I carena an thou couldst carry Gunnerby away with thee in thy lap, for it's a murder to post-horses. But here's to thy journey, and mayst thou win well through it, for thou is a bold and a canny lass."

So saying, he took a powerful pull at a solemn tankard of home-brewed ale.

"I hope there is nae bad company on the road, sir?" said Jeanie.

"Why, when it's clean without them I'll thatch Groby pool wi' pancakes. But there arena sae mony now; and since they hae lost Jim the Rat, they hold together no better than the men of Marsham when they lost their common. Take a drop ere thou goest," he concluded, offering her the tankard; "thou wilt get naething at night save Grantham gruel, nine grots and a gallon of water."

Jeanie courteously declined the tankard, and inquired what was her "lawing?"

"Thy lawing! Heaven help thee, wench! what ca'st thou that?"

"It is – I was wanting to ken what was to pay," replied Jeanie.

"Pay? Lord help thee! – why nought, woman – we hae drawn no liquor but a gill o' beer, and the Saracen's Head can spare a mouthful o' meat to a stranger like o' thee, that cannot speak Christian language. So here's to thee once more. The same again, quoth Mark of Bellgrave," and he took another profound pull at the tankard.

The travellers who have visited Newark more lately, will not fail to remember the remarkably civil and gentlemanly manners of the person who now keeps the principal inn there, and may find some amusement in contrasting them with those of his more rough predecessor. But we believe it will be found that the polish has worn off none of the real worth of the metal.

Taking leave of her Lincolnshire Gaius, Jeanie resumed her solitary walk, and was somewhat alarmed when evening and twilight overtook her in the open ground which extends to the foot of Gunnerby Hill, and is intersected with patches of copse and with swampy spots. The extensive commons on the north road, most of which are now enclosed, and in general a relaxed state of police, exposed the traveller to a highway robbery in a degree which is now unknown, except in the immediate vicinity of the metropolis. Aware of this circumstance, Jeanie mended her pace when she heard the trampling of a horse behind, and instinctively drew to one side of the road, as if to allow as much room for the rider to pass as might be possible. When the animal came up, she found that it was bearing two women, the one placed on a side-saddle, the other on a pillion behind her, as may still occasionally be seen in England.

"A braw good-night to ye, Jeanie Deans," said the foremost female as the horse passed our heroine; "What think ye o' yon bonny hill yonder, lifting its brow to the moon? Trow ye yon's the gate to heaven, that ye are sae fain of? – maybe we will win there the night yet, God sain us, though our minny here's rather dreigh in the upgang."

The speaker kept changing her seat in the saddle, and half stopping the horse as she brought her body round, while the woman that sate behind her on the pillion seemed to urge her on, in words which Jeanie heard but imperfectly.

"Hand your tongue, ye moon-raised b – ! what is your business with – , or with heaven or hell either?"

"Troth, mither, no muckle wi' heaven, I doubt, considering wha I carry ahint me – and as for hell, it will fight its ain battle at its ain time, I'se be bound. – Come, naggie, trot awa, man, an as thou wert a broomstick, for a witch rides thee —

With my curtch on my foot, and my shoe on my hand,
I glance like the wildfire through brugh and through land."

The tramp of the horse, and the increasing distance, drowned the rest of her song, but Jeanie heard for some time the inarticulate sounds ring along the waste.

Our pilgrim remained stupified with undefined apprehensions. The being named by her name in so wild a manner, and in a strange country, without farther explanation or communing, by a person who thus strangely flitted forward and disappeared before her, came near to the supernatural sounds in Comus: —

The airy tongues, which syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.

And although widely different in features, deportment, and rank, from the Lady of that enchanting masque, the continuation of the passage may be happily applied to Jeanie Deans upon this singular alarm: —

These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion – Conscience.

In fact, it was, with the recollection of the affectionate and dutiful errand on which she was engaged, her right, if such a word could be applicable, to expect protection in a task so meritorious. She had not advanced much farther, with a mind calmed by these reflections, when she was disturbed by a new and more instant subject of terror. Two men, who had been lurking among some copse, started up as she advanced, and met her on the road in a menacing manner. "Stand and deliver," said one of them, a short stout fellow, in a smock-frock, such as are worn by waggoners.

"The woman," said the other, a tall thin figure, "does not understand the words of action. – Your money, my precious, or your life."

"I have but very little money, gentlemen," said poor Jeanie, tendering that portion which she had separated from her principal stock, and kept apart for such an emergency; "but if you are resolved to have it, to be sure you must have it."

"This won't do, my girl. D – n me, if it shall pass!" said the shorter ruffian; "do ye think gentlemen are to hazard their lives on the road to be cheated in this way? We'll have every farthing you have got, or we will strip you to the skin, curse me."

His companion, who seemed to have something like compassion for the horror which Jeanie's countenance now expressed, said, "No, no, Tom, this is one of the precious sisters, and we'll take her word, for once, without putting her to the stripping proof – Hark ye, my lass, if ye look up to heaven, and say, this is the last penny you have about ye, why, hang it, we'll let you pass."

"I am not free," answered Jeanie, "to say what I have about me, gentlemen, for there's life and death depends on my journey; but if you leave me as much as finds me bread and water, I'll be satisfied, and thank you, and pray for you."

"D – n your prayers!" said the shorter fellow, "that's a coin that won't pass with us;" and at the same time made a motion to seize her.

"Stay, gentlemen," Ratcliffe's pass suddenly occurring to her; "perhaps you know this paper."

"What the devil is she after now, Frank?" said the more savage ruffian – "Do you look at it, for, d – n me if I could read it if it were for the benefit of my clergy."

"This is a jark from Jim Ratcliffe," said the taller, having looked at the bit of paper. "The wench must pass by our cutter's law."

"I say no," answered his companion; "Rat has left the lay, and turned bloodhound, they say."

"We may need a good turn from him all the same," said the taller ruffian again.

"But what are we to do then?" said the shorter man – "We promised, you know, to strip the wench, and send her begging back to her own beggarly country, and now you are for letting her go on."

"I did not say that," said the other fellow, and whispered to his companion, who replied, "Be alive about it then, and don't keep chattering till some travellers come up to nab us."

"You must follow us off the road, young woman," said the taller.

"For the love of God!" exclaimed Jeanie, "as you were born of woman, dinna ask me to leave the road! rather take all I have in the world."

"What the devil is the wench afraid of?" said the other fellow. "I tell you you shall come to no harm; but if you will not leave the road and come with us, d – n me, but I'll beat your brains out where you stand."

"Thou art a rough bear, Tom," said his companion. – "An ye touch her, I'll give ye a shake by the collar shall make the Leicester beans rattle in thy guts. – Never mind him, girl; I will not allow him to lay a finger on you, if you walk quietly on with us; but if you keep jabbering there, d – n me, but I'll leave him to settle it with you."

This threat conveyed all that is terrible to the imagination of poor Jeanie, who saw in him that "was of milder mood" her only protection from the most brutal treatment. She, therefore, not only followed him, but even held him by the sleeve, lest he should escape from her; and the fellow, hardened as he was, seemed something touched by these marks of confidence, and repeatedly assured her, that he would suffer her to receive no harm.

They conducted their prisoner in a direction leading more and more from the public road, but she observed that they kept a sort of track or by-path, which relieved her from part of her apprehensions, which would have been greatly increased had they not seemed to follow a determined and ascertained route. After about half-an-hour's walking, all three in profound silence, they approached an old barn, which stood on the edge of some cultivated ground, but remote from everything like a habitation. It was itself, however, tenanted, for there was light in the windows.

One of the footpads scratched at the door, which was opened by a female, and they entered with their unhappy prisoner. An old woman, who was preparing food by the assistance of a stifling fire of lighted charcoal, asked them, in the name of the devil, what they brought the wench there for, and why they did not strip her and turn her abroad on the common?

"Come, come, Mother Blood," said the tall man, "we'll do what's right to oblige you, and we'll do no more; we are bad enough, but not such as you would make us, – devils incarnate."

"She has got a jark from Jim Ratcliffe," said the short fellow, "and Frank here won't hear of our putting her through the mill."

"No, that I will not, by G – d!" answered Frank; "but if old Mother Blood could keep her here for a little while, or send her back to Scotland, without hurting her, why, I see no harm in that – not I."

"I'll tell you what, Frank Levitt," said the old woman, "if you call me Mother Blood again, I'll paint this gully" (and she held a knife up as if about to make good her threat) "in the best blood in your body, my bonny boy."

"The price of ointment must be up in the north," said Frank, "that puts Mother Blood so much out of humour."

Without a moment's hesitation the fury darted her knife at him with the vengeful dexterity of a wild Indian. As he was on his guard, he avoided the missile by a sudden motion of his head, but it whistled past his ear, and stuck deep in the clay wall of a partition behind.

"Come, come, mother," said the robber, seizing her by both wrists, "I shall teach you who's master;" and so saying, he forced the hag backwards by main force, who strove vehemently until she sunk on a bunch of straw, and then, letting go her hands, he held up his finger towards her in the menacing posture by which a maniac is intimidated by his keeper. It appeared to produce the desired effect; for she did not attempt to rise from the seat on which he had placed her, or to resume any measures of actual violence, but wrung her withered hands with impotent rage, and brayed and howled like a demoniac.

"I will keep my promise with you, you old devil," said Frank; "the wench shall not go forward on the London road, but I will not have you touch a hair of her head, if it were but for your insolence."

This intimation seemed to compose in some degree the vehement passion of the old hag; and while her exclamations and howls sunk into a low, maundering, growling tone of voice, another personage was added to this singular party.

"Eh, Frank Levitt," said this new-comer, who entered with a hop, step, and jump, which at once conveyed her from the door into the centre of the party, "were ye killing our mother? or were ye cutting the grunter's weasand that Tam brought in this morning? or have ye been reading your prayers backward, to bring up my auld acquaintance the deil amang ye?"

The tone of the speaker was so particular, that Jeanie immediately recognised the woman who had rode foremost of the pair which passed her just before she met the robbers; a circumstance which greatly increased her terror, as it served to show that the mischief designed against her was premeditated, though by whom, or for what cause, she was totally at a loss to conjecture. From the style of her conversation, the reader also may probably acknowledge in this female an old acquaintance in the earlier part of our narrative.

"Out, ye mad devil!" said Tom, whom she had disturbed in the middle of a draught of some liquor with which he had found means of accommodating himself; "betwixt your Bess of Bedlam pranks, and your dam's frenzies, a man might live quieter in the devil's ken than here." – And he again resumed the broken jug out of which he had been drinking.

"And wha's this o't?" said the mad woman, dancing up to Jeanie Deans, who, although in great terror, yet watched the scene with a resolution to let nothing pass unnoticed which might be serviceable in assisting her to escape, or informing her as to the true nature of her situation, and the danger attending it, – "Wha's this o't?" again exclaimed Madge Wildfire.

"Douce Davie Deans, the auld doited whig body's daughter, in a gipsy's barn, and the night setting in? This is a sight for sair een! – Eh, sirs, the falling off o' the godly! – and the t'other sister's in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh; I am very sorry for her, for my share – it's my mother wusses ill to her, and no me – though maybe I hae as muckle cause."

"Hark ye, Madge," said the taller ruffian, "you have not such a touch of the devil's blood as the hag your mother, who may be his dam for what I know – take this young woman to your kennel, and do not let the devil enter, though he should ask in God's name."

"Ou ay; that I will, Frank," said Madge, taking hold of Jeanie by the arm, and pulling her along; "for it's no for decent Christian young leddies, like her and me, to be keeping the like o' you and Tyburn Tam company at this time o' night. Sae gude-e'en t'ye, sirs, and mony o' them; and may ye a' sleep till the hangman wauken ye, and then it will be weel for the country."

She then, as her wild fancy seemed suddenly to prompt her, walked demurely towards her mother, who, seated by the charcoal fire, with the reflection of the red light on her withered and distorted features marked by every evil passion, seemed the very picture of Hecate at her infernal rites; and, suddenly dropping on her knees, said, with the manner of a six years' old child, "Mammie, hear me say my prayers before I go to bed, and say God bless my bonny face, as ye used to do lang syne."

"The deil flay the hide o' it to sole his brogues wi'!" said the old lady, aiming a buffet at the supplicant, in answer to her duteous request.

The blow missed Madge, who, being probably acquainted by experience with the mode in which her mother was wont to confer her maternal benedictions, slipt out of arm's length with great dexterity and quickness. The hag then started up, and, seizing a pair of old fire-tongs, would have amended her motion, by beating out the brains either of her daughter or Jeanie (she did not seem greatly to care which), when her hand was once more arrested by the man whom they called Frank Levitt, who, seizing her by the shoulder, flung her from him with great violence, exclaiming, "What, Mother Damnable – again, and in my sovereign presence! – Hark ye, Madge of Bedlam! get to your hole with your playfellow, or we shall have the devil to pay here, and nothing to pay him with."

Madge took Levitt's advice, retreating as fast as she could, and dragging Jeanie along with her into a sort of recess, partitioned off from the rest of the barn, and filled with straw, from which it appeared that it was intended for the purpose of slumber. The moonlight shone, through an open hole, upon a pillion, a pack-saddle, and one or two wallets, the travelling furniture of Madge and her amiable mother. – "Now, saw ye e'er in your life," said Madge, "sae dainty a chamber of deas? see as the moon shines down sae caller on the fresh strae! There's no a pleasanter cell in Bedlam, for as braw a place as it is on the outside. – Were ye ever in Bedlam?"

"No," answered Jeanie faintly, appalled by the question, and the way in which it was put, yet willing to soothe her insane companion, being in circumstances so unhappily precarious, that even the society of this gibbering madwoman seemed a species of protection.

"Never in Bedlam?" said Madge, as if with some surprise. – "But ye'll hae been in the cells at Edinburgh!"

"Never," repeated Jeanie.

"Weel, I think thae daft carles the magistrates send naebody to Bedlam but me – thae maun hae an unco respect for me, for whenever I am brought to them, thae aye hae me back to Bedlam. But troth, Jeanie" (she said this in a very confidential tone), "to tell ye my private mind about it, I think ye are at nae great loss; for the keeper's a cross-patch, and he maun hae it a' his ain gate, to be sure, or he makes the place waur than hell. I often tell him he's the daftest in a' the house. – But what are they making sic a skirling for? – Deil ane o' them's get in here – it wadna be mensfu'! I will sit wi' my back again the door; it winna be that easy stirring me."

"Madge!" – "Madge!" – "Madge Wildfire!" – "Madge devil! what have ye done with the horse?" was repeatedly asked by the men without.

"He's e'en at his supper, puir thing," answered Madge; "deil an ye were at yours, too, an it were scauding brimstone, and then we wad hae less o' your din."

"His supper!" answered the more sulky ruffian – "What d'ye mean by that! – Tell me where he is, or I will knock your Bedlam brains out!"

"He's in Gaffer Gablewood's wheat-close, an ye maun ken."

"His wheat-close, you crazed jilt!" answered the other, with an accent of great indignation.

"O, dear Tyburn Tam, man, what ill will the blades of the young wheat do to the puir nag?"

"That is not the question," said the other robber; "but what the country will say to us to-morrow, when they see him in such quarters? – Go, Tom, and bring him in; and avoid the soft ground, my lad; leave no hoof-track behind you."

"I think you give me always the fag of it, whatever is to be done," grumbled his companion.

"Leap, Laurence, you're long enough," said the other; and the fellow left the barn accordingly, without farther remonstrance.

In the meanwhile, Madge had arranged herself for repose on the straw; but still in a half-sitting posture, with her back resting against the door of the hovel, which, as it opened inwards, was in this manner kept shut by the weight of the person.

"There's mair shifts by stealing, Jeanie," said Madge Wildfire; "though whiles I can hardly get our mother to think sae. Wha wad hae thought but mysell of making a bolt of my ain back-bane? But it's no sae strong as thae that I hae seen in the Tolbooth at Edinburgh. The hammermen of Edinburgh are to my mind afore the warld for making stancheons, ring-bolts, fetter-bolts, bars, and locks. And they arena that bad at girdles for carcakes neither, though the Cu'ross hammermen have the gree for that. My mother had ance a bonny Cu'ross girdle, and I thought to have baked carcakes on it for my puir wean that's dead and gane nae fair way – But we maun a' dee, ye ken, Jeanie – You Cameronian bodies ken that brawlies; and ye're for making a hell upon earth that ye may be less unwillin' to part wi' it. But as touching Bedlam that ye were speaking about, I'se ne'er recommend it muckle the tae gate or the other, be it right – be it wrang. But ye ken what the sang says." And, pursuing the unconnected and floating wanderings of her mind, she sung aloud —

"In the bonny cells of Bedlam,
Ere I was ane-and-twenty,
I had hempen bracelets strong,
And merry whips, ding-dong,
And prayer and fasting plenty.

"Weel, Jeanie, I am something herse the night, and I canna sing muckle mair; and troth, I think, I am gaun to sleep."

She drooped her head on her breast, a posture from which Jeanie, who would have given the world for an opportunity of quiet to consider the means and the probability of her escape, was very careful not to disturb her. After nodding, however, for a minute'or two, with her eyes half-closed, the unquiet and restless spirit of her malady again assailed Madge. She raised her head, and spoke, but with a lowered tone, which was again gradually overcome by drowsiness, to which the fatigue of a day's journey on horseback had probably given unwonted occasion, – "I dinna ken what makes me sae sleepy – I amaist never sleep till my bonny Lady Moon gangs till her bed – mair by token, when she's at the full, ye ken, rowing aboon us yonder in her grand silver coach – I have danced to her my lane sometimes for very joy – and whiles dead folk came and danced wi' me – the like o' Jock Porteous, or ony body I had ken'd when I was living – for ye maun ken I was ance dead mysell." Here the poor maniac sung, in a low and wild tone,

"My banes are buried in yon kirkyard
Sae far ayont the sea,
And it is but my blithesome ghaist
That's speaking now to thee.

"But after a', Jeanie, my woman, naebody kens weel wha's living and wha's dead – or wha's gone to Fairyland – there's another question. Whiles I think my puir bairn's dead – ye ken very weel it's buried – but that signifies naething. I have had it on my knee a hundred times, and a hundred till that, since it was buried – and how could that be were it dead, ye ken? – it's merely impossible." – And here, some conviction half-overcoming the reveries of her imagination, she burst into a fit of crying and ejaculation, "Wae's me! wae's me! wae's me!" till at length she moaned and sobbed herself into a deep sleep, which was soon intimated by her breathing hard, leaving Jeanie to her own melancholy reflections and observations.

CHAPTER SIXTH

Bind her quickly; or, by this steel,
I'll tell, although I truss for company.

Fletcher.

The imperfect light which shone into the window enabled Jeanie to see that there was scarcely any chance of making her escape in that direction; for the aperture was high in the wall, and so narrow, that, could she have climbed up to it, she might well doubt whether it would have permitted her to pass her body through it. An unsuccessful attempt to escape would be sure to draw down worse treatment than she now received, and she, therefore, resolved to watch her opportunity carefully ere making such a perilous effort. For this purpose she applied herself to the ruinous clay partition, which divided the hovel in which she now was from the rest of the waste barn. It was decayed and full of cracks and chinks, one of which she enlarged with her fingers, cautiously and without noise, until she could obtain a plain view of the old hag and the taller ruffian, whom they called Levitt, seated together beside the decayed fire of charcoal, and apparently engaged in close conference. She was at first terrified by the sight; for the features of the old woman had a hideous cast of hardened and inveterate malice and ill-humour, and those of the man, though naturally less unfavourable, were such as corresponded well with licentious habits, and a lawless profession.

"But I remembered," said Jeanie, "my worthy fathers tales of a winter evening, how he was confined with the blessed martyr, Mr. James Renwick, who lifted up the fallen standard of the true reformed Kirk of Scotland, after the worthy and renowned Daniel Cameron, our last blessed banner-man, had fallen among the swords of the wicked at Airmoss, and how the very hearts of the wicked malefactors and murderers, whom they were confined withal, were melted like wax at the sound of their doctrine: and I bethought mysell, that the same help that was wi' them in their strait, wad be wi' me in mine, an I could but watch the Lord's time and opportunity for delivering my feet from their snare; and I minded the Scripture of the blessed Psalmist, whilk he insisteth on, as weel in the forty-second as in the forty-third psalm – 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.'"

Strengthened in a mind naturally calm, sedate, and firm, by the influence of religious confidence, this poor captive was enabled to attend to, and comprehend, a great part of an interesting conversation which passed betwixt those into whose hands she had fallen, notwithstanding that their meaning was partly disguised by the occasional use of cant terms, of which Jeanie knew not the import, by the low tone in which they spoke, and by their mode of supplying their broken phrases by shrugs and signs, as is usual amongst those of their disorderly profession.

The man opened the conversation by saying, "Now, dame, you see I am true to my friend. I have not forgot that you *planked a chury*,¹¹ which helped me through the bars of the Castle of York, and I came to do your work without asking questions; for one good turn deserves another.

But now that Madge, who is as loud as Tom of Lincoln, is somewhat still, and this same Tyburn Neddie is shaking his heels after the old nag, why, you must tell me what all this is about, and what's to be done – for d – n me if I touch the girl, or let her be touched, and she with Jim Rat's pass, too."

"Thou art an honest lad, Frank," answered the old woman, "but e'en too good for thy trade; thy tender heart will get thee into trouble. I will see ye gang up Holborn Hill backward, and a' on the word of some silly loon that could never hae rapped to ye had ye drawn your knife across his weasand."

¹¹ Concealed a knife.

"You may be balked there, old one," answered the robber; "I have known many a pretty lad cut short in his first summer upon the road, because he was something hasty with his flats and sharps. Besides, a man would fain live out his two years with a good conscience. So, tell me what all this is about, and what's to be done for you that one can do decently?"

"Why, you must know, Frank – but first taste a snap of right Hollands." She drew a flask from her pocket, and filled the fellow a large bumper, which he pronounced to be the right thing. – "You must know, then, Frank – wanna ye mend your hand?" again offering the flask.

"No, no, – when a woman wants mischief from you, she always begins by filling you drunk. D – n all Dutch courage. What I do I will do soberly – I'll last the longer for that too."

"Well, then, you must know," resumed the old woman, without any further attempts at propitiation, "that this girl is going to London."

Here Jeanie could only distinguish the word sister.

The robber answered in a louder tone, "Fair enough that; and what the devil is your business with it?"

"Business enough, I think. If the b – queers the noose, that silly cull will marry her."

"And who cares if he does?" said the man.

"Who cares, ye donnard Neddie! I care; and I will strangle her with my own hands, rather than she should come to Madge's preferment."

"Madge's preferment! Does your old blind eyes see no farther than that? If he is as you say, dye think he'll ever marry a moon-calf like Madge? Ecod, that's a good one – Marry Madge Wildfire! – Ha! ha! ha!"

"Hark ye, ye crack-rope padder, born beggar, and bred thief!" replied the hag, "suppose he never marries the wench, is that a reason he should marry another, and that other to hold my daughter's place, and she crazed, and I a beggar, and all along of him? But I know that of him will hang him – I know that of him will hang him, if he had a thousand lives – I know that of him will hang – hang – hang him!"

She grinned as she repeated and dwelt upon the fatal monosyllable, with the emphasis of a vindictive fiend.

"Then why don't you hang – hang – hang him?" said Frank, repeating her words contemptuously. "There would be more sense in that, than in wreaking yourself here upon two wenches that have done you and your daughter no ill."

"No ill?" answered the old woman – "and he to marry this jail-bird, if ever she gets her foot loose!"

"But as there is no chance of his marrying a bird of your brood, I cannot, for my soul, see what you have to do with all this," again replied the robber, shrugging his shoulders. "Where there is aught to be got, I'll go as far as my neighbours, but I hate mischief for mischiefs sake."

"And would you go nae length for revenge?" said the hag – "for revenge – the sweetest morsel to the mouth that over was cooked in hell!"

"The devil may keep it for his own eating, then," said the robber; "for hang me if I like the sauce he dresses it with."

"Revenge!" continued the old woman; "why, it is the best reward the devil gives us for our time here and hereafter. I have wrought hard for it – I have suffered for it – and I have sinned for it – and I will have it, – or there is neither justice in heaven or in hell!"

Levitt had by this time lighted a pipe, and was listening with great composure to the frantic and vindictive ravings of the old hag. He was too much, hardened by his course of life to be shocked with them – too indifferent, and probably too stupid, to catch any part of their animation or energy. "But, mother," he said, after a pause, "still I say, that if revenge is your wish, you should take it on the young fellow himself."

"I wish I could," she said, drawing in her breath, with the eagerness of a thirsty person while mimicking the action of drinking – "I wish I could – but no – I cannot – I cannot."

"And why not? – You would think little of peaching and hanging him for this Scotch affair. – Rat me, one might have milled the Bank of England, and less noise about it."

"I have nursed him at this withered breast," answered the old woman, folding her hands on her bosom, as if pressing an infant to it, "and, though he has proved an adder to me – though he has been the destruction of me and mine – though he has made me company for the devil, if there be a devil, and food for hell, if there be such a place, yet I cannot take his life. – No, I cannot," she continued, with an appearance of rage against herself; "I have thought of it – I have tried it – but, Francis Levitt, I canna gang through wi't – Na, na – he was the first bairn I ever nurst – ill I had been – and man can never ken what woman feels for the bairn she has held first to her bosom!"

"To be sure," said Levitt, "we have no experience; but, mother, they say you ha'n't been so kind to other bairns, as you call them, that have come in your way. – Nay, d – n me, never lay your hand on the whittle, for I am captain and leader here, and I will have no rebellion."

The hag, whose first motion had been, upon hearing the question, to grasp the haft of a large knife, now unclosed her hand, stole it away from the weapon, and suffered it to fall by her side, while she proceeded with a sort of smile – "Bairns! ye are joking, lad – wha wad touch bairns? Madge, puir thing, had a misfortune wi' ane – and the t'other" – Here her voice sunk so much, that Jeanie, though anxiously upon the watch, could not catch a word she said, until she raised her tone at the conclusion of the sentence – "So Madge, in her daffin', threw it into the Nor'-lock, I trow."

Madge, whose slumbers, like those of most who labour under mental malady, had been short, and were easily broken, now made herself heard from her place of repose.

"Indeed, mother, that's a great lie, for I did nae sic thing."

"Hush, thou hellicat devil," said her mother – "By Heaven! the other wench will be waking too."

"That may be dangerous," said Frank; and he rose, and followed Meg Murdockson across the floor.

"Rise," said the hag to her daughter, "or I sall drive the knife between the planks into the Bedlam back of thee!"

Apparently she at the same time seconded her threat by pricking her with the point of a knife, for Madge, with a faint scream, changed her place, and the door opened.

The old woman held a candle in one hand, and a knife in the other. Levitt appeared behind her, whether with a view of preventing, or assisting her in any violence she might meditate, could not be well guessed. Jeanie's presence of mind stood her friend in this dreadful crisis. She had resolution enough to maintain the attitude and manner of one who sleeps profoundly, and to regulate even her breathing, notwithstanding the agitation of instant terror, so as to correspond with her attitude.

The old woman passed the light across her eyes; and although Jeanie's fears were so powerfully awakened by this movement, that she often declared afterwards, that she thought she saw the figures of her destined murderers through her closed eyelids, she had still the resolution to maintain the feint, on which her safety perhaps depended.

Levitt looked at her with fixed attention; he then turned the old woman out of the place, and followed her himself. Having regained the outward apartment, and seated themselves, Jeanie heard the highwayman say, to her no small relief, "She's as fast as if she were in Bedfordshire. – Now, old Meg, d – n me if I can understand a glim of this story of yours, or what good it will do you to hang the one wench and torment the other; but, rat me, I will be true to my friend, and serve ye the way ye like it. I see it will be a bad job; but I do think I could get her down to Surfleet on the Wash, and so on board Tom Moonshine's neat lugger, and keep her out of the way three or four weeks, if that will please ye – But d – n me if any one shall harm her, unless they have a mind to choke on a brace of blue plums. – It's a cruel, bad job, and I wish you and it, Meg, were both at the devil."

"Never mind, hinny Levitt," said the old woman; "you are a ruffler, and will have a' your ain gate – She shanna gang to heaven an hour sooner for me; I carena whether she live or die – it's her sister – ay, her sister!"

"Well, we'll say no more about it; I hear Tom coming in. We'll couch a hogshead,¹² and so better had you."

They retired to repose accordingly, and all was silent in this asylum of iniquity.

Jeanie lay for a long time awake. At break of day she heard the two ruffians leave the barn, after whispering to the old woman for some time. The sense that she was now guarded by persons of her own sex gave her some confidence, and irresistible lassitude at length threw her into slumber.

When the captive awakened, the sun was high in heaven, and the morning considerably advanced. Madge Wildfire was still in the hovel which had served them for the night, and immediately bid her good-morning, with her usual air of insane glee. "And dye ken, lass," said Madge, "there's queer things chanced since ye hae been in the land of Nod. The constables hae been here, woman, and they met wi' my minnie at the door, and they whirl'd her awa to the Justice's about the man's wheat. – Dear! thae English churls think as muckle about a blade of wheat or grass, as a Scotch laird does about his maukins and his muir-poots. Now, lass, if ye like, we'll play them a fine jink; we will awa out and take a walk – they will mak unco wark when they miss us, but we can easily be back by dinner time, or before dark night at ony rate, and it will be some frolic and fresh air. – But maybe ye wad like to take some breakfast, and then lie down again? I ken by mysell, there's whiles I can sit wi' my head in my hand the haill day, and havena a word to cast at a dog – and other whiles, that I canna sit still a moment. That's when the folk think me warst, but I am aye canny enough – ye needna be feared to walk wi' me."

Had Madge Wildfire been the most raging lunatic, instead of possessing a doubtful, uncertain, and twilight sort of rationality, varying, probably, from the influence of the most trivial causes, Jeanie would hardly have objected to leave a place of captivity, where she had so much to apprehend. She eagerly assured Madge that she had no occasion for further sleep, no desire whatever for eating; and, hoping internally that she was not guilty of sin in doing so, she flattered her keeper's crazy humour for walking in the woods.

"It's no a'thegither for that neither," said poor Madge; "but I am judging ye will wun the better out o' thae folk's hands; no that they are a'thegither bad folk neither, but they have queer ways wi' them, and I whiles dinna think it has ever been weel wi' my mother and me since we kept sic-like company."

With the haste, the joy, the fear, and the hope of a liberated captive, Jeanie snatched up her little bundle, followed Madge into the free air, and eagerly looked round her for a human habitation; but none was to be seen. The ground was partly cultivated, and partly left in its natural state, according as the fancy of the slovenly agriculturists had decided. In its natural state it was waste, in some places covered with dwarf trees and bushes, in others swamp, and elsewhere firm and dry downs or pasture grounds.

Jeanie's active mind next led her to conjecture which way the high-road lay, whence she had been forced. If she regained that public road, she imagined she must soon meet some person, or arrive at some house, where she might tell her story, and request protection. But, after a glance around her, she saw with regret that she had no means whatever of directing her course with any degree of certainty, and that she was still in dependence upon her crazy companion. "Shall we not walk upon the high-road?" said she to Madge, in such a tone as a nurse uses to coax a child. "It's brawer walking on the road than amang thae wild bushes and whins."

Madge, who was walking very fast, stopped at this question, and looked at Jeanie with a sudden and scrutinising glance, that seemed to indicate complete acquaintance with her purpose. "Aha, lass!"

¹² Lay ourselves down to sleep.

she exclaimed, "are ye gaun to guide us that gate? – Ye'll be for making your heels save your head, I am judging."

Jeanie hesitated for a moment, on hearing her companion thus express herself, whether she had not better take the hint, and try to outstrip and get rid of her. But she knew not in which direction to fly; she was by no means sure that she would prove the swiftest, and perfectly conscious that in the event of her being pursued and overtaken, she would be inferior to the madwoman in strength. She therefore gave up thoughts for the present of attempting to escape in that manner, and, saying a few words to allay Madge's suspicions, she followed in anxious apprehension the wayward path by which her guide thought proper to lead her. Madge, infirm of purpose, and easily reconciled to the present scene, whatever it was, began soon to talk with her usual diffuseness of ideas.

"It's a dainty thing to be in the woods on a fine morning like this! I like it far better than the town, for there isna a wheen duddie bairns to be crying after ane, as if ane were a warld's wonder, just because ane maybe is a thought bonnier and better put-on than their neighbours – though, Jeanie, ye suld never be proud o' braw claihs, or beauty neither – wae's me! they're but a snare – I ance thought better o'them, and what came o't?"

"Are ye sure ye ken the way ye are taking us?" said Jeanie, who began to imagine that she was getting deeper into the woods and more remote from the high-road.

"Do I ken the road? – Wasna I mony a day living here, and what for shouldna I ken the road? I might hae forgotten, too, for it was afore my accident; but there are some things ane can never forget, let them try it as muckle as they like."

By this time they had gained the deepest part of a patch of woodland. The trees were a little separated from each other, and at the foot of one of them, a beautiful poplar, was a hillock of moss, such as the poet of Grasmere has described. So soon as she arrived at this spot, Madge Wildfire, joining her hands above her head with a loud scream that resembled laughter, flung herself all at once upon the spot, and remained lying there motionless.

Jeanie's first idea was to take the opportunity of flight; but her desire to escape yielded for a moment to apprehension for the poor insane being, who, she thought, might perish for want of relief. With an effort, which in her circumstances, might be termed heroic, she stooped down, spoke in a soothing tone, and endeavoured to raise up the forlorn creature. She effected this with difficulty, and as she placed her against the tree in a sitting posture, she observed with surprise, that her complexion, usually florid, was now deadly pale, and that her face was bathed in tears. Notwithstanding her own extreme danger, Jeanie was affected by the situation of her companion; and the rather, that, through the whole train of her wavering and inconsistent state of mind and line of conduct, she discerned a general colour of kindness towards herself, for which she felt gratitude.

"Let me alane! – let me alane!" said the poor young woman, as her paroxysm of sorrow began to abate – "Let me alane – it does me good to weep. I canna shed tears but maybe ance or twice a year, and I aye come to wet this turf with them, that the flowers may grow fair, and the grass may be green."

"But what is the matter with you?" said Jeanie – "Why do you weep so bitterly?"

"There's matter enow," replied the lunatic, – "mair than ae puir mind can bear, I trow. Stay a bit, and I'll tell you a' about it; for I like ye, Jeanie Deans – a'body spoke weel about ye when we lived in the Pleasaunts – And I mind aye the drink o' milk ye gae me yon day, when I had been on Arthur's Seat for four-and-twenty hours, looking for the ship that somebody was sailing in."

These words recalled to Jeanie's recollection, that, in fact, she had been one morning much frightened by meeting a crazy young woman near her father's house at an early hour, and that, as she appeared to be harmless, her apprehension had been changed into pity, and she had relieved the unhappy wanderer with some food, which she devoured with the haste of a famished person. The incident, trifling in itself, was at present of great importance, if it should be found to have made a favourable and permanent impression in her favour on the mind of the object of her charity.

"Yes," said Madge, "I'll tell ye a' about it, for ye are a decent man's daughter – Douce Davie Deans, ye ken – and maybe ye'll can teach me to find out the narrow way, and the straight path, for I have been burning bricks in Egypt, and walking through the weary wilderness of Sinai, for lang and mony a day. But whenever I think about mine errors, I am like to cover my lips for shame." – Here she looked up and smiled. – "It's a strange thing now – I hae spoke mair gude words to you in ten minutes, than I wad speak to my mother in as mony years – it's no that I dinna think on them – and whiles they are just at my tongue's end, but then comes the devil, and brushes my lips with his black wing, and lays his broad black loof on my mouth – for a black loof it is, Jeanie – and sweeps away a' my gude thoughts, and dits up my gude words, and pits a wheen fule sangs and idle vanities in their place."

"Try, Madge," said Jeanie, – "try to settle your mind and make your breast clean, and you'll find your heart easier. – Just resist the devil, and he will flee from you – and mind that, as my worthy father tells me, there is nae devil sae deceitfu' as our ain wandering thoughts."

"And that's true too, lass," said Madge, starting up; "and I'll gang a gate where the devil daurna follow me; and it's a gate that you will like dearly to gang – but I'll keep a fast haud o' your arm, for fear Apollyon should stride across the path, as he did in the Pilgrim's Progress."

Accordingly she got up, and, taking Jeanie by the arm, began to walk forward at a great pace; and soon, to her companion's no small joy, came into a marked path, with the meanders of which she seemed perfectly acquainted. Jeanie endeavoured to bring her back to the confessional, but the fancy was gone by. In fact, the mind of this deranged being resembled nothing so much as a quantity of dry leaves, which may for a few minutes remain still, but are instantly discomposed and put in motion by the first casual breath of air. She had now got John Bunyan's parable into her head, to the exclusion of everything else, and on she went with great volubility.

"Did ye never read the Pilgrim's Progress? And you shall be the woman, Christiana, and I will be the maiden, Mercy – for ye ken Mercy was of the fairer countenance, and the more alluring than her companion – and if I had my little messan dog here, it would be Great-heart, their guide, ye ken, for he was e'en as bauld, that he wad bark at ony thing twenty times his size; and that was e'en the death of him, for he bit Corporal MacAlpine's heels ae morning when they were hauling me to the guard-house, and Corporal MacAlpine killed the bit faithfu' thing wi' his Lochaber axe – deil pike the Highland banes o' him."

"O fie! Madge," said Jeanie, "ye should not speak such words."

"It's very true," said Madge, shaking her head; "but then I maunna think o' my puir bit doggie, Snap, when I saw it lying dying in the gutter. But it's just as weel, for it suffered baith cauld and hunger when it was living, and in the grave there is rest for a' things – rest for the doggie, and my puir bairn, and me."

"Your bairn?" said Jeanie, conceiving that by speaking on such a topic, supposing it to be a real one, she could not fail to bring her companion to a more composed temper.

She was mistaken, however, for Madge coloured, and replied with some anger, "*My bairn?* ay, to be sure, my bairn. Whatfor shouldna I hae a bairn and lose a bairn too, as weel as your bonnie tittie, the Lily of St. Leonard's?"

The answer struck Jeanie with some alarm, and she was anxious to soothe the irritation she had unwittingly given occasion to. "I am very sorry for your misfortune"

"Sorry! what wad ye be sorry for?" answered Madge. "The bairn was a blessing – that is, Jeanie, it wad hae been a blessing if it hadna been for my mother; but my mother's a queer woman. – Ye see, there was an auld carle wi' a bit land, and a gude clat o' siller besides, just the very picture of old Mr. Feeblemind or Mr. Ready-to-halt, that Great-heart delivered from Slaygood the giant, when he was rifling him and about to pick his bones, for Slaygood was of the nature of the flesh-eaters – and Great-heart killed Giant Despair too – but I am doubting Giant Despair's come alive again, for a' the story book – I find him busy at my heart whiles."

"Weel, and so the auld carle," said Jeanie, for she was painfully interested in getting to the truth of Madge's history, which she could not but suspect was in some extraordinary way linked and entwined with the fate of her sister. She was also desirous, if possible, to engage her companion in some narrative which might be carried on in a lower tone of voice, for she was in great apprehension lest the elevated notes of Madge's conversation should direct her mother or the robbers in search of them.

"And so the auld carle," said Madge, repeating her words – "I wish ye had seen him stoiting about, aff ae leg on to the other, wi' a kind o' dot-and-go-one sort o' motion, as if ilk ane o' his twa legs had belanged to sindry folk – but Gentle George could take him aff brawly – Eh, as I used to laugh to see George gang hip-hop like him! – I dinna ken, I think I laughed heartier then than what I do now, though maybe no just sae muckle."

"And who was Gentle George?" said Jeanie, endeavouring to bring her back to her story.

"O, he was Geordie Robertson, ye ken, when he was in Edinburgh; but that's no his right name neither – His name is – But what is your business wi' his name?" said she, as if upon sudden recollection, "What have ye to do asking for folk's names? – Have ye a mind I should scour my knife between your ribs, as my mother says?"

As this was spoken with a menacing tone and gesture, Jeanie hastened to protest her total innocence of purpose in the accidental question which she had asked, and Madge Wildfire went on somewhat pacified.

"Never ask folk's names, Jeanie – it's no civil – I hae seen half-a-dozen o' folk in my mother's at ance, and ne'er ane a' them ca'd the ither by his name; and Daddie Ratton says, it is the most uncivil thing may be, because the bailie bodies are aye asking fashions questions, when ye saw sic a man, or sic a man; and if ye dinna ken their names, ye ken there can be nae mair speerd about it."

"In what strange school," thought Jeanie to herself, "has this poor creature been bred up, where such remote precautions are taken against the pursuits of justice? What would my father or Reuben Butler think if I were to tell them there are sic folk in the world? And to abuse the simplicity of this demented creature! Oh, that I were but safe at hame amang mine ain leal and true people! and I'll bless God, while I have breath, that placed me amongst those who live in His fear, and under the shadow of His wing."

She was interrupted by the insane laugh of Madge Wildfire, as she saw a magpie hop across the path.

"See there! – that was the gate my auld joe used to cross the country, but no just sae lightly – he hadna wings to help his auld legs, I trow; but I behoved to have married him for a' that, Jeanie, or my mother wad hae been the dead o' me. But then came in the story of my poor bairn, and my mother thought he wad be deaved wi' it's skirling, and she pat it away in below the bit bourock of turf yonder, just to be out o' the gate; and I think she buried my best wits with it, for I have never been just mysell since. And only think, Jeanie, after my mother had been at a' these pains, the auld doited body Johnny Drottie turned up his nose, and wadna hae aught to say to me! But it's little I care for him, for I have led a merry life ever since, and ne'er a braw gentleman looks at me but ye wad think he was gaun to drop off his horse for mere love of me. I have ken'd some o' them put their hand in their pocket, and gie me as muckle as sixpence at a time, just for my weel-faired face."

This speech gave Jeanie a dark insight into Madge's history. She had been courted by a wealthy suitor, whose addresses her mother had favoured, notwithstanding the objection of old age and deformity. She had been seduced by some profligate, and, to conceal her shame and promote the advantageous match she had planned, her mother had not hesitated to destroy the offspring of their intrigue. That the consequence should be the total derangement of amind which was constitutionally unsettled by giddiness and vanity, was extremely natural; and such was, in fact, the history of Madge Wildfire's insanity.

CHAPTER SEVENTH

So free from danger, free from fear
They crossed the court – right glad they were.

Christabel.

Pursuing the path which Madge had chosen, Jeanie Deans observed, to her no small delight, that marks of more cultivation appeared, and the thatched roofs of houses, with their blue smoke arising in little columns, were seen embosomed in a tuft of trees at some distance. The track led in that direction, and Jeanie, therefore, resolved, while Madge continued to pursue it, that she would ask her no questions; having had the penetration to observe, that by doing so she ran the risk of irritating her guide, or awakening suspicions, to the impressions of which, persons in Madge's unsettled state of mind are particularly liable.

Madge, therefore, uninterrupted, went on with the wild disjointed chat which her rambling imagination suggested; a mood in which she was much more communicative respecting her own history, and that of others, than when there was any attempt made, by direct queries, or cross-examinations, to extract information on these subjects.

"It's a queer thing," she said, "but whiles I can speak about the bit bairn and the rest of it, just as if it had been another body's, and no my ain; and whiles I am like to break my heart about it – Had you ever a bairn, Jeanie?"

Jeanie replied in the negative.

"Ay; but your sister had, though – and I ken what came o't too."

"In the name of heavenly mercy," said Jeanie, forgetting the line of conduct which she had hitherto adopted, "tell me but what became of that unfortunate babe, and"

Madge stopped, looked at her gravely and fixedly, and then broke into a great fit of laughing – "Aha, lass, – catch me if you can – I think it's easy to gar you trow ony thing. – How suld I ken onything o' your sister's wean? Lasses suld hae naething to do wi' weans till they are married – and then a' the gossips and cummers come in and feast as if it were the blithest day in the warld. – They say maidens' bairns are weel guided. I wot that wasna true of your tittie's and mine; but these are sad tales to tell. – I maun just sing a bit to keep up my heart – It's a sang that Gentle George made on me lang syne, when I went with him to Lockington wake, to see him act upon a stage, in fine clothes, with the player folk. He might hae dune waur than married me that night as he promised – better wed over the mixen¹³ as over the moor, as they say in Yorkshire –

he may gang farther and fare waur – but that's a' ane to the sang,

I'm Madge of the country, I'm Madge of the town,
And I'm Madge of the lad I am blithest to own —
The Lady of Beeve in diamonds may shine,
But has not a heart half so lightsome as mine.
'I am Queen of the Wake, and I'm Lady of May,
And I lead the blithe ring round the May-pole to-day;
The wildfire that flashes so fair and so free,
Was never so bright, or so bonny, as me.'

¹³ A homely proverb, signifying better wed a neighbour than one fetched from a distance. – Mixen signifies dunghill.

"I like that the best o' a' my sangs," continued the maniac, "because he made it. I am often singing it, and that's maybe the reason folk ca' me Madge Wildfire. I aye answer to the name, though it's no my ain, for what's the use of making a fash?"

"But ye shouldna sing upon the Sabbath at least," said Jeanie, who, amid all her distress and anxiety, could not help being scandalised at the deportment of her companion, especially as they now approached near to the little village.

"Ay! is this Sunday?" said Madge. "My mother leads sic a life, wi' turning night into day, that ane loses a' count o' the days o' the week, and disna ken Sunday frae Saturday. Besides, it's a' your whiggery – in England, folk sings when they like – And then, ye ken, you are Christiana and I am Mercy – and ye ken, as they went on their way, they sang." – And she immediately raised one of John Bunyan's ditties: —

"He that is down need fear no fall,
He that is low no pride,
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.
"Fulness to such a burthen is
That go on pilgrimage;
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age."

"And do ye ken, Jeanie, I think there's much truth in that book, the Pilgrim's Progress. The boy that sings that song was feeding his father's sheep in the Valley of Humiliation, and Mr. Great-heart says, that he lived a merrier life, and had more of the herb called heart's-ease in his bosom, than they that wear silk and velvet like me, and are as bonny as I am."

Jeanie Deans had never read the fanciful and delightful parable to which Madge alluded. Bunyan was, indeed, a rigid Calvinist, but then he was also a member of a Baptist congregation, so that his works had no place on David Deans's shelf of divinity. Madge, however, at some time of her life, had been well acquainted, as it appeared, with the most popular of his performances, which, indeed, rarely fails to make a deep impression upon children, and people of the lower rank.

"I am sure," she continued, "I may weel say I am come out of the city of Destruction, for my mother is Mrs. Bat's-eyes, that dwells at Deadman's corner; and Frank Levitt, and Tyburn Tam, they may be likened to Mistrust and Guilt, that came galloping up, and struck the poor pilgrim to the ground with a great club, and stole a bag of silver, which was most of his spending money, and so have they done to many, and will do to more. But now we will gang to the Interpreter's house, for I ken a man that will play the Interpreter right weel; for he has eyes lifted up to Heaven, the best of books in his hand, the law of truth written on his lips, and he stands as if he pleaded wi' men – Oh, if I had minded what he had said to me, I had never been the cutaway creature that I am! – But it is all over now. – But we'll knock at the gate, and then the keeper will admit Christiana, but Mercy will be left out – and then I'll stand at the door, trembling and crying, and then Christiana – that's you, Jeanie – will intercede for me; and then Mercy – that's me, ye ken, will faint; and then the Interpreter – yes, the Interpreter, that's Mr. Staunton himself, will come out and take me – that's poor, lost, demented me – by the hand, and give me a pomegranate, and a piece of honeycomb, and a small bottle of spirits, to stay my fainting – and then the good times will come back again, and we'll be the happiest folk you ever saw."

In the midst of the confused assemblage of ideas indicated in this speech, Jeanie thought she saw a serious purpose on the part of Madge, to endeavour to obtain the pardon and countenance of some one whom she had offended; an attempt the most likely of all others to bring them once more

into contact with law and legal protection. She, therefore, resolved to be guided by her while she was in so hopeful a disposition, and act for her own safety according to circumstances.

They were now close by the village, one of those beautiful scenes which are so often found in merry England, where the cottages, instead of being built in two direct lines on each side of a dusty high-road, stand in detached groups, interspersed not only with large oaks and elms, but with fruit-trees, so many of which were at this time in flourish, that the grove seemed enamelled with their crimson and white blossoms. In the centre of the hamlet stood the parish church, and its little Gothic tower, from which at present was heard the Sunday chime of bells.

"We will wait here until the folk are a' in the church – they ca' the kirk a church in England, Jeanie, be sure you mind that – for if I was gaun forward amang them, a' the gaitts o' boys and lasses wad be crying at Madge Wildfire's tail, the little hell-rakers! and the beadle would be as hard upon us as if it was our fault. I like their skirting as ill as he does, I can tell him; I'm sure I often wish there was a het peat doun their throats when they set them up that gate."

Conscious of the disorderly appearance of her own dress after the adventure of the preceding night, and of the grotesque habit and demeanour of her guide, and sensible how important it was to secure an attentive and impatient audience to her strange story from some one who might have the means to protect her, Jeanie readily acquiesced in Madge's proposal to rest under the trees, by which they were still somewhat screened, until the commencement of service should give them an opportunity of entering the hamlet without attracting a crowd around them. She made the less opposition, that Madge had intimated that this was not the village where her mother was in custody, and that the two squires of the pad were absent in a different direction.

She sate herself down, therefore, at the foot of an oak, and by the assistance of a placid fountain, which had been dammed up for the use of the villagers, and which served her as a natural mirror, she began – no uncommon thing with a Scottish maiden of her rank – to arrange her toilette in the open air, and bring her dress, soiled and disordered as it was, into such order as the place and circumstances admitted.

She soon perceived reason, however, to regret that she had set about this task, however decent and necessary, in the present time and society. Madge Wildfire, who, among other indications of insanity, had a most overweening opinion of those charms, to which, in fact, she had owed her misery, and whose mind, like a raft upon a lake, was agitated and driven about at random by each fresh impulse, no sooner beheld Jeanie begin to arrange her hair, place her bonnet in order, rub the dust from her shoes and clothes, adjust her neck-handkerchief and mittans, and so forth, than with imitative zeal she began to bedizen and trick herself out with shreds and remnants of beggarly finery, which she took out of a little bundle, and which, when disposed around her person, made her appearance ten times more fantastic and apish than it had been before.

Jeanie groaned in spirit, but dared not interfere in a matter so delicate. Across the man's cap or riding hat which she wore, Madge placed a broken and soiled white feather, intersected with one which had been shed from the train of a peacock. To her dress, which was a kind of riding-habit, she stitched, pinned, and otherwise secured, a large furbelow of artificial flowers, all crushed, wrinkled and dirty, which had at first bedecked a lady of quality, then descended to her Abigail, and dazzled the inmates of the servants' hall. A tawdry scarf of yellow silk, trimmed with tinsel and spangles, which had seen as hard service, and boasted as honourable a transmission, was next flung over one shoulder, and fell across her person in the manner of a shoulder-belt, or baldrick. Madge then stripped off the coarse ordinary shoes, which she wore, and replaced them by a pair of dirty satin ones, spangled and embroidered to match the scarf, and furnished with very high heels. She had cut a willow switch in her morning's walk, almost as long as a boy's fishing-rod. This she set herself seriously to peel, and when it was transformed into such a wand as the Treasurer or High Steward bears on public occasions, she told Jeanie that she thought they now looked decent, as young women should do upon

the Sunday morning, and that, as the bells had done ringing, she was willing to conduct her to the Interpreter's house.

Jeanie sighed heavily, to think it should be her lot on the Lord's day, and during kirk time too, to parade the street of an inhabited village with so very grotesque a comrade; but necessity had no law, since, without a positive quarrel with the madwoman, which, in the circumstances, would have been very unadvisable, she could see no means of shaking herself free of her society.

As for poor Madge, she was completely elated with personal vanity, and the most perfect satisfaction concerning her own dazzling dress, and superior appearance. They entered the hamlet without being observed, except by one old woman, who, being nearly "high-gravel blind," was only conscious that something very fine and glittering was passing by, and dropped as deep a reverence to Madge as she would have done to a countess. This filled up the measure of Madge's self-approbation. She minced, she ambled, she smiled, she simpered, and waved Jeanie Deans forward with the condescension of a noble *chaperone*, who has undertaken the charge of a country miss on her first journey to the capital.

Jeanie followed in patience, and with her eyes fixed on the ground, that she might save herself the mortification of seeing her companion's absurdities; but she started when, ascending two or three steps, she found herself in the churchyard, and saw that Madge was making straight for the door of the church. As Jeanie had no mind to enter the congregation in such company, she walked aside from the pathway, and said in a decided tone, "Madge, I will wait here till the church comes out – you may go in by yourself if you have a mind."

As she spoke these words, she was about to seat herself upon one of the grave-stones.

Madge was a little before Jeanie when she turned aside; but, suddenly changing her course, she followed her with long strides, and, with every feature inflamed with passion, overtook and seized her by the arm. "Do ye think, ye ungratefu' wretch, that I am gaun to let you sit down upon my father's grave? The deil settle ye down, if ye dinna rise and come into the Interpreter's house, that's the house of God, wi' me, but I'll rive every dud aft your back!"

She adapted the action to the phrase; for with one clutch she stripped Jeanie of her straw bonnet and a handful of her hair to boot, and threw it up into an old yew-tree, where it stuck fast. Jeanie's first impulse was to scream, but conceiving she might receive deadly harm before she could obtain the assistance of anyone, notwithstanding the vicinity of the church, she thought it wiser to follow the madwoman into the congregation, where she might find some means of escape from her, or at least be secured against her violence. But when she meekly intimated her consent to follow Madge, her guide's uncertain brain had caught another train of ideas. She held Jeanie fast with one hand, and with the other pointed to the inscription on the grave-stone, and commanded her to read it. Jeanie obeyed, and read these words: —

"This Monument was erected to the Memory of Donald Murdockson of the King's xxvi., or Cameronian Regiment, a sincere Christian, a brave Soldier, and a faithful Servant, by his grateful and sorrowing master, Robert Staunton."

"It's very weel read, Jeanie; it's just the very words," said Madge, whose ire had now faded into deep melancholy, and with a step which, to Jeanie's great joy, was uncommonly quiet and mournful, she led her companion towards the door of the church.

It was one of those old-fashioned Gothic parish churches which are frequent in England, the most cleanly, decent, and reverential places of worship that are, perhaps, anywhere to be found in the Christian world. Yet, notwithstanding the decent solemnity of its exterior, Jeanie was too faithful to the directory of the Presbyterian kirk to have entered a prelatie place of worship, and would, upon any other occasion, have thought that she beheld in the porch the venerable figure of her father waving her back from the entrance, and pronouncing in a solemn tone, "Cease, my child, to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge." But in her present agitating and

alarming situation, she looked for safety to this forbidden place of assembly, as the hunted animal will sometimes seek shelter from imminent danger in the human habitation, or in other places of refuge most alien to its nature and habits. Not even the sound of the organ, and of one or two flutes which accompanied the psalmody, prevented her from following her guide into the chancel of the church.

No sooner had Madge put her foot upon the pavement, and become sensible that she was the object of attention to the spectators, than she resumed all the fantastic extravagance of deportment which some transient touch of melancholy had banished for an instant. She swam rather than walked up the centre aisle, dragging Jeanie after her, whom she held fast by the hand. She would, indeed, have fain slipped aside into the pew nearest to the door, and left Madge to ascend in her own manner and alone to the high places of the synagogue; but this was impossible, without a degree of violent resistance, which seemed to her inconsistent with the time and place, and she was accordingly led in captivity up the whole length of the church by her grotesque conductress, who, with half-shut eyes, a prim smile upon her lips, and a mincing motion with her hands, which corresponded with the delicate and affected pace at which she was pleased to move, seemed to take the general stare of the congregation, which such an exhibition necessarily excited, as a high compliment, and which she returned by nods and half-courtesies to individuals amongst the audience, whom she seemed to distinguish as acquaintances. Her absurdity was enhanced in the eyes of the spectators by the strange contrast which she formed to her companion, who, with dishevelled hair, downcast eyes, and a face glowing with shame, was dragged, as it were in triumph after her.

Madge's airs were at length fortunately cut short by her encountering in her progress the looks of the clergyman, who fixed upon her a glance, at once steady, compassionate, and admonitory. She hastily opened an empty pew which happened to be near her, and entered, dragging in Jeanie after her. Kicking Jeanie on the shins, by way of hint that she should follow her example, she sunk her head upon her hand for the space of a minute. Jeanie, to whom this posture of mental devotion was entirely new, did not attempt to do the like, but looked round her with a bewildered stare, which her neighbours, judging from the company in which they saw her, very naturally ascribed to insanity. Every person in their immediate vicinity drew back from this extraordinary couple as far as the limits of their pew permitted; but one old man could not get beyond Madge's reach, ere, she had snatched the prayer-book from his hand, and ascertained the lesson of the day. She then turned up the ritual, and with the most overstrained enthusiasm of gesture and manner, showed Jeanie the passages as they were read in the service, making, at the same time, her own responses so loud as to be heard above those of every other person.

Notwithstanding the shame and vexation which Jeanie felt in being thus exposed in a place of worship, she could not and durst not omit rallying her spirits so as to look around her, and consider to whom she ought to appeal for protection so soon as the service should be concluded. Her first ideas naturally fixed upon the clergyman, and she was confirmed in the resolution by observing that he was an aged gentleman, of a dignified appearance and deportment, who read the service with an undisturbed and decent gravity, which brought back to becoming attention those younger members of the congregation who had been disturbed by the extravagant behaviour of Madge Wildfire. To the clergyman, therefore, Jeanie resolved to make her appeal when the service was over.

It is true she felt disposed to be shocked at his surplice, of which she had heard so much, but which she had never seen upon the person of a preacher of the word. Then she was confused by the change of posture adopted in different parts of the ritual, the more so as Madge Wildfire, to whom they seemed familiar, took the opportunity to exercise authority over her, pulling her up and pushing her down with a bustling assiduity, which Jeanie felt must make them both the objects of painful attention. But, notwithstanding these prejudices, it was her prudent resolution, in this dilemma, to imitate as nearly as she could what was done around her. The prophet, she thought, permitted Naaman the Syrian to bow even in the house of Rimmon. Surely if I, in this streight, worship the God of my

fathers in mine own language, although the manner thereof be strange to me, the Lord will pardon me in this thing.

In this resolution she became so much confirmed, that, withdrawing herself from Madge as far as the pew permitted, she endeavoured to evince by serious and composed attention to what was passing, that her mind was composed to devotion. Her tormentor would not long have permitted her to remain quiet, but fatigue overpowered her, and she fell fast asleep in the other corner of the pew.

Jeanie, though her mind in her own despite sometimes reverted to her situation, compelled herself to give attention to a sensible, energetic, and well-composed discourse, upon the practical doctrines of Christianity, which she could not help approving, although it was every word written down and read by the preacher, and although it was delivered in a tone and gesture very different from those of Boanerges Stormheaven, who was her father's favourite preacher. The serious and placid attention with which Jeanie listened, did not escape the clergyman. Madge Wildfire's entrance had rendered him apprehensive of some disturbance, to provide against which, as far as possible, he often turned his eyes to the part of the church where Jeanie and she were placed, and became soon aware that, although the loss of her head-gear, and the awkwardness of her situation, had given an uncommon and anxious air to the features of the former, yet she was in a state of mind very different from that of her companion. When he dismissed the congregation, he observed her look around with a wild and terrified look, as if uncertain what course she ought to adopt, and noticed that she approached one or two of the most decent of the congregation, as if to address them, and then shrunk back timidly, on observing that they seemed to shun and to avoid her. The clergyman was satisfied there must be something extraordinary in all this, and as a benevolent man, as well as a good Christian pastor, he resolved to inquire into the matter more minutely.

CHAPTER EIGHTH

There governed in that year
A stern, stout churl – an angry overseer.

Crabbe.

While Mr. Staunton, for such was this worthy clergyman's name, was laying aside his gown in the vestry, Jeanie was in the act of coming to an open rupture with Madge.

"We must return to Mummer's barn directly," said Madge; "we'll be ower late, and my mother will be angry."

"I am not going back with you, Madge," said Jeanie, taking out a guinea, and offering it to her; "I am much obliged to you, but I maun gang my ain road."

"And me coming a' this way out o' my gate to pleasure you, ye ungratefu' cutty," answered Madge; "and me to be brained by my mother when I gang hame, and a' for your sake! – But I will gar ye as good"

"For God's sake," said Jeanie to a man who stood beside them, "keep her off! – she is mad."

"Ey, ey," answered the boor; "I hae some guess of that, and I trow thou be'st a bird of the same feather. – Howsomever, Madge, I redd thee keep hand off her, or I'se lend thee a whisterpoop."

Several of the lower class of the parishioners now gathered round the strangers, and the cry arose among the boys that "there was a-going to be a fite between mad Madge Murdockson and another Bess of Bedlam." But while the fry assembled with the humane hope of seeing as much of the fun as possible, the laced cocked-hat of the beadle was discerned among the multitude, and all made way for that person of awful authority. His first address was to Madge.

"What's brought thee back again, thou silly donnot, to plague this parish? Hast thou brought any more bastards wi' thee to lay to honest men's doors? or does thou think to burden us with this goose, that's as hare-brained as thysel, as if rates were no up enow? Away wi' thee to thy thief of a mother; she's fast in the stocks at Barkston town-end – Away wi' ye out o' the parish, or I'se be at ye with the ratan."

Madge stood sulky for a minute; but she had been too often taught submission to the beadle's authority by ungentle means to feel courage enough to dispute it.

"And my mother – my puir auld mother, is in the stocks at Barkston! – This is a' your wyte, Miss Jeanie Deans; but I'll be upsides wi' you, as sure as my name's Madge Wildfire – I mean Murdockson – God help me, I forget my very name in this confused waste!"

So saying, she turned upon her heel, and went off, followed by all the mischievous imps of the village, some crying, "Madge, canst thou tell thy name yet?" some pulling the skirts of her dress, and all, to the best of their strength and ingenuity, exercising some new device or other to exasperate her into frenzy.

Jeanie saw her departure with infinite delight, though she wished that, in some way or other, she could have requited the service Madge had conferred upon her.

In the meantime, she applied to the beadle to know whether "there was any house in the village where she could be civilly entertained for her money, and whether she could be permitted to speak to the clergyman?"

"Ay, ay, we'se ha' reverend care on thee; and I think," answered the man of constituted authority, "that, unless thou answer the Rector all the better, we'se spare thy money, and gie thee lodging at the parish charge, young woman."

"Where am I to go then?" said Jeanie, in some alarm.

"Why, I am to take thee to his Reverence, in the first place, to gie an account o' thysel, and to see thou comena to be a burden upon the parish."

"I do not wish to burden anyone," replied Jeanie; "I have enough for my own wants, and only wish to get on my journey safely."

"Why, that's another matter," replied the beadle, "and if it be true – and I think thou dost not look so polrumpitious as thy playfellow yonder – Thou wouldst be a mettle lass enow, an thou wert snog and snod a bid better. Come thou away, then – the Rector is a good man."

"Is that the minister," said Jeanie, "who preached"

"The minister? Lord help thee! What kind o' Presbyterian art thou? – Why, 'tis the Rector – the Rector's sell, woman, and there isna the like o' him in the county, nor the four next to it. Come away – away with thee – we maunna bide here."

"I am sure I am very willing to go to see the minister," said Jeanie; "for though he read his discourse, and wore that surplice, as they call it here, I canna but think he must be a very worthy God-fearing man, to preach the root of the matter in the way he did."

The disappointed rabble, finding that there was like to be no farther sport, had by this time dispersed, and Jeanie, with her usual patience, followed her consequential and surly, but not brutal, conductor towards the rectory.

This clerical mansion was large and commodious, for the living was an excellent one, and the advowson belonged to a very wealthy family in the neighbourhood, who had usually bred up a son or nephew to the church for the sake of inducting him, as opportunity offered, into this very comfortable provision. In this manner the rectory of Willingham had always been considered as a direct and immediate appanage of Willingham Hall; and as the rich baronets to whom the latter belonged had usually a son, or brother, or nephew, settled in the living, the utmost care had been taken to render their habitation not merely respectable and commodious, but even dignified and imposing.

It was situated about four hundred yards from the village, and on a rising ground which sloped gently upward, covered with small enclosures, or closes, laid out irregularly, so that the old oaks and elms, which were planted in hedge-rows, fell into perspective, and were blended together in beautiful irregularity. When they approached nearer to the house, a handsome gateway admitted them into a lawn, of narrow dimensions indeed, but which was interspersed with large sweet chestnut trees and beeches, and kept in handsome order. The front of the house was irregular. Part of it seemed very old, and had, in fact, been the residence of the incumbent in Romish times. Successive occupants had made considerable additions and improvements, each in the taste of his own age, and without much regard to symmetry. But these incongruities of architecture were so graduated and happily mingled, that the eye, far from being displeased with the combinations of various styles, saw nothing but what was interesting in the varied and intricate pile which they displayed. Fruit-trees displayed on the southern wall, outer staircases, various places of entrance, a combination of roofs and chimneys of different ages, united to render the front, not indeed beautiful or grand, but intricate, perplexed, or, to use Mr. Price's appropriate phrase, picturesque. The most considerable addition was that of the present Rector, who, "being a bookish man," as the beadle was at the pains to inform Jeanie, to augment, perhaps, her reverence for the person before whom she was to appear, had built a handsome library and parlour, and no less than two additional bedrooms.

"Mony men would hae scrupled such expense," continued the parochial officer, "seeing as the living mun go as it pleases Sir Edmund to will it; but his Reverence has a canny bit land of his own, and need not look on two sides of a penny."

Jeanie could not help comparing the irregular yet extensive and commodious pile of building before her to the "Manses" in her own country, where a set of penurious heritors, professing all the while the devotion of their lives and fortunes to the Presbyterian establishment, strain their inventions to discover what may be nipped, and clipped, and pared from a building which forms but a poor accommodation even for the present incumbent, and, despite the superior advantage of stone-

masonry, must, in the course of forty or fifty years, again burden their descendants with an expense, which, once liberally and handsomely employed, ought to have freed their estates from a recurrence of it for more than a century at least.

Behind the Rector's house the ground sloped down to a small river, which, without possessing the romantic vivacity and rapidity of a northern stream, was, nevertheless, by its occasional appearance through the ranges of willows and poplars that crowned its banks, a very pleasing accompaniment to the landscape. "It was the best trouting stream," said the beadle, whom the patience of Jeanie, and especially the assurance that she was not about to become a burden to the parish, had rendered rather communicative, "the best trouting stream in all Lincolnshire; for when you got lower, there was nought to be done wi' fly-fishing."

Turning aside from the principal entrance, he conducted Jeanie towards a sort of portal connected with the older part of the building, which was chiefly occupied by servants, and knocking at the door, it was opened by a servant in grave purple livery, such as befitted a wealthy and dignified clergyman.

"How dost do, Tummas?" said the beadle – "and how's young Measter Staunton?"

"Why, but poorly – but poorly, Measter Stubbs. – Are you wanting to see his Reverence?"

"Ay, ay, Tummas; please to say I ha' brought up the young woman as came to service to-day with mad Madge Murdockson seems to be a decentish koind o' body; but I ha' asked her never a question. Only I can tell his Reverence that she is a Scotchwoman, I judge, and as flat as the fens of Holland."

Tummas honoured Jeanie Deans with such a stare, as the pampered domestics of the rich, whether spiritual or temporal, usually esteem it part of their privilege to bestow upon the poor, and then desired Mr. Stubbs and his charge to step in till he informed his master of their presence.

The room into which he showed them was a sort of steward's parlour, hung with a county map or two, and three or four prints of eminent persons connected with the county, as Sir William Monson, James York the blacksmith of Lincoln,¹⁴ and the famous Peregrine, Lord Willoughby, in complete armour, looking as when he said in the words of the legend below the engraving, —

When they had entered this apartment, Tummas as a matter of course offered, and as a matter of course Mr. Stubbs accepted, a "summat" to eat and drink, being the respectable relies of a gammon of bacon, and a *whole whislin*, or black pot of sufficient double ale. To these eatables Mr. Beadle seriously inclined himself, and (for we must do him justice) not without an invitation to Jeanie, in which Tummas joined, that his prisoner or charge would follow his good example. But although she might have stood in need of refreshment, considering she had tasted no food that day, the anxiety of the moment, her own sparing and abstemious habits, and a bashful aversion to eat in company of the two strangers, induced her to decline their courtesy. So she sate in a chair apart, while Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Tummas, who had chosen to join his friend in consideration that dinner was to be put back till after the afternoon service, made a hearty luncheon, which lasted for half-an-hour, and might not then have concluded, had not his Reverence rung his bell, so that Tummas was obliged to attend his master. Then, and no sooner, to save himself the labour of a second journey to the other end of the house, he announced to his master the arrival of Mr. Stubbs, with the other madwoman, as he chose to designate Jeanie, as an event which had just taken place. He returned with an order that Mr. Stubbs and the young woman should be instantly ushered up to the library. The beadle bolted in haste his last mouthful of fat bacon, washed down the greasy morsel with the last rinsings of the pot of ale, and immediately marshalled Jeanie through one or two intricate passages which led from the ancient

¹⁴ [Author of the *Union of Honour*, a treatise on English Heraldry. London, 1641.] "Stand to it, noble pikemen, And face ye well about; And shoot ye sharp, bold bowmen, And we will keep them out." "Ye musquet and calliver-men, Do you prove true to me, I'll be the foremost man in fight, Said brave Lord Willoughbee."

to the more modern buildings, into a handsome little hall, or anteroom, adjoining to the library, and out of which a glass door opened to the lawn.

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