ВАЛЬТЕР СКОТТ

OLD MORTALITY, VOLUME 1

Вальтер Скотт
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Содержание

Walter Scott
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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION TO OLD MORTALITY

The origin of "Old Mortality," perhaps the best of Scott's historical romances, is well known. In May, 1816, Mr. Joseph Train, the gauger from Galloway, breakfasted with Scott in Castle Street. He brought gifts in his hand, – a relic of Rob Roy, and a parcel of traditions. Among these was a letter from Mr. Broadfoot, schoolmaster in Pennington, who facetiously signed himself "Clashbottom." To cleish, or clash, is to "flog," in Scots. From Mr. Broadfoot's joke arose Jedediah Cleishbotham, the dominie of Gandercleugh; the real place of Broadfoot's revels was the Shoulder of Mutton Inn, at Newton Stewart. Mr. Train, much pleased with the antiques in "the den" of Castle Street, was particularly charmed by that portrait of Claverhouse which now hangs on the staircase of the study at Abbotsford. Scott expressed the Cavalier opinions about Dundee, which were new to Mr. Train, who had been bred in the rural tradition of "Bloody Claver'se."

[The Editor's first acquaintance with Claverhouse was

obtained through an old nurse, who had lived on a farm beside a burn where, she said, the skulls of Covenanters shot by Bloody Claver'se were still occasionally found. The stream was a tributary of the Ettrick.]

"Might he not," asked Mr. Train, "be made, in good hands, the hero of a national romance as interesting as any about either Wallace or Prince Charlie?" He suggested that the story should be delivered "as if from the mouth of Old Mortality." This probably recalled to Scott his own meeting with Old Mortality in Dunnottar Churchyard, as described in the Introduction to the novel.

The account of the pilgrim, as given by Sir Walter from Mr. Train's memoranda, needs no addition. About Old Mortality's son, John, who went to America in 1776 (? 1774), and settled in Baltimore, a curious romantic myth has gathered. Mr. Train told Scott more, as his manuscript at Abbotsford shows, than Scott printed. According to Mr. Train, John Paterson, of Baltimore, had a son Robert and a daughter Elizabeth. Robert married an American lady, who, after his decease, was married to the Marquis of Wellesley. Elizabeth married Jerome Bonaparte! Sir Walter distrusted these legends, though derived from a Scotch descendant of Old Mortality. Mr. Ramage, in March, 1871, wrote to "Notes and Queries" dispelling the myth.

According to Jerome Bonaparte's descendant, Madame Bonaparte, her family were Pattersons, not Patersons. Her Baltimore ancestor's will is extant, has been examined by Old

Mortality's great-grandson, and announces in a kind of preamble that the testator was a native of Donegal; his Christian name was William ("Notes and Queries," Fourth Series, vol. vii. p. 219, and Fifth Series, August, 1874). This, of course, quite settles the question; but the legend is still current among American descendants of the old Roxburghshire wanderer.

"Old Mortality," with its companion, "The Black Dwarf," was published on December 1, 1816, by Mr. Murray in London, and Mr. Blackwood in Edinburgh.

The name of "The Author of 'Waverley'" was omitted on the title-page. The reason for a change of publisher may have been chiefly financial (Lockhart, v. 152). Scott may have also thought it amusing to appear as his own rival in a new field. He had not yet told his secret to Lady Abercorn, but he seems to reveal it (for who but he could have known so much about the subject?) in a letter to her, of November 29, 1816. "You must know the Marquis well, – or rather you must be the Marquis himself!" quoth Dalgetty. Here follow portions of the letter:

> I do not like the first story, "The Black Dwarf," at all; but the long one which occupies three volumes is a most remarkable production… I should like to know if you are of my opinion as to these new volumes coming from the same hand… I wander about from nine in the morning till five at night with a plaid about my shoulders and an immensely large bloodhound at my heels, and stick in sprigs which are to become trees when I shall have no eyes to look at them..
>
> I am truly glad that the Tales have amused you. In my

poor opinion they are the best of the four sets, though perhaps I only think so on account of their opening ground less familiar to me than the manners of the Highlanders… If Tom – [His brother, Mr. Thomas Scott.] – wrote those volumes, he has not put me in his secret..

General rumour here attributes them to a very ingenious but most unhappy man, a clergyman of the Church of Scotland, who, many years since, was obliged to retire from his profession, and from society, who hides himself under a borrowed name. This hypothesis seems to account satisfactorily for the rigid secrecy observed; but from what I can recollect of the unfortunate individual, these are not the kind of productions I should expect from him. Burley, if I mistake not, was on board the Prince of Orange's own vessel at the time of his death. There was also in the Life Guards such a person as Francis Stewart, grandson of the last Earl of Bothwell. I have in my possession various proceedings at his father's instance for recovering some part of the Earl's large estates which had been granted to the Earls of Buccleugh and Roxburgh. It would appear that Charles I. made some attempts to reinstate him in those lands, but, like most of that poor monarch's measures, the attempt only served to augment his own enemies, for Buccleugh was one of the first who declared against him in Scotland, and raised a regiment of twelve hundred men, of whom my grandfather's grandfather (Sir William Scott of Harden) was lieutenant-colonel. This regiment was very active at the destruction of Montrose's Highland army at Philiphaugh. In Charles the Second's time the old knight suffered as much through the

nonconformity of his wife as Cuddie through that of his mother.

My father's grandmother, who lived to the uncommon age of ninety-eight years, perfectly remembered being carried, when a child, to the field-preachings, where the clergyman thundered from the top of a rock, and the ladies sat upon their side-saddles, which were placed upon the turf for their accommodation, while the men stood round, all armed with swords and pistols… Old Mortality was a living person; I have myself seen him about twenty years ago repairing the Covenanters' tombs as far north as Dunnottar.

If Lady Abercorn was in any doubt after this ingenuous communication, Mr. Murray, the publisher, was in none. (Lockhart, v. 169.) He wrote to Scott on December 14, 1816, rejoicing in the success of the Tales, "which must be written either by Walter Scott or the Devil… I never experienced such unmixed pleasure as the reading of this exquisite work has afforded me; and if you could see me, as the author's literary chamberlain, receiving the unanimous and vehement praises of those who have read it, and the curses of those whose needs my scanty supply could not satisfy, you might judge of the sincerity with which I now entreat you to assure the Author of the most complete success." Lord Holland had said, when Mr. Murray asked his opinion, "Opinion! We did not one of us go to bed last night, – nothing slept but my gout."

The very Whigs were conquered. But not the Scottish Whigs, the Auld Leaven of the Covenant, – they were still dour, and

offered many criticisms. Thereon Scott, by way of disproving his authorship, offered to review the Tales in the "Quarterly." His true reason for this step was the wish to reply to Dr. Thomas McCrie, author of the "Life of John Knox," who had been criticising Scott's historical view of the Covenant, in the "Edinburgh Christian Instructor." Scott had, perhaps, no better mode of answering his censor. He was indifferent to reviews, but here his historical knowledge and his candour had been challenged. Scott always recognised the national spirit of the Covenanters, which he remarks on in "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," and now he was treated as a faithless Scotsman. For these reasons he reviewed himself; but it is probable, as Lockhart says, that William Erskine wrote the literary or aesthetic part of the criticism (Lockhart, v.174, note).

Dr. McCrie's review may be read, or at least may be found, in the fourth volume of his collected works (Blackwood, Edinburgh 1857). The critique amounts to about eighty-five thousand words. Since the "Princesse de Cleves" was reviewed in a book as long as the original, never was so lengthy a criticism. As Dr. McCrie's performance scarcely shares the popularity of "Old Mortality," a note on his ideas may not be superfluous, though space does not permit a complete statement of his many objections. The Doctor begins by remarks on novels in general, then descends to the earlier Waverley romances. "The Antiquary" he pronounces to be "tame and fatiguing." Acknowledging the merits of the others, he finds fault with

"the foolish lines" (from Burns), "which must have been foisted without the author's knowledge into the title page," and he denounces the "bad taste" of the quotation from "Don Quixote." Burns and Cervantes had done no harm to Dr. McCrie, but his anger was aroused, and he, like the McCallum More as described by Andrew Fairservice, "got up wi' an unto' bang, and garr'd them a' look about them." The view of the Covenanters is "false and distorted." These worthies are not to be "abused with profane wit or low buffoonery." "Prayers were not read in the parish churches of Scotland" at that time. As Episcopacy was restored when Charles II. returned "upon the unanimous petition of the Scottish Parliament" (Scott's Collected Works, vol. xix. p. 78) it is not unnatural for the general reader to suppose that prayers would be read by the curates. Dr. McCrie maintains that "at the Restoration neither the one nor the other" (neither the Scotch nor English Prayer Books) "was imposed," and that the Presbyterians repeatedly "admitted they had no such grievance." No doubt Dr. McCrie is correct. But Mr. James Guthrie, who was executed on June 1, 1661, said in his last speech, "Oh that there were not many who study to build again what they did formerly unwarrantably destroy: I mean Prelacy and the Service Book, a mystery of iniquity that works amongst us, whose steps lead unto the house of the great Whore, Babylon, the mother of fornication," and so forth. Either this mystery of iniquity, the Book of Common Prayer, "was working amongst us," or it was not. If it was not, of what did Mr. Guthrie complain?

If it was "working," was read by certain curates, as by Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, at Saltoun, Scott is not incorrect. He makes Morton, in danger of death, pray in the words of the Prayer Book, "a circumstance which so enraged his murderers that they determined to precipitate his fate." Dr. McCrie objects to this incident, which is merely borrowed, one may conjecture, from the death of Archbishop Sharpe. The assassins told the Archbishop that they would slay him. "Hereupon he began to think of death. But (here are just the words of the person who related the story) behold! God did not give him the grace to pray to Him without the help of a book. But he pulled out of his pocket a small book, and began to read over some words to himself, which filled us with amazement and indignation." So they fired their pistols into the old man, and then chopped him up with their swords, supposing that he had a charm against bullets! Dr. McCrie seems to have forgotten, or may have disbelieved the narrative telling how Sharpe's use of the Prayer Book, like Morton's, "enraged" his murderers. The incident does not occur in the story of the murder by Russell, one of the murderers, a document published in C. K. Sharpe's edition of Kirkton. It need not be true, but it may have suggested the prayer of Morton.

If Scott thought that the Prayer Book was ordained to be read in Scotch churches, he was wrong; if he merely thought that it might have been read in some churches, was "working amongst us," he was right: at least, according to Mr. James Guthrie.

Dr. McCrie argues that Burley would never have wrestled

with a soldier in an inn, especially in the circumstances. This, he says, was inconsistent with Balfour's "character." Wodrow remarks, "I cannot hear that this gentleman had ever any great character for religion among those that knew him, and such were the accounts of him, when abroad, that the reverend ministers of the Scots congregation at Rotterdam would never allow him to communicate with them." In Scott's reading of Burley's character, there was a great deal of the old Adam. That such a man should so resent the insolence of a soldier is far from improbable, and our sympathies are with Burley on this occasion.

Mause Headrigg is next criticised. Scott never asserted that she was a representative of sober Presbyterianism. She had long conducted herself prudently, but, when she gave way to her indignation, she only used such language as we find on many pages of Wodrow, in the mouths of many Covenanters. Indeed, though Manse is undeniably comic, she also commands as much respect as the Spartan mother when she bids her only son bear himself boldly in the face of torture. If Scott makes her grotesque, he also makes her heroic. But Dr. McCrie could not endure the ridiculous element, which surely no fair critic can fail to observe in the speeches of the gallant and courageous, but not philosophical, members of the Covenant's Extreme Left. Dr. McCrie talks of "the creeping loyalty of the Cavaliers." "Staggering" were a more appropriate epithet. Both sides were loyal to principle, both courageous; but the inappropriate and promiscuous scriptural language of many Covenanters was, and

remains, ridiculous. Let us admit that the Covenanters were not averse to all games. In one or two sermons they illustrate religion by phrases derived from golf!

When Dr. McCrie exclaims, in a rich anger, "Your Fathers!" as if Scott's must either have been Presbyterians or Cavaliers, the retort is cleverly put by Sir Walter in the mouth of Jedediah. His ancestors of these days had been Quakers, and persecuted by both parties.

Throughout the novel Scott keeps insisting that the Presbyterians had been goaded into rebellion, and even into revenge, by cruelty of persecution, and that excesses and bloodthirstiness were confined to the "High Flyers," as the milder Covenanters called them. Morton represents the ideal of a good Scot in the circumstances. He comes to be ashamed of his passive attitude in the face of oppression. He stands up for "that freedom from stripes and bondage" which was claimed, as you may read in Scripture, by the Apostle Paul, and which every man who is free-born is called upon to defend, for his own sake and that of his countrymen. The terms demanded by Morton from Monmouth before the battle of Bothwell Bridge are such as Scott recognises to be fair. Freedom of worship, and a free Parliament, are included.

Dr. McCrie's chief charges are that Scott does not insist enough on the hardships and brutalities of the persecution, and that the ferocity of the Covenanters is overstated. He does not admit that the picture drawn of "the more rigid Presbyterians"

is just. But it is almost impossible to overstate the ferocity of the High Flyers' conduct and creed. Thus Wodrow, a witness not quite unfriendly to the rigid Presbyterians, though not high-flying enough for Patrick Walker, writes "Mr. Tate informs me that he had this account front Mr. Antony Shau, and others of the Indulged; that at some time, under the Indulgence, there was a meeting of some people, when they resolved in one night.. to go to every house of the Indulged Ministers and kill them, and all in one night." This anecdote was confirmed by Mr. John Millar, to whose father's house one of these High Flyers came, on this errand. This massacre was not aimed at the persecutors, but at the Poundtexts. As to their creed, Wodrow has an anecdote of one of his own elders, who told a poor woman with many children that "it would be an uncouth mercy" if they were all saved.

A pleasant evangel was this, and peacefully was it to have been propagated!

Scott was writing a novel, not history. In "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" (1802-3) Sir Walter gave this account of the persecutions. "Had the system of coercion been continued until our day, Blair and Robertson would have preached in the wilderness, and only discovered their powers of eloquence and composition by rolling along a deeper torrent of gloomy fanaticism… The genius of the persecuted became stubborn, obstinate, and ferocious." He did not, in his romance, draw a complete picture of the whole persecution, but he did show, by that insolence of Bothwell at Milnwood, which stirs the most

sluggish blood, how the people were misused. This scene, to Dr. McCrie's mind, is "a mere farce," because it is enlivened by Manse's declamations. Scott displays the abominable horrors of the torture as forcibly as literature may dare to do. But Dr. McCrie is not satisfied, because Macbriar, the tortured man, had been taken in arms. Some innocent person should have been put in the Boot, to please Dr. McCrie. He never remarks that Macbriar conquers our sympathy by his fortitude. He complains of what the Covenanters themselves called "the language of Canaan," which is put into their mouths, "a strange, ridiculous, and incoherent jargon compounded of Scripture phrases, and cant terms peculiar to their own party opinions in ecclesiastical politics." But what other language did many of them speak? "Oh, all ye that can pray, tell all the Lord's people to try, by mourning and prayer, if ye can taigle him, taigle him especially in Scotland, for we fear, he will depart from it." This is the theology of a savage, in the style of a clown, but it is quoted by Walker as Mr. Alexander Peden's.' Mr. John Menzie's "Testimony" (1670) is all about "hardened men, whom though they walk with you for the present with horns of a lamb, yet afterward ye may hear them speak with the mouth of a dragon, pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides." Manse Headrigg scarcely caricatures this eloquence, or Peden's "many and long seventy-eight years left-hand defections, and forty-nine years right-hand extremes;" while "Professor Simson in Glasgow, and Mr. Glass in Tealing, both with Edom's children cry Raze, raze the very foundation!"

Dr. McCrie is reduced to supposing that some of the more absurd sermons were incorrectly reported. Very possibly they were, but the reports were in the style which the people liked. As if to remove all possible charge of partiality, Scott made the one faultless Christian of his tale a Covenanting widow, the admirable Bessie McLure. But she, says the doctor, "repeatedly banns and minces oaths in her conversation." This outrageous conduct of Bessie's consists in saying "Gude protect us!" and "In Heaven's name, who are ye?" Next the Doctor congratulates Scott on his talent for buffoonery. "Oh, le grand homme, rien ne lui peut plaire." Scott is later accused of not making his peasants sufficiently intelligent. Cuddie Headrigg and Jenny Dennison suffice as answers to this censure.

Probably the best points made by Dr. McCrie are his proof that biblical names were not common among the Covenanteers and that Episcopal eloquence and Episcopal superstition were often as tardy and as dark as the eloquence and superstition of the Presbyterians. He carries the war into the opposite camp, with considerable success. His best answer to "Old Mortality" would have been a novel, as good and on the whole as fair, written from the Covenanting side. Hogg attempted this reply, not to Scott's pleasure according to the Shepherd, in "The Brownie of Bodsbeck." The Shepherd says that when Scott remarked that the "Brownie" gave an untrue description of the age, he replied, "It's a devilish deal truer than yours!" Scott, in his defence, says that to please the friends of the Covenanters, "their

portraits must be drawn without shadow, and the objects of their political antipathy be blackened, hooved, and horned ere they will acknowledge the likeness of either." He gives examples of clemency, and even considerateness, in Dundee; for example, he did not bring with him a prisoner, "who laboured under a disease rendering it painful to him to be on horseback." He examines the story of John Brown, and disproves the blacker circumstances. Yet he appears to hold that Dundee should have resigned his commission rather than carry out the orders of Government? Burley's character for ruthlessness is defended by the evidence of the "Scottish Worthies." As Dr. McCrie objects to his "buffoonery," it is odd that he palliates the "strong propensity" of Knox "to indulge his vein of humour," when describing, with ghoul-like mirth, the festive circumstances of the murder and burial of Cardinal Beaton. The odious part of his satire, Scott says, is confined to "the fierce and unreasonable set of extra-Presbyterians," Wodrow's High Flyers. "We have no delight to dwell either upon the atrocities or absurdities of a people whose ignorance and fanaticism were rendered frantic by persecution." To sum up the controversy, we may say that Scott was unfair, if at all, in tone rather than in statement. He grants to the Covenanters dauntless resolution and fortitude; he admits their wrongs; we cannot see, on the evidence of their literature, that he exaggerates their grotesqueness, their superstition, their impossible attitude as of Israelites under a Theocracy, which only existed as an ideal, or their ruthlessness on certain occasions. The books of Wodrow,

Kirkton, and Patrick Walker, the sermons, the ghost stories, the dying speeches, the direct testimony of their own historians, prove all that Scott says, a hundred times over. The facts are correct, the testimony to the presence of another, an angelic temper, remains immortal in the figure of Bessie McLure. But an unfairness of tone may be detected in the choice of such names as Kettledrummle and Poundtext: probably the "jog-trot" friends of the Indulgence have more right to complain than the "high-flying" friends of the Covenant. Scott had Cavalier sympathies, as Macaulay had Covenanting sympathies. That Scott is more unjust to the Covenanters than Macaulay to Claverhouse historians will scarcely maintain. Neither history or fiction would be very delightful if they were warless. This must serve as an apology more needed by Macaulay – than by Sir Walter. His reply to Dr. McCrie is marked by excellent temper, humour, and good humor. The "Quarterly Review" ends with the well known reference to his brother Tom's suspected authorship: "We intended here to conclude this long article, when a strong report reached us of certain transatlantic confessions, which, if genuine (though of this we know nothing), assign a different author to those volumes than the party suspected by our Scottish correspondents. Yet a critic may be excused for seizing upon the nearest suspected person, or the principle happily expressed by Claverhouse in a letter to the Earl of Linlithgow. He had been, it seems, in search of a gifted weaver who used to hold forth at conventicles: 'I sent for the webster, they brought in his brother

for him: though he, maybe, cannot preach like his brother, I doubt not but he is as well principled as he, wherefore I thought it would be no great fault to give him the trouble to go to jail with the rest.'"

Nobody who read this could doubt that Scott was, at least, "art and part" in the review. His efforts to disguise himself as an Englishman, aided by a Scotch antiquary, are divertingly futile. He seized the chance of defending his earlier works from some criticisms on Scotch manners suggested by the ignorance of Gifford. Nor was it difficult to see that the author of the review was also the author of the novel. In later years Lady Louisa Stuart reminded Scott that "Old Mortality," like the Iliad, had been ascribed by clever critics to several hands working together. On December 5, 1816, she wrote to him, "I found something you wot of upon my table; and as I dare not take it with me to a friend's house, for fear of arousing curiosity" – she read it at once. She could not sleep afterwards, so much had she been excited. "Manse and Cuddie forced me to laugh out aloud, which one seldom does when alone." Many of the Scotch words "were absolutely Hebrew" to her. She not unjustly objected to Claverhouse's use of the word "sentimental" as an anachronism. Sentiment, like nerves, had not been invented in Claverhouse's day.

The pecuniary success of "Old Mortality" was less, perhaps, than might have been expected. The first edition was only of two thousand copies. Two editions of this number were sold in six

weeks, and a third was printed. Constable's gallant enterprise of ten thousand, in "Rob Roy," throws these figures into the shade.

"Old Mortality" is the first of Scott's works in which he invades history beyond the range of what may be called living oral tradition. In "Waverley," and even in "Rob Roy," he had the memories of Invernahyle, of Miss Nairne, of many persons of the last generation for his guides. In "Old Mortality" his fancy had to wander among the relics of another age, among the inscribed tombs of the Covenanters, which are common in the West Country, as in the churchyards of Balmaclellan and Dalry. There the dust of these enduring and courageous men, like that of Bessie Bell and Marion Gray in the ballad, "beiks forenenst the sun," which shines on them from beyond the hills of their wanderings, while the brown waters of the Ken murmur at their feet.

> Here now in peace sweet rest we take,
> Once murdered for religion's sake,

says the epitaph on the flat table-stone, beneath the wind tormented trees of Iron Gray. Concerning these *Manes Presbyteriani*, "Guthrie's and Giffan's Passions" and the rest, Scott had a library of rare volumes full of prophecies, "remarkable Providences," angelic ministrations, diabolical persecutions by The Accuser of the Brethren, – in fact, all that Covenanteers had written or that had been written about

Covenanteers. "I'll tickle ye off a Covenanter as readily as old Jack could do a young Prince; and a rare fellow he is, when brought forth in his true colours," he says to Terry (November 12, 1816). He certainly was not an unprejudiced witness, some ten years earlier, when he wrote to Southey, "You can hardly conceive the perfidy, cruelty, and stupidity of these people, according to the accounts they have themselves preserved. But I admit I had many prejudices instilled into me, as my ancestor was a Killiecrankie man." He used to tease Grahame of "The Sabbath," "but never out of his good humour, by praising Dundee, and laughing at the Covenanters." Even as a boy he had been familiar with that godly company in "the original edition of the lives of Cameron and others, by Patrick Walker." The more curious parts of those biographies were excised by the care of later editors, but they may all be found now in the "Biographia Presbyteriana" (1827), published by True Jock, chief clerk to "Leein' Johnnie," Mr. John Ballantyne. To this work the inquirer may turn, if he is anxious to see whether Scott's colouring is correct. The true blue of the Covenant is not dulled in the "Biographia Presbyteriana."

With all these materials at his command, Scott was able almost to dwell in the age of the Covenant hence the extraordinary life and brilliance of this, his first essay in fiction dealing with a remote time and obsolete manners. His opening, though it may seem long and uninviting to modern readers, is interesting for the sympathetic sketch of the gentle consumptive

dominie. If there was any class of men whom Sir Walter could not away with, it was the race of schoolmasters, "black cattle" whom he neither trusted nor respected. But he could make or invent exceptions, as in the uncomplaining and kindly usher of the verbose Cleishbotham. Once launched in his legend, with the shooting of the Popinjay, he never falters. The gallant, dauntless, overbearing Bothwell, the dour Burley, the handful of Preachers, representing every current of opinion in the Covenant, the awful figure of Habakkuk Mucklewrath, the charm of goodness in Bessie McLure, are all immortal, deathless as Shakspeare's men and women. Indeed here, even more than elsewhere, we admire the life which Scott breathes into his minor characters, Halliday and Inglis, the troopers, the child who leads Morton to Burley's retreat in the cave, that auld Laird Nippy, old Milnwood (a real "Laird Nippy" was a neighbour of Scott's at Ashiestiel), Ailie Wilson, the kind, crabbed old housekeeper, generous in great things, though habitually niggardly in things small. Most of these are persons whom we might still meet in Scotland, as we might meet Cuddie Headrigg – the shrewd, the blithe, the faithful and humorous Cuddie. As to Miss Jenny Dennison, we can hardly forgive Scott for making that gayest of soubrettes hard and selfish in married life. He is too severe on the harmless and even beneficent race of coquettes, who brighten life so much, who so rapidly "draw up with the new pleugh lad," and who do so very little harm when all is said. Jenny plays the part of a leal and brave lass in the siege of Tillietudlem, hunger and terror do not subdue

her spirit; she is true, in spite of many temptations, to her Cuddie, and we decline to believe that she was untrue to his master and friend. Ikuse, no doubt, is a caricature, though Wodrow makes us acquainted with at least one Mause, Jean Biggart, who "all the winter over was exceedingly straitened in wrestling and prayer as to the Parliament, and said that still that place was brought before her, Our hedges are broken down!" ("Analecta," ii. 173.) Surely even Dr. McCrie must have laughed out loud, like Lady Louisa Stuart, when Mause exclaims: "Neither will I peace for the bidding of no earthly potsherd, though it be painted as red as a brick from the tower o' Babel, and ca' itsel' a corporal." Manse, as we have said, is not more comic than heroic, a mother in that Sparta of the Covenant. The figure of Morton, as usual, is not very attractive. In his review, Scott explains the weakness of his heroes as usually strangers in the land (Waverley, Lovel, Mannering, Osbaldistone), who need to have everything explained to them, and who are less required to move than to be the pivots of the general movement. But Morton is no stranger in the land. His political position in the juste milieu is unexciting. A schoolboy wrote to Scott at this time, "Oh, Sir Walter, how could you take the lady from the gallant Cavalier, and give her to the crop-eared Covenanter?" Probably Scott sympathised with his young critic, who longed "to be a feudal chief, and to see his retainers happy around him." But Edith Bellenden loved Morton, with that love which, as she said, and thought, "disturbs the repose of the dead." Scott

had no choice. Besides, Dr. McCrie might have disapproved of so fortunate an arrangement. The heroine herself does not live in the memory like Di Vernon; she does not even live like Jenny Dennison. We remember Corporal Raddlebanes better, the stoutest fighting man of Major Bellenden's acquaintance; and the lady of Tillietudlem has admirers more numerous and more constant. The lovers of the tale chiefly engage our interest by the rare constancy of their affections.

The most disputed character is, of course, that of Claverhouse. There is no doubt that, if Claverhouse had been a man of the ordinary mould, he would never have reckoned so many enthusiastic friends in future ages. But Beauty, which makes Helen immortal, had put its seal on Bonny Dundee. With that face "which limners might have loved to paint, and ladies to look upon," he still conquers hearts from his dark corner above the private staircase in Sir Walter's deserted study. He was brave, he was loyal when all the world forsook his master; in that reckless age of revelry he looks on with the austere and noble contempt which he wears in Hell among the tippling shades of Cavaliers. He died in the arms of victory, but he lives among

> The chiefs of ancient names
> Who swore to fight and die beneath the banner of King James,
> And he fell in Killiecrankie Pass, the glory of the Grahames.

Sentiment in romance, not in history, may be excused for

pardoning the rest.

Critics of the time, as Lady Louisa Stuart reminds Sir Walter, did not believe the book was his, because it lacked his "tedious descriptions." The descriptions, as of the waterfall where Burley had his den, are indeed far from "tedious." There is a tendency in Scott to exalt into mountains "his own grey hills," the *bosses verdatres* as Prosper Merimee called them, of the Border. But the horrors of such linns as that down which Hab Dab and Davie Dinn "dang the deil" are not exaggerated.

"Old Mortality" was the last novel written by Scott before the malady which tormented his stoicism in 1817-1820. Every reader has his own favourite, but few will place this glorious tale lower than second in the list of his incomparable romances.

ANDREW LANG

INTRODUCTION TO THE TALES OF MY LANDLORD

As I may, without vanity, presume that the name and official description prefixed to this Proem will secure it, from the sedate and reflecting part of mankind, to whom only I would be understood to address myself, such attention as is due to the sedulous instructor of youth, and the careful performer of my Sabbath duties, I will forbear to hold up a candle to the daylight, or to point out to the judicious those recommendations of my labours which they must necessarily anticipate from the perusal of the title-page. Nevertheless, I am not unaware, that, as Envy always dogs Merit at the heels, there may be those who will whisper, that albeit my learning and good principles cannot (lauded be the heavens) be denied by any one, yet that my situation at Gandercleugh hath been more favourable to my acquisitions in learning than to the enlargement of my views of the ways and works of the present generation. To the which objection, if, peradventure, any such shall be started, my answer shall be threefold:

First, Gandercleugh is, as it were, the central part – the navel (*si fas sit dicere*) of this our native realm of Scotland; so that men, from every corner thereof, when travelling on their concernments of business, either towards our metropolis of law,

by which I mean Edinburgh, or towards our metropolis and mart of gain, whereby I insinuate Glasgow, are frequently led to make Gandercleugh their abiding stage and place of rest for the night. And it must be acknowledged by the most sceptical, that I, who have sat in the leathern armchair, on the left-hand side of the fire, in the common room of the Wallace Inn, winter and summer, for every evening in my life, during forty years bypast, (the Christian Sabbaths only excepted,) must have seen more of the manners and customs of various tribes and people, than if I had sought them out by my own painful travel and bodily labour. Even so doth the tollman at the well-frequented turnpike on the Wellbrae-head, sitting at his ease in his own dwelling, gather more receipt of custom, than if, moving forth upon the road, he were to require a contribution from each person whom he chanced to meet in his journey, when, according to the vulgar adage, he might possibly be greeted with more kicks than halfpence.

But, secondly, supposing it again urged, that Ithacus, the most wise of the Greeks, acquired his renown, as the Roman poet hath assured us, by visiting states and men, I reply to the Zoilus who shall adhere to this objection, that, *de facto*, I have seen states and men also; for I have visited the famous cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the former twice, and the latter three times, in the course of my earthly pilgrimage. And, moreover, I had the honour to sit in the General Assembly (meaning, as an auditor, in the galleries thereof,) and have heard as much goodly speaking on the law of patronage, as, with the fructification thereof in

mine own understanding, hath made me be considered as an oracle upon that doctrine ever since my safe and happy return to Gandercleugh.

Again, – and thirdly, If it be nevertheless pretended that my information and knowledge of mankind, however extensive, and however painfully acquired, by constant domestic enquiry, and by foreign travel, is, natheless, incompetent to the task of recording the pleasant narratives of my Landlord, I will let these critics know, to their own eternal shame and confusion, as well as to the abashment and discomfiture of all who shall rashly take up a song against me, that I am NOT the writer, redacter, or compiler, of the "Tales of my Landlord;" nor am I, in one single iota, answerable for their contents, more or less. And now, ye generation of critics, who raise yourselves up as if it were brazen serpents, to hiss with your tongues, and to smite with your stings, bow yourselves down to your native dust, and acknowledge that yours have been the thoughts of ignorance, and the words of vain foolishness. Lo! ye are caught in your own snare, and your own pit hath yawned for you. Turn, then, aside from the task that is too heavy for you; destroy not your teeth by gnawing a file; waste not your strength by spurning against a castle wall; nor spend your breath in contending in swiftness with a fleet steed; and let those weigh the "Tales of my Landlord," who shall bring with them the scales of candour cleansed from the rust of prejudice by the hands of intelligent modesty. For these alone they were compiled, as will appear from a brief narrative which my zeal

for truth compelled me to make supplementary to the present Proem.

It is well known that my Landlord was a pleasing and a facetious man, acceptable unto all the parish of Gandercleugh, excepting only the Laird, the Exciseman, and those for whom he refused to draw liquor upon trust. Their causes of dislike I will touch separately, adding my own refutation thereof.

His honour, the Laird, accused our Landlord, deceased, of having encouraged, in various times and places, the destruction of hares, rabbits, fowls black and grey, partridges, moor-pouts, roe-deer, and other birds and quadrupeds, at unlawful seasons, and contrary to the laws of this realm, which have secured, in their wisdom, the slaughter of such animals for the great of the earth, whom I have remarked to take an uncommon (though to me, an unintelligible) pleasure therein. Now, in humble deference to his honour, and in justifiable defence of my friend deceased, I reply to this charge, that howsoever the form of such animals might appear to be similar to those so protected by the law, yet it was a mere *deceptio visus*; for what resembled hares were, in fact, hill-kids, and those partaking of the appearance of moor-fowl, were truly wood pigeons, and consumed and eaten *eo nomine*, and not otherwise. Again, the Exciseman pretended, that my deceased Landlord did encourage that species of manufacture called distillation, without having an especial permission from the Great, technically called a license, for doing so. Now, I stand up to confront this falsehood; and

in defiance of him, his gauging-stick, and pen and inkhorn, I tell him, that I never saw, or tasted, a glass of unlawful aqua vitae in the house of my Landlord; nay, that, on the contrary, we needed not such devices, in respect of a pleasing and somewhat seductive liquor, which was vended and consumed at the Wallace Inn, under the name of mountain dew. If there is a penalty against manufacturing such a liquor, let him show me the statute; and when he does, I'll tell him if I will obey it or no. Concerning those who came to my Landlord for liquor, and went thirsty away, for lack of present coin, or future credit, I cannot but say it has grieved my bowels as if the case had been mine own. Nevertheless, my Landlord considered the necessities of a thirsty soul, and would permit them, in extreme need, and when their soul was impoverished for lack of moisture, to drink to the full value of their watches and wearing apparel, exclusively of their inferior habiliments, which he was uniformly inexorable in obliging them to retain, for the credit of the house. As to mine own part, I may well say, that he never refused me that modicum of refreshment with which I am wont to recruit nature after the fatigues of my school. It is true, I taught his five sons English and Latin, writing, book-keeping, with a tincture of mathematics, and that I instructed his daughter in psalmody. Nor do I remember me of any fee or honorarium received from him on account of these my labours, except the compotations aforesaid. Nevertheless this compensation suited my humour well, since it is a hard sentence to bid a dry throat wait till quarter-

day.

But, truly, were I to speak my simple conceit and belief, I think my Landlord was chiefly moved to waive in my behalf the usual requisition of a symbol, or reckoning, from the pleasure he was wont to take in my conversation, which, though solid and edifying in the main, was, like a well-built palace, decorated with facetious narratives and devices, tending much to the enhancement and ornament thereof. And so pleased was my Landlord of the Wallace in his replies during such colloquies, that there was no district in Scotland, yea, and no peculiar, and, as it were, distinctive custom therein practised, but was discussed betwixt us; insomuch, that those who stood by were wont to say, it was worth a bottle of ale to hear us communicate with each other. And not a few travellers, from distant parts, as well as from the remote districts of our kingdom, were wont to mingle in the conversation, and to tell news that had been gathered in foreign lands, or preserved from oblivion in this our own. Now I chanced to have contracted for teaching the lower classes with a young person called Peter, or Patrick, Pattieson, who had been educated for our Holy Kirk, yea, had, by the license of presbytery, his voice opened therein as a preacher, who delighted in the collection of olden tales and legends, and in garnishing them with the flowers of poesy, whereof he was a vain and frivolous professor. For he followed not the example of those strong poets whom I proposed to him as a pattern, but formed versification of a flimsy and modern texture, to the compounding whereof was necessary

small pains and less thought. And hence I have chid him as being one of those who bring forward the fatal revolution prophesied by Mr. Robert Carey, in his Vaticination on the Death of the celebrated Dr. John Donne:

> Now thou art gone, and thy strict laws will be
> Too hard for libertines in poetry;
> Till verse (by thee refined) in this last age
> Turn ballad rhyme.

I had also disputations with him touching his indulging rather a flowing and redundant than a concise and stately diction in his prose exercitations. But notwithstanding these symptoms of inferior taste, and a humour of contradicting his betters upon passages of dubious construction in Latin authors, I did grievously lament when Peter Pattieson was removed from me by death, even as if he had been the offspring of my own loins. And in respect his papers had been left in my care, (to answer funeral and death-bed expenses,) I conceived myself entitled to dispose of one parcel thereof, entitled, "Tales of my Landlord," to one cunning in the trade (as it is called) of book selling. He was a mirthful man, of small stature, cunning in counterfeiting of voices, and in making facetious tales and responses, and whom I have to laud for the truth of his dealings towards me. Now, therefore, the world may see the injustice that charges me with incapacity to write these narratives, seeing, that though I have proved that I could have written them if I would, yet, not having

done so, the censure will deservedly fall, if at all due, upon the memory of Mr. Peter Pattieson; whereas I must be justly entitled to the praise, when any is due, seeing that, as the Dean of St. Patrick's wittily and logically expresseth it,

> That without which a thing is not,
> Is Causa sine qua non.

The work, therefore, is unto me as a child is to a parent; in the which child, if it proveth worthy, the parent hath honour and praise; but, if otherwise, the disgrace will deservedly attach to itself alone.

I have only further to intimate, that Mr. Peter Pattieson, in arranging these Tales for the press, hath more consulted his own fancy than the accuracy of the narrative; nay, that he hath sometimes blended two or three stories together for the mere grace of his plots. Of which infidelity, although I disapprove and enter my testimony against it, yet I have not taken upon me to correct the same, in respect it was the will of the deceased, that his manuscript should be submitted to the press without diminution or alteration. A fanciful nicety it was on the part of my deceased friend, who, if thinking wisely, ought rather to have conjured me, by all the tender ties of our friendship and common pursuits, to have carefully revised, altered, and augmented, at my judgment and discretion. But the will of the dead must be scrupulously obeyed, even when we weep over

their pertinacity and self-delusion. So, gentle reader, I bid you farewell, recommending you to such fare as the mountains of your own country produce; and I will only farther premise, that each Tale is preceded by a short introduction, mentioning the persons by whom, and the circumstances under which, the materials thereof were collected.

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM.

INTRODUCTION TO OLD MORTALITY

The remarkable person, called by the title of Old Mortality, was we'll known in Scotland about the end of the last century. His real name was Robert Paterson. He was a native, it is said, of the parish of Closeburn, in Dumfries-shire, and probably a mason by profession – at least educated to the use of the chisel. Whether family dissensions, or the deep and enthusiastic feeling of supposed duty, drove him to leave his dwelling, and adopt the singular mode of life in which he wandered, like a palmer, through Scotland, is not known. It could not be poverty, however, which prompted his journeys, for he never accepted anything beyond the hospitality which was willingly rendered him, and when that was not proffered, he always had money enough to provide for his own humble wants. His personal appearance, and favourite, or rather sole occupation, are accurately described in the preliminary chapter of the following work.

It is about thirty years since, or more, that the author met this singular person in the churchyard of Dunnottar, when spending a day or two with the late learned and excellent clergyman, Mr. Walker, the minister of that parish, for the purpose of a close examination of the ruins of the Castle of Dunnottar, and other subjects of antiquarian research in that neighbourhood. Old

Mortality chanced to be at the same place, on the usual business of his pilgrimage; for the Castle of Dunnottar, though lying in the anti-covenanting district of the Mearns, was, with the parish churchyard, celebrated for the oppressions sustained there by the Cameronians in the time of James II.

It was in 1685, when Argyle was threatening a descent upon Scotland, and Monmouth was preparing to invade the west of England, that the Privy Council of Scotland, with cruel precaution, made a general arrest of more than a hundred persons in the southern and western provinces, supposed, from their religious principles, to be inimical to Government, together with many women and children. These captives were driven northward like a flock of bullocks, but with less precaution to provide for their wants, and finally penned up in a subterranean dungeon in the Castle of Dunnottar, having a window opening to the front of a precipice which overhangs the German Ocean. They had suffered not a little on the journey, and were much hurt both at the scoffs of the northern prelatists, and the mocks, gibes, and contemptuous tunes played by the fiddlers and pipers who had come from every quarter as they passed, to triumph over the revilers of their calling. The repose which the melancholy dungeon afforded them, was anything but undisturbed. The guards made them pay for every indulgence, even that of water; and when some of the prisoners resisted a demand so unreasonable, and insisted on their right to have this necessary of life untaxed, their keepers emptied the water on the prison

floor, saying, "If they were obliged to bring water for the canting whigs, they were not bound to afford them the use of bowls or pitchers gratis."

In this prison, which is still termed the Whig's Vault, several died of the diseases incidental to such a situation; and others broke their limbs, and incurred fatal injury, in desperate attempts to escape from their stern prison-house. Over the graves of these unhappy persons, their friends, after the Revolution, erected a monument with a suitable inscription.

This peculiar shrine of the Whig martyrs is very much honoured by their descendants, though residing at a great distance from the land of their captivity and death. My friend, the Rev. Mr. Walker, told me, that being once upon a tour in the south of Scotland, probably about forty years since, he had the bad luck to involve himself in the labyrinth of passages and tracks which cross, in every direction, the extensive waste called Lochar Moss, near Dumfries, out of which it is scarcely possible for a stranger to extricate himself; and there was no small difficulty in procuring a guide, since such people as he saw were engaged in digging their peats – a work of paramount necessity, which will hardly brook interruption. Mr. Walker could, therefore, only procure unintelligible directions in the southern brogue, which differs widely from that of the Mearns. He was beginning to think himself in a serious dilemma, when he stated his case to a farmer of rather the better class, who was employed, as the others, in digging his winter fuel. The old man at first made

the same excuse with those who had already declined acting as the traveller's guide; but perceiving him in great perplexity, and paying the respect due to his profession, "You are a clergyman, sir?" he said. Mr. Walker assented. "And I observe from your speech, that you are from the north?" – "You are right, my good friend," was the reply. "And may I ask if you have ever heard of a place called Dunnottar?" – "I ought to know something about it, my friend," said Mr. Walker, "since I have been several years the minister of the parish." – "I am glad to hear it," said the Dumfriesian, "for one of my near relations lies buried there, and there is, I believe, a monument over his grave. I would give half of what I am aught, to know if it is still in existence." – "He was one of those who perished in the Whig's Vault at the castle?" said the minister; "for there are few southlanders besides lying in our churchyard, and none, I think, having monuments." – "Even sae – even sae," said the old Cameronian, for such was the farmer. He then laid down his spade, cast on his coat, and heartily offered to see the minister out of the moss, if he should lose the rest of the *day's dargue*. Mr. Walker was able to requite him amply, in his opinion, by reciting the epitaph, which he remembered by heart. The old man was enchanted with finding the memory of his grandfather or great-grandfather faithfully recorded amongst the names of brother sufferers; and rejecting all other offers of recompense, only requested, after he had guided Mr. Walker to a safe and dry road, that he would let him have a written copy of the inscription.

It was whilst I was listening to this story, and looking at the monument referred to, that I saw Old Mortality engaged in his daily task of cleaning and repairing the ornaments and epitaphs upon the tomb. His appearance and equipment were exactly as described in the Novel. I was very desirous to see something of a person so singular, and expected to have done so, as he took up his quarters with the hospitable and liberal-spirited minister. But though Mr. Walker invited him up after dinner to partake of a glass of spirits and water, to which he was supposed not to be very averse, yet he would not speak frankly upon the subject of his occupation. He was in bad humour, and had, according to his phrase, no freedom for conversation with us.

His spirit had been sorely vexed by hearing, in a certain Aberdonian kirk, the psalmody directed by a pitch-pipe, or some similar instrument, which was to Old Mortality the abomination of abominations. Perhaps, after all, he did not feel himself at ease with his company; he might suspect the questions asked by a north-country minister and a young barrister to savour more of idle curiosity than profit. At any rate, in the phrase of John Bunyan, Old Mortality went on his way, and I saw him no more.

The remarkable figure and occupation of this ancient pilgrim was recalled to my memory by an account transmitted by my friend Mr. Joseph Train, supervisor of excise at Dumfries, to whom I owe many obligations of a similar nature. From this, besides some other circumstances, among which are those of the old man's death, I learned the particulars described in the

text. I am also informed, that the old palmer's family, in the third generation, survives, and is highly respected both for talents and worth. While these sheets were passing through the press, I received the following communication from Mr. Train, whose undeviating kindness had, during the intervals of laborious duty, collected its materials from an indubitable source.

> "In the course of my periodical visits to the Glenkens, I have become intimately acquainted with Robert Paterson, a son of Old Mortality, who lives in the little village of Balmaclellan; and although he is now in the 70th year of his age, preserves all the vivacity of youth – has a most retentive memory, and a mind stored with information far above what could be expected from a person in his station of life. To him I am indebted for the following particulars relative to his father, and his descendants down to the present time.
>
> "Robert Paterson, alias Old Mortality, was the son of Walter Paterson and Margaret Scott, who occupied the farm of Ilaggisha, in the parish of Hawick, during nearly the first half of the eighteenth century. Here Robert was born, in the memorable year 1715.
>
> "Being the youngest son of a numerous family, he, at an early age, went to serve with an elder brother, named Francis, who rented, from Sir John Jardine of Applegarth, a small tract in Comcockle Moor, near Lochmaben. During his residence there, he became acquainted with Elizabeth Gray, daughter of Robert Gray, gardener to Sir John Jardine, whom he afterwards married. His wife had been, for a considerable time, a cook-maid to Sir Thomas

Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, who procured for her husband, from the Duke of Queensberry, an advantageous lease of the freestone quarry of Gatelowbrigg, in the parish of Morton. Here he built a house, and had as much land as kept a horse and cow. My informant cannot say, with certainty, the year in which his father took up his residence at Gatelowbrigg, but he is sure it must have been only a short time prior to the year 1746, as, during the memorable frost in 1740, he says his mother still resided in the service of Sir Thomas Kirkpatrick. When the Highlanders were returning from England on their route to Glasgow, in the year 1745-6, they plundered Mr.

Paterson's house at Gatelowbrigg, and carried him a prisoner as far as Glenbuck, merely because he said to one of the straggling army, that their retreat might have been easily foreseen, as the strong arm of the Lord was evidently raised, not only against the bloody and wicked house of Stewart, but against all who attempted to support the abominable heresies of the Church of Rome. From this circumstance it appears that Old Mortality had, even at that early period of his life, imbibed the religious enthusiasm by which he afterwards became so much distinguished.

"The religious sect called Hill-men, or Cameronians, was at that time much noted for austerity and devotion, in imitation of Cameron, their founder, of whose tenets Old Mortality became a most strenuous supporter. He made frequent journeys into Galloway to attend their conventicles, and occasionally carried with him gravestones from his quarry at Gatelowbrigg, to keep in remembrance

the righteous whose dust had been gathered to their fathers. Old Mortality was not one of those religious devotees, who, although one eye is seemingly turned towards heaven, keep the other steadfastly fixed on some sublunary object. As his enthusiasm increased, his journeys into Galloway became more frequent; and he gradually neglected even the common prudential duty of providing for his offspring. From about the year 1758, he neglected wholly to return from Galloway to his wife and five children at Gatelowbrigg, which induced her to send her eldest son Walter, then only twelve years of age, to Galloway, in search of his father. After traversing nearly the whole of that extensive district, from the Nick of Benncorie to the Fell of Barullion, he found him at last working on the Cameronian monuments, in the old kirkyard of Kirkchrist, on the west side of the Dee, opposite the town of Kirkcudbright. The little wanderer used all the influence in his power to induce his father to return to his family; but in vain. Mrs. Paterson sent even some of her female children into Galloway in search of their father, for the same purpose of persuading him to return home; but without any success. At last, in the summer of 1768, she removed to the little upland village of Balmaclellan, in the Glenkens of Galloway, where, upon the small pittance derived from keeping a little school, she supported her numerous family in a respectable manner.

"There is a small monumental stone in the farm of the Caldon, near the House of the Hill, in Wigtonshire, which is highly venerated as being the first erected, by Old Mortality, to the memory of several persons who fell at that place in

defence of their religious tenets in the civil war, in the reign of Charles Second.

"From the Caldon, the labours of Old Mortality, in the course of time, spread over nearly all the Lowlands of Scotland. There are few churchyards in Ayrshire, Galloway, or Dumfries-shire, where the work of his chisel is not yet to be seen. It is easily distinguished from the work of any other artist by the primitive rudeness of the emblems of death, and of the inscriptions which adorn the ill-formed blocks of his erection. This task of repairing and erecting gravestones, practised without fee or reward, was the only ostensible employment of this singular person for upwards of forty years. The door of every Cameronian's house was indeed open to him at all times when he chose to enter, and he was gladly received as an inmate of the family; but he did not invariably accept of these civilities, as may be seen by the following account of his frugal expenses, found, amongst other little papers, (some of which I have likewise in my possession,) in his pocket-book after his death.

Gatehouse of Fleet, 4th February, 1796.

ROBERT PATERBON debtor to MARGARET CHRYSTALE.

To drye Lodginge for seven weeks… 0 4 1

To Four Auchlet of Ait Meal..... 0 3 4

To 6 Lippies of Potatoes..... 0 1 3

To Lent Money at the time of Mr. Reid's Sacrament..... 0 6 0

To 3 Chappins of Yell with Sandy the

Keelman,[1]..... 0 0 9
Total.....L.0 15 5
Received in part..... 0 10 0
Unpaid..... L.0 5 5

"This statement shows the religious wanderer to have been very poor in his old age; but he was so more by choice than through necessity, as at the period here alluded to, his children were all comfortably situated, and were most anxious to keep their father at home, but no entreaty could induce him to alter his erratic way of life. He travelled from one churchyard to another, mounted on his old white pony, till the last day of his existence, and died, as you have described, at Bankhill, near Lockerby, on the 14th February, 1801, in the 86th year of his age. As soon as his body was found, intimation was sent to his sons at Balmaclellan; but from the great depth of the snow at that time, the letter communicating the particulars of his death was so long detained by the way, that the remains of the pilgrim were interred before any of his relations could arrive at Bankhill.

"The following is an exact copy of the account of his funeral expenses, – the original of which I have in my possession: —

"Memorandum of the Funral Charges of Robert Paterson, who dyed at Bankhill on the 14th day of February, 1801.

To a Coffon..... L.0 12 0
To Munting for do..... 0 2 8

[1] ["A well-known humourist, still alive, popularly called by the name of Old Keelybags, who deals in the keel or chalk with which farmers mark their flocks."]

To a Shirt for him..... 0 5 6
To a pair of Cotten Stockings… 0 2 0
To Bread at the Founral… 0 2 6
To Chise at ditto..... 0 3 0
To 1 pint Rume..... 0 4 6
To I pint Whiskie..... 0 4 0
To a man going to Annam… 0 2 0
To the grave diger..... 0 1 0
To Linnen for a sheet to him… 0 2 8
L.2 1 10
Taken off him when dead.....1 7 6
L.0 14 4

"The above account is authenticated by the son of the deceased.

"My friend was prevented by indisposition from even going to Bankhill to attend the funeral of his father, which I regret very much, as he is not aware in what churchyard he was interred.

"For the purpose of erecting a small monument to his memory, I have made every possible enquiry, wherever I thought there was the least chance of finding out where Old Mortality was laid; but I have done so in vain, as his death is not registered in the session-book of any of the neighbouring parishes. I am sorry to think, that in all probability, this singular person, who spent so many years of his lengthened existence in striving with his chisel and mallet to perpetuate the memory of many less deserving than himself, must remain even without a single stone to mark out the resting place of his mortal remains.

"Old Mortality had three sons, Robert, Walter, and John; the former, as has been already mentioned, lives in the village of Balmaclellan, in comfortable circumstances, and is much respected by his neighbours. Walter died several years ago, leaving behind him a family now respectably situated in this point. John went to America in the year 1776, and, after various turns of fortune, settled at Baltimore."

Old Nol himself is said to have loved an innocent jest. (See Captain Hodgson's Memoirs.) Old Mortality somewhat resembled the Protector in this turn to festivity. Like Master Silence, he had been merry twice and once in his time; but even his jests were of a melancholy and sepulchral nature, and sometimes attended with inconvenience to himself, as will appear from the following anecdote: —

The old man was at one time following his wonted occupation of repairing the tombs of the martyrs, in the churchyard of Girthon, and the sexton of the parish was plying his kindred task at no small distance. Some roguish urchins were sporting near them, and by their noisy gambols disturbing the old men in their serious occupation. The most petulant of the juvenile party were two or three boys, grandchildren of a person well known by the name of Cooper Climent. This artist enjoyed almost a monopoly in Girthon and the neighbouring parishes, for making and selling ladles, caups, bickers, bowls, spoons, cogues, and trenchers, formed of wood, for the use of the country people. It must be noticed, that notwithstanding the excellence of the

Cooper's vessels, they were apt, when new, to impart a reddish tinge to whatever liquor was put into them, a circumstance not uncommon in like cases.

The grandchildren of this dealer in wooden work took it into their head to ask the sexton, what use he could possibly make of the numerous fragments of old coffins which were thrown up in opening new graves. "Do you not know," said Old Mortality, "that he sells them to your grandfather, who makes them into spoons, trenchers, bickers, bowies, and so forth?" At this assertion, the youthful group broke up in great confusion and disgust, on reflecting how many meals they had eaten out of dishes which, by Old Mortality's account, were only fit to be used at a banquet of witches or of ghoules. They carried the tidings home, when many a dinner was spoiled by the loathing which the intelligence imparted; for the account of the materials was supposed to explain the reddish tinge which, even in the days of the Cooper's fame, had seemed somewhat suspicious. The ware of Cooper Climent was rejected in horror, much to the benefit of his rivals the muggers, who dealt in earthenware. The man of cutty-spoon and ladle saw his trade interrupted, and learned the reason, by his quondam customers coming upon him in wrath to return the goods which were composed of such unhallowed materials, and demand repayment of their money. In this disagreeable predicament, the forlorn artist cited Old Mortality into a court of justice, where he proved that the wood he used in his trade was that of the staves of old wine-pipes

bought from smugglers, with whom the country then abounded, a circumstance which fully accounted for their imparting a colour to their contents. Old Mortality himself made the fullest declaration, that he had no other purpose in making the assertion, than to check the petulance of the children. But it is easier to take away a good name than to restore it. Cooper Climent's business continued to languish, and he died in a state of poverty.

CHAPTER I

Preliminary

Why seeks he with unwearied toil
Through death's dim walks to urge his way,
Reclaim his long-asserted spoil,
And lead oblivion into day?

Langhorne.

"Most readers," says the Manuscript of Mr Pattieson, "must have witnessed with delight the joyous burst which attends the dismissing of a village-school on a fine summer evening. The buoyant spirit of childhood, repressed with so much difficulty during the tedious hours of discipline, may then be seen to explode, as it were, in shout, and song, and frolic, as the little urchins join in groups on their play-ground, and arrange their matches of sport for the evening. But there is one individual who partakes of the relief afforded by the moment of dismission, whose feelings are not so obvious to the eye of the spectator, or so apt to receive his sympathy. I mean the teacher himself, who, stunned with the hum, and suffocated with the closeness of his school-room, has spent the whole day (himself against

a host) in controlling petulance, exciting indifference to action, striving to enlighten stupidity, and labouring to soften obstinacy; and whose very powers of intellect have been confounded by hearing the same dull lesson repeated a hundred times by rote, and only varied by the various blunders of the reciters. Even the flowers of classic genius, with which his solitary fancy is most gratified, have been rendered degraded, in his imagination, by their connexion with tears, with errors, and with punishment; so that the Eclogues of Virgil and Odes of Horace are each inseparably allied in association with the sullen figure and monotonous recitation of some blubbering school-boy. If to these mental distresses are added a delicate frame of body, and a mind ambitious of some higher distinction than that of being the tyrant of childhood, the reader may have some slight conception of the relief which a solitary walk, in the cool of a fine summer evening, affords to the head which has ached, and the nerves which have been shattered, for so many hours, in plying the irksome task of public instruction.

"To me these evening strolls have been the happiest hours of an unhappy life; and if any gentle reader shall hereafter find pleasure in perusing these lucubrations, I am not unwilling he should know, that the plan of them has been usually traced in those moments, when relief from toil and clamour, combined with the quiet scenery around me, has disposed my mind to the task of composition.

"My chief haunt, in these hours of golden leisure, is the

banks of the small stream, which, winding through a 'lone vale of green bracken,' passes in front of the village school-house of Gandercleugh. For the first quarter of a mile, perhaps, I may be disturbed from my meditations, in order to return the scrape, or doffed bonnet, of such stragglers among my pupils as fish for trouts or minnows in the little brook, or seek rushes and wild-flowers by its margin. But, beyond the space I have mentioned, the juvenile anglers do not, after sunset, voluntarily extend their excursions. The cause is, that farther up the narrow valley, and in a recess which seems scooped out of the side of the steep heathy bank, there is a deserted burial-ground, which the little cowards are fearful of approaching in the twilight. To me, however, the place has an inexpressible charm. It has been long the favourite termination of my walks, and, if my kind patron forgets not his promise, will (and probably at no very distant day) be my final resting-place after my mortal pilgrimage. [Note: Note, by Mr Jedediah Cleishbotham. – That I kept my plight in this melancholy matter with my deceased and lamented friend, appeareth from a handsome headstone, erected at my proper charges in this spot, bearing the name and calling of Peter Pattieson, with the date of his nativity and sepulture; together also with a testimony of his merits, attested by myself, as his superior and patron. – J. C.]

"It is a spot which possesses all the solemnity of feeling attached to a burial-ground, without exciting those of a more unpleasing description. Having been very little used for many

years, the few hillocks which rise above the level plain are covered with the same short velvet turf. The monuments, of which there are not above seven or eight, are half sunk in the ground, and overgrown with moss. No newly-erected tomb disturbs the sober serenity of our reflections by reminding us of recent calamity, and no rank-springing grass forces upon our imagination the recollection, that it owes its dark luxuriance to the foul and festering remnants of mortality which ferment beneath. The daisy which sprinkles the sod, and the harebell which hangs over it, derive their pure nourishment from the dew of heaven, and their growth impresses us with no degrading or disgusting recollections. Death has indeed been here, and its traces are before us; but they are softened and deprived of their horror by our distance from the period when they have been first impressed. Those who sleep beneath are only connected with us by the reflection, that they have once been what we now are, and that, as their relics are now identified with their mother earth, ours shall, at some future period, undergo the same transformation.

"Yet, although the moss has been collected on the most modern of these humble tombs during four generations of mankind, the memory of some of those who sleep beneath them is still held in reverent remembrance. It is true, that, upon the largest, and, to an antiquary, the most interesting monument of the group, which bears the effigies of a doughty knight in his hood of mail, with his shield hanging on his breast, the armorial

bearings are defaced by time, and a few worn-out letters may be read at the pleasure of the decipherer, Dns. Johan – de Hamel, – or Johan – de Lamel – And it is also true, that of another tomb, richly sculptured with an ornamental cross, mitre, and pastoral staff, tradition can only aver, that a certain nameless bishop lies interred there. But upon other two stones which lie beside, may still be read in rude prose, and ruder rhyme, the history of those who sleep beneath them. They belong, we are assured by the epitaph, to the class of persecuted Presbyterians who afforded a melancholy subject for history in the times of Charles II. and his successor. [Note: James, Seventh King of Scotland of that name, and Second according to the numeration of the Kings of England. – J. C.] In returning from the battle of Pentland Hills, a party of the insurgents had been attacked in this glen by a small detachment of the King's troops, and three or four either killed in the skirmish, or shot after being made prisoners, as rebels taken with arms in their hands. The peasantry continued to attach to the tombs of those victims of prelacy an honour which they do not render to more splendid mausoleums; and, when they point them out to their sons, and narrate the fate of the sufferers, usually conclude, by exhorting them to be ready, should times call for it, to resist to the death in the cause of civil and religious liberty, like their brave forefathers.

"Although I am far from venerating the peculiar tenets asserted by those who call themselves the followers of those men, and whose intolerance and narrow-minded bigotry are at least as

conspicuous as their devotional zeal, yet it is without depreciating the memory of those sufferers, many of whom united the independent sentiments of a Hampden with the suffering zeal of a Hooper or Latimer. On the other hand, it would be unjust to forget, that many even of those who had been most active in crushing what they conceived the rebellious and seditious spirit of those unhappy wanderers, displayed themselves, when called upon to suffer for their political and religious opinions, the same daring and devoted zeal, tinctured, in their case, with chivalrous loyalty, as in the former with republican enthusiasm. It has often been remarked of the Scottish character, that the stubbornness with which it is moulded shows most to advantage in adversity, when it seems akin to the native sycamore of their hills, which scorns to be biassed in its mode of growth even by the influence of the prevailing wind, but, shooting its branches with equal boldness in every direction, shows no weather-side to the storm, and may be broken, but can never be bended. It must be understood that I speak of my countrymen as they fall under my own observation. When in foreign countries, I have been informed that they are more docile. But it is time to return from this digression.

"One summer evening, as in a stroll, such as I have described, I approached this deserted mansion of the dead, I was somewhat surprised to hear sounds distinct from those which usually soothe its solitude, the gentle chiding, namely, of the brook, and the sighing of the wind in the boughs of three gigantic ash-trees,

which mark the cemetery. The clink of a hammer was, on this occasion, distinctly heard; and I entertained some alarm that a march-dike, long meditated by the two proprietors whose estates were divided by my favourite brook, was about to be drawn up the glen, in order to substitute its rectilinear deformity for the graceful winding of the natural boundary. [Note: I deem it fitting that the reader should be apprised that this limitary boundary between the conterminous heritable property of his honour the Laird of Gandercleugh, and his honour the Laird of Gusedub, was to have been in fashion an agger, or rather murus of uncemented granite, called by the vulgar a drystane dyke, surmounted, or coped, *cespite viridi*, i.e. with a sodturf. Truly their honours fell into discord concerning two roods of marshy ground, near the cove called the Bedral's Beild; and the controversy, having some years bygone been removed from before the judges of the land, (with whom it abode long,) even unto the Great City of London and the Assembly of the Nobles therein, is, as I may say, adhuc in pendente. – J. C.] As I approached, I was agreeably undeceived. An old man was seated upon the monument of the slaughtered presbyterians, and busily employed in deepening, with his chisel, the letters of the inscription, which, announcing, in scriptural language, the promised blessings of futurity to be the lot of the slain, anathematized the murderers with corresponding violence. A blue bonnet of unusual dimensions covered the grey hairs of the pious workman. His dress was a large old-fashioned coat of

the coarse cloth called hoddingrey, usually worn by the elder peasants, with waistcoat and breeches of the same; and the whole suit, though still in decent repair, had obviously seen a train of long service. Strong clouted shoes, studded with hobnails, and gramoches or leggins, made of thick black cloth, completed his equipment. Beside him, fed among the graves a pony, the companion of his journey, whose extreme whiteness, as well as its projecting bones and hollow eyes, indicated its antiquity. It was harnessed in the most simple manner, with a pair of branks, a hair tether, or halter, and a sunk, or cushion of straw, instead of bridle and saddle. A canvass pouch hung around the neck of the animal, for the purpose, probably, of containing the rider's tools, and any thing else he might have occasion to carry with him. Although I had never seen the old man before, yet from the singularity of his employment, and the style of his equipage, I had no difficulty in recognising a religious itinerant whom I had often heard talked of, and who was known in various parts of Scotland by the title of Old Mortality.

"Where this man was born, or what was his real name, I have never been able to learn; nor are the motives which made him desert his home, and adopt the erratic mode of life which he pursued, known to me except very generally. According to the belief of most people, he was a native of either the county of Dumfries or Galloway, and lineally descended from some of those champions of the Covenant, whose deeds and sufferings were his favourite theme. He is said to have held, at one period

of his life, a small moorland farm; but, whether from pecuniary losses, or domestic misfortune, he had long renounced that and every other gainful calling. In the language of Scripture, he left his house, his home, and his kindred, and wandered about until the day of his death, a period of nearly thirty years.

"During this long pilgrimage, the pious enthusiast regulated his circuit so as annually to visit the graves of the unfortunate Covenanters, who suffered by the sword, or by the executioner, during the reigns of the two last monarchs of the Stewart line. These are most numerous in the western districts of Ayr, Galloway, and Dumfries; but they are also to be found in other parts of Scotland, wherever the fugitives had fought, or fallen, or suffered by military or civil execution. Their tombs are often apart from all human habitation, in the remote moors and wilds to which the wanderers had fled for concealment. But wherever they existed, Old Mortality was sure to visit them when his annual round brought them within his reach. In the most lonely recesses of the mountains, the moor-fowl shooter has been often surprised to find him busied in cleaning the moss from the grey stones, renewing with his chisel the half-defaced inscriptions, and repairing the emblems of death with which these simple monuments are usually adorned. Motives of the most sincere, though fanciful devotion, induced the old man to dedicate so many years of existence to perform this tribute to the memory of the deceased warriors of the church. He considered himself as fulfilling a sacred duty, while renewing to the eyes of

posterity the decaying emblems of the zeal and sufferings of their forefathers, and thereby trimming, as it were, the beacon-light, which was to warn future generations to defend their religion even unto blood.

"In all his wanderings, the old pilgrim never seemed to need, or was known to accept, pecuniary assistance. It is true, his wants were very few; for wherever he went, he found ready quarters in the house of some Cameronian of his own sect, or of some other religious person. The hospitality which was reverentially paid to him he always acknowledged, by repairing the gravestones (if there existed any) belonging to the family or ancestors of his host. As the wanderer was usually to be seen bent on this pious task within the precincts of some country churchyard, or reclined on the solitary tombstone among the heath, disturbing the plover and the black-cock with the clink of his chisel and mallet, with his old white pony grazing by his side, he acquired, from his converse among the dead, the popular appellation of Old Mortality.

"The character of such a man could have in it little connexion even with innocent gaiety. Yet, among those of his own religious persuasion, he is reported to have been cheerful. The descendants of persecutors, or those whom he supposed guilty of entertaining similar tenets, and the scoffers at religion by whom he was sometimes assailed, he usually termed the generation of vipers. Conversing with others, he was grave and sententious, not without a cast of severity. But he is said never to have been observed to give way to violent passion, excepting upon one

occasion, when a mischievous truant-boy defaced with a stone the nose of a cherub's face, which the old man was engaged in retouching. I am in general a sparer of the rod, notwithstanding the maxim of Solomon, for which school-boys have little reason to thank his memory; but on this occasion I deemed it proper to show that I did not hate the child. – But I must return to the circumstances attending my first interview with this interesting enthusiast.

"In accosting Old Mortality, I did not fail to pay respect to his years and his principles, beginning my address by a respectful apology for interrupting his labours. The old man intermitted the operation of the chisel, took off his spectacles and wiped them, then, replacing them on his nose, acknowledged my courtesy by a suitable return. Encouraged by his affability, I intruded upon him some questions concerning the sufferers on whose monument he was now employed. To talk of the exploits of the Covenanters was the delight, as to repair their monuments was the business, of his life. He was profuse in the communication of all the minute information which he had collected concerning them, their wars, and their wanderings. One would almost have supposed he must have been their contemporary, and have actually beheld the passages which he related, so much had he identified his feelings and opinions with theirs, and so much had his narratives the circumstantiality of an eye-witness.

"'We,' he said, in a tone of exultation, – 'we are the only true whigs. Carnal men have assumed that triumphant appellation,

following him whose kingdom is of this world. Which of them would sit six hours on a wet hill-side to hear a godly sermon? I trow an hour o't wad staw them. They are ne'er a hair better than them that shamena to take upon themsells the persecuting name of bludethirsty tories. Self-seekers all of them, strivers after wealth, power, and worldly ambition, and forgetters alike of what has been dree'd and done by the mighty men who stood in the gap in the great day of wrath. Nae wonder they dread the accomplishment of what was spoken by the mouth of the worthy Mr Peden, (that precious servant of the Lord, none of whose words fell to the ground,) that the French monzies [Note: Probably monsieurs. It would seem that this was spoken during the apprehensions of invason from France. – Publishers.] sall rise as fast in the glens of Ayr, and the kenns of Galloway, as ever the Highlandmen did in 1677. And now they are gripping to the bow and to the spear, when they suld be mourning for a sinfu' land and a broken covenant.'

"Soothing the old man by letting his peculiar opinions pass without contradiction, and anxious to prolong conversation with so singular a character, I prevailed upon him to accept that hospitality, which Mr Cleishbotham is always willing to extend to those who need it. In our way to the schoolmaster's house, we called at the Wallace Inn, where I was pretty certain I should find my patron about that hour of the evening. After a courteous interchange of civilities, Old Mortality was, with difficulty, prevailed upon to join his host in a single glass of liquor, and

that on condition that he should be permitted to name the pledge, which he prefaced with a grace of about five minutes, and then, with bonnet doffed and eyes uplifted, drank to the memory of those heroes of the Kirk who had first uplifted her banner upon the mountains. As no persuasion could prevail on him to extend his conviviality to a second cup, my patron accompanied him home, and accommodated him in the Prophet's Chamber, as it is his pleasure to call the closet which holds a spare bed, and which is frequently a place of retreat for the poor traveller. [Note: He might have added, and for the rich also; since, I laud my stars, the great of the earth have also taken harbourage in my poor domicile. And, during the service of my hand-maiden, Dorothy, who was buxom and comely of aspect, his Honour the Laird of Smackawa, in his peregrinations to and from the metropolis, was wont to prefer my Prophet's Chamber even to the sanded chamber of dais in the Wallace Inn, and to bestow a mutchkin, as he would jocosely say, to obtain the freedom of the house, but, in reality, to assure himself of my company during the evening. – J. C.]

"The next day I took leave of Old Mortality, who seemed affected by the unusual attention with which I had cultivated his acquaintance and listened to his conversation. After he had mounted, not without difficulty, the old white pony, he took me by the hand and said, 'The blessing of our Master be with you, young man! My hours are like the ears of the latter harvest, and your days are yet in the spring; and yet you may be gathered into

the garner of mortality before me, for the sickle of death cuts down the green as oft as the ripe, and there is a colour in your cheek, that, like the bud of the rose, serveth oft to hide the worm of corruption. Wherefore labour as one who knoweth not when his master calleth. And if it be my lot to return to this village after ye are gane hame to your ain place, these auld withered hands will frame a stane of memorial, that your name may not perish from among the people.'

"I thanked Old Mortality for his kind intentions in my behalf, and heaved a sigh, not, I think, of regret so much as of resignation, to think of the chance that I might soon require his good offices. But though, in all human probability, he did not err in supposing that my span of life may be abridged in youth, he had over-estimated the period of his own pilgrimage on earth. It is now some years since he has been missed in all his usual haunts, while moss, lichen, and deer-hair, are fast covering those stones, to cleanse which had been the business of his life. About the beginning of this century he closed his mortal toils, being found on the highway near Lockerby, in Dumfries-shire, exhausted and just expiring. The old white pony, the companion of all his wanderings, was standing by the side of his dying master. There was found about his person a sum of money sufficient for his decent interment, which serves to show that his death was in no ways hastened by violence or by want. The common people still regard his memory with great respect; and many are of opinion, that the stones which he

repaired will not again require the assistance of the chisel. They even assert, that on the tombs where the manner of the martyrs' murder is recorded, their names have remained indelibly legible since the death of Old Mortality, while those of the persecutors, sculptured on the same monuments, have been entirely defaced. It is hardly necessary to say that this is a fond imagination, and that, since the time of the pious pilgrim, the monuments which were the objects of his care are hastening, like all earthly memorials, into ruin or decay.

"My readers will of course understand, that in embodying into one compressed narrative many of the anecdotes which I had the advantage of deriving from Old Mortality, I have been far from adopting either his style, his opinions, or even his facts, so far as they appear to have been distorted by party prejudice. I have endeavoured to correct or verify them from the most authentic sources of tradition, afforded by the representatives of either party.

"On the part of the Presbyterians, I have consulted such moorland farmers from the western districts, as, by the kindness of their landlords, or otherwise, have been able, during the late general change of property, to retain possession of the grazings on which their grandsires fed their flocks and herds. I must own, that of late days, I have found this a limited source of information. I have, therefore, called in the supplementary aid of those modest itinerants, whom the scrupulous civility of our ancestors denominated travelling merchants, but whom, of late,

accommodating ourselves in this as in more material particulars, to the feelings and sentiments of our more wealthy neighbours, we have learned to call packmen or pedlars. To country weavers travelling in hopes to get rid of their winter web, but more especially to tailors, who, from their sedentary profession, and the necessity, in our country, of exercising it by temporary residence in the families by whom they are employed, may be considered as possessing a complete register of rural traditions, I have been indebted for many illustrations of the narratives of Old Mortality, much in the taste and spirit of the original.

"I had more difficulty in finding materials for correcting the tone of partiality which evidently pervaded those stores of traditional learning, in order that I might be enabled to present an unbiassed picture of the manners of that unhappy period, and, at the same time, to do justice to the merits of both parties. But I have been enabled to qualify the narratives of Old Mortality and his Cameronian friends, by the reports of more than one descendant of ancient and honourable families, who, themselves decayed into the humble vale of life, yet look proudly back on the period when their ancestors fought and fell in behalf of the exiled house of Stewart. I may even boast right reverend authority on the same score; for more than one nonjuring bishop, whose authority and income were upon as apostolical a scale as the greatest abominator of Episcopacy could well desire, have deigned, while partaking of the humble cheer of the Wallace Inn, to furnish me with information corrective of the facts which I learned

from others. There are also here and there a laird or two, who, though they shrug their shoulders, profess no great shame in their fathers having served in the persecuting squadrons of Earlshall and Claverhouse. From the gamekeepers of these gentlemen, an office the most apt of any other to become hereditary in such families, I have also contrived to collect much valuable information.

"Upon the whole, I can hardly fear, that, at this time, in describing the operation which their opposite principles produced upon the good and bad men of both parties, I can be suspected of meaning insult or injustice to either. If recollection of former injuries, extra-loyalty, and contempt and hatred of their adversaries, produced rigour and tyranny in the one party, it will hardly be denied, on the other hand, that, if the zeal for God's house did not eat up the conventiclers, it devoured at least, to imitate the phrase of Dryden, no small portion of their loyalty, sober sense, and good breeding. We may safely hope, that the souls of the brave and sincere on either side have long looked down with surprise and pity upon the ill-appreciated motives which caused their mutual hatred and hostility, while in this valley of darkness, blood, and tears. Peace to their memory! Let us think of them as the heroine of our only Scottish tragedy entreats her lord to think of her departed sire: —

> 'O rake not up the ashes of our fathers!
> Implacable resentment was their crime,

And grievous has the expiation been.'"

CHAPTER II

Summon an hundred horse, by break of day,
To wait our pleasure at the castle gates.

Douglas.

Under the reign of the last Stewarts, there was an anxious wish on the part of government to counteract, by every means in their power, the strict or puritanical spirit which had been the chief characteristic of the republican government, and to revive those feudal institutions which united the vassal to the liege lord, and both to the crown. Frequent musters and assemblies of the people, both for military exercise and for sports and pastimes, were appointed by authority. The interference, in the latter case, was impolitic, to say the least; for, as usual on such occasions, the consciences which were at first only scrupulous, became confirmed in their opinions, instead of giving way to the terrors of authority; and the youth of both sexes, to whom the pipe and tabor in England, or the bagpipe in Scotland, would have been in themselves an irresistible temptation, were enabled to set them at defiance, from the proud consciousness that they were, at the same time, resisting an act of council. To compel men to dance and be merry by authority, has rarely succeeded even on board of slave-ships, where it was formerly sometimes

attempted by way of inducing the wretched captives to agitate their limbs and restore the circulation, during the few minutes they were permitted to enjoy the fresh air upon deck. The rigour of the strict Calvinists increased, in proportion to the wishes of the government that it should be relaxed. A judaical observance of the Sabbath – a supercilious condemnation of all manly pastimes and harmless recreations, as well as of the profane custom of promiscuous dancing, that is, of men and women dancing together in the same party (for I believe they admitted that the exercise might be inoffensive if practised by the parties separately) – distinguishing those who professed a more than ordinary share of sanctity, they discouraged, as far as lay in their power, even the ancient wappen-schaws, as they were termed, when the feudal array of the county was called out, and each crown-vassal was required to appear with such muster of men and armour as he was bound to make by his fief, and that under high statutory penalties. The Covenanters were the more jealous of those assemblies, as the lord lieutenants and sheriffs under whom they were held had instructions from the government to spare no pains which might render them agreeable to the young men who were thus summoned together, upon whom the military exercise of the morning, and the sports which usually closed the evening, might naturally be supposed to have a seductive effect.

The preachers and proselytes of the more rigid presbyterians laboured, therefore, by caution, remonstrance, and authority, to diminish the attendance upon these summonses, conscious

that in doing so, they lessened not only the apparent, but the actual strength of the government, by impeding the extension of that esprit de corps which soon unites young men who are in the habit of meeting together for manly sport, or military exercise. They, therefore, exerted themselves earnestly to prevent attendance on these occasions by those who could find any possible excuse for absence, and were especially severe upon such of their hearers as mere curiosity led to be spectators, or love of exercise to be partakers, of the array and the sports which took place. Such of the gentry as acceded to these doctrines were not always, however, in a situation to be ruled by them. The commands of the law were imperative; and the privy council, who administered the executive power in Scotland, were severe in enforcing the statutory penalties against the crown-vassals who did not appear at the periodical wappen-schaw. The landholders were compelled, therefore, to send their sons, tenants, and vassals to the rendezvous, to the number of horses, men, and spears, at which they were rated; and it frequently happened, that notwithstanding the strict charge of their elders, to return as soon as the formal inspection was over, the young men-at-arms were unable to resist the temptation of sharing in the sports which succeeded the muster, or to avoid listening to the prayers read in the churches on these occasions, and thus, in the opinion of their repining parents, meddling with the accursed thing which is an abomination in the sight of the Lord.

The sheriff of the county of Lanark was holding the wappen-

schaw of a wild district, called the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, on a haugh or level plain, near to a royal borough, the name of which is no way essential to my story, on the morning of the 5th of May, 1679, when our narrative commences. When the musters had been made, and duly reported, the young men, as was usual, were to mix in various sports, of which the chief was to shoot at the popinjay, an ancient game formerly practised with archery, but at this period with fire-arms.

[Note: Festival of the Popinjay. The Festival of the Popinjay is still, I believe, practised at Maybole, in Ayrshire. The following passage in the history of the Somerville family, suggested the scenes in the text. The author of that curious manuscript thus celebrates his father's demeanour at such an assembly.

"Having now passed his infancie, in the tenth year of his age, he was by his grandfather putt to the grammar school, ther being then att the toune of Delserf a very able master that taught the grammar, and fitted boyes for the colledge. Dureing his educating in this place, they had then a custome every year to solemnize the first Sunday of May with danceing about a May-pole, fyreing of pieces, and all manner of ravelling then in use. Ther being at that tyme feu or noe merchants in this pettie village, to furnish necessaries for the schollars sports, this youth resolves to provide himself elsewhere, so that he may appear with the bravest. In order to this, by break of day he ryses and goes to Hamiltoune, and there bestowes all the money that for a long tyme before he had gotten from his freinds, or had

otherwayes purchased, upon ribbones of diverse coloures, a new hatt and gloves. But in nothing he bestowed his money more liberallie than upon gunpowder, a great quantitie whereof he buyes for his owne use, and to supplie the wantes of his comerades; thus furnished with these commodities, but ane empty purse, he returnes to Delserf by seven a clock, (haveing travelled that Sabbath morning above eight myles,) puttes on his cloathes and new hatt, flying with ribbones of all culloures; and in this equipage, with his little phizie (fusee) upon his shoulder, he marches to the church yaird, where the May-pole was sett up, and the solemnitie of that day was to be kept. There first at the foot-ball he equalled any one that played; but in handleing his piece, in chargeing and dischargeing, he was so ready, and shott so near the marke, that he farre surpassed all his fellow schollars, and became a teacher of that art to them before the threttеenth year of his oune age. And really, I have often admired his dexterity in this, both at the exercizeing of his soulders, and when for recreatione. I have gone to the gunning with him when I was but a stripeling myself; and albeit that passetyme was the exercize I delighted most in, yet could I never attaine to any perfectione comparable to him. This dayes sport being over, he had the applause of all the spectatores, the kyndnesse of his fellow-condisciples, and the favour of the whole inhabitants of that little village."]

This was the figure of a bird, decked with party-coloured feathers, so as to resemble a popinjay or parrot. It was suspended to a pole, and served for a mark, at which the competitors

discharged their fusees and carabines in rotation, at the distance of sixty or seventy paces. He whose ball brought down the mark, held the proud title of Captain of the Popinjay for the remainder of the day, and was usually escorted in triumph to the most reputable change-house in the neighbourhood, where the evening was closed with conviviality, conducted under his auspices, and, if he was able to sustain it, at his expense.

It will, of course, be supposed, that the ladies of the country assembled to witness this gallant strife, those excepted who held the stricter tenets of puritanism, and would therefore have deemed it criminal to afford countenance to the profane gambols of the malignants. Landaus, barouches, or tilburies, there were none in those simple days. The lord lieutenant of the county (a personage of ducal rank) alone pretended to the magnificence of a wheel-carriage, a thing covered with tarnished gilding and sculpture, in shape like the vulgar picture of Noah's ark, dragged by eight long-tailed Flanders mares, bearing eight insides and six outsides. The insides were their graces in person, two maids of honour, two children, a chaplain stuffed into a sort of lateral recess, formed by a projection at the door of the vehicle, and called, from its appearance, the boot, and an equerry to his Grace ensconced in the corresponding convenience on the opposite side. A coachman and three postilions, who wore short swords, and tie-wigs with three tails, had blunderbusses slung behind them, and pistols at their saddle-bow, conducted the equipage. On the foot-board, behind this moving mansion-house, stood, or

rather hung, in triple file, six lacqueys in rich liveries, armed up to the teeth. The rest of the gentry, men and women, old and young, were on horseback followed by their servants; but the company, for the reasons already assigned, was rather select than numerous.

Near to the enormous leathern vehicle which we have attempted to describe, vindicating her title to precedence over the untitled gentry of the country, might be seen the sober palfrey of Lady Margaret Bellenden, bearing the erect and primitive form of Lady Margaret herself, decked in those widow's weeds which the good lady had never laid aside, since the execution of her husband for his adherence to Montrose.

Her grand-daughter, and only earthly care, the fair-haired Edith, who was generally allowed to be the prettiest lass in the Upper Ward, appeared beside her aged relative like Spring placed close to Winter. Her black Spanish jennet, which she managed with much grace, her gay riding-dress, and laced side-saddle, had been anxiously prepared to set her forth to the best advantage. But the clustering profusion of ringlets, which, escaping from under her cap, were only confined by a green ribbon from wantoning over her shoulders; her cast of features, soft and feminine, yet not without a certain expression of playful archness, which redeemed their sweetness from the charge of insipidity, sometimes brought against blondes and blue-eyed beauties, – these attracted more admiration from the western youth than either the splendour of her equipments or the figure of her palfrey.

The attendance of these distinguished ladies was rather inferior to their birth and fashion in those times, as it consisted only of two servants on horseback. The truth was, that the good old lady had been obliged to make all her domestic servants turn out to complete the quota which her barony ought to furnish for the muster, and in which she would not for the universe have been found deficient. The old steward, who, in steel cap and jack-boots, led forth her array, had, as he said, sweated blood and water in his efforts to overcome the scruples and evasions of the moorland farmers, who ought to have furnished men, horse, and harness, on these occasions. At last, their dispute came near to an open declaration of hostilities, the incensed episcopalian bestowing on the recusants the whole thunders of the commination, and receiving from them, in return, the denunciations of a Calvinistic excommunication. What was to be done? To punish the refractory tenants would have been easy enough. The privy council would readily have imposed fines, and sent a troop of horse to collect them. But this would have been calling the huntsman and hounds into the garden to kill the hare.

"For," said Harrison to himself, "the carles have little eneugh gear at ony rate, and if I call in the red-coats and take away what little they have, how is my worshipful lady to get her rents paid at Candlemas, which is but a difficult matter to bring round even in the best of times?"

So he armed the fowler, and falconer, the footman, and the ploughman, at the home farm, with an old drunken cavaliering

butler, who had served with the late Sir Richard under Montrose, and stunned the family nightly with his exploits at Kilsythe and Tippermoor, and who was the only man in the party that had the smallest zeal for the work in hand. In this manner, and by recruiting one or two latitudinarian poachers and black-fishers, Mr Harrison completed the quota of men which fell to the share of Lady Margaret Bellenden, as life-rentrix of the barony of Tillietudlem and others. But when the steward, on the morning of the eventful day, had mustered his *troupe dore* before the iron gate of the tower, the mother of Cuddie Headrigg the ploughman appeared, loaded with the jackboots, buff coat, and other accoutrements which had been issued forth for the service of the day, and laid them before the steward; demurely assuring him, that "whether it were the colic, or a qualm of conscience, she couldna tak upon her to decide, but sure it was, Cuddie had been in sair straits a' night, and she couldna say he was muckle better this morning. The finger of Heaven," she said, "was in it, and her bairn should gang on nae sic errands." Pains, penalties, and threats of dismission, were denounced in vain; the mother was obstinate, and Cuddie, who underwent a domiciliary visitation for the purpose of verifying his state of body, could, or would, answer only by deep groans. Mause, who had been an ancient domestic in the family, was a sort of favourite with Lady Margaret, and presumed accordingly. Lady Margaret had herself set forth, and her authority could not be appealed to. In this dilemma, the good genius of the old butler suggested an

expedient.

"He had seen mony a braw callant, far less than Guse Gibbie, fight brawly under Montrose. What for no tak Guse Gibbie?"

This was a half-witted lad, of very small stature, who had a kind of charge of the poultry under the old henwife; for in a Scottish family of that day there was a wonderful substitution of labour. This urchin being sent for from the stubble-field, was hastily muffled in the buff coat, and girded rather to than with the sword of a full-grown man, his little legs plunged into jack-boots, and a steel cap put upon his head, which seemed, from its size, as if it had been intended to extinguish him. Thus accoutred, he was hoisted, at his own earnest request, upon the quietest horse of the party; and, prompted and supported by old Gudyill the butler, as his front file, he passed muster tolerably enough; the sheriff not caring to examine too closely the recruits of so well-affected a person as Lady Margaret Bellenden.

To the above cause it was owing that the personal retinue of Lady Margaret, on this eventful day, amounted only to two lacqueys, with which diminished train she would, on any other occasion, have been much ashamed to appear in public. But, for the cause of royalty, she was ready at any time to have made the most unreserved personal sacrifices. She had lost her husband and two promising sons in the civil wars of that unhappy period; but she had received her reward, for, on his route through the west of Scotland to meet Cromwell in the unfortunate field of Worcester, Charles the Second had actually breakfasted at

the Tower of Tillietudlem; an incident which formed, from that moment, an important era in the life of Lady Margaret, who seldom afterwards partook of that meal, either at home or abroad, without detailing the whole circumstances of the royal visit, not forgetting the salutation which his majesty conferred on each side of her face, though she sometimes omitted to notice that he bestowed the same favour on two buxom serving-wenches who appeared at her back, elevated for the day into the capacity of waiting gentlewomen.

These instances of royal favour were decisive; and if Lady Margaret had not been a confirmed royalist already, from sense of high birth, influence of education, and hatred to the opposite party, through whom she had suffered such domestic calamity, the having given a breakfast to majesty, and received the royal salute in return, were honours enough of themselves to unite her exclusively to the fortunes of the Stewarts. These were now, in all appearance, triumphant; but Lady Margaret's zeal had adhered to them through the worst of times, and was ready to sustain the same severities of fortune should their scale once more kick the beam. At present she enjoyed, in full extent, the military display of the force which stood ready to support the crown, and stifled, as well as she could, the mortification she felt at the unworthy desertion of her own retainers.

Many civilities passed between her ladyship and the representatives of sundry ancient loyal families who were upon the ground, by whom she was held in high reverence; and not a

young man of rank passed by them in the course of the muster, but he carried his body more erect in the saddle, and threw his horse upon its haunches, to display his own horsemanship and the perfect bitting of his steed to the best advantage in the eyes of Miss Edith Bellenden. But the young cavaliers, distinguished by high descent and undoubted loyalty, attracted no more attention from Edith than the laws of courtesy peremptorily demanded; and she turned an indifferent ear to the compliments with which she was addressed, most of which were little the worse for the wear, though borrowed for the nonce from the laborious and long-winded romances of Calprenede and Scuderi, the mirrors in which the youth of that age delighted to dress themselves, ere Folly had thrown her ballast overboard, and cut down her vessels of the first-rate, such as the romances of Cyrus, Cleopatra, and others, into small craft, drawing as little water, or, to speak more plainly, consuming as little time as the little cockboat in which the gentle reader has deigned to embark. It was, however, the decree of fate that Miss Bellenden should not continue to evince the same equanimity till the conclusion of the day.

CHAPTER III

Horseman and horse confess'd the bitter pang,
And arms and warrior fell with heavy clang.

Pleasures of Hope.

When the military evolutions had been gone through tolerably well, allowing for the awkwardness of men and of horses, a loud shout announced that the competitors were about to step forth for the game of the popinjay already described. The mast, or pole, having a yard extended across it, from which the mark was displayed, was raised amid the acclamations of the assembly; and even those who had eyed the evolutions of the feudal militia with a sort of malignant and sarcastic sneer, from disinclination to the royal cause in which they were professedly embodied, could not refrain from taking considerable interest in the strife which was now approaching. They crowded towards the goal, and criticized the appearance of each competitor, as they advanced in succession, discharged their pieces at the mark, and had their good or bad address rewarded by the laughter or applause of the spectators. But when a slender young man, dressed with great simplicity, yet not without a certain air of pretension to elegance and gentility, approached the station with his fusee in his hand, his dark-green cloak thrown back over his shoulder, his laced

ruff and feathered cap indicating a superior rank to the vulgar, there was a murmur of interest among the spectators, whether altogether favourable to the young adventurer, it was difficult to discover.

"Ewhow, sirs, to see his father's son at the like o' thae fearless follies!" was the ejaculation of the elder and more rigid puritans, whose curiosity had so far overcome their bigotry as to bring them to the play-ground. But the generality viewed the strife less morosely, and were contented to wish success to the son of a deceased presbyterian leader, without strictly examining the propriety of his being a competitor for the prize.

Their wishes were gratified. At the first discharge of his piece the green adventurer struck the popinjay, being the first palpable hit of the day, though several balls had passed very near the mark. A loud shout of applause ensued. But the success was not decisive, it being necessary that each who followed should have his chance, and that those who succeeded in hitting the mark, should renew the strife among themselves, till one displayed a decided superiority over the others. Two only of those who followed in order succeeded in hitting the popinjay. The first was a young man of low rank, heavily built, and who kept his face muffled in his grey cloak; the second a gallant young cavalier, remarkable for a handsome exterior, sedulously decorated for the day. He had been since the muster in close attendance on Lady Margaret and Miss Bellenden, and had left them with an air of indifference, when Lady Margaret had asked whether there

was no young man of family and loyal principles who would dispute the prize with the two lads who had been successful. In half a minute, young Lord Evandale threw himself from his horse, borrowed a gun from a servant, and, as we have already noticed, hit the mark. Great was the interest excited by the renewal of the contest between the three candidates who had been hitherto successful. The state equipage of the Duke was, with some difficulty, put in motion, and approached more near to the scene of action. The riders, both male and female, turned their horses' heads in the same direction, and all eyes were bent upon the issue of the trial of skill.

It was the etiquette in the second contest, that the competitors should take their turn of firing after drawing lots. The first fell upon the young plebeian, who, as he took his stand, half-uncloaked his rustic countenance, and said to the gallant in green, "Ye see, Mr Henry, if it were ony other day, I could hae wished to miss for your sake; but Jenny Dennison is looking at us, sae I maun do my best."

He took his aim, and his bullet whistled past the mark so nearly, that the pendulous object at which it was directed was seen to shiver. Still, however, he had not hit it, and, with a downcast look, he withdrew himself from further competition, and hastened to disappear from the assembly, as if fearful of being recognised. The green chasseur next advanced, and his ball a second time struck the popinjay. All shouted; and from the outskirts of the assembly arose a cry of, "The good old cause for

ever!"

While the dignitaries bent their brows at these exulting shouts of the disaffected, the young Lord Evandale advanced again to the hazard, and again was successful. The shouts and congratulations of the well-affected and aristocratical part of the audience attended his success, but still a subsequent trial of skill remained.

The green marksman, as if determined to bring the affair to a decision, took his horse from a person who held him, having previously looked carefully to the security of his girths and the fitting of his saddle, vaulted on his back, and motioning with his hand for the bystanders to make way, set spurs, passed the place from which he was to fire at a gallop, and, as he passed, threw up the reins, turned sideways upon his saddle, discharged his carabine, and brought down the popinjay. Lord Evandale imitated his example, although many around him said it was an innovation on the established practice, which he was not obliged to follow. But his skill was not so perfect, or his horse was not so well trained. The animal swerved at the moment his master fired, and the ball missed the popinjay. Those who had been surprised by the address of the green marksman were now equally pleased by his courtesy. He disclaimed all merit from the last shot, and proposed to his antagonist that it should not be counted as a hit, and that they should renew the contest on foot.

"I would prefer horseback, if I had a horse as well bitted, and, probably, as well broken to the exercise, as yours," said the young

Lord, addressing his antagonist.

"Will you do me the honour to use him for the next trial, on condition you will lend me yours?" said the young gentleman.

Lord Evandale was ashamed to accept this courtesy, as conscious how much it would diminish the value of victory; and yet, unable to suppress his wish to redeem his reputation as a marksman, he added, "that although he renounced all pretensions to the honour of the day," (which he said some-what scornfully,) "yet, if the victor had no particular objection, he would willingly embrace his obliging offer, and change horses with him, for the purpose of trying a shot for love."

As he said so, he looked boldly towards Miss Bellenden, and tradition says, that the eyes of the young tirailleur travelled, though more covertly, in the same direction. The young Lord's last trial was as unsuccessful as the former, and it was with difficulty that he preserved the tone of scornful indifference which he had hitherto assumed. But, conscious of the ridicule which attaches itself to the resentment of a losing party, he returned to his antagonist the horse on which he had made his last unsuccessful attempt, and received back his own; giving, at the same time, thanks to his competitor, who, he said, had re-established his favourite horse in his good opinion, for he had been in great danger of transferring to the poor nag the blame of an inferiority, which every one, as well as himself, must now be satisfied remained with the rider. Having made this speech in a tone in which mortification assumed the veil of indifference, he

mounted his horse and rode off the ground.

As is the usual way of the world, the applause and attention even of those whose wishes had favoured Lord Evandale, were, upon his decisive discomfiture, transferred to his triumphant rival.

"Who is he? what is his name?" ran from mouth to mouth among the gentry who were present, to few of whom he was personally known. His style and title having soon transpired, and being within that class whom a great man might notice without derogation, four of the Duke's friends, with the obedient start which poor Malvolio ascribes to his imaginary retinue, made out to lead the victor to his presence. As they conducted him in triumph through the crowd of spectators, and stunned him at the same time with their compliments on his success, he chanced to pass, or rather to be led, immediately in front of Lady Margaret and her grand-daughter. The Captain of the popinjay and Miss Bellenden coloured like crimson, as the latter returned, with embarrassed courtesy, the low inclination which the victor made, even to the saddle-bow, in passing her.

"Do you know that young person?" said Lady Margaret.

"I – I – have seen him, madam, at my uncle's, and – and elsewhere occasionally," stammered Miss Edith Bellenden.

"I hear them say around me," said Lady Margaret, "that the young spark is the nephew of old Milnwood."

"The son of the late Colonel Morton of Milnwood, who commanded a regiment of horse with great courage at Dunbar

and Inverkeithing," said a gentleman who sate on horseback beside Lady Margaret.

"Ay, and who, before that, fought for the Covenanters both at Marston-Moor and Philiphaugh," said Lady Margaret, sighing as she pronounced the last fatal words, which her husband's death gave her such sad reason to remember.

"Your ladyship's memory is just," said the gentleman, smiling, "but it were well all that were forgot now."

"He ought to remember it, Gilbertscleugh," returned Lady Margaret, "and dispense with intruding himself into the company of those to whom his name must bring unpleasing recollections."

"You forget, my dear lady," said her nomenclator, "that the young gentleman comes here to discharge suit and service in name of his uncle. I would every estate in the country sent out as pretty a fellow."

"His uncle, as well as his umquhile father, is a roundhead, I presume," said Lady Margaret.

"He is an old miser," said Gilbertscleugh, "with whom a broad piece would at any time weigh down political opinions, and, therefore, although probably somewhat against the grain, he sends the young gentleman to attend the muster to save pecuniary pains and penalties. As for the rest, I suppose the youngster is happy enough to escape here for a day from the dulness of the old house at Milnwood, where he sees nobody but his hypochondriac uncle and the favourite housekeeper."

"Do you know how many men and horse the lands of

Milnwood are rated at?" said the old lady, continuing her enquiry.

"Two horsemen with complete harness," answered Gilbertscleugh.

"Our land," said Lady Margaret, drawing herself up with dignity, "has always furnished to the muster eight men, cousin Gilbertscleugh, and often a voluntary aid of thrice the number. I remember his sacred Majesty King Charles, when he took his disjune at Tillietudlem, was particular in enquiring" – "I see the Duke's carriage in motion," said Gilbertscleugh, partaking at the moment an alarm common to all Lady Margaret's friends, when she touched upon the topic of the royal visit at the family mansion, – "I see the Duke's carriage in motion; I presume your ladyship will take your right of rank in leaving the field. May I be permitted to convoy your ladyship and Miss Bellenden home? – Parties of the wild whigs have been abroad, and are said to insult and disarm the well-affected who travel in small numbers."

"We thank you, cousin Gilbertscleugh," said Lady Margaret; "but as we shall have the escort of my own people, I trust we have less need than others to be troublesome to our friends. Will you have the goodness to order Harrison to bring up our people somewhat more briskly; he rides them towards us as if he were leading a funeral procession."

The gentleman in attendance communicated his lady's orders to the trusty steward.

Honest Harrison had his own reasons for doubting the

prudence of this command; but, once issued and received, there was a necessity for obeying it. He set off, therefore, at a hand-gallop, followed by the butler, in such a military attitude as became one who had served under Montrose, and with a look of defiance, rendered sterner and fiercer by the inspiring fumes of a gill of brandy, which he had snatched a moment to bolt to the king's health, and confusion to the Covenant, during the intervals of military duty. Unhappily this potent refreshment wiped away from the tablets of his memory the necessity of paying some attention to the distresses and difficulties of his rear-file, Goose Gibbie. No sooner had the horses struck a canter, than Gibbie's jack-boots, which the poor boy's legs were incapable of steadying, began to play alternately against the horse's flanks, and, being armed with long-rowelled spurs, overcame the patience of the animal, which bounced and plunged, while poor Gibbie's entreaties for aid never reached the ears of the too heedless butler, being drowned partly in the concave of the steel cap in which his head was immersed, and partly in the martial tune of the Gallant Grames, which Mr Gudyill whistled with all his power of lungs.

The upshot was, that the steed speedily took the matter into his own hands, and having gambolled hither and thither to the great amusement of all spectators, set off at full speed towards the huge family-coach already described. Gibbie's pike, escaping from its sling, had fallen to a level direction across his hands, which, I grieve to say, were seeking dishonourable safety in as

strong a grasp of the mane as their muscles could manage. His casque, too, had slipped completely over his face, so that he saw as little in front as he did in rear. Indeed, if he could, it would have availed him little in the circumstances; for his horse, as if in league with the disaffected, ran full tilt towards the solemn equipage of the Duke, which the projecting lance threatened to perforate from window to window, at the risk of transfixing as many in its passage as the celebrated thrust of Orlando, which, according to the Italian epic poet, broached as many Moors as a Frenchman spits frogs.

On beholding the bent of this misdirected career, a panic shout of mingled terror and wrath was set up by the whole equipage, insides and outsides, at once, which had the happy effect of averting the threatened misfortune. The capricious horse of Goose Gibbie was terrified by the noise, and stumbling as he turned short round, kicked and plunged violently as soon as he recovered. The jack-boots, the original cause of the disaster, maintaining the reputation they had acquired when worn by better cavaliers, answered every plunge by a fresh prick of the spurs, and, by their ponderous weight, kept their place in the stirrups. Not so Goose Gibbie, who was fairly spurned out of those wide and ponderous greaves, and precipitated over the horse's head, to the infinite amusement of all the spectators. His lance and helmet had forsaken him in his fall, and, for the completion of his disgrace, Lady Margaret Bellenden, not perfectly aware that it was one of her warriors who was furnishing

so much entertainment, came up in time to see her diminutive man-at-arms stripped of his lion's hide, – of the buff-coat, that is, in which he was muffled.

As she had not been made acquainted with this metamorphosis, and could not even guess its cause, her surprise and resentment were extreme, nor were they much modified by the excuses and explanations of her steward and butler. She made a hasty retreat homeward, extremely indignant at the shouts and laughter of the company, and much disposed to vent her displeasure on the refractory agriculturist whose place Goose Gibbie had so unhappily supplied. The greater part of the gentry now dispersed, the whimsical misfortune which had befallen the gens d'armerie of Tillietudlem furnishing them with huge entertainment on their road homeward. The horsemen also, in little parties, as their road lay together, diverged from the place of rendezvous, excepting such as, having tried their dexterity at the popinjay, were, by ancient custom, obliged to partake of a grace-cup with their captain before their departure.

CHAPTER IV

At fairs he play'd before the spearmen,
And gaily graithed in their gear then,
Steel bonnets, pikes, and swords shone clear then
As ony bead; Now wha sall play before sic weir men,
Since Habbie's dead!

Elegy on Habbie Simpson.

The cavalcade of horsemen on their road to the little borough-town were preceded by Niel Blane, the town-piper, mounted on his white galloway, armed with his dirk and broadsword, and bearing a chanter streaming with as many ribbons as would deck out six country belles for a fair or preaching. Niel, a clean, tight, well-timbered, long-winded fellow, had gained the official situation of town-piper of – by his merit, with all the emoluments thereof; namely, the Piper's Croft, as it is still called, a field of about an acre in extent, five merks, and a new livery-coat of the town's colours, yearly; some hopes of a dollar upon the day of the election of magistrates, providing the provost were able and willing to afford such a gratuity; and the privilege of paying, at all the respectable houses in the neighbourhood, an annual visit at spring-time, to rejoice their hearts with his music, to comfort his own with their ale and brandy, and to beg from each a modicum

of seed-corn.

In addition to these inestimable advantages, Niel's personal, or professional, accomplishments won the heart of a jolly widow, who then kept the principal change-house in the borough. Her former husband having been a strict presbyterian, of such note that he usually went among his sect by the name of Gaius the publican, many of the more rigid were scandalized by the profession of the successor whom his relict had chosen for a second helpmate. As the browst (or brewing) of the Howff retained, nevertheless, its unrivalled reputation, most of the old customers continued to give it a preference. The character of the new landlord, indeed, was of that accommodating kind, which enabled him, by close attention to the helm, to keep his little vessel pretty steady amid the contending tides of faction. He was a good-humoured, shrewd, selfish sort of fellow, indifferent alike to the disputes about church and state, and only anxious to secure the good-will of customers of every description. But his character, as well as the state of the country, will be best understood by giving the reader an account of the instructions which he issued to his daughter, a girl about eighteen, whom he was initiating in those cares which had been faithfully discharged by his wife, until about six months before our story commences, when the honest woman had been carried to the kirkyard.

"Jenny," said Niel Blane, as the girl assisted to disencumber him of his bagpipes, "this is the first day that ye are to take the place of your worthy mother in attending to the public; a douce

woman she was, civil to the customers, and had a good name wi' Whig and Tory, baith up the street and down the street. It will be hard for you to fill her place, especially on sic a thrang day as this; but Heaven's will maun be obeyed. – Jenny, whatever Milnwood ca's for, be sure he maun hae't, for he's the Captain o' the Popinjay, and auld customs maun be supported; if he canna pay the lawing himsell, as I ken he's keepit unco short by the head, I'll find a way to shame it out o' his uncle. – The curate is playing at dice wi' Cornet Grahame. Be eident and civil to them baith – clergy and captains can gie an unco deal o' fash in thae times, where they take an ill-will. – The dragoons will be crying for ale, and they wunna want it, and maunna want it – they are unruly chields, but they pay ane some gate or other. I gat the humle-cow, that's the best in the byre, frae black Frank Inglis and Sergeant Bothwell, for ten pund Scots, and they drank out the price at ae downsitting."

"But, father," interrupted Jenny, "they say the twa reiving loons drave the cow frae the gudewife o' Bell's-moor, just because she gaed to hear a field-preaching ae Sabbath afternoon."

"Whisht! ye silly tawpie," said her father, "we have naething to do how they come by the bestial they sell – be that atween them and their consciences. – Aweel – Take notice, Jenny, of that dour, stour-looking carle that sits by the cheek o' the ingle, and turns his back on a' men. He looks like ane o' the hill-folk, for I saw him start a wee when he saw the red-coats, and I jalouse he

wad hae liked to hae ridden by, but his horse (it's a gude gelding) was ower sair travailed; he behoved to stop whether he wad or no. Serve him cannily, Jenny, and wi' little din, and dinna bring the sodgers on him by speering ony questions at him; but let na him hae a room to himsell, they wad say we were hiding him. – For yoursell, Jenny, ye'll be civil to a' the folk, and take nae heed o' ony nonsense and daffing the young lads may say t'ye. Folk in the hostler line maun put up wi' muckle. Your mither, rest her saul, could pit up wi' as muckle as maist women – but aff hands is fair play; and if ony body be uncivil ye may gie me a cry – Aweel, – when the malt begins to get aboon the meal, they'll begin to speak about government in kirk and state, and then, Jenny, they are like to quarrel – let them be doing – anger's a drouthy passion, and the mair they dispute, the mair ale they'll drink; but ye were best serve them wi' a pint o' the sma' browst, it will heat them less, and they'll never ken the difference."

"But, father," said Jenny, "if they come to lounder ilk ither, as they did last time, suldna I cry on you?"

"At no hand, Jenny; the redder gets aye the warst lick in the fray. If the sodgers draw their swords, ye'll cry on the corporal and the guard. If the country folk tak the tangs and poker, ye'll cry on the bailie and town-officers. But in nae event cry on me, for I am wearied wi' doudling the bag o' wind a' day, and I am gaun to eat my dinner quietly in the spence. – And, now I think on't, the Laird of Lickitup (that's him that was the laird) was speering for sma' drink and a saut herring – gie him a pu' be the

sleeve, and round into his lug I wad be blithe o' his company to dine wi' me; he was a gude customer anes in a day, and wants naething but means to be a gude ane again – he likes drink as weel as e'er he did. And if ye ken ony puir body o' our acquaintance that's blate for want o' siller, and has far to gang hame, ye needna stick to gie them a waught o' drink and a bannock – we'll ne'er miss't, and it looks creditable in a house like ours. And now, hinny, gang awa', and serve the folk, but first bring me my dinner, and twa chappins o' yill and the mutchkin stoup o' brandy."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.