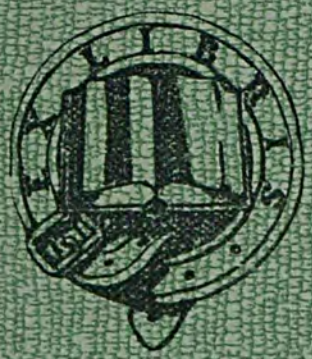

To Elisabeth
With best wishes
from Lilian

TH

The Circle in the Water

MARJORIE BOWEN

has also written

GOD AND THE WEDDING DRESS
MR. TYLER'S SAINTS } *Forming a trilogy with present volume*

THE GOLDEN ROOF
THE TRIUMPHANT BEAST } *Trilogy on the Renaissance*
TRUMPETS AT ROME

MARJORIE BOWEN

THE CIRCLE IN THE WATER

HUTCHINSON & CO.
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Glory is like a circle in the water
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
Till by broad spreading it disperse to naught.

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PREFACE

THIS is the third of the trilogy of novels dealing with various phases in the spiritual history of Great Britain. The endeavour has been to show in terms of action and individual experience, varying aspects of the growth of British thought. The first volume, *God and the Wedding Dress*, was associated with the poetry of Henry Vaughan and the faith of an Anglican minister of the late seventeenth century, the second, *Mr. Tyler's Saints*, dealt with the religious conflicts of an earlier generation, was illustrated by the poetry of Richard Crashaw and dealt with Richard Baxter and Father Southworth. The poetical affinity of the present volume is the folk-verse and lore of Scotland and the historical characters introduced are William Penn, the pacifist, John Graham of Claverhouse, and the Cameronian Saints. In an earlier trilogy the author tried to give three different aspects of the Renaissance in Europe, in the present series the aim has been to give, on a narrower stage, the same cross-sections of British history, not in the form of swashbuckling tales nor in that of romancized biography, but as studies in human drama played by characters profoundly affected by the thought and superstitions of their time.

The present tale is told in the first person, as this method seems best suited to the wild subject, bringing the reader

close as it does to the matter and allowing these strange events to be related by an eye-witness.

The details and the background are both authentic, though in this novel, as in the other two of the series, there is no attempt at painful historical reconstruction; it is the spirit of the times dealt with that has been aimed at.

MARJORIE BOWEN.

LONDON, 1939.

FOREWORD

I HAVE put down this story—that is, my own story—as I remember it ; to me it is all pure truth, truth of mind and spirit, as well as truth of material fact. But it well may be that I have during the years that have passed since I first went to Scotland, I have confused here and there, both dates and places, making this event and that come out of sequence. It may be also that I was mistaken in my estimates of the characters of these great ones with whom I had to deal, I write of them as they seemed to me. As I put together my memoranda my whole being was made melancholy by a sense of loss, and I heard the words of the old Scots preacher—" Build no nests here, for God has sold the forest to Death "—but as I wrote further I became glad of my life, my love, and resigned to all that had befallen me.

The name of the noble family where I was pedagogue and of their castle is too famous for my tale, and so I have painted these people and this place under feigned titles.

THOMAS MAITLAND.

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CASTLE DRUM

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I

CASTLE DRUM

"GIVE me the yellow gown, for I've a mind to wear it to-night for the 'Witches' Gathering.'"

These were the first words I heard spoken in that grand yet dreary place that was to be my home. It was followed by a break of laughter, and standing at the foot of the dark stairs I looked up and saw three young women standing on the first landing-space.

One held a lamp, and the sound of my footsteps must have disturbed them for she raised this above her head, and the three of them drew quickly together and stared down the stone steps at me.

I stared back in disdain, and in a manner, in rage. I had not wished to come to this barbarous place, or to this ill-favoured country, as I then thought it. I was melancholy, too, from the long and tedious journey, and I leaned against the grim, cold wall of the passage, folded my arms over my breast and eyed them defiantly as I said :

"I am Thomas Maitland, who has come to tutor your brother."

Upon which the three sisters moved again, as if a spell of fear had been taken from them, and she who had spoken before cried out :

"The English tutor! Why, that is only matter for a jest!"

And she turned again with a reckless look and gesture, at which I wondered, to the tall dark girl standing next her and cried :

"Off with the yellow gown! I tell you I've a mind to wear it to-night!"

And she put her hand on the other woman's bodice, as if she would have torn it from her back. But the third girl came between these two, and in tones in which I detected more alarm than modesty, bid them both be silent, for a stranger was present. Then to me she called out, proudly:

"Come upstairs, and leave your portmanteaux in the passage below, for a serving-man will see to them."

I obeyed sullenly enough; with every moment that passed I liked the place less. I was really an exile, I had left England unwillingly. I resented the bitter fact that my one asset was my relationship to the Duke of Lauderdale; I was a distant cousin, but we bore the same name.

I waited upon His Grace in my ruin and distress, hat in hand, and gained this favour—a recommendation to Castle Drum. And finally, after some tiresome delays, the offer of a post that no one else wished for—that of tutor to the heir of Sir Donald Garrie in Galloway, many weary miles from the banks of the Solway.

It was full summer, but I had not liked the northern landscape across which I had ridden. Perhaps if I had been better mounted and more splendidly attended, Scotland had pleased me more. But I was already angrily homesick for the quiet English pastures and lush fields, the gardens spangled with blossoms, the houses sweet with music and delicate odours. Here all were rude and wild, and rude and wild, too, I thought, were the three women who stood erect, curious, and, as I believed, hostile, to greet me.

She who wore the yellow dress—and it was a fine garment, ill-suited to this stern place, of stiff satin on which the light glimpsed in and out of the wide folds—was, I guessed, two- or three-and-twenty years of age. Her face was handsome and fierce, her eyes large, her nose high, her black hair lay in untidy ringlets on her thin shoulders.

Though she was young, fresh, she had a hawklike look, and I was used to carefully-nurtured women who cherished their beauty like a casket of jewels. And this woman's cheeks were flayed from the meath and her lips unpainted, and I thought that for all her fine gown she had a coarse air.

The girl who had called out for the yellow gown stood beside her and held up the lantern, looking at me curiously and defiantly. She wore a dark, and as I suppose, a homely dress that she might have been working in, but over her shoulders was twisted a rich scarf of the Highland colours—tartan, or plaid, as they termed them—and her hair was a rich colour, too—gold with red in it, strong and gleaming, and caught carelessly in a snood of bright blue silk. She had yellow-brown eyes, like a pale agate, and the wind had whipped her cheeks also. Her full lips were coarse in texture and ragged, as if she constantly bit them. What I could see of her neck and bosom was white and beautiful, and though her hands were rough in texture, they were fine and shapely.

The third girl seemed to me to be the youngest, and her attire was little better than that of a serving-maid, being of a coarse material and rude in fashion. She also wore a plaid round her shoulders, but it was of wool, and ragged at the edges. Her hair, too, was red-gold and hung straightly to her waist in tangled ringlets. Her eyes were soft, yellow and shining, like those I have seen in a sleepy cat. And her features had a strange sulky beauty that pleased me not at all. I noticed that she was barefoot on the cold dark stones, and that the other two were but untidily shod.

I was in no mood to flatter them or anyone else, I had no fear of losing my position—it was not so easy to find a tutor to reside in Castle Drum ; I had been warned as much before I left London ; now I could see for myself.

" So you're Thomas Maitland," replied the girl who held the lamp—more like a lantern it was, and fitter for a stable than a drawing-room. " An Englishman, Elspeth, as dark as a Highlander." They spoke with a barbarous inflec-

tion that my pen could not imitate ; though I give their speech here clearly, I was many days in Castle Drum before I could understand immediately what they said, and the plain English that I spoke was often to them incomprehensible.

But now their looks, gestures, spoke clearly enough of enmity and contempt. It was the dark dame who spoke first, she who wore the brilliant and envied yellow satin gown.

" I am Elspeth Garrie, and these are my stepdaughters, Jannot and Isabelle."

The first of the two she had named was the youngest, the barefoot girl, the other was she who held the lantern and who had clamoured for the yellow dress.

I bowed. I had been told to expect a young mistress at Castle Drum, the second wife of Sir Donald Garrie—a young virago, I had been told, bitter, in her own childlessness, against the sickly heir.

The prospect was not agreeable. I had miseries and failures enough of my own to burden me without wishing to enter into the troubles of Castle Drum. I acknowledged their scant courtesy briefly, but I had to wait on their pleasure, for they made no motion to direct me as to where I should go, but stood there disputing again among themselves, as if I had not existed.

The argument was always about the yellow dress, the gathering of the witches there was to be that night. I thought that they spoke in a blasphemous and crude jesting way, and I leaned against the wall, weary from melancholy and idleness more than from bodily fatigue, disdaining to beg their attention and waiting until they should see fit to dispose of me.

But I saw Jannot's eyes turn on me again and again, quick-moving eyes shaded by thick gold lashes, so that the whole of her orbit seemed filled with pale, sparkling light. She leant towards the two others, her stepmother and sister, and whispered something, and this seemed to stay their

passion. And then I saw that they were all looking at me with deepened enmity. And Elspeth, who felt some responsibility no doubt as mistress of the Castle, cried in a high voice to the others to cease their quarrelling, "Or this foolish young Englishman may think that you are serious when you talk of a witches' gathering."

"Maybe I shall," I replied disdainfully. "I have heard that Scotland is the home of witches and warlocks, evil fairies, and even of Satan himself."

They stood mute at that, and then Elspeth stepped forward and, lifting up the yellow satin gown from her roughly-shod feet, walked ahead, motioning to Jannot to follow with the lantern. Isabelle, pattering on with her bare toes, came behind, and I closed the procession.

I had had a glimpse, when I entered the Castle, of great apartments on the ground floor, for one of the doors had been standing open. These had seemed to be handsomely furnished, though with great lack of taste.

But the rooms to which they showed me now were gaunt and bare and my chamber had but few pieces in it. The uneven floor of boards polished to a dark amber colour was covered here and there by sheepskin rugs, yet there was a bedstead that might have come from France, and that was hung by some excellent embroideries. The curtains at the window were of grey serge, but between them was a desk of Chinese workmanship on an ormolu stand. A large press was both ancient and ugly. There was, however, a handsome chair with arms well supplied with velvet cushions. There were two candlesticks, one silver and one pewter, and a shelf occupied by very ancient Latin, Greek, and Hebrew books.

The three women looked at me keenly, as if anxious to know my opinion of this apartment. This I disdained to give them, but demanded to be brought into the presence of my employer, and, if possible, my charge.

"You speak boldly," said Lady Donald, but not altogether as if this temerity displeased her. She glanced

at her two stepdaughters, with whom she now seemed to be on the best of terms. "It's a dull life here," she added, "unfit for gentlefolk. You must tell us all the town gossip, the London scandals and the Paris fashions."

"I know nothing of such things, madam," I replied roundly.

"But we know something of you," replied Lady Donald, drawing her heavy black brows together. "We know the tale that sent you here, or part of it."

I was not greatly enraged at this insolence, for I had come prepared for their malice. I had been warned by such friends as I had left in London that I should not find this exile agreeable. So I merely scowled in reply. In a manner I was glad to find that courtly manners were not expected of me, my mood was ruthless.

"My husband's away," said Lady Donald, after another long scrutiny of my face, figure, and clothes. "And the boy's in bed. You may see the old tutor—that's Richard Cameron. He is going away to-morrow."

"And what can he have to tell me that I need to know?" I asked. "Come, is this your hospitality, madam? I would have water, clean linen napkins, some food and wine."

"White bread and French wine, I suppose," laughed Jannot, maliciously.

"The best you have," I replied, for with the master away I felt as if I was in command of the place. "Was this Mr. Cameron's room?"

Lady Donald made an ugly grimace.

"No, the old man thinks this too fine. He's a saint, you know. He sleeps hard and feeds on bread and water, and his eyes are always turned upwards and inwards."

"Why did not you keep so excellent a character? I shall not be able to emulate his virtues," I warned them with irony.

"He is a dangerous man to keep," said Lady Garrie sullenly. "A learned man, a man who gives no trouble,

and one who's worked for half your fee, but Sir Donald will no longer keep him."

"A fanatic, I suppose," said I, for I'd heard of these stern Presbyters, as they were termed, who were bitter against the government of King Charles for forcing episcopacy on them. And these things interested me not at all. What, indeed, was I interested in at this time, save my own story?

I confess that I was to myself the most important person in the world. Everything seemed as small as a grain of sand beside the swelling magnitude of the disasters of Thomas Maitland. I could have turned on the three women and driven them with foul words from the room as they stood there close together, with their considering faces and strange attire; how ugly and incongruous the yellow satin gown of the elder looked beside the homely garments of the other two!—staring at me, inquisitive, insulting, spiteful. Perhaps they thought that I desired them. Two of them, at least, possessed a gracious beauty, and they appeared to have neither modesty nor discretion.

But my thoughts, my passion, my heart and soul and spirit were entirely with Philippa, for whose sake I had had to leave England, and who, as I then believed, I was never to see again.

As the memory of this loss—that I had through my long and painful journey into exile kept at bay—pierced me, I was scarcely able to control a groan. Harshly and abruptly turning aside, I began to throw down the books on the shelves in the corner, declaring them to be of no use to me, and demanding that the serving-man might be sent up with my valises and cases of manuscripts. And, I added, brutally, "If the young boy whom I am to train is like you, madam, and your stepdaughters, I think my task of teaching Christian humility and of gentlefolk's courtesy will be hard and maybe barren."

At that they seemed to realize their rudeness in staring thus at a stranger, and a man who was, in a sense, dependent upon them, and in another sense their guest.

Jannot, who seemed to take the duties of a servant upon herself, then came forward, and drawing a flint and tinder from her coarse apron, lit the candles—both those in the silver and the pewter sticks.

I stood watching her, my arms again folded on my chest, as I remember, and leaning against the rich desk that looked foolish in those rude surroundings, while she drew the serge curtains across the window. Then, taking up the lantern that she had placed on the bed-step, she followed the other two women out of the room.

They left the door ajar and I heard them laughing loudly, and, as I thought, contemptuously in the passage.

When they had gone I threw off all restraint. I could no longer control myself, though I knew how dangerous it is both to mind and body to give way to pent-up agonies.

Philippa was gone, for ever lost ! Like a star drowned in endless depths of dark sea. And here was I, a landless man, without estate or profession, unable for a long time to return to England, forced to remain in this country that I, after a few days' knowledge, thought detestable. I was too young, fierce, and wilful to make allowances for my own mood, my own swelling self filled the universe. I looked on the three women who had given me so harsh a welcome, on the grey and solid castle built in ancient days of bloody warfares, and a fit habitation now, as I thought, for vultures, owls and foxes, as utterly abhorrent, as a part of the ugly destiny that had enclosed me.

I was not prepared to try and suck some sweet out of this sour grape. I saw no good, no loveliness in anything. I had travelled meanly, without a servant, on a wretched hired nag, a hired man changed at every posting-station, following with the baggage horse. And these ignoble circumstances had helped to darken my already bitter mood.

I remembered now, as I stood in this large, unfamiliar and unliked room in Castle Drum, the long monotony of the journey, those endless hills, purple and violet, that had encompassed me on every hand. I had travelled slowly

through gorge and valley, across Cumberland, Northumberland, the Border. How gloomy had appeared the wide waters of the Solway, how hostile the bleak shores of Scotland!

Even then I had been minded to turn back and take my fate. But youth will not easily give up, and ahead of me was a living, a period of respite from many harassing puzzles. And despite my sour, gloomy mood, hope was increasing, and I began to build again a few poor schemes for the future.

I might, in this solitude to which I was bound, study. I was a fair scholar. I might become famous for my learning, I might enter the Church and reach a bishop's throne. I might—and not for the first time did these thoughts creep and wind into my mind—surprise some of the secrets that then seemed on the edge of discovery. I might find out the mystery of the elements, of fire, of water, of earth, of air. I had read the books of the Rosicrucians, I had been the friend of that son of fire, Thomas Vaughan, I had read many other occult works.

I had contrived now and then to visit the laboratories of wealthy men and to make at their expense some studies in chemistry, as I had always lacked both patience and means, my time and fortune going on lusts and vanities. There had been on me from my earliest years idleness and luxury, and I had been proud and wilful, disdainful of any labour that did not please my mood. My scholarship was owing to my love of learning.

I was proud, too, of my gentle birth, and I offended my elders and my betters by these misplaced and dark vanities.

Then I had lost myself in my pursuit of Philippa, and squandering my small estate in the purchase of those glittering toys that best pleased my amorous youth.

But now I was thrifty and sober, and as I sat in the boat that bore me across the quickly-moving waters of the Solway towards the country that was to me one large prison, these old and fantastic hopes rose again.

I had heard much of the legends of Scotland, I had read old books found in strange places of their songs and tales. Like many another youth for whom the world and all the world can offer is scarcely brilliant enough, I had dreamed of Thomas the Rhymer and the Queen of Elfland, who had taken him away to live for ever and ever in the hidden palaces in the green hills.

I had thought when I reached Scotland that I would probe into such stories, and that perhaps I, being young and comely and full not only of lusty life, but of many warm dreams, might meet some such stately fairy who would take me away to perpetual wantonings beneath the glassy floor of a lake or in the sweet darkness of a vast mountain untrodden save by lovely sheep.

I had thought that perhaps when I reached the gloomy castle where my sole duty would be to teach a little Latin, a little Greek, the use of the globes, a few tales from history, the elements of mathematics to a sickly and a peevish lad, and that I might find leisure to pursue my occult studies, perhaps to become an adept in the black arts and be able myself to raise or create the shapes that would satisfy my ambition and my lust.

But all these dreams were now to me but like a little dust in the palm of my tired hand as I stood in the room at Castle Drum, looking out at the black and fading landscape.

I had not been welcomed by anyone whose countenance or whose words gave me hope that any of my desires would be fulfilled. These were rude, barbaric people, savages almost, and I should have to live among them as if I were amongst beasts. Their language to me was harsh and repellent. I had seen their serving-men, with rusty hair and beards and bare arms and short daggers stuck in the leather belt, speaking a tongue to me incomprehensible.

And the Castle itself, with its antique turrets and heavy, half-dismantled battlements, was at that time but a prison.

My mood was exceedingly bitter. I was past prayer, nor did I know of any God to whom I might put up a petition.

For I was, in the modern fashion, a sceptic, though I paid lip service to the Church of England, and no man would have been troubled by any heresy of mine. But in my soul I believed nothing and always looked inward to wild and tumultuous fancies.

So I rose now, no prayer having been uttered, and pride getting me to my feet lest one of these women should come upon me and see my dismay.

I thought then of Mr. William Penn, who had been such a good friend to me, and of his scheme, impracticable as it had always seemed to me, for the man was in many ways hare-brained, of founding a city of brotherly love in the New World. This design was not then ripe ; he had asked me if I would wait until he might persuade some of the great ones—the King, perhaps, or the Duke—to give him a charter whereby he might acquire land in America and take with him some of his people, who belonged to a set called by the ribald nobile ' Quakers.'

But this design had not pleased me. I was in no mood for the tranquillity preached by Mr. Penn, nor by the bustling activity whereby he sought to obtain his projects. Besides, the man was unfortunate ; he had been in prison once and would be again. No, I preferred my Scottish exile to Newgate, or possibly the halter. I did not want to have my ears cropped or to stand in the pillory and be killed by brickbats. And I was not a man to believe in brotherly love.

But I thought of it now, that lunatic design, with regret.

It was Jannot who came in with the servant behind her with a wooden tray on which was set cakes made of oatmeal, a bottle of wine, some coarse meat and a rude, yellow earthenware bowl full of soup that smelt savoury enough. The horn goblet was finely mounted in pierced silver, and the napkin was of pure linen, delicately embroidered.

Jannot, who made a pretence, insolently intended, as I thought, of seeing that I was well served, stood about directing the gaping maid. I saw that she had altered her attire ; there were latched shoes on her feet now, her bodice was

more discreetly laced, her smock drawn up to the throat and down to the wrists. Her bright hair had been smoothly combed and twisted into a blue snood like that which her sister had worn.

I could not avoid looking at her. It was a strange face to me, a countenance that did not resemble any woman's countenance I had seen before. The lines were pure and noble, the finely-moulded bones showed in the cheeks and jaw. The native winds had coarsened her carnation, but it was clear and bright, and the peculiar colour of her eyes, the peculiar burnish of her brows and lashes did, as I had noted before, make her eyes appear to be of liquid gold.

I stood, in a disdainful courtesy, while she was on her feet, but she bade me sit down to my supper and took the chair the other side of the desk where the tray had been set ; putting her elbows on her knees and folding her hands under her fine chin, she asked me if I had brought with me the things that she and her sister had ordered from London—

" Wax candles," said she, " for these are but of mutton fat, and a box of patches such as the ladies wear on their faces, and some orris powder for the hair, and the roll of Florentine silk in stripes of blue and red and yellow, a filigree cup and saucer in silver, shoes for all of us in gold brocade, and a length of dark-green silk to make me a gown ? "

I did not answer ; I was hungry and relishing my meat, coarsely though this was cooked and served. Besides, the girl's demands were folly. His Grace of Lauderdale's secretary had told me that the ladies of Castle Drum had some requests to make as to vanities that I might bring them from the Exchange, but they had sent no precise list—I doubt if any of them could write, at least, not English, nor any money wherewith to pay for these foolishnesses.

So, when I had fortified my hunger, I told her. A quick fury that amused me to see flashed across her face. Then her lips quivered and her expression was that of a disappointed child.

"There's but one silk or satin gown in the Castle," she said, "and that Elspeth is always wearing."

"I'd enough baggage of my own to bring," I replied indifferently. "It's a long way to drag ladies' gowns and slippers and suchlike vanities, madam," I answered. "Besides, I am a ruined man, and there was no money sent."

"My father would have paid," she said stormily.

I was avenged now for the malice with which she had regarded me before and I asked her what use such finery would be to her in Castle Drum.

"Who is there to admire you here, madam? I heard you demand the yellow dress that you might go to a witches' gathering. Were all these gauds to dazzle the eyes of Satan himself?"

At that she looked at me very blackly like a cat going to spit, then said violently:

"You're a fool, young man! I'll speak to you again in a few weeks' time, when you've found out as much."

With that she rose and left me, to my great pleasure, in peace.

The serving-man brought up my valises and took away the tray. I then had some further pleasure in arranging my few possessions in my new chamber.

I did not dare give myself time to reflect on my misfortunes, or I must have fallen on some violent mood or evil passion, and I yet wished to preserve my fortitude.

I was suffering from a double disappointment. First there was the trouble that had sent me here, which was little less than the overthrow of my entire existence. And second, there was the disappointment of those faint hopes that had been raised when I had been crossing the Solway and seen Scotland before me, had now vanished when I found the country to be dull, featureless, and rude.

I had brought with me such of my books as I had been able to save from the sale of my effects, and it was with a sense, however fleeting, of consolation, that I arranged on

the desk and the shelves from which I had cast those old tattered volumes down, my Tacitus, my Ovid, my Erasmus, and many other of the choicer gems of my once handsome library, from the poems of Virgil to the pamphlets of Mr. John Milton.

'What,' I wondered bitterly, 'am I supposed to teach this young whelp? Judging by his stepmother and his sisters, the classics will mean little to him. Yet I know that the Scots are able at learning, and I have met many accomplished scholars from their ancient universities. But in this household there is no spark of grace or letters.'

I did not know when I was like to receive more candles, so husbanded those I had. And the two that I allowed myself gave but a dim and flickering light. They had, like everything else in Castle Drum, been rudely made, and the coarse wick burned too quickly and sent the rank-smelling mutton fat guttering down the sides on to the silver sticks, for it was those on the pewter stand that I had put out.

I felt a sense of triumph, as if I had given good proof of steadfast courage when at length I saw my possessions fairly arranged—my clothes in the press, my books on the shelves, my desk supplied with ink-well, sand dish, and quill, my two globes set out, my case of mathematical instruments in their place.

I had kept one magnificent garment, a cloak of purple velvet that I had bought in Paris, and that was very brightly adorned with a design of acorns in bullion. I knew that I would have no opportunity to wear anything so splendid, but though it would have fetched a good price, and I sorely needed the money, I had not been able to bring myself to part with it. And I was glad now that I had preserved at least one garment that might remind me of a past as brilliant as it was bitter.

I cast it now over the bed, concealing the homespun coverlet that contrasted so rudely with the embroidered

curtains that were worked in a curious design of suns and stars. Even the ragged yellow light from the candles showed the lustre of the rich pile on that handsome velvet, for which I had paid so high a price, though not more than it was worth.

While I was staring at the cloak and remembering the many occasions on which I had worn it, there came a scratching at the door. I believed it was one of the bold young women returned to torment me, and I did not at first take any heed of this vexation. But as the scratching became bolder I was forced to cry out that whoever stood there might enter.

I heard the latch lifted, not with any very steady hand, and it was a man well on in years who entered. His demeanour was courteous and meek, and I was sorry that I had spoken hardly. I took him to be the Mr. Richard Cameron whose place I had taken. I could not have told his age, he might have been sixty years old or more. He was thin and upright and wore the plain, and, as I always thought it, forbidding attire of a Calvinist pastor. Even in that outlandish place he had contrived to have his band starched and pressed. His hair, that was the colour of wood ash and very fine in texture, was neatly trimmed, and his face had an aspect at once commanding and sweet.

As he advanced towards me I set him the chair with arms in which I had been reclining myself, and he accepted this with a gracious appreciation of my courtesy.

"I am," said he, "Richard Cameron, and I would have been in the passage-way, or even at the gates, to welcome you, but the women would have their will, their wilful will, I take it to be."

This speech, though broad Scotch that I would not know how to spell or put upon paper, was yet agreeable to my ear and not so difficult to understand as had been the language of the ladies of Castle Drum.

I was glad to meet him because he was a learned and, as I believed, a civil and well-meaning gentleman. He was

also a man of a strange and, as I afterwards came to know, formidable personality.

And he turned on me now eyes of a cold blue-grey colour that reminded me of a winter scene and regarded me very keenly.

"Mr. Maitland," said he, "by what queer chance do you come to Castle Drum to teach a poor young lad his Latin and his globes?"

Although I liked the pastor, I was not inclined to give him my history, and it was one that would have stung his ears. So I answered merely that I was a ruined gentleman who had had some influence with His Grace of Lauderdale, and through him had been presented to this post—through one of my Lord's friends, or panders, or hangers-on, what knew I?—to Donald Garrie of Castle Drum.

"You might have been sent to a better place, Mr. Maitland," replied Richard Cameron, and his eyes looked as if a pale dim flame had been lit behind them. "They are turning me out, homeless, on to the moors. You know that, I suppose? No, never start or raise your hand or talk of pity! I know where to go, I have my friends, ay, and armed men, too. That is the manner of folk the Garries are. That's the three women—have you seen them?"

His last question came abruptly, like a ball from a cannon, and was spoken with such meaning that even I, in my complacency, was startled.

"Ay, I've seen them," I replied, "and ordinary pieces they appear to be, uncouth and bold."

"They're more than that," replied Richard Cameron. "You are going to live in the same house with them, and it's but fair to you to know that two of them, at least, are witches."

I smiled at him. I had never thought—interested and even absorbed as I had been in occultism, spirits, apparitions—seriously of witches or warlocks. At best I had considered them as crazed old women familiar with apes or cats, but here was a grave, learned old man speaking seriously.

"They're young, but well favoured," I replied, not wishing to check his talk, my curiosity alight. And to fill the pause, for indeed I knew not well what to say, I snuffed the guttering candles. And I was glad, though I had not told Madam Jannot as much, that I had brought several pounds of fine English wax taken from the hives of Devon honey bees, in my baggage.

"Ay, they're bonny enough" said Mr. Cameron. "But if you should see them at night, in the ruins of the old chapel. Do you think in London that such things are fairy-tales? I tell you, these women met Satan himself, and one of them, Jannot——"

"That's a fair name for a witch!"

"Most of the witches in Scotland have been named Jannot, Mr. Maitland—*she's* what we term the maiden, or queanes, and sits at old Cloutie's right hand."

"That would be a sight I should like to see," said I, still smiling and thinking the old man, for all his learning and piety, was crazed in his wits.

"You'll see it, if you stay in Scotland—either Jannot Garrie or some other woman. I suppose you're a Christian, Maitland?"

"I belong to the Church of England," said I.

Then the old man began to talk against the government of King Charles and all his ministers and all his bishops. And I was weary and made but little of his discourse, for such matters of politics, either in government of country or Church, interested me not at all. It always appeared to me as if the affairs of men were so jangled and so out of tune that no human could put them right. What mattered to me the wrongs of Scotland or the tyrannies of King Charles? I was as yet immersed in my own vanity.

The old man saw this and stopped in his discourse, which he had delivered with a power and a flower of rhetoric that I was forced to admire, although I could understand but little of what he said. Checking himself, he remarked with stately courtesy:

"What has the curse or the doom of Scotland to do with the English? I was sorry for you as a young man, one whom I believed had met with misfortune—a stranger here in this accursed house."

He spoke the last words so solemnly that I was drawn up short in my complacency as a plunging steed may be pulled up at the edge of a precipice, and all his pride falls from him in a tremor of fright.

"Accursed house!" I repeated. "And who are you to speak so of Castle Drum? It seems to me to be but a rude habitation of uncultured people."

"I go forth to-morrow," replied the old man, rising, and his long shadow in the black gown was cast by the guttering candles on the wall behind him, where it seemed to rise up and down and to overshadow the whole room with menace. "Do not grieve for me. As I told you, I have my friends, and they are armed men. I am a power in this land, and one who will testify strongly for the Lord. Do you think we are defeated because Charles Stuart, a traitor and a damned son of Bel, is on the throne?"

"I know nothing of your tricks or your politics," I replied. "I tell you I am a ruined gentleman who has come here for his misfortune."

"For his damnation unless you are careful, Mr. Thomas Maitland," replied Richard Cameron. "I came here for no concern of my own. I have nothing more to do in Castle Drum, or with the family of the Laird of Garrie. But hearing that you were here, a young man and defenceless——"

"Defenceless!" I caught at the word that seemed a slur upon my manhood and my courage. "I have my sword and a case of pistols, and my two fists also. I have not met a man who could defeat me in bodily conflict."

"I'm not talking about men," replied Richard Cameron sternly, and his pale face was yellow like the guttering candles, and his wrinkled lips twitched as he spoke. "I am talking of the powers of the dark. Do you know, young

man, how mighty they are? Have you ever heard of the wiles and traps of Satan? Have you ever met the women who have yielded to his spell?"

"I think you talk like the actors in a playhouse," I replied. "I am sorry to offend you, Mr. Cameron, but I have lived too long in London, ay, and in Paris, to listen to tales of Satan and witches."

Yet even as I spoke I thought of those forbidden studies that had so attracted me, I thought of the days I had passed in the laboratory of that son of fire and of Hermes, Thomas Vaughan. I thought of all that I had begun to learn there and had laid aside, half in idleness, half in fear. And leaning towards the preacher in that dark and shadowed room where the yellow flames of the guttering candles leapt and sank, I whispered:

"Tell me, Mr. Cameron, what you know of these things, for I am much interested in them, and I would give ten or fifteen years of the wretched life I have still to live to meet the Evil One face to face!"

And I laughed loud and long into those shadows.

The old man rose, he seemed to me a supernatural height, his white hair and his pale face were both the colour of frost. He looked at me with pity and with disdain, and I remembered what Elspeth Garrie had said—"He is a saint"—and I felt myself gross, lewd, and full of ugly lust before his frailty and his contempt.

"Leave me!" I cried. "I came here for a retreat. I have left behind me a life of what you would call sin, and defeat. I have brought here but a few books."

"You will need but one book in Castle Drum," interrupted Richard Cameron, "and that is the Holy Bible. There is no other book worth carrying from place to place. What have the others within their covers but vain thoughts, the vexatious disputes of men? In the Holy Book is written the holy command of God."

"Would I could think so," I replied. "I have my copy of the Holy Testament with me. It is not often that I

unclasp it. Speak to me of more practical matters. You see me here a young man, delivered—I will not admit to witches, but to three wilful, and I think, wanton women. What of this Sir Donald? Why is he away? What is this boy whom I have come so far to teach?"

"The boy," said Richard Cameron, "is a clever lad. As to his soul, I do not know if it is lost or saved. Sometimes he has been under the influence of his sisters, sometimes under mine. It was to fight for that soul that I remained in Castle Drum, enduring malice and insult. And now the time has come when I can fight no more. You do what you can for this poor lad. He is sickly, a cripple, he can never fight a bodily war."

"I had known of it before I had left London." I was disdainful too, for in the hot lust of my youth I despised all who were weakly or diseased, and it was but a facile compassion that caused me to answer:

"I will do what I may for David Garrie, but I suppose my concern will be more with his father."

"Sir Donald is a man well on in years," replied Richard Cameron. "He is much in the hands of his young second wife and two daughters. It is the three women who rule Castle Drum, and you will find them evil. They are, indeed," he added, lowering his voice, "related with a known wizard. That is James Sharp, the Archbishop, as they call him, of St. Andrews. Though in Scotland since the Covenant was signed there can be neither bishop nor archbishop, but only fiends and arch-fiends."

"Why, I know the Archbishop of St. Andrews," I replied. "I met him in London. He seemed to me an amiable, though a weak, man."

"He played the traitor," replied Richard Cameron in a low voice. "But what is that to you? You have no concern in the woes or the warning of Scotland. Archbishop Sharp, as you will have that name for him, is a wizard. He has under his domain hundreds of witches and warlocks. Hush, I will not speak to you, I see that I spend my words on one

who scoffs. Take care of your sneers, young Englishman. Do not come to Scotland to gibe at dark shapes and grim forebodings. There is more in this shadowed island than you will understand, were you to live a hundred years."

He put his lean hand before his hollow eyes, and I thought he looked like a warlock himself, for such had I imagined these men to seem ; he was gaunt, thin, and seemed wasted by unnatural living, and I noted that his gown was rusty and frayed at the hem, and though his linen was clean and sweet there was poverty and misery in all his other habiliments. And woe and desolation at my fate seized me then as I looked round at the room so large, so gaunt, with its grotesque assortment of furniture, rich and modish, rude and fitted for a farmhouse. And I thought of the time that I must spend there, and the fortune that was before me if I left this refuge, and a cry was wrenched from me as I turned to the window and pulled aside the curtains of coarse serge.

At this sign of weakness Richard Cameron's compassion rose. He came to me where I stood and put his hand on my shoulders.

" You are a stranger to me and belong to those whom I should hate, but you are young, and one has always compassion for youth, be it ever so wilful or misled. I leave you behind in the darkness of Castle Drum while I go out into the light of the saints and the followers of the Covenant. But do you beware of these three women—Isabelle, Jannot, and Elspeth. Beware, too, of the physician, Dr. Fletcher."

I looked at him over my shoulder. I said :

" I heard the women disputing on the stairs. As I came up I heard them arguing about the yellow satin dress, and one—who was it, I forget now—said that she wished to wear it for the witches' gathering. And I took it to be but the wantonness of unlettered women."

" Take it to be what you will, Thomas Maitland," replied the preacher, " there is truth behind it. These queans, go out to meet Satan in the ruined chapel. So does that lost

soul, Fletcher. If you are abroad in the morning look at the old chapel, mark well. Maybe you will need to know how to enter and how to escape from those ruins built by the accursed monks of old."

I saw him again, his face matching the wax for yellowness as he stood there with the guttering candles behind him ; they were falling now in their sockets, the coarse wax had made what the waiting-maids call winding sheets, falling over the cups of silver ; and on the rough white-washed walls on which were hung at intervals rude pieces of cloth were the leaping shadows of the old preacher.

I stared into his eyes and he into mine, and something that could not be expressed in words passed between us. He was going free, from what he called the accursed place, and I was to remain. I had come from London and from Paris, from places where men jested even about God on His throne above, where nothing was taken solemnly, and where all was a matter for scoffing, even birth, even death, and even love.

And I remembered Philippa, how I had last seen her in the satin that was the same colour and sheen as the pearls about her throat, stained with wine that a corrupt hand had cast on her bosom, her eyes looking at me through a glaze of tears, her hair falling on her rounded shoulders, the faded roses among the tresses.

I remembered that, the faint timid laughter, the light of a thousand wax candles, the glitter of a thousand gold pieces piled upon the gaming tables, and I put a hand before my eyes, not knowing what to credit.

The old man seemed to pity my distress. He muttered something in his broad Scotch that was still like a foreign language to me, but that I took to be a blessing, an appeal to his God, to the guardians of his Heaven to have their watch over me. And then he took me by the arm and asked me to walk with him to the door of my chamber. He said that he had never seen the room before but lodged in one as straight and narrow as the grave and where he had

but one candle and one bowl of porridge, one plate of oat-cakes, one glass of water in the day.

"And as for the young lad David," he said, as I parted from him at the door, "remember that he has an immortal soul, and fight for it as you would for your own."

Then he was gone from me and I heard the latch click into its place. And I stood there watching the wicks flicker up and down in the large pools of molten fat, and I watched how the purple velvet on the bed which hid the coarse coverlet showed its rich lustre in that last light.

That night I did not hope to sleep. I lay in the complete darkness with no watch-light. It was the moonless week of the month, and the darkness without invaded the darkness within, for I had left the window open. My curtains were drawn, allowing the soft yet chill air upon my face, cooling the blood beating in my cheeks. Who was I to combat the perils of darkness?

I believed then what the old man had told me, and I wondered where the three women had gone. Did such accursed creatures go abroad on a moonless night?

I lay in my bed—the mattresses were soft, the pillows wide and soft, and my hands were stretched out at my side and I imagined myself in my tomb, the tomb such as my father's bones rested in, with a painted alabaster monument above and inside all my armorial shields arrayed, painted blue and purple, scarlet and gold.

And who should lie beside me on that gorgeous tomb but Philippa? When I first met her she had been another man's wife, never could she belong to me save secretly in vile and sullen passion.

And our private sin had been discovered and we had been put to shame. And Philippa was her husband's penitent and I was exiled to the Castle Drum.

As I lay in that thick darkness peopled by the evil fancies of the days that were gone, how childish seemed my vices—the jingling of the coins on the gambling-tables, the bawdy songs of the revellers going home late, the despoiled houses,

the sullen wives, the glare of torches held by the sleepy little boys across the courtyard, where the tired horses waited, the sedan chairs painted in red and gold, the foul words of the greasy footmen as they pressed in idleness about the gate.

And her face, not different in the eyes of others from the faces of other wanton women, but to me beautiful, with the gold dust in her hair, and the red paint on her lips, the satin smock falling from her pearl-coloured shoulders that had the sheen of the jewels round her warm, white firm throat.

How different from these three women ! . . .

I sat up in bed, pulling the curtains yet further back and the rings rattled on the poles.

I remembered Jannot's eyes like slits of golden fire, I remembered the old preacher's warning, yet I could hardly believe that he had really visited me in this very room, he seemed rather like some figment of my dreams.

I reached out my hand and felt on the chair with arms that I had drawn up beside the bed my sword in its scabbard and the two pistols in their cases.

Clearly, sharply, yet all misty like a phantasy or dream, do I remember that first night that I spent in Castle Drum.

I watched the dawn, the grey and spent fire, creep upwards like water slowly filling a cask, until it reached the level of my window and flowed into my strange and desolate chamber.

How useless now seemed my preparations of the night before—my books so neatly arrayed, my purple cloak laid across the bed, my sand-dish and ink-horn now meant nothing. I was exiled in what seemed to me an ' accursed place,' as Richard Cameron had called it.

And when I sat up in bed my shirt opened on my bosom, I felt the air very cold, although it was summer, and when the cock crowed beneath I felt an infinite melancholy, as if I was a lost soul on the verge of Hell hearing for the last time a homely sound of earth.

II

THE LADIES OF CASTLE DRUM

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II

THE LADIES OF CASTLE DRUM

THE next day I was presented to the young boy who was to be in my charge. His father was still absent from the Castle.

I found the lad to my liking, though I had ever had an abhorrence for those afflicted bodily. And David Garrie was not agreeable to the sight with his long, distorted body, crooked shoulders and limbs awry, and his thin pale face, his high nose and hollowed eyes that made him look older than his years, that were not sixteen.

He had the same bright-coloured hair as his sisters, but this was often dark with sweat. What was his ailment I did not ask, for courtesy, and was not told. I suppose that he had met some accident in his childhood, I wondered they did not take him at least to Edinburgh or Glasgow, if not to London, to see if some experienced physician might not have healed some of his hurts.

But there seemed to have been little care taken of him, though one day he would be master of all their fortunes, and lord, as far as I could understand, of many acres, although these might be barren. At least, in this rude, wild country his position would be a powerful one.

And there he lay on his couch that was drawn into the wide window-place, with no other attendant than an ageing serving-man and a dull boy.

He received me courteously, his speech and manner were superior to those of his sisters. I noticed that his linen was better cared for than theirs, his clothes

neater, and his manner, though not less haughty, not so coarse.

I found him, too, to be a considerable scholar. Richard Cameron had taught this cripple well. The dullness of ill-health and the constraint he felt before a stranger fell from him as he showed me his shelves of books. He had sent as far as Paris for copies of the classics, and had them there finely bound in tooled leather with green and purple ties.

He was nearly as efficient as I was myself in the Greek and Latin, and I believed that I should have some difficulty in teaching one who was so little my inferior in learning. But David Garrie assured me himself that he required more a companion than a master. I was to read and discuss with him and help him pass his lonely hours.

"For my sisters," he said, with a grim look, "give me but little company, and my stepmother has other employments than that of nurse."

I asked him if he was not sorry to lose the company of Mr. Cameron? And he reflected a little before he gave me his answer, which showed, I thought, a rare prudence in one so young.

"Mr. Cameron is too old for me," he confessed at last, glancing at me with a chill approval, "you, Mr. Maitland, are nearer my age. Mr. Cameron, besides, seems to belong too much to these modern times, while I would tread backwards into extinct glories."

'Not being able,' I reflected compassionately, 'to mingle in the activities of your own day, poor lad.'

But I humoured him, and in order to break the constraint between us, sat by his side while he told me something of the state of affairs in Scotland, a matter to which I had hitherto given little or no attention. He told me about the Covenant, how it had been sworn to by his present Majesty and afterwards, by the same King's command, burnt by the common hangman. And how black resentment had rankled in the breasts of many Presbyterian Scots at this gross betrayal, as they termed it.

These facts I knew, though I allowed the boy to relate them to me as if they were novelties. And as he spoke without passion, yet putting the Presbyterian case fairly, I could see their side of the question, as I had not concerned myself to see it before.

"This Mr. Cameron," continued David Garrie, "is one of the most fervent of the Presbyterians, or Covenanters, as they term themselves. He considers himself held in a bond to resist the King and the English to the utmost of his power. My father has considered him as a seditious and perhaps a dangerous man, and for that reason has sent him away."

"Where will he go?" I asked.

And David Garrie replied with a shrug of his thin, twisted shoulders, almost in the words that Mr. Cameron had used himself the night before when he had stood, his dark figure dim among the shadows of my chamber.

"He will have protection enough over the whole of Scotland. Ay, the protection of armed men also." Then with a rapid change of subject that surprised me, the boy sat up on his couch and asked me to move the velvet pillows at his back. I noticed that these, in contrast to much that was so rude in the castle, were as handsome as the cloak that I had bought in Paris and cast upon my bed upstairs, and thickly embroidered in gold with the arms of the Garries —three pierced hearts in a flowered border.

"Do you know anything of magic, Mr. Maitland? Have you had any strange conversation with spirits or phantoms? Have you seen ghosts walking abroad by night or by daylight?"

I was a little startled by these questions, which chimed too closely with my own thoughts. He sensed my surprise and added slyly:

"I asked my father to see that one who was acquainted with this new science was sent to me. I have heard a good deal about it."

"From Mr. Cameron?" I asked cautiously.

"From him, too. He considers himself sent on earth particularly to combat the tricks of Satan."

"Something of chemistry and the new sciences I do know," I replied, still cautious. "These things have interested me, nay, at times absorbed my spirit. But the affairs of the world have been too much with me." I paused, not willing to unlock my heart or to tell to this strange boy my own bitter tale.

But he had little interest in me or in my history. Clasping his thin hands either side of him on the carved arms of his couch, he began to talk a deal of matter that to me was incomprehensible. It seemed that he had gone deeply into what he termed this science of the supernatural. That he believed firmly in all he said there could be no doubt, and much of it I believed as firmly myself. I might be a lukewarm Christian, and on occasion a fashionable sceptic, but I had no reason to doubt the existence of the Devil, though I might doubt that he came as a black man to dance on the heath amid a circle of wanton village wives.

But David Garrie made no more ado about believing such tales than if he had been present at some of these Devil's holidays.

"If I were not lame," said he earnestly, leaning towards me, and I noted the drops of sweat on his taut upper lip and his domed brow, "I should have been abroad and seen these cantrips myself. Mr. Cameron has seen them. The witches and the warlocks meet in the ruined church which used to belong to my forefather. John Knox and his men turned it over in the Reformation and laid the vaults agape. Come—my Lord Lauderdale said that you had some knowledge of these matters, Mr. Maitland."

"Maybe," I replied, withdrawn into myself, "but I came here to teach you Greek and Latin, and I had thought of Scotland as the home of pleasant elves and fairies the agreeable sprites of a winter's tale. I suppose," I added cautiously, "we have in England also these vulgar demons, but I have given little heed to them."

"You do not believe them, perhaps?" asked David Garrie. "You think they are all the babblings of ignorant old gossips who do not know how to read and write? You do not, perhaps, believe in the Bible? But in these antique tales that I read I come upon wonders, too, and whom am I to dispute what wise men have set down?"

"Maybe," I replied, "maybe. But what sort of place have I gotten into, David Garrie, that our talk must be all of these matters? The Devil may walk abroad oftener in Scotland than in England, for all I know, but I am not to be cozened by the idle, spiteful tattling of the ignorant."

The boy stared at me without replying, and I saw that this was a serious matter to him. I felt a creeping uneasiness. Why had I been sent for to Castle Drum? Not to read his books with this boy, but to help him—how and why? And what part did the father play in this cozening?

"Your sisters," I began, and then I saw the intent look in his eyes deepen. He drew his pallid lips back from his teeth, the crooked yellow teeth of a sick man, and said:

"What about my sisters? You saw them last night, I think?"

"Yes, I saw the three ladies. They were disputing about a yellow satin dress, and there was some jest about a witches' revel."

The boy did not answer. His head drooped back on the handsome cushion and his lids slid quickly over the eager eyes. Was it possible, I asked myself, that he believed his sisters to be Satan's darlings?

I rose and began to arrange the books he had shown me back on their shelves; I was determined, for a while at least, to be a pedagogue and nothing else.

"It is a pity," I said, with irony, "that if you believe yourself surrounded by the legions of the damned you have parted with Mr. Richard Cameron. A saint would be a good protection against Satan."

"The old man wearied me," replied the boy indifferently, "he talked too much of God."

"And what am I to talk to you about?" I asked. And as I looked down at that forlorn figure on the couch, a deep depression came over my own spirits.

I glanced past him at the window from which came the cold light that enveloped him. It did not seem to be high summer here in Scotland, in this room with the northern aspect. Why had they put a sick man in a chamber where the sun never fell? How was I to endure to live in this Castle? My pupil was obsessed by dark fancies that I must suppose were the fumes of a sick brain. And who else had I for company?

As I stood there with the books in my hand scowling at my own fate and feeling like a man trapped, the latch was lifted and Jannot entered. She wore a scarlet petticoat of thin silk that fluttered when she moved like a blown flame. Her hair was free again, curling to her waist, and her gold eyes were full of excitement.

She crossed to her brother and seated herself on a corner of his couch, and a scowl passed between them, a challenge on her part and a defiance on his, I thought it.

"What have you told Mr. Maitland?" she demanded.

"He is here for my company, not for yours, sister," replied the boy, with more energy than I supposed he possessed. "And this room is mine, and while my father is away I'm master in Castle Drum, and you shall leave me in tranquillity."

She threw back her head and laughed, and I could not but admire the line of her chin and neck, the swell of her bosom where it slipped behind the loose scarlet bodice. In that bleak light from the tall, rudely glazed window I gazed at her under lowered lids, thinking how strange a creature she was, how different from Philippa, from every other gentlewoman I had known. Gentlewoman seemed indeed an ironic term to apply to one so wild, so discourteous, who was without either kindness or charity or grace. And yet

Jannot Garrie was the daughter of a noble house, and must be considered by her father's numerous tenantry as little less than a princess.

I spoke to her sternly now, meaning to pit my will against hers.

"Madam," I said, "if your brother is to be in my charge, I must ask you to leave me in peace during the hours that I am to read to him."

"Read to him!" cried she, with a flaunting tone and a bold look. "Who was reading when I entered this room? You were talking, I believe, of Mr. Richard Cameron, and of witches and of the Devil's tricks."

"You, madam, I suppose, were listening at the door," said I, angrier than I wished to be.

"You've a deep voice," said she, rising, "and took no trouble to lower it. Black man, indeed! You're a black man yourself, Mr. Maitland. Your hair is like a burnt coal, and your eyes too." Then she looked at her brother over her shoulder and added disdainfully: "Captain Graham is coming here to-morrow. Mr. Cameron did not leave us too soon. They've determined in London to put down the Conventicles and to bring peace to Scotland."

There is no describing the disdain and scorn she put into these simple words.

"Did you hear this talk in London?" she said, coming up to me and holding her face close to mine. "You are a Scot yourself, are you not?"

"I do not claim that honour," I replied. "I am a distant relation of His Grace of Lauderdale, but I and my forebears have lived for some while in England. And I would have you know, madam, that I take no interest in politics or in the affairs of Scotland. I came here to earn my bread, and I think," said I, my temper getting out of hand again, "I shall find it hardly gained. When does your father return?" I added.

She replied with her air that was at once fiery and indifferent:

"He is away, he visits kinsfolk at St. Andrews."

"It's Dr. Sharp," said David Garrie from his couch. "He was related to our mother, and Sir Donald, that's our father, you know, does what any harassed man would do—he plays here and there for safety."

"You talk like a fool," said Jannot. "We may have needed a place of safety, as you term it, some years ago, now it's clear who's master—and that's the King."

"I've met the new Archbishop of St. Andrews," I said, "and I've heard of him in London."

"And nothing to his credit, I suppose," said David, bitterly.

This was true enough. I knew of John Sharp, now the Archbishop of St. Andrews, as a King's man, although at one time he had been a champion of the people, a violent Presbyterian. I knew, for it was common talk, that he had pledged himself to have the Covenant observed, and then, like my own relative, His Grace of Lauderdale, used all his influence to gain favour with the King, and having gained that favour, he had turned his coat very prettily and become a persecutor of the people whom he had once led.

I believed him to be a weak and wilful man, more than an utterly base or vile one. But I could understand that his name must be loathed by all the Scotch Covenanters. And remembering Richard Cameron as he had stood in my shadowed room the night before, I felt that I would not care to be detested by these Scots fanatics.

But what had any of it to do with me? I was a stranger in a strange house, groping my way, as it seemed, through manifold confusion.

"I'll wait till Sir Donald returns," said I, trying to preserve my dignity, "to find out from him what my duties are."

"You'll make yourself useful and agreeable," said Madam Jannot, coming still closer to me and turning on me those eyes so oddly golden.

I looked keenly at her to try to discover the trick of this. Why should her orbs appear like liquid yellow fire?

"She's trying to enchant you," said David from the couch. "They should not have sent one who was young and comely, but one who was a cripple, like me. That's what I wanted—a wise young man who was lame in body."

Seeing his passion roused at the wiles of the wanton girl, I turned deliberately away from her and sat on my stool by the couch, opening a book at random. I believed I had defeated Jannot and she had left us, but a low meaning laugh warned me of my mistake.

I turned, and there were two of them standing inside the door, Isabelle in a gown of apple-green silk and the blue snood on her bright curls, her lips drawn back from her pretty teeth. They both laughed together, then went out as quietly as mice, dropping the latch into its place behind them.

* * *

In a few days I had come to a clear understanding of the inhabitants of Castle Drum.

There were a great number of these, for the steward, the housekeeper, and many servants lived in the large antique building.

But of these I took little account, they seemed to know their rude duties and to go about them without confusion. But for those of us who sat at the high table, besides Madam Elspeth, her two stepdaughters, and myself, there was an old, thin, yellow man by the name of Doctor Fletcher who acted as physician to David Garrie, who had been described as a warlock by Richard Cameron. It seemed he had been a professor of medicine at St. Andrews University and had left that place to remain in perpetual attendance on the invalid heir of Castle Drum.

He was a quiet man who took little heed of what was going on about him, but was absorbed, as I supposed, in his own studies. He received me civilly and told me that he

had rooms set apart for him in one of the towers that was disused by all save himself. He invited me when I had leisure to come and see his study where he had gathered many curios, for in his youth and mature age he had been a great traveller.

I thought him now something past his prime and even shaken in his wits. His attire was shabby and faded, the ladies treated him with contempt, and I supposed that what the old pastor had said of him was but malice and moonshine.

This Doctor Fletcher, indeed, I took to be a man who had had many adventures and wished, in the shadow of his days, to come upon some peace, and so he had fallen upon these odd quarters in Castle Drum.

The establishment should have contained a pastor and Mr. Richard Cameron had served this turn, but now he had gone, and I, a layman, had taken his place, there was no Christian minister to bless our meat or lead our prayers. These offices I was asked to undertake, and the Bible was taken out of its large walnut-wood box and laid by my place at every meal. I had no difficulty or embarrassment in giving the Latin grace and reading the appointed lessons and prayers for the day, but I was irritated by the little undertones of laughter and whispers that came up from the ladies seated at the board.

Our fare was very rude. I had never noticed before how I relished dainty meat and cakes. But my stomach soon became used to these coarse dishes. Our table service was like the rest of the establishment, in some parts delicate, in others most lacking. If it suited Madam Elspeth to concern herself with these matters we would have pure linen napkins and silver salvers, if she was in a forgetful mood the housekeeper would send up wooden trenchers. Pewter wickets usually served for the candles, and these were commonly of the tallow that I had found in my room on my arrival. When Madam Elspeth was in the humour she would send for some wax candles, kept in her own chamber.

The only other person who sat with us at the high table in the great hall that was adorned by the antlers of great stags that had been killed in the chase by Sir Donald Garrie and his fathers, was a young man whom I took to be a poor dependant, a distant relation of this house as I was a distant relation to the House of Maitland.

I pitied these wretched cadets; well did I know their portion. I had been fortunate in having had an estate from my mother. Fortunate! it had gone too quickly to give me much benefit, and I did not know now when in my exile I looked back upon my brief life of splendour whether indeed I had been blessed by the possession of the substance that had enabled me to see, to envy, and to win Philippa.

This young man was named Evan Garrie, and I did not understand his position in the household. He appeared sullen and withdrawn, the butt for the humours of the ladies, and often, when he visited the sick boy, for the petulance of David. The upper servants seemed to pay him but little respect, the lower servants were slow to do his bidding. Why, I wondered, did he not go for a soldier? There was brisk recruiting going on just then in Scotland, troops for the putting down of the Covenanters were being raised in all the counties, and this Captain John Graham, who had promised Castle Drum a visit, was, I knew, very earnest in the service of His Majesty.

But young Evan Garrie passed an idle life in the Castle Drum, keeping himself much withdrawn. He was comely, tall, and fair-haired, but with dark eyes, his cheeks were hollowed and gaunt, and he had a forlorn look, like a lonely young animal. I pitied him, yet disdained him too. He had poor clothes on his back, no money in his pockets, yet remained here without endeavouring to go and seek his fortune in the world.

And then I thought of my own case, of how pitiful an object of compassion I should be for any observer. Here was I, nearly as young as Evan, stronger and more experienced, with more boldness and confidence in my place, and

yet I, too, remained in this outlandish place of exile and made no effort to ward off my fate.

But I promised myself that I was but gathering strength, and that when the time came I would strike, a bold stroke, many bold strokes if need be, to gain once more what I valued. To gain what I loved? I asked myself that question, too, but I had an inner hope that if I remained away from England long enough I should cease to desire Philippa.

I was alarmed and a little dismayed to find that after but a short space of time I had fallen into the routine of this strange household.

That my presence was resented, I could not avoid knowing. Everyone kept themselves—him or herself, secret and apart. Even the boy who had so ardently desired my companionship—and who had, as I learned, pestered his father until he sent to England for some ruined gentleman, of good family and fair education, to beguile his wretched leisure—even the boy, I knew, had his secrets from me, his deep reserve.

The women soon ceased to torment me. I seldom saw them; even at the meals they would sometimes be absent and there would be but the three of us—Doctor Fletcher, myself, and Evan, the gaunt-faced, silent youth.

If I had been told during my London days that this was the prospect ahead of me, I should have said that it was intolerable, that I would sooner slit my throat or jump into the Thames than support such an existence, but here I was enduring it, with my senses, I suppose, and my emotions dulled, my own vanity clouding every prospect for me, until at times I almost welcomed this rude solitude that gave me so much leisure to brood upon my own tragedy.

Captain Graham's visit was postponed. He had taken his troop of horse in another direction, but he promised, appearing to be a good friend of the Garries, to honour Castle Drum with his presence shortly.

I had seen this man on one of his visits to London and

been impressed by his tranquil, almost feminine beauty. I had spoken to him, for we were much of an age and in much of a position, save that his estate was larger than mine and he had not been such a fool as to lose it. He had been trying to obtain the hand of a young heiress and had lost that and the fortune and the title that went with it, and there was a gloom over his comeliness when I had met him and spoken to him, we having a fair acquaintanceship, in one of the rooms at St. James's Palace.

He had seen service in Holland but had left that because the war was over and promotion hard to find, and returned to London with letters of recommendation from the Stadtholder to the Duke of York.

In order to distract myself from my own businesses I had asked Captain Graham what he had intended to do, and he had told me that he thought the best thing would be to ask permission to raise a troop to put down the troubles in Scotland. It was from him I had learnt the little I knew about the Covenanters. This was before my own ruin, and I had no thought that I should find myself in Scotland so soon.

I had asked him idly, looking at the painted ceiling on which fleshly goddesses were reclining in the midst of curdled clouds white as a goose's plumage :

" What do you mean, Captain Graham, the best thing ? "

" For glory," said he, briefly, and turned on his heel.

And the words rang in my mind—" For Glory ! "

I had repeated them to Mr. Penn, who had asked me to a conference at his house soon afterwards. He did not know my exact position and thought that I might be able to help him with money towards the enterprise he had in hand of founding a new world in America.

" Glory," said he, " there's but one glory—and that is serving the Lord and through Him mankind."

" That's not the glory John Graham means," I replied, and Mr. Penn in his eager way broke into my words and

said it was not the glory that any worldly man meant, but the only one that was fit for an honest creature to pursue.

I had amused myself amid my own miseries and wretchednesses, and during those days when I was parted from Philippa by pondering on this term, the glory that Captain Graham desired, the glory that Mr. Penn desired, the glory that I might hope to gain myself.

John Graham was a man of battle, he had no thought but war, no hope but war ; he wanted titles, ribbons, stars, a great name, power. I believed he might gain all these for he was an experienced soldier and a man of a passionate enthusiasm and a harsh loyalty. Yes, it would be more likely that Captain Graham would gain his desire than that Mr. Penn would gain his. There might be glory in founding a city of brotherly love, but what man would earn it ?

And so I mused in these dark stone rooms where it seemed I was to meet Captain Graham again and ask him how far he had got in his pursuit of glory, the glory he hoped to achieve by quieting the Lowlands of Scotland.

I soon learnt how quickly the summer was over in the North. The purple heatherbell seemed to fade overnight to the colour of dried blood, and there were no flowers left but the thistles and their crimson crowns had changed to white. The landscape was richly coloured by the scarlet berries of the mountain ash, and the dark tawny gold of the fern that was like the colour of Jannot's and Isabelle's locks.

It was cold at nights, and I was glad when David Garrie began to shiver and to order fires to be lit in the great stone hearth in the room where we worked. The stone walls were chilly and the damp crept up at night, and I could understand how a man caught an ague here.

* * *

In fine rain and cold air I was walking one afternoon about the moors that were still so alien to me when Evan Garrie begged my company.

I supposed that he wished to confide in me some troubles

that I believed would be puerile and trivial compared to my own, but I was prepared, though with a cynic air, to listen to them.

We walked for a while across the moors and the strangeness of the landscape grew upon me and seemed to encompass me like a spell. As I looked back upon the Castle it appeared to be a shell upon the distant light sky, a dark and massive outline belonging to older and ruder days, though in the west wing there had been improvement and some of the latter Garries had attempted an air of southern comfort and civilization.

The line of the ruined chapel, too, stood out dark against the yellow twilight, and I asked my companion why the lords of Castle Drum had never roofed over this sacred place and tried to protect it from the mist and rain of heaven.

He replied, sullenly enough, that there was a chapel inside the Castle where services had been conducted, that the Garries were strange folk and spent their money on their own vices and their errant whims, and but little on the sanctification or beautifying of their dwelling.

" I suppose," cried he, as we strolled farther and farther across the darkening moors, " you wonder at me, a lusty youth, wasting my time in these solitudes ? "

" Wonder ? " I replied, in a mood as sombre as his own. ' Sir, I wonder at nothing. No doubt you have had your marvels at my residing here ? "

' " I thought you," said he, shortly, " a man apart, a man of estate, fortune, and person who might have done better than play the tutor to a sick lad in Castle Drum."

I was silent in some anger. I did not care to be read so well by a youth whom I had despised. And then Evan Garrie was to me an object of compassion, therefore I did not care to be an object of compassion to him.

But he relieved me of further vexation by saying simply and yet with a boldness that pleased me :

" It may be you have guessed my misery, my story. I love to desperation Jannot Garrie."

I had not guessed this, and swiftly I tried to put the two people together in my mind—the girl with her golden eyes and her gay frocks and her insolent, rude ways, and the gaunt, withdrawn lad. I had not seen much of either of them, yet I felt a pang that displeased me, for it was a sharp pinch and I believed it might be of jealousy. Yet what concern had I in the violent loves of Jannot Garrie and Evan Garrie, the poor, despised dependant, as I took it, of Castle Drum?

"I do not know why you confide your secret to me," said I, sullenly. "I am an Englishman, or like to think myself as such, although I am a cadet of the House of Maitland. And I have come here to escape tragedies of my own, and I do not care to see another's tragedies clouding over me like so many wings."

"What tragedies are there," asked he, walking quickly to keep pace with my strides, "besides that that I have confessed to you—my love for Jannot Garrie?"

"You repeat those words as if you were proud of them," said I, "but the girl——"

"Say nothing of her," said he in a warning tone, "not that I am squeamish as to her reputation, but be careful, for there are ears in the winds and eyes in the trees. Jannot Garrie is a witch."

I laughed in his face for my blood was not so warm as it had been a few moments before. I remembered what Richard Cameron had said to me in the shadows of my chamber, I remembered many strange looks and broken whispers while I had been in Castle Drum. I remembered the words I had heard the girl say the first night I arrived at the dark castle when she had stood at the head of the stairs trying to tear the yellow dress from the shoulders of her stepmother.

"All the women are witches," said Evan Garrie in a lower tone, "but that does not prevent one loving Jannot, does it? She may be Satan's darling——"

"Hush," said I, "I have gone some way in these matters

and have studied the supernatural science. I hope, if God gives me grace, to see and face a phantom. I hope to investigate those regions which lie between Heaven and Earth and Hell. But I will not listen, Evan Garrie, to your babblings of these ladies."

"Ladies!" said he, and the word rang trivial and hollow across the moors. "The ladies of Castle Drum!"

"And who are you," said I, stopping, and turning round and taking him by the shoulders, "to speak so of the women of Sir Donald Garrie who gives you house-room and food, and maybe a fee to put in your pocket?"

"I am his cousin's son," said he. "I was a student and did well in my work and I thought to make my livelihood and maybe my fame in medicine, loathing war."

"You should belong," said I, "to the sect that Mr. William Penn commands. Let me give you a letter of recommendation to him in London. Do not remain, poor lad, in this wilderness."

He said passionately, leaning towards me in the waning light:

"What matter of any of this, I am telling you, since I must tell someone—or must I talk to the bandogs and the owls?—of my love for Jannot Garrie. Have you," he added in a lower tone, "ever seen such golden eyes? Even if they be a gift of hell one must admire them."

"You talk," said I, "like a weakling. Be careful what you say, remember that the witch hunt is up in Scotland. They burn women who suffer under this accusation."

"Why," said he, in a voice that made me doubt if he was in his wits, "I would rather see Jannot Garrie in the flames than belonging to another man."

"Do you think," I cried, "to warn me? I have no love towards any of these women, neither Madam Elspeth nor her two stepdaughters."

"You are a strange fellow," said he, "I do not know why I am minded to tell this secret to you. But I must speak to someone, and events seem moving fast. We have

been chained long in silence and solitude here in Castle Drum. Soon Captain Graham is coming. They are scouring the Lowlanders for these Conventicles, and Richard Cameron has roused his people against the soldiers. Soon there will be blood across the moon."

"Listen to me," said I, turning and seizing the young man by the shoulder. "You seem a gentleman, one who might be strong in mind and body. Listen, then! You say this girl is a witch—leave her, go out into the world and either with gown or sword make your way. You will meet other women as fair. . . ."

"Not," said he, interrupting stubbornly, "as fair as Jannot Garrie."

"What of Isabelle?" said I, for it was she whom I had noticed most, though Jannot had done her best to bring herself before my eyes.

"Isabelle is a witch, too," said he, "and Elspeth. All three are witches. Have you not learned as much while you have lived in Castle Drum?"

"Quick," said I, "walk further away from the Castle. It seems to me as if invisible spies are about us, carrying what we say on the winds."

He looked back at the Castle and now in that dark outline were streaks of light where the windows were. I imagined the women within. They had their own chambers to which I had never been invited, but I could believe that I knew how they sat there with a great fire burning, one with a tapestry frame, and one with perhaps a spinning-wheel, and another with a book. None of them could read, as I supposed, but she might be turning the pages. It would be a book bound in brass and she would be looking at the pictures. And all of them would be silent, save now and then a low laugh would pass between them.

And Doctor Fletcher would be sitting in the next room, drowsing in his stool beside the bed of the sick boy. And the tallow candles would flare up and flare down.

And in the kitchens the servants would be singing their

rude ballads while the harpist pulled the few strings of his ancient instrument.

And there were we, two wind-blown figures—for the night breeze was rising to a gale—out on the lonely moor, the saffron streaks of the sunlight as the sun set becoming dimmer and dimmer beyond the reaches of the purple hills. It was solitary, it was chill, it was an evening which makes a man long to turn to his home, to creep into his bed, whether it be straw or down, to lay his face on the pillows and to dream.

I looked at the youth beside me and I felt a certain companionship towards him, a certain sympathy and compassion. I took him by his shoulders and I shook him, for I was much the stronger man, though not by many years the older, and I cried out :

" What would you have me do and why do you tell me you have this passion for Jannot Garrie ? If she be a witch, as you say she is, what am I to do ? Denounce her to these fierce saints whom Captain Graham is sent to suppress ? "

" Listen," said he. I could no longer see his face for he was but a dark shape before me in the gathering darkness, and the clouds flew low over the moor and that saffron light on the horizon was soon eclipsed never to be seen again. " I love a witch, and if I am damned for that, damned I must be. She goes now and then to dance in the ruined Chapel of Saint Anne, where her ancestors lie buried upright in the vaults, some in their shrouds and some in their armour. And you have come, a stranger from the South, and I have wondered if you could help me ! "

" How could I help," said I, and my voice fell to a whisper, " a man who loves a witch ? "

" They are true," said he, sullenly, " to their gods as the saints are true to Christ."

I had been, as I said, a sceptic in my thoughts, but this name spoken now in this place made me shudder, and I

had a mind to fall on my knees and call out for mercy to some unknown God.

"I, too, have loved," I said, in an excess of weakness for which I despised myself though which I had not foreseen. "I loved a woman named Philippa in London. She was another man's wife. And yet we loved, and that seemed to make no difference. And I gambled that I might have more money to spend on gauds for her. And so I lost my estate. And then she played me false and doubly false. Well, no need to tell that tale now."

"I guessed," said he, in an avid tone, "that some such story was behind your coming to some such place as Castle Drum. But when you have seen Jannot, Isabelle, and Elspeth, have you not forgotten Philippa?"

I was silent; the night winds blew across my face and I was grateful for the chill across my brow for my blood was running as hot as a man in a fever. Philippa? She had become moon-pale in my mind, and the three women, the ladies of Castle Drum, were like the suns of fairy-tale.

When I had first come there as a despised stranger, Jannot in her scarlet silk that was fine and fluttering like a brown flame, had seemed to take some notice of me and even deigned to lure me to her side. But now many weeks had passed and she had not looked in my direction.

"Let us go home," said I, "for it is chill and I think a storm blows up. And what good do we do, discussing the ladies of Castle Drum on these lonely moors?"

"Look," said he, "how the lights of the Castle burn up!"

And I turned and gazed over my shoulder, and there seemed to be a light in every window.

"Sometimes they do that—make festival and merriment!"

"And that sick boy?" said I, and I turned again and shook the stupid youth by the shoulder. "When does Sir Donald Garrie come home?"

"Soon, I hope," replied Evan Garrie. And then he

began to talk of worldly matters, of Archbishop Sharp, of the dastardly part he had played, of the rage he had roused in the breasts of the Covenanters. "I know a good deal," said the youth, slyly. "I have listened to Richard Cameron talking, I have been with him to the meetings he has held on the moors. And yet at the last minute I drew back, not wishing to be involved in what was dangerous——"

"Hush!" said I. "These things seem nothing in London, but here they have a great importance."

What did I mean by that? I did not know. I was shocked by the significance of my own words. Was I, who had come from the great worlds of London and of Paris, thus far drawn into these rustic politics?

I turned sharply away from the youth and made my own way back across the darkening moors towards Castle Drum.

When I reached this, the lights in all the windows were extinguished, and when I entered the great hall there was no one there. And when I went up the stairs they were lonely, and my own room was empty and the fire sinking into embers on the hearth.

* * *

David Garrie had ceased to importune me as to my knowledge of witches. I saw that he kept to his own advice and brooded much upon these matters that I thought dangerous for one in his state of health. And I penned a letter to his father, still staying with Dr. Sharp at St. Andrews, saying that I had taken up my position and that I found the lad sickly and difficult, and that I thought that he should have a pastor in his house and a physician who was more modern in his ideas than Doctor Fletcher, who, though no doubt a worthy man, spent too much time in his laboratory in the tower.

But there came no answer to this epistle and I began to be indifferent as to the health of David Garrie. For I was much absorbed in watching the three ladies after what Evan

Garrie had told me. He had become withdrawn and sullen again after his brief confidence on the moors and seemed to avoid me in the long passages and dark rooms of the Castle.

The autumn was drawing in, the nights were long and the days brief, and I became, as I suppose now looking back, somewhat clouded in my intellect. This world was so different from any world I had ever known before, these thoughts that came into my mind were so different from any thoughts that had ever impinged upon my consciousness before, the outside world of politics—the world in which Philippa moved—appeared with every day to recede farther away.

Captain Graham visited us one evening, unexpectedly clattering up through the dusk into the courtyard with his troop of sixty horse. The place was large enough to accommodate all of them and he sat at our board that evening.

I marked him curiously. A long time seemed to have elapsed since I had spoken to him in the corridors of St. James's. But he acknowledged me courteously, and I saw that he was still practical in his mind.

" What of glory now, Captain Graham ? " said I, leaning across the table and looking into his beautiful face in the light of the wax candles that Madam Elspeth had brought forth in his honour.

" Glory ? " said he lightly. " I do my duty." And I saw a curve in his perfect lips and a light in his melancholy eyes that proved he was a man doing the work he liked.

Then Evan Garrie began to question him and he briefly, as a man who would not obtrude his business on the society of gentlefolk, described how he was keeping Dumfries and Wigtown quiet and clearing out of them those rebels the Covenanters.

" Have you met," I asked, " one Richard Cameron, who was tutor in this house before he was turned adrift for his fanaticism ? "

" Richard Cameron ? Why, he has such influence over these Covenanters that they term themselves Cameronians

in his honour. Black Cameronian Saints," said Captain Graham, and broke his bread into pellets and idly pushed it about on the cloth that Madam Elspeth had laid in his honour—for often enough we sat down at bare boards.

I looked at him as he sat there in his beauty, for his comeliness was extraordinary, the curls falling either side of his melancholy face and giving him an aspect delicate beyond that of most men. And I wondered if I should resign my foolish post with this sick boy and offer to join his troop and ride with him across the moors, spying out these Covenanters who were no better than rebels to His Majesty.

But he broke the train of my thought by turning to Madam Jannot and saying :

" These Covenanters have a sharp nose for a witch."

At that she stared at him, and I gazed, too, from one to another in the light of the wax candles : it was a softer glow than we were used to at that rough board.

Then Madam Elspeth rose ; she wore the yellow satin dress that had been the matter of dispute the first day I had entered Castle Drum. And she took up the branch of candles in her hand and cried out in a high, rich voice :

" Captain Graham, I will light you to your room. We will have no talk of witches, nor of Cameronian saints. We are all loyal subjects."

He rose and bowed, not much moved, I think, by her high talk, but he looked at me curiously, then at the two other girls who stood by their places at the table—Jannot in her scarlet and Isabelle in her green silk. These were their festival gowns, I had learnt, and the only silk garments in the Castle ; the only satin one that was really rich and fine was that worn by Madam Elspeth at the head of the table.

Before he left Castle Drum John Graham sent for me and I was pleased to wait upon him. Not only was he a link with those old days, but he was both a man I respected and liked. Yet I could not forbear saying to him :

"I suppose, sir, that you have heard of my misfortune, how I was ruined, both in love and fortune, and have come here to this strange position in Castle Drum."

"I listen to nothing against my friends and acquaintances," replied he with his grand air. "Mr. Maitland, if you are weary of a pedagogue's work, why do you not ride with me?"

I could not answer him, and he, always a well-bred man, did not press me, but allowed me to demand a question of him:

"Why, sir, did you ask to see me?"

"I find myself," replied John Graham, "in a place where there are not many men of your breeding. I speak to you as one who has a wider experience than your fellows here in Castle Drum."

"What concerns you, Captain Graham, in Castle Drum, or those who live here?"

"Sir Donald Garrie," he replied, "was my father's friend. And I like you, Mr. Maitland."

He paused, with his cool air, but I never could suppose that he was at a loss for what to say. I knew that he was about to warn me, and I stiffened, as obstinate men will, resenting the advice of those even whom they know to be their well-wishers.

"I wonder, Mr. Maitland, whether you understand Scotland? I have one task—I serve the King. I am here to quiet the Lowlands, I am here to rout out those people who term themselves Covenanters, who are rebels, and in some cases, murderers. Listen, Maitland, these people believe in supernatural agencies, in witchcraft and enchantment. They believe that from my poor buff coat bullets will rain off like harmless hail."

I looked into his beautiful face earnestly as he spoke. I wondered if he was leading me to the subject of Jannot Garrie.

"This is in many parts a wild country. They believe that Doctor Sharp, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, is a

warlock who leads, like I am supposed to lead, and General Dalzell and others, an enchanted life."

"What do these rude superstitions and beliefs matter to me?" said I.

"You are in the midst of them," replied John Graham coolly. "You are, in a fashion, in a strange position. I suppose you know," he said, rising and flicking a speck of dust invisible to me from his neat embroidered cuff, "that the three ladies of Castle Drum are reputed to be witches? If you have any influence over them, as an educated man and an Englishman, tell them to be careful."

He looked at me keenly as he spoke and I knew not what to make of his words.

"I have no influence over them," I replied at random. "And of what should I tell them to be careful?"

"The law," said Captain Graham, sharply. And I laughed loudly to cover my uneasiness.

"Then saints, the servants of God, and witches, the servants of the Devil, are alike persecuted in Scotland?"

"Take it as you will," replied John Graham. "I have spoken, and, as I hope, to a man of sense."

The next morning he was gone, and the place seemed lonely without him. He was too fine a gentleman for Castle Drum, and I believed him to be hard and cruel in his pursuit of glory, yet I missed his elegance and the darkness and harshness of my exile seemed intensified.

It was Jannot who found me moping by the fire and mocked me for my gloom.

"Why did you not ride with John Graham of Claverhouse?" she said. "You would have made a bold dragoon to hunt down the whining saints upon the moss-side."

I looked up at her and said, as I had not meant to say:

"I suppose you know that Evan Garrie loves you? Why do you keep him in torment?"

She appeared pleased at this, her eyes glittered like those of a cat in the dark. She moved towards me, fingering the thin silk of that scarlet gown.

"Put on," said I, "more womanly attire, nor flaunt in this silly finery."

"You'd like to see me in linsey-woolsey, then?" she asked. "Well, I'll wear it if it pleases you."

She sank down beside me on the settle by the fire and took my hand in hers—so much boldness she had not shown before.

"How do you know," she said very softly under her breath, "that Evan Garrie loves me?"

I was not minded to betray the boy's confidence, so I answered brusquely:

"When a wanton woman and a silly lad get together it's easy for her to have her way."

She laughed at that, throwing back her head and showing her sharp white teeth and shaking from her brow the thick, red-gold curls.

"Will you come to the old chapel to-night?" she, whispered. "Will you come and see us hold our revels?"

"John Graham warned me," I began.

She laughed louder and put her small hand, delicate in shape though roughened by work, before my mouth. Then I did what she had intended I should do, I took her into my arms and kissed her. She laughed the louder still, and shrilly, until I put her from me, disgusted at myself.

I went from her and returned to my place by the sick boy. But he would have nothing from me that evening, being absorbed with Doctor Fletcher, who had brought him some new medicine to assuage the pains that attacked him lately.

And, indeed, I was averse from that air, infected and foul as it seemed to me, of the sick chamber where the atmosphere was full of the acrid odour of drugs.

The lean face of the doctor and the thin face of the patient were close together on the bed, which I saw already in my mind plumed and draped in black and silver for the last scene of all.

I had not grown to love David Garrie and I much

regretted the long delay that his father made in the North. For I wished to make to my employer a report of the boy, who was, although learned, wise and clever in his own way, idle and wilful even beyond what the state of his health justified.

So I was glad to go up to my own room and look at my own books and the purple cloak that glowed so bravely over the bed. Even in Castle Drum I might claim this place as my own.

But not for long, it seemed. There was a scratch at the door.

I did not reply. I knew that my peace would be invaded, although I never said a word.

The latch was lifted and Jannot entered. Into the gloom lit by two tallow dips she came, holding aloft a branch of silver candlesticks ; in every socket was a white wax candle.

She did not wear the scarlet silk dress that I had spoken of so mockingly but a plain smock of linsey-woolsey and over her head a hood of the same dark-grey colour.

" I am going abroad," said she, holding her candlestick aloft and at the same time dropping a slight and mocking curtsey, " on an errand of mercy. Will you please accompany me across the moors ? "

" Going out ! " cried I. " At this hour of the night ? "

" Ay," said she, " and with witches and warlocks and Claverhouse's dragoons and ranting saints abroad. And therefore I have come to you, my bold and bonny gentleman, to give me your protection."

I did not like the look in her golden eyes nor the curl on her red mouth that I had kissed not long ago. But I could not refuse her challenge. I had held her in my arms and then escaped her, and she had followed me here to what I thought a sanctuary. But why should I be afraid of Jannot Garrie ?

" Bring your bonny purple cloak," said she, eyeing the garment on the bed.

" What use is that," said I, " going over the moors in the

dark? And what's your errand of mercy, Madam Jannot? Since I've been in Scotland," I added with a sideways look, "I've learnt that Jannot is the commonest name for a witch."

"One might be a worse creature than a witch or a warlock," said she, "one might be a puling fool."

This I felt intended for me, and I stood still for a moment to steady myself and turned to look at myself in the mirror that I had brought with me. There was none provided in this grim place, but in my dressing-case—the last remnant of my former fortunes—was a mirror, and this I had hung by the handle to the wall. In it now I looked at myself, to reassure my failing confidence that I had some grace of manhood, some breadth of shoulder and strength of limb.

I was glad that she had asked me, although I knew she was lying. There was no errand of mercy she was going on, but some dark business. And I was glad for the threat of adventure to be away from these dark, gloomy walls, where nothing happened and yet where there were always whispers in corners and sighs on the corridors, and soft footsteps going to and fro from room to room. And a sick boy with his brooding and his queasy fancies, and an old man shut away with his great books in a tower. And Madam Elspeth with her frowns and her tantrums, and Isabelle, soft-footed as a mouse.

To torment and taunt her I turned and said:

"I owe my duty to your father, madam, and not to you."

"Oh," said she, dropping another curtsey, and I saw the wax run down the candles she carried as they shivered with her motion, "I speak to you, fair sir, as a lady to a gentleman, not as an employer to a dependant."

I ignored the sneer she had made about the rich cloak I had cast on the bed and took that of plain dark cloth I usually wore from its hook on the wall. I pulled my leaf hat over my brows and set my pistol in my belt and I was ready to follow her.

We went downstairs, lit by the silver candlesticks that her fantastic whim had brought into my chamber. And there in the lower room she quenched that, candle by candle, and brought out from under her cloak a dark lantern. This she gave to me to carry.

And so we set out from Castle Drum into the windy night. As soon as the darkness was round us like a garment she drew close beside me and I put my arm round her.

And so together under guidance we turned into the night, and the wind was soft on my face and lifted my hair from my brow, and for the first time since I had left England I forgot Philippa.

It was towards the chapel we turned, and that was lit up, by the light as I supposed of torches. There was a flickering and a fitful gleam through the unglazed windows and a glow rose from the roofless building that faintly stained the darkness of the sky.

Jannot pressed close to me, I felt my blood flow freely and my brain act quickly, as my blood had not flowed and my brain had not acted when I first came to Castle Drum. Nay, since I had last seen Philippa in London.

I declined, despite the mockery of Jannot, intended, I believe, to lure and challenge me into a confusion and bewilderment of mind and senses, nor despite the stern alarm of Evan Garrie, to believe that there were satanic revels in the ruins of the old church, though I credited that of the millions of spirits and phantoms that walked the earth some of them are occasionally made visible. I knew, too, something of human credulity and ignorance, and this was a wild part of the country in which both might well flourish.

I spoke of the matter to Doctor Fletcher, trying by blunt words to call him from his abstruse studies.

"What are you trying to discover, Doctor Fletcher," I asked, "in that tower room of yours? You have promised me a sight of it."

"What interest have you in such things?" said he,

lifting his lips back from his shrunken gums in a way he had that gave him the look of an old, tired animal.

" I like a scene full of action," I replied, " but ever the things of the mind and spirit have haunted and tormented me."

And then I told him something of the tales that had been chattered to me by Jannot, and told me with a groan by Evan Garrie. And I added, to test him, that I had seen lights in the chapel as I was coming home over the moors at night.

" Well," he replied, muttering, " that might be some old man at his need, burning turf or charcoal. What do I know ? "

I pulled at his gown as he was turning away.

" You must know something. Have these women an evil reputation beyond their own acres ? Why does Sir Donald Garrie stay so long away in St. Andrews ? And is it true that the Presbyterian saints think Dr. Sharp, the Archbishop, is a warlock ? "

He stared at me with his weak, blinking eyes like an owl suddenly forced into the daylight.

" Why did you come here, Mr. Maitland ? " he counter-questioned.

" I do not know," replied I, frankly. Then making a shot at random I suggested : " Perhaps Sir Donald thought that his son required some protection in a house full of witches and a saint."

At this Doctor Fletcher suddenly laughed, throwing back his head and cackling, so that I could see the muscles moving in his thin throat beneath his ragged beard. I abhorred the old man, having all lusty youth's loathing for the aged, with their reminders of the grave.

" Perhaps you're right, Mr. Maitland," he said, " perhaps you're right. Any time, when you have the leisure, you may come to my room in the tower. I have a small laboratory there, some retorts and limbecks."

" Well, chemistry is fashionable enough in London. It

is practised by the King and Prince Rupert," said I. "But what can you hope to discover here, so far from all centres of learning?"

I felt a wave of impatience and detestation for the foul place. Why had I come here? I must have been a desperate man to trust myself in so unlikely a place. An exile!

"I'll get me another employment," I cried. "I'm not fitted to be a pedagogue."

I turned away from the old man in the windy corridor to find myself face to face with Isabelle. How light of foot she was! It must have been practice that enabled her to move about the place without making a sound. She did not creep or seem to be sly in her walk, which indeed was rather bold and upright, but she had learned the fashion of moving as if she scarcely touched the ground. If I had been a Papist I should have made the sign of the Cross when Isabelle Garrie appeared before me.

I think she enjoyed the confusion I could not altogether control. But she pulled at my sleeve and asked if Doctor Fletcher had been talking of witches.

"There's too much talk of witches in Castle Drum," I replied. "The magistrate's not far away, and Presbyterians who have a keen nose for the Devil. I should be careful, my lady, how you make these childish boasts."

"If we were witches," she replied, "there'd be nothing we need fear."

"That's foolishly spoken," I said. "You know well enough, madam, that however witches may vaunt and boast, the day comes when they find themselves in the cutting-stool or at the stake."

"Well," said she, "I could show you some tricks, were you not so slow and stupid. For what do you think three women do, in a place like Castle Drum, alone with an old imbecile man and a boy who never leaves his couch?"

"Why," asked I, "is Sir Donald Garrie so often away, and for so long?"

"Not so often away," she replied. "My father is here,

year in, year out. As it chances now he has gone to St. Andrews. He is afraid, I think, of the Presbyterians since we turned off Richard Cameron."

"Afraid, perhaps, I hear, that Mr. Cameron will denounce you as witches, eh? And what were the tricks that you could show me, madam?"

I disdained myself for giving her this encouragement, but the truth was I was restless and weary in my spirit, I was glad of anything to distract me. I did not intend to stay in Castle Drum; I had been there a month and felt as if I had crept into my grave. Those sunny skies, bare of cloud and revealing an infinite distance were to me like the leaden lid of a coffin.

Isabelle took me by the hand, led me into the large room that they termed their bower. It would have been, I suppose, in an English gentlewoman's house, the great parlour or music chamber. And Elspeth Garrie, who had lived some while in Edinburgh, had tried to give the gaunt apartment a modish air. Two of the walls were bare, but two were covered by French tapestries, there were some handsome chairs of velvet fringe, and the one window was hung with velvet also, although this was rubbed smooth in places.

There was even, and this luxury did not show in any other room in Castle Drum, a strip of Persian carpet in front of the great hearthstone. And by the door stood a cabinet, very finely made in ebony set with ivory.

Isabelle opened a drawer in this at once and with hasty movements, as if she feared to lose my attention and interest, she drew out a large slab of jet and laid it on the palm of her small white hand. White, do I say! Ay, it was white enough now, for since my first coming to Castle Drum she must have ceased rude work and used some unguent, for her skin was no longer rough and chafed but almost as fine as a London lady's.

"What trick are you going to show me with that black stone?" said I.

She looked up at me straightly, I wondered if she was more fair than Jannot. She was smaller, her hair the same colour, her eyes not quite so golden and so bright. She had her one silk gown on, she always wore it now and would, I think, until it was in tatters.

She breathed on the slab of jet, then rubbed it lightly with the palm of her other hand and bade me look into it.

"Take it in your own hand," said she, "and look into it long and tell me what you see. Do not be hasty, for first everything will be blank."

Glad of this amusement, I took the slab of jet into the window-place where there was a stool, and seated myself comfortably and took the slab in my palm, resting it on my knee, and gazed into it.

First I tried to clear my mind of all floating fancies and random thoughts. Then Isabelle was suddenly beside me in her startling silent manner; she rested her hand on my shoulder, and I thought: 'If she is possessed of magic powers, in this moment no doubt she will bewitch me. But I'll get away from the ladies of Castle Drum.'

I leaned forward over the slab of jet; I remember my hair fell down and touched my hand, for I wore no periwig in Scotland. Then, as will happen when one gazes long and intently at one object, I became drowsy in my senses, and the slab of jet, in which at first I had seen nothing, seemed to cloud over into a stirring curdle of opal-coloured mist.

"Take your hand off my shoulder," I muttered to Isabelle, for I believed that her touch was enchanted; but I felt the tips of her small fingers pressed yet more firmly through my cloth coat on to my flesh and bone. I would like to have moved, but I was numb as well as drowsy.

I knew what I hoped to see in the jet, and that was Philippa, seated in the fair England manor-house, with the red roses climbing over the red bricks, the white pillars of the portico, and she with her pale gown standing there with

the fair soft summer breezes blowing upon her, her fingers folded gracefully one upon the other, brilliant rings of ruby gleaming there.

But I saw nothing of this. The curdling clouds parted to show a gloomy scene.

" No need," I murmured, struggling to speak ironically, despite my drowsiness, " to look into the jet to see this desolate landscape. There's enough of it abroad round Castle Drum."

I thought I heard Isabelle whisper in my ear, but her voice was no longer mocking, but keen and anxious. " What do you see ? " I thought she said. " What do you see ? "

Over the moors came a coach with four horses, there were outriders, all outlined in black against a fading light, as I had seen Castle Drum and the chapel outlined against the saffron twilight not long ago. They were coming as quickly as they might along a rough road. Then a shot sounded deeply in my ears, the coachman pulled up the leaders, who reared back on the wheelers. And an old man put his head out of the coach. Then I saw that from behind some bushes of gorses or wind had come several figures of armed men, and they fired at the old man, who tumbled out on the step of the coach. There was a dismal shriek from a woman and a lady in a tawny-coloured travelling cloak came out of the carriage and fell on her knees beside the old man.

I could see her face distinctly, although it was distorted by terror. She was young and fresh, I noted her cloak of tawny-coloured cloth with a lining of sage-green.

The whole thing was over me like a horror. I tried to rise and twist as one does in the grip of a hideous dream. I heard Isabelle whisper close through my hair into my ears : " Why do you groan ? What do you see ? Tell me ! "

They were all shadows, darkened and fused, but I could see they were beating the old man to death and that the girl was on her knees, screaming for mercy. There were dead men lying on the ground.

Then the whole of the square of jet fused with a dark colour of flowing blood.

And I shuddered so strongly that I broke the bonds of the enchantment. The slab of jet fell out of my shaking hands, and I heard it tinkle on the floor and the dull room was about me again. Isabelle was resting on my shoulder, looking at me with her yellow eyes.

"Did you see anything?" she asked. And I had no mind to tell her what I had seen, for I resolved in that moment to get clear of Castle Drum and if possible, out of pure compassion, to take with me Evan Garrie.

Isabelle was angry with me because I would not tell her what I had seen in the slab of jet, and I do not know what induced me to keep my own counsel so closely. I believe she had put me on this as a test or trial, to see if I had the gift of second sight, as they termed it. It may be that because I was new to these tricks I had certain powers she did not possess herself, but I was not versed in the gallimaufry of the doubtful arts.

The twilight was coming about her while she disputed with me, and I stood sullen. My head was aching from the horror of what I had seen. I was used to violence, and had fought my *duello* and killed my man in my time when I had been in Flanders, but there had been a dread about this lonely murder of the old man in the sight of his daughter that had horrified me. And yet it was but a play of shade, and they were strangers to me, both the man who was dragged from the coach, and his daughter, as I took the young woman to be.

So I tried to put it out of my mind and left Isabelle brusquely, and went to meet Evan Garrie.

I found him with David, my charge, who was much petulant because he had been left so long.

"Did you not come to the Castle Drum to look after me?" he cried, and showed me a fair translation of one of Ovid's tales he had made, neatly written out on expensive vellum and tied with purple strings.

I had not then the heart to tell the boy that I was about to leave this employment, and, indeed, prudence told me that I had better bide where I was until I knew of a better place.

So I soothed the young man and lit his candles for him and called up his servants to arrange his bed, spent half an hour listening to his translation and correcting it here and there with the aid of Mr. Golding's book that I had by me. And all the while Evan Garrie sat by, not interested, but staying there because there was no purpose in his life and he had nothing else to do.

When I could at last leave my charge I took the other young man by the arm and led him away, and gave him roundly my opinion of Castle Drum.

"I will not stake my honour," said I, drily, "that these women practise evil, but I think them wanton and headstrong, and I believe they know some tricks of devilry that would bemuse an honest man's mind."

"I've been here six years," replied he, sternly, "since I was a little lad. And I love Jannot, as I told you, and I'll always love her. If I can be no more than the bandog, I must stay."

"That," said I, "is the foolish talk of impulsive youth. Go abroad and see other women as fair as this young witch——"

He interrupted:

"Witch, did you say?"

"I think she is!"

"Have you been yet to the chapel and caught them at their satanic dances?"

"No," I replied grimly, "nor credit that they hold them. But I think I'll be away from this place, nor wait Sir Donald's return."

"You can't leave David," replied the young man, as if suddenly affrighted. "You can't leave me," he added. He put out his lean hand and gripped my arm firmly. "I think, Tom Maitland, you were sent here for our salva-

tion, and I'm not going to let you go again so easily. It's been worse since Richard Cameron left. You wouldn't notice that; you weren't here before. We had prayers then—twice a day—and a service on Sunday."

"Well, I read the prayers and a grace, too," I said.

"Yes, but you're not a consecrated preacher," said Evan Garrie. "You do what you can, but we need some holy man to sanctify this place. But leave that talk."

"Ay, leave it," I said sternly, "and come away with me. That is what I intend to do—leave Castle Drum and Scotland."

"You've seen nothing of Scotland," said he, and I laughed at his quick and angry defence of his own country.

"I know that," I replied. "I blame my own evil mood and sour fortunes, not the place. Come with me——" And I remembered, I know not why, the beautiful face of Captain Graham and his quiet talk of glory. "Why don't you join Claverhouse's cavalry or come with me?"

"For what end?" asked he.

"For glory!" said I, catching at the word, which came, I know not why, into my mind that had been a little troubled and clouded since I had looked into the wanton Isabelle's slab of jet.

"Glory!" repeated Evan Garrie. He drew his golden brows into a frown. "I read an old book of plays that David has, and there were many curious lines in it that chimed in with my own secret thoughts. And one of them was about glory—it said that glory was like a circle in the water, enlarging until it dissolved itself into naught. Have you noticed that?—you throw a stone into a pool and there's one ring after another until the inmost ring reaches the bank and breaks and is gone."

"Why, what of that?" said I, gloomily. "Each of us has no more than his own life and maybe some fame after death."

"And what matters fame after death?" replied young Evan. "I wish to live my life, and unless I can have Jannot . . ."

I took him by the arm, I remembered Philippa and forgot some of my own aches in compassion for him. He was perhaps no more than five years younger than I, but in experience there seemed a lifetime between us. And still I urged him to get away from Castle Drum.

"What can I do? What can I do?" he said. "Save a trooper, and I've no liking for blood."

He confessed to me that he had a great sympathy with the Covenanters, whom he took to be desperately wronged, that he had hated Captain Graham when he had seen him sitting there at the board with his cool smile and his elegant attire and his talk of the Lowlands.

Mr. William Penn then came into my mind as an agreeable thing, and I spoke of it to young Evan Garrie.

"There is a man," said I, "in London who may be thought extreme in his opinions or fanatic in his enthusiasms. And when I was with him I refused to listen to him, but now I think of him with relish. Yes, in this sombre, cold place I like to amuse myself with those dreams that Mr. William Penn had."

"What dreams were they?" said the young man, rudely. "And what can another man's dreams mean to you or me?"

"Dreams of glory!" said I. I did not think of the glory that William Penn thought was an earthly matter. "He rather thought to please his God and to take many weary world-bitten people out of this old country that is rotten and fretted with vices, and start in the New World another country—a city that he said should be termed of brotherly love."

Evan Garrie did not, as I expected he would, laugh at me. He gazed back at me with serious eyes, and I sensed his youth with compassion, and though I had not thought that I would ever again take such trouble for another human being, yet I felt now inclined to some exertion to save young Evan from Jannot Garrie.

So I spoke to him in soothing terms of Mr. William Penn

and his scheme. I said how the man had suffered for the faith that was in him, had been lodged, vilely and cruelly, in Newgate Gaol, but now that he had a friend or patron in His Royal Highness the Duke of York, the same man who had also been a friend to Captain Graham of Claverhouse, and who held lands in America he might farm out for this godly plan.

"It would be good," admitted young Evan Garrie, "to get away from this country, which is dark and murk. Yes, it seems like that to me—for all the skies are shining and the heather is bright. And there is likely to be a battle here, ay, many battles, for the Presbyterians are massed and armed with guns hidden in towers and thatches, and I learned from Captain Graham that it is the Government's intention to put them down with fire and sword. They are to bring the wild Highlanders upon them, and all are to be murdered who will not take the Oath—the Test, as they call it, which means the denying of the Covenanter."

"Well," said I, "it would be a man's work to join these Presbyters, who seem at least brave and steadfast. Better that than idling in these dreary rooms, allowing a woman to make you fond and silly."

"I think," said he, "I'll take your advice. Although I've no money, somehow I'll get to London and find this Mr. Penn. I'll ask him if he'll take me to his new land over the Atlantic."

I was sorry that I had said so much, for when it came to it the subject was wild and uncertain. And I remembered that Mr. Penn had said that he might not be long in London, that he was going to The Hague. I told this to Evan Garrie, told him to wait awhile until I had written to London and had the news.

At this he turned sullen, as if he had lost faith in me, and I was moved again with compassion as I saw him slouching away. I was vexed with myself that I had taken the burden of another's discontent on my shoulders, already

bowed with my own troubles. What was Evan Garrie to me ? I wished to be free of him, and of Jannot and Isabelle.

* * *

It was the third of these ladies, Madam Elspeth, with whom I had next to deal. She sent for me to the room where Isabelle had shown me the picture in the jet ; my lady was wearing the coveted yellow satin she put on in the evening ; it was a fine gown, scalloped and embroidered with gold bullion. And she had a falling lace collar of the fashion of the last reign, and her hair twisted in curls and done up on the top of her head. For all that, she was not a fine lady or a beautiful woman. She was too thin, and the red on her cheeks served only to show the hollows beneath. She seemed savage and restless, and though young was gaunt and thin. She now began to complain, in a high voice, of my behaviour in Castle Drum, declaring that I was neglecting her stepson.

And I told her roundly that I cared nothing for this employment and that I was soon leaving it. And I said at random that I intended to go to Holland and take my fortune there at the Courts of the Stadtholder. For I had two to recommend me there—John Graham and William Penn.

At this Madam Elspeth became frightened. Clasping her thin hands together tightly she looked at me with her great eyes glowing with some strong emotion, fear I took it to be.

" Don't leave Castle Drum, Mr. Maitland, yet," she implored. " Not, at least, until my husband returns. There's trouble in the country, you can see the signal beacons at night, if you look out."

" I've seen fires burning," said I, interested in anything that showed violent action to be likely in this gloomy country.

" I don't know what's going on," she said. " It's the forbidding Conventicles again—they will meet. They gather together, and preachers go about with armed men.

It is like a rebellion. Dalzell and Claverhouse and others, as you know, are raising troops to put them down. And they'll send more soldiers from England—you have this knowledge better than I. Many of the lairds here support the Whigs, hide and feed the preachers—and the little men get hanged for it."

"And why," said I, "should that make me return to Castle Drum? Why does not your husband return? Even without your husband you have a number of men, as I think, armed," for I had seen that they had an arsenal in one of the lower rooms, where there were numerous, if rude, weapons.

"But I want you to stay, Mr. Maitland," urged Sir Donald Garrie's lady. "You're a gentleman, and these are but wild folk. I can trust you, I hope," she added, in a stormy voice. "If I spoke to you harshly just now, I am sorry for it."

"Why, so you should be if you're to ask a service of me," said I. I did not feel obliged even to be courteous towards her, she had treated me from the first harshly, and I much mistrusted both her and her stepdaughters.

"I must confide in you," she admitted. "I have those two girls, Jannot and Isabelle, under my charge."

'And a poor business you make of it,' I thought, 'letting them trip about like wanton queans, instead of turning them into modest gentlewomen.'

I was not prepared for what she was going to say; these were her next words:

"Mr. Maitland, as I said, I must trust you. We are surrounded by what I can only term rebels. Preachers, among whom is Mr. Richard Cameron, whom to our misfortune we nurtured here, have gone abroad, rousing the countryside, not only against the Government but what they term Devil-worship. Ay, the witch hunt is up again in Galloway and Wigtown."

I was sharply interested, but tried to keep my features composed as I replied:

"And how should the question of witches concern the ladies of Castle Drum?"

She was ready for me and returned my challenge coolly, though I could see that she was still deeply troubled, perhaps deeply afraid.

"There is much witchcraft in Scotland," said she, "and much secret worship of the Devil. Perhaps for years at a time nothing will be said and nothing will be discovered. Then one man rising up and cries of 'Vue, halloo!' and there's the hunt—and the innocent and the guilty go to the torture and the stake. There's not a corner of Scotland," continued Elspeth Garrie, wildly, "where witches may not be found if they are sought for. These Covenanters, as they term themselves, are as set against witchcraft and the worship of Satan as they are set against the Bishops, whom they take to be under the protection of demons."

"And you think, madam, I suppose, that they may rouse the fanatic and superstitious peasantry?"

"That I do," said she, "and we are three women alone. And as we have more learning and a better education than any man for miles around——" she checked herself, and I thought that she was going to admit that they were, the three of them, objects of suspicion, that they had been reckless in their sense of security as the ladies of Castle Drum. But she was not so foolish as that; she looked at me as if she was enjoying my disappointment as she added:

"As we have a better education, we have protected in our establishment several old women who have been suspected of bewitching cattle and of transferring pains from which they suffered to others. We know them to be harmless old bodies and have protected them. They have work in the castle, but now I think their names may be remembered. And this Mr. Cameron, when he was here, was always protesting against their presence."

"I think Mr. Cameron protested against other things," said I, grimly. I was vexed because she had asked me for my protection, said she trusted me, then put me off with

a tale like that. I did not at that time think the three ladies of Castle Drum were otherwise than mischievous and foolish. I believed they practised stupid and perhaps disgusting rites, such as sticking pins into the wax images of their enemies, making philtres to rouse love or hate, mixing potions to increase their beauty, and suchlike follies. But with real evil or real power I did not then connect them.

The lady's terror was manifest, though I had to confess that she kept a fair show of fortitude. And when I reflected on their case, with the husband at St. Andrews and no one in the Castle with them but a sick boy, an old, half-crazed man and some stupid serving-folk who might, for all I know, turn traitors, I was sorry for their plight. And I promised Elspeth Garrie, though unwillingly, that I would remain in Castle Drum until Sir Donald returned.

At that she seemed satisfied and thanked me in a friendly fashion. And I noticed at the supper-table that evening that she and the two other ladies did their best to flatter me. It was an evening when we had the wax candles on the table, when good French wine was served and our places were spread with linen napery.

When I had been talking with Elspeth Garrie young Evan had gone out of my mind or I would have reminded Madam Elspeth that she had there a man on whose services she might call. I thought of him in this connection when I saw him at the supper-table and reminded my hostess :

" If you are attacked, either by Claverhouse's cavalry or by the wild Covenanters," I said, " there is a knight ready to protect you."

None of them liked the sharpness of my tone, and young Evan reminded me sourly that I had promised to send him to some Utopia beyond the seas, where the Golden Age might be discovered again.

I was vexed at the sly and, as I thought it, evil laughter of the women, and I championed the young man, leaning across the light of the shining white candles, and said to him :

"I have promised to remain here until Sir Donald's return from St. Andrews. Then you and I will leave Castle Drum together and we will go to London and then straight to Holland. If no better employment can be found we will take service with the Prince of Orange."

At that the three ladies clasped their hands and laughed and bade us both good cheer and good luck and hoped we would find glory in the wars.

The word glory rang into my head again and I thought of the simile of the circle in the water. How little any of us mattered, how soon we should be gone from this dark and whirling planet——

I rose from the table, pushing back my chair, plunged in a deep melancholy all of a sudden as a man may be seized by the throat by his phantoms and thrust into the dark waters of despair.

I could not endure to stay longer at that dismal board, brightly though it was lit by the candles they had brought out in my honour.

I went up to my chamber and sat there in the dark, that was only dispersed by the dying embers of the fire on the wide hearth.

And there Evan Garrie came to me after an interval and asked if I would like to go abroad that night. He had a dark lantern, he said, which he would conceal under his cloak. "And we might visit the chapel." And I could see for myself some of the strange things that were whispered about Castle Drum and the ladies.

As I have written, I did not at this time take any great heed of any stories I had heard of these women. The place was detestable to me, but I believed that this was the result of my own humour and the savage desolateness of the countryside.

But as I was restless, tormented in myself, I willingly accepted the young man's invitation. As it was usual for one or other of us, or sometimes both, to watch by the sick boy, I asked him how that duty was to be performed that

night. And he said that David had had one of his fits or seizures and that Doctor Fletcher and a servant were in attendance on him, he had been let a pint of blood and was now in a swoon. The Doctor would watch him all night. I had little faith in the treatment of Doctor Fletcher, his learning must have grown a little rusty in this wilderness ; but David Garrie was not my bodily charge, it was his mind I had undertaken to keep. I had said nothing about endeavouring to heal his disease. So I put him out of my mind and felt no further responsibility for him.

* * *

And the house being quiet save for the outdoor servants whom they kept watching on the walls, we passed out, the two of us, wrapped in our dark cloaks, through the postern gate. The sentries were rude and ill-trained, and it was not difficult for us to evade them for they lingered and perhaps slept on their watch. And we were soon free both of the building and of the grounds.

It appeared to be almost winter here in this grim north, though I knew that in England the beech and the elm would be showing golden leaves and the last lilies and roses blooming in the well-kept gardens. Philippa would be spreading her plucked blossoms with their spices and salts in the glow of the autumn sun in order that she might fill her blue china bow-pots with odours for the short December days. How odd that this thought sprang into my mind now as we stood on the bleak moorland.

" What do you think to show me, sir ? " I said to Evan Garrie. I could understand that superstition must have him deep in its grip and that he must believe in many crude tales that a child in England would scarcely credit. How desolate was this country, how wild the climate, these uncultivated fields and moors, the lonely hills, the long winters, the lack of learning and books and company—why, it was easy for these poor benighted people to believe that the Devil walked abroad.

So thought I in my complacence as we went together towards the ruined chapel.

The moon had risen into a sky pale as a faded hyacinth bell, from banks of heavy purplish cloud, and the thin pale light like dissolved pearl drifted on to the sharp outlines of the ruins, the broken arches, the defaced pillars of the papal church that the followers of John Knox had laid low.

We moved towards this with cautious steps, keeping in the shadows as best we might, though Evan Garrie said to me : " There is no need for such caution. Many will be going to the chapel to-night, and who is to know one from the other in the moonlight ! "

The air was very keen, I felt the flesh of my face chill and I drew my cloak, not so much for diguise as for warmth, closer round my neck.

Evan Garrie seemed to know the way well. He led me by divers paths until we came to a block of fallen masonry. The moon, with that swift spinning motion it seems to have when clouds are in the sky, had disappeared behind a sombre band of vapour, and Evan Garrie took advantage of this obscurity to seize me by the arm and lead me where he would have me, into an archway that led to some stone steps. I could just discern them, as he told me in a whisper that they were safe and bade me mount quietly.

" It is the old belfry, rebuilt in later times after the church was destroyed, though the Covenanters took the bells away in the last King's reign."

Unthinking fool as I was, I followed the young man up the stairs, my spirits raised by what I thought the triviality of the adventure, for it reminded me of enterprises undertaken in my youth when I had been light of heart and anything that savoured of excitement had heightened my dancing blood. So I had gone out at night, searching for owls' nests and I know not what senseless trophies—to rob sour fruit, may be, from a neighbour's orchard when glasshouse pines and peaches would be placed on my own father's table.

We reached the little chamber at the top of the belfry easily enough and could look down, as my companion pointed out to me, into the centre of the ruined church. The moon having swum clear of the bank of clouds again, showed us these green aisles. Near where the altar had once stood and before the ruins of a fine window with broken tracery in the arch, grew three young beech trees that still retained a few pale-gold leaves ; harsh grass and weeds carpeted the church ; these were already bitten by the early frost, and among them I could see the outlines of flat grey coffin stones that covered the long-forgotten dead.

It was silent, not even the hoot of a bird, the rustle of a wind broke the dense stillness, that seemed suddenly to qeat on my ear-drums with more passion than a continuous noise.

What did I expect to see ? I did not know, and if I had formed any pictures of the satanic rites that Evan Garrie's excited fancy had conjured up, I imagined that I should see a gathering of women, headed by the ladies of Castle Drum, young and old, poor and gentle, meet on the one sanctified ground, to dance, to sing, to chatter, and to perform their futile, their trivial, perhaps their obscene rites.

But no one appeared in that palely-lit enclosure.

I turned to Garrie and said :

" What are we waiting for ? What do you think we shall see ? "

He did not answer, and I heard a sigh pass from his lips. And I continued to gaze from my small pointed window. The stone was cold under my hand, and I was uncomfortable as I half leant, half knelt, crouching in the narrow space.

Then, as I stared, I was conscious of something moving below. It seemed a grey shape, as if it were of the same substance as the weed-covered ground or the stained stone pillars. But it was moving and detached from these, and seemed to be a human being and yet to be crawling. It moved towards the large stone that had once been hung

with rich cloths and set with jewelled candlesticks in the days when the Pope was lord in Scotland.

" Look ! " I whispered. " What's that below ? "

My companion replied only with a groan, and I felt my own blood was not so warm in my veins. I had not expected anything like this, and I wished myself back even in the gaunt rooms of Castle Drum.

As I stared again I saw that the whole space enclosed by those ruined walls was moving with these grey figures. It seemed as if the ground heaved as I had noticed a piece of rotten meat to heave with the maggots that were devouring it. I could not count them, they were there so thick, these grey palpitating shapes.

' It is the moon mist,' I thought. ' I am bewildered in my senses.' And I remembered with rage the tricks that Isabelle had played on me with the square of polished jet. I turned my head away and tried to steady myself by staring into the darkness.

Evan Garrie was clutching my hand.

" What do you see below ? " I asked.

" I see death in many shapes ! " he replied. " The place is full, do not attract attention to us. This place is still blessed, they cannot enter it. Hold this," he pushed something into my palm, and my fingers closed on the four points of metal. He had given me a Cross.

I tried to laugh, but looked down again. There were the shapes swarming, heaving, crawling towards the altar.

" Empty," said I. " What are they worshipping ? There is nothing there ! "

Then I was angry with him for having brought me to this place and set me in such a foul position. I tried to drag at his hand, his arm, and pull him down the stairs again, but he stayed there against the wall, peering out of the window beside me like one bewitched. And I felt bewitched myself.

How lightly we talk of the Devil and his evils, how carelessly we jest about the monsters of darkness ! I remembered then what Mr. Cameron had said to me about the

ladies of Castle Drum, and I wished I had him there by my side. Surely these men, these Presbyterians, were right—the country was vile and haunted. I felt my courage grow heavy and like a sea receding in my veins, the sea of my warm blood that was chilling into ice.

The first figures had reached the altar, they overflowed it in slow-grey waves, then mounted through the broken windows and began to disperse like torpid rings of smoke in the dim upper air.

Then I heard a little wailing music like someone playing on the pipes that they had in this country, of someone singing.

I looked up at the moon to steady myself, for I thought that the base of the ruined church was filled by globes of light that changed and intermingled one into the other, and I would not believe these to be anything but an illusion and so stared up into the highest point of the heavens where the moon now shone free, the clouds had drifted to the horizon, and the wind blew very cold. It seemed to come directly from the moon on to my face. I put out my hands into the white light as if I thought I could clean them in that pure glow.

And then I felt Evan Garrie fall against me. He said:

"Let us come away! It is worse to-night than it has ever been."

I thought I should not be able to move, that my limbs were trapped by witchcraft. And I held the little Cross that he had given me tightly in my palm, and managed to move my stiff fingers to my lips, then to open them and to kiss the Cross.

At that a little courage returned to me. I suppose he, too, must have believed that he had the strength that was in this holy symbol, for he was able to rise, and we turned and made our way slowly, step by step, down the stairs that were worn and crumbling and damp with slimy mosses and tangled with great thick weeds, none of which I had noticed when we had come up so swiftly and so eagerly.

When we reached the bottom there was one standing there like a sentry on guard. He appeared of monstrous size, and as he turned his face to look at us I saw it was that of a black man.

"Do not speak to it," moaned Evan Garrie, and his words were hissing breath upon his lips.

We turned from this awful sentinel, and there was one of the grey shapes lurking in the corner of the wall. It floated out as we came by with a slow, sullen movement, not as if it were light but rather like a heavy thing, solid, being dragged. And there was a foul smell of putrefaction.

I stepped back from Evan Garrie, who was better used, I thought, than I to these horrors.

And the shape paused by us and looked at me with the face of Jannot, that same richly-coloured face with the tawny hair, the eyes full of golden light, but now inhuman with stains of decay on it that I had seen on marble statues that had long been buried underground.

Evan Garrie pulled me away and we stumbled on. I tried to tell myself that this was no more than a dream. I did not fear the shapes roused in midnight slumbers, or in the lonely hours of the morning as the cold dawn filled the gaunt bedchamber with a soiled light. Cold I might be, even to the heart, even to the marrow, but I rose from my bed to say "these are but visions."

So now I must think—these were but fumes or humours of the brain. I tried to think that they had given me at my last meat some noisome drug. What were those boasted wines or cakes with which they had been so eager to toast me.

Another shape approached us. It was decorously clad in russet. I knew it for Doctor Fletcher and hailed him with a warm pulse of joy. Here was another human being, a Christian man who would help to guide us home.

But he drew near and turned upon us awful empty eyes, and I saw that he, too, was one of this accursed crew.

Three times he passed us, kept pace with us for a while, and then disappeared.

Evan Garrie was by my side, whimpering like a beaten hound. Why had he brought me on so foul a journey, and why had I, foolish in my complacency, allowed him to persuade me ?

We reached that pile of fallen masonry behind which we had hidden when the moon first shone upon us when we had left Castle Drum. And there the two other women were waiting for us—Elspeth and Isabelle. I knew them, being used now to their foul trickery and their obscene shape. They appeared in outline like those large grey slugs that I had seen crawling in my father's garden after the rain. They were grey, too, as those we had seen in the desecrated church, and yet shrouded and drawn together. And that abomination that had the face of Elspeth took no heed of us, but the shape that had the face of Isabelle moved forward and her stained visage was pale in the pinched light of the moon.

Made desperate by horror, ay, and by fear, I struck out at this with my clenched fist, which seemed to go but into soft cloud.

Then the appearances had gone and we were no more molested on our way home, save that we saw, sitting near the confines of the Castle grounds, a hunched figure playing upon the bagpipes, that I took to be no mortal thing.

And I knew then that Castle Drum and all the ground about was truly infested with the powers of evil.

* * *

As I reached the Castle I thought of the sick boy and the shape of Doctor Fletcher that I had seen walking in the ruins of the church.

' He, too ! ' I thought. ' Perhaps he, too ! '

I turned and looked at Evan Garrie, who appeared like one crazy with a mortal sickness.

I took him into the great dining-room, where they had lit the wax candles and brought the French wine to me that evening. There was still some of the native raw spirit in

the horn and silver goblets, standing carelessly, after their fashion, on the serving-board. I gave him some of this and took a draught myself.

Gradually the world of reality slipped into place about me. Reality, say I, there was but little of that in Castle Drum. Even now this room seemed to me strange and heavy, infected ground.

" We'll get away," said I. " No more after to-night." I raved against witches and warlocks. " What have I seen ? " I was angry with the young man. " Why did you show me what I shall never be able to forget ? "

" Jannot holds me here," he sobbed, silly and beaten from his manhood.

" Jannot ! After you've seen her as you saw her to-night ? " Yet I could not wonder at the boy. I felt something of the same bewitchment over my own dulled senses. " There's David to think of." I tried to steady myself by this concern about the sick boy. " If that was Doctor Fletcher whom we saw . . . ? "

" Who do you think it would be ? " snarled Garrie. His eyes were shining from the strong spirit, there was a hectic red in his cheeks and his lips were drawn back from his teeth, making him look like a lean young mastiff.

I had no thought then but getting him and myself away from the place, but I still had David on my conscience. I had been fee'd to teach his mind, as I had said, and not to look after his body, much less his soul. But he was another human being, and after the last few hours I had begun to believe in eternal damnation. Those two words and the thoughts they evoked blew over me like an icy wind.

We crawled feebly up the large cold stone stairs to the sick boy's room. The door was ajar and the watchlight was burning on the table by his bed ; the fire had sunk down, the strong wind down the chimney was stirring the already cold ashes.

I did not know what light it was that fell between the

shutters that stood partially open, whether the light of dawn or moon or chill rays from some other world.

The boy was seated on his bed with a sage-coloured cloak about his shoulders, and his face, damp with sweat, was like that of an old man in this unearthly light that filled the chamber.

The serving-man was there, but asleep, his head overcast on his arms upon the table. The coarse tallow candles had guttered out on his uncombed hair, his locks and the winding tallow both fell over the table.

"Well, Evan," whispered the boy, leaning forward so that his cloak and shirt fell apart and showed his thin chest, on which I could count the ribs, "what did you see to-night? Tom Maitland! He went with you, too, and he had a taste of their quality!"

I did not know if he was one of them, although I feared as much. And I had no answer ready, nor could I understand the mind or mood of Evan, who stood there at the foot of the bed staring at the sick man. Was he, young Evan, trying to save the soul of David? Or were they companions, almost accomplices, in all this satanic vileness?

I felt as if I, too, like young Evan, stood on the borderland.

And then all our high thoughts and resolutions, tremulous, half-formed, were scattered by a noisy clangor and thunder on the gates.

The sick boy shrieked, drawing his knees up under his heavy coverlet. Even the weary manservant, responsive to that loud command, rose yawning and groaning, pushing the hair, stained with the tallow, out of his bloodshot eyes.

Evan Garrie fell to his knees, thinking no doubt this was a summons from Hell. But for me it cleared my mind, and I was Thomas Maitland again, the ruined gentleman who had been hired as a pedagogue for this pale withered heir to a Scots lord.

"Who's master here when Sir Donald's away?" I said.

I looked at David, then at Evan. Neither was able to answer me, so I told the serving-man to go down to the

door and rouse the house and see who it was without. It might be Sir Donald's return, it might be Captain Graham and his troop, it might be the Covenanters on a witch-hunt.

My faculties were sharpened above the common by the horrors I had seen and the strong drink I had taken, yet I cared nothing to what might befall. I knew that these days there might be a danger in opening the gates of Castle Drum in its master's absence. What did I know of the broils of this petty kingdom? It might be that enemies without were coming to slit all our throats, but what did I care for that? The place was drenched in horror for me. Could I have seen Elspeth, Jannot and Isabelle speared as they stood I should not have blanched.

The sick boy gathered up his serge cloak to his shoulders and again shrieked with fear. And I shouted back at him and put my hand on my sword; Evan Garrie caught at my arm, and so we stood, the three of us, while the serving-man stared, asking me to repeat my orders, for he seemed to look on me as the master.

I told him to go downstairs and to see who was outside, for someone had passed the outer gate and was now belabouring the inner door.

I peered from the window that I pushed open and there was the light of a pine-knot torch below; the moon had long since disappeared and the sky was black above us. A drizzle of rain was falling, I felt it as I put out my hand, and I wondered if this pure moisture from Heaven had scattered those hideous, swarming shapes inside the ruined walls of the chapel. And I thought, too, that if I could not stop my memory of this night, one day I should go mad and gibbering or imbecile as Doctor Fletcher must be in his unholy dotage.

We went downstairs together, I feeling again some confidence in my youth and strength, and even Evan Garrie having thrown off something of his bewitchment, and the servants were roused now and stood together while two of them lifted the latch of the great door.

Without was no warlock or devil and no shouting Covenanter saint, but Captain Graham of Claverhouse on his famous sorrel horse. His elegance was something marred, he had lost his hat and his long curls were dark with sweat and rain and dust.

He asked where Sir Donald Garrie was as he threw himself from the saddle and came with slow dignity up the few steps into the great hall.

I told him that the Lord of Castle Drum was still away at St. Andrews. And then John Graham told me, quietly as when we had met that day in St. James's and he had mentioned glory, that he had been outwitted by the rebels, as he termed them, who were gathering in their hundreds on the moors and had outstripped his dragoons. And he added, drawing off his gloves, pulling them finger by finger, that he had pursued a hundred rebels for a week, but that they had escaped, being much protected by the farmers and gentlefolk.

And he said with his cool smile : " You have none hiding here ? I recall that this was Mr. Cameron's retreat. He is a dangerous and obstinate fanatic."

He was much disturbed beneath his show of equanimity, I was well convinced. And he and his misfortune—a strange one, surely, for him and his troop to be defeated by these fanatics and their followers—seemed to me to blend into the horror that was that night.

The weary soldier would not sleep but came and sat in the great hall where they had all the candles they could find lit and the fire piled up and set aflare. He would not take off more of his equipment than his gauntlets and his boots. And there he sat in those changing and flickering lights as first one candle and then another guttered in the strong draughts.

Nor would he speak of his defeat, for he had set his heart on capturing these men, but presently towards the dawn he withdrew himself from his moody abstraction and asked for paper and a quill. And I brought down the equipment

from my chamber, for I had not much used it since I had come to Castle Drum—the sand-dish and quills that I had used in London and brought with some contempt to this outlandish place.

He thanked me with grave courtesy, his dark eyes were heavy with fatigue, and I admired the air with which he put off his humiliation.

"Next time," he said to me with a smile, "we shall see who is the stronger. They killed two of my troopers and burned the home of a woman who gave us directions."

"You will have troops from London, sir, perhaps," said I.

"No," said he, "I hope to raise sufficient men of my own. I must enlarge my own troop. What are sixty men to quiet the Lowlands?"

He would say no more nor would he take any wine. He was always an abstemious man, and he had no interest in cards or in wantonness or in drink, but only in this idea that he kept fixed before him, of glory, or rather, as he would term it, of loyalty. "The King's Service" were words often on his lips, but I knew that he tried to win an heiress, titles, and castles for himself.

And I thought again of the circle in the water as I watched him bending to his task, which was that of writing to his Commander in Glasgow of his complete failure. These rude, untrained rebels, these fierce Covenanters, had killed many of his men and escaped, and he had counted, I well knew, on clearing the Lowlands at once and on the reward he might have for that.

He said when he had finished his letter that he was so sleepy he could scarce keep his eyes open. And he asked me why I sat awake all night. And I told him bluntly that I did not like Castle Drum, and I said: "I'd rather be out with yon Covenanters on the heather, rebels as they may be, than shut up here."

His eyes, dim with fatigue, flashed at that; he seemed to know what I meant, for he asked me where the ladies were. And I said bitterly: "I suppose in their chambers."

I added I had a charge I did not like, and I was reminded to return to London and go to Holland to seek out Mr. William Penn.

"For I'll be free," said I, "of this country, ay, and of England too. Here is no chance——"

"Do you seek glory?" asked Captain Graham, sharply.

I used words that I had never used before, nor thought to use.

"No," I said, "I hope to save my soul."

John Graham made little disguise of his contempt of me, who, a man of stalwart habit and body, was in the foolish position of pedagogue to a sick boy instead of being a trooper. He wanted soldiers.

And when he had slept an hour or so on the settle in the room where he had written his letter—he had refused the use of one of the bedchambers offered him by Evan Garrie—he turned to me on his waking, and trying to conceal his scorn, endeavoured to persuade me to join his dragoons, as his troop of mounted infantry was termed.

He said that he would probably have permission to raise another hundred men. For the whole of the Lowlands, all at least of Wigtown and Dumfries, were likely to be armed; there was talk of having the Highlanders down, but he did not greatly care to lead these wild men.

I do not know how much he was aware of my story; he must at least have remembered me as a gentleman of position whom he had met in the corridors of St. James's Palace. Why I was ruined and why I was here was probably no concern of his. But I noted the firmness with which he kept to his own point, to get men with which to pursue the Covenanters. And I realized his pride, which was sharp and keen. He had been entrusted with this work by the Government, in particular by his patron, the Duke of York, and it was odd to think that that same man was the friend and patron of Mr. William Penn. And he, John Graham of Claverhouse, wished to quieten the Lowlands without calling for help from England.

Therefore I was to him but as was a means to his end. I had no need to flatter him, and I looked at him straightly as I replied :

" Why are you giving so much to this work, Captain Graham ? You are a man of a substantial fortune, a good position. Why do you not enjoy yourself in tranquillity ? "

" This is my enjoyment," said he coldly, " to do my duty as I perceive it, to serve my loyalty as I see it. Come, will you ride with me ? "

" It is bloody work you do," said I. " I have heard enough tales since I've been in Castle Drum."

He gave me a contemptuous glance.

" You have been listening to the wild ravings of Richard Cameron. If I could catch that errant mischief-maker I should be very glad to silence him. But as well chase a squib of wildfire."

" Have you warrants," I asked, " to kill all whom you will ? "

" I have warrant to shoot at sight those who refuse to take the Test," replied Captain Graham, still controlling his anger at what, no doubt, he considered my impertinence, for he hoped to enlist me, as I was a likely man for a trooper. " These are rebels," he added in a high tone. " Do you not understand ? "

" Do you greatly care," said I, " about the Test or not, Captain Graham ? Do you greatly care about this fine question of theology and the Covenant and what it means or does not mean, and whether its presence justifies His Majesty in breaking his oath ? "

" I do not question where I obey."

Captain Graham rose. I saw him as a man who was strained almost to the limit of his endurance, fatigued, and chagrined ; he was shorter than I, with long arms, very dark, with melancholy eyes.

" Next time," he said, taking up his soft tasselled gloves, " we will not be defeated. And I take it, Mr. Maitland, that you will not join my troop of dragoons ? "

"No," said I, "I intend to be free of Scotland and Scotland's troubles. I'm taking with me young Evan Garrie."

"That's a pity," said Claverhouse. He used no oath, being, as I said, in his language as in his habit both abstemious. "It is a pity," he repeated, but he gave the womanish word a deadly edge. "Two strong young men——"

"But neither," said I, breaking into his speech, "inclined to fight with you, Captain Graham. I came here, as I think it, on false pretences. At least, I don't intend to be shut in Castle Drum with three crazy ladies and a sick stripling. Besides, my fancy has changed. I'll be no more a pedagogue."

"What will you do?" he asked, still, I could see, with a hope of gaining me. "Why do you take the young man away? I had hopes of him. It sickens me to the soul to see a likely youth lead a life of idleness. Or is it possible," added Captain Graham, shrewdly, drawing his fine brows together above his beautiful, dreamy eyes, "that you are, both of you, tainted with this Presbyterianism?"

"You can scarcely suspect me of that," said I, "since I am new come from London."

"As I remember, in London you were a friend of William Penn, who is suspected by some of Nonconformist doctrines."

"You've taken little trouble to study the beliefs of those whom you've been sent to exterminate, Captain Graham, if you confuse the tenets of Covenanters with those of William Penn. What will you do now?" I asked sharply.

"Ride into Glasgow," he replied, "and there make my report. Do not fear that I shall return soon."

"It's ungrateful and unpleasant work, this of yours, policing the Lowlands," I said. "But it matters little to me." Then, to exasperate him, for I never liked the man, I said: "Will you give us an escort of troopers, for I intend to ride to St. Andrews to see Sir Donald Garrie, to

tell him that we will neither of us remain in Castle Drum. We have our reasons which, if pressed, we will explain to Sir Donald himself."

"Why," asked Captain Graham, giving me hostility for hostility, "should you demand an escort for so peaceful an expedition?"

"We are but two men, we intend to take no servants, having none of our own and not wishing to deprive the ladies," said I, with irony, "of their protection. And we go through the country that is, as I believe, infested by these rebels. We may be taken for two of your troopers."

I had intended these remarks but to vex him, and I was surprised when he answered gravely:

"It is true that my troopers are murdered when they go far from their fellows. Even the women set on them and beat them with stones. But I can do nothing for you, Mr. Maitland. Young Evan Garrie must know the countryside. You had better take the less frequented ways. Do not wear buff coats, cuirass, or sash, try to appear ordinary travellers, and no doubt you will not be molested."

I felt rebuked by his kindness and courtesy, though it was sternly offered. And as the ladies did not appear (well I knew why), I assumed the post of master of the house, saying that I was acting for the sick lad David, and did what I could for the entertainment and solace of Captain Graham and his dragoons; the great castle had the means to refresh them all.

In the ill-kept yard was a standing pool, and when the troopers were ready to ride away I took a stone and threw it into this stagnant water and bade John Graham, who then had one foot in the stirrup, to mark the circles that it made.

"Glory!" I said. "The circle in the water!"

He gave me a sharp, unkind look. He took my meaning, being quick and alert in mind. But I could not avoid sending it home. I said:

"Captain Graham, what is this glory for which you would

give your life and the life of so many others? Do you not pause in your ridings to and fro and in those severities that make these stern people think you are helped by Satan, to consider how soon fame is gone? Look," said I, "the last circle has dissolved and the pool is calm again as if the stone had never been."

"A man may leave a name behind," he said, "for after generations to wonder at."

"And shall he for that," I demanded, "give his sweet life, which is all he has?"

"I would rather," replied the proud soldier, "die in my youth in pursuit of this glory that you despise, than live long and safely, to die at length the death of a dog, utterly."

* * *

The troop was gone; there was a pale sunshine in the air, flickered by a chill wind. I saw the gleams of their cuirasses, the soft white plumes that the officers wore, and for a moment I regretted that I was not of their company and of his mind who led them.

But I had resolved that my way should not be of blood and slaughter. What I had seen last night had shaken my spirit. Hallucinations they might be, delusions from some fierce potent they had put into my wine, but it mattered little whether it was a dream or reality on which I had gazed, for it was proof, intangible maybe, but proof that evil was about me, that evil was possible, and might take on these tormenting and disastrous forms to torture mankind.

As I was turning back into the Castle, having seen the last of the troop and watched the clumsy and sullen servingmen close the door, I drew back a step and sent my foot into the soiled water into which I had thrown the stone, for there, standing in the doorway, was a black man, whom I could not doubt was he whom I had seen in the ruins of the chapel the night before.

The Devil, no other, I had thought him then. But this man was a blackamoor, such a creature had I often seen in

London, a slave employed as a servant in gaudy feather and turban, though the young negroes were more favoured by the ladies for their prettiness and docility.

This man looked sick and melancholy and could not have been, I soon decided, the shape that I had seen last night. He was not of such vast stature, either, being about my own height and breadth. He was ragged and his eyes, brown with the muddy white injected with blood, turned on me with an appealing look.

He spoke a few words of English and tried to make me understand his history. How he had crept into the courtyard I do not know, it must have been while we were all occupied with the departure of Captain Graham's troop.

Seeing the terrified and malicious looks that the servants cast on him, I took him into the house. I wondered where the ladies of Castle Drum were now, and whether they would be glad to see this fellow.

I certainly had my suspicions of him. It was strange that he should appear so pat on the obscene rites of yesterday had he not been a partaker in them. The poor wretch, for such he seemed at least to be, was glad to get to the fire and warm his limbs.

His story as I could piece it together was that he had been a slave in Edinburgh, in the 'Nether Bow.' He had worked in a goldsmith's shop and been most ill-treated. His master had brought him from London, and apart from the poor food and the blows he received from his owner's virago of a wife, he had endured great torment from the cold. This I could well believe, for I had seen the wretched creatures in England; the black boys seldom survived their first winter but would pine and wither like those outlandish flowers some gardeners affect when first nipped by our native frosts.

I asked the man why he had come to Castle Drum, and he replied that it was the first great house he had passed. He had not dared to show himself, for he knew that the people would stone him wherever he went; even in Edin-

burgh he had been looked at askance. Well he understood the meaning of these injuries and insults ; the blackamoor was aware that he was considered a demon, an attendant in the train of the Prince of Darkness. This much he had learned during his four years in Scotland.

I asked him how he had lived and his grin answered me ; he had stolen such poor food as had kept him alive. I was in the mood for a grim jest and to avenge myself on all those whom I disliked in Castle Drum, so I told the man, slowly—and he was quick-witted like most creatures in extremity—that I would for a while at least, take him into my service and offer him my protection. I was aware that I could not afford to buy him from his master, and until I could produce his purchase price he would be the property of the goldsmith in the 'Nether Bow.' And yet I thought it little likely, the times being as they were in Scotland, that he would be traced to me. Even in the north there were several blackamoors employed. They were brought into Leith from the Netherlands and Germany ; some of the hardy ones survived the climate for many years, so the sight of them in cities and towns was not so frightening to the populace. One blackamoor, too, as I argued to myself, looked as much like another as one sheep resembled his fellow in the flock.

The creatures were, too, as I knew, faithful, and this one was powerful in stature with mighty arms and hands. So I took the blackamoor as my servant or slave, and I thought that he would be no ill companion if I and Evan Garrie were to ride over the rebellious country to St. Andrews. For I remained resolute to that loyalty, that I would let Sir Donald Garrie know that I was leaving his service and that the three women of his family were alone with the sick boy in Castle Drum. No consideration that I could think of would have induced me to remain in that lonely place, and neither would any consideration have induced me to abandon my task without at least an explanation.

Besides, practical reasons impinged upon these lofty resolves. I was almost without money, the last sale of my effects had brought in but a few pounds, and these I had almost spent. The residue of my possessions, a few jewels and such comfortable vanities as the velvet cloak, I was not minded to part with. And only, I knew, by going to St. Andrews, should I get my fee from Sir Donald ; these women would give me nothing.

It was Jannot who entered the room first. I wondered if she knew that I had spied upon her last night, or that shape that had her face. It was difficult to look at her with composure, but I was pleased to see the recoil she gave when she noticed the black man standing by the hearth.

" This is my new servant," I said, with an air as if I had conjured the creature out of the stone flags at my feet. And I was bewildered by her bewilderment. ' This looks,' I thought, ' as if the black man was present last night. Perhaps it was this poor wretch huddled in the ruins for some manner of shelter. Yet the creature that had affrighted me and Evan Garrie had seemed gigantic and had a different countenance.'

" He is a runaway slave from Edinburgh," I told her, scornfully. " His name is Virgil, and I'll keep that, for it suits me well. The ignorant used to think that Virgil was a warlock because he showed Dante, the Italian poet, over Hell."

By this Madam Jannot had recovered her spirits. She came mincingly to the table where our breakfast had been set, and I asked her how it was she had slept so sound that she had not heard the arrival and departure of Captain Graham and his troop of horse ?

She replied insolently enough :

" Why, I heard them, Mr. Maitland, and so did Isabelle and Elspeth. But we had no thought to come down and entertain these rude men at night."

While she spoke and as she sat over her oat-cakes I

could see her eyeing the black man with wonder, and, I thought, apprehension.

The other two women came down presently, and she went to meet them and whispered to them in the doorway. And I could see the three of them throwing looks at the blackamoor who they allowed, however, to continue kneeling by the hearth, bidding him throw on the billets of wood from the great basket that stood there, when the flames sunk low. They permitted me, too, to order a plate of meat and bread for the fellow and for him to eat it and in their presence, for I was not minded to let the blackamoor out of my sight for fear some of the Scots should do him a mischief.

"Everyone will think he is an evil spirit, or Satan himself," said Isabelle.

I looked straightly into her yellow eyes. I wondered if she knew how I had spent my night.

The three women accepted sullenly my decision to go to St. Andrews and seek out Sir Donald. They admitted themselves that he had been away a long time, and it was a good while since they had received even a message from him.

I did not tell them of my designs to leave their service, feeling sure they would raise outcries, especially if they knew that I was taking away, and for ever, as I hoped, Evan Garrie from the circle of their spells and enchantment.

I thought, at the last, that I should not have my way with this. The youth became restless and was minded to hang back; I saw Jannot signalling to him with her eyes and even with her fingers as she moved quickly to and fro on her lap, inviting him, no doubt, to more of these hellish cantrips, as they termed them, that I had witnessed on the night before.

But at length I got the boy away, and the women not suspecting that we were escaping for ever, provided us with a bag of meal and a plate whereon to cook it, a flask of spirit, and a portion of salt. They allowed young Evan Garrie,

too, to take arms from the arsenal that I had observed on the ground floor. I had my own sword that I had brought with me from England, and I had taken Captain Graham's warning not to wear a steel cuirass, a flash of which, even, from a distance, might cause me to be taken for a soldier.

Evan Garrie had a small target, or shield, that he hung on the saddle in front of him and a Scottish dagger, or dirk, as he termed it, that was finely set with the native yellow stones that they call cairngorms.

Jannot also gave me some money to pay my fees at the inns where we must stay. I thought it was no more than my due, and put it in the long purse of knitted purple silk ; the coins within were, I found, golden Jacobuses of one of the old Scottish kings that had been hoarded, I know not how long, in the coffers and closets of Castle Drum. But I doubted not that in that rude country they would be glad enough to take the gold without concerning themselves with its antiquity.

About Virgil, the blackamoor, the ladies had made no comment whatsoever. Either they believed that I had evoked an attendant spirit—and this is what I intended them to believe—or they credited the tale that Virgil was a runaway slave, or they thought that he was some demon of their own creation. At least, and this was the important point, they saw him provided with clothes such as their own servants wore—homespun coat and breeches and stockings and rawhide shoes, a shawl like a checkerboard in black and white. They armed him, too, and Elspeth said :

" I am glad you have this protection of the blackamoor's. We have no men that we can spare."

" You are not likely to be attacked," said I, " in Castle Drum. Nor are the rebels so bold," I added mockingly, " that they would dare to undertake a gentleman of the provision and substance of Sir Donald Garrie."

But I knew that it was not the rebels rising against the Government that the ladies of Castle Drum were frightened of, but the country-side roused in a witch-hunt by the

preaching of one of the Covenantering saints such as Richard Cameron.

* * *

So we left them, on the fifteenth day of October, as I can recall it. It was winter to me, there was no cloud in the sky that was colourless as a pearl ; the landscape lay rich beneath it, dark purple and faded gold of quiet distance and dry heather and crackling, tawny ferns.

The ladies of Castle Drum stood on the old battlements to see us depart. Elspeth was wearing the yellow satin dress, I wondered if she had worn it at the revels of the night before ; it seemed that Jannot had given up the dispute for it. She, whose face looked heavy with fatigue and whose air now that she saw us determined to depart was dull and lifeless, wore a grey gown and mantle like one of the serving wenches But Isabelle who still sought to please me and hoped, I think, to gain me in the end, was robed brightly in her silken garment, and the universal pallor of the light caught this in little brilliant gleams and lingered too in the heavy bands of her hair as she watched us depart.

I had to keep my hand on the bridle of Evan Garrie's horse, for I thought even at the last moment he would turn back, and I called out to the blackamoor to take the animal on the other side. And I cried out to Evan Garrie : " Do not look back ! " for I did not know what tricks they might not play on him.

Yet I could not subdue my own curiosity. Before we were out of eyeshot I had turned in the saddle and stared at Castle Drum.

What had I expected to see ? Perhaps a pale flame leaping heavenward where those dark walls had been, perhaps a dream palace, such a fabric as we build in our half-waking hours wherein to enshrine our dearest, most unobtainable hopes. A dream palace, windows with fair faces looking, beckoning us to unimaginable delight ?

But however strong the arts of the three ladies, they had

not transformed their dwelling-place for our destruction. Grim and cold the dark walls uprose against that pale sky, the groves of leafless trees were of man's planting, and built by human hands were the stained arches of the ruined chapel through which the daylight shone, wan and delicate.

"Those women are not witches," said I, contemptuously, "nor linked with any great powers. Let them be, sir, you'll forget them at the first fresh face you see."

Evan Garrie did not reply, he seemed downcast and aloof as we rode together down the rough road. But presently he brought his horse close up to mine and, moving his head sideways, looked without speaking at the blackamoor. This fellow was riding humbly a place or two behind. He looked at me as a slave or a dog should at his master; I had had as yet no instructions to give him, but I did not doubt that he would obey the first I should issue.

I noticed, with a smile, how eagerly he handled his weapon. I suppose he never had been armed before, and I believed that he would, as was his place, die for me willingly. And I intended, at our first halt, to show him how to fire the musket that I had made Elspeth Garrie give him.

But young Evan Garrie was plainly uneasy and soon he whispered his doubts into my ear. What could the blackamoor be but the familiar spirit of the ladies of Castle Drum? What could it all be but a trick?

"Were you not too credulous, Mr. Maitland, to take in so easily so strange an attendant?" He sank his voice yet lower and added: "Remember what we saw last night in the ruins of the chapel!"

I smiled, yet wryly. The thought had come to me also.

* * *

The way was lonely now, no human creature, no human habitation was in sight on either hand, behind where Castle Drum had dropped out of sight, nor ahead where as yet no other building had come into view. The sky had

darkened, fleeces of grey cloud obscured the pale light that first shone upon our desolate way. A bird of prey hovered overhead. This was Evan Garrie's native country, but even he seemed oppressed by the dull gloom of the scene, and the high spirits with which I had left Castle Drum had somewhat left me.

I glanced over my shoulder at the humble blackamoor following up ; uncouth and rude he looked in those unaccustomed garments, the grey of the North, worn and ill-fitting, sat clumsily upon his Eastern strength and grace. Strange, indeed, if we had taken the Devil for protection, if we had the Foul Fiend for company. How would that adventure end ?

I spoke boldly to my young companion, who was, I knew, a brave man, afraid of nothing mortal but who was now most uneasy in his mind.

" What we saw last night," I said, " were but the fumes from the drug they had given us at the supper-table, cannot you forget them."

Though I spoke roughly, I knew that the visions we had seen in the chapel would remain long in my memory, and I hoped that I should never look upon the faces of the ladies of Castle Drum again.

" Maybe," replied young Evan, sullenly, " but I wish we had not the blackamoor for company."

III

THE SAINTS

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III

THE SAINTS

I CAN remember but little of that journey except that it grew with every day more uncomfortable. The roads were worse in Scotland than any I had seen in England, and became rougher as we proceeded through Carrick and Ayr towards Fife.

I regretted what I considered now my foolish courtesy in this journey. Why should I trouble to inform Sir Donald Garrie that I was leaving his service ? What had impelled me to take upon myself all this trouble ? I put these questions once or twice to Evan Garrie, and he rebuked me for my sullenness and reading me more clearly than I cared to know of, said :

" You know, Mr. Maitland, that you go to St. Andrews really for your own pleasure, because you are of a wild and adventurous turn. Because you would, at any price, be away from Castle Drum. Besides," he added, with his candid smile, " we are fee'd, are we not ? "

He glanced towards the pouch where I kept the golden Jacobi given me by Jannot Garrie.

Virgil, the blackamoor, was a good servant to both of us, and any mistrust that young Garrie may have had of him was soon dispelled by the poor creature's devotion and strength, that was always at our service. It was easier for Evan than it was for me to talk with the blackamoor because what Christian language he knew was broad Scotch, and he was almost incomprehensible, but we

did, somehow, between the two of us, contrive to communicate with him.

And as we rode ever further into the winter, as it seemed to me, across that bleak and colourless landscape, Evan Garrie told me something more of the state of affairs in Scotland than I had ever known before. Had I better employment I had not listened to him, but I can recall now how he, occupied like all his countrymen in these matters of Church and State that to me were so barren, talked to me of Test Act and Covenant.

The Test Act, it seemed, was not put on yet in Scotland, though we had had it five years or more in England. It was my Lord Shaftesbury who had got it put through Parliament; it had been directed against the Roman Catholics and the Duke of York, though it was operated against the Dissenters also. I had heard a good deal of it from Mr. William Penn, who considered it unjust and unlawful that all who held public office had to receive the Church of England sacrament and renounce transubstantiation.

"They'll put the Test on here," said Evan Garrie, "and how many men, do you think, will be shot for refusing to take it?"

I little knew or cared. I was trying to think out my own fortunes and my own future and gave but distracted attention to the young man's talk. From what I had seen of him in Castle Drum he had not seemed so interested in these affairs. But it seemed, when it came to it, that every Scot seemed bitten to the bone with this fanatic interest in Church and State.

Although he was not a Covenanter, young Evan was most indignant that the Covenant had been burned by the public hangman in London.

"That was many years ago," said I, "I can scarce remember it. And was it not condemned also by your Privy Council as an unlawful oath? And those ministers who maintained it ejected?"

"Yes," replied Evan Garrie, "and it is these same outed Ministers who have held conventicles on the hill-side ever since."

And he reminded me that it was in that same year that the Abjuration Oath had been brought in, by which all the Scots were to declare that the Oath of the Covenant was unlawful.

"The King had betrayed them, you see," said Evan Garrie, though without passion. "Little I care one way or another, though these hard matters have been hammered into my head since I was a child. But the King took the Covenant as the price of Scotland's help, and as soon as he had come into his own again he betrayed it. As did Doctor James Sharp, the man whom we are about to visit, who received as his prize the archbishopric."

And then Evan Garrie, as I recall and not for the first time, reminded me that my name was held in odium in Scotland, and it would be well to conceal wherever we stayed that I was a relation of His Grace of Lauderdale, who more than others was blamed for the suppressing of the liberties of Scotland and who was considered to have great influence over the King and to have induced His Majesty to persecute the Covenanters.

At the first town we stayed, I do not recall its name, the people were agog with the news that Captain Graham had been made Sheriff-Deputy of Dumfries and Wigtown, or was about to be made so, I forget which, and that he had raised another troop of horse which was to be under the command of the Earl of Airlie. That made three troops, for there were already two—one under Lord Hulme and one under Colonel Graham, as he now was to be. Lord Linlithgow, too, we heard, was to be commander-in-chief in Scotland, and a great campaign against the conventicles and the Covenanters was to be begun in Dumfries and Galloway, all to be forced to take the abjuration oath or taken prisoner.

"Well, Evan Garrie," said I, "here is your chance.

Think well, again, whether you will not turn back and enlist in Captain Graham's troop."

"No," said he, "though the fumes of this dispute sometimes rise to my brain, yet on the whole I care little for them. And if you will have me, as a guide and companion, or a secretary, or even a servant . . ."

"None of which I can afford," said I.

"Well, I'll come with you just for the luck of the road, whatever it may be. I'll get free of Scotland. And Scotland," added the young man gloomily, lowering his voice, "means Jannot Garrie."

"Are you still thinking of her!" I was contemptuous of his fidelity. I would not have cared to admit that I dreamt too often of Castle Drum and the ladies there, at night when we wrapped ourselves in our cloaks and used our saddles for our pillows, sheltering behind rocks or in some deserted shepherd's hut. These dreams would rise out of my exhausted sleep, like noisome fumes from stagnant poisons, and turning sharply on my side I would think that I saw the stained face of Jannot or Isabelle lying beside me on my hard pillow. Cowardly, too, was that remembrance of Doctor Fletcher, and I puzzled myself if it had been the man's phantasm or the man himself that we had seen in the ruins of the chapel. Had his body kept watch by the boy while his spirit had wandered among the ruins to attend the obscene rites held by the witches?

One night, I recall, my fancies crowded on me blackly and I woke young Evan Garrie and made him speak to me in the dark. We had taken shelter in a small, ruined building, a roofless cottage that yet afforded some protection in the angle of the stone walls. The night was bleak and the wind harsh and there was no sparkle of heavenly light above us, the thick clouds covered the stars and there was no moon. But I had liked the look of this shelter better than the inn where we might have stayed, that was kept by villainous folk—at least, if their appearance was warrant for them.

Here we seemed safer with our weapons to our hand and

our horses ready, tethered to an old ash tree that grew near the ruined hearth, and with Virgil, the blackamoor, on guard for us.

We had each an inch or two of candle that we had set in a horn lantern to light us for our meal, we had bought some food and eaten it with relish, and now I could not sleep. I had loosened my cravat for all the cold winds, and thrown back my cloak for all our exposed position, for something seemed to choke and stifle me.

And I roused young Evan Garrie, whom I could not see in the dark, and bade him tell me something of what he knew of the witches in Scotland.

He seemed surprised at my question, as if I had asked him about something too common for speech.

"This is a dreary country," said I, "where the summer is but a gleam and the winters are long and dreary. You must have many moors and mountains here unknown to human inhabitants."

"Well," said Evan Garrie in a whisper, "I'll not deny that there are many outposts of Hell, and that is the opinion of a sober man. There's no ford that has not its kelpie, and on the bare hill-side you may find the May moulach."

"But these," said I, "are elves and fairies; I've read of them in England. I thought I would like to be like Thomas the Rhymer and wander away to some of those islands you have in the west, in the train of the Queen of Fairyland. She should have hair as yellow as the corn and plaited with lilies of unearthly beauty."

"That's the poet's talk," replied Evan Garrie, and I thought that his voice was uneasy. "You find such fancies in the ballads and songs the people have, I've sung them myself in the evenings at Castle Drum to the harp, and I doubt the fairies. I think they are but the ministers of Satan."

"What of the fairy gold?"

"They've bought many an unhappy soul with that, and within an hour it is dust in the hand."

Then Evan Garrie told me how, ever since the days of John Knox, the Presbyterian and black Genevans had set out to combat the fairies and the Devil in Scotland. Was it not John Knox who had forced Queen Mary to publish a statute bringing in the penalty of death for witchcraft ?

" How may you tell a witch ? " asked I, curiously.

" It may be anyone," answered Evan Garrie, glancing uneasily through the dark, " a fair young maiden or an old hioldame, a great noble or a mean peasant. Have you heard of the lamias, those are female devils who take the likeness of fair women ? There are human brides, too, who marry demons."

" One may no doubt all this, I suppose ? " I asked.

" If you are a Christian you may no doubt it," replied Evan Garrie. " Is there not the Witch of Endor, and Simon Magus ? And what is the holy command ' Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live ' ! "

The young man told me, as if it was a plain matter of fact, that there were organizations of witches all over the country, that His late Majesty King James I of Great Britain had well known, for had he not spent the greater part of his life endeavouring to combat witches and warlocks and black magic ?

I asked what these witches could do and how far their powers extended ?

" For even after what we saw in the ruined church," said I, " I take it to be but delusion of the senses."

He did not deign to reply to this, he did not think that my words were truthful. And he told me that the witches could raise storms, troops of ghosts and apparitions, and that they went to ruined churches and churchyards at night to dance with the Devil.

And he added that he knew for a certainty from what Mr. Richard Cameron had told him, that the Covenanters were pledged together to abolish witchcraft, the Devil, and all his legions from Scotland, and that they firmly believed that their persecutors, as they named them, such as Colonel

Graham and Archbishop Sharp and my relation, the Duke of Lauderdale, were in league with his Satanic Majesty and protected by his diabolical arts.

More than this, that was a confusion of dark and doubtful sayings, some of them fit for old wives' tales in the chimney corner of a winter's night, some of them such as would be used to frighten fractious children, did Evan Garrie tell me as he sat in the corner of the ruined cottage that stormy night.

My mind was troubled and doubtful, I knew that he who spoke to me believed these matters, as did nearly all of his countrymen. And I had seen for myself enough horror to cause me to think sharply before I said I did not believe the wild and curious tales.

I remembered Doctor Fletcher and his experiments in the tower, I remembered what I had learnt in my youth when I had been a pupil of Thomas Vaughan in London. And I was weighed down by a heaviness, partly thoughtfulness and partly dreaming, while Evan Garrie, in an awesome tone, reminded me of the commissions that had been set up in Scotland in the last few years for the suppression of witchcraft and the numbers of men and women who had been tortured, strangled and burnt for this offence. And I had a horrid twinge at the heart as I thought of the three women of Castle Drum. I remembered how Isabelle had looked at me.

"It is my duty, I think," said I, "to warn Sir Donald when I get to St. Andrews, of the danger those women stand in. Whatever are their tricks or cantrips, as you name them, they are in danger, it is clear, from the Covenanters."

And then from the dark I heard the young man say sullenly:

"I wish they would burn Castle Drum and all who are in it, and then maybe I might be in peace."

* * *

We did not sleep that night, but sat up until the slow

reluctant dawn, talking to one another. Virgil kept guard, refusing to sleep even though we were awake, over the open door.

I wondered who had lived in that hut, had he perhaps been dragged out with his wife and children about him, offered the Oath and been shot because he had refused to take it ?

With the morning we were on our way again. A dreary rain was falling. We had kept the horses we had taken from Castle Drum, and this made our progress slow because we had to pause so often to rest them. Yet even with all the care we had given them, the beasts were now becoming weary, and, like ourselves, splashed with mud, so that we three, riding slowly along the bad roads through the rain, made no splendid picture of well-attended gentlemen but appeared rather like travelling merchants of the meaner sort, with the poor blackamoor in his sodden grey behind us.

We had not gone far that morning before we fell in with a troop of men who came up rapidly from the mist and challenged us.

I knew them at once to be Presbyterians for their grim aspect and plain clothing. One of them wore the garments that I had noticed were affected by Mr. Richard Cameron, Genevan black and lank beneath the russet cloak. His companions were armed men with muskets in their hands, and I saw them look with mingled fear and fury at poor Virgil, so that I cried out quickly :

" Friends, that is an escaped slave and a baptised soul ! "

I made this statement, not knowing if it were true or not, for I had not been able to discover from the blackamoor if he were a Christian.

At that, respecting perhaps my air of authority, the men put down their muskets, but sullenly, and rode up either side of us as if we were prisoners, and asked us our business.

They did not like my English accent any more than they liked Virgil's black face. Perhaps, too, they took amiss my

swarthy visage, which no doubt looked grim enough in the shadow of my leaf hat dripping with moisture.

I thought it best to speak to them boldly, so I said :

" Sirs, I am an Englishman, and neither one of Colonel Graham's troopers, nor a warlock, nor a Highlander sent for your destruction."

He who appeared to be the leader then asked me what was my name and business. The first I thought it prudent not to give. I said that I was the pedagogue in Castle Drum. At those two last words I saw them exchange sidelong looks.

" I did not like my employment," I said, " and therefore I left it. I am going abroad, but first I have a duty to perform. And that is to take a message to Sir Donald Garrie in St. Andrews."

If they had not liked the words ' Castle Drum,' they liked those of ' St. Andrews ' less. I heard them talking among themselves. And Evan Garrie whispered to me not to mention the name of the Archbishop, who was the most loathed man in Scotland, being even more feared and hated than my relative, His Grace of Lauderdale.

" What matter for that ? " I replied under my breath. " No doubt they know where Sir Donald Garrie lodges in St. Andrews."

I thought they were like to murder us where we stood. They stopped the horses and two of them kept guard over us, their blunderbusses ready, while the others conferred a little way apart.

I looked at the blackamoor, his eyes were rolling in his head ; I saw that he and Evan Garrie were willing to make a fight for it. But we were outnumbered, perhaps ten to one.

I laughed suddenly, for it seemed to me a foolish way to die after what my life had been, what I hoped it would be. And I remembered Philippa. Was it possible that the same earth could contain her and the scene where we were now ? I remembered, too, the three ladies—Elspeth, Jannot, and

Isabelle—of Castle Drum. It all seemed to me a confusion and ridiculous.

And I turned to those men who were so seriously discussing our fate, and said :

" Why do you stay here to talk of bloodshed, for I think that you intend to kill us."

The leader then rode up to me and asked me what I meant.

He spoke seriously, and his aspect, though stern, was not ruffianly.

" I mean this," said I, looking at him through the driving mist and rain. " There are other countries in the world besides Scotland where a man might be free. Have you not heard of those who sailed to the Americas in the *Mayflower* ? Do you not know that there are Protestants living quietly in the Netherlands ? "

" Yes," said he, " Richard Cameron has gone there."

" Well, then," said I, " I might meet him. It was his place that I took in Castle Drum. And I am going to The Hague."

" For what purpose ? " asked the Covenanter quickly.

" For that, I do not know. I think to find my friend, William Penn, and to go with him, if the matter can be arranged, to the New World."

And then I asked them why they did not do the same, instead of remaining in this infested country, planning vengeance on their persecutors, slaughtering and being slaughtered, tormenting and being tormented, they did not go with Mr. Penn and build up a new city in hope.

And I reminded them that the persecuted and the helpless had in every age imagined the promised land a golden city, a Utopia.

" And why do not you, who are young and stalwart," said I, " endeavour to attain it ? "

They had not, I think, been spoken to thus before. The matter and the manner a little surprised them, and they puzzled a little over my English accent. But I think they

were impressed with my sincerity, for what I spoke I spoke truthfully. My own life had been faulty, even evil, but I was minded in that moment, and had been for some while, to end it, and all these feuds, done in the name of Christ, God of Love, confused and sickened me.

"Our homes are here," said the leader of the men, still looking at me earnestly; "we are pledged to root out the Devil from Scotland and to overthrow the rule of that base perjured man Charles Stuart."

Evan Garrie then told him that he spoke treason, and added in friendly warning that such words were dangerous.

"For," said he, "I come from Dumfries, and in there, and Wigtown, they are raising more troops every week, and it is intended to put down the Conventicles and the outed ministers by sword and fire. John Graham has fuller powers now."

The Covenanters seemed to think these bold words from one who was in their power, and peered again at young Evan Garrie, at me, and at the negro. Then the leader of them said:

"My name is David Harston of Raphillet, I have estates near here, and I think you are honest men, even if you speak foolishly of what concerns you not. For you," he turned to me, "you are an Englishman and have no concern in these matters. For you," and he spoke to Evan Garrie, "I think you are one of those who blow neither hot nor cold. You'll not ride with Claverhouse nor fight with us. Well, be on your way." He spoke to the man beside him, and said: "This friend of mine, James Balfour, will go with you and see you safely across the moor."

"Are we likely to be stopped by other rebels," said I, using the word deliberately, "those who will fire at us, maybe, without stopping to question?"

He did not answer, but looked at me gloomily. I cannot reproduce his rough and strange speech, but the substance of his emphatic talk was clear enough to me. I saw that I could not move him from his purpose, and desolation fell

upon my spirit. The scene was so gloomy, the moor, the rain, the low sky, these dark-faced men with their stern purpose, blood as I was sure it was, their muskets ready to their hand, their faces intently peering through the wet vapours. What a fool I had been to endeavour to persuade them to go abroad and walk the world elsewhere. How useless it would be, even if they went they would carry their bitternesses, their quarrels, their dissensions, with them !

So we went on our way with Mr. James Balfour as our surly guide. After a while he said he would turn back, for we were almost within sight of St. Andrews.

I asked him of the name of the place where we had crossed, and he said that it was known as Magus Moor.

* * *

Within an hour or so we reached the city of St. Andrews, entering it by an old gate that was much chained. The mist cleared about this hour and showed us the noble city standing upon a rocky promontory above the bay. We passed through streets of noble houses, antique and dignified, and the ruins of a magnificent cathedral that had been destroyed, Evan Garrie told me, by the fury of the followers of John Knox, the true founder. I recalled that grim old man was himself suspected of being a warlock, for had he not taken to himself in his extreme old age a fair and noble young wife ? and how else save by magic had he won her ?

In St. Andrews city had been martyred several of these reformers, and there too had been murdered Cardinal Beaton, who was minister to Mary, Queen of Scotland. And everywhere we looked were ruined churches, convents, or monasteries, I know not what, but at least fragments of popish architecture with roofless aisles and broken arches.

Asking our way from some of the passers-by, who stared

with suspicion, for by now we looked uncouth and rough enough, we were directed to the residence of Doctor Sharp, who did not live in the castle on the cliff but in a smaller though still magnificent house in the city.

The interior of this mansion was furnished in a fair fashion, and we were courteously received, so that in a while, when I had been able to repair my garments in a comfortable chamber that was set at my disposal, all that had passed seemed but a wild dream, for I had returned now to the manner of life to which I had been used in England.

Doctor Sharp had about him all the appointments and service that I had been accustomed to in the houses of those people whom I had known before I came to Scotland.

And so, having, as it were, returned to that life, I could not believe in the phantoms I thought I had seen that night in the ruined chapel. Nay, I could scarcely believe in the existence of the ladies of Castle Drum, or in the wild tales that Evan Garrie had told me in the corner of the ruined cottage two or three nights ago. It was difficult even to credit those wild figures who had accosted us on Magus Moor, whom I had, in a moment of madness, as it now seemed to me, endeavoured to persuade to join Mr. Penn in his fanatic attempt to find a New World.

What need of a New World? Why, all was fair here. The house was warm and pleasantly perfumed, the servants were lightfooted and in comely liveries, there was fine meat and good French wine on the table. No trace of savage Scotland here. I noticed that Evan Garrie seemed uneasy, almost uncomfortable, and that he looked uncouth and rustic among these luxurious surroundings.

But I was once more Tom Maitland, who had not cut so poor a figure in St. James's and on the Mall.

Doctor Sharp was agreeable, but seemed, I thought, weak, for beneath his courtesies that he dispensed very amiably, was a certain hesitancy, an irritability that seemed to indicate a man not sure of himself.

However, he played the host very graciously and presented me to his daughter, Marjorie I think the name was, who kept house for him I understood.

I discovered the reason why Sir Donald Garrie had tarried so long in St. Andrews was because he had been ill with a quinzy. Why he had not written was also clear, why we had not received the letters. He had made several attempts to send messengers, but none of these had got more than part of the way. They had all come back, saying that the countryside was in a state of revolt and it was not safe to endeavour to push through to Castle Drum.

After our experiences of James Balfour and David Harston and their troop, I could believe Sir Donald.

He expressed some marvel that we had succeeded in gaining St. Andrews without being molested, and I told him of the care we had taken on our journey and that Evan Garrie had a fair knowledge of the by-roads. He asked us if we had come upon any Conventicles or outed ministers gathering their flocks about them in the haunts of the fox and the eagle ?

And I replied no, we had met none but a few men on the moors outside the town. But I did not give the names of these, disdaining to betray their sufferance by delivering them to their persecutors.

Sir Donald, like his host, the Archbishop, was a peevish man. I could see that he was trying hard to get himself a place in the Government. Like all the rest, like all of us, perhaps, for I should include myself in the same category, he wanted rewards, honours, safety, some manner of earldom for himself.

And I looked at him, a man past his prime, with a wonder at the vileness of humanity. While this dotard was cringing upon the great prelate in St. Andrews, what were his two daughters doing, or his sick heir ? They were in the charge of that man Fletcher, whom I took at best to be but a charlatan and at worse to be, perhaps, a minister of Satan himself.

So absorbed was he in his own affairs and so brought down by the sickness that had nearly choked him, Sir Donald did not at first recall how strange it was that I should be there, nor ask me my errand. And it was after we had supped and had our wine, elegantly enough, and we had laughed over poor Virgil, who had been taken to the servants' quarters to be fed and clothed, that suddenly he looked at me across the table and said :

" But, Mr. Maitland, you are my son's pedagogue. How is it you have left Castle Drum ? "

I had been waiting for that question, and I had so many answers ready that I knew not which to offer first. I gave a sidelong glance at Evan Garrie, who looked back steadily at me. I meant to say to him ' This is the moment to defy the enchantment,' and he meant to say ' Speak on, I am ready.'

" Sir," said I, " speaking in the presence of His Grace, here, I did not like my employment in Castle Drum, and if I were in your place, Sir Donald, I would hasten back as soon as you may get a troop of horse to the protection of your castle."

" Is it likely," cried he, half rising in his chair, " to be assailed by these bloody devils, murderous Covenanters, as they call themselves ? Greatly do I regret," he added, quickly, without giving me time to speak, " that ever I harboured Richard Cameron, who was like a viper on my hearth, and yet I never knew it, for he played the gentle saint."

" I think he is a gentle saint," said I, " and maybe he kept much evil from your house."

Sir Donald did not like these words nor their inclination. He looked at Doctor Sharp, who sat at the head of his table, indifferent, I think, to all of us, yet listening, as an uneasy, nervous man will, for sounds that were not there. I had seen that his house was very well guarded, I had been told that he wore chainmail under his priestly robes, that he endured all the torments of a man who goes in fear of

assassination ; more than once there had been an attempt on his life.

I think that Sir Donald had taken something of my meaning, for he said :

" I am obliged to you, Mr. Maitland, for taking this long, and, as I fear, dangerous journey, to warn me that Castle Drum is in peril. I am glad to have had news of my ladies and to be able to send them back messages by you, for I think that you have taken an unnecessary fatigue. The Castle's well guarded, I must have over two hundred able-bodied serving-men, and an arsenal of arms there."

" I'm not talking," said I, " of worldly perils. Castle Drum has inmates more dangerous to its safety than the attacks of Covenanters."

I know not what he made of these dark words, but he began to play Sir Hector with me, saying in a bullying tone : " I took you from London, Mr. Maitland, as a ruined gambler who chanced to be a fine scholar, and, as I thought, an honest gentleman. I took you because you came of my Lord of Lauderdale's family."

" No reason why how you took me," I said, " I'll not be your son's pedagogue nor your daughters' guardian."

I gave him a look that pierced through his evasions and took from my pocket the packet of gold that Jannot Garrie had given me.

" This is what is left of my fee, some of it is spent on my journey. But little, we only bought food and bait for the horses and slept for the most in our cloaks by the wayside. Here is what's left of Castle Drum's gold, Sir Donald. I intend to go abroad."

Doctor Sharp was now looking a little amazed at this scene, which must have been unlike any he had seen at his elegant table. He looked at me, to Evan, and then to Sir Donald. Being prudent, he asked nothing of what the matter was.

Sir Donald turned to him with a bow, as if excusing this uncouthness, then to me, and said, almost with a whimper :

"It was difficult to get anyone to teach a sick boy."

"Ay, and your two wayward daughters," said I, rising. "We've done our part now."

"Your part!" said Sir Donald. "Why are you taking with you my young kinsman, Evan Garrie?"

"Why should he stay in Castle Drum in idleness? He's too old for a page," said I, "and does not wish to be a serving-man."

"Well, let him go as a trooper. Colonel Graham is raising more men," said the Archbishop. "We want more soldiers to protect us from these accursed rebels."

"I've no mind for that, Your Grace," Evan Garrie spoke for himself. "I think to go abroad with Mr. Maitland, here. I've lived roughly too long here."

"Go home, sir," said I, "and find out why we left."

Then I thanked His Grace for his hospitality, and I begged that he would give us a room for the night and that we would be gone early in the morning. The horses were not ours, and we were prepared to go on foot, we intended to make our way to the nearest port, if not from St. Andrews Bay—and so across the wintry seas to the Low Countries.

"Why," cried Sir Donald, "have you come so far to tell me this? Why did not you go straight on your adventures from Castle Drum?"

"You reminded me but now," said I, "that I am a gentleman, albeit a ruined one, and I wished to let you know my intentions. Now you can understand that there is no one in authority there at your castle save your sick son and Doctor Fletcher." I could scarce avoid retching at the name, I remembered that figure I had seen in the chapel ruins. "Your patron, His Grace here, and your friend, Colonel Graham, can protect Castle Drum."

Sir Donald made no more demur. I think he realized something of what lay behind my words, he must have had some glimmer of the reputation his ladies held. For all I knew he was a warlock himself, that was certainly the reputation of Doctor Sharp.

After that we were silent over our wine. His Grace was very courteous, and after a while began to give us good advice. He did not disagree with our design of going to the Netherlands, where he said many good and able men were gathered.

"And it was as well," he added shrewdly, "to have a foot in each camp, for His Highness of Orange was in the position of heir-apparent to the throne of England, and was well known to be in secret chief of the opposition to His Grace of York. Some even thought that he encouraged these rebellious Covenanters, but that Doctor Sharp did not credit. Being one who always spoke well, I think, of all the great ones of the earth, he had much praise for the young Stadtholder, and even offered us, being gentlemen of position, letters of introduction to His Highness.

I said we would take these, although I did not think we should be able to use them. We were really penniless adventurers, and had but a small pouch of silver between us.

Sir Donald, frowning and uneasy, said that I must take my fee for the few weeks I had been at Castle Drum, and I said that I would take whatever he chose to give me, not being in a position to show pride nor dignity.

So the matter was settled, something to the convenience and comfort of us all. And we spent a night on feather beds between fair linen, and rose in the morning much refreshed.

His Grace insisted on sending serving-men with us to the port, where we might get a ship to Leith, and advised us not to encumber ourselves with the poor blackamoor. This last I would not listen to ; I had taken an affection to Virgil and Evan Garrie did not object to his company.

Sir Donald took me aside before we left the Archbishop's house next morning and asked me, in a tone that I think was unnaturally controlled, what was my real reason for leaving Castle Drum ? He said that I had mentioned his wayward daughters and demanded in what way they had offended me ?

"Offended!" I cried. "What am I, a poor pedagogue, to use such a word! I have had my lesson, sir, and lived a wild life. I shall not now risk offence by advising another man's women. And my advice is this, Sir Donald, return as fast as you may to Castle Drum and give an eye as to what is taking place there."

I saw that he did not care to press me further, but was most uneasy. And he muttered with regret:

"I thought if I had an Englishman it would be different. I believed a foreigner would suit."

His Grace asked us if we would not delay while he got other letters from His Grace of Lauderdale and other relatives of mine, who might also supply us with money and necessities.

But we were both of us impatient to be out of the country, where we saw nothing ahead but blood and revolution. And I think in the breast of each was a little hope that we might come upon some peace or pleasure that till now had seemed impossible to us.

Young Evan, whom I had rescued from Jannot Garrie, felt, I believe, a lightened spirit such as had been unknown to him before. His face looked younger, less lined and harassed than when he had been in Castle Drum, and the strained look had gone from his eyes, his mouth was less grim.

I felt I had been a benefactor to the poor lad, I might have soothed my pride by saying the same of poor Virgil, whose cheeks had fattened, whose eyes were less bloodshot, whose gait was less slouching. He had been treated kindly at the Archbishop's establishment, for the servants had come from Edinburgh and London and were used to negroes, and did not consider them all limbs of Satan.

We were, on the whole, well treated by these two gentlemen on whom we had broken so rudely and for one of whom at least I had brought an ungracious message. A certain amount of money I accepted, a further sum Sir Donald gave to his young kinsman, Evan. The negro was

provided with a decent livery, and they importuned us until we accepted horses to take us to the port.

It was a day of thick mist when we left the shores of Scotland in the Cross Keys. The passage to Holland was slow and tedious ; we encountered several gales of wind. Both I and Evan Garrie felt queasy in the stomach and the poor blackamoor was ill, groaning his soul out in the cabin.

IV

WISE YOUNG PRINCE

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IV

WISE YOUNG PRINCE

THE sun shone fairly though out of a misted sky when we arrived on the shores of the Lowlands, and when we reached The Hague the snow was thick on the ground and the canals frozen. It was difficult to make Evan Garrie believe that this country was in the same world as Scotland ; I agreed with him most heartily as to the sharp differences between the two countries.

We lodged modestly and in a most clean place, and finding William Penn in The Hague we waited upon him soon after our arrival.

Evan Garrie had seen nothing but his native country and his native customs, and he continued to be greatly astonished at the place in which he found himself. Perhaps there could be few contrasts more complete than that between Scotland and the Lowlands at the time of which I am writing, when I paid my first visit there after my horrid experiences in Castle Drum.

The winter was severe but the houses so comfortable and well warmed that we did not feel the rigours of it, while the ever-encroaching sea damp was checked by so many good housewifely arts that there was neither unsightliness from tarnish nor discomfort from chill.

The States General had signed the peace in the same year in which I reached The Hague, and there was still signs of warlike activity in the beautiful town, many soldiers about the streets and many men returning to civil occupations after having been for years under arms.

There was a quiet pride about this people that I could not but admire, for they had begun this war six years ago in desperation to defend themselves from the wanton aggression of France and from the heroism of their young Stadtholder only and from their own dogged determination not to lose their freedom had they survived.

I have heard the Dutch spoken of with contempt and the country referred to as the 'vomit of the sea' and the 'valiant sand-bank,' and there was much about these people that was not sympathetic to one of my temperament.

But for all that I was obliged to allow them noble and splendid qualities. Everything they did was done well, their arts and crafts were admirable, and I soon perceived that they had been the first in many inventions.

There was a dignity most pleasing to the eye in this town —for it was no more than that though the seat of government; indeed, I believe it held the status of a village— with the flat-fronted patrician houses rising either side the canals planted in comely fashion with wych-elms and lime trees, all now prettily outlined with sparkling frost. There were many skaters on the frozen waters and on the great lake of the Yverberg that lay in front of the ancient Hall of the Knights that was surrounded by more modern buildings, now the seat of the Government and the Stadtholder's Palace. Swans graced the lakes in milder weather, but now these were taken into shelter for the winter, that was as bleak as the climate as that of Scotland, as I have said. Ceaseless low clouds blew up from the dunes and from the open sea that lay but an easy ride away through old pleasant woods of tall trees; the land was so flat that all was at the mercy of the winds.

All here was civilized to the highest point of civilization that I had ever seen. The people were patrician in temperament, elegant in their accomplishments, fond of music, of painting and of games of skill; good equestrians too, and fine judges of both dogs and horses. It was surprising in a country that had been fighting for bare existence for years,

all odds against it, that there should be so much tranquillity, and, as far as I could see, so much luxury.

My introductions gave me the entry into several houses where the names of Doctor Sharp, the Duke of Lauderdale, and Sir Donald Garrie were known. Some of these were the mansions of noblemen, where one might expect magnificence, but others belonged to men who were no more than merchants and knew the Scots through trading with them. But even in these houses I found much elegance and even extravagance.

The Dutch had long been trading with the East, and it was to my eye, long cheated of beauty and comeliness, a great pleasure to gaze on these rich pieces of furniture, lacquer, gilt, and inlaid, these vases of enamel and of fine porcelain set so precisely against the walls painted a pale pea-green colour in these stately mirrored chambers with the glass-fronted cabinets filled with porcelain.

Mr. Penn could not immediately receive us, he was, indeed, in attendance on the Stadtholder. We heard that through the agency of Dr. Gilbert Burnet, who gave himself the air of a personage, he had had an introduction to the Prince of Orange from the Duke of York, his patron, and that he was entrusted with some half-secret mission from one prince to another ; some proposal, it was said, about the abolition of the Test.

But we amused our leisure well enough ; all that defeated us was lack of means, we could not ruffle it very bravely when we had to count every penny in our pouches. But my clothes were good, Evan Garrie was much of my height and my wardrobe served to give us both a decent appearance. The livery that Dr. Sharp had fitted out poor Virgil looked very well, and against this background of The Hague no one here remarked on the blackamoor, for most of the people kept a slave, or even more, and these negroes might be seen in attendance on the sledges that passed along the canals, finely painted with gay carnival scenes and adorned with the heads of swans and peacocks,

with furred ladies within and drawn either by ponies, servants, or these lusty blackamoors.

I liked this life, so ordered, so aristocratic ; it cleared my mind of many fumes and fancies, and after no more than a few weeks of it I had found it difficult to believe that I had ever witnessed that scene in the chapel ruins or ever seen Jannot Garrie's stained face turn and look at me as I hastened away from those wicked enchantments. Impossible to believe that such abominations ever took place while moving in these cool airs, this atmosphere of dignity and common sense.

I could not but admire the Dutch for their toleration, so vivid a contrast to the bloody debates in Scotland. Here were no jarring dissensions, no talk of persecuting a man for his faith. The religion of the Dutch was that of John Calvin, but they seemed to have wrought that stern faith into a gentler form than that it was given in Scotland, and though their ministers were grave enough in their black and white bands, though their religious observances were severely kept, I saw nothing of those grim furies and black hatreds that animated the Covenanters.

Their churches were pleasant, the large Romish buildings had long since been stripped of all ornaments and white-washed out with painful care. The brightly-coloured glass was gone from all the higher windows and the clear cold daylight fell through the water-green panes on to interiors that were, with their green serge curtains and plain pews, more like meeting-houses than churches.

But here even the taste and luxury of this wealthy people showed, for they had magnificent tombs in alabaster for their heroes and not a church that I went into during my residence in the Low Country lacked a superb organ, played on by skilled musicians and garnished with gilt figures of angels for the pipes and fine paintings for the panels.

In one sense of the word neither Evan Garrie nor myself could feel a stranger at The Hague, there were so many English and Scots there—refugees and adventurers—

more the first than the last, because rogues and scoundrels were not encouraged by His Highness, and those who lived by vice found it difficult to make a livelihood there among people cool, prudent, and decorous.

Many worthy and pious men were there, who had fled from persecution or ill-treatment or the threat of injustice that had been offered them in their native countries.

There were Germans there who had come to offer their services to the Stadtholder in their various provinces of science and art ; there were a number of Jews, for this was one of the few countries in the world where the Jews were not persecuted. Amsterdam, I knew well, was the headquarters of the powerful Jew bankers and great trading houses, and although this superb city was always antagonistic to the House of Orange, yet the Prince was on good terms with many of these Jews, and I have seen them going to and fro the streets of The Hague in their furred gowns and their high caps with their servants behind them and their secretaries with portfolios under their arms.

I was told that much of the money that His Highness had spent on his long war with France from which he had emerged, if not victorious at least safe, and that was a triumph considering the might of France, had been produced by the Jews.

Here were many of the extreme Scots Covenanters, including, I heard, Mr. Richard Cameron. Strange to think that I should meet him in this place, so different from Castle Drum. I heard from another Scot, whom I met at an Ordinary, of this preacher's residence at The Hague, but for some time I did not see him.

I noticed other Scots, however, some of them known to Evan Garrie ; it was not clear to me if they were on peaceful purposes of trade or because they had fled from political storms. There were several English people of distinction also, and I surmised that they had come to learn from his own mouth the future plans of the Prince of Orange, who,

as the husband of the heiress to the throne of Great Britain, was of increasing importance to English politics, and had a great reputation as a wise statesman.

All these people were allowed to live as they would, practising their several faiths. There was a chapel where the Scots might meet and pray in peace, there was a church for those who followed the English Communion ; Papists, too, were welcome as long as they did not meddle with others ; there were Freethinkers also, and philosophers, various clubs and organizations existed in The Hague for the entertainment and support of these foreigners.

You may believe that with all these activities and all these strangers, the place was full of life and movement. The British Resident, Sir William Temple, and his wife—the lively and gracious Lady Dorothy—were continually receiving visitors from England, and many of these stayed for several months, hiring expensive houses in the Voor hourt, where there was always a press of handsome carriages.

I did not wait on Sir William. I did not suppose that my name would be more popular in The Hague than in Scotland. I knew that my powerful relative, the Duke of Lauderdale, for whom I had not any great respect myself, was not a man to be held in esteem by the Prince of Orange or the Dutch people. Nor had I any good reason for approaching His Highness. I did not want a troop of horse, I had no excuse to ask for a pension, I had no news to give him, no offer of service to make.

For the same reason, after my first impulse to seek the man out had passed, I made no endeavour to approach Mr. Penn, whom I saw on several occasions going about the streets in his plain grey coat and flat hat that he did not take off even in the presence of the King, walking as was his wont, quickly, as if he had a mighty business in hand, his full, pleasant features clouded by an anxious look, talking loudly in his thick sweet voice.

I pointed him out once as he hastened along the footway to Evan Garrie :

"That is the man," said I, "who is going to found a new world."

And as I spoke old regrets tugged at my heartstrings. And another man's dreams haunted me again.

Evan Garrie was disappointed in the appearance of Mr. Penn. He said that he looked an ordinary enough man, scarce a gentleman, too stolid and temperate, like an overfed clerk.

"It is the strange dress he affects," said I. "They call themselves Friends, the vulgar term them Quakers, for they are supposed to fall into tremulous fits when they receive divine inspiration. And it may be, young Evan, that they know the truth of it, and in following them we may find peace."

And the fit came upon me and I endeavoured to persuade the boy, as I had tried once before when we were in Scotland, that we should leave all these broils, attach ourselves to Mr. Penn and offer him—not our fortune, for we had none—but the strength of our hands, brains, and sense, and help him found in that faraway country a new world and to build a city of brotherly love.

"It is a fair climate," said I, although I knew but little of the place; "there are wide streams, lush pastures, and mighty trees, magnificent beasts. And is there not in every man's mind a longing to start afresh on the virgin soil, cut down the timber to build his own house, to raise his roof-tree by his own labour?"

And I reminded Evan Garrie of the Pilgrim Fathers, as they termed them, who had sailed to New England fifty years ago, yet from what reports I had heard of them I was bound to add, they had fallen into nothing but broils among themselves ever since, being transported too far in zeal and overgiven to disputes on doctrinal points.

"Well, the tale I've heard," confided Evan Garrie, lowering his voice and looking round apprehensively, as if he was not safe from old terrors even here, "is that they took witches with them and that it was the witches

who blew up these quarrels. Besides, there were Indians, the murdering savages. How does your Mr. Penn intend to deal with them ? "

" By brotherly love," I quoted. " He means to buy the land from them on honest terms, to smoke the pipe of peace with them, to offer them his friendship and love."

" Well, you'll not go, Mr. Maitland, will you ? And neither shall I ! I suppose," added Evan Garrie with a sigh, " we belong to this old world, with all its broils and halts and fears. Sometimes I think, Mr. Maitland," added the boy earnestly, " that I belong to Scotland. That even here in the Netherlands I hanker for it. I am smitten with a desire to return."

He made the confession with a mounting colour, for he knew the pains I had been at to rescue him from Castle Drum and the women there, and that such an admission as this might well smack of ingratitude. Of such, indeed, I instantly accused him, and he told me, shamefacedly, that he regretted his words.

" Why," said he, bitterly, and I could see he was trying to talk down his own desires, " should I wish to return to a country so dark and accursed ? "

" Dark and accursed, indeed," I agreed, for we had read of the affairs of Scotland in the news-letters and heard of them from the other Scots and English whom we had met. " The country is ill-governed and in a state of rebellion, and the men who are set over it—and I do not except my own relative, His Grace of Lauderdale—are both greedy, corrupt, and incapable. Matters are little mended, said I, getting into my little homily as I stretched my feet out before the earthenware stove, " by sending busy gallants like Captain John Graham to play the Constable and to slaughter the saints, as they term themselves."

We had heard something of this gentleman at The Hague, for he had been for some years in the service of the Prince of Orange and had proved himself a capable as well as a brave soldier. But there had been some trouble, and no

one rightly knew the story of why it was that he had left His Highness' service and returned to England quickly, though with letters of recommendation to that Prince's uncle, the Duke of York. There was some story that he had assisted the Prince at the Battle of St. Neff, mounting His Highness on his own horse and hoping for great rewards for this ; whereas all he got was a hundred guineas for the price of the animal he had lent the Prince, and in disdain he had scattered this money among his stablemen.

There was another tale that he, jealous of an officer who had received, as he thought, undue preferment, that he had struck this gentleman and that the Prince had pardoned him this grave offence that had taken place in the precincts of the Palace, but had at once dismissed him from his service. Whatever these stories might be, and they heard them but at the clubs and coffee-houses at second- and third-hand, it was at least clear that Captain Graham had acted with much arrogance and spirit ; and he being but a mercenary soldier, this had been ill-stomached by the Dutch and not tolerated by the Stadtholder, whom I took to be as proud a prince as any who ever stepped, for all his simplicity of life and the fact that he was head of a republic.

I know not how long we should have gone on in this lazy life for, despite all our high talk when we had left Scotland, we made no effort to obtain adventures but lived in the rooms we had found in The Hague, comfortable in the little circle of friends we soon made, avoiding the Court, but going among the coffee-houses and the clubs, talking to the wits and sages of many nations who found it wiser to come to this tolerant country.

And the days passed quickly enough.

I found a *salle d'armes* where I practised my swordsmanship and where I taught Evan Garrie the use of more civilized weapons than the dirk and the targe. I amused myself by instructing the poor blackamoor, Virgil, in plain English, in writing a few simple sentences.

And I hired a horse and rode a little through the woods, towards the wide open sea. I played cards, billiards, and backgammon, I made the memoranda for my Memoirs. I talked—yes, I was not too old to talk—and ranted a great deal of the state of the world and the state of my soul, the history of the past and the enigma of the future, with all whom I met.

And I heard the opinions and arguments of Doctors of Law, Doctors of Theology, and Swiss philosophers and Flemish peasants, of scarred soldiers who had been fighting for six years up and down the Flanders borders. I spoke with engineers and moneylenders, both of whom had been important in the last war, with chemists and architects, none of them very great in their professions, but keen and able men. I met fanatics, too, who boiled over with zeal, and found themselves, even here, taken up to prison.

And still out of all this babble I could not resolve my own way. What should I be? What should I do? I had been discontented in Scotland, where I had work to my hand, and I soon became discontented in the comfortable idleness of The Hague, where I felt myself but an idle jackanapes.

Evan Garrie seemed to wait on my mood, and that at times exasperated me, and I would ask the boy roundly why he did not go to the Prince of Orange and offer his sword? And he said for the same reason that he had refused to ride with Captain Graham.

Then we would fall laughing, both of the same mind, for we had no wish to begin such a bloody and useless profession as that of war, yet I felt ashamed of my lightness and jesting mind.

What, then, should we do? We were young and lusty, both gently born, though I was better bred, and I wondered if there was not some scheme of trade whereby I might not make enough money to buy back my estates in England. But when I thought of England I would think of Philippa, and decided I would never see my own country again.

Then I pondered if we might not engage in some merchandise, and we began to learn the Dutch language for that end. Some of our indulgent friends offered to give us letters to rich merchants' houses in Amsterdam. If we had known anything of seamanship we might have gone on some of their trading vessels that went to and fro the Indies. But there were many highly skilled men in the Netherlands to fill these employments.

The winter began to break, even in this cold climate, and the snow to melt and even the sluggish waters in the canals stirred a little beneath the thin ice; and we were still without resolve or employment.

We should have been, at this time, hard put to it for money had I not—in a moment of bravado and maybe of insolence—written to His Grace of Lauderdale, upbraiding him for the miserable employment he had gotten me in Castle Drum, and telling him that it was a disgrace to him to have a cadet of his house reduced as I was reduced, and, to come closer to the point, begging him that he would send a draft on one of the banks at The Hague in my name and for a round sum of money, adding that a refusal would do him a great deal of wrong.

I made a wager with Evan Garrie that I should get no reply. But a letter did come, and with it a draft for a sum of money that exceeded my hopes.

There was also a letter of advice from His Grace, who referred bitterly to my late misconduct, as he termed it, in London, saying that I had brought discomfiture, if not disgrace, upon his house. He added, however, that time enough perhaps had gone by, and it might be reasonable for me to return to London, where he would endeavour to find me some post about the Court. 'A sinecure,' he added, 'for you never had any gift, Tom, save for your ancient learning. And what use is that to a man of breeding if it be not joined to other matters?'

I had found this same knowledge of the classics, however, some use in The Hague, for it was the passport to the

company of men better than myself. I was, though I appeared but an ordinary gallant, a ruined gentleman of birth and one time of position, a fair scholar, and I could hold my own with the pedagogues and savants whom I met at The Hague.

With my Lord of Lauderdale's monies, we paid our expenses until the spring. When we had made up our minds at last to wait upon Mr. Penn, he had returned to London. It was voiced that he would be back in The Hague in a few weeks, so we made this an excuse to condone our idleness. We would remain there until he returned and then put before him our plight and see if he was able to persuade us to join him in his scheme of founding a new city in a new world.

I think the happiest of the three of us in those days was the blackamoor, who, well treated in The Hague and given as much consideration as if he were a Christian, became fat and content, and certainly did not now look like any imp of Satan, for his cheeks became round and glistening, his eyes clear, his smile perpetual and cheerful.

I discovered that he had been fairly well trained by the goldsmith in the Heatherbow in Edinburgh, he knew how to look after a gentleman's clothes and weapons, how to prepare food and how to dress a horse. I taught him some further elegances, and he became a most useful servant, warmly grateful for the least kindness and strongly attached both to Evan Garrie and myself.

It was in the month of April that I, like many a man who has retreated into a backwater of life, discovered that I was in a fool's paradise. I had endeavoured like a coward to stand aside from all the conflicts and storms, and I was idling away my time, my youth, and my kinsman's money in vain disputes and arguments.

From this mental sloth and bodily inactivity I was shaken by an event that to me was dreadful.

As I was walking by the Vyverberg the day that, as I remember, I first felt the faint warmth of spring in the air,

I saw Philippa coming towards me, the woman whom I did not think I should ever see again, the woman I did not wish to see again ; for her I had undergone much, and it might have been on a better account.

She wore a dark-green coloured cloak, that was the first I noted about her. Why do we observe in strong moments such petty trivialities ? And she was alone, save for a footman in attendance a few yards behind.

She held in her hand a little travelling mask on a stick and wore large doeskin gloves with tassels.

I kept my attention on these details, for I wished to persuade myself that this was Philippa, indeed, and not a fantasy of my infatuated imagination.

It was she, and she knew me, and stared at me with as much amaze as I looked at her.

I had often wondered what we should do if we chanced to meet ; that had been my amusement in my midnight hours when I had woken, wretched almost to madness thinking of her, counting over in my mind what I had lost when I had lost this lady.

But now that I saw her so unexpectedly and in this strange place, I stared foolishly. It was she who spoke :

" I did not think to see you ever again. I certainly did not think to see you here."

I found my voice again, and the words I used did not seem of my own choosing. I said :

" Do you speak as a friend or as an enemy ? "

" You are in your old mood," she replied, " and intend, I see, to make a debate of everything."

Then she could not let the moment be, but must tarnish it with feminine duplicity and worldliness, for she added :

" If we are seen talking here they will believe we met in The Hague by design."

I commended her prudence and was turning away, but she called after me, one word, slowly spoken :

" Tom ! "

I stood still and would not turn, and she came up to me, and said quickly :

" Do you want to see me again ? Do you want to speak to me ? "

I remembered the three witch ladies in Castle Drum, why I do not know. There seemed something of the expression I had noticed on their faces in the fine-pointed countenance of Philippa Dean.

Why should I want to speak to her ? What could we have to say ? Had there not been arguments and questions enough between me and this woman ? Had she not broken my life in half, leaving me sullen, discontented, and desolate ?

" Is your husband with you ? " I asked.

She replied, looking away, that he was, and that he had her watched closely, seldom letting her out of sight.

" That is his servant following you now, I suppose," I said. " He will go and report to his master that you were seen talking to me. And I shall soon be known as Tom Maitland, for whose sake, no doubt," I added bitterly, " you suffer all this espionage."

She then told me quickly that her husband had come to The Hague as, he declared, to buy horses, the Prince of Orange having some magnificent Polish horses in his stables that, now the wars were over, he was willing to sell. But that this was a mere excuse and that Sir John had political reasons, like most of those who came to The Hague for such visits, under various excuses, to the Stadtholder's Court.

I was so occupied by the fact that this was Philippa and that we had again, after a not great space of time, met, that I took little heed of what she said. I was wondering, with my usual black selfishness, what effect this meeting would have on me and my destiny and my future.

I had not told Evan Garrie my story, but I knew he had guessed much of it, and as I watched Philippa hurrying away in her green cloak with the footman behind her along

the edge of the Vyverberg, I thought I would return to the young Scot and tell him my tale for the pleasure of having a listener, for I was stirred from my spruce idleness.

So I went back to our lodgings, hardly noticing the world about me, full of elation, rage and confusion of spirit, and with nothing but these words "Philippa is here! I have found Philippa again!" ringing in my mind, to discover that Evan Garrie was not alone in the dark, clean room that looked on to the grey water of the canal.

To my deep chagrin I found Richard Cameron was in his company. We had not met the Covenanter often when we were in The Hague. He kept himself much apart among a few chosen followers.

Why he had sought us out now when I wished for Evan Garrie's company, I could not guess, and I gave him dismal looks. I was so vexed to see the old man there, babbling of his own, as it seemed to me, thin and foolish concerns, while I was smitten by the clap that Fate had given me in this meeting with Philippa, that I sat apart black and sullen and scarcely heard a sentence that he spoke.

I had wanted Evan Garrie, who was, as it were, the whipping-boy for my moods, to myself that night, and to pour out before him my rage and tribulation at coming face to face with this woman, who had been at once my joy and my ruin. And there was the old man, looking to me half starved in his worn gown and darned starched bands, trying, as I supposed, to persuade Evan Garrie to return with him to Scotland to join the Covenanters, even as Captain Graham had endeavoured to make the boy join his dragoons.

'Why could they not leave the wretch alone?' I thought bitterly, forgetting in my grim selfishness that I had used Evan Garrie for my own ends and brought him away with me out of Scotland, partly, no doubt, as I flattered myself, to save his soul and his health of body, but partly also that I might have the solace of his companionship and admiration.

The cold daylight waned and the serving-maid brought in the candles and still the old man talked.

And I was forced at last to interrupt ; I came forward into the circle of light and, resting my arms on the table, demanded without much respect what the matter of his discourse was ?

Richard Cameron was suddenly silent, but Evan Garrie looked at me then shrewdly, and I saw that he weighed me up in his mind, comparing me, perhaps, with Richard Cameron, comparing both of us with Colonel Graham ; wondering, no doubt, where his path lay. And he said, slowly, and in a gentle tone and in his Scots tongue, that he had not lost even after so many months abroad, and that I could never imitate :

" It is true, Mr. Maitland " (he had never lost his formal manner of addressing me) " that I waste my time here at The Hague in idleness, and I have told you before that I have a mind to return to Scotland."

I could not speak for chagrin and disgust, so I took my head in my hands and listened sullenly while the old man took the word.

I had to admit that Mr. Cameron spoke in dulcet tones, he had a soothing and endearing way with him, but much of what he said to me was but dead theology ; what care had I for the dry and divers ways in which men strove to approach an invisible God ?

Yet some of his discourse had warm human colouring and went directly to the heart.

He said :

" There are persecuted people, who are my people, in Scotland. They are shooting down those who will not take the Oath against the Covenant. It is yes or no, and then a bullet in the heart or brain. Young boys are dying thus, and women too. Wives and mothers are bereaved. The heather is covered with the blood and beaten-out brains of the saints."

" It has always been thus," said I, wearily, " Europe has

but come to the end of a long war, and there are further warnings as to the future. How, either in the public affairs or in the private lives of men, shall there be any peace ? "

I thought of Mr. Penn, with his schemes which, as he had told me in fiery, eager words, were like to fail for lack of funds, and I laughed aloud in my bitterness at all these confusions that stumbled the moderate, and gratified, no doubt, the Devil.

" If I cannot save them," Mr. Cameron was saying, " I may die with them. Blessed be the Lord."

" What use would you be—an aged, failing man ? " asked Evan Garrie curiously. " In this choppy sea of politics and persecution ? "

" No use with my hands, that is why I come to a strong youth like you. Why do not you take up the sword for your countrymen who are persecuted and downtrodden ? Well you know—and you too, Mr. Maitland—that Scotland is bitterly misgoverned. And I intend," said he in quiet tones, " to excommunicate Charles Stuart and to publish a declaration that he is no longer, by reason of his perfidy and blasphemy and lewd living, King of Scotland. And none of my friends will alter or warp from this."

" That's a bold, and perhaps a dangerous thing to do," said I. " It is no toy or trifle to thus defy a great King."

The old man's pale eyes turned on me with a tranquil look, clear as that of a child.

" Well I know it," he replied. " Do you think that I can live at The Hague in comfort and cowardice while the others suffer ? The glorious power of the Lord has wonderfully risen in me."

He began to recite to me what was happening in Scotland, naming the arrests in Galloway that was under the heel of Captain Graham and his regiment of horse, and added solemnly :

" These men, Claverhouse, Dalzell, and others, are under the protection of the Devil, and they cannot by ordinary human means be killed. One must have blessed bullets

made of silver. This cool fiend," and I understood that this was his name for Captain Graham, "is under the direct protection of the Evil One, and not by mortal means can he be given a stop."

And then, half to humour him, half because I was curious, I asked:

"And what of Castle Drum and the ladies there?"

Mr. Cameron gave me a look out of his faded eyes, pale from age and prayer and watching, and answered:

"Where there are witches in Scotland the Covenanters will root them out. Is it not written 'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live'?"

I put out my hand and grasped Evan Garrie's wrist. I thought perhaps this stem might serve as his cure, if the image of Jannot was not already withered out of his simple heart. And I said steadily, looking across the candles that were guttering on their prickets, at the old man:

"Tell me, sir, you who lived in quality as pedagogue at Castle Drum, what you think of the three ladies and of the tricks they play? Give me, too," and I could not forbear a grimace at the name, "your opinion of Doctor Fletcher."

I saw the old man's face sharpen and wrinkle with the suspicions that he might not utter. His lids drooped over his tired eyes as he looked from one to another of us.

"It is some sign of grace," he answered evasively, "to know evil when you see it. And though I take you, Mr. Maitland, to be a malignant, perhaps a concealed Papist, no better than a man of blood——"

"So!" I interrupted, "you know something of the scandals told of me?"

"Something," said he. "But let that go now. I say, though I take you to be a violent man and a man of blood, yet I have this tenderness for you, that I would warn you not to return to Castle Drum."

"Then you should have more than a tenderness. You should have thanks—because I have rescued Mr. Garrie from that accursed place."

I tried to speak with a light bitterness, but I think that wonder sunk my tone, for I was thinking of that night that I had passed in the watch-tower gazing down at the empty space between the ruined walls of the old chapel, the space that was not empty long enough.

Then the old man—I could not deny him sweet and gentle ways potent to persuade the heart of any man were he not set in black anger and near despair as I was myself, approached me, thinking me, I believe, a soul on the brink of Hell, endeavouring to persuade me to return to Scotland to cast in my lot with the Covenanters, to help protect the preachers who still gathered their flocks about them on the hill-side, against the Horse of Claverhouse, Rosse, Balcarres and Dalzell.

" Do you know who I am, and my story ? " I cried in a torment.

Mr. Cameron replied again that he had heard somewhat but that it was no concern of his, and that no matter how lost and desperate a soul might be there was still chance for it to return to peace.

And all my mind went cloudy with these conflicting beliefs and hard sayings and grim dissensions, and I tried to send my thoughts piercing upwards through these black and twisting confusions to whatever God there might be enthroned above them all.

So I withdrew from the circle of candlelight and sat in the window-place, musing upon Philippa, and the dead man and the live man who stood between us—her brother, whom they said I had killed, and her husband, to whom she had returned, accepting his charity and his pity sooner than share my blasted name and my estate forfeited to folly.

Then I tried, dark and selfish as I was, to put myself in place of the old man—old not perhaps in years, he was so frail, I could not tell his age—and when I turned to look at him now I saw how bloodless he seemed in the candlelight, how bent and feeble.

And he was returning from the peace and comfort of the Netherlands, from the little society where he was admired and safe in The Hague, to that rude, violent land that I could not think of without distaste, bold and strong as I boasted myself to be, to a land not only policed by the dragoons of Captain Graham but by, as this man firmly believed, the outposts of Hell.

So I leaned towards him and spoke earnestly :

" Sir, will you not remain where you are secure ? Must you venture on your fate with heedless boldness ? "

" I go," he answered quickly, and as he turned his face and hair looked ghostly in the candlelight, " where God directs. And I had hoped that this young gentleman," he bowed courteously towards Evan Garrie, " would have accompanied me, forming a guard and escort."

" You'll not lack those," replied the youth roughly, speaking, as I supposed, in this manner to disguise his strong feelings. " Many men will rise from the hill-sides and the heathered plains to greet you, Mr. Cameron."

" Why so I hope and so I suppose," he agreed, getting to his feet ; his voice was low and fatigued with overmuch speaking.

And I thought of what his fate might be if he fell into the hands of the Government forces. And I tried, ill-used as I was to such offices, to persuade him to remain where he would be safe. And I asked him if he had waited on the Stadtholder and what His Highness had said as to his return to Scotland.

But Mr. Cameron spoke without enthusiasm of that Prince.

" He is a valiant man," he admitted, " but one who blows too hot and cold for me. Why, he has even Papists among his friends, and is so much for toleration that I believe he could find it in him to stomach the Devil himself."

" The Stadtholder is a young man," I replied, " but has always proved himself a wise one."

" I have nothing to do with the wisdom of this world,"

replied Mr. Cameron, and Evan Garrie rose and offered his arm to help the old man to the door, for he seemed exceedingly weak ; a poor wretch to go to that powder-magazine that was Galloway.

" Think on this," I cried, " that you will make more mischief by returning to Scotland and rousing the Covenanters, as you term them, against the Government. What can it end in but blood, and more blood ! "

" What matter of that," said he, " as long as the Lord is served ? There are many hiding-places on the moors and many good friends, even among the gentlefolk."

And with that he left us, first pressing the hand of Evan Garrie and bowing courteously to me. I knew that he was disappointed, that he had hoped to take the young man with him, and that he blamed me, probably for his failure to turn the youth into a fanatic, willing to risk his life in a disaffected country kept down by Government troops.

And I was sorry and sick for the whole business, and I turned on Evan Garrie when he came back to the room and cried :

" Why must you have the old fantastic, meddling man here to-night when I have something of moment to relate to you ! "

But even as I spoke I felt with shame my meeting with Philippa was not so important as the resolution of Richard Cameron to return to Scotland.

The young man looked at me as if he scarcely understood what I had said. He was still full of this preacher's words as he muttered :

" Mr. Cameron is going back to Scotland, to send out a declaration that defies the authority of the King."

" What do you suppose that will mean but civil war ? Ay, and a war to the end, the extermination of the Scots," said I, " when men such as Colonel Graham are entrusted with the quieting of the Lowlands. Why, they'll bring the wild Highlanders on them, and more, the English troopers.

What chance have they, armed peasants and farmers and a few zealots like Mr. Cameron ? "

" They'll be taken, these zealots, at their prayers or preaching," said Evan Garrie, resting his elbows on the table and his head in the hands, " and I suppose they'll be hanged and taken down while they're alive, and quartered, and their limbs will be set up before the gates of all the market towns in Scotland."

" And who's to blame for that," cried I, " save the rank fools themselves ! His Highness, the Prince of Orange, who is their champion, has warned them against such fierce madness."

He did not answer me directly, but looking at me straightly with the golden eyes that reminded me always of Jannot and Isabelle, demanded :

" What ails you to-night, Mr. Maitland ? Something has befallen you since I saw you earlier in the day. Your manner is wild, your eyes are strange."

" I have seen," said I, " Philippa Dean, walking by the Vyverberg."

" Oh," said he, in a confusion, " that lady for whose sake you are here ? "

" You know, I suppose," I answered. " Remote as you've lived, you must have heard this story. She and I were named together, and she was married to a jealous man. Her brother came into it, too, and I met him in a *duello*. The wound I gave him was slight, but he died of it afterwards through his own negligence and the lack of skill of the surgeons. But I was blamed for it, and there was scandal at the Court. And though I had friends in high places, they said that if I left the country all would be forgotten.

" She went back to her husband, out of fear, not wishing to lose her fame, her estates. And that is all my story, save at the time when these misfortunes fell on me, I had lost a great deal of money at the gambling-tables. I wished to give magnificent presents to the lady I cradled in my heart.

And my disaster coming upon me my blood ran high and I was reckless at the cards. That is all, though no doubt from other lips you have heard it also, Evan Garrie."

He seemed impressed with my poor tale, as if there was a certain high magnificence about it. Yet he looked at me askance, and I saw that his brains were bewildered from the rapid talk of Mr. Cameron that was not without its turn of nobility, and my tale, which no doubt he had heard whispered in the various clubs that we frequented at The Hague, and his own thoughts which were largely thoughts of Jannot whom I named, and I have no doubt as he named, the young witch of Castle Drum.

And so we sat there in the twilight, taking no heed of the candles that ran down on the prickets in shrouds of wax, two wretched and misguided men, for I could not count Evan Garrie happy, for I believed that the strange girl had still her enchantment over him, and when he spoke of going back to Scotland he did not mean any other place but Castle Drum nor any other person save Jannot Garrie.

I wondered if she had sent to him at The Hague, though I took her to be a person who could not write or read. But it might be that she had these accomplishments.

I remembered then in the drowsiness of my misery as I sat in the twilight in the window-place, sunk and not resting, on the seat piled with cushions, of what she had shown me in the jet stone—the moor and the man riding across it, and the woman whom they had dragged out of the coach. And since then—often it would be in my dreams and when waiting—I had put names to those shadows, and I had thought that the man in the coach was Doctor James Sharp, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and that the leaders of the men who had attacked him were those two whom we had met on Magus Moor outside the episcopal city. The young woman, too, might well have been Marjorie Sharp—she was married, but I forgot that name.

I had spoken to Evan Garrie of this more than once and

he had admitted to me that the Covenanters believed that Doctor Sharp was a most powerful wizard and one who was responsible more than any other for the dire persecutions that they underwent. And he had added, half fearfully, that he believed that there were two men who were set aside to watch the Archbishop and, if need be, to avenge the Covenanters' blood upon him. These had a private dispute with him, one had been his steward.

I had often wondered if these two men were those whom I had met outside St. Andrews, and now all this medley of dreams and fancy returned to me and I said sullenly :

" Mr. Cameron is a dangerous man to return to the Highlands. He'll rouse them all into a flame. What will the revenge of Colonel Graham and Doctor Sharp be on all these roaring and preaching against the king ? "

" You see what I think of him," replied Evan Garrie, gloomily, " by the fact that I will not return with him. Now for your affair, Mr. Maitland. What do you wish me to do for you ? Long since I vowed myself in service to you, and so did Virgil, the poor blackamoor."

" You can do nothing for me," I replied, but the whole fibre of my being was warmed by this offer of friendship. " I tell you I met to-day this unhappy woman whom once I set too high."

And there I stayed myself, not wishing to tell the story of my unfortunate passion to this young man, making myself thus but one with him in his folly towards Jannot Garrie. And I tried to soothe him and put him off from probing into my story, and I tried to treat lightly the talk of Mr. Richard Cameron. I said that we must forget Scotland and all her woes and evils, and all her witches and devils, and the Covenanters and the troopers. That we would go forward into Europe, into Germany or France, and some way find a livelihood.

The young man did not reply to me, and I thought that my talk was wasted, for he was a Scot and loved Scotland.

* * *

So I went out into the clean air and wondered much what I should do, where my fate was minded to lead me. And then I thought, and it seemed at the time no more than a whim, that I would ask for an audience of the Prince. He was young, not much above my own age, and he had proved himself in a long and difficult war, and I knew that he was regarded by the people over whom he ruled as a hero, one who had saved them from annihilation at the hands of His Most Christian Majesty. I knew, too, that he was considered, despite his youth, one of the most wise and skilful statesmen in Europe. And I thought that perhaps if I was to see him and discuss with him the Covenanters in Scotland and Mr. Penn's schemes for a city of brotherly love to be founded in the New World, he might speak some sentence or offer some words that would relieve me from the worst of anxieties and set me on some manly path of useful work.

So far I had made myself known to few people in The Hague but, as I have already related, remained quietly in the background, only frequenting the usual coffee-houses and clubs where the exiles gathered in comfort.

Now I used what influence I had and waited upon Sir William Temple, telling him of my great relation, the Duke of Lauderdale, and begging that I might be permitted to wait upon the Stadtholder.

The matter was soon arranged, for Sir William Temple was close to His Highness' ear, and then, as always, much in his favour.

I found the Prince, like so many great men, easily accessible to those who seriously wished to see him, and it was but three days after my application that I found myself waiting in the *salons* of the Binnenhof, awaiting an audience with the Prince.

The thought of this interview had somewhat put my personal affairs out of my mind, and I was able to remember with equanimity that Philippa Dean was also in The Hague.

I had not seen her since I had met her on the Vyverberg

in her dark green cloak, with the footman and spy so discreetly but so obviously behind her. I knew where she lived and I had seen her husband more than once going to and fro in his carriage. I mistrusted him ; not only on personal grounds did I dislike him, for I believed him to be a sly and treacherous man, one who would act for two or three masters at once and serve only the one who paid him the highest fee.

Philippa Dean was in the spirit in my mind and in my blood, as I thought, and never should I be able to forget her. But I had, through the help and the companionship of Evan Garrie and through dwelling on this interview that I was to have with His Highness, the Stadtholder, somewhat put her in the background of my thoughts. And I was as surprised as pleased at my clarity of mind. I was able to think of the future with some hope.

Might I not yet carve out a fine fortune for myself ? It was said that the Emperor required noble volunteers to help him in his war against the Turks. It might be, that my blood was proud enough to enable me to volunteer to fight in the trenches beneath Belgrade.

His Highness was, I reflected, as I waited for my audience, in a curious position. He belonged to one of the oldest families in Europe which had given emperors to the West. His quarterings were not to be placed on one shield, nor his titles to be rehearsed by one herald. I had always understood that he was one of the proudest of men. He was a grandchild, too, of our King Charles I, and married to his cousin, the Duke of York's daughter Mary. But for all that he was the chief magistrate of a republic and effected to live on an equality with the least of the Dutch. Surely there was something to be learned from a man who could, being so born and married, hold such a position.

His palace was in an ancient building, and the rooms wherein I waited were handsomely decorated, the ceilings being of embossed leather and the walls hung with handsome tapestries. If only I could have forgotten Philippa

Dean, I should have been pleasurably concerned to this interview with a man who was then considered the most admired personage in Europe.

Yet, after all, what had I to say to him ?

I did not intend to offer him either my sword or my wit, I would not be his soldier or his spy, and I had no news to bring him from England. What, then, had I to do with His Highness the Stadtholder ? I knew that I had obtained the favour of this audience only through the influence of Sir William Temple, who no doubt had mentioned to His Highness that I was a relative of the Duke of Lauderdale, then one of the most important men in Great Britain, and he who had most the ear of King Charles in regard to the affairs of Scotland.

The Prince did not keep me waiting long ; he had none of that arrogance that distinguished men of smaller pride. He received me alone in his cabinet that was hung with domestic pictures by artists of his native country.

When I came into his presence and thought of the cares that he had upon him and on the futility of my own life and the uncertainty of my future, I felt in a manner ashamed and stood, as I did not often, even in the presence of the great, at a loss.

He was a man below my own stature but of a manly countenance. I had seen him before, but only at a distance on ceremonial occasions, and I had marked the great likeness he bore both to his mother, whom I remembered in youth, and to his uncle, now dead, the Duke of Gloucester. Knowing his reputation for thoroughness and shrewdness, I could not doubt that he had my *dossier*, as the French term it, under his hand, and I felt foolish as he questioned me as to why I had asked for this audience.

I can see him now as I saw him then in his plain attire of maroon coloured velvet ; he was seldom out of the uniform he wore of Colonel of the Blue Guards, but on this occasion he wore civilian dress. His hair was of the Stuart colour, chestnut-red and long and fine as a woman's, and his eyes

for power and brilliancy were the most remarkable I had ever seen.

I had but a poor tale to tell him. I said :

" Your Highness knows I am but a ruined gentleman of the house of my Lord of Lauderdale, that I have been for a while in Scotland . . ."

" A strange position," interrupted the Prince, speaking excellent English, but slowly and with care. " You were a pedagogue, I believe, in the establishment of Sir Donald Garrie ? "

" Yes," said I. " And, sir, liked it but little. I have been for some months in The Hague and have not ventured to bring myself to the notice of Your Highness before. For in truth," I cried, " I know not what to do nor to what turn, and though it is but an impertinence of me to bring my troubles to Your Highness . . ."

" Still," he interrupted again in his stately manner, " no doubt you are aware that I am glad both to receive news from England from any source," and these last words he emphasised, " and also to receive the offer of the services of any worthy gentleman."

And then he pressed on me, as Captain Graham had pressed on me some months before, the offer of a troop of horse. I might have a position in the army of the States-General immediately, and all my tale of tragedy and present confusion of affairs overlooked.

I could scarcely forbear laughing in the austere countenance of His Highness as he made his proposition.

" I am a friend," said I, " of Captain Graham."

" And he was a most efficient officer," said the Stadtholder, " I was sorry to lose him from my service. He was also of a high and passionate temperament and one, perhaps, who will do better at the work he is now employed on than he would in one of my regiments."

" And does Your Highness," I broke out, " approve the work that Captain Graham is now employed on ? Do you not rather support the Covenanters ? "

"I support neither the man of blood nor the fanatic," replied the Prince, ready for dubious arguments. "What I work for I think must be known to gentlemen like yourself, Mr. Maitland, who take no great interest in politics—it is the peace of Europe, and the resistance to the aggression of France."

"Your Highness does not, then, think the Covenanters are saints?"

"I would persecute no man for his religion," replied the Prince, "and those opinions of mine are too well known for me to need to repeat them to you now, Mr. Maitland."

He glanced at the clock, a fine piece, as I recall, of pierced brass that stood above his bureau, and then down at his hands. I remarked them keenly; they lay upon his knees, and though they were of feminine delicacy and beauty, they gave the impression of power and authority; though they were so still I felt as if they contained an immense energy, and it was only by an effort of will that he held them thus tranquil; they were equally able with sword or pen, as I knew.

I felt out of countenance and even a fool.

"I have nothing," said I, "to tell Your Highness. No espionage talk from England has come my way, and as to what I have seen in Scotland, it would not interest you."

"Ay, but it is of interest to me," said he earnestly, turning his brilliant eyes upon me. "If you have any interest with these fanatics, with men like Mr. Richard Cameron who go about now, as I understand, to light flames in their native land, bid them be peaceful and more tolerant and to look well to their warrants. If you have any influence with men like Captain Graham, bid them not ride too high nor be too overbearing. There is never virtue in extreme, Mr. Maitland."

He then asked me if I often saw my noble kinsman, and I replied that it was but seldom I had that honour.

"If you ever do see His Grace of Lauderdale, Mr. Maitland, whisper a word in his ear of the fire and sword and the

tyranny he has created. Bid him, if it be possible to one of his temper, to be more moderate and liberal."

I then asked him what he suggested I should do, and by his answer I measured his opinion of my worth, for I knew he had but one set proposition he made to all whom he considered useless but perhaps bold adventurers. And he said to me graciously enough:

"Go and fight the Turks, Mr. Maitland. The Emperor has need of volunteers outside Belgrade. There may honour be acquired, and if nothing better, a death that any man might tolerate."

I saw then his estimate of me, and that he had no employment to offer in The Hague, nor should I have expected any save that of a trooper.

After he had got out of me what he could with many shrewd probings and questionings—I understood that he allowed no one, especially an Englishman, to speak to him without discovering something, however small, of the world's affairs that might help him in his great design—I took my turn to venture a question to this Prince. I asked him what he thought of the design of Mr. William Penn, who was lately returned to The Hague?

"What design?" asked the Stadtholder. I could tell by his stately manner that he thought I was interfering beyond my province in the matters of statecraft, that he suspected me, after all, perhaps for a spy or a secret service agent of some foreign government. I pitied him for his need of perpetual watchfulness, for I knew how he must be surrounded by intrigue and jobbery. So I relieved his doubts by saying:

"I do not ask Your Highness to debate statecraft with me. I refer to the design that Mr. William Penn has for establishing a colony in the New World and building a city that he intends to call Philadelphia, or city of brotherly love."

At this His Highness smiled, and I learnt afterwards the reason for his suspicions. Mr. Penn had been sent by the

Duke of York to endeavour to induce His Highness to assent to a repeal of the Test, as I had heard, and the Stadtholder, though the most tolerant of men, had refused this with a dry reference to the little reliance to be placed on the British Government.

I expected, when I saw His Highness smiling at me like that, to be rebuked for an enthusiast or a fanatic. But instead he told me that he considered the enterprise laudable.

"And I," said he, "when I was a young man newly come to the government of this country when it was threatened with destruction by the French, had some such design myself. I thought I would take all the shipping in the port of Amsterdam and that sooner than live under foreign tyranny we would go and found another country in the Indies. And so you see, Mr. Maitland, that I am inclined to judge leniently these fantasies of Mr. Penn."

"Yet, sir, you call them fantasies," I remarked.

"I think they be little more for one who is but a private gentleman and has no great fortune behind him."

"But let Your Highness consider. The land belongs to a parcel of Indians, who might easily be driven off or massacred, or bought, as is Mr. Penn's intention, by a few knives and guns or to gentlemen who will sell willingly for a low sum. Let Your Highness remember that this land is rich in all possibilities, with great rivers and fine timber and fertile soil."

"If you wish to found a new state," said the Stadtholder, "it is not the quality of the land that matters but that of the people you take there. Where does Mr. Penn propose to find colonists worthy of his ideals?"

"Sir," replied I, "are there not enough broken soldiers and discontented idlers and oppressed craftsmen and unemployed artisans in Europe? And if these were gathered together and taken out to the New World, would it not leave the Old World freer of broils and difficulties and bloodshed?"

"Why do you ask my opinion?" demanded His Highness, who seemed, however, I flattered myself, interested in my discourse. "My hands, as doubtless you know, Mr. Maitland, are full enough with the affairs of the old world. I have plenty of trouble in this small country of my own as likely to last me my days, without seeking out these fresh problems. Are you a friend of Mr. Penn's?"

I disclaimed that honour and I said that this scheme had taken my fancy, and that if I had money I would have given it to the Quakers towards his proposed colonization of America—the Holy Enterprise, as they named it.

The Prince seemed to ponder a moment in his pensive way; he was a man who went deeply into any scheme that was put before him, and no doubt he was considering in his large, magnanimous mind if here there was not something that could be turned to the good of the Netherlands, shaken, if not crippled, as it was by a war costly and bloody, and hampered by a circle of enemies and a bad peace.

He said at length:

"Mr. Penn is not the man for such an enterprise. He is too simple, too easily led. I think him honest, I know him full of ardour, but such a project as this is for a great prince."

"And what great prince could undertake it," I asked, "seeing all in Europe, as Your Highness says of yourself, are engaged in domestic broils?"

"Until we can secure toleration," replied the Stadtholder, "until every man in the Western hemisphere is free to follow his own tastes, his own conscience—that matter I always took to be God's province—until he can without dread of molestation or persecution, follow his own faith, the hands of every prince and ruler and leader will be full. And who shall have time to consider what may be done with the New World? Better, Mr. Maitland, to leave it to the savages."

"I suppose, sir," I replied, "in the breast of every man

there is a longing for the Promised Land, for the Golden Age."

His Highness smiled again.

"Do you suppose, sir, that we shall get the Golden Age or the Promised Land by taking a parcel of men, some of whom would assuredly be fools and some scoundrels, from your country or my country or France, and setting them against a fresh background? Would they not take with them their old ills, their old vices, their old quarrels and their ancient hatreds? No, Mr. Maitland, it is a pretty scheme, but leave it to Mr. Penn, and do you," said he, returning quickly to his original point, "serve whatever good cause you have at heart in a more active way. You are a gentleman of leisure, as you have said, and came upon some misfortune."

I saw that His Highness would still persuade me to be a soldier. I was worth no more than that to him.

"I refused Captain Graham, and I must refuse his better—that is, Your Highness. Besides, there is no war in Europe at the moment, and I have no wish to track down the Covenanters in Scotland."

"There's better work than that," said the Prince, "the Emperor always requires volunteers. Leave the New World to the savages and help chase the Turks out of Europe."

I suppose he must have seen some merit in me, for he tried again with that patience that he did not disdain to use on the smallest things, to turn me in some way to his service, and I found that he thought a little better of me than I had supposed.

For he asked if I would undertake political work for him in England, if I would report news of the various parties, and bring messages to and fro The Hague. I marvelled at the largeness of his designs and the attention he gave to small details and that he should trouble about a gentleman like myself, no doubt merely because I was a cadet of the house of Maitland and because my reputation

would cause me to be overlooked as a mere spendthrift gambler.

I suppose he had found me of some intelligence, and perhaps of unusual tolerance to take so much trouble with me. I felt I was in the presence of a great man, yet I wanted to have nothing to do with him ; the magnitude of his burdens weighed me down, even though they were on another's shoulders. I would not have been in his place for all his titles and the high place he held in the armorials of Europe.

When I declined to do any work for him, he, without any loss of temper or change of countenance, asked me still patiently why I had demanded to see him ?

And I wondered why he had granted me this favour, seeing that every moment of his time must have been parcelled out among vast interests.

So I told him that I hoped he would not take it for insolence that I had asked for this audience, being concerned at my own future, my mind and spirit in a turmoil, and I took him to be the wisest Prince—for all his youth—in Europe, and that I had hoped he might say something that would give me some guidance as to what to do with the rest of my life, for I was a man not yet thirty years of age.

" Well, Mr. Maitland," said he, still with that unchanged and stately composure that I had observed in no one else ; it was marvellous to me that a man could have so much control of his feelings and temper, " have I not given you some guidance ? I have asked you to work for me, and when I say for me I do not speak for myself but of the common cause."

I knew by this phrase, that was often on his lips and on those of his followers, that he meant the Protestant religion, that he was determined to champion against the aggression of France, and by the Protestant religion he meant also the liberty of mankind. He had no quarrel with the Roman Catholics, and was believed to be on friendly terms even

with His Holiness the Pope. But against oppression and tyranny as he saw it he had firmly set his face, and so far had won for himself in that fight an unparalleled place in Europe, being the most admired and respected, ay, and feared, of modern heroes.

But such high work was not for me. I would be neither his soldier nor his spy, his pamphleteer or his agent.

Seeing there was nothing to be obtained from me, he told me that the audience was over, still without haste or sign of impatience, though he must have known that he had wasted his time—time to him as valuable as gold, on a useless, wilful man.

But I had still one or two questions to ask him, and taxed his tolerance by demanding what he thought of this Mr. Richard Cameron and his followers, Covenanters or Cameronians, as they were termed. I knew that these men looked to the Stadtholder for protection, and I wondered how he considered their fanaticism. It was not likely that he would commit himself to a man like Tom Maitland on these subjects, but he replied, in his low, tranquil voice :

" There are mistakes on both sides, sir. Scotland is ill-governed. You cannot suppress a proud people by putting soldiers on them. And Captain Graham, whom I myself recommended to His Royal Highness the Duke of York, is not a man for such work. He thinks of nothing else but his own glory."

" Then you give the Cameronians the right of it ? "

" What man can say he has the right of it ? " asked His Highness, rising. " These enthusiasts and fanatics do harm with their zeal. They, too, lack tolerance."

" Your Highness will have none of Captain Graham, and none of Mr. Cameron, and none of William Penn ! Who, then," said I, " is the man to be admired and followed ? "

" The moderate man," said the Prince, " he who, without persecution or violence, sets himself a difficult task

for the good of mankind, and pursues it through all disappointments."

I had one more question to ask him. He had used the word glory, that word that had of late run so often in my mind, and as he was in his stately yet homely way ringing the bell to show me from his cabinet—I think he liked me a little, or he would not have tolerated me, useless as I was to him, for so long—I asked him what he made of that word glory that one heard so often on the mouths of men, worldly glory, heavenly glory, glory which I had thought described best by the old poet as a 'circle in the water.'

"And how," said I, "would Your Highness define this quality of glory? Captain Graham seeks it by endeavouring to slay the Covenanters, and the Covenanters seek it by allowing themselves to be slain. The King of France seeks it by trying to overlord Europe. And Your Highness——"

"I have no time to think of it," he replied, coolly, "I do my task as I see it set before me."

These words were spoken modestly, but he added others that made me think that he, too, had his ambitions, for he said:

"What I do is, as I think, sent me by God."

And what pride, after all, can go further than that? And had he not felt the lure of glory when he had led the charge of St. Neff, when he had cut the dykes to free the waters with which to roll the invader back?

I left him much impressed, in a way exalted and excited by his personality, but still resolute not to involve myself in his deep politics.

Years afterwards, when he was a king and I was one of the common press, I looked at him again, but from a distance and with the impression I had of him then—that he was unutterably lonely. And it was partly this loneliness that frightened me from being in his service, for I wished to be down among more human faults and failings, not perched up on the heights of these solitary endeavours.

I knew the man had those who loved him well and served

him faithfully, and there it was, the sense that he was set apart, to labour and to suffer. For what purpose? For the good of the others, as he thought, perhaps, something for glory, too, as I suppose.

I never forgot him. His face was familiar to all of us, it was so commonly reproduced in all the print shops, on coins and medals, yet there was no likeness of him that gave the essence of the man as I had noticed it when I sat in that small cabinet with him, gazing at the pale hollow face with the dark chestnut hair, and the very large clear hazel eyes—a sensitive face, that of a fearless Prince.

I think he forgot me as soon as I had left his presence; it was always his custom to see anyone who solicited an audience and who had some name and a family behind him. For this curious and valiant Prince had one great design—that of securing the liberty and freedom of his country and resisting the domination of France, and to this end spared no pains and undertook so much business that he was a marvel to all who knew him.

When I returned to my lodging I found a letter from Philippa Dean declaring that she must and would see me before she returned to England.

* * *

The weather was mild and the trees planted along the canals began to show their first green. Light clouds still blew up from the sea, but they were of a transparent texture and the faint blue of the sky showed through them as they floated above the towers and spires of The Hague. The Dutch are great gardeners, and already the bouquets of flowers, tulips, hyacinths, and daffodils appeared in the bow pots behind the brightly-polished glass of the long windows.

Time was flowing away, it seemed to me almost as if I could see it, like sand falling through the hour-glass or blood softly dripping from a wound.

Time flowing away and no problem solved. The thought-

ful people were bewildered and silent, the careless chattered and went about their several concerns. The news from Scotland was bad, the country was in a state of civil war. My lord of St. Andrews, the sheriffs and the commanders of the troops in all the different counties went well guarded. My relative, His Grace of Lauderdale, stayed at St. James's, where he was safe. A fresh outburst of roaring hatred was loosened against the Government by the execution of one James Mitchell, a man who many years before had shot at Dr. Sharp and missed him, though he had wounded Dr. Honeyman who was with him. This Mitchell had been in hiding since but suddenly been discovered or betrayed, and, though he had not as much as wounded His Grace he was put to death for the slaying of the other gentleman, who had died of gangrene.

This seemed to me not only unmerciful, but impolitic, albeit the fellow had the intention to murder.

I could not forget what His Highness, the Stadtholder, had told me. I knew something of the man now and I could see the result of his works all about me, a people inspired with loyalty, energetic, hard-working, honest and honourable, and I remembered that half-averted, aquiline face that I had looked at in the little cabinet, and those eyes that had gazed at me without pride or ostentation but that seemed to indicate a spirit contending with the future.

But what was all this to me, it was but the background of my private distress? Philippa Dean remained at The Hague. She had been in my life, perhaps, and in this story certainly, a featureless creature, but the symbol of distracting womanhood.

I believed that I had loved her, I assured myself that this was so again and again. I did so in order to banish from my mind some creeping doubts that I resented the pass to which this same love or passion had brought me. Was it not because of Philippa Dean that I was now placed, as it were, beyond the pale, as they would say of the wild Irish

in Ireland, a man who had lost touch with his own class, in some sense of the word an exile, living on a kinsman's bounty?

But for her I should not have gambled so desperately even endeavouring to lose my estates in my despair. But for her I should not have met her young brother in the *duello*. I had tried to avoid that encounter, but the lad was not to be persuaded to reason. I had tried, superior swordsman as I was, not to do him much hurt, and was it my fault that the slight wound that my sword had given him had brought about his death?

It had been the clumsiness of the surgeon, who had allowed gangrene to develop, and the lad's own imprudence in eating rich food and drinking quantities of wine when he had the fever. But all the blame and the chagrin came upon me. I was the man who had to leave the country, using all the influence I possessed to escape arrest.

I felt I had sunk in many ways since I had left England for that position His Grace of Lauderdale had contrived for me in Castle Drum. I had become wild and wilful, sullen in my manners, and had dwelt too much apart with Evan Garrie, even preferring the company of poor Virgil, the blackamoor, to those gentlefolk who were my equals.

And all this while Philippa Dean remained at The Hague, and had written and her letters were not answered.

And sometimes all my wild rebellion against my fate, and my own discontent at my present idleness, would die down as I thought of her, not many streets of these prim houses away, living sullenly with her suspicious lord.

Sometimes I saw her passing by in sedan or coach, sometimes I dreamt of her in those dark realms that have no sound, no colour, no perfume, the sombre, silent landscape of dreams.

I did not know clearly what happened in these visions, but when I awoke I would have to lie still, drawing deep breaths to quiet my anguish. For always in these un-

bidden imaginings she was close to me, and always when I awoke I was once more bitterly bereaved.

So April was nearly over and I remained gloomy and inactive, and Evan Garrie fretting and inactive.

I could see that he wanted to return to Scotland; he began to talk of Jannot again, to wonder how she was faring in Castle Drum that seemed, as he said, to be at the other end of the world, for all the space there was between him and his kinsfolk. And I noticed a great uneasiness in him and discovered that he believed the fair, golden witch was casting spells over him and perhaps had an image of wax of him shut up in her chamber, over which she would croon her incantations.

I tried to clear his mind of these fumes and to urge him to go about among the acquaintances we had made at The Hague, for there were many people still in the Dutch capital, of many persuasions, creeds and complexions, enough to distract a young man from any sick dreams.

But Evan, who had been cheerful at our first coming into Holland, now would keep solitary in his room, refusing almost all company save my own and that of the uncouth blackamoor. Virgil was often called up from the closet where he slept, to sit the other side of the yellow earthenware stove and listen to the complaints that he scarcely understood of Evan Garrie, who would talk a little, and pull at his long clay pipe a little, and half doze in the overheated room.

There was no question yet of putting the stoves out, for though the weather was mild the air was still damp and at night the wet fogs would blow up strongly from the North Sea.

Sir Donald Garrie wrote to Evan as a cadet of his house, urging his return, trying to persuade, nay, ordering him to take a commission in the new troop that Captain Graham was raising to put down the insolent Conventicles.

I tried to persuade him to remain as he was, but my Lord of Lauderdale's last charity was giving out, we soon must

find some means of making money. I suggested we should turn our backs on the North, and if we did not take His Highness the Stadtholder's advice, at least press eastwards into lands that to us would be new.

We might go to Prague, I suggested, maliciously, and see the city of the alchemists.

Evan Garrie did not care for this, that he took to be but an unkind jest on my part. I often heard him sigh and groan, and I was often much troubled for his obvious distress of mind.

I became impatient with him too. Had I not my own troubles? Might I not step into the street and see the small, pinched face of Philippa looking between the folds of her fur hood or under the shade of her large hat, through the glass of her coach or sedan-chair? And what was the use to me that I should struggle to disentangle him from his ancient enchantment.

I supposed that he must love or lust after the girl, although he believed her to be no better than a witch, though he had seen with his own eyes many such unnameable powers as that in the ruined chapel that I had beheld but once and been stricken for ever.

The lad had grown comely and strong during these months that he had spent in Holland, with better food and lodging than he had known before, and for the first part of the sojourn, at least, more peace of mind.

He was a pleasing enough creature to look at with his ruddy complexion and strong, red-gold hair, that he wore instead of a peruke, curling it carefully at night round leaden ribbons, for he had his vanity now, and with such means as he could secure and such credit as he could command, went richly dressed like a gentleman. I had my amusement out of that, remembering him as I had first seen him, a rude Scot in his homespun and leather, and when he went abroad on his rough horse with targe and dirk.

His mother came of a noble Highland family, but he

never wore the plaid that his relatives, the three ladies of Castle Drum would, when the fancy took them, twist round their head or shoulders.

* * *

There must be an end even to the longest hesitancy and the end of mine came when Philippa one day walked up our narrow stairs and straight into our room with as much natural composure as if she had been my wife or my sister.

It chanced that our rooms were over a small shop kept by a china merchant who sold fragrant tea, fruits in syrup, and delicate Eastern porcelain. When you entered his shop you were faced by the door on the right that led to the apartment filled by his pleasant commodities and a narrow staircase that twisted opposite and led up to our chambers. These we had with a closet behind the shop for Virgil.

I suppose it had not been difficult for Philippa, who had her full share of feminine cunning, to enter the shop and make her purchases and then, eluding whatever servant or escort she had, to turn quickly up the stairs into our apartment.

She must have watched her time, for it fell out exactly as she would have it. I was alone, even Virgil had gone abroad to see after a saddle for me, and Evan Garrie was attending a gathering at the little meeting-house, where the Scots held their Episcopalian services, that being, superficially, his persuasion.

It was a fair day, and my room, always an agreeable place to me, though in a strange house and a strange land, was lapped in pale sunshine. The furniture was good, but worn, all in the Dutch style, that is, well wrought, solid, and dark.

I had my papers before me and was wasting time—too much leisure I threw away in this fashion—on putting together notes on my travels, writing of my own insignificant life that in my hard vanity and black pride I thought

of the greatest importance. I had written of the Covenanters, of Doctor Sharp, and Captain Graham, even of the dream, foolish as it seemed now, or vision that had been provoked by the gazing into the square of jet that Isabelle Garrie had put into my hand that day already seeming long ago in Castle Drum.

I had written of the speech I had had with His Highness, the Stadtholder, of this and that, even to the snow I had noted on the ground when first we had come to Holland, and the hymn tunes the bells chimed overhead.

And here was Philippa making it all seem foolish. What had we to say to one another ?

So much that all words were useless.

Now the snow had melted almost everywhere, save in that far North that I had not reached. Even in Scotland it would be gone, except on the highest mountain-tops. Here there were green leaves through which the sunshine was pouring, that I could see through the thick shining glass of my window.

And there was Philippa with her hand on the door and her eyes bright behind the lowered lids and her lips unsteady and no words passing through them.

As I rose before my scattered papers I did not know if I loved or hated her most, if I most desired her or most wished her out of my life and forgotten.

" Why are you remaining here ? " she asked, and I could understand by that question that was at random and yet might be answered a thousand ways to the satisfaction of neither of us, that she was intending to make a long talk of all that was between us. And even as she spoke my resolution was taken and I said sternly :

" I am returning to Scotland soon, in a few days."

She was as surprised at this as I should have been myself even a few moments before, for I had taken no such resolve until I had seen Philippa Dean standing beside my door.

" And what do you want me to do ? " I added, harshly.

"Kill another for you? Ruin myself again? For I have gathered together some little repute and substance."

"Was it my fault?" she asked. "And I do not blame you that young Harry died. It was through his own wilfulness."

"Whether you blame me or not, I have the censure of the world," I replied.

She seemed baffled, perhaps astonished, at my attitude.

"I thought that you would become a soldier," she said.

"Am I so commonplace that I should do what every disappointed man does?" I sneered. "I have my own thoughts about women, and about God, and about glory."

"Why," said she, still holding the door ajar, ready as I thought to escape down the stairs at the least surprising noise, "should you return to Scotland?"

"It is, in a way, my native country," said I. "Though my mother was an Englishwoman, my father was a Scot, even if he did spend most of his days in England."

"And what side are you on?" she said, and I think there was resentment both in her look and in her tone. "Are you to help the men who uphold the Covenant, or to ride with——"

"The persecutors!" I took the words out of her mouth, for I knew her strain of Whiggery. "I care for nothing for either, Philippa. I wish to go where there is action."

"And I think," she said, "you have become crazed since last I knew you. Do you not understand that it took me much toil and a long intrigue to come here to The Hague? I was told you were here, I thought there might be opportunities——"

"Of sly and secret meetings," I said, "in this little place? Where everyone is godly and well-behaved. And what of your husband and the promises you made him?"

As I put this into words I was overwhelmed by bitterness, for I thought of what it might have been if Philippa had had the courage—but what women had ever had that amount of courage?—to leave the husband whom she

loathed, the family whom she did not like, and go abroad with me.

Yet, that was why I had always been allured by Mr. William Penn's scheme of a new world, for I thought that I and Philippa might go there, to that visionary shining city of brotherly love. Even though she was another man's wife some honourable divorce might be possible. Or we might travel to such a sweet wilderness that there would be no talk of anything but natural love, no censuring eyes, or preaching voices. But Philippa had hung back and left me to the commonplace tragedies, the gambling-table, and the *duello* in my despair, and the disgrace of failure. And then had returned cringing like a beaten spaniel to her husband for her board and her food and her silk gowns and her place at Court.

Did I want her? Did I still imagine that I could be happy with her?

Happiness! The word was but a torment. It could not be achieved, I believe, on this earth, and who was to be drugged and surfeited with tales of happiness in Heaven?

"Philippa," said I, "this is but a mockery of our former meeting. I'll not have you for my secret mistress, even if it could be contrived in such a place as this. I'm a ruined man, my pockets are empty and my reputation blown upon."

"But, Tom," said she, prudently lowering her voice. "I love you."

I thought the words sounded faint and false, little better than the accents used by Jannot or Isabelle, the witch. At least they had not profaned something that might have been holy when they had leered at me with their golden eyes.

And then a thought that was poignant, ugly, and yet delightful, stirred in me.

Had I been a fool? Was it possible that I was being drawn back to Scotland by the enchantments of the ladies of Castle Drum even as was Evan Garrie? When I had said—and it had been like the voice of someone else speaking and not my own accents—that I wished to return to Scot-

land, did I mean that I wished to see Isabelle and Jannot again? Or Isabelle only?

I looked at Philippa, and she seemed frightened at my gaze, for she drew back through the half-open door. I looked at Philippa, her face was white and pinched and small in the tawny velvet hood she wore, and the little hand that clasped together at her throat was as small as a child's and yet not as small as the little hand of Isabelle Garrie.

There seemed then unnatural sounds in my ears, unnatural sights before my eyes.

It was a piercing melancholy that possessed me, and yet a sweet passion. I thought I saw before me the clear light of the North and an air that was full of cold miserable winds, the fantastic dance on a winter night of beings that had golden eyes and who flitted in and out the grey snowflakes.

I thought of the tales that Evan Garrie had told me that night when we had sat in the ruined cottage; the old broken walls seemed about me now, the room roofless, and overhead the dark sky, flecked by no remote stars.

But fooleries were what he had told me, yet lit by the broken light of some half-remembered fairyland. I thought of those wild streams, distant mountains, and gloomy moors, the low screaming of the wind in the wide chimneys of Castle Drum, and Isabelle moving silently about, and Jannot standing at the window watching the beating of the rain through the last light of day.

Had I been driven away by fear, and would I be driven back by desire?

The face and form of Philippa, who was but an ordinary mortal woman, seemed to dwindle before my sight until it had vanished like a speck of light receding into utter darkness.

And I thought of the rings in the stagnant water the stone had made that day that Claverhouse's dragoons had clattered up to Castle Drum after the failure to track the armed men on the moors.

I heard Philippa's voice say to me :

" You're changed, Tom ! You're like a man bewitched ! "

I felt as if my imprisoned spirit was quickening within me. I cannot put into words that scene, and when I turn my mind back to it I feel even now my distressed passion and bewildered expectancy.

I turned aside from Philippa, my hands still held the quill, and on the piece of paper whereon I had been writing to still my roving thoughts such scraps of commonplace as came into my mind, I now traced the word ' Isabelle.'

As I wrote the name it was as if I broke the spell, for my visions, or whatever they might be, left me in eddies, like waves of water that obscured my sight, and I was again in the plain, comfortable room at The Hague, and there was a frightened woman with pale lips, the lower showed, I noticed, the dry pressure of her teeth, standing at the door, leaning forward, staring at me.

I noticed the artificial crimping of her hair. I remembered that she had always had tender sight, her eyes were slightly reddened.

How bravely she had arrayed herself for me, and how quickly her alarm at my changed appearance had withered her decked charms !

" I have been through some strife," I said, " since last I saw you, Philippa. And I've known much inner debate and listened to much wise talk, and there has been a truce between us. I think it would be perilous to break it."

" You mean," said she, plainly, " that you have forgotten me. And I have lain in a solitary, silly bed for months, Tom, thinking of you. My marriage and my husband, you say, I think you know what bargain was made there. I have been faithful to you, I have been constant."

I stared at her again and I wanted to say : " Why, I no longer love you, Philippa. It is useless for you to come cringing to me as you cringe to your husband."

And if she had been no man's wife I would not have taken her.

She was frightened, too. Perhaps this love that she talked about was a dead thing to her also. At least, she kept glancing over her shoulder down the stairs. Perhaps there was a maid or a footman waiting for her. She must, for many years now, have been ready with lies. She was not, I think, very skilful ; she was in a constant turmoil for fear she was utterly shamed by her own falsehoods. Shamed, that is, before her own world, not before any imagined God.

How little poor Philippa Dean cared for anything, save what pride and what pleasure and what ease she might get out of each day as it passed.

" You go to Scotland," she said, on a sigh, quite bewildered. " And what could take you to Scotland, Tom ? I thought you went there as a place of exile. Is it a woman ? " she asked, still whispering and sighing and looking down the stairs and then round again at me as if she would have fled and then hoped that I would call her back and make some passionate whispered promise for the next meeting.

" A woman ! No ! " I answered with truth, for I did not think of Isabelle as a woman. But my bewitched mood had passed and I no longer believed that it was because of the ladies of Castle Drum that I wished to return to Scotland.

There was a sound from below, the serving-man in the shop, perhaps, or a customer, or some other, and Philippa was gone, light-footed, but not so light as Isabelle Garrie.

* * *

That evening I suggested to Evan Garrie that we, taking with us Virgil, the blackamoor, should return to Scotland.

He was very willing, but asked me what my mind was, if I should go as a King's man or to help the rebels. I could not tell him, for I did not know my own intention save in so far as I desired to return to Scotland.

V

THE KILLING TIME

V

THE KILLING TIME

THIS is the name that I have given to this part of my narrative, but I think that what they afterwards came to term the killing time was '84, but these earlier years when I was present at the battles in Scotland and saw and heard of more bloodshed than had ever come to my knowledge before was a ' killing time ' enough in my opinion.

It is difficult to get the rights of things in the remembrance ; maybe I have confused the year when Captain Graham became Colonel Graham and commanded a troop of English Horse, I was ever absorbed in my own matters, weighty and dark to me, and though I was interested in this gentleman, his affairs came to me by hearsay, and I made no note of them as I did of other happenings that more nearly concerned myself.

I marked with malice how he had missed an heiress, Helen Graham, my Lord of Montieth's daughter, and later, I recall, he married for love, as they say, Jean Cochrane, who came of a grim Covenanting family, and had Dunhope Castle for his pains and later still a viscountcy, but how these things fit into my narrative I hardly recall.

Nor does it greatly matter—during all those years of the reigns of the last two Stuart kings, Scotland was at war within herself, the Government troop were few but better trained than the Covenanters ; on the other hand, they did not know the country so well, and the Conventicles could move on foot from place to place where the horsemen could not go.

Moreover, half the gentry were Whigs, too, and hid the rebels, stuck their arms into stacks and byres, or up chimneys, and gave them money and food.

That was the wrong of it, to my thinking, that the spirit of the country was for the Covenant and that the King had broken his sword and forsworn his oath to these fierce people. I had disliked the country when I was penned up there, but now I thought of it as beautiful—like some of the native gems, golden cairngorm and purple topas and water pearls, I recalled these moors, hills, and streams, those milky clouds and curdling mists.

I wondered now at my fear and rage at Isabelle, with her noiseless feet and eyes like torn water with the sun in it; shut up in Castle Drum with her sick brother, the two other wilful women, and that evil man, Dr. Cyrus Fletcher, how could she be other than what she was?

Why did I who had once fled from her now want to take her away, from her grim home, from Scotland?

I had received a letter from Mr. Penn before I left The Hague, and it set me afire with hopeful longing.

He wrote to me from Worminghurst, where he was established with his wife Gerli, and told of the progress the Quakers were making in buying parcels of land in Maryland and New Jersey; there had been a company for this end for some while, since '76 I think, but it had lagged for lack of money and ships. Now it went ahead and seemed as if it might be a great venture; and my spirit could not but rise to the words that Mr. Penn quoted to me as to the New Jersey Settlement, where already a meeting-house had been built and bargains made peaceably with the native Indians for land, by sale or barter.

There were the words—the venture was "a foundation for after ages to understand their liberty as men and Christians, that they might not be brought into bondage, but by their own consent; for we put the authority in the people."

A brave challenge to the Old World!

I dreamed that I might sail to those unspoilt shores and

that there Isabelle would be no more a witch, nor Tom Maitland a ruined gentleman with a tarnished name, for already I was thinking of myself and Isabelle as one. But this would mean that I must become a Quaker, and here doubts came teasing, and I recalled the advice of the young Stadtholder, that he had so patiently given me—" that Mr. Penn was not the man for so large an enterprise, and that no Promised Land should be peopled by those who brought their sorrows and faults with them."

So New Jersey remained a view of Pisgah to me, and I turned my attention to matters at hand, the more readily as Mr. Penn wrote to me that he was travelling in Germany with a company of Quakers, among them Mr. Fox and Mr. Barclay, and that I missed seeing him in the Lowlands by but a little.

For I thought that if the leaders were away the scheme would limp and it would be wiser for me to wait until these men sailed themselves for their Utopia. Besides, I could not endure to leave the Old World while Isabelle remained in Castle Drum.

So it all stood as we contended whether or not we should sail to Scotland, making a voluntary neglect of the advantages we might have had in The Hague.

" I must go," said Evan Garrie continuously. " I must help the persecuted, who are my own people."

With this delay came another letter from William Penn, telling of the new sufferings of the Quakers. Where was justice to be found in the Old World ?

He broached a scheme to me, with his great vigour and energy—the late King had owed his father, Admiral Penn, a great sum of money, perhaps many thousands of pounds, would His Majesty, perhaps, be induced to grant a space of virgin land in America to cancel this debt—a wilderness that the Quakers might make to blossom like the rose, where there might be freedom, justice for all ? "

" It is a dream," said young Evan, when I told him of Mr. Penn's zeal.

"Ay, but men make their dreams come true, Evan. This young Prince here had his dream when he set himself against France. He was laughed at, but so far he triumphs —maybe Mr. Penn will found his city yet."

"And maybe the time will come," said Evan, "when men can worship as they please in Scotland."

"Some will have to die first, Evan, and suffer cruelly."

"It might as well be me. I am of little worth to anyone."

I was also for action, but still not clearly saw what side to fight for; I could afford to please my conscience, for I had nothing to lose and nothing to gain save the chance of seeing Isabelle again.

I wrote to my friends in Scotland, directing the answers to be sent to the port of Leither; among others I wrote to John Graham, in what mood I know not, save that I wanted his news, and I knew that he would reply, for he was exact and careful in his business, and still wanted men, and hoped to get me and young Garrie. I wrote to His Grace of Lauderdale, too, asking for money to be sent to Edinburgh, and I laughed to think that I might join the 'ranting rogues,' as he called them, who were so tormenting him.

As soon as we had made up our minds to return to Scotland we set about the business as if there had never been any debate whatever.

I thought there was a weight off young Evan Garrie's spirits, and certainly mine felt lighter. But our decision brought grief and distress to Virgil, for the blackamoor did not relish the return to the North, where he had been so ill-treated and where, even with two kind masters, he dreaded the climate and the witches. We persuaded him, however, that when the sun shone Scotland was not so ill a place.

Yet so desperate seemed the negro that I was minded to leave him behind in The Hague where he might find good service among honest Dutch folk in a town where there were plenty of black fellows to keep him company.

But the poor slave would be by no means parted from us, and at the last the dispute was ended, and we all three set sail from the Netherlands and arrived in Scotland at the end of April, for we had made a bustle about our journey.

We had news as soon as we set on the shores of Scotland ; there were letters waiting for me, for I had sent mine by the packet that set sail before the ship in which we embarked. One was from Colonel Graham, as I had expected.

The ambitious soldier was prompt to renew his offers. He told me that he had just returned from Dunkirk, where he had gone to the Court of France, and that he had finally given over his suit to the heiress, Helen Graham. He told me this publicly because the matter had been much blown abroad. He wrote to me as one man of quality to another, and said he was resolved by all means in his power to quiet the Lowlands, and he conjured me to join his troop.

As we proceeded inland, I was still doubtful of my destination, and met on every hand by the reports that Colonel Graham was appealing for more soldiers with which to keep the country down, and I was half minded to join him where he then had his headquarters at Falkirk. It might be better for the country if the fanatics were silenced.

Nor did Evan Garrie raise any objection to this plan.

At our first stop we had the news that was told us by the innkeeper (I thought with relish) of the murder of Dr. Sharp, who had now at last been paid for his double-dealing, and the ambition that had made him betray his party.

This brought to my mind with much uneasiness the picture I had seen in the slab of polished jet. Like a puzzle suddenly fitting into place, it came to me who were the people I had seen in that vision—the man in the coach, the woman who had been haled forth. I could not be surprised at the murder of my Lord, who had been for long the most loathed man in Scotland, and who always went with soldiers about him, for he was afraid of an attempt on his life. It

had been, as I have written, the execution of the sentence on James Mitchell, a young man and a preacher of merit and piety, which had roused the final fury that had destroyed the Archbishop. This James Mitchell had missed my lord when he had fired at him as he was entering his coach at Edinburgh, but his companion, the Bishop of Orkney, had been wounded in the wrist and had died, like Philippa's brother, from a gangrene, though some years afterwards. Therefore Mitchell was, in one sense of the word, a murderer.

But his brethren considered him a martyr, and some of them resolved to avenge him in a mighty fashion that should set the whole Government trembling.

The crime took place on Magus Moor ; well I remembered that gloomy place and the men who had stopped us there. Some of these, I believed, were the same, local squires or lairds, as they termed them in Scotland, Hackston of Rapphillet, Russell of Kepple, and John Balfour of Kinloch. These were not men of good character, and the last had been steward to the Archbishop and accused of dishonesty, and Hackston was Balfour's brother-in-law, and had been his baillee.

Yet it was not my lord for whom they were waiting but for the Sheriff, whom they intended to murder.

These men were true fanatics and highly exalted both by their fear of God and their dread of Satan. They believed they were the chosen ministers of the Almighty, His weapons to purge Scotland of the persecutors. And when they saw the coach of the Archbishop approaching, that they knew by the liveries of the outriders, they resolved to endeavour to kill the wizard who was the curse of Scotland, as they named him. Not that they felt much hope for this enterprise, for they believed that my lord was protected by satanic powers.

The coachman driving six horses endeavoured to outdistance his pursuers ; by a chance, unlucky to my lord that made the attackers believe that God had delivered the

persecutor into their hands, he was that day without his usual band of armed protectors. We heard that he had looked out of the window and cried : " God help my poor child, for I am gone ! " This being related with relish by the murderers.

The horsemen gained on the coach-horses that had the heavy vehicle to encumber them, and the coachman's desperate efforts to keep them off with the long thong of his heavy whip was unavailing. First a postilion was shot and then a horse lamed and the coach being then at a standstill, the poor animals on top of one another, these desperate men fired a volley into it, shouting to my lord : " Come out, Judas ! Come out, you cruel, bloody traitor ! "

At that, the old man, who had always been a formidable personality and had his own courage—though the zealots were not so wrong in the words they threw at him, for double-dealer and traitor he had been—opened the door and looked at them piteously, begging for mercy so the murderer's report went, and that was a foul thing to hear, for he was an old man and had his daughter with him. Balfour said, too, that the hand that he put out to shield the poor, unconscious woman, was cut off at the wrist-bone. Then his murderers, " worthy gentlemen of courage and zeal for the cause of God," as the Covenanters termed them, believing that the old man was invulnerable, hacked at him desperately with their swords until he was but a bloody heap of broken bones, his brains scattered on the fresh spring heather.

Still they were not satisfied but plundered the coach, turning over all the baggage they found therein, the persons, the servants, the swooning daughter, and the clothes of the dead man, in order to discover my lord's familiar spirit.

And when at length one of them opened his horn snuff-box and a bee flew out, they thought they had it ; one of them, who struck down and trampled on the insect, was counted a saint whose piety had defeated Satan.

And so they rode off, singing hymns of triumph.

I could understand how the rage of Colonel Graham would be roused by this, for I heard that he had a reverence for the Archbishop, since the days when he had been a student at St. Andrews and Doctor Sharp set over him.

Garrie asked me what I made of this bloody killing. I could see both the right and wrong of it, and I could not deny that if these men had been persuaded, as it seemed they were persuaded, that Doctor Sharp was one of Satan's captains, bringing blood and misery on Scotland, then they did well to dispose of him, even in that barbarous manner ; the daughter and the servants had not been slain.

We found as we rode south-west that this murder of the Archbishop had put great heart into the Covenanters, or rebels, whichever one might choose to call them, who were daily becoming stronger, many who were before timid or dubious now coming forward to join them, now that the great wizard was slain.

When by the end of May we reached Falkirk, we found Claverhouse established there with his Horse, and good store of munitions. Here we heard that Mr. Richard Cameron had been as good as his word and, with some of his fellow preachers, was excommunicating the King and declared submission to him to be unlawful.

Richard Cameron had gone with a great following, in company with Robert Hamilton and other insurgents, to Kilbryde Moor, not far from the city of Glasgow, to hold a great meeting.

They had won this openly, and the Conventicle had been appointed out of contempt for the festivals to be held on the birthday of His Majesty.

We learnt, from the different tales and rumours that came our way, that there were to be more than a thousand men there, who were well armed and made no secret of their proceedings, which were to consist of burning four Acts of Parliament, those that were in favour of keeping the King's supremacy and in favour of episcopacy. For

this was but a just return, they argued, for the perfidious and presumptuous burning of the sacred Covenant.

This defiance the Covenanters followed by putting all these matters into a declaration which they pinned to the Market Cross of Rutherglen.

This information was gathered while we were in Falkirk. We lodged at a poor inn and attracted no attention in all the bustle and commotion there was in the town. Though I had Colonel Graham's letter in my pocket, I was still not sure whether I wished to become one of his dragoons, and Evan Garrie was still more hesitant.

He was the one who settled the matter by declaring that he had at last made up his mind to join the persecutors. I think he was considering how he stood with Jannot Garrie, and I, too, had Isabelle in my mind, and I thought that if we joined Claverhouse, not only should we be persecuting people whom I held in my heart to have the right of it, but we should be in league with those whom we had fled from in Castle Drum, one with those termed witches, warlocks, and imps of Satan. Supposing that we drew the sword to clear the Covenanters out of Wigtown and Galloway and Lanarkshire ?

Should we not set up a reign of evil in that wretched and distracted country and lose maybe our own souls and our own wits ? If the Covenanters won we might save these women from peril and evil.

So being agreed on this matter, we crept out of Falkirk though it was not so easy for stout men to escape when Claverhouse was clamouring for fresh troopers, but we contrived it, something I think by the terror inspired by the appearance of Virgil that made us respected and even feared. And trusting to Evan Garrie's knowledge of the country we made for Rutherglen, that is but a quiet village, but found that the Covenanters had left it a little while before.

There we stayed a while, uncertainly ; then a peddler coming in told us that Claverhouse, with Lord Ross, whose troops he had joined, was marching towards Rutherglen,

having made some prisoners at the town of Hamilton. And this same peddler, whom I took to be but a Covenanter spy, learned that the rebels had gone towards Loudon, and there we, having spent the greater part of the money in our pouch on fresh horses, found them encamped.

There were nearly two thousand of these stern people, among them many with whom I had been familiar at The Hague. Among them was Richard Cameron, and they had with them, too, their families, women, and even some children, whom they had encamped in the middle of them, the fighting men being ringed about like a wall.

We, even the blackamoor, were given a welcome because we were vouched for by Richard Cameron, who rejoiced when he saw us, as if he considered us two straying sheep returned to the flock. In particular he was tender with Evan Garrie, whom he had taught in his youth, and whom he regarded almost as a son. Occupied as he was, and exalted in this moment of dreadful expectation, for all knew that Claverhouse's dragoons were pursuing them, to break the Conventicles, he found time to draw us aside and tell us how his heart bounded with delight that we had escaped the vileness of Castle Drum and all the snares and baits of the great enemy of mankind.

It was strange to me to find myself in this camp. I had my sword and they gave me a carbine and appointed me to a group of men. Evan Garrie was allowed to remain with me, but the poor black who showed little courage at this display of force was sent with those who looked after the horses.

The Covenanters were gathered upon a barren moor which ended in a wide purplish bog, and was on one side encompassed by a small bare hill that had the name, I learned, of Drum Clog. We had not long to wait for the enemy whom the scouts had warned us were approaching (for so to me Colonel Graham and his troops had now become), for we saw that morning of Sunday in June the horsemen appear at the top of this rising ground.

We much outnumbered them I could see at a glance, for I think that Colonel Graham had no more than a hundred and fifty men ; I suppose he looked at us through his spy-glass across the bog. The day was fair, but there was a little mist about ; the foot were in front, the horse behind. Mr. Robert Hamilton, who was a gentleman and very zealous, led us ; what he knew of soldiering I cannot say ; he had been a pupil of Gilbert Burnet, whom I have heard speak very ill of him ; but now he made at least the show of a hero.

There had been much praying and singing through the night and in the early morning ; harsh and tedious, I thought it ; I had slept as well as I could, and I had been one of the first to see that troop of foot and horse outlined against the pale sky, even before the watchman had fired his carbine and run towards the kneeling congregation to warn them ; but they had long been in readiness.

The foremost minister was one James Douglas, as I heard him named ; he was an old weather-stained man, he had taken off his worn bonnet and his grey locks were hanging limply by the side of his pallid face as he expounded his faith, with his ear cocked for the soldiers.

There was no fear in his voice when he told the excited people that they had now " said their prayers and sung their praises, and it was the moment to put into practice their theories." They knew their duties, he said, self-defence was always lawful. Then he uttered a prayer that I had heard on the lips of Richard Cameron : " Lord, spare the green and take the ripe," meaning that he was willing to die.

Singing then the tune of a hymn termed the ' Martyrs,' the elders, the women, and the children moved apart to a higher ground where the baggage was and some spare horses.

I wondered if Colonel Graham would really attack us ; I knew he had large powers, but I was not aware whether he would be permitted to bear down on these people peacefully praying on the moors. But I learned afterwards he carried

in his pocket his permission from the Privy Council, and that told him that should he be resisted when dispersing field preaching he should treat the Covenanters as rebels and mow them down.

I recall that it was a Sunday, and that it made the work, in the eyes of the Covenanters at least, the more dreadful. I think they would have turned and gone quietly away, singing their hymns, had not Colonel Graham and his dragoons attacked them. Seeing the troopers, profane, rude wretches as they named them, coming upon them, they turned to fight ; a press of stout men, armed with scythes and sickles.

In my company, as I name it, were many stout Scots armed with carbines, pikes, pitchforks, and knives. One pleasant youth, William Cleland, was in command of this band, and he bore himself in a manly fashion and showed great skill in getting round the bog in order that we might fall upon the dragoons on the flank. Here, too, some of the Covenanters were in a ditch or trench with an old, low ruined wall in front (left from some house, I supposed, that had once stood there) that served as a parapet. Here we stationed ourselves, and such as had carbines fired at the dragoons until the mud and stone was piled with dead and wounded.

Our young leader was a good soldier, as was the commander of the whole force, Robert Hamilton, and some few others, but I had little hopes of our success with such rude, untrained men.

This young man, Cleland, had his Bible with him ; I suppose he had been reading part of it to the Conventicle ; he put it down on the ground and tore some of the leaves out to make wads for his musket. I heard that several of the rebels had put silver pieces into their guns instead of bullets, in the hopes of bringing down Claverhouse who, owing to his pact with the Devil, they believed, no leaden bullet could slay ; I felt cool, yet excited ; was this, I asked myself, a great event ?

Bloody as it was, it seemed as futile as trivial. I stared about me at the struggling soldiers behaving with routine courage, I smelt the acrid odour of the powder that quenched the fresh perfume of the heather, and leaning in my place behind the rude parapet I asked William Cleland how they came to have so many weapons ?

" Do you fire," replied he, flushed and keen, " and be silent." Then he laughed. " They buy the weapons instead of paying taxes."

I was amused to mark out the white plume that Claverhouse wore that tossed in the strengthening sunshine as he rode up and down his breaking line.

I wondered if it would be murder if I shot him now, aiming at him in the mêlée !

What a hero that would make of me among the Covenanters ; but the man had been kind to me, was ready to be my friend, and I liked him well enough.

But this problem was not for my solving, for he never came within my range. The noise and the smoke increased ; Cleland's face was blackened until it resembled Virgil's dark visage ; I wondered where the poor negro was, and why I, a man of some philosophy, with nothing to gain from violence, was standing here, trying to kill some poor devil of a trooper who fought out of stupidity in a cause for which he could have little stomach.

It was soon easy to see how the day was going. The trained dragoons, stubbornly as they fought, were no match for these desperate men, who so outnumbered them. Their horses were mutilated by the pikes and scythes, even the famous sorrel charger that Claverhouse rode was ripped up with a pike. The agonized animal carried his rider off the field ; at one moment it seemed that he might be captured, for the frenzied animal bore him past our trench, and Cleland, our leader, sprang after him and even had his hand on the bridle.

But Colonel Graham shook him off, and the horse fell dead half a mile away soon afterwards, I was told, and

Claverhouse made his way off the field on the horse of his trumpeter, and so he disappeared towards Glasgow and his troop went after him, leaving his prisoners whom he had with him behind.

The Government had been worsted that day, and for a while, at least, that was the end of what they called "that bloodthirsty wretch Claverhouse." I believe, had not his dying horse bolted, he would have stayed and fought to the last, perhaps choosing sooner to be dragged down and slain, as was the Archbishop of St. Andrews, than yield. I saw his face as the animal bore him past us, and knew his rage by his black look as he flung Cleland down with his bare hands.

'Where is his glory now?' I thought, as I heard the Covenanters roar in triumph.

We came up on to the moor then, and joined in the medley. All Claverhouse's standards were saved, though one of the Covenanters got into the thick of the horse and had his hands on one; but it was recovered soon after. This young man's name was Weir, the same as that of the celebrated wizard. He dropped almost at my feet, cut down by a flying trooper; it was I and Evan Garrie who took him up and dragged him to the side where such surgeons as they had were looking after the wounded, and these were many, groaning and yelling. Yet what mattered that, or the dead either?

Though I had joined the cause but recently and in a strange mood that was certainly not one of godly enthusiasm, yet I was moved now by the deep shouts of triumph that rose from the small band of victorious men. I knew that it seemed to them that they had been directly led and inspired by God and accompanied by angels, and their battle hymn rose up above the smoke of battle that blurred the fair day.

The man whom they most loathed next to Archbishop Sharp and Lord Lauderdale had drawn off his broken troops in disarray to Glasgow.

It seemed as if God was working for them.

It was a strange victory, one of which I began to feel a

part ; I thought that these grim men were in the right to demand the liberty to pray as they would in the open air, as they were beaten out of the churches, and to defend themselves with weapons if they were attacked as they worshipped their God. I saw the strength there was in them ; fanatics or enthusiasts, they might be termed, but was not this fire they possessed the only fire that should make a man different from a clod or a beast ?

I saw a look on young Evan Garrie's face that I had never seen there before. He seemed washed, cleansed, and purified from his residence in Castle Drum, from his sad affection for Jannot, the witch girl. There was blood on his brow and on his hands ; he had been slightly wounded, and I had seen him bring a trooper down with his carbine. Never would the young man be the same again, I thought ; I was a little changed myself.

* * *

My stern companions had their grim humour, too. Presently, when the news came in that Colonel Graham had gathered together his dispersed soldiers, and had turned aside to avoid the rebels gathered to meet him at Strathaven, Richard Cameron remarked that Claverhouse "had attended one Whig meeting that day and had disliked the sermon so much that he was unwilling to hear more of the discourse."

Such of us as were mounted had pursued the retreating soldiers as long as their horses could stay, but without being able to approach Glasgow. There was some talk, presumptuous as I thought, of an attack on that city, and after decently attending to the dead and the wounded—and all this was done with much order—and comforting the women and children and such as had faintness of spirit, the leaders of the Covenanters went to the house of Lord Loudon, who was a Campbell and a cautious man, not one inclined, I think, to be a rebel but sympathetic to the Presbyterians. My lord was not there, perhaps out of

prudence, but my lady entertained us very kindly, there were men of her rank amongst us, besides our leader Hamilton.

I thought that she would be surprised if she knew my name and standing. She would scarcely have looked for me, a cadet of the House of Maitland, in this company.

Even in the hour of their triumph, an unexpected and delectable triumph, the Covenanter captains were abstemious. There was little wine drunk and little meat eaten, but they were all wrought up with religious zeal.

I saw young Evan with William Cleland, a man whom I afterwards learnt was a poet as well as a soldier. Bold, skilful, and handsome, I liked him much, and I felt no jealousy, only curiosity, when I saw that young Evan's affection was likely to be taken from me and given to this man of his own race and age.

It was pitiful to see the alarm of Virgil, who had been deafened by the guns and blinded by the smoke, and sickened by the sight of blood. The Covenanters, who at first had looked askance at him because of his colour, now smiled at his terrors. Many of them were well used to the slaves in Edinburgh, there were even some in Glasgow, and they treated him with indulgence, asking me only if he had been baptized ?

I lied, as I think I had lied before on behalf of Virgil, and said that he was a Christian. They desired then that he should have a Christian name, and I said that he might be called after our victorious leader, Robert, and the flourish was well received.

Well I can recall that evening, a lassitude and faint nausea, a fatigue that was more of the spirit than the body, was over me, for I did not join in the exultation of these saints. As I have said, I took them to be in the right, that they were misgoverned, and had tyrants set over them, but for all that I loved them not. They were rude, grim, and ianatic.

And I had seen a sight after the battle that had turned

my stomach, that was not apt to be queasy. They had found a young officer dead on the field, a cornet of Claverhouse's troop. His name was Graham, and this was on his shirt, so some of the more ignorant believed that they had got Claverhouse himself. They proceeded then to kill the devil within the hated captain, as I suppose. They stuck their knives into the dead body and beat the head into a jelly, scattering his brains over the stones and moors as the brains of Archbishop Sharp had been scattered. I thought: 'He who slays by the sword shall perish by the sword,' but where was the Christian charity?

So my mood was dark and gloomy as I sat in the great hall in Loudon's House, wondering why at last my lot had cast me here.

I heard a quarrel going on because the prisoners were spared, many condemned Robert Hamilton for this clemency; the soldiers had got off, either by mercy or mischance, and were sure to have tales to tell of the strength and plans of the Covenanters.

"Evan," said I, "shall we not sleep to-night?" For no one seemed to have any thought of that; the leaders sat about in the great hall, that resembled the great hall at Castle Drum, the younger talking, the elder praying, or reading their Bibles, while the lesser sort would be heard, when one opened a door to come to or fro, singing in the barns and sheds where they were housed.

"What matter for sleep?" he replied wildly; I could see that he was much unsettled by this bloody event, but William Cleland answered with a smile that a good soldier should take his rest when he could. "We may roll up our coats in a corner," he added.

"Come, Evan," I took the excited youth by the shoulder. "Talk intoxicates, like strong drink"—and I could not forbear bending low to him where he sat and whispering in his ear—"What of Jannot now?"

"Oh, accursed! Accursed!" he cried, whimpering like a child.

But I thought of Isabelle ; what mattered it on what side I fought. I should get to Castle Drum and do what a man might for her and the other two silly women, despite their spells.

I went to the window and set the shutters wide so that the summer air came into that place fouled by many breaths, and leaned out into the light of the dawn, and thought that I could see the golden light of her eyes in the sunlit vapours that began to brighten the vanishing night.

* * *

Much heartened by this advantage, many thousands—and I do not write loosely, for I remember that they were counted as they came in—able-bodied fighting men, armed not only with their farm implements, but with fusils, joined us, I mean the main covenanting party under Robert Hamilton during that month of June.

And the captains, consulting together in Loudon House, where the lady still entertained us fairly, decided to make a push for it against Glasgow before the Government had time to well barricade and garrison that city.

As all the country folk and peasantry were, without exception as I believe, on our side, we had many messengers and spies coming in with news. There was not an old woman crossing the bogs, a boy pulling up weeds or scaring crows, an old labourer at his cottage door, who did not have some eyes and ears for the doings of the Government troops.

So we learned that Lord Ross and Colonel Graham in Glasgow had determined to hold the city, that they had sent riders post-haste to Edinburgh, where Lord Linlithgow was, he being still in command of all the Royal forces in Scotland.

It was not so easy for us to get news from the capital, but we had well-wishers even there, and Robert Hamilton was informed that the commander-in-chief would probably march towards the west with all the soldiery in Scotland ; they were not many.

At this time the Covenanters were so elated and proud that they believed that they could overthrow the rule of His Majesty King Charles, and I being in the midst of them, found it hard to get the right perspective of their ambition. It seemed even to me, a man of a wider experience than most of them and one who from a long residence in London knew the power and might of the Government, that they might succeed, and make Scotland too hot for His Majesty's fingers to hold.

I noted that my noble relative, the Duke of Lauderdale, did not come to Scotland, but remained at the King's ear in London. Doctor Sharp now being dead they lacked a strong man to hold the country down, and that the main feeling of Scotland was Whig and Presbyterian I did not doubt.

Evan Garrie had become one of the warmest of the supporters of Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Cleland, and I wondered at the lad who had so long been hesitant and who had now taken up his position with so much decision. I saw him, too, at the praying and the hymn-singing, and marked in all his gestures and words a new-born valiancy.

'Well,' said I to myself, 'there is one who has found his work. And I suppose that with these zealous and holy men he will forget Jannot of Castle Drum.'

But for me, could I forget?

I still did not know. Sometimes the mood that had come upon me when I had seen Philippa Dean standing in the door of my room at The Hague would torment me again, and I would feel a tingling in my blood and a strange restlessness in my soul. Strange, I say, for it was not to be explained, as if a magnet drew me towards that dark and dreary castle.

I learned that Sir Donald Garrie had returned there now, and I supposed he was in charge of that wild pack of womanhood. I wondered what the sick boy was doing, and Doctor Fletcher? I could not think of him without a creeping of the flesh.

I was not, as was Evan Garrie, persuaded of the rights of the Covenanters to slay as fiercely as they did, although I was persuaded of their rights to pray to their God in peace. I had thought that Robert Hamilton had shown a tenderness for the prisoners after the battle of Drumclog, as they named that skirmish in the bog.

But he told me roundly to my face that he, being in command that day, had given out word that no quarter should be given, meaning that the prisoners should be slain. And he much blamed the misplaced mercy, as he termed it, of those who had allowed the Royalists to escape and take information into Glasgow. I did not like this, as I had not liked the way they had mutilated the body of Cornet Graham; I might have been named a ruthless man myself, but that did not make me respect other bloody-minded men, and I thought that these Covenanters were a long way from the kingdom of the God of Love.

Yet I remained with them, out of a curious indifferency of spirit. Here was work to do, and man's work at that, and if they were fierce and violent the same might be said of Colonel Graham, who carried his prisoners "bound like beasts," as we were told, and who would have shot down the whole Conventicle, including women and children, if he had had the power.

I did not use my name, one accursed to these people, of Maitland, but termed myself after my mother's family Thomas Findlater. I had shown sufficient zeal and forwardness at Drumclog for my English name and accent to be overlooked, and William Cleland, who had become so close a friend to Evan Garrie, sought out my company during the march and the conferences. He was a man of a sensitive spirit and liked the intelligent and the scholarly. I could have had many profitable discourses with him and taught him much, for he was thirsty after the classics, and longed to improve his knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages. But what time had we for such things?

At the end of the first week of June found us not far from

Glasgow. We had advanced a few miles at a time over a country wholly friendly ; there was no one against us except a few Royalist troopers. Knowing Claverhouse as I did, I expected to find that he had made preparations to receive us.

And so it was. The city was guarded and barricaded, about the market cross, the town house, and the tolbooth, and a brisk fire received the first attackers. We lost many in that assault but went forward again.

I was with the party that tried to force up the Gallowgate, but we found it impossible to penetrate far into the city owing to the murderous fusillade that met us from the closes, the street corners, and the windows of the houses. When we fell back we had left many dead in the streets and several prisoners.

On gaining the open ground again we found that the other detachment, that Hamilton had sent by the College, had also retreated, and the entire army of the Covenanters withdrew, but in good order.

We were not unduly dispirited by this reverse. The town of Hamilton was our next headquarters, and there our numbers were so augmented that we were nearly seven thousand armed men strong.

Our scouting parties brought the news that was as welcome as unexpected, that Ross and Claverhouse had abandoned Glasgow, on command as one supposed, from Lord Linlithgow in Edinburgh. These tactics seemed, to even my small experience, foolish. It appeared to me as if the commander-in-chief was faced with a situation with which he did not know how to deal.

We learned from our spies that he had called his two captains, Ross and Claverhouse, and all their troops at Bonnybridge, there to meet him and to discuss future operations.

This left the West of Scotland in our power ; Robert Hamilton lost no time in marching on Glasgow, and the undefended town was peacefully occupied.

I wondered how the news of these activities sounded in London. I had many a grim smile to myself as I considered the countenances of His Majesty and the Duke of York and his counsellors at St. James's when they learnt that those whom they most loathed in the world—this was certainly true at least on His Majesty's part—had seized the second city in the kingdom of Scotland.

We were for a while unmolested, and the days fell into a curious pattern of prayer-meetings and conferences and debates that were sometimes cool and sometimes excited.

William Cleland and Evan Garrie were always in the midst of the deepest disputes, and I saw little enough now of the lad whom I had taken with me from Castle Drum to The Hague.

The news that came from without seemed to show a curious inaction on the part of the Government. Our numbers swelled with every day that passed, for all those who believed in the Covenant, and they certainly seemed the majority of the residents in the Lowlands, rode up to Glasgow to increase our garrison.

I heard that my good relative, His Grace of Lauderdale, was endeavouring to raise fresh troops as well as to call out the militia. Those who daily rode up to Glasgow told us that all bridges and fords were guarded and that it would not be so easy in future for sympathisers with the Covenanters to reach Glasgow, since all armed men were likely to be arrested.

We had news, too, of a trifling reverse. Some of the Presbyterians coming from Fife were dispersed by the Master of Ross, who killed a good part of them and took several prisoners. This, that was termed the skirmish of Bewly Bog, with its tale of so many slaughtered and so many prisoners sent to meet a criminal's death in Edinburgh, whipped up the Covenanters in Glasgow to one of these furies that I had witnessed among them before.

I marched with them to Rutherglen by the middle of the month, where Christian burial was given to some poor

miserable relics that had fallen into the Covenanters' hands during their late success. These were the heads of those Presbyterians who had been put to death after the Pentland rising.

This epitaph was written, I forget by whom, either on these martyrs, as they termed them, or on those others whose heads lie at Hamilton :

Stay, passenger, take notice
  What thou reads.
At Edinboro be our bodies
  Here our heads,
Our right hands stood at Lanark
  These we want
Because with them we swore
  The Covenant.

Evan Garrie came to me after this ceremony, which had been accompanied by great ecstasies of prayer and hymn-singing, and asked me uneasily if I thought the Covenanters had not reached the dangerous confidences given by success ?

For he had learned by the last rebels who had ridden up that the Duke of Monmouth was to be sent from London as commander-in-chief in Scotland, bringing with him English troops. It was said that there would be near six thousand of these when the reinforcements were joined to the army under my Lord Linlithgow ; he had heard, too, and this I could only too readily believe, that the King's bastard brought letters of fire and blood with him and that he was instructed to enforce the law unto the death of all who might be suspected of treason, and to pursue the obstinate rebels who should remain in arms with all the extremities of war until they should be absolutely reduced.

" Well," said I, " what else did you expect ? Did you think, Evan, that the King would allow Scotland, which,

after all, is a jewel in his crown, to fall from him and make no effort to reclaim it ? "

Then Evan Garrie confided to me that he doubted as to the leadership of the Covenanters. The captains argued and the ministers disputed among themselves too much and too long ; there was no unison.

" I thought," said he, " that the Lord had called for this service at my hands, and I wished to venture my all for Him. And seeing that the Covenanters own to be for the Lord, I judge myself obliged to own and assist them. But now sometimes I fear that the Lord is not with them, that they have no authority and discipline and there is much division among those that should have guided the rest."

I could not stay my mockery at this.

" Do they not say, and the saintly Richard Cameron among them, that the Lord will provide, the Lord will protect ? Well, you have made your choice, Evan. You thought, as you say, that you saw the Lord's hand in this, that you are doing his service. It is a great thing," I added, " that you have found God's hand in anything. As well shed your blood in that cause as in another."

Then I asked him roundly if he ever thought of Jannot Garrie ? He would not answer me, but turned aside.

* * *

It was a few days after this that we in Glasgow, having news that the King's son and his troops were advancing on us, went out to Bothwell's Bridge to meet them. We were not yet combined into an orderly army ; there was, as Evan Garrie had said, disputes among the leaders, and the fanatic ministers stirred up revolt those who were in lay authority. Yet there was no breaking in the spirits of these Presbyterians, who were resolved to fight to the death " the King of England and the legions of Satan," as they termed Charles Stuart.

All knew the Duke of Monmouth's Proclamation that had been cast over the country. Mercy was to be offered

to such as would lay down their arms, save those who had murdered the Archbishop of St. Andrews ; we used such of these as came our way for musket wads.

It was another Sunday when we came in sight of the Government troops, who had already planted their cannon on the bridge that spanned the River Clyde at the little town of Bothwell.

There was a service held before the action, and the words were wild and inspiring and lifted even my indifferent soul for a moment into a noble exaltation.

" The Lord God of gods, He knoweth in Israel, we shall know, that if it be in rebellion or in transgression against the Lord, save us not this day."

Our end of the bridge was protected by our only cannon and had a brave man behind it ; horse and foot was behind him ; across the bridge was the Government artillery being put into position.

I noticed that there was not the confidence among the Covenanters that there had been at Drumclog ; we were clearly outnumbered, and Monmouth was thought to be a good captain. Many of our men were unarmed, and we lacked ammunition. Robert Hamilton found, to his dismay and fury, that barrels he thought had contained gunpowder were instead full of dried fish—a mistake or a treachery that was likely to prove highly inconvenient.

When I heard, after the matter had been for an hour or so disputed, that Robert Hamilton had offered a parley and the Duke of Monmouth accepted, I volunteered to go with the two clergymen who, with a drummer, rode forward to speak to the Royal commander-in-chief.

We crossed the bridge, and found the young Duke not many yards from the head of it. I had seen him often enough in St. James's, but did not suppose that he would recognize me now in my rough attire, with my hat pulled over my eyes, my face unshaven, my air rude and harsh. And I think His Grace was in no mood to recognize his best friend had he seen him then, because he was deeply

troubled. A gay, light-hearted and humane man, he could not have liked this task.

His face, womanish in its perfection at one time though now slightly coarsened by debauch, was flushed and his words hesitant, gentle, and contradictory as he spoke to the rebels.

I saw Claverhouse close behind him on another roan horse, as like as possible to that that had been slain at Drumclog, and I thought that the scowl on his cool face was because of His Grace's hesitancy and tenderheartedness, for Monmouth was courteous and showed himself a moderate man. And I thought of William Penn, there were few peacemakers in the world, and it was surely a notable thing to have met two of them.

And while they were talking—the plain Scots and the affable Duke, who, for all his cuirass and plumes, seemed to me an easy courtier rather than a man of war—fantastic pictures were passing through my mind of that city of brotherly love in the New World where perhaps men like His Grace of Monmouth, gentle princes might have found their ease and pleasure in sport and art, with simple-minded, gracious men like William Penn for their ministers.

Then I remembered the sharp antidotes to these sick fancies, the words of His Highness, the Prince Stadtholder. And I knew such thoughts—and why should they have come to me on the eve of a battle ?—to be vainillusi ons.

I sat there patiently on my rough horse, for I was not spokesman of the party, for more than an hour while the Duke, with good-humour and courtesy, tried to persuade the rebels to spare much slaughter by laying down their arms.

This they refused to do.

They had, and I could not but admire their steadfast courage, their own terms to make. And these must have been allowed just by any reasonable man. The spokesman of the Presbyterians demanded that they should be allowed to exercise their religion as they pleased, that the old oaths

for the abolishing of the Covenants should in their turn be abolished, and that a new General Assembly of free, unbiased men should be called to consider coolly and to debate wisely the troubles of Scotland in Church and State.

Well I knew that His Grace of Monmouth, if it had been in his power, would have granted these conditions gracefully and gone with a light heart to his wine or his repose or his sport. But he was the tool of the Government only, and though he spun the matter out as long as he could, being, though a brave and efficient soldier, a man who loathed bloodshed, the moment came when the negotiations were broken off and I had to ride back with the envoys to the waiting army of the Covenanters.

There was soon a general engagement. As we had but one cannon we were finally driven from our posts by the fire of the Duke's artillerymen, though desperate charges and our one gunner had chased them off at first.

It was a hand-to-hand engagement in the end, in which I, beside Evan Garrie, took my part ; it was soon a wild medley, so many of us were unarmed, and could but stand and be shot, or run like cowards.

Once, twice, spurred on by the roaring shouts of the old, unarmed, unbonneted ministers who bawled to them the warrior words of the Old Testament, the rebels rallied.

Rebels, say I, I found it difficult to rid myself of this word having been bred in conventional loyalty to His Majesty King Charles, but I was glad to be fighting in these ranks, glad, even, to forget the noble birth of which I had been so blackly proud and to have as my brothers in arms these poor countrymen, many of whom had no weapons, others having nothing but scythes or pitchforks. They believed that they struggled against the cohorts of Satan, and I was glad to lead them again and again in that part of the field where I found myself against Claverhouse's troop of horse.

But what could we do against the cavalry and the artillery ? Our ranks broke, the dead lay about in heaps,

the blood drying on the torn flesh in the heat of the June day, and those who were mounted rode wildly away. Hamilton among them.

It was Claverhouse's cavalry that drove Robert Hamilton off the field, I heard afterwards—at the time I knew nothing but what was happening around me. I fell back in the pursuit with the others, I heard myself roaring a hymn. Two ministers and two standards that the Covenanters carried about with them were captured by an officer who rode up close to us, but I was left for dead on the ground, I suppose. I was somewhat blinded by the blood that was falling into my eyes from a cut on my brow; but I was not greatly hurt, and rolled over to find beside me Evan Garrie, who was more gravely wounded than I, and I had, as best I could, to get him off the field. It was Virgil, the poor blackamoor, whom I knew to be a timorous creature, who somehow had managed to keep close to me in the press, who came up to me now with a fresh horse, that he, quick and clever despite his terror that his affection had overcome, had found loose on the field and captured; he had been hiding with the baggage, but had come out when the mass had thinned.

Between us we got Evan Garrie on to the horse, and I made Virgil mount behind him and gave him my orders to ride westward out of the affray as best he could.

My own horse had been killed earlier in the day, and I had fought on foot, but I, too, secured another mount—there were a number of riderless horses then galloping across the field by the river-banks. And before Garrie and the negro were out of sight I contrived to follow them.

* * *

So I escaped from the battle of the bridge over the Clyde by the town of Bothwell, and so avoided an ill fate. Claverhouse covered his name with more infamy than it already possessed in the minds of the Lowlanders by his ruthless pursuit and slaughter of the Cameronian saints, at

least, this blame was given him by the Whigs. A number of prisoners, no less than a thousand it was said, were taken to Edinburgh ; there being no place large enough to contain them, they were all set under guard in the churchyard of the Grey Friars. There, to conclude this mention of their fate, they were kept for nearly half a year, sleeping on the ground, living on such scraps of food as charity offered them. Such as refused to subscribe to the Government were finally shipped to the West Indies.

The two hundred of these who were lost in a storm near the Orkneys were the most fortunate, for the rest were sold as slaves in Barbados. Whenever I heard this tale I thought it related the most cruel fate that could ever befall a man, for I had known the pride, the stubbornness, the black obstinacy of these Covenanters. Who was less fitted to play the part of a slave to some insolent and ignorant Englishman ?

Many active rebels were beheaded in Edinburgh, their quartered limbs set up over various market towns.

As the three of us fled across the country, not knowing whither we went we were overtaken by other fugitives from Bothwell Bridge. And all had the same tale to tell of bloody slaughter. I thought to myself that it might have been the same had the Covenanters got the victory. I knew what they did, their women as well as their men, to such of the soldiers who fell into their hands. But that did not make the burden of death and suffering the lighter on the wretched country-side.

Where were we to go ? Evan Garrie was grimly wounded, and hurt, too, in his mind, as I thought, for he was talking about the victory of the warlocks and the witches and of Satan having got the upper hand in Scotland, and of the Lord having forsaken his saints.

I was able to give him some repose in a cottage where a woman sheltered us at the peril of her own life for a few days and nights. There he lay in a fever, not knowing what he said. We nursed him as best we could. All my

property and my money had been left behind in Glasgow on the field at Bothwell Bridge ; I had only a little brandy stolen from the cellar of the Bishop at Glasgow when we sacked the palace.

By chance we escaped the searching troops ; the Duke of Monmouth was riding through the rebellious districts and as none came forward to meet him he believed that the followers of the Covenant were dispersed for ever. So confident were the Government in their success that the militia was disbanded and the King's bastard returned to Edinburgh before the end of the month.

I heard afterwards that he had been much abused, not only by his uncle, His Grace of York, who had always much disliked him, but by his father, the King, for his clemency towards the rebels ; His Majesty had always loathed the Presbyterians of Scotland, who had inflicted many sharp humiliations upon him when he had been in their power. And now he was reputed to have said to his son, " Had I been at Bothwell Bridge there would have been no trouble about prisoners."

But all these matters I learnt afterwards. For the moment my concern was with my own affairs. I think I had not realized before into what position I had put myself by joining the Covenanters. Not all my influence with His Grace of Lauderdale would help me now, indeed no doubt he, who was a sick and failing man, gross of habit and dull in mind, would not endure to hear my name mentioned again but would be glad of my rebellion in order to wash his hands of me. I had now no hopes of regaining my estates, even if I had been able in some way to find some money to purchase them. All I possessed would be forfeit through my treason had I been present at Drumclog and with the Covenanters in Glasgow. If I was not sent to join those wretches herded in the churchyard at Grey Friars I might be hanged in Edinburgh, as were the ministers who had been captured at Bothwell Bridge.

I now fully counted the cost of my rash and, as it were,

indifferent act. I had thrown away my hopes of the future, perhaps my life. But indeed, I did not quite understand why I wished to preserve my life. Philippa was gone and had been lost to me from the moment when she had stood on my threshold in that comfortable room in The Hague. That Philippa had not been the dear love of the English days whom I had always seen against a gentle background of a Kentish garden with the red roses blowing against the red bricks of her pleasant home. She had been a woman harassed and pursued, stained by remorse and shame, offering me not a high affection but a backstairs intrigue.

And there was Isabelle.

I thought of her every day more frequently as we made our painful progress westward, three men on two horses—the negro and I taking it in turn to support Evan Garrie in front of us. I feared that he might be smitten by gangrene, for he was wounded in the leg, the arm, and the brow. But it seemed that these things go by chance, for I have known many a man to die in agonies from a lesser hurt. Why, the scratch that I gave Philippa's brother was not so severe as the least of Evan Garrie's gaping cuts. But the washing out that I had given them of wine at that cottage where we had first stopped seemed to have kept the flesh wholesome, for the edges of the wound dried and came together under the bandages, and the youth, being strong and lusty, recovered from his loss of blood.

And when we had been two weeks or so going about the country, hidden always by the country-folk who in this 'killing-time,' as it was afterwards termed, offered their all to those pursued by the Government, Evan Garrie was as healthy as he had been the day before Bothwell Bridge. In his body that is, I thought his mind was clouded, his senses almost overcast.

He seemed to have forgotten much that had happened to him since I had taken him from Scotland. He looked askance at the faithful negro, as if the blackamoor's face alarmed him. But the earlier part of his life he remem-

bered well, and he constantly urged me to return to Castle Drum.

"That," said I, "would be to walk into the arms of the enemy. We might meet Claverhouse himself there, for Sir Donald Garrie stands for the Government."

"It is my home," said the boy sullenly, "and I want to see Jannot and Isabelle again."

I wondered if these women would, in extremity, hide us, and a torturing desire to put this question to the proof assailed me through the long bitter days and nights of that pursuit that seemed endless.

* * *

We slept in caves and on the moors, behind what whins and bushes we could discover. We wandered over tracts of land, mountain passes fit only for the fox and the eagle, quite unknown to me. We had guides, children or old women, who saw us from place to place. We never lacked some food, even if it was but a cup of water, a plate of oatmeal cakes. Sometimes we got a piece of meat and even good brandy.

But finding myself no better than a hunted hare affected my mind as well as my body. The last became taut, hardy, and alert, the first became subdued and quivering at the sound of a broken branch or a footfall in the distance.

And I could see no end to this slow torment.

Even if we could get to the coast, what money had we with which to buy the meanest passage on the meanest ship? We had joined in a moment, on my part at least, of utter wilfulness a party that had been defeated. I had lost even my name, there was no one to whom I could now appeal.

Evan Garrie, too, was cut off from what he still termed his home. The negro was a wretched slave, dependent on the charity of those who could no longer protect him.

We had, soon after the first week of our flight was over, to abandon our horses, not being able to maintain them. Besides, our paths often lay down glens and up rocks, where

it would have been impossible for the animals to have gone.

So, as fugitives, we existed in this country that to me was certainly accursed, until one night when we had taken shelter in a cave, and I slept heavily from sheer weariness of broken spirit. And when I woke Virgil was watching by me.

He told me that Mr. Garrie had gone.

I thought, as the blackamoor gave me this news in the grey glimmer of an ugly dawn, that I must follow this boy to whom I had, in a manner, pledged myself. Although he had forsaken me for the company and the affection of William Cleland, still he had turned to me again and I had heard him say nothing of that worthy since we had fled from Bothwell Bridge, and I had nursed him through the sickness caused by his wounds. There was no doubt that the attention the blackamoor and I had paid him had saved his life. But what was any man's life worth in these times ?

And as Virgil gave me the story, and I made him repeat it more than once in order that I could be sure of it, I wondered if I should follow Evan Garrie or not.

What did it matter if he sought shelter in Castle Drum or whether the ladies there gave it him, or whether he was caught and slaughtered on the heather, or dragged to Edinburgh and there tormented before his death ?

As happened afterwards to that man David Hackston of Raphillet, who had murdered Archbishop Sharp, who was tried about a year after this date, condemned and taken, bound with irons, barebacked on a horse with his face to the animal's tail. First his right hand was cut off, then his left, and then he was hanged, and while still alive his heart cut out, exposed on the point of the executioner's knife and thrown into a fire. Such was, commonly enough, the fate of those who followed the covenanting captains.

And I knew that it might be the fate of Evan Garrie were he captured by one of Monmouth's soldiers.

Nay, it might have been the fate of all three of us had we not had so many friends among the humble peasantry who were engaged to pass us from one to another and to hide us in the glens, the passes, and the mountains.

We had heard, too, the tales brought us by the whisperers, who passed us news in secret, that the Duke of York was coming to Edinburgh to control the country, and knowing him to be as black a Papist as Richard Cameron and his men were black Covenanters, I could see the fate of Scotland in the few months to come.

All these considerations were thrusting into my mind as I listened to the tale told by Virgil. We now were but two and had no horse between us, and I wondered what we should do or how proceed on our way. And I sat musing awhile in the murk of the cave, idly tracing with my right hand that had been no great use to me either with pen or sword, either in fighting men or caressing women, a name upon the damp mud on which I lay stretched. A cluster of heather had been our sole bed and our food but some porridge and a drink of water.

The blackamoor was steadfast in his tale. Evan Garrie had roused him while it was still dark and told him that he was impelled to go towards Castle Drum and begged him to give a message to me when I should awake, saying that that was his destination and nothing could keep him from it.

I could understand the meaning of these words ; Evan Garrie had been drawn towards Castle Drum by the incantations of Jannot, or so at least he supposed.

The woman had gotten into his blood, into his mind, into his spirit, and he could by no means resist her. Although I had taken him away from her enchantment, although he had lived with me peacefully for a while at The Hague, although he had joined the fanatic Covenanters who were so many zealots out for the blood of such witches as Jannot Garrie was reputed to be, still he had turned again steadfast to her spell.

And now he was gone, to his certain death it might be,

for how did I know whether Sir Donald Garrie would shelter his kinsman or deliver him to the Royalist troopers?

I looked down at the name I had written in the mud and saw it was 'Isabelle.' If one golden-eyed girl lured Evan Garrie, did not the other lure me?

"Virgil," said I, "we, too, will go to Castle Drum."

He remembered the place and began to gibber in fear. And then I was minded, out of curiosity, to ask him if he had been present at the ruined chapel the night before he had attracted my attention standing in the doorway of the Castle. I could get no sense out of him on this point.

He said he had been wandering for some time since he had run away from the Netherbow in Edinburgh, and it might have been that he had slept in a corner of the ruins of the chapel the night before I had seen him.

Well, there was no bottom to be found to this. I was convinced in my own mind that Virgil had nothing to do with the nasty business in which Doctor Fletcher and the ladies of Castle Drum were undoubtedly concerned. But I thought that I might have seen him when I had supposed that the great black man at the foot of the stairs had been Satan himself.

And I remember that I stretched myself out on the floor of the cave and crossed my hands in front of my face and rested these on my poor bed of heather and thought miserably of the tangle that my life had been since first I had met Philippa.

But the blackamoor was pulling at my coat, and it was a question of action. Yes, I would go to Castle Drum also. I had not the small hope on which Evan Garrie might be relying, for I was no kinsman of the house but a stranger, and one whom they might consider had played the traitor and the renegade. I had fought with the Covenanters; everything I had or might have had was forfeited. It even gave me an ugly satisfaction to think how stripped I was.

We left our place of refuge as soon as it was light enough for us to see our way. Now that I had lost Evan Garrie I

had no sure guide, and the negro knew the country even less than I did.

We never failed of a welcome or a shelter at the huts where we stayed. Once we came upon a conventicle ; even after Bothwell Bridge and the killings that followed it and the fierce revenge taken by the Royalist troops upon the Scottish people, these proscribed ministers went forth to hold their services of prayer and praise in the waste lonely places, the watchman standing above them on the rising ground and the armed men ready with their hands upon their weapons.

And when I saw these people again, still valiant after their great misfortune, my heart went out to them once more, and I was not sorry to suffer in their cause.

Stern and grim as they were, they received me kindly. I was soon able to identify myself as the Englishman who had so suddenly and unexpectedly joined them, and they treated me, and even the negro, well.

These men, too, set me on my way towards Castle Drum. They exclaimed much that I should be going near such a dangerous place, and they said that Sir Donald Garrie had fortified it and that a troop of Claverhouse's soldiers were within the walls, for they had feared an attack from the Covenanters. But the man who told me this admitted that, for the moment, the spirit of the Presbyterians was broken. Too many had been slain, too many made prisoners, too many scattered, for them to be enabled to make any attack on any place, whether fortified or not.

I asked after Richard Cameron and whether he had fallen into the hands of the enemy. And they assured me no, but that aged and valiant man was still going about the country, setting up where he could a copy of his Declaration that excommunicated King Charles and absolved all the Scots from allegiance to him.

All this matter was but dusty to me now, never had it interested me very greatly. I recalled with the longing of a man in a desert for water the sweet peace that was promised

by Mr. William Penn's scheme, and I wished that I had never come to Scotland but remained rather in London, where I might have some hope of going to America with that gentleman. It was some while since I had been in The Hague that I had had any news of him, but it was pleasant in that gloomy summer—for though the sun shone the days were dark to me—to recall that there had been such a man and such a plan.

With only the negro for company I fell silent and therefore disconsolate. There was no one to whom to voice my doubts and fears ; hopes and joy I had none.

We were set on our way by such peasants as succoured us, and on the second day after we left the conventicle in the hills we came within sight of Castle Drum.

I remembered with what relief, even with what joy, I had left it, and how I had stared back at its dark outline on the horizon with a malicious pleasure, as if I said farewell for ever to those grim walls and all the corruption that they enclosed.

But I had returned, my destiny had come full circle. Useless had been the attempt at peace and resignation in Holland, useless the wise words of the stately Prince to whom I had spoken, useless all the sayings and arguments of those pastors and philosophers to whom I had listened in the clubs and at the conferences in The Hague.

Here I was returning, a wild and broken man.

As I stood upright on the heather, I looked but a vagabond and was, indeed, no better than I looked. I had lost all the attributes of a gentleman, even my sword—that had been first lost then broken and was a fitting symbol, I thought, for my thought, for my condition. I had but a short Scotch dirk, as they termed it, and the negro the same ; our fusils, or carbines, had long been lost, and if we had contrived to keep them they would have been useless, for we had no ammunition. The poor people who sheltered us were also without weapons, and we should have met a speedy death had we chanced on any soldiers, for not only were we

without means of defence but we had been for many days so foot-weary that we would not have been able to take to flight.

So stood I, with my clothes torn and soiled, my face unshaven and my hair tangled, looking at that domain which had been at one time accursed to me and which I had left in a moment of pride. I looked down at the negro and saw that his face was grey, an ugly and a fearsome tinge that it took when he was frightened.

I remembered Doctor Fletcher and felt sick ; I did not wish to see the women in the state I was then in, and I wondered how it was possible to get a message to Evan Garrie, or even if he was still in the Castle.

We waited until the dark fell then made our way, by slow and cautious marches, until we approached the building, and came within sight of the ruined chapel.

The moon was high and full ; it was then, so long had our adventures taken, towards the autumn, it would be the beginning of harvest in England, as I supposed, but here in this bitter north I had seen no sign of reaping and garnering of the grain. And whatever poor harvest Scotland might have usually, that year there was little but that of blood in the Lowlands.

I and the negro were both exhausted from long walking and from lack of food, we had had but little that day, and I found myself at the foot of the tower, where, with Evan Garrie beside me, I had looked down on those satanic revels, or whatever that hallucination might have been.

There we rested, too exhausted to move, drawing ourselves away from the moonlight as best we could, into the shadows. Virgil, who was still in my service, as if I had been the great gentleman that once in my black pride I had affected to be, pulled some ferns and heather and made me the pillow to which I had been now for many weeks accustomed ; then laid himself down across my feet in the manner of a band-dog.

I was soon asleep, scorning myself for this lassitude of the

flesh, for it had been in my mind to make an attempt at once to creep up to the Castle and under disguise of my ragged appearance to get into the kitchens and so find some news of Evan.

Was it Evan for whom I had come ? Was it not rather for another of whom I wished news ? I did not allow myself to debate this point but fell asleep, drawn away in that broken wall of the chapel, away from the moonlight that streamed, for all I knew, from the windows of Hecate. who is the goddess of all dark things of the night.

My dreams were sweet and gentle as they had not been for some time. I returned in my sleep to my earlier thoughts of Scotland and to those strange ballads that I had read carelessly in England, of Thomas and the Queen of Elfland, and those dark-green shades to which she led him on her pearl-white steed.

Across my dreams came oddly the writing on an old posy that I had known long since :

' They say what likes them, let them say : I care not, but love thou me, it's good for thee.'

VI

ISABELLE

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VI

ISABELLE

WHEN I awoke Isabelle was gazing at me.

She wore a dark-grey hood that matched the sky, then at the dawning, and held it under the chin as Philippa had held her rich red fox fur when I had last seen her standing on the threshold of my room at The Hague.

I raised myself on my elbow, not believing this to be true. She motioned with her free hand for me to be silent, and sat down upon a large block of fallen masonry.

The negro was asleep, his face was grey like ashes, wretched and hollow-cheeked in that colourless light. I looked at him without seeing him and then again at her.

She began to sing as if she did not see him, a little song that I believed might be for my enchantment :

" Oh, my love, leave me not ! Leave me not ! Leave me not !
Oh, my love, leave me not, leave me not alone !
With one burden on my back,
Love this burden from me take,
Or else I am gone.

With sins I am laden sore. Leave me not ! Leave me not ;
With sins I am laden sore. Leave me not alone !
I pray thee, sir, therefore,
Keep not my sins in store.
Love me, or I be forlorn, and hear my moan."

" Cease," said I, " cease ! "
And I could not raise my voice above my breath.

"I cry, and I call to thee to leave me not, to leave me not!
I cry, and I call to thee to leave me not alone!
All they that laden be,
Thou didst come home to me!
Then shall they stay with me, through thy mercy alone!"

"Do you speak to me, Isabelle, or to God?"

I tried to rise, but could get no further than my knees. A cold wind blew from the east, where the colourless light was stirring, in eddies with the clouds.

She clasped her hands, and not looking at me, and her eyes seeming blank indeed, whispered in her moaning song:

"Faith, hope and charity, leave me not! Leave me not!
Faith, hope and charity, leave me not alone.
I pray thee, Lord, grant me
These goodly gifts free.
Then shall I say with Thee, doubts have I none."

"Why," said I, "Isabelle, do you sing this hymn to me? Or is it a love-song? And who are you, Isabelle?—a witch? Or the Queen of Elfland, or the daughter of Sir Donald Garrie only?"

She turned and looked at me then and said:

"Poor Tom Maitland! You are much changed since you left Castle Drum!"

"Where is your kinsman, Evan Garrie?" I asked her. I had contrived to rise, though I was weak to my very bones, and leant in the broken arch.

"He's safe enough," she said, "ay, and hidden."

"How did you find me?" I asked.

"I knew you'd come," she said. "We go out to watch for you every night, one by one, round the ruins, round the ramparts, even on to the moors. Come, you must not remain here now, the light's rising and the sentries may see us. Bring your servant—he is faithful, I see."

She took my hand and led me, by her side, away from the Castle until we came to a place behind the ruins where

was a small hut that had been built with the fallen stones. There she had prepared a comfortable chamber ; there was a low pallet bed with blankets on it, there was a jug of milk, a plate of cakes. And there, too, was even the travelling toilet-box that I had left behind at Castle Drum.

She went away without saying anything more, neither giving me instructions nor warnings. The negro had followed me, and when I had eaten I gave him what was left of the food, for the fellow would never stay his stomach until I was satisfied.

I did not care to look into the mirror that was let in the lid of the toilet-box. I was sorry that she had seen me in this rough array. I was glad to see my comb and razors and to be able to make myself more civilized in appearance. But this seemed a profane interlude in what had been like a dream.

When I had eaten and drunk—and the food, though plain, was satisfying—when I had washed in the ewer she had set there and dried myself on the clean rough napkin, I felt more equal to facing her, trying to come to terms with my destiny. My clothes were still ragged, but I had more the appearance of a gentleman and little less that of a vagabond. I remembered the odd luxuries there had been at Castle Drum, the days when they used to set wax candles on the tables, the other days when there was nothing but a tallow dip on the pricket. Now she had brought out her best for me—linen, and the plate on which the cakes stood was of silver with the Garrie arms engraved on it.

" I wonder," said I to Virgil, " what power this lady has to hide us ? "

I talked to the negro because there was no one else to speak to. But he looked at me dumbly, terrified on returning to this place but never faltering in his fidelity to me.

Ah, if Isabelle and I and Jannot and Garrie could escape from Scotland, its black saints and its black witches, and its overshadowing of Satan and its ugly murders, and go with Mr. Penn to his New World, where there would be plain

and fruitful fields of corn, large and lightsome streets and stately buildings, and we could live for ever in peace !

Isabelle came to see me with no great pretence at, nor concern in, secrecy, and I remembered how, during my residence in Castle Drum, the three ladies had seemed to rule there with a freedom that at that time I attributed to unholy spells.

But now the master of the house was at home, and I asked Isabelle how it came that she was able to hide me not far from her father's residence, and come to me, as she seemed to come, fearlessly.

She had brought a change of garments with her, and I noticed that these were like everything else in Castle Drum, mingled mean and rich. There was a purple scarf with golden tassels, a strange gaud to bring a man in hiding ; there was a hat with spangled plumes that might have belonged to some mountebank player. And there was, more comfortable than these, a cloak of lamb's wool.

These she laid on the ground, they had concealed a basket of the earliest apples of golden colour and fragrant smelling that she put on the table where she had before set my food.

" My father, Sir Donald," she said, " is a sick man. When Doctor Fletcher is not by his bedside he is by that of David, and there is daily talk as to which shall die the first."

It did not please me to hear her speak thus coldly of her father and her brother, although I knew she could have but little affection for either in the nature of things. But whatever had pleased me about Isabelle Garrie ? She had nothing changed during those months in which so much had happened to me.

She had come into my rude hiding-place, that I was ashamed to take from her charity with as light a step as she had moved into the great stone hall behind me when I had been her brother's pedagogue. Her eyes had the same golden look as if there was a star behind them, and her tawny-coloured hair was smooth in the shadow of her hidden grey hood. Her thin face was a little pinched and

wan and not now, any more than it had been before, beautiful. I noticed that the hands that she had once tended into whiteness for my care had now been treated negligently again and seemed stained with work.

And what work should Isabelle Garrie do, who had a castle full of servants at her disposal?

But what I had noticed most in her discourse was this mention of Doctor Fletcher. I said to her roundly:

"I take that man to be a warlock. Though he is grey-haired he has a miserable countenance, and I take his condition to be the most pitiful and miserable known to mankind. But," added I, hotly, "he is indeed in league with the Devil."

"Leave Doctor Fletcher," said she, in a soft and dulcet tone, that she did not always use, "tell me why you have returned here."

"Perhaps," said I, sullenly, for I was a man trapped and cornered like a beast taken in the net, "because you cast your spells on me. They say that witches can raise the wind, ay, and bring Venus out of the sea, I doubt not."

"Do not speak so loud," she said, "and tell your blackamoor to keep guard at the door. I suppose he is a faithful monster?"

I was ashamed that I had been betrayed into a loud-voiced protest. I gave directions to the black man, whom I did not care to see against this background, for he reminded me of that odious night I had spent in the chapel ruins now at my hand.

"I have," said I, "a difficulty to divine the dream from the reality of these matters. I have endured many pains since I left you, Isabelle. Indeed, I know not why I returned. My heart was set upon another woman and she filled, as I thought, all my thoughts. Yet when I was away from Castle Drum I saw it in visions, and I tried to cut a path for myself through thickets of doubts, tried this way and that to reach up to God until I joined the Covenanters."

"Yes," said she, and repeated, "the Covenanters. And

if they had beaten the Royalists at Bothwell Bridge as they beat them at Drumclog, would you have marched with them on Castle Drum, to burn us all as witches ? "

" There's witchcraft here," cried I. " No doubt of it ! But I put the blame on Doctor Fletcher. Was he not known for a wizard when a student at Prague, and afterwards at St. Andrews in the days of Doctor Sharp ? "

" His black arts did not save him," smiled Isabelle. " He was hacked to pieces on the moors as if he had no friend to protect him. Tell me, Thomas Maitland," and she leaned towards me, " what have you seen in this place that makes you talk so much of witchcraft ? You know that if you blow this reputation abroad we could be all arrested and tormented to our several deaths."

" What was the vision," said I, sullenly, " that I saw in the jet ? What was it I saw "—and for the first time I brought these evil, ugly dreams across my lips, " in the chapel the night that Evan Garrie took me there ? Loathsome things that made me leave Castle Drum for ever."

" Perhaps," said she, " you were bewitched."

" Ay," said I, " you and Jannot and your stepmother, Sir Donald Garrie's wife, were in that enchantment."

" You are," said she, " touched with conceit and vain phantasies."

" I am," said I, " a vagabond. What do you mean to do with me ? "

" So you've lost everything," said she, in a compassionate tone. " You had little enough, Mr. Maitland, when you came here before. It was almost charity you were taken in then. We tried to treat you as a worthy guest, knowing your quality, and then you must run away and join those fanatics who say that we are in the pay of Satan."

Something in the way that she said these words that was wild and beautiful brought me in sudden and bitter mind of the peril in which she stood, not only from the Covenanters but from the Royalists themselves. The King was as eager as were his rebellious subjects to set Commissions

up to deal with witches, and well it was known to every sober man throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain that Scotland was infested by the diabolical arts.

Isabelle perhaps saw the terror in my face for she spoke again, in softer tones :

" What is this witchcraft of which you speak ? What do you think I know ? Do you think that I shall give disease to cattle or to children ? That when I hurt my hand I can give the pain of it to another woman ? Do you think that I can take a baptized cat on the lake and raise a storm ? Do you think that I go out at night and dance naked on the heath with our witch-wives round the black man who is Satan ? "

I thought I heard a note of human pleading in her voice, but I would not answer her. I said :

" What of Evan Garrie ? "

Isabelle sighed and turned away. She had taken a little stool in the corner of the hut ; I noticed jealously how it was arranged as a refuge. It was concealed behind the blocks of fallen masonry and the wild plants, the mountain ash and fern, in such a manner that one might pass and never see that there was a shelter there. For whom had this secret retreat been arranged ? Was it the hut where Doctor Fletcher worked his spells ?

" You have an affection for Evan, I think," she said at last. " My father received him again. Sir Donald is a man who is very troubled. He has never recovered the anguish he felt when he heard of the murder of his friend, Doctor Sharp. But for a chance he would have been in the coach with him, and often he wakes in the night now groaning out that armed men are dragging him over the heather to cut off his hands and batter out his brains. For," said Isabelle, sadly, " these are not merciful men whom you would join, Mr. Maitland."

" Who shall find mercy in Scotland," said I, " for it is a dark place ! I came here but to hear the fortunes of Evan Garrie, if he has returned to his bondage."

"Bondage!" cried she, softly. "Why, he has returned to his home, and I tell you that he has received my father's mercy. He has forgiven him that he fought with the Covenanters at Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge, that he was with the rebels in Glasgow. He will hear nothing of any of those things, he thinks that the lad was led astray, and by you, Mr. Maitland, who have played a double part—not only in our house but in Scotland."

Perceiving her to be angry, I changed the discourse and spoke to her fairly, until she had given me some account of the young man for whose sake I had come, by such tedious marches to so perilous a place.

From what I could learn from her, and she spoke as if the subject held no great interest, Evan Garrie had returned to his old position in Castle Drum—neither a servant nor a retainer nor a friend, but a neglected kinsman, idle for the most part and at a pinch doing what work was given him, content that he might be under the same roof-tree as Jannot.

Yes, he had returned to the woman whose spells had, as I took it, ruined him before. And I believed that she had found him now an easier victim because of the wound he had received and the scant nursing he had had.

I had noticed while we were on our flight together that his speech was slow, his thoughts often confused, and that he seemed as those do who are a little ruined in their senses, drawn nearer to that invisible land; that world we dread to know about yet we are sure is there, and that those who are whole in our wits only visit when asleep.

"You'll not save Evan Garrie now," said Isabelle. "Jannot has him for ever."

"Does she love him?" I asked.

"I do not talk of love," said Isabelle. "I sense that there is some bond between them that shall end only with the staying of their breath, and you've but wasted your time by taking him away to a strange land and to fight in the rebellion."

"Well, I have lost a friend," said I.

"Not so," said Isabelle. "He is not lost, though he shines in another's heart."

And I looked at her and she at me, as well as we could see one another in that obscure light.

Only a glimmer of the sun glow came here and there where the masonry was badly joined, for over the entrance a skin had been cunningly hung and a bank was in front, but a few feet away, so that anyone might come in and out without being observed.

"You and I are old," said I, "under one demeanour or countenance we have existed in all the ages. We are lovers however we may be named or whatever we admit to ourselves, with whatever cunning devices and quiddities we try to amuse ourselves."

"Lovers!" said Isabelle, softly. "You came back here to name me as a witch."

"Whatever I name you, you know what you are. Nothing is explained between us, yet all is known."

"And what have you to offer me," said she, whom I took then, in my weariness, to be witch or fairy, but certainly no mortal, "if I leave Castle Drum and all these broils and follow you?"

"What should I have to offer? You know me a vagabond. The last meal I had was by your charity, the next will come from your pity. And after that I shall go, taking the poor black with me, to wander down the breadth of Scotland until I find a man to slay me, if I can, in honourable fight. It is more likely that I shall receive a shot in the back or have my brains beaten out as I saw those of Cornet Graham beaten. For I have been a double-minded, unstable man."

And I thought of all my own unsettled doubts and wavering of mind. My life had been uneven because my heart, which was the string of my life, had been at odds with itself.

And I remembered what I had read in the book of some

divine, that a man that is not agreed within is like the motion of the sea, of himself ever fluctuating to and fro according to the natural instability of that element and at the same time exposed to all the tossing of the waves that arose.

I had thought that I loved Philippa Dean. For her sake I had ruined myself in a worldly sense, taken blood, though unwittingly, on my foolish hands. And then when I had seen her again I had looked upon her as but a commonplace person, of a frail and fading nature, who had no special privilege of beauty or grace or godliness.

And I had come back here to Isabelle Garrie, who sat now on the stool in the corner and looked at me where I rested on the poor table she had provided. And what had she that was not also frail and doomed to fade ?

And I thought ' the grass withereth, the flower thereof falleth away,' that we were all of us at our best and brightest but shallow streams that would run into the river, that would in its turn run into the sea and be lost for ever.

" Have you," said she, " any mind to fight further with the Covenanters ? "

" I have no mind," said I, " to fight with or for any man. Yet their cause is just and they have always the right of it. And I liked the mighty words they spoke, and something of the breath of God is in their old, wise men. There are no Doctor Fletchers among them," said I with a grin. And there came into my mind some of the words I had heard spoken before the battle of Bothwell Bridge, about the desirable and beautiful sight of God's glory in His own temple. I remembered how the old man—was it Richard Cameron or another ?—had said that " though for a small moment He had forsaken us, yet with great mercy He will gather us. He has lifted up our enemies that their fall may be the greater, and that He may cast them down in desolation for ever. Arise, and let us be doing, for the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

" And who are you," said Isabelle, not with mockery but

sadly, " to think of mighty words and stirring speeches who sit now in a dark corner like an owl, a defeated man ? "

I was fatigued, my mind was not steady.

I had come to the end of a long journey, though it had been but a journey in a circle. I had considered—lately as my poor shallow wits allowed—many things, the nature of God's dealing with man, the nature of man's dealing with his fellow. I had listened to the wisdom of that heroic Prince, the Stadtholder, in Holland, and there had been nothing in that for me. And I had refused to fight for the great ones of the earth, even though I thought their causes good. I had fought instead for these zealots who in much I disliked.

I had considered the scheme of Mr. William Penn for shaking off his shoes all the soiled dust of the Old World and endeavouring to plant a new country in the New World.

And where had all this brought me ?

I had lost that brilliant and now broken love that had got me into this plight, and I found myself entangled with one who was witch or fairy, or common clay, I knew not what. And I had returned again to this antique, melancholy residence where I had never been happy, sloth had softened my bones, and my plight was no better than that described by Mr. William Cleland, by whose side I had fought in a poem he wrote.

I had seen these words that he had written when we were in Glasgow, finishing for his amusement an old poem that seemed to have been scribbled by a madman gazing at the moon through the grating of his cell window.

Mr. Cleland told me that he had written this paper when he had been a youth of eighteen in the college of Edinburgh, and now and then when the affairs of the world lay heavy on him and he wished to distract his loaded spirit, he would add another verse. I heard it the night they sacked the cathedral in Glasgow and fired the spirit in the Bishop's cellar.

I said the words now to Isabelle, and she listened, and her golden eyes sparkled as if I recited to her an incantation :

" Fain also would I prove this :
By considering
What that which you call Love is :
Whether it be Folly,
Or a melancholy,
Or some Heroic thing !

" Fain I'd have it proved by one whom love has wounded
And fully upon one his Desire hath founded,
Whom nothing else could please, tho' the world were rounded.
Hallo, my fancy, whither wilt thou go ? "

" By these foolish rhymes," said I, " I speak to you, for no sense and reason can I offer you, either for my being here nor for what I say."

And I added some more of the crazed verse written by the Covenanting poet :

" Hallo, my fancy, hallo !
Stay, stay at home with me.
I can thee no longer follow
For thou hast betrayed me
And betrayed me ;
It is too much for thee.

" Stay, stay at home with me.
Leave off thy lofty soaring ;
Stay thou at home with me and on thy books be poring,
For he that goes abroad, lays little up in storing,
Thou art welcome home, my Fancy, welcome home to me."

Isabelle clapped her hands and laughed when I had finished.

" That is all the matter there need be between you and me," she said. " No reason, debate or argument ! "

It may be that we did not say all this on one occasion, it may be that there were two or three occasions on which

she visited me in that little cell behind the ruins. But when she had gone I used to put down in the poor sheets I had still preserved, the highest matter of these discourses, and thus I found it written a long while afterwards.

I think she came no more than two or three times to see me, bringing food and even a few books, for she knew that I found comfort in the written words of wise men. Greek and Latin writers she brought me, and I remembered the volumes as being among those that had stood by the side of the sick boy.

I was not greatly concerned with the health of David Garrie or with the long, dreary illness of Sir Donald, his father, and I soon ceased to have any interest for the affairs of Evan Garrie and Jannot.

Isabelle and I were all that concerned me, and would, I thought, in this world and the next—if there be such a world.

* * *

There was much freedom in this strange retreat. At night poor Virgil and I would go and walk abroad, contentedly, and not afraid of either the legions of Satan or Claverhouse's dragoons, for there were many wide and waste spaces where we could walk unperceived, and in this manner we stretched our limbs and got fresh air into our lungs.

I began to think of life again. So far the sum for me of many months of existence had been this return to Castle Drum. And now I was here, and now I knew why I had come, I began to think how I should continue with my days. And the more I thought of this the more I was enamoured with Mr. William Penn's project. And I thought if I could take Isabelle and Virgil with me, and perhaps Evan Garrie and Jannot, we might yet have a fresh lease of days, and that all this in the memory would seem poor and tawdry, bloody, and ill-favoured.

But I, being, as I have so often said, a vagabond, did not

know how to put this design into execution. I had, too, the black man dependent upon me. He was still the property of another man, and might, were I to be captured, be claimed again by the goldsmith of the Netherbow.

Isabelle was like a bird from a bough or an animal escaped from its hiding-place. She had nothing to suggest as to the future. If she loved me or would follow me for caprice, I did not know which, I had not asked, but I felt that our destinies were intertwined as the rose and eglantine that grew from the lovers' graves in the ballad.

But, as I have said, she had nothing to say as to what the days might bring us. She occupied herself in her tender duties to us ; we had food enough and water, and even wine. And well I knew that her stepmother and her sister must be in a connivance with her or she would not have been able to bring these things from the Castle without being noted.

Then there came a peak in our affairs when Sir Donald Garrie died. Isabelle did not weep for him, or mourn ; she had not seen him often, he had usually been harsh with her. But while the funeral was taking place, and they made a long and dreary business of it, a wild ceremony in that wild place, she did not come to me, and I felt as if a curtain had fallen between me and the sun.

" Virgil," said I, for I had no one to talk to save the poor black, " we must get somehow to London, and I must wash the past away from me, and see if I can begin again."

I remember, I think it was when I was saying these words to him or some other occasion soon after the death of Sir Donald Garrie, that a hare ran past our retreat. The skin that hung in front of the door had been drawn a little aside, for we had become careless with much security, and the animal, so fleet and beautiful, bounded in and bounded away again. I saw the negro, it was at the break of the day, and I had been sleepless for many hours, groveling on the floor in terror.

It flashed upon me that he believed the hare to be an enchanted creature, and I remembered that Isabelle, mocking me, had danced about on the wooden floor, reciting what she declared to be a charm—" Hare, hare, God send you fear ! I am in a hare's likeness now, but I shall be a woman e'en now ! Hare, hare, God send you fear ! "

When Virgil could recover his speech he babbled out his fear that the hare had been one of the ladies of Castle Drum.

I looked out into the light that was strengthening over the ruined chapel, and the beast was no longer in sight. Her swift leaps had carried her, I hope, safely to her forme. And if it should have been Isabelle, would I have held her nestling in my bosom or cast her to the dogs, who, maybe, were behind her, as a thing accursed ?

I believe that this made me consider with great seriousness my position. And I decided that I would, once and for all, solve the problem of the future. If not by untying of the knot, then by cutting of it, as Alexander did the Gordian twist.

Isabelle came down that morning—I had seen her once only since her father died—and seated herself on the stool in the corner, as was her wont, to make with me random discourse. But I was changed, by I knew what subtle alchemy of the spirit, and though I still had not a penny in my pouch nor a sword by my side, I was resolute to try my own fate.

" Isabelle," said I, " I remember there was an arsenal on one of the great rooms on the ground floor of the Castle. find me there a sword that is not too old-fashioned a make and bring it down here to me, with the belt appertaining, if you may find it."

" And to whom will you do a mischief ? " she asked.

" I have no wish," said I, " to shed anyone's blood. I find myself in peace towards all mankind, but it is fitting that I should go armed as a gentleman for what I am about to do."

She seemed frightened at that and asked if I would deliver her up for a witch.

I did not answer, and her fears increased, and she spoke like a child when she confessed piteously :

" Doctor Fletcher has offered to teach me many strange things, and I have been out with him at night on the heath. And I have seen faces in the smoke that forms in the spray cast up by his crucible. And at times he has blinded my sight and made my speech unsteady. But I could swear to you by any god you like to name that I am no witch, that I know no evil arts."

I remembered how she had been bred in that lonely Castle among superstitious folk. I did not care to dwell on the strange powers that Doctor Fletcher might possess ; nay, I believed that Isabelle herself might have them, but all I could answer was that all this was nothing to me.

She brought me the sword ; by then she never refused to do my bidding, not that I asked much of her. It was the most modern weapon that she could find in her late father's arsenal, but dated back to the time of the father of His present Majesty. Still, it was fitted with a baldrick, and I was glad to feel the leather over my shoulder again.

Thus armed according to my gentility, and my attire made as neat as the care of Virgil, still a good body-servant, in these adverse circumstances could make me, I took Isabelle by her little wrist and bade her take me to the next gathering of witches, the *Sabats*, as they termed them, that might be held within a man's walk of Castle Drum.

She looked at me long and earnestly with those eyes of liquid golden light, and I could only read in her glance the keen questioning of bewildered child in asking whether what she does is right or wrong ?

" You might hold me cursed," she said, " you might deliver me up to the tar-barrel."

I comforted her away from thoughts of such foul treachery by saying that as we went to meet the Devil and his legions, and as I was but one human man, and not godly at that, all the force would be on her side.

She seemed hesitant and reluctant, and I knew not yet

whether I was in the right of it or no. I seemed to see a light, but it was far distant and much clouded over.

Still, at length she was persuaded. She came to me one chilly night in October ; no snow had fallen yet for the northern summer had been long and sweet in the Lowlands, though the Highland hills were white. I told her that Virgil must be of our company, for the poor wretch was too affrighted to remain alone and would have become a howling madman by the morning had he been abandoned by the ruins of the old church that he declared to be haunted by a hundred foul goblins. None of these sprites had I seen, but they were very apparent to the rolling eyeballs of the blackamoor.

So we set out, and there was an odd pain in my heart to think that the girl should be taking me to what she admitted was a gathering of witches ruled over by some infernal demon. I had set the request to test her, to pierce to the heart this confusing, fantastic, and doubtful tale that had been tormenting me ever since I came to Castle Drum.

I had thought perhaps it would end in moonshine, that like the fairy gold it would be nothing but a handful of dead leaves in the morning, and here we were—Isabelle with her dark lantern—and I reflected jealously how easily she came and went from the Castle, now masterless save for the sick boy—Virgil behind us, towards the accursed place where abominable rites would be held, and Isabelle the centre of them. The small hand put into mine was like that of a child, and it was hard to think of her as smirched by those obscene ceremonies that I had heard the witches held.

We came at last to the place. It was a hollow, boggy as I should suppose in foul weather, but yet dry and guarded by a shield of ash trees. The moon that had not shone upon our early journey had now parted the heavy clouds and the pale light that I never liked was lying over the scene, a colourless glow that seemed soiled in its substance.

" Is Jannot coming here to-night ? " I whispered to the

girl by my side as we slipped between the smooth trunks of the rowan trees.

"No," said she. "She seldom comes now, she is occupied in tending Evan."

And then she told me what I had long guessed, the boy was becoming daily more cloudy in his mind, and though sweet, gentle, and happy too, seemed to have lost much of his reason or to be at the least of it dimmed in his intellect. He was strong still in his body, and gave no sign of physical disease. And he had become, Isabelle told me, increasingly dependent upon Jannot, who had asked her brother's permission for their marriage.

"And so, you see, being a betrothed maiden," said Isabelle, "she comes no longer to these ceremonies. And I have not been for a while, thinking you would not countenance it."

"Why did you ever come, Isabelle?" I said. I sat beside her on a long stone that had been placed there, I think, as a seat for spectators at these satanic revels.

She did not know. It had been her stepmother who had brought her first; there had been old women in the Castle too who were supposed to be possessed of magic powers. All the women for miles round came.

Virgil stood behind us, I heard him groaning prayers, and when I looked up I could see his eyes rolling, showing their whites. I was afraid that with a shriek and a clatter he might fly the scene of what he supposed would be monstrous iniquities, so with a stern word I bade him be quiet.

"We must go down and join them," said Isabelle. "We must not sit here as if we meant to spy on them."

I thought of Mr. Richard Cameron and his courage and his holiness, I thought of the young Prince, the most admired man of Europe, to whom I had spoken at The Hague, and I smiled to myself when I considered what these two men who had found me not unworthy of serious discourse would think of me were they to see me now.

I was soon aware of a group of people gathered in the

hollow. They were all darkly dressed, but many of them carried torches or lanterns. I peered at them keenly, and soon had a chance of close observation, for Isabelle tugged at my hand as Virgil tugged at my cloak, and between the two of them I found myself among the chattering crowd.

There was enough light from the various pine-knots and lanterns for me to observe closely those gathered in this lonely and desolate place.

Most of them were old folk, clutching tattered garments about them from the keen night wind, labouring men and cottage wives, not to be distinguished from those who had helped us on our flight after the battle of Bothwell Bridge.

Here and there was the fresh face of a younger woman, younger men I did not see. Everyone there was credulous, ignorant, bemused, I thought, with idle tales and sick fancies, and the horrors of these bloody times.

Very different was this from the scene that I had observed from the old tower of the ruined church. All was commonplace, there was no sense of evil, of dread, or of the marvellous. I could not believe that here were gathered any envoys either from Hell or ambassadors from Fairyland.

Amid these wretches, many of whom I doubted not were doomed to torture and the stake, moved Doctor Fletcher, whose weak, keen face was drawn in fretful lines. He had on some kind of tawdry robe stuck with stars and held a staff in his hand.

I kept well out of his way ; no doubt he would recognize me, though I was much changed since first I had come to Castle Drum.

But he was in some manner of trance or swoon, and going round and round with staggering steps, with closed eyes and slavering lips was reciting some gibberish charm.

His audience soon formed a circle round him, and with slow, capering motions began to execute a clumsy dance. As their old and tired feet stamped the soft earth I began to feel something of the vibration of their rhythm, I began to understand, as uncouth words left their quivering throats,

chanting in some language older than even the rude Scots tongue, that this was the wretched remnant of some ancient religion far older than Christianity, and that these were the priests of some god whom they would not allow to drop into decay, though in the eyes of most of mankind he was already dead.

Doctor Fletcher seemed the high priest of these poor rites, but I saw among them a leading fanatic, with a face either blackened or covered by a black taffeta mask.

I thought by his gait, for he limped even as he tried to leap in the dance that became every moment more lively, that he was a wounded soldier whom I knew, who lived near Castle Drum. Perhaps the man was a charlatan, and for the sake of a few pence and the little power he might gain had set himself up as a messenger of Satan among these rude and ignorant people, who were lonely and afraid.

And I thought again of glory, the little loathsome glory that this fellow gained in deluding the wretched, the poor, and the foolish.

What power had been over me before when I had looked in the chapel I know not ; I think it was some drug that had been put into my wine by Doctor Fletcher that evening. No doubt, for I was not discreet, he had learned that I intended to spy upon his ceremonial and thus had prepared visions to frighten me away, as he had most successfully done.

Or else in some other way my spirit had been bewitched and hallucinations put upon me.

For this evening, as I looked with the eyes of clear common sense, there was nothing to be seen but these mean and distressed people celebrating, with an enthusiasm that quickly rose to a frenzy equal to the Covenanters, the long-forgotten rites of some long-forgotten god.

The old soldier, for such I took him to be, was soon enthroned. He thrust out his wooden peg-leg and the women trooping past kissed it. Doctor Fletcher stood by his

right hand, like his priest, and there were howling songs and chants. One there had the pipes, and these began skirling away.

Then pipkins of drink that I doubt not was strong enough were passed round, and the people began to screech and sing in a different key, bending and bowing before those two figures—the black man enthroned upon the stone, the vile and degraded scholar standing beside him.

Was there any difference, I asked myself, between these worshippers and the Covenanters whom I had heard defying the powers of evil at Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge?

This, at least, I knew—that the cavalry of Claverhouse would ride down these as they had ridden down the Cameronian saints, for there would be the stake as for the others the halter.

The moon went behind a cloud and the wind rose, but these zealots did not seem to feel the discomfort of the bitter winds.

I drew Isabelle close to me and so got her apart from the throng that was beginning to whirl and sway in fantastic patterns.

"There's nothing here," said I. "There's nothing here, Isabelle, my dear love, but such as are wretched and miserable, trying to forget themselves even for half an hour."

"There's the Devil in the midst," said she coolly. By her tranquillity I could gauge for how long—no doubt since she had been in arms—that she, living enclosed, had been accustomed to these barbarous superstitions.

"There's magic in the world," I whispered in her ear, "but not here or now. There's strange things done, but not here. Doctor Fletcher knows some tricks, and has even taken me with them, but they are nothing."

The blackamoor had followed me. We stood apart, but no one noticed, I think, our withdrawal, for they were by then, I am sure, all drunk with their own furies, and the strong

drink that was handed from one to another in the wooden bowls. This seemed to be brewed by some of the company who were crouched behind the stone on which the one-legged soldier sat.

I wonder if the man himself believed in his dark and paltry glory, or whether he was laughing at these poor fools, and knew well enough that he was but some blear-eyed relic of the late wars, who had been abroad in his time and learnt enough—not to dissipate his own ignorance—but to bewilder these poor folk.

Be that as it may, he played his part, and I had to admit that there was a dignity about him in his tattered red mantle and his black-horned mask that might have convinced many whose minds were bemused by ignorance and superstition that here indeed was one of Satan's lieutenants.

And what was Doctor Fletcher's part in this, I wondered ?

That he was a man of great learning I could not doubt. He was an adept in chemistry, and I knew from the time I had served with Thomas Vaughan, that son of fire, what strange things were to be discovered in that science, things that in their effect seemed magical, but in their causes, as I had seen proved, were but effects of Nature and logical in their demonstration.

I could not be surprised if these people worshipped the Devil. The God of the Covenanters was violent and bloody. The love and peace preached by Christ were hard to find, indeed, I think they were not known at all in Scotland. And it seemed as likely, nay, as reasonable, to me that men should fall into this extreme of devil worship as that they should become zealous in the cause of the God of battle whom the Covenanters served.

These poor fools, at least, did not beat out the brains of men whom they suspected of magic powers. They would not, I thought, have the ferocious courage to do so even if they had the chance. I found them more harmless either than the rebels, the captains of the Covenanters, or the Royalist troops.

I saw, moving in that murky throng, some women of the better sort, and that caused me a sickly qualm, and I questioned Isabelle in whispers as to what part she had ever taken in these revels? And she replied with great pride of birth that never had she mingled with them, but when the ladies came she and her mother and sister sat apart and were treated as queens.

And I remembered that no one had taught her to read or to write nor taken any concern over her spirit or her mind, and that it was not strange that she had fallen into these practices, and I had no marvel that when Mr. Richard Cameron had come to Castle Drum he had found her as far beyond his grasp as any gauzy summer butterfly that fed on the honey-heather in the summer.

I put my cloak about her face and led her away, and she came willingly.

"These junketings and prancings are but folly," said I, and I spoke with some melancholy and regret, too. "Here is no bravery of fairyland, or no dark magnificence of Hell, only a number of poor wretches beguiling their present miseries by thought of power. And what power have they, Isabelle? Consider that! When they are captured, can any of them escape the torture and the stake?"

"They have some power," said she, drawing close to me for protection against the night wind and looking up at me through the dark. And I could believe that, I had evidence of it. What of the slab of polished jet? Both these sisters possessed strange gifts.

They might be, for all I knew, of fairy birth, as they call it, lamias or women half immortal, born without souls. All these things were dark, confused, and inexplicable, and I was not minded to probe them but take my fortune as it came, and trust that God would forgive a mortal man his errors.

* * *

I took Isabelle back to Castle Drum that night and left her within sight of the sentry, for Scotland was still in a

state of lively unrest, and Ross' dragoons still garrisoned Castle Drum, where now the three women lived lonely with a sick lad.

I slept that night better than I had slept for many nights before, and in the morning I made my attire as cleanly as possible, helped by the toilet-box that Isabelle had brought me and with the help of the blackamoor. And with him arrayed as my body-servant, with his livery brushed and mended—he was skilful in such matters—I went openly to Castle Drum.

The sentries allowed me to pass, thinking from my demeanour that I was a friend of the young lord. For, with my newly-spruced clothes and the black behind me, I did not cut so ill a figure. And it made me smile at the paltry, shifting fortunes of men to think that I had lain hidden, a fugitive, for so many weeks behind the chapel, who had only but to appear decently arrayed before the castle to be admitted immediately.

The family were at meat, as I knew, seated in the great hall where I had often broken my rough bread on a silver platter and eyed Isabelle and Jannot's golden curls across the tapers of French wax.

At the head, in the chair of the master, that he had only lately occupied, sat David, the sick lad, his bright hair falling on his bent shoulders, his face worn beyond his years, and set in sullen lines of pain.

To his right sat Elspeth ; she wore the yellow satin gown and had a long-stemmed glass in her long hand.

I faced the boy whom I had tried to teach, the learning, it seemed to me, he would never need now, for I thought that he was going to a place where all tongues would be alike. Yet perhaps he had gained some virtue, in the Latin sense of the word, from the old books that he had read so constantly.

He looked at me straightly now, like a gentleman and master of the place, as I came in with Isabelle in my hand and Virgil behind me. Elspeth looked at me keenly also ; there was no fear in any of them, yet they might have

thought that I was but the forerunner of some murdering band of Covenanters, or leading the country-side roused on a witch-hunt.

Before I spoke to them I took pains to look at Jannot and Evan. She was by his side, their hands were interlocked, their eyes turned towards me, not with the intentness of the others, but rather with a gentle peace, as if withdrawn into their own companionship they saw the rest of the world but as an immense solitude. But the youth was happier now than he had ever been, in this long twilight of his mind, I could not doubt. And witch or no, Jannot was purged of most of her spells and wantonness, and I could see nothing between them but pure affection.

And so I came to the foot of the long heavy table and stood there, a landless, penniless man, and could not but help laugh at myself.

"I am Thomas Maitland," I said, "who was your pedagogue, since then I joined the Covenanters and did no good, either to them or to myself. Now I'm taking Isabelle away with me."

"What old dream is this?" answered Elspeth, and I thought that there was a note of longing in her voice. "Do you take her away to some palace in the hills, or has she beguiled you to follow her across a sea that has no shore?"

"Do not speak to me in riddles," I replied. "I am at no pains now to sift out the values of these earthly and unearthly things. Lamia or witch or Devil's maiden, Isabelle belongs to me."

"It is true," said she, breaking the little silence that fell after I had spoken. "Wherever he wishes I will go."

"I was at the witch-gathering last night," said I, "and saw but a parcel of poor wretches, maddened by drink and despair and cozened by a lame soldier with a blackened face. But it may be that there are other and more tremendous revels of which I know nothing."

Then the young lord answered me.

He spoke bravely and with a grave air. Indeed, there was none at that table who seemed cowed but Doctor Fletcher, who was fingering the napery in front of him with crooked fingers and looking at me aslant. I suppose that he was thinking of the torture chamber and the staple with the iron chain that might be his fate yet. I had no mind to denounce him or to save the other occupants of Castle Drum from his spell, for I took him to be a man of much cunning and deep learning in evil ways.

David Garrie said :

" Take her, Mr. Maitland. I would not stay anyone who would try to escape from Castle Drum. There are horses in the stable, and you may take your choice."

He pulled a key from a chain around his neck and sent it spinning down the table towards us. It stayed half-way, but Elspeth's hand sent it further to the end of the board and within my reach.

" Go to the room," said he, " that you know of and is kept as an arsenal. There is an iron-bound chest at the end, open it, and you will find some bags of gold. Take what you will for Isabelle's dowry, for I do not think that I shall need this earth's coinage much longer."

Doctor Fletcher made a movement as if he would stay his pupil and his patient, but the boy's pale narrow eyes gave him a sharp look and the old man fell back, fingering his beard.

" I'll take something," said I. " Nothing is owing to me, I was paid my fee when I worked here, but for Isabelle's sake I will take a few pieces of gold to get us safe out of the realm of Scotland."

I turned to the girl and asked her if she would say good-bye to her kinsfolk, and she held my hand tightly as she said in the high clear voice that was like the trilling of a small bird :

" Good-bye to you all, David, my brother, and Jannot, my sister, and Garrie, her love, and Elspeth, who was a mother to me ! Good-bye ! "

"The password," said David Garrie, sinking back into his chair as if exhausted, "is *United in Time*. And if any of the soldiers stay you give them that and say I know of your going."

And so I, Thomas Maitland, and Isabelle Garrie, and Virgil, the blackamoor, left Castle Drum on borrowed horses and with borrowed money.

We rode through the darkness and a drifting rain until we came to Hamilton, where the heads of the Covenanters were buried. We slept in our cloaks, Isabelle was as hardy as a mountain falcon, and in the morning we read the epitaph of these men who had been dead nearly twenty years.

Why do I recall it now? It seems to chime in with my flight with my love.

* * *

That is not the end of the story, but it is all that I care to set down, save for such general particulars that little touch my own life.

I married Isabelle in London, and my kinsman, the Duke of Lauderdale, dying soon afterwards, left me a pretty portion.

This I put into Mr. William Penn's scheme for his plantation in America, that he was to call Pennsylvania. This proved but a material business, after all. There was parcelling out of land and buying and bargaining from His Grace the Duke of York and Lord Baltimore, who had the grants over those parts.

While this business was going on we lived quietly in London in a small house that I took furnished in Golden Square, and Isabelle never left my side day or night, save when I was on the most pressing affairs about the Court. And I can say no more than that.

She was my first wife, and has been these thirty years dead.

While I was urging on the business of our settlement in

Philadelphia, as the city of brotherly love was to be named, and envisaging a life that was to be sweet and pleasant, where Isabelle's children and mine might grow up about our knees in a comely mansion set about with prolific gardens that reached to fields of noble corn and fine timbered forests, there came the news to me of how Richard Cameron had been slain in a skirmish at Aird's Moss, in Ayrshire, and how his hands and head had been set up over different market towns in Scotland.

Then the plague took Isabelle ; læmia or witch or fairy, she was gone from me in a day and a night and dust lay on the golden eyes, and I had no heart nor interest any more in the schemes of Mr. William Penn.

It was as if the finer part of me, all that was capable of wonder and ecstasy, rapture and delight, had died with Isabelle, and been laid with her in her linen shroud, her eyes shut with the first cold-coloured windflowers of the year.

Mr. Penn's plans went awry, too. God did not seem to bless that undertaking any more than he had blessed the Covenanters.

I left England and returned again to The Hague, moving like an automaton, doing my business, eating, drinking, smoking, but with little heart in any of it.

And as I was a man of substance, some traders got hold of me and I entered a substantial business, banking and exchange. The house was situate at Amsterdam, and there I lived for many years.

Like echoes from a far-off planet I heard of the death of Claverhouse, Lord Dundee he was then, in the dark defiles of Killicranky. This was the end of his glory, cut down by a silver bullet fired by his servant, so they said, and like Archbishop Sharp had been, to lie mangled on the heather.

And Mr. Penn's glory was but a circle in the water, too, for all his schemes ended in disputes and difficulties.

And I lived well out of it all, industrious and comfortable,

a man of substance, with a kind and pretty wife who bore me noble children.

But where was it all—the worldly glory, the spiritual glory, the lust for power, the search for God?

I often pondered as I smoked my pipe and gazed into the fire.

Time soon chilled the old torments, and with every year that passed they grew less, until I was able with patience to set down on paper what broken memories I had of Isabelle, of the yellow satin gown, of the day I had first gone to Castle Drum.

And until he died of an ague caught in that inhospitable climate, I kept with me always Virgil, the blackamoor, for though I could not speak to him of these matters, he had been through these adventures with me, and was one who had been my companion in those days of pain and ecstasy.

I avoided news of Scotland, but I chanced to hear that David died not long after my second marriage and that Jannot and Evan lived in Castle Drum in solitude, being, as one might say, accursed, or, as another might say, blessed.

THE END

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