

Scott's

GOOD COUNSEL.

BY WILLIAM PEMROKE MULCHINOCK.

Cling to your friend, when you prove his devotion—
Breathe the false world with him by your side,
Firm as a rock that repels the rude ocean
Dashing against it in power and pride.
Though danger and death around him should hover,
Still be you prompt to shield and defend,
Till each rude tempest that threatens is over,
Meet it like true men, and cling to your friend.

Toil for your land with unceasing endeavor,
Put forth your powers of muscle and mind,
Strike while a fetter is left you to sever,
Strike while a tyrant is left to bind.
Check not your spirit, proud, panting for glory,
Free be the stroke of your heart and your hand—
On through the ranks of the plunderer hoary,
Strike for your freedom, strike for your land.

Give to the poor, o'er the wide earth they wander,
Toiling and working, never at rest;
Better to give than in riot to squander
That which would lighten a sorrowing breast.
Think on the sickness and hunger assailing
Each mud-built hut on the cold wintry moor—
Think on each squalid child bitterly wailing,
Think on your comforts—and give to the poor.

Think on your God in all seasons and places,
Fondly adoring Him bend you the knee;
Shun every vice, every sin that debases,
Happy and light let your conscience be;
Let your soul take without grief or repining
Each stroke he deals with his chastening rod—
Soon to the mourning one bright hope comes shining,
Be he but patient—then think on your God.

THE DISINHERITED SON.

A LEGEND OF FURNESS ABBEY.

CHAPTER V.

RANDOLF AND JOSLYN BRAITHWAITE.

Then he stuck spurs into his horse, and slinging the lady's bridle over his arm, they set off on the murky road that led to the wild fens with a speed that would have been dangerous had not the horseman been acquainted with every foot of the way.

The fugitive pair were scarce quit of the castle woods when two more horses were led to the sally-port. The bridles were held by Joslyn Braithwaite the huntsman, and he waited but a few minutes when he was joined by the Lord Randolph.

"So!" he exclaimed in an angry whisper, "why loiters the lady Evelina, I bade her be here before the clock told twelve, and it is five minutes past the hour; a fair specimen, by mine halidom, of wifely obedience."

"Be patient, I pray you, my good lord!" replied the retainer, "the lady waits you at the stone cross that parts her fair lands of Egremont from the demense of Coniston. She cared not to wait you so near the castle, 'tis not half-a-mile, you know, from hence!"

"I care not if it were but a rod," answered Randolph, savagely. "The wilful giglot, she did propose this morning to repair thither with her waiting damsel, and I told her I would not have it so."

"In sooth, my lord!" answered Braithwaite, "the lady Evelina is meek and gentle: but she is a woman, nevertheless, and perverse, and small marvel it is that for once she should take her maiden prerogative of doing as she lists, since I woe it is for the last time."

"The last time, I warrant her," answered Randolph. "Marry, when she is my wife she shall look, think, walk, talk, only as becoms my pleasure. Yea, though her confessor may tell her, her soul is her own, she shall order herself as if it were mine, and if she thinks it is her own, she shall not say so!"

"By our Lady's grace, your lordship will be a rare teacher for wives!" said Joslyn.

"Were more husbands of my mind, disdainful, capricious wives would be few," answered Randolph; "the whip and the curb, are the best teachers for horses, dogs, and women, and eke for contumacious men," he added, darting a malicious glance at Joslyn, which the darkness of the night concealed.

The bitter sarcasm of his voice, however, sufficiently informed the retainer that his admirable young lord in his last words referred to him; but he took no notice of the gibe till Randolph, suddenly reining in his horse, exclaimed—

"Whither goest thou, knave? this is the way to the Wolf's Hollow, not to the Stone Cross!"

"And to the Wolf's Hollow thou goest, brutal boy!" cried the retainer fiercely. "There for three days shalt thou be taught with stripes and curbs, in the same dungeon where the bold Scottish outlaw, MacIvan, beat out his brains with his fetters, in the days of thy grandsire, as cruel as thyself!"

"What meanest thou, what would thou dare? dog of a retainer, thou shalt hang for this!" cried Randolph, in a voice inarticulate with rage and wonder.

More he would have added, but even while the words were on his lips, he was seized on either side by strong hands and dragged unceremoniously from his horse.

Then the red light of a torch was flashed upon the scene, and the bad and bold young lord was startled at the grim and threatening aspect of the vassal, whom he accounted as less than a hawk or a hound.

"I will tell thee what I mean, Lord Randolph; thou seest what I dare! and what confederates I have chosen!" cried Joslyn, as he pointed to the two wild Scots of the border who held Randolph in their grasp.

"A dog am I!" reiterated the huntsman, whose wrath seemed to kindle as he spoke. "A dog in truth, with fangs to tear the hand that strikes unjustly. Thou hast struck me, Lord Randolph—I, a man older than thy father! dost thou remember that day? Thou wert wroth that thy brother, swift of foot, and true of aim, had stricken the stag that threw the hounds off the scent, and in thy spite and fury thou didst lay the blame on me and the dogs. Me, whom, holy St. Hubert, thou didst lash across the face with thy riding whip! I swore to be avenged on thee for that blow. This night I keep mine oath. What, I'll warrant thou didst think that a born vassal of Coniston would submit like a very hound. Lord Randolph, vassals are not dogs, but men;—men who can be as relentless and savagely as their masters. Didst never hear, since the days of bold Robin Hood, of vassals driven mad by oppression who broke the bonds of their vassalage by taking to the woods and defying their masters? There were such, I can tell thee, so late as the days of the Fourth Edward, and I mean, to follow their example in the days of our Eighth Henry. For myself, though, I might have borne it,—I might have borne it all. But the brave, gallant Lord Oswald, and little Lord Walter, the innocent child. The one driven from his father's roof-tree, and the other drowned! drowned! to pamper thy rank pride. Dog! callest thou me? Dog thyself! nay not half so noble as a trusty hound. Wolf, rapacious wolf! wolf's measure shalt thou have to-night!"

With these last words, the voice of Joslyn, which had been half smothered with the sob in his throat as he spoke of the beloved Walter, became fierce and threatening as the wintry gale that howled among the leafless trees, and seemed almost as if it would sweep the whole party from the giddy brink of the precipice on which they stood.

Grasped, as he was, by the sturdy Scots, who held him by either arm, the slender figure of Randolph swayed in the blast, his plumed cap was blown from his head; his curled locks streamed wild upon the wind; and in the sullen and fitful glare of the torch his face looked white and ghastly with rage, and fear, and hate. The always extraordinary resemblance between him and his brother Oswald was strengthened, now that for his accustomed lowering and downcast look, was substituted an expression of rage and defiance.

The retainer laughed bitterly.

"What do I mean, and what do I dare?" he repeated. "Look round thee, Lord Randolph! Yonder down the gorge, there away where the cascade flashes white through the gloom, is the cavern dungeon of Wolf's Hollow; there shalt thou pass this night; though, by the fiends, I doubt me if thy cruelty and rapacity were not better paid by swinging thee from the topmost bough of yonder blasted pine,—an example for false brothers and tyrannous nobles, where thou shouldst hang! hang! and the kites and crows pick out thine eyes. And, verily the carrion birds are not viler things than thou."

Randolf de Coniston had not permitted the retainer to give vent to his long pent up sense of injury, but he was for the time struck dumb with sheer astonishment and dismay.

Randolf de Coniston, though selfish and brutal, was not a coward: Yet something like fear thrilled his heart, as he glanced from the wrathful countenance of Joslyn around the wild scene.

It was enough to strike the boldest with dismay. On the one hand, the black sombre woods that girded the Castle of Coniston; on the other, a dismal glen that swept down abruptly from the brow of the hill to which he had been led by Joslyn.

A steep precipice, shagged with thorns and briars, over which hung the blasted pine that Joslyn named.

At the extremity of the glen, which bore the ominous name of Wolf's Hollow, a white gleam shone out upon the black back-ground of the leafless woods. This white gleam shot from the foam-crested waters of a cascade that tumbled down a mass of rocks, in a cavity of which had been hollowed, partly by the hand of nature, and partly by the orders of an ancient feudal Lord of Thurston, a horrible dungeon, in which many a refractory vassal or defeated foe had been doomed to perish.

Randolf de Coniston glanced from the deep, sombre glen, with its roaring waters and overhanging pine, to Joslyn and the Scottish borderers. Joslyn had cherished a hatred of him of which he had never dreamed, and his evil destiny, or rather his rash confidence, had placed him in the man's power. Randolph's courage revived from the very horror and hopelessness of his position, and he faced Joslyn as defiantly as though he stood safe within his father's walls.

"Treachorous and insolent vassal!" he said, "I shall not stoop to plead to thee for mercy, though thou plunge me into the rock dungeon, or hang me as though I were a slave like thyself, from yonder creeking pine. But before I die, I would fain know something of the plot which has, I doubt not, its origin with Oswald, my thrice accursed brother."

"I would not that thou shouldst die," responded the retainer, fiercely. "Food and wine will be stored with thee in the Wolf's dungeon, and in three days thou shalt be released. Released, when I am safe over the Scottish border, and the Lady Evelina is the bride of thy brother. Know, too, this plot, as thou callest it, was not the coinage of thy brother's brain, but mine. When thou didst acquaint me with the designed elopement with the damsel of Egremont, I carried the news to the maltreated Lord Oswald. Ha, ha! He resembles thee, thou knowest how closely, in person and voice. A slouched hat, a wrapping mantle, a speech more rough and rude than is common for a gallant to his liege lady, and Evelina of Egremont was duped, and is already over the fells with thy brother. And, ha, ha, ha! she must needs consent to be his bride, or be reported as his leman."