The PIRATE by Sir WALTER SCOTT Bart

EVERY MAN I WILL GO WITH THEE BE THY GVIDE

IN THY MOST NEED TO GO BY THY SIDE

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

"THE PIRATE" was chiefly written at Abbotsford; but Scott was, in the year 1821, suffering the penalty of his fame, so that his own house was too often a tourists' resort, where he could not be sure of privacy. He had occasionally to repair, therefore, to the cottage where Lockhart and his daughter, Sophia, were then residing—Chiefswood.

"When sore beset at home," says his son-in-law, "he would escape early in the day, and reach the cottage on his mare before its inmates were astir. Then the clatter of Sybil Grey's hoofs, the yelping of Mustard and Spice, and his own joyous shout of *reveillée* under our windows, were the signal that he had burst his toils, and meant for that day to 'take his ease in his inn.' On descending, he was to be found seated with all his dogs and ours about him, under a spreading ash that overshadowed half the bank between the cottage and the brook, pointing the edge of his woodman's axe for himself, and listening to Tom Purdie's lecture touching the plantation that most needed thinning. After breakfast, he would take possession of a dressing-room upstairs, and write a chapter of 'The Pirate'; and then, having made up and despatched his packet for Mr. Ballantyne, away to join Purdie wherever the foresters were at work—and sometimes to labour among them as strenuously as John Swanston himself—until it was time either to rejoin his own party at Abbotsford, or the quiet circle of the cottage."

The same period brings into "The Pirate" record the figure of him who was Scott's most intimate friend, William Erskine.

"During several weeks of that delightful summer," writes Lockhart, he and two of his daughters were guests at Abbotsford. "Scott had probably made a point of having his friend with him at this particular time, because he was desirous of having the benefit of his advice and corrections from day to day as he advanced in the composition of 'The Pirate'—with the localities of which romance the Sheriff of Orkney and Zetland was of course thoroughly familiar. At all events, the constant and eager delight with which Erskine watched the progress of the tale has left a deep impression on my memory; and indeed I heard so many of its chapters first read from the MS. by him, that I can never open the book now without thinking I hear his voice. Sir Walter

used to give him at breakfast the pages he had written that morning; and very commonly, while he was again at work in his study, Erskine would walk over to Chiefswood, that he might have the pleasure of reading them aloud to my wife and me under our favourite tree, before the packet had to be sealed up for the printer, or rather for the transcriber, in Edinburgh."

So much for "the Counsellor," and his good counsel and share in the book, so far as its actual and final stages of composition were concerned. For its origins, we must return, as Scott's introduction of 1831 tells us, to his tour in the Shetland and Orkney Isles, in 1814, when Erskine was his fellow-voyager. He had then newly commenced novelist and prose romancer; was fresh from the writing of "Waverley," and was consciously and unconsciously assimilating his own adventures and new and strange experiences to his romantic invention. What his senses then received, his imagination reproduced seven years later.

The story of Gow and the pirate Cleveland, no doubt, came home to Scott's fantasy the more vividly because the roving Lighthouse Commissioners of 1814, and their guest, had heard of an armed schooner at Dunluce, during the Irish extension of their tour; and had even thought it wise to take precautions in case they should be surprised at the Giant's Causeway. But the whole of this journal of 1814 is worth studying, if one could get behind Scott's fashion of transmuting experience into a romance. For his power of realising wild scenery, one could not find anything better than some pages of his "Journal"; they are quite equal to anything in "The Pirate," and even have a fresher reality, a more answerable force of description.

For the rest, let Lockhart again speak :—

"The splendid romance of 'The Pirate' was published in the beginning of December 1821; and the wild freshness of its atmosphere, the beautiful contrast of Minna and Brenda, and the exquisitely drawn character of Captain Cleveland, found the reception which they deserved. The work was analysed with remarkable care in the *Quarterly Review*—by a critic second to few, either in the manly heartiness of his sympathy with the felicities of genius, or in the honest acuteness of his censure in cases of negligence and confusion. This was the second of a series of articles in that journal, conceived and executed in a tone widely different from those given to 'Waverley,' 'Guy Mannering,' and 'The Antiquary.'"

This critic was the same "Mr. Senior" who afterwards severely reviewed "Peveril of the Peak."

The following is a list of the works of Sir Walter Scott, 1771–1832:—"Disputatio Juridica," etc., 1792 (Exercise on being called to the Bar); The Chase, and William and Helen (from German of Bürger), 1796; Goetz of Berlichingen (translation of Goethe's Tragedy); Apology for Tales of Terror (includes some of Author's ballads), privately printed, 1799; The Eve of St. John: A Border Ballad, 1800; Ballads in Lewis's "Tales of Wonder," 1801; Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, 1802, 1803; Lay of the Last Minstrel, 1805; Ballads and Lyrical Pieces, 1806; Marmion: a Tale of Flodden Field, 1808; Life of Dryden; The Lady of the Lake, 1810; Vision of Don Roderick, 1811; Rokeby, 1813; The Bridal of Triermain, 1813; Abstract of Eyrbiggia Saga, in Jamieson's "Northern Antiquities," 1814; Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since, 1814; Life of Swift (prefixed to works), 1814; The Lord of the Isles, 1815; Guy Mannering, 1815; The Field of Waterloo, 1815; Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, 1815; The Antiquary, 1816; Black Dwarf, Old Mortality (Tales of my Landlord, first series), 1817 (1816); Harold the Dauntless, 1817; The Search after Happiness, or the Quest of Sultan Solimaun, 1817; Rob Roy, 1818; Heart of Midlothian (Tales of my Landlord, second series), 1818; The Bride of Lammermoor, Legend of Montrose (Tales of my Landlord, third series), 1819; Description of the Regalia of Scotland, 1819; Ivanhoe, 1820; The Monastery, 1820; The Abbot, 1820; Kenilworth, 1821; Biographies in Ballantyne's "Novelists," 1821; Account of the Coronation of George IV, 1821; The Pirate, 1822; Halidon Hill, 1822; Macduff's Cross (Joanna Baillie's Poetical Miscellanies), 1822; The Fortunes of Nigel, 1822; Peveril of the Peak, 1822; Quentin Durward, 1823; St. Ronan's Well, 1824; Redgauntlet, 1824; The Betrothed, The Talisman (Tales of the Crusaders), 1825; Woodstock, or the Cavaliers: a tale of 1651, 1826; Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, 1827; The Two Drovers, The Highland Widow, The Surgeon's Daughter (Chronicles of the Canongate, first series), 1827; Tales of a Grandfather, First Series, 1828; Second Series, 1829; Third Series, 1830; Fourth Series, 1830; St. Valentine's Day, or The Fair Maid of Perth (Chronicles of the Canongate, second series), 1828; My Aunt Margaret's Mirror, The Tapestried Chamber, The Laird's Jock (Keepsake, 1828); Religious Discourses, by a Layman, 1828; Anne of Geierstein, 1829; History of Scotland (Lardner's "Cabinet Cyclopædia"), 1830; Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft, 1830; House of Aspen (Keepsake, 1830); Doom of Devorgoil; Auchindrane, or the Ayrshire Tragedy, 1830; Essays on Ballad Poetry, 1830; Count Robert of Paris, Castle Dangerous, 1832 (Tales of My Landlord, fourth series).

Letters and Articles were contributed to Encyclopædia Britannica, 1814 (Chivalry; Drama); "Provincial Antiquities of Scotland," 1819–1826; "Edinburgh Weekly Journal," 1820, 1826; as well as frequent articles to the "Edinburgh" and "Quarterly" Reviews, and "Edinburgh Annual Register."

Collected Poems: 1820, 1821, 1823, 1830 (with Author's Prefaces); 1834 (Lockhart).

Collected Novels: 1820 (Novels and Tales); 1822 (Historical Romances); 1824 (Historical Romances), 26 vols. With Author's Notes, 1829–33, 48 vols. People's Edition, 1844–8; Abbotsford, 1842–7; Roxburghe, 1859–61; Dryburgh, 1892–4; Border (A. Lang), 1892–4; The Temple Edition (C. K. Shorter), 1897–9.

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THE PIRATE

Nothing in him ——
But doth suffer a sea-change.

Tempest.

INTRODUCTION

Quoth he, there was a ship.

THIS brief preface may begin like the tale of the "Ancient Mariner," since it was on ship-board that the author acquired the very moderate degree of local knowledge and information, both of people and scenery, which he has endeavoured to embody in the romance of the "Pirate."

In the summer and autumn of 1814, the author was invited to join a party of Commissioners for the Northern Light-House Service, who proposed making a voyage round the coast of Scotland, and through its various groups of islands, chiefly for the purpose of seeing the condition of the many lighthouses under their direction, — edifices so important, whether regarding them as benevolent or political institutions. Among the commissioners who manage this important public concern, the sheriff of each county of Scotland which borders on the sea, holds *ex-officio* a place at the Board. These gentlemen act in every respect gratuitously, but have the use of an armed yacht, well found and fitted up, when they choose to visit the lighthouses. An excellent engineer, Mr. Robert Stevenson, is attached to the Board, to afford the benefit of his professional advice. The author accompanied this expedition as a guest; for Selkirkshire, though it calls him Sheriff, has not, like the kingdom of Bohemia in Corporal Trim's story, a seaport in its circuit, nor its magistrate, of course, any place at the Board of Commissioners,—a circumstance of little consequence where all were old and intimate friends, bred to the same profession, and disposed to accommodate each other in every possible manner.

The nature of the important business which was the principal purpose of the voyage, was connected with the amusement of visiting the leading objects of a traveller's curiosity; for the wild cape, or formidable shelf, which requires to be marked out by a lighthouse, is generally at no great distance from the most magnificent scenery of rocks, caves, and billows. Our time, too, was at our own disposal, and, as most of us were freshwater sailors, we could at any time make a fair wind out of a foul one, and run before the gale in quest of some object of curiosity which lay under our lee.

With these purposes of public utility and some personal amusement in view, we left the port of Leith on the 26th July,

1814, ran along the east coast of Scotland, viewing its different curiosities, stood over to Zetland and Orkney, where we were some time detained by the wonders of a country which displayed so much that was new to us; and having seen what was curious in the Ultima Thule of the ancients, where the sun hardly thought it worth while to go to bed, since his rising was at this season so early, we doubled the extreme northern termination of Scotland, and took a rapid survey of the Hebrides, where we found many kind friends. There, that our little expedition might not want the dignity of danger, we were favoured with a distant glimpse of what was said to be an American cruiser, and had opportunity to consider what a pretty figure we should have made had the voyage ended in our being carried captive to the United States. After visiting the romantic shores of Morven, and the vicinity of Oban, we made a run to the coast of Ireland, and visited the Giant's Causeway, that we might compare it with Staffa, which we had surveyed in our course. At length, about the middle of September, we ended our voyage in the Clyde, at the port of Greenock.

And thus terminated our pleasant tour, to which our equipment gave unusual facilities, as the ship's company could form a strong boat's crew, independent of those who might be left on board the vessel, which permitted us the freedom to land wherever our curiosity carried us. Let me add, while reviewing for a moment a sunny portion of my life, that among the six or seven friends who performed this voyage together, some of them doubtless of different tastes and pursuits, and remaining for several weeks on board a small vessel, there never occurred the slightest dispute or disagreement, each seeming anxious to submit his own particular wishes to those of his friends. By this mutual accommodation all the purposes of our little expedition were obtained, while for a time we might have adopted the lines of Allan Cunningham's fine sea-song,

> The world of waters was our home,
> And merry men were we!

But sorrow mixes her memorials with the purest remembrances of pleasure. On returning from the voyage which had proved so satisfactory, I found that fate had deprived her country most unexpectedly of a lady, qualified to adorn the high rank which she held, and who had long admitted me to a share of her friendship. The subsequent loss of one of

those comrades who made up the party, and he the most intimate friend I had in the world, casts also its shade on recollections which, but for these embitterments, would be otherwise so pleasing.

I may here briefly observe, that my business in this voyage, so far as I could be said to have any, was to endeavour to discover some localities which might be useful in the "Lord of the Isles," a poem with which I was then threatening the public, and was afterwards printed without attaining remarkable success. But as at the same time the anonymous novel of "Waverley" was making its way to popularity, I already augured the possibility of a second effort in this department of literature, and I saw much in the wild islands of the Orkneys and Zetland, which I judged might be made in the highest degree interesting, should these isles ever become the scene of a narrative of fictitious events. I learned the history of Gow the pirate from an old sibyl (the subject of Note III. at the end of this volume), whose principal subsistence was by a trade in favourable winds, which she sold to mariners at Stromness. Nothing could be more interesting than the kindness and hospitality of the gentlemen of Zetland, which was to me the more affecting, as several of them had been friends and correspondents of my father.

I was induced to go a generation or two farther back, to find materials from which I might trace the features of the old Norwegian Udaller, the Scottish gentry having in general occupied the place of that primitive race, and their language and peculiarities of manner having entirely disappeared. The only difference now to be observed betwixt the gentry of these islands, and those of Scotland in general, is, that the wealth and property is more equally divided among our more northern countrymen, and that there exist among the resident proprietors no men of very great wealth, whose display of its luxuries might render the others discontented with their own lot. From the same cause of general equality of fortunes, and the cheapness of living, which is its natural consequence, I found the officers of a veteran regiment who had maintained the garrison at Fort Charlotte, in Lerwick, discomposed at the idea of being recalled from a country where their pay, however inadequate to the expenses of a capital, was fully adequate to their wants, and it was singular to hear natives of merry England herself regretting their approaching departure from the melancholy isles of the Ultima Thule.

Such are the trivial particulars attending the origin of that publication, which took place several years later than the agreeable journey from which it took its rise.

The state of manners which I have introduced in the romance, was necessarily in a great degree imaginary, though founded in some measure on slight hints, which, showing what was, seemed to give reasonable indication of what must once have been, the tone of the society in these sequestered but interesting islands.

In one respect I was judged somewhat hastily, perhaps, when the character of Norna was pronounced by the critics a mere copy of Meg Merrilies. That I had fallen short of what I wished and desired to express is unquestionable, otherwise my object could not have been so widely mistaken; nor can I yet think that any person who will take the trouble of reading the "Pirate" with some attention, can fail to trace in Norna,—the victim of remorse and insanity, and the dupe of her own imposture, her mind, too, flooded with all the wild literature and extravagant superstitions of the north,—something distinct from the Dumfriesshire gipsy, whose pretensions to supernatural powers are not beyond those of a Norwood prophetess. The foundations of such a character may be perhaps traced, though it be too true that the necessary superstructure cannot have been raised upon them, otherwise these remarks would have been unnecessary. There is also great improbability in the statement of Norna's possessing power and opportunity to impress on others that belief in her supernatural gifts which distracted her own mind. Yet, amid a very credulous and ignorant population, it is astonishing what success may be attained by an impostor, who is, at the same time, an enthusiast. It is such as to remind us of the couplet which assures us that

> The pleasure is as great
> In being cheated as to cheat.

Indeed, as I have observed elsewhere, the professed explanation of a tale, where appearances or incidents of a supernatural character are referred to natural causes, has often, in the winding up of the story, a degree of improbability almost equal to an absolute goblin narrative. Even the genius of Mrs. Radcliffe could not always surmount this difficulty.

ABBOTSFORD, 1*st May*, 1831.

ADVERTISEMENT

THE purpose of the following Narrative is to give a detailed and accurate account of certain remarkable incidents which took place in the Orkney Islands, concerning which the more imperfect traditions and mutilated records of the country only tell us the following erroneous particulars:—

In the month of January, 1724–5, a vessel, called the *Revenge*, bearing twenty large guns, and six smaller, commanded by JOHN GOW, or GOFFE, or SMITH, came to the Orkney Islands, and was discovered to be a pirate, by various acts of insolence and villainy committed by the crew. These were for some time submitted to, the inhabitants of these remote islands not possessing arms nor means of resistance; and so bold was the Captain of these banditti, that he not only came ashore, and gave dancing parties in the village of Stromness, but, before his real character was discovered, engaged the affections, and received the troth-plight, of a young lady possessed of some property. A patriotic individual, JAMES FEA, younger of Clestron, formed the plan of securing the buccaneer, which he effected by a mixture of courage and address, in consequence chiefly of Gow's vessel having gone on shore near the harbour of Calfsound, on the Island of Eda, not far distant from a house then inhabited by Mr. FEA. In the various stratagems by which Mr. FEA contrived finally, at the peril of his life (they being well armed and desperate), to make the whole pirates his prisoners, he was much aided by Mr. JAMES LAING, the grandfather of the late MALCOLM LAING, Esq., the acute and ingenious historian of Scotland during the seventeenth century.

Gow, and others of his crew, suffered, by sentence of the High Court of Admiralty, the punishment their crimes had long deserved. He conducted himself with great audacity when before the Court; and, from an account of the matter by an eye-witness, seems to have been subjected to some unusual severities, in order to compel him to plead. The words are these: "JOHN GOW would not plead, for which he was brought to the bar, and the Judge ordered that his thumbs should be squeezed by two men, with a whip-cord, till it did

break; and then it should be doubled, till it did again break, and then laid threefold, and that the executioners should pull with their whole strength; which sentence Gow endured with a great deal of boldness." The next morning (27th May, 1725), when he had seen the terrible preparations for pressing him to death, his courage gave way, and he told the Marshal of Court, that he would not have given so much trouble, had he been assured of not being hanged in chains. He was then tried, condemned, and executed, with others of his crew.

It is said, that the lady whose affections Gow had engaged, went up to London to see him before his death, and that, arriving too late, she had the courage to request a sight of his dead body; and then, touching the hand of the corpse, she formally resumed the troth-plight which she had bestowed. Without going through this ceremony, she could not, according to the superstition of the country, have escaped a visit from the ghost of her departed lover, in the event of her bestowing upon any living suitor the faith which she had plighted to the dead. This part of the legend may serve as a curious commentary on the fine Scottish ballad, which begins,

There came a ghost to Margaret's door, &c.

The common account of this incident farther bears, that Mr. FEA, the spirited individual by whose exertions Gow's career of iniquity was cut short, was so far from receiving any reward from Government that he could not obtain even countenance enough to protect him against a variety of sham suits, raised against him by Newgate solicitors, who acted in the name of Gow, and others of the pirate crew; and the various expenses, vexatious prosecutions, and other legal consequences, in which his gallant exploit involved him, utterly ruined his fortune, and his family; making his memory a notable example to all who shall in future take pirates on their own authority.

It is to be supposed, for the honour of GEORGE the First's Government, that the last circumstance, as well as the dates, and other particulars of the commonly received story, are inaccurate, since they will be found totally irreconcilable with the following veracious narrative, compiled from materials to which he himself alone has had access, by

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

THE PIRATE

CHAPTER I

The storm had ceased its wintry roar,
Hoarse dash the billows of the sea;
But who on Thule's desert shore,
Cries, Have I burnt my harp for thee?
MACNIEL.

THAT long, narrow, and irregular island, usually called the mainland of Zetland, because it is by far the largest of that Archipelago, terminates, as is well known to the mariners who navigate the stormy seas which surround the Thule of the ancients, in a cliff of immense height, entitled Sumburgh Head, which presents its bare scalp and naked sides to the weight of a tremendous surge, forming the extreme point of the isle to the south-east. This lofty promontory is constantly exposed to the current of a strong and furious tide, which, setting in betwixt the Orkney and Zetland Islands, and running with force only inferior to that of the Pentland Firth, takes its name from the headland we have mentioned, and is called the Roost of Sumburgh; *roost* being the phrase assigned in those isles to currents of this description.

On the land side, the promontory is covered with short grass, and slopes steeply down to a little isthmus, upon which the sea has encroached in creeks, which, advancing from either side of the island, gradually work their way forward, and seem as if in a short time they would form a junction, and altogether insulate Sumburgh Head, when what is now a cape, will become a lonely mountain islet, severed from the mainland, of which it is at present the terminating extremity.

Man, however, had in former days considered this as a remote or unlikely event; for a Norwegian chief of other times, or, as other accounts said, and as the name of Jarlshof seemed to imply, an ancient Earl of the Orkneys, had selected this neck of land as the place for establishing a mansion-house. It has been long entirely deserted, and the vestiges only can be discerned with difficulty; for the loose sand,

borne on the tempestuous gales of those stormy regions, has overgrown, and almost buried, the ruins of the buildings; but in the end of the seventeenth century, a part of the Earl's mansion was still entire and habitable. It was a rude building of rough stone, with nothing about it to gratify the eye, or to excite the imagination; a large old-fashioned narrow house, with a very steep roof, covered with flags composed of grey sandstone, would perhaps convey the best idea of the place to a modern reader. The windows were few, very small in size, and distributed up and down the building with utter contempt of regularity. Against the main structure had rested, in former times, certain smaller compartments of the mansion-house, containing offices, or subordinate apartments, necessary for the accommodation of the Earl's retainers and menials. But these had become ruinous; and the rafters had been taken down for firewood, or for other purposes; the walls had given way in many places; and, to complete the devastation, the sand had already drifted amongst the ruins, and filled up what had been once the chambers they contained, to the depth of two or three feet.

Amid this desolation, the inhabitants of Jarlshof had contrived, by constant labour and attention, to keep in order a few roods of land, which had been enclosed as a garden, and which, sheltered by the walls of the house itself, from the relentless sea-blast, produced such vegetables as the climate could bring forth, or rather as the sea-gale would permit to grow; for these islands experience even less of the rigour of cold than is encountered on the mainland of Scotland; but, unsheltered by a wall of some sort or other, it is scarce possible to raise even the most ordinary culinary vegetables; and as for shrubs or trees, they are entirely out of the question, such is the force of the sweeping sea-blast.

At a short distance from the mansion, and near to the sea-beach, just where the creek forms a sort of imperfect harbour, in which lay three or four fishing-boats, there were a few most wretched cottages for the inhabitants and tenants of the township of Jarlshof, who held the whole district of the landlord upon such terms as were in those days usually granted to persons of this description, and which, of course, were hard enough. The landlord himself resided upon an estate which he possessed in a more eligible situation, in a different part of the island, and seldom visited his possessions at Sumburgh Head. He was an honest, plain Zetland gentleman, some-

what passionate, the necessary result of being surrounded by dependents; and somewhat over-convivial in his habits, the consequence, perhaps, of having too much time at his disposal; but frank-tempered and generous to his people, and kind and hospitable to strangers. He was descended also of an old and noble Norwegian family; a circumstance which rendered him dearer to the lower orders, most of whom are of the same race; while the lairds, or proprietors, are generally of Scottish extraction, who, at that early period, were still considered as strangers and intruders. Magnus Troil, who deduced his descent from the very Earl who was supposed to have founded Jarlshof, was peculiarly of this opinion.

The present inhabitants of Jarlshof had experienced, on several occasions, the kindness and goodwill of the proprietor of the territory. When Mr. Mertoun—such was the name of the present inhabitant of the old mansion—first arrived in Zetland, some years before the story commences, he had been received at the house of Mr. Troil with that warm and cordial hospitality for which the islands are distinguished. No one asked him whence he came, where he was going, what was his purpose in visiting so remote a corner of the empire, or what was likely to be the term of his stay. He arrived a perfect stranger, yet was instantly overpowered by a succession of invitations; and in each house which he visited, he found a home as long as he chose to accept it, and lived as one of the family, unnoticed and unnoticing, until he thought proper to remove to some other dwelling. This apparent indifference to the rank, character, and qualities of their guest, did not arise from apathy on the part of his kind hosts, for the islanders had their full share of natural curiosity; but their delicacy deemed it would be an infringement upon the laws of hospitality, to ask questions which their guest might have found it difficult or unpleasing to answer; and instead of endeavouring, as is usual in other countries, to wring out of Mr. Mertoun such communications as he might find it agreeable to withhold, the considerate Zetlanders contented themselves with eagerly gathering up such scraps of information as could be collected in the course of conversation.

But the rock in an Arabian desert is not more reluctant to afford water, than Mr. Basil Mertoun was niggard in imparting his confidence, even incidentally; and certainly the politeness of the gentry of Thule was never put to a more severe test than when they felt that good-breeding enjoined them to abstain

from inquiring into the situation of so mysterious a personage.

All that was actually known of him was easily summed up. Mr. Mertoun had come to Lerwick, then rising into some importance, but not yet acknowledged as the principal town of the island, in a Dutch vessel, accompanied only by his son, a handsome boy of about fourteen years old. His own age might exceed forty. The Dutch skipper introduced him to some of the very good friends with whom he used to barter gin and gingerbread for little Zetland bullocks, smoked geese, and stockings of lambswool; and although Meinheer could only say, that "Meinheer Mertoun hab bay his bassage like one gentlemans, and hab given a Kreitz-dollar beside to the crew," this introduction served to establish the Dutchman's passenger in a respectable circle of acquaintances, which gradually enlarged, as it appeared that the stranger was a man of considerable acquirements.

This discovery was made almost *per force;* for Mertoun was as unwilling to speak upon general subjects, as upon his own affairs. But he was sometimes led into discussions, which showed, as it were in spite of himself, the scholar and the man of the world; and, at other times, as if in requital of the hospitality which he experienced, he seemed to compel himself, against his fixed nature, to enter into the society of those around him, especially when it assumed the grave, melancholy, or satirical cast, which best suited the temper of his own mind. Upon such occasions, the Zetlanders were universally of opinion that he must have had an excellent education, neglected only in one striking particular, namely, that Mr. Mertoun scarce knew the stem of a ship from the stern; and in the management of a boat, a cow could not be more ignorant. It seemed astonishing such gross ignorance of the most necessary art of life (in the Zetland Isles at least) should subsist along with his accomplishments in other respects; but so it was.

Unless called forth in the manner we have mentioned, the habits of Basil Mertoun were retired and gloomy. From loud mirth he instantly fled; and even the moderated cheerfulness of a friendly party, had the invariable effect of throwing him into deeper dejection than even his usual demeanour indicated.

Women are always particularly desirous of investigating mystery, and of alleviating melancholy, especially when these circumstances are united in a handsome man about the prime