

CLASSICS TO GO

**THE YELLOW
FRIGATE**



JAMES GRANT

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INTRODUCTION.

In that broad and magnificent valley which separates chain of the Grampians from the Ochil Mountains, close by the margin of the Allan, and sequestered among venerable trees, lies the pleasant and peaceful little village of Dunblane, in Scotland's elder days an old cathedral city. Northward of the limpid Allan lie purple heaths, black swamps, and desert muirs. An old bridge which spans the river, and was built in the time of King Robert III., by "the Most Reverend Father in God," Findlay Dermach, bishop of the see, with a few ancient houses, having quaint chimneys and crow-stepped gables, that peep on the steep brae-side from among the shady beeches, are all that survive of Dunblane; but over those remains rise the grey ruins of King David's vast cathedral, of which nothing now is standing but the roofless nave, with its shattered aisles, and the crumbling but lofty gothic tower.

The gleds and corbies that flap their wings between the deserted walls; the swallows that twitter on the carved pillars, or build their nests among the rich oakwork of the prebends' stalls, with the grass-grown floor and empty windows of this magnificent ruin, impress the mind of the visitor with that melancholy which is congenial to such a place. But it is neither the recumbent figure of a knight in armour, with his sword and triangular shield, marking where the once powerful Lord of Strathallan sleeps, nor the burial-place of the Dukes of Athol, blazoned with the silver star of the Murrays, that are the most interesting features in this old ruin.

It is not the fine west window which overlooks the wooded path that winds by the river-side, and is known as "the Good Bishop's walk," nor the ruined shrine where

sleeps St. Blane of Bute—he whose boat sailed upon the Clyde without sail or oar; he who (as the veracious Breviary of Aberdeen tells us) struck fire with his fingers when the vesper lights went out; and who raised from the dead the English heir of Appleby and Trodyngnam, that attract most particularly the attention of visitors, but *three plain slabs* of blue marble, that lie side by side on the grassy floor, and nestling, as it were, together, as if to show that those they cover had loved each other in life too well to be separated even in death.

The fall of the ponderous and once magnificent roof; the action of the weather, and the footsteps of visitors, have defaced the legends that were originally carved there; but the memory of those who sleep below these marble labs yet lingers in Dunblane and Strathearn.

Under the first lies the affianced bride of one who was a good and valiant soldier, and faithful to his king.

Under the second lies the betrothed of a stout Scottish mariner, as brave a fellow as ever faced salt water or cannon-shot.

Under the third sleeps the youngest—she who perhaps was the fairest—the wife (but not the queen) of one who in his time was the most gallant and magnificent monarch that ever wore the Scottish diadem.

These three ladies were sisters; and their story is a strange and a dark one.

History, tradition, and an old manuscript, that was found (no matter when) among the Records of the Scottish Court of Admiralty, have enabled me to lay their lives and narrative before the reader in the following pages.

CHAPTER I.

ON BOARD.

"There was a ship at morning prime
The Scottish shore forsook,
And southward with a favouring gab
Her rapid course she took:
Her mast St. Andrew's banner bears,
And heaven be now her speed!
For with her goes the bravest knight
That Scotland hath in need."

BALLADS AND LAYS.

By the fragment of a log-book, which was found among the MSS. just referred to, we are informed that on Beltane day, in the year of Grace 1488, two Scottish ships of war, the *Yellow Frigate* and the *Queen Margaret*, were lying becalmed off the mouth of the Tay, about seven miles from the Gaa Sands, and three from the Inchcape Rock, the large bell of which was heard at times, as its sonorous notes floated over the still bosom of the water. An abbot of St. Thomas at Arbroath had hung it there, on a wooden frame, to indicate by night that ghastly ridge, so long the terror of mariners; and thus as the waves rose and fell, they swung it to and fro. Water will convey sound to a vast distance; thus, in the noon of a calm May day, the notes of the Inchcape bell were distinctly heard on board of the two ships of his Majesty James III., although they were three miles distant from the reef.

A groundswell came off the dangerous sands of Abertay; the sails of the caravels flapped lazily against the masts, as the hulls rolled from side to side slowly and heavily, for there was so little wind that neither would obey her helm, but lay like a log on this water.

The fertile shores of Fife and Angus were shrouded in hazy summer mist, above which peeped the bare scalp of the Law of Dundee. Noon passed, and still the swell came rolling in long, glassy, and monotonous ridges from the land, while the burnished sea seemed smooth, as if coated over with oil. The ships lay about half a mile apart; and the *Yellow Frigate*, with which we have more particularly to do, was nearest to the shore.

A young officer who was pacing to and fro on her poop, gazed frequently and impatiently at the mouth of the river, and after wearying himself by whistling for the lagging wind, tossing splinters of lighted wood into the water, and watching anxiously the direction taken by the puffs of smoke or steam, he suddenly slapped his hands.

"Ahoy there, mizen-top! Barton," he exclaimed to an officer who had ascended into the mizen-rigging, "there is a breeze setting in from the east."

"Right, Falconer," replied the other; "I can see it curling the water over the Inchcape; and it comes in time, for I was beginning to bethink me of some other trade, for this of sailor requires overmuch patience for me. So-ho! here it comes!" he continued, while descending the ratlins with the activity of a squirrel. "See how the sea wrinkles before it!"

"Now the canvas fills," said Falconer, looking aloft.

"The *Queen Margaret* has caught it already, and now old Mathieson squares his yards. Aha! he is an active carle; always on the look-out, and his messmates jump like crickets when his whistle blows."

The person thus eulogized, we find to have been Sir Alexander Mathieson, a rich merchant-skipper of Leith,

who had become captain of a king's ship, and won the name of "King of the Sea."

"Keep her away, timoneer," said Barton; "keep her away yet—a point or two to the south."

"Why so," asked Falconer, "when she lies so well?"

"Because, in entering the harbour of Dundee, we must keep the north gable of St. Clement's kirk upon the bar, and on the north-west, right over against Broughty, else we shall run upon the Drummilaw Sands; and then not St. Clement himself, nor his blessed anchor to boot, would save us. Master gunner—Willie Wad—please to inform Sir Andrew that a breeze is springing up; but that I see nothing of my father's ship, the *Unicorn*, at anchor in the Firth."

"Art thou sure?" said Falconer, anxiously.

"Sure! I would know her by her red poop-lanterns and square rigging among a thousand ships."

Robert Barton, who was captain of the ship, hastened to get sail made on her; and as the breeze freshened, the yards were almost squared; the notes of the Inchcape bell died away, and both vessels stood slowly into that beautiful estuary formed by the confluence of the Tay with the German Sea.

The sailors, who, during the calm, had been lounging lazily on deck, or basking in the sunshine between the brass guns, exchanged their listlessness for activity; a smile of satisfaction spread over their weather-beaten visages, and a hum of gladness arose from the ship.

"Now, timoneer, the breeze is more aft," cried Barton; "steer dead for the harbour mouth."

"Soho!" said Falconer, "the *Margaret* is coming up with us, hand over hand."

"Fear not," replied Barton, joyously, "we shall soon leave her far astern. Thou knowest, Falconer, that this good caravel was built under Sir Andrew's own eyes at the New Haven, near Leith," continued the captain, surveying with a seaman's proverbial delight the lofty rigging of the frigate.

"Yet, she is but a cockle-shell to the great ship of Hiero, anent which, Father Zuill, the chaplain, told us so many wonderful things after mass yesterday."

"If you had seen how beautifully she took the water, diving deep with her stern, and tilting up her bow like a swan. She is sharp as a lance at the bows below the water line—bold above it; straight between poop and forecastle—clean in the counter, and bolted with copper. By the faith of Barton, there sails not such another ship in all Scottish waters; and I marvel mickle, if either French Francis, or English Harry, will ever build one like her."

The ship which Captain Barton eulogised so highly would create no small speculation in Bonny Dundee, if she and her consort were seen standing before the wind, right up the Firth of Tay, in this year 1855; and we may imagine the criticisms of the rough old tars, who usually congregate about the piers and rocks of Broughty Ferry. Her whole hull was painted *brilliant yellow*; hence the name, that has won her a place so conspicuous in the histories of the period.

Both vessels seemed comparatively low in the waist, for their gigantic poops and forecastles rose like wooden towers above the sea; and to render this simile more complete, were furnished with little wooden tourelles at the inner angles. Elaborate carving and gorgeous gilding

covered the hulls above the water-line; and amid this, grinned the great carthouns or forty-eight pounders; the brass culverins and falconets, tier above tier. The port-lids were painted a flaming red; three gigantic lanterns, with tops of polished brass, surmounted each of the poops, which had round their sterns and quarters a gaudy row of painted shields, bearing the armorial blazons of the gentlemen who served on board. Round the butt of each mast stood a rack of long Scottish spears and hand-guns, into the tubes of which were inserted the hafts of Jedwood axes.

The *Yellow Caravel* or frigate carried fifty guns; the *Margaret*, twenty. Both were ship rigged, with three masts, each of these being composed of two long tapered spars, fidded at the tops, which were clumsy and basket-like enclosures, surrounded by little embrasures, from whence the cross-bowmen, pages, and arquebussiers, could gall the enemy in security. From the carved bows, the bowsprits started up at an angle of forty-five degrees; and each had rigged thereon a lesser or fourth mast, having a great square spritsail before. At the yard-*arms* were iron hooks to grasp an enemy's rigging. All the sails were large and square. At her mainmast head, each vessel carried the flag of the admiral, a golden tree in a blue field; while at the stern waved the blue national ensign, with the great white cross of St. Andrew, extending from corner to corner.

The summer sun of this fair Beltane day shone joyously on the glassy water, on the glittering hulls and snow-white canvas of these stately caravels, as they neared those green headlands which form the entrance to one of the noblest of the Scottish firths.

On the south the shore is bold and rocky; there, round its old peel, now in ruins, clustered the little village of Port-on-

Craig, whose population lived by fishing and managing the boats of the ferry (the oldest in the kingdom), which plied between Fife and the opposite point, where, on a bare and unwooded promontory stands the Royal Castle of Broughty, a strong, square tower, then surrounded by a barbican and other defences, which frowned towards the ocean on the east, defending the narrow strait from hostile fleets, and on the west, towards a dreary salt-marsh, that stretched almost from the outer walls to the gates of busy Dundee.

The dresses of the officers and crews of the ships of James III. were as remarkable as the aspect of their craft; for Robert Barton, who was sailing master or captain, and Sir David Falconer, who was captain of the arquebussiers, wore doublets or pourpoints of grey velvet, cut very short, with slit sleeves, to show the loose white shirts below; their shoulders were padded out with *mahoitres*, or large puffs; they wore tight hose of Flanders cloth, with long boots that came up to their knees, They had swords and daggers of great length and flat blue bonnets; at the end of his gold neckchain, the sailor carried a whistle; but the soldier had a cross and medal; and, as a protection from salt water, each wore an overall, or rough surcoat of Galloway frieze, trimmed with brown fur.

The sailors wore gaberdines of the same coarse material, with fustian breeches, blue bonnets, and shoes of undressed deerskin, which in those days won us the strange appellation of *rough-footed Scots*. Willie Wad, the gunner, and Archy of Anster, the boatswain, only, wore doublets of Flemish cloth, edged with silver lace, and with the royal crest, the crown and lion *sejant*, embroidered on the sleeves thereof. The arquebussiers, of whom there were a hundred and fifty on board, wore steel casquetels, with large oval ear-plates, buff coats, and broad military belts,

which sustained their dirks, priming-horns, bullet-bags, and the spanners of their long-barrelled arquebusses.

Such was the general aspect of the ships and crews of his Majesty James III.

Barton and Falconer were both stout and athletic young men, but were somewhat different in aspect and bearing; for the former, who was a son of the admiral, Sir Andrew Barton, or Barnton, of that Ilk in Lothian, the wealthy Leith merchant, who had acquired a splendid fortune, and purchased a fine estate, was a florid and jovial-looking young seaman, with something of the Cavalier in his aspect; but Falconer, who had no fortune but his sword, had been introduced to the royal favour by the late Earl of Mar—the murdered favourite of James III., who knighted the youth for his valour at the siege of Dunbar in 1478, when but a stripling. Thus, though a knight, and captain of one of the king's bands, he was but the son of a poor merchant-skipper of Borrowstoness; yet he was a handsome and a stately youth; his eyes, hair, and complexion were dark, and his sharply pointed mustachios stuck fiercely off on each side of his mouth.

"A boat has shot off from Broughty," said he, shading his eyes with his right hand; "and two stout fellows are pulling for the ship as if their lives depended upon their speed."

"Keep to larboard of the *Margaret*," cried Barton to the timoneer; "for she draws less water of course, and we require all the fairway to ourselves. Keep her away—see how the surf curls on the Gaa Sands!"

At that moment, a door, which was studded with iron nails like that of an old tower, opened in the after part of the poop, and the sentinels saluted with their arquebusses

as the admiral stepped on deck, and first cast his eyes aloft and then ahead.

"Keep her full, Barton," said he, "keep her full. So, the old Tay now opens her arms to us! and now the spires of St. Clement and St. Mary are in sight again. Gadzooks, I can see the Rock of St. Nicholas, and if I had thine eyes, Falconer, I might distinguish the great house of Stobhall."

Falconer only twisted his mustachios, and smiled, but with a sombre aspect.

"How, Sir Andrew," said Barton, "you think the eyes of a mariner——"

"Are but green glass when compared to those of a lover—yea I do," laughed the good old admiral, as he walked to the quarter, looked over the side, and whistled to the freshening breeze; thus he failed to observe the ill-concealed gesture of impatience that escaped Sir David Falconer, and the bitter smile he exchanged with Barton.

Sir Andrew Wood of Largo, admiral of the fleet of James III.—the Scottish Nelson of his time—was originally a wealthy merchant of Leith, where in early life he was as well known in the Timber Holfe as at Sluice and the Dam. He had first been merely a merchant-skipper, who fought his own way at sea, but he had done so with such signal success, and had so frequently defeated the fleets of Edward IV. of England, and of Alfonso, King of Portugal, and the pirates of many nations, that he was knighted on his own deck by James III., who never omitted an opportunity of distinguishing that rising middle class which the feudal barons viewed with aversion and contempt. James further bestowed on him the noble barony of Largo, in Fife, and he held it by the tenure that he should at all

times be ready to pilot and convey the king and queen to the famous shrine of St. Adrian, on the Isle of May. His Castle of Largo, a pile of great size and strength, he built by the hands of several English, French, and Portuguese pirates whom he had captured at sea, and whose hard work he made the price of their liberty.

Thus he, who had commenced life as a poor sailor boy of Leith, found himself, before his fiftieth year, a Scottish knight and baron of Parliament; the founder of a noble family; the possessor of a stately fortress, Laird of Largo, Easter-dron, and Newbyrne; with a coat of arms, bearing two ships in full sail under an oak tree, in memory of his defending the Castle of Dumbarton against an English fleet in 1481, and defeating another near the Bass a few years after—But we anticipate.

Now, his caravels had just returned from Sluice, where he had been on an embassy, concerning the quarrel then existing between Scotland and the Flemings.

He was rather under than over the middle height, and somewhat stout in body, with a round good-humoured face; his complexion was fair, but burned to a dusky red by exposure for nearly forty years to the sea air in many climates; his beard and mustachios were rather full, and the former fringed his face all round, mingling with his short-cut hair, which, though it had been dark in youth, was now becoming grey and grizzled.

On his head was a cap of maintenance, adorned by a short red feather; he wore a rich military belt, and a jazarine jacket of the fashion of the late King James II.; a gorget of polished steel, having scalloped edges, and a magnificent poniard, which he had received from Bartolemeo Diaz, the famous Portuguese navigator, who

discovered the Cape of Good Hope. Buff-coloured hosen encased his sturdy legs, and he wore plain knee-boots of black leather, with high red heels. The only indications of naval life about him were, his silver whistle (in those days the invariable badge of rank on the ocean), with a consecrated medal, bearing the image of Clement, the patron of mariners; and more than these, that unmistakeable roll in his gait, which is peculiar to all those brave and honest souls who live by salt water.

"And so, Barton," said he, returning from the starboard quarter; "there is no sign of thy father's ships in the Tay. We expected to have met them here."

"It is indeed most strange!" replied Captain Barton, giving a last and anxious glance up the broad and shining river that opened now before them; "but assuredly I can see no more ships in the Firth."

"Not even from the mast-head?"

"Nay, though I could see the river as far up as the Pows of Errol."

"Some service must have turned up in our absence, and while we lingered at the Sluice," said Falconer.

"And if service was to be found," said the admiral, with honest emphasis, "my brave auld messmate, Sir Andrew Barton, would be the last man on the Scottish waters to keep his anchor down. But, ho! gadzooks, here is the captain of Broughty beginning to waste the king's powder. Archy of Anster, order a yeoman of the braces to lower my pennon."

At that moment a puff of white smoke broke over the black ramparts of Broughty, as the cannoneers saluted the

admiral's well-known flag, which was thrice lowered in reply to the compliment as the vessels swept slowly past, and entered the broad bosom of that magnificent river.

The tide was now beginning to ebb, and those dangerous shoals, known as the Drummilaw Sands, were gradually appearing.

Under these heaps lie the wrecks of those Norwegian galleys which were destroyed in a storm in the days of Duncan I., after his general had defeated the soldiers of King Sueno in the Carse of Gowrie. There they sank, and there the shifting sand rose like a bar at the river mouth above their shattered hulk.

CHAPTER II.

THE SWASHBUCKLER.

"Kind cousin Gilford, if thou lack'st good counsel
At race, at cockpit, or at gaming table,
Or any freak by which men cheat themselves
As well of life as of the means to live,
Call for assistance upon Philip Mure;
But in all serious parley spare invoking him."

AUCHINDRANE.

By this time, the boat which had shot off from the promontory on which the fortress is situated, was alongside the *Yellow Frigate*, which was moving slowly, almost imperceptibly, up the river, and was now some hundred yards ahead of the *Margaret*, which was but a dull sailer. As the boat neared, the song chaunted by the two rowers was heard on board. It was a dull and monotonous chant, the constant burden of which was,

"Hey, the canty carles o' Dysart!
Ho, the merry lads o' Buckhaven!
Hey, the saucy limmers o' Largo!
Ho, the bonnie lassies o' Leven!"

"'Tis the boat of Jamie Gair," said Barton; "the bravest fellow that ever dipped a line in salt water; let a rope be hove to him from one of the larboard ports."

This was immediately done; the boat (which was one of those strong clinker-built fisher craft, which are peculiar to the Scottish firths) sheered alongside; and the two fishermen who rowed it, together with a gentleman, enveloped in a scarlet mantle, who had been lounging in the stern, ascended to the maindeck, and from thence the latter climbed by Jacob's ladder to the lofty poop, where

the admiral, his second in command, and the captain of the arquebussiers, were surmising who the visitor might be.

"Pshaw!" said Sir Andrew, as they all retired aft; "'tis Sir Hew Borthwick!"

"But we must not forget ourselves altogether," urged Robert Barton; "the man is a visitor."

"True," said the admiral; "I forget."

"Welcome," said Falconer, as this visitor, not in the least daunted by the coolness of his reception, approached them jauntily, with a tall feather nodding in his bonnet, and an enormous sword trailing at his heels; "welcome on board the *Yellow Frigate*."

"A dog's welcome to him," muttered Robert Barton, under his thick mustachios; "for he is the falsest loon in all broad Scotland. Dost thou know, admiral, that 'tis said, this fellow, with two brother villains in the English pay, betrayed Berwick to the King of England?"

The Admiral nodded a brief assent.

Borthwick's appearance was somewhat forbidding. He was past forty years of age, and had black, glossy, and fierce-looking eyes; a mouth like an unhealed gash; ears set high on his head, black teeth, and a stumpy beard. He wore a faded doublet of figured satin with *mahoitres*, that had once been cloth of gold; his feet were encased in English boots of that absurd fashion then called duck-bill, as the toes were like beaks, and five inches long. A purse hung at his girdle, and a chain encircled his neck; but rumour wickedly averred that the former was frequently distended by pebbles, and that the second was only brass.

When he removed his bonnet, the remains of a tonsure were visible; for Sir Hew (the origin of whose knighthood was somewhat obscure) had formerly been a prebend in the Cathedral of Dunblane, but forsaking the cloister at a time when the ecclesiastical rule was considerably relaxed, he had espoused the more congenial occupation of sharper, bully, jockey, and swashbuckler. Always obsequious to the rich and noble, but supercilious to the poor and humble, or brutal whenever he dared venture to be so he hovered like a vulture wherever the ambulatory Court of James III. chanced to be residing.

"And now, that all ceremonious inquiries are over, may I ask, *Master* Borthwick, on what devil's errand thou hast boarded us?" bluntly inquired Robert Barton, who, being less good-natured than the bluff old admiral, was at no pains to conceal his scorn for the swashbuckler.

The dislike was quite mutual; thus a malicious gleam lighted the eyes of Borthwick, as he replied—

"I came on board to learn that which is of much importance to the jovial gallants about Court; (nay, nay, Sir David Falconer, do not laugh quite so loud if *you* please!) whether our good friend the admiral has been successful in his embassy to the Flemings; for since the interdict of '66, when our vessels could no longer trade with the ports of the Swyn, the Sluice, and the Dam, wine hath been so bad, and so dear——"

"That you must e'en content your noble self with plain usquebaugh," interrupted the admiral, laughing outright at the idea of communicating the result of his important mission to a pitiful fellow like Borthwick. "But canst thou tell me, sir, where are the ships of mine old messmate, Sir Andrew Barton, and where is he?"

"The ships of Sir Andrew," replied the swashbuckler, slowly, and with another malevolent glance at Robert Barton, "are anchored safely by the walls of London Tower."

"And Barton——"

"Is at the bottom of the sea, I suppose."

"Borthwick!" exclaimed the admiral, in great wrath; "if thou hast come on board to laugh at us, by Heaven's mercy, thou shalt find none here, for I will rig thee by the earings to the spritsail yard."

"He dare not trifle with us," said Robert Barton, in a thick hoarse voice, as his swarthy cheek grew pale; "be patient, Sir Andrew, and let us hear what he has to say. Hew Borthwick, thou art poor, and lovest gold, like thy own life-blood. I will give thee a hundred crowns if thou speakest the truth; but I will poniard thee on this deck, sirrah, if thou liest; so spin thy yarn, then, hand over hand; be a man for once. 'Tis a son who asks for tidings and the safety of his father."

"Quick!" added the testy admiral, stamping his foot; "for my arm is somewhat longer than my patience, sir."

"Hearken," said Borthwick, with deliberation. "On the very day you sailed for Sluice, three months ago, the Provosts of Aberdeen and Dundee appeared before the Parliament at Stirling (where the king was biding) making doleful complaints anent the great loss their burghs had suffered from the pirates of Portugal, who had seized many of their ships and barbarously murdered the crews. In five hours thereafter, Sir Andrew Barton put to sea with the *Great Lion*, the *Unicorn* and *Little Jenny*. He sailed towards the Tagus, and by a herald's mouth demanded immediate justice from the Portuguese. Alfonso V. delayed; then stout

old Barton lost his temper, and after firing a few shot at the castle of Lisbon, put to sea. Falling in with the identical ships which had committed the outrages complained of by the two Provosts, he captured and sunk them, sending the heads of their crews, daintily salted in beef barrels, to the King, at Stirling. Being somewhat soft-hearted, James, as you may believe, was no way delighted by the present; but, Sir Andrew, after cannonading every town on the coast of Portugal, as he passed it, and after destroying every ship of that nation which he met on the high seas, bore away for Scotland. Alfonso complained to his good ally the King of England; the latter made inquiries as to the most likely route to be chosen by Sir Andrew Burton on his homeward voyage, and despatched his high-admiral, the Lord Thomas Howard, and his brother Edmund, with a strong fleet of the best ships London could produce, to the Downs, as these Southerners call that part of the north sea——"

"I know, I know, off the south-east coast of England, on the Kentish shore," said the admiral, stamping a foot impatiently; "go on, man—go on!"

"After sweeping all the shores of Portugal, and after escaping a frightful tempest, on Saint Swithin's day, he was descried by the English fleet, breasting gallantly up the channel, with all sail possible on the *Lion*, and the *Jenny*, too, which bowled on alongside, like a little gadfly, all legs and arms, with sweeps out, and every stitch of canvas set."

"Ay," said Robert Barton, "she was a noble little sloop, built under my father's own eye, poor man!—Well."

"The English fleet came on in the form of a half-moon, each vessel with a large white rod at her bowsprit, in sign of amity; but Sir Andrew knew the Lord Howard of old; and undaunted by his array, came on with his guns double-

shotted, and all his ports open; but failing to break through, he engaged the English admiral. A desperate conflict ensued, for the *Great Lion* was hemmed in on every side, and boarded at both stem and stern. Through the joints of his armour, Sir Andrew was shot by an arrow, when about to retreat by the rigging into the main-top on his decks being taken; and just then, as he was falling, a cannon shot swept both his legs away. His brave crew fought round him in a circle, and he continued to cheer and encourage them, by blowing his whistle to the last, until they were all slain, or taken and disarmed. Edmund Howard, with three ships, pursued the *Jenny*; dismasted her, and shot her sweeps away; then she struck, and the survivors of both crews—only one hundred and fifty poor seamen in all—were marched in chains through the streets of London, as a spectacle to the exulting citizens. They were then flung, like felons, in the fortress which they name the Tower; but after being instructed to implore their lives from the English king, they were dismissed; and now, *Master* Robert Barton, your father's noble ships, the *Great Lion* and the *Unicorn*, have the honour of being esteemed the best in the navy of England, and display St. George's red cross, where St. Andrew's blue ensign waved before."

"And what says our king to all this?" asked Barton, in a voice that was rendered hoarse and tremulous by grief and passion.

"Ay," added the admiral, with a terrible frown; "what says King James?"

"He despatched the Rothesay Herald to Windsor Castle, demanding redress, and threatening war."

"And the Englishman answered—?"

"That the fate of pirates should not occasion disputes between princes."

"*Pirates!*" exclaimed Robert Barton, whose rage at such an epithet surmounted even his grief for his father's death. Borthwick's sinister eyes were brightened by a grim smile; but mutterings of anger were heard among the officers and seamen, many of whom had crowded round to hear the news from shore; and many a swarthy brow was knit, and many a hard hand clenched: for old Andrew Barton, like his compatriot and mess-mate, Andrew Wood, had long been the idol of the Scottish mariners. "*Pirates!*" reiterated Robert; "dared the English king stigmatize by such a name a gallant merchant mariner, who, by noble valour and honest industry, has won himself a fair estate and spotless reputation—a knight, who received his spurs from the hands of a queen—an admiral, second only to the Laird of Largo!"

"Second to none, my brave boy," said Sir Andrew Wood, clapping Barton on the shoulder. "Thy father was second to no man that sails upon the sea; but he hath found a sailor's grave, so rest him God! As for pirates—Heaven will know best whether kings or those who live by salt water are the most honest men. Every dog hath his day; and just now Lord Howard hath his; be patient, my boy, until our new ship, the *Great Michael*, is off the stocks, and then we shall see whether the Scottish or the English cross shall float highest above the water. But tell me, Hew Borthwick, what hath been the result of all this; for among these lubberly Flemings we learned no Scottish news."

"You all know, sir, of course," resumed the swashbuckler, assuming a lofty and impertinent air of consequence, as he stuck his left hand into the hilt of his sword, "that the king's eldest son, James Duke of Rothesay, was at his birth

betrothed to the Princess Cecilia of England, daughter of the late King Edward IV.; that his brother, the Duke of Albany, was to marry King Edward's fair young sister, the Dowager Duchess of Burgundy; that our adorable Princess Margaret was to marry the English Duke of Clarence; that every one was to be married to some one else, except myself, who, in all these illustrious alliances, had been strangely overlooked; when lo! the brave Archibald, Earl of Angus, who is now Warden of the East and Middle Marches, grew weary of all this traffic with England, and the long truce to war. To square accounts with Henry VII. for Barton's loss, he marched ten thousand of his vassals across the Border, and ravaged all Northumberland. So thus, for the present, have all these royal marriages ended—in fire and smoke—bloodshed and cold steel."

"So may they ever end when our kings look for alliances elsewhere than on the Continent," said Sir David Falconer.

The admiral paced up and down the deck, in a bitter and thoughtful mood, grieving for the loss of his oldest and earliest friend; one hand he thrust into the breast of his jazarine jacket; the other rested on the pommel of his poniard.

Relinquishing the ship to the care of others, Barton stood apart, gazing dreamily upon the shining river, with his heart full of sad and bitter thoughts, while involuntarily he clutched the mizen rattlins. His eyes were swimming; but he bit his bearded nether lip till the blood came. Suddenly he raised his eyes to a large mansion, which was looming high above others, through the summer haze in which Dundee was sleeping; and then a smile spread over his broad and thoughtful brow.

At that moment a hand was laid upon his shoulder, he turned, and encountered the ship's chaplain, Father Zuill, a Dominican.

"Relinquish these bitter thoughts, Barton," said he; "and come below with me to my cabin. There I will show thee an invention that will avenge thy father more surely than all the cannon in Scotland—yea, a burning-glass, that will consume a ship at the distance of a hundred leagues."

"Right, Father Zuill," said the admiral, who did not hear, or mistook, what the friar had said. "God may listen to the prayers of an honest sailor, when He turns a deaf ear to those of a king."

A few minutes after they had gone below, the friar reappeared and ascended to the ship's waist, where Sir Hew Borthwick, notwithstanding his knighthood, was comfortably regaling himself with Archy of Anster and Wad the gunner, on salt beef and spiced ale at the capstan-head. Zuill placed a purse in his hands, and said,

"Here are the hundred crowns which Captain Barton promised thee."

"A hundred crowns!" stammered Borthwick; "'tis an enormous sum, good father." (And so it was in the time of James III.)

"But Barton hath a noble heart and a princely fortune," said the chaplain, retiring hurriedly, for he had neither respect nor admiration for an apostate priest like Borthwick.

"Ah me!" muttered the latter; "where shall I conceal this, and what shall I do with it? I never had such a sum before! What a thing it is, for a poor devil, who has not had even a

black penny for ten days, to find himself suddenly the king of a hundred crowns! I' faith!" he added, while concealing his prize, "'tis well that fiery birkie Barton knoweth not by *whose* information the Lord Howard knew that the Scottish ships would pass the English Downs about Saint Swithin's day."

CHAPTER III.

BONNY DUNDEE.

"Yon is the Tay rolled down from Highland hills,
That rests his waves, after so rude a race,
In the fair plains of Gowrie—further westward
Proud Stirling rises—yonder to the east,
Dundee, the gift of God."

MACDUFF'S CROSS.

In that age of cold iron (for indeed we cannot call it a golden age), when the potent and valiant knight, Sir James Scrimgeour, of Dudhope and Glastre, Hereditary Bearer of the Royal Standard, was Constable and Provost of the Scottish Geneva, the unexpected appearance of Sir Andrew Wood's two stately caravels created no small commotion within the burgh. No sooner was notice given from the Castle of Broughty that the Laird of Largo's ships had been seen off the Inchcape, and were now standing up the Tay, than it spread from mouth to mouth, and passed through the town like wildfire.

Though now the shapeless façade of many a huge linen factory, and the tall outline of many a smoky chimney, overshadow the ground that was covered by green fields and waving coppice in the days I write of, "Bonny Dundee" still merits the name given it of old by the northern clansmen—*Ail-lec*—the pleasant and the beautiful.

Spread along the sandy margin of one of our noblest rivers, and nestling under the brow of a green and conical mountain, it was without walls in the year 1488; but at each end had a strongly embattled gate, which defended it on the east and west, while its castle, of the eleventh century, which stood on an immense mass of steep rock

that overlooked the Tay, gave it additional strength, and added a military character to the naval importance which the burgh was acquiring by the shipping that usually crowded its harbour. This castle is now removed, and a broad street has been hewn through the heart of the rock which it crowned.

Its quaint thoroughfares contained then many beautiful chapels, convents, and monasteries; and the stately hotel of many a noble family, with turrets and turnpike-stair, embattled porch, and armorial bearings. These towered above the timber-fronted and arcaded houses of the Fluckergaitt, the Overgaitt, and other venerable streets, whose appearance was more picturesque than their names would import. There our kings had a mansion named the Whitehall, the vaults of which are yet remaining; as also had the Lords Drummond, the Scrimgeours of Dudhope, the Barons of Strathmartine, the powerful Earls of Angus, and the great Earl of Crawford, who, for his valour at Blackness, in the recent struggle between the king and nobility, had been created Duke of Montrose, and Lord High Chamberlain of Scotland. Many great barons of the Carse of Gowrie also resided in Dundee, where Parliaments and Conventions have been held; and which could then boast of the Mint of King Robert I., and the palace of St. Margaret, the Queen of Malcolm III.; but its proudest objects were that broad river, which from the hills of Strathfillan and Glendochart rolls its mighty current to the German Sea; and its ample harbour, crowded by the high-pooped and gaudily-painted ships of France and Norway, Sweden and Flanders.

On the afternoon of this bright Beltane day, the return of the great naval hero from the shores of Flanders caused an unusual commotion and satisfaction in Dundee. The whole inhabitants were "on tiptoe," and a joyous murmur spread

along the Mole when the well-known caravels of Wood were seen to enter the river; for now, though the admiral was a knight and baron of Parliament, who fought under the king's pennon, he still dabbled a little in merchandise, which gave him additional value in the estimation of the thrifty burgesses and merchant traders of the town. Thus, every ship in the harbour, from the great argosie that traded with the Levant, down to those little crayers or low-built smacks which are still peculiar to the Scottish firths, hoisted her colours. The bells in the vast tower of St. Mary rang a merry peal; groups of old weather-beaten tars, wearing broad blue bonnets, gaberdines of Galloway white, and enormous boots of rough skin, assembled on the rock of St. Nicholas, and on the Mole, which then lay to the westward thereof, to observe, and exercise their nautical criticism on the aspect of the tall ships which, before a gentle eastern breeze, were slowly coming abreast of the town. There are bluff old fellows of this kind—half man and half fish—who, in all ages, have haunted the piers of seaport towns, and are great, pugnacious, and, moreover obstinate authorities, in all matters appertaining unto salt water.

Amid all the dense population so interested in the arrival of the admiral, there were none who bent their eyes more eagerly on the coming ships than five fair young girls who were seated on the bartizan of a large mansion, which (after surviving nearly all its baronial cotemporaries) still stands at the corner of Fish-street, and the Flesher-row, which were then, as they are yet, the busiest part of all Dundee, and contained some of the finest examples of old Scottish street architecture.

This mansion is large and square, like a great bastel-house; and at three of its corners has broad round towers, which are strong enough to turn cannon balls. The whole

superstructure rests on an arcade composed of finely-moulded elliptical arches, that spring from fluted pilasters.* Its arcade is partly sunk into the earth, and it is further diminished of its original height by a slate roof sloping down upon the walls, which of old were surmounted by a bartizan, from whence a view could be obtained of the river to the south, and that quaint old thoroughfare to the west, where, two hundred years before, the schoolboy *William Wallace*, slew the son of Selby, the English governor; but to the north the lofty mansions of the Nethergaitt shut out the view.

* In 1808, two hundred silver coins of James VI. were found imbedded in the wall of this fabric, which is now named King James's Custom House, from the use to which it was last applied.

In the time of our history, this stately mansion, the stone panels of which were covered by coats-of-arms bearing a Sleuth-hound and shield, with three bars *wavy*, was the town residence of one of Scotland's most powerful peers, John, Lord Drummond, of Stobhall and that ilk, who was Baron of Concraig, Steward of Strathearn, Privy Councillor, and had been Ambassador of James III. to England, three years before, concerning the marriage of James, the young Duke of Rothesay, to a princess of that kingdom; an embassy on which he mysteriously failed.

The five fair girls who were watching the ships' approach on this bright summer evening, were his daughters, now left entirely to their own control; for Lord Drummond was with the king at Scone, and their mother, Elizabeth Lindesay, of the princely House of Crawford, had been dead three years, and lay entombed in Dunblane.

Euphemia was twenty years of age; her sisters, Sybilla and Margaret, were respectively nineteen and eighteen;

but Elizabeth and Beatrix were little girls, and of them cotemporary history has recorded little more than the names.

Lady Euphemia was a very handsome girl, with fine hazel eyes, and glossy dark brown hair, which was entirely confined in one of those cauls of gold net by which the Scottish ladies had gladly superseded the fontanges of the preceding reign. Over this floated a white kerchief of the finest texture, edged with gold fringe. Her nose was straight; her well-defined eyebrows expressed decision; her complexion was clear, but pale; her bust and figure were unexceptionable, and the very elegant costume of the court of James III.—an ermined jacquette of black velvet, with spangled skirtle and yellow mantle, displayed them to the best advantage. She wore scarlet gloves from Perth, and shoes of crimson tissue. Her whole appearance was gaudy and brilliant; while her air was lofty and reserved, for it was an age when pride of birth and station were carried to an absurd extent; but in her beauty there was something noble and majestic; and her dark hair imparted to her skin a pure and transparent whiteness that was very striking, even in a land of fair women.

Sybilla was just a second edition of Euphemia, but with a slight rose tinge in her cheek, and a stature somewhat less. Perhaps the most charming of the three was Margaret, who was then barely eighteen, and had soft blue eyes, a pure and delicate complexion, a profusion of that beautiful and brightly-coloured hair for which our Scottish Mary was so famous; and her face (though less regular than her elder sisters) had the sweetest expression that ever Raffaele conjured up in the happiest moments of his artistic inspiration. There was a dash of thought or sadness (which you will) in Margaret's winning smile that fascinated all,