

"I would not fear to take it," replied the esquire. "There never was a flood on Findhorn, which reached the planks, and if the Lady can venture to cross on foot, I would gage my fee to lead over some of the horses."

The knight paused for a moment; then turning to his bride, "Lead on," said he, "you know the road."

They had scarce gone fifty paces, when an indistinct sound came down the wind.

"What was that?" exclaimed Sir Avenel, looking back.

"But the Weir wind," replied Norman, "it yells and clamours tonight as if all the demons in the air shrieked in the blasts."

At this moment there fell one of those momentary lulls, which intervene amidst a storm.

"There, again!" said Sir Avenel; and as he spoke, the deep-mouthed chide of a bloodhound came distinctly in the gust.

Rose had not spoken before—"Oh there is 'black Du'ochan!" she exclaimed, closing to the side of Sir Avenel.

"No, no," answered he, "it is but some shepherd's dog on Tul-ludvie."

"It is no Shepherd's dog," replied Rose, "I know his tongue—it is the black dog of Driachan."

The bay of the hound came now distinctly on their track, and the loud clatter of arms and the trample of horses could be heard at intervals—"By holy St John they have crossed the bridge!" exclaimed Norman.

Sir Avenel sat without a motion of his reign, and gave directions to his men, in a tone as calm and unhurried as if he stood in the hall of Kilravoch. In a few moments they resumed their course as rapidly as they could ride for the darkness; as they reached the hill of Relugas, the bay of the dog and the trample of the pursuit had receded far in the wind, and when they crossed the parks below, it was lost behind the hill. "Good fellows," said Sir Avenel, "another sixty rods the bridge is crossed, and broken, and no man on earth may follow." The riders spurred fiercely forward, and the pale white figure of Rose, and the Arab horse, shot like a flying shadow through the darkness.

As the little troop swept round the elbow of the glen, and approached the promontory, which forms the eastern buttress of the Rathad-Cuinge, every eye strained forward towards the river, and vainly endeavoured to distinguish its course through the darkness; but as they advanced, the terrific roar of the water gave fearful warning of its fury.

At length they came upon the rock above the bridge, and the whole party stopped appalled at the black half-visible tempest which rushed through the abyss. At the moment, a sudden flash of lightning illuminated the whole course of the river, and showed the white roaring battle of mountain waves running at the edge of a shelf, not a bow's length below the bridge. The fragile fabric shook like a spider's web over the sweeping tumult, and its bleaching rail and trembling footway stretching indistinctly through the haze of spray, seemed to extend into immeasurable darkness like the visionary Bridge of Dread, over which the soul is said to pass, the gulf of eternity.

The troopers looked appalled upon the fearful pass, but Sir Avenel leaped from his horse, and lifting Rose from the ground led her down the path towards the water; the horsemen followed in silence, and as they approached, the deafening thunder of the cataract drowned even the roaring of the trees, and the white spray drove in their faces like a sheet of snow.

The knight made no check before the bridge—"Now, lady," whispered he, "one prayer to the Virgin—a firm hand to the rail, and all is safe." Rose replied only by the close pressure of her cold hand; for a moment she trembled—paused—stopped—it was but while her slender finger moved upon her breast and forehead. In the next her white figure stood above the roaring flood, and glided—faded—vanished in the darkness as if it melted into air.

In the momentary pause which followed, the mail glove of Sir Avenel flew through the spray and cashed upon the rock at the foot of Norman. "They are safe!" he exclaimed, as he lifted the signal, and taking the reign of Solder led him forward towards the bridge. For an instant the brave horse trembled, snorted, and stretched his wide nostrils to the gulf below. The esquire patted his white shoulder, and encouraged him by his voice, then loosing the reign upon his neck passed boldly on the bridge and called him by his name. The brave and gentle animal immediately followed him upon the terrific footing, and proceeding step by step passed the trembling planks and gained the opposite bank in safety. The troopers could scarce suppress a shout of joy, and immediately led forward their horses towards the bridge, but none would approach the roar of the water, and each recoiled snorting and trembling with ungovernable fear. At this moment the clattering career of the pursuers approached full speed, and in an instant the horses were abandoned, and the riders rushed upon the bridge, but not half their number had passed when a furious clamour of armed men rushed down upon the pass.

For some minutes the clash of the blows, the yell of shouts, the dash of falling bodies, mixed with the roar of the tempest; but suddenly the tall black stature of a gigantic figure appeared upon the centre of the bridge. He was rushing forward, followed by the mixed rout, when he was met by Norman, and each grasping to the rail made desperate stand for the passage. Unable to join in the combat, and appalled by the shaking footway, the rest recoiled upon the rock, while the dark figures of the two combatants, the flash of swords, and the clang of mail, could be distinguished over the spray and roar of water. Suddenly they appeared to close together, but at the same moment a high swell of water came down over the chasm, and men, bridge, and horses, swept overwhelmed in the gulf. As they went down, a wild thrilling shout mixed with the roar of the flood, and a terrific blaze of lightning illuminated the white roaring sheet of water. For a single instant the black heads of the combatants, the fold of a red mantle, the flash of a dirk, appeared amidst the foam, but in the next all was lost but the pale shooting light of the froth, and the rolling peal of thunder which burst over the river.

The women of both sides stood stiff and appalled upon the brink, their hands fast clenched, and their eyes fixed upon the black abyss which roared between them. But suddenly the faint blast of a horn sounded in the forest, and as a second flash of

* The Arab horses are accustomed to follow their masters without leading, even through fire.

† On the Findhorn, and other mountain rivers of the same character, these swells sometimes come down like a bank six feet abreast.

lightning showed the northern bank it shone only upon the long black rock, and the tall rent beech trees, tossing their white branches in the wind.

The sun rose bright and still and breathless upon the Findhorn, the slender birch trees scarce shook away the heavy drops from their boughs, and the blue harebells and cuckoo-cups hung surcharged over the dewy grass, in which the tears of the night glistened like crystal gems. None stirred but the red buck which stepped cautiously through the fern, and no sound came over the Ranach but the slow deep warble of the blackbird and the subdued hum of the river.

The yellow water now lipped gently on the margin of the meadow, but far above along the mossy banks, and amidst the tallest trees, long ridges of discoloured froth and tangled wreck were left upon the turf, or hung suspended in the branches. At intervals in the hollows of the rocks, or on the shelves of sand, lay the half-barked trunks of shattered trees, and here and there a broken wheel, an empty cradle, or the rafter of a cottage, tokened the desolation which had swept from the Monadh-lia to the caire of Moir.

As the morning shone over the fishers' huts of Slui, one of the old men tottered out into the sun, and leaning on his staff above the pool, looked down for the cobbles, which had been drawn up on the bank the night before. While he continued gazing on the "jetsons" of the river he observed the sun glisten upon a red heap, half covered by the sand and shaggy wreck. Thinking to find the contents of some broken KIST he descended to the spot, but as he approached he discovered the shape of limbs beneath a scarlet mantle, and lifting the skirt with his salmon-hook, beheld the bodies of young Norman and Sir Reginald Calder, locked together in the death-gripe of their last struggle.

Their blue stiffened features were fixed in the glare of mortal defiance, and their limbs bore fearful marks of the conflict of torrent and rock, which could not separate their mangled bodies. The dirk of the esquire was still fast clenched in his right hand, and his left closed on the throat of his master's enemy, the deep wound in whose neck disclosed the death-stroke which had reached him in the water.

From the Saint Christopher Gazette, March 9.

"How strangely do the wretched state of, and the discontent evinced in, the British West India possessions, at this moment, connect them with the dreadful condition of England, as the disastrous consequences of imbecility and misrule!—Every Colonial paper received by the last packet, teems with loud and well grounded complaints against the iniquitous measures adopted at the suggestion of the Colonial Office, for the government of our labouring population, and the pertinacious determination of Ministers to refuse any relief to West India commerce, by a reduction of the enormous duties imposed upon colonial produce. How the questions at issue between the colonists and the mother country, will be decided, should the present Ministry remain much longer in power is easy to foresee. Neither respect for the right of property nor consideration for the lives of thousands of innocent individuals, will be suffered to interfere with the firm determination of the puppets of Downing-street to accomplish our ruin, as a propitiation to the favour of their tyrants, "The Sovereign People." In the mean time should England be involved in a continental war, as there is every probability she soon will be, if not already engaged in one, weak, indeed, will be her hold upon the loyalty and attachment of the West Indies, goaded to desperation as they are by the iron hand of tyranny and oppression. The Legislature of St Kitts have come to the determination to withhold all supplies until their wrongs are redressed, and a guarantee given them that their properties shall not be wantonly deteriorated and destroyed. "The inhabitants of Demerara and Berbice have decided in offering Ministers a practical proof of their determination to resist having imposed upon them the ruinous and delusive theory promulgated by the late Order in Council, by petitioning his Majesty to accede to the demand of the King of Holland for the restoration of those United Colonies!" Our readers are already aware of the deplorable state of Trinidad and St Lucia, and we have no doubt but that Lord Goderich's circular, with the Colonial Office code, will be received in Jamaica with one universal shout of indignation, and resented in a manner that may materially influence the proceedings of the smaller Islands, to the annoyance of their unnatural parent.

In addition to the vexatious interference with her internal affairs, which Dominica, in common with the whole of the British West India Colonies, experiences, that unfortunate Island is placed in the most imminent danger, from a continental influx of run-away slaves from the French Islands of Martinique and Gaudaloupe. "As the Editor of The Barbadian says—"It is quite at variance with all our ideas of right and justice—perfectly irreconcilable with the divine precept to 'do unto others as we would wish them to

do unto us'—it is really also most unaccountable, that the British Government should sanction such a system of 'wrong and robbery.' That a man's slaves in Martinique and Gaudaloupe, his lawful property—as much so as the land and buildings are—should, by escaping into a British Colony, and that Colony one in which slavery is also acknowledged—and held to be lawful by its own government—become free, is contrary to every principle of justice, and a most dangerous example."

SPIRIT OF THE PROVINCIAL JOURNALS.

CANADIAN COURANT. UPPER CANADA.—We regret to see that Mr. McKenzie continues to agitate the sister Province, and although evidently sinking in popularity, holds to his projects with a tenacity and perseverance, worthy of a better cause. On the 19th inst., a meeting was held at Hamilton, which became a scene of uproar, we might almost say riot. Mr. M.K. and his friends, among whom were a number not inhabitants of the district, and several even from York, attempted to call W. B. Sheldon, Esquire, to the chair, and the opposite party nominated the Sheriff of the district; after a considerable time spent in noise and confusion, the Sheriff took the chair, and Mr McKenzie attempted to remove him; in this state of uproar, a motion expelling Mr McKenzie and his adherents, was put, carried, and obeyed, it being very evident that violence would have been used if it had been resisted. The Sheriff and one party remained inside the Court-House and passed resolutions, and an address to His Majesty, whilst Mr McKenzie and the other party retired to the Green, and passed resolutions, and an address to His Majesty of an opposite description. Both the ins and the outs then dispersed, the meeting or meetings, the row, speeches, &c. &c. terminated. In the evening, however, Mr McKenzie was attacked at the door of the house at which he stopped, and severely beaten with fists, sticks, &c. This barbarous and inhuman conduct will, we hope, be punished with all the severity of the law; for, if the club is to be substituted for the use of reason and open discussion, the very foundation of society would be shaken.

PICTOU PATRIOT.—The following clause of an act, passed by the Legislature of Lower Canada, enables the proprietors of the Royal William to send her only to this port, instead of completing her voyage by proceeding to Halifax, as last season:

"And it is enacted that the several sums of money payable under the authority of the Act 10 and 11, Geo. 3d, may be paid to the person or company who shall have complied with the other provisions of the Act, although the vessel should have been regularly navigated only between Quebec, and the ports of the St. Lawrence and Pictou, in Nova-Scotia instead of Halifax."

We have been informed, that it is the determination of the Shareholders at Quebec to conform to this arrangement for the ensuing summer. This will add considerably to the importance of Pictou; but we cannot conceal our apprehension, and consequent regret, that there is too little prospect of her remunerating her enterprising owners sufficiently, to admit of a reasonable hope of her success.

A fatal error in her construction, will prove her ruin and destroy the beneficial consequences which would have occurred from a production of Steam Communication between these Provinces and the Metropolis of British America. The Royal William, (as is the case in most company undertakings) was got up on a scale of extent and magnificence, more adapted to a competitor on the crowded Hudson, than to form a solitary pioneer on the northern waters. The error, however, is not, in our opinion, irremediable; and if, impressed with the strongest desire for the Company's success, our humble suggestion could possibly reach them, and have any weight, we would advise the proprietors to sell the present boat, and purchase one of one quarter her power, or even exchange her for one of that description, as the current expenses of the Royal William must far exceed her receipts. She will undoubtedly destroy herself.

Our readers will be pleased to learn, that there is every probability of a Steam Conveyance being immediately established between Pictou and Charlotte town. The boat will very likely proceed as far as Miramichi, and may probably embrace Arichat in the sphere of her operations; we are gratified to add, that there is a fair prospect of the undertaking proving a very successful one.

ST. JOHN OBSERVER.—A general excitement was caused in our mercantile community last week, by the current report of an inaccuracy or error having been detected in the recently enacted Revenue Law of this Province, by which it was feared every article of Food &c. not 'the growth, produce, or manufacture of the United Kingdom,' imported into this Province, would