

of the deadliest kind. He became silent and reserved, and was evidently meditating some deep plot. In the silent hour of midnight, the thought of his ladye love would come across his feverish brain, and he would give way to the most incoherent ravings—while swords and scenes of the most horrible nature would present themselves to his bewildered imagination. In this situation he communicated his thoughts to none, with the exception of an old trusty servant, who was his only confidant.

"Tradition says that a great annual fair or market was then held in that district, whither the greater part of the gentry in the country assembled to celebrate their prowess and the various rude games which characterised that age. Thither Sutherland of Forse repaired with a few stanch retainers, but, we may say, it was principally with the view of seeing his intended bride. Upon his arrival at the market place, he found an immense assemblage of people congregated before him, contesting for the honours of the day. He freely mingled with them, and seemed to take the lead. At last Sinclair and himself came to oppose each other, when it would be impossible to say which of them would be successful. In other circumstances than those in which they were situated, such a keen contest would never have arisen between the two youthful aspirants.—The eyes of the whole crowd were directed towards them, and their energies seemed to be roused to the highest pitch. Both felt as if the honours of their different clans rested on their merit and success. A fierce struggle ensued, when at last victory inclined to Sutherland. His opponent, in a fit of frenzy and anger, taunted him with some disagreeable aspersions. Sutherland, who could by no means brook such an insult, drew his sword; but the Sinclairs rushed to the aid of their exhausted chieftain, and in the skirmish Sutherland was killed, before his handful of followers could offer any resistance. The perpetrator of this action was a stout athletic Lowlander, whose strength and ferocity were the theme of many a story: and the people in the district where he lived looked upon him as matchless and unconquerable. He was foremost in the forage or any other undertaking which required more than ordinary exertion or intrepidity.

"When the mournful and afflicting news of Sutherland's death were conveyed to his mother, she felt uncomfortable for the hapless fate of her son. Near her dwelt Angus Sutherland, a powerful and gigantic Highlander, whose arm was never raised in vain. Suther-

land was summoned before her, when she treated of him in the most earnest manner to revenge the death of her son, and promised to reward him handsomely for the completion of the undertaking. Sutherland, having armed himself, set out with a few attendants for the residence of the murderer of his chief. The sun was rising in splendour and majesty over the red ocean as the solitary band left their homes to accomplish their foul deed of revenge, which in those days was accounted an honourable one. All nature seemed to be partaking of repose and rest, and man alone, in whose breast jarring passions raged, seemed to be the only being who could break the tranquility of the scene. A few hours' march brought Sutherland to the place where his opponent dwelt, but found him absent, being at a fast given by his chieftain for his services in taking away Sutherland's life. How to act in this emergency, he knew not; for to pursue the object of his revenge amongst his own clan would be certain death to him, as by their numbers they could easily overpower him; but he was soon relieved from this dilemma by the appearance of his antagonist. Both met each other with looks, in which defiance and vengeance scowled.

"'What dost thou here,' asked the latter, in a voice which betokened some approaching storm,

"'Base murderer, you shall soon know and atone for the crime of killing my beloved master, and your carcass shall be food for the ravenous hawk and eagle,' reiterated Sutherland.

Thrusts of the broad-sword were exchanged immediately; but Sutherland, who seemed to be the best swordsman, was rapidly gaining ground, and gave a fatal thrust in the heart to his opponent, who staggered and reeled, when the other severed his head from his body with one stroke. Upon committing this act, Sutherland pursued his way homeward, and laid the prize before his mistress, who directed it to be placed on the highest pinnacle of the Castle of Forse, where it remained for many a day.

"When the report of what Sutherland had done was divulged among the friends of the murdered vassal, their rage knew no bounds, and in return they prepared to revenge his death. A band of men set out immediately who dogged his steps. They attacked him unawares; but owing to his nimbleness of foot they could not overtake him. On passing Berrisdale, he was so hotly pursued that he had to leap the river above the inn, at a spot