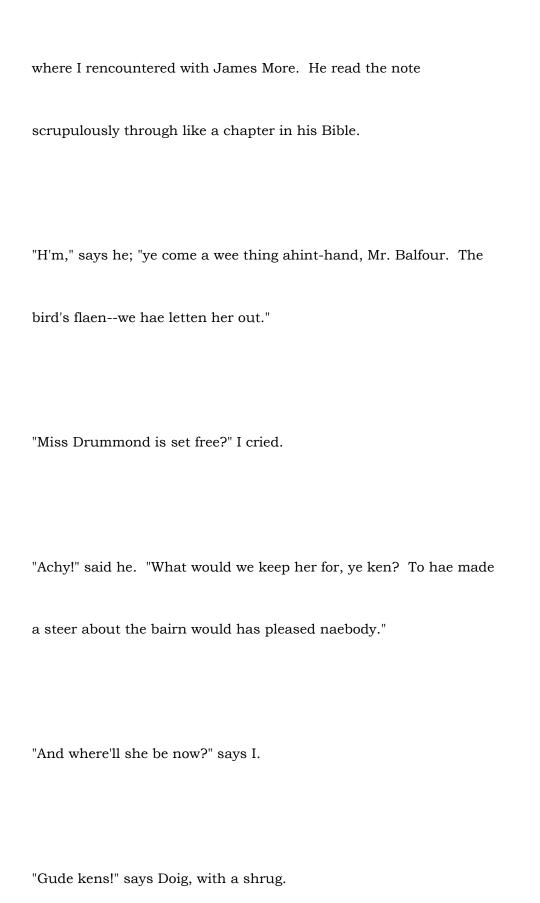
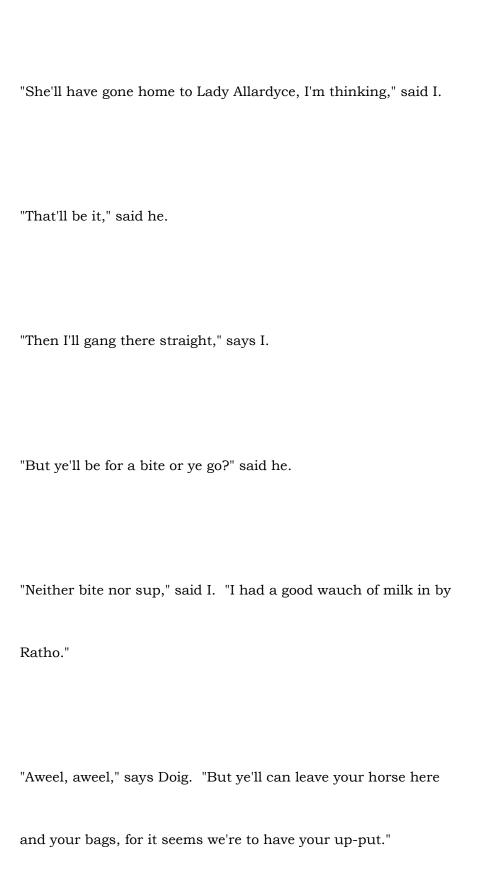
The copying was a weary business, the more so as I perceived very early there was no sort of urgency in the matters treated, and began very early to consider my employment a pretext. I had no sooner finished than I got to horse, used what remained of daylight to the best purpose, and being at last fairly benighted, slept in a house by Almond-Water side. I was in the saddle again before the day, and the Edinburgh booths were just opening when I clattered in by the West Bow and drew up a smoking horse at my lord Advocate's door. I had a written word for Doig, my lord's private hand that was thought to be in all his secrets--a worthy little plain man, all fat and snuff and self-sufficiency. Him I found already at his desk and already bedabbled with maccabaw, in the same anteroom





"Na, na", said I. "Tamson's mear  $\{17\}$  would never be the thing for me this day of all days."

Doig speaking somewhat broad, I had been led by imitation into an accent much more countrified than I was usually careful to affect a good deal broader, indeed, than I have written it down; and I was the more ashamed when another voice joined in behind me with a scrap of a ballad:

"Gae saddle me the bonny black,

Gae saddle sune and mak' him ready

For I will down the Gatehope-slack,

And a' to see my bonny leddy."

The young lady, when I turned to her, stood in a morning gown, and her hands muffled in the same, as if to hold me at a distance. Yet I could not but think there was kindness in the eye with which she saw me.

"My best respects to you, Mistress Grant," said I, bowing.

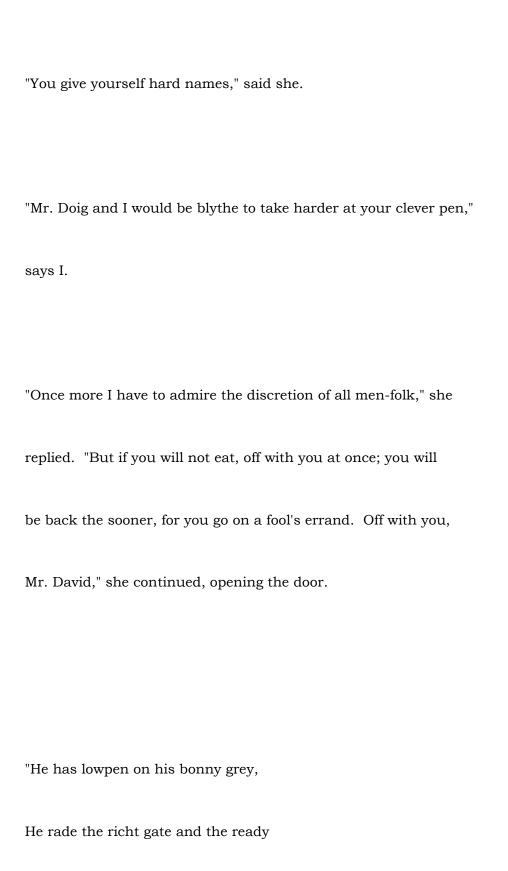
"The like to yourself, Mr. David," she replied with a deep courtesy. "And I beg to remind you of an old musty saw, that meat and mass never hindered man. The mass I cannot afford you, for we are all good Protestants. But the meat I press on your attention.

And I would not wonder but I could find something for your private ear that would be worth the stopping for."

"Mistress Grant," said I, "I believe I am already your debtor for some merry words--and I think they were kind too--on a piece of unsigned paper."

"Unsigned paper?" says she, and made a droll face, which was likewise wondrous beautiful, as of one trying to remember.

"Or else I am the more deceived," I went on. "But to be sure, we shall have the time to speak of these, since your father is so good as to make me for a while your inmate; and the GOMERAL begs you at this time only for the favour of his liberty,"



I trow he would neither stint nor stay,

For he was seeking his bonny leddy."

I did not wait to be twice bidden, and did justice to Miss Grant's citation on the way to Dean.

Old Lady Allardyce walked there alone in the garden, in her hat and mutch, and having a silver-mounted staff of some black wood to lean upon. As I alighted from my horse, and drew near to her with CONGEES, I could see the blood come in her face, and her head fling into the air like what I had conceived of empresses.

"What brings you to my poor door?" she cried, speaking high through

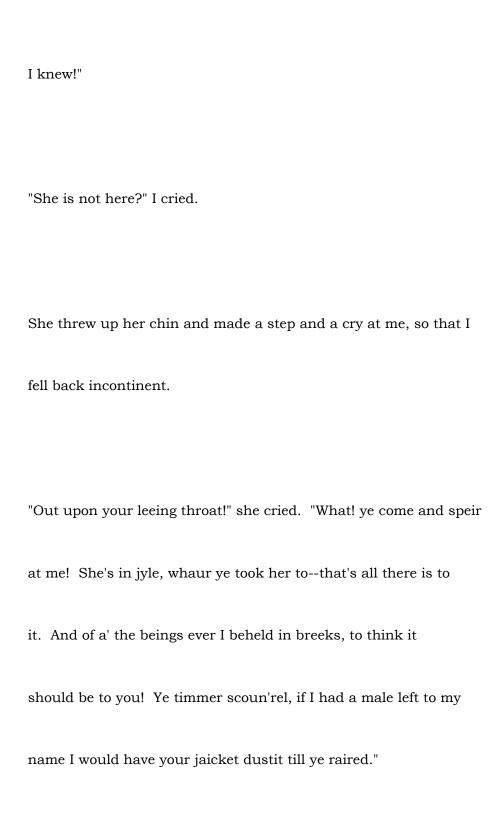
her nose. "I cannot bar it. The males of my house are dead and buried; I have neither son nor husband to stand in the gate for me; any beggar can pluck me by the baird {18}--and a baird there is, and that's the worst of it yet?" she added partly to herself.

I was extremely put out at this reception, and the last remark, which seemed like a daft wife's, left me near hand speechless.

"I see I have fallen under your displeasure, ma'am," said I. "Yet

I will still be so bold as ask after Mistress Drummond."

She considered me with a burning eye, her lips pressed close together into twenty creases, her hand shaking on her staff. "This cows all!" she cried. "Ye come to me to speir for her? Would God



I thought it not good to delay longer in that place, because I

remarked her passion to be rising. As I turned to the horse-post she even followed me; and I make no shame to confess that I rode away with the one stirrup on and scrambling for the other.

As I knew no other quarter where I could push my inquiries, there was nothing left me but to return to the Advocate's. I was well received by the four ladies, who were now in company together, and must give the news of Prestongrange and what word went in the west country, at the most inordinate length and with great weariness to myself; while all the time that young lady, with whom I so much desired to be alone again, observed me quizzically and seemed to find pleasure in the sight of my impatience. At last, after I had endured a meal with them, and was come very near the point of appealing for an interview before her aunt, she went and stood by

the music-case, and picking out a tune, sang to it on a high key-"He that will not when he may, When he will he shall have nay."

But this was the end of her rigours, and presently, after making

some excuse of which I have no mind, she carried me away in private
to her father's library. I should not fail to say she was dressed
to the nines, and appeared extraordinary handsome.

"Now, Mr. David, sit ye down here and let us have a two-handed crack," said she. "For I have much to tell you, and it appears besides that I have been grossly unjust to your good taste."

"In what manner, Mistress Grant?" I asked. "I trust I have never seemed to fail in due respect."

"I will be your surety, Mr, David," said she. "Your respect,
whether to yourself or your poor neighbours, has been always and
most fortunately beyond imitation. But that is by the question.

You got a note from me?" she asked.

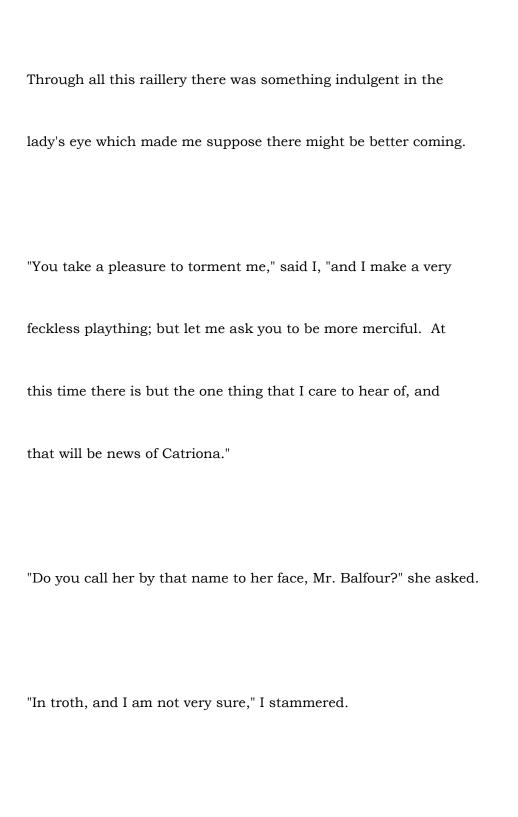
"I was so bold as to suppose so upon inference," said I, "and it was kindly thought upon."

"It must have prodigiously surprised you," said she. "But let us begin with the beginning. You have not perhaps forgot a day when you were so kind as to escort three very tedious misses to Hope Park? I have the less cause to forget it myself, because you was so particular obliging as to introduce me to some of the principles of the Latin grammar, a thing which wrote itself profoundly on my

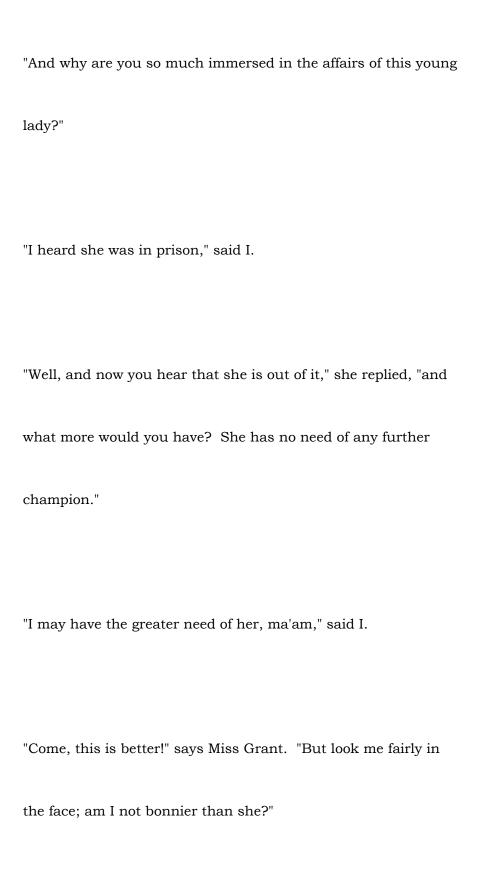
gratitude."

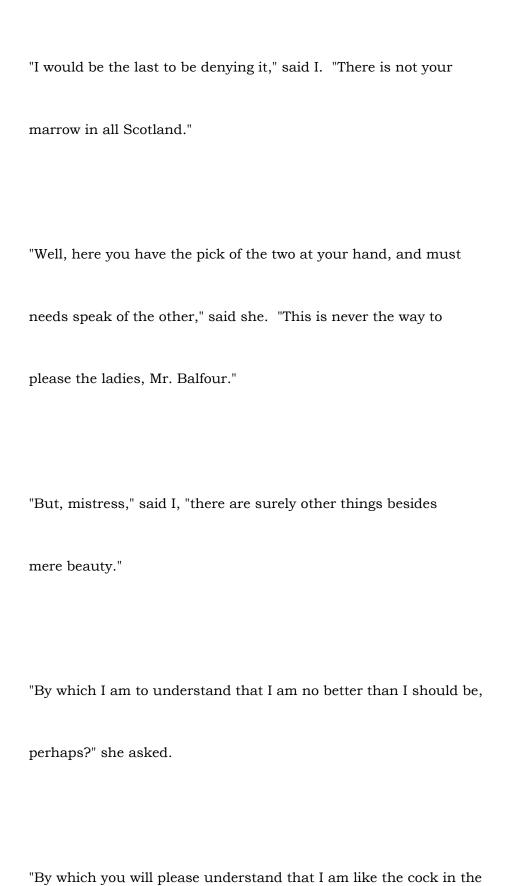
"I fear I was sadly pedantical," said I, overcome with confusion at the memory. "You are only to consider I am quite unused with the society of ladies."

"I will say the less about the grammar then," she replied. "But how came you to desert your charge? 'He has thrown her out, overboard, his ain dear Annie!" she hummed; "and his ain dear Annie and her two sisters had to taigle home by theirselves like a string of green geese! It seems you returned to my papa's, where you showed yourself excessively martial, and then on to realms unknown, with an eye (it appears) to the Bass Rock; solan geese being perhaps more to your mind than bonny lasses."



"I would not do so in any case to strangers," said Miss Grant.





midden in the fable book," said I. "I see the braw jewel--and I like fine to see it too--but I have more need of the pickle corn."

"Bravissimo!" she cried. "There is a word well said at last, and I will reward you for it with my story. That same night of your desertion I came late from a friend's house--where I was excessively admired, whatever you may think of it--and what should I hear but that a lass in a tartan screen desired to speak with me? She had been there an hour or better, said the servant-lass, and she grat in to herself as she sat waiting. I went to her direct; she rose as I came in, and I knew her at a look. 'Grey Eyes!' says I to myself, but was more wise than to let on. YOU WILL BE MISS GRANT AT LAST? she says, rising and looking at me hard and pitiful.

AY, IT WAS TRUE HE SAID, YOU ARE BONNY AT ALL EVENTS.--THE WAY GOD

MADE ME, MY DEAR, I said, BUT I WOULD BE GEY AND OBLIGED IF YOU

COULD TELL ME WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE AT SUCH A TIME OF THE NIGHT.-

LADY, she said, WE ARE KINSFOLK, WE ARE BOTH COME OF THE BLOOD OF THE SONS OF ALPIN.--MY DEAR, I replied, I THINK NO MORE OF ALPIN OR

HIS SONS THAN WHAT I DO OF A KALESTOCK. YOU HAVE A BETTER ARGUMENT

IN THESE TEARS UPON YOUR BONNY FACE. And at that I was so weak-minded as to kiss her, which is what you would like to do dearly, and I wager will never find the courage of. I say it was weak-minded of me, for I knew no more of her than the outside; but it was the wisest stroke I could have hit upon. She is a very staunch, brave nature, but I think she has been little used with tenderness; and at that caress (though to say the truth, it was but

lightly given) her heart went out to me. I will never betray the

secrets of my sex, Mr. Davie; I will never tell you the way she turned me round her thumb, because it is the same she will use to twist yourself. Ay, it is a fine lass! She is as clean as hill well water."

"She is e'en't!" I cried.

"Well, then, she told me her concerns," pursued Miss Grant, "and in what a swither she was in about her papa, and what a taking about yourself, with very little cause, and in what a perplexity she had found herself after you was gone away. AND THEN I MINDED AT LONG LAST, says she, THAT WE WERE KINSWOMEN, AND THAT MR. DAVID SHOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU THE NAME OF THE BONNIEST OF THE BONNY, AND I WAS THINKING TO MYSELF IF SHE IS SO BONNY SHE WILL BE GOOD AT ALL

EVENTS'; AND I TOOK UP MY FOOT SOLES OUT OF THAT. That was when I forgave yourself, Mr. Davie. When you was in my society, you seemed upon hot iron: by all marks, if ever I saw a young man that wanted to be gone, it was yourself, and I and my two sisters were the ladies you were so desirous to be gone from; and now it appeared you had given me some notice in the by-going, and was so kind as to comment on my attractions! From that hour you may date our friendship, and I began to think with tenderness upon the Latin

"You will have many hours to rally me in," said I; "and I think besides you do yourself injustice. I think it was Catriona turned your heart in my direction. She is too simple to perceive as you do the stiffness of her friend."

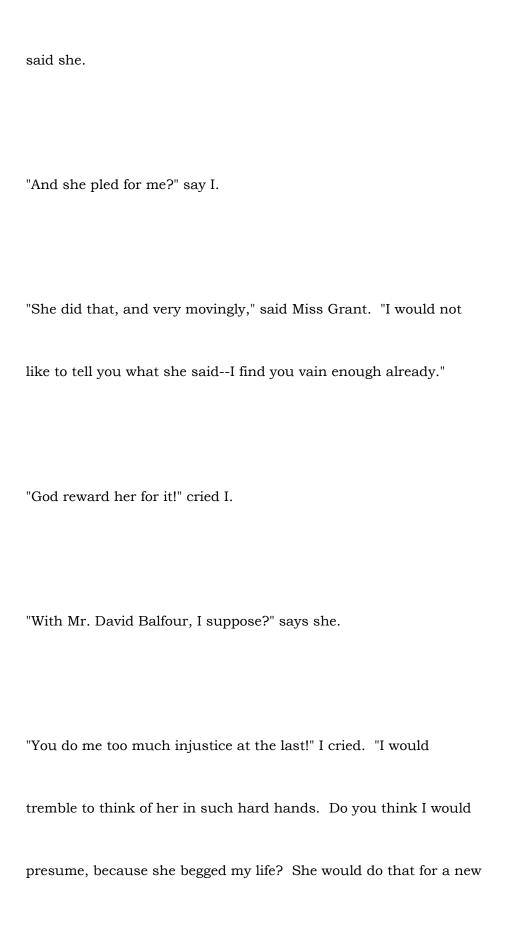
grammar."

"I would not like to wager upon that, Mr. David," said she. "The lasses have clear eyes. But at least she is your friend entirely, as I was to see. I carried her in to his lordship my papa; and his Advocacy being in a favourable stage of claret, was so good as to receive the pair of us. HERE IS GREY EYES THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DEAVED WITH THESE DAYS PAST, said I, SHE IS COME TO PROVE THAT WE SPOKE TRUE, AND I LAY THE PRETTIEST LASS IN THE THREE LOTHIANS AT YOUR FEET--making a papistical reservation of myself. She suited her action to my words: down she went upon her knees to him--I would not like to swear but he saw two of her, which doubtless made her appeal the more irresistible, for you are all a pack of Mahomedans--told him what had passed that night, and how she had withheld her father's man from following of you, and what a case

she was in about her father, and what a flutter for yourself; and begged with weeping for the lives of both of you (neither of which was in the slightest danger), till I vow I was proud of my sex because it was done so pretty, and ashamed for it because of the smallness of the occasion. She had not gone far, I assure you, before the Advocate was wholly sober, to see his inmost politics ravelled out by a young lass and discovered to the most unruly of his daughters. But we took him in hand, the pair of us, and brought that matter straight. Properly managed--and that means managed by me--there is no one to compare with my papa."

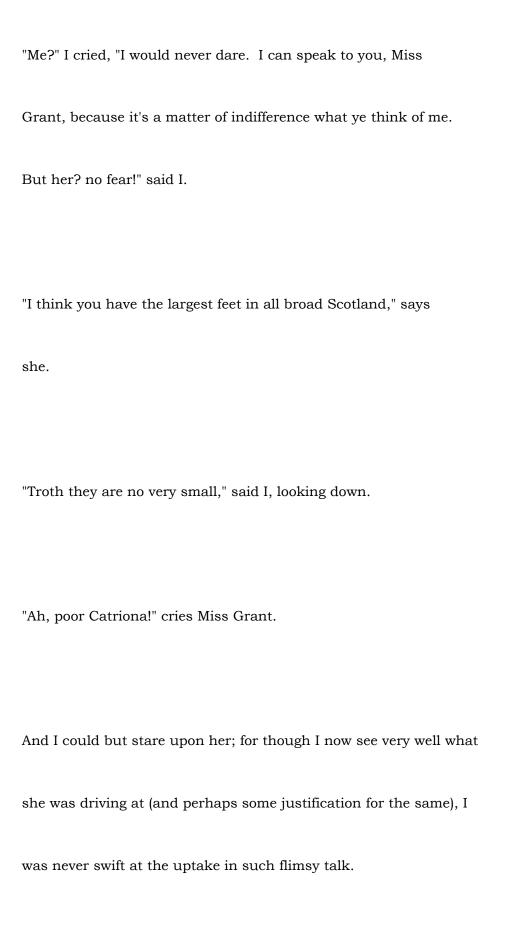
"He has been a good man to me," said I.

"Well, he was a good man to Katrine, and I was there to see to it,"



whelped puppy! I have had more than that to set me up, if you but ken'd. She kissed that hand of mine. Ay, but she did. And why? because she thought I was playing a brave part and might be going to my death. It was not for my sake--but I need not be telling that to you, that cannot look at me without laughter. It was for the love of what she thought was bravery. I believe there is none but me and poor Prince Charlie had that honour done them. Was this not to make a god of me? and do you not think my heart would quake when I remember it?"

"I do laugh at you a good deal, and a good deal more than is quite civil," said she; "but I will tell you one thing: if you speak to her like that, you have some glimmerings of a chance."



"Ah well, Mr. David," she said, "it goes sore against my conscience, but I see I shall have to be your speaking board. She shall know you came to her straight upon the news of her imprisonment; she shall know you would not pause to eat; and of our conversation she shall hear just so much as I think convenient for a maid of her age and inexperience. Believe me, you will be in that way much better served than you could serve yourself, for I will keep the big feet out of the platter."

"You know where she is, then?" I exclaimed.

"That I do, Mr. David, and will never tell," said she.

"Why that?" I asked.

"Well," she said, "I am a good friend, as you will soon discover; and the chief of those that I am friend to is my papa. I assure you, you will never heat nor melt me out of that, so you may spare me your sheep's eyes; and adieu to your David-Balfourship for the now."

"But there is yet one thing more," I cried. "There is one thing that must be stopped, being mere ruin to herself, and to me too."

"Well," she said, "be brief; I have spent half the day on you already."

"My Lady Allardyce believes," I began--"she supposes--she thinks that I abducted her." The colour came into Miss Grant's face, so that at first I was quite abashed to find her ear so delicate, till I bethought me she was struggling rather with mirth, a notion in which I was altogether confirmed by the shaking of her voice as she replied -"I will take up the defence of your reputation," she said. "You may leave it in my hands." And with that she withdrew out of the library.