

Vernor, the Traitor
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Author of "The Men of the Cross-Hags," "The Stick Minister," etc.

Being the Memoirs of Patrick Vernor, of Irongray, Written by Himself, and Now Published by His Brother for the Warning of Others Alike Traitorous and Malignant, and for the Encouragement of Them That Do Well.

PART I.
I, Patrick Vernor, the youngest of Irongray, in following, now private in Colonel Ingham's regiment of dragoons, take ten in hand in order that I may write for the easing of my heart the story of a life wherein the sweet, the evil overpowered the good, and the faint visitings of worthy desire have been blown away before the blasts of pride and black envy.

I mind well how it began. It was the day on which there came to visit us that best of ministers, goodmaster Mr. John Welsh, of Cluden. He had been over at the Seam preaching, and after the sermon and the scattering of the folks--which as yet was done in peace, for Chavernish had not then settled himself down at the fallow-hill bill for the bridge end of Dumries--the minister came on with my father, John Vernor, to dine at our house of the good farm.

On the way he held converse with him concerning duty and piety. "Ye have seven sons, John Vernor; he leaves you a house and a name," said Mr. Welsh to my father. "Ye are a man that, so far as the times have sped, stand as yet in good odor with them that are in high places. You are a man of substance. Will you afford to spend some of your living on the educating of one of your boys for the preaching of the Word? Now, I have a thing which I believe you to give ear to. There are four youths of promise who are going by ship to Rotterdam, on their way to the College of Groningen--William Groun, Earlston, a lad of parts and promise, being one of them. Wherefore, then, having this good chance, John Vernor, do you not send one of your sons with them, and skill himself in the humanities, to be afterwards, if so his heart incline, to be exercised in sound divinity by Mr. Brackett, of Leevanagh, and the silver given him of the pure reformer Kirk of Holland?"

And my father lent a not unwilling attendance, and considered of the matter while I, who had been with him to the conventicle, pricked up my ears and listened. For so soon as I had heard of the journey to Holland I was smitten with a great desire to go. It was not that I had any great call to the preaching work--God wot, there was never aught of that about me. But I may as well tell it out as I can. I had a great desire to go to Rotterdam, where I was fairly daff upon. She had twisted herself about my heart that in her presence became but a stumbling block, that tumbled me off and grovels in the dust to draw its mistress's eye.

Isabel Vernor was her name, and a sweet maid she was, and she had beyond all in that country, and with such a serene, persuasive way with her, that there was nothing that she would have asked that even a man of stone could have refused. I loved her more than all this world, and infinitely more than the next. But she would say no good word to me, and she had the name of a wildish maid, and one that was a deal better at the sword-point than at the seven-point of doctrine. But I was so smitten with a daughter of the Weirs of Toward, was true-blue maid of the Covenant, and many was the time she told me that if I wanted any great favor, I must come with those who sought the good way of her folk, and shun the back-swording and the weapon-horning, where only the ill-tempered and the unseemly come.

And so for awhile, to the infinite weary trial of my spirit, I did. Yet, for the sake of Isabel Weir, I attended the conventicle and kept watch and ward for the coming of the "persecutors" over the moor. And sometimes when I sat near her heart was glad, and notwithstanding that I had not something of the religion of which my father and one or two of my brothers were always speaking. But when for a season I saw that I was not the Albeck or Wat Dickson called me in to drink a taste of brandy with them, at the change-house, straightway I forgot. So I was come to the moor, that backside; and when Isabel met me again, she looked the other way, gave me her hand right coldly, and walked with Robert, who was with her, in a callow fashionless and that never did wrong openly all the days of him.

So now on this afternoon when old Mr. Welsh came over with my father to Irongray, and I heard him speaking of sending one of us to the college in Holland, there came on me a great desire to go. Moreover, I felt that I had the right of it, for I was not the eldest of John Vernor's seven sons? Moreover, I knew that more shaming at the leading strings of procehonor would bring me in favor in the eyes of Isabel Weir. And already I saw myself saying farewell to her, and asking for a kindly word, and it might be a kiss, before I went for the good, come to a foreign land. I saw her lift her eyes to mine with willingness and sweet surrender in them. Faith, I would have gone to Holland for love, had I been farther than the moon and as warm with cannibals.

"I would see your sons," said Mr. Welsh, after he and my father had arrived at the house door, "and then there may come a message and a sign to me which of them the Lord has chosen for this work."

ple of her eye. "He draws naturally to the quieter ways of the house and the company of women folk."

"So," said I again, then he will make a brave breacher to the hill folk--he must those wind and wet, endure hardship cheerfully, sleep on a straw bed, and heather roots, and die at the last in the Grassmarket with a tow rope round his neck and a second-hand testimony in his hand."

"This daunted my mother a little, fearing for his peltin."

PART II.
"Let us hear what the lad says himself," said the minister, who had been narrowing his eyes and bending the tips of his fingers together upon us as he looked from one to the other. I could see that his mood was one of deep consideration. Yet the poor Robert, being ever the favorite of my parents, so roused my spirit to a very great degree that I could not restrain my tongue--though I well knew that I was playing havoc with my chances of going to Holland, as I so greatly desired. For his mother had spoiled him for love of sanctity, but all for the sake of winning the favor of Isabel Weir.

"Where is Robert?" said my father, when we were all settled in the room down the house.

"I can not find," said my mother, "but I will go and seek him. He will be in the barn, I think, as he has been over at the Seam preaching, and after the sermon and the scattering of the folks--which as yet was done in peace, for Chavernish had not then settled himself down at the fallow-hill bill for the bridge end of Dumries--the minister came on with my father, John Vernor, to dine at our house of the good farm."

"But I spoke up and said: 'Mr. Welsh, I am the eldest son of the house, and it is my right to go forth with strange boys and a father's love. It is surely I, if my father give his consent, I am ready to set sail with William Gordon and the rest. And I will strive every day to be a blessing to the world, and not a discredit to you either in the low country or on my return. My father knows that I do not lie. And this I promise faithfully.'

"Mr. Welsh turned his head toward me as I spoke. He had beautiful white hair, and a broad collar of fair linen came down over his coat. "You speak comingly, but fairly, what you say is of a good sound so far as it goes. But whether you have indeed the root of the matter in ye--that I know not."

"That," I replied, "I know not either. But at all events, I have the will and desire to do things in me. And this, as I see it, is as much as I can do as one may expect. I will even go to Holland to learn more."

"But my father shook his head. "Ye are better feeding the horse, Patrick," he said. "I fear all that ye would form of divinity at Groningen would not choke a week-old chicken. Mind, I will not spend my good unclipped silver to let you play your pranks among the Dutch birkies."

"But just then came in my mother with my younger brother Robert in her hand. She was lifting up her eyes and making a mighty phrase about me. "I am a seoffer, Patrick," she said, "and will come to no good end. The lad was at his prayers, and among other things heard him loud and just, that the sign of his brothers might be forgiven to them, and especially the often backsliding of this Patrick, who now takes it to him to flout the good law for it."

ing foot. There is a ford near by over the little water of Cluden and a cross of stepping-stones, about which as bairns we had played the day by the length, before we heard a sound of the weary servants that have worked so much since in this land. I had my foot on the first stone when Duncan nudged Gilbert to speak. He was a fine, solid lad, Duncan, but not a gleer at the boy's foot.

"Duncan wants me to say, Patie," said Gilbert, taking the signal reluctantly. "That we are heart sorry for this work of ye, and are a vexed for ye, and we do not think that ye have been rightly used. But ye are to mind that the Irongray is your ain word, and will work it for ye as the rightful heir. There's name of us that are Jacob, or would supplant our brother. Is that not right, lads?"

"Ay, ye're gruffly enough responded Duncan. And the others also said 'Ay' with one voice. "And ye are no to do anything rash, Patie," he went on. "For we leave here some peck siller that we had laid by. It's no better than twenty Scots pounds, but ye are welcome. Part ye out, think sham of yourself, man, and ye are to take it and look about ye a wee, and do no nothing rash that ye would be so sore for. Like a man, ye are to be so for."

"Lads," I answered them, slowly, for I was near overcome. "I cannot take your hard-won silver. 'Tis I'll be needing to make a journey, and I could hear poor Martin, that was ever a kenning soft in the heart, break into a passion of tears, at which Duncan took him by the collar of his coat to shake the folly out of him."

"Have ye no more sense?" he is for. "Hinna make it harder than it is for. Ah, good lads, kindly lads--praise God for five brothers that are neither thieves nor hypocrites!"

"It was at the risk still, as I went by the village, that I got the heaviest stroke. For there I met Isabel Weir. She came daintily over, lifting at a beam, and putting up her hand, she said to me, 'Patrick, ye are a man that is a deal better at the sword-point than at the seven-point of doctrine. My father knows that I do not lie. And this I promise faithfully.'

"Not I," I made answer, gloomily enough. "But Robert, my brother, goes to Holland in my stead. He, as we all know, is the lad of grace in our household, and keeps himself first in favor with the goodly. Who can contend with such a flower of sanctity?"

"Patrick Vernor," answered Isabel Weir, holding up her head severely; "let me tell you that it is for ye to be likewise in favor with things honorable and great with goodly men. Your brother Robert is truly a lad of promise."

"And also of comeliness--a very young David, with his locks and ruddy cheeks," said I bitterly. "Well, I am I aware that he has the favor of all you women, and especially of Isabel Weir of the Toward."

"Ye forget yourself, Patrick Vernor!" answered Isabel Weir. "Ye are a man that is a deal better at the sword-point than at the seven-point of doctrine. My father knows that I do not lie. And this I promise faithfully."

BICYCLE QUOTATIONS.
From "Quotations for Occasions."
Will you guard your person while you take a rest.
And watch your safety. Tompsett, II, 1.
Punctured foot of deathly looks.
Richard III, v, 3.

Invent some other thing!
Dekker and Ford, Sun's Darling, II, 1.
I am a kind of lawless justice or usurping marquis of authority that will kill any man with my safety.
Shakespeare, The Antiquary, II, 1.
I will go, look how I will.
Swift, from a note from the Tartar's bow.

Missummer Night's Dream, III, 2.
Yet bear their bright offshoots lamps.
Milton, Paradise Lost, IX, 1.
I like the new tire.
Shakespeare, As You Like It, II, 1.
They that ride so, and ride not warily.
Henry V, III, 7.
Their earth-convulsing whole affliction.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.

Speak, brother, hast thou hurt thee with the fall?
Titus Andronicus, II, 2.
Ring your bells.
King John, II, 2.
On their own axis as the planets run.
Pope, Essay on Man, III, 2.
Swift, erect and rife not warily.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
Sweep the wide earth, and tramples of mankind.
Pope, Essay on Man, III, 2.
Turn your wheel.
King John, II, 2.
Without a pause, without a sound.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.

So some of the things would say.
Lanefellow, Keramos.
Patchin' our patent self-blow-up agins' Lovell, King Lear, II, 2.
My mind exceeds the compass of her work.
Henry VIII, IV, 2.
The chief of the time shall teach me speed.
King John, IV, 2.
But, chief of all, your safety.
King John, IV, 2.
I was forced to wheel.
King John, IV, 2.
Three or four miles about.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.

The speed makes night kindle.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
Attend me where I wheel.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
The wheel has set the world on wheels.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
Then may I see the fall on wheels.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
This quick revolving wheel shall rest in peace.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.

Petrarch, Triumph of Eternity.
Her silent course advance.
With indolent pace, that spinning sleeps on her self.
Milton, Paradise Lost, VII, 152.
Your eye elegant rascal, that can attend sleep, almost together.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
Shoot through the air as nimble as a hawk.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
Turn short as doth a swallow; and be here.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
And here, and here, and yonder, all at once.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
The citizens gaze at her and praise her tires.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.

B. Jonson, The Alchemist, IV, 2.
Come, will thou see me ride?
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
Let far you ride?
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
As far, my lord, as will fill us the time.
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, II, 2.
Twixt this and supper.
Macbeth, III, 1.

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