

just turned over for the purpose and then thrown back again. Sometimes coffins are prematurely removed to make place for others. On one occasion, happening to remain behind, after one of these funerals was ended and the people dispersed, a boy of fourteen or fifteen came breathless to the abbey, inquiring from me in great perturbation, whether the coffin of his sister had not been removed to make way for the one last deposited. I could only tell the poor fellow I saw no coffin removed; but, that several, heaped together, and lying as it were in the same grave, had been opened to view. The smell was extremely offensive in certain places. On another occasion, whilst I was alone, occupied with the *gallowglasses*, a tall woman, in a scarlet cloak, entered the church, and stalked about as if in search of some object, or doubtful where to fix. At last having determined, as nearly as the scattered stones would permit, the place where the grave ought to be, over which she was come to perform a mournful ceremony, she deliberately laid aside her conspicuous red mantle, fell upon her knees, pulled down her long raven locks, extended her arms, and beat her breast, setting up, at the same time, a howl which pierced my ears, and echoed through the ruins far and wide. My occupation took rather more time than hers, and I remained long enough to see her resume her cloak and walk smartly off, seemingly quite unconcerned. I know not whether she saw me, for the place was overrun with brambles, bushes, and long weeds, which formed a screen between us. During the many visits I paid to the abbey, I never found it a place of silence; for if people were wanting, crows and jackdaws never were; and the perpetual croaking and flapping of

wings amidst the dense foliage which overshadowed the old walls, might have led to the supposition that the animals considered man as an intruder in their dominions. Whether they watched for opportunities of preying upon the dead, I will not pretend to say; but it seemed by no means improbable, that they were ready to do so if a chance opportunity offered, as no doubt it must in the course of time.

The ruined church is the only part of the abbey which now remains, although, doubtless, there must have been extensive habitable buildings in its contiguity. These, probably, like other monastic remains, were pulled down for the sake of the stones, and the neighbouring houses may have been amongst those which were constructed from the spoils. Fine trees grow in abundance near the church and near these houses, and dispersed in graceful groups through the meadow, give interest and variety to the scene, and render the view of the ruins far more agreeable than that of the generality of old churches, which, for the most part, present only heaps of stones, without shade or relief.

The tradition of the country, that monastic buildings formerly spread between this abbey and the present parish church on the hill, and that a connexion existed between them, is countenanced by the accidental discovery but a few years ago, of some old foundations, and of sculptured stones, in gardens behind houses in the town. The steeple of the parish church contains an ancient door case, with a pointed arch, which constitutes the principal entrance at present; and in the belfry story there are also ancient windows; but whether these belonged originally to the