

#### THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

chair overturned with a crash ; a great the uncompromising old man. " I'm fair body struck him on the chest; a hot, pestilent breath volleyed in his face, and wolfish teeth were reaching for the throat.

"Come on, Killer ! " he screamed. The horror of suspense was past. It had come, and with it he was himself again.

Back, back, back, along the wall he was borne. His hands entwined themselves around a hairy throat ; he forced the great head with its horrid lightsome eyes from him; he braced himself for the effort, lifted the huge body at his breast, and heaved it from him. It struck the wall and fel! with a soft thud.

As he recoiled a hand clutched his ankle and sought to trip him. David kicked back and down with all his strength. There was one awful groan, and he staggered against the door and out.

There he paused, leaning against the wall to breathe.

He struck a match and lifted his foot to see where the hand had clutched him. God ! there was blood on his heel.

cry was suffocated in his breast by the panting of his heart.

listened.

Fearfully he opened it a crack. Silence of the tomb.

He banged it to. It opened behind him, and the fact lent wings to his feet. He turned and plunged out into the night, and ran through the blackness for his life. And a great owl swooped softly by and hooted mockingly :

'For your life ! for your life ! for your life '

# PART V

#### Owd Bob o' Kenmuir.

#### CHAPTER XXII. A Man and a Maid.

In the village even the Black Killer and the murder on the Screes were forgotten in this new sensation. The mystery in which the affair was wrapped, and the ignorance as to all its details, served to whet the general interest. There had been a fight; M'Adam and the Terror had been mauled; and David had disappeared-those were the facts. But what was the origin of the affray no one could

One or two of the Dalesmen had, indeed, a shrewd suspicion. Tupper looked guilty ; Jem Burton muttered, " I knoo hoo 'twould be '; while as for Long Kirby, he vanished entirely, not to reappear till three months had sped.

Injured as he had been, M'Adam was yet sufficiently recovered to appear in the Sylvester Arms on the Saturday following the battle. He entered the tap-room silently, with never a word to a soul ; one arm was in a sling and his head andaged. He eyed every man present critically; and all, except Tammas, who was brazen, and Jim Mason, who was innocent, fidgeted beneath the stare. Maybe it was well for Long Kirby he was not there.

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grieved he didna slice yer throat while he was at it."

At that M'Adam raised his eyetrems, stared, and then broke into a low whistle.

"That's it, is it?" he muttered, as though a new light was dawning on him. 'Ah, noo I see."

The days passed on. There was still no news of the missing one, and Maggie's face became pitifully white and haggard,

Of course she did not believe that David had attempted to murder his father, desparately tried as she knew he had been. Still, it was a terrible thought to her that he might at any moment be arrested; and her girlish imagination was perpetually conjuring up horrid pictures of a trial, conviction, and the things that followed.

Then Sam'l started a wild theory that the little man had murdered his son, and thrown the mangled body down the dry well at the Grange. The story was, of course, preposterous, and, coming from Then a great fear laid hold on him. As such a source, might well have been discarded with the ridicule it deserved. Yet it served to set the cap on the girl's He crept back to the kitchen door and fears; and she resolved, at whatever cost, to visit the Grange, beard M'Adam, and discover whether he could not or would not allay her gnawing apprehension.

Her intent she concealed from her father; knowing well that were she to reveal it to him, he would gently but firmly forbid the attempt; and on an afternoon some fortnight after David's disappearance, choosing her opportunity, she picked up a shawl, threw it over her head, and fled with palpitating heart out of the farm and down the slope to the Wastrel.

The little plank-bridge rattled as she tripped across it ; and she fled faster lest any one should have heard and come to look. And, indeed, at the moment it rattled again behind her, and she started guiltily round. It proved, however, to be only Owd Bob, sweeping after, and she was glad.

"Comin' wi' me, lad?" she asked as the old dog cantered up, thankful to have that gray protector with her.

Round Langholm now fled the two conspirators; over the summer-clad lower slopes of the Pike, until, at length, they reached the Stony Bottom. Down the bramble-covered bank of the ravine the girl slid ; picked her way from stone to stone across the streamlet tinkling in that rocky bed; and scrambled up the opposite bank.

At the top she halted and looked back. The smoke from Kenmuir was winding slowly up against the sky; to her right the low gray cottages of the village cuddled in the bosom of the Dale; far away over the Marches towered the gaunt Scaur; before her rolled the swelling slopes of the Muir Pike; while behindshe glanced timidly over her shoulderwas the hill, at the top of which squatted the Grange, lifeless, cold, scowling. Her heart failed her. In her whole life she had never spoken to M'Adam. Yet she knew him well enough from all David's accounts-ay, and hated him for David's sake. She hated him and feared him, too; feared him mortally-this terrible little man. And, with a shudder, she recalled the dim face at the window, and thought of his notorious hatred of her father. But even M'Adam could hardly harm a girl coming, brokenhearted, to seek her lover. Besides, was not Owd Bob with her? And, turning, she saw the old dog standing a little way up the hill, looking back at her as though he wondered why she waited. "Am I not enough?" the faithful gray eyes seemed to say. 'Lad, I'm fear'd,'' was her answer to the unspoken question. Yet that look determined her. She clenched her little teeth, drew the shawl about her, and set off running up the hill. Soon the run dwindled to a walk, the walk to a crawl, and the crawl to a halt. Her breath was coming painfully, and her heart pattered against her side like the beatings of an imprisoned bird. Again her gray guardian looked up, encouraging her forward.

Marr Princess Royal, and the balance are a choice lot of young heifers Also a few matched pairs of road and carriage horses will thick, mossy type. be offered, and a few pure-bred Yorkshire and Berkshire sows.

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Onythin' the matter ? " asked Jem, at length, rather lamely, in view of the plain evidences of battle.

Na, na ; naethin' oot o' the ordinar',' the little man replied, giggling, "Only David set on me, and me sleepin'. And," with a shrug. "here I am noo." He sat down, wagging his bandaged head and grinning 'Ye see he's sae playfu', is Pavie. He wangs ye o'er the head wi' a chair, kicks ye in the jaw, stamps on yer wame, and all as morry as May." And nothing further could they get from him, except that if David reappeared it was his  $(\underline{M}^{\prime}\underline{A}dam^{\prime}\underline{s})$  firm resolve to hand him over to the police for attempted parricide. Brutal assault on an auld man by his son ' 'Twill look well in the Argus; he ! he ! They couldna let him aff under

two years. I'm thinkin'. M'Adam's version of the affair was received with quiet incredulity. The general verifict was that he had brought his punishment entirely on his own head. Tammas, indeel, who was always rule when he was not witty, and, in fact, the difference between the two things is only one of degree, told him straight It served to well reet. An' I nob'but wish he'd made an end to yo'."

He did his best, pair lad," M'Adam reminded him cently We've had anongh e vo

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"Keep close, lad," she whispered, starting forward afresh. And the old dog ranged up beside her, shoving into her skirt, as though to let her feel his presence

(To be continued.)



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