

'O the gowk!' said I, 'what business had he to fa' in love, when he had the bairns an' his books to mind.'

So I determined to rally him a wee thought on the subject, in order to bring him back to his senses; for when a haffins laddie is labouring under the first dizziness o' a bonny lassie's influence, I dinna consider that he is capable o' either seeing, feeling, hearing or acting, wi' the common-sense discretion o' a reasonable being. It is a pleasant heating and wandering o' the brain. The next time, therefore, I say him,

'Sandy,' says I, 'wha was't laid Troy in ashes? He at first started and stared at me, rather vexed like, but at last he answered, wi' a sort o' forced laugh--

'A woman.'

'A woman, was it?' says I; 'and wha was the cause o' Sandy Rutherford losing his situation as tutor, an' being sent back to Annan?'

'Sir!' said he, and he scowled down his eye-brows, and gied a look at me that would hae spained a ewe's lamb. I saw that he was too far gone, and that his mind was in a state that it would not be safe so trifle wi'; so I tried him no more upon the painful subject.

Weel, as his mother, puir woman, had quite enough to do, and couldna keep him in idleness, and as there was naething for him in Annan, he went to Edinburgh to see what would cast up, and what his talents and education would do for him there. He had recommendations from several gentlemen, and also from myself. But month after month passed on, and he was like to hear of nothing. His mother was becoming extremely unhappy on his account, and the more so because he had given up writing, which astonished me a great deal, for I could not divine the cause of such conduct as not to write to his own mother, to say that he was well or what he was doing; and I was the more surprised at it, because of the excellent opinion I had entertained of his character and disposition. However, I think it would be about six months after he had left, I received a letter from him--and as that letter is of importance in giving you an account of his history, I shall just step along to the school for it, where I have it

carefully placed in my desk, and shall bring it and any other papers that I think may be necessary in giving you an account of your other school-fellows."

Thus saying, Dominie Grierson, taking up his three-cornered hat and silver mounted walking-stick, stalked out of the room. And as people like to have some idea of the sort of person who is telling them a story, I shall here describe to them the appearance of Mr. Grierson. He was a fine looking old man, about five feet nine inches high--his age might be about three score fifteen, and he was a bachelor. His hair was as white as the driven snow, yet as fresh and thick as though he had been but thirty. His face was pale. He could not properly be called corpulent, but his person had an inclination that way. His shoes were fastened with large silver buckles--he wore a pair of the finest black lamb's-wool stockings--breeches of the same colour, fastened at the knees by buckles, similar to those in his shoes. His coat and waistcoat were also black, and both were exceedingly capacious--for the former, with its broad skirts, which descended almost to his heels, would have made a great coat now-a-days--and in the kingly flaps of the latter which defended his loins, was cloth enough and to spare to have made a modern vest. This, with the broad brimmed round-crowned, three cornered hat, already referred to, a pair of spectacles, and the silver mounted cane, completed the outward appearance of Dominie Grierson, with the exception of his cambric handkerchief, which was whiter than his own locks, and did credit to the cleanliness of his housekeeper.

In a few moments he returned with Sandy's letter, and other papers in his hand, and helping himself to another glass of wine, he rubbed the glass of his spectacles with his handkerchief, and said--

"Now, doctor, here is poor Sandy's letter--listen and ye shall hear it.

*Edinburgh, June 10, 17--.*

'Honoured Sir--I fear that, on account of my not having written to you, you will, ere now, have accused me of ingratitude; and when I tell you that, until the other day, I have not for months even written to my mother, you may think me undutiful as well as ungrateful. But my own breast holds me