

Sing.

BY CHARLES EDWARD PRATT.

SING! as the birds shall teach thee,  
A song of love and trust;  
Sing! till the world shall listen,  
Till thine own eyes shall glisten  
As joy or grief shall reach thee,  
As a true singer must;  
May the brave music swelling,  
From thy good heart upwelling,  
Its message still be tolling  
Long after thou art dust.

SING! for the world is weary  
With burden of its care;  
And men are heavy-hearted,  
Puzzled, misjudged, and thwarted,  
And sin has made life dreary,  
Temptation everywhere.  
Sing! as true singer may,  
Driving these clouds away  
With promises of day  
Whose coming shall be fair.

SING! as thy heart shall bid thee,  
Nor let the music die,  
Its tenderest words unspoken;  
Give generously love's token;  
Heed none that would forbid thee  
As days and years go by.  
Think not of what it cost thee,  
Gold, friendship, pleasures lost thee,  
Of praises seldom tossed thee,  
Of blame few would deny.

SING! and thy heart's best feeling  
Shall not in vain be spent.  
Some soul, sin-sick, life-weary,  
Shall at thy song grow cheery,  
As thou in it revealing  
New hope for discontent.  
And put away the badness  
Of sin and strife and sadness,  
Of misspent days, with gladness  
In holy purpose meant.

SING! and thy song shall sweeter  
Grow with the coming years,  
And some day men shall heed thee,  
Finding how much they need thee  
To make their lives completer,  
Whose faith shall still their fears.  
Sing! with thy soul's pure fire,  
Thy passionate desire,  
That Godward doth aspire,  
And heavenly music hears.

HUNTED AND HARRIED.

A Tale of the Scottish Covenanters.

BY R. A. BALLANTYNE.

CHAPTER I.—ON THE HUNT.

ON a brilliant summer morning in the last quarter of the seventeenth century a small troop of horsemen crossed the ford of the river Cairn, in Dumfriesshire, not far from the spot where stands the little church of Irongray, and, gaining the road on the western bank of the stream, wended their way towards the moors and uplands which lie in the neighbourhood of Skeoch Hill.

The dragons, for such they were, trotted rapidly along the road that led into the solitudes of the hills, with all the careless dash of men whose interests are centred chiefly on the excitements of the passing hour, yet with the unflinching perseverance of those who have a fixed purpose in view—their somewhat worn aspect and the mud with which they were bespattered, from jack-boots to iron headpiece, telling of a long ride over rugged ground.

The officer in command of the party rode a little in advance. Close behind him followed two troopers, one of whom was a burly middle-aged man with a stern, swarthy countenance; the other a youth whose tall frame was scarcely, if at all, less powerful than that of his comrade-in-arms, though much more elegant in form, while his youthful and ruddy, yet masculine, countenance suggested that he must at that time have been but a novice in the art of war.

This youth alone, of all the party, had a somewhat careworn and sad expression on his brow. It could hardly have been the result of fatigue, for there was more of ease and vigour in his carriage than in that of any of his companions.

"We should be near the river by this time, Glendinning," said the leader of the party, reining in and addressing the swarthy trooper. "Ay, sir, the Cluden rins jist ayont the turn o' the road there," replied the man. "Ye'll hear the roar o' the fa' in a mornin' or twa."

Even as he spoke the dull growl of a cataract was heard, and, a few minutes later, the party came upon the ford of the river. It was situated not many yards below the

picturesque waterfall, which is now spanned by the Routen Bridge, but which, at that time, was unbridged—at all events, if a bridge had previously existed, it had fallen in or been carried away—and the wild gorge was impassable.

The sound of the fall alone told of its vicinity, for a dense mass of foliage hid it completely from the troopers' view until they had surmounted the steep bank on the other side of the stream.

"Are you well acquainted with this man Black?" asked the leader of the party as they emerged from the thick belt of trees and shrubs by which the Cluden was shaded, and continued their journey on the more open ground beyond.

"I ken him weel, sir," answered the trooper. "Andrew Black was an auld friend o' mine, an' a big, stoot, angry man he is—kindly disposed, nae doot, when ye let him alone, but a perfect deevil incarnate when he's roused. He did me an ill turn ance that I've no paid him off for yet."

"I suppose, then," said the officer, "that your guiding us so willingly to his cottage is in part payment of this unsettled debt?"

"Maybe it is," replied the trooper grimly. "They say," continued the other, "that there is some mystery about the man; that somehow nobody can catch him. Like an eel he has slipped through our fellows' fingers and disappeared more than once, when they thought they had him quite safe. It is said that on one occasion he managed even to give the slip to Claverhouse himself, which, you know, is not easy."

"That may be, sir, but he'll no slip through my fingers gin I ance git a grip o' his thrapple," said the swarthy man, with a revengeful look.

"We must get a grip of him somehow," returned the officer, "for it is said that he is a sly helper of the rebels—though it is as difficult to convict us to catch him; and as this gutting, of which our spies have brought information, is to be in the neighbourhood of his house, he is sure to be mixed up with it."

"Nae doot o' that, sir, an' so we may manage to kill twa birds wi' ae stane. But I'm in a difficultly noo, sir, for ye ken I'm no acquaint wi' this country nae farer than Cluden ford, an' here we hae come to a fork i' the road."

The party halted as he spoke, while the perplexed guide stroked his rather long nose and looked seriously at the two roads, or bridle-paths, into which their road had resolved itself, and each of which led into very divergent parts of the heath-clad hills.

This guide, Glendinning, had become acquainted with Black at a time when the latter resided in Lanarkshire, and, as he had just said, was unacquainted with the region through which they now travelled beyond the river Cluden. After a short conference the officer in command decided to divide the party and explore both paths.

"You will take one man, Glendinning, and proceed along the path to the right, he said; he said; "I will try the left. If you discover anything like a house or cot within a mile or two you will at once send your comrade back to let me know, while you take up your quarters in the cottage and await my coming. Choose whom you will for your companion."

"I choose Will Wallace, then," said Glendinning, with a nod to the young trooper whom we have already introduced.

The youth did not seem at all flattered by the selection, but of course obeyed orders with military promptitude, and followed his comrade for some time in silence, though with a clouded brow.

"It seems to me," said the swarthy trooper, as they drew rein and proceeded up a steep ascent at a walk, "that ye're no sae pleased as ye might be wi' the wark we hae on hand." "Pleased!" exclaimed the youth, whose tone and speech seemed to indicate him an Englishman, "how can I be pleased when all I have been called on to do since I enlisted has been to aid and abet in robbery, cruelty, and murder? I honour loyalty and detest rebellion as much as any man in the troop, but if I had known what I now know I would never have joined you."

Glendinning gazed at his companion in amazement. Having been absent on detached service when Will Wallace had joined—about three weeks previously—he was ignorant both as to his character and his recent experiences. He had chosen him on the present occasion simply on account of his youth and magnificent physique.

"I doot I've made a mistake in choosin' you," said Glendinning with some asperity, after a few moments, "but it's over late noo to rectify't. What ails ye, lad? What hae ye seen?"

"I have seen what I did not believe possible," answered the other with suppressed feeling. "I have seen a little boy tortured with thumb-screws, pricked with bayonets, and otherwise inhumanly treated because he would not, or could not, tell where his father

was. I have seen a man hung up to a beam by his thumbs because he would not give up money which perhaps he did not possess. I have seen a woman tortured by having lighted matches put between her fingers because she would not, or could not, tell where a conventicle was being held. I did not, indeed, see the last deed actually done, else would I have cut down the coward who did it. The poor thing had fainted and the torture was over when I came upon them. Only two days ago I was ordered out with a party who pillaged the house of a farmer because he refused to take an oath of allegiance, which seems to have been purposely so worded as to make those who take it virtually bondslaves to the King, and which makes him master of the lives, properties, and consciences of his subjects—and all this done in the King's name and by the King's troops!"

"An' what part did you tak' in these doin's?" asked Glendinning with some curiosity.

"I did my best to restrain my comrades, and when they were burning the hayricks, throwing the meal on the dunghill, and wrecking the property of the farmer, I cut the cords with which they had bound the poor fellow to his chair and let him go free."

"Did anybody see you do that?"

"I believe not; though I should not have cared if they had. I am thoroughly disgusted with the service. I know little or nothing of the principles of these rebels—these fanatics, as you call them—but tyranny or injustice I cannot stand, whether practised by a king or a beggar, and I am resolved to have nothing more to do with such fiendish work."

"Young man," said the swarthy comrade in a voice of considerable solemnity, "ye hae obviously mista'en your callin'. If you were nae to thae parts, ye would ken that the things ye objec' to are quite common. Punishin' an' harryin' the rebels and fanatics—Covenanters, they ca' theirsels—has been gaun on for years ower a' the land. In my opinion it's weel deserved, an' naething that ye can do or say will prevent it, though what ye do an' say is no' unlikely to cut short yer ain career by means o' a rope round yer thrapple. But losh! man, I wonder ye hae na heard about thae matters afore noo."

"My having spent the last few years of my life in an out-of-the-way part of Ireland may account for that," said Wallace. "My father's recent death obliged my mother to give up her farm and return to her native town of Lanark, where she now lives with a brother. Poverty and the urgency of a cousin have induced me, unfortunately, to take service with the dragons."

"Afore what ye've said, how am I to count on yer helpin' me o' noo?" asked Glendinning.

"As long as I wear the King's uniform you may count on my obeying orders unless I am commanded to break the plainest laws of God," answered the young man. "As our present business is only to discover the cottage of Andrew Black, there seems likely to be no difficulty between us just noo."

"H'm! I'm no sure o' that; but if ye'll tak' my advice, lad, ye'll hae yer tongue about thae matters. If I hae heard the half o' what ye've said to me, he'd send ye into the next war! without givin' ye time to say yer prayers. Freedom of spee' is no' permitted at the present time in Scotland unless it be the right kind of spee'ch, and—"

He stopped, for at that moment two young girls suddenly appeared at a bend of the road in front of them. They gazed for a moment at the soldiers in evident surprise, and then turned as if to fly, but Glendinning put spurs to his horse and was beside them in a moment. Leaping to the ground, he seized the girls roughly by their arms as they clung together in alarm. One of the two was a dark-eyed little child. The other was fair, unusually pretty, and apparently about fifteen or sixteen years of age.

The trooper proceeded to question them sharply.

"Be gentle," said Will Wallace, sternly, as he rode up, and, also dismounting, stood beside them. "No fear of their running away noo."

The swarthy trooper pretended not to hear, but nevertheless relaxed his grip and merely rested his hand upon the fair girl's shoulder as he said to the other—

"Now, ny wee doo, ye canna be far frae hame, I's be sworn. 'What's yer name?" "Aggie Wilson," answered the child at once.

"And yours?" "Jean Black," replied the blonde timidly. "Oho! an' yer father's name is Andrew, an' his hoose is close by, I'll be bound, so ye'll be guid enough to show us the way till't. But first, my bonny lass, ye'll gie me a—"

Slipping his arm round the waist of the terrified blonde, the trooper rudely attempted to terminate his sentence in a practical manner: but before his lips could touch her face he received a blow from his comrade that sent him staggering against a neighbouring tree.

Blowing with astonishment and wrath, the young man drew his sword and sprang at his companion, who, already full of indignation at the memory of what he had been so recently compelled to witness, could ill brook the indignity thus offered to the defenceless girl. His weapon flashed from its sheath on the instant, and for a few moments the two men cut and thrust at each other with savage ferocity. Wallace, however, was too young and unused to mortal strife to contemplate with indifference the possibility of shedding the blood of a comrade. Quickly recovering himself, he stood entirely on the defensive, which his vigorous activity enabled him easily to do. Burning under the insult he had received, Glendinning felt no such compunctions. He pushed his adversary fiercely, and made a lunge at last which not only passed the sword through the left sleeve of the youth's coat, but slightly wounded his arm. Roused to uncontrollable anger by this, Will Wallace fetched his opponent a blow so powerful that it beat down his guard, rang like a hammer on his iron breastplate, and fairly hurled the man into the ditch on the roadside.

Some what alarmed at this sudden result, the youth hastily pulled him out, and kneeling beside him, anxiously examined his head. Much to his relief he found that there was no wound at all, and that the man was only stunned. After this examination Wallace observed that the girls had taken advantage of the fray to make their escape.

Indignation and anger having by that time evaporated, and his judgment having become cool, Wallace began gradually to appreciate his true position, and to feel exceedingly uncomfortable. He had recklessly expressed opinions and confessed to actions which would of themselves make his being disgraced and cast into prison, if not worse; he had almost killed one of his own comrades, and had helped two girls to escape who could probably have assisted in the accomplishment of the duty on which they had been despatched. His case, he suddenly perceived, was hopeless, and he felt that he was a lost man.

(To be continued.)

A THRILLING RESCUE.

PASSENGERS on a Jersey Central train were witnesses of a thrilling leap for life and a brave rescue. As the train rounded the curve and approached at a high rate of speed the bridge over the Lackawanna river, the engineer was horrified to see a little girl walking upon the ties, and about half-way across the bridge. He blew his whistle and reversed his lever. The momentum of the train carried it rushing towards the child. As the train bore down on her the little girl started to run, hesitated a moment, and then jumped off the trestle into the river below. As the train had approached the child John Mellick, fireman of the engine, started from the step, and when the train came opposite to the spot where the child had jumped off he leaped off into the air, turned over two or three times in his descent and struck the water in a heap. He rose to the surface uninjured, seized the struggling child and brought her safely ashore. Neither Mellick nor the child were injured by the jump. When the train stopped the passengers commended Mellick for his brave deed. They took up a collection for him, and quite a large sum was realized.

Adoration of the Shepherds.

(See cut on last page.)

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,

All seated on the ground:  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he,—for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled mind,  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.

"To you in David's town this day,  
Is born of David's line  
The Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,  
And this shall be the sign:

"The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
To human view displayed  
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
And in a manger laid."

The shepherds have found the Holy Babe, and are the first of the many thousands upon thousands to bow down and worship Jesus. What new joy and happiness must come stealing into their hearts as they pray: