FRIDAY EV'G, AUG. 7, 1868. The Braes of Yarrow

An Historical Tale of the Sixteenth Century.

So Sir Walter gave him his hand frankly, and awaited the revelation which appeared to be of so much import.

The pilgrim held the hand between his own, as if it were his last hope, with an eager suspense upon his haggard countenace, but withal possessing in his manner and look a species of undercurrent which raised suspicion in the mind of the observer despite himself. Holding the hand tightly, and partly raising himself upon his elbow, he peered at the masked face as if vainly endeavouring to pierce the disguise.

At length—

'Give me one promise,' he gasped.

'Of what nature?' demanded Sir Walter with that sense of suspicion strong upon him.

'That you will not betray me whatever lay reveal.'

may reveal."

'I promise,' was the hasty response; for as the man appeared to be dying it did not seem to matter anything whether he were betrayed or not.

'Enough. I can speak freely now.'

'I listen.'

'I tis not easy even after your promise to make known my guilt. The cord should have been round my neck long ago, and folk would have been the better for it. But I have escaped it, as you see, and am like to escape it altogether.'

Sir Walter made a slight attempt to with-

altogether.' Sir Walter made a slight attempt to with raw his hand, but the man held it with al

his strength.

'Don't draw away from me—I have repented, and I have suffered bitterly for my crimes. I am called Ritchie, and have spent most of my time on the Borders. I was one of the band of traitors who at Flodden turned upon Sir Walter Spens—what made you exact?

start?

'Nothing, nothing, go on.'

'I was one of them, and was commanded
to man at the life of Spens—

'By whom commanded?' was the somewhat excited interruption.'

'By Heron Barras.'

'The villain! what motive can he have

had?

'You are a friend to Spens, I see,' said Ritchie with a strange quietness of manner, and he now slowly released the hand he had been holding.

Sir Walter was startled by the query into a consciousness that he was betraying him-

Sir Walter was startled by the query into a consciousness that he was betraying himself.

'Yes—yes,' he answered quickly; 'I know Spens, and will awear he has given Barras no cause for emity.'

'You are right no doubt; but emity springs from odd sources sometimes. Barras and Spens have not met for years—I do not think they would recognize each other were they to meet now. But Spens holds in his possession the proofs which would give to an unknown lad the title and wealth to which Barras aspires.'

'Say you?

'The good knight of Halstane must suspect as much, but of course you did not know the circumstance. But do you not think there might be cause enough for enmity in that?'

'Mayhap there is; but to your own matter.'

'I come to that. I was to aim at the

ter."

'I come to that. I was to aim at the knight's life, and in my effort to obey the command I would have fallen had not the generous Spens, even in the heat of battle, listened to my prayer for mercy, and spared me."

me."
'Yet you turned against him.'
'Not after that. I was grateful, and resolved that when the fight was done I would seek him out and warn him of the treachery which surrounded him.'
'Were you faithful to the resolvé?'
'So far that I sought him, but failed to find him. He had fallen, some said; he was prisoner, others said. At all events I did not find him and I returned to my old master.

not find him and I returned to my old master.

'That was a sorry end to your gratitude.'
'You shall see. I had my purpose now; and that purpose was to learn the plans of Barras and give Lady Spens timely tidings of any evil he might threaten to her. But he is wary, and trusts no more to his tools than is enough to enable them to execute his infernal work. I learned very little of his infernal work. I learned very little of his infernal work. I learned very little of his infernal work and that little was not learned early enough to be of service to the lady, else much of the evil that has befallen her might have been guarded against.'
'Well?'

Ritchie had paused as if his exertions were fast overcoming him. He passed his

"Well?"
Ritchie had paused as if his exertions
were fast overcoming him. He passed his
hand slowly over his brow, and resumed.
'I watched him narrowly, and tried hard
to find some means of showing my gratitude
to Spens, but failed. At last I discovered
this—that Gilbert Elliot loved Mistress Spens,
and that she regarded him with some fawour—'

vour 'I' It is false!' cried Sir Walter Spens passionately and forgetting himself.
Ritchie seemed startled by his companion's
vehemence, and that suspicious expression
before alluded to, glimmered for an instant
in his eyes.
'And wherefore so?' he asked, with every
appearance of simple amaze, at the flat denial given to his words by the masked
knight.

mial given to his words by the masseu mial given to his words by the masseu knight.

The latter responded somewhat vexedly, as was apparent in manner and voice.

'I mean—that is, I should have said, that it seems false to me.'

'How to you?'

'I know the folk. Elliot is a mere stripling, and has learned to regard Lady Spens too much as a mother ever to fix on her the eyes of a lover.'

Ritchie shook his head doubtingly.

'He is a man in years, in action, and in thought. She is very fair, I am told, and still young.'

still young.'

'True, true,' muttered Sir Walter medi-

'True, true,' muttered Sir Walter meditatively.
Ritchie went on in a slow tone, pausing offen between his words as if for lack of pith, but in reality to note the effect of the poison upon his hearer.
'He is a comely youth as yon would say, had you ever seen him. He is brave, and when Flodden fight was lost he field to her with the tidings of her husband's death.'
'Not so. He endeavoured to give her hope,'

with the tidings of her husband's death.'

'Not so. He endeavoured to give her hope.'

'Ay, but in such a way that he filled her with dispair.'

Sir Walter clenched his hands behind him and closed his lips tightly, trying with all his might to repress the indignation which the man aroused. He kept stuging to himself that the man lied; natheless his blood grew hot and his brain feverish.

'When she was driven from Halstane, he came to her aid; he wathed over her day and night with an ardour which nothing but love could inspire. She could not fail to observe the nature of his regard—she could not fail to like him for his devotion. Soothely, they were not human if they could be so much together, and not learn to feel something-finor than mer erspect for each other.'

'Well, well, but what has this to do with the service you seek from me?' said Sir Walter sharply, and unable to conceal his impatience.

'You will understand presently. Would you know the writing of Mistress Spens?'

You will understand presently.
you know the writing of Mistress Spe

you know the writing of saisstead it by force 'Perhaps.'
Then read this. Barras, took it by force from the messenger who was despatched to Elliot with it, and I stole it from Barras.'
His pilgrim's gown was lying upon the couch beside him, and from a pocket in the breast of it he drew a scrap of paper.

TO BE CONTINUED.

The Emperor of Russia, through the Russian Minister at Washington, congratulates Andrew Johnson on his escape from removal by impeachment. Who knows but the Czar may appoint the President Bear-skin Cutter General to the Russian Imperial household after the expiration of his term of office? Andy boasts of having made good fits.

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