

who was on horseback, approach, started hastily to his feet, and made a hurried sign to his associate to quit the apartment. It was too late however: the horseman had already alighted, and was now in the passage of the inn, calling loudly for the landlord. Donald, finding he could not escape from the apartment, but in such a manner as he conceived might excite suspicion in the new comer, resolved to brave out the threatened interview in the best way he could. With this determination, he resumed his seat, taking the precaution, however, against being recognised, of drawing his bonnet down over his brows, and muffling his plaid closely around him. Thus prepared, the bandit resolutely awaited the entrance of the unwelcome visitor. Unluckily for Donald, as the sequel will shew, it happened that a party of the Black Watch consisting of about twenty men, arrived at the public house, shortly after Captain Campbell, on their march to another part of the country. These men, of whose arrival Campbell was aware, took possession of the kitchen, laid aside their muskets and knapsacks, and prepared so enjoy themselves for an hour or two before resuming their route.

In the meantime, Campbell entered the room which Donald occupied—it being the best, nay, almost the only one in the house; and, having given orders to his host to provide for his horse, which still remained at the door, placed himself at the table at which the freebooter—who still continued to maintain the same discourteous position which he had assumed previous to the entrance of the former—was seated.

The dogged silence, and equivocal appearance and conduct of the outlaw, soon attracted the notice of Campbell; and something like a suspicion of his real profession crossed his mind, as he seated himself opposite to him—a suspicion which was pretty plainly expressed by the scrutinizing glances which he threw from time to time across the table. Hoedless of these, Campbell's mysterious companion maintained his silence and his position, and gave no indications whatever of his being aware of the presence of a stranger.

"Friend," said Campbell, at length, and at the same time filling up a glass of spirits, with which he had been supplied by his host, "will you drink with me?"

"I drink only when I am thirsty," replied Donald, gruffly, and without moving from his position.

"Not a bad rule," replied Campbell; "it will prevent you drinking overmuch, if strictly adhered to."

To this the outlaw merely replied by a slight nod of acquiescence, and at the same moment raising one of his arms to adjust his plaid. While he was in the act of doing this, Campbell's eye was caught by the glittering of a splendid ring which he wore on one of his fingers; for Donald was rather tasteful in the decoration of his person, and had acquired a strong predilection for such ornaments. Campbell thought he knew the ring, and his face grew pale, and his whole frame became agitated with the feelings which this real or imaginary recognition excited. A moment's reflection, however, showed him the extreme improbability of his conjecture, and forced upon him the belief that he must certainly have been mistaken. The motion of the freebooter's hand prevented him, for some time, from following out his scrutiny of the object of his suspicions; but the latter, at length, having unguardedly placed his elbow on the table, and rested his head on the hand which was adorned with the ring, it was thus fully and fairly placed in Campbell's view, who, availing himself of the opportunity, again fastened his eye upon it, and again the idea that he recognised in it an old acquaintance recurred forcibly to his mind. With this conviction his agitation returned; and, though unwitnessed by his companion, his countenance at this moment strongly expressed the workings of deep various, and conflicting feelings. In short, Campbell imagined, however improbable the circumstance, and however unaccountable, that he had discovered, in the ornament which the outlaw wore on his finger, the identical ring, which, upwards of three years before, he had given to Isabella Malvern. How it had come into the possession of its present owner, or how it had found its way into this remote corner of the Highlands, he of course could not possibly conjecture; but, however these circumstances might be accounted for, he felt assured that it was indeed the gift he had presented to Isabella. It was some little time, however, before Campbell could, in the face of so many improbabilities, venture to make any inquiries on the subject of him who alone could answer them. But at length all reluctance, all delicacy of feeling towards the stranger gave way before the impulse of the moment, and—

"Friend, friend," he exclaimed, in a voice rendered indistinct with emotion, "how did you come by that ring? I have particular reasons for inquiring, and I request, as a favor, that you will be explicit with me."

The outlaw, on being thus strangely interrogated, turned coolly round, and for the first time confronted his companion. "This ring?" after contemplating for a second or two the earnest and agitated countenance opposite to him, and at the same time boldly

projecting the finger on which the ring was placed. "Pray, what right, sir, have you to inquire whom or how I got this ring?"

Confirmed in his suspicions of the real character of the person who was with him by his very equivocal manner, and determined to have the information he wanted, Campbell started to his feet, and, striking the table violently with his clenched fist, exclaimed—

"By Heaven, sir, I will know how you came by that ring! It was once mine; it has since been the property of a friend, and I shall learn, before I leave this apartment, how it came to be yours, otherwise it shall be all the worse for one of us." Saying this, Campbell clapped his hand on his sword, drew it, proceeded to the door of the apartment, flung it violently open, and called on his soldiers, who were in the adjoining apartment, to come to him. These instantly answering the call, and recognising in Campbell one of their officers, and a favorite one, stood ready to obey his commands.

In the meantime, the outlaw, undaunted by the unexpected dangers which now surrounded him, remained cool and collected, still keeping his seat at the table with the same air of dogged resolution which he had first assumed, and never once casting his eye upon the soldiers by which the apartment was now filled.

On the entrance of the latter, "Now, sir," said Campbell, again approaching the table at which the freebooter sat, "you either inform me instantly how you came by that ring, or you march off to head quarters under a suitable escort, there to be dealt with as you appear to deserve."

"So," replied the outlaw, looking fiercely over the hand on which his head was resting, "you think this an excellent way of obtaining information doubtless—Ha, ha, ha!" he added with a laugh of bitter scorn. "You never was more mistaken in your life. You have taken the most effectual way you possibly could have taken to shut my mouth. I tell you nothing, sir," he continued, in a resolute and somewhat contemptuous tone, "if you proceed to violence. If you do not, it's hard to say what I may do." Having said this, the intrepid outlaw resumed his first position, and awaited, with an air of apparent indifference, the result of his remarks.

Campbell instantly felt the force of these, of the latter particularly, and saw at once that the person he had to deal with was not one who was likely to yield information on compulsion, whatever might be extracted from him by other means; and while Campbell saw this, Donald upon his part, perceived the hold he had upon Campbell, although he knew not upon what it was founded, beyond its ostensible cause—the ring; and the consciousness of his advantage, increased his confidence and strengthened the resolution to which he had come, of reserving his information for the purchase of his personal safety, the only terms he had determined, on which he would be communicative.

The coolness, promptitude, and dexterity, with which the outlaw thus made the circumstances of Campbell's interest in the ring which he possessed, available to his own advantage, showed a degree of presence of mind worthy of a greater occasion and a better cause.

"Well, friend," said Campbell—who, as has been already said, saw the hopelessness of compulsory measures with the desperate character before him, and who now determined to try the effects of more conciliatory language—"if I order these men to withdraw, and," he added in a whisper, "if I offer you personal safety, will you give me the information I require?"

"I make no promises, sir," replied the outlaw, equally resolved to keep the vantage ground he possessed; "but certainly, if I communicate anything, it shall not be in the presence of these fellows." And here Donald gathered himself up in his plaid, with an air of great dignity.

Campbell took the hint, and instantly ordered the men to withdraw, though not without a quiet intimation that they should not go far away.

"Now," said Campbell, when the soldiers had retired from the apartment, "now that we are left alone, may I beg of you to inform me how you came by that ring. Insignificant as it may appear to you it possesses much interest for me. I gave it—I gave it," he added, with an emotion which he could not conceal, "to a lady in whom I was much interested some years ago; and I know—a least I have always believed—that she would not part with it willingly."

"Ah, you ask from whom I had it?" replied the outlaw, with an air of carelessness. "Why, then, since you seem so much concerned about it, I will tell you. I had it from a lady."

"From a lady!" exclaimed Campbell, in great surprise. "What lady? Where did you meet with her? Did she present it to you? Did she give it voluntarily?"

"Present it to me!—give it voluntarily!" retorted Donald, with a contemptuous laugh. "Oh, no; neither ladies nor gentlemen are in the habit of

giving me anything voluntarily, and therefore they won't give I take. I help myself in such cases."

This language was to plain too leaves Campbell any longer in doubt as to the real character of the person before him; and he therefore determined to treat with him in the plain terms which his conviction on the subject warranted.

"Ay, friend," said Campbell, with a significant inclination of his head, "I understand, you; and—more this is the case, it may be as well that you understand me. In short, let us distinctly comprehend the position in which we are placed with regard to each other. You are in my power. You are possessed of information which I am desirous of having. If you will give me the latter, I will not exert the former. If you do not, I will."

"Very laconic, and very plainly spoken," said the outlaw.

"Why, then, sir," he added, after a moment's pause, "what would you have?"

"I would have you inform me," replied Campbell, "who and where the lady is, that gave you, or rather from whom, according to your own account, you took that ring which you wear?"

"Who the lady is I don't know," replied the freebooter gruffly—"where she is I do. And I'll tell you what," he added, "to end this matter, if you will permit me to depart quietly, the lady shall be brought to this house in less than four and twenty hours—that is, upon condition of your giving me your word of honour that no harm, through your means, either directly or indirectly, shall befall those who may bring her here."

"That proposal will not do, friend," said Campbell, smiling incredulously at Donald's promise, in which he put but little faith. "No, no, in short I am determined not to loose sight of you, until the lady you speak of is delivered up to me—that is, if she be—as I suspect from what you say she is—in your keeping."

"I would have kept my promise, however," said Donald, haughtily, "but it matters not. Will you then accompany me yourself, alone," he went on—"and I pledge my word that no harm shall be done you?"

"I will accompany you," replied Campbell; "but certainly not alone. I will take a score of soldiers with me, and no other proposal or terms will I listen to. On this I am determined. But, in turn, I promise you, on the honour of a gentleman and a soldier, that, if the lady is delivered up to us in safety, without resistance on your part, or on the part of those with whom you are associated, neither myself nor my men shall do you or yours the smallest injury."

The outlaw made no immediate reply to this peremptory proposition, but swung himself backwards and forwards on his chair, apparently in deep cogitation.

"Well, well," he at length said, half addressing Campbell, and half muttering to himself, "he it is so. But," he added, looking full at the latter, "what pledge have I that you will keep your word with me? I have only your promise, and you refused to trust yourself to mine."

"I have promised you, on the word and honour of a gentleman and a soldier," replied Campbell—"I can give no other guarantee, nor would if I could, because I think it sufficient."

"Umph," ejaculated the freebooter—"then, I suppose I must e'en take it."

Here the conversation terminated, and was followed by an arrangement that the proposed party should set out for Donald's retreat in the mountains—where it was now perfectly understood, the lady, whoever she was from whom the ring had been taken, was concealed—early on the following morning.

(To be concluded in our next)

UNITED STATES.

From the Providence R. I. Journal.

The Times.—The times, the sad, disheartening, appalling character of the times, is in every body's mouth. Such a general prostration of business, in the brief space of two months, and such a gloomy prospect for the future, is unexampled in the history of the world. Where and when the tremendous revolution will stay its desolations no man can foretell. Where least expected it has reached. Men who were considered of undoubted credit, and as far removed from the fluctuating nature of trade and the transitory character of riches, the young and the old, the retired gentleman and the busy, aspiring, energetic