THE SCOTTISH CHIEFS; OR THE LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM WALLACE

BY MISS JANE PORTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERIOUS BOX.

The war which had desolated Scotland was at an end. Ambition seemed satiated, and the vanquished concluded they might wear their chains in peace. Such were the hopes of those Scottish noblemen who, early in 1296, signed the bond of submission to a ruthless conquerer. Edward I. of England had entered Scotland at the head of an immense army. He seized Berwick, laid the country in ashes, and, on the field of Dunbar, forced the king and his nobles to acknowledge him their liege lord.

While the courts of Edward, or of his representatives, were crowded by the humbled Scots, the spirit of one brave man remained unsubdued. Disgusted at the facility with which the sovereign could resign his people and his crown into the hands of an invader, and at the pusillanimity of the nobles who could ratify such a sacrifice, Sir William Wallace retired to Ellerslie. Too noble to bend to the usurper, too honest to affect submission, he resigned himself to the only way left of maintaining the independence of a true Scot; and, giving up the world, all the ambitions of youth were extinguished in his breast.

During the preceding autumn, while Scotland was yet free, Wallace married Marion Braidfoot, the heiress of Lammington. Of the same age, and brought up from childhood together, reciprocal affection grew with their growth; and sympathy of taste, virtues, and mutual tenderness, made them so entirely one, that when at the age of twenty-two, the enraptured lover was allowed by his grandfather to pledge that faith publicly which he had so often vowed to his Marion in secret, he clasped her to his heart and whispered—"Dearer than life! part of my being, now and for ever! blessed is this union that mingles thy soul with mine, to all eternity!"

Edward's invasion of Scotland broke in upon their joys. Wallace threw aside the wedding garment for the cuirass and the sword; but he was not permitted to use either. Scotland submitted to her enemies; and he had no alternative but to bow to her oppressors, or to become an exile amid the deep glens of his country. Ellerslie was henceforth the lonely abode of himself and his bride. The neighboring nobles avoided him, because the principles he declared were a tacit reproach on their proceedings; and all occasions of mixing with society were rejected by him. Ellerslie was his hermitage; and there he might have forgotten that Edward was lord in Scotland, had not what was without his little paradise made a way to its gates, and showed him the slavery of the nobles and the wretchedness of the people.

Several months of this blissful solitude had elapsed, when Lady Wallace saw a chieftain arrive at her gate. He inquired for Sir William, and requested a private conference. They remained together above an hour; when Wallace ordered his horse and four servants to be in readiness, saying he meant to accompany his guest to Douglas Castle. When he embraced his wife at parting, he said that he should be at home again before the moon rose. He told her that the stranger was Sir John Monteith, youngest son of Walter Lord Monteith, who was put to death by the English in the early part of the last year. This young nobleman was left, by his dying father, to the charge of Lord Douglas, at that time governor of Berwick. After the fall of that place, and the captivity of its defender, Sir John Monteith returned to Douglas Castle, in the vicinity of Lanark. Informed of the privacy in which Wallace wished to live, he had never dared to disturb it until this day; and then he came to entreat that he would accompany him to Douglas Castle. "I have a secret to disclose to you," said he, "which cannot be divulged on any other spot." Unwilling to deny so small a favor to the son of one who had so often shed his blood in his country's service, Wallace consented, and was conducted by Monteith towards Douglas.

As they descended the heights which led down to the castle, Monteith kept a profound silence; and when they crossed the drawbridge, he put his fingers to his lips, in token to the servants for equal taciturnity. This was explained as they entered the gate, and saw it guarded by English soldiers. Wallace would have drawn back, but Monteith whispered, "For your country!" The sun was setting as Monteith led his friend into a room and closed the door. Looking fearfully around, and trembling at every step, he approached Wallace, and in a low voice said, "You must swear upon the cross that you will keep inviolable the secret I am now going to reveal."

Wallace put aside the hilt of the sword which Monteith presented. "No," said he, "I take no oaths. In these times, I would not bind my conscience on subjects that I do not know. If you dare trust the word of a Scotchman and a friend, speak out; and, if it be honest, my honor is your pledge."

"And you will not swear," demanded Monteith.

"No."

"Then I must not trust you."

"Then our business is at an end," returned Wallace, "and I may return home."

"Stop!" cried Monteith. "Forgive me, noble Wallace, that I have dared to hesitate! These are, indeed, times of such treason to honor, that I do not wonder you should be careful how you swear. Of any one but you, I would exact oaths on oaths; but your word is given, and on that I rely. Await me here."

Monteith unlocked a door concealed by the tapestry, and in a few minutes reentered with a small iron box. He set it on the table, then went to the great door, tried that the bolts were secure, and returned with a pallid countenance. Wallace, surprised at so much precaution, awaited with wonder the promised explanation. Monteith sat down, and began: "I am going to mention a name which you may hear with patience, since the power by which its bearer insulted you is no more. The successful rival of Bruce, and the enemy of your family, is now a prisoner in the Tower of London."

"You speak of Baliol?"

"I do," answered Monteith, who, after a few preliminary remarks, proceeded—"During the massacre at Berwick, Lord Douglas was taken, wounded and insensible, by a band of Scots out of the citadel, and they contrived to escape with him out of the town. I followed to Dunbar, where he sufficiently recovered to witness the day's dreadful loss. When the few nobles who survived the battle dispersed, he took the road to Forfar, hoping to meet King Baliol there. I accompanied him; and we found his Majesty in conversation with John Cummin, earl of Athol. This worthless Scot had persuaded him, that by the disaster at Dunbar all was so lost, that if he wished to save his life, he must go to the King of England, at Montrose, and surrender himself. Our brave Douglas tried to alter Baliol's resolution, but without effect. Athol sat knitting his black brows during this conversation; and at last, throwing out some sullen remarks to Lord Douglas on the vehemence with which he exorted the King to defy his liege lord, he left the room. Baliol rose, and, taking my patron into an adjoining room, they continued there a few minutes, and then re-entered, Douglas bearing with him this iron box. 'Monteith,' said he, 'I confide this to your care.' As he spoke, he put the box under his arm, and concealing it with my cloak, added, 'Carry it directly to my castle in Lancanshire. I will rejoin you there in four and twenty hours after you arrive. Meanwhile, by your affection to me, and fidelity to your King, breathe not a word of what has passed.' I arrived at this place on the second day, and deposited the box within the secret closet. A week passed without any tidings of Lord Douglas, when a pilgrim on his way to the shrine of St. Ninian arrived. He presented me with a packet saying it had been entrusted to him by Lord Douglas at Montrose. He proceeded to tell me that my brave friend, having been carried on board a vessel which was to convey him and Baliol prisoners to London, he sent to the monks at Aberbrothick, and, under pretence of making a religious confession before he sailed, begged to be visited by the sub-prior. 'I am that prior,' continued the pilgrim; 'and having been born on Douglas' lands, he well knew he had every claim to my fidelity. He gave me this packet and conjured me to lose no time in conveying it to you.' I inquired whether Lord Douglas had sailed. 'Yes,' replied he; 'I stood on the beach at Montrose till the ship disappeared; and woeful was the sight, for it carried away the benefactor of my youth.'"

A groan burst from Wallace. Monteith proceeded: Not only the brave Douglas was wrested from our country, but so was our king, and that holy pillar of Jacob which prophets have declared the palladium of Scotland."

"What!" inquired Wallace, "has Baliol robbed Scotland of that trophy of one of her best kings? Is the sacred gift of Fergus to be made the spoil of a coward?"

"Baliol is not the robber," rejoined Monteith; "the hallowed stone was taken from its sanctuary at Scone by the command of the king of England, and carried on board the same vessel with the sackings of Ikolmkill; the archives of the kingdom have also been torn from that monastery, and thrown by Edward's own hands into the fire."

"Do the traitors think," cried Wallace, "that by robbing Scotland of her annals, and of that stone, they deprive her of her palladium? Fools! Scotland's history is in the memories of her sons; her palladium is in their hearts; and Edward may one day find that she remembers the victory at Largs, and needs not talismans to give her freedom."

"Alas! not in our time:" answered Monteith. "The spear is at our breasts and we must submit. You see this castle is full of Edward's soldiers. Every house is a garrison for England; but I have to tell you the contents of the packet. It contained two letters—one directed to Sir James Douglas at Paris, and the other to me. I read as follows:—'Athol has persuaded Baliol to his ruin, and betrayed me into the hands of Edward. I shall see Scotland no more. Send the enclosed to my son at Paris; it will inform him what is the last wish of William Douglas for his country. The iron box I confided to you, guard as your honor, until you can deposit with my son. But should he remain abroad, and you ever be in extremity, commit the box in strict charge to the worthiest Scot you know; and tell him, that it will be at the peril of his soul who dares to open it till Scotland be again free! When that hour comes, then let the man by whose valour God restores her rights receive the box as his own, for by him only is it to be opened. Monteith, as you would not disgrace the memory of your noble father, and as you hope for honor here, or happiness hereafter, attend to these injunctions of your friend Douglas.'"

Monteith finished reading the letter, and remained silent. Wallace spoke first—"Tell me in what I can assist you; or how serve these last wishes of the brave Douglas?"

Monteith replied by reading again this sentence—"Should my son remain abroad, and you ever be in extremity, commit the box in strict charge to the worthiest Scot you know." "I am in that extremity now. Edward had formed his plan of desolation, when he placed English governors throughout our towns; and the rapacious Heselrigge, his representative in Lanark, has just issued an order for all the houses of the absent chiefs to be searched for records and secret correspondence. Two or three in the neighborhood have already gone through this ordeal; and the event has proved that it was not papers they sought but plunder, and an excuse for dismantling the castles, or occupying them with English officers. A detachment of soldiers was sent hither by Heselrigge this morning to guard the castle, until he could be present at the examination. This ceremony is to take place to-morrow; and, as Lord Douglas is considered a traitor to Edward, I am told the place will be sacked to its bare walls. In such an extremity, to you, noble Wallace, as to the worthiest Scot I know, I fly to take charge of this box. Within the remote cliffs of Ellerslie it will be safe from suspicion; and when Sir James Douglas arrives from Paris, to him you can resign the trust."

Wallace made no difficulty in granting this request, and proposed to depart immediately. There being two rings on each side of the casket, Wallace took the belt which girded his sword, and putting it through them, swung it under his left arm, and covered it with his plaid. Monteith's eye brightened; and, with a firmer step, as if relieved of a heavy load, he called a servant to prepare Wallace's horses and attendants. As Wallace shook hands with his friend, Monteith bade him be cautious in what part of the house he kept the box. "Remember," said he, "the penalty that overhangs him that looks into it."

"Be not afraid," answered Wallace; "even the outside shall never be seen by other eyes than my own, unless the same circumstance which now induces you—mortal extremity—should force me to confide it to safer hands."

While Wallace advanced to his horse, to which he was lighted not only by the servants of the castle, but by several English soldiers, he held in his hand the sword which, to accommodate his charge, he had unbuckled from his side. Monteith whispered, "A weapon in your hand will excite suspicion;" and as he hastily pulled aside Wallace's plaid to throw it over the sword, he exposed the iron box. The light of so many torches displayed it to all eyes; but no remarks being made, and Wallace not observing what was done, he again shook hands with Monteith, and, calling his servants about him, galloped away.

CHAPTER II.

FIGHT IN THE STREETS OF LANARK—ELLERSLIE—FLIGHT OF WALLACE.

Musing on what had passed, Wallace rode on, till, crossing the bridge of Lanark, he saw the rising moon; and putting spurs to his horse, he galloped through the town. He was turning the angle of a street, when the cry of murder arrested his ear. He checked his horse, and listened; the clashing of arms told him that the sound issued from an alley to the left. He alighted, and, drawing his sword, threw away the scabbard, and, leaving his horse with one of his servants was followed, by the other three to the spot whence the noise proceeded.

On arriving, he discovered two men in tartans beset by a throng of Edward's soldiers: the brave Scots who accompanied Wallace, blowing their bugles to encourage the assailed, hurried after their gallant leader, and attacking the banditti, each man cut his opponent to the ground. Such unexpected assistance reanimated the drooping strength of one of the two from whom the cry had issued. He sprung from the wall, but at the moment received a wound in the back, which would have thrown him into the hands of his enemies, had not Wallace caught him in his left arm, and with his right cleared the way, while he called to his men, "To the Glen!" As he spoke, he threw the wounded stranger into their arms. The other poor fellow at that instant fell covered with blood, exclaiming, "Save! save my lord!"

Two of the servants carried their senseless burthen towards the horses; but the third could not move, being hemmed in by the furious soldiers. Wallace made a passage to his rescue; but he soon found himself alone with the assailants, for his already wounded follower received a gash which so disabled him that his master ordered him to seek safety in flight. One wretch, as the poor servant was retreating, made a stroke at his neck, which would have severed his head from his body, had not the claymore of Wallace struck down the weapon of the coward, and received his body upon its point. He fell with bitter imprecations, calling aloud for vengeance.

A cry was now raised by the whole band of assassins. "Murder! treason!—Arthur Heselrigge is slain!" The uproar became general. People, armed and unarmed, issued from their doors, and pressed forward to inquire the cause of alarm. Wallace was nearly overpowered; a hundred swords were levelled towards him; but the moment when he expected they would be sheathed in his heart, the earth gave way under his feet, and he sunk into darkness. He fell upon a quantity of gathered broom; and concluding that the weight of the thronging multitude had burst his passage into a cellar, he sprung on his feet; and though he heard the curses of several who had fallen with him, he moved towards a half-opened door, flew across the adjoining apartment, and darting through the window, leaped out at the foot of the Lanark hills. He pursued his way, without stopping, along the crags, through the valley, and across the river to the cliffs which overlooked the garden of Ellerslie. Springing on the projecting point of the nearest, he leaped into a thicket of honeysuckles, and walked towards the house. He approached the door, and beheld his beloved leaning over a couch on which was laid the person he had rescued. Halbert, his faithful servant, was dressing his wounds. Her hands held a cup to the lips of the stranger.

"Marion!" burst from her fond husband. She looked up, and with a cry of joy, threw herself into his arms: her tears flowed: she sobbed. It was the first time that Wallace had been from her; she feared it would have been the last. "Art thou indeed here?" exclaimed she. Blood fell from his forehead upon her bosom. "O my Wallace, my Wallace!" cried she in agony.

"Fear not, my love! it is a mere scratch. All is well, since the wounded stranger is safe."

"But you bleed!" returned she.

"I hope my preserver is not mortally hurt?" inquired the stranger.

"Oh! no," replied Wallace, putting back the hair from his forehead; "a mere trifle!"—That the action discovered the gash to be wider than he thought, he saw in the countenance of his wife: she turned pale. "Marion," said he, "to convince you how causeless are your fears, you shall cure me yourself, and with no other surgery than your girdle!" When Lady Wallace heard his gay tone, and saw the smiles on his lips, she took courage and unbound the linen fillet from her waist. Halbert having poured some balsam into the wound, she prepared to apply the bandage; but when she lifted his hair from his temples, and the clotted blood met her fingers, a mist seemed to pass over her sight. She paused for a moment; but rallying her strength as her husband assured her her fear was groundless, she tied the fillet, and, stealing a kiss, seated herself trembling by his side.

"Gallant Wallace!" continued the stranger, "it is Donald, Earl of Mar, who owes to you his life."

"Then blest be my arm," exclaimed Wallace, "that has preserved a life so precious to my country!"

"May it indeed be blest!" cried Lord Mar, "for this night it has made the Southrons feel that there is yet one man in Scotland who fears not to resist oppression and to punish treachery."

"Treachery: what treachery?" inquired Lady Wallace; "is any meant to my husband?"

"None to Sir William Wallace, more than to any other brave Scot," replied the earl; "but we all see the oppression of our country. Heselrigge, the English governor of Lanark, despatched a body of men to Bothwell Castle (where my family now are), on a plea, that as its lord was adverse to Edward, and gone to the Highlands, it must be searched for traitorous papers. Considering myself the representative of my brother-in-law, Lord Bothwell, and suspecting they might be a private marauding party, I refused to admit the soldiers, and saw them depart, swearing to return next day with a stronger force and storm the castle. To be ascertained of the fact, and to appeal against such tyranny, should it be true, I followed the detachment to Lanark. I saw Heselrigge. He avowed the transaction; but awed by the power which I possess in the country, he consented to spare Bothwell while I and my family remain in it. As it was nearly dark, I took my leave, and was proceeding to join my servants, when a young man accosted me. I recognised him to be the officer who had commanded the party I had driven from the castle. Heselrigge having told me that he was his nephew, I made no hesitation to go back with him, as he said his uncle had forgotten to communicate something of importance. I followed his steps, but instead of conducting me to the room in which I had conversed with Heselrigge, he led me into a small apartment, where, telling me his uncle would attend me, he retreated out of the door, and before I could recollect myself I heard him bolt it. I now judged myself a prisoner, and made every essay, but in vain, to force open the door. I was in a state not to be described when the bolt was undrawn, and two men entered, with manacles in their hands. They attempted to seize me, telling me I was the prisoner of King Edward. I listened not to what they said; but, wounding one with my dagger, I knocked the other down, and made my way till I found myself in the street. I ran against some one as I rushed from the portal: it was my servant Neil. I told him to draw his sword and follow me. We then hurried forward; and fearing the worst of consequences from the visit of Heselrigge and his miscreants at Bothwell Castle, I was hastening onward, determined to pursue my way on foot, when, at the turning of an angle, we found ourselves surrounded by armed men. They were Southrons, and young Heselrigge was at their head. 'Villain!' cried he, aiming a blow at my head with his battle-axe, 'you have escaped me once, but you shall now die! The plunder of Bothwell, my lads!' cried he to the soldiers; down with its lord, and all but the lovely Helen shall be yours. In a moment every sword was levelled towards me. They wounded me in several places but the thought of my daughter gave vigor to my arm; and I defended myself, till the cries of my dying servant brought you, my brave deliverer, to my rescue. But while I am safe, perhaps my treacherous assaulter has marched towards Bothwell, too sure to commit the violence he meditates: there are none to guard my child but a few domestics, the unpractised sword of my stripling nephew, and the feeble arms of my wife.

"Be easy on that head," interrupted Wallace. "I believe the infamous leader of the banditti fell by my hands; for the soldiers made an outcry that Arthur Heselrigge was killed; and then pressing on me to take revenge, their weight broke a passage into a vault, through which I escaped."

"Save, save yourself, my master!" cried a man, rushing in from the garden; "you are pursued—save, save!" While he spoke, he fell down, covered with blood, at Wallace's feet. The chief perceived that it was Dugald, whom he had bidden seek safety in flight; and who, from the bleeding of his wounds, had been all this while in reaching Ellerslie.

Wallace had hardly time to give him to the care of Halbert, when the outcry of men demanding admittance, and the sounds of spears rattling against the shields of their owners, told that the house was beset by armed men. "Blood for blood!" cried a horrid voice; "vengeance on Wallace for the murder of Heselrigge!"

"Fly! fly!" said Lady Marion, looking wildly at her husband.

"Whither?" answered he. "Would this be a moment to leave you and our wounded guest? I must meet these assailants."

"Not now," cried Lord Mar; "hear you not by the uproar how numerous they are? Mark that shout: they thirst for blood. In pity fly! if you have love for your wife or regard for me, delay not a moment. Again"——The uproar redoubled, and the room was instantly filled with shrieking women. "O, my lord," cried they, "what will become of us? The Southrons are at the gates, and we shall be lost for ever."

"Fear not," replied Wallace; "retire to your chambers. I am the person they seek; none else will meet with injury."

The women retreated to their apartments; and Wallace, turning to the earl, who continued to enforce the necessity of his flight, repeated that he would not leave his wife in such a tumult. "I entreat you to leave me," cried she. "Leave me, or see me die!" As she spoke, there was a violent crash and a burst of imprecations. Three of Wallace's men ran into the room. Two of the assailants had climbed to the hall window; they were just thrown back upon the cliffs, and one killed. "Conceal yourself," said the Scots to Wallace; "for in a few minutes more your men will not be able to maintain the gates."

"Yes, my dear lord," cried Halbert; "there is the dry well at the end of the garden; at the bottom of that you will be safe."

"By your love for me, Wallace; by all you owe to the tender affections of your grandfather, hearken to him!" cried Lady Marion, falling at his feet; "I kneel for my life in kneeling for yours! Pity the grey hairs of Sir Ronald, whom your untimely death would bring to the grave! — Pity your unborn child?—Fly, Wallace, fly, if you would have me live!"

"Angel of my life!" exclaimed Wallace. "I obey thee. But if a hand of one of these desperate robbers dares to touch thy hallowed person"——

'Think not so, my lord!" interrupted Halbert; "it is you they seek. Not finding you, they will be too eager in pursuit, to molest my lady. I will preserve her from affront, at the peril of my life."

"I shall be safe," whispered Marion. "Only fly! while you are here, their shouts kill me."

"But you shall go with me," returned he; "the well will contain us all. But first let our faithful Halbert and these honest fellows lower Lord Mar into the place of refuge. He, being the cause of the affray, if discovered, would be immediately sacrificed."

Lord Mar acquiesced, and was carried into the garden. He was followed by Wallace, to whose arm his wife fondly clung. At the well-side they found the earl bound with the rope that was to lower him down. By great care it was safely done; and the cord being brought up again before it was tied round Wallace, he recollected that the iron box might hurt the wounded nobleman, by striking him in his descent. Unbuckling it, he told his faithful harper it contained matters of great value, and desired it might be lowered first.

Lord Mar, beneath, was releasing it from the rope, when a shout of triumph pierced their ears. A party of the English soldiers had leaped the wall of the garden, and were within a few yards of the well. For Wallace to descend now was impossible. "That tree!" whispered Marion, pointing to an oak. As she spoke, she slid from his arms, and in a moment, along with Halbert, she disappeared amid the adjoining thicket. The two servants fled also.

Wallace the next instant was looking down from the tree upon his enemies. They passed beneath him, denouncing vengeance upon the assassin of Arthur Heselrigge! At that moment, one who seemed to be their leader, stopped under the tree, declaring he had sprained his ankle, and must wait a few minutes. Several of the soldiers crowded round him: but he desired them to search the house, and bring Wallace before him, dead or alive. They obeyed while others ran towards their leader, saying that the murderer could nowhere be found. "But here is a gay lady," cried one, "perhaps she can inform us!" and at that moment Marion and Halbert appeared between a band of men. "Soldiers stand back," cried the officer approaching. "Fear not, madam! I beg your pardon, both for the alarm these hot-headed men have occasioned you, and for the violence they have committed in forcing one of your sex and beauty before me. Had I expected to have found a lady here, I should have issued orders to have prevented this; but I am sent hither in quest of Sir William Wallace, who, by a mortal attack made on the Governor of Lanark's nephew, has forfeited his life. The scabbard of his sword found beside the murdered Heselrigge is proof of his guilt: Direct us to find him, and not only release, but the favour of the English monarch, will await your allegiance."

"I am Sir William Wallace's wife," returned Marion; "and by what authority you seek him thus, and presume to call him guilty, I cannot understand."

"By the authority of the laws, madam, which he has violated."

"What laws?" rejoined she; "Sir Wallace acknowledges none but those of God and his country. Neither of these has he transgressed!"

"He this night assassinated Arthur Heselrigge in the streets of Lanark; and that condemns him by the last declaration of King Edward:—'Whatever Scot maltreats any one of the English soldiers or civil officers garrisoned in the towns of Scotland, shall thereby forfeit his life, as the penalty due to his crime.'"

"A tyrant's-law, sir, to which no free-born Scot will submit! But even were it allowed by my countrymen, in this case it can have no hold on my husband. That he is a Scot, he glories; and not that he maltreated any Englishman in the streets of Lanark, do I glory; but because, when he saw two defenceless men borne down by a band of armed soldiers, he exposed his unshielded breast in their defence! One of the two died, covered with wounds. That the governor's nephew also fell was a just retribution for his heading so unequal a contest, and no crime in Sir William Wallace; for he slew him to preserve a feeble old man, who had a hundred English swords levelled at his life."

The officer paused; and then ordered his soldiers to fall back. When they were at a sufficient distance, he offered to take Lady Wallace's hand, but she withstood his motion, with a reserved air, and said, "Speak, sir, what you would say; or allow me to retire."

"I mean not to offend you, noble lady," continued he. "Had I a wife lovely as yourself, I hope, were I in like circumstances, in the like manner she would defend my life and honour. I knew not the particulars of the affair in which Arthur Heselrigge fell, till I heard them from your lips. I can easily credit them, for I knew his unmanly character. Wallace is a Scot, and acted in Scotland as Gilbert Hambledon would have done in England, were it possible for any vile foreigner there to put his foot upon the neck of a countryman of his. Wherever you have concealed your husband, let it be a distant asylum, until the rage of the governor be appeased. At present, no track within the jurisdiction of Lanark will be unsearched by his indefatigable revenge. I will use my influence with Heselrigge to prevent the interior of your house being disturbed again; but it will be impossible to free you from the disagreeable ceremony of a guard being placed to-morrow morning around the domains. This, I know, will be done to intercept Sir William Wallace, should he attempt to return."

"Oh! that he were indeed far distant!" thought Lady Wallace. The officer added—"However, you shall be relieved of my detachment directly. I will now call off my men from a search which they must see is unavailing, and leave you, noble lady, to your rest." As he spoke, he waved his sword to the men who had seized the harper; they advanced, still holding their prisoner. He ordered them to commit the man to him, and to sound. The trumpeter obeyed, and in a few seconds the whole detachment assembled before their commander. "Soldiers!" cried he, "Sir William Wallace has escaped our hands. Return to your horses, that we may march back to Lanark, and search the other side of the town. Lead forth, and I will follow."

The troops obeyed, and left Sir Gilbert alone with Lady Wallace and Halbert. The brave young man took the now not-withdrawn hand of the grateful Marion. "Noble Englishman!" said she, "I cannot enough thank you for this generous conduct; but, should you or yours be ever in the like extremity with my beloved Wallace—(and in those tyrannous times, what brave spirit can answer for its continued safety?) may the Ear which has heard you this night at that hour repay my gratitude!"

"Sweet lady!" answered Hambledon, "I thank you for your prayer. God is indeed the benefactor of a true soldier; and, though I serve my king and obey my commanders, yet it is only to the Lord of battles that I look for a sure reward; and whether He pay me here with victories and honours, or take my soul to receive my laurel in paradise, it is all one to Gilbert Hambledon. But the night is cold; I must see you safe within your own doors; and then, lady, farewell!" Lady Wallace yielded to the impulse of his hand; and Hambledon desiring Halbert to follow, disappeared with the agitated Marion into the house.

Wallace, whose spirits could ill brook the sight of his domains filled with troops, and the wife of his bosom brought before their commander, would have leaped down amongst them, had not the courteous address of Hambledon made him hesitate. He listened to the replies of his Marion with exhultation; and when the Englishman ordered his men to withdraw, and delivered himself so generously respecting the safety of the man he came to seize, Wallace could hardly prevent a noble confidence in such virtue from compelling him to come from his concealment to thank him; but the consideration that such a disclosure would put the military duty and the generous nature of the commander at variance, he desisted.

"Sir William! my master!" cried a well known voice in a suppressed tone. It was Halbert's. "Speak, my dear lord, are you safe?"

"In heart and body!" returned Wallace, sliding from the tree. "I must now hasten to the dearest, the noblest of women!" He flew across the lawn, and met Marion, who had just bade farewell to Hambledon. She rushed into his arms, and fainted. His caresses soon restored her to sensibility. She leaned on his breast, and thanked Heaven that he had escaped the search of his enemies.

"But, my dear lady," interrupted Halbert, "remember that my master must not stay here. You know what the English commander said, that if he would preserve his life, he must fly far away. Nay, spies may even now be lurking to betray him."

"You are right," said Marion; "my Wallace, you must depart. Should the guard arrive soon, your flight may be prevented. You must go now: but, oh! whither?"

"Not very distant, my love. There are recesses amongst the Cartlane Crags discovered by me when hunting, and which, I believe, have been visited by no mortal foot but my own! There will I be, my Marion, before sunrise; and, before it sets, thither must you send Halbert to tell me how you fare. Three notes blown by his pipe shall be a sign to me that he is there; and I will come forth to hear tidings of thee."

Eye Strain Headache

Manitoba lady tells how headaches disappeared with the use of Dr. A. W. Chase's Nerve Food.

Women who use their eyes much for reading or fine needlework are sure to find eye-strain and nervous, sick headaches among the first symptoms when the nervous system gets run down.

As a positive cure for headaches, not mere relief but cure, Dr. A. W. Chase's Nerve Food stands without rival because it gets at the cause of the trouble and builds up the nervous system to health and strength.

Mrs. George Fuller, Lakeland, Man., writes:—"Dr. Chase's Nerve Food cured me of nervous headaches, from which I was a great sufferer, and I am no longer troubled with twitchings of the nerves in the arms and legs."

The portrait and signature of A. W. Chase, M. D. the famous receipt Book author, on every box. 50 cents at all dealers or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.

DR. A. W. Chase's Nerve Food