

before. Full three minutes passed, and nothing was seen of him. The crowded street became as silent as death; even those who were running backward and forward carrying water, for a time stood still. The suspense was agonizing. At length he appeared at the window, with the sick man wrapt up in his bed clothes, and holding him to his side with his right arm around him. The hope and fear of the people became indescribable. Never did I witness such a scene!—never may I witness such again! Having fastened one end of the rope to the bed, he flung the other from the window to the street; and by grasping it with his left hand, he drew himself out at the window, with Katie's father in his arm, and crossing his feet around the rope, he slid down to the street, bearing his burden with him! Then, sir, the congratulations o' the multitude were unbounded.—Every one was anxious to shake him by the hand; but what with the burning his right hand sustained, and the worse than burning his left hand had suffered wi' the sliding down a rope frae the third story wi' a man under his arm, I may say that my venturesome and gallant auld scholar hadna a hand to shake.

Ye canna be surprised to hear—and at the time o' life ye've arrived at, ye'll be no longer jealous—besides, during dinner, I think ye spoke o' having a wife and family—I say, therefore, doctor, that ye'll neither be jealous nor surprised to hear that from that day Katie's drynes to Jamie melted down:—Moreover, as ye had gane out to India, where ye would be mair likely to look after siller than think o' a wife, and as I understand ye had dropped correspondence for some length o' time, ye couldna think yoursel in any way slighted. Now, folk say that 'ninereen *nay* says are half a *yes*.' For my part, [and my age is approaching the heels o' the patriarchs] I never put it in the power o' woman born to say *No* to me. But, as I have heard and believe, Katie had said *No* to Jamie before the fire, not only nineteen times, but thirty-eight times twice told, and he found seventy six, which is about my age, nae nearer a *yea* than the first *nay*. And folk said it was a' on account o' a foolish passion for the doctor laddie that had gane abroad. But Katie was a kind, gratefu' lassie. She couldna look wi' cauldness upon the man that had not only saved her life, but her father's also,

and I ought to have informed you, that within two minutes from the time o' her father's being snatched from the room where he lay, the floor fell in, and the flames burst from the window where Katie had been standing a few minutes before.

Her father recovered from the fever, but he died within six months after the fire, and leaving her a portionless orphan, or what was next door to it. Jamie urged her to make him happy, and at last she consented, and they were married. But ye remember that his parents were in affluent circumstances, they thought he had demeaned himself by his marriage, and they shut their door upon him, and disowned him a'thegither. As he was his father's heir, he was brought up to no calling or business whatsoever; and when the auld man not only vowed to cut him off wi' a shilling, on account o' his marriage, but obstinately got his will altered accordingly, what did the silly lad do, but, in desperation, list into a regiment that was gaun' abroad.—'The laddie has done in in a fit o' passion,' said I, 'and what will become o' poor Katie's Weel, although it was said that the lassie never had any particular affection for him, but just married him out o' gratitude, and although several genteel families in the neighbourhood offered her respectable and comfortable situations, for she was universally liked, yet the strange creature preferred to follow the hard fortunes o' Jamie, who had been disowned on her account, and she implored the officers o' the regiment to be allowed to accompany him. It is possible that they were interested with her appearance, and what they had heard of his connexions, and the manner in which he had been treated, for they granted her request; and about a month after he enlisted, the regiment marched from Carlisle, and Katie accompanied her husband. They went abroad some where; to the East or West Indies, I believe.—but from that day to this, I have never heard a word concerning either the one or the other, or whether they be living or no. All I know is, that the auld man died within two years after his son had become a soldier, and keeping his resentment to his late breath, actually left his property to a brother son. And that, sir, is all that I know o' the venturesome Jamie, and your old sweetheart Katie.'

The doctor looked thoughtful—exceeding