

John Burnet of Barns

of that brave, romantic stream came on my sight, as a sound of old music comes on the ears, bringing a thousand half-sad, half-joyful memories. All that life held of fair was in it—the rattle and clash of arms, the valour of men, the loveliness of women, the glories of art and song, the wonders of the great mother earth, and the re-creations of the years. And as we walked together, I and my dear lady, in that soft twilight in the green world, a peace, a delight, a settled hope grew upon us, and we went in silence, speaking no word the one to the other. By and by we passed through the garden where the early lilies stood in white battalions, and entered the dining-hall.

A band of light lay on the east wall where hung the portraits of my folk. One was a woman, tall and comely, habited in a grey satin gown of antique fashion.

“Who was she?” Marjory asked, softly.

“She was my mother, a Stewart of Traquair, a noble lady and a good. God rest her soul.”

“And who is he who stands so firmly and keeps hand on sword?”

“That was my father’s brother who stood last at Philiphaugh, when the Great Marquis was overthrown. And he with the curled moustachios was his father, my grandfather, of whom you will yet hear in the countryside. And beyond still is his father, the one with the pale, grave face, and solemn eyes. He died next his king at the rout of Flodden. God rest them all; they were honest gentlemen.”