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COMMENCING WITH
WILSON'S BORDER TALES.

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1858.

"Peter! O Peter!" cried the wretched girl, clinging around him.

The party from the frigate approached them. Even their hearts were touched.

"From my soul I feel for you Paterson," said the lieutenant commanding them, "and I am sorry to see those old people and that lovely girl in distress, but you know I must do my duty, lad."

"O Sir! Sir!" cried his mother, wringing her hands and addressing the lieutenant, "if ye hae a drop o' compassion in your heart spare my poor bairn! O Sir! I implore ye as ye wad expect mercy here or hereafter, dinna tear him from the door o' the mother that bore him."

"Good woman," replied the officer, "your son must go with us, but I shall do all that I can to render his punishment as light as possible."

Ann uttered a shriek of horror.

"Punishment!" exclaimed Betty, grasping the arm of the lieutenant—"O Sir! what do ye mean by punishment? Surely, though your heart was harder than a nether millstone, ye couldna be sae cruel as to hurt my bairn for comin' to see his ain mother?"

"Sir," said Robin, "my son never intended to rin away frae your ship. He tauld me he was gaun to return immediately, I assure ye o' that. But Sir, if ye could only leave him, and if siller can do ony thing in the case, ye shall hae the savings o' thirty years, and a father's blessing into the bargain."

"O aye Sir!" cried his mother, "ye shall hae the last penny we hae in the world—ye shall hae the very stock off the farm if ye'll leave my bairn!"

The officer shook his head. The sailors attempted to pinion Peter's arms.

"Vast there, shipmates, vast," said Peter sorrowfully; "there's no need for that; had I intended to run for it you would not have found me here. Ann, love"—he added—his heart was too full for words—he groaned—he pressed his teeth upon his lip—he wrung her hand. He grasped the hands of his parents and of Mr. Graham—he burst into tears, and in bitterness exclaimed "farewell!" I will not describe the painful scene, nor paint the silent agony of the father, the heart rending lamentations of the bereaved mother, nor the tears and anguish of the miserable maiden who refused to be comforted.

Peter was taken to the boat and conveyed again to the frigate: his officers sat in judgment upon his offence, and Peter stood a cul-

prit before them: he begged to be heard in his defence, and his prayer was granted.

"I know, your honours," said Peter, "that I have been guilty of a breach of discipline; but I deny that I had any intention of running from the service. Who amongst you that has a heart to feel would not under the same circumstances have acted as I did? Who that has been torn from a father's hearth would not brave danger, or death itself, again to take a father by the hand, or to fling his arms around another's neck? Or who that has plighted his heart and his truth to one that is dearer than life, would not risk his life for her sake? Gentlemen, it becomes not man to punish an act which Heaven has not registered as a crime. You may flog, torture, and degrade me—I will not supplicate for mercy—but will degradation prompt me to serve my king more faithfully? I know you must do your duty, but I know also you will do it as British officers, as men who have hearts to feel."

During this address Peter had laid aside his wonted provincial accent. There was an evident leaning amongst the officers in his favour, and the punishment they awarded him was a few days confinement.

It was during the second war between Great Britain and the United States. The frigate was ordered to the coast of Newfoundland. She had cruised upon the station about three months, and during that time, as the seamen said, "not a lubber of the enemy had dared to shew his face—there was no life going at all," and they were becoming impatient for a friendly set-to with their brother Jonathan. It was Peter's watch at the mast head. "A sail! a Yankee!" shouted Peter. A sort of wild hurra burst from his comrades on the deck. An officer hastily ascended the rigging to ascertain the fact. "All's right," he cried, "a sixty gun ship at least."

"Clear the deck, my boys," cried the commander, "get the guns in order—active—be steady, and down upon her."

Within ten minutes all was in readiness for action. "Then down on the deck, my lads," cried the captain, "not a word amongst you; give them a British welcome."

The brave fellows silently knelt by the guns, glowing with impatience for the command to be given to open their fire upon the enemy. The Americans seemed nothing loath to meet them half-way. Like winged engines of death rushing to shower destruction on each other, the proud vessel came within gunshot. The American opened the first fire upon the frigate. Several shot had

passed over, and some of the crew were already wounded. Still no word escaped from the lips of the British commander. At length he spoke a word in the ear of the man at the helm, and the next moment the frigate was brought across the bow of the enemy. "Now my lads," cried the captain, "now give them it." An earthquake seemed to burst at his words: the American was raked fore and aft, and the dead and dying and limbs of the wounded strewed her deck. The enemy quickly brought their vessel round; then followed the random gun, and anon the heavy broadsides were poured into each other. For an hour the action had continued, but victory or death seemed the determination of both parties. Both ships were crippled and had become almost unmanageable, and in each equal courage and seamanship were displayed. It was drawing towards midnight, they became entangled, and the word "to board!" was given by the commander of the frigate. Peter Paterson was the first man who, cutlass in hand, sprang upon the deck of the American: he seemed to possess a lion's strength and more than a lion's ferocity. In a few minutes four of the enemy had sunk beneath his weapon. "On my hearties! follow Paterson," cried an officer; "Peter's a hero!" Fifty Englishmen were engaged hand to hand with the crew of the American, and for a time they gained ground, but they were opposed with a determination equal to their own, and overpowered by superiority of numbers, they were driven back and compelled to leap again into the frigate. At the moment his comrades were repulsed, Peter was engaged with the first lieutenant of the American—"Stop a minute!" shouted Peter, as he beheld them driven back, "keep your ground till I finish this fellow!" His request was made in vain, and he was left alone on the enemy's deck, but Peter would turn his back on no man. "It lies between you and me, now friend," said he to his antagonist: he had shivered the sword of the lieutenant by the hilt, when a Yankee seaman, armed with a crowbar, felled Peter to the deck.

Darkness came on and the vessels separated. The Americans were flinging their dead into the sea; they lifted the body of Peter: his hands moved—the supposed dead man groaned: they again placed him on the deck: he at length looked round in bewilderment: he raised himself on his side: "I say neighbours," said he to the group around him, "is this our ship or yours?" The Americans made merry at Peter's question. "Weel,

if it be yours," continued he, "I can only tell you it was foul play that did it. It was a low cowardly action to fell a man behind his back; but come face to face, and twa at a time if ye like, and I'll clear the decks of the whole ship's crew o' you."

"You are a noble fellow," said the lieutenant whom he had encountered, "and if you will join our service, I guess your merit shan't be long without promotion."

"What!" cried Peter, "raise my right hand against my ain country! Gude gracious, sir! I wad sooner eat it as my next meal!"

In a few weeks the vessel put into Boston for repairs, and on her arrival it was ascertained that peace had been concluded between the two countries. Peter found himself once more at liberty, but with liberty he found himself in a strange land, without a sixpence in his pocket. This was no enviable situation to be placed in, even in America, renowned as it is as the paradise of the unfortunate—and he was standing on the second morning after his being put on shore counting the picturesque islands which stud Boston harbour, for his breakfast, poor fellow, when a person accosted him: "Well, my lad, how is the new world using you?" Peter started round: it was his old adversary the lieutenant.—

"A weel filled pocket, sir," returned Peter, "will mak either the new wark or the auld use you weel; and without that, I reckon your usage in either the aue or the ither, wad be maething to mak a sang about."

The lieutenant pulled out his purse—"I am not rich, Paterson," said he; "but, perhaps, I can assist a brave man in need." Peter was prevailed upon to accept a few dollars. He knew that to return to Berwickshire was again to throw himself into the power of his persecutor, and he communed with himself what to do: he could plough; he could manage a farm—he was master of all field-work—and within a week he engaged himself as a farm-servant to a proprietor in the neighbourhood of Charleston. He had small reason, however, to be in love with his new employment. Peter was proud and high minded (in the English, not the American acceptation of the word) and he found his master an imperious, avaricious, republican tyrant. The man's conduct ill accorded with his profession of universal liberty. His wish seemed to be, to level all down to his own standard, that he might the more easily trample on all below him: his incessant cry, from the rising of the sun until its setting, was, "Work! work!" and with an oath he again called upon his

servants to "work!" He treated them as beasts of burden—"Work! hang ye, work!" and a few oaths, seemed to be the principal words in the man's vocabulary. Peter had not been overwrought in the figate—he had been his own master at Foxlaw—and when doing his utmost he hated to hear those words everlastingly rung in his ear. But he had another cause for abhorring his employment; his master had a number of slaves, on whom he wreaked the full measure of his cruelty. There was one, an old man, in particular, on whom he almost every day gratified his savageness. Peter had beheld the brutal treatment of the old negro till he could stand it no longer; and one day when he was vainly imploring the man who called himself the owner of his flesh for mercy, Peter rushed forward, he seized the savage by the breast, and exclaimed—"Confound, ye sir, if I see ye strike that poor auld black creature again, I'll cleave ye to the chin."

The slave owner trembled with rage.—"What!" said he; "it's a fine thing, indeed, if we've wollopped the English for liberty, and after all a man an't to have the liberty of wollopping his own neeger!"

He drew out his purse, and flung Peter's wages contemptuously on the ground. Peter stooping placed the money in his pocket, and turning towards Charleston, proceeded along the bridge to Boston. He had seen enough of tilling another man's farm in America, and resolved to try his fortune in some other way—but was at a loss how to begin. I already have told you how Peter's mother praised his delivery in his debate with the schoolmaster; and Peter himself thought that he could deliver a passage from Shakspeare in a manner that would make the fortune of any hero of the sock and buskin; and he was passing along the Mall, counting the number of trees in every row, much in the same manner, and for the same reason, as he had formerly so counted the islands in the harbour, when the thought struck him that the Americans were bad of theatricals; and he resolved to try his stage: he called at the lodgings of the manager in Franklin Place: he gave a specimen of his abilities; and at a salary of eighteen dollars a week, Peter Paterson was engaged as leader of the "heavy business" of the Boston *corps dramatique*. The tidings would have killed his mother. Lear was chosen as the part in which he was to make his first appearance. The curtain was drawn up: "Peter, what would your mother say?" whispered his conscience, as he looked in the glass, just as the bell rang and the prompter

called him: and what indeed would Betty Paterson have said to have seen her own son Peter, with a red cloak, a painted face, a grey wig, and a white beard falling on his breast! Lear—Peter—entered. He looked above, below, and around him. The audience clapped their hands, shouted, and clapped their hands again. It was to cheer the new performer. Peter thought they would bring down the theatre. The lights dazzled his eyes. The gallery began to swim—the pit moved—the boxes appeared to wave backward and forward. Peter became pale through the very rouge that bedaubed his face, and sweat, cold as icicles, rained down his temples. The shouting and clapping of hands was resumed—he felt a trembling about his limbs—he endeavoured to look upon the audience—he could discern only a confused mass. The noise again ceased.

"Attend—France—Burgundy—hem!—Gloster!" faltered out poor Peter. The laughter became louder than the clapping of hands had been before. The manager led Peter off the stage, paid him the half of his week's salary, and bade him good-by. It is unnecessary to tell you how Peter, after this disappointment, laid out eight dollars in the purchase of a pack, and how, as pedlar, he travelled for two years among the Indians and back-settlers of Canada, and how he made money in his new calling. He had written to his parents and to Ann Graham; but, in his unsettled way of life, it is no wonder that he had not received an answer. He had written again to say, that, in the course of four months, he would have to be in New-York *in the way of business*—for Peter's pride would not permit him to acknowledge that he carried a pack—and if they addressed their letters to him at the Post-office there, he would receive them. He had been some weeks in New-York, and called every day, with an anxious heart, at the Post office.—But his time was not lost; he had obtained many rare and valuable skins from the Indians, and, with his sash upon his back, he was doing more business than the most fashionable store-keeper in the Broadway. At length, a letter arrived. Peter hastily opened the seal, which bore the impress of his mother's thimble, and read:—"My dear bairn,—This comes to inform ye that baith your father and me are weel—thanks to the Giver o' a' good—and hoping to find ye the same. O Peter, hinny, could ye only come hame—did you only ken what sleepless nights I spend on your account, ye wad leave America as soon as ye get my letter. I wad

der that ye no ken that Ann, poor woman, an' her father, an' her mother, an' the family, a' gaed to about America mair than a year and a-half syne, and I'm surprised ye haena seen them."

"*Ann in America!*" cried Peter. He was unable to read the remainder of his mother's letter. He again flung his pack upon his shoulder, but not so much to barter and to sell, as to seek his betrothed bride. He visited almost every city in the States, and in the provinces of British America. He advertised for her in more than fifty newspapers; but in his search, the world prospered with Peter: his pack had made him rich. He opened a store in New-York. He became also a shareholder in canals, and a proprietor of steam-beats; in short, he was looked upon as one of the most prosperous men in the city. But his heart yearned for his native land; and Peter Paterson, Esq., turned his property into cash, and embarked for Liverpool.

Ten long years had passed since the eyes of Betty Paterson had looked upon her son; and she was busied, on a winter day, leading her poultry in the barn-yard, when she observed a post-chaise drive through the village and begin to ascend the hill towards Foxlaw.

"Preserve us, Robin!" she cried, as she bustled into the house, "there's a coach comin' here—what can folk in a coach want wi' the like o' us? Haed awa out an' see what they want, till I fling on a clean mutch an' an apron, an' mak mysel wiselike."

"I wana wha it can be," said Robin, as he rose and went towards the door.

The chaise drew up—a tall genteel-looking man alighted from it—at the first glance he seemed nearly forty years of age, but he was much younger. As he approached, Robin started back—his heart sprang to his throat—his tongue faltered.

"Pe—Pe—Peter!" he exclaimed. The stranger leaped forward, and fell upon the old man's neck.

Betty heard the word *Peter!*—the clean cap fell from her hand, she uttered a scream of joy, and reached to the door, her grey hairs falling over face; and the next moment her arms encircled her son.

I need not tell you of the thousand anxious questions of the fond mother, and how she wept as he hinted at the misfortunes he had encountered, and smiled and wept, and grasped his hand again, as he dwelt upon his prosperity:

"Did I no aye say," exclaimed she, "that

I would live to see my Peter a gentleman?"

"Yet, mother," said Peter, "riches cannot bring happiness—at least not to me, while I can hear nothing of poor Ann. Can no one tell to what part of America her father went?—for I have sought them everywhere."

"Oh, forgie me, hiiny," cried Betty, bitterly; "it was a mistake o' yer mother's a'thegither. I understand, now, it wasna America, they gaed to; but it was Jamaica, or some ca, and we hear they're back again."

"Not America!" said Peter: "and back again!—then, where—where shall I find her?"

"When we wrote to you, that, after leaving here, they had gaen to America," said Robin, "it was understood they had gaen there—at any rate, they went abroad someway—and we never heard, till the other week, that they were back to this country, and are now about Liverpool, where I'm very sorry to hear they are very ill off; for the world, they say, has gaen a' wrang wi' the auld man."

This was the only information Peter could obtain. They were bitter tidings; but they brought hope with them.

"Ye were saying that ye was in Liverpool the other day," added the mother; "I wonder ye didna see some o' them!"

Peter was sad, yet he almost smiled at the simplicity of his parent; and he resolved to set out in quest of his betrothed on the following day.

Leaving Foxlaw, we shall introduce the reader to Sparling Street, in Liverpool.—Amongst the miserable cellars where the poor are crowded together, and where they are almost without light and without air, one near the foot of the street was distinguished by its outward cleanliness; and in the window was a ticket with the words—"A Girl's School kept here.—by A. Graham." Over this humble cellar was a boarding-house, from which, ever and anon, the loud laugh of jolly seamen rang boisterous as on their own element. By a feeble fire in the comfortable cellar, sat an emaciated, and apparently dying man; near him sat his wife, engaged in making such articles of apparel as the slop-dealers send to the West Indies, and near the window was a pale but beautiful young woman, instructing a few children in needle-work and the rudiments of education. The children being dismissed, she began to assist her mother; and, addressing her father, said—

"Come, che-r up, dear father—do not give way to despondency—we shall see better times. Come, smile now, and I will sing your favourite song."

"Heaven bless thee, my own sweet child!" said the old man, while the tears trickled down his cheeks. "Thou wilt sing to cheer me, wilt thou?—bless thee!—bless thee! It is enough that in my old age, I eat thy bread, my child—sing not!—sing not!—there is no music now for thy father's heart." "Oh, speak not—think not thus," she cried, tenderly "you make me sad too."

"I would not make thee sad, love," returned he, "but it is hard—it is very hard—that after cruising till I had made a fortune, as I may say, and after being anchored in safety to be tempted to make another voyage, where my all was wrecked; and not only all wrecked, but my little ones too—thy brothers and thy sisters, Ann to see them struck down one after another, and I hardly left wherewith to bury them, it is hard to bear, child! and worse than all, to be knocked up like a useless hulk, and see thee and thy mother toiling and killing themselves for me: it is more than a father's heart can stand, Ann."

"Nay, repine not, father," said she; "HE who tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb, will not permit adversity to press on us more hardly than he gives us strength to endure it—though we suffer poverty, our exertions keep us above want."

The old woman turned aside her head and wept.

"True dear," added he, "thy exertions keep us from charity; but those exertions my child will not long be able to make; I see it, feel it! And, oh, Ann, shall I see thee and thy mother inmates of a workhouse—shall I hear men call thy father, Bill Graham, the old pauper?"

The sweat broke upon the old man's brow from his excitement: his daughter strove to soothe him, and with an assumed playfulness, commenced singing Skinner's beautiful old man's song, beginning—

"Oh, why should old age so much wound us!"

Now, Peter Paterson had been several days in Liverpool, anxiously inquiring for Capt. Graham, but without obtaining any information of him or of his daughter, or where they went. Again and again he had wandered along the docks; and he was disconsolately passing up Sparling Street, when the loud melody of the seamen in the boarding-house attracted his attention. It reminded him of old associations: he paused for a moment, and glanced upon the house, and, as the evening laughter ceased, a low, sweet voice, pouring forth a simple Scottish air, reached his ear. Peter now stood still: he listened;

"That voice!" he exclaimed audibly, and he shook as he spoke. He looked down towards the cellar: the ticket in the window caught his eye. He read the words, "A Girl's School kept here, by A. Graham." "I have found her!" he cried, clasping his hands together. He rushed down the few steps, he stood in the midst of them: "I have found her!" he repeated, as he entered. His voice fell like a sunbeam on the cheerless heart of the fair vocalist. "Peter! my own!"—she exclaimed, starting to her feet: she could not utter more; she would have fallen to the ground, but Peter caught her to his arms.

I need not describe the scene that followed: that night they left the hovel which had served as a grave for their misfortunes:—In a week they arrived at Foxlaw, and within a month old and young in the village danced at a joyful wedding. I may only add, that, a few weeks after his marriage, Peter read in the papers an advertisement, headed: "Upset Price Greatly Reduced—Desirable Property in the neighbourhood of Foxlaw," &c. It was the very farm now offered for sale of which Peter was to have become a tenant some twelve years before, and was the remnant of the estates of the hopeful Laird Horslie; and Peter became the purchaser: the old skipper regained his wonted health and cheerfulness; and Betty Paterson lived to tell her grandchildren, "she aye said their father was a gentleman, and her words cam true." Even the old schoolmaster, who had styled him, "we'er-do-weel Peter," said he "had aye predicted o' Mr. Paterson, even when a callant, that he would turn out an extraordinary man."

THE PRODIGAL SON.

The early sun was melting away the coronets of grey clouds on the brows of the mountains, and the lark, as if proud of its plumage, and surveying itself in an illuminated mirror, carolled over the bright water of Keswick, when two strangers met upon the side of the lofty Skiddaw. Each carried a small bag and a hammer, betokening that their common errand was to search for objects of geological interest. The one appeared fifty, the other some twenty years younger. There is something in the solitude of the everlasting hills, which makes men, who are strangers to each other, despise the ceremonious introductions of the drawing-room. So was it with our geologists; their place of meeting, their

common pugfult, produced an instantaneous familiarity. 'They spent the day, and dined on the mountain side together. They shared the contents of their flasks with each other; and ere they began to descend the hill, they felt, the one towards the other, as though they had been old friends. They had begun to take the road towards Keswick, when the elder said to the younger; "My meeting with you to day recalls to my recollection a singular meeting which took place between a friend of mine and a stranger, about seven years ago, upon the same mountain. But, sir, I will relate to you the circumstances connected with it; and they might be called the history of the Prodigal Son."

He paused for a few moments, and proceeded: "About thirty years ago a Mr. Fenwick was possessed of property at Bam-boroughshire, worth about three hundred per annum: he had married while young, and seven fair children cheered the hearth, of a glad father and a happy mother. Many years of joy and peace had flown over them when Death visited their domestic circle, and passed his icy hand over the cheek of their first born; and for five successive years, as their children opened into manhood and womanhood, the unwelcome visiter entered their dwelling, till of their little flock there was but one, the youngest, left. And, O sir, in the leaving of that one, lay the cruelty of Death; to have taken him, too, would have been an act of mercy: his name was Edward, and the love, the fondness, and the care which his parents had borne for all their children, were concentrated on him: His father, whose soul was stricken with affliction, yielded to his every wish; and his poor mother

^{would not permit}

The winds of Heaven to visit his cheek too roughly'

But you shall hear how cruelly he repaid their love; how murderously he returned their kindness: he was headstrong and wayward;—and though the small, still voice of affection was never wholly silent in his breast it was stifled by the storm of his passions and propensities. His first manifestation of open viciousness, was a delight in the brutal practice of cock-fighting; and he became a constant attender at every 'main' that took place in Northumberland: he was a habitual 'better,' and his losses were frequent; but hitherto his father, partly through fear, and partly from a too tender affection, had supplied him with money. A 'main' was to take place in the neighbourhood of Morpeth, and

he was present. Two noble birds were disfigured, the savage instruments of death were fixed upon them, and they were pitted against each other. 'A hundred to one on the Felton! Grey!' shouted Fenwick. 'Done for guineas!' replied another. 'Done! for guineas! Done!' repeated the prodigal; and the next moment the Felton Grey lay dead on the ground, pierced through the skull with the spur of the other: he rushed out of the cockpit; 'I shall expect payment to-morrow, Fenwick,' cried the other. The prodigal mounted his horse, and rode homeward with the fury of a madman. Kind as his father was, and had been, he feared to meet him or tell him the amount of his loss: his mother perceived his agony, and strove to soothe him.

'What is't that troubles thee, my bird?' inquired she: 'come, tell thy mother, darling?'

With an oath he cursed the mention of birds, and threatened to destroy himself.

'O Edward, love!' cried she, 'thou wilt kill thy poor mother; what can I do for thee?'

'Do for me!' he exclaimed, wildly, tearing his hair as he spoke; 'do for me, mother!—get me a hundred pounds, or my heart's blood shall flow at your feet.'

'Child! child!' said she, 'thou hast been at thy black trade of betting again! thou wilt ruin thy father, Edward, and break thy mother's heart. But give me thy hand on't, dear, that thou'lt bet no more, and I'll get thy father to give thee the money.'

'My father must not know,' he exclaimed; 'I will die rather.'

'Love! love!' replied she; 'but, without asking thy father, where could I get thee a hundred pounds?'

'You have some money, mother,' added he; and you have trinkets; jewellery!' He gasped, and hid his face as he spoke.

'Thou shalt have them! thou shalt have them, child!' said she, 'and all the money thy mother has—only say thou wilt bet no more. Dost thou promise, Edward—oh, dost thou promise thy poor mother this?'

'Yes, yes!' he cried. And he burst into tears as he spoke.

He received the money, and the trinkets, which his mother had not worn for thirty years, and hurried from the house, and with them discharged a portion of his dishonourable debt.

He, however, did bet again; and I might tell you how he became a horse-racer also; but you shall hear that too: he was now about two and twenty, and for several years

he had been acquainted with Eleanor Robinson; a fair being, made up of gentleness and love, if ever woman was. She was an orphan, and had a fortune at her own disposal of three thousand pounds. Her friends had often warned her against the dangerous habits of Edward Fenwick. But she had given him her young heart—to him she had plighted her first vow; and though she beheld his follies, she trusted that time and affection would wean him from them; and with a heart full of hope and love, she bestowed on him her hand and fortune. Poor Eleanor! her hopes were vain, her love unworthily bestowed.—Marriage produced no change on the habits of the prodigal son and thoughtless husband. For weeks he was absent from his own house, betting and carousing with his companions of the turf; while one vice led the way to another, and by almost imperceptible degrees, he unconsciously sunk into all the habits of a profligate.

It was about four years after his marriage when according to his custom, he took leave of his wife for a few days, to attend the meeting at Doncaster.

'Good-by, Eleanor, dear,' said he gaily, as he rose to depart, and kissed her cheek; 'I shall come back within five days.'

'Well, Edward, said she, tenderly, 'if you will go, you must—but think of me, and think of these our little ones. And with a tear in her eye, she desired a lovely boy and girl to kiss their father. 'Now, think of us, Edward,' he added; 'and do not bet, dearest—do not bet!'

'Nonsense, duck! nonsense!' said he; 'did you ever see me lose? do you suppose that Ned Fenwick is not 'wide awake?' I know my horse, and its rider too: Barrymore's Highlander can distance every thing. But it could not, I have it from a sure hand; the other horses are all 'safe.' Do you understand that—eh?'

'No, I do not understand it, Edward, nor do I wish to understand it,' added she; 'but farewell, as you love me—as you love our children—risk nothing.'

'Love you, little gipsy! you know I'd die for you,' said he; and with all his sins, the prodigal spoke the truth. 'Come, Nell, kiss me again, my dear; no long faces: don't take leaf out of my old mother's book; you know me saying: never venture never win—fair play never won fair ladye!' Good-by, love by Ned—good-by mother's darling,' said

he, addressing the children as he left the house.

He reached Doncaster: he had paid his guinea for admission to the betting rooms: he had whispered with, and slipped a fee to all the shrivelled, sin-and-bone, half-melted little mannikins, called jockeys, to ascertain the secrets of their horses. 'All's safe,' said the prodigal to himself, rejoicing in his heart.—The great day of the festival, the important St. Leger, arrived: hundreds were ready to back Highlander against the field—amongst them was Edward Fenwick: he would take any odds; he did take them; he staked his all. 'A thousand to five hundred on Highlander against the field,' he cried, as he stood near the betting-post. 'Done!' shouted a mustachioed peer of the realm, in a barouche by his side. 'Done!' cried Fenwick, for the double, if you like, my lord.' 'Done!' added the peer; 'and I'll treble it if you dare!'—'Done!' rejoined the prodigal, in the confidence and excitement of the moment. 'Done! my lord.' The eventful hour arrived: there was not a false start. The horses took the ground beautifully. Highlander led the way at his ease; and his rider in a tartan jacket and mazarine cap, looked confident. Fenwick stood near the winning-post, grasping the rails with his hands; he was still confident, but he could not chase the admonition of his wife from his mind. The horses were not to be seen: his very soul became like a solid and sharp-edged substance within his breast. Of the twenty horses that started four again appeared in sight. 'The tartan yet! the tartan yet!' shouted the crowd: Fenwick raised his eyes: he was blind with anxiety; he could not discern them; still he heard the cry of 'The tartan!' and his heart sprang to his mouth. 'Well done, orange! the orange will have it!' was the next cry. He again looked up, but he was more blind than before. 'Beautiful! beautiful! Go it tartan! Well done, orange!' shouted the spectators: 'a noble race! neck and neck; six to five on the orange!' He became almost deaf as well as blind; 'Now for it! now for it! it won't do, tartan! hurra! orange has it!'

'Liar!' exclaimed Fenwick, starting as if from a trance, and grasping the spectator who stood next him by the throat—'I am not ruined!—In a moment he dropped his hands by his side, he leaned over the railing, and gazed vacantly on the ground. His flesh writhed, and his soul groaned in agony.

'Eleanor!—my poor Eleanor!' cried the prodigal. The crowd hurried towards the winning-post—he was left alone. The peer with whom he had betted, came behind him; he touched him on the shoulder with his whip—'Well my covy?' said the nobleman, 'you have lost it.'

Fenwick gazed on him with a look of fury and despair and repeated—'Lost it!—I am ruined—*soul* and body!—wife and children ruined!'

'Well, Mr. Fenwick,' said the sporting peer, 'I suppose, if that be the case, you won't come to Doncaster again in a hurry. But my settling day is to-morrow—you know I keep sharp accounts, and if you have not the *'ready'* at hand, I shall expect an equivalent—you understand me.'

So saying, he rode off, leaving the prodigal to commit suicide if he chose. It is enough for me to tell you that, in his madness and his misery, and from the influence of what he called his sense of honour, he gave the winner a bill for the money—payable at sight. My feelings will not permit me to tell you how the poor infatuated madman more than once made attempts upon his own life; but the latent love of his wife and of his children prevailed over the rash thought, and, in a state bordering on insanity, he presented himself before the beings he had so deeply injured.

I might describe to you how poor Eleanor was sitting in their little parlour, with her boy upon a stool by her side, and her little girl on her knee, telling them fondly that their father would be home soon, and anon singing to them the simple nursery rhyme—

'Hush, my babe, baby hunting,
Your father's at the hunting,' &c.

when the door opened, and the guilty father entered—his hair clotted—his eyes rolling with the wildness of despair, and the cold sweat raining down his pale cheeks.

'Eleanor! Eleanor!' he cried, as he flung himself upon a sofa.

She placed her little daughter on the floor: she flew towards him: 'My Edward!' she cried, 'what is it, love? something troubles you?'

'Curse me, Eleanor!' exclaimed the wretched prodigal, turning his face from her; 'I have ruined you! I have ruined my children! I am lost for ever!'

'No, my husband!' exclaimed the best of wives, 'your Eleanor will not curse you.

Tell me the worst, and I will bear it: cheerfully bear it, for my Edward's sake.'

'You will not: you cannot, cried he; 'I have sinned against you as never man sinned against woman. Oh! if you would spit upon the very ground where I tread, I would feel it as an alleviation of my sufferings; but your sympathy, your assertion, makes my very soul destroy itself! Eleanor! Eleanor! if you have mercy, hate me: tell me: shew me that you do!'

'O Edward!' said she, imploringly, 'was it thus when your Eleanor spurned every offer for your sake, when you pledged to her everlasting love? She has none but you, and can you speak thus? O husband! if you will forsake me, forsake not my poor children. Tell me! only tell me the worst, and I will rejoice to endure it with my Edward!'

'Then,' cried Fenwick, 'if you will add to my misery by professing to love a wretch like me, know you are a beggar! and I have made you one! Now, can you share beggary with me?'

She repeated the word 'Beggary!' she clasped her hands together: for a few moments she stood in silent anguish: her bosom heaved; the tears gushed forth: she flung her arms around her husband's neck; 'Yes!' she cried, 'I can meet even beggary with my Edward!'

'O Heaven!' cried the prodigal; 'would that the earth would swallow me! I cannot stand this!'

I will not dwell upon the endeavours of the fond, forgiving wife, to soothe and comfort her unworthy husband: nor yet will I describe to you the anguish of the prodigal's father and of his mother, when they heard the extent of his folly and of his guilt. Already he had cost the old man much, and with a heavy and sorrowful heart he proceeded to his son's house, to comfort his daughter-in-law. When he entered she was endeavouring to cheer her husband with a tune upon the harpsichord; though, Heaven knows there was no music in her breast, save that of love; enduring love!

'Well, Edward,' said the old man, as he took a seat, 'what is this that thou hast done now?' The prodigal was silent.

'Edward' continued the grey haired parent, 'I have had deaths in my family; many deaths, and thou knowest it: but I never had to blush for a child but thee! I have felt sorrow, but thou hast added shame. sorrow'—

'O father!' cried Eleanor, imploringly, 'do not upbraid my poor husband.'

The old woman wept; he prest her hand, and, with a groan, said, 'I am ashamed that thou shouldst call me father, sweetest; but if thou canst forgive him, I should. He is all that is left of me; all that the hand of death has spared me in this world! Yet, Eleanor, his conduct is a living death to me: it is worse than all that I have suffered.

When affliction pressed heavily upon me, and year after year, I followed my dear children to the grave, my neighbours sympathised with me; they mingled their tears with mine, but now, child—oh, now, I am ashamed to hold up my head amongst them! O Edward man! if thou hast no regard for thy father or thy heart-broken mother, hast thou no affection for thy poor wife? canst thou bring her and thy helpless children to ruin? But that, I may say, thou hast done already! Son! son! if thou wilt murder thy parents, hast thou no mercy for thine own flesh and blood? wilt thou destroy thine own offspring? O Edward! if there be any sin that I will repent upon my deathbed, it will be that I have been a too-indulgent father to thee, that I am the author of thy crimes!

'No, father!' cried the prodigal; 'my sins are my own. I am their author, and my soul carries its own punishment! Spurn me! cast me off! disown me for ever! it is all I ask of you! You despise me; hate me too, and I will be less miserable!'

'O Edward!' said the old man, 'thou art a father, but little dost thou know a father's heart! Disown thee! Cast thee off, sayest thou! As soon could the graves of thy brothers give up their dead! Never, Edward! never! O son, wouldst thou but reform thy ways: would'st thou but become a husband worthy of our dear Eleanor: and after all, he suffering thou hast brought upon her, and the shame thou hast brought upon thy family, I would part with my last shilling for thee, Edward! though I should go into the workhouse myself,

You are affected, sir: I will not harrow up your feelings by further describing the interview between the father and his son. The misery of the prodigal was remorse, not penitence. It is sufficient for me to say, that the old man took a heavy mortgage on his property, and Edward Fenwick commenced business as a wine and spirit merchant in Newcastle. But, sir, he did not attend upon business: and I need not tell you that such being the case, business was too proud a

customer to attend upon him. Neither did he forsake his old habits, and within two years he became involved, deeply involved. Already to sustain his tottering credit, his father had been brought to the verge of ruin. During his residence in Bamberoughshire, he had become acquainted with many individuals carrying on a contraband trade with Holland—to amend his desperate fortunes, he recklessly embarked in it. In order to obtain a part in the partnership of a lugger, he used his father's name! This was the crowning evil in the prodigal's drama: he made the voyage himself. They were pursued and overtaken when attempting to effect a landing near the Coquet. He escaped. But the papers of the vessel bespoke her as being chiefly the property of his father. Need I tell you you that this was a finishing blow to the old man?

Edward Fenwick had ruined his wife and family: he had brought ruin on his father, and was himself a fugitive. He was pursued by the law: he fled from them; and he would have fled from their remembrance, if he could. It was now, sir, that the wrath of Heaven was showered upon the head, and began to touch the heart of the prodigal.—Like Cain, he was a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth. For many months he wandered in a distant part of the country—his body was emaciated and clothed with rags, and hunger preyed upon his very heart-strings. It is a vulgar thing, sir, to talk of hunger—but they who have never felt it, know not what it means. He was fainting by the wayside; his teeth were grating together, the tears were rolling down his cheeks. 'The servants of my father's house,' he cried, 'have bread enough, and to spare, while I perish with hunger;' and, continuing the language of the prodigal in the Scriptures, he said—'I will arise and go unto my father, and say, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight.'

With a slow and tottering step, he arose to proceed on his journey to his father's house.

A month had passed—for every day he made less progress—ere the home of his infancy appeared in sight. It was noon, and, when he saw it, he sat down in the little wood by a hill-side, and wept, until it had become dusk; for he was ashamed of his rags. He drew near the house, but none came forth to welcome him. With a timid hand he rapped at the door, but none answered him. A stranger came from one of the out-houses and inquired—'What dost thou want man?'

'Mr. Fenwick,' feebly answered the prodigal.

'Mr. Fenwick,' slowly returned the stranger.

'Why, naeboddy lives there,' said the other, 'and auld Fenwick died in Morpeth jail, mair than three months sin'!

'Died in Morpeth jail!' groaned the miserable being, and fell against the door of the house that had been his father's.

'I tell ye, ye cannot get there,' continued the other.

'Sir,' replied Edward, 'pity me—and, oh, tell me, is not Mrs. Fenwick here—or her daughter-in-law?'

'I know noughts about them,' said the stranger; 'I'm put in charge here by the trustees.'

Want and misery kindled all their fires in the breast of the fugitive. He groaned, and, partly from exhaustion, partly from agony, sank upon the ground. The other lifted him to a shed, where cattle were wont to be fed. His lips were parched, his languid eyes rolled vacantly. 'Water! give me water!' he muttered, in a feeble voice; and a cup of water was brought to him. He gazed wistfully in the face of the person who stood over him: he would have asked for bread; but in the midst of his sufferings, pride was yet strong in his heart, and he could not. The stranger, however, was not wholly destitute of humanity.

'Poor wretch!' said he, 'ye look very fatigued; dow ye think ye cud eat a bit bread, if I were gie'n it to thee?'

Tears gathered in the lustreless eyes of the prodigal; but he could not speak. The stranger left him, and, returning, placed a piece of bread in his hand. He ate a morsel; but his very soul was sick, and his heart loathed to receive the food for lack of which he was perishing.

Vain, sir, were the inquiries after his wife, his children, and his mother; all that he could learn was, that they had left Northumberland together, but where, none knew. He also learned that it was understood amongst his acquaintances that he had put a period to his existence, and that this belief was entertained by his family. Months of wretchedness followed, and Fenwick, in despair, enlisted into a foot regiment, which, within twelve months, was ordered to embark for Egypt. At this period, the British were anxious to hide the remembrance of their unsuccessful attack upon Cadiz, and resolved

to wrench the ancient kingdom of the Pharoahs from the grasp of the proud armies of Napoleon. The cabinet, therefore, on the surrender of Malta, having seconded the views of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, several transports were fitted out to join the squadron under Lord Keith. In one of those transports, the penitent prodigal embarked. You are too young to remember it, sir; but at that period a love of country was more widely than ever becoming the ruling passion of every man in Britain; and, with all his sins, his follies, and his miseries, such a feeling glowed in the breast of Edward Fenwick. He was weary of existence, and he longed to listen to the war-horse, and the shout of its rider, and as they might rush on the invulnerable phalanx, and its breast-work of bayonets, to mingle in the ranks of heroes; and, rather than pine in inglorious grief, to sell his life for the welfare of his country; or, like the gallant Graham, amidst the din of war, and the confusion of glory, to forget his sorrows. The regiment to which he belonged, joined the main army off the Bay of Marmorice, and was the first that, with the gallant Moore at its head, on the memorable seventh of March, raised the shout of victory, Fenwick fell wounded on the field, and his comrades, in their triumph, passed over him. He had some skill in surgery, and he was enabled to bind up his wound. He was fainting upon the burning sand, and he was creeping amongst the bodies of the slain, for a drop of moisture to cool his parched tongue, when he perceived a small bottle in the hands of a dead officer. It was half filled with wine—he eagerly raised it to his lips—'Englishman!' cried a feeble voice, 'for the love of Heaven! give me one drop—only only one!—or I die!' He looked around—a French officer, apparently in the agonies of death, was vainly endeavouring to raise himself on his side, and stretching his hand towards him. 'Why should I live?' cried the wretched prodigal, 'take it, take it, and live, if you desire life.' He raised the wounded Frenchman's head from the sand—he placed the bottle to his lips—he untied his sash, and bound up his wounds. The other pressed his hand in gratitude. They were conveyed from the field together. Fenwick was unable to follow the army, and he was disabled from continuing in the service. The French officer recovered, and he was grateful for the poor service that had been rendered to him; and previous to his being sent off with other prisoners, he gave a present of a thousand francs.

to the joyless being whom he called his deliverer.

I have told you that Fenwick had some skill in surgery: he had studied some years for the medical profession, but abandoned it for the turf and its vices. He proceeded to Alexandria, where he began to practise as a surgeon, and, amongst an ignorant people, gained reputation. Many years passed, and he had acquired, if not riches at least an independency. Repentance also had penetrated his soul. He had inquired long and anxiously after his family. He had but few other relatives; and to all of them he had anxiously written, imploring them to acquaint him with the residence of the beings whom he had brought to ruin, but whom he still loved. Some returned no answer to his applications, and others only said that they knew nothing of his wife, of his mother, or of his children, nor whether they yet lived; all they knew was, that they had endeavoured to hide the shame he had brought upon them from the world. These words were daggers to his bruised spirit; but he knew he deserved them, and he prayed that Heaven would grant him the consolation and the mercy that was denied him on earth.

Somewhat more than seven years ago, he returned to his native country; and he was wandering on the very mountain where, to-day, I met you, when he entered into conversation with a youth apparently about three or four and twenty years of age; and they spent the day together as we have done. Fenwick was lodging in Keswick, and as toward evening, they proceeded along the road together, they were overtaken by a storm. 'You must accompany me home,' said the young man, 'until the storm be passed—my mother's house is at hand.'—and he conducted him to yonder lonely cottage, whose white walls you perceive peering through the trees by the water-side. It was dusk: two ladies sat; the one appeared about forty, the other three-score and ten. They welcomed the stranger graciously. He ascertained that they let out the rooms of their cottage to visitors to the lakes, during the summer season. He expressed a wish to become their lodger, and made some observations on the beauty of the situation.

'Yes, sir,' said the younger lady, 'the situation is, indeed, beautiful; but I have seen it when the water, and the mountains around it, could impart no charm to its dwellers. Providence has, indeed, been kind to us;

and our lodgings have seldom been empty; but, sir, when we entered it, it was a sad house indeed. My poor mother-in-law and myself had experienced many sorrows; yet my poor fatherless children—for, I might call them fatherless—and she wept as she spoke—'with their innocent prattle, soothed our affliction. But my little Eleanor, who was loved by every one, began to droop day by day. It was a winter night—the snow was on the ground—I heard my little darling give a deep sigh upon my bosom. I started up. I called to my poor mother. She brought a light to the bed side—and I found my sweet child dead upon my breast. It was a long and sad night, as we sat by the dead body of my Eleanor, with no one near us; and, after she was buried, my poor Edward there, as he sat by our side at night, would draw forward to his knee the stool on which his sister sat—while his grand mother would glance at him fondly, and push aside the stool with her foot, that I might not see it; but I saw it all.'

The twilight had deepened in the little parlour, and its inmates could not perfectly distinguish the features of each other; but, as the lady spoke, the soul of Edward Fenwick glowed within him: his heart throbbed: his breathing became thick: the sweat burst upon his brow 'Pardon me, lady!' he cried, in agony; 'but oh! tell me your name!'

'Fenwick, sir,' replied she.

'Eleanor! my injured Eleanor!' he exclaimed, flinging himself at her feet; 'I am Edward, your guilty husband! Mother! can you forgive me? My son! my son! intercede for your guilty father!'

Ah, sir, there needed no intercession—their arms were around his neck—the prodigal was forgiven! 'Behold,' continued the narrator, "yonder from the cottage, comes the mother, the wife, and the son of whom I have spoken! I will introduce you to them—you must stop with me to-night—start not, sir—I am Edward Fenwick, the Prodigal Son!"

SIR PATRICK HUME,

A TALE OF THE HOUSE OF MARCHMONT.

Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth was elected representative of the county of Berwick in the year 1665, being then in the twenty-fifth year of his age. He was a lover of freedom, a lover of his country, and a staunch Presbyterian. In those days, however, a love of freedom was a dangerous principle either to avow or to carry into Parliament. The tyrant Charles, whom some falsely call the Merry Monarch, was then attempting to rule the empire with a rod of iron. You have all heard of his Long Parliament, and of his afterwards governing the country like an absolute tyrant, without a Parliament at all: fettered and servile as Parliaments then were, young Hume had boldly stepped forward as the advocate of civil and religious liberty; and when the arbitrary monarch sent down a mandate to Scotland for a levy of men and of money, that he might carry his plans of despotism the more effectually into execution, Sir Patrick resisted the slavishness with which it was about to be obeyed.

"What!" exclaimed he, "are we mere instruments in the hands of the King; creatures appointed to minister to his pleasures? Are we not representatives of the people of Scotland? the representatives of their wants and their wishes, and the defenders of their rights? and shall we, as such, at the mere nod of a monarch, drag them from following their plough in the valley, or attending their hirsels on the hill? shall we do these things, and lay contributions on their cattle, on their corn, and on their coffers, merely because his Majesty wills it? Pause, my countrymen. The King has no authority to compel such a measure, and it can only be rendered legal by the concurrence of the assembled representatives of the people."

"Treason!" vociferated the Duke of Lauderdale, who was the arch-minion of Charles: "before the Parliament of Scotland, I denounce Sir Patrick Hume as a dangerous man; as a plotter against the life and dignity of our sovereign lord the King!"

"What!" exclaimed Sir Patrick, indignantly fixing his eyes upon Lauderdale, "though there may be amongst us a slave who would sell his country for a royal smile, I still hope that this is a free Parliament, and it concerns all the members to be free in what concerns the nation."

From that day Sir Patrick Hume became

a suspected man, and the eyes of the King's creatures were upon him: and when two years afterwards Charles endeavoured to put down the people by the sword, and establish garrisons throughout the country, again the laird of Polwarth stood foremost in the ranks of opposition, and resisted his power. The King accordingly ordered his privy council to crush so dangerous a spirit, and Sir Patrick was confined in Stirling Castle, where, with the exception of a short interval, he was imprisoned for two years.

Britain had long been distracted with the pretended discovery of fabulous or ridiculous plots against the royal family; and the perjury of paid miscreants, like the infamous Titus Oates, was causing the scaffolds to run with blood. But tyranny being glutted with Catholic blood, and the extinguishing of what were called Popish plots, the myrmidons of Charles (who lived a libertine, and died a Papist) professed that they had discovered a Protestant plot against his royal person. In this plot, the incorruptible Algernon Sydney, Lord Russell, Mr. Bailie of Jerviswoode, and Sir Patrick Hume, were included. They beheld their common country withering and wasting beneath the grasp of a tyrant; and true it is they had united together to restore it to freedom, but they were innocent of designs against his life, or even of a wish to dethrone him. They did not, however, act sufficiently in concert, and were unable to bring their plans into operation. A price was set upon their heads; some fled into exile, and others sought refuge on the mountain and in the wilderness, whilst the amiable Russell died upon the scaffold.

It was near nightfall, in the month of September, 1684, when Jamie Winter, who was joiner on the estate of Polwarth, ran breathless up to Redbraes Castle, and knocked loudly at the door. It was opened by John Allan, the land-steward, who perceiving his agitation, inquired:

"In the name o' gudeeness, Jamie, what's happened, or what do ye want?"

"Dinna ask, Maister Allan," replied Jamie, "but for Heaven's sake tell me is Sir Patrick at hame? and let me speak to him presently as ye value his life."

"Follow me then, Jamie," said the other, "and come in quietly, that the servants mayna observe onything extraordinar', for we live in times when a man canna trust his ain brither."

The honest joiner was ushered into a room where Sir Patrick sat in the midst of his family, acting at once as their schoolmaster and their playmate.

"Weel, James," said the laird, "I understand ye hae been at Berwick the day, ye've got early back: what uncos heard ye there?"

"I watna, Sir Patrick," replied the other; "Now a-days I think there's naething unco that can happen. Satan seems to have been let loose on our poor misgoverned country: but I wish to speak to your honour very particularly, and in private if you please."

"You may speak on, James," said the laird; "I am private in the midst o' my ain family."

"Wi' your guid leave, sir," returned the cautious servant, "I wad rather the bairns were oot o' the way, for what I hae to say is no proper for them to hear, and the sooner ye are acquainted wi' it the better."

Sir Patrick led the younger children out of the room, but requested Lady Polwarth and her eldest daughter Grizel, a lovely dark-haired girl about twelve years of age, to stop.

"You are the bearer of evil tidings, James," said he as he returned, "but you may tell them now: it is meet that my wife should hear them if they concern me: and," added he, taking Grizel's hand in his, "I keep no secrets from my little secretary."

"God bless her!" said James; "she's an auld-farrant bairn, as wise as she's honny, I ken that. But I am indeed the hearer of evil tidings. A party o' troopers arrived at Berwick this morning, and it was nae secret here that they would be baith at Jerviswoode and Redbraes before midnight. I heard them alk o' the premium that was set upon your le, and slipped out o' the town immediately, without performing a single transaction, or speaking a word to a living creature. How ye've got along the road is mair than I can tell, for I was literally sick, blind, and desperate wi' grief. I've this minute arrived, and whatever can be done to save you can be done one instantly."

Lady Polwarth burst into tears. Sir Patrick grasped the hand of his faithful servant. Little Grizel gazed in her father's face with a look of silent despair, but neither spoke nor wept,

"Oh, fly! fly instantly, my dear husband!" cried Lady Polwarth, "and Heaven direct you."

"Be composed my love," said Sir Patrick:

"I fear that flight is impossible; but some means of evading them may perhaps be devised."

"O my ledly," said Jamie Winter, "to flee is out o' the question a'thegither. Government has its spies at every turn o' the road; in every house iff the country, even in this house. Our only hope is to conceal Sir Patrick; but how or where is beyond my comprehension."

Many were the schemes devised by the anxious wife; many the suggestions of her husband, and honest Jamie proposed numerous plans: but each was in its turn rejected as being unsafe. More than an hour had passed in these anxious deliberations; within three hours more, and the King's troops would be at his gate. Grizel had, till now, remained silent, and dashing away the first tear that rolled down her cheek, she flung her arms around her father's neck, and exclaimed, in an eager and breathless whisper--

"I ken a place faither; I ken a place that the King's troopers and his spies will never find out: and I'll stop beside ye to bear ye company."

"Bless my bairn!" said Sir Patrick, pressing her to his breast; "and where's the place dearest?"

"The aisle below Polwarth kirk, faither," returned Grizel; "nae trooper will find out such a hiding place; for the mouth's a bit wce hole, and the long grass, and the docks and the nettles grow over it, and I could slip out and in without trampling them down; and naebody would think o' seeking ye there, faither."

Lady Polwarth shuddered, and Sir Patrick pressed the cheek of his lovely daughter to his lips.

"Save us a', bairn!" said Jamie, "there's surely something no earthly about your ledlyship, for ye hae mair sense than us a' put thegither. The aisle is the very place. I'll steal awa, an' hae a kind o' bed put up in it, and tak other tva or three hits o' necessary things; and Sir Patrick ye'll slip out o' the house an' meet me there as soon as possible!" Within an hour Sir Patrick had joined Jamie Winter in the dark and dismal aisle. The humble bed was soon and silently fitted up, and the faithful servant, wishing his master "fareweel," left him alone in his dreary prison house. Slow and heavily the hours of darkness moved on. He heard the trampling of the troopers' horses galloping in quest of him. The oaths and the imprecations of the riders

fell distinctly on his ears. Amidst such sounds he heard them mention his name. But his heart failed not. He knelt down upon the cold damp floor of his hiding place, upon the bones of his fathers: and there in soundless but earnest prayer supplicated his father's God to protect his family, to save his country, to forgive his persecutors, and to do with him as seemed good in His sight. He arose; and laying himself upon his cold and comfortless bed, slept calmly: he awoke shivering and benumbed. Faint streaks of light stole into the place of death through its narrow aperture, dimly revealing the ghastly sights of the charnel-house, and the slow reptiles that crawled along the floor. Again night came on, and the shadows of light, if I may use the expression, which revealed his cell, died away. A second morning had come, and a second time the feeble rays had been lost in utter darkness. It was near midnight, and the slender stock of provisions which he had brought with him were nigh exhausted: he started from his lowly couch: he heard a rustling among the weeds at the mouth of the aisle; he heard some one endeavouring to remove the fragment of an old grave-stone that covered it.

"Father!" whispered an eager voice; "it is me; yer ain Grizel!"

"My own, devoted, my matchless child!" said Sir Patrick, stretching his hands towards the aperture, and receiving her in his arms.

She sat down beside him on the bed; she detailed the search of the troopers; she stated that they were watched in their own house; that a spy was set over the very victuals that came from their table, lest he should be concealed near, and fed by his family.

"But what of that?" continued the light-hearted and heroic girl; "while my plate is supplied, my father's shall not be empty: and here," added she, laughing, "here is a flask of wine, cakes, and a sheep's head. But I will tell you a story about the sheep's head. It was placed on a plate before me at dinner-time. The servant was out of the room, nae-body was looking, and I whupped it into my apron. Little Sandy wanted a piece, and turning round for it and missing the head: 'Ah! mother!' he cried, 'our Grizzy has swallowed a sheep's head, bones and a', in a moment!' 'Whesht, laddie!' said my mother; 'eat ye next ane then.' 'Oh, ye greedy Grizzy!' said Sandy, haking his little nieve in my face; 'I'll mind you for this.' 'I'm sure Sandy will ne'er forget me,' said I, and

slipped away out to hide the sheep's head in my own room; and as soon as I thought nae-body was astir I creeped out quietly by the window, and got down here behind the hedges; and I'll come every night, father. But last night the troopers were still about the house."

In spite of his misery Sir Patrick laughed at the ingenuity of his beloved and heroic daughter; then wept and laughed again, and pressed her to his bosom.

He had passed many weeks in this cheerless dungeon, with no companion during the day save a volume of Buchanan's Psalms, but every night he was visited by his intrepid daughter, who at once supplied him with food, and beguiled the hours of his solitude: he was sitting in the gloomy cell conning over his favourite volume, the stone of the aperture had been pushed aside a few inches to admit the light more freely, and the weeds at the entrance were now bowed down and withered by the frost: a few boys were playing in the church-yard, and tossing a ball against the kirk. Being driven from the hand of an unskillful player, it suddenly bounded into the aisle. Sir Patrick started; and the book dropped from his hand. Immediately the aperture was surrounded by the boys, and the stone removed. They stood debating who should enter; but none had sufficient courage—at length one more hardy than the rest volunteered to enter, if another would follow him. The laird gave himself up as lost, for he knew that even the tale of a schoolboy would effect his ruin: he was aware he could disperse them with a single groan: but even that, when told to his enemies, might betray him. At length three agreed to enter, and the feet of the first already protruded into the aisle. Sir Patrick crept silently to its farthest corner, when the gruff voice of the old grave-digger reached his ears, shouting,

"The mischief's in the callants, an' nae guid—what are ye doing there? Do ye want the ghaists o' the auld Humes aboot yer lugs?"

The boys fled amain, and the old man came growling to the mouth of the aisle.

"The devil's in the bairns o' Polwarth," said he: "for they would disturb the very dead in their graves. I'll declare they've the stane frae the mouth o' the aisle!"

He stooped down, and Sir Patrick saw his grim visage through the aperture, and heard him thus continue his soliloquy, as he replaced the stone—

"Sorrow tak the hands that moved t'

"Ane! ye're hardly worth the covering up o'rain, for ye're a profitless hole to me; and I wane him that I should lay in ye next, he is where he likes, will garg the gute his friend, Bailie, gaed yesterday on a scaffold. A grave digger's a pair business, I am sorry to say, in our King's reign; an' the sient a man thrives but the common executioner."

So saying he enveloped Sir Patrick in utter darkness. That night Grizel and her father left the aisle together: from her he learned the particulars of what he had heard muttered by the grave-digger, that his friend, Mr. Bailie of Jarviswoode, had been executed the previous day.

Disguised, and in the character of a surgeon, he, by byways, reached London, and from thence fled to France. On the death of Charles, and when the bigot James ascended the throne, Sir Patrick was one of the leaders of the band of patriots who drew their swords in behalf of a Protestant succession.

That enterprise was unsuccessful; and after contending almost single handed against the enemies of his religion and his country, and his family sought refuge in a foreign land. He assumed the name of Dr. Peter Wallace, and they took up their abode in Utrecht. There, poverty and privations sought and found the exiles. They had parted with every domestic, and the lovely Grizel was the sole servant and helper of her mother, and when their work was done, the assistant of her father in the education of the younger children; for he had no longer the means of providing them a tutor. Yet theirs was a family of love—a family of happiness—and poverty purified their affections. But their remittances from Scotland were not only scanty but uncertain. Till now, Sir Patrick had borne his misfortunes with resignation and even cheerfulness; he cared not that he was stripped of attendants, and of every luxury of life; yet at times, the secret and unbidden tears would start into his eyes, as he held his wife and his fair daughter perching without a murmur, the most menial offices. But the measures of his trials was not yet full—luxuries were not only denied him, but he was without food to set before his children. The father wept, and his spirit waned with anguish. Grizel beheld his tears and she knew the cause. She spoke not, but hastening to her little cabinet, she took from a pair of jewelled bracelets, and wrapping herself up in a cloak, she took a basket under her arm, and hurried to the street. The gentleman glided along the streets of Utrecht, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, and

shunning the glance of the passengers, as if each knew her errand. She stood before a shop in which all manner of merchandize was exposed, and three golden balls were suspended over the door. She cast a timid gaze into the shop—thrice she passed and re-passed it, and repeated the timid glance:—she entered—she placed the bracelets upon the counter.

"How much?" was the laconic question of the shopman, Grizel burst into tears. He handed her a sum of money across the counter, and deposited the bracelets in his desk. She bounded from the shop with a heart and step light as a young bird in its first pride of plumage. She hastened home with her basket filled. She placed it upon the table. Lady Polworth wept, and fell upon her daughter's neck.

"Where have you been, Grizel?" faltered her father.

"Purchasing provisions for a bauble," said she; and the smile and the tear were seen on her cheek together.

But many were the visits which the gentle Grizel had to pay to the Golden Balls, while one piece of plate was pledged after another, that her father, and her mother, and her brethren, might eat and not die; and even then, the table of Sir Patrick, humble as it was, and uncertainly provided for, was open, to the needy of his countrymen. Thus three years passed; the memorable 1688 arrived. Sir Patrick was the friend, the counsellor, and supporter of King William: he arrived with him in England: he shared in his triumph. He was created Lord Polwarth, and appointed Sheriff of Berwickshire; and, in 1696, though not a lawyer, but an upright man, he was made Lord Chancellor of Scotland, and created Earl of Marchmont, and Lord Polworth, Redbraes, and Greenlaw. He was one of the most ardent promoters of the Union, and with it ceased his political career. In 1710, when the Tories came to power, the Earl being the staunchest Whig in Scotland, he was deprived of the sheriff of Berwickshire, but was reinstated in 1715. His lady being dead, he came to take up his residence in Berwick-upon-Tweed; and there, when the heroic Grizel, who was now a wife and a mother, (being married to the son of his unfortunate friend, Mr. Bailie of Jarviswoode,) came with her children and friends to visit him for the last time, as they danced in the hall, though unable to walk, he desired to be carried into the midst of them, and beating time with his foot—"See, Grizel," exclaimed the old pa-

triot, "though your father is unable to dance, he can still beat time with his foot."

Shortly after this he died in Berwick, on the 1st of August, 1724, in the eighty-third year of his age—leaving behind him an example of piety, courage, and patriotism, worthy the admiration of posterity.

CHARLES LAWSON.

"Tak a faither's advice, Betty, my woman," said Andrew Weir to his only daughter, "tak a faither's advice, an' avoid gaun blindfolded to your ruin. Ye are soon enough to marry these seven years yet. Marry! preserve us! for Linnaken what the generation is turning to; but I'll declare bits o' lasses now-a-days haena the dolls weel out o' their arms till they tak a guidman by the hand. But aboon everything earthly, I would impress it upon ye, bairn, that ye canna be ower carefu o' your company; mind that a character is a' a woman has to carry her through the world, and ye should guard it like the apple o' your e'e; and remember, that folk are aye judged o' frae the company they keep. Now, how often maun I warn ye no to be seen wi' Charles Lawson—he's a clever lad, nae doubt—naebody denies that; but O Betty, Betty, woman! would ye only reflect that a' gitts are no graces; and I am far mista'en if he has na a serpent's heart as weel as his tongue.—He has naething o' ther fear o' God before his een—ye canna deny that. In ae word, he is a wiid, thoughtless ne'er-do-weel; and I charge ye, I command ye, Betty, that ye ne'er speak to him again in your born days: or if ye do, ye surely will hae but little satisfaction to break your faither's heart, and bring him to the grave wi' sorrow and wi' shame—for that, Betty, that would be the end o't."

Elizabeth heard him, and bent her head upon her bosom to conceal her confusion.—The parental homily was too late—she was already the wife of Charles Lawson.

Having thus begun our story in the middle, it is necessary that we go back and inform the reader, in a few words, that Andrew Weir was a respectable farmer on the north side of the Tweed, and withal a decent and devout Presbyterian, and an elder in the kirk:—Charles Lawson's parents were originally from Northumberland. They had known better days, and at the period we have alluded to, were struggling with a hard farm in the neighborhood of Andrew Weir's. Charles was not exactly what his father-in-law had

described him; and were we to express his portrait in a line, we should say, he had blue eyes and a broad brow, a goodly form and an open heart. The ruglets which parted on Elizabeth's forehead were like the raven-wing, and loveliness, if not beauty, nestled around the dimples on her cheeks. The affection for each other began in childhood and grew with their years, till it became strong as their existence.

A few weeks after Andrew Weir had delivered the advice we have quoted to his daughter, Charles Lawson bade farewell to his parents, his wife, and his country, and proceeded to India, where a relative of his mother's had amassed a fortune, and while he refused to assist them in their distress, had promised to make provision for the son. As we are not writing a novel in three volumes, we shall not describe the scene of their parting, and tell with what agony, with what tears, and with what bitter words Charles tore himself from his father, his mother, and his yet unacknowledged wife. The imagination of the reader may supply the blank. Hope urged him to go—necessity compelled him.

After his departure, Elizabeth drooped like an early lily beneath the influence of a returning frost. There were whisperings among the matrons and maidens of the neighbouring village. They who had formerly courted her society began to shun it—and even the rude clown who lately stood abashed in her presence, approached her with indelicate familiarity. The fatal whisper first reached Andrew's ear at a meeting of the kirk-session of which he was a member. He returned home troubled in spirit, a miserable and a humbled man, for his daughter had been his pride. Poor Elizabeth confessed that she was married, and attempted to prove what she affirmed. But this afforded no gratification of her offence in the eyes of her rigid and offended father. "Oh, what hae I been born to suffer!" cried he, stamping his foot upon the ground—"Oh, you witch o' End! you Jezebel!—you disgrace o' kith and kin! Could naething, naething serve ye but breaking yer puir auld faither's heart? Get a' o' my sicht! get out o' my sight!" He remained silent for a few moments—the pain arose in his heart—tears gathered in his eyes. "But ye are still my bairn," he continued. "O Betty, Betty, woman! what hae ye brought us to!" Again he was silent, and again proceeded—"But I forgie ye, Betty—ye, naebody else will, yer faither will forgie, for yer mother's sake, for ye are a' that I

left o' her. But we canna haud up our heads again, in this pairt o' the country—that's impossible. I've lang thought o' gawn to America, and now I'm driven till't."

He parted with his farm, and in the ensuing spring proceeded with his daughter to Canada. We shall not enter upon his fortunes in the new world—he was still broken in spirit—and after twelve years' residence he was neither richer nor happier than when he left Scotland. Elizabeth was a young mother, and the smiles of her young son seemed to shorten the years of her exile; yet, ever as he returned his smile, the thought of the husband of her youth flashed back on her remembrance, and anguish and misery shot rough her bosom as the eagle darteth on her prey. Her heart was not broken, but it felt like a proud citadel, burying the determined garrison.

Charles Lawson had not been in India many months, when a party of native troops attacking the property of his relative, Charles, who had fallen wounded amongst them, was carried by them in their retreat into the interior of the country, where, for several years, he was cut off from all intercourse or communication with his countrymen. On obtaining his liberty, he found that his kinsman had been for some time dead, and had left him his heir. His wife—his parents—doubt and anxiety—impatient affliction—trembling hope, all hastened his return. At length the white cliffs of Albion appeared before him, like a fair cloud spread on the unruffled bosom of the ocean; and in a few days more, the green hills of his childhood met his anxious eye.

It was the grey hour of a summer night as he again approached the roof that sheltered his childhood. His horse, as if conscious of supporting an almost unconscious rider, stopped involuntarily at the threshold: he trembled upon the saddle as a leaf that rustles in the wind: he raised his hand to knock at the door, but again withdrew it. The inmates of the house, aroused by the sound of a horse, rapping at the door, came out to inquire the cause. Charles gazed upon them for a moment—it was a look of agony and disappointment—his heart gave one convulsive throb, and the icy sweat burst from his temples.—Does not—does not Mr. Lawson—live here? he inquired, almost gasping for words to convey the question.

"Mr. Lawson! na, na, sir," replied the chief of the group "it's lang since he gaed

awa. Ye ken he gaed a' wrang, puir man, and he's no lived here since the hard winter, for they didna come upon this parish."

"Did not come upon this parish!" exclaimed Charles; "heaven and earth! what do you mean?"

"Mean! what wad I mean," answered the other, "but just that they were removed to their ain parish—is there ony disgrace in that?"

"O', my father! my poor mother!" cried Charles, wildly.

"Mercy, sir!" rejoined the astonished farmer, "are ye Master Charles? Bairns! haste ye, tak the horse to the stable. Losh, Charles, man, an' how hae ye been? but ye dinna ken me—man, I'm yer auld schoolfellow, Bob Graham, and this is my wife, Mysie Allan—ye mind o' Mysie. Haste ye Mysie lass, kill twa ducks, an' the bairns an me will hool the pease. Really, Charles, man, I'm sae glad to see ye!"

During this harangue, Charles, led by his warm hearted friend, had entered the dwelling of his nativity; where Mr. Graham again continued—"Ye, aiblins, dinna ken that auld Andrew Weir was sae sair in the dorts when ye gaed awa, that he set off wi' Betty for America. But I hear they are coming hame again this back end. The bairn will be a stout callant now, and faith ye maun marry Betty, for she was a mensefu' lass."

Charles could only reply by exclaiming—"America! my wife! my child!"

Having ascertained where he would find his parents, early on the following morning he departed, and about five in the afternoon approached the village where he had been told they resided. When near the little burying-ground, he stopped to look upon the most melancholy funeral procession he had ever witnessed. The humble coffin scarce was coloured, and they who bore it seemed tired of their burden. Three or four aged and poor looking people walked behind it. Scarce was it lowered into the grave, ere all departed, save one, meanly clothed in widow's weeds, and bent rather with the load of grief than of years. She alone lingered, weeping over the hastily covered grave.

"She seems poor," said Charles, "and if I cannot comfort her, I may at least relieve her necessities;" and fastening his horse to the gate, he entered the churchyard.

She held an old handkerchief before her face, only removing it at intervals to steal a hurried glance at the new made grave.

"Good woman," said Charles, as he ap-

proached her; "your sorrows demand my sympathy—could I assist you?"

"No! no!" replied the poor widow, without raising her face—"but I thank you for your kindness. Can the grave give up its dead?"

"But why should you remain here?" said he with emotion; "tell me, could not I assist you?" And he placed a piece of money in her hand.

"No! no!" cried the widow, bitterly, and raising her head; "oh, that Mary Lawson should have lived to be offered charity on her husband's grave!"

"My mother! gracious heaven! my mother!" exclaimed Charles, casting his arm around her neck. Shall we describe the scene that followed? we will not, we cannot. He had seen his father laid in the dust, he had met his mother on his father's grave—but we cannot go on.

It was some weeks after this that he proceeded with his widowed mother to his native village, to wait the return of Elizabeth. Nor had he to wait; for on the day previous to his return, Elizabeth, her son, and her father, had arrived. Charles and his parent had reached Mr. Graham's—the honest farmer rushed to the door, and hurrying both towards the house, exclaimed, "Now, see if ye can find onybody that ye ken here!" His Elizabeth, his wife, his son, were there to meet him; the next moment she was upon his bosom, and her child clinging by her side, and gazing on his face: he alternately held both to his heart, the mother and her son.—Andrew Weir took his hand, his mother wept with joy and blessed her children. Bob Graham and his Mysie were as happy as their guests. Charles Lawson bought the farm which Andrew Weir had formerly tenanted; and our informant adds—they live in it still.

THE ORPHAN.

About forty years ago, a post-chase was a sight more novel in the little hamlet of Thorndean, than silk gowns in country churches, during the maidenhood of our great-grandmothers—and, as one drew up at the only public house in the village, the inhabitants, old and young, startled by the unusual and merry sound of its wheels, hurried to the street. The landlady, on the first notice of its approach, had hastily bestowed upon her person the additional recommendation of a clean cap and apron; and still tying

the apron strings, ran bustling to the door smiling, colouring, and courtesying and colouring again, to the yet unopened chaise. Poor soul! she knew not well how to behave—it was an epoch in her annals of in-keeping. At length the coachman, opened the door handed out a lady in widow's weeds; beautiful golden-haired child, apparently not exceeding five years of age, sprang to the ground without assistance, and grasped the extended hand. "What an image o' beauty!" exclaimed some half dozen bystanders as the fair child lifted her lovely face to smile to the eyes of her mother. The lady stepped feebly towards the inn, and, though the landlady's heart continued to practice sort of fluttering motion, which communicated a portion of its agitation to her hands, she waited upon her unexpected and uninvited guests with a kindness and humility, fully recompensed for the expertness of practised waiter. About half an hour after the arrival of her visitors, she was seen bustling from the door—her face, as the village said, bursting with importance. They were still in groups about their doors, and in the middle of the little street, discussing the mysterious arrival; and, as she hastened on her mission, she was assailed with a dozen such questions as these—"Wat ye wha she is?" "Is she ony great body?" "Ha'e ye ony guess wat brought her here?" and "Is ye bonny creature her ain bairn?" But to the odd and sundry other interrogatories, the important hostess gave for answer—"Hoot, I ha'e nae time to haver the noo." She stopped a small, but certainly the most gentle house in the village, occupied by a Mrs. Douglas, who, in the country phrase, was a very decent sort of an old body, and the widow a Cameronian minister. In the summer season, Mrs. Douglas let out her little parlour to lodgers, who visited the village to see health, or for a few weeks' retirement. She was compelled to do this from the narrowness of her circumstances; for, though she was "clever-handed woman," as her neighbour said, "she had a sair fight to keep up a appearance ony way like the thing ava." In a few minutes Mrs. Douglas, in a clean cap, a muslin kerchief round her neck, quilted black bombazeen gown, and snow-white apron followed the landlady up to the inn. In a short time she returned, the stranger lady leaning upon her arm, and the lovely child leaping like a young lamb before them. Days and weeks passed away, as the good people of Thorndean, notwithstanding

all their surmises and inquiries, were never regarding their new visiter; all they could learn was, that she was the widow of a young officer, who was one of the first that when Britain interfered with the French Revolution; and the mother and her child became known in the village by the designation of "Mrs. Douglas' two pictures!"—an appellation bestowed on them in reference to their beauty.

The beautiful destroyer, however, lay in the mother's heart, now paling her cheeks like the early lily, and again scattering over them the rose and the rainbow. Still dreaming of recovery, about eight months after her arrival in Thorndean, death stole over her like a sweet sleep. It was only a few moments before the angel hurled the fatal shaft, that the truth fell upon her soul. She was stretching forth her hand to her work-basket, her lovely child was prattling by her side, and Mrs. Douglas smiling like a parent on both, striving to conceal a tear while she smiled, when the breathing of her fairest became difficult, and the rose, which a moment before bloomed upon her countenance; vanished in a fitful streak. She flung her feeble arms around the neck of her child, who now wept upon her bosom, and exclaimed, "Oh! my Elizabeth, who will protect you now—my poor, poor orphan?" Mrs. Douglas sprang to her assistance. She said she had much to tell, and endeavoured to speak; but a gurgling sound only was heard in her throat; she panted for breath; the rosy streaks, deepening into blue, came and went upon her cheeks like the midnight dances of the northern lights; her eyes flashed with momentary brightness more than mortal, and the spirit fled. The fair orphan still clung to the neck, and kissed the warm lips of her dead mother.

As yet she was too young to see all the eariness of the desolation around her, but she was indeed an orphan in the most cruel meaning of the word. Her mother had preserved a mystery over her sorrows and the circumstances of her life, which Mrs. Douglas had never endeavoured to penetrate. And now she was left to be as mother to the helpless child, for she knew not if she had another friend; and all that she had heard of the mother's history was recorded on the granite stone, which she placed over her grave—"Here resteth the body of Isabella Morton, widow of Captain Morton; she died amongst us a stranger, but beloved." The whole property to which the fair orphan came heir by the death of her mother, did

not amount to fifty pounds, and amongst the property no document was found which could throw any light upon who were her relatives, or if she had any. But the heart of Mrs. Douglas had already adopted her as a daughter; and, circumscribed as her circumstances were, she trusted that He who provideth food for the very birds of heaven, would provide the orphan's morsel.

Years rolled on, and Elizabeth Morton grew in stature and in beauty, the pride of her protector, and the joy of her age. But the infirmities of years grew upon her foster-mother, and disabling her habits of industry stern want entered her happy cottage. Still Elizabeth appeared only as a thing of joy, contentment and gratitude; and often did her evening song beguile her aged friend's sigh into a smile. And to better their hard lot, she hired herself to watch a few sheep upon the neighbouring hills, to the steward of a gentleman named Somerville, who, about the time of her mother's death, had purchased the estate of Thorndean. He was but little beloved, for he was a hard master, and a bad husband; and more than once he had been seen at the hour of midnight, in the silent churchyard, standing over the grave of Mrs. Morton. This gave rise to not a few whisperings respecting the birth of poor Elizabeth. He had no children, and a nephew who resided in his house was understood to be his heir. William Somerville was about a year older than our fair orphan; and as he could escape the eye of his uncle, he would fly to the village to seek out Elizabeth as a playmate. And now, while she tended the few sheep, he would steal round the hills, and placing himself by her side, teach her the lessons he had that day been taught, while his arm in innocence rested on her neck, their glowing cheeks touched each other, and her golden curls played around them. Often were their peaceful lessons broken by the harsh voice and the blows of his uncle. But still William stole to the presence of his playmate and pupil, until he had completed his fourteenth year; when he was to leave Thorndean, preparatory to entering the army. He was permitted to take a hasty farewell of the villagers, for they all loved the boy, but he went only to the cottage of Mrs. Douglas. As he entered, Elizabeth wept, and he also burst into tears. Their friend saw the yearnings of a young passion that might terminate in sorrow; and taking his hand, she prayed God to prosper him, and bade him farewell. She was leading him to

the door, when Elizabeth raised her tearful eyes; he beheld them, and their meaning, and leaping forward, threw his arms round her, and printed the first kiss on her forehead! "Do not forget me Elizabeth," he cried, and hurried from the house.

Seven years from this period passed away—The lovely girl was now transformed into the elegant woman, in the summer majesty of her beauty. For four years Elizabeth had kept a school in the village, to which her gentleness and winning manners drew prosperity; and her gray-haired benefactress enjoyed the reward of her benevolence. Preparations were making at Thorndean Hall for the reception of William, who was now returning as Lieut. Sommerville. A post-chaise in the village had then become a sight less rare; but several cottagers were assembled before the inn to welcome the young laird. He arrived, and with him a gentleman between forty and fifty years of age.—They had merely become acquainted as travelling companions, and the stranger being on his way northward, had accepted his invitation to rest at his uncle's for a few days. The footpath to the Hall lay through the churchyard, about a quarter of a mile from the village. It was a secluded path, and Elizabeth was wont to retire to it between school hours, and frequently to spend a few moments in silent meditation over her mother's grave. She was gazing upon it when a voice arrested her attention, saying, "Elizabeth—Miss Morton!" The speaker was Lieutenant Sommerville, accompanied by his friend. To the meeting of the young lovers we shall add nothing. But the elder stranger gazed in her face and trembled, and looked on her mother's grave and wept.—"Morton?" he repeated, and read the inscription on the humble stone, and again gazed on her face, and again wept. "Lady!" he exclaimed, "pardon a miserable man—what was the name of your mother?—who the family of your father? Answer me, I implore you!" "Alas! I know neither," said the wondering and now unhappy Elizabeth. "My name is Morton," cried the stranger: "I had a wife—I had a daughter once, and my Isabella's face was thy face!" While he yet spoke, the elder Sommerville drew near to meet his nephew. His eyes and the stranger's met. "Sommerville!" exclaimed the stranger, starting. "The same," replied the other, his brow blackening like thunder, while a trembling passed over his body. He rudely

grasped the arm of his nephew, and dragged him away. The interesting stranger accompanied Elizabeth to the house of Mrs Douglas. Painful were his inquiries; so while they kindled hope and assurance, they left all in cruel uncertainty. "Oh, Sir!" said Mrs. Douglas, "if ye be the father o' my blessed bairn, I dinna wonder at auld Sommerville growing black in the face when he saw ye, for when want came hard upon our heels, and my dear motherless an' fatherless bairn was driven to herd his sheep by the brae-sides—there wad the poor, dear, delicate bairn, (for she was as delicate then as she's bonny now,) been lying—the sheep feeding round about her, and her readin' a her Bible, just like a little angel, her lee hand when the brute wad come sleekin' down a hunt her, an' giein' her a drive wi' his foot-cursed her for a little lazy something I'm na gaun to name, and rugged her bonny yellow hair, till he had the half o' it torn out o' her head; or the monster wad riven the blessed book out o' her hand, and thrown it wi' an oath as far as he could drive. But the nephew was aye a bit fine callant; only, ye ken, wi' my bairn's prospects, it wasna my part to encourage ony thing."

Eagerly did the stranger, who gave his name as Colonel Morton, hang over the face being, who had conjured up the sunshine of his youth. One by one, he was weeping and tracing every remembered feature of his wife upon her face—when doubt again entered his mind, and he exclaimed in bitterness, "Merciful Heaven! convince me!—Oh, convince me, that I have found my child!" The few trinkets that belonged to Mrs. Morton had been parted with in the depth of long poverty. At that moment, Lieut. Sommerville hastily entered the cottage. He stated that his uncle had left the Hall, and delivered a letter from him to Colonel Morton. It was of few words, and as follows:—

"Morton—We were rivals for Isabella's love—you were made happy, and I miserable. But I have not been unrevenged. It was I who betrayed you into the hands of the enemy. It was I who reported you dead—who caused the tidings to be hastened to your widowed wife, and followed them to England—it was I who poisoned the ear of her friends until they cast her off—I dogged her to her obscurity, that I might enjoy my triumph, but death thwarted me as you had done. Yet I will do one act of mercy—she sleeps beneath where we met yesterday; and the

ny, before whom you wept—is your own daughter."

He cast down the letter and exclaimed, "My child! my long lost child!—and in speechless joy the father and the daughter rushed to each other's arms. Shall we add more—the elder Sommerville left his native land, which he never again disgraced with his presence. William and Elizabeth wandered by the hill side in bliss, catching love and recollections from the scene. In a few months her father bestowed on him her hand—and Mrs. Douglas, in joy and in pride, bestowed upon both her blessing.

SQUIRE BEN.

Before introducing my readers to the narrative of Squire Ben, it may be proper to inform them who Squire Ben was. In the year 1816, when the piping times of peace had begun, and our heroes, like Othello, "their occupation gone," a thickset, bluff, burley-headed old man, whose every word and look would remind you of Inceledon's *Ceasarude Boreas* had bespoke him to be one of those who had sailed with noble Jervis," or,

"In gallant Duncan's fleet,
Had sung out, yo heave ho!"

He purchased a small estate in Northumberland, a few miles from the banks of the Coquet. He might be fifty years of age, but his weather-beaten countenance gave him the appearance of a man of sixty. Around the collar of a Newfoundland dog, which followed him more faithfully than his shadow, were engraved the words, "Captain Benjamin Cookson;" but, after he had purchased the estate to which I have alluded, his poorer neighbours called him Squire Ben. He was a strange mixture of enthusiasm, shrewdness, rage, comicality, generosity, and humanity. Ben, on becoming a country gentleman, became a keen fisher; and, as it is said, "a low feeling makes one wondrous kind," I being fond of the sport, became a mighty favorite with the bluff-faced Squire. It was a fine bracing day in March, after a remarkable day's fishing, we went to dine and in the afternoon in the Angler's Inn, which stands at the north end of the bridge over the Coquet, at the foot of the hill leading up to Longframlington. Observing that he was in good sailing trim, I dropped a few lines in an account of his voyages and adventures on the ocean of life would be interest-

"Ah, my boy," said Ben, "you are there with your soundings, are you—well, you shall have a long story by the shortest tack. "Somebody was my father," continued he, "but whom I know not. This much I know about my mother: she was cook in a gentleman's family in this country; and being a fat, portly body—something of the build of her son, I take it—no one suspected that she was in a certain delicate situation, until within a few days before I was born. Then, with very grief and shame, and sorrow, the poor thing became delirious—and, as an old servant of the family has since told me, you could see the very flesh melting off her bones. While she continued in a state of delirium, your humble servant, poor Benjamin, was born; and, without recovering her senses, she died within an hour after my birth, leaving me a beautiful orphan, as you see me now—a legacy to the workhouse and the world. Benjamin was my mother's family name—from which I suppose they had something of the Jew in their blood—though, Heaven knows, I have none in my composition. So they who had the christening of me gave me my mother's name of Benjamin, as my Christian name, and from her occupation as cook, they surnamed me Cookson—that is, 'Benjamin the Cook's son,' simply Benjamin Cookson, more simply, Squire Ben. Well, you see, my boy, I was born beneath the roof of an English Squire, and, before I was three hours old, was handed over to the workhouse. This was the beginning of my life. The first thing I remember was hating the workhouse—the second was loving the sea. Yes, Sir, before I was seven years old, I used to steal away in the noble company of my own good self, and sit down upon a rock on the solitary beach, watching the ships, the waves, and the sea-birds—wishing to be a wave, a ship, or a bird—ay, sir, wishing to be any thing but poor orphan Ben. The sea was to me what my parents should have been—a thing I delighted to look upon. I loved the very music of its maddest storms;—though quietly, I have since had enough of them. I began my career before I was ten years of age, as cabin-boy in a collier. My skipper was a dare-devil tear-away sort of a fellow, who cared no more for running down one of your coasting craft, than for turning a quid in his mouth. But he was a good, honest, kind-hearted sort of chap for all that—harrating that the rope's end was too often in his hand. 'Ben,' says he to me one misty day, when we were taking coals across the herring pond to the Dutchmen, and the

man at the helm could not see half way to the mast head—'Ben, my little fellow, can you cipher?' 'Yes, Sir,' says I. 'The deuce you can!' says he, 'then you're just the lad for me; and do you understand logarithms?' No, sir,' says I, 'what sort of wood be they?' 'Wood be hanged! you blockhead!' said he, raising his foot in a passion, but a smile on the corners of his mouth shoved it to the deck again, before it reached me. 'But come, Ben, you can cipher, you say; well, I know all about the radius and tangents, and them sort of things, and stating the question; but blow me if I have a multiplication table on board; my fingers are of no use at a long number, and I am always getting out of it counting chalks—so come below Ben, and look over the question, and let us find where we are. I know I have made a mistake someway—and mark ye, Ben, if ye don't find it out—ye that can cipher—there's a rope's-end to your supper, and that's all.' Hows'ever, Sir, I did find it out, and I was regarded as a prodigy in the ship ever after. The year before I was out of apprenticeship, our vessel was laid up for four months, and the skipper sent me to school during the time, at his own expense, saying—'Get navigation, Ben, my boy, and you will one day be a commodore—by Jupiter, you'll be an honour to the navy.' I got as far as '*Dead Reckoning*,' and there I reckon I made a dead stand, or rather, I ceased to do any thing but study '*Lunar Observations*.' Our owner had a daughter, my own age to a day.

I can't describe her, sir—I haven't enough of what I suppose you would call poetry about me for that, but upon the word of a sailor, her hair was like night rendered transparent black, jet black; her neck white as the spray on the bosom of a billow; her face was lovelier than a rainbow; and her figure handsome as a frigate in full sail. But she had twenty thousand pounds; she was no bargain for orphan Ben! However, I saw her, and that was enough—learning and I shook hands—her father had a small yacht—he proposed taking a pleasure party to the Coquet isle.—Jess, for that was her name, was one of the passengers, and the management of the yacht was entrusted to me. In spite of myself, I gazed upon her by the hour; I was intoxicated with passion; my heart swelled as if it would burst from my bosom. I saw a tided puppy touch her fingers; I heard him prattle love in her ears. My first impulse was to dash him overboard. I wished the sea which

I loved might rise and swallow us. I thought it would be happiness to die in her company, perhaps to sink with her arm clinging round my neck for protection. The wish of my madness was verified. We were returning. We were five miles from the shore. A squall, then a hurricane, came on; every sail was reefed; the mast was snapped as I would snap that pipe between my fingers; (here the old squire, suiting the action to the word broke the end of his pipe;) the sea rose; the hurricane increased, the yacht capsized, and a feather twirls in the wind. Every soul that had been on board was now struggling for life, buffeting the billows. At that moment I had but one thought, and that was of Jess; but one wish, and that was to die with her. I saw my fellow creatures in their death agonies, but I looked only for her. At the moment we were upset, she was clinging to the arm of the tided puppy for protection, and now I saw her within five yards of me still clinging to the skirts of his coat, calling on him and on her father to save her; and I saw him! yes, sir, I saw the monster, while struggling with one hand, raise the other to strike her on the face, that he might extricate himself from her grasp. 'Brute! monster!' I exclaimed, and the next moment I had fixed my clenched hands in the hair of his head. Then with one hand I grasped the arm of her I loved, and with the other, uttering a fiendish yell, I endeavoured to hurl the coward to the bottom of the sea. The yacht still lay bottom up, but was now a hundred yards from us; however, getting my arm round the waist of my adored Jess, I laughed at the sea, I defied the hurricane, we reached the yacht. Her keel was not three feet out the water, and with my right hand I managed to get a hold of it. I saw two of the crew and six of the passengers perish; but her father, and the coward who had struck her from him, still struggled with the waves; they were borne far from us: within half an hour I saw a vessel pick them up: it tried to reach us, but could not. Two hours more had passed, and the night was coming on: my strength gave way; my hold loosened: I made one more desperate effort, I fixed my teeth in the keel; but the burden under my left arm was still sacred: I felt her breath upon my cheek: it inspired me with a lion's strength, and for another hour I clung to the keel. Then the fury of the storm slackened, a boat from the vessel that picked up her father reached us; we were taken on board.

she was senseless, but still breathed: my arm seemed glued round her waist. I was almost unconscious of every thing, but an attempt to take her from me. My teeth gnashed when they touched my hand to do so. As we approached the vessel, those on board hailed us with three cheers. We were lifted on deck: she was conveyed to the cabin. In a few minutes I became fully conscious of our situation. Some one gave me brandy: my brain became on fire. 'Where is she?' I exclaimed; 'did I not save her? save her from the coward who would have murdered her?' I rushed to the cabin; she was about recovering, her father stood over her, and strangers were rubbing her bosom: her father took my hand to thank me: but I was frantic, I rushed towards her: I bent over her; I pressed my lips to hers; called her mine. Her father grasped me by the collar: 'Boy! beggar! bastard!' he exclaimed. With his last word half of my frenzy quickly vanished; for a moment I seized him by the throat: I cried 'Repeat the word!' I groaned in the agony of shame and madness! rushed upon the deck, we were then within quarter of a mile from the shore: I plunged overboard, I swam to the beach; I reached it."

I became interested in the narrative of the quire, and I begged he would continue it with less rapidity: "Rapidly!" said he, fixing upon me a glance in which I thought there was something like disdain: "young man, if you cast a feather into the stream it will be borne on with it. But," added he in a less hurried tone, after pausing to breathe for a few moments, "after struggling with the strong surge for a good half hour, I got to the shore. My utmost strength was spent and I was scarce able to drag myself a dozen yards beyond tide mark when I sank quite exhausted on the beach. I lay as though in sleep, until night had gathered round me; and when I arose, cold and numbed, my delirium had passed away. My bosom, however, like a galley manned with criminals, was still a prison house of agonising feelings, each more unruly than the other. Every scene which I had borne a part during the day, shed before me in a moment: her image; the image of my Jess, mingled with each; I hated existence: I almost despised myself: hot tears started in my eyes; the suffocation of my breast passed away, and I soon again breathed freely. I will not trouble you with details: I will pass over the next five years

of my life, during which I was man-of-war's man, privateer, and smuggler. But I will tell you how I became a smuggler, for that calling I only followed for a week, and that was from necessity; but as you shall hear it well nigh cost me my life: Britain had just launched into a war with France, and I was first mate of a small privateer, carrying two guns and a long Tom: we were trying our fortune within six leagues of the Dutch coast when two French merchantmen hove in sight. They were too heavy metal for us, and we saw that it would be necessary to deal with them warily: so hoisting the republican flag, we bore down upon them; but the Frenchmen were not to be had, and no sooner had we come within gunshot, than one of them saluted our little craft with a broadside that made her dance in the water. It was evident there was no chance for us but at close quarters. 'Cookson,' says our commander to me, what's to be done, my lad? 'Leave the privateer,' says I. 'What!' says he, 'take the long boat and run, without singeing a Frenchman's whisker! no, blow me,' says he. 'No sir,' says I, 'board them; give them a touch of the cold steel.' Right Ben, my boy,' says he; 'helm about there: look to your cutlasses, my hearties; and now for the Frenchman's deck and French wine to supper.'

The next moment we had tacked about, and were under the Frenchman's bow. In turning round, long Tom had been discharged, and clipped the rigging of the other vessel beautifully. The commander, myself, and a dozen more, sprang upon the enemy's deck, cutlass in hand. Our reception was as warm as powder and steel could make it—the Frenchmen fought like devils, and disputed with us every inch of the deck hand to hand. But, d'ye see, we beat them all, though their numbers were two to one; yet as back luck would have it, out of the twelve of us who had boarded her, only seven were now able to handle a cutlass, and amongst those who lay dying on the enemy's deck was our gallant commander. He was a noble fellow, Sir—a regular fire-eater, even in death. Bleeding, dying as he was, he endeavored to drag his body along the deck to assist us—and when finding it would not do, and he could move no farther, he drew a pistol from his belt, and raising himself on one hand, he discharged it at the head of the French captain with the other: and shouting out: 'Go it my hearties! Ben! never yield! his head

fell upon the deck: and—' he died like a true British sailor.' But sir, the other vessel that had been crippled, at that moment made alongside. Her crew also boarded to assist their countrymen, and we were attacked fore and aft. There was nothing now left for us but to cut our way to the privateer, which had been brought round to the other side of the vessel we had boarded. She had been left to the care of the second mate and six seamen: but the traitor seeing our commander fall, and the hopelessness of success, cut the lashings and bore off, leaving us to our fate on the deck of the enemy. Our men was now reduced to five, and we were quite hemmed in on all sides; but we fought like tigers bereaved of their cubs. We placed ourselves heel to heel, we formed a little circle of death. I know not whether it was admiration of our courage, or the cowardice of the enemy, that induced them to proclaim a truce and to offer us a boat, oars, and provisions, and to depart with our arms. We agreed to their proposal, after fighting an hour upon their deck. And here begins my short, but eventful history as a smuggler. We had been six hours at sea in the open boat, when we were picked up by a smuggling lugger named the *Wildfire*. She had an Englishman for her owner, and her cargo which consisted principally of brandy and Hollands, was to be delivered at Spittal and Boomer. It was about day break on the third morning after we had been picked up; we were again within sight of the Coquet isle. I had not seen it for five long years. It called up a thousand recollections, I became entranced in the past. My Jess seemed again clinging to my neck! I again thought I felt her breath upon my cheek, and involuntarily I again exclaimed aloud, 'She shall be mine. But I was aroused from my reverie by a cry—' A cruiser; a cutter a-head! In a moment the deck of the lugger became a scene of consternation. The cutter was making upon us rapidly, and though the *Wildfire* sailed nobly, her pursuer skimmed over the sea like a swallow. The skipper of the lugger seemed to become insane as the danger increased. He ordered every gun to be loaded, and a six oared gig to be got in readiness: the cutter fired on us, the *Wildfire* returned the salute, and three of the cutter's men fell. A few more shots were exchanged, and the lugger was disabled; her skipper and the Englishmen of his crew took the gig, and made for the shore. In a few minutes more, we were boarded by the commander of the

cutter and part of her crew. I knew the commander's face: his countenance, his name, were engraved as with a sharp instrument on my heart. His name was Melton—the honorable Lieutenant Melton, my enemy—the man I hated; the titled puppy of whom I spoke: my rival for the hand of my Jess. He approached me: he knew me as I did him. We lost no love between us. I heard his teeth grate as he fixed his eyes on me, and mine echoed to the sound. 'Slave! scoundrel!' were his first words; 'we have met againe last, and your life shall pay the forfeit: place him in irons.' 'Coward!' I hurled in his teeth a second time, and my hand grasped a cutlass which in a moment flashed in the air: his armed crew sprang between us, I defied them all: he grew bold under their protection. 'Strike him down!' he exclaimed, and the springing forward, his sword entered my side but scarce was it withdrawn ere his blood streamed from the point of my cutlass to my hand. Suffice it to say, I was overpowered and disarmed: I was taken on board the cutter, and put in irons. And now, Sir," continued, "know that you are in company of a man who has been condemned to die: yes, sir, to die like a common murderer on the gallows! You start, but it is true; and if you do not like the company of a man for whom the hangman once provided a neckerchief, will drop my story." "I requested he would proceed." "Well, Sir," continued he, "I was lodged in prison. I was accused of being a smuggler, of having drawn my sword against one of his Majesty's officers, and of having wounded him. On the testimony of my enemy and his crew, I was tried and condemned, condemned to die without hope of pardon. I had but a day to live when a lady entered my miserable cell. She came to comfort the criminal, to administer consolation in his last hour. I was in no mood to listen to the admonitions of the female Samaritan, and I was about to bid her depart from me. Her face was veiled, and in the dim light of my dungeon I saw it not. But she spoke, and her voice went through my soul like the remembrance of a national air which we have sung in childhood, and heard in foreign land. 'Lady?' I exclaimed, 'whom the fiend hath sent thee; come ye to ask me to forgive my murderer? if you command it will.' 'I would ask you to forgive your enemies,' replied she mildly, 'but not for my sake.' 'Yet it can only be for your sake,' said I; 'but tell me, lady, are you the wife of the man who has pursued me to death?' 'No, not his wife.' 'But you will be,' ex-

hastily, 'and you love him : tell me, do you not love him ?' She sighed ; she burst into tears : 'Unhappy man,' she returned, 'what know you of me that you torment me with questions that torture me.' I thrust forth my fettered hand ; I grasped hers : 'tell me, lady,' I exclaimed, 'before my soul can receive the words of repentance which you come to preach ; tell me, do you love him ?' 'No !' she pronounced emphatically, and her whole frame shook. 'Thank God !' I cried, and clasped my fettered hands together !— 'forgive me, lady ! forgive me ! Do you know me—I am Ben ! orphan Ben ! the boy who saved you !' She screamed aloud, she fell upon my bosom, and my chained arm once more circled the neck of my Jess.

'Yes, sir, it was my own Jess, who, without being conscious who I was, had come to visit the doomed one in his miserable cell, to prepare him for death, by pointing out the necessity of repentance and the way to heaven. I need not tell you that the moment my name was told, she forgot her mission ; and as with my fettered arms, I held her to my breast, and felt her burning tears drop upon my cheek, I forgot imprisonment, I forgot death : my very dungeon became a heaven that I would not have exchanged for a throne, for oh ! as her tears fell, and her weeping bosom throbbed upon my heart, each word told me that Jess loved the persecuted orphan, the boy who saved her. I cannot tell you what a trance is, but as I clung round her neck and her arms encircled mine, I felt as if my very soul would have burst from my body in ecstasy. She was soon convinced

that I was no criminal, that I had been guilty of no actual crime, that I was innocent and doomed to die, 'No ! no ! you shall not die !' cried my heroic girl : 'hope ! hope ! hope ! man who saved me shall not die !' She hurried to the door of my cell ; it was open by the keeper, and she left me, exclaiming, 'Hope ! hope !' On that day his then majesty, George the Third, was to prorogue parliament in person. He was returning from the House of Lords ; crowds were following the royal procession, and thousands of spectators lined Parliament Street, some waving their loyalty by shouts and waving hats and handkerchiefs, and others manifesting their discontent in sullen silence, or suppressed murmurs. In the midst of the multitude, and opposite Whitehall, stood my private carriage, the door of which was open, and out of it, as the royal retinue ap-

proached, issued a female, and with a paper in her hand, knelt before the window of his Majesty's carriage, clasping her hands together as she knelt, and crying, 'look upon me, sire !' 'Stop ! stop !' said the king ; 'coachman, stop ! what, a lady kneeling, eh, eh ? A young lady too : poor thing, poor thing ! give me the paper ?' His Majesty glanced at it ; he desired her to follow him to St. James's. I need not dwell upon particulars : that very night my Jess returned to my prison with my pardon in her hand, and I left its gloomy walls with her arm locked in mine. And now you may think that I was the happiest dog alive ; that I had nothing more to do but to ask and obtain the hand of my Jess ; but you are wrong : and I will go over the rest of my life as briefly as I can. No sooner did her father become acquainted with what she had done, than he threatened to disinherit her, and he removed her I know not where. I became first desperate, then gloomy, and eventually sank into lassitude. Even the sea which I had loved from my first thought lost its charms for me. I fancied that money only stood between me and happiness, and I saw no prospect of making the sum I thought necessary at sea. While in the privateer service, I had saved about two hundred pounds in prize money. With this sum as a foundation, I determined to try my fortune on shore. I embarked in many schemes ; in some I was partially successful, but I persevered in none. It was the curse of my life that I had no settled plan : I wanted method ; and let me tell you, sir, that the want of a systematic plan, the want of method ; has ruined many a wise man. It was my ruin. From this cause, though I neither drank nor gamed, nor seemed more foolish than my neighbours, my money wasted like a snow ball in the sun. Though I say it myself, I was not an ignorant man ; for considering my opportunities I had read much, and had as much worldly wisdom as most of people. In short, I was an excellent framer of plans at night, but I wanted decision and activity to put them into execution in the morning. I had also a dash of false pride and generosity in my composition, and did actions without considering the consequences, by which I was continually bringing myself into difficulties. This system, or rather this want of system, quickly stripped me of my last shilling, and left me the world's debtor into the bargain. Then, sir, I gnashed my teeth together, I clenched my fist ; I could have

cut the throat of my own conscience, had it been a thing of flesh and blood, for spitting thoughtlessness and folly in my teeth. I took no oath, but I resolved, firmly, resolutely, deeply resolved, to be wise for the future; and let me tell you my good fellow, such a resolution is worth twenty hasty words. I sold my watch, the only piece of property worth twenty shillings that I had left, and with the money it produced in my pocket, I set out for Liverpool. That town, or city, or whatever you have a mind to call it, was not then what it is now. I was strolling along by the Duke's little Dock, and saw a schooner of about a hundred and sixty tons burden.—Her masts lay well back, and I observed her decks were double laid. I saw her character in a moment. I went on board—I inquired of the commander if he would ship a hand. He gave me a knowing look, and inquired if ever I had been in the 'trade' before. I mentioned my name and the ship in which I had last served. 'The deuce you are!' he said; 'what! you Cookson! ship you, ay, and a hundred like you, if I could get them.' I need hardly tell you the vessel was a privateer.—Within three days the schooner left the Mersey, and I had the good fortune to be shipped as mate. For two years we boxed about the Mediterranean, and I had cleared, as my share of prize money, nearly a thousand pounds. At that period, our skipper, thinking he had made enough, resigned the command in favor of me. My first cruise was so successful, that I was enabled to purchase a privateer of my own, which I named the 'Jess.' For, d'ye see, her idea was like a never-waning moonlight in my brain—her emphatic words, 'Hope! hope! hope!' whispered eternally in my breast, and I did hope. Sleeping or waking, on sea or on shore, a day never passed but the image of my Jess arose on my sight, smiling and saying—'Hope!' In four years more I had cleared ten thousand pounds, and I sold the schooner for another thousand. I now thought myself a match for Jess, and resolved to go to the old man—her father, I mean—and offer to take her without a shilling. Well, I had sold my craft at Plymouth, and before proceeding to the north, was stopping a few days in a small town in the south west of England, to breathe a little land air—for my face, you see, had become a little rough by constant exposure to the weather. Well, sir, the windows of my lodging faced the jail, and for three days I observed the handsomest figure that ever graced a woman, enter the prison at meal times. It was the very figure—the very gait

of my Jess—only her appearance was not genteel enough. But I had never seen her face. On the fourth day I got a glimpse of it. Powers of earth! it was her! it was my Jess! I rushed down stairs like a madman—I flew to the prison door and knocked. The jailer opened it. I eagerly inquired who the young lady was that had just entered. He abruptly replied, 'The daughter of a debtor.' 'For Heavens sake,' I returned, 'let me speak with them.' He refused. I pushed a guinea into his hand, and he led me to the debtor's room. And there, sir, there stood my Jess—my saviour—my angel—there she stood, administering to the wants of her gray haired father. I won't, because I can't, describe to you the tragedy scene that ensued. The old man had lost all that he possessed in the world—his thousands had taken wing and flown away, and he was now pining in jail for fifty—and his daughter, my noble Jess supported him by the labours of her needle. I paid the debt before I left the prison, and out I came with Jess upon one arm, and the old man on the other. We were married within a month. I went to sea again—but I will pass over that; and when the peace was made, we came down here to Northumberland, and purchased a bit of ground and a snug cabin, about five miles from this, and there six little Cooksons are romping about and calling my Jess their mother, and none of them orphans, like their father, thank Heaven. And now, sir, you have heard the narrative of Squire Ben—what do you think of it?"

THE FAIR.

You may smile, reader, at the idea of a story entitled "The Fair;" but read on, and you may find it an appropriate title to a touching, though simple tale. This may seem like the writer's praising his own production, but that is neither here nor there amongst authors; it is done every day; and not amongst authors only, but amongst trades, crafts, and professions. If a man does not speak well of his own wares, whom does he expect to do it for him, when every person is busy selling wares of his own? You know the saying, "he's a silly gardener that lichtlies his ain leeks." But to go on with "The Fair."

On a Fair day, nature always turns

hundreds of her best human specimens of un-
 sophisticated workmanship. Did you ever
 examine the countenances of a rustic group
 around a stall covered with oranges and
 sweetmeats, a bevy of rural beauties, be-
 sieging the hearts and the pockets of a rural
 bachelor of two-and-twenty. The colour of
 one countenance is deep and various as the
 rainbow—a second emulates the rose—a third
 the carnation—while the face of a fourth, who
 is deemed the old maid of her companions, is
 as pale as a daffodil after a north wind: there
 blue eyes woo and dark eyes glance affection,
 and ruby lips open with the jocund laugh;
 and there, too, you may trace the workings
 of jealousy, rivalry, and envy, and other
 passions less gentle than love, according as
 the oranges and gingerbread happen to be
 divided amongst the fair recipients. You
 have heard the drum beat for glory, and
 the shrill note of the fife ring through the
 streets, while a portly serjeant, with a sword
 as bright as a sunbeam, and unsheathed in his
 hand, flaunted his smart cockade, or belike
 took a well lined purse as he marched along
 halting at intervals, shook it again, while
 he harangued the gaping crowd: "Now, my
 boys, now is the time for fortune and glory!
 Here, by Jupiter, there is the look, and the
 boulders—the limbs, the gait of a captain at
 least! Join us, my noble fellow! and your
 fortune is made! your promotion is certain!
 God save the King! Down with the French!"
 "Down wi' them!" cries a young country
 man, flushed with "the barley bree," and,
 borrowing the sword of the serjeant, waves
 it uncouthly round his head—feels himself a
 hero—a Sampson—a Cæsar—all the glories
 of Napoleon seem extinguished beneath his
 sword-arm. "Glory and honour!" he cries
 again more vehemently, and again—"Hurra
 the life of a soldier!" and the next mo-
 ment the ribbon streams from his Sunday hat.
 In such incidents turns our present story.—
 Willie Forbes was a hind in Berwickshire.
 He was also the only child, and the sole sup-
 port of a widowed mother, and she loved him
 the soul loveth the hope of immortality;
 Willie was a dutiful son and a kind one,
 and withal, one of whom many mothers in
 Scotland might have been proud, for his
 person was goodly as his heart was affection-
 ate; and often as his mother surveyed his
 stately figure, she thought to herself, as a
 mother will, that "there wasna a marrow to
 Willie in a' braid Scotland." Now, it
 happened that before Willie had completed his

twenty-third year, that they were "in need
 of a bit lassie," as his mother said, "to keep
 up the bondage."

Willie, therefore, went to Dunse hiring to
 engage a servant; but as fate would have it,
 he seemed to fix upon the most unlikely mai-
 den for fieldwork in the market. At a corner
 of the market place, as if afraid to enter the
 crowd, stood a lovely girl of about eighteen.
 Her name was Menie Morrison. "Are ye for
 hiring the day, hinny?" said Willie, kindly.

"Yes," was the low and faltering reply.

"And what place was ye at last?"

"I never was in service," said she, and as
 she said this she faltered more.

"An' where does your father live? what
 is he?" continued Willie.

"He is dead," answered Menie with a
 sigh.

Willie paused a few moments, and added
 —"And your mother?"

"Dead too!" replied the maiden, and tears
 gushed into her eyes.

"Puir thing! puir thing," said Willie:
 "weel, I'm sure I dinna ken what to say
 till't."

"You may look at this," said she, and she
 put into his hands a slip of paper. It was her
 character from the minister of the parish
 where she had been brought up. "That's
 very excellent," said Willie, returning the
 paper—"very satisfactory—very, indeed.—
 But—can ye—can ye hoe?" added he hesi-
 tatingly.

"Not well," answered she.

"I like that, that's honest," added he,
 "hoein's easy learned. Can ye milk a cow?"

"No," she replied.

"That's a pity," returned Willie. But he
 looked again in her face; he saw the tear
 still there. It was like the sun gilding a sum-
 mer cloud after a shower—it rendered her
 face more beautiful. "Weel, it's na great
 matter," added he, "my mother can learn
 ye"—and Willie Forbes hired Menie Morri-
 son through his heart.

In a short time Menie became an excellent
 servant. Willie and his mother called her,
 "our Menie." She loved her as a daughter,
 he as a man loveth the wife of his bosom;
 and Menie loved both in return. She had
 been two years in their service, and the wed-
 ding day of Menie and Willie was to be in
 three months. For a few weeks Willie, from
 his character and abilities, had been appoint-
 ed farm steward: he looked forward to the

day when he should be able to take a farm of his own, and Menie would be the mistress of it. But Berwick Fair came—Willie had a cow to sell, and Menie was to accompany him to the fair. Now the cow was sold, and Willie was gallanting Menie and three or four of her companions about the streets: he could not do less than be-tow a fairing upon each, and he led them to a booth, where the usual luxuries of a fair were spread out. At the booth Willie found his master's daughter with some of her own acquaintances. She was dressed more gaily than Menie Morrison and her face was also fair to look upon, but it wanted the soul, the charm that glowed in the countenance of the humble orphan. It had long been whispered about the farmstead, and at the farmsteads around it, that "Miss Jean was fond o' Willie Forbes," and some even said that it was through her partiality he obtained his stewardship. Menie had heard this, and it troubled her; for the breeze that scarce moves the down on the thistle will move the breast of a woman that loves. Miss Jean accosted the young steward for her fairing. "Ye shall ha'e that," said Willie, "but there's naething good enough here for the like o' you; come awa' to ane o' the shops." So saying, he disengaged himself from Menie Morrison's, and without thinking of what he did, offered it to his master's daughter, and left Menie and her friends at the booth. Poor Menie stood motionless, a mist seemed to gather before her eyes, and the crowd passed before her as a dream: "Ye see how it is," observed her companions: *naething here guid enough for her*—if you speak to him again, Menie, ye deserve to beg in the causie!" Her pride was wounded; her heart was touched; a cloud fell upon her affections. Such is human nature that it frequently happens revenge and love are at each other's elbows.

Now Menie was not without other admirers, and it so happened that one of these, who had more pretensions to the world's goods than Willie Forbes, came up at the moment, while her bosom was struggling with bitter feelings. For the first time Menie turned not away at his approach; he was more liberal in his fairings than Willie could have been: as the custom then was, and in some instances still is, they heard the sounds of music and dancing. Willie's rival pressed Menie and her companions to "step up an' hae a reel." They complied, and she accompanied them, scarce knowing what she did.

In a few minutes Willie returned to the booth, but Menie was not there. His eyes wandered among the crowd; he walked up and down the streets, but he found her not. Something told him he had done wrong; he had slighted Menie. At length a "good natured friend" informed him she was dancing with young laird Lister. The intelligent was wormwood to his spirit: he hastened to the dancing room, and there he beheld Menie "the observed of all observers," gliding among her rustic companions lightly as you have seen a butterfly kiss a flower. For a moment and he was proud to look upon her as the queen of the room; but he saw his rival hand her to a seat and his blood boiled: he approached her: she returned his salutation with a cold glance. Another reel had been danced; Willie offered her his hand for her partner in the next.

"I'm engaged," said the hitherto gentle Menie, "but maybe Miss Jean will hae na objections, *if there's onything good enough for her here!*" At that moment Willie's rival put his arm through Menie's; she stood by his side, the music struck up, and away they glided through the winding dance. Willie uttered a short, desperate oath, which we dare not write, and hurried from the room. But scarce had he left till confusion and a sickness of heart come upon Menie. She went wrong in the dance, she stood still, her bosom heaved to bursting, she uttered a cry and fell upon the floor.

She, in her turn, felt that she had done wrong, and on recovering she left her companions, and returned home alone. She doubted not but Willie was there before her. The road seemed longer than it had ever been before, for her heart was heavy. She reached his mother's cottage. She listened at the door; she heard not Willie's voice, but she trembled she knew not why. She entered. "The old woman rose to meet her.

"Weel, hinny," said she, "hae ye gae back again? what sort o' a fair has there been? where is Willie?"

Menie turned towards the bink, to lay aside her bonnet, and was silent.

"What's the matter wi' ye, bairn?" continued the old woman; "is Willie no wi' ye where is he?"

"He is comin', *Ifancy*," returned Menie and she sobbed as she spoke.

"Bairn! bairn! there's something no right," cried the mother, "between ye. Some foolish quarrel, I warrant. But tell me what

is done; and for sending my Menie hame
 aetin' I'll gie him a hame-comin'!"

"No, no, it wasna Willie's wyte," replied
 Menie, "it was mine, it was a' mine. But
 Dinra be angry." And here the maiden un-
 bloomed her grief, and the old woman took
 part with her saying, "son as he's mine ye
 just served him as he deserved, Menie."

Her heart grew lighter as her story was
 told, and they sat by the window toge-
 ther, watching one party after another return from
 the fair. But Willie was not amongst them;
 and as it began to wax late, and acquaintan-
 ces passed, Menie ran to enquire of them if
 they had seen anything of Willie, and they
 shook their heads and said, "No." And it
 grew later and later, till the last party, who
 at the fair, had passed; singing as they
 went along; but still there were no tidings
 of Willie. Midnight came, and the morning
 came, but he came not: his mother became
 miserable, and in the bitterness of her heart
 she upbraided Menie, and Menie wept the
 more. They sat watching through the night
 and through the morning, listening to every
 sound. They heard the lark begin his song,
 the poultry leap from their roost, the cows
 low on the milk maidens, and the ploughman
 prepare for the field, yet Willie made not
 his appearance. Time grew on till mid-day,
 and the misery of the mother and Menie in-
 creased. The latter was still dressed in the
 apparel she had worn on the previous day,
 and the former throwing on her Sunday gown,
 they proceeded to the town together to seek
 for him. They inquired as they went along,
 and from one they received the information;
 "I thought I saw him wi' the sodgers in the
 afternoon." The words were as if a light-
 ning had fallen on Menie's heart; his mother
 rang her hands in agony, and cried, "my
 bairn!" and she cast a look on poor
 Menie that had more meaning than kindness
 in it.

They reached the town, and as they reach-
 ed it, a vessel was drawing from the quay:
 she had recruits on board, who were to be
 sent at Chatham, from whence they were
 to be shipped to India. Amongst those re-
 cruits was Willie Forbes.

When he rushed in madness from the dan-
 gerous room, he met a recruiting party on the
 street; he accompanied them to their quar-
 ters; he drank with them; out of madness
 and revenge he drank; he enlisted; he drank
 again; his indignation kindled against Menie
 and against his rival; he again swore at the
 remembrance of her refusing him her hand:
 he drank deeper; his parent was forgotten:

he took the bounty; he was sworn in, and
 while the fumes of the liquor yet raged in
 his brain, maddening him and drowning re-
 flection, he was next day embarked for Chat-
 ham. The vessel had not sailed twenty yards
 from the quay, Willie and his companions
 were waving their hats, and giving three
 cheers as they pulled off, when two women
 rushed along the quay. The elder stretched
 out her arms to the vessel: she cried wildly.
 "Give me back my bairn! Willie! Willie
 Forbes!" He heard her screams above the
 huzza of the recruits, he knew his mother's
 voice, he saw his Menie's dishevelled hair;
 the poisonous drink died within him; his hat
 dropped from his hand: he sprang upon the
 side of the vessel; he was about to plunge
 into the river, when he was seized by the
 soldiers and dragged below. A shriek rang
 from his mother and from Menie; those who
 stood around them tried to comfort and pity
 them, and by all but themselves in a few days
 the circumstance was forgotten.

"Who will provide for me now, when my
 Willie is gane?" mourned the disconsolate
 widow, when the first days of her grief had
 passed. "I will," answered Menie Morris-
 son; "and your home shall be my home, and
 my bread your bread, and the husband o' the
 widow, and the father o' the orphan, will
 bring our Willie back again." The old wo-
 man pressed her to her breast, and called her
 —"her mair than daughter." They left the
 farmstead, and rented a very small cottage
 at some miles distance, and there, to provide
 for her adopted mother, Menie kept two
 cows, and in the neighbouring markets her
 butter was first sold, and her poultry brought
 the best price. But she toiled in the harvest
 field—she sewed—she knitted—she span—
 she was the laundress of the gentry in the
 neighbourhood—she was beloved by all, and
 nothing came wrong to bonny Menie Morris-
 son. Four years had passed, and they had
 twice heard from Willie, who had obtained
 the rank of serjeant. But the fifth year had
 begun, and from a family in the neighbour-
 hood Menie had received several newspa-
 pers, that, as she said, she "might read to
 her mother what was gaun on at the wars."
 She was reading an account of one of the
 first victories of Wellington in the east, and
 she passed on to what was entitled a Gal-
 lant Exploit. Her voice suddenly faltered—
 the paper shook in her hands. "What is't—
 oh! what is't, Menie?" cried the old wo-
 man; "Is't anything about Willie?—my

bairn's no dead?" Menie could not reply—she pressed her hand before her eyes and wept aloud. "My son! my son!" exclaimed the wretched widow—"Oh! is my bairn dead?" The paragraph, which had filled Menie with anguish, stated that a daring assault had been led on by Serjeant Forbes of the 21st, after his superiors had fallen, but that *he also fell mortally wounded* in the moment of victory. I will not attempt to paint their sorrow. Menie put on the garments of widowhood for Willie, and she mourned for him not only many but every day—he had fallen in the arms of glory, yet she accused herself as his murderer.

Five years more had passed. It was March; but the snow lay upon the ground, and the face of the roads was as glass. A stranger gentleman had been thrown from his horse in the neighborhood of the widow's cottage. His life had been endangered by the fall, and he was conveyed beneath her lowly roof, where he remained for weeks unable to be removed. He was about fifty or sixty years of age, and his dress and appearance indicated the military officer. Menie was his nurse, and if her beauty and kindness did not inspire the soul of the veteran with love, they moved it with sympathy.—He wished to make her a return, and, at length, he resolved that that return should be an offer of his hand. He knew he was in his "sere and yellow leaf," and his face was marked with wounds—but for those wounds he had a pension—he had his half-pay as Major, and three thousand pounds in the funds. He would shew his gratitude by tendering his hand and fortune to the village maiden. He made known his proposal to the old woman—maternal feeling suggested her first reply: "She was to be my Willie's wife," said she ruefully, and wiped away a tear; she was to be my daughter, and she *is* my daughter,—I canna part wi' my Menie." But prudence at length prevailed, and she added, "But why should she be buried for me? No, Sir, I winna wrang her, ye are ower kind, yet she deserves it a', an' I will advise her as though she had been my ain bairn." But Menie refused to listen to them.

When the sun began to grow warm in the heavens, a chair was brought to the door for the invalid, and Menie and her mother would sit spinning by his side, while he would recount his "battles, sieges, fortunes," and in an evening in May as the sun was descending on the hills, ran his story—"Fifty of

us were made prisoners. We were chained man to man, and cast into a dark, narrow and damp dungeon. Our only food was a cup of water once in twenty-four hours. Death in mercy thinned our numbers. Worse than plague raged amongst us—dead comrades lay amongst our feet. Two living lay chained to a corpse. All died but myself and my companion to whom I was lettered. He cheered me in fever and sickness. And, maiden, I have been interested in you for his sake—for in his sleep he would start, and mention the name of Menie!"

"Oh, sir!" interrupted Menie and the woman at once, "what? what was his name?"

"If the world were mine I would give it to you," replied the Major, and continued, "He succeeded in breaking our fetters: they were left unguarded. Let us fly, said he; I was unable to follow him: he took me upon his shoulders. It was midnight: he bore me to the woods. For five days he carried me along, or supported me on his arm, till we were within sight of the British lines. Then a party of native horsemen came upon me, my deliverer, with no weapon but a brat which he had torn from a tree, defended himself like a lion in its desert. But he fell badly wounded, and was taken prisoner. A company of our troops came to our assistance and was rescued—but my noble deliverer was borne again into the interior, and three years have passed, and I have heard no more of him."

"But it is *five* years since my Willie fell," sighed Menie Morrison. Yet she brooded on the word—*Menie*.

A wayfaring man was seen approaching the cottage. As he drew near, the eyes of the Major glistened,—his lips moved,—he threw down his crutch. He started unawares to his feet—"Gracious Heaven! it is himself!" he exclaimed, "my companion!—my deliverer!"

The stranger rushed forward with open arms—"Menie!—mother!" he cried, and speech failed him. It was Willie Forbes! Menie was on his bosom—his mother's arms were round his neck—the old Major grasped his hand. Reader, need I tell you more? Willie Forbes had fallen, wounded as we thought mortally; but he had recovered: he had been made a prisoner. He was returned. Menie gave him her hand. The Major procured his discharge, and made him his heir. He took a farm, and on the farm the Major dwelt with them, and 'fought his battles o'er again,' to the children Willie and Menie Forbes.

THE FIRST-FOOT.

Notwithstanding the shortness of their days, the bitterness of their frosts, and the fury of the storms, December and January are merry months. First comes old Christmas, shaking his hoary locks, helike, in the shape of snow-drift, and laughing, well-pleased, beneath his crown of mistletoe, over the smoking surloin and the savoury goose.— There is not a child on the south side of the Borders, who longs not for the coming of merry Christmas—it is their holiday of holidays: their season of play and of presents: and old and young shake hands with Christmas, and with each other. And even on the northern side of “the river,” and “the ideal by fancy drawn,” which “divide the kingdoms,” there are thousands who come and forget not “blithe Yule day.” It comes the New Year: the bottle, the pint, and the *first-foot*; and, we might say, also, Hansel Monday, and “and Auld-hiel Monday,” which follow in their train, and keep up the merriment till the end of January is broken. But our business, at present, is with the *first-foot*, and we must hold. It matters not on what side of the Borders it may be: and northward the feeling extends far beyond the Border; there is a mysterious, an ominous importance attached to the individual who first crosses the threshold, after the clock has struck twelve at midnight, on the 31st of December, or who is the *first-foot* in a house after the New Year has begun. The *first-foot* stamps the “luck” of the house: the good fortune or the evil fortune of its inmates throughout the year! We begin with our story. There was not a person on all the Borders, nor yet in all England, who attached more importance to the First Foot than Nelly Rogers. Nelly was a very worthy, kindhearted, yea, even a noble sort of woman, but a vein of super-eminence ran through her sense; she had imbibed a variety of “and warld notions” in her infancy, and as she grew up, they became a part of her creed. She did not exactly believe that ghosts and apparitions existed in this day, but she was perfectly sure they *had* existed, and *had* been seen; she was sure there was something in dreams, and she was positive there was a great deal in the kindness or unkindness of a First Foot; she remarked it in her own experience thirty years, and she said “it was of nae use attempting to argue her out o’ what she had

observed herself.” Nelly was the wife of one Richard Rogers, a respectable farmer, whose farm-house stood by the side of the postroad between Kelso and Lauder. They had a family of several children, but our business is with the oldest, who was called George, and who had the misfortune to receive both from his parents and their neighbours the character of being a *genius*. This is a very unfortunate character to give to any one who has a fortune to make in the world as will be seen when we come to notice the history of George the genius, for such was the appellation by which he was familiarly mentioned. Now it was the last night of the old year, George was about twelve years of age, and because he was their first born, and moreover because he was a genius he was permitted to sit with his father and his mother, and a few friends who had come to visit them, to see the old year out and the New Year in. The cuckoo clock struck twelve, and the company rose: shook hands: wished each other a happy new year, and, in a bumper, drank, “May the year that’s awa be the worst o’ our lives.”

“I wonder wha will be our first foot,” said Nelly; “I hope it will be a lucky one.” The company began to argue whether there was any thing lucky in a first foot or not, and the young genius sided with his mother; and, while they yet disputed upon the subject, a knocking was heard at the front door.

“There’s somebody,” said Nelly; if its anybody that I think’s no lucky I winna let them in.”

“Nonsense!” said Richard.

“It’s nae nonsense,” replied Nelly; “it may be a *flatsoled* body, for onything I ken; and do ye think I wad risk the like o’ that. Haud awa, see wha it is, George,” added she, addressing the genius; “and dinna let them in unless you’re sure that they dinna come empty-handed.”

“Did ever ye hear the like o’ the woman!” said her husband; “sic havers! Run awa, George, himmy; open the door.”

The boy ran to the door, and inquired; “Who’s there?”

“A stranger,” was the reply.

“What do you want?” inquired the genius, with a degree of caution seldom found in persons honoured with such an epithet.

“I have a letter to Master Rogers, from his own brother,” loudly answered the stranger.

“A letter frae my brother, John!” cried Richard, starting from his seat; “open the door, laddie—open the door.”

Now, Richard Rogers had a brother, who also had been considered a sort of genius in his youth. He was of a wild and restless disposition in those days, and his acquaintances were wont to call him by the name of Jack the Rambler. But it is a long road that has no turning: he had now been many years at sea: was the captain of a free-trader: and as remarkable for his steadiness and worldly wisdom, as he had been noted for the wildness of his youth. There was a mysterious spot in the captain's history, which even his brother Richard had never been able to unriddle. But that spot will be brought to light by and by.

George opened the door, and the stranger entered. He was dressed as a seaman; and Nelly drew back and appeared troubled as her eyes fell upon him. It was evident she had set him down in her mind as an unlucky first-foot: he was not, indeed, the most comely personage that one might desire to look upon on a New Year's morning; for he was a squat little fellow, with huge red whiskers that almost buried his face, his bulky head was covered with a sou-wester, and his eyes squinted most fearfully. Nelly could not withdraw her eyes from the man's eyes; she contemplated the squint with horror! Such eyes were never in the head of a first-foot before! She was sure that something no canny would be the upshot.

"Tak a seat, sir; tak a seat, sir," said Richard, addressing the sailor; "fill out a glass, and mak yourself at hame. Nelly, bring a clean tumbler. And ye hae a letter frae my brother, the captain, sir," added he, anxiously: "how is he? where is he? when did ye see him?"

"I left him at Liverpool, sir," replied the queer-looking sailor; "and as I intended to take a run down overland to Lenth to see my old mother, 'Bill,' says he to me, (for my name's Bill, Bill Somers;) well, as I'm saying, 'Bill,' says he, 'you'll be going past the door of a brother of mine, and I wish I were going with you;' (and I wish he had, for not to say it before you, sir, there an't a better or a cleverer fellow than Captain Rogers, in the whole service, nor a luckier one either, though, poor fellow, he has had his bad luck too in some things; and it sticks to him still, and will stick to him;) however, as I say, said he to me; 'Bill, here is a bit of a letter, give it to my brother; it concerns my nevy, George;' (yes, George, I think he called him.) So I took the letter and set off, that is, some

days ago; and I arrived at the public house a little from this, about four hours since, and intended to cast anchor there for the night but having taken a glass or two, by way of ballast, I found myself in good sailing-trim and, having inquired about you, and finding that you lived but a short way off and that the people in the house said, it being New Year's time, you wouldn't be moored yet, I desired the landlady to fill me up half a gallon, or so, of her best rum, that I mightn't come empty-handed; for that wouldn't be luck, ma'am, I reckon," added he, squinting in the face of M^s. Rogers, who now looked at his eyes, and row at a large bottle, which he drew from beneath a sort of half-great-coat or monkey jacket. Nelly was no friend to spirit drinking; nevertheless she was glad that her first-foot, though he did squint, had not come empty-handed.

The letter was handed to Mr. Rogers, who, having broke the seal, "Preserve it, Richard!" said Nelly, "that's a lang epistle I dare say the captain's made his will int'—what does he say?"

"It's a kind, sensible weel-written letter," said Richard, "for John was a genius a' the days; and there is nae a: out a will int' the ye're aware o'. But there's nae secret int' George will read it."

The letter was then given to the genius who read as follows:

"DEAR PICK,—As one of my crew, B. Somers, who has sailed with me a dozen years is going down to Scotland, and will pass ye way, I take the opportunity of writing to ye and lettin' you know that I am as well as person, who has as much cause to be unhappy as I have, can desire to be. The cause of the unhappiness you don't know, and few know—but I do, and that's enough. I have made some money—perhaps a good deal—but that of no consequence. I once thought that might have *them* of my own flesh and blood to inherit it; however, that was not to be. It is a long story, and a sad story—one that ye know nothing about, and which it is of no use to tell you about now. As things are, my nevy, George, is to be heir to whatever mone, goods, and chattels I possess."

As her son read this, Nelly thought that was nonsense, after all, to say that a squat first-foot was unlucky.

"Read on, George," said his father, "and take heed to what your uncle says."

The boy resumed the letter, and again read,

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