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WILSON'S BORDER TALES.

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TORONTO .

1839.

THE PROCRASTINATOR.

Being overtaken by a shower in Kensington Gardens, I sought shelter in one of the alcoves near the palace. I was scarcely seated, when the storm burst with all its fury; and I observed an old fellow, who had been loitering till the hurricane whistled round his ears, making towards me, as rapidly as his apparently palsied limbs would permit. Upon his nearer approach, he appeared rather to have suffered from infirmity than age. He wore a brownish black coat, or rather shell, which, from its dimensions, had never been intended for the wearer; and his expressions were truly inexpressible.—“So,” said I, as he seated himself on the bench, and shook the rim from his old broad-brimmed hat, “you see, old boy, ‘Procrastination is the thief of time,’ the clouds give you a hint of what was coming, but you seemed not to take it.” “It is,” replied he eagerly. “Doctor Young is in the right. Procrastination has been my curse since I was in leading-strings. It has grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. It has ever been my besetting sin, my companion in prosperity and adversity; I have slept upon it, like Samson on the lap of Delilah, till it has shorn my locks and deprived me of my strength. It has been to me a witch, a manslayer, and a murderer; when I would have shaken it off in youth and in disgust, I found I was no longer master of my own actions and my own house. It had brought around me a number of its blood-relations—its sisters and its cousins-german—to fatten on my weakness, to haunt me to the grave; so that when I attempted to free myself from the embrace of one, it was only to be intercepted by another. You are a young man, Sir, and a stranger to me, but its effects are upon me, and my history—the history of a poor paralytic shoemaker—if you have patience to hear, may serve as a beacon to warn you in your voyage through life.”

Upon expressing my assent to his proposal, I was struck by the fluency and fervency of his manner, and had at once rivetted my attention, and excited curiosity—he continued:—“I was born without a fortune, as many are. When about five years of age I was sent to the parish school in Roxburgh, and procrastination went with me.—I was not possessed of a tolerable memory, I was

not more deficient than my schoolfellows; but the task which they had studied the previous evening, was by me seldom looked at till the following morning; and my seat was the last to be occupied of any other on the form. My lessons were committed to memory by a few hurried glances, and repeated with a faltering rapidity, which not unfrequently puzzled the ear of the teacher to follow me. But what was thus hastily learned, was as suddenly forgotten. They were mere surface impressions, each obliterated by the succeeding. And though I had run over a tolerable general education, I left school but very little wiser than when I entered it.

“My parents—peace to their memory!”—here the old fellow looked most feelingly, and a tear of filial recollection glistened in his eyes; it added a dignity to the recital of his weakness, and I almost revered him—“My parents,” continued he, “had no ambition to see me rise higher in society than an honest tradesman; and, at thirteen, I was bound apprentice to a shoemaker. Yes, Sir, I was—I am a shoemaker; and but for my curse—my malady—had been an ornament to my profession. I have measured the foot of a princess, Sir; I have made slippers to his Majesty!” Here his tongue acquired new vigour from the idea of his own importance. “Yes, Sir, I have made slippers to his Majesty—yet I am unlucky—I am bewitched—I am a ruined man. But to proceed with my history. During the first year of my apprenticeship, I acted in the capacity of errand boy; and, as such, had to run upon many an unpleasant message—sometimes to ask money, frequently to borrow it. Now, Sir, I am also a bashful man; and, as I was saying, Bashfulness is one of the blood relations which procrastination has fastened upon me. While acting in my last-mentioned capacity, I have gone to the house—gazed at every window—passed it and re-passed it again—stood hesitating and consulting with myself—then resolved to defer it till the next day, and finally returned to my master, not with a direct lie, but a broad equivocation; and this was another of the cousins german which procrastination introduced to my acquaintance.

“In the third year of my servitude, I be-

came fond of reading; was esteemed a quick workman; and, having no desire for money beyond what was necessary to supply my wants, and I gave unrestricted indulgence to my new passion. We had each an allotted quantity of work to perform weekly.—Conscious of being able to complete it in half the time, and having yielded myself solely to my ruinous propensity to delay, I seldom did anything before the Thursday; and the remaining days were spent in hurry, bustle, and confusion. Occasionally I overrated my abilities—my task was unfinished, and I was compelled to count a *dead horse*. Week after week this grew upon me, till I was so firmly saddled, that, until the expiration of my apprenticeship, I was never completely freed from it. This was another of my curse's handmaidens."

Here he turned to me with a look of seriousness, and said—"Beware, young man, how you trust to your own strength and your own talents; for, however noble it may be to do so, let it be in the open field, before you are driven into a corner, where your arms may come in contact with the thorns and the angles of the hedges.

"About this time, too, I fell in love—yes, *fell* in love—for I just beheld the fair object, and I was a dead man, or a new man, or anything you will. Frequently as I have looked and acted like a fool, I believe I never did so strikingly as at this moment. She was a beautiful girl—a very angel of light—about five feet three inches high, and my own age. Heaven knows how I ever had courage to declare my passion; for I put it off day after day, and week after week, always preparing a new speech against the next time of meeting her, until three or four rivals stepped forward before me. At length, I did speak, and never was love more clumsily declared. I told her in three words; then looked to the ground, and again in her face most pitifully. She received my addresses just as saucily as a pretty girl could do. But it were useless to go over our courtship—it was the only happy period of my existence, and every succeeding day has been misery. Matters were eventually brought to a bearing, and the fatal day of final felicity appointed. I was yet young, and my love possessed all the madness of a first passion. She not only occupied my heart, but my whole thoughts; I could think of nothing else—speak of nothing else

—and, what was worse, do nothing else. It burned up the very capabilities of action, and rendered my native indolence yet more indolent. However, the day came; (and a bitter stormy day it was;) the ceremony was concluded, and the honey-moon seemed to pass away in a fortnight.

"About twelve months after our marriage Heaven (as authors say) blest our loves with a son and—I had almost said heir. Deplorable patrimony!—heir of his mother's features—the sacrifice of his father's weakness. Kean could not have touched this last burst. The father, the miserable man, parental affection, agony, remorse, repentance, were expressed in a moment.

A tear was hurrying down his withered cheek as he dashed it away with his dripping sleeve; 'I am a weak old fool,' said he, endeavouring to smile; for there was a voluble gaiety in his disposition, which his sorrow had subdued, but not extinguished. 'Y my boy! my poor dear Willie! I shall never—no, I shall never see him again!' Here again wept, and had nature not denied that luxury, I should have wept too, for the sake of company. After a pause, he again proceeded:—

'After the birth of my child, came the heathenism. I had no conscientious objections to the tenets of the established church of my country, but I belonged to no religious community. I had never thought of it as an obligation beyond that of custom: and deferred from year to year until I felt ashamed to go forward' on account of my age. My wife was a Cameronian: and to them, though I knew nothing of their principles, I had an aversion: but for her to hold up the child while I was in the place, was worse than heathenism—was unheard of in the parish. The nearest Episcopal chapel was at Kell a distance of ten miles. The child still remained unbaptized. 'It hasna a name,' said the ignorant meddlers, who had no higher idea of the ordinance. It was a source of much uneasiness to my wife, and gave rise to some family quarreling. Months succeeded weeks, and eventually the child was carried to the Episcopal church. This closed up all the slander of the town, and directed it into one channel upon my devoted he. Some said 'I wasna sound,' and all agreed 'was nae better than I should be,' while a zealous clergyman came to my father, pressing his fears that 'his son was in a

way.' For this, too, am I indebted to procrastination. I thus became a martyr to supposed opinions, of which I was ignorant; and such was the christian bigotry of my neighbours, that, deeming it sinful to employ one whom they considered little other than a pagan, about five years after my marriage, I was compelled to remove with my family to London.

'We were at this period what tradesmen term miserably hard up. Having sold off our little stock of furniture, after discharging a few debts which were unavoidably contracted, a balance of rather less than two pounds remained, and upon this, my wife, my child, and myself, were to travel a distance of three hundred and fifty miles. I will not go over the journey, we performed it on foot in twenty days: and including lodging, our daily expense amounted to one shilling and eight pence; so that, on entering the metropolis, all we possessed was five shillings and a few pence. It was the dead of winter, and nearly dark, when we were passing down St. John Street, Clerkenwell. I was benumbed—my wife was fainting, and our poor child was blue and speechless. We entered a public house near Smithfield, where two pints of warm water and ginger, with a crust of bread and cheese, operated as partial restoratives. The busy scene of butchers, drovers, and coal carriers, was new to me. My child was afraid, my wife uncomfortable, and I, a gaping observer, forgetful of my own situation. My boy pulled my coat, and said, 'Come, father—my wife jogged my elbow, and reminded me of a lodging; but my old reply, 'Stop a moment,' was my ninety and nine times repeated answer. Frequently the landlord made a long neck over the table, gauging the contents of our tardily emptied pint; and, as the watchman was calling 'Past eleven,' finally left it away, and bade us 'bundle off.' Now I arose, feeling at once the pride of my spirit and the poorness of my purse—vowing never to darken his door again, should I remain in London a hundred years.

On reaching the street, I inquired of a half-grown boy where we might obtain a lodging; and, after causing me to inquire three or thrice—'I no ken, Sawney—haud ay' north,' said the brat, sarcastically imitating my accent. I next inquired of a watchman, who said there was no place up his beat—but *beat* was Gaelic to me; and

I repeated my inquiry to another, who directed me towards the hells of Saffron hill. At a third, I requested to be informed the way, who, after abusing me for seeking lodgings at such an hour, said he had seen me in town six hours before, and bade us go to the devil. A fourth inquired if we had any money—took us to the bar of a public house—called for a quartern of gin—drank our healths—asked if we could obtain a bed—which being answered in the negative he hurried to the door, bawling 'Half past eleven,' and left me to pay for the liquor. On reaching Saffron-hill, it was in an Irish uproar; policemen, thieves, prostitutes, Israelites, were brawling in a satanic mass of iniquity; blood and murder was the order of the night. My child screamed; my wife clung to my arm; she durst not, sleep in such a place. To be brief; we had to wander in the streets till morning; and I believe that night, aided by a broken heart, was the forerunner of her death. It was the first time I had been compelled to walk trembling for a night without shelter, or to sit frozen on a threshold; and this, too, I owe to procrastination.

'For a time we rented a miserable garret, without furniture or fixture, at a shilling weekly, which was paid in advance. I had delayed making application for employment till our last sixpence was spent. We had passed a day without food; my child appeared dying; my wife said nothing, but she gazed upon her dear boy, and shook her head with an expression that wrung me to the soul. I rushed out almost in madness, and, in a state of unconsciousness, hurried from shop to shop in agitation and in misery. It was vain—appearances were against me. I was broken down and dejected, and my state of mind and manner appeared a compound of the maniac and the blackguard. At night I was compelled to return to the suffering victims of my propensity, penniless and unsuccessful. It was a dreadful and a sleepless night with us all; or, if I did slumber upon the hard floor for a moment, (for we had neither seat nor covering,) it was to startle at the cries of my child wailing for hunger, or the smothering sighs of my unhappy partner. Again and again I almost thought them the voice of the Judge, saying, 'Depart from me ye cursed.'

'I again hurried out with daybreak, for I was wretched, and resumed my inquiries;

but night came, and I again returned equally successful. The yearnings of my child were now terrible, and the streaming eyes of his fond mother, as she pressed his head with her cold hand upon her lap, alone distinguished her from death. The pains of hunger in myself were becoming insupportable; my teeth gnashed against each other, & worms seemed gnawing my heart-strings. At this moment my dear wife looked me in the face, and, stretching her hand to me, said, 'Farewell, my love—in a few hours I and our dear child shall be at rest? Oh! hunger, hunger!' I could stand no more. Reason forsook me. I could have died for them, but I could not beg. We had nothing to pledge. Our united wearing apparel was not worth a shilling. My wife had a pair of pocket Bibles, (I had once given them in a present,) my eyes fell upon them—I snatched them up unobserved—rushed from the house, and—O Heaven! let the cause forgive the act—pawnd them for eighteen pence. It saved our lives. I obtained employment, and, for a few weeks, appeared to have overcome my curse.

'I am afraid I grow tedious with particulars, Sir; it is an old man's fault—though I am not old either; I am scarce fifty-five.—After being three years in London, I was appointed foreman in an extensive establishment in the Strand, I remained in this situation about four years. It was one of respectability and trust; demanding, hourly, a vigilant and undivided attention. To another it might have been attended with honour and profit, but to me, it terminated in disgrace. Amongst other duties, I had the payment of the journeymen, and the giving out of the work. They being numerous, and their demands frequent, it would have required a clerk for the proper discharge of that duty alone. I delayed entering at the moment in my books the materials and cash given to each, until they multiplying on my hands, and begetting a consequent confusion, it became impossible for me to make their entry with certainty or correctness. The workmen were not slow in discovering this, and not a few of the more profligate improved upon it to their advantage. Thus, I frequently found it impossible to make both ends of my account meet: and, in repeated instances, where the week's expenditure exceeded the general average, though satisfied in my own mind of

its accuracy, from my inability to state the particulars, in order to conceal my infirmity, I have accounted for the overplus from my own pocket. Matters went on in this way for a considerable time. You will admit I was rendered feelingly sensible of my error, and I resolved to correct it. But my resolutions were always made of paper, they were like a complaisant debtor—full of promises, praying for grace, and dexterously evading performance. Thus, day after day, I deferred the adaption of my new system to a future period. For, Sir, you must be aware there is a pleasure in procrastination, of a nature the most alluring and destructive: but it is a pleasure purchased by the sacrifice of judgment; in its nature and results it resembles the happiness of the drunkard: for, in exact ratio as the spirits are raised above their proper level, in the same proportion when the ardent spirits have evaporated they sink beneath that level.

'I was now too proud to work as a mere journeyman, and I commenced business for myself: but I began without capital, and a gourd of sorrow hung over me, while I stood upon sand. I had some credit: but, as my bills became payable, I ever found I had pe off, till the very day they became due, the means of liquidating them: then had I to run and borrow five pounds from one, and five shillings from another, urged by despair for a hundred quarters. My creditors grew clamorous—my wife upbraided me—I flew to the bottle—to the bottle! he repeated: 'all my ruin was complete—my family, business, everything, was neglected. Bills of Middlesex were served on me, declarations filed—surrendered myself, and was locked up in Whitecross Street. It is a horrid place—the Fleet is a palace to it—the Bench, paradise. But, Sir, I will draw my painful story to a close. During my imprisonment, my wife died—died, not by my hands, but from the work of them! She was laid in a strange grave, and strangers laid her head in the dirt while I lay a prisoner in the city where I was buried. My boy—my poor Willie—we had been always neglected, was left without father and without mother!—Sir! Sir! my boy was left without food! He forsook me in the prison—I heard he had become the associate of thieves: and, from that period, five years have passed, and I have obtained no trace of him. But it is my darling—my poor Willie!'

Here the victim of procrastination finished his narrative. The storm had passed away, and the sun again shone out. The man had interested me, and we left the gardens together. I mentioned that I had to go into the city: he had business there also, and asked me to accompany me. I could not refuse him. From the door by which we left the gardens, our route lay by way of Oxford Street. As we proceeded down Holborn, the church bell of St. Sepulchre's began to toll: and the crowd, collected round the top of Newgate Street, indicating an execution. As we approached the place, the criminal was brought forth. He was a young man about nineteen

years of age, and had been found guilty of an aggravated case of housebreaking. As the unhappy being turned round to look upon the spectators, my companion gave a convulsive shriek, and, springing from my side, exclaimed—'Righteous Heaven! my Willie! my murdered Willie!'—He had proceeded but a few paces, when he fell with his face upon the ground. In the wretched criminal he discovered his lost, his only son. The miserable old man was conveyed, in a state of insensibility, to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where I visited him the next day: he seemed to suffer much, and, in a few hours, died with a shudder, and the word *Procrastination* on his tongue:

THE BRIDE OF BRAMBLEHAUGH.

It has been stated by the greatest critics of the world ever saw—whose names we would not mention, if we did wish to avoid interfering with the simplicity of our humble annals—that no fictitious character ought to be made of a once virtuous and unfortunate; and the reason given for it is, that mankind, having a natural tendency to a belief of an adjustment, even in this world, of the claims of virtue and deserts of vice, are displeased with a representation which at once overturns this adjustment, and creates dissatisfaction with the dispensations of Providence. This may be very true in criticism, and we have no wish to find fault with it as applied to works intended to produce a certain effect on the minds of readers; but so long as Nature and Providence are represented with machinery whose secret springs are hid from our view, and evince—doubtless for wise purposes—a disregard of the adjustment of rewards and punishment for virtue and vice, we shall not want higher authority than the critics for exhibiting things as they are, and portraying them on the page of truth, wet with unavailing tears, goodness that went ungraved, not only unrewarded, but struck with griefs that should have dried the eyes, and grizzled the hairs of the wicked. A little haugh that runs parallel to the river—at a part of its course not far from the sea, and through which there creeps a bed of white pebbles, a little burn,

whose voice is so small, except at certain places where a larger stone rises its 'sweet anger' to the height of a tiny 'buller,' that the lowest note of the goldfinch drowns it and charms it to silence—there stood, about the middle of the last century, a cottage, whose white walls and dark roof, with some white roses and honeysuckle flowering on its walls, bespoke the humble retreat of contentment and comfort. The place went by the name of Bramblehaugh, from the sides of the small burn being lined, for several miles, with the wild plant whose name has entered into the composition of that of the hollow or haugh where it grew. The sloping collateral ground was covered with shrubs and trees of various kinds, which harbored, in the summer months, a great collection of birds—the blackbird, the starling, the mavis, and others of the tuneful choir—whose notes rendered harmonious the secluded scene where they sang unmolested. The spot is one of which scattered sparingly over a wild country, woo the footsteps of lovers of nature, and, by a few months of their simple charms, regenerate the health, while they quicken and gratify the business clouded fancies of the denizens of smoky towns.

The cottage we have now described was occupied by David Mearns, and his wife Elizabeth, called, by our national contraction, Betty. The individuals earned a live-

lihood and nothing more, by the mode in which poor cotters in Scotland contrive to spin out an existence; the leading feature of which—contentment, the result of necessity, is often denominated happiness by those whose positive pleasures, checkered by a few misfortunes, are forgotten in the contemplation of a state of life almost entirely negative. Difficulties that cannot be overcome deaden the energies that have in vain been exerted to surmount them; and, when all efforts to better our condition are relinquished, we acquire a credit for contentedness, which is only a forced adaptation of limited means to an unchangeable end. David Mearns, who had in his younger days been ruined by a high farm, had learned from misfortune what he would not have been very apt to have received from the much applauded philosophy which is said to generate a disposition to be pleased with our lot. The bitterness of disappointment, and the wish to get beyond the reach of obligations he could not discharge, suggested the remedy of a reliance simply on his capability of earning a cotter's subsistence; and having procured a cheap lease of the little domicile of Bramblehaugh, he set himself down, with the partner of his hopes and misfortunes, to eat with that simulated contentment we have noticed, the food of his hard labor, with the relish of health, and to extract from the lot thus forced upon him as much happiness as it would yield.—The cottage and a small piece of ground attached to it, was the property of an old man, who, having made a great deal of money by the very means that had failed in the hands of David Mearns, had purchased the property of Burnbank, lying on the side of the small rivulet already mentioned, and in consequence, it was said, of Betty Mearns bearing the same name, (Cherrytrees,) though there was no relationship between them, had let to David the small premises at a low rent.

A single child had blessed the marriage of David Mearns and his wife—a daughter, called Euphemia, though generally, for the sake of brevity and kindness, called Effie; an interesting girl, who, at the period we speak of, had arrived at the age of sixteen years. In a place where there were few to raise the standard of beauty formed in the minds of a limited country population, she was accounted 'bonny'—a much abused word, no doubt, in Scotland, but yet having a very fair and legitimate application to an

interesting young creature, whose blue eyes, however little real town beauty they may have expressed or illuminated, gave on much tenderness and feeling, accompanied by that inexpressible look of pure, unaffected modesty, which is the most difficult gesture of the female manner attempted to be imitated by those who are destitute of the feeling that produces it. An expression of juvenescence—perhaps the fruit of the early misfortunes of her parents operating on the tender mind of infancy, ever quick in catching with instinctive sympathy, the feeling that saddens or enlivens the spirit of a mother—was seldom abroad from her countenance imparting to it a deep interest, and, by suggesting a wish to relieve the cause of so early an indication of incipient melancholy, creating an instant friendship, which subsequent intercourse did not diminish.

Walter Cherrytrees, the Laird of Burnbank, a man approaching seventy years of age, had a daughter, Lucy about the same age as Effie Mearns. He had lost his wife about fifteen years before; and—though feeling of anxiousness often found its way to his heart, suggesting to his vacant mind, the cure of his listlessness and thro' balm his bereavement, another wife—he had for a long time been nearly equally poised between the hope of Lucy becoming his comfort in his old age, and the wish for a true partner of pleasures which, without participation, lose their relish. His daughter, Lucy was a sprightly, showy girl, who, having a good education, might, with the prospect of inheriting her father's property, have been entitled to look for a husband among the sons of the neighboring proprietors, if her mother's secluded mode of life, and plain, but manners, had not to a great extent limited her intercourse to a few acquaintances, by means equal to him in point of wealth and status, however estimable they might have been in other respects. A more pleasant companion to the old Laird of Burnbank could not be found, from one end of Bramblehaugh to the other, than David Mearns, tenant, whose honesty and bluntness set off by a fertility of simple anecdote, had done for one of the same habits of thought and feeling, which all the disadvantages of poverty could not counterbalance. The timidity of the fathers produced at an early period, a friendship between the daughters, who, however, could not boast of the

abundance of thought and manners, and community of feeling, which formed the foundation of the attachment which existed between the parents.

This friendship was not exclusive of some acquaintanceships with the neighbouring young men and women, which, however, were in general mutual, neither of the two young maidens having formed any intimacy with another without her friend participating in the friendship. Among others, Lewis Campbell, the son of a neighboring farmer, who had been a large creditor of David Mearns at the time of his failure, called sometimes at the cottage of Bramblehaugh, and was soon smitten with a strong love for Effie. They sometimes indulged in long walks by the side of the river.

We may anticipate, when we say that the most interesting in these excursions—in which the fairest beauties of external nature, and the purest and truest emotions of two loving hearts acting in co-operation and harmony, formed a present and a future such as poets dream of, and the world never realizes, but momentary glimpses—were the happiness of these lovers. Effie's inseparable companion, Lucy, frequently met them as they strolled along by the house of Burbank: and the soft breathings of ardent affection were relieved by the gay and innocent prattling of the companions, who enjoyed, though in different degrees, the conversation and company of the young lover. The simplicity and single-heartedness of Effie were entirely exclusive of a single thought unfavorable to equal openness and frankness on the part of her companion, whom she had informed, without artless way, of the state of her affection. But what might not have resulted from this mere acquaintanceship between Lucy and Effie's lover, was called forth by the jealousy of the former, whose spirit of emulation, excited by the good fortune of her poor friend, suggested a secret wish to alienate the affection of Lewis from her companion, and direct it to herself. The wish to be beloved, though the mere effect of emulation, is the source of the artificial modes by which love is generated in the heart of the wisher; and Lucy soon became, unbeknown for a time to Effie, as much enamoured of young Lewis as her unsuspecting friend.

The first intimation that Effie received of the state of Lucy's feelings towards her

lover, was from Lewis himself. Sitting at a part of the haugh called the Cross Knowe, from the circumstance of an old Romish cruciform stone that stood on the top of a gentle elevation—a place much resorted to by the lovers—Lewis unable to conceal a single thought or feeling from one who so well deserved his confidence, first told her of the perfidy of her friend.

'You are not so well supplied with sweethearts, Effie,' he began, 'as I am; for I can boast of two besides you.'

'That speaks little in your favor, Lewie,' replied she, 'for, if it was my wish, I could have a' the young men o' the haugh makin' love to me from morning to e'en.'

'That remark, Effie,' said Lewis, 'implies that I courted, or at least received marks of affection, from others besides you, while I was leading you to suppose that my heart entirely yours. Now, that is not justified by what I said; for one may have sweethearts, and neither know nor acknowledge them as such.'

'Maybe I am wrang, Lewie,' said Effie, 'but what was I to think but that the twaither sweethearts ye mentioned were acknowledged by ye? Its no in poore o' my my heart to conceive hoo a young woman could love ane that neither kened nor acknowledged her love. But I speak frae my ain simple, an' maybe worthless thoughts.—The world is wide and haulds black and fair, weak an' strang, heigh an' laigh; an' wherefore no also hearts an' minds as different as their bodies? The birds of this haugh hae only their ain single luvies; but they're a' colored alike that belang to ae kind. Would it had been God's pleasure to make mankind like the bonny birds!

'I fear, Effie,' replied Lewis, 'that a statement of mine, intended to be partly in jest, has been construed by you in such a manner as to produce to you pain. God is my witness that I am as single hearted in my affection as the birds of this haugh; and gaudier colors, sweeter notes, and better scented bowers will never interfere with the love I bear to Effie Mearns.'

'What meant ye, then, Lewie, by sayin ye had two sweethearts besides Effie Mearns?' said she.

'That you shall immediately know,' replied Lewis, 'and will think more highly of me when I shew you, by revealing secrets, not indeed confided to me, but still secrets, that

you have all my heart and the thoughts that it contains. The first of my lovers you will not be jealous of, for she is old Lizzy Buchanan, or, as she calls herself Bawltan, my nurse, who loves me as well as you do, Effie, but the other I fear may create in you an unpleasant feeling of confidence misplaced, and friendship repaid by something like treachery. Surely I need say no more.'

'Is it indeed sae, Lewie?' said she. It's lang since I whispered—and my heart beat and my limbs trembled as I did it—in the ear o' Lucy Cherrytrees, that my pair, silly thoughts were never off Lewie Campbell.—And what do you think she said to me? She said I needna look far ayont Bramblehaugh for a bonnier and a brawer lover.'

'Then,' replied Lewis, 'I am not much better off than you are; for she told me that your simplicity, she feared, was art, and that your poverty made any beauty you had; and she doubted if that bonny face was not a great snare for the ruin of a penniless lover.'

'Sae, sae,' said she, sighing deeply, 'and has the fair face o' a life's friendship put on the locks o' a hypocrite at the very time when a greater confidence was required? I hae read in Larid Cherrytrees' books he is sae kind as lend me, many an example o' fause and faithless creatures, baith men and women, o' the world, o' the great cities that lie far ayont oor humble sphere; but little did I think that here, in Bramblehaugh, where oor bughts ken nae nicht thieves, and oor hen roosts nae reynards, there was ane, and that ane my friend, wha could smite in my face at the very moment she was tryin to ruin me in the eyes o' ane wha is dearest to me on earth.'

As she thus poured forth her feelings with greater loquacity than she generally exhibited—being far the most part quiet and gentle—the tears flowed down her cheeks in great profusion, and she sobbed bitterly, in spite of all the efforts of Lewis to satisfy her that Lucy's endeavors to lessen her in his estimation were entirely fruitless.

'Apprehend nothing, dear Effie, from the discovered treachery of a false friend, said he, as he pressed her to his bosom. 'It has less power with me than the whispers of that gentle burn have on the echos of the Eagle's Rock that only answer to the voice of the tempest.'

'It's no that, Lewie,' replied she wiping away her tears, 'that gies me pain. I hae nae fear o' faith and troth that has been

pledged; for I hae seen it in yer looks, and heard it i' the sounds o' yer deep drawn sighs. Thae tears are for a broken friendship—the withered blossoms o' a bonny flower I hae cherished and watered, in the hope it wad yield me a sweet smell when I kissed it leaves i' the daffin o' youth or the kindness o' age. If it is sae sair to lose a friend, what Lewie—what wad it be to lose a lover?'

'The very existence of great evils, Effie said he, 'makes us happy, in the thought that they are beyond oor reach.'

'But did I no think,' said she, 'that I wad beyond the reach o' the pain o' experiencing the fauseness o' Lucy Cherrytrees—the very creature, o' a' ither, I hae chosen as my bosom friend—to whom I confided a' my thochts and the very secret o' my love?'

'But it is an ill wind that blows nacher gait, as they say, Effie,' said Lewis. 'Ye better appreciate your goodness, now that you have experienced the faithfulness of another.'

'An' if I hae lost a friend,' replied Effie, 'am I nae mair sure o' my lover. Ye dinna ken, Lewie, hoo muckle this has raised ye even in my mind, whar ye hae aye occupied the highest place. Ye hae rejected the offer o' love o' the braw heiress o' Burbar for the humble dochter o' David Mearns, wha earns his bread by the sweat o' his brow. Oh! what can a pair, penniless cottage dochter gie, in return, to the man wha in return, to the man wha for her sake, turns back on a big ha', a thousand braid acres; a braw heiress?'

'Her simple, genuine, unsophisticated heart,' replied Lewis, 'with one unchangeable, devoted affection beating in its core. Were Burnbank Hall as big as the Parliament House, and Burnbank itself less than the lands watered by the Bramble burn, and Lucy Cherrytrees as fair as unfortunate Mary Stuart, I would not give my simple Effie, with no more property of her own than the bandeau that binds her locks, for Lucy Cherrytrees and all lands.'

The two lovers continued their evening walks indulging in conversations which, bracing the subject of their affections, anticipating the pleasures of their ultimate union, realized that fullest hope which is to transcend possession. No notice was taken of their mutual sentiments of Lucy Cherrytrees' affection for Lewis, and her unsuccessful attempt to displace her old friend.

the room for herself in the heart of the most beloved object of their wishes.

Matters continued in this state for some time, Effie being regularly gratified by a visit from Lewis three times a week. On one occasion a whole week passed without any intelligence of her lover. Her inquiries had not produced no satisfactory explanation of this unusual occurrence; and Fancy, under the spell of the Genius of Fear, was busy in the vocation of drawing dark pictures of coming evil. At last she was told by her father, who had procured the intelligence from a friend of George Campbell, the father, that young Lewis had been suspected of an intention to marry the poor daughter of the cottage, David Mearns, and had been dispatched without a minute's premonition, to an uncle who was a merchant in Rio de Janeiro. Some time had been given to him to write to her; and care had been taken to prevent him from sending her any intelligence while he remained at Liverpool, previous to his departure. The statement was corroborated by intelligence to the same effect, procured from one of Laird Cherrytrees' servants from the servants of George Campbell, who he had told it to Lucy, and who again told it to Effie, who hid tears in her eyes, which she took every care to conceal. The effect produced on the heart of Effie Mearns, by this unexpected misfortune, was proportioned to its magnitude, and the susceptibility of the feelings of this delicate individual on whom it operated. For many days she wept incessantly—refusing the ordinary sustenance of a life which she now deemed of no importance to herself or to any one else. All attempts at comforting a bruised heart were—as they generally are in cases of disappointed love—unavailing; and the effects of time seemed only apparent in a quieter, though not in any degree less poignant sorrow. Every object kept alive in the remembrance of the youth who had first made an impression on her heart, and whose image was graven on every spot of the neighbourhood, which had been consecrated by the language of a mutual passion. The scenes of their wanderings, hallowed as they had been in her memory, were now peopled with refined terrors; and every time that she was forced abroad to take that air and exercise which latterly seemed indispensable to her existence, her sorrow received an accession of power from every tree under which she had sat, and every knove or dell where

they had listened to the musical loves of the birds, as they exchanged their own in not less eloquent sighs.

The first circumstance that produced any effect on the mind of the disconsolate maiden, was a misfortune of another kind, which, realizing the old adage, seemed to follow with due rapidity the footsteps of its precursor.—Her mother, who sat on one side of the fire, while Effie occupied her usual seat in the corner of the cottage in the other, had been using all the force of her rude but impressive eloquence to get her daughter to adopt the only means of her power for the amelioration of a grief which might render her childless.

'I am getting auld, Effie,' she said, 'an' you are the only one I can look to for administration to yer father an' to me: that comfort we hae a richt to expect at the hands of a dochter who never was yet deficient in her duty. Our poverty, which winna be made any less severe, as ye may weel ken, by the oncome o' years, will mak yer attention to us mair necessary; an' it may even be—God meise the means!—that your weak hands may yet be required to work for the support of yer auld parents. I hae lang intended to speak to ye in this way, and it was only for pity for my puir heart broken Effie that put me off fra day to day, in the expectation that either some news wad come frae Lewie, or that ye would get consolation frae anither an' a higher source, to support ye for trials ye may yet hae to bear up against, for the sake o' them that brocht ye into the world. A'ither means hae been tried to get ye to determine to live, and no lay yersel down to dee, and they havin failed what can I do but try the last remedy in my pooer—to speak as I hae noo dune to yer guid sense, an' lay afore ye the duties of a dutifu bairn, which are far aboon the thochts o' a disappointed love. Promise, now, my bonny Effie, that ye will try to gie up yer mournin, for the sake o' parents whase love for ye is nae less than Lewie Campbell's.'

As Betty finished her impressive admonition to Effie, who acknowledged its force, and inwardly determined on complying with the request of her mother, an unusual noise at the door of the cottage startled her anxious ear. It seemed that a number of people were approaching the cottage, and the groans of one in deep distress and pain were mixed

with the low talk of the crowd, who, from those inexpressible indications which the ear can catch and analyze ere the mind is conscious of the operation, seemed already to sympathise with one to whom they were bearing a grief. Roused by that anticipative fear of evil which the unfortunate feel, Betty ran to the door, followed by her daughter, and opened it—to let in the mangled body of her husband; who, in felling an oak, on the property of Burnbank, had fallen under the weight of the tree, and got his leg broken, and one of his arms dislocated at the shoulder joint. He was conveyed, by the kind neighbours, to a bed; and, by the time they got him undressed, for the purpose of his wounds being submitted to the curative process of the doctor, that individual arrived, and proceeded to perform the painful operation of setting the broken bones. The full effect of this misfortune to Effie and her mother was for a time suspended, by the call made upon them to relieve the sufferings of the father and the husband; and it was not till the bustle ceased, and the neighbors (excepting two women, whose services, in addition to those of the wife and daughter, might still be required) went away, that they felt the full force of the gigantic evil that had befallen them, the consequences of which might extend through the remaining years of their existence.

A period of not less than eighteen months passed away, and David Mearns was still unable to do more than, with assistance, raise from his bed, and sit, during part of the day, by the fire or at the window. During the whole of this time, he had been tended by his daughter with assiduous care. Her filial sympathies, called into active operation by sorrows of her parent, filled up the void that had been made in her heart by the departure of her lover; and a new source of grief effected (however paradoxical it may seem) a change in the morbid melancholy to which she had been enslaved, which, although not for mental health or ease, was so much in favor of exertion and remedial exercise, that she came to present the appearance of one inclined to endeavor to sustain her sorrow, rather than resign herself to the fatal power of an irremedial woe. Among the visitors who took an interest in a family reduced by one stroke to want and all its attendant evils, Laird Cherrytrees evinced the strongest concern for the fate of his friend; and by a time

ous contribution of necessary assistance, ameliorated, in so far as man could, the unhappy condition of virtue under a load of misery.—The many visits of the good laird, and the long periods passed at the bedside of the patient enabled him to see and appreciate the devoted affection of Effie to her parent; and often, as she flew at the slightest indication of a wish for something to assuage pain, or remove the uneasiness produced by the long confinement, he would stop the current of his narrative, and fix his eyes on the kind maiden, so long as her tender office engaged her attention and feelings. These long looks, no unaccompanied at times with a deep sigh were attributed, as they well might, to admiration and approbation of so much filial affection and devotedness exercised toward one whom the old laird respected above all his friends.

The visits of Laird Cherrytrees were at first twice or thrice a week. His infirm body already begun to exhibit the effects of old age, prevented him from walking; and such was the anxiety he felt for the unhappy patient, that he mounted his old pony, Donald, nearly as frail as his master, to enable him to administer consolation so much required. He came always at the same hour; Effie would expect him, was often at the door ready to receive him; while she held old Donald's head till he dismounted, welcomed his father's friend with so much sincerity of pleasure that if she had failed in her hospitality he would have felt a disappointment he would not have liked to express. Even when at a distance from the cottage, he strained his eyes to endeavor to catch a glimpse of his faithful attendant; and, if he did not see her, the rein of Donald was relaxed, and he was allowed to saunter along at his own pleasure or even to eat grass by the road side (a luxury he delighted in from his having once belonged to a cadger,) so as to give Effie time to get to her post.

The three days of the week on which Laird Cherrytrees was in the habit of visiting David Mearns, were Monday, Thursday, and Saturday; and he seldom came without bringing something to the poor family, either some money for old Betty; some presents prepared by Lucy, for the invalid; or a bouquet or a flower from Burnbank garden, for Effie. When his conversation with David was finished—and every day it seemed shorter and shorter, though there seemed no lack of it

objects or ideas—he commenced to talk with Effie, chiefly on the nature and contents of the books he brought her to read; and nothing seemed to delight him more than to sit in the large arm chair by David's bedside, and hear Effie discursing, *ex cathedra*, (on a three footed stool at the foot of the bed, opposite to the Laird's chair, with her characteristic simplicity and good sense, on the subjects he himself had suggested. But notwithstanding all her efforts to appear well pleased in the presence of the man who was supporting her family, her train of thoughts was often broken in upon by the recollections of Lewis Campbell, and she would sit for an hour at a time, with the eyes of the Laird fixed upon her melancholy face, as if he had spent all that time in mute cogitation, suggesting some remedy for her sorrow. His ideas and feelings seemed to be operated upon by the same power that ruled the mind of the maiden; for his face followed, in its changing expressions, the mutations of her countenance. Her melancholy seemed to be communicated by a glance of her watery eye, the thought of Lewis entered her mind; and when she recovered from her gloomy reverie a corresponding indication of relief lighted up the grey twinkling orbs of the old Laird. This custom of 'glowrin,' for whole hours at a time, on the face of the sensitive girl, at first painful, became a matter of indifference; and the position and attitudes of the three individuals—Betty being generally engaged about the house—undergoing, while the Laird was present, no change, came to assume something like the natural properties of the parties, as if they had been fixtures, for the study of a painter.

Every time the Laird came to the cottage, he extended the period of his stay, and, latterly, he did not stir till a servant from the bank, sent by Lucy, came to take him home. It seemed as if he could not get enough of 'glowrin;' for, latterly, all his occupation, which, at first consisted of rational conversation, merged in that mute eloquence of the eye, or rather in that inebriation of the soul, 'drinking of light,' which lovers of sights, especially female countenances, are so fond of. The visits had been so regular, not a day being ever missed, that, as Effie held the stirrup till he mounted Donald, during all which time the process of 'glowring' went on as regularly as at the bedside of David, she nev-

er thought of asking, and he never thought of stating, when he would call again. Time had stamped the act of calling with the impress of an unchangeable custom. The caseless clock of David's cottage was not more regular; the only change that already observed—that the time of the Laird's stay gradually and gradually lengthened.

The homage paid by Effie to Laird Cherrytrees was, as may easily be conceived, the respect, attention, and kindness of an open hearted girl, filled with gratitude to the preserver of the lives of her and her parents.—Every evening she offered up, at her bedside, prayers for the preservation and happiness of the man but for whose kindness starvation might have overtaken the helpless invalid, and not much less helpless wife and daughter. In their prayers the 'amen' of David and his wife was the most heartfelt expression of love and gratitude that ever came from the lips of mortal. This feeling, however, did not prevent David Mearns and Betty from sometimes indulging, in the absence of Effie, (in all likelihood giving freedom to her tears as, she sat in some favorite retreat of her absent lover,) in some remarks on the extraordinary conduct of Laird Cherrytrees. They soon saw the secret, and resolved upon drawing him out; for which purpose Effie was to be called away on the occasion of the next visit.

The Laird came as he used to do, took his seat, and resumed his gazing. Effie pleased him exceedingly, by an account she gave him of the last book he brought to her; and, throwing himself back in the arm chair, he hemmed, for a time, wrapped in meditation. Effie obeyed, in the meantime, her mother's request, to come for a few minutes to the green to assist her in her work; and, when the Laird had again applied his eyes to their accustomed vocation, he was surprised, but not (for once) displeased, at her disappearance. A great struggle, now commenced between some wish and a restraint. He looked round the cottage, and then turned his eyes on David; acts which he repeated several times. Incipient syllables of words half formed, died away in his struggling throat. He moved restlessly in the large chair, and twirled his silver headed cane in his hand. He even rose, went to the door looked out, came back again, and took his seat without saying a word. Holding away

his face from David, he at last made out a few words, uttered with great difficulty.

'She's a fine lassie, Effie,' he said.

'A bonnier an' a better never was brocht up in Bramblehaugh, savin' your ain Lucy,' replied David.

"Hoo auld is she noo?" said the Laird, still holding away his face.

'She will be nineteen come the time,' replied David.

'It's a pity she's sae young,' rejoined the Laird, with a great struggle, and making a noise with his cane, as if he had repented of his words and wished to drown them before they reached the ears of David.

'I dinna think sae, beggin yer Honour's pardon,' replied David. 'We need her assistance in this trial; an' I'm just thinkin' o' some way she might use her hands—an' she's willing aneugh puir creatur—for oor assistance.'

'Are ye no pleased wi' my assistance?' said the Laird, displeased at something in David's reply.

'Yer Honor has saved oor lives,' replied David, feelingly, 'an' it wad only be because we are ashamed o' yer guidness that we wad wish oor dochter to tak a part o' that burden aff ane wha is under nae obligation to serve us.'

'If I hae been yer freend, ye hae been mine,' said the Laird. 'I hae got guid advices frae ye; an', even noo, I hae something to ask ye concernin mysel, that nae ither man i' the haugh could sae weel answer.'

'What is that, yer Honor?' said David.

'What do ye think, David Mearns, I should do,' said the Laird, moving about in the chair in evident perplexity, 'if my dochter Lucy were to tak a husband an' leave Burnbank? I carena about fa'in into the hands o' Jenny Mucklewham, wha, for this sometime past, has neither cleaned my buckles nor brushed my coat as I wad wish. She says I'm mair fashious; but that's a mere excuse.'

'I hae seen aulder men marry again,' said David, thinking he would please the Laird, by giving him such an answer as he was clearly fishing for.

'Aulder men, David, man?' replied the Laird, looking down at his person, and adjusting his wig. 'Did I ask ye onything about

my age? I wanted merely your advice what I should do in certain circumstances—an' ye gie me a comparison for an answer. Do ye think I should marry?'

'If yer Honour has ony wish in that wa I think ye should,' said David.

'I never yet did wrang in following yer advice, David Mearns,' said the Laird. 'She's a fine lassie, Effie.'

'Ou, ay,' responded David, at a loss wh more to say.

'Very fine,' again said the Laird, turning his face partially from the window, so as the tail of his eye reached David's face, and waiting for something more.

David could, however, say nothing. The very circumstance of the Laird's wishing him to say something pertinent to the purpose already so broadly hinted at, prevented him from touching so delicate a subject; and notwithstanding of another application the tail of the Laird's eye, he was silent.

'Ye hae gien me ae advice, David,' said the Laird, in despair of getting any more of David without a question: could ye tell me *wha* I should marry, man? After having achieved this announcement, he rose and walked to the window.

'That's owre delicate subject for me to gae an advice on, yer Honour,' replied David. 'The doo laes aside ninety nine guid straws an' taks the hundredth, though a crooked an' for its nest. Ye maun judge for yoursel.'

'What say ye to yer ain Effie, then?' said the Laird, relieved at last from a dreadful burden.

'If yer Honour likes the lassie, an' she tak yer Honour, I can hae no objections,' replied David.

'The Laird, who seemed twenty years younger after this declaration, took David by the hand, and shook it till the pain of the dislocated arm almost made him cry.

Will ye speak to her about it, David?' said he, still holding his hand. 'The best fair o' Burnbank will be your reward. Plead me, David, my best friend. Tell Betty aboot it, and get her to use her mother's power. I can trust my een, Effie doesna dislike a' a' goes aweel, ye may hae Ravelrigg, Braidacre, or Muirfield—onything that's my pooer to gie, David.' And the old man, exhausted by the struggle and excitement, had suffered, sank back into the chair.

"I will do my best," replied David—and the old Laird sighed, and absolutely groaned with pure, unmixed satisfaction.

At the end of this scene Effie and her mother came in. The damsel took her old seat on the three-footed stool at the foot of the bed, and the eyes of the Laird sought again her face, where he thought they had a better chance now to rest. No more was spoken;—though for a day had been said and done—yet with a parting look to David, to keep him in remembrance of his promise, and a purse of money slipped into the hand of Betty as a solvent of any obstacle that might exist in her mind, the lover went to the door to bid her Donald from the soft hands of Effie, as was her custom, had gone out before him, to lead the old cadger to the door, to hold the bridle till he with an effort got up to the saddle. The only difference that he could observe in his departure this day, was a kind of a mock-gallant wave of the hand, as he, with more than usual spirit, struck his spurless heels into Donald's sides, and tried to rise in the saddle, in response to the hobble of the old Highlander.

The Laird had been scarcely out of the house, when David had a communing with his wife, in absence of Effie, on the extraordinary intimation made by the old lover.—She was agreeable to the match; but the spark came into her eye as she thought of the wretched poor Effie was to be called upon to receive. Neither of them could answer for the consent of Effie, whose melancholy, though somewhat ameliorated, was little diminished, and whose recollections of Lewis Campbell were as vivid as they were on the day of his departure. When she returned from one of her solitary rambles, which fed her passion and increased her grief, she was lately told of the intentions of Laird Cherrish. The announcement of the extraordinary intelligence produced an effect which neither her father nor mother could have anticipated. A quick operation of her mind disclosed before her all the affectionate acts of attention she had for years been in the habit of paying to the old friend of her father, and the preserver of their lives. Gratitude, open as in one of the most grateful hearts that ever beat in the bosom of mortal, had produced in her an exuberant kindness, a devotedness of a species of affection due by a child to a godfather, a playful freedom of the conversation of one who relied on the disparity of

years for a license from even the suspicion of a possibility of any other relation existing between them, that now came back upon her, loaded with self-reproach and shame, and attributing to her misconstrued attentions the extraordinary passion that had taken hold of the heart of the old Laird. She was totally unable to make any reply to her parents. The image of Lewis Campbell, never absent from her mind, assuming a new form, and swam in the tears which flowed from her eyes. The natural contrast between age and youth, love and gratitude, assumed its legitimate strength. The first feeling of her mind was, that she would suffer the death that had for a time been impending over her, and whose finger was already on her breaking heart, rather than comply with the wishes of her father and mother. They saw the struggle that was in her mind, and abstained from pressing what they had suggested. They did not ask her even to give her sentiments; but the silent tears that stole down her cheek and dropped in her lap from her drooping head, required no spoken commentary to tell them the extent of her grief, and the resolution at least of a heart that might entirely break, as it appeared to be breaking, but never could forget.

There was little sleep for the eyes of Effie on the succeeding night. Her sobs reached the ears of her parents, who, unable to yield her consolation, were obliged to leave her to wrestle with her grief; sending up a silent prayer to the Author of all good dispensations, that He might assuage the sorrow of one who had already, with exemplary patience, submitted to the rod of affliction. The sacredness of her feelings was too well appreciated by her parents to admit of any offer of counsel, where deep seated affection, the work of mysterious instinct, stood in solemn derision of the vulgar ideas of this world's expediency. The struggle in her mind arose from the strength of her love, and the power of her filial devotion. No part of the attendant circumstances or probable consequences of her decision escaped her mind. She knew that she never could be happy as the wife of any other individual, even of suitable age, than Lewis Campbell. But this concerned only herself; and she knew, and trembled as she thought, that the result of her decision might be the destitution, the want, perhaps the death of her pa-

rents: their all depended on the breath of the man whom she, by the sign of her finger, might change from a friend to a foe; and she might thereby become the destroyer of those who gave her being.

The morning came, but brought neither sleep nor relief to the unhappy maiden. Her parents seemed inclined not to advert to the subject that day, but to let her struggle on with her own thoughts. The hour of the Laird's visit approached, and he was already on the road for the home of his beloved whom his ardent fancy pictured standing smiling at the door, ready as usual to receive him and lead him into the house. Donald—who knew a reverie in his master better than he did himself, and did not fail to take advantage of it—ambled on with diminished speed. The Laird approached the cottage. No Effie was there. His bright visions took flight, and were succeeded by a cold shiver, the precursor of a gloomy train of ideas, which pictured a refusal and all its attendant horrors. He drew up the head of Donald, and even invited him to partake of the long grass which grew by the way side. He counted the moments as Donald devoured the food; and, from time to time, lifted his eyes, to see if Effie was yet at the cottage door. She was not to be seen—and she had not been absent before for many months. His mind was unprepared for a refusal; the ground swell of his previous excited fancy distracted him amidst the dead stillness of despair. He looked again, and for the last time that day. Effie was not yet there. He turned the head of the delighted, and no doubt astonished Donald, and quietly sought again the house of Burnbank.

The same procedure was gone through on the succeeding day. Laird Cherrytrees again proceeded to the cottage of David Mearns; and, as he sauntered along, he thought it impossible that Effie should again be absent from her post. He was too good a man, and too conceited a lover, as all old lovers are, to allow his mind to dwell on the probable operation of necessity and the fear of injuring her father's patron, on the mind of the daughter; and yet a lurking, rebellious idea suggested that he would rather see Effie at the door, impelled by that cause, than absent altogether. His hopes again beat high, and Donald was pricked on to the goal of his wishes with an asperity he did not relish so well as a reverie. The spot was attained.

Effie was still absent. Donald was agitated, and remitted to the long grass, and all the sources of a lover's mind were called up, enable him to face the evil that awaited him. But all was in vain—he found it impossible to proceed.

'I am rejected,' he muttered to himself with a sigh; 'a cottager's dochter has rejected the Laird o' Burnbank; but her cauldron an' cruelty mak me like her the mair. For Mearns, Effie Mearns! hoo little do ye! what commotion ye hae produced in this burstin heart! But, though ye winna' me, I winna desert yer faither. Hame, Donald, to Burnbank.' And, as he pulled the bridle with his left hand, he wiped away the tears that had collected in his eyes, and casting many a look back to the cottage, entered slowly home.

These proceedings of the Laird had been noticed by Betty Mearns, from the window of the cottage, and she and David were no loss to guess the cause of them. They knew his timid, sensitive disposition, and truly attributed his return to his not seeing Effie at the door, waiting for him as usual. Apprehensions now seized the good man that the Laird might withdraw his attentions and assistance from the family, the result of which would be nothing but misfortune and ruin; as David's fractured limbs, yet far from being healed, and a long period must yet pass before he could earn a penny to keep in their lives. These fears were increased by a fourth day having passed without a visit from the Laird, who had, notwithstanding, been seen reconnoitering usual at a distance from the cottage. She herself saw how matters stood, and learned from the looks of her father and mother's sentiments they seemed unwilling to detect. Her mind was still convulsed with the struggle of the antagonist duties, wishes, emotions and fears, that rose in her mind; and the apprehensions of her parents, which she considered well-founded, added to her sorrow an additional source of anguish.

'This house,' said David, at last overcome by his feelings, 'has become mair like a hospital that has lost its mortification, an honest man's cottage. Effie sits gauging an sabbin the hail day, an' you, Betty, forward to starvation, wi' the gruesome prospect o' despair. I am unhappy mysel, besides being an invalid. What is this to end in? What are we to do? Hoo are we to do'

"but meat, noo that Burnbank, guid man, deserted us?"

"There has come naething frae Burnbank five days," replied Betty; "an' the siller I frae the guid auld man, the last time he here, I payed awa i' the village for neeries I had taen on afore we got that help. girmel winna haudoot lang against three an'; an', if Laird Cherrytrees bides awa the langer, I see naething for it but to"

he tear started to the eye of David. He sat at Effie. She wept, and sobbed, and red her face with her hands.

"Effie, woman," said David, "a' this micht be averted if ye had just gane to the an' welcomed the auld Laird, as ye went. He's a blate man, though a carl; an' he has, nae doot, thocht he unwelcome when yer auld practice o' in for him was gien up."

"I tauld her that, David," said Betty, "and bid her to gae to the door, though it was to gie the blate Laird a glimpse o' her k was a' he wanted to bring him in; she only sabbed the mair. Unhappy she first saw that callant, wha may noo had or married for ought she kens!—an' for his sake maun a hail family dree the o' this day's misery. Effie, woman, can ye forget ane wha has na thocht ye worth trouble o' tellin ye, by ae scrape o' his whether he be i' the land o' the livin'?"

"Sob was the only reply Effie could make is appeal.

"I hae tauld Effie," said David, "what save us frae the ruin an' starvation that us i' the face; but my mind's made up for to the end though I should lie here y broken banes, and dree the pains o' er, rather than force my dochter to marman against her ain choice. But, O Effie, woman, wad ye see yer puir faither, brothe is in baith mind an' body, lie starvin in his bed, wi' nae mair pooer to earn a bread than the unspeaned bairn, and k a sacrifice to save him?"

"Ye, faither," replied Effie, "I wad dee to ye."

"But deein winna save either him or me," Betty, "Naething will hae that effect er agreein to be the ledy o' the braw an' braid acres o' Burnbank. Wae's that a difference between that condition,

wi' servants at yer nod, an' a' the comforts an' luxuries of life at your command, an', abune a', pooer o' makin happy yer auld faither an' mother, an' this awfu prospect o' dreein the very wurst an' laast o' a' the evils o' life—want an' auld age—ill matched pair, Effie, woman, my bonny bairn, hae ye nae love in yer heart, but for Lewie Campbell? Wad ye, for his sake, see a' this misfortune fa' on the heads o' yer parents, whom, by the laws o' God an' man, ye are bound to honor, serve, an' obey?"

It was easier for Effie to say she would die to save parents, than that she would comply with the wish of her mother; but the feeling appeal of her parent increased her agony, which induced another paroxysm of hysterical sobs, the only answer she could yet make to her mother.

"Effie doesna care for either you or me, Betty," said David, "or she wad hae little hesitation about marryin a guid, fresh, clean, rich auld man, to save her faither an' mother frae poverty an' starvation. I see nae great sacrifice i' the matter. Her young heart mayna rejoice i' the pleasures o' a daft love, but her guid sense will be gratified by a feeling o' duty far aboon the vain, frawart freits o' a silly, giddy, youthfu passion. Let her refuse Laird Cherrytrees, an' when Lewie Campbell comes hame, the owrecome bread o' the funeral o' her faither may grace a waddin bought wi' the price o' his life."

"Dinna speak that way; faither," cried Effie, lifting up her hands, "I canna stand that. You said ye wadna force me, an' ye are forcin me. Oh, my puir heart, what will support ye when grief for my parents turns me against ye? Faither, faither, when I am dead, Laird Cherrytrees will be again yer freend. A little time will do't: will ye no wait?"

"Hunger waits only eight days, as the sayin is," replied he, "an' ye'll live mair than that time, I hope an' trow. I will be dead afore ye, Effie, an' ye'll hae the consolation, as ye maybe drap a tear on the mossy grey stane that covers the Mearnses i' the kirk-yard o' oor parish, to think, if ye shouldna like to say, in case ye micht be heard—tho' thinking an' speakin's a' ane to God—that 'that stane was lifted ten years suner than it micht hae been, because I liked Lewie Campbell better than auld Laird Cherrytrees.'"

"An' it's no likely," said the mother, "that I wad be there to hear Effie mak sae wae fu a speech. If I binna lyn wi the Mearns, I'll be wi' the Cherrytrees o' Mossnook—nae relations o' the Burnbanks, though maybe as guid a family. But, afore I'm mixed wi' the dust o' that auld hoose, Effie—an' it mayna be lang—ye may join the twa Cherrytrees, an' let the gravestanes o' the Mearns, as weel as the Mossnooks, lie yet a score years langer, without bein moved. It's a pity to disturb the lang grass. Its sough in the nicht wind keeps the bats frae pickin the auld banes, an' maybe it may save your mother's if ye send her there afore her time."

Effie's feelings could no longer withstand these appeals. Her sobbing ceased suddenly; and, starting up from her seat, she looked to the old clock that stood against the wall of the cottage. She noticed that it was upon the hour of the Laird's usual visit.

'It's twelve o'clock, faither," she said, firmly—"this hour decides the fate of Effie Mearns."

Walking to the door, she placed herself in the position she used to occupy when she intended to welcome her father's friend. Now she was to welcome a husband. Laird Cherrytrees was as might have been expected, allowing Donald to take his liberty of the roadside, grazing while he was busy reconnoitering the cottage. The moment he saw the form of Effie standing where he had for several long days wished to see her, he pulled up Donald's bridle, with the alacrity of youth, and, striking his sides with his unarmed heels, made all the speed of a bridegroom to get to his bride. The sight of the object he had gazed upon so unceasingly for so long a time, and whom he had strained his eyes in vain to see during these eventful days, operated like a charm on the old lover. He discovered at first sight the red swollen eyes of Effie; but he was too happy in thinking he was successful, as he had no doubt he had, to meditate on the struggle which produced his bliss. Having taken a long draught of the fountain of his hopes and happiness, and feasted his eyes on the face of the maiden, who attempted to smile through her tears, which she did sitting on his horse, and, without speaking a word—for, loquacious in politics or rural economy, he was mute in love—he dismounted, while Effie, as usual, held the reins. He lost not time in getting into his chair, falling back into it like a

breathless traveller who has at last attained the end of his journey. David and Betty who construed Effie's conduct, into a consent, took an early opportunity, while she was still at the door, of letting the happy Laird know that their daughter, as the conceived was inclined to the match. The laird received the intelligence as if it had been too much too bear. He was at first beyond the vulgar habit of speech. He sighed, turned his eyes in their sockets, groaned and wrung his hands. On recovering he exclaimed—

"Whar is she, Betty? Let me see that dear creature David, ye'll hae Ravelin it's the best o' them a'. Whan is't to be Betty? Ye maun fix the day; an' ye ma brak the thing to Lucy, and to Jenny Mucklewham; for I hae nae pooer. Let me see her—let me see the sweet creature this instant."

Effie, at the request of her mother, came in and resumed her seat on the three-foot stool. Her eyes were still swollen, and she looked sorrowfully at her father. The laird fixed his eyes on her; but his loquacity was gone. He had net a word to say; but 'glowrin' was in some degree changed, being accompanied by a smile of self-complacency and contentment, and freed from the nervous irritability with which he used to solicit with his eyes a look from the object of his affections. His visit this day was shorter than it used to be. Next day Betty was to visit Burnbank, to arrange for the marriage.

Meanwhile the unfortunate girl resigned herself as a self-sacrifice into the hands of her mother. Bound with the silken bands of affection, she renounced all desire of exercising her own free will, or indulging in the feelings of the female heart which are demanded so strong as to demand the sacrifice of all other earthly considerations. The story of Iphigenia has occupied the peacelongs of pitying mortals for thousands of years. A lovely woman sacrificed for a wind, doomed to have the blood that melted in the blushing cheeks of beauty spilled on the altar of a false religion, is a spectacle which the imagination cannot contemplate without a participation of the sympathies of the heart; yet there are many a scene in the act of being performed, where, though there is no bloodshed and no smoking altar exhibited, the sacrifice is

than that of the Grecian victim. Our holy altar of matrimony is often, by wayward feelings of man—for we here know nothing of vice or corrupt conduct, made more cruel than those of Moloch and Chion. There is many a bloodless Iphigenia in those days, whose sufferings are unknown and unregarded, because confined to the heart that conceals them and concealed them in death. The young, tender, and devoted female, for the love she bears to her parents, constrained to intermarry with rich age, to embrace dry bones, to extend her sympathies to selfishness, caprice, and ill-nature, or what worse, to the asthmatic giggle of a superstitious love, while all the while her heart, laden with its tribute and swelling with indignation, requires to be watched by her with vigilance and firmness, the cruelty of which to herself feels—presents a form of self-sacrifice possessing claims on the pity of man—beyond those of the boasted self-immolation of ancient devotees.

The silence and dejection of our bride were introduced, by her parents, into that seemingly becoming sedateness which sensible young women think it proper to assume on the eve of so important a change in their condition as marriage; while the happy bridegroom had come to that time of life when he ceased with submission, though it be exchanged through tears. No chemical menstruum has so much power in the dissolution of the hardest metals as the self-complacency of an old lover has in construing, according to his wishes, the actions, words, or looks of a young woman who is destined to be his wife. Silence and tears are expressive of grief as well as of joy; and so long as the desire of the ancient philosopher is unfulfilled by the gods, and there is no access to the heart, that organ in the young man may break while the sexagenarian bridegroom is enjoying the imputed silent, unexpressed happiness of the object of his ill-considered affection.

The sadness and melancholy of the apparently resigned Effie Mearns had no effect on the noise and show of the preparations for marriage with her old lover. The marriage of old men are well known to be celebrated with higher bugle notes from the trumpet of fame than any others. A sumptuous dinner was to be given to the neigh-

bouring lairds, and the cotters were to be fed and regaled on the green opposite to the mansion. Dancing and music were to add their charms to the gay scene; and it was even alleged that the light of a bonfire would lend its peculiar aid, in raising the joy of the guests, predisposed to hilarity by plenteous potations, to the proper height suited to the conquest of the old bridegroom over, at once, a young woman and o'd Time.

For days previous to the eventful one Effie Mearns was not heard to open her lips—she looked on all the gay preparations for her marriage as if they had been the mournful acts of the undertaker employed in laying the silver trimming on the coffin lid of a lover:—the bedside of her sick parent, who was still unable to rise, was the place where she sat “shrouded in silence.” She heard the conversations of her father and mother about the progress of the preparations, without exhibiting so much interest as to shew that she understood them. Misgivings crossed the minds of the old couple, and brought tears to their eyes, as they contemplated the animated corpse that sat there, waiting the nod of the master of ceremonies, and ready to perform the part assigned to it in the forthcoming orgies of mournful joy; but they had gone too far to recede, and it was even a subject of satisfaction to them that the period of the celebration was so near, for otherwise they might have had reason to fear that their daughter would not have survived the intermediate time. When the bridegroom called his ears were alarmed by the voices of the parents, who saw the necessity of endeavoring to hide the condition of their daughter; and he was satisfied, if he got free and unrestrained, “a feast of his eyes.” His love was still expressed by silent gazing; for it was too deep in his old heart for either words or tears; if indeed there was moisture enough in the seat of his affection for the suppliance of the *softest* expression of the soft passion.

The eventful day arrived. The marriage was to take place in the cottage, where David Mearns still lay confined to his bed: the sick man wore a marriage favour attached to the breast of his shirt! for Laird Cherrytrees would be content with no less a demonstration of his participation in his unparalleled happiness. The still silent bride submitted passively to all the acts of her nimble dressers, whose laugh seemed to strike her ears

like funeral bells ; yet she tried—poor victim—to smile, though the clouded beam came through a tear which, by its steadfastness, seemed to belong to the orb. The bridegroom came at the very instant when he ought to have come—the hand of the clock not having had time to leave the mark of notation. He was dressed in the style of his earliest days, with cocked hat, laced coat, and a sky-blue vest, embroidered in the richest manner ;—while a new wig, ordered from the metropolis, imparted to him the freshness of youth—his cheek was flushed with the blood which joy had forced, for a moment, from where it was more needed, at the drying fountain of life ; and his eye spoke a happiness which his parched tongue could not have achieved, without causing shame even to himself :—Every thing was new, spruce, perking, self-complacent. The clergyman next came, and all was prepared.

Throughout all this time and all these preparations, not the slightest change had been made on the bride. After she was dressed, she took her seat again, silently by the side of her father's sick-bed, where she sat like a statue. The ceremony was now to commence and she stood up when required by the clergyman, as if she obeyed the command of an

executioner. It was noticed that she seemed to incline to be as near as possible to her father's bed ; and her unwillingness or inability to come forward forced the clergyman to move the bridegroom some paces from the situation they at first held. The ceremony proceeded till it came to that part where the consent of the parties is asked. The happy bridegroom pronounced his response, quick, sharp, with an air of conceit, which brought a smile to the faces of the parties present. There was now a pause for the consent of the bride. All eyes were fixed on her death-like face—severe struggle was going on in her bosom, yet her countenance was unmoved, and no one conjectured that she suffered more than sensitive females often do in her situation. The clergyman repeated his question—there was still a pause—the eyes of all were riveted on her. “ *I canna ! I canna !* ” at last she exclaimed, in a voice of agony, and fell back in the bed—a corpse !

Six months after the death of Effie Mac-Lucy Cherrytrees was married, without her father's consent, to Lewis Campbell, who returned home in spite of his reported death. There was opposition against the consent of the Laird, but she soon died of either a broken heart or old age—no doctor could have told which.

BEES.

It is said, but with what truth must be left for Philosophers and the learned to determine—“ that Bees had their origin from the carcass of a Lion.” They still delight in dipping their wings in putridity, and shaking hands with their kindred—the maggots—which is superior to the conduct of human beings, whose love departs, when their friends be-

come like poor old Lazarus, who had a ‘cross’ in his pocket—all Christian Coins, of old, having the symbol, of what the Pagans are now ashamed—the Cross. Therefore, the Bees exceed men, in that their life has nothing to do with fashion or state—activity and industry being the ‘*sine qua non*’

ROGER GOLDIE'S NARRATIVE.

FALSE ALARM.

We have heard of the false alarm, (said ever Goldie,) which for the space of well nigh four and twenty hours filled the country upon the Borders with exceeding great consternation, and at the same time called for an example of general and devoted heroism; and love of country, such as is nowhere recorded in the annals of any nation on the face of the globe. Good cause have we to remember it, and were I to live a thousand years, it never would be effaced from my recollection. What first gave rise to the alarm I have not been clearly able to ascertain unto this day. There was a house heated up beside Preston, with feasting and dancing, and a great light like that of a beacon proceeded from the onstead. Now we may say that the man that kept the beacon at Hownamlaw, mistook the light for the beacon at Dunselaw; and the man at Dunselaw in his turn seeing Hownam flare up, kindled his fires also, and speedily the red burning alphabet of war blazed on every side. At last, a spirit seemed to fly from mountain to mountain, touching their summits with fire, and writing in the flame of the word—*invasion!* Others say that it arose from the individual who kept watch at Hume Castle being deceived by an accidental fire over in Northumberland; and a very general supposition is, that it arose from a feint on the part of a great sea admiral, which he made in order to try the courage and loyalty of the nation. To the last report, however, I attach no credit. The fable informs us that the shepherd laddie lost his sheep, because he cried *the wolve!* when there was no wolf at hand, and it would have been policy similar to his, had he cried—*an invasion!* when there was no invasion. Neither nations nor individuals like such practical jokes. It is also certain that the alarm was not first given by the beacons on the sea coast; and there can be no doubt that the mistake originated either at Hownamlaw or Hume Castle.

I recollect it was in the beginning of February, 1804. I occupied a house then about half a mile out of Dunse, and lived comfortably, and I will say contentedly, on the interest of sixteen hundred pounds which I had

invested in the funds; and it required but little discrimination to foresee that if the French fairly got footing in in our country, funded property would not be worth an old song. I could at all times have risked my life in the defence of my native land for the love I bore it; though you will perceive that I had a double motive to do so; and the more particularly, as out of the interest of my funded capital I maintained in competence an affectionate wife and a dutiful son—our only child. The name of my wife was Agnes, and the name of my son,—who at the time of the alarm was sixteen,—was Robert.—Upon their account it often caused me great uneasiness, when I heard and read of the victories and the threatenings of the terrible Corsican. I sometimes dreamed that he had marched a mighty army on a bridge of boats across the straits of Dover, and that he had not only seized my sixteen hundred pounds, but drawn my son, my only son Robie, as a conscript, to fight against his own natural and lawful country, and perhaps to shoot his father! I therefore, as in duty bound as a true and loyal subject, had enrolled myself in the Dunse volunteers. Some joined the volunteers to escape being drawn for the militia, but I could give my solemn affidavit, that I had no motive but the defence of my country—and my property, which, as I have said, was a double inducement.

I did not make a distinguished figure in the corps, for my stature did not exceed five feet two inches. But although my body was small, no man was more punctual on the parade, and I will affirm without vanity, none more active, or had a bolder heart. It always appeared to me to be the height of folly to refuse to admit a man into a regiment, because nature had not formed him a giant.—The little man is not so apt to shoot over the head of an enemy, and he runs less risk of being shot himself—two things very necessary to be considered in battle; and were I a general, I would have a regiment where five feet two should be the maximum height even for the grenadier company.

But, as I was saying, it was early in the Feb.

of 1804, on the second night, if I recollect aright. I had been an hour abed, and was lying about three parts asleep, when I was started with a sort of bum, bumming, like the beating of drum. I thought also that I heard people running along the road, past the door. I listened, and to my horror I distinctly heard the alarm drum beat to arms. It was a dreadful sound to arouse a man from his sleep in our peaceful land.

'Robie!' cried I to my son, 'rise my man rise, and run down to the town, and see what is the matter, that they are beating the alarm drum at this time of night. I fear that'

'O dearsake Roger!' cried Agnes, grasping my arm, 'what do you fear.'

'That—that there's a fire in town,' said I.

'Fire,' quoth she, 'it canna reach us. But O dear me! it hae made my heart beat as if it would start from my breast,—for I thought ye was gaun to say that ye was feared the French were landed.

'I hope not,' said I. But in truth it was that which I did fear.

Robie was a bold, spirited laddie; and he rushed out of the house, cold as it was, half dressed, and without his jacket; but he had not been absent a minute, when he hurried back again, and cried breathlessly as he entered—'Faither, faither! the Law is a' in a lowe!—the French are landed!'

I was then standing in the middle of the floor, putting on my clothes, and, starting as though I had seen an apparition, I exclaimed—'The French landed!—rise Agnes! rise and get me my accoutrements. For this day I will arm and do battle in defence of my native land.'

'Roger! Roger!' cried my wife, 'wherefore will ye act foolishly. Stop at home as a man ought to do, to preserve and protect his ain family and his ain property. Wherefore would ye risk life or limb withouten cause. There will be enough to fight the French without you,—unmarried men, or men that have naebody to leave behind them and to mourn for them.'

'Agnes,' said I, in a tone which manifested my authority, and at the same time showed the courageousness of my spirit—'get me my accoutrements. I have always been the first upon the parade, and I will not be the last to shew my face upon the field of battle.

I am but a little man—the least battalion in the whole corps, but I have a heart as big as the biggest of them. Buonaparte is no Goliath, and a shot from my musket might reach his breas., when a taller man would be touching the cockade on his cock-hat. Therefore, quick! quick!—get me my accoutrements.'

'O gudeman!' cried she, 'your poor breasted wife will fall on her knees before you—and I implore you for my sake, and for the sake of our dear bairn, that ye winna flit away your life, and rush upon destruction. What in the name of fortune has a peaceable man like you to do wi' war or wi' Buonaparte either? Dinna think of leaving the house this night, and I myself will go down to town and hire a substitute in your stead. I have fifteen pounds in the kist, that I have been scraping together for these twelve years past, and I will gie them to ony man that will take your place in the volunteers, and go forth to fight the French in your stead.'

'Gudewife,' said I angrily, 'ye forget what ye are talking about. The French are landed, and every man, auld and young, must take up arms. Ye would have me to become the laughing stock of both town and country. Therefore get me my accoutrements, and let me down to the cross.'

'O Robie my bairn!—my only bairn!' cried she, weeping and addressing our son, 'try to prevail upon your faither to gie up his resolution. If he leave us he will make ye fatherless and me a widow.'

'Mother,' said the laddie gallantly, 'the French are landed, and my faither may help to drive them into the sea. I will tak my pistol and gang wi' him, and if anything happens, I will be at hand to assist him.'

'Haud, haud your tongue, ye silly callant!' she exclaimed in great tribulation, 'ye are as great a fool as your faither is. He sees what he has made o' ye. But as the auld cock crows the young one learns.'

I felt a sort of glow of satisfaction warming my heart at the manifestation of my son's spirit; but I knew that in one of his age and especially at such a time, and with such a prospect before us, it was not right to encourage it, and it was impossible for a father to incite his only son to the performance of an act that would endanger his life. I therefore spoke to him kindly, but at the

the time with the firmness necessary to enforce the commands of a Father, and said—“Ye are too young Robie to become a participant in the scenes of war and horror.—Your young bosom, that is yet a stranger to war, must not be exposed to the destroying-bullet: nor your bonny cheek, where the bud blooms, disfigured with the sabre or horse’s hoof. Ye must not break your mother’s heart, but stay at home to comfort and defend her, when your father is absent fighting for ye both.”

The boy listened to me in silence, but I thought that sullenness mingled with his obedience, and I had never seen him sullen before. Agnes went around the house weeping, and finding that I was not to be gainsayed, she brought me my military apparel and weapons of war. When therefore I was armed and ready for the field, and while the sound of the drum was still summoning us to war, I took her hand to bid her farewell. At that fullness of my heart I pressed my lips to hers, and my tears mingled with her own upon my cheek.

“Farewell, Agnes,” said I, “but I trust—I doubt not, but we shall soon return sound and victorious. But if I should fall—and if it be so ordered that it is to be my lot all gloriously in defence of our country, my son Robert will comfort ye and protect ye, and ye will find all the papers relating to the sixteen hundred pounds of funded property in my private drawer; although, if the French gain a footing in the country, I know it will be but of small benefit to ye.—In that case Robin my man,” added I, “in pressing my son, “ye will have to labor with your hands to protect your mother!—I pray you, doubly bless you both.”

When I saw my son fall upon his mother’s neck, it afforded me a consolation. With great alacrity I got out of the house, and I heard myself sobbing when I was a hundred yards distant. I still also heard the roll of the drum rolling and rattling through the streets of midnight, and on arriving at the rendezvous I found a number of the volunteers, and a multitude of the townspeople assembled.—No one could tell *where* the French had landed, but all knew that they *had* landed.

That night, I assure ye, was a never to be forgotten night. Every person naturally looked anxious, but I believe I may safely say, that there was not one face in a hundred that was

pale with fear, or that exhibited a trace of cowardice or terror upon it. One thought was uppermost in every bosom, and that was—to drive back the invaders, *yea* to drive them into, and drown them in the German ocean, even as a Pharaoh and his host were encompassed by the Red Sea and drowned in it. Generally speaking, a spirit of genuine, of universal heroism was manifested. The alacrity with which the volunteers assembled under arms was astonishing; not but that there were a few who fell into the ranks rather slowly, and with apparent reluctance. But some of those like me, had perhaps wives to cling round their necks, and to beseech them not to venture forth into the war. One of the last who appeared upon the ground was my right hand comrade, Jonathan Barlowman. I had to step to the left to make room for Jonathan, and as he took his place by my side, I heard his teeth chattering in his head. Our commanding officer spoke to him rather sharply, about being so slow turning out in an hour of such imminent peril. But I believe Jonathan was insensible to the reprimand.

The drums began to beat and the fifes to play—the word ‘march,’ was given—the town’s people gave us three cheers as we began to move, and my comrade Jonathan, in his agitation, put his wrong foot foremost, and could not keep the step. So we marched onward, armed and full of patriotism, towards Haddington, which in case of invasion, was appointed as our head quarters or place of rendezvous.

I will not pretend to say that I felt altogether comfortable during the march; indeed to have done so was impossible, for the night was bitterly cold, and at all times there is but little shelter on the Lammermoors; yet the cold gave me but small concern, in comparison of the thoughts of my Agnes and my son Robin. I felt that I loved them better than ever I had imagined I loved them before, and it caused me much silent agony of spirit when I thought that I had parted with them—perhaps for ever. Yet even in the midst of such thoughts, I was cheered by the glorious idea of fighting in the defence of one’s own native country; and I thought of Wallace and of Bruce, and of all the heroes I had read of when a laddie, and my blood fired again. I found that I hated our invaders with a perfect hatred,—that I feared not to meet death,—and I grasped my firelock

more firmly, and a thousand times fancied I had it levelled at the breast of the Corsican.

I indulged in this train of thoughts until we had reached Longformacus, and during that period not a word had my right hand neighbor, Jonathan Barlowman, spoken, either good, bad, or indifferent; but I had frequently heard him groan audibly, as tho' his spirit were troubled. At length when we had passed Longformacus, and were in the most desolate part of the hills—"O Mr. Goldie! Mr. Goldie!" said he, "is this no dismal?"

"I always consider it," answered I, "one of the dreariest spots on the Lammermoors."

"O sir!" said he, "it isna the dreariness of the road that I am referring to. I would rather be sent across the hills from Cowdengham to Lauder blindfold, than I would be sent upon an errand like this. But is it not a dismal and a dreadful thought, that christian men should be roused out of their beds at the dead of the night, to march owre moor and mountain to be shot at, or to cut each others throats! It is terrible, Mr. Goldie!"

Now he was a man seven inches taller than I was, and I was glad of the opportunity of proving to him that though I had the lesser body, I had the taller spirit of the two—and the spirit makes the man. Therefore I said to him—"Why Mr. Barlowman, you surprise me to hear you talk, when our country demands our arms in its defence, we should be ready to lay down our lives, if necessary, by night or by day, on mountain or in glen, on moor, or in meadow—and I cannot respond your sentiments."

"Weel," said he, "that may be your opinion, and it may be a good opinion, but for my own part I do confess that I have no ambition for the honours of either heroism or martyrdom. Had a person been allowed a day to make a sort of decent arrangement of their worldly affairs, it wadna have been sae bad; but to be summoned out of your warm bed at midnight, and to take up an instrument of death in the dark, and go forth to be shot at!—there is in my opinion but a small share of either honour or glory in the transaction. This certainly is permanent duty now, and peremptory duty also, with a witness! But it is a duty the moral obligation of which I cannot perceive; and I think that

a man's first duty is to look after himself and family."

He mentioned the word 'family' with peculiarity of emphasis, which plainly indicated that he wished it to work an effect on me, and to bring me over to his way of thinking. But instead of its producing that effect, my spirit waxed bolder and bolder. I remained an ear-witness of his rank and ardor.

"Comrade, Jonathan—I beg pardon, Jonathan Barlowman I meant to say," said I, "the first duty of every man when his country is in danger, is to take up arms in its defence and to be ready to lay down his life, if his body will form a barrier to the approach of an enemy."

"It may be sae," said he, "but I could not as soon think of my body being eaten by vermin as applied to any such purpose. It takes a long time to convince me that there is any bravery in a man volunteering to be sent out for six pence a day; and it will be a long time before fighting the French prepare my mind for the spring seed. If I can get a substitute when we reach Haddington, they may as well that likes for me."

As we marched along, his body became the victim of one calamity after another. Now his shoes pinched his feet and crippled him, and in a while he was seized with sorts of cramp pains in his breast, which crippled him together two-fold. But as it was generally suspected by the corps that Jonathan was at best hen-hearted, he met with little sympathy indeed I may say no sympathy on account of his complaints, but rather with contempt for there was not a man in our whole regiment, save himself, that did not hate a coward with his whole heart, and despise him with his whole soul. Whether he was actually suffering from bodily pain, in addition to the pain of his spirit or not, it is not for me to judge. The doctor came to the rear to attend to him, and he said that Mr. Barlowman certainly was in a state of high fever, that would render him incapable of being of much service. But I thought that he made the declaration in an ironical sort of tone, and whether it was a fever of fear, of spiritual torment, or of bodily torment, he did not know. One thing is certain, the one frequently gets the other.

The words of the doctor gave a sort of sanction to bold John Barlowman, and his

and his groaning, his writhing and coming, increased. He began to fall behind now stood fumbling with his pinching; or bent himself double with his hands on his breast, sighing piteously and shedding tears in abundance. At length we lost sight and hearing of him, and we imagined he had turned back, or peradventure fallen down by the way; but there was no time to return to seek him, nor yet to look for one man, when belike a hundred thousand French had landed.

Well, it was about an hour after the final appearance of Jonathan, that a stranger stepped forward in his stead. He took his place close by my side. He carried a firelock on his shoulder, and was dressed in a great coat, but so far as I could judge from his appearance in the dark, I suspected him to be a young man. I could not get a word out of him, save that in answer to a question—“Ye Mr. Barlowman’s substitue, young?”

He answered—“Yes.”

And that one word I could not get him to say in his mouth. However, I afterwards ascertained that the youth overtook Jonathan, and that he was writhing in agony upon the ground, and declaring aloud that he would give me money from ten to a hundred guineas to substitute, besides his arms and accoutrements. The young man leaped at the opportunity, or rather at a part of it, for he said he would take no money, but that the other would give him his arms, ammunition, and a horse, like, and he would be his substitute.—Jonathan joyfully accepted the conditions;—whether or not his pains and his groaning relieved him, when relieved from the weight of his knapsack, I cannot tell. Our corps imagined him to be no man who could find time to breathe, even in earnest, during an enemy’s march.

My attention, however, was now wholly occupied with the stranger, who, it appeared to me, had been dropped as if from the clouds, in the middle of a waste howling wilderness, to volunteer to serve in the place of my comrade, Jonathan Barlowman. The sight excited my curiosity the more, because I had already informed ye, he was as silent as a milestone, and not half so satisfactory, for beyond the little word “Yes,” which he got out of him, not another syllable could he breathe—but he kept his head half

turned away from me. I felt the consciousness and the assurance growing in me more and more that he was a French spy—therefore I kept my musket so that I could level it at him, and discharge it at half a moment’s warning; and I was rejoicing to think that it would be a glorious thing if I got an opportunity of signalizing myself on the very first day of the invasion. I really began to dream of titles and rewards, the thanks of parliament, and the command of a regiment. It is a miracle that in the delirium of my waking dream, I did not place the muzzle of my musket to my strange comrade’s head.

But day-light began to break just as we were about Danskin, and my curiosity to see the stranger’s face—to make out who he was or what he was, or whether he was a Frenchman or one of our own countrymen, was altogether insupportable. But just with the first peep of day, I got a glimpse of his countenance. I started back for full five yards—the musket dropped out of my hands!

“Robie! Robin ye rascal!” I exclaimed in a voice that was heard from the one end of the line to the other, and that made the whole regiment halt—“what in the wide world has brought you here? What do ye mean to be after?”

“To fight the French, saither!” said my brave laddie, “and ye ken ye always said, that in the event of an invasion it would be the duty of every one capable of firing a musket, or lifting a knife, to take up arms. I can do baith; and what mair may another?”

This was torturing me on the shrine of my own loyalty, and turning my own weapons upon myself, in a way that I never had expected.

“Robie! ye daft, disobedient heart breaker ye,” continued I, “did I not command ye to remain at home with your mother, to comfort her, and if it were necessary, and in your power, to defend her; and how, sirrah, have ye dared to desert her, and leave her sorrowing for you?”

“I thought saither,” answered he, “that the best way to defend her, would be to prevent the enemy approaching near to our dwellings.”

My comrades round about that heard this answer, could not refrain from giving three

cheers in admiration of the laddie's spirit; and the cheering attracting the officers, one of them came forward to us, to inquire into the cause, and on its being explained to him, he took Robin by the hand and congratulated me on having such a son. I confess that I did feel an emotion of pride and gratification glowing in my breast at the time, nevertheless, the fears and the anxiety of a parent predominated, and I thought what a dreadful thing it would be for me, his father, to see him shot or pierced through the body with a bayonet at my very side; and what account, thought I, could I give of such a transaction to his bereaved and sorrowing mother. For I felt a something within my breast, which whispered, that if evil befel him in the warfare in which we were about to engage, I would not be able to look her in the face again. I fancied that I heard her upbraiding me with having instilled into his mind a love of war, and I fancied that I heard her voice requiring his life at my hands, and crying—"Where is my son?"

At length we arrived at Haddington; and there, in the course of the day, it was discovered, to the gratification of some and the disappointment of many, that our march had originated in a *false alarm*. I do confess that I was among those that felt gratified that the peace of the land was not to be endangered, but that we were to return every man to his own fireside, and to sit down beneath our vine and fig-tree, with the olive branches twining between them. But amongst those who were disappointed, and who shewed their chagrin by the gnashing of their teeth, was my silly laddie, my only son Robert. When he saw the people laughing in the market place, and heard that the people had been aroused by an accidental light upon a hill, his young brow lowered as black as midnight; his whole body trembled with a sort of smothered rage, and his eyebrows drew together until the shape of a horse-shoe was engraven between them.

'Robie, my captain,' said I, 'wherefore are ye looking so dour? Man ye ought to rejoice, that no invader as yet has dared to set his foot upon our coast, and that you and I will return to your mother, who no doubt will be distracted upon your account beyond measure. But O, when she sees you again, I think that I see her now, springing up from the chair, where she is sitting, rocking and

mourning, and flinging her arms round ye neck, crying--' Robie! Robie, my son! what have ye been?--how could ye leave ye mother?' Then she will sob upon ye breast, and wet your cheek with her tear, and I will lift her arms from your neck and say--'look ye Agnes woman, your husband is restored to ye safe and sound, as well your son!' And then I will tell her all about your bravery, and your following us over moors, and the cowardice of Johnathan Blowman, and of your coming up to him where he groaned behind us on the road--your becoming his substitute, and of getting his great coat, his knapsack and gun,--and of your marching an hour by your father's side, without him finding out what you were. I will tell her all about my covering you, and about your answers, and the cheering of the volunteers, and the officer's coming up and taking your hand, and congratulating me upon having such a son. O Robie man! I will tell her every thing. It will be such a meeting as there has never been in the memory of man. Therefore, the French are neither landed nor like land, I will speak to the superior officer, and you and I will set off for Dunse immediately.

We went into a public house, to have a bottle of ale and baps; and I never in my life partook of any thing more delicious. Even Robie, notwithstanding the horse-shoe of angry disappointment on his brow, made a hearty repast; but that was natural to a growing laddie, and especially after such a tramp as we had had in the death and darkness of night, over moor and heather.

"Eat well, Robie lad," said I, "it's a long road over again between here and Dunse, and there is but little to be got on it. Take another glass of ale; ye never tasted anything from Clockmill to match that. It's as delicious as honey, and as refreshing as fountain water."

That really was the case, though whether the peculiar excellence of the ale arose from any thing extraordinarily grateful in its flavour, or from my long march, my thirst and sharp appetite, added to the joy I felt in the unexpected prospect of returning home in peace and happiness with my son, instead of slaughtering at enemies, or being slaughtered by them, I cannot affirm. There may be something in both. Robin, however, drank an entire bottle to his own head--that was

three parts of a choppin, and a great deal more for a laddie of his years. But in the temper he was in, and knowing by myself that he must be both thirsty and hungry, did not think it prudent to restrain him. It was apparent that the liquor was getting up almost in his brain, and he began to speak and to argue in company, and to strike his hand upon the table like an angry man; in short, he seemed forgetful of my presence, and those were exhibitions which I had never observed in him before.

I was exceedingly anxious to get home on my mother's account, for she was a woman of a tender heart and a nervous temperament; and I knew that she would be in a state bordering on distraction on account of my absence. I therefore said to him—'Robin, when you are going to speak to the commanding officer, ye will sit here until I come back, but do not drink any more.'

'Very weel faither,' said he.

So I went out and spoke to the officer, and told him my reasons for wishing to return home immediately; urging the state of anxiety and distress that Agnes would be in on account of the absence of our son.

'Very well Mr. Goldie,' said he, 'it is all very right and proper; I have a regard to the feelings of a husband and a parent; and as this has proved but a false alarm, there is no obstacle to your returning home immediately.'

I thanked him very gratefully for his civility, and stepped away up to the George Inn, where I took two outside places on the heavy coach to Dunbar, intending to walk from there to Broxmouth, and to strike up three miles the west to Innernick, and away over the hills down by Preston, and home.

For an hour certain I was not twenty minutes or an hour absent at the farthest. When I reached the public house again I looked for my son, but he was not there.

'What have ye made of Robie?' said I to my comrades.

'Has he no been wi' ye?' answered they; 'he left the house just after ye.'

No mortal man cannot describe the fear, agony, and consternation that fell upon me. The lightning burst upon my brow as though it had been the warmest day in summer. A thou-

sand apprehensions laid their hands on me in a moment.

'With me!' said I, 'he's not been with me—have none of ye an idea where he can have gone.'

'Not the smallest,' said they, 'but he canna be far off—he will soon cast up. He will only be out looking at the town.'

'Or showing off gallant Johnathan Barlowman's gun, big coat and knapsack,' said one.

'Keep yoursel' at ease, Mr. Goldie,' said another laughing, 'there is no danger of his passing the advanced posts and falling into the hands of the French.'

It was easy for those to jest, who were ignorant of a father's fears and a father's feelings. I sat down for the space of five minutes, and to me they seemed five hours; but I drank nothing, and I said nothing, but I kept my eyes fixed upon the door. Robin did not return. I thought the ale might have overcome the laddie, and that he had gone out and lain down in a state of sickness; and 'that,' thought I, 'will be a becoming state for me to take him home in to his distressed mother. Or it will cause us to stop a night upon the road.'

My anxiety became insupportable, and I again left my comrades, and went out to seek him. I sought him in every street, in every public house in the town,—amongst the soldiers, and amongst the townspeople; but all were too much occupied in discussing the cause of the alarm, to notice him who was to me as the apple of my eye. For three hours I wandered in search of him, east, west, north and south, making inquiries at every one I met; but no one had seen or heard tell of him. I saw the coach drive off for Dunbar. I beheld also my comrades muster on the following morning and prepare to return home, but I wandered up and down disconsolate, seeking my son, but finding him not.

The most probable, and the fondest conjecture that I could indulge in was, that he had returned home. I therefore shouldered my musket, and followed my companions to Dunse, whom I overtook upon the moors. It would be impossible for me to describe my feelings by the way—they were torture strained to its utmost extremity, and far more gloomy and dreary than the gloomiest and drea-

riest parts of the moors over which we had to pass. Every footstep increased my anxiety, every mile the perturbation and agony of my spirit. Never, I believe, did a poor parent endure such misery before, and I wished that I had never been one. I kept looking for him to the right and to the left every minute; and though it was but few travellers that we met upon the road, every one that we did meet, I described him to them, and asked them if they had seen him. But 'No!'—'No!' was their unvaried answer, and my wretchedness increased.

At length we arrived at Dunse, and a great crowd was there to meet us—wives to welcome their husbands, parents to greet their children, and children their parents. The first that my eyes singled out, was a sister of my Agnes. She ran up to me.

'Roger,' she cried 'have ye seen any thing o' Robie?'

The words went through my breast as if it had received the fire of a whole French battalion. I stood stock still, petrified with despair. My looks told my answer to her question.

'O dear me! dear me! I heard her cry, 'what will his poor mother do now,—for she already is like one clean out o' her judgment about him.'

I did not stop for the word—'halt,' or for the breaking of the lines, and I went home I may say by instinct, for neither bird, bush, house nor tree, man nor bairn, was I capable of discerning by the road. Grief and heart bursting anxiety were as scales upon my eyes. I remember of rushing into the house,—throwing down my gun, and crying—'O Agnes! Agnes!' And as well do I remember her impatient and piteous inquiry—'Where is my Robie?—O where is my son? have ye no seen him?'

It was long before I could compose myself, so as to tell her all I knew concerning him, and it was even longer before she was sufficiently calm to comprehend me. Never did unhappy parents before experience greater bitterness of soul. I strove to comfort her, but she would not listen to my words; for O! they were as the blind leading the blind; we both were struggling in the slough of despair—both were in the pit of dark bewildered misery. We sometimes sat looking at each

other, like criminals whose last hour is come and even when our grief wore itself into 'calm sough,' there was something in our glance as dismal and more hopeless than the silence of the grave itself. But every now and then she would burst out into long, lamentations, mourning and crying for 'her son! her son!' Often, too, did we sit, repressing our very breath, listening to the foot that approached, and as one disappointment followed another, her despair became deeper and deeper, louder and louder, and crushing weight sank heavier and heavier upon my spirit.

Some of his young companions informed that Robin had long expressed a determination to be a soldier, and on the following day I set out for Edinburgh to seek him there and to buy him off at any price if he had been enlisted.

There, however, I could gain no tidings concerning him; and all that I could learn was, that a regiment had left the Castle the morning at two o'clock, and embarked at Leith for Chatham, from whence they were to proceed abroad, and that several recruits were attached to it, some of them only a few hours in an hour before they embarked; but whether my poor Robie was among them or no one could tell.

I left Edinburgh no wiser, no happier, in no way more comforted than when I entered it, and returned to his mother a sad, sorrowing hearted man. She wrung her hands the instant she beheld me, and in a tone that might have touched the heart of stone, cried aloud—'My lost, lost bairn! Ye have made a living grave o' your mother's breast!'

I would have immediately set off for London, and from thence down to Chatham, inquire for him there; but the wind was unfavourable when the vessel sailed, and it was therefore certain that by the time I got back to Dunse, she was at the place of her destination; and moreover I had no certainty or assurance that he was on board. There we spent another day in fruitless lamentations and tears, and in vain inquiries about our own neighbourhood, and amongst our acquaintances.

But my own heart yearned continually, his mother's moaning was unceasing in my ear, as the ticking of a spider, or the beating

a stop-watch to a person that is doomed to : I could find no rest. I blamed myself not proceeding direct from Edinburgh to Chatham ; and next day I went down to Newick, to take my place in the mail to London.

By the way I met several of the yeomanry who were only returning from Dunbar, where they had been summoned by the alarm, and found that Berwick also had been in arms : taking my place on the mail, I proceeded without sleep or rest to London, and from there proceeded to Chatham. There again I found that the regiment which I sought was already half way down the Channel, but I ascertained also that my poor thoughtless son was one of the recruits, and even that he found some consolation, although but a very poor one.

When I returned to his mother, and told her of the tidings. They brought her no comfort, and night and day she brooded on the sight of her fair son lying dead and mangled on the field of slaughter, or of his return helpless and wounded to his native land. It often it was wormwood to my spirit, and an augmentation of my own sorrows, to find that in secret she murmured against me as the author of her bereavement, and as having instilled into my son a liking for a soldier's life. She said it was all owing to my showing him from the time that he was able to read, to take the newspaper in his hand and read it aloud to my cronies, and in which there were accounts of nothing but wars and battles, of generals and captains, and Buonaparte, of whom enough was foretold, and which could be read in the Revelations :— My murmurings grieved me the more, inasmuch as my mind was in no way satisfied that they were without foundation. No man knew better than I did, how easily the twig is bent ; a passing breeze, the lighting of a match upon it, may do it—and as it is bent, the branch or the tree will be inclined. I there-fore almost resolved not to permit another newspaper to be brought within my door.— Somehow or other, it became more necessary than ever. Every time it came it was like a letter from Robie—and we read it from beginning to end, expecting always to hear something of him or of his regiment :— Agnes grew fond of it, and was uneasy on Saturdays if the post-man was half an hour behind.

Full twelve months passed before we received a letter from him—and never will I forget the delightful sensations that gushed into my bosom at the sight of that letter :— I trembled from head to foot with joy. I knew his hand writing at the first glance, and so did his mother—just as well as if he had begun “ dear parents” on the back of it : it was only to be a penny, and his mother could hardly get her hand into her pocket to give the copper to the postman, she shook so excessively with joy and with agitation, and kept saying to me—“ Read ! Roger read ! O let me hear what my bairn says.”

I could hardly keep my hand steady to open it, and when I did break the seal, I burst into tears at the same moment, and my eyes became as though I were blind, and still his mother continued saying to me—“ O read ! read !”

Twice, thrice, did I draw my sleeve across my eyes, and at last I read the letter as follows :—

“ My Dear Parents—I fear that my conduct has caused you many a miserable day, and many a sleepless night. But even for my offence, cruel as it has been, I trust there is forgiveness in a parent's breast. I do not think that I ever spoke of it to you, but from the very earliest period that I could think, the wish was formed in my mind to be a soldier. When I used to be spelling over the history of Sir William Wallace, or the lives of the Seven Champions of Christendom, I used to fancy myself Wallace or Saint George, and I resolved that when I lived to be a man, that I would be a soldier and a hero like them ; and I used to think what a grand thing it would be for you and my mother, and my acquaintances, to be reading about me and my exploits ! The continual talking about the war, and of the French and of their intention to invade Britain, all strengthened my early desires. Often when I was reading the newspapers to you and your friends, and about the gallant deeds of any particular individuals, though I used to read *his name* aloud to you I always read it to myself as though it were my own. I had resolved to enlist before the false alarm took place—and when you and the other volunteers marched out of Dunse to Haddington, I could not resist the temptation which it offered of seeing and being present at a battle. About half an hour after

you left the town I followed ye, and as ye are already aware, overtook poor Jonathan Barlowman, who had fallen behind the corps, in great distress, apparently both of body and mind. He seemed to be in a swither whether to return home, to follow ye, or to lie down by the road and die. I knew him by the sound of the lamentation he was making—and accosting him, I inquired—‘What is the matter wi’ ye Jonathan? Has ony o’ the French concealed about the moors sl. ot ye already?’ ‘O!’ he replied, ‘I am ill—I am dying!—I am dying! I will give any money for a substitute!’ ‘Gie me your gun,’ said I, ‘and I will be your substitute without money,’ ‘A thousand blessings upon your head, Robbie lad,’ said he, ‘ye may take my gun, and also my great coat and knapsack, for they only encumber me. Ye have rescued a dying man.’ I was nearly as tall as he, and though his coat was loose about me, when I got it on, and his musket over my shoulder, and felt that I was marching like an armed knight of old against the invaders of my country, I felt as proud as an Emperor—I would not have changed situations with a king. I overtook you, and you know the rest. At Haddington the strong ale was too strong for me. I was sorely mortified to find all my prospects of becoming a hero blasted. When therefore you went out to take our places in the coach to Dunbar, I slipped out of the room, and hiding Mr. Barlowman’s coat and gun in a closet in the house, I took the road for Edinburgh, which city I reached within less than three hours, and before I had been in it twenty minutes I was a soldier:—I was afraid to write home, lest ye would take steps to buy me off. On the fourth day after my enlistment I was landed at Chatham, where I was subjected to a perpetual drill—and within thirty hours after landing I again embarked with my regiment, and when I wished to have written, I had not an opportunity. Since then I have been in two general engagements and several skirmishes, in all of which I have escaped unwounded. I have found that to read of a battle, and to be engaged in a battle, are two very different things. The description is grand, but the sight is dismal. I trust that my behaviour as a soldier has been unimpeachable. It has obtained for me the notice of our colonel who has promoted me to the rank of corporal, with the promise of shortly making me a sergeant—and I am not without hopes before the war

is over (of which there at present is no prospect) of obtaining a commission; though certainly is not one in a thousand that ye such fortune. Hoping therefore, my dear parents, that under the blessing of Providence this will find you well as it leaves me, and that I will live to return to ask your forgiveness, remain your affectionate and dutiful son,

“Robert Goldie!”

Such was Robin’s letter. “Read it again said his mother, and I read it again; and when I had done so she took it in her hand and pressed it to her lips, and wept for the “poor bairn.” At last in a tone of despondency she said—“But he doesna mention mother’s name.”

“He surely does,” said I—“I think he mentions us both.”

I took the letter again, and on one corner observed the words—“P. S. Turn over.”

“P. S.” said his mother, “who does it mean?”

“It means that we have not read all the letter.”

“Read it then,” she cried.

“P. S.—But how am I to ask forgiveness of my dear mother, for all the distress and anxiety that my folly and disobedience may have occasioned her—I start in my sleep, and think that I hear her upbraiding: dear father, and dear mother! both of ye forgive the thoughtless son.”

The last lines drowned us in tears: I was the first to break silence, and I said—“Father, our dear Robie is now a soldier—but I dislike the thought of his only being a corporal, and I should wish to see him an officer: we have nobody in the world but him to care for: he is our only son; and I believe five or five hundred pounds will buy him a commission, with a genteel pay and provision for life—besides setting him on the high road to be a general: therefore, if ye approve of it, will sell out stock to the amount that will buy him a commission.”

“O,” replied she, “ye needna ask me if I approve o’ it; weel do ye ken that I will prove of any thing that will be for my bairn’s benefit.”

I accordingly lifted five hundred pounds, and through the influence of a parliamentarian succeeded in procuring him a commission.

as an ensign. I thought the money well spent, as it tended to promote the respectability and prospects of my son.

Four years afterwards his mother and I had the satisfaction of reading in the public papers, that he had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant upon the field for his very. On the following day we received a letter from himself confirming the tidings, which gave us great joy. Nevertheless our joy was mingled with fears, for we were always apprehensive, that some day or other we would find his name among the list of the dead and wounded. And always the first thing his mother said to me when I took up the papers, was—"Read the list of the killed and wounded." And I always did so with a slow, hesitating, and faltering voice, fearing that the next I should mention would be the name of my son Lieutenant Goldie.

There was very severe fighting at the front and every post was bringing news concerning the war. One day, (I remember it was a king's fast day) several neighbors and I were leaning against a dyke, upon the footpath opposite my house and waiting for the postman coming from Ayton, to hear what was the news of the day. As he approached I thought he looked very demure and he was not as usual, for he was as cheerful looking a little man as you could possibly see.

"Well Hughie," said I to him, holding out my hand for the papers, "ye look dull like to-day; I hope ye have no bad news?" "I would hope not, Mr. Goldie," said he, giving me the paper walked on.

At a moment that Agnes saw that I had got the paper she came running out of the house, to hear what was the news of the day. I read a list of the killed and wounded and, as my neighbors gathered round about me. I had been, I ought to tell ye, a severe battle, and both the French and our army had the victory; from which we may see that there was no great triumph on either side. But agreeably to my wife's wish, I first read over the list of the killed, and then the missing. I got over the two lists mentioned; but O! at the sight of the name upon the missing list, I clasped my hands together, and the paper dropped to the ground.

"Robbie! my son! my son!" I cried

Agnes uttered a piercing scream, and cried, "O my bairn!—what has happened to my bairn? Is he dead? Tell me, is my Robbie dead?"

Our neighbors gathered about her and tried to comfort her, but she was insensible to all that they could say. The first name on the missing list was that of my gallant son. When the first shock was over, and I had composed myself a little, I also strove to console Agnes; but it was with great difficulty that we could convince her that Robin was not dead, and that the papers did not say he was wounded.

"O then," she cried, "what do they say about him. Tell me at once. Roger Goldie! how can ye, as the father of my bairn, keep me in suspense?"

"O, dear Agnes," said I, "endeavor, if it be possible, to moderate your grief; I am sure ye know I would not keep you in suspense if I could avoid it. The papers only say that Robin is *amissing*."

"And what mean they by that?" she cried.

"Why," said I to her, "they mean that he pursued the enemy too far,—or possibly that he may have fallen into their hands and be a prisoner; but that he had not cast up when the accounts came away."

"Yes! yes!" she exclaimed with great bitterness, "and it perhaps means that his body is lying dead upon the field, but hasna been found."

And she burst out into louder lamentations, and all our endeavors to comfort her were in vain. Though, in fact, my sufferings were almost as great as hers.

We waited in the deepest anxiety for several days, always hoping that we would hear some tidings concerning him, but none came. I therefore wrote a letter to the War Office, and I wrote also to his Colonel. From the War Office I received a letter from a clerk, saying that he was commanded to inform me, that they could give me no information relative to Lieutenant Goldie, beyond what was contained in the public prints.—The whole letter did not exceed three lines. You would have said that the writer had been employed to write a certain number of letters in a day, at so much a day, and the sooner he got through his work the better.—I set it down in my mind that he had

never had a son amissing on the field of battle, or he never would have written an anxious and sorrowing father such a cold scrawl. He did not even say that if they got any tidings concerning my son that they would make me acquainted with them. He was only commanded to teil me that they did not know, what I was, beyond every thing else on earth, desirous to ascertain. Though perhaps I ought to admit, that in the time of war the clerks in the War Office had something else to do, than enter particularly into the feelings of every father that had a son in the army, and to answer all his queries.

From the Colonel, however, I received a long, and a very kind letter. He said many flattering things in praise of my gallant lad-die, and assured me that the whole regiment deplored his being separated from them. He, had no doubt but that he had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and that in some exchange of prisoners, or in the event of a peace, he would be restored to his parents and country again.

This letter gave us some consolation. It encouraged us to cherish the hope of pressing our beloved son again to our breasts. Three years passed and no tidings of him. Anxiety preyed sadly upon Agnes' health and spirits, and I could not drive away a settled melancholy.

About that time a brother of mine, who was a bachelor, died in the East Indies, and left me four thousand pounds. This was a great addition to our fortune, and we hardly knew what to do with it. I may say that it made us uunhappy for we thought that we had nobody to leave it to, and he who ought to have inherited it, and whom it would have made independent, we knew not whether he was in the land of the living, or strange corpse in a foreign grave. Yet I resolved that for his sake I would not spend one farthing of it, but let it lie at interest; and I even provided in a will which I made, that unless he cast up, and claimed it, no one should derive any benefit from either principal or interest until fifty years after my death.

I have said, that the health of Agnes had broken down beneath her weight of sadness,

and as she had a relation, who was a gentleman of much respectability, that then resided in the neighborhood of Kelso, it was agreed that we should spend a few weeks at his house in the summer. I entertained the lady in that society, and the beautiful scenery around Kelso, with the white chalky braes* overlaid with trees, and the bonny islands in the Tweed, with mansions, palaces, and rocks all embosomed in a paradise as fair and fertile as ever land could boast of, would have a tendency to cheer her spirits, and ease, if it did not remove, the one heavy and continuing sorrow, which lay like an everlasting night upon her heart, weighing her to the grave.

Her relation was a well-educated man—he had been an officer in the army in youth, and had seen foreign parts. He was also quite independent in his worldly circumstances, and as hospitable as he was independent. There was at that period a number of French officers, prisoners, at Kelso, and several of them who were upon their parole, were visitors at the house of my wife's relation.

There was one amongst them, a fine, stern looking man of middle age, and he was addressed as Count Berthe. He spoke our language almost as well as if he had been a native. He appeared to be interested when he heard that my name was Goldie, and one day after dinner, when the Count was withdrawn, and my wife's relation had ordered the punch upon the table—"Goldie! Goldie!" said the Count repeating my name, "I can tell one story which concerns me much, concerning one Monsieur Goldie. When I was governor of castle La-Land (he called it by some foreign name, which I cannot repeat to you)—there was brought me (he added) to be placed under my charge, a young British officer whose name was Count Goldie. I do not recollect the number of his regiment, for he was not in uniform when he came to me. He was a handsome man, but represented as a terrible, who made a violent attempt to escape after being taken prisoner, and his desperate bravery in the field was also recorded. I was requested to treat him with the respect due to a brave man, and

*It is evidently from the beautiful chalk cliff near Ednam House, though now a very prominent object) that Kelso derives its name—as is proved by (the very ancient spelling,

same time to keep a strict watch over, and to allow him even less liberty than might do an ordinary prisoner. His being a captive did not humble him; he treated his keepers and his guards with as much contempt, as though he had been their commander upon the field. We had confined him, but there was no humbling of his spirit. I heard so much of him that I took an interest in the haughty Briton. But he treated with the same sullen disdain that he directed towards my inferiors. I had a daughter who was as dear to me as life itself, for he had had five brothers and they had all died in the cause of the great emperor, with a tri-color on their brow, and the wing of an Eagle over them. She was beautiful,—beautiful as her sainted mother, than whom I boasted not a fairer daughter, (for she was a native of Rome.) Hers was not a beauty that you may see every day amongst the thousand in the regions of the north,—hers was the rare beauty amongst ten thousand the daughters of the sunny south, with a beaming with as bright a loveliness, and would say divinity, as the Medici. Of all the children which that fair being bore unto I had but one, a daughter left,—beautiful as I have said—beautiful as her mother, and a garden beneath the castle, and over a terrace, in which the British prisoner Goldie, was allowed to walk. They saw each other. They got acquainted with each other. He had despised all who had approached; he had even treated me, who had life in my hand, as a dog. But he did so treat my daughter. I afterwards saw, when it was too late, that they had been exchanging looks, words, and smiles with each other. He had been eight-months my prisoner; and one morning I awoke, I was told that my daughter was not to be found, and that the English prisoner, Lieutenant Goldie, also had escaped. I loved both in my heart, for they had robbed me of my happiness,—he had robbed me of my child; though she only could have accomplished it. Shortly after this, (and I was because of it,) I was again called to active service, where in my first engagement it was my lot to be made a prisoner, and I was here; and since then I have heard nothing of my daughter,—my one, dear child, the image of her mother; and nothing of the villain who seduced her from me.’

escaped through the instrumentality of your daughter, and took her with him, he has not a drop of villain’s blood in his whole body. Sir! sir! I have a son, a Lieutenant Goldie, and he has, (as I hope,) been a French prisoner, from the time ye speak of. Therefore, tell me I implore ye, what was he like—was he six inches taller than his father, with light complexion, yellowish hair, an aquiline nose; full, blue eyes, a mole upon his right cheek, and at the time ye saw him, apparently perhaps from two and twenty to three and twenty years of age. O sir,—Count or whatever they call ye, if it be my son that your daughter has liberated and gone away with, she has fallen upon her feet; she has married a good, a kind, and a brave lad; and though I should be the last to say it, the son of an honest man, who will leave him from five to six thousand pounds, besides his commission.’

By the description which he gave me, I had had no doubt but that my poor Robie, and the laddie who had run away with his daughter, (or I might say the laddie with whom his daughter had run away,) were one and the same person.

I ran into the next room, crying—‘Agnes! Agnes! hear woman! I have got news of Robie!’

‘News o’ my bairn!’ she cried before she saw me, ‘speak! Roger speak!’

I could hardly tell her all that the French Count had told me, and I could hardly get her to believe what she heard. But I took her into the room to him, and he told her every thing over again. A hundred questions were asked backward and forward upon both sides, and there was not the smallest doubt, on either of our parts, but that it was my Robie that his daughter had liberated from the prison, and run off with.

‘But O sir,’ said Agnes, ‘where are they now,—baith o’ my bairns, as you say I have twa? Where shall I find them?’

He said that he had but little doubt that they were safe, for his daughter had powerful friends in France, and that as soon as a peace took place, (which he hoped would not be long,) we would all see them again.

Well, the long wished for peace came at last, and in both countries the captives were released from the places of their imprisonment. I have already twice mentioned the infirm state of my wife’s health, and we were residing at Spittal, for the benefit of the sea

air and bathing, and the Spa Well, (though it had not then gained its present fashionable popularity,) when a post chaise drove to the door of our lodgings. An elderly gentleman stepped off from the dicky beside the driver, and out of the chaise came a young lady, a gentleman, and two bonny bairns. In a moment I discovered the elderly gentleman to be my old friend the French Count. But O! how! how shall I tell you the rest! I had hardly looked upon the face of the young stranger when I saw my own features in the countenance of my long lost Robbie! The lady was his wife, the Count's bonny daughter, and the bairns their bairns. It is in vain for me to describe to you the feelings of Ag-

nes; she was at first speechless and saw and then she threw her arms round Rob and she threw them round his wife, and took his bairns on her knee—and O! but was proud at seeing herself a grandmother. We have all lived together in happiness from that day to this; and the more I see Robie's wife, the more I think she is like an angel; and so thinks his mother. I had only to inform ye that bold Johnathan Lowman was forced to leave the country shortly after his valiant display of courage and since then, nobody in Dunse has heard whether he be dead or living, and not cares. This is all I have to tell ye regarding the *false alarm*, and I hope ye are satisfied.

THE HIGHLANDER.

Stern! nursed among his Highland hills!
 Sequestered glens and mountain rills—
 With fearless eye and hardy form,
 He revels in the winter storm:
 While nature, with her music wild,
 Inspires her free-born darling child,
 To earn upon the fields of fame
 The glory of a deathless name.

Where fiery wars loud thunders roll,
 He breathes the ardour of his soul;
 And foremost on the field of death,
 Bears from the foe the Victor's Wreath:
 Nor timid fear, nor peril quells,
 The pride that high his bosom swells,
 For o'er the world to spread the fame
 Of his own honoured Highland name!

In distant lands, o'er burning soil,
 Where fainting nature shrinks from toil
 Onward, in honour's bright career,
 He presses like the mountain deer—
 While science sheds upon his way
 Her richest charms, her purest ray,
 Or art or commerce plenteous spreads
 Their treasures wheresoe'er he treads.

Give me, where other friends depart,
 The friend that bears a Highland heart
 Give me, where other loves decay,
 The heart where Highland feelings play
 True to the last, and fond and free,
 Highland love's the love for me:
 Though mist may gather 'round his face,
 No mist his Highland bosom chills.