

CHAPTER V.

Whaur gat ye that ring, ye carl sae bauld?
 Whaur gat ye that ring o' gowd :
 That ring maun hae graced a hand lang cauld,
 Whaur can ye hae had it stowed?

A fine wee thing is an auld gowd ring
 To mak sic a wark about ;
 Ye maunna think though 'mang gowd ye clink,
 Ye hae hammer'd the quarry out.

Old Ballad.

It was nearly twenty years previous to the date of our visit to Kelpie Cleugh, when, as my uncle, who was at that time in the heyday of his popularity, and in the full blaze of his local glory, sat on a fine summer forenoon in his little shop, working away at some curious antique piece of jewellery he was repairing, there came to the shop window a hale-looking country man, carrying a huge wallet, and dressed in a blue coat and corduroy unmentionables; his sturdy legs encased in a pair of those homely-looking but comfortable stockings, known in Scotland by the name of rig-and-fur. The sturdy carl, after carefully scanning the jewellery that lay in the window, pushed up the little half-door of the shop, entered, and presenting a large massive gold ring, asked my uncle if he could repair it.

"Repair that, man?" said my uncle; "we can repair anything here but broken reputations, an' they are no easily southered; but ye hae sic an honest looking face, and seem to be made o' sic genuine stuff a'thegither, that it wadna be ill, I daresay, to mend you, gin ye were out o' order. But what's this on't!" he exclaimed in a tone of great surprise, after clapping his working glass to his eye, and looking earnestly through it at a family crest which was cut upon the ring, "How cam ye by this, gudeman? This is the crest o' the chief o' my ain name, the Hepburns o' Keith, an' it's mony a lang year since onybody was entitled to wear it."

"Dinna ye be feared," said the carl, who was no other than our friend the Gaberlunzie, "I cam by the ring in nae wrang way; and gin I'm no mista'en, it was ance worn on a hand o' whase stoop an' stay you an' yours hae been the better."

"What!" exclaimed my uncle, taking first another long look at the ring, and then looking hard at the Gaberlunzie; "ye dinna mean to say that ring belanged to him wha fell in the Forty-five?"

"To nae ither," replied the Gaberlunzie; "and a mair patriotic gentleman ne'er drew sword in defence o' his country. When puir auld Scotland's back was at the wa', he fought for her wi' a gallantry that weel merited a better fate, sharing in the noble spirit that brought the brave Highlanders from their mountain fastnesses to make, alas! a vain attempt to regain our national independence, and restore an injured Prince to the throne o' his ancestors."

"Although," replied my uncle, "I am o' a different opinion regarding the consequences that wad hae followed, had the party with which he was connected at that time gained the ascendancy, still there can only be ae opinion as to the motives which induced him to tak the part he did; an' every one must respect him for the wish he expressed, and the efforts he made, to free his country frae the humiliating effects o' the Union, and to restore a Scottish gentleman to his proper rank an' station in society. Although branded wi' the name o' Jacobite, he had as loyal a heart as e'er beat beneath a Scottish plaid."

"I am proud to hear you speak sae highly o' him," said the Gaberlunzie.

"Highly! I canna talk highly enough o' him," replied the grateful jeweller; "but for him and his family I could ne'er hae been what I am this day. My twin sister an' mysel' were brought up on the presentations to twa o' our best institutions, which they purchased and bequeathed for the upbringing and education o' puir orphans bearing their ain name, an' through them we thus gat the best o' schoolin' and keepin', when we hadna a relative left wha could gie us a bite to put in our mou. Proud wad I be should Providence e'er pit it in my power to show my gratitude for the benefits my sister an' I received frae that excellent and benevolent family."

"I'm delighted to hear ye say sae," said the Gaberlunzie; "mony a ane has received as muckle an' mair through them, wha

now think shame to acknowledge the obligation ; and unless ye had haen a heart worthy the name ye bear, sic a warm and kind return could scarcely have been expected. Folks that are brought up on charity often in after years exercise that virtue least, and seem anxious to impose the belief that they hae been brought up in the lap o' wealth."

"Awa wi' your high-headed, cauld-hearted wretches, wha think shame to own their humble origin, an' refuse to acknowledge the hand that helped an' the arm that succoured them ! they whase pride get the better o' their judgment sae far that they canna see the merit they themsel's hae in scrambling up the hill frae a low foundation ! Awa wi' sic fools an' knaves ! Just let ye me see how I can mak ony return to that respected family, and see gin it be nae done. Od, I could gang through fire an' water to serve them ; but I suspect they are a' gane. I ne'er could find ony speering o' them, despite o' a' my anxious inquiries."

"The king may come in the cadger's gate some day," rejoined the Gaberlunzie ; "and gin we cast our bread on the waters, it is written that in many days hence we shall find 'it. The descendants o' that house are still alive, and happy am I to be the bearer o' sic gude news to sae true a friend."

"How or whaur hae they been silent sae lang?" eagerly inquired my uncle.

"There's a time for a' thing," replied the Gaberlunzie. "There's a time for silence and a time for speaking ; an' something has lately occurred which renders it necessary for them to bespeak a' the friendly help they can find ; so on their parts I chap ye at your word, in their name accept your friendly offer ; and gin ye can spare me half-an-hour, I shall be glad to let ye ken a' about them, and leave it wi' yourself to discover how ye can be o' use to them."

"Hoolie, hoolie, a wee !" exclaimed my uncle, "this is ower serious a business to crack ower dry-mou'ed. Stay till I lock this precious ring (whilk I am proud to hae the honour o' haeing in my possession) up in my cabinet. Wow, but ye are queer chields, you Gaberlunzies ; ye pick up strange ferlies now an' then ; neither gossip nor gowd escapes ye. Now, we'll put this in here," he said, taking out the smallest inner drawer of his tortoiseshell lined cabinet, "an' I shall let ye see a job o't that wadna do ony discredit to Jingling Geordie himsel'."



“ I hae nae fear o’ that, or ye wadna hae gotten the job,” said the Gaberlunzie. “ A jeweller like you, wha has your name on the plate o’ half the nobility in the country, is just as great a man in your day as George Heriot was in his, although ye hae nae sovereign staying at Holyrood now, like King James, to come up an’ gossip wi’ ye, an’ borrow siller, and so forth. Scotland now-a-days canna afford to mak mony tradesmen as rich as Jingling Geordie.”

“ Aye, he had the time o’ t,” said my uncle, highly flattered by the compliment paid to his professional skill; “ but, in the meantime, wi’ your leave, we’ll drap that subject, and ye’ll aiblins step ower wi’ me a wee to Johnnie Dowie’s, whaur we can get a quiet corner to crack in.”

Before my uncle could leave the shop to enjoy a *tête-à-tête* which he looked forward to with so much relish, there was another party to consult. This was no less a personage than my worthy aunt, without whose permission, asked and obtained, he never left his business even for an instant. At that time their dwelling-house consisted of the small apartments over the shop, with which they communicated by a little old-fashioned wooden stair, almost perpendicular, but with which habit had made the inmates so familiar, that they could run up and down like cats. Upon that forenoon my aunt, as was her wont, sat upstairs at her little favourite window which looked into the square, arrayed in her neat frilled cap, and bending with earnest purpose and absorbing interest over some fine cambric which she was busily engaged converting into hand-ruffles for her



beloved brother. This had been her usual seat in the forenoons for many years; and some octogenarians of the legal profession may perhaps remember with what a pleasant smile she would open the window when called up to pay them back their compliments in their own coin, inquire after their families, drop a courtesy, shut the casement, and resume her labours. On the present occasion she was interrupted in her task, and summoned from her favourite forenoon seat, by my uncle, who, having taken down his cocked hat from the peg on which it hung, put it on his head with a due regard to effect, and having taken his gold-headed tasselled staff in his hand, called up to his sister—

“Matty, will ye come down a wee, hinnie, and keep the shop till I come back? I am gaun out wi’ this friend o’ mine upon some particular business.”

“Hoot awa, Watty,” said my aunt, in a tone of jocular sarcasm, as she peeped down, leaning over the railing of the little staircase; “ye hae aye friends to meet wi’, an’ particular business to do, at this time o’ day outby; can ye no just say at ance that you are gaun to get your twall hours?”

“Atweel, Matty, my tittie, ye’re no a’thegither right e’now, although it maun be confessed ye’re seldom a’thegither wrang. I’ll no promise but we may hae a weetin; we canna tak up the folks’ house for naething; but we hae something to talk about that ye’ll be blythe to hear anent. This honest carl brings me news o’ them we hae been sae often and anxiously inquiring after—our kind patrons, the Hepburns o’ Keith.”

“What o’ them, what o’ them!” exclaimed my aunt, much excited; “are there still some o’ them to the fore? Whaur’s Laird Nairn? He, I trow, wad loup out o’ his skin gin he kened sic a disclosure was gaun on. He’ll be here in a wee, it’s just about his time; and I’m sae anxious to hear about them myself, ye might just step up the stair and let’s hear a’ about it. We’ll let the laddie till his dinner; I’ll put the bell on the halt door, and watch the shop frae the tap window; naebody shall disturb ye; and ye’ll get your twall hours here as comfortably as at Johnnie Dowie’s. I ferlie what way you men folk are aye sae fond o’ the public-house; the whisky maun surely taste sweeter there because it’s dearer. What we get cheaply we prize lightly.”

“We dinna value either you or your bottle lightly, my ae

sister, as ye shall find in the afternoon when we come back ; but ye ken weel that wa's hae lugs. I like aye to be cautious ; and gin Laird Nairn were comin in, and hearing suddenly o' the affair, wi' that free outspoken nature common to his relatives, and for whilk they hae paid sae dearly, he wad be in sic a flurry, and his lang tongue wad yelp sae loudly, that we might as weel get the town-crier and gaur him tingle his bell in the middle o' the square at anoe ; then we wad hae lawyers surrounding us like midges, ilka ane greedier for a bite than anither ; besides a' this, ye ken the Laird wad hae an adjournment and a sederunt that wad last the feck o' the day, and ye wadna see us back till night ; sae ye'll get it sooner frae me at second-hand, when we come in at twa o'clock to our dinner. See that the lassie disna let the cockie-leekie burn."

"She kens her wark better than to do ony sic thing," said my aunt, "I tak some credit to mysel' for learning her how to cook ; but the young things are a' sae glaikit now-a-days, that it's no easy learning them ony thing ; dress, dress is a' their care ; and there's little wønder, for the silks are sae cheap that a quean wha can scanty afford to gie her mother a pickle tea, or her father a pickle snuff at term time, maun hae a silk gown to catch the ee o' some bit joe as witless as hersel'. It was othertwise in my young days : servant lassies and tradesmen's wives wore linsey-woolsey ; silk gowns were only to be seen on ladies o' rank an' quality."

"Atweel ye're as muckle to blame as her," said my uncle. "Gin it hadna been for you the creature wadna hae been sae pridefu'. Gin a lassie get even a cast-aff dress o' her mistress's to wear, it's no to be expected she'll be content wi' onything less fine afterwards ; they wha set their hearts on a silk gown are sure to get the sleeve o't, and I like to see the bit lassie tidy and mensfu' like ; but we're putting aff time claverin here, sae pap ye down and look after the shop. If Nairn comes in, invite him to pat-luck at twa, and we'll be back afore that time, an' gie ye a' the story."

"Aweel, mind your time," said my aunt, as she descended the stair. "See ye dinna be behind twa o'clock ; hae mercy on my female curiosity that ye hae waukened up sae."

Away now went the two worthies to honest Johnnie Dowie's tavern, which being then in all its glory, and an excellent specimen of the houses of entertainment in the last century, is worthy of a somewhat detailed description.

Nothing so much astonishes an explorer of the steep old lanes and alleys in Edinburgh as the very small quantity of daylight which our forefathers could manage to see with. In the darker closes, where you have to stretch your neck ere you get a glimpse of the blue speck of sky that gleams like a top-light far overhead, the windows are all of a small size, and the frames of great thickness and strength. Even this peculiarity, however, I have heard praised by some of my ancient friends, who declare that they "ne'er required the aid of spectacles, until the pride o' their bairns had forced them to flit to big, toom, cauld houses, a' windows thegither, an' wi' gas lamps in them like suns, that had fairly blinded them wi' light; ay, and say they, what wi' the lang straight streets, and the muckle windows, the young folk will soon be a' blind and broken windit thegither." But to return from this digression. The tavern which was kept by Johnnie Dowie was situated in Libberton's Wynd, one of the alleys which led from the High Street to the Cowgate. The apartments were all contracted, low-roofed, and dark, particularly those on the ground floor, which were much in request, and most generally frequented. All these little rooms required the aid of lamps or candlelight, even in the brightest summer days; and perhaps this was one of their chief recommendations to the "twall hours" frequenters, who had a strong antipathy to the idea of drinking in daylight. They seemed to cheat themselves into the belief that they were able to convert day into night, and that they were only enjoying themselves during the hours generally devoted to merriment and sociality.

This, let me mention, too, by the way, was the house in which Burns first lodged when he came to Edinburgh; and among the small apartments just alluded to, was one generally called by the appropriate name of "Burns' Coffin," in which it is said the immortal bard had composed his celebrated address to

"Edina, Scotia's darling seat."

Although the smallest and darkest room in the house, it was much in request; and although capable of containing only two persons at a time, was seldom unoccupied. Many an empty headed and ambitious imitator here hammered, twisted, and racked his little brain until he wrung from it a couplet, which

perchance was transferred with a pencil to the walls, and afterwards recited to his friends. Moreover, such is the power of genius, and such the homage paid by his countrymen to everything associated with the name of Burns, that this little room was looked upon with veneration as a sanctuary, wherein the bard of Nature had spent many a lonely hour communing with his own soul, and seeking refuge from the noisy and reckless crowds of worshippers, whose well meant, but injudicious hospitality, originated habits which ultimately ruined the man whom they loved, the poet whom they almost worshipped.

Johnnie Dowie, the landlord of this much-frequented tavern, was a character in his way; he always shut his door at high twelve, and was to be seen at early morn, arrayed in his Kilmarnock nightcap and white apron, busily employed, along with some barefooted, darkfaced girls, setting the house to rights, and inspecting every corner with the most scrupulous regard to cleanliness and comfort. Before his "twall hour" customers made their appearance, Johnnie had been to market, and was now prepared to receive his well-known visitors, decked out in full dress for the day, including, of course, the cocked hat and knee breeches. He had ready-made compliments suited to all the various tastes and qualities of his customers—he laughed with the merry, joked with the joker, and twitted the satirist with his own wit. All this he was suffered to do with impunity; for, along with a groundwork of good sense, shrewd humour, and a kindly disposition, his money-making habits had secured for him—what was of more consequence in the eyes of the world—a comfortable independency.

Such was the landlord, and such the house, that now received my uncle and the Gaberlunzie; and my uncle's astonishment may better be conceived than described, when honest Johnnie ushered them into a small apartment, with "Come awa, gentlemen, Laird Nairn has been waiting and wearying on you this half hour;" and there, sure enough, sat the Laird at his wonted hour, in his usual seat, with his accustomed beverage, or what he called his "fuzzle," before him.

"Come away," said he with one of his most knowing looks; "did not I tell you," he added, addressing the Gaberlunzie,

“you would have half an hour’s battle before you could get him dragged forth from his gold smithy?”

“What!” exclaimed my uncle, “are you twa acquainted; what for did ye no tell me this before?” looking to the Gaberlunzie, with an expression of face as if he half thought he had been overreached.

“I’m sure you are not angry to find it so,” said Nairn, “although, indeed, our acquaintance is but of short standing. It was to be expected that he should come to me first, when he had any news to communicate anent my respected relatives, who, I am delighted to learn, are still in existence, although I was altogether ignorant of the fact till informed of it by our friend here. That he is not imposing on us, nor beguiling us with false hopes, I feel assured by his honest look; and that he is now acting under due authority, the very valuable family ring, of which I have often heard my father speak, wondering where it had gone to, is sufficient evidence. He has, it appears, a communication of some importance to make regarding the family to whom it belongs, and knowing your esteem and respect for them, and having the utmost confidence in your discretion, I desired him to wait on you and prepare you in some measure for the very pleasing intelligence which he assures me he has to make known. Moreover,” continued he, with a leer, “knowing that you were sure to be here at this time of day, whatever came in the way, I popped in to secure a quiet corner: and now, goodman,” said he, addressing the Gaberlunzie, “perhaps you will be kind enough to wet your lips with this genuine Ferintosh, in which I beg to pledge you, and thereafter commence your narrative, which to me must certainly be full of interest.” Accordingly, the Gaberlunzie, in a clear and steady tone of voice, and in a more studied style of language than he had hitherto used, rivetted the attention of his hearers by the following story:—

“It is not at all necessary,” he said, “seeing how nearly and intimately both of you are connected with the Hepburns of Keith, that I should enlarge on the gallant character of the patriot of that name, the first lowland gentleman of family and property who gave Charles a welcome to the home of his ancestors. It was a gallant, a brave deed, and one which excited the admiration of all parties, Jacobite and loyalist, when, upon that Prince arriving at the Palace of Holyrood, James Hepburn

stepped from the crowd, drew his sword, held it aloft, and walking through the corridor before Charles, marshalled him to the large hall which had of yore been enriched and adorned by a long and illustrious line of Stuarts. This course he resolved on, not because he was a blind devotee of the indefeasible rights of kings, but because of the injurious effects of the Union which, he said, had ruined his country, and had made a Scotch gentleman of small fortune nobody—an indignity which he vowed he would die a thousand deaths rather than endure. Acting on this resolution, he had, when a very young man, borne arms in behalf of the Pretender, as he was called, in the rebellion of 1715, and finally laid down his life on the field of Culloden. He was well known and much respected by men of all parties, and his death was very generally and deeply lamented. The estate of Keith was confiscated, and the presentations which the family had purchased in the hospitals at Edinburgh, for the education and maintenance of poor children bearing their family name, were assigned over to the patronage of the loyal magistrates of the city by the Government of the day. You are aware, Mr Hepburn," continued the Gaberlunzie, "how faithfully that body have discharged the trust reposed in them, giving always the preference to the most needy of the name, as the histories of yourself and your sister abundantly testify. The nearest known relative of Mr Hepburn, at the time of his death, was his nephew, your father, Mr Nairn, a man who is said to have inherited his uncle's spirit, and who bequeathed to you a glorious patrimony of patriotism, of which I am proud to see you yet possessed. Hepburn, however, left behind him a relative still more dear to him in the person of an infant daughter, the offspring of a marriage contracted a few years previous to the rebellion. Both father and mother were of the Roman Catholic persuasion, and their marriage had been for some reason or other privately solemnized in the Roman Catholic chapel, Blackfriars' Wynd, which was afterwards burned and sacked in 1779. The mother died giving birth to her first child, and the marriage never had become generally known, its concealment probably being a consequence of the odium at that time attached to Roman Catholic tenets. When Hepburn went forth on his ill-fated mission, he left his infant daughter in charge of a tried friend, who had been witness to his union; a man who, although a warm Protestant, was a zealous and kind friend, an old companion, and a sincere



PRINCE CHARLES. ARRIVAL AT HOLYROOD.

admirer, and one who had done all he could to dissuade the high-minded gentleman from embarking in the luckless enterprise in which he lost his life.

“After the battle of Culloden this friend carried the child, thus thrown on his care, to the west country, where he possessed a small estate, and there brought her up along with his own son, adopting her as his daughter, and carefully concealing her relationship with Hepburn of Keith. At that time there was little prospect that the Government would ever restore to the descendants of the banished rebels, as they were ignominiously styled, the confiscated estates of their fathers, and he wisely judged that it was better to withhold information which could only excite hopes that would in all probability never be realised.

“As might have been anticipated from so close an intimacy, there sprung up between the children an attachment, which strengthened as they advanced in years, and it was with a glad heart and a cheerful eye that the old man saw them united under his own roof by the sacred ties of marriage. By this event he knew he had secured the happiness and comfort of one who was as dear to him as if she had been his own daughter. The object on which his heart had been set was accomplished, and he indulged in the most delightful reflections and anticipations. Often as he sat and silently gazed on the smiling faces of his children, a tear would gather in his eye, and a sigh steal from his bosom, as the half-suppressed hope arose that his old friend and companion might perhaps be permitted to look down from heaven on the happy scene. This dream of felicity, however, was of short duration. The young and amiable wife, who had always been of a delicate constitution, died shortly after giving birth to twin boys—a dispensation which fell so heavily on her afflicted husband, that he shortly afterwards sunk into a premature grave. Thus the old man had a second time two orphans committed to his charge, and, as if gifted with new strength for the additional demand made upon him for exertion, he superintended, notwithstanding his age, and the calamities he had met with, the upbringing and education of his grandchildren with a care and attention worthy of his best years.

“Himself a rigid Presbyterian, and a highly respected elder of the kirk, he brought them up in a way well calculated to secure both their temporal and spiritual welfare; and as he could

not from his comparatively small means hold out to them any prospect of a fortune, he gave them a good practical education, and taught them at a very early period the value of diligent and industrious habits. Hence, both boys, even when very young, were to be seen assisting their grandfather in his rural labours, and few better cultivated and better managed farms than his were to be seen anywhere. There was, however, a great difference in the dispositions of the twins, and although they were both general favourites, they were loved for very different qualities. The one boy was of a restless, roving, unsettled disposition, and had from his earliest years shown a love of wandering, which caused much anxiety on his behalf. On one occasion, when a mere child, he had been missing a whole day and night, making his appearance on the following morning laden with a burden of wild berries, his chubby hands besmeared with their ruby colour, and his face stained as if with blood. His grandfather often afterwards related how his terror had been dispelled, and his anger disarmed, when the little fellow held up his capful of berries, and said he had been at Tintock gathering them for his brother.

“The other boy, on the contrary, was a quiet, sedate youth, attached to his home, his school, his books, and never absent from the fireside at night, conning his lesson for the following day. Yet his wandering and wayward brother, who was fonder of gossiping with the old wives in the village than reading his book, was never much behind with the tasks he got to learn. The latter not unfrequently absented himself from school; and although his grandfather often threatened to chastise him for his truant tricks, expressing at the same time fears for his safety, such threats were never executed; for when the youngster did return, he always entered the house with a bound, flung himself on the old man's neck, and looked up in his face with such an arch and rosy smile as at once dispelled his resentment. On these occasions the kind old man, instead of punishing the wayward boy, would take him between his knees, and gently stroking his fair hair, give utterance at once to his grief and his joy, in some such exclamation as, ‘Oh, laddie, laddie, what has come ower ye!’ Often, indeed, the little truant would be found by some of the ploughmen or carriers, snugly ensconced in some gipsy encampment by the roadside; and it was a pretty general opinion that he would some time or other

become one of the wandering fraternity himself. With all these drawbacks, however, he was a general favourite, and, like all prodigal sons, from the prodigal son in Scripture downwards, he was the apple of the old man's eye.

“Both boys grew up, and had attained the age of fifteen years, when their good, kind, old grandfather died, leaving his small estate equally divided between them. He also selected a tried friend to act for them until they should attain their majority; leaving, besides, in that person's charge a sealed packet, which was not to be opened until that period arrived. Years passed away, and the lads grew up, the one steady, sober, and industrious, of a slender make, and apparently of a weakly constitution; the other bold, roving, and robust, of a firmly knit frame, and manly appearance. The one gained friends amongst those who could benefit him, the other acquired the grateful affections of the friendless and the poor. The one promised to be an excellent practical farmer, guided by rule, and governed by fixed principle; the other an impracticable changeling, full of strong impulses, moved by whim, and guided by chance. The different bent of their minds may be at once gathered from the fact, that while the one wrote essays on the management of farms and dairy produce, the other indulged in the propensity of rhyming, and delighted particularly in associating with, and describing the peculiarities of, such worthies as



“WEE TAMMIE TWENTY.



HERE'S Wee Tammie Twenty, the auld tinker bodie,
Comes here twice a-year wi' his creels and his cuddy ;
Wi' Nanny his wife, sae gudgy an' duddy,
It's hard to say whilk is the queerest auld bodie.

“ He works brass and copper, an' a' siclike metals,
Walds broken brass pans, southers auld copper kettles ;
Wi' ilka auld wife he gossips and tattles,
An' ilka young lassie he coaxes an' pettles.

- “Fou stievely he clouts up auld broken-wind bellows,
Or mends, wi’ brass clasps, broken-ribb’d umbrellas;
An’ sic sangs he can sing, an’ sic stories can tell us,—
I trow but Wee Tammie’s the king o’ gude fellows.
- “Auld Nan’s second-sighted, she sees far and clearly,
Foretells ilka waddin’ a towmond or nearly;
Can tell ilka lad the bit lass he lo’es dearly,
An’ gin the bit lassie lo’es him as sincerely.
- “She tells ilka auld maid she yet may recover;
She tells ilka gillfirt some slee chield will move her;
Ilka dark black-eed beauty she spaes a wild rover,
An’ ilka blue-eed one a true-hearted lover.
- “Ilka wanton young widow she spaes a brave sodger,
Ilka thrifty landlady her best paying lodger,
Ilka fat-leggit henwife an auld dodgin’ cadger,
An’ ilka yillhouse wife an’ auld half-pay gauger.
- “At night they get bouzie in Watty Macfluster’s,
Whaur a’ the young belles sparkle round them like lustres,
An’ a’ the young beaux gather round them in clusters,
An’ mony braw waddin’s made up at their musters.
- “They’d a humph-backit laddie, they ne’er had anither,
Could coax like the faither, an’ spae like the mither;
He’d the craft o’ the tane, an’ the wit o’ the tither—
There ne’er was sic metal e’er souther’d thegither.
- “He could spout a’ last speeches, could sing a’ new ballants,
Could mimic a’ tongues, frae the Highlants or Lawlants,
Grew grit wi’ the lasses, an’ great wi’ the callants,
An’ a’body laugh’d at the wee deilie’s talents.
- “But what did the gillie do here the last simmer
But ran aff wi’ Maggy, the young glaikit limmer!
Syne stole a bit pursie to deck out the kimmer,
An’ was sent ower the seas to the felling o’ timmer.

“Nae mair the puir bodies look hearty an’ cheerie,
For the loss o’ their callant they’re dowie and eerie;
They canna last lang, for their hearts are sae weary,
An’ their lang day o’ life closes darksome and dreary.”

“The brothers, although very dissimilar in habits and dispositions, were much attached to each other, and were on the borders of manhood before a single word, thought, or deed of an unfriendly nature had passed between them. Each possessed the other’s entire and unbounded confidence, and there was not a sentiment entertained by the one that was not unreservedly committed to the other’s keeping. ‘Love,’ however, as the old song says, ‘will venture in whaur it daurna weel be seen;’ and I presume, gentlemen,” said the Gaberlunzie, with a particularly sly look, “you are both aware from experience (here Nairn and my uncle looked hard at each other with a peculiar twinkle of the eye) how careful lovers generally are to conceal their attachment from all the world, more especially from their own immediate relatives; how they seek romantic dells, shady woods, and lonely glens, where ‘they tell the midnight moon their cares,’ and rather call on inanimate nature to participate in their feelings, than seek advice or consolation from their nearest friend. The person most free and open in his general disposition is often the most secret and reserved in affairs of the heart. Perhaps it was attributable to these causes, that when the brothers fell in love both with the same girl, the one had not the slightest suspicion that the other was similarly affected. The goddess of their idolatry was a fine blooming country maiden, who was considered the belle of the village. Perfectly aware of her beauty, and more than sufficiently vain of it, the coquetry of this fair maiden became proverbial. Her father, who was a farmer in comfortable circumstances, had no objections to either of the brothers for a son-in-law, although it was natural to expect that he should prefer the one he judged best qualified, by industrious and plodding business habits, to secure his daughter’s happiness and independence. Both brothers having free access to their fair charmer, essayed their best to win her smiles, but gave expression to their feelings in very different ways. The one was a favourite fireside companion, who talked with the father plausibly and sagely about matters

which few at his years could be expected to have taken an interest in, and who, when an opportunity occurred, could explain his sentiments very plainly and intelligibly to the daughter. The other, when he visited the house, appeared always absent and agitated, talked little and blushed deeply, although he dressed well, and assumed airs which, from his former habits, one would not have been led to expect. He apparently believed that his silent and expressive looks were understood and appreciated by the object of his love, and sent to her anonymously, although fully convinced that she knew whence they came, such rhyming epistles as the following, full of extravagant commendations of her beauty :—



“ A LOVE WREATH.

COME, my charmer, list thy praise ;
 Thou hast woke my slumb'ring lyre ;
 Thou hast kindled up my lays
 With sweet love's ethereal fire :
 All my soul's best powers inspire
 With thy beauty and thy love,
 And let virtuous fond desire
 Coming down from Heaven above,
 Flower this wreath I weave for thee,
 With bright buds of purity.

“ Sweeter thou than morning fair,
 Gentler than the pale moonbeam,
 Softer than the summer air,
 Purer than the silver stream ;
 Holy as an infant's dream,
 Are thy thoughts that heavenward rise ;
 Piercing as the lightning's gleam
 Is the lustre of thine eyes ;
 Wit and purity combine
 In each thought and glance of thine.

- “ Hark, the lark in glory floats,
Piping forth his matin lay ;
Thrush and linnet mingle notes,
Music swells from every spray ;
But if thou shouldst chance to stray
'Mong the woodlands glistening green,
And one little note essay,
All the feather'd choir are seen
Listening mute to that sweet tone,
Fondly deeming it their own.
- “ To the sweet Forget-me-not
Bends the Blue-bell on its stem,
Thinking all their sweets forgot,
As thou smiling passest them ;
But each little fairy gem,
Blooming bell, and glassy cup,
Sparkles like a diadem,
Drinking all thy glances up ;
Brightening all the flowery lea
With reflected light from thee.
- “ Mark the blushing heather bloom,
Bright on mountain, moor, and lea,
Load the air with rich perfume,
And with sweets the honey-bee ;
Listen to the melody
Of the shepherd's native strains,
Now in sadness, now in glee,
Swelling over Scotia's plains ;
All are sweet, and dear to me,
Emblems as they are of thee.
- “ Yes, all Nature's fairest flowers,
Blooming in our moorlands wild,—
Bright in sunshine and in showers,
Are but types of Nature's child ;
Ever gentle, ever mild,
Ever pure, and ever fair,
Virtue, when she saw thee, smiled,
This wreath twining round thy hair,—
Wear it maiden, for the giver,
Virtue's garland blooms for ever.

“While the one brother was thus engaged writing sonnets, or looking and blushing, hoping and wishing, the other wooed and won, and, with the consent and good wishes of her parents, was received as the accepted lover of their daughter. The arrangements for the wedding were soon completed, and it was agreed that the espousal was to take place on the day on which the bridegroom came of age. Not aware of the state of his brother's feelings, the happy lover communicated to him his success and joy; and of course insisted on his acting as bridesman at the bridal. Had the successful wooer been a keen observer, and marked the expression of countenance with which this announcement was received by his astonished relative, it is probable that, being of a remarkably cool temperament, and, moreover, imbued with the strongest regard for his brother, he would have instantly resigned to him his pretensions, and exerted himself to divert the affections of his bride in favour of her more sensitive admirer. But the look of despair with which the countenance of the sufferer was momentarily overcast, was soon displaced by a broad and placid smile; and if the tremulous emotion which shook his frame had been discovered, it would naturally have been ascribed to some such cause as regret for their impending separation.

Time passed on; the birthday of the twin-brothers, the day on which the marriage was to be celebrated, arrived; the whole neighbourhood was early astir that morning. The daughters of the neighbouring farmers for miles round had been invited to the wedding. The dressmakers had been busy for weeks making dresses, each more showy than another, authorities were consulted for the newest fashions, and there was much rivalry among the fair belles on the point of elegance of shape and brilliancy of colour, with a view to attract the attention of the remaining brother, who was now generally whispered to be a much better bargain, and more to be coveted than the staid and demure personage for whom the proud and affected beauty was destined. When a man is about to be married his good qualities suddenly disappear, and, along with the partner of his choice, he suffers much in the affectedly disinterested gossip of the fair part of the creation. How this comes about, the fable of the fox and the grapes may perhaps explain. It certainly must be very provoking to

a fair dame, after having arrayed herself in the newest fashions for years, after having expended a world of sparkling glances, and heaved ten thousand deep-drawn sighs at church and fair, to find the object of all her wiles suddenly appear in public with some fair girl before admired hanging on his arm, but who is now stigmatised as an awkward proud minx, while he is set down as a fellow of poor taste. On this occasion, accordingly, rumour was busy, and many whispers went about."

"Hoot, ay, we ken what a wedding in the country is," interrupted my uncle; "ye needna be describing that, but gae on wi' your story."*

"Well," resumed the Gaberlunzie, "on the morning of that day, and previous to the ceremony being performed, the friend to whose charge the grandfather of the young men had confided them, and who had discharged his trust with fidelity and care, met them at breakfast, and the sealed packet, anent the contents of which much anxiety had been felt and expressed, was found to contain the following document:—

"MY DEAR GRANDCHILDREN,—I have purposely withheld from you the secret of your birth, until your arrival at the years of discretion, when the industrious habits which I have done my best to form in you, and which I trust you shall then have matured, will enable you to provide a livelihood for yourselves. I anticipate that the very distant hope which this communication may awaken in you of some time or other succeeding to the title and estates of your forefathers, will not have the effect of inducing you to spend, in the pursuit of a shadow, that valuable time which may be more usefully employed. You are the grandchildren of James Hepburn of Keith, who fell in the rebellion of 1745, and whose estates were confiscated. Of this ill-fated enterprise, and the gallant conduct of your relative, you have often heard me speak. One important incident in his life, to which you owe your connection with him, was not generally known; he was privately married to a lady belonging to a family of the same political and religious persuasions with himself. Both parties were Roman Catholics, and the marriage was solemnized in the

* Many of my readers are, I daresay, of the same opinion, and the reviewers call out for story, story. I must just say to them, as John Scott said to the poor folk, "Wait on."

Chapel in Blackfriars' Wynd, where the necessary proofs may be found, if Government should at any time show a disposition to restore to your family their ancient possessions ; but as there is little probability that this will come to pass for many a long year, you had better, as I have done, keep this secret to yourselves. The world is always more bent on gratifying curiosity than on giving assistance in cases of doubt and perplexity. The period, however, may arrive, when the ruling powers may forget and forgive the faults of those misguided subjects who at that time took the part of their unfortunate prince ; then, but not till then, let your relationship be known, and numerous friends will flock around you. In the meantime, my anxious desire is, that you keep it a profound secret between you, and be rather eager to secure yourselves an estate in heaven, from whence, if permitted, I shall always have much pleasure in looking down upon you with fatherly affection.—Your affectionate grandfather,

John Melville

“The reading of this document, as might have been expected, had an extraordinary effect on the young men. New and bright visions of glory and ambition rose up before their mind's eye, and it required all the influence of their grandfather's friend to calm their roused and troubled spirits. In a state of high excitement they stalked about the apartment, fell into each other's arms, mutually embraced, and, shedding tears, vowed religiously to obey the injunctions of their grandfather. They then separated to meet again at noon, when the marriage ceremony was to be performed. The guests arrived ; the bride, bridesmaid, bridegroom, and clergyman were present, but the bridesman did not make his appearance. Inquiries were made in every quarter concerning him, but in vain. Nor has he ever since been heard of. Various causes were assigned for his disappearance ; some ascribed it to disappointed love. His brother and their old friend seemed to be of opinion, that the sudden communication made to him regarding his descent and blighted prospects had operated so powerfully on his excitable brain, that, like young Norval, he had started off to try a mili-

tary life, for which he had often expressed much enthusiasm. Whether any of these causes had the effect of driving him from home and kindred remains to be seen. But the following effusion, found among his papers, may perhaps give some little explanation of the true cause :—

“ I go to tread the path of fame,
 To seek the battle's roar,
 To drown my soul's consuming flame,
 'Mid crimson'd seas of gore ;
 And if a laurel deck my brow,
 I'll twine it round my heart ;
 'Twill hide the wound that lurks below,
 And ease the gnawing smart.

“ If glory's path is to be trod,
 And honour to be won,
 Upon the battle's purple sod,
 'Mid war clouds rolling dun ;
 Then there the soul that feels despair
 May shout amid the throng,
 And bosoms dead with grief and care
 Awake to freedom's song.'

“ By this unexpected and unforeseen occurrence, the whole bridal party was suddenly dispersed, and it was not till some years after that the marriage was actually celebrated. Even after this event did take place, the loss of his twin-brother seemed to have had a withering effect on the gentle nature of the newly married husband ; he fell into gloomy and desponding fits, and, notwithstanding the blandishments of his affectionate wife, and the endearing smiles of a numerous family which she bore to him, he seemed altogether unfit to take the place in society which he had once promised to fill. His father-in-law remonstrated with him in vain. His gloom became more deep and settled ; and when his wife and children died of a malady at that time prevalent, leaving him with one only child, he appeared not so much affected by his loss, as charmed with the light-hearted and joyous pranks of his little daughter. His whole affections were centred in her, and he pleased himself with the idea that he could trace in her young features a re-

semblance to his long-lost brother. He tended her during the years of childhood with constant anxiety and watchfulness; and when she grew up, he sent her to a seminary to have her initiated into the usages of genteel society. His wonted vigour, however, had forsaken him; by degrees his small estate became burdened, his affairs fell into confusion and disorder; and when his daughter returned home, she found her father involved in difficulties, from which no exertion could possibly relieve him. About this time I became acquainted with them, and seeing how matters stood, advised them to sell off their land, and retire to a small sheep farm, which in the course of my wanderings I had seen, and thought well adapted for them, in a district where I knew that the helplessness of the father, and the filial affection of the daughter, would find sympathising friends among its simple and kind-hearted inhabitants. Their subsequent success proved how correctly I had calculated; the amiable girl not only worked hard at the coarsest work, but, by her superior training and habits, did much to improve the females of that secluded district—communicating to them freely many of the very useful accomplishments which she possessed, by which kindness she secured the voluntary and grateful services of the neighbourhood on all occasions, when their assistance could be of advantage.

“It was not to be expected that such a flower should ‘blush unseen’ or unadmired, even in the wilderness of Carnwath Muir. Many of the most intelligent and respectable young men of the district became suitors for the hand of the fair stranger. This love must have been sufficiently disinterested, since it was well known that her father was extremely poor, and to no soul, not even to his own daughter, had he breathed a word of the secret connected with her birth or expectations. To the honour of the simple-minded race who reside in the region alluded to, wealth is not so much courted as worth, and how, therefore, could the beauties and virtues of a being so fair fail to command universal admiration? Her devoted love and unceasing attention to her frail and fast-failing father, whom latterly she watched and tended as if he had been an infant; her uniform mildness of temper, and unceasing kindness of heart; her sweetness of manner, her superior accomplishments and refined beauty, formed altogether a creature so perfect and so attractive, that, as might



naturally have been expected, many of the neighbouring young lairds eagerly sought to win her affections. The object of their admiration and solicitude, however, made choice of one in the humble capacity of a farm-servant; a man who was not so remarkable for his external accomplishments as for his internal worth, his frank sincerity, intelligence, and industrious habits—qualities which seem to have gained him the goodwill of the father, and the love of the daughter, to whom he was shortly united. The happy couple had not been long married, till the prudence of the step became sufficiently evident. Under the management of his energetic, strong-minded, and industrious son-in-law, the old man saw his farm begin to assume a new appearance; and to the enterprising exertions of this young farmer, who toiled hard late and early, the origin of many of those improvements which have now taken place in that bleak district may be traced. In little more than two years after his marriage, his farm was blooming like an Eden in the desert. No labour was too hard for him to encounter; no obstacle so formidable as to resist his powerful energies. His neighbours, urged on by his example, and encouraged by his success, rapidly followed in the same course; and in the quarter of the country to which I refer, much ancient soil has been turned over, and muirs and mosses have been drained, which now bear excellent crops, adding to the internal resources of our country, and serving to gratify those feelings of independence which it ought to be the glory of every true Scot to foster and encourage.

“Notwithstanding the unceasing attention and kindness of his beloved children, the old man, whose constitution, as formerly mentioned, was far gone, lately died. During the later period of his life I attended him closely; and, previous to his death, he committed to me the secret of his connection with the family of Hepburn, requesting me to seek you out, Mr Nairn, and to entreat your friendship for his daughter. He desired me also to show you this document, and the family ring, which is now in your possession, Mr Hepburn. This document, containing the declaration of his grandfather, is, you will observe, the only testimonial that exists relative to the said marriage; for my friend, on making inquiry many years ago, had reason to believe that the papers connected with the marriage, together with many other valuable documents, had

all been destroyed at the famous No-Popery fire in 1779, when the chapel, wherein the ceremony took place, was burned to the ground."

"Ah!" said Nairn, "that was indeed a cruel and reckless business. Well do I remember the horrors of that awful night, which even yet rise before me in vivid reality. At that time government was considerably in advance of the age; and, as religious toleration had long been given in Scotland to every sect and party, ministers thought that the penal statutes against the papists might be abrogated without giving umbrage to the nation. The result proved that they had been too sanguine in their expectations, and had given the mass of the people credit for more charity than they possessed. No sooner was the proposal made to introduce the detested and obnoxious measure, than the heather was on fire. All Scotland rose from one end to the other. Associations, in the formation of which the respectable classes of the community were frequently the most active, were got up in every quarter; and the influence which was exerted, and the outcry which was raised, had the effect of compelling the ministry to withdraw a bill which was dictated by the best motives of humanity, and brought forward in the true principles of Christian philanthropy and liberality. Although the measure was deserted on meeting with this decided opposition, the populace, whose sectarian zeal and jealousy had been excited and inflamed in every possible manner, determined to resent what they looked on as little less than an attempt to set up a stepping-stone for the re-establishment of Popery among them. In Edinburgh particularly, the commotion was spread over all the city, and among all classes of the community; low mutterings and loud cursings were to be heard in every corner of the streets. 'No Popery—down with Popery!' screamed the children, as they pelted each other with mud. 'No Popery—down with Popery!' mumbled the old man, catching the ominous cry through his hearing-trumpet. 'No Popery—down with Popery!' he murmured, as he essayed to lift the staff which fell from his palsied and feeble hand. 'No Popery!' shouted the drunken bacchanalian, as he reeled home from his club at midnight, supported between two caddies, nearly as intoxicated and powerless as himself. 'Down with Popery!' yelled the inebriated cobbler, as he was borne along on the shoulders of a couple of the City Guard; and in every direction your ears were greeted with the old rhyme of—

“ Prelacy and Popery
 Are daughter and mither ;
 The Pope an' the Prelate
 Are brither and brither.
 Burn them in a banefire,
 Hing them in a towe,
 Fire in the Cowgate,
 Faggots in the Bow !

“ To painted Saints an' Images
 They kneel in adoration ;
 Grinding muckle whistle-kists—
 Sic abomination !
 Ding them a'thegither down,
 An' burn them in a lowe ;
 Fire in the Cowgate,
 Faggots in the Bow !

“ I happened to be in the Council at that time, and as the magistracy dreaded, from the excited state of the public mind, that some tumultuary act of violence would take place ere the agitation altogether subsided, they used every precaution in their power to secure and protect the lives and properties of the persecuted body. The Town Guard was held in readiness to act, if necessary, at a moment's warning. Arrangements were made whereby the military in the Castle could be instantly brought on the scene of action. Every night the Defensive Bands met in their lodge-rooms, and were ready to sally forth, armed with firelocks, and provided with an ample supply of ball-cartridge. The slightest symptoms of riot were to be reported at the Council Chamber, as the head-quarters from which all orders were to be issued. Notwithstanding these precautions, however, the rulers of the city were outwitted. The Edinburgh mob, with that steadiness of purpose and secrecy of movement which has always characterised their most violent proceedings, had on this, as on other occasions, arranged matters so quietly, that the riot was well nigh over, and the object they had in view accomplished, before a thought could have arisen that such a thing was in contemplation. For some days the storm had apparently been lulled ; everything went calmly on ; the public dissatisfaction seemed to

have disappeared, and no traces of the under-current which still boiled beneath could be discerned on the surface of society. Frequenters of clubs and taverns, who for some time had been rather stinted of their usual nightly indulgences, congratulated themselves on the fair prospect held out to them, by the quiet and orderly state of the town, to resume their convivial meetings; and, for some days previous to the night on which the riot took place, all apprehension of such an occurrence had ceased: so still were the people, and so busy, that they seemed to be ashamed of their violence, and essayed to drown their shame in the sounds of their hammers. On that evening I had just completed dressing for the part of a high personage that I was to personate at the Bonnet Lairds' Club, which had been closed for some weeks, and was to be re-opened that night, when, on opening the window of my dressing-room to ascertain whether or not it was fair, the sound of the fire-bell caught my ear. I instantly hurried on my cloak and hat, and rushed into the street. The night was unusually dark; the rain was falling in torrents. As I descended the Mint Close the town-drum began to beat; lights were seen flickering to and fro among the high windows, which were violently shot up and down; heads were popped out, questions were hurriedly and anxiously put, and briefly answered; the compact and measured tread of the City Guard was heard at a distance, as that veteran body moved along the High Street, and it was evident that the long-dreaded riot had at length broken out. On reaching the Cowgate I found the shops all shut. Crowds of people, full of excitement, were hurrying forward as if to one point, and in this direction I was borne by the moving mass. The smothered cry at length broke out, and loud and long was the howl that rose to the welkin from the infuriated populace. Throats at length became hoarse with bawling 'Burn the Papists—lay low their abominations!' Every close and wynd poured forth their hundreds, like so many tributary streams, to swell the living tide that filled the valley below. Onward, onward was I borne by the heaving and excited mob, till I reached the foot of Blackfriars' Wynd, when a dense black cloud of smoke, and the crackling and flashing of flaming embers, announced that the work of destruction had not only begun, but had gone too far to be arrested. Being aware that the local authorities had not

anticipated such an event, and could not consequently have made any such preparations as might effectually check the wild flame of passion that was vividly typified by the blaze which every moment became brighter and brighter, I resolved to do all that could be done to assist any poor sufferer who might require aid. Accordingly, throwing off my cloak, and exhibiting the showy dress in which I was arrayed, I pushed my way forward. The crowd, either from an involuntary terror at anything in the shape of lawful authority, or already satiated with mischief, fell back before me, and in a short time I stood alone within a few paces of the burning tenement. On looking upward, the sight which met my gaze froze my blood with horror. The whole edifice was tottering, the flames began to flash out at the eaves of the house, when suddenly a figure appeared at one of the windows shrieking for aid. In another instant a fine tall young man, who had followed and backed me through the crowd, sprang up the narrow stair, dashed through the cloud of fire to the apartment in which was the terror-stricken wretch, evidently in a state of stupor, seized him in his arms, and, opposing his own body as a barrier to ward off the flames from the unfortunate creature to whose deliverance he had come so opportunely, bore him down to the street in safety. The sight of this half-dead man, who lay almost senseless in the arms of his deliverer, raised anew the fury of the mob. He was known to be the organist of the chapel, and the crying and yelling again arose of 'Burn the whistle-grinder—scaud Satan's skirlin' servant!' and several of the boldest of the rioters in front were about to seize him, when his deliverer, picking up a burning brand which fell at his feet, cleared a passage through the astonished crowd. I followed them, and as a fearful crash, succeeded by a brief momentary eclipse and a brilliant flame arose from behind, announcing the fall of the burning building, we found ourselves in comparative safety on the outskirts of the throng, now rapidly dispersing in all directions. I conducted the gallant youth with his burden to my house in the Mint; but while I sought after some refreshments to revive the poor sufferer, I found that his deliverer had disappeared. I never saw him again; he was a brave youth: it was a noble deed, and I have loved him for it ever since. A reward, proclaimed by the town-crier, was offered him by the magistrates, but he was either too modest or too generous to

claim it. There were, indeed, several applicants for this reward, but all of them, on being questioned by me, only showed they knew nothing of the matter, and accordingly got themselves disgraced."

"Ay; and are ye sure ye would have known him?" interrupted the Gaberlunzie. "You must have had sharp eyes to see a man so perfectly in a cloud of smoke, which you say almost choked you, and in such a dark night, too, as that was. Are ye sure ye did not refuse the reward to the proper person?"

"Heaven forbid!" said Nairn. "Nay, nay, I saw his face momentarily, to be sure, but it was so full at once of humanity and determination that I never shall forget it. Then his eyes, they rivalled in brilliancy the fiery brand which he carried, striking terror into the mob as he bore along his helpless burden in triumph."

"Ay," said the Gaberlunzie, "but faces differ much according to the state of animation they are in. The eye which glances brightest in war beams meekest in peace; and it would have been a pity that one who had earned his reward so nobly, and who perchance was conscious he had done the good deed, should have been refused that reward, because he could not prove that he was the party, or because you had formed an erroneous idea of the cast of your hero's countenance."

"Indeed," retorted Nairn, "if you provoke me to show you a proof of my sharp eyes, and if it were not, friend, that your dress and your age is now somewhat different, your hair white instead of black, which the time that has elapsed since that event might easily account for, I would somewhat astonish you, I presume, by declaring, that your own face bears a stronger resemblance to the features of that brave youth than any I have seen since. Indeed to-day, when you told me you had something to communicate, I said to myself, Here is the hero of No-Popery Riot night come at last to claim his reward."

"Gae wa wi' your nonsense; a very likely story, indeed," said the Gaberlunzie, resuming his broad Scotch, and his free bantering manner at the same time; "but come now, and tell us what ye made o' the puir organist?"

"I kept the poor inoffensive musician snugly concealed with me till the blast blew past, and a most pleasant and cheerful companion he was. He played the violin admirably, and

withal was so innocent and good-natured, that I could scarcely prevail upon myself to part with him. Although not over communicative on matters connected with his late office, on being pressed by me one day as to the motive which had induced him to throw himself in the face of certain destruction, and remain so long in a place of danger, from whence he could so easily have escaped, before the fire had reached such a height, he answered, by saying, 'That, by that desperate effort, which but for the unknown stranger would have been too much for him, he had saved from the devouring element some important documents which might, at some period or other, prove advantageous to some of our Scottish families, who could have no such expectations.' Possibly this very marriage certificate of which you have spoken might have been amongst the number. But I have long since lost sight of the musician, and where to find him I know not. I recollect of seeing him playing the fiddle on the street one night, but thought he wished to avoid me, poor fellow! as if ashamed of the humble condition to which he was reduced, and under that impression, and having no pressing business with him, I did not force myself on his notice."

"Aweel," said the Gaberlunzie, "he will perhaps be forthcoming when he is more wanted. I have no doubt that the desiderated certificate of marriage was among the papers he referred to; we will be on the look-out for him. Meantime, I am happy at having met with two such true friends, and proud shall I be if we live to see my good old friend's daughter restored to the estates of her forefathers."

"And where is she?" said Nairn; "my heart yearns to embrace so near a relative, and the daughter of so near a friend."

"Ah! Willie, Willie, when will ye gie ower yearning to kiss the lassies?" said my uncle.

"Kettle *versus* Pot, Walter," said Nairn; "but ye forget, ye old fool! the girl is my half-cousin; and"—

"Ay, but there's nae restrictions against half-cousins marrying, ye ken, my auld friend; ye are no within the degrees."

"Keep yourself easy on that point," said the Gaberlunzie, "that relative whom you may be proud to see, Mr Nairn, is now in Edinburgh with her infant daughter. Her husband, who is well worthy of her, and who married her without the slightest idea that she had any such connections or expecta-

tions, is still quite ignorant of what family she belongs to, although he is aware of some little mystery hanging over her fate, and at my solicitation he allowed her to come to town under my protection. She is now residing at the White Hart Inn, where she will be happy to see you, and where I shall be glad to conduct you both, gentlemen."

"Go, bring her instantly to my house," said Nairn; "let her make it her home as long and as often as she comes to remain in Edinburgh; all that I have is hers. Government has lately been disposed to relax its severity towards the representatives of several of those families who were out in '15, and I have little doubt similar clemency will be extended by-and-by to the unfortunate victims of the more recent rebellion. A considerable time may elapse ere that period arrive, but there can be little harm in endeavouring to awaken the sympathies of our rulers in their behalf. Let us endeavour to discover, my old friend, the organist with his documents, anent which I have little doubt," continued he, addressing the Gaberlunzie, "your surmises are correct. All's well that ends well; and it will be a pleasing conclusion to our labours if we are able to present the descendant of Hepburn, and the husband who married her for love, with a landed estate, and a crest that might grace the armorial bearings of any noble family. Meantime keep all secret; let nothing transpire; and if we do fail in our attempt, the busy world will not have cause for laughter or derision."