

tion, but made himself exceedingly popular among all the intelligent and thoughtful classes of the population.

Our portrait of Mr. Walters is reproduced from a photograph by Ralston and Sons, 141, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow.

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### The Lark Hall Sprite.

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**J**ANUARY, 1800, was the date when a mischievous sprite, whose pleasure it was to remain invisible, played such fantastic tricks at a place called Lark Hall, near Burrowdon, in the parish of Alwinton, as not only to astonish the somewhat simple-minded natives, but to puzzle the wisest heads among those learned Thebans who came to penetrate the mystery.

Lark Hall is a small farm, which belonged at the beginning of the century to Mr. William Walby, of Burrowdon, and was rented by Mr. Turnbull, a butcher in Rothbury, who kept his father and mother, two decent old people, at the place. There was also a hind and his family, who were separated from the Turnbells by a partition only, formed by a couple of those old-fashioned close beds which were once so common in Northumbrian cottages, and which left a narrow dark passage between, the two apartments constituting a "but" and a "ben." The garrets above were kept locked by old Turnbull, who had them filled with all sorts of stored-up trumpery. The only access to "ben the hoose" was through the outer room, and the occupants of the two halves were unfortunately not on the most friendly terms, it being almost impossible, under such circumstances of continual close contact, for even the kindest and best-disposed people to avoid annoyance and bickerings.

It was suspected that the house was haunted. Knockings and noises were heard every now and then in Turnbull's apartment. The plates, bowls, basins, glasses, tea cups, and other crockery, which the old lady took a pride in arranging showily on the dresser, with peacock's feathers stuck in for ornament, jumped off the shelves and were broken. The chairs and tables danced about the room in the most fantastic manner. Scissors, knives and forks, horn spoons, wooden dishes, bottles, &c., flew in all directions, and the confused and terrified spectators were sometimes actually wounded by these uncanny missiles. A poor tailor had a tin pot full of water dashed in his face, and had the hardihood to stand to his post notwithstanding, when, to punish him for his temerity, a large rolling-pin descended from overhead, and hit him a smart blow on the shoulders that made him beat a retreat. One of the most curious tricks was played in the presence of the Rev. Mr. Lauder, the Presbyterian minister at Harbottle, who came to administer some spiritual consolation and comfort to the afflicted inmates,

but who went away almost, if not quite, convinced that the arch-deceiver Satan had a finger in the pie, while he was not gifted with the power of exorcising and laying him, as John Wesley had done the Building Hill ghost at Sunderland some years before. Mr. Lauder had been but a short time in the house, and had scarcely got his preliminary inquiries over, when a large family Bible, which had been lying in its accustomed place in the window recess, made a sudden series of gyrations through the air into the middle of the room, and fell down at his feet—a marvel enough to shake the nerves of a doctor of divinity, or even the moderator of the general assembly, let alone a poor village presbyter.

All these wonders were verified by credible witnesses. Two professors of legerdemain, besides many intelligent gentlemen, examined the premises with critical eyes, but failed to discover anything that could lead to an explanation. Suspicions, indeed, attached to a certain humorous individual, reported to be versed in the black art, and a frequent visitor to Lark Hall; but some of the most astonishing manifestations having taken place when he was certainly absent, these suspicions were set aside as groundless. Twenty guineas were offered for the detection of the fraud, if fraud it should turn out to be, but without success, for nobody ever came forward to claim the money. Nor was the mystery, so far as our knowledge of the records go, ever clearly explained.

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### The North-Country Garland of Song.

By John Stokoe.

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#### HUGHIE THE GRÆME.

**J**OSEPH RITSON'S curious and valuable collection of legendary poetry, entitled "Ancient Songs," (edition 1790), contains a version of this Border ditty under the title of "The Life and Death of Sir Hugh of the Græme," taken from a collation of two black letter copies, one of them in the Roxburgh Collection. The ballad first appeared in D'Urfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy," and several versions have since been published—in Sir Walter Scott's "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," in Johnson's "Scots Musical Museum," and in other standard works on ballad poetry.

The Græmes were a powerful and numerous clan, who chiefly inhabited the Debateable Land. They were said to be of Scottish extraction, and their chief claimed his descent from Malis, Earl of Stratherne. In military service they were more attached to England than to Scotland; but in their depredations in both countries they appear to have been very impartial, for in the year 1600 the gentlemen of Cumberland complained to Lord