

DRUMMEDALE :

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

FROM

THE BORDER HILLS

SKETCHES AND POEMS

BY

C. M. THOMSON

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RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO THE

HONOURED AND BELOVED MEMORY

OF


LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK, K.T.

SIR FRANCIS SCOTT,

ELEVENTH BARONET OF THIRLESTANE.

DIED AT FLORENCE, 19th December, 1898.

INTRODUCTION.

HERE a preface is necessary, it should be to a book what the key-note is to a piece of music, and should give to the reader an instant and comprehensive grasp of the entire composition, with its varying inflections. It is with this idea in my mind that I offer a few explanatory and introductory remarks to the readers of DRUMMEDALE.

The Sketches appeared some time ago in a Border newspaper, and were very favourably received. For this and other reasons, I have been induced to publish them in book form, with the further addition of several poetical pieces which I had in store, and which seemed suitable for inter-spersion with the prose chapters.

To sketch the everyday lives, and perpetuate the memories of the good old folks amongst whom I spent my youth in the quiet vale of Ettrick,

has been to me a labour of love: most of the characters are therefore drawn from real life, and easy of recognition to those who knew them. Some, however, are fictitious, though all are common types of Scottish character in rural districts. The foreign element is mainly introduced as a side-light, which brings into clearer relief the individual characteristics of the plain-spoken but more wholesome-minded villagers of Sunnyburn.

To the honoured memory of the late Lord Napier and Ettrick, who so dearly loved the green valley in which lay his ancestral estates, and where, in the stately seclusion of Thirlestane, his lordship spent the latter years of a useful life, I have dedicated DRUMMEDALE.

That my little book may receive a kindly welcome, and be found interesting by many readers, is the earnest wish of its authoress.

C. M. THOMSON.

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DRUMMEDALE.



GRANNIE'S BAIRN.

“RE we near Grannie's hoose yet, Sandy?”

“Ay, hinnie; we'll sune be there now. Ye're no' turnin' cauld, ir ye?”

“No' very. Will Grannie be expeekin' iz, Sandy?”

“O-wye, Ise warran' will she, hinnie. Juist 'e creep doon amang yer haps a wee whilie yet, and I'll tell 'e when oo won to Grannie's hoose.”

Sandy Simpson was the Drummeldale postman, who went three times a week to Souterhill—one day down and the next day up—bringing with him a wallet full of news from the outside world. Letters were not so rife then as now, and the chief recipients of Sandy's postal deliveries were the 'gentry' at the Big Hoose, the minister, a few of the farmers, and—Chirsty Grieve. Others got

letters occasionally ; but, like angels' visits, these occasions were few and far between.

But Sandy's business at Southerhill was not entirely confined to his duties at the Post Office. These, in fact, occupied but a brief portion of his time, and yet from about half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, when he entered the busy little Border town, until late at night, Sandy was on the trudge, and every hour was filled in with a multiplicity of services, as varied as they were numerous.

Probably his first visit would be to the bank, where he would lift or deposit considerable sums of money entrusted to his care by the farmers or 'bein bodies' of Drummeldale. More than likely he would also have several accounts to pay or collect for his country customers ; for Sandy, being the impersonation of honesty, was implicitly trusted by all ; and, as the country folk said, 'If Sandy'll take in hand to transack oor bit biz'ness, there's nae yuise for huz trailin' a' the gaet to Southerhill aboot it.

But Sandy's undertakings, though they might begin at the bank, did not by any means end there. From one shop to another the rural postman would steer his way, slipping the smaller articles he bought into a big leathern bag, which

was strapped across his back and hung under his arm. The heavier goods were ordered to be 'sent ower to the cairt by nine next mornin'; and sei that 'e be in time,' Sandy would add. Following him into the shoemaker's, one might hear an order given for a 'perr o' Sabbath-day shuin to Jock Tamson, ploughman at Corbiecleugh'—a young man who was reported to be coortin' his maister's dauchter, and 'to be 'settin' oot;' which latter phrase meant that Jock was arraying himself for conquest; and, certainly, Sandy's notebook would have borne strong evidence in support of such a design; for not only was there the Sabbath-day shuin, for which a 'mett,' or measuring stick was sent to show the size, but there was an order also for a white dickey, a blue silk necktie, and—a lang hat! Now, who ever heard of a young ploughman buying a lang hat, unless he was either getting married or going to a funeral? Sandy had not been slow to enquire for which of these solemn occasions the hat was wanted, and Jock had been suspiciously ready with the answer, that 'he was gaun to be best-man at a freend's waddin'.'

But when Sandy was informed, a week later, that 'Jock had run away wi' Corbiecleugh's dauchter,' the canny postman, who got everybody's news, but gossiped with none, merely remarked that he

had 'jaloosed as muckle;' then whipping up his brown pony to a trot, while a grim smile hovered amongst the wrinkles on his weather-beaten face, he muttered to himself—'Best man? Umph! The leein' scoondril.'

To return, however, to Sandy's unfinished duties in Souterhill, we might follow him to the draper's, where he was to choose a baby's hood, and to 'mind that the bairn was a lassie;' also claith for a perr o' guid breeks to Sandy Gow, the blacksmith; merino, to match a goon that Jeanie Blythe, the mantlemaker, had to feenish for a waddin'; swatches o' second murnin' for Peggy Galbraith, a buxom widow, another individual who was reported to be 'settin' oot.'

Salts, senna leaf, castor oil, something for a sair hoast, a plaister for Eben Anderson's pains, entailed a visit to the chemist's; and so on to the butcher's, the baker's, the grocer's, the watchmaker's, and many other tradesmen, until Sandy's labours and anxieties would be over for the day—though only to begin again next morning, when dilatory shopkeepers would delay his departure by omitting to send their goods in time, or forgetting them altogether. An extra crop of such and similar provocations would worry Sandy into a state of impatient irritability, the outcome of which would

be short answers and sharp speeches for all and sundry who came in his way then. Even the articles of merchandise sent to the post cart after the proper time came in for a share of Sandy's invective—'Trappin',' trumpery,' 'humbug,' 'rub-bitch,' were the terms he would use at the sight of these unwelcome additions to his already heavy load. On such occasions the message boys would telegraph storm signals to each other, by the imperative wave of an empty basket, and the warning admonition — 'Better hurry up, yowe yins; Sandy's in a tirmendous ill tuin the day.'

* * * * *

One frosty morning in October, it was a comely pleasant-faced matron, leading a little girl by the hand, who had to bear the brunt of Sandy's temporary displeasure.

'Could ye take this little lassie up the water wi' 'e the day, Sandy?' enquired the matron.

"I can take nae lassie up the waiter the day," was Sandy's gruff response, as he proceeded with the arranging of his packages; evidently considering the matter settled, and the questioner dismissed. But the kindly-faced applicant, whose speech and accent betokened her to be a north-country woman, probably knew and understood Sandy's little peculiarities; and so, without taking any notice of his

abrupt manner, she diplomatically renewed the attack.

“Her grandmother will be disappointed if ye don’t take her to-day.”

“An’ whae’s her grandmother?” was the peppery query fired forth as Sandy turned impatiently to his persistent visitant.

“Mrs Stuart, up at Sunnyburn, is her grandmother.”

“And whae’s Mrs Stuart?” was the next question, as Sandy went over a mental directory of the residents at Sunnyburn, a small village some sixteen miles from Souterhill.

“Well, perhaps you would know her better as Chirsty Grieve,” answered the child’s mother with a smile.

“O-ye! Chirsty Grieve’s her grannie?” said Sandy, more civilly, as faint recollections began to dawn upon his mind of sundry injunctions he had received from the said Chirsty Grieve, concerning a bairn somebody was sending her. But being on his high horse that morning, Sandy could not climb down all at once; so he tried to preserve his dignity, and compromise matters by bidding the younger Mrs Stuart ‘take the bairn hame again the day, and maybe it wadna be sae cauld the morn.’

“Oh, but she is well wrapped up, and won't mind the cold,” replied the mother, as she lifted the child in her arms, and, after giving her an affectionate cuddle, deposited her in the front of the post gig, where she would be at Sandy's feet; whereupon the worthy man—whose bark was a good deal worse than his bite, and who had a very kindly heart beating under his rugged exterior—took the little one and set her up on the seat, telling her to ‘haud on, and no fa' oot, till he got the beast yokit.’

The mother stood by until the pony was harnessed, and the nondescript vehicle fairly astart on its homeward journey; then, waving her hand in response to the child's vigorous nods—both hands being fully occupied in ‘haudin' on'—Mrs Stuart proceeded towards her own house, where several children were awaiting her return; but all that day, and for many days, and months, and years afterwards, the mother missed the winsome face of her little daughter.

Slowly the post gig descended the brae which led out of the town, Sandy carefully guiding the well-laden pony until they got out on to the country road, by the side of which, on a heap of broken stones, sat a sony matron waiting for ‘a hurl.’

“Preserve us a’, Jenny, I clean forgot about yowe atehgither, and I’m desperit hivvy laden the day.”

“Weel, Sandy, hivvy laden or no hivvy laden, ye’ll hev to take mei; for I canna walk a’ that lang road.”

So Sandy shifted some of the parcels to the back of the cart, and Jenny with considerable difficulty got her portly form into the vehicle, and settled down on the cushioned seat. Then, lifting her small fellow-passenger on to her lap, she drew her ample cloak around both, greatly to the comfort of the child, who nestled into the motherly bosom of the shepherd’s wife with evident satisfaction.

“As shuir as I’m leevin’, that’s a bit nice bairn, Sandy. Where ir ye takin’ her?”

“Oh, I’m takin’ her up to her grannie, Chirsty Grieve, at Sunnyburn.”

“O-wye, she’ll be yin o’ John’s bairns, na, Ise warrant ye; and what dae they ca’ ye, hinnie?”

The little girl sat up, and with a quaintly serious air gave them her name in full — ‘Elaine Izzetta Mackenzie Stuart.’

“Megstie mei! but that’s an unco big name for sic a wee bodie,” said Sandy, laughingly; “whae was ’e ca’d for?”

"A lady in the Highlands," answered the little one.

"And what dae they ca' ye at hame, hinnie?" queried the shepherd's wife, somewhat puzzled over the novel-sounding names.

"Father and mother call me Elainie, but the rest just call me Eily."

"O-wye, Eily's a bit nice short name," said the kindly woman, drawing the bairn close to her warm breast again; "and yer grannie 'ill be rale guid till ye, Ise warrant; an' ye 'll be graund company for her when yer grandfaither's oot a' day."

After that the gig jogged on its way, only stopping now and again that Sandy might give out some of his goods, or deliver a letter or a newspaper here and there at the farm-places and cottages which hide themselves among the green knowes and howes and fir plantations of quiet Drummeldale.

After nine miles of the journey had been accomplished, Jenny descended from the inadequate accommodation of the narrow seat and limited interior of the post gig; and gathering together her belongings, while bidding Eily 'be a guid bairn to her grannie,' she took the hill path towards her moorland home, and soon disappeared from view.

Meanwhile, Sandy had been busy emptying a good-sized basket, and lining it cosily with a rug. Then he gently lifted little Eily into it, arranging shawls around and over her till nothing but a pair of blue eyes and a small nose were visible from among the folds. Very quiet and sometimes half asleep Eily had remained, until within a mile of Sunnyburn she startled Sandy—who had evidently forgotten all about her—by asking how far it was to Grannie's hoose now? On hearing that they would soon be there, the child nestled down among her shawls again and waited patiently.

By-and-bye the post gig stopped before a cosy-looking thatched cottage, the walls of which were completely covered with ivy, roses, and other climbing plants. From the porch of this house stepped out the kindest-looking of old women, whose beautiful silvery hair, under the white goffered mutch, framed a fine broad Scottish face, which, with its varying expressions of humour and gravity, was in perfect harmony with its natural surroundings—reflecting, as it were, the lights and shadows which fall and flit over the calm heights of the green hills rising majestically around the yellow fields and flowery meadow lands of Sunnyburn.

“Weel, Sandy, what have ye for iz the nicht?”

asked Chirsty, as she came down the walk towards the road.

One by one Sandy handed out what he had for Chirsty, saying, "There 's a letter for yowe, a paper for Wullie, a sheep's heid, and the Drum-melside butter box."

"O-wye; but dear mei, Sandy, have they no' sent the bairn wi' 'e?"

"Bairn! wha—whatna bairn? Shuirly, Chirsty, ye've had bairns eneuch o' yer ain 'ithoot 'e bawtherin' wi' ither folks'."

"Oh, weel, ye sei, ma ain are up and away, and I took a notion that I wad have little Eily—yin o' John's bairns—up aside iz for a while, juist to be kind o' company; but maybe it was ower cauld for her to come the day."

"O-wye. Aweel, gang' roon' the cairt, and look in that basket, and maybe ye'll find something."

So roond the cart went Chirsty in a hurry; and there, sure enough, she found a smiling little face watching for her coming.

"My certy, Sandy, but ye hev taen guid care o' her; she 's as warm as a penny pie. Come away, hinnie; Ise warrant ye'll be tired, comin' sae ferr."

And, lifting Eily oüt from amongst her wrappings, Grannie set her down on the road until she

could collect the shawls; but from sitting so long in her cramped position, the child could scarcely stand; so Grannie had to take her up in her kindly arms again, and carry her into the house, Sandy following with the wraps.

“Come away in, Sandy; ye maun ha’e a dram the nicht for bein’ sae guid tae ma bairn; ‘deed, I maun gi’e ‘e a gless o’ brandy, I think, to keep oot the cauld, and drink the bairn’s health.”

Whereupon the brandy bottle was produced, and Sandy took up his dram, after wishing Chirsty luck wi’ the bairn.

“And sei that ‘e dinna spoil her amang ‘e; for she’s a bit nice lassie,” added the postman, as he departed on his homeward way.

Eily, now divested of her brown cloak and close-fitting beaver bonnet, was seated on a low stool, enjoying the scones and tea which Grannie had arranged on a chair close to the fireside.

And so began the kindly feeling between Eily and her grannie, an affection which deepened into a love almost painful in its intensity, especially to the child, whose sensitive nature and warm, loving heart clung tenaciously to the dear old grandmother who was so good to her bairn.

IN MEMORIAM
LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK.

DIED DECEMBER 19TH, 1898.

THE wintry winds o'er Wardlaw hill
Are sweeping with an eerie wail,
While foaming floods and tinkling rill
Lend softer cadence to the gale.
All leafless now are Ettrick woods,
The flowerless meads no longer gay ;
But he who loved her varying moods,
From Ettrick vale has passed away.

And Ettrick mourns her honoured dead—
No dearer name than his she knows ;
The tears around that coffin shed,
Her people's heartfelt sorrow shows.
No more his genial smile shall cheer,
His word of praise no more reward ;
No more his well-loved form appear,
His kindly voice no more be heard.

His stately presence in the hall,
His courteous kindness in the cot,
Are memories which remain to all,
Be theirs the high or humble lot.

The loss is ours— the gain is his ;
For though on earth he won renown,
What honours vie with Paradise ?
What laurels match the heavenly crown ?

In Ettrick's old graveyard he sleeps ;
The wintry wind his requiem hymns ;
Unbidden tears the rain-cloud weeps,
And sombre skies the daylight dims.
But nature's mood accords with theirs
Who lingering gaze within the pale,
Where calmly rests from earthly cares,
The honoured chief of Ettrick vale.

SUNNYBURN.

SUNNYBURN is a small village lying among the green hills in the quiet vale of Drum-meldale. One row of four cottages, with their opposite out-houses, constitute the main and only street in the hamlet, the other houses being scattered here and there in irregular fashion.

Thimble Row—so called because at one time the four houses were all occupied by knights and dames of the order of the thimble—was at the period of this sketch inhabited by Robbie Biggar, the shoemaker; John Burnet, the tailor; Jeanie Blyth, the dressmaker; and George Matthews, the carrier.

Perhaps the most noticeable of these individuals was John Burnet. John was a bachelor of middle age, a Cameronian elder, and also precentor in the Cameronian meeting-house; and, when circumstances necessitated, a substitute for the regular preacher. He could take the chair—there was no pulpit—and deliver a good edifying sermon. In fact, John Burnet had all the makings of a

minister in him, but there was one great drawback—the tailor was afflicted with a chronic deafness, which incapacitated him for any of the higher professions, and made him somewhat peculiar in manner. The repressed capabilities of mind and speech consequent upon his inability to hear, or to take much part in ordinary conversation, found an outlet in a way which to strangers was somewhat disconcerting.

John had a keen sense of humour, but it took a considerable time for the full meaning of any ludicrous incident or story to penetrate the dulled avenues which led to his active brain; but once fairly assimilated by the understanding, the joke became an inexhaustible source of amusement. The practice of making his customers' clothes in their own houses ('whuppin' the cat,' it was called) was a common one in John's day; and many times the tailor, sitting cross-legged on some cottager's kitchen table, would go off into sudden outbursts of subdued but convulsive laughter, the cause of his merriment being known only to himself. John was a devout, strictly religious man, and somewhat narrow in many of his ideas; he had, nevertheless, a great admiration for the lasses; and many were the practical jokes played upon him when he went a-courting,

his whereabouts being easily discovered, as a 'whispered love' was not exactly suitable to John's mode of wooing the fair sex.

In a larger cottage standing by itself at Sunnyburn lived Eben Anderson, a retired farmer and a strict anti-burgher. At the age of sixty he thought little of walking to Souterhill and back on a Sunday for the privilege of attending his own particular place of worship.

In his younger days the thirty miles and more would have been considered a trifling journey, but the sturdy old man frankly acknowledged that 'it was juist eneuch for him now, especially when he was fashed wi' the pains,' by which he meant the rheumatics.

Eben Anderson had never been married, and his maiden sister Peggy had, from her girlhood, kept house for him. An orphan nephew had been left to their care, and a baby girl had been laid on their doorstep one summer morning, though by whose agency no one had ever been able to find out. It was the one mystery of Sunnyburn, and a mystery it seemed likely to remain.

When Peggy Anderson told the story, as she had often been called upon to do, it was always in the same fashion: "I wakened that mornin'," she would say, "juist as daylight was comin' in,

and some way I had the impression that I had heard a cry; but, thinks I to masel', it maun hae been a dream, for there could be naebody cryin' at that time o' the mornin'; so I turned masel' ower, and was juist doverin' asleep when I hears the cry again."

"Dear sakes, hinnie!" says I to masel', 'that was for a' the yirth like a bairn's greet, but whae wad be oot wi' a bairn the now?' Up I gets, though, and on wi' some claes, and away to the door; and there, rowed up in a shawl and lyin' on the doorstep, was oor ain wee Gracie—the bonniest bit bairn, I thocht, I had ever seen. Puir bit thing! Them that laid it there had little o' the mother i' their breest, but they had haen the sense to bring the bairn to a guid hame. But it was nae common body's bairn, for its bits o' claes were a' o' the finest, and it was as clean as a new preen. Weel, I brocht it in, and got some milk warmed for't as quick as I could, and gied it its bottle—for there was nae less than a sookin' bottle rowed in the shawl wi't; so them that pat the bairn on oor doorstep kenn'd weel eneuch that there wasna likely to be ony sookin' bottles in Eben Anderson's hoose; an' if that same man never got a surprise in his life afore, Ise warrant 'e he got yin that mornin'.

“Whae’s aucht the bairn?” says he, when he cam’ ben till his brekfist.

“It’s oors,” says I, “isn’t it a nice yin?”

“Oh, I daursay, it’s weel eneuch; but whae’s aucht it?”

“Weel, Eben lad, I faund it on the doorstep afore daylight this mornin’, and them that laid it there, whaever it was, is no likely to come back seekin’ for’t; so if the puir lamb disna find a hame here there’ll be naething but the puirhoose for’t.”

“There was an unco speakin’ and conjecturin’ in Sunnyburn that day, but the bairn micht hae drappit doon frae the cluds for onything that onybody could find oot about it. As for masel’, my mind was made up frae the first to keep the bairn, and the only thing I dreeded was that they wad find oot whae it belanged till. Weel, I happened to hev a yirrant up to Braeheid that efternuin wi’ a clockin’ hen that I had promised Marget the len’ o’. So, of coorse, I telled her the story about the bairn, and away she gaed ben to tell the mistress; and when she cam’ back she said the mistress wanted to see iz. So I gaed ben to the room, and she was lyin’ on the sofa, gey tired like; for she had been away at Edinburgh for a fortnicht, waitin’ on a sister o’ her ain that dee’d

there. She had bidden till efter the fooneal, and had come hame late the nicht afore, so she was gey dune oot like. She's a prood, stiff-kind o' bodie—Mrs Hamilton—although folks say that her and her sister were juist common playackers, or singers, or something o' the kind; but I maun say that she was unco kind that day when I telled her about the bairn, an' she gaed iz a big bundle o' claes that had been her ain laddie's when he was an infant; and she said if I needit ony ither thing I was to be shuir and speir for't. She thocht it was sae guid o' iz to keep the bairn, and she hopit that it wad be company for Eben an' mei, and a coamfort till iz in oor auld age."

So that was the history of little Gracie, as Peggy told it. Gracie was the prettiest and most piquant of little maidens—old Eben's fairy attendant, and the light of Aunt Peggy's eyes.

Across the burn from Eben Anderson's stood a thatched cottage, which was also the village shop, where tea, tobacco, meal, bread, sweeties, lucifer matches, &c., were sold by Betty Grieve, sister of Chirsty, aforementioned. Betty was a remarkably intelligent woman, and had been the village schoolmistress for many years. Latterly she had given up the day school, but still kept the Sabbath school, which most of the young people attended.

Betty Grieve's class was, however, differently conducted from the Sunday schools of the present day; and the modern Sunday scholar, with the usual short verse half-learned, would have fared badly at Betty's hands; for the old lady had no excuse for carelessness.

The children—a dozen or more—were wont to assemble in Betty's kitchen at five o'clock on Sabbath afternoons, a wooden form accommodating about half of the number, while the others sat on stools and chairs around their preceptress. A few old people were also in the habit of dropping in to hear the lessons and the sermon which was read at the close.

The first lesson in the order of the day was the half of the Shorter Catechism, Betty speirin' the questions and the children and the old folk each answering in turn, until the Fourth Commandment was reached. The other half was then left for the next Sunday's lesson.

Four verses of a psalm—or the whole of it if not very long—six verses of a chapter, and a whole chapter or psalm that had been learned before, had all to be repeated from memory. Then there was a Bible lesson, with examination thereon; and, lastly, the latest 'Spurgeon's sermon' was read for the benefit of old and young.

Betty was an excellent reader, and the deeply theological, brilliant, or pathetic utterances of that great preacher found an able if humble exponent in Betty Grieve. Over any particularly affecting passage Betty's voice would occasionally falter and stop, while a tear would steal down her furrowed cheek and fall upon the paper. But Betty was no weak emotionalist. On the contrary, she was a strong-minded, clever, capable woman, for whom the scholars entertained much respect and some awe; and it was seldom they came with lessons ill prepared, for Betty's sharp 'take tent now,' when any one blundered, was sufficient in most cases to ensure careful preparation.

The Smiddy stood near the shop, and the cheery ring of Sandy Gow's anvil was usually the accompaniment to Sandy's song or psalm; for the worthy blacksmith was the Auld Kirk precentor, and did all his practeezin', as he called it, in the Smiddy. Sandy had a good voice, and 'aye sang best at the studdie' (or anvil), according to the general verdict.

Sandy, however, was no learned musician, and occasionally he went off the tune in the kirk—a mishap which usually occurred when 'a new yin or a repeater' had to be introduced; but the canny blacksmith never came to a standstill for a

tune, and one Sabbath when he had run off the rails—that is, diverged from the original notes—Sandy finished up with an air which sounded familiar to the Drummeldale ear, though new as a psalm tune.

“Man, Sandy! whatna tuin was yon ’e gied iz the day?” inquired a neighbour on his way home from the kirk.

“Weel, ’e sei,” said Sandy, “she’s a gey kittle yin yon new tuin I was tryin’ the day; an’, man, div ’e ken, yince I gaed fairly off the stot. I couldna manage to get on tilt again, and I was like to be fair bamboozilt athegither; sae—but, mind ’e, ’e needna be tellin’ everybody—I juist gied them a kind o’ newfangilt vairsion o’ ‘The Floo’ers o’ the Forest.’ But maybe there wadna be mony excep’ yersel that wad notice’t.”

A little further up, on the opposite side of the road from the Shop and the Smiddy, stood another thatched house, which was occupied by Tam Scott, better known as ‘Tam the Dyker,’ and his wife, Eelin Beattie (the married women in Drummeldale usually went by their maiden names); Kate, their daughter, a spirited girl of eighteen; and Rob, a rollicking boy of ten.

Tam was not a particularly kind husband and father in his home circle; in fact, he was tyrannical

and ill-tempered, and a good deal more feared than loved. Eelin was a thin, delicate slip of a body, often ailing, and overburdened with work. In her husband's opinion, she was 'a yuiseless, peengin' pallywat o' a craiter, and aye yammerin' wi' her stamick.' Had Tam been anything of a gentleman, or even commonly courteous, he might have expressed himself more politely, by saying that his wife had weak health, and was not able for much work, being troubled with indigestion or dyspepsia. But Tam was not gentlemanly in any sense of the word; and, besides, indigestion or dyspepsia were unheard-of ailments in Drummel-dale; and any one who suffered from these now ordinary complaints were said to be 'unco bawther'd wi' their stamicks.'

Eelin Beattie was very unlike her husband, being a meek - spirited, gentle - mannered little woman—one who pursued her quiet, Christian way with humble sincerity, doing what she could, and often more than she should, to 'have things richt afore Tam cam' hame.' Tam's work being often at a considerable distance from Sunnyburn, he was a good deal away from home—a circumstance which his family might, and probably did, count amongst their mercies.

A little further up the road stood the ivy-

covered cottage where Wullie Stuart, Chirsty Grieve, and little Eily had their abode. Wullie might have described himself as head gardener at the Castle, but he never assumed the title, and willingly put his hand to whatever work there was to be done. He had been for the most of his life in the service of Sir Francis and his forbears, and continued in it until the end. Wullie was a tall, fine-looking old man, with a keenly intelligent face, Roman nose, and high forehead. Had he moved in a higher sphere of life, it is probable that he might have turned out a leading politician, or perhaps an eminent theologian; as it was, however, the arena of his statesmanship was chiefly the Smiddy, where he and his colleagues discussed the affairs of the State and the nations at large, and formulated wonderful schemes for the right management of affairs and the proper government of the people—bills which often gave rise to heated discussions, and never were allowed to ‘pass’ without the usual ‘Tory obstructions.’

But Wullie Stuart was a match for most of his opponents, and not only in arguments on political questions, but also in the theological debates with which the village fathers sharpened each other’s wits; and nothing pleased Wullie better than to have a tie with a worthy antagonist. Sometimes

it was the parish minister, Mr Shaw, whom he tackled on the subject of 'infant salvation,' on which point the minister 'wasna vera soond,' according to Wullie's ideas.

With the Cameronians—although his wife was one—Wullie had long and stiff arguments. 'They were soond eneuch on maist points, but unco nairaw.'

The 'New Lights' were another class of religionists at which Wullie Stuart went with sarcastic weapons. Who or what the 'New Lights' were is somewhat difficult to define, as they might belong to any denomination; but, generally speaking, it was the 'Revivalists' and their followers who came under the category of 'New Lights.' 'Salvation made easy' was the head and front of their offendings, and this 'new fangelt doctrine' was as smoke in the nostrils of the determined old Calvinist.

There was another and more pliable quality in Wullie's character. He could make himself 'graund company' at a festive gathering; and, being a good fiddler, his fiddle and he were in great request at the weddings and kirns with which Drummeldale was occasionally enlivened.

Chirsty was as remarkable as her husband, though in an entirely different way. She was a

woman of a meek and quiet spirit, full of faith and good works, and yet one who said very little about her own personal experience in religious matters. Her daily life was filled up with the most ordinary duties, but her simple consistency went with her through them all; while a natural, shrewd humoursomeness pointed her speech with incisive force, which, even when it took the form of rebuke, could hardly be resented.

Chirsty had also a good deal of medical knowledge; she was said by the neighbours to be a 'skeely body,' and she saved the regular practitioner many a long ride in dark nights and stormy days by assisting into this world the fledglings from the other; and she was no less serviceable in soothing and cheering dying spirits with bright hopes of that better land to which they were going. Whoever was sick or sorry sent for Chirsty, and the same prescription did for many and widely different cases of illness—'a calomel pooder at nicht, and a guid dose o' castor oil in the mornin'.' From an ordinary headache to the most complicated of disorders, Chirsty's remedy was applied, and in truth it often succeeded in effecting a cure when all other medicines had failed. Her old friend, Dr Henry (whose forbears had been doctors in Drummeldale for several

generations back), would often make a pretence of remonstrating with the old lady for dozing everybody with calomel, by telling her that 'the folk nowadays were too weak of constitution to stand mercury.' But Chirsty took her own way, assuring him that 'a calomel powder kills naebody and cuirs the maist o' folk,' adding, with a humorous twinkle in her eyes, 'and that's *mair* than 'e can say for the feck o' your drogs, doctor.'

Chirsty's family were all grown up and away, but the ties of family affection were strong in the Stuarts, and the old folks at home were not forgotten, as is too often the case. Many comforts and advantages unusual to the ordinary cottage were to be found under that thatched roof; while nearly every post brought letters and the daily papers to the old people. Every week, too, a 'Spurgeon's sermon' came, which Chirsty read with deepest interest, and then handed round for the benefit of her neighbours; afterwards the copy was carefully 'laid by,' until a sufficient number was collected for a volume, when they were sent with Sandy the post to Southerhill to be bound, in which new form they were read and re-read by Chirsty and her friends. The Bible, Boston's, Guthrie's, and Spurgeon's sermons constituted the bulk of Chirsty's library; and the last named, in

four volumes, were apportioned as legacies to her four sons, by whom, or their descendants, they are still carefully preserved.

OOR AIN LAND.

O THERE'S nae land like oor ain land,
 Though the lift ow'r-heid be grey :
 Though the norland winds blaw cauld and keen,
 When the wintry cluds lie laigh.
 Oor ain land, ay, oor ain land,
 Ow'r a' ither lands is best ;
 And its skies are blue when the cluds gae by,
 And the storms are hushed to rest.

O there's nae folk like oor ain folk,
 The folk made o' Scottish clay ;
 They are kind and leal, and their hearts are warm,
 Though they ha'e na a phrasin' way.
 Ay, there's nae folk like oor ain folk,
 Oor ain Scottish kith and kin ;
 For their ain dear land they wad gi'e their bluid,
 Or a weel-foucht victory win.

O there's nae words like oor ain words,
 As they drap thrae a Scottish tongue ;
 And the auld Scots sangs to a Scottish ear,
 Are the sweetest e'er were sung.
 Oh' to be hame to my ain land,
 That dear land ow'r the sea ;
 To hear the soond o' the auld Scots tongue,
 And amang my ain folk dee!

A CAMERONIAN PREACHIN'.

“**Y**E'LL likely be takin' the cairt to Scotscleuch the morn?”

“O-wye, Ise warran' wull oo; Adam's no juist sae guid at the gaun now, sin' he's been bawther'd wi' the pains; an', as I tell him, there's nae uise hainin' the horse and hurtin' his sel'.”

“A' weel, I'm thinkin' o' gaun ow'r the Shank-end masel'; but Eily, here, had better wait for the cairt. She's raither little yet to gang ow'r the hill.”

“Ay, but I'm gaun ow'r the hill an' a', Grannie; I can easy gang, it's nae farther away than the kirk, and 'e ken I aye walk there and back wi' Gran'father.”

“Eh but, hinnie! Scotscleugh's a guid bit fether than the kirk, and I think ye had better wait for the cairt. As Grannie says, ye wad be sleepin' a' the time o' the preachin', ye ken, if ye gaed a' that lang road on yer ain feet.”

“Nae fears, Aunt Jenny, I'll no' sleep, and I want to gang ow'r the hill wi' Grannie and the rest o' them.”

“Weel, weel, then; oo’ll wait and sei what kind o’ day it’s; an’ if it’s dry, ye can try yersel’ at the hill; but Ise warran’ ye’ll suin be wushin’ that ye had waited for Aunt Jenny and the cairt.”

It was a Saturday in the beginning of June, and next day being the tri-weekly Cameronian preachin’ at Scotscleugh—a farm four good miles distant from Sunnyburn—Christy Grieve, Betty, and others had arranged to go over the spur of Whitehouse hill, a near cut locally known as the Shank-end.

Jenny Grieve—another sister of Christy’s—and her husband, Adam Symington, usually took the cart with as many of the oldest and youngest members of the flock as could conveniently be packed into the straw-lined vehicle.

The Symingtons of Drummelside, a small farm on the opposite side of the water from Sunnyburn, were staunch Cameronians, and, like most of that sect, held strictly to their own place of worship. To have entered the door of the Auld Kirk, would have seemed like bowing down in the house of Rimmon; and to have joined in singing the man-made hymns, accompanied by ‘the rummelin’ soond o’ a kist o’ whistles,’ would have been to them a sinful conforming to the whigmaleeries of papistry.

Adam was a short, stoutly-built old man, with a kindly rugged face, and a fine massive head, entirely bald save for a fringe of silvery hair around its base. There was a great deal in the character and daily life of this venerable Cameronian elder, which made one think of the grand Old Testament saints, an unostentatious walking with God in the common round of everyday duties, which, combined with his simple faith in and devout worship of the risen Christ, made him a worthy type of the God-fearing patriarch of the Old Testament, and of the loving disciple of the New.

Jenny, his wife, was a thin, vivacious little woman, active and light of foot as a bird on the wing, and constantly occupied with the multifarious duties pertaining to the house and the little farm. Like all the rest of the Grieves, her mind was a perfect storehouse of knowledge, chiefly Scriptural, and having a remarkable memory Jenny could repeat the whole of the metrical Psalms, a great part of the Bible, and the most of Ralph Erskine's quaintly beautiful 'Gospel Sonnets.' No one could ever feel dull in Jenny Grieve's company, for things new and old came trippingly from her tongue, while her brisk, energetic movements provoked the most indolent to emulation.

The old couple had no family of their own, but a young woman named Jessie Jamieson, who had served with them from her girlhood, was more of a daughter than a servant in the house; and to their numerous nieces and nephews Drummelside was a most attractive spot, the dear old house seldom lacking a bevy of youthful visitors. One apartment, however, was specially reserved for Mr Cargill, the Cameronian minister, who stayed at Drummelside when he came to officiate at Scotscleugh.

The Cameronians of Drummeldale not being numerous enough to warrant them having a preacher entirely for themselves, they had to be contented with a service once in the three weeks—Scotscleugh being only a branch from the parent church at Longmuir, a parish in the neighbouring county, where Mr Cargill resided, and preached two Sabbaths in succession; the third being left to the management of the elders, while the minister was absent tending his lesser flock at Drummeldale.

That Sabbath morning in June, already referred to, dawned bright and cloudless. So over the hill went Grannie and Eily, each with her Bible wrapped in a clean pocket handkerchief, which also enclosed a small posy of white Scotch roses

and a sprig of peppermint or southernwood freshly gathered from Grannie's garden. Accompanying them went Aunt Betty, Eelin Beattie, Kate and Rob Scott, also Peggy Anderson, and little Gracie. After crossing the Drummel on a narrow plank bridge and getting on to the hill, shoes and stockings were taken off, and tied up in coloured napkins; and then over the benty knowes, and through the soft green hollows, they pursued their way, the youngsters in a perfect ecstasy of delight with what to them was a sort of Sunday picnic. Their exuberant spirits were, however, well kept in check by Betty Grieve, whose Sabbath-school authority was not to be disputed, and whose sharp glance or brief word of rebuke would instantly tone down the wild skip into a sedate walk, or the half-uttered 'hurrah' into a demure 'Oh, dear!'

But notwithstanding these restraints, the young folk's enjoyment was unbounded; and when the hill was crossed and a small stream had to be waded, the day's outing had reached its crowning point. Little Eily would fain have waded the water on her own feet, but Grannie forbade, and Aunt Betty said that 'bairns maun aye dae as they're budden.' So Eily was hoisted on to Grannie's back, and—ignominiously in her own

opinion—carried across the stream to the side of the public road, where the little company of pilgrims sat down upon the grass to put on their shoes and stockings and eat their ‘pieces’ (sousy whangs of bread and cheese), a goodly supply of which was a necessity for the journey and the long day.

The road, hard and dusty, proved less pleasant to the travellers than the hill path had been, and soon the youngest of the wayfarers began to show signs of fatigue; but as luck would have it, Mr Cargill, on his brown pony Bess, speedily overtook them, and Eily was lifted up in front of him on the pony’s back, a proceeding to which Eily and Bess were quite accustomed, as the minister made a special pet of his small parishioner; and as they jogged along towards Scotscleugh, the child, relieved from the fatigue of walking, chattered away to her kind friend, for whom she entertained an affectionate respect.

Mr Cargill, being a bachelor with no home ties, was very fond of ‘The little Cameronian,’ as her grandfather called her, and liked listening to her quaint observations on things in general. Eily had little of the awkward shyness common to country children, and from being almost constantly in the society of old people who were in the habit of

talking to her as if she were as old as themselves, the child had acquired a sort of old-fashioned wisdom, not quite in keeping with her tender years; but, nevertheless, the heart of the solitary and somewhat reserved elderly minister warmed to the winsomeness of the little maid who chattered to him so freely.

Arriving at Scotscleugh, they were greeted with a perfect volley of welcomes from a dozen or so of colliers that had accompanied their masters to the preachin'. The dogs, evidently considering it their official duty to notify the gathering of the congregation, gave forth a vociferous intimation of every fresh arrival. At the door of the meeting-house stood a small barrel, on which was placed a common soup plate of the blue willow pattern; this was the 'collection box,' into which the people cast their offerings as they entered.

The meeting-house itself was neither a grand nor a costly building, being simply a barn with causewayed floor under foot and dusty rafters (on which lay a variety of farm implements) over the heads of the worshippers. A wide fireplace, in which a huge peat fire burned if the day was cold; a score or so of rough wooden forms for the seating of the congregation; an arm-chair for the precentor; and for the preacher, the threshing-

floor—a strong wooden platform about twelve feet long by six wide, and raised a few inches from the ground. Over this was spread a crimson carpet, on which stood a round table for the Bible and a leather-covered chair for the minister. These were the prominent features of the humble place of worship, but at the further end of the barn was piled up a miscellaneous assortment of implements pertaining to farm work—smearing stools, wheelbarrows, a large pair of fanners, turnip machines, harrows, scythes, rakes, forks, spades, &c.; also great bales of wool, or sheaves of yellow corn, according to the season of the year. But, rude and comfortless as this temple among the hills might appear to a stranger, to the Cameronians gathered there it was indeed the house of God, sanctified by the divine presence in their midst.

Earnest, godly men and women—many of them the lineal descendants of the Covenanters, who gave their lives for their faith—gathered together at Scotscleugh, as their forefathers gathered to the old time conventicles on the moorlands, to worship the Most High in their own simple way. Narrow in some things they probably were, but grander types of God-fearing and God-serving Christians could nowhere be found.

The ease-loving loungers in our modern churches strain their politeness and stifle their yawns, which would betoken their weariness of the half-hour's sermon; but these truth-seeking, earnest-minded Cameronians, on their backless benches, sat unweariedly through a four hours' service, thinking much of the privileges which they enjoyed; and if any of the little ones, like Eily, or even older folk who had come a long distance, happened to drop into a doze, and be caught nodding, the friendly dunch from their next neighbour and the offered 'peppermint drap' was, reproof sufficient to keep them from repeating the offence.

The opening services were always commenced with the giving out and reading of a metre psalm, which, before being sung, was prefaced with a lengthy exposition on every verse. The psalm, or part of it, was afterwards sung to the tune of 'Kilmarnock,' 'St Paul's,' 'Martyrs,' or other time-honoured melody; the precentor usually being John Burnet, the tailor. As has been already said, John was very deaf, which was perhaps no great disadvantage to him on these occasions, considering the different and indifferent notes which surged around him—one stentorian male voice always lagging a good way behind,

while a shrill, 'timmer-tuined' old woman persisted in leading off a note or two in front; but such things did not disconcert John, who sailed along in his own leisurely way, loyally followed by the general body of the worshippers. A prayer followed the psalm-singing—a prayer which essayed to take the whole earth and its inhabitants into a fraternal embrace, and present them to the loving-kindness and tender mercy of the Great Father of all.

After these preliminary services, the minister and his hearers settled down to what might be called the business of the day, namely, the sermon. A chapter was read, from which a verse or two was selected as a text; but the entire chapter, with more or less of the preceding and succeeding chapters, would be the subjects of commentation. Mr Cargill was a quiet, unassuming, meditative sort of man, and his sermons were like himself. There was nothing brilliant about them, no declamatory denunciation, no dropping into pathos or poetry; only a steady, plodding exposition of the theology of his subject, or a minute dissection of the characters and events of sacred history, which nowadays would be considered uninteresting and monotonous, but which was listened to with the utmost reverence and attention in the old barn at Scotscleuch.

Of course, no paper, not even notes, were considered needful for a Cameronian preacher, and no preacher worth the name would ever have thought of using any such degenerate inventions; for had any one of them been so far left to himself as to insult a Cameronian congregation with a paper sermon, it is more than likely that some 'Jenny Geddes' amongst his hearers would have hurled her stool at his head, as a protest against such scandalous innovation.

The long sermon ended, and followed by another psalm, prayer, and benediction, the people passed out into the open air, where the collies, glad no doubt that the services were at last over, frisked and barked in all the joyousness of doggish delight. Many friendly greetings and a kindly handshake from the minister concluded the day's proceedings, unless for those who accepted the warmly pressed hospitalities of Scotscleuch, where the Grieves—cousins of Chirsty's—had always a good cup of tea, 'and plenty till't,' ready for any number of guests.

But, when the hill-folk came out from the feast of heavenly things spread for their hungry souls in the old barn, they began to remember the wants of the animals dependent upon their care in the far-off homes, and after a brief word with their

minister and fellow-worshippers, they were eager to set out on the homeward journey; many of them having eight or ten miles to go.

Occasionally, Chirsty Grieve and her sisters would go into the farm-house and enjoy the cheering cup, the delicious scones and butter, together with the cheerful conversation, making a pleasant sequel to the long spell of quietude in the meeting-house. But Adam Symington was usually in a hurry to 'wun hame,' and soon had Charlie yoked, after which the sisters got seated in the straw-lined cart; and soon all was ready for the road. But, first, a hill stream had to be crossed, where big stones made the ford a trying one, and Eily was fain to cling to her grannie, thinking 'the cairt wad coup,' as one wheel would be atop of a boulder, and the other down in a hole. Once on the road, however, the cart went merrily along, and Eily would be called upon to repeat the text, and as much of the sermon as she remembered; no worldly conversation was allowable on the way home from 'the preachin',' but each one recalled passages in the sermon which had most impressed their minds, or proved to them a word in season; the repetition of which and the comments thereon revived the interest, and stamped the truth they had heard upon the memories of speakers and listeners.

But all things come to an end, even a Cameronian preachin'; and, no doubt, Grannie, Eily, and the others were glad to be home again, after their long day; though they would just be as eager next time to 'take ow'r the hill,' that they might share again in 'the feast of fat things' within the homely sanctuary of happy memory at Scotscleugh.

DRUMMEDALE.

Oh to be in Drummeldale when Wardlaw hill is green,
When the blue-bell and the gowan on its bonnie braes are
seen,
When the tasselled broom is bending 'neath its wealth of
yellow flowers,
And the hawthorn's fragrant blossom comes down in snowy
showers;
When the meadow lands are gleaming with buttercups of
gold,
And humble bees are feasting in the clover's honeyed hold;
When every cottage garden has its lilac tree in bloom,
With southernwood and roses intermingling sweet perfume.

Oh to be in Drummeldale when the summer days are long,
To hear the muirland peewit, or the blackbird's mellow song,
To listen to the laverock as on quivering wing he soars
To seek new inspiration at heaven's half-open doors :
Maybe he bears petitions from some feathered friend in woe,
Or hymns thanksgiving from the heart of voiceless life below ;
And sweetest aye o'er Drummeldale the laverock trills his lay,
When from his dewy couch he springs to greet the dawning
day.

Oh to be in Drummeldale when summer skies are bright,
To see the Drummel river like a silver streak of light,
As it glints in sunny ripples, coquetting with the breeze,
Or dallies 'neath the shadows of the dark o'erhanging trees ;

As it hurries through the narrows, or—placid, slow, and deep—
Flows on by moonlit meadows, where the flowerets nod asleep.
There's no lullaby like nature's, no music like the stream's,
And the sound of Drummel water comes back to us in dreams.

Oh to be in Drummeldale when, 'life's fitful fever o'er,'
We rest from all our labours on the Jordan's further shore,
When all the toil and turmoil of the working day is done,
And the wearied soul speeds homeward at setting of the sun;
Then to sleep in Drummeldale 'mid the quiet of the hills,
Where the softly-sighing breezes or the murmur of the rills,
The singing of the laverock or the wild birds in the glade,
Alone may break the silence where the dreamless dead are laid.

PLAYMATES.

“**W**HERE ye gaun, Rob?”

“Doon the waiter side to herd the cow; come on away doon wi’ s, Eily.

“Tuts, I’ m no comin’.”

“I’ ll gie ye a shoogie on a graund brainch I ken o’ if ye’ ll come.”

“I dinna want yer shoogies; ye let me fa’ last time, and my airm was black and blue for a week efter.”

“Oh, but that brainch was rotten; this is a fine strong yin; it’ ll no brik wi’ ye.”

“Weel, I’ m no carin’; I’ m no comin’,” said Eily; “Grannie’s no in, and she said I was to bide about the doors for fear ony tinklers wad come by.”

“There’ ll be nae tinklers the day; they’ ll be a’ away to Teerielinn Fair, and at ony rate ye needna bide lang; juist come doon a wee bit.”

“I’ m no comin’.”

“I’ ll lairn ’e a new sweer if ’e come, Eily.”

“I dinna want to lairn ony sweers. Grannie

says it's verra wrang o' folk to sweer, and yer inoother said she wad gi'e 'e an awfu' lickin' if 'e sweered again."

"Oh, but thir's only wee sweers, Eily; there's nae ill in them.

"What ir they, Rob?"

"Come on doon the waiter side wi's, and I'll tell 'e."

"I'm no gaun; Grannie said I wasna to gang away."

"Weel, 'e can bide then! but I ken o' anither blackie's nest, and I'll no tell 'e o'd."

"Where is't, Rob? 'e nicht tell iz, mun."

"I'll tell 'e if 'e come doon the waiter side wi's."

Eily hesitated—and was lost. The blackie's nest proved a temptation too strong to be resisted.

"Will 'e rin a' the road if I come?"

"O-wye, it'll no take 'e a meenit; come on."

With a glance first up and down the road for possible tinklers, the two youngsters set off at a sharp run towards the wooded strip of land where Tam Scott's cow was pastured. 'Shusie' was usually tethered to a tree during the day, but when Rob got home from school it was his special duty to set the cow free from her bonds, and afterwards to keep a watchful eye upon her

movements, in case she should take a fancy to taste the luxuriant clover which grew on the other side of the tottering fence.

Rob had no particular objection to the task imposed upon him, providing he had company, but solitude had no charms whatever for Rob Scott; hence his persistent appeals to Eily for her companionship.

On reaching the spot where the cow was tethered, they found that the unlucky animal had got the rope wound first round one tree and then another, until she stood with her head close to the trunk of an elm, from which she could not budge an inch. After a considerable time spent in getting 'Shushie' untwisted, Eily called upon Rob to fulfil his promise of showing her the nest he knew of; but sly Rob, having offered the only bribe likely to tempt his playmate from her post of duty, was not in a hurry to fulfil his promise—if indeed he was able to do so, which seemed doubtful, judging from the diplomatic evasiveness of his answer.

"A' richt, Eily; but wait till I tell 'e the sweers."

"Be quick then, for I havena time to wait."

"Weel," said Rob oracularly, "when ye're awfu' mad about onything, and want to sweer at

it, juist bang oot 'Damascus,' and that'll no be ony ill."

"But what guid will it dae?" queried practical Eily.

"O, weel, weel, I dinna ken," slowly answered Rob, who had not studied that side of the subject.

"And it wadna be richt ony way, for Damascus is a Bible word, and Grannie says we shouldna use Bible words in fun."

"O, but ye dinna say sweers in fun; ye juist keep them to say when ye're awfu' angert aboot something; and it's no the Bible yin at ony rate, it's the place where the curtains come thrae, graund reid yins. I saw them when I was up at the Castle wi' the joiner. He was hinging them at the wundahs, and they ca'd them damasks. I speired at the joiner if they cam thrae Damascus; and he said, 'Ay, Ise warrant ye they dae;' and I askit him if the Jews wad make them, and he said, 'Ay, Aiberdeen Jews, maybe;' so ye sei, Eily, it canna hev onything adae wi' the Bible if it's a place aboot Aiberdeen; an' ye ken Jock the delver, that dis the gairdens i' the spring? Weel, when he gets a gliff wi' onything, he sets up his een and says 'Jewrewsalem?' and he disna mean the Bible yin aither, but that yin where the grey pownies come thrae, for I askit him yince; maybe

hit's about Aiberdeen tae; but here's a fine yin for 'e, Eily, and 'e canna say this is oot o' the Bible——"

"I dinna want to hear ony mair o' yer s'weers; I want to see the bird's nest 'e said 'e ken'd o'," interrupted Eily, sharply.

Much to his mother's annoyance and vexation, Rob had picked up a number of objectionable words and phrases from the dykers who worked with his father, the men finding considerable amusement in teaching the boy to repeat their rough lingo. Once in his mother's hearing Rob had ventured to air his latest acquisition, but that once was sufficient. It happened at a time when old Rob Scott, the grandfather (a particularly cantankerous old gentleman), was an inmate of their cottage. 'Gran'faither' was much given to grumbling, and sorely taxed the patience of his kindly daughter-in-law. One day, while Eelin was attending to his wants, and he retailing his grievances as usual, young Rob, who was busy supping his porridge, suddenly hurled his spoon at the old man's head, with the uncanonical exclamation—"Haud yer blastit tongue, ye girnin' auld deevil;" and was out at the door like a shot.

"Eh, whow!" said Eelin Beattie, holding up her hands in horror, 'heard onybody ever the like o'

that? Sirse mei! to think that a laddie o' mine wad say sic words."

"Ay, ay! that's yer fine Cameronian upbringing'," sneered the grandfather, with a malicious pleasure in having at last found something to taunt her with. "Sirse! sic a like thing—an auld man like mei to be sworn at b' a callant o' twal year auld; it's peetifu'; it's fair terrible; but, wait till Tam comes yhim, I'll let him ken what his puir auld faither has t' pit up wi' when he's oot o' the hoose."

Rob meanwhile had betaken himself to the waterside, where he remained till after nightfall, when his mother came in search of him, and found the culprit keeping company with the owls amongst the topmost branches of a Scots fir.

After extracting a promise that the maternal rod would be spared, Rob ventured to descend from his perch; but the severe reproofs, and the evidence of his mother's sorrow, for what she considered a heinous sin in her boy, was not without their effects on the lad; and he took care that his mother should never be vexed in that way again. Moreover, after that, when Rob felt compelled to use 'a sweer,' it was modified to 'a lang-nebbit word wi' nae ill in't.'

Finding that Eily was not to be diverted from

the subject he was trying to avoid, Rob went off up the nearest tree on the pretext of looking for a nest, but in reality to get out of his companion's way before she would fully discover the deception that had been practised upon her credulity.

But Eily had her own suspicions, and when Rob's head appeared above the highest branches, she called out in a tone 'sarcastic'—"Is't a craw's nest ye ken o', Rob? when ye have to clim' sae ferr tae look for't."

"Na," replied Rob, in the same tone of voicé, "it's no a craw's, but a mear's nest wi' three fiddlers in't that I'm lookin' for; thae kind o' birds aye build high up, 'e ken?"

"O-wye; weel, juist clim' a wee bit higher, like a man, and ye'll maybe find a cuddie's nest wi' Rob Scott in't." And with this parting shot Eily turned to go.

"Send Gracie Anderson doon to bide wi' us a while," cried unabashed Rob from the tree-top.

"Gracie Anderson's up at Braeheid playing shuttlecock wi' Arthur Hamilton," replied Eily, glad of the opportunity to speed an arrow at her enemy.

"Gang up this meenit, and tell her I want her," shouted Rob angrily, as he quickly descended from his leafy retreat.

“ I ’ll dae naething o’ the kind ; ye ’ve nae business where Gracie gangs.”

“ Have I no ? but she kens better ; oo’re gaun to be mairrit as sune as I’m echteen, and she promised no to gang up to Braeheid again,” cried Rob excitedly, as he dropped to the ground.

“ But ye’re no thirteen yet, and she wadna have ye ony way. She says ye’re juist a muckle reidheidit yilliphant, beside Arthur Hamilton ; so if she mairries ony o’ ’e, it’ll be him,” pursued Eily relentlessly.

“ Airthur Hamilton’s an impident, upsettin’ taid ; aw’ll claw the een oot o’ his heid yet,” yelled Rob in a fury ; but just at that moment a shrill female voice with a note of impatience in it awakened the echoes, and recalled the youngsters to a sense of their neglected duties.

“ Eee-ly.”

“ Comin’,” shouted Eily, as she ran homewards, thoughts of a tinkler invasion, and Grannie’s displeasure, filling her mind with dread ; while Rob, lifting up his eyes with a sudden remembrance of his charge, beheld ‘ Shusie ’ up to her knees in the clover field, where she had already eaten her fill, to which fact her greatly distended sides bore evident testimony.

Disagreeable results usually follow in the wake

of youthful disobedience, as these two delinquents soon discovered to their cost; for not only had Tam the dyker's cow broken down the fence, and eaten or trampled nearly a cartful of clover—for which offence the farmer, happening to come along in the nick of time, had caught Rob, and given him a lounding with his stick, a punishment which the culprit's mother supplemented with a sound cuffing; but Chirsty Grieve, also, on returning to the house which she had left Eily to guard, found two stalwart and ill-looking tramps in possession, and making themselves quite at home; and while the one had been getting the kettle to boil and was infusing a pot of good tea, the other had been busy setting out the table, with dishes and provender from Chirsty's cupboard.

Chirsty was a remarkably even-tempered woman, but her equanimity was fairly upset that afternoon by the cool self-help of her uninvited guests.

“Ye impident scoondrils, how daur ye take sic liberties in onybody's hoose, an' withoot as muckle as askin' if ye micht come in.”

“Sure thin, mistress, its mesilf would ha' axed yez roight enough an yez had been here to ax,” explained the rough-looking Irishman who was making the tea. “But faix, mum, whin a man's

been travellin' all day wi' niver the bite nor sup, there's a hunger grip inside o' him that maiks an invitation to tay a naidcessity, whether the mistress is after axing him or no."

The other man never spoke, but calmly proceeded to pour out the tea; and although Chirsty 'flate' all the time—for she was really angry—it was somewhat to the credit of the tramps that they showed no resentment either by words or looks; and as Chirsty was in the habit of 'boiling the kettle for gaun folk' to make their tea with, it was probable enough that one or both of the invaders had proved her kindness on some former occasion, and with a knowledge of her mild disposition had made themselves welcome in her absence.

On Eily making her appearance, she received what she seldom got from her grannie, 'a good ragin',' and that to Eily's sensitive feelings was more painful than was the farmer's stick to Rob Scott's back.

Hearing Chirsty's repeated calls for Eily, and, having seen the two youngsters run off together, Kate Scott came along to give information of their whereabouts. Accompanying her, came Walter Anderson, a young student and orphaned nephew of Eben's. Wattie, when staying at his

uncle's, was known as 'Kate's shadow,' for wherever the lively dark-haired girl appeared it might with certainty be affirmed that Wattie would not be far away; and yet a more dissimilar couple never drew together than these two. If matrimony was to be the goal of their friendliness, the grey mare would undoubtedly prove the better horse, for Kate was a quick-witted, clever-handed, through-going lassie; while Walter Anderson was exactly her opposite in every respect—a tall, pale-faced youth of nineteen, never very robust in health, quiet, diffident, sensitive, and shrinking from all kind of publicity with a nervous dread which threatened to entirely spoil his chances of ever 'wagging his pow in a poopit.'

"The callant's a guid callant, but as nervish as an auld wife," was his uncle's commentary on Walter's character; and, in point of fact, 'the callant was a guid callant,' but more troubled with nervousness than most old wives.

Another, though smaller, couple had also been attracted to the scene, namely, Gracie Anderson and Arthur Hamilton. Arthur was a handsome boy of fifteen, who usually spent the summer months with his mother at Braeheid, a tumble-down sort of place—half farm, half mansion-house—which stood on the hill above Chirsty Grieve's cottage.

The Hamiltons of that ilk were not Drummeldale folk, although they had been tenants at Braeheid for a quarter of a century; but, as none of them ever made Braeheid a permanent home, they were comparative strangers in the district. Moreover, the Hamiltons had the reputation of 'going the pace' in a manner which made their absence preferable to their company by the more sober-minded Drummeldalers. But, as Arthur was the last of his race, and the old house gradually crumbling to decay, it was unlikely that the quiet parish would be much longer troubled with them.

Mrs Hamilton, an Italian by birth, was a somewhat haughty-looking dame, whose cold reserve kept every one at arm's length, with the exception of her son, upon whom she lavished every indulgence; and, the village boys being considered too rough for the society of her darling, Eily and Gracie were often sent for to amuse the spoilt boy, whose every whim and caprice had to be gratified. Eily, however, having a will of her own as well as the heir of the Hamiltons, the two juveniles invariably fell out; and it was therefore the more pliable Gracie who was the favourite playmate. Between Rob Scott and Arthur Hamilton there had always existed a sort of family feud. Some former Hamilton had wronged a dead and

gone Scott, and the old grievance served as a handle for newer offences, which were continually cropping up; and the two boys seldom met without a fight taking place—the representative of the Scotts usually coming off victor, while the defeated descendant of the Hamiltons went home to his horrified mother with a black eye or a bleeding nose.

But the bitterest feelings that had ever been evoked by Arthur's supercilious airs of superiority were as nought compared with the fury that filled Rob's breast when he discovered the fact that his hated rival was winning the admiration and interest of Gracie Anderson—a graceful brunette of twelve, and the object of a passionate boyish love in Rob's wayward but warm heart. True, they were only children, who might be expected to outgrow all those feelings and fancies, but such is not always the case, and their subsequent histories proved amongst the exceptional cases.

Probably, Gracie was a bit of a flirt even in those early days, for she managed to keep both of her admirers well in hand, although she could not always prevent them from fighting when they met. But it was with joy unconcealed, that Rob looked forward to the departure of the Hamiltons for the Continent, as, according to his calculations and in-

tentions, "Gracie and him would be mairrit afore that taid Airthur came back."

The mature age of eighteen having already been fixed upon by the prospective bridegroom as the proper time to mate, and the maiden of his choice having been duly admonished to 'have her providin' ready afore then,' Rob's mind was entirely at ease, and no fears of change or unforeseen hindrances disturbed his peace; for the happy-hearted carelessness of twelve takes no account of the increasing burdens and difficulties that weight the wings of the advancing years; nor have the ideas of courtship and marriage yet assumed those rosy tints which lend to youthful love a romantic ideality, peculiarly its own.

SCOTLAND'S HILLS O' PURPLE HEATHER.

Let England boast her fertile plains,
Her rosy bowers and sparkling fountains;
Gi'e me a hame where freedom reigns,
Amang oor ain auld Scottish mountains.
Though southern lands have sunnier skies,
Though Scotia boasts not cloudless weather,
On sunnier shores the exile sighs
For Scotland's hills o' purple heather.

Our bluebell'd braes, our snow-capped bens,
Each silvery lake and winding river,
Our Lowland vales and Highland glens
Are dear to Scottish hearts for ever.
In foreign lands, or distant isles,
Wherever loyal lads forgather,
Their boast and toast, 'mid tears and smiles,
Is 'Scotland's hills o' purple heather.'

Fair Caledonia, freedom's home,
Thy glorious grandeur nought surpasses;
To thee returns, where'er they roam,
Thy buirdly sons and bonnie lasses.
Of azure skies Italians dream,
While France extols her brilliant weather;
'The land o' mist' shall be my theme,
And Scotland's hills o' purple heather.

A KIRN, A WEDDING, AND A FAIR.



OCTOBER, with its evening mists and morning frosts, gave hints of approaching winter. The Drummeldale folk were busy getting up the last of their potatoes, and having everything put under cover, before

“December’s cold and surly blasts
Made fields and forests bare.”

At the farm of Whitehouse everything in the stackyard was safely under ‘thack and raip;’ the tatties were a’ up, and the next big job was ‘the poorin’.

‘To gi’e Whitehoose a haund wi’ their poorin’,’ neighbouring farmers would send their shepherds, receiving assistance of like kind in return. On smearing stools, ranged round the inside of the big barn, sat about a score of men, each with a sheep laid on the stool in front of him. Along the body of the patient animal the wool was swiftly and deftly divided, and into this ‘shed’ ‘the poorer’—a boy or girl armed with a poorie-

pot containing a villainous mixture of soft soap, oil, and some kind of insecticide—quickly poured a streak of the evil-smelling compound, this process being repeated until every part of the fleece had received attention. Then the frightened creature, with its insect and waterproof coat, was set at liberty, and another caught to take its place, until the numerous flock had all been gone over—a job which took three or four days to accomplish.

Very cheery and good-humoured were all such gatherings, while merry evenings usually followed the labours of the day; many of the helpers being too far from their homes to go back and forward, the company in the kitchen was often a large one. On these occasions all the big boys and girls of the neighbourhood were pressed into the service as 'poorers,' and rather a fatiguing occupation it was, as they had to be on their feet all day; and when a refractory sheep happened to give an unexpected kick, splash! would go the unsavoury contents of the pot over the 'poorer's' head and face; and lucky might he or she consider themselves if they missed getting a mouthful of it as well.

But the fun and good fellowship that abounded in the barn made up for all such mishaps;

besides, there was the 'kirn' to look forward to. This was the harvest-home, which at Whitehouse was always celebrated at Hallowe'en, and to which all who had been assisting at the 'poorin' were invited.

The kirn commenced with a sumptuous supper, served on two long tables in the dining-room. Around those hospitable boards, which literally groaned beneath their weight of good things, would be gathered some forty guests, presided over by the genial farmer and his kindly wife. A luscious haggis was invariably one of the features of this feast, but the provision of roast beef, pies, and other substantial fare was abundant; and everybody was pressed to eat, until many had to confess that 'they were as fu' as they could haud.'

When this happy state of matters had been reached, an adjournment was made to the kitchen, where Pate M'Leish, an itinerant fiddler, was waiting to put mettle into the heads and heels of the bashful swains and buxom lasses, who were looking forward to 'a grand nicht's dancin'.' After a while, when the awkwardness of wearing unaccustomed finery, and the restraint consequent upon the presence of 'the ben-a-loose folk,' had worn off, the mystic observances of Hallowe'en were duly entered upon.

To begin with, the men-folk betook themselves to the stables for a smoke, while the lasses trooped out to the garden, where, in the darkness, each chose for herself a cabbage stock, with which she speedily returned to the kitchen, amid the jokes and laughter of the matrons there assembled; for according to the shape and size of the kail-runt would be the appearance of the 'coming man' who should wed its owner; and as some were gnarled and crooked, while others were short or lanky, their unlucky possessors had each to bear a considerable amount of chaff, over her ill-shaped runt. After being duly marked, those rugged foretellers of destiny were laid in a row on the table; then at a given signal, the young men came in one by one, until ilka lass had claimed the lad whose entrance accorded with the number on her kail-stock.

After the fateful ceremony of Hallowe'en partnerships had been gone through with, the succeeding hilarities of 'nit burnin', aipple dookin', and dancin'' went on merrily, until the approach of morning sent the company to their beds, for an hour's rest before the duties of the day demanded their sleepy attentions.

But the kirn was often far-reaching in its consequences, and more than one couple who had

settled down together in the nit burnin' at Whitehouse confirmed the old superstitions by settling down in 'a canty bit hoose o' their ain' before another Hallowe'en came round.

* * * * *

A wedding in Drummeldale is, as a rule, an occasion of much merriment, with fiddling and dancing galore; but when Jessie Jamieson—who had come to Drummeldale a lassie of twelve, and remained until she was twenty-five—was married to John Lawson, a young but very worthy elder of the Cameronian kirk, it was not in the least likely that anything in the way of frivolity, far less dancing, would be allowable at the Drummel-side wedding.

A goodly number of friends had, however, been invited to the marriage feast, for which the best of everything had been provided. But 'there's mony a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip'—a proverb which most of the bidden guests had an opportunity of proving for themselves; for the rain clouds descending that day upon the green hills brought the Drummel down in full flood, and there was only time to get a few near neighbours across the river before it became impassable; and very soon the farm-house stood isolated on the acre or two of higher ground which afforded safety for the dwellings, steading, and gardens.

It was a common occurrence for Drummelside to be surrounded by water in this fashion; and usually the islanded inmates did not concern themselves about it; but on a wedding day it was decidedly inconvenient. Moreover, neither the minister nor the bridegroom had arrived before the flood, and the possibility of their arriving at all was very doubtful. Poor Jessie was disconsolate, and anxiously surveyed the intervening waste of waters which had so unexpectedly come between her and happiness, and beyond which the bridegroom and his friends stood waiting and wondering how they were to get across the submerged meadows.

Presently a cry arose that the minister was coming; and, sure enough, there was Brown Bess, with Mr Cargill on her back, half wading, half swimming down the wide field which lay between the farm and the hill road. The excited watchers were in a state of great anxiety lest the beast wad 'miss its fit, or step into a ditch, and baith the minister and it be drooned.' But Bess knew her ground, and the minister was not to be daunted by 'a drap waiter.' So the two arrived safely, though very wet.

Meanwhile, Adam Symington had bridled Big Chairlie, and set forth to fetch over the wedding

party one by one on the horse's back ; but as the watery journey was both difficult and hazardous, only the bridegroom and the best man cared to risk it; the others going on to Whitehouse, where a merrymaking in honour of the wedding was in progress, and where dancing was the order of the day, or rather of the night, for—

“ The time flew by wi' tentless heed,
Till 'tween the late and early.”

After the newcomers at Drummelside had been relieved of their wettest garments, and each supplied with dry stockings and shoes, the bridegroom having to select a pair of clogs as the only foot-gear that would fit him, the ceremony commenced. It was a somewhat lengthy service, as the exhortations which preceded and the long prayer which followed the joining of hands were of more than an hour's duration. However, 'all's well that ends well,' and after so much anxiety and uncertainty, the accomplished union was a matter of great satisfaction and many congratulations.

The fatted calf had been killed in prospect of 'Jessie's waddin', and a big roast of veal awaited Adam's carving, while a couple of fine fowls, which had also lost their lives in honour of the

same event, were assigned to Mr Cargill's more skilful dissection. Cream scones ('Jessie's ain bakin'') looked almost too nice to be eaten, and Souterhill bannocks, cut up into substantial slices, disappeared like magic; for a Souterhill bannock is altogether irresistible, and the more of it one eats, the more of it one wants to eat; moreover, as the only real and original article is manufactured in Souterhill, the inhabitants of that picturesque and salubrious town have an ancient and proprietary claim to the inimitable bannock—a privilege which they and the country people in the surrounding districts, and far-away friends at Christmas and New Year times, show their appreciation of by always doing ample justice to the local bun.

The evening hours went quickly past, each filled in 'wi' kindly crack,' and enlivened by the singing of numerous hymns. In these 'the best man' joined heartily, although as the time wore on he began to think a good deal about 'a rosy cheekit lass,' who had promised him a dance if he came to Whitehouse. Perhaps if Kate Scott had been in her usual high spirits on the day of Jessie's wedding, or had cared to exercise her powers of fascination upon the stranger lad, he might have found sufficient attraction at Drummelside

without again braving the flooded meadows; but Kate was dull and quiet, in consequence of an elder sister's foolishness, which gave the girl a humiliating sense of shame. So after surveying the waters, which by this time had considerably abated from off the face of the earth, the young man decided 'to try it.' Big Chairlie was therefore brought out once more, and the departing guest was safely conveyed to the hill foot, from whence he easily made his way to Whitehouse.

After Adam's return 'the buiks were brocht ben,' and Mr Cargill 'took the worship,' which fitly closed the ceremonies of the Cameronian wedding.

* * * * *

The fairs, which were held on Sunnyburn green in the months of March and October—though now done away with—were events of great importance in Drummeldale at that period. The spring fair was mainly a hiring market, when farm servants and extra workers were engaged for the summer season. Thither, therefore, came all the farmers, usually accompanied by their wives and daughters, the main errand of many of the ladies being to purchase clogs, for wear while engaged in their outdoor duties; and also lay in a stock of gingerbread cakes, which wholesome dainty generally

accompanied the 'dram' offered to visitors. But some of the women folk had another reason for coming to the fair; that was to look after their respective husbands, fathers, and brothers, who were apt to forget the home-coming; and when 'the maun got abune the meal,' their driving became somewhat reckless. As a matter of course, there was a good deal of drinking at the fairs, where all contracts, settlements, and old friendships had to be sealed with 'a tastin',' and as these frequent tastings had a tendency 'to rin to the heid,' the genial friends who

" Sat bousin' at the nappy,
And gettin' fou, and unco happy,"

would suddenly be swooped down upon, and carried off by their gentle dames, who, remembering 'the lang Scots miles between them and their hames,' compelled their reluctant feet to the waiting gig or cart.

To the country lads and lasses the fair was a 'tryst' in more than one sense of the word; for not only were they hired to new places, but engagements of a different kind and more enduring nature were often the result of these forgatherings at Sunnyburn Fair. And while the rustic gallants filled 'the pooches and pocket naipkins' of their

smiling partners with sweets and gingerbread from the krames, the unattached units in the crowd would fill themselves with lemonade, or something stronger, in the tent or fair-house, where all needful refreshments could be procured.

The chief topic of conversation among the farm servant class was naturally the advantages or disadvantages of the places they were going to or leaving.

“Ir 'e heyert, Wull?”

“Ay, min.”

“Where 'e gaun?”

“Blackhill.”

“Oh, Blackhill! Weel, ye'll ha'e plenty wark and plenty meat—twae things that gang grand thegither.”

Or another side of the same subject might present itself thus—

“Ha'e e' gotten a place, Bell?”

“Ay. I'm gaun to the kitchen at Staneyrigg. It's licht wark, but gey ferr away.”

“Ay. It's a guid bit away, but that's no its warst faut; they say it's an awfu' puir meat hoose—porritch twice a day, and hardly ever a richt denner.”

“Div 'e say sae? My! but I didna ken that, or I wad never ha'e taen 'd.”

“Weel, I kenned a lass that was there yince, Jeanie Smail, an’ she said it was juist a blush o’ thin kail an’ braxy a’ the ‘ear roond at denner time.”

“Faigs! an’ I’m no’ gaun then, if that’s the kind o’ d.”

To the bairns, the fair was a great event, and their carefully hoarded pennies required much skilful management and a wonderful amount of elasticity to make them cover the wide area of expenditure; to their youthful owners the purchasing power of a penny was often a subject of anxious debate, and how to lay it out to the best advantage in the tempting wares around them was a very difficult question to decide.

The principal business at the autumn fair was the sale of sheep, great flocks of which were quartered in the park beside the village. Many of the householders in Drummeldale were in the habit of buying a ‘mairt’ at this fair—a ‘mairt’ being a live sheep, which they converted into mutton, salting it for use throughout the winter. Great, therefore, was the slaughter of the innocents on such occasions, and Sandy Gow’s apprentice was kept busy singeing sheep heads for a week afterwards.

Betty Grieve, too, was a busy woman on the

fair day, as her country customers made a point of paying up their accounts, and ordering fresh supplies of flour and other articles in which she dealt, when they came to the fair. Betty's tea table was, therefore, constantly surrounded with fresh relays of guests, who relied upon Betty's hospitality for the only substantial meal of the day. The old lady's assistants at such times had usually been Jessie Jamieson and Kate Scott, who, trim and trig in white muslin aprons, actively waited upon and entertained the visitors, while Betty 'settled accoonts' wi' her customers; and the fair day with its animating duties was an occasion to which they both looked forward with cheerful anticipations; but after the Drummel-side wedding Betty had to find helpers elsewhere, for Jessie was married and Kate declined to come.

Kate Scott had of late developed an almost morbid self-consciousness and irritability which threatened to destroy her own happiness and also that of others. As has been previously mentioned, her elder sister had behaved foolishly, and had come home with her misfortune until such time as she could resume her duties in the farm-house where she was a servant. Jean was a fair-haired, comely lass, with no vicious propensities, but weak-willed and entirely lacking the high-spirited

independence and fine susceptibilities of her younger sister. To Eelin Beattie her daughter's dishonour was a great grief, and to Kate it was a mortifying humiliation; though to Jean herself the sense of sorrow or shame was neither very acute nor abiding—her nature being too shallow for better feelings taking root therein.

Were the consequences of sin entirely confined to the sinner, what an amount of suffering would be spared to others; and how many crushed souls would spread out their leaves and blossoms to the sunshine, developing into fair flowers or stately trees of beauty and fruitfulness. But sorrow and suffering caused by the selfishness and folly of others is the daily discipline of life; and the malign influence which hinders or altogether destroys our happiness or usefulness is but a too common experience. Doubtless, such clouds are often silver-lined, and when we get above them the glory and brightness of the inner side will be fully revealed. In very loving-kindness, God has often to hedge up our way, lest we wander too far afield, and get lost and entangled amongst the wild briars of temptation and sin. The prosaic character of Jean Scott and her lightly regarded offence might have appeared almost too commonplace to have had any

influence upon others; yet, indirectly, her folly affected the after lives of at least three individuals. Upon Eelin Beattie's weak organisation trouble told perceptibly, and gradually her health declined, until she became a complete invalid. In Kate's youthful heart the poisoned arrow of shame rankled sorely, and a sullen expression of mortified pride chased all the brightness from her countenance, and led her to shun her former friends — Wattie Anderson particularly. To Wattie, this uncalled-for estrangement was an overwhelming disaster; Kate was his inspiration, and for her sake he had struggled manfully with the difficulties of higher education. As a matter of fact, the lad had neither the capacity nor the inclination for great scholarship, and his lack of robust health, together with the inherent diffidence of his disposition, somewhat lessened the chances of a successful college career. Yet, for Kate's sake, and because his uncle had determined to make a minister of him, Wattie had striven anxiously to overcome his natural defects by hard study.

But when Kate turned her back upon him, for no reason that his guileless mind could comprehend, Wattie's wounded spirit sank into a state of hopeless apathy. Without her stimu-

lating affection and encouraging anticipations of success to urge him on to the desired goal, Wattie would fail, and he knew it. But so desolate had his life become that he no longer cared to strive against the tide for the once coveted victory.

A BRIDAL SONG.

A BRIDAL SONG.

Effulgent morn that first in Eden
Dawned to greet a bridal day,
Re-awake in pristine splendour,
Shine upon those festals gay;
Skies unclouded, sunbeams golden,
Smile upon Love's flower-strewn way.

Angels bright, that first in Eden
Clustered round a peerless bride,
Earthward flit on snowy pinions
To this fair young maiden's side;
Hover o'er her with your blessings,
All her gentle footsteps guide.

Kingly Adam once in Eden
O'er creation reigned supreme;
But earth's master, man, was mateless,
Slowly flowed life's sluggish stream,
Till he slept, and Love's queen maiden
Rose embodied from his dream.

Perfect trust that first in Eden
Filled with joy a wedded pair,
Bind those hearts in sacred union,
Holy, as an angel's prayer.
God be with them, guard them, bless them;
Long in health and peace, them spare.

THE REVIVAL.

“**D**EAR sakes, hinnie; but it’s an ill woarld this, turnin’; folk’s ferr waur now than they yuised to bei langsyne; and what wi’ guis-eatin’s, an’ ither gilravagin, at the new ‘ear time, this pairish o’ Drummeldale’s no a hait better than some o’ thae wicked toons, wi’ their daftlike ongauns; and wumman, Jenny, what div ‘e think I heard the day? There’s a man ta’en Sandy Riddell’s room, an’ gaun to stert a dancin’ schule for the bairns; heard ‘e ever the like od, na? In oor young days, oo had a’ wark eneuch, to keep iz dancin’ thrae daylight to derk to wun throwe wi’t; but the young folk now maun a’ be gentry, an’ lairn grammar, an’ Frainch, an’ the peeana. Keep iz a’! Jenny, yowe an’ mei had to buckle up oor tails an’ milk the kye at nicht, instead o’ dinkin’ oor hair, an’ gaun to dancin’ schules. An’ there’s oor Gracie wunna be said nay, but she maun gang like the rest; Eben, hei juist lauchs, an’ says, ‘Let the lassie lairn to dance if she likes; it’ll dae her nae ill.’ But I’m

no on wi't ava. What think 'e about it, Jenny, wumman?"

"Atweel, Peggy, I juist think it's openin' the door to let Sawtan in; sirse, but I'm gled we've nae bairns to vex iz, b' takin' up their heids wi' sic fuilishness."

"Ay, it's ow'r true what 'e say, Peggy; it's an unco ill bit this, turnin'; but as the auld sayin' is, When things are at their warst they whiles begin to mend; and 'when the enemy comes in like a flude, the Lord'll lift up a standard against him.' And if thae evaingelists that hev been daein' sae muckle guid in Souterhill, as I was readin' in the Souterhill paper, comes up here next month, whae kens but the gled sangs o' salvation may rise abune the fiddlin' an' dancin', and the licht o' the glorious gospel drive away the sheddaws that lie aroond us. I am shuir if they'll but come, I'll make them wailcome to the best in ma hoose; an' sae, I dootna, will 'e, Peggy?"

"Ay, blithe wull I bei to dae that, Jenny; and sae wull Eben; for a' he's no sae sic̄ar about that dancin'-schule as I wad like him to bei; but—dear sakes, hinnie!—I maun wun away hame wi' ma milk, for Ise warran' Eben 'ill want some porritch to his supper the nicht. They say that porritch is gaun oot the fashion a'maist atgether,

but it's no that wey in oor hoose, I'm gled to say."

Peggy Anderson had gone through to Drummel-side for a can of milk—her own cow being eild—when the above recorded conversation took place between her and Jenny Grieve.

Deep was their disapproval of the dancin' schule, and very sincere their sorrow over the evils they saw around them; though no doubt the narrowness of their views sometimes exaggerated the heinousness of the offences they condemned. The dancin' schule, for instance, was a very orderly and innocent affair, and smartened up the bairns amazingly; also the New Year parties were, for the most part but friendly gatherings, which helped to relieve the monotony of the long winter evenings. True, there was a great deal of dram-drinking on such occasions, which did nobody any good; and there was real cause for concern in a certain laxity of morals which threatened to work havoc amongst the young. Also, the strict observance of the Sabbath of former days was giving place to what the old people considered 'a sinfu' disregaird o' the Lord's day.' Unfailing regularity of attendance upon church ordinances had become a characteristic of the few, rather than a fixed habit of the many; and, consequently, the congregation in the kirk was often 'unco thin.'

Notwithstanding all these signs of degeneration, however, Drummeldale did not consider itself 'ony waur than its neibours,' which it probably was not. But then, as Jenny Grieve said, 'it was a pairish greatly preevileged baith by nature and grace.' The beauty of their surroundings and the godliness of their forebears should, in Jenny's opinion, have been reason sufficient for the Drummeldale folk to be a great deal better than their neighbours, instead of only 'nae waur.'

Taking all these things into account, it was therefore not to be wondered at if the Cameronians, and others of like-mindedness, longed earnestly for some share in the showers of blessing which were falling so freely in Souterhill and elsewhere; for the great revival movement, of which Moody and Sankey were the pioneers, was flooding the souls of thousands with new life and light. To prepare the soil for the expected seed-time, Mr Shaw, the parish minister, spared no pains. Prayer meetings and pastoral visitations were zealously carried out, but without producing any apparent effect upon the people.

"Aye, it's the valley o' dry bones, Mr Shaw, and it'll take a hantle o' preachin' and a hantle o' prophesein' juist to shake them thegither; but it'll need the fowr wunds o' heeven and the speerit o' the Lord to pit life in them."

“Pray God that Spirit may soon be sent,” said Mr Shaw, fervently.

The minister had been visiting the upper reaches of the parish, and had dropped in at the farm-house of Sunnycleuch, on his way home. Mrs Grieve was soon busy preparing a fragrant cup of tea for the wearied pastor, whom she entertained, not only with material comforts from her well-filled cupboard, but also with mental refreshment from her stores of general knowledge and ready wit. Of course, the Grieves were Cameronians; but that made no difference in the welcome accorded to the Auld Kirk minister.

The mistress of Sunnycleuch was a tall, elderly woman, of ladylike appearance; whose keen intellect and extraordinary memory made her an invaluable referee in all matters of dispute. Did any one want evidence to prove some half forgotten relationship? Then they had only to make enquiries at Mrs Grieve, and she would straightway trace out their genealogical tree with all its branches clearly defined.

For every incident, or phase of life, Mrs Grieve had an apt text, or Scriptural illustration—not that she used these either for religious display or as a pious phraseology—she was far too strong-minded and plain-spoken for any such paltry pretentious-

ness; but all through life, the truths and teaching of the Bible had been to her and to her people as daily bread; and its language came as naturally from her lips as her own mother tongue of Border doric.

“Atweel ay; ’oo’re a stiff-neckit and rebellious people, huz Drummeldale folk. ’Deed, I whiles think, oo wad be nae the waur o’ havin’ Claverhoose and his dragoons at oor heels for awhile again; it micht gar iz think mair o’ oor kirks and oor bibles than oo’ve dune this while back. But ye maunna loss hert, Mr Shaw; guid Mr Bowston had juist as sair a fecht wi’ the backslidin’s and besettin’ sins o’ his folk as ever ’e’ve had; and hei leaved to sei the fruits o’ his labour, as sae weel ’e, Mr Shaw, if ’e persevere, and bei na weary o’ yer weel-daein’.”

“Thanks, Mrs Grieve, for your words of encouragement,” said the minister, as he rose to go; “your tea and your company have been both alike refreshing, and now I feel ready for the road again.”

It was the month of May before the evangelists found time to devote their energies to the religious needs of Drummeldale. Two earnest, devoted workers they were who came: one gifted with the power of persuasive preaching, the other with a

voice of melodious sweetness, which carried the winning words of the gospel hymns home to many hearts. With one accord the people flocked to hear them, many out of mere curiosity to see for themselves what their neighbours in Souterhill, and elsewhere, had gone out to see.

Some saw 'naething ava in them,' and never went back. Some went to scoff, and scoffers they remained. But the majority found in the preaching the power of God; and all had to acknowledge that 'the revival' had come to Drummeldale.

For the few weeks that the evangelists remained the meetings were crowded, and new converts were continuously being added to those who had already professed their faith. It was in the best sense a time of joy and rejoicing, both for young believers and for the elder Christians, who experienced great gladness of heart in witnessing the newly-found happiness and peace of those who had accepted the good tidings. There were spurious conversions, as a matter of course; there always are in every revival movement—emotional natures, carried away by the excitement around them; unstable minds, blown about with every wind of doctrine, and veering to every point of the compass in pursuit of the latest religious novelty; also, the convicted sinner, who, in a re-

pentant mood, builds for himself a tower of good resolutions, only to find that the first blast of temptation has completely demolished the superficial structure. Like the morning cloud and the early dew, the effervescent fervour of such volatile enthusiasts soon vanished away. But many remained steadfast, and many were strengthened.

Perhaps the most notable case was that of Kate Scott. Kate had always been what is called a good girl, and hitherto she herself had never had any doubts about the matter. For several months previous to the revival, however, Kate, as has been already remarked, had been in a very unsatisfactory state of mind. Her sister's trouble had stirred up some unsuspected evils in the girl's heart; her honest, self-respecting pride had been touched with a humbling sense of shame; and her sensitive spirit took refuge in a cold reserve, and a sort of morbid dislike towards all who knew the story. Silent, and self-absorbed, she went about her daily duties, a very different Kate, indeed, from the bright-faced, cheery lass of a year before. Even her mother's illness—though Kate tended the almost helpless invalid with unceasing care and unwearied devotion—seemed rather to increase than diminish her bitterness of spirit; for it, also, was a consequence of Jean's folly.

Much against her own will, and only to please her mother, Kate went to the meetings, though for a time she appeared to take little or no interest in the proceedings. By-and-bye, however, Jenny 'Grieve's watchful and affectionate eyes noticed that Kate was 'peying mair attention to the preachin', and one evening, while a particularly touching hymn was being sung, the girl electrified the audience by bursting into a violent and hysterical fit of weeping.

In a moment Jenny's kindly arms were round her, and the quivering face was hidden on her sheltering breast, while comforting passages of Scripture, suited for a penitent's ear, dropped softly from Jenny's lips. After a time the sobbing ceased, and when the people rose to depart, Kate made as if to go with them, but her friend's detaining hand held her fast, until only 'the anxious' remained.

At a sign from Jenny, one of the evangelists came over, and Kate was left to listen to his tender enquiries and exhortations; but with that strong will which characterised her, the girl, after that involuntary outburst of long pent-up feelings, had again closed up the fountain of her tears, and set the seal of silence upon her lips, so that no responsive sigh, or broken confession of need,

came to cheer the preacher's heart, with the longed-for signs of a new life awaking in the soul.

From that evening Kate avoided the meetings, and neither her mother's gentle pleading, nor the friendly persuasions of others, could induce her to go back; but the grace of God often comes through unlikely channels.

* * * * *

"Oor Wattie's comed hame unco unweel."

"Hout! I'm vexed to hear that, Peggy; what's like wrang wi' him?"

"I hardly ken, Eelin; but he's unco fushionless and dowie-lookin', and he eats naething. Ye sei, wumman, he's failed wi' thae confoondit exeminations, as I sud ca' them, and his uncle's rale disappointit about it. But, dear sakes, hinnie! the callant wasna yibble to stap a' thae blethers oot o' thae buiks intae his heid, and it sae often sair; and at ony rate, he'll juist be as wice without them as wi' them; only, it seems that they wanna make ministers o' them unless they can yerkerk off the answers to a' thae Greek and Laitin quaistins they speir at them."

Kate had set up her tub outside the back door, and was 'thrang washin'' while Peggy Anderson was telling her mother of Wattie's failure in

health and hopes; but the girl was listening to every word, and an instantaneous flash of comprehension stamped the conviction upon her brain that she was the cause of all Wattie's troubles. For a minute she stood irresolute; then, hastily wiping the soapy suds from her hands, Kate sped down the road towards Eben Anderson's cottage.

The door stood open, and without the ceremony of knocking, she stepped into the kitchen, where in Eben's big chair, lay Wattie, apparently asleep. Standing in the doorway while she gazed wistfully at the lad's thin face, which looked woefully white, against the dark back of the leather-covered chair, Kate discovered that an accusing conscience, and a yearning feeling of love and pity, were giving her the heartache. "What ails ye, Wattie?" she asked.

The young man on perceiving the presence of his visitor, had quickly sat up, with an eager look in his eyes; but, alas! the chilling shadow that had clouded Kate's countenance when he last left Drummeldale was on it still; and with a weary sigh of disappointment, Wattie fell back in his chair.

"Oh, what ails 'e?" repeated Kate, trying to stifle the sob that rose in her throat, as she saw and understood the action.

“Everything ails me—at least, nothing in particular; nothing that you would care to hear about, any way,” was Wattie’s somewhat incoherent reply.

With a swift impulsive movement, Kate was kneeling at his side; “Wattie, was I in ony way to blame for—for you no wunnin’ through?”

“You! Kate? no, of course not,” said Wattie, springing up with a new light in his eyes.

“But Katie, I thocht ye didna care, and I had nae hert for’t.”

Wattie’s arm had slipped round Kate’s neck, and his tongue had resumed its natural doric.

“I’ve been a wicked wretch, Wattie; and a’ the time I thocht masel sae guid, sae muckle better than—than some other folk; but I sei now I’ve been waur, ferr waur than them. It was naething but pride, a meeserable, hungert pride, that ett up ma very hert and left a stane in place od. Oh, Wattie, can ye ever forgi’e me for the ill I’ve dune ‘e?” and tears of penitence stood in Kate’s dark eyes.

“My ain bonnie Kate! ye’ve dune me nae ill, no a grain,” cried Wattie, as he pressed a loving kiss on her wet cheek.

“It was juist my ain dunderheadedness that hindered me thrae passin’. At ony rate, I’m no

fit to be a minister, for I'm no clever, an' I'm nae speaker; but I wad like to be a missionary. Would ye cross the seas wi' me, Kate?"

"To be eaten b' the blecks? No likely. They wad need to fatten you up a bit, Wattie, afore ye was worth pittin' i' the pot; but they wad roast me like a reid herrin' as sune as oo wan there." And Kate's merry laugh rang out as of old, to Wattie's great joy.

Together they went to the meeting that night, and while Wattie's guileless heart was filled with the gladness of those who sit at the feet of Jesus, Kate's burdened soul sought its Saviour with earnest supplications; and, having found not only the human, but the divine forgiveness and love, what wonder that her young face was radiant with the joy of her espousals?

After the first evangelists went away, others were occasionally sent to relieve the minister, and to keep up the interest in the meetings. Some of these helpers were earnest Christian men, zealous only for the truth and the salvation of souls; others were weaklings, who had neither experience nor eloquence wherewith to edify their hearers. One or two were mere windbags of vanity, mouthing pious words and phrases, but with little real religion in their hearts. One such was domiciled at Eben Anderson's.

“Wi’ a’ that preachin’ ye maun shuirly have dune a lot o’ guid,” remarked Eben inquiringly, after a boastful speech respecting the number of times the preacher had spoken at meetings.

“The kingdom of Heaven cometh not with observation,” answered the young man, with a dignified air of rebuke.

“Maybe no, maybe no,” said Eben, somewhat nettled. “But if yin saws the seed, yin naiterally looks for some signs o’ a hervest.”

“Paul may plant, and Apollos water; but God giveth the increase,” quoted the preacher, with a pomposity which fairly put an end to Eben’s patience.

“Verra true, lad; verra true; but if Paul fills his seed-pock thrae the cauff-bags o’ empty pride, and Apollos has nocht in his waiterin’ can but a dribble o’ the dirty waiter o’ self-sufficiency, they’re no likely to be sair burdened wi’ the sheaves they’ll cairry hame,” said the old man testily, as he left the room.

Whereupon, Peggy, who, metaphorically speaking, sat at the feet of all the preachers, hastened to smooth the ruffled plumes of the spruce, white-handed gentleman, with a humble apology for Eben’s ‘thrawnness,’ ascribing it to ‘his disappointment about Wattie.’

A missionary from heathen lands attracted large audiences, who listened with interest to his thrilling stories of danger and devotion, in that far-away mission field, for which both men and money were greatly needed to carry on the good work.

To Wattie Anderson, it seemed to open a door of usefulness, thoroughly rousing within him the latent missionary spirit, which only required a spark to kindle it into a blaze. Enthusiasm for the good work of spreading abroad the knowledge of the gospel took complete possession of Wattie's quiet but determined nature. This Kate perceived with feelings akin to dismay, for she knew that so long as her mother was spared, she could not leave her; although now, the girl had no hesitation about crossing the seas with Wattie, even if it was to be eaten by the 'blecks' some day.

J U N E .

O sweet the mem'ries clustered 'mang
 The flowery wreaths of June,
 And sweet the laverock's cheery sang
 Comes frae the clouds abune;
 Yet oft I think the June days noo
 Are no like them lang syne,
 The simmer skies are no sae blue,
 The simmer's no sae fine.

Oh, Sandy, lad! ye mind the days—
 Yon sunny days o' June—
 When ower the heath-clad Border braes
 We wandered late and sune;
 We kent nocht o' life's troubles then,
 Oor hearts were licht and free,
 And nae bird singin' i' the glen
 Thocht less o' care than we.

O dewy days o' June's gane by,
 " Could I your charms reca',
 A bonnier blue wad fill the sky,
 And balmier breezes blaw;
 The birks wad boast a brichter green,
 The rose a fairer hue,
 And the wee white gowans steek their een
 Wi' draps o' pearly dew.

The bluebells noddit to the breeze,
And rang their fairy tunes;
The blithe birds sang in a' the trees
In yon fair far-off Junes;
The birds sing yet, but no sae sweet
Their wild wood notes to me;
The bluebells bloom amang oor feet,
But they hae tint their glee.

It may be that oor een are dim,
And eld's thin bluid rins cauld;
Yince life's fu' cup o'erflowed the brim,
But noo, guidman, we're auld.
Yet, Sandy, lad, what needs we fret,
For we'll a' be young abune,
And meet again, as first we met,
Where the days will aye be June.

DARK CLOUDS.

MIDSUMMER had come, and the air was filled with the perfumes of the flowers and the new mown hay that was falling in thick swathes before the keen blades of the scythemen in the green meadows of Sunnyburn.

A week of intense heat and brilliant sunshine had been succeeded by a day of sultry shadow; dark clouds lay piled up in motionless masses on the further horizon, and a grey gloom overspread the blue of the summer skies and hid the sunbeams in its murky folds.

“It’s been a week o’ graund hey wauther,” said Eelin Beattie to her daughter that morning, “but the thunner’s no ferr off now, and I wadna wonder to see a storm o’ some kind afore nicht. Yhist ’e, lass, and wun away throwe to Drum-melside, for they hev a ’lot o’ hey lyin’, and Ise warran’ they’ll be keen to get it ruckit afore the rain comes on.”

“Ay, it’s fine and dry—it wad be a peety to let it get wat now,” answered Kate, who had

been lending a hand to the Drummelside folk whenever she could spare a few hours from the tedding and turning of their own hay; but yesterday had seen the last of it 'ruckit' in good order, and this day was to be devoted to helping forward the work at Drummelside.

Very neighbourly were the Sunnyburn cottagers, and very willingly they went 'to gie onybody a haund wi' a job that was like to bate them.' So as soon as Kate had got the cow milked, the hens fed, and the house tidied up, she hastened away to the little farm across the water, accompanied, as usual, by Wattie Anderson.

"Ye'll look in through the day, Chirsty, and sei that ma mother's a' richt?" said Kate as they passed the cottage where Grannie and Eily were 'thrang weedin' the gairden.'

"O - wye, I'll dae that," said Chirsty, cheerily. 'Eily and mei has twae rucks to pit up i' the meeda, ells oo wad hae gane along wi' 'e, but Wattie and yowe 'ill be a great help to them, and Ise warran' they'll want to ply on and get it up afore the rain comes on."

At Drummelside all was bustle and activity. Jenny Grieve had been 'up since four o'clock gettin the kirnin' bye,' and the delicious rolls of yellow butter, wrapped up in clean wet linen and

packed in the wooden butter-box, were already on their way to Southerhill in Sandy the post's gig.

Four cows had been milked, four calves fed, two pigs, and a flock of hens breakfasted; a long array of milk plates had been washed and plotted, ready for next milking time; the byres had been cleaned, and the house put to rights; the dinner—a big basin of new milk, 'yirned,' flanked with a glass jug of rich cream—already stood on the kitchen table, though not yet ten o'clock; but the family by that time were busily engaged in the hay field. Adam, with the horse (Big Chairlie), and a thick rope was drawing the kyles together in heaps for the ricks, which Jenny and 'the lassie' put up with an alacrity that was wonderful to behold. Despite her sixty years and her multifarious morning's work, Jenny Grieve was as fresh and nimble as a lass of twenty; and her cheery voice greeted the new comers with a hearty welcome.

"Come away, ma bairns! I'm unco gled to sei 'e. Yiddie was thinkin' 'e wadna could wun the day, but I kenn'd 'e wad come if 'e could get ava, when 'e saw'd sae like rain. Kate, hinnie, ye'll build; and Wattie, lad, ye'll fork till her, ower yonder where Yiddie's drawing the kyles

thegither, and Ise warran' oo'll get on juist like a hoose afire, now. Mony haunds make licht wark."

And so the work went on with a cheerful zest, that left long rows of finished ricks behind, but also many heaps of hay in front, when the dinner hour arrived. Overhead the clouds were gathering black and threatening, and distant peals of thunder ever and anon gave notice of an approaching storm. Under the circumstances every one felt there was no time to spare for rest; so Jenny and 'the lassie' ran homeward for the mid-day milking, soon returning to the hay field with substantial slices of bread and cheese for the workers; which wholesome fare, washed down with copious draughts of creamy buttermilk, was by no means to be despised, but greatly enjoyed by all the workers.

Meanwhile the ominous clouds grew blacker, and the thunder louder, and before the last rick was finished, the vivid flashes of lightning were leaping like shining swords from dark scabbards; and heavy rain drops began to fall, compelling the haymakers to make a speedy retreat from the scene of their labours, and hurry home, there to find the cattle waiting to be housed, and hungry animals needing to be fed, before the tired party could sit down to the curds and cream awaiting their work-whetted appetites.

Although a thunderstorm in Drummeldale may not be quite so effective in noise and grandeur of display as it is among the mountain echoes and rocky peaks of highland scenery, yet it is sublime enough to fill the mind with awe and the artistic eye with admiration. Over the green hills the wriggling chains of fire flash downward with a terrible swiftness, startling the beholder with a sudden dread, and the volleying crash that succeeds the blaze of light subdues the boldest spirit, and makes the most arrogant braggart realise his own nothingness in the presence of God's almighty power.

The storm of that day was memorable for more reasons than its own terrificness, but even the oldest inhabitant had no remembrance of anything like it. All the powers of the air seemed engaged in fierce conflict; the roaring wind, the hissing rain, the terrible thunder-claps which seemed to shake the very earth, and the continuous flash of the steely flame on the murky darkness of the day, made up a scene of subduing awfulness.

In the little parlour at Drummelside sat Adam Symington, with the big Bible before him, open at the forty-sixth Psalm—

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

“Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea.

“Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”

The old man's voice went steadily on through the grand old psalm, and the repeated Selahs sounded like triumphant notes of trust and praise. With the last, he slowly and reverently closed the book, and in a quiet tone said, ‘Let us pray.’ Whereupon they all knelt down, and the voice of the Cameronian elder as he communed with the Most High seemed to command a hush amid the wild warfare of the elements which raged around the dwelling.

Did some prophetic shadow of coming sorrow fall athwart the spiritual vision of the aged suppliant? It almost appeared so.

“In life and in death,” he proceeded, “we are in Thy hands, O Lord; and living or dying may we be given grace and strength to glorify Thy name, and to do Thy will. If Thou willest, Lord, that we abide upon this earth, give us grace to walk wisely, and strength to do the work which Thou hast appointed for us, that with clean hands and with pure hearts we may render unto Thee a faithful service. But, if for some of us gathered here, Thou hast in thy wisdom otherwise decreed, Heavenly Father, grant them, we beseech Thee, saving faith and a childlike trust, that they may take Thy hand and go down into the dark valley fearing no evil, but rejoicing in their nearness to the Father's

house, and the heavenly welcome that awaits their home-coming."

The solemnity of the prayer, interluded with the crash of the thunder peals and the wild shrieks of the battling winds outside, brought an unwonted sense of fear and dread into Kate's usually buoyant heart, and her hand involuntarily sought Wattie's as they knelt together; but the firm reassuring clasp with which he answered her silent appeal gave her a feeling of confident trust in his deep love, and helped to dissipate the gloom of the dark portals, on the threshold of which their youthful feet were already standing, although they knew it not. But if its portentous shadows first fell upon their spirits as they knelt hand in hand at the footstool of heavenly mercy, all the more likely was it that the way through the dark valley would be made brighter by that hour of prayer and preparation.

There was another awe-stricken soul kneeling in that little assembly, amid the tumults of the storm. It was 'the lassie,' who was listening, open-eyed, not to the prayer, but to the noise of the tempest without; her ruddy, sun-browned cheeks were pale, and she trembled with fear as peal after peal of nature's artillery rolled overhead. 'That's awfu,' she whispered every now

and again to herself. Once she had said it audibly, but Jenny Grieve had answered her rebukingly—'Lassie, there's naething awfu' but the judgment day;' but the admonition had not altered her opinion, nor yet her way of expressing it. 'It's awfu',' said she to herself again, after a vivid flash of lightning and a tremendous volley of thunder had almost startled her from her knees. In her terror she edged her chair nearer to the sofa where the others knelt, craving company in her solitude; then she saw something that made her for the moment forget her fears; it was Kate slipping her hand into Wattie's warm clasp, and the glance of trustful love which passed between them.

"Eh! but it maun be fine to have a laud o' yin's ain," quoth 'the lassie' to that inner self with whom she held so much converse; then, with a delicacy of feeling for which few would have given her credit, she turned away her head and resolutely bore her own loneliness rather than intrude upon the sacredness of such sweet communion.

'The lassie' was not a Cameronian, nor even what Jenny Grieve deemed 'a Christian.' She had come to Drummelside from a shepherd's cot amongst the hills, where religion was relegated to

the shelf with the Bibles that accompanied the family to the kirk on Sabbath days. Her parents were hard working, decent folk, but in their laborious toil for the things of this world, they found no time to make provision for the world to come; and so it came to pass that the praying and psalm-singing at Drummelside gave a new experience to 'the lassie,' and it could not be said that she greatly relished it. In point of fact, she had as often as not to be wakened from a sound sleep before getting up from her knees. That she was something of a trial to her energetic mistress need hardly be said; and sharp words would often fall from the active little woman's lips, which afterwards she would regret. But 'the lassie' was used enough to sharp words at home, and took better to them even than the unaccustomed prayers.

The worst of the storm passed over, and although the wind was still high, and an occasional thunder-clap echoed amongst the hills, Adam Symington hastened the departure of his guests; as unless they consented to remain overnight (which they were unwilling to do), 'the waiter wad be doon direckly;' for the silvery Drummel, which murmurs so melodiously over the pebbles on a summer day, comes down like

a ruthless giant when fed to repletion with the numberless rills that ripple in the sunshine, or rage 'neath the dark clouds which pour their waters upon the green braes. So Wattie and Kate ran off to get across the already partially swollen river, before it would become impassable.

The plank bridge, which had easily spanned the pool in the morning, was now almost submerged, and a considerable stream ran past the end of it; but they managed to get safely over, and together they pulled the plank to the higher side, where it would be less likely to be carried away. Then, after shouting and waving a last good-night to Adam and Jenny, who had accompanied them to the waterside, the two ran on hand-in-hand for home, while 'the lassie,' who stood waiting for the old folk and watching the young ones, sighed and said again to herself—'Eh, but it maun be fine to have a laud o' yin's ain.'

Kate and Wattie had passed through the plantation, and were nearing the road, when suddenly the girl stopped short and cried, "Oh, Wattie, I clean forgot aboot the sheep; they're doon the waiterside, and if the flude gets bigger they'll verra likely a' be drowned."

"I dinna think there's ony fear o' them," answered Wattie, who felt unwilling to turn back.

“Eh, but ma faither wad be like to take a’ oor heids off if onything happened them,” said Kate anxiously; “I’ll juist rin doon and sei if they’re safe, and you gang on and sei how ma mother’s been keepin’ a’ day. Puir body, I hope she had some of the neibours aside her when it was sic a thunner.”

“If ’e gang back, I’m gaun wi’ ’e,” was Wattie’s reply; so down the river side they hurried, until they came in sight of the half dozen hoggets which constituted Tam Scott’s flock. Four of the animals were safe enough, but two were standing on a patch of rising ground surrounded by a wide space of sand, where already a stream of water was flowing betwixt them and the mainland.

Without a thought for her own safety, Kate instantly rushed to the rescue of the endangered animals, and Wattie, as a matter of course, followed her, but in spite of their united efforts the bewildered sheep would not cross the ever widening stream.

“Kate! Kate! come quick,” shouted Wattie, suddenly abandoning the pursuit of the sheep he had been trying to catch. Kate, who was similarly employed, lifted her eyes at the warning cry; and there, almost upon them, was a huge moving roll

of yellow-brown water, spreading itself from bank to brae, and carrying all before it. For a moment Kate stood still in paralysed astonishment and fear, until Wattie half dragged, half carried her to the stream they had so easily stepped across a few minutes before. Alas! they were too late; already it was impassable, and their only chance of escape lay in getting back to the higher patch of ground they had just left; and that they had only time to reach before the flood was upon them, its turbid waters surging around them and over their feet, while the strayed sheep that had caused their misfortune were carried away like kittens in the current.

For a moment the two young creatures gazed blankly at the widening waste of water that swirled and eddied between them and the solid green bank, whereon they might have stood in safety; then they looked at each other with despairing eyes.

“Oh! we’ll be drooned, and it was me that brocht you intilt.”

“It disna maitter aboot me, Kate, if only there was a chance o’ gettin’ you oot. You have your mother and Rob; they wad be sair putten’ aboot if onything happened ye; but I ha’e naebody to care muckle aboot me, and if I could save your life, Kate, I would willingly gi’e my ain.”

"I dinna doot that in the least, Wattie; but 'e canna, and even if 'e could, dae 'e think I wad gang without 'e?"

"Oh, Kate, my darling, my darling! how happy we could have been together through life; even to die with you makes dying sweet."

"I would raither that we died thegither than that we should live divided," answered Kate, as she laid her arms around his neck and kissed his cheek.

It was the first voluntary caress that Wattie had ever received from the sprightly lass whom he had loved all his life, and that virgin kiss thrilled through his being like a draught of richest wine; and as he clasped her close to his breast and showered kisses on her sweet lips, he forgot their surroundings and the danger in which they stood. But the chill of the rising flood recalled them from their blissful forgetfulness. Already the greedy waters were surging above their ankles, while around them the debris of the banks was being hurried down the stream; and branches of trees, logs of wood, piles of hay, and occasionally a drowned sheep or lamb floated swiftly past.

The darkness was beginning to fall, and everything was becoming indistinct in the gathering

gloom. The wind was still high, and when they shouted for help, as several times they did, it carried their voices away from the village, from whence help could only come.

“If only the waiter wad stop rising, it wad sune gang doon,” said Kate, with a faint glimmer of hope in her eyes.

But, alas! there was no sign of the water going down; instead, it was rising up to their knees, and they were finding it difficult to keep their feet on the sandy mound.

“Kate, my beloved, there is no hope for us; we must prepare to face death very soon; but, my darling, it will be a quick and easy way to die; only a few minutes of darkness, and then the everlasting glory beyond. We will be together in death, and together in paradise. You’re no feared, are ye, my ain Kate?”

“No, Wattie, I’m no feared, and I’m gled we’re thegither, but I’m vexed about ma mother. Pray for us a’, Wattie.”

And Wattie prayed a simple prayer of child-like trust, commending their friends and themselves into the hands of their Heavenly Father, in whose presence they would soon stand. Then, firmly clasped in each other’s arms, they lifted up their voices, amid the raging waters—

“God is our refuge and our strength,
In straits a present aid;
Therefore, although the earth remove,
We will not be afraid.”

The two young voices rose above the tumult of the elements, and the wind carried the sound to a shepherd, who was making his way homeward on the opposite hillside. The winged words of triumphant faith fell clearly upon his astonished ears, as he stood listening.

“Preserve us! the Drummelside folk’s shuirly takin’ the buiks ootbye the nicht,” observed the man to himself, wonderingly. Suddenly the singing ceased, and an eerie sough came up from the waters, bringing the echo of a stifled cry, which caused the shepherd’s ruddy face to grow pale with fear.

“Guid keep us! there’s something no canny gaun on the nicht; that was an unco queer cry. I hope there’s naebody i’ the waiter.” ‘Hullo!’ he shouted loudly, though his voice quivered with a nameless dread. But the wind was against him, and only carried the sound to the drowsy sheep on the hillside, and startled the sleeping birds in the plantation that skirted its base.

A GOWAN WREATH.

ETTRICKHALL,

July 28th, 1898.

He sang amongst the Ettrick hills
His woodnotes, wild and clear,
Melodious as the laverock's trills
That charmed his listening ear.

He sang the sweets of rural life—
The peasant's simple joys,
The cottage bairns, the cottar's wife,
The rustic's pranks and ploys.

Of helpful brownies bringing luck,
And witches weaving dool;
Of elves-like mischief-loving Puck,
He brought a wallet full.

He saw the greenwood fairies meet;
He watched them dance at e'en,
And thither led Kilmeny's feet,
The fairest maid e'er seen.

The shepherd minstrel tuned his harp
In cot and queenly hall,
And deftly wove the woof and warp
Of songs that held them thrall.

He marked men's baser passions glow
 In fierce ungoverned flame,
And tried in words of tuneful flow
 To teach a nobler aim.

He sang the bonds of wedded bliss,
 Which love and honour seals,
The gloaming tryst, the lover's kiss—
 Earth's greatest joy reveals.

O, poet of these Ettrick hills,
 Whose songs we sing to-day,
The magic of thy music thrills
 All hearts beneath its sway.

With garland gays thy sculptured name
 Our loving hands have wreathed,
And The Ettrick Bard's immortal fame,
 To Ettrick, is bequeathed.

CHANGES.

EBEN Anderson had been in a restless mood all day, 'the thunner affeekit him.' So he told his sister and himself; but Eben had something on his conscience, and that affected him more than 'the thunner.'

Of late it had been borne in upon his mind that he was not doing his duty very well by Wattie—who, since his failure at college, had been kept at home—and Eben was a man who, whatever mistakes he might make, conscientiously tried to do his duty by every one, but he liked things to go the way he wanted them: any opposition to his plans he could not brook, and with failures he had no patience. In so far as Wattie's upbringing and education were concerned, Eben had honestly done his best for the lad, sparing neither money nor pains to make a scholar, and a minister, of him. That the boy had not the making of a scholar in him, or that the inherent nervousness, and shy diffidence of his disposition, unfitted him for that particular pro-

fession, Eben either failed to perceive, or wilfully refused to see. Wattie was to follow in the footsteps of the uncle after whom he had been named, and be 'a minister to begin wi', a professor later on, if siller at his back wad push him forrit.'

His nephew's failure to carry out these ambitious schemes was a bitter disappointment to the old man, and many harsh and angry speeches had fallen from his lips—chilling Wattie's sensitive feelings and tender heart, like a wintry rain on the flowers of spring.

"Thrawin' away as muckle guid siller on a soft sumph, that couldna read his paper after he had it written! As weel think to make a man o' a wunnelstrae, as pit ony kind o' smeddum intae a milk-and-waiter craiter like that."

"I'll tell 'e what it is, Eben," said Peggy, at last losing patience with her brother's grumbling, "Ye've been clean wrang in the wey ye've gane about things wi' Wattie. Ye wanted to make a minister o' him, and juist because his uncle got the length o' bein' a professor, ye thocht there was naething to hinder Wattie thrae bein' the same; and so, against the laddie's wull, ye sent him to that confoondit college—as I should make yuise o' sic a word—where they bawthered his brains wi' blethers o' Laitin an' Greek, an' I

dinna ken what, till the puir thing was fair wurn to skin an' bane wi' sae muckle study; and then when the examination came on, he was that throughither wi' waikness an' want o' sleep, that the nerves got the better o' him, an' sae he failed to pass. But what bizness had 'e, Eben Anderson, to ordeen that the laddie was to be a minister, and naething else? Ye pat yersel' in the place o' Providence, and tried to order the callant's life to suit yer ain pride. Had ye putten him to some licht tredd, or sent him to lairn fermin', Wattie wad dune weel eneuch; but ye've gane on at him till the puir craiter has lost hert, and thinks the only thing he's fit for is to gang and lairn the blecks their carritches; and, dear sakes! hinnie, he's that set on gaun away to that cannibal island, that naething yin can say 'ill stop him; though, as I tell him, it's only to fill a grave, or a cannibal's stamick, that he gangs there, for aither the heat or the blecks 'ill feenish him; and if Kate gangs wi' him, that'll be twae denners instead o' yin for the savages. But their daiths 'ill lie at your door, Eben Anderson; sae ye had better take a thocht o' things afore it's ow'r late."

After this plain speaking from Peggy, Eben had taken to thinking; and that, for a man with some-

thing on his conscience, is not a pleasant exercise. Of course he had done nothing wrong; in fact he had done everything he could for what he considered the best—so at least he told himself—but that troublesome conscience insisted that Peggy's accusations were true, and that it was his own ambition, more than Wattie's well-being, that had been considered; and something within gave him a sharp twinge as he remembered how the lad had pled to be let off from going back to college, and allowed to learn cabinet-making, or farming; but Eben had been deaf to his entreaties, and the poor youth had yielded obedience and toiled at his studies, cudgelling his brain to perform tasks for which it was naturally unqualified.

Also, Eben could not deny to himself that he had sorely grudged the siller, for though an honest, God-fearing man, he kept a good grip of his gear, and liked ill to spend a penny needlessly. Thus he had come to look upon Wattie in the light of a bad investment, by which he had lost not only capital, but interest. That in itself was enough to make him irascible, and impatient with his nephew. Nor did he try to spare the offender's feelings in the least degree, for the boy's soft sensitiveness was just what Eben had been diligently seeking to eradicate. 'To pit some

smeddum intil him,' had been his constant and conscientious aim, but he had only succeeded in making Wattie fear him; and latterly it had seemed as if the lad's only thought was to get away from the nagging of his uncle's tongue.

Now, however, Eben's eyes were beginning to open, and in an uncertain, glimmering sort of light he saw that he had misunderstood the lad's nature and capabilities, though what he really was use for remained a problem yet to be solved. Such was the troubled condition of Eben's mind that evening when Wattie failed to return home as usual, and with the restless fit still upon him, the old man went out into the gloaming and proceeded up the road, crying in at Chirsty Grieve's open door, "Hev 'e heard or seen ocht o' the Drummelside folk?"

"Na," answered Chirsty, coming out with her knitting in her hand. "Oo've seen naething o' them; but the young folk maun hae bidden a' nicht, when they henna come hame."

"Ay, o-wye, nae doot; it's turned oot a guid nicht efter sic a day o' thunner and rain."

"Sirse ay! It was an unco day. Ise warran' oo'll hear tell o'd yet."

"Like eneuch, like eneuch; guid nicht," said Eben in his abrupt fashion, as he went on his way further up the road.

“Eben’s shuirly kind o’ anxious about Wattie,” observed Chirsty, as she re-entered the house.

“If Wattie has Kate to look efter him, he’ll no gang ferr wrang,” replied Wullie Stuart, with a laugh.

At the shepherd’s cottage opposite Drummelside Eben put the same question—“Seen ony o’ them?”

“Ay, I saw them come doon to the waiter side wi’ Wattie and Kate, when they were comin’ hame,” said Marget Riddell, wonderingly.

Eben’s blood seemed suddenly to congeal in his veins, and his face paled with apprehension. “But they’ve never comed hame,” he gasped.

“Never comed hame!” repeated Marget; “where can they hev gane?”

“Are ye perfitley shuir they cam’ to this side o’ the waiter?” asked Eben, falteringly, as he leant a shoulder against the wall, as if for support.

“Maybe they gaed back wi’ the auld folk again; I wasna watchin’ perteklar; but I noticed them a’ come doon to the plank, and I thocht they cam’ ower’t; but I maun hae been wrang,” said Marget, anxious to dispel the old man’s fears.

“I’ll gang doon and gi’e the Drummelside folk a cry,” said Eben, rousing himself to action. So down to the waterside they both went, and

shouted their loudest; but the wind was against them, and there came no response from the farmhouse, where the inmates, tired out with the day's hard work, were already all asleep in bed.

"Hoots, they'll be a' richt, Eben; they maun juist hæ gane back when they saw the waiter sae big; Ise warran' ye they're soond sleepin' by this time," said Marget, encouragingly. And Eben tried to convince himself that all was well, though a weight of dread remained upon his heart which no argument could lighten.

By their cosy fireside that same evening, sat Eelin Beattie and Rob with no thought of impending calamity disturbing their peace.

"They'll gang roond by the brig i' the mornin'," said Rob, when he came home from his work—for Rob was now apprenticed to the village joiner, and was away all day. So with no fears for the safety of the absent ones, Rob and his mother sat by the fire, and recounted to each other their experiences of the day, the thunder storm forming the main topic of their conversation.

"Chirsty and Eily cam' in and baid wi' me a' the time," said Eelin, "and efter it was kind o' bye Eily made the tea, and oo had it a' thegither; so I had company, ye sei, though Kate and yowe were baith away."

“I’m gled o’ that, mother; for I was thinkin’ about ‘e a’ the time o’ the thunner, an’ wonderin’ if ‘e wad bei a’ yer lane.”

“Ye’re aye thinkin’ about your mother, my laddie; I dinna ken what I wad dae withoot ‘e. Kate and yowe have been guid bairns, and a great comfort to mei.”

Eelin put out her thin hand as she spoke, and stroked the boy’s rough brown fingers fondly. Unbidden tears stole into Rob’s blue eyes at the gentle caress, and the need of comfort which her words implied.

“Oo couldna dae withoot yowe, mother,” said Rob, with a falter in his voice; for even as he spoke he noticed the thinness of the almost transparent hand, and the frailness of his mother’s general appearance.

“Ye maun pit a’ yer trust in the Lord, my laddie, and He’ll be mair than baith faither and mother till ‘e when ye’re left alane. If Wattie and Kate gang away to a foreign land, ye’ll hae nane left to lippen to but Him, and that’s often the wey God lairns iz to lean entirely upon Himself. We’re unco ready to make props o’ frail flesh-and-bluid craiters like oorsels, and when they bend or brik in oor haund, it’s often a sair sorrow to the hert; but trust in the Lord, my man, for He’ll never fail ‘e.”

Rob's heart was full, and he could not answer, for the thought of losing his mother was more than he could bear. But Eelin Beattie had no desire to bedim the brightness of her boy's countenance with dark forebodings; what she said was only to prepare him by degrees for the inevitable parting; so after her words of loving counsel, she rose and opened the shutters, letting in a flood of moonlight.

"Rob," said his mother, "juist come and sei sic a graund nicht it is—no' a clud to be seen; the storm has a' blawn by, and the peace o' God is ower iz a'."

Together they stood at the window looking across the quiet meadows, beyond which, on the green strip of waterside, lay two forms closely clasped in each other's arms, their white, still faces softly illumed by the kindly moonlight.

* * * * *

Eben Anderson passed a wakeful night. Plans for Wattie's future had so occupied his mind that the hours sped by unnoticed, until a glimmer of daylight surprised the old man's sleepless vigils; then, for a while he dozed, but it seemed as if he had only but closed his eyes, when a low knock at the door filled his soul with a sudden dread.

Hurriedly slipping on a few garments, he almost

immediately found himself facing John Burnet, who stood on the doorstep pale and haggard—the usual calm placidity of his demeanour disturbed by a great excitement, and his startled eyes filled with a look of horror, as if they had seen some terrible vision.

“There’s something wrang wi’ Wattie,” cried Eben; for John seemed unable to speak.

“They’re baith drooned,” faltered John. They’re lying doon on my waiterside, baith deid; Eh, sirse, Eben! ‘how are oo tae tell Eelin? It’ll fair kill her.”

“What’s wrang ava, that ye’re here sae sune i’ the mornin’, John?” cried Peggy, who, hearing the voices, had hastily left her bed.

Peggy was told the sad news, and her grief and lamentations were very great, but Eben said never a word. Silently he went with John Burnet and others to bring home his dead; they wondered how he bore it so well, but the arrow of remorse had pierced his heart, and the wound was beyond the natural remedy of healing tears.

It was Chirsty Grieve who broke the news to the bereaved mother.

“Eelin, my wumman, I’m bringin’ ye ill news,” said Chirsty sorrowfully, as she stood by the bedside clasping the invalid’s weak hands in both her

own, as if trying to impart strength for the coming trial.

“Is onything wrang wi’ Tam?” was the anxious enquiry of the wife, whose first thought was of her absent husband.

“Na, Eelin, it’s no Tam, it’s Kate. Wattie and her had been tryin’ to get the sheep oot o’ the waiter last nicht as they were comin’ hame frae Drummelside, and they had gane doon theirsels. John Burnet got them this mornin’ doon on his waiterside. They’ve wun hame afore ’e, Eelin, and ye’ll find them waitin’ for ’e at the Faither’s door, when He gi’es you the ca’ to come.”

Eelin listened without a word while Chirsty was speaking; then she tried to say something, but a sudden spasm of pain convulsed her features, and her breathing became laboured. For a few minutes Chirsty feared her friend was dying from the shock; but the seizure passed off, leaving the pale face paler, and the thin cheeks more sunken. Then Eelin lifted calm eyes to Chirsty’s anxious gaze, and said, “It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.”

With the same resigned quietness, she gave directions for the necessary preparations, rising herself from her bed to be in readiness for the sad home-coming of her daughter’s body.

Drummeldale that day was a valley of weeping. Never had such a sad calamity been known within its boundaries, but the two mourners whose grief was the deepest shed no tears.

Physically and mentally Eben Anderson was a strong man; a typical Scotchman in his natural reservedness and undemonstrative demeanour. To have made a public exhibition of his feelings in matters of personal religion or family affection would not have been in keeping with Eben's character; yet his religiousness was none the less genuine, nor his affections less deep for that.

With all his usual methodicalness he arranged every detail of the double funeral, overcoming Tam Scott's mean scruples of expense by paying for everything except the coffin, which Tam had commissioned the village joiner to make, 'as cheap as he could.'

In human nature there are two kinds of strength: there is the natural strength of the strong, and the spiritual strength of the weak. Eben Anderson was an example of the first, Eelin Beattie of the second. Frail and worn as she was, she also saw to all the arrangements for her daughter's burial; and the accommodation of friends from a distance—putting aside all Tam's objections of 'a needless waste o' siller' with an indifference to his grumbling which she never dared show before.

But, when the funeral day came, and Eben had to lay Wattie's head in its narrow bed, most of the numerous company noticed that the uncle's grizzled locks had turned snow-white, while the upright figure had become bent, as if a heavy burden had been laid upon its shoulders. Old age had fallen upon Eben in those few days.

And Eelin Beattie, having seen to everything that needed her attention, lay down to rest. She was 'unco dune,' she said; and sad-eyed Rob sat night and day by her bedside, holding her hand as if to keep her from 'slipping away;' but the call had indeed come, and in less than a week poor Rob was motherless.

Death came often to Drummeldale that year. Several old people passed away, and amongst them Wullie Stuart. A hale, fresh-looking man of seventy odd years, Wullie was not accounted old; but a severe illness brought him low, and after many weary weeks of pain, he too was laid in the kirkyaird.

With the spring came other changes. A new house was to be built for Chirsty Grieve; and as a daughter had made her homè with her mother, Eily was no longer needed as company to her grannie. Besides, it was considered time that she was learning something by which to make her way in the world.

No doubt the reasons were sufficient, but to Eily the prospect of being parted from her beloved grandmother was terrible: the dread of her death had been the only dark cloud in the summer sky of her childhood's years. 'What will I do if my grannie dies?' had always been the burden of her thoughts when the old woman was ailing, but no other parting had been considered possible. Now, however, the dreaded separation had come before its time, and to both it was very bitter.

"My ain bairn, I wadna let 'e gang if I could help it, but now that your grandfaither's away, them that keeps me maun make their ain rules, and nae doot it's a' dune for the best; but my hert's unco wae for my bit lassie."

Poor Eily on her knees, and with her face hidden in Grannie's lap, was sobbing disconsolately, as she waited the coming of the post's gig; and when the sound of its approach fell upon her ears, it was like the knell of doom to her grief-stricken soul.

Then, as the vehicle stopped at the door, Grannie laid her hands on the bowed head, and invoked the Divine favour for her sorrowful bairn:—

"May the Lord bless thee and keep thee, may

the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

After a moment's silence a call came, telling her to make haste; and Eily rose from her knees, clasped her arms round Grannie's neck for the last time, and went out from her presence in speechless sorrow.

Sandy the post, who, ten years before, had brought Eily home to her grandmother's, was quick to perceive the state of his young passenger's feelings, and with great tact and kindness tried to cover her silence with a stream of remarks which required little or no answering, until she had somewhat succeeded in overmastering her emotion. But all the way to Souterhill her heart was heavy, and the tears never far away—and with reason—for Eily had embarked on life's troubled ocean, and her dear old grandmother she never saw again.

YARROW BRAES.

THE setting sun on Yarrow braes
Casts mony lights and shadows ;
And silvery gleams frae slanting rays
Fa' softly ower the meadows.

The heather blooms upon the knowes,
In a' its purple splendour ;
And yellow broom waves i' the howes,
Wi' foxgloves tall and slender.

There lurks a charm 'mang Yarrow braes
That every heart enamours ;
A rosy light frae bygone days,
That casts ower a' its glamours.

The tragic tale of ruthless hate,
The maiden's deep devotion,
The dowie dens, the lover's fate,
Must ever stir emotion.

And maidens fair, on Yarrow braes,
The poet's rhymes still borrow,
And croon the lays o' other days,
Beside the flowing Yarrow.

O! sweet is love on Yarrow braes,
Where lovers still have meetings ;
And 'neath the pale moon's silver rays
Are whispered love's soft greetings.

Sae fresh and fair are Yarrow braes,
Nae beauty need they borrow ;
But the tender lays o' Mary's waes
Have hallowed them wi' sorrow.

No ruthless foe, no cruel fate,
Fair maidens' hearts now harrow ;
Though as of yore, fond lovers wait
To keep their trysts by Yarrow.

And years shall come, and years shall go,
But years shall never banish
That love-lit scene, whose afterglow
From Yarrow ne'er shall vanish.

TAM THE DYKER.

“**W**HOW, sirse! Sic a like thing! Eelin no a twalmonth gane, and Tam takin’ anither wife; it’s no wicelike ava.”

“Atweel ay, Betty, it’s an unco daft-like thing o’ him, but, dear sakes, hinnie! thae men’s a’ alike, there’s no yin o’ them ’e could mend anither wi’. It’s juist theirsels, and their ain maggots; that’s a’ they think aboot; but Ise warran’ ye, Betty, Tam’s catchin’ a tartar this time, and he’ll sune find oot that it’s no Eelin Beattie he has to dale wi.’ Jess M’Killop has no only an ill tongue, but a perr o’ reddy haunds; and she’ll no be laith to daud his lugs till him, if he begins ony o’ his yatterin’ and yammerin’ wi’ *her*. Nae doot it’ll be her siller he’s efter, but I wush he maunna get a begunk; for some say the auld faither left it a’ to the tither dauchter, when Jess made sic a fule o’ hersel’ wi’ that sapper and miner fallaw that ludged wi’ them a year or twae syne. And, deed! it’ll be weel

waired t' his haund if he gets naither siller nor coamfort wi' her, for he was ill to Eelin. And she was a canny body, ferr ower canny for the like o' Tam."

"Ay, Eelin attended him haund and fit a' her mairrit life, and he thocht unco little o' her; but her bairns made up till her for his negleck, and she's at rest the day thrae a' her troubles, puir wumman!"

Betty Grieve sighed as she set about weighing up the groceries which Peggy Anderson had come over to purchase. Betty had always a feeling of envy for those mothers whose bairns were a comfort to them. She herself was a childless widow, living alone; and reminders of the family love and home ties of others seemed to intensify her loneliness. Not that Betty was in any way discontented with her lot, but the unsatisfied maternal cravings of her earlier years had left a void which no other interests could wholly fill.

Tam Scott's second marriage, though hasty from a Drummeldale point of view, had been, in Tam's own opinion, 'a lang, dour job, and kittle to work;' for, as the 'disconsolate widower' remarked to a confidential crony, "Ye sei, Wat, I canna dae withoot a wife to look efter the hoose and the cow, but she maun be soond i' the wund,

and hae siller; for thae deein' kind o' weemen are unco fashious craitors, and sae mony buirals are a fair ruination to a body."

So Tam had looked well about him, and 'speired the price' of a few before Jess M'Killop took him in hand. The dyker was under the impression that he had managed the matter very shrewdly, and driven a good bargain for himself, but in reality, as some of the neighbours said, 'Jess had drawn the blinders ower his een, and made her ain merkit.'

"Ye'll hev a pickle siller by ye na, Jess?" observed Tam, as a sort of preliminary feeler, when he went a wooin'.

"O-wye, I hev a weel filled stockin'; but mind ye, Tam, the man that gets mei maun take iz for mysel', an' no for my siller; I'm baith young an' yibble, an' wad sei naebody i' my road, aither for wear or wark.

"Ye're a' that, Jess; ay, atweel; ye're a yauld, guid-lookin' hizzie. But there's the bairn, ye ken; nae doot it wad bei to keep?"

"The bairn's weel peyed for," said Jess, flaring up hotly; "and ye maunna forget that ye hev a faimily yersel. An auld weedower's no sic a big catch, that he maun look for perfection in the lass that takes him."

“Cannie, my wumman; I’m no’ sayin’ a word aither again yowe or the bairn; ye’re a wicelike lass, and it’s an uncommon nice bairn; but ’e ken it’s aye best to settle thae bits o’ maitters aforehaund. And how muckle siller micht ye hae na, Jessie, wumman?” queried Tam, with an insinuating slyness, peculiar to him.

“Mair than the feck o’ folk thinks, but I’m naither gaun to tell yowe nor nae ither body the length o’ my purse; sae ye needna speir ony mair quaistins about it,” answered Jess so determinedly that Tam, seeing no further information was to be gained from her, and taking it for granted that ‘the siller was there, richt eneuch,’ popped the question, was accepted, and married as soon as possible.

It was a week after the wedding, but as yet Jess had said nothing about the amount of money she possessed, although Tam had several times come as near asking as he dared, for already the dyker was beginning to realise that in his wife he had found a master. Desperately anxious, however, to find out ‘what Jess was worth,’ Tam hit on a plan to gain the desired information—but failed.

“Jess, wumman, I saw Whitehoose the day, and hei was sayin’ that Wastercleugh was gaun

to flit at Whussenday; and I've just been thinkin' that oo nicht dae waur than take it oorsels. What div ye think?"

"How muckle siller have 'e, Tam?"

"Weel—weel I hev aboot fifty pound, and if ye can pit another fifty til't, that wad stock the place, and ony lyin' siller wad be handy for the first year's rent," replied Tam, trying to make the best of the thing, though he had not intended letting his wife know anything of his own financial affairs.

"Whatna bank div ye keep yer siller in?" was Jess's next direct query.

"I keep it in nae bank; it's a hantle safer i' my ain kist," said Tam, testily.

"Man! that's a silly way o' daein'. I get ten per cent. on my siller, that's twae shillings for every pound I pit in; man, look at the interest ye nicht hev haen on that fifty by this time."

"Ay weel, twae shillings—that wad sune munt up; ay, wumman! that wad be graund interest for yin's bits o' bawbees; but, is't safe aneuch, think 'e?" asked Tam anxiously.

"Perfitly safe; I'll tell 'e what, Tam, I'm gaun doon to Souterhill the morn, and I'll juist take your twae three notes wi' iz and pit them in the same bank that mine's in, and then ye'll ken that they're safe, and aye makin' mair."

“But ye’ve never telled iz yet how muckle ye have yersel’, Jess?”

“That’s a surprise in store for ’e, Tam. Wait till oo sei a guid, no-ower-big ferm to let, and than oo’ll maybe gi’e thae bletherin’ sinners something worth speakin’ about.”

Tam was very unwilling to part with his cherished hoardings, but Jess managed him, and the dyker’s fifty pounds were finally deposited in a Souterhill bank, but in Jess’s name—not Tam’s.

Of course, Tam ‘kickit up a shine’ when he fully understood that ‘he had made a present of his siller to the wife,’ but Jess’s tongue and ready hands were more than a match for the dyker, who, like all tyrants, was a coward at heart. So Tam ‘was gled to gi’e in for a quiet life,’ and though Jess most undeniably ‘wore the breeks,’ she was a good worker and had the knack o’ hainin’ siller, which, in the dyker’s estimation, were the two greatest virtues a woman could possess. Therefore Tam Scott crept into the corner allotted to him, and was ‘haund and fit’ to his second wife, as his first had been to him.

“Dear sakes, hinnie! Tam’s turned as cannie as a lamb, now that Jess has fairly maistered him; I aye said he was catchin’ a tartar, but he’s fund it oot for hissel’ by this time. And though he

may girn and growl, he canna bite, for Jess drew his teeth when she took the pickle siller thrae him."

Such was Peggy Anderson's summing up of the situation ; and no doubt she knew all about it, for, although a good woman and a capital housewife, the old lady was a born gossip, and had all the news of the parish at her finger ends.

THE AULD HOOSE.

I canna leave the auld hoose noo,
O let it stand awee ;
Within it first I' saw the licht,
And in it I wad dee.

Langsyne my faither bigg'd the wa's
Wi' blue whinstane and clay ;
And 'neath its ruif the auld folk leaved,
Till death them ca'd away.

And here, when Will and I were wed,
We made oor bridal hame ;
'Twas little gowd or gear we had,
And less o' empty fame.

But rich were we in wedded love,
And blest in sweet content ;
Syne winsome bairns sat roond oor 'board,
And griefs were a' unkennt ;

Till 'Death,' the awsome angel, cuist
His shadow ower Life's day ;
And Will, my ain, my buirdly man,
Fell sick, and dwined away.

Again, and oft again I tholed
That angel's dreeded ca' ;
But when my wee, wee Jim was ta'en,
I tined the last o' a'.

And I am left, a fading bough
Upon a stricken tree ;
The hame we lo'ed is a' I ha'e,
And in it I wad dee.

Then let it staund a wee while yet ;
I'm auld, and unco dune ;
And, or it's lang, I'll get the ca'
To meet my ain abune.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

SWIFTLY the years slip by, even in the quiet vale of Drummeldale. Revivifying spring makes green the hillsides, o'er which the sturdy lambs disport themselves in frolicsome glee; the meadows are gay with golden buttercups, and the hedgerows white with hawthorn blossom.

Summer comes, and the breeze is fragrant with the perfume of the roses and lilac in the cottage gardens; haymakers are busy turning the newly-mown swathes upon which depends the winter's provision for the indispensable cow which nearly every cottager possesses.

Smiling autumn, garlanded with purple heather from the hills and russet leaves from the forest, brings home the yellow sheaves and gathers in the precious fruits of the earth until the store is complete; and Drummeldale is ready for the November blasts which come sweeping down the valley, heralding the approach of winter's wild army of tempests and storms.

But very little do the Drummeldale folk care for either stormy winds or wintry weather; around their cosy peat fires the home circles gather with their knitting, reading, or other occupations. Time was—and not so long ago—when the cheery hum of the spinning wheel could be heard in every house, but nowadays ‘the wheel’ is relegated to the garret; and with a different kind of ‘wheel’ the younger generation is much better acquainted; while the music of a violin, a melodeon, or piano is a much commoner accompaniment to the social crack round the family fireside than the constant ‘burr’ of that homely industry which every good housewife considered a necessary accomplishment.

But the revolving seasons brought changes, other than the seed-times and harvests, the summers and winters of the passing years. There were vacant chairs by many a hearth in the quiet valley. Young people had gone out to push their fortunes amid the stir and strife of a busy world, which knew not Drummeldale; while the old folks waited for ‘the call’ to another and a better world, where

“Faith’s journey ends in welcome to the weary,

And heaven, the heart’s true home, is gained at last.”

Chirsty Grieve was failing; her memory for every day occurrences was perceptibly on the de-

cline. 'Auld langsyne' things she remembered perfectly, but the events of yesterday were completely forgotten. She was also getting deaf, and her sight was dim; but, then, she was upwards of eighty-four, and no doubt that fact accounted for those signs and signals of a coming change. Otherwise, Chirsty was well and cheerful as ever.

A comfortable and commodious new house had been built upon the site of the old one, and luxurious surroundings made her increasing weakness less evident to herself, or others.

The aged are not fond of changes, and perhaps the old woman sometimes sighed for the theekit but-and-ben, where most of her family had been born and brought up, where many joys and sorrows had brightened or shadowed life's chequered scene. But Chirsty was 'aye content;' in storm or sunshine, she invariably found 'muckle to be thankfu' for,' and in 'the new hoose,' her cup was overflowing with mercies.

The end came suddenly. A stroke of paralysis deprived her of power and speech, though not of consciousness, and the calm spirit of thankful content still looked placidly from her eyes. Then a week later, another stroke closed those peaceful grey orbs for ever, and Chirsty had realised the wish of her favourite and oft-repeated gospel sonnet—

“While thus I laid my listening ear
Close to the door of heaven to hear,
And then the sacred page did view,
Which told me all I heard was true.

Then said I, Oh to mount away,
And leave this clog of heavy clay,
May wings of time more hasty fly,
That I may join that song on high.”

In a distant town, Eily was employed as nursery-governess to the grandchildren of Lady Logan, the widow of a well-known Scottish Professor of Logic. The news of her grandmother's illness did not reach the girl until it was too late to see her in life, although Eily's first impulse was to fly to the bedside of the beloved sufferer, and seek by some means, untried, to ward off the dreaded enemy; but her mistress counselled patience.

“When this letter was written, your dear grandmother was not expected to survive many hours, and probably by this time she is no more, and your journey would be in vain. Wait for another letter, and see what news it brings.”

Lady Logan was known as a clever, active old lady, with a keen eye and a sharp tongue, and few would have credited her with the depth of kindness and sympathy manifested towards

sorrow-stricken Eily in that dark hour of desolation. The next post brought the sad tidings of Grannie's death; and in an utter abandonment of grief, the young girl threw herself upon her bed, refusing to be comforted. It was her first great sorrow, and at eighteen such trials seem altogether overwhelming.

Black darkness had suddenly swallowed up every trace of life's brightness, the sun was shrouded in impenetrable clouds, through which no golden ray of light could ever pierce to cheer the mourner's heavy heart.

Grannie was gone; and Eily's world was desolate. For her, there was nothing more to live for—or so she thought then—but other loves come to fill the aching void, and other griefs came with them; and Eily learned, by sad experience, how much the human heart can bear without breaking.

With the utmost patience and tenderest ministrations, Lady Logan waited upon Eily in her distressed state of mind, until the first force of her grief had spent itself; then she left her alone with her sorrow, only occasionally stealing in with some dainty offering of food, or but to give a caressing touch, with the sympathetic murmur of "Poor Eily, poor little Eily?"

The tender strings of youthful hearts
Are quick to feel the touch of pain;
And suffering's sharp envenomed dart
Thrills keen through every nerve and vein.

Pale Sorrow's smile seems but a frown—
The frown of fate and woful care;
They fail to see the starry crown
That gleams amid her dusky hair.

Their eyes are dimmed with falling tears
For transient joys, that fade too soon;
Far down the vista of the years,
Those mists of morning veil the noon.

But God's bright sunshine beams behind
The darkest cloud that hides our way;
His chastening hand is always kind,
And though He smite, He will not slay.

Experience, with her jewelled rod,
Points upward to the changeless sky;
Above the clouds, the throne of God,
Supreme o'er fate, He reigns on high.

Pale Sorrow's smile, to older eyes,
Seems tender as a mother's kiss;
Above the mists of grief they rise,
And catch a glimpse of paradise.

Along the path, where Sorrow leads,
The Master trod in days gone by,
And for our weakness and our needs,
The strength and grace He will supply.

His light will guide our faltering feet
O'er rugged roads and 'wilderer ways ;
His love will make our sorrows sweet,
And turn our faithless fears to praise.

The crosses that we bear on earth,
May be our golden harps in heaven ;
The lustrous crowns of priceless worth,
May be the tears that here were given.

DRUMMELSIDE.

THE old folk at Drummelside were getting frail. Adam Symington, once so hale and hearty, was now almost an invalid; rheumatism and dropsy, with their attendant ills, combined to make the old man's declining years somewhat of a burden to himself; and Jenny Grieve, though brisk as ever, was not so nimble on her feet as in days of yore. 'The lassie,' now 'a strappin' hizzie o' nineteen, wi' a laud o' her ain,' took most of the duties and responsibility upon her own substantial shoulders, and tried to save her aged master and mistress all she could; but the time had come when it was felt that the little farm would need to be given up, for lack of strength to work it.

It was a trial to the old couple: they had been in Drummelside most of their married life, and had toiled hard to win a livelihood from its green meadow-lands. It had never been a 'money-making concern,' as the heavy floods were continually carrying off the water-dykes, and overflowing the fields, sweeping all' before them with

destructive force. Still, they had 'been fairly comfortable and very content, and to them Drummelside was the most desirable habitation on the face of the whole earth. However, by arranging with a neighbouring farmer to take the land and steadings, Sir Francis was able to give the old people the use of the house as long as they lived, a boon for which they were very grateful, and by which the dreaded 'flittin'' was averted; and so, in quiet rest and peace, Adam and Jenny crowned 'a youth of labour with an age of ease,' while 'the lassie,' with many tears—for she too had learned to love Drummelside—'row'd up her wee kist, wi' her a' in 't,' and left for a more remunerative situation.

"I think oo maun send for little Eily, to come and bide wi' iz a while," said Adam one day, when Jenny and he were feeling 'unco dune,' and a ministering hand was becoming 'a felt want.'

"Ay, that's weel thocht o', na; oo'll juist send away for her," responded Jenny.

So Eily was sent for, and came to keep the auld folk company, as she had come to her Grannie many years before. Alas!—there was no loving Grannie now to bid her bairn welcome; and Eily's heart was full of sadness 'for days that were no more.'

“Ay, hinnie, ye’ll miss yer grannie this time,” said Sandy the post sympathetically, as they neared Sunnyburn: and the girl’s eyes began to overflow at sight of the dear old home.

Sandy himself was getting up in years, and not so able for the long daily journeys as he used to be; but his thirty years of service were nearly up, and the old postman would soon be retiring on a well-earned pension.

“An honest man, close buttoned to the chin,
Broadcloth without, and a warm heart within.”

But Eily found many changes at Sunnyburn besides the absence of her ‘loved and lost.’ These four short years had left many traces of ‘time’s noiseless foot’ in the green valley of Drummeldale. The children of what seemed but yesterday were growing up and choosing sweethearts for themselves, with as much billing and cooing as mated doves. Youths had become men, and maidens matrons; while ‘silver threads amongst the gold’ marked the progress of the years in the grizzled locks of the middle-aged. But

“The auld folk, the dear auld folk,
Weel lo’ed in days of yore,”

were, many of them, laid to their long and last rest in the lone kirkyard among the hills.

Eben Anderson had turned an old man, stooping wearily, and leaning heavily on his stout staff, as he slowly, but daily, wended his way to the fateful waterside, where Wattie and Kate had met their untimely end.

Peggy, too, had aged, but the girlish brightness of her beloved Gracie had helped greatly to chase the shadows from the older woman's pathway.

Gracie was twenty, and the embodiment of all youthful charms; tall, slender, dark-eyed, with a profusion of curls framing an oval face of clear olive complexion; a small mouth, with carmined lips, which gave the needed touch of colour to the somewhat foreign cast of countenance peculiar to this fair exotic flower, so carelessly cast many years ago at Eben Anderson's door.

But Gracie had other gifts besides her brightness and beauty; never had a voice like hers been heard in Drummeldale.

"The lassie's a born singer," said Sandy Gow, as Gracie's woodnotes wild rang sweet and clear across the rippling burn, and joined in with the blacksmith's stentorian voice, as, in the retirement of the smiddy, he allowed his vocal ability full scope in the fine old Jacobite song, 'Come ower the stream, Charlie,' fitly accompanied by the music of the anvil hammer, as it welded into shape a flaming horse shoe.

“Ay, the lassie’s a born singer, and it’s a sin to try and hinder her thrae lairnin’,” observed Sandy to himself, after the two had finished their duet.

Gracie had always been in great request at local concerts and friendly gatherings in the neighbourhood of her home, but lately she had preened her wings for a higher flight, and had sung two or three times on a concert platform at Souterhill, to the delight of all who listened to her bird-like notes. Moreover, a certain Signor de Gracia, of professional repute, who happened to be in the town and heard her sing, had sought an interview, and offered to teach her free of charge, if she would come to Edinburgh, and put her voice under his training and tuition.

Gracie returned home filled with joyful anticipations of her future prospects, and enthusiasm for her newly-found friend; but unexpected opposition upset her plans and disappointed all her hopes. Eben was against it from the first, and Rob Scott could see no sense in it; but Peggy and she, between them, might have talked those two into acquiescence had not Mrs Hamilton suddenly appeared on the scene and strongly denounced the Italian professor as an “evil-minded, bad man, whose patronage was an insult, and whose proffered

assistance was only too likely to prove a lure to ruin."

Whether old Marget, who acted as caretaker of the tumble-down house at Braehead, had sent word to her mistress of Gracie's intention to study music under Signor de Gracia, or how Mrs Hamilton came to hear of it, no one knew; but altogether unexpectedly she arrived, and having settled the business, she immediately took her departure, leaving Gracie a sadly disappointed girl; for, of course, Eben now sternly forbade another word on the subject, and even Peggy was aghast at the thought of the peril her bairn had so narrowly escaped.

Rob Scott was twenty-one, but as yet he was not in a position to take a wife. Every penny he could save went to swell the store which he had entrusted to Eben Anderson's keeping; but it would be another year or two before Rob could set up house, or reasonably expect Eben to confide Gracie to his care.

Meanwhile, they were very happy, for although Gracie had most of the young men in the parish at her beck and call, Rob was not in the least jealous, for he knew very well that Gracie had no particular preference for any of them; and it was to him she came with all her little troubles,

and to his ears only she confessed her innermost thoughts and aspirations.

“If that squeef, Airthur Hamilton, only keeps away till oo’re mairrit, it’ll bei a’ richt,” was Rob’s oft-repeated soliloquy. The old hatred and jealousy of ‘Young Braeheid’ had not abated with the passing years, and Rob’s only anxiety was the dread of Arthur’s return to Drummeldale before he could make Gracie his wife.

* * * * *

Peacefully the winter months went by at Drummelside; quiet, happy days they were for Eily and her aged friends. Comfortably seated round the old-fashioned fireside, with its bright brass fender and fire-irons reflecting the cheerful glow of the flaming logs and peat. That kind of fuel was common in Drummelside; ‘coals were dear, and far to fetch; but peats and sticks could be had ony day for the bringin’ hame.’

Uncle Adam sat in his easy chair on one side of the fire, and Aunt Jenny on the other, with Eily on the crepie stool between them, reading aloud for their benefit, or listening with enjoyment to the langsyne stories which both the old people were so good at telling.

The ‘Edinburgh Daily Review,’ which Adam received regularly from a nephew, was a source

of much entertainment to all; but the old man's eyesight had sadly failed, and he was now almost dependent upon others for his reading; and that, to the keenly intelligent elder, was a great deprivation. Eily, however, was very willing to devote her eyes to his service, and almost from beginning to end the newspaper was read aloud.

"Juist gi'e a look what like the merkits are the day," would frequently be the farmer's request.

"Now, let's hear how the war's gaun on."

That having been gone into, it was Jenny's turn next.

"There na, look ower the accidents and the daiths, and sei if there's onybody oo ken among them."

These items of news having received careful attention, Adam would light his pipe, and settle himself comfortably in his chair, ready to deal with more substantial and important matters.

"Ay, now oo'll sei what they're daein' i' the Hoose o' Parliament."

And on, and on, through all the endless bickerings, polite sarcasms, and long-winded speeches of the politicians of that day, plodded Eily, with Adam listening to every word, as attentively as if his own destiny depended upon their ponderous deliberations.

'The Souterhill Reporter,' 'Signs of The Times,' and Spurgeon's Sermons were weekly feasts of intellectual entertainment, which offered variety in the bill of fare. But the Bible was the unfailing resource and comfort of their quiet everyday life; morning, noon, and night, its sacred truths were read and commented upon, with a relish and a fervour ever fresh and inexhaustible.

The budding trees and hedgerows were giving promise of approaching spring, when Adam's trouble suddenly took a turn for the worse, developing acute symptoms, which showed that the end was not far off.

Sitting by the parlour fire one wild March evening, when the rain was falling in torrents, and the floods were all around their dwelling, the old folks dozed peacefully in their armchairs, while Eily's busy fingers sorted up Aunt Jenny's best bonnet, preparatory for the coming fine weather and a visit which the old lady intended paying to Jessie Jamieson, now the happy mother of an interesting family in a shepherd's cot among the distant hills.

There was nothing unusual in her thoughts or surroundings that evening, but all at once, and without warning, a dark shadow seemed to fall

over the brightness of Eily's life. The girl was in her usual health, and hitherto untroubled by any presentiments of evil, yet suddenly and unaccountably a premonition of approaching death took complete possession of her mind. Quietly, and without disturbing the old people, she rose and laid aside her finished work, arranged several small matters, and wrote a letter of farewell to her friends; for that the summons was meant for herself she had no manner of doubt. Strangely enough, it never occurred to her that either her aged uncle or aunt was more likely to be taken away than she was, in the morning of her days; but Eily had never been strong nor of robust health, and when the angel of death spread his dark wings over the dwelling, and the young girl's sensitive spirit discerned his nearness, she accepted the call for her own.

After Adam had 'ta'en the buiks,' and the old folks were ready for bed, Eily bade them an affectionate and 'last' good-night, and went upstairs to 'the minister's room,' where she slept. Here she made all her preparations for 'the sleep that was to know no awaking;' the clean white night-gown was laid out conspicuously on the table, so that it might be in readiness for those who would perform the last offices for the dead;

then, committing her soul into the hands of its Creator, before whose face it soon would appear, the impressionable girl calmly and quietly lay down to rest.

“Eily, my lassie, ye maun come away doon, yer uncle’s turned waur. I doot if he’ll ever sei the mornin’, and wi’ the waiter a’ roond iz oo canna get aither a doctor or help o’ ony kind.”

Suddenly awakened from a sound sleep by her aunt’s voice, Eily sat up with a bewildered kind of feeling that there was a mistake somewhere, and that it was she who ought to have been ill.

“What time is it, Aunt Jenny?” she asked wonderingly.

“It’s atween twal and yin o’clock; now, I’ll leave the cannil aside ye, and haste ye doon as quick as ye can, hinnie.”

Speedily resuming the garments which, only a few hours before, she had ‘laid aside for ever,’ Eily’s mind became clearer and more comprehensive, but the thought that it was the dear old man that was to be taken away gave her a keener pang of sorrow than she had felt for her own expected demise.

“I canna lest lang, Jenny, if I’m to be nae better; but dinna be putten aboot, my wumman; juist let me lie till the waiter fa’s, and some o’ them can wun through to gie ye a haund.”

This, Eily heard her uncle saying as she descended the stairs; and a night of sore trouble and much suffering it proved to the aged invalid, whose already weakened frame could ill afford its lessening strength; but towards morning the intensity of his pain abated, and he lingered for a week afterwards. The old man liked to have Eily by his bedside, and she was never in her bed again till after his death; when she slept, it was only for an hour or two on a sofa in the room, where she could hear his slightest call.

Very precious to the girl were those last hours with the saintly old man, whose day was ebbing to its close. All pain had left him, and only the increasing weakness gave token of the impending dissolution. Hour after hour in peaceful quietness he would rest, while Eily read to him from the Bible he loved so well; or with his emaciated hand caressing her auburn curls, he would talk to her of many things; recalling days and events long past, or trying to pierce the veil which hid the future world from his longing gaze, while kindly and numerous were the advices and exhortations addressed to his youthful nurse.

“Leeve a canny life, my lassie, and ye’ll have a’ the mair coamfort when ye come to the end o’t. The ill that yin has dune comes back, and

plants thorns in the deein' bed; but ony guid turn yin ever did, for aither freend or enemy, helps to make daith the easier. Ay, it's a queer thing, daith; yin thinks unco little aboot it when they're weel, but, when 'e come face to face wi't, it's a stern reality, that makes human nature shrink 'back; and that last step out o' this life, into unkenned space, is yin oo wad a' fain escape if oo could. Ye sei, man wasna made for daith; it was sin that brocht that on him; if there had been nae sin i' the world, there wad hae been nae daith to reckon wi', but 'thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

The Millennium and the Battle of Armageddon were two coming events firmly believed in and often discussed by the Cameronians; and one day after the old elder had lain for some time in quiet slumber, he woke up with a satisfied look on his peaceful countenance.

"I have been sleepin', lassie; and I had a kind o' by-ordinar dream."

"What was it, uncle? tell me about it," said Eily.

"Ay weel, ye're young yet, and maybe ye'll leeve to sei my dream fulfilled, for *yon*, I think, will be the *richt* way o't."

Hearing that her husband was awake, Jenny had come ben, and, along with Eily, sat and listened to the old man's prophetic vision.

“I dreamed it was the Battle o' Armageddon, and a' the airmies o' a' the nations were gethered thegither on a great wide plain, under the leadership o' the Antichrist. But on the hillside abune them, and wi' naething in their haunds but open Bibles, stuid the believers, the sons of God, and in their midst the Prince of Peace. Abune their heids waved a white banner, and the word 'Redemption' in letters of bluid was a' that was on't. The Christians were but a handfu' in compairison wi' the hosts below, and naething seemed shuirer than that they wad be completely destroyed; but juist as the enemy began to move forrit to take the hill, them that was abune raised the forty-sixth psalm, and as the soond o' the singin' floated doon the brae the queerest thing heppen'd; for insteid o' the airmed legions pressin' on to cut the Christians to pieces, they commenced to quarrel amang theirsels, and it wasna lang afore they were a' fechtin' through yin anither. But the folk on the hill juist stuid and lookit on 'till the battle was bye, and then the remnant that was left o' that great army cam' and laid doon their bluidy swords at the Redeemer's feet; and that ended a' the wars; for the Millennium had begun.

It was a bright spring day when the spirit of the good old Cameronian elder took its flight to that unknown but greatly desired country—

“Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice opprest.
We know not, O we know not,
What joys await us there;
What radiance of glory,
What light beyond compare.”

“He has gotten a bonny day to gang hame, and it’ll bei a braw hame he’s gane till, for there never leaved a humbler-minded man, or a truer Christian, than Adam Symington,” said Peggy Anderson, as she stood by the bed whereon lay the still form, while Eily tearfully arranged the first snowdrops of the year to place upon the motionless breast of the dear departed.

Jessie Jamieson had come to them for a few days, but the requirements of a young family demanded her maternal care, and reluctantly enough she had to leave the bereaved widow and her young niece alone with their dead. An epidemic of illness had laid many on sick-beds, and there was no one available they cared to ask to come and be with them till the funeral was

over, but Aunt Jenny and Eily were in nowise troubled at their lack of company, for the hearts of both were too sad for any feelings of fear.

But Eily's experiences in the shadowy vale of death were not yet over; for her aunt, worn out with watching and anxiety, took suddenly ill in the night, and for some hours it seemed as if she too would take her departure from this life. Candle in hand, Eily hurried through the silent house, seeking the needful remedies for the sufferer upstairs. Beside her uncle's bed she paused for a moment, noting the statuesque lines into which the covering linen had fallen around the cold clay of her revered friend. The next night brought a similar experience, but by that time there was only the coffin upon which to cast a loving look. Happily, Aunt Jenny recovered from her illness, and by the funeral day was able to be downstairs again.

It had been Eily's first hand to hand conflict with death, but through it all she had been strong and fearless; and it was not until all was over that a few words from a thoughtless neighbour upset her equilibrium, and brought on a nervous illness which lasted several weeks.

"It maun hae been awfu' lonely for 'e ower there, wi' the auld man lyin' deid, and Jenny sae

ill. It's a guid thing 'e wasna feared, for I couldna hev dune it masel'; and Tam Smith was tellin' iz that he saw the deid lights dancin' round the hoose yae nicht when he was gaun hame late."

The speaker meant to be sympathetic, but the idea of 'the deid lights' took possession of Eily's mind, although common-sense told her plainly enough that it was her own candle moving through the house that had given rise to the tale; yet strive against it as she would, a nervous dread of the darkness haunted her for weeks after, and it was many days before she recovered her wonted health and brightness again.

ETTRICK VALE.

Sweet Ettrick Vale, sweet Ettrick Vale,
Thy breezes roond me blaw,
And memories dear o' ither days
Thy weel lo'ed scenes reca'.
The whisperin' o' the birken leaves,
The murmurin' o' the stream,
And the cushie cooin' i' the wud
Sets music to my dream.

Green are thy braes, sweet Ettrick Vale,
Wi' floo'rs thy meads are fair ;
And the bonny hawthorn's snowy bloom
Wi' fragrance fills the air.
The mavis i' the lift sae blue
Thrills forth his blithesome sang,
To cheer his wee broon mate that sits
Her callow brood amang.

There's mony a nook in Ettrick Vale
Where beauty blooms unseen ;
And foamin' falls in ferny linns
Where nae stranger's fit has been.
The wild birds sing in Ettrick Vale
Frae morn till daylight wanes ;
And when their heids are 'neath their wings
Unbroken stillness reigns.

The auld kirkyaird in Ettrick Vale—
The leal and true are there,
And yince warm hearts lie cauld and still,
In the angel's watchfu' care.
The dear auld folk fu' soond they sleep
Beneath yon shelterin' tree—
Sae kind were they, sae free o' guile,
Their like we'll nae mair see.

Afar from the sweet Ettrick Vale,
'Mid busier scenes I roam ;
But aye to me, though far or near,
Fair Ettrick Vale is home ;
And when my wanderin' days are dune,
And life is ower below,
I fain would rest in the auld kirkyaird,
Within soond o' the Ettrick's flow

THE WOOLIN' O 'T.

IT was again the sunny month of June, and Drummeldale, with its green hills and gay meadows, was looking fresh and fair as a maiden in her teens.

'And ilka bird sang o' its love,' while nature's varied sounds made melody for the summer breeze. Very beautiful is the quiet valley, in this the sweetest month of all the year; and nowhere is it fairer than at Drummelside, with its verdant pastures, flowery meads, and shimmering birken trees.

The gloomy shadows had folded their dark wings, and departed for a season from the old-fashioned farm-house; and Aunt Jenny and her assistant, Eily, were about, and busy as usual.

Between them they had delved and planted the square garden with the needful cabbage and potatoes; and now the weeds were asserting their rights to flourish—rights which the two industrious gardeners zealously contested.

Jenny Grieve was on the eve of paying her long deferred visit to Jessie Jamieson, and everything

had to be in order before she could feel at leisure 'to wun away a day or twae.' For the old woman, accustomed all her life to the constant routine of imperative duties devolving upon farmers' daughters and wives, could not realise the freedom of her changed circumstances, and considered her absence, even for a day, an occasion which required to be worked up for, both before she went and after she returned. And when, after many last injunctions concerning the feeding of the cow, the calf, and the hens, she was fairly away in the post's gig, Eily and Gracie Anderson (who had come to keep her company) felt like two children let loose from school, and raced back to Drummelside in such exuberant spirits that, had the old woman seen them, it is probable her anxieties respecting the live stock left in their care might have been considerably increased.

Two merry girls, of nineteen and twenty, left to themselves for a brief period of companionship, were not likely to settle down quietly, for that day at least; so after indulging in all sorts of light-hearted capers and cantrips, they went off to the wood for backfulls of sticks, the weight of which helped to tone down the effervescence of their youthful gaiety, so that the cow, the calf, and the hens received their due meed of attention.

In the evening, came Rob Scott and a young joiner friend, both on the same laudable errand bent, 'to keep the lasses thrae wearyin'.'

When the gloaming shades began to fall, the girls urged their departure; but the youths preferred to wait, 'till the mune was richt up.' Before that time, however, the young caretakers were glad of their company, as heavy footsteps were heard approaching the door, and a loud knock set their hearts in a flutter of fear.

The lads, for reasons of their own, refused to answer the summons; so Eily gathered courage, and boldly enquired, 'Who's there?' No answer having been returned to this question, the key was turned in the lock, and the owner of the heavy feet, after making a slow tour round the house, went away down the walk leading to the farm steading.

"It's an Irish tramp," said Eily in a whisper, she having caught a glimpse of white corduroys in the faint moonlight. Terrified Gracie clung to Rob, with a trustful tenacity which that young man seemed greatly to appreciate; though had the girls noticed the understanding glance which passed betwixt the youths, they might have suspected that 'the tramp' was no stranger to them.

Directly, however, that the moon was up, a lantern was lighted, and the two valiant protectors were sent out to search the barn for the vagrant, who doubtless would be making his bed amongst the straw, to which in all probability he would set fire before morning. It certainly did not take them long to inspect the premises, and they soon returned with the comforting report that 'there was naebody about the place.'

But they found a locked door at the farm-house, and no persuasions on their part could induce the girls to open it again; so the two lads had to take their way home.

Rob and his step-mother 'didna sowder weel,' as the dyker expressed it, but as Jess had always lodged in the house, Rob and she had fewer opportunities of quarrelling than might otherwise have been the case.

At that time there were five or six joiners and dykers staying at Tam's; and no doubt it was one of their number who—knowing where the youths had gone—did his best 'to gi'e them and their lasses a fricht.' It was also owing to their kindly attentions that, when the late comers—after taking off their boots on the step—cautiously and quietly opened the door, a huge iron tray, which had been carefully set up above the inside

lintels, came down with a ringing and terrific clatter on the stone floor of the passage.

“Preserve us a’ to the day! what’s that?” cried Tam, springing out of his bed, under the impression that, ‘the hoose was comin’ doon,’ and reaching the entry just in time to share the contents of a can of water, which had been ingeniously balanced on top of the inner door. But the involuntary shower-bath in no wise cooled the dyker’s wrath, when he discovered the cause of the startling disturbance; and the two youths came in for some ‘ill tongue,’ both from Tam and his angry wife.

“The farce o’ callants like yowe bidin’ oot till half-past ten o’clock at nicht; it’s perfitley redeeklus! And if it happens again, ‘e may bide oot a’ thegither,” raged Jess, as she hunted up dry clothes for the drookit dyker; while the perpetrators of the joke vainly tried to stifle their laughter at the absurd success of their tricks.

The older hands amongst them were more wary when they went out on a moonlight expedition to see their sweethearts, usually taking the precaution to give a sympathetic comrade the hint to ‘gi’e a look that thae sorras didna bar the door, or try ony o’ their daft nonsense the nicht.’ The country custom of ‘gaun to sei the lasses’ at night was

the common mode of courtship in Drummeldale, as in other rural districts, and there was really much less harm in it than evil minds might have imagined; indeed,

“When Love took up the harp of life,
And smote on all its chords with might,”

as love has a habit of doing, with the lives of peer and ploughman alike, these rustic lovers could find no leisure time for their woolin', until, their day's work over, they were at liberty to trudge away 'ow'er moors and mosses mony O,' to where their own particular 'Nannie' might be serving.

“Gi'e me a canny 'oor at e'en,
My airms about my dearie O,”

was often the highest inspiration and brightest anticipation of the homely toiler, as he laboriously followed the plough over the furrowed field, or climbed the green braes in search of the wandering sheep committed to his care. Occasionally the tricks played on rival swains were more malicious than amusing, and one instance, in which the biter got bitten, is worth recording.

Tam Laidlaw, the herd, and Wull Cairns, the ploughman at Blackhill, were both doing their best to court Jean Hislop, who was serving at 'an ootbye ferm place' not far distant. Jean

was an heiress, in a small way, a deceased relative having left her 'a theekit hoose, wi' its plenishin'.' This was no doubt a great attraction for Wull, who was of a parsimonious turn of mind; but which of her admirers Jean most favoured was not easily determined, as she seemed to treat them both with the same coquetish indifference, or sweet amiability, according to the mood she happened to be in when they came. Tam, being in love, a little encouragement sufficed to keep the flame burning; but Wull was more practical than sentimental; and, considering that 'a lass wi' a hoose o' her ain wasna to be gotten every day,' he determined to rid her of his rival's attentions, so that he might have all the more chance himself.

Accordingly, he enlisted the services of a mischief-loving loon, commonly designated 'the Craw,' who was employed as cowherd at Blackhill, and, having borrowed a sheet and pillow-slip, the two set out one night to 'gi'e Tam a gliff that he wadna forget in a hurry.'

'The Craw,' having been posted near the yett (the gate) across the road which led to the farmhouse where Jean was servin', Wull retired behind a clump of whins farther off, where he donned his ghostly habiliments. After a long wait the plain

tive wheeple of a belated whaup gave token that 'the Crow' was wide awake, and Tam on his way out. Jean accompanied him to the yett, and after an affectionate leave-taking, 'the laud' set off on his homeward journey, while 'the lass' slowly retraced her steps to the house.

Presently, however, an eldritch screech rang out on the quiet night, and a tall white figure, with weirdly waving draperies, sprang up from amongst the whin bushes—causing Tam Laidlaw to stand stock still, in sheer astonishment; while Jean and 'the Crow' eagerly watched the result of the plot.

But Wull had miscalculated the amount of the shepherd's courage; he had also forgotten that his rival carried a stick; and so, when Tam, instead of fainting from fear, or taking to his heels in affright, boldly advanced upon the supposed ghost with uplifted nibbie, 'the apparition,' evidently considering discretion the better part of valour, fled across the moor, with the enemy in close pursuit; while 'the Crow,' in perfect ecstasies of delight, danced wildly about, clapping his hands, and yelling out to the racers—

"Rin fast, white deevil; rin fast, min; or the black yin 'll hev 'e."

And Jean, having witnessed the first part of the

ploy, and hearing later on that 'the herd had gotten haud o' Wull, and gi'en him an awfu' threshin', endorsed the sentiment, 'none but the brave deserve the fair,' by bestowing her hand and her house on the valiant and victorious Tam.

Nowadays, however, there are shorter hours of labour, even in the country, and holidays are much more frequent, so that there is no longer any necessity for the lover losing a night's sleep by going to see his lass; and certainly the old time custom is one that is more honoured in the breach than the observance.

TU WHIT! TU WHOO!

Ken ye the lass wi' the gowden tresses?

Ken ye the lad baith big and braw?

A lass as fair as the flowers she presses

'Neath her hastin' feet at the e'enin' fa'.

Tu Whit! Tu Whoo! Tu Whit! Tu Whoo!

Ken ye the glen wi' the brambles breery,

Where the bourtree gleams like drifted snaw?

Ken ye the fit, or the face sae cheery,

That comes to the glen i' the e'enin' fa'?

Tu Whit! Tu Whoo! Tu Whit! Tu Whoo!

Ken ye the 'oor that 'mang 'oors gaes fleetest,

To the lass sae trig, and the lad sae true?

Ken ye the joy ower a' joys the sweetest?

A wise bird cries, Tu Whit! Tu Whoo!

Tu Whit! Tu Whoo! Tu Whit! Tu Whoo!

Ken ye ocht o' lips that are honey laden,

Ocht o' hearts that wi' love are fu'?

Ken ye life's best, for a man or maiden?

The Owl replies, To Woo! Tu Woo!

Tu Whit! Tu Whoo! Tu Whit! Tu Whoo!

AN ELOPEMENT.

SUMMER was declining into autumn, when the Hamiltons, after a long absence, returned to Braehead. Common rumour had it that Arthur had speedily gone through his own patrimony, and was now depending upon his mother's small income for his support—that, in short, he was one of that contemptible class of society, the idle young man. Rob Scott heard of his coming with mingled feelings of hatred, jealousy, and dismay.

“If Gracie and mei had only been mairrit afore he cam, the polished guid-for-naething that he is,” ruefully sighed the young joiner to himself for the hundredth time; but the lack of money barred the way to their immediate union; and what changes might not the next two months bring forth?

Gracie herself scouted the idea of Arthur Hamilton ever regaining anything of his old supremacy over her will and affections.

“I daursay a fine gentleman like him wadna

bawther his heid about a country lassie like mei; and at ony rate I want naething adae wi' him and his idle ways. If he wad gang and work for his mother it wad set him better than leevin' on her, like the yuisless neer-dae-weel that he is."

After a month's shooting and fishing with various old acquaintances, the young master of Braehead began to find the time hanging heavily on his hands, and, for lack of other amusement, sought to renew his boyish intimacy with Gracie Anderson, whom he had occasionally seen since his return to Braehead, and still admired.

For a week or two, Gracie fought shy of him, but her unwilling concessions to his polite requests only added a zest to the pleasure of overcoming her unusual obdurateness, and of undermining her conscientious constancy to her country lover. Moreover, the chance of annoying his old enemy, Rob Scott, was one that afforded Arthur's mean nature a deep satisfaction.

So with more than his usual energy, in order to play his heartless game, young Hamilton put forth all his arts—which were neither few nor simple—to turn the girl away from her allegiance to the plain but warm-hearted lad who would gladly have laid down his life for love of her.

For a time Gracie continued proof against Ham-

ilton's wiles, but gradually her icy demeanour thawed under the effusive warmth of his admiration; while his persistent appeals for her companionship in the dull home at Braehead stirred her sympathy. Mrs Hamilton, unwittingly, aided her son's schemes by frequently inviting Gracie to the house; probably, she too appreciated the brightness which the girl's presence imparted to the dingy old rooms of the almost uninhabitable dwelling. But the strongest influence which Arthur Hamilton gained over Gracie was due—not to his flattering encomiums on her beauty, but to the genuine delight he had in her singing; and he was not slow to denounce 'the narrow-minded bigotry' which had barred her pathway to the glittering pinnacle of fame which her great musical gifts deserved, and which he assured her was within easy reach.

Need it be wondered at that such a prospect excited poor Gracie's vanity and stimulated her wish to gain distinction as a great singer? The interference of her guardians with her desire to study music had rankled sorely in the girl's breast, for undoubtedly the great ambition of her life was to draw crowds of admiring listeners to the voice which only required a course of training under a proficient master to render perfect. In Arthur

Hamilton she had found—or thought she had found—a qualified judge and sympathising friend, who was willing, nay eager, to remove all obstacles from her path, and place her where she could have the best teachers obtainable.

But dazzled though Gracie was with the prospect of attaining her ambitious desires, she was not forgetful of the claims which her foster-parents, and also Rob Scott, had upon her obedience and affection; nor had she any serious intentions of owing her chances of success to the generosity of the Hamiltons; and if at that critical period wiser and gentler measures had been used in dealing with her wishes, the sequel might have been different.

But when the matter was laid before Eben, he at once refused his consent, adding some severe strictures upon ‘the consaitedness o’ thae folk that can sing, or think they can; though no’ yin o’ them can ever compare wi’ the laiverock, that sings a’ day up i’ the lift, without a thocht o’ lis’ners.’

With Rob, Gracie fared no better, for the already sorely - strained patience of that young man entirely gave way when he came to know the latest proposal of his hated rival. That the whole thing was a wicked scheme of Hamilton’s

to get the unsuspecting girl into his power, Rob never doubted, nor did he hesitate to tell her so; and though she assured him that she was to stay with friends of her own while pursuing her musical studies, such a dubious security for the preservation of the proprieties had no recommendations in the eyes of Rob Scott. "Airthur Hamilton was aye a crawlin' snake a' his days; if he could creep up an' gi'e yin a nip afore they kenned he was there, an' then take to his heels, that was mair in his line than a strecht-forrit, staunding-up fecht. An' that's exac'ly what he's daein' the now; he hates mei, an' he's tryin' to creep roond yowe, Gracie, till he gets 'e intil his poo'er, an' at the same time be revaingd on mei. But mind 'e this, Gracie Anderson, if 'e gang away to Edinburgh wi' thae Hamiltons, an' against the wull o' yer freends here, ye'll rue it a' the days o' yer life; an' if ye're determined to make a fule o' yersel', and o' mei as weel, takin' up wi' a wild, unprincipled character like Airthur Hamilton, 'e may; but 'e needna think that I'll have ony mair adae wi' 'e.'

The undisguised sorrow and bitterness that was overflowing Rob's heart when he thus addressed the girl he loved might have touched the sympathies of even a stranger; but after the insidious

flatteries of her more refined admirer, Rob's plain speaking sounded vulgar and uncouth to Gracie's ears, and the humiliating hint that he would have nothing more to do with her if she opposed his wishes aroused her maidenly pride, and sent her home with indignation burning hotly in her breast, against what she termed 'Rob's impidence and Eben's thrawnness.'

A few days later Gracie went to sing at a concert in Souterhill, and Arthur, who was supposed to be in Edinburgh, made his arrangements, and met her at the door of the hall when she came out. Whether she expected to see him, or by what misrepresentations he induced her to go to Edinburgh with him, no one ever knew; but such a way-going had certainly been quite unpremeditated on Gracie's part, and she had evidently been led into it without realising the probable consequences, or the compromising character of her foolish escapade.

When the post's gig arrived at Sunnyburn next day without Gracie, Eben and Peggy were surprised, but thought that she had stayed the day in the town. Only Rob Scott suspected something amiss, and without saying a word to any one, he made ready after his day's work was over, and started for Souterhill, where he arrived late at

night. From Gracie's friends there he learned the truth that she had gone to Edinburgh, although they knew nothing of the particulars of the case. Straight back to Sunnyburn went the young man, his soul so cast down and discouraged within him that the weary length of the thirty miles he had walked that night were scarcely thought of.

Early in the morning he came to Eben Anderson's door, bringing bad news, as once before John Burnet had also come; and perhaps they all felt that this last was a greater sorrow than the first, for *death* is not the *worst* thing that can happen in this world: there are 'living griefs' which are far greater trials than any bereavement could be.

"Gang and bring her hame," said Peggy, while the tears followed each other over her furrowed cheeks. Up to Braehead she went, with her sad story of 'Gracie lost,' as twenty years before she had gone with the gladsome news of Gracie found.

Mrs Hamilton was both astonished and angry when she heard of the trouble into which her scapegrace son had brought Gracie and her guardians. Knowing that the girl was engaged to her old playmate, Rob Scott, she had never suspected any deeper feeling than friendship between Gracie and Arthur; and the knowledge

that he had decoyed the girl away to Edinburgh under the pretence of having her taught singing, when he had not means even to keep himself, was very bitter to her. But she too determined to go to the city, where, she said, certain matters would now require to be cleared up.

So the post's gig was heavily laden with passengers that day, and heavy also were the hearts of the three travellers, who set out with varied feelings of sadness, but all alike anxious to find and bring back their own.

LOVE BRINGS BUT PAIN.

In childhood's halcyon days, when Spring flowers hid life's
maze,

And birds sang clear,

I loved a matron fair, with sun-glints in her hair,

A mother dear;

She died, and left to weep, I cried in anguish deep--

Love brings but pain:

I will not, will not love again.

When youth's hale heart was light, when hope's blue skies
were bright,

And maidens coy,

Their glances woo'd me on, for me their dark eyes shone.

Deluded boy!

False hearts are bought and sold, they bartered theirs for
gold,

I sighed, Love brings but pain:

I will not, will not love again.

In manhood's glowing prime, in life's mid-summer time,

In Flora's bower,

'Mong roses rich and rare, I found a 'lily' fair,

A dainty flower;

To worth and beauty wed, time all too swiftly sped;

Love, death, are twain;

I will not, will not love again.

Oh hearts that loved too well, your anguished grief to tell
 In words were vain ;
The wound that nought can heal, the deep scars ye conceal,
 Through life remain ;
Hope's golden anchor lost, wrecked lives are rudely tossed
 O'er waves of pain :
Ye will not, will not love again.

The yellow leaf and sere of winter time is here,
 And left alone,
By love's enwreathed bier, 'neath sullen skies and drear,
 We sit and moan ;
But, buried love shall bloom, immortal, from the tomb,
 Beyond all pain,
We 'll love, we 'll love again.

BROKEN LINKS.

SIGNOR de Gracia was a professional singer, who at one time had held a high place in a fashionable opera company; but, owing chiefly to his dissipated habits, his voice had lost much of its former strength and good quality, and having lost his engagements along with his voice, the Italian found himself almost entirely dependent upon his earnings as a teacher of music and singing.

To the care of this poor but pompous gentleman and his harassed-looking wife, Arthur Hamilton committed Gracie; and whatever may have been his ultimate intentions concerning her, his conduct so far had been honourable enough in its way.

But to the girl herself, the seedy-looking professor, with his brandy-scented breath, and obtrusive familiarity of manner, was altogether objectionable; while the narrow street and shabbily furnished house in which they lived was a dismal exchange for the bright and cosy cottage at Sunnyburn.

After the highly coloured pictures which Arthur had drawn of the wealth and elegancies attained by those favourites of fortune who owned seraphic voices like hers, the musical professor's abode, with its flimsy and faded furnishings, its limited accommodation, its close atmosphere, and the very apparent narrowness of the household means, was something of a shock to the country girl, accustomed all her life to the cheerful comforts of competency and the free fresh breezes from the grand old hills. Now, indeed, she began to realise the consequences of her folly; what could she have been thinking of—to leave her good home, her kind friends, and Rob for this?

‘Oh if only she could awake and find it but a bad dream, and herself in her own little room at Sunnyburn, how glad she would be and how content for the future.’ But, alas! it was no dream. By that one false step she had left happiness behind her, and now she must go forward in spite of all her regrets. She could not go back to Sunnyburn: her mind was quite made up on that point; she had grieved and disgraced her friends there, and completely alienated herself from Rob by her elopement with Arthur Hamilton.

True, she had only looked upon her specious

abductor as a means to the end she had in view; but she saw now in what light her conduct would appear to others, and poor Gracie bowed her proud head in shame, weeping bitterly.

Hamilton at first denied all knowledge of Gracie's whereabouts when confronted with the party from Sunnyburn; but when he came to see that denial was of no use he veered round and put all the blame upon the girl, saying that she had come to him of her own accord, and that he had taken her to Signor de Gracia's.

Of course they all knew that he lied, and Rob Scott would there and then have given him the thrashing he deserved had not Mrs Hamilton interfered. "Come all of you to this Signor de Gracia's," said she; "I have somewhat to say to him which you may as well hear."

Gracie was receiving her first music lesson when the visitors were ushered into the small music room. She had not found her teacher so much impressed with the qualities of her voice as, from his flattering compliments of the previous year, she had expected. And while he alternately ridiculed her style of singing and her Scotch accent, or waxed maudlingly sentimental over her 'pretty face,' the girl was heartily wishing herself out of the room; for, as usual, the foreign pro-

fessor had imbibed too much brandy, and was neither capable of giving a music lesson, nor very fit company for his new pupil.

The entrance of her friends upon this embarrassing scene was another humiliation to Gracie's pride, although their presence relieved her from Signor de Gracia's unwelcome attentions. But the sorrow that clouded the countenances of Eben and Rob seemed to chill her heart with a sense of guilty shame, which made her shrink from their affectionate but sad gaze. Mrs Hamilton was really the only one present who preserved her composure. The professor had suddenly sobered, and became pale as ashes, while he nervously stammered out his recognition of the stern and stately woman who stood coldly regarding him.

"Signor de Gracia, as you call yourself," she said, "you have not forgotten the past, I presume; but that you may more clearly recollect some of its incidents, let me recall to your memory an old story which our friends here may find interesting. Twenty-five years ago three young people left their native village in sunny Italy to seek their fortunes in London, where a friend of their family was manager of a theatre, and had promised to find them engagements. The names of these three aspirants to fame were Carlo Ortelli, Maria,

his newly-wedded wife, and Teresa, her elder sister. Carlo rapidly won success, and soon stood high in favour with the English public. Maria, his wife, filled a minor part in the same operatic company, but their marriage was kept secret. Teresa married, and went to Scotland with her husband, who two years later died, leaving his widow with an infant son. Carlo Ortelli continued to rise in his profession, but he had contrived to rid himself of his humble wife by making her believe that their marriage was not binding in this country. He knew it was false, but he wanted to be free, so that he might wed a lady of wealth, who had become enamoured of his singing. It is now a little over twenty years ago that Teresa was summoned to Edinburgh to see her sister die. On the bed beside the broken-hearted young mother lay a baby girl of a week old, and the future of her helpless child was a distracting anxiety to the dying woman. She had been simple enough to believe her husband's story, and thought their offspring illegitimate; but even when Teresa assured her that his statement was a falsehood, her fears seemed only to increase, for she knew now that he was wholly selfish and unscrupulous, and she dreaded leaving the child to his guardianship. Her sister relieved her anxieties by promising to

put the infant into the care of Christian people, where it would be well brought up, and kindly treated, and where its unworthy father would never be likely to discover its existence. The day of Maria's death was the eve of Carlo Ortelli's wedding morn; but late that night Teresa went to the hotel where she knew his bride was staying, and there, in presence of the gay supper party gathered round the table, she told her tale, only withholding the fact that Maria was dead. Guilt was too plainly printed on the bridegroom's face for her story to be doubted; and the indignant lady, after ordering him from her presence, warmly thanked her informant for having saved her from the fate of being wedded to a deceiver.

"After burying her sister," continued Mrs Hamilton, "Teresa returned to Drummeldale, taking the child with her, and laying it at Eben Anderson's door, where she thought it would be safe from recognition, and well taken care of. And there Gracie has remained and grown up in happy ignorance of her parentage, until now, when this story is forced from my lips by these evidences of the joint partnership which my self-indulgent son and her indigent parent have entered into for their own gratification and aggrandisement. And now, Gracie, that you have for the first time

learned your history, and see into what evil company you have wandered, what are your future intentions? If you follow my advice you will go back with your kind and honest friends to Sunnyburn, where you will be a great deal happier and safer than with either your idle cousin or your dissipated father."

Mrs Hamilton sat down, and the professor lurched forward with a deprecating gesture.

"No, my daughtaire will sing, she will be one great singaire when I teach her ze museek," cried the proud father, as he unsteadily advanced to embrace his newly discovered child.

But Gracie shrank back instinctively from the unwelcome caress, having already learned to loathe the man who for the future she had to regard as her father.

"Ye'll come hame to Sunnyburn, Gracie, that's the richt place for 'e; naiter yer faither nor ony o' yer freends have as guid a claim till 'e as Peggy and mei. Sae ye'll juist come yer ways hame, and let them a' gang their ain roads," spoke out Eben decisively.

But still Gracie held aloof.

"Ye *mann* come hame, Gracie, oo canna dae 'ithoot 'e," half whispered Rob, with a faint smile.

The girl seemed about to answer, when Arthur

Hamilton stepped forward. "As Gracie and I," he said, "are to be married the day after to-morrow by special licence, and as my mother is now here to take care of her till she becomes my wife, there will be no further need for her kind friends troubling themselves about her future."

This bold and somewhat insolent speech took every one by surprise. Even to Gracie herself this solution of the difficulty was altogether unexpected, as no arrangements had been proposed; neither had any definite offer of marriage been made to her by the man who now so decidedly announced their immediate union. That he was actuated by entirely selfish motives, the girl perfectly understood, but his unchallenged affirmation settled matters, by making it appear that marriage had been the end and aim of the elopement; and poor Gracie, feeling her position keenly, and anxious to escape from the compromising consequences of her thoughtlessness, quietly accepted her fate.

Eben and Rob reluctantly submitted to the inevitable, and remained until they saw Gracie married. A sad-eyed and joyless-looking bride she was, but she said little; and it was not until Eben and Rob went to bid her good-bye that she

broke down. They were alone, and the old man, with her hands in his affectionate clasp, was speaking with a faltering voice.

“Fare ye weel, my lassie! may the Lord bless and keep ’e wherever ’e may be! I wish wi’ a’ my heart that things had been otherwise than as they are; but mind, my bairn, that if ever e’ come to be in trouble, or need, yer auld hame’s waitin’ for ’e; and the auld folk’ll aye be lookin’ for ’e as lang as they leeve.”

Then Rob came into the room, but the young man’s heart was too full of sorrow for him to speak; and he could only grasp her hand in silent misery, while the tears stole down his cheeks.

“Good-bye, Rob,” sobbed Gracie. “I wish it had been you instead o’ Arthur Hamilton, for it was you only that I cared for; but I acted like a fool, and this seemed the only way to mend maitters.”

It was a pitiful confession from a bride of an hour, but it was the saving of Rob; for the penitent tears washed the bitterness out of his wounded spirit, and the knowledge of her love and her sacrifice made him from that day kind and gentle with all other women for her dear sake.


STEPPING WESTWARD.

Lights and shadows, lights and shadows,
Flitting o'er the hills of Time ;
Fleecy clouds of careless childhood,
Darker shadows of life's prime ;
Gathering storms of black misfortune,
Wintry tempests of despair,
Change anon to April's promise—
Primrose'd April's balmy air.

Lights and shadows, lights and shadows,
Changing seasons come and go ;
Rosy dawns of summer sweetness,
Starless nights of wintry woe ;
And amongst the lights and shadows
Of the cloud-capped hills of Time,
We are weary wanderers, seeking
Guidance to a fairer clime.

For beyond those mist-crown'd summits
Gleam the sunny heights of bliss ;
Only lights—no chilling shadows
Blight the joys of Paradise.
Summer days of cloudless beauty,
Days which know no darkening night,
Will be ours when, through earth's shadows,
We have reached the Land of Light

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

HE autumn had passed into winter, and winter into spring, since Gracie Anderson's marriage, and one evening Rob Scott had come over to Eben's, as he often did; for the old man was failing, and Rob's company was a great comfort to both him and Peggy.

“For the taen o' oor bairns is deid, and the tither yin's lost, and oo're left oor lane juist when oo maist needed them,” said Peggy sadly, as she welcomed Rob that night.

“Have 'e no had ony mair word thrae Gracie?” asked Rob anxiously.

“Nae word, but oo've gotten a newspaper, and there's a bit in't about her. She has been singin' at some graund concert in London nae less, and the folk thocht an unco lot o' her singin', and made her come back and sing the sang ower again; it was 'Robin Adair' she was singin' till them.”

Rob got up hastily and walked over to the window, where he stood for several minutes trying

to overcome the emotion which Peggy's words had stirred up in his breast.

'Robin Adair,' the song she knew to be his favourite, and which she had so often sung to him alone in the old happy days. Now she was singing it to a glittering throng of applauding strangers. Would she remember, or had she altogether forgotten? Perhaps it were better if she had, but *he* would never forget; and every step Rob took, by burn, or brae, or flowery mead, recalled sweet memories.

"Sweet as first love, and wild with all regret,
O Death in life, the days that are no more."

"I'm thinkin' o' gaun away to America this spring," said Rob quietly, as he returned to the fireside.

"Gaun away till America! Wa, Rob, what's putten that i' yer heid ava?" cried Peggy in great excitement.

"They're offerin' free passages to young men the now, and I ken twae or three that's gaun oot," answered Rob.

"Dear sakes, hinnie, I never heard the like o' that, na—gaun away till America, Rob, and huz juist lippenin' till 'e to lay oor heids amang the mools when oo're taen away; I never kenned the

like. First, it was Wattie, eh mei! Than it was Gracie; and now ye're gaun. Sirse, ay, it's an auld sayin', and a true yin, that 'if 'e take other folk's bairns into yer bosom, they'll creep oot at yer sleeve.' But I thocht oo could depend on yowe, Rob."

"Wumman, Peggy, I wonder to hear 'e," said Eben, rebukingly. "Rob canna bide aye at Sunnyburn. 'Deed there's vera few wad have bidden sae lang; and there's nae doot but what young men have a better chance o' wunnin' forrit oot there than at hame. I think ye're perfittly richt, Rob; and I'll gi'e 'e twae-three notes along wi' yer ain to help 'e on a bit when 'e wun there."

Rob thanked the old man for his kindly intentions and advice, and took his leave.

"The callant's never been the same since Gracie was mairrit; he needs to be away where he'll forget about it," observed Eben.

"She seems to have forgotten iz ony way, when she never writes, but she'll have to keep that idle man wi' her singin', for Ise warrant he'll no work for *her*, and now that Braeheid's knockit doon they'll have nae richt hame," answered Peggy.

Rob was soon ready for his departure to a foreign land, and had come over to receive his

savings from Eben's careful hands. "There's the twuntty pound o' yer ain, Rob; and I've liftit a hunder and putten tilt. Ye've been like a son to hiz, Rob, sin' oo lost oor ain twae, and I wadna like 'e to gang away bare."

"But that's ferr ower muckle, Eben. I can never pey 'e back," said Rob in astonishment.

"It's no expeckit that ye'll dae onything o' the kind; oo have eneuch to dae oor turn, and there'll be something ower for Gracie. I aye ettled to gi'e 'e something to set up hoose wi' when yowe and her wad be mairrit. I was aye sweer to pairt wi' siller a' my days, and I have been sair punished for my sin; I nicht have saved Wattie thrae daith, and I nicht have saved Gracie thrae danger, if it hadna been that sinfu' likin' for siller keepin' iz thrae pairtin' wi't. My grief diz naebody ony guid now, but I hae mony a sair heart when I begin to think about what I *nicht* hae dune but *didna* dae."

For a few minutes Rob stood silent, hardly knowing how to answer. He was very grateful to Eben for his altogether unexpected generosity, and he felt deeply for the old man's sorrow; but he could not help thinking somewhat bitterly of the difference that even the half of that money would have made for Gracie and himself, if only

it had been given sooner; moreover, he could not truthfully say that Eben had done all he could for either of those two whose futures had depended so much upon him; and the lad was too honest to be hypocritical.

“Ye are daein’ a great dale for mei, Eben; and I’ll try my best to get on and make a guid yuise o’ the siller ye’ve gaen iz,” said Rob at last.

“There’s nae fear but ye’ll dae that, Rob; ye’ve aye had some smeddum in ‘e, and wi’ a fair chance afore ‘e ye’ll get on; but never set yer heart on siller, my man. Make eneuch and keep eneuch for yer daily needs, but naither be extravagant nor grippy, for baith the ways are alike selfish.”

Sadly the young man bade his old friends good-bye as he set out for the far country, from which he might never return; and even if he came back they by that time might have gone to a further and a fairer shore.

“I canna think what’s takin’ him away among thae cannibal blecks, when he nicht hae dune weel eneuch at hame,” was Peggy’s tearful comment. “Dear sakes! what joinery wark can they have for onybody? If he had been a tailyor to make claes for their nakit backs, I wadna hae thocht sae muckle; but they can hae

nae hooses for joiners to work at; Ise warran' they 'll just sit up i' the trees like puggies, puir things!"

All foreign countries were peopled with savages, according to Peggy's ideas, and no amount of argument could ever make her believe anything else.

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Five years, with their snowy mantles and flowery crowns, had come and gone before Gracie returned to Sunnyburn.

Eben Anderson still lingered, but he had got very frail, and seldom moved from his armchair by the fireside, where, with the big Bible on the table by his side he sat waiting, 'only waiting.' Earthly cares, sorrows, and desires had slipped from off his soul, like a needless garment; and in the golden sunshine of perfect peace the old man patiently 'waited.'

Peggy, though failed, was still wonderfully active and well; she too was waiting, but it was for Gracie's return. For two or three years they had lost all trace of her; then came a letter, saying that she had been very ill, that she had almost entirely lost her voice, and would never again be able to sing in public; also that Arthur had gone abroad.

“Ay, he wad sune leave her, when she couldna sing for siller to keep him, the guid - for - naething lazy scoondril. Eben, oo maun write direckly and tell her to come strecht hame,” said Peggy eagerly.

So a letter was written and dispatched with all haste, but nearly twelve months elapsed before Gracie came. They had, however, got word from her, which held out the hope that she would be with them some day. That day was anxiously longed for, and every night Peggy watched for the post's gig till it came to her door.

“She hasna comed the nicht yet, and there's nae word thrae her,” was Peggy's oft repeated sorrowful remark to Eben; and “She'll maybe come the morn,” was invariably his comforting reply.

It was the pleasant month of May when Peggy's fond hope was realised, for Gracie did come back; but the old woman's heart ached, and her eyes filled with tears, when she saw the wasted form and thin pinched features of her darling. “O, my bairn! what have they dune till 'e that ye're looking sae ill; and where's yer man that he didna take better care o' 'e?”

“I have been ill and in the hospital for a long time, Aunt Peggy; and Arthur is dead. He died abroad six months ago.”

That was all that Gracie ever said about her husband. Very little she told them of her past troubles, but there was a wistful look in her dark eyes which told its own tale of sorrow and suffering.

For a month or two it seemed doubtful if Gracie would ever recover from the effects of her neglected illness; but love and care work wonders; and slowly but surely her health and strength returned, and ere many months were past she was more like the Gracie of former days.

“Rob’s comin’ hame this simmer to sei iz a’,” remarked Eben cheerfully, as he perused the foreign letter which the post brought him one day. “He says he’s gotten a contrack for a big hotel that a London man’s buildin’ oot there. Sae he needs to come to this country at ony rate.”

“Dear sakes, hinnie!” said Peggy, “what can they be wantin’ wi’ a hotel oot there? But it maitters na if they build it i’ the mune, sae as it brings Rob hame; and, my certies!, but he has gotten on weel. He’s no a common joiner workin’ for a weekly wage now; he’s what they ca’ a contracter, and he has mair than a hunder men workin’ till him; but they’ll be maistly blecks likely. He’s laid bye a guid pickle siller

already, and he'll aye be makin' mair, I'll warran'. Wull 'e no be gled to sei him again, Gracie?" queried the old woman, noticing the silence of her young friend.

"Oh yes, of course I will," answered Gracie somewhat confusedly, while her cheeks assumed a wild-rose tint that expressed her feelings better than any words could do.

In the autumn Rob came home, a bronzed and bearded man, but otherwise unaltered. The boyish delight which comes back to all true hearts on revisiting the scenes of their youthful days was manifestly felt by Rob in visiting again the familiar nooks round Sunnyburn; and his glad meetings with old friends, his ready-handed help in trouble, and his warm interest in the everyday life of the little village all showed that success could never spoil Rob Scott, nor absence make him forgetful of the home of his early years. For Gracie his love was as deep and his admiration as great as ever.

The sequel scarcely needs telling. Suffice it to say, that when Rob returned to his distant home across the sea, he took with him a wife, who through much suffering had learned to know the worth of a good man's love.

But—before they went, Eben Anderson had

gone on a longer journey. He died sitting in his armchair, his hand resting on the open Bible in which he had been reading of the many mansions, in the fourteenth chapter of St John's Gospel. They thought he slept, and walked softly lest they should disturb his slumbers. But Eben was dead, and on his calm face was reflected the peace of God.

"I think, Aunt Peggy, 'e had better juist come away wi' us; oo dinna like to leave 'e here alane. My faither's oot yonder, and twae-three mair that 'e ken, and 'e wad aye-be aside Gracie and mei," said Rob, a week after the funeral. And Gracie urged his plea.

"Tout, bairns! 'e needna bawther yersels aboot that, I'll dae fine masel for a' the time I can be here now. I'm sae gled ye're baith gaun thegither that I'll juist be blithe thinkin' about 'e. Na, Rob, lad, it's very kind o' 'e, but it wadna dae for mei tae gang sae ferr away; no but what I wad like to be near 'e, and I micht leeve ony gait, but I maun dei in Drummeldale, and be laid i' oor ain kirkyaird, for I could never rest i' my grave amang fremd folk."

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Time has made many changes in Drummeldale since the days of long ago. The dear old folk

are all at rest, and a new generation has sprung up to fill their places in the scattered homesteads of the green valley.

Of the Hamiltons', the Andersons', and the Scotts' old habitations there are no traces left to-day. Drummelside, also, is but a memory of the past; although, to that sweet deserted spot, at long intervals, comes a world-weary wanderer named Eily; and at still longer intervals, two silvery-haired Americans, known to each other as Rob and Gracie.

Far, far away from Drummeldale,
Their wand'ring feet have strayed,
Yet, dear to them the flowery vale,
Where they in childhood played.

[THE END.]