

TAMMY LAW BROD, a tailor chappie, an' I gaed doon to Arran last Fair Setterday to spend a week's holidays. We had a picturesque week o't, an' no mistake! We had often heard the Island o' Arran spoken aboot as a grand place for pickin' up health. The air was sae wonderfu' fresh there, an' the saut water sae strong, that the folks said ye cood thrive finely there, an' even grow fat on plain tatties and herrin', mornin', noon, an' nicht, wash't doon wi' a jugfu' o' soor mulk. Oor livin' at Arran was, therefore, likely to prove very cheap. But, if the livin' was likely to prove cheap, the lodgin's turned oot a saut enough concern, I can tell ye!

Lodgin's at Arran! D'ye ken what that means? It means oftener than no' twa pounds a week for a hen hoose, wi' six or eicht in the bed, a coo's byre next door, an' the rain comin' thro' the roof! Talk aboot gaun abroad to see the picturesque in life! Gang doon to Arran at the Gleska Fair-holiday time, an' ye'll never need to gang farrer to see mair. Weel, we hadna jist exactly six in oor bed—Tammy Lawbrod an' I; but oor room was quite remarkable for the want o' room. To begin wi', the wee microscopic bed we slept in had obviously been made for the accommodation o' some Italian organ-grinder's monkey in bad health. It was sae sma' that Tammy an' I had, yin nicht almost say, to examine it wi' oor specks on! It was a fine tak'-in, that

same furnished room. We saw it advertised in the Gleska papers as a

FURNISHED ROOM TO LET AT ARRAN,
 Suitable for two bachelor gentlemen; fine sea-view; garden at the back; every convenience; own key; terms moderate! Address—Mrs. M'Tavish, Brodick.

The advertisement, ye'll notice, was very nicely worded, an' was fitted to draw like a mustard poultice. It drew Tammy Lawbrod an' mysel' a' the way doon to Arran jist like that! (snapping his finger and thumb). We wrote doon for it at yince, an' engaged it for eicht days, without seein' it; the advertisement, along wi' Mrs. M'Tavish, was sae fu' o' promise. Talk aboot buyin' a pig in a pock! It was waur than even that, it was aboot as bad as a man tryin' to read the papers wi' the specks on the back o' his heid! Brodick's no' a big place; but we had, nevertheless, some difficulty in findin' oot Mrs. M'Tavish.

"D'ye ken whaur Mrs. M'Tavish bides?" I speired at a native, a wild-lookin' man wi' red hair, tartan trowsers, and a squint e'e.

"Faur daes she leeve?" replied the Celt, "tell me faur she stays?"

"That's what I'm wantin' to ken, man," said I.

"So wass me," answered the Celt, with a wild grin.

"Can ye no' tell me whaur Mrs. M'Tavish bides?" I yince mair asked him.

"Wass you come a' ta way doon from Klasko to see Mrs. M'Tavish?" inquisitively replied the Celt.

"Tuts, man, d'ye no' ken whaur Mrs. M'Tavish bides, I'm speirin' ye—yes or no'?"

"Mrs. M'Tavish! Mrs. M'Tavish!" ruminated the Celt, "fat Mrs. M'Tavish wass she bee wantin'?"

"Mrs. M'Tavish wha let's the summer lodgin's," I answered.

"Hump!" replied the Celt with a shrug, "efery Mrs.

M'Tavish, an' Mrs. Macfarlanes, an' Mrs. Macdougalls, an' efery other housewife on ta island keeps twa or four lodgers whateffer, an' twice as more too."

Brodick's no a big place, however, as ye a' ken, an' I fand oot oor identical landlady before lang. She was standin' in' the doorway lookin' oot for oor comin'. We had passed her, back an' forrit, half-a-dizzen times before we ever even suspected that she was Mrs. M'Tavish, or that the hut she occupied was the "Cottage at Arran" we had seen described in that highly romantic and drawing advertisement.

The "cottage" was a yae-story concern, and looked a sort o' twa-hunder-year-auld shepherd's hut or dowg-hoose, tooken doon, holus bolus, frae the hillside somewhaur, an' set on the edge o' the road as a protest against all modern ideas of ordinary taste and comfort. The "garden" at the back was a genuine cabbage yin! Mrs. M'Tavish was a pure native o' the island. She snuffed, wore mutches an' specks, an' spoke a limited quantity of English, interfused wi' an unlimited quantity o' unpronounceable Gaelic.

Beyond an' above a' that, Mrs. M'Tavish was a very thrifty, economical woman. Her hoose consisted o' a but-an'-a-ben, or, to phrase the thing more genteelly, a room an' a kitchen. She kept a coo, and a lot o' cocks an' hens in the hoose, forbye her lodgers. The hens had the best o't. They had, at a' hours, an' on a' occasions, the unqualified run o' the hoose, an' between their ceaseless cackle, the cocks' fearfu' crawin', an' the fine, fresh smell o' the auld coo, tethered at the faur-awa en' o' the kitchen bed, the place, mornin', noon', an' nicht, was remarkably fu' o' the very strongest country odours and associations.

Talk about the picturesque in foreign travel! For a genuine e'e-opener, try Arran. Mrs. M'Tavish's yae-room-an'-kitchen concern in Arran was a whussler, I can tell ye! It was the most musical, as weel as the most diversified, lodgin's I ever stayed in. As early as fowr in the mornin',

it was cockie-leerie-law ! in yer sleepin' lugs frae the tane or the tither o' the twa cocks ; a' the forenoon it was moo-oo ! frae the auld coo in the kitchen ; while mornin', noon, and nicht, it was naething but clack, clack, clack ! frae the twa-and-twenty hens that roosted singly or in pairs in a' parts o' the hoose.

But we had a waur experience than a' that—Tammy Lawbrod an' I. The hoose was a fine airy yin, the roof was thatched wi' straw, an' had numerous keek-holes in't, thro' which the daylight peeped like wee stars. This was a' very fine sae lang as the weather kept dry. But a break in the barometer took place yae nicht suddenly, aboot fowr in the mornin', an' the scene was changed, as the poet says. That mornin' I was waukened oot o' a deep sleep wi' Tammy Lawbrod dunchin' me on the shoother wi' his elbow. I started, an' looked about me.

“What's the maitter, Tammy ?” I asked.

“The maitter ! d'ye no' see what's up ?” he asked, “why, it's poorin' o' rain in here, an' I'm jist thinkin' it wad be better for us baith to get up an' gang ootside till it tak's aff ! This is fine, lively, picturesque lodgin's we've cam' to, an' no' mistake !”

“Dook yer heid under the blankets till the rain's aff,” quo' I, wi' a laugh, for I coodna help laughin' at the oddity o' the situation, badly as we were in for't.

“Nae yise,” replied Tammy, “the blankets 'ill be wat thro' in twa ticks ; the rain's already lyin' in wee pools on the tap o' them ! It's an umbrella we're sairly needin', I'm thinkin'.”

“The very thing !” I joyfully exclaimed, an' afore ye cou'd say Jake Robinson, I had jumpit oot the bed, seized my auld umbrella, an' getting yince mair laid doon in bed, flapp't it up abune oor twa heids, to save oorsel's frae the rain that was skytin' doon on us frae the dreepin' roof !

An' for twa lang hours we lay in the bed there, wi' oor

nichtcaps drawn doon owre oor twa lugs, an' the umbrella spread owre oor heids, a grand specimen o' the picturesque in life—and lodgin's in Arran! I kenna how auld Mrs. M'Tavish got on in the kitchen that rainy nicht; but I ken that some o' the cocks an' hens had to hide for shelter ere mornin' below the chairs an' tables!

Folks ha'e different ideas o' hoo to spend a holiday; but I'll say this much, if ye want a new experience in life spend a week in Arran. But for ony sake dinna gang there without takin' wi' ye an ample supply o' waterproof, along wi' a fine big bed-room UMBRELLA!
