GEORGE MACDONALD

DONAL GRANT

George MacDonald
Donal Grant

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=35007785
Donal Grant:

Содержание

George MacDonald
Donal Grant

CHAPTER I.
FOOT-FARING

It was a lovely morning in the first of summer. Donal Grant was descending a path on a hillside to the valley below—a sheep-track of which he knew every winding as well as any boy his half-mile to and from school. But he had never before gone down the hill with the feeling that he was not about to go up again. He was on his way to pastures very new, and in the distance only negatively inviting. But his heart was too full to be troubled—nor was his a heart to harbour a care, the next thing to an evil spirit, though not quite so bad; for one care may drive out another, while one devil is sure to bring in another.

A great billowy waste of mountains lay beyond him, amongst which played the shadow at their games of hide and seek—graciously merry in the eyes of the happy man, but sadly solemn in the eyes of him in whose heart the dreary thoughts of the past are at a like game. Behind Donal lay a world of dreams into which he dared not turn and look, yet from which he could scarce avert his eyes.

He was nearing the foot of the hill when he stumbled and almost fell, but recovered himself with the agility of a mountaineer, and the unpleasant knowledge that the sole of one of his shoes was all but off. Never had he left home for college that his father had not made personal inspection of his shoes to see that they were fit for the journey, but on this departure they had been forgotten. He sat down and took off the failing equipment. It was too far gone to do anything temporary with it; and of discomforts a loose sole to one's shoe in walking is of the worst. The only thing was to take off the other shoe and both stockings and go barefoot. He tied all together with a piece of string, made them fast to his deerskin knapsack, and resumed his walk. The thing did not trouble him much. To have what we want is riches, but to be able to do without is power. To have shoes is a good thing; to be able to walk without them is a better. But it was long since Donal had walked barefoot, and he found his feet like his shoe, weaker in the sole than was pleasant.

"It's time," he said to himself, when he found he was stepping gingerly, "I ga'e my feet a turn at the auld accomplishment. It's a pity to grow nae so fit for onything suner nor ye need. I wad like to lie doon at last wi' hard soles!"

In every stream he came to he bathed his feet, and often on the way rested them, when otherwise able enough to go on. He had no certain goal, though he knew his direction, and was in no haste. He had confidence in God and in his own powers as the gift of God, and knew that wherever he went he needed not

be hungry long, even should the little money in his pocket be spent. It is better to trust in work than in money: God never buys anything, and is for ever at work; but if any one trust in work, he has to learn that he must trust in nothing but strength—the self-existent, original strength only; and Donal Grant had long begun to learn that. The man has begun to be strong who knows that, separated from life essential, he is weakness itself, that, one with his origin, he will be of strength inexhaustible. Donal was now descending the heights of youth to walk along the king's highroad of manhood: happy he who, as his sun is going down behind the western, is himself ascending the eastern hill, returning through old age to the second and better childhood which shall not be taken from him! He who turns his back on the setting sun goes to meet the rising sun; he who loses his life shall find it. Donal had lost his past—but not so as to be ashamed. There are many ways of losing! His past had but crept, like the dead, back to God who gave it; in better shape it would be his by and by! Already he had begun to foreshadow this truth: God would keep it for him.

He had set out before the sun was up, for he would not be met by friends or acquaintances. Avoiding the well-known farmhouses and occasional village, he took his way up the river, and about noon came to a hamlet where no one knew him—a cluster of straw-roofed cottages, low and white, with two little windows each. He walked straight through it not meaning to stop; but, spying in front of the last cottage a rough stone seat under a low, widespreading elder tree, was tempted to sit down and rest a

little. The day was now hot, and the shadow of the tree inviting.

He had but seated himself when a woman came to the door of the cottage, looked at him for a moment, and probably thinking him, from his bare feet, poorer than he was, said—

"Wad ye like a drink?"

"Ay, wad I," answered Donal, "—a drink o' watter, gien ye please."

"What for no milk?" asked the woman.

"'Cause I'm able to pey for 't," answered Donal.

"I want nae peyment," she rejoined, perceiving his drift as little as probably my reader.

"An' I want nae milk," returned Donal.

"Weel, ye may pey for 't gien ye like," she rejoined.

"But I dinna like," replied Donal.

"Weel, ye're a some queer customer!" she remarked.

"I thank ye, but I'm nae customer, 'cep' for a drink o' watter," he persisted, looking in her face with a smile; "an' watter has aye been grâtis sin' the days o' Adam—'cep' maybe i' toons i' the het pairts o' the warl'."

The woman turned into the cottage, and came out again presently with a delft basin, holding about a pint, full of milk, yellow and rich.

"There!" she said; "drink an' be thankfu'."

"I'll be thankfu' ohn drunken," said Donal. "I thank ye wi' a' my heart. But I canna bide to tak for naething what I can pey for, an' I dinna like to lay oot my siller upon a luxury I can weel

eneuch du wantin', for I haena muckle. I wadna be shabby nor yet greedy."

"Drink for the love o' God," said the woman.

Donal took the bowl from her hand, and drank till all was gone.

"Wull ye hae a drap mair?" she asked.

"Na, no a drap," answered Donal. "I'll gang i' the stren'th o' that ye hae gi'en me—maybe no jist forty days, gudewife, but mair nor forty minutes, an' that's a gude pairt o' a day. I thank ye hertily. Yon was the milk o' human kin'ness, gien ever was ony."

As he spoke he rose, and stood up refreshed for his journey.

"I hae a sodger laddie awa' i' the het pairts ye spak o'," said the woman: "gien ye hadna ta'en the milk, ye wad hae gi'en me a sair hert."

"Eh, gudewife, it wad hae gi'en me ane to think I had!" returned Donal. "The Lord gie ye back yer sodger laddie safe an' soon'! Maybe I'll hae to gang efter 'im, sodger mysel'."

"Na, na, that wadna do. Ye're a scholar—that's easy to see, for a' ye're sae plain spoken. It dis a body's hert guid to hear a man 'at un'erstan's things say them plain oot i' the tongue his mither taucht him. Sic a ane 'ill gang straucht till's makker, an' fin' a'thing there hame-like. Lord, I wuss minnisters wad speyk like ither fowk!"

"Ye wad sair please my mither sayin' that," remarked Donal. "Ye maun be jist sic anither as her!"

"Weel, come in, an' sit ye doon oot o' the sin, an' hae

something to ait."

"Na, I'll tak nae mair frae ye the day, an' I thank ye," replied Donal; "I canna weel bide."

"What for no?"

"It's no sae muckle 'at I'm in a hurry as 'at I maun be duin'."

"Whaur are ye b'un' for, gien a body may speir?"

"I'm gaein' to seek—no my fortin, but my daily breid. Gien I spak as a richt man, I wad say I was gaein' to luik for the wark set me. I'm feart to say that straucht oot; I haena won sae far as that yet. I winna du naething though 'at he wadna hae me du. I daur to say that—sae be I un'erstan'. My mither says the day 'ill come whan I'll care for naething but his wull."

"Yer mither 'ill be Janet Grant, I'm thinkin'! There canna be twa sic in ae country-side!"

"Ye're i' the richt," answered Donal. "Ken ye my mither?"

"I hae seen her; an' to see her 's to ken her."

"Ay, gien wha sees her be sic like 's hersel'."

"I canna preten' to that; but she's weel kent throu' a' the country for a God-fearin' wuman.—An' whaur 'll ye be for the noo?"

"I'm jist upo' the tramp, luikin' for wark."

"An' what may ye be pleast to ca' wark?"

"Ow, jist the communication o' what I hae the un'erstan'in' o'."

"Aweel, gien ye'll condescen' to advice frae an auld wife, I'll gie ye a bit wi' ye: tak na ilka lass ye see for a born angel. Misdoobt her a wee to begin wi'. Hing up yer jeedgment o' her

a wee. Luik to the moo' an' the e'en o' her."

"I thank ye," said Donal, with a smile, in which the woman spied the sadness; "I'm no like to need the advice."

She looked at him pitifully, and paused.

"Gien ye come this gait again," she said, "ye'll no gang by my door?"

"I wull no," replied Donal, and wishing her good-bye with a grateful heart, betook himself to his journey.

He had not gone far when he found himself on a wide moor. He sat down on a big stone, and began to turn things over in his mind. This is how his thoughts went:

"I can never be the man I was! The thoucht o' my heart 's ta'en frae me! I canna think aboot things as I used. There's naething sae bonny as afore. Whan the life slips frae him, hoo can a man gang on livin'! Yet I'm no deid—that's what maks the diffeeclety o' the situation! Gien I war deid—weel, I kenna what than! I doobt there wad be trible still, though some things micht be lichter. But that's neither here nor there; I maun live; I hae nae ch'ice; I didna mak mysel', an' I'm no gaein' to meddle wi' mysel'! I think mair o' mysel' nor daur that!

"But there's ae question I maun sattle afore I gang farther—an' that's this: am I to be less or mair nor I was afore? It's agreed I canna be the same: if I canna be the same, I maun aither be less or greater than I was afore: whilk o' them is't to be? I winna hae that queston to speir mair nor ance! I'll be mair nor I was. To sink to less wad be to lowse grip o' my past as weel's o' my futur!

An' hoo wad I ever luik her i' the face gien I grew less because o' her! A chiel' like me lat a bonny lassie think hersel' to blame for what I grew til! An' there's a greater nor the lass to be considert! 'Cause he seesna fit to gie me her I wad hae, is he no to hae his wull o' me? It's a gran' thing to ken a lassie like yon, an' a gran'er thing yet to be allooed to lo'e her: to sit down an' greit 'cause I'm no to merry her, wad be most oongratefu'! What for sud I threip 'at I oucht to hae her? What for sudna I be disapp'intit as weel as anither? I hae as guid a richt to ony guid 'at's to come o' that, I fancy! Gien it be a man's pairt to cairry a sair hert, it canna be his pairt to sit doon wi' 't upo' the ro'd-side, an' lay't upo' his lap, an' greit ower't, like a bairn wi' a cuttit finger: he maun haud on his ro'd. Wha am I to differ frae the lave o' my fowk! I s' be like the lave, an' gien I greit I winna girn. The Lord himsel' had to be croont wi' pain. Eh, my bonnie doo! But ye lo'e a better man, an' that's a sair comfort! Gien it had been itherwise, I div not think I could hae borne the pain at my hert. But as it's guid an' no ill 'at's come to ye, I haena you an' mysel' tu to greit for, an' that's a sair comfort! Lord, I'll clim' to thee, an' gaither o' the healin' 'at grows for the nations i' thy gairden.

"I see the thing as plain's thing can be: the cure o' a' ill 's jist mair life! That's it! Life abune an' ayont the life 'at took the stroke! An' gien throu' this hert-brak I come by mair life, it'll be jist ane o' the throes o' my h'avenly birth—i' the whilk the bairn has as mony o' the pains as the mither: that's maybe a differ 'atween the twa—the earthly an' the h'avenly!

"Sae noo I hae to begin fresh, an' lat the thing 'at's past an' gane slip efter ither dreams. Eh, but it's a bonny dream yet! It lies close 'ahin' me, no to be forgotten, no to be luikit at—like ane o' thae dreams o' watter an' munelicht 'at has nae wark i' them: a body wadna lie a' nicht an' a' day tu in a dream o' the sowl's gloamin'! Na, Lord; mak o' me a strong man, an' syne gie me as muckle o' the bonny as may please thee. Wha am I to lippen til, gien no to thee, my ain father an' mither an' gran'father an' a' body in ane, for thoo giedst me them a'!

"Noo I'm to begin again—a fresh life frae this minute! I'm to set oot frae this verra p'int, like ane o' the youngest sons i' the fairy tales, to seek my portion, an' see what's comin' to meet me as I gang to meet hit. The warl' afore me's my story-buik. I canna see ower the leaf till I come to the en' o' 't. Whan I was a bairn, jist able, wi' sair endeevour, to win at the hert o' print, I never wad luik on afore! The ae time I did it, I thoucht I had dune a shamefu' thing, like luikin' in at a keyhole—as I did jist ance tu, whan I thank God my mither gae me sic a blessed lickin' 'at I kent it maun be something dreidfu' I had dune. Sae here's for what's comin'! I ken whaur it maun come frae, an' I s' make it welcome. My mither says the main mischeef i' the warl' is, 'at fowk winna lat the Lord hae his ain w'y, an' sae he has jist to tak it, whilk maks it a sair thing for them."

Therewith he rose to encounter that which was on its way to meet him. He is a fool who stands and lets life move past him like a panorama. He also is a fool who would lay hands on its motion,

and change its pictures. He can but distort and injure, if he does not ruin them, and come upon awful shadows behind them.

And lo! as he glanced around him, already something of the old mysterious loveliness, now for so long vanished from the face of the visible world, had returned to it—not yet as it was before, but with dawning promise of a new creation, a fresh beauty, in welcoming which he was not turning from the old, but receiving the new that God sent him. He might yet be many a time sad, but to lament would be to act as if he were wronged—would be at best weak and foolish! He would look the new life in the face, and be what it should please God to make him. The scents the wind brought him from field and garden and moor, seemed sweeter than ever wind-borne scents before: they were seeking to comfort him! He sighed—but turned from the sigh to God, and found fresh gladness and welcome. The wind hovered about him as if it would fain have something to do in the matter; the river rippled and shone as if it knew something worth knowing as yet unrevealed. The delight of creation is verily in secrets, but in secrets as truths on the way. All secrets are embryo revelations. On the far horizon heaven and earth met as old friends, who, though never parted, were ever renewing their friendship. The world, like the angels, was rejoicing—if not over a sinner that had repented, yet over a man that had passed from a lower to a higher condition of life—out of its earth into its air: he was going to live above, and look down on the inferior world! Ere the shades of evening fell that day around Donal Grant, he was in the

new childhood of a new world.

I do not mean such thoughts had never been present to him before; but to think a thing is only to look at it in a glass; to know it as God would have us know it, and as we must know it to live, is to see it as we see love in a friend's eyes—to have it as the love the friend sees in ours. To make things real to us, is the end and the battle-cause of life. We often think we believe what we are only presenting to our imaginations. The least thing can overthrow that kind of faith. The imagination is an endless help towards faith, but it is no more faith than a dream of food will make us strong for the next day's work. To know God as the beginning and end, the root and cause, the giver, the enabler, the love and joy and perfect good, the present one existence in all things and degrees and conditions, is life; and faith, in its simplest, truest, mightiest form is—to do his will.

Donal was making his way towards the eastern coast, in the certain hope of finding work of one kind or another. He could have been well content to pass his life as a shepherd like his father but for two things: he knew what it would be well for others to know; and he had a hunger after the society of books. A man must be able to do without whatever is denied him, but when his heart is hungry for an honest thing, he may use honest endeavour to obtain it. Donal desired to be useful and live for his generation, also to be with books. To be where was a good library would suit him better than buying books, for without a place in which to keep them, they are among the impedimenta

of life. And Donal knew that in regard to books he was in danger of loving after the fashion of this world: books he had a strong inclination to accumulate and hoard; therefore the use of a library was better than the means of buying them. Books as possessions are also of the things that pass and perish—as surely as any other form of earthly having; they are of the playthings God lets men have that they may learn to distinguish between apparent and real possession: if having will not teach them, loss may.

But who would have thought, meeting the youth as he walked the road with shoeless feet, that he sought the harbour of a great library in some old house, so as day after day to feast on the thoughts of men who had gone before him! For his was no antiquarian soul; it was a soul hungry after life, not after the mummy cloths enwrapping the dead.

CHAPTER II.
A SPIRITUAL FOOT-PAD

He was now walking southward, but would soon, when the mountains were well behind him, turn toward the east. He carried a small wallet, filled chiefly with oatcake and hard skim-milk cheese: about two o'clock he sat down on a stone, and proceeded to make a meal. A brook from the hills ran near: for that he had chosen the spot, his fare being dry. He seldom took any other drink than water: he had learned that strong drink at best but discounted to him his own at a high rate.

He drew from his pocket a small thick volume he had brought as the companion of his journey, and read as he ate. His seat was on the last slope of a grassy hill, where many huge stones rose out of the grass. A few yards beneath was a country road, and on the other side of the road a small stream, in which the brook that ran swiftly past, almost within reach of his hand, eagerly lost itself. On the further bank of the stream, perfuming the air, grew many bushes of meadow-sweet, or queen-of-the-meadow, as it is called in Scotland; and beyond lay a lovely stretch of nearly level pasture. Farther eastward all was a plain, full of farms. Behind him rose the hill, shutting out his past; before him lay the plain, open to his eyes and feet. God had walled up his past, and was disclosing his future.

When he had eaten his dinner, its dryness forgotten in the condiment his book supplied, he rose, and taking his cap from his head, filled it from the stream, and drank heartily; then emptied it, shook the last drops from it, and put it again upon his head.

"Ho, ho, young man!" cried a voice.

Donal looked, and saw a man in the garb of a clergyman regarding him from the road, and wiping his face with his sleeve.

"You should mind," he continued, "how you scatter your favours."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Donal, taking off his cap again; "I hadna a notion there was leevin' cratur near me."

"It's a fine day!" said the minister.

"It is that, sir!" answered Donal.

"Which way are you going?" asked the minister, adding, as if in apology for his seeming curiosity, "—You're a scholar, I see!"—with a glance towards the book he had left open on his stone.

"Nae sae muckle as I wad fain be, sir," answered Donal—then called to mind a resolve he had made to speak English for the future.

"A modest youth, I see!" returned the clergyman; but Donal hardly liked the tone in which he said it.

"That depends on what you mean by a scholar," he said.

"Oh!" answered the minister, not thinking much about his reply, but in a bantering humour willing to draw the lad out, "the learned man modestly calls himself a scholar."

"Then there was no modesty in saying I was not so much of a scholar as I should like to be; every scholar would say the same."

"A very good answer!" said the clergyman patronizingly, "You'll be a learned man some day!" And he smiled as he said it.

"When would you call a man learned?" asked Donal.

"That is hard to determine, seeing those that claim to be contradict each other so."

"What good then can there be in wanting to be learned?"

"You get the mental discipline of study."

"It seems to me," said Donal, "a pity to get a body's discipline on what may be worthless. It's just as good discipline to my teeth to dine on bread and cheese, as it would be to exercise them on sheep's grass."

"I've got hold of a humorist!" said the clergyman to himself.

Donal picked up his wallet and his book, and came down to the road. Then first the clergyman saw that he was barefooted. In his childhood he had himself often gone without shoes and stockings, yet the youth's lack of them prejudiced him against him.

"It must be the fellow's own fault!" he said to himself. "He shan't catch me with his chaff!"

Donal would rather have forded the river, and gone to inquire his way at the nearest farm-house, but he thought it polite to walk a little way with the clergyman.

"How far are you going?" asked the minister at length.

"As far as I can," replied Donal.

"Where do you mean to pass the night?"

"In some barn perhaps, or on some hill-side."

"I am sorry to hear you can do no better."

"You don't think, sir, what a decent bed costs; and a barn is generally, a hill-side always clean. In fact the hill-side 's the best. Many's the time I have slept on one. It's a strange notion some people have, that it's more respectable to sleep under man's roof than God's."

"To have no settled abode," said the clergyman, and paused.

"Like Abraham?" suggested Donal with a smile. "An abiding city seems hardly necessary to pilgrims and strangers! I fell asleep once on the top of Glashgar: when I woke the sun was looking over the edge of the horizon. I rose and gazed about me as if I were but that moment created. If God had called me, I should hardly have been astonished."

"Or frightened?" asked the minister.

"No, sir; why should a man fear the presence of his saviour?"

"You said God!" answered the minister.

"God is my saviour! Into his presence it is my desire to come."

"Under shelter of the atonement," supplemented the minister.

"Gien ye mean by that, sir," cried Donal, forgetting his English, "onything to come 'atween my God an' me, I'll ha'e nane o' 't. I'll hae naething hide me frae him wha made me! I wadna hide a thoucht frae him. The waur it is, the mair need he see't."

"What book is that you are reading?" asked the minister sharply. "It's not your bible, I'll be bound! You never got such

notions from it!"

He was angry with the presumptuous youth—and no wonder; for the gospel the minister preached was a gospel but to the slavish and unfilial.

"It's Shelley," answered Donal, recovering himself.

The minister had never read a word of Shelley, but had a very decided opinion of him. He gave a loud rude whistle.

"So! that's where you go for your theology! I was puzzled to understand you, but now all is plain! Young man, you are on the brink of perdition. That book will poison your very vitals!"

"Indeed, sir, it will never go deep enough for that! But it came near touching them as I sat eating my bread and cheese."

"He's an infidel!" said the minister fiercely.

"A kind of one," returned Donal, "but not of the worst sort. It's the people who call themselves believers that drive the like of poor Shelley to the mouth of the pit."

"He hated the truth," said the minister.

"He was always seeking after it," said Donal, "though to be sure he didn't get to the end of the search. Just listen to this, sir, and say whether it be very far from Christian."

Donal opened his little volume, and sought his passage. The minister but for curiosity and the dread of seeming absurd would have stopped his ears and refused to listen. He was a man of not merely dry or stale, but of deadly doctrines. He would have a man love Christ for protecting him from God, not for leading him to God in whom alone is bliss, out of whom all is darkness

and misery. He had not a glimmer of the truth that eternal life is to know God. He imagined justice and love dwelling in eternal opposition in the bosom of eternal unity. He knew next to nothing about God, and misrepresented him hideously. If God were such as he showed him, it would be the worst possible misfortune to have been created.

Donal had found the passage. It was in The Mask of Anarchy. He read the following stanzas:—

> Let a vast assembly be,
> And with great solemnity
> Declare with measured words that ye
> Are, as God has made ye, free.
>
> Be your strong and simple words
> Keen to wound as sharpened swords,
> And wide as targes let them be,
> With their shade to cover ye.
>
> And if then the tyrants dare,
> Let them ride among you there,
> Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew—
> What they like, that let them do.
>
> With folded arms and steady eyes,
> And little fear, and less surprise,
> Look upon them as they slay,
> Till their rage has died away.

And that slaughter to the Nation
Shall steam up like inspiration,
Eloquent, oracular—
A volcano heard afar.

Ending, the reader turned to the listener. But the listener had understood little of the meaning, and less of the spirit. He hated opposition to the powers on the part of any below himself, yet scorned the idea of submitting to persecution.

"What think you of that, sir?" asked Donal.

"Sheer nonsense!" answered the minister. "Where would Scotland be now but for resistance?"

"There's more than one way of resisting, though," returned Donal. "Enduring evil was the Lord's way. I don't know about Scotland, but I fancy there would be more Christians, and of a better stamp, in the world, if that had been the mode of resistance always adopted by those that called themselves such. Anyhow it was his way."

"Shelley's, you mean!"

"I don't mean Shelley's, I mean Christ's. In spirit Shelley was far nearer the truth than those who made him despise the very name of Christianity without knowing what it really was. But God will give every man fair play."

"Young man!" said the minister, with an assumption of great solemnity and no less authority, "I am bound to warn you that you are in a state of rebellion against God, and he will not be

mocked. Good morning!"

Donal sat down on the roadside—he would let the minister have a good start of him—took again his shabby little volume, held more talk with the book-embodied spirit of Shelley, and saw more and more clearly how he was misled in his every notion of Christianity, and how different those who gave him his notions must have been from the evangelists and apostles. He saw in the poet a boyish nature striving after liberty, with scarce a notion of what liberty really was: he knew nothing of the law of liberty—oneness with the will of our existence, which would have us free with its own freedom.

When the clergyman was long out of sight he rose and went on, and soon came to a bridge by which he crossed the river. Then on he went through the cultivated plain, his spirits never flagging. He was a pilgrim on his way to his divine fate!

CHAPTER III.
THE MOOR

The night began to descend and he to be weary, and look about him for a place of repose. But there was a long twilight before him, and it was warm.

For some time the road had been ascending, and by and by he found himself on a bare moor, among heather not yet in bloom, and a forest of bracken. Here was a great, beautiful chamber for him! and what better bed than God's heather! what better canopy than God's high, star-studded night, with its airy curtains of dusky darkness! Was it not in this very chamber that Jacob had his vision of the mighty stair leading up to the gate of heaven! Was it not under such a roof Jesus spent his last nights on the earth! For comfort and protection he sought no human shelter, but went out into his Father's house—out under his Father's heaven! The small and narrow were not to him the safe, but the wide and open. Thick walls cover men from the enemies they fear; the Lord sought space. There the angels come and go more freely than where roofs gather distrust. If ever we hear a far-off rumour of angel-visit, it is not from some solitary plain with lonely children?

Donal walked along the high table-land till he was weary, and rest looked blissful. Then he turned aside from the rough track

into the heather and bracken. When he came to a little dry hollow, with a yet thicker growth of heather, its tops almost close as those of his bed at his father's cottage, he sought no further. Taking his knife, he cut a quantity of heather and ferns, and heaped it on the top of the thickest bush; then creeping in between the cut and the growing, he cleared the former from his face that he might see the worlds over him, and putting his knapsack under his head, fell fast asleep.

When he woke not even the shadow of a dream lingered to let him know what he had been dreaming. He woke with such a clear mind, such an immediate uplifting of the soul, that it seemed to him no less than to Jacob that he must have slept at the foot of the heavenly stair. The wind came round him like the stuff of thought unshaped, and every breath he drew seemed like God breathing afresh into his nostrils the breath of life. Who knows what the thing we call air is? We know about it, but it we do not know. The sun shone as if smiling at the self-importance of the sulky darkness he had driven away, and the world seemed content with a heavenly content. So fresh was Donal's sense that he felt as if his sleep within and the wind without had been washing him all the night. So peaceful, so blissful was his heart that it longed to share its bliss; but there was no one within sight, and he set out again on his journey.

He had not gone far when he came to a dip in the moorland —a round hollow, with a cottage of turf in the middle of it, from whose chimney came a little smoke: there too the day was begun!

He was glad he had not seen it before, for then he might have missed the repose of the open night. At the door stood a little girl in a blue frock. She saw him, and ran in. He went down and drew near to the door. It stood wide open, and he could not help seeing in.

A man sat at the table in the middle of the floor, his forehead on his hand. Donal did not see his face. He seemed waiting, like his father for the Book, while his mother got it from the top of the wall. He stepped over the threshold, and in the simplicity of his heart, said:—

"Ye'll be gaein' to hae worship!"

"Na, na!" returned the man, raising his head, and taking a brief, hard stare at his visitor; "we dinna set up for prayin' fowk i' this hoose. We ley that to them 'at kens what they hae to be thankfu' for."

"I made a mistak," said Donal. "I thoucht ye micht hae been gaein' to say gude mornin' to yer makker, an' wad hae likit to j'in wi' ye; for I kenna what I haena to be thankfu' for. Guid day to ye."

"Ye can bide an' tak yer parritch gien ye like."

"Ow, na, I thank ye. Ye micht think I cam for the parritch, an' no for the prayers. I like as ill to be coontit a hypocrite as gien I war ane."

"Ye can bide an' hae worship wi' 's, gien ye tak the buik yersel'."

"I canna lead whaur 's nane to follow. Na; I'll du better on the

muir my lane."

But the gudewife was a religions woman after her fashion—who can be after any one else's? She came with a bible in her hand, and silently laid it on the table. Donal had never yet prayed aloud except in a murmur by himself on the hill, but, thus invited, could not refuse. He read a psalm of trouble, breaking into hope at the close, then spoke as follows:—

"Freens, I'm but yoong, as ye see, an' never afore daured open my moo i' sic fashion, but it comes to me to speyk, an' wi' yer leave speyk I wull. I canna help thinkin' the gudeman 's i' some trible—siclike, maybe, as King Dawvid whan he made the psalm I hae been readin' i' yer hearin'. Ye observt hoo it began like a stormy mornin', but ye h'ard hoo it changed or a' was dune. The sun comes oot bonny i' the en', an' ye hear the birds beginnin' to sing, tellin' Natur' to gie ower her greitin'. An' what brings the guid man til's senses, div ye think? What but jist the thoucht o' him 'at made him, him 'at cares aboot him, him 'at maun come to ill himsel' 'afore he lat onything he made come to ill. Sir, lat's gang doon upo' oor knees, an' commit the keepin' o' oor sowls to him as til a faithfu' creator, wha winna miss his pairt 'atween him an' hiz."

They went down on their knees, and Donal said,

"O Lord, oor ain father an' saviour, the day ye hae sent 's has arrived bonny an' gran', an' we bless ye for sen'in' 't; but eh, oor father, we need mair the licht that shines i' the darker place. We need the dawn o' a spiritual day inside 's, or the bonny day ootside

winna gang for muckle. Lord, oor micht, speyk a word o' peacefu' recall to ony dog o' thine 'at may be worryin' at the hert o' ony sheep o' thine 'at's run awa; but dinna ca' him back sae as to lea' the puir sheep 'ahint him; fess back dog an' lamb thegither, O Lord. Haud 's a' frae ill, an' guide 's a' to guid, an' oor mornin' prayer 's ower. Amen."

They rose from their knees, and sat silent for a moment. Then the guidwife put the pot on the fire with the water for the porridge. But Donal rose, and walked out of the cottage, half wondering at himself that he had dared as he had, yet feeling he had done but the most natural thing in the world.

"Hoo a body 's to win throuw the day wantin' the lord o' the day an' the hoor an' the minute, 's 'ayont me!" he said to himself, and hastened away.

Ere noon the blue line of the far ocean rose on the horizon.

CHAPTER IV.
THE TOWN

Donal was queer, some of my readers will think, and I admit it; for the man who regards the affairs of life from any other point than his own greedy self, must be queer indeed in the eyes of all who are slaves to their imagined necessities and undisputed desires.

It was evening when he drew nigh the place whither he had directed his steps—a little country town, not far from a famous seat of learning: there he would make inquiry before going further. The minister of his parish knew the minister of Auchars, and had given him a letter of introduction. The country around had not a few dwellings of distinction, and at one or another of these might be children in want of a tutor.

The sun was setting over the hills behind him as he entered the little town. At first it looked but a village, for on the outskirts, through which the king's highway led, were chiefly thatched cottages, with here and there a slated house of one story and an attic; but presently began to appear houses of larger size—few of them, however, of more than two stories. Most of them looked as if they had a long and not very happy history. All at once he found himself in a street, partly of quaint gables with corbel steps; they called them here corbie-steps, in allusion, perhaps, to the

raven sent out by Noah, for which lazy bird the children regarded these as places to rest. There were two or three curious gateways in it with some attempt at decoration, and one house with the pepperpot turrets which Scotish architecture has borrowed from the French chateau. The heart of the town was a yet narrower, close-built street, with several short closes and wynds opening out of it—all of which had ancient looking houses. There were shops not a few, but their windows were those of dwellings, as the upper parts of their buildings mostly were. In those shops was as good a supply of the necessities of life as in a great town, and cheaper. You could not get a coat so well cut, nor a pair of shoes to fit you so tight without hurting, but you could get first-rate work. The streets were unevenly paved with round, water-worn stones: Donal was not sorry that he had not to walk far upon them.

The setting sun sent his shadow before him as he entered the place. He kept the middle of the street, looking on this side and that for the hostelry whither he had despatched his chest before leaving home. A gloomy building, apparently uninhabited, drew his attention, and sent a strange thrill through him as his eyes fell upon it. It was of three low stories, the windows defended by iron stanchions, the door studded with great knobs of iron. A little way beyond he caught sight of the sign he was in search of. It swung in front of an old-fashioned, dingy building, with much of the old-world look that pervaded the town. The last red rays of the sun were upon it, lighting up a sorely faded coat of arms.

The supporters, two red horses on their hind legs, were all of it he could make out. The crest above suggested a skate, but could hardly have been intended for one. A greedy-eyed man stood in the doorway, his hands in his trouser-pockets. He looked with contemptuous scrutiny at the bare-footed lad approaching him. He had black hair and black eyes; his nose looked as if a heavy finger had settled upon its point, and pressed it downwards: its nostrils swelled wide beyond their base; underneath was a big mouth with a good set of teeth, and a strong upturning chin—an ambitious and greedy face. But ambition is a form of greed.

"A fine day, landlord!" said Donal.

"Ay," answered the man, without changing the posture of one taking his ease against his own door-post, or removing his hands from his pockets, but looking Donal up and down with conscious superiority, then resting his eyes on the bare feet and upturned trousers.

"This'll be the Morven Arms, I'm thinkin'?" said Donal.

"It taksna muckle thoucht to think that," returned the inn-keeper, "whan there they hing!"

"Ay," rejoined Donal, glancing up; "there is something there—an' it's airms I doobtna; but it's no a'body has the preevilege o' a knowledge o' heraldry like yersel', lan'lord! I'm b'un' to confess, for what I ken they micht be the airms o' ony ane o' ten score Scots faimilies."

There was one weapon with which John Glumm was assailable, and that was ridicule: with all his self-sufficiency he

stood in terror of it—and the more covert the ridicule, so long as he suspected it, the more he resented as well as dreaded it. He stepped into the street, and taking a hand from a pocket, pointed up to the sign.

"See til't!" he said. "Dinna ye see the twa reid horse?"

"Ay," answered Donal; "I see them weel eneuch, but I'm nane the wiser nor gien they war twa reid whauls.—Man," he went on, turning sharp round upon the fellow, "ye're no cawpable o' conceivin' the extent o' my ignorance! It's as rampant as the reid horse upo' your sign! I'll yield to naebody i' the amoont o' things I dinna ken!"

The man stared at him for a moment.

"I s' warran'," he said, "ye ken mair nor ye care to lat on!"

"An' what may that be ower the heid o' them?—A crest, ca' ye 't?" said Donal.

"It's a base pearl-beset," answered the landlord.

He had not a notion of what a base meant, or pearl-beset, yet prided himself on his knowledge of the words.

"Eh," returned Donal, "I took it for a skate!"

"A skate!" repeated the landlord with offended sneer, and turned towards the house.

"I was thinkin' to put up wi' ye the nicht, gien ye could accommodate me at a rizzonable rate," said Donal.

"I dinna ken," replied Glumm, hesitating, with his back to him, between unwillingness to lose a penny, and resentment at the supposed badinage, which was indeed nothing but humour;

"what wad ye ca' rizzonable?"

"I wadna grudge a saxpence for my bed; a shillin' I wad," answered Donal.

"Weel, ninepence than—for ye seemna owercome wi' siller."

"Na," answered Donal, "I'm no that. Whatever my burden, yon's no hit. The loss o' what I hae wad hardly mak me lichter for my race."

"Ye're a queer customer!" said the man.

"I'm no sae queer but I hae a kist comin' by the carrier," rejoined Donal, "direckit to the Morven Airms. It'll be here in time doobtless."

"We'll see whan it comes," remarked the landlord, implying the chest was easier invented than believed in.

"The warst o' 't is," continued Donal, "I canna weel shaw mysel' wantin' shune. I hae a pair i' my kist, an' anither upo' my back,—but nane for my feet."

"There's sutors enew," said the innkeeper.

"Weel we'll see as we gang. I want a word wi' the minister. Wad ye direc' me to the manse?"

"He's frae hame. But it's o' sma' consequence; he disna care aboot tramps, honest man! He winna waur muckle upo' the likes o' you."

The landlord was recovering himself—therefore his insolence.

Donal gave a laugh. Those who are content with what they are, have the less concern about what they seem. The ambitious

like to be taken for more than they are, and may well be annoyed when they are taken for less.

"I'm thinkin' ye wadna waur muckle on a tramp aither!" he said.

"I wad not," answered Glumm. "It's the pairt o' the honest to discoontenance lawlessness."

"Ye wadna hang the puir craturs, wad ye?" asked Donal.

"I wad hang a wheen mair o' them."

"For no haein' a hoose ower their heads? That's some hard! What gien ye was ae day to be in want o' ane yersel'!"

"We'll bide till the day comes.—But what are ye stan'in' there for? Are ye comin' in, or are ye no?"

"It's a some cauld welcome!" said Donal. "I s' jist tak a luik aboot afore I mak up my min'. A tramp, ye ken, needsna stan' upo' ceremony."

He turned away and walked further along the street.

CHAPTER V.
THE COBBLER

At the end of the street he came to a low-arched gateway in the middle of a poor-looking house. Within it sat a little bowed man, cobbling diligently at a boot. The sun had left behind him in the west a heap of golden refuse, and cuttings of rose and purple, which shone right in at the archway, and let him see to work. Here was the very man for Donal! A respectable shoemaker would have disdained to patch up the shoes he carried—especially as the owner was in so much need of them.

"It's a bonny nicht," he said.

"Ye may weel mak the remark, sir!" replied the cobbler without looking up, for a critical stitch occupied him. "It's a balmy nicht."

"That's raither a bonny word to put til't!" returned Donal. "There's a kin' o' an air aboot the place I wad hardly hae thoucht balmy! But troth it's no the fau't o' the nicht!"

"Ye're richt there also," returned the cobbler—his use of the conjunction impressing Donal. "Still, the weather has to du wi' the smell—wi' the mair or less o' 't, that is. It comes frae a tanneree nearby. It's no an ill smell to them 'at's used til't; and ye wad hardly believe me, sir, but I smell the clover throuw 't. Maybe I'm preejudized, seein' but for the tan-pits I couldna weel

drive my trade; but sittin' here frae mornin' to nicht, I get a kin' o' a habit o' luikin' oot for my blessin's. To recognize an auld blessin' 's 'maist better nor to get a new ane. A pair o' shune weel cobblet 's whiles full better nor a new pair."

"They are that," said Donal; "but I dinna jist see hoo yer seemile applies."

"Isna gettin' on a pair o' auld weel-kent an' weel men'it shune, 'at winna nip yer feet nor yet shochle, like waukin' up til a blessin' ye hae been haein' for years, only ye didna ken 't for ane?"

As he spoke, the cobbler lifted a little wizened face and a pair of twinkling eyes to those of the student, revealing a soul as original as his own. He was one of the inwardly inseparable, outwardly far divided company of Christian philosophers, among whom individuality as well as patience is free to work its perfect work. In that glance Donal saw a ripe soul looking out of its tent door, ready to rush into the sunshine of the new life.

He stood for a moment lost in eternal regard of the man. He seemed to have known him for ages. The cobbler looked up again.

"Ye'll be wantin' a han' frae me i' my ain line, I'm thinkin'!" he said, with a kindly nod towards Donal's shoeless feet.

"Sma' doobt!" returned Donal. "I had scarce startit, but was ower far to gang back, whan the sole o' ae shue cam aff, an' I had to tramp it wi' baith my ain."

"An' ye thankit the Lord for the auld blessin' o' bein' born an' broucht up wi' soles o' yer ain!"

"To tell the trowth," answered Donal, "I hae sae mony things to be thankfu' for, it's but sma' won'er I forget mony ane o' them. But noo, an' I thank ye for the exhortation, the Lord's name be praist 'at he gae me feet fit for gangin' upo'!"

He took his shoes from his back, and untying the string that bound them, presented the ailing one to the cobbler.

"That's what we may ca' deith!" remarked the cobbler, slowly turning the invalided shoe.

"Ay, deith it is," answered Donal; "it's a sair divorce o' sole an' body."

"It's a some auld-farrand joke," said the cobbler, "but the fun intil a thing doesna weir oot ony mair nor the poetry or the trowth intil't."

"Who will say there was no providence in the loss of my shoe-sole!" remarked Donal to himself. "Here I am with a friend already!"

The cobbler was submitting the shoes, first the sickly one, now the sound one, to a thorough scrutiny.

"Ye dinna think them worth men'in', I doobt!" said Donal, with a touch of anxiety in his tone.

"I never thoucht that whaur the leather wad haud the steik," replied the cobbler. "But whiles, I confess, I'm jist a wheen tribled to ken hoo to chairge for my wark. It's no barely to consider the time it'll tak me to cloot a pair, but what the weirer 's like to git oot o' them. I canna tak mair nor the job 'ill be worth to the weirer. An' yet the waur the shune, an' the less to be made o'

them, the mair time they tak to mak them worth onything ava'!"

"Surely ye oucht to be paid in proportion to your labour."

"I' that case I wad whiles hae to say til a puir body 'at hadna anither pair i' the warl', 'at her ae pair o' shune wasna worth men'in'; an' that wad be a hertbrak, an' sair feet forby, to sic as couldna, like yersel', sir, gang upo' the Lord's ain shune."

"But hoo mak ye a livin' that w'y?" suggested Donal.

"Hoots, the maister o' the trade sees to my wauges!"

"An' wha may he be?" asked Donal, well foreseeing the answer.

"He was never cobbler himsel', but he was ance carpenter; an' noo he's liftit up to be heid o' a' the trades. An' there's ae thing he canna bide, an' that's close parin'."

He stopped. But Donal held his peace, waiting; and he went on.

"To them 'at maks little, for reasons good, by their neebour, he gies the better wauges whan they gang hame. To them 'at maks a' 'at they can, he says, 'Ye helpit yersel'; help awa'; ye hae yer reward. Only comena near me, for I canna bide ye'.—But aboot thae shune o' yours, I dinna weel ken! They're weel eneuch worth duin' the best I can for them; but the morn's Sunday, an' what hae ye to put on?"

"Naething—till my kist comes; an' that, I doobt, winna be afore Monday, or maybe the day efter."

"An' ye winna be able to gang to the kirk!"

"I'm no partic'lar aboot gaein' to the kirk; but gien I wantit to

gang, or gien I thoucht I was b'un' to gang, think ye I wad bide at hame 'cause I hadna shune to gang in! Wad I fancy the Lord affrontit wi' the bare feet he made himsel'!"

The cobbler caught up the worst shoe and began upon it at once.

"Ye s' hae't, sir," he said, "gien I sit a' nicht at it! The ane 'll du till Monday. Ye s' hae't afore kirk-time, but ye maun come intil the hoose to get it, for the fowk wud be scunnert to see me workin' upo' the Sabbath-day. They dinna un'erstan' 'at the Maister works Sunday an' Setterday—an' his Father as weel!"

"Ye dinna think, than, there's onything wrang in men'in' a pair o' shune on the Sabbath-day?"

"Wrang!—in obeyin' my Maister, whase is the day, as weel's a' the days? They wad fain tak it frae the Son o' Man, wha's the lord o' 't, but they canna!"

He looked up over the old shoe with eyes that flashed.

"But then—excuse me," said Donal, "—why shouldna ye haud yer face til 't, an' work openly, i' the name o' God?"

"We're telt naither to du oor gude warks afore men to be seen o' them, nor yet to cast oor pearls afore swine. I coont cobblin' your shoes, sir, a far better wark nor gaein' to the kirk, an' I wadna hae't seen o' men. Gien I war warkin' for poverty, it wad be anither thing."

This last Donal did not understand, but learned afterwards what the cobbler meant: the day being for rest, the next duty to helping another was to rest himself. To work for fear of starving

would be to distrust the Father, and act as if man lived by bread alone.

"Whan I think o' 't," he resumed after a pause, "bein' Sunday, I'll tak them hame to ye. Whaur wull ye be?"

"That's what I wad fain hae ye tell me," answered Donal. "I had thoucht to put up at the Morven Airms, but there's something I dinna like aboot the lan'lord. Ken ye ony dacent, clean place, whaur they wad gie me a room to mysel', an' no seek mair nor I could pey them?"

"We hae a bit roomie oorsel's," said the cobbler, "at the service o' ony dacent wayfarin' man that can stan' the smell, an' put up wi' oor w'ys. For peyment, ye can pey what ye think it's worth. We're never varra partic'lar."

"I tak yer offer wi' thankfu'ness," answered Donal.

"Weel, gang ye in at that door jist 'afore ye, an' ye'll see the guidwife—there's nane ither til see. I wad gang wi' ye mysel', but I canna, wi' this shue o' yours to turn intil a Sunday ane!"

Donal went to the door indicated. It stood wide open; for while the cobbler sat outside at his work, his wife would never shut the door. He knocked, but there came no answer.

"She's some dull o' hearin'," said the cobbler, and called her by his own name for her.

"Doory! Doory!" he said.

"She canna be that deif gien she hears ye!" said Donal; for he spoke hardly louder than usual.

"Whan God gies you a wife, may she be ane to hear yer lichtest

word!" answered the cobbler.

Sure enough, he had scarcely finished the sentence, when Doory appeared at the door.

"Did ye cry, guidman?" she said.

"Na, Doory: I canna say I cried; but I spak, an' ye, as is yer custom, hearkent til my word!—Here's a believin' lad—I'm thinkin' he maun be a gentleman, but I'm no sure; it's hard for a cobbler to ken a gentleman 'at comes til him wantin' shune; but he may be a gentleman for a' that, an' there's nae hurry to ken. He's welcome to me, gien he be welcome to you. Can ye gie him a nicht's lodgin'?"

"Weel that! an' wi' a' my hert!" said Doory. "He's welcome to what we hae."

Turning, she led the way into the house.

CHAPTER VI.
DOORY

She was a very small, spare woman, in a blue print with little white spots—straight, not bowed like her husband. Otherwise she seemed at first exactly like him. But ere the evening was over, Donal saw there was no featural resemblance between the two faces, and was puzzled to understand how the two expressions came to be so like: as they sat it seemed in the silence as if they were the same person thinking in two shapes and two places.

Following the old woman, Donal ascended a steep and narrow stair, which soon brought him to a landing where was light, coming mainly through green leaves, for the window in the little passage was filled with plants. His guide led him into what seemed to him an enchanting room—homely enough it was, but luxurious compared to what he had been accustomed to. He saw white walls and a brown-hued but clean-swept wooden floor, on which shone a keen-eyed little fire from a low grate. Two easy chairs, covered with some party-coloured striped stuff, stood one on each side of the fire. A kettle was singing on the hob. The white deal-table was set for tea—with a fat brown teapot, and cups of a gorgeous pattern in bronze, that shone in the firelight like red gold. In one of the walls was a box-bed.

"I'll lat ye see what accommodation we hae at yer service, sir,"

said Doory, "an' gien that'll shuit ye, ye s' be welcome."

So saying, she opened what looked like the door of a cupboard at the side of the fireplace. It disclosed a neat little parlour, with a sweet air in it. The floor was sanded, and so much the cleaner than if it had been carpeted. A small mahogany table, black with age, stood in the middle. On a side-table covered with a cloth of faded green, lay a large family bible; behind it were a few books and a tea-caddy. In the side of the wall opposite the window, was again a box-bed. To the eyes of the shepherd-born lad, it looked the most desirable shelter he had ever seen. He turned to his hostess and said,

"I'm feart it's ower guid for me. What could ye lat me hae't for by the week? I wad fain bide wi' ye, but whaur an' whan I may get wark I canna tell; sae I maunna tak it ony gait for mair nor a week."

"Mak yersel' at ease till the morn be by," said the old woman. "Ye canna du naething till that be ower. Upo' the Mononday mornin' we s' haud a cooncil thegither—you an' me an' my man: I can du naething wantin' my man; we aye pu' thegither or no at a'."

Well content, and with hearty thanks, Donal committed his present fate into the hands of the humble pair, his heaven-sent helpers; and after much washing and brushing, all that was possible to him in the way of dressing, reappeared in the kitchen. Their tea was ready, and the cobbler seated in the window with a book in his hand, leaving for Donal his easy chair.

"I canna tak yer ain cheir frae ye," said Donal.

"Hoots!" returned the cobbler, "what's onything oors for but to gie the neeper 'at stan's i' need o' 't."

"But ye hae had a sair day's wark!"

"An' you a sair day's traivel!"

"But I'm yoong!"

"An' I'm auld, an' my labour the nearer ower."

"But I'm strong!"

"There's nane the less need ye sud be hauden sae. Sit ye doon, an' wastena yer backbane. My business is to luik to the bodies o' men, an' specially to their puir feet 'at has to bide the weicht, an' get sair pressed therein. Life 's as hard upo' the feet o' a man as upo' ony pairt o' 'm! Whan they gang wrang, there isna muckle to be dune till they be set richt again. I'm sair honourt, I say to mysel' whiles, to be set ower the feet o' men. It's a fine ministration!—full better than bein' a door-keeper i' the hoose o' the Lord! For the feet 'at gang oot an' in at it 's mair nor the door!"

"The Lord be praist!" said Donal to himself; "there's mair i' the warl' like my father an' mither!"

He took the seat appointed him.

"Come to the table, Anerew," said the old woman, "gien sae be ye can pairt wi' that buik o' yours, an' lat yer sowl gie place to yer boady's richts.—I doobt, sir, gien he wad ait or drink gien I wasna at his elbuck."

"Doory," returned her husband, "ye canna deny I gie ye a bit noo an' than, specially whan I come upo' onything by ord'nar' tasty!"

"That ye du, Anerew, or I dinna ken what wud come o' my sowl ony mair nor o' your boady! Sae ye see, sir, we're like John Sprat an' his wife:—ye'll ken the bairns' say aboot them?"

"Ay, fine that," replied Donal. "Ye couldna weel be better fittit."

"God grant it!" she said. "But we wad fit better yet gien I had but a wheen mair brains."

"The Lord kenned what brains ye had whan he broucht ye thegither," said Donal.

"Ye never uttert a truer word," replied the cobbler. "Gien the Lord be content wi' the brains he's gien ye, an' I be content wi' the brains ye gie me, what richt hae ye to be discontentit wi' the brains ye hae, Doory?—answer me that. But I s' come to the table.—Wud ye alloo me to speir efter yer name, sir?"

"My name 's Donal Grant," replied Donal.

"I thank ye, sir, an' I'll haud it in respec'," returned the cobbler. "Maister Grant, wull ye ask a blessin'?"

"I wad raither j'in i' your askin'," replied Donal.

The cobbler said a little prayer, and then they began to eat—first of oat-cakes, baked by the old woman, then of loaf-breid, as they called it.

"I'm sorry I hae nae jeally or jam to set afore ye, sir," said Doory, "we're but semple fowk, ye see—content to haud oor earthly taibernacles in a haibitable condition till we hae notice to quit."

"It's a fine thing to ken," said the cobbler, with a queer look,

"'at whan ye lea' 't, yer hoose fa's doon, an' ye haena to think o' ony damages to pey—forby 'at gien it laistit ony time efter ye was oot o' 't, there micht be a wheen deevils takin' up their abode intil 't."

"Hoot, Anerew!" interposed his wife, "there's naething like that i' scriptur'!"

"Hoot, Doory!" returned Andrew, "what ken ye aboot what's no i' scriptur'? Ye ken a heap, I alloo, aboot what's in scriptur', but ye ken little aboot what's no intil 't!"

"Weel, isna 't best to ken what's intil 't?"

"'Ayont a doobt."

"Weel!" she returned in playful triumph.

Donal saw that he had got hold of a pair of originals: it was a joy to his heart: he was himself an original—one, namely, that lived close to the simplicities of existence!

Andrew Comin, before offering him house-room, would never have asked anyone what he was; but he would have thought it an equal lapse in breeding not to show interest in the history as well as the person of a guest. After a little more talk, so far from commonplace that the common would have found it mirth-provoking, the cobbler said:

"An' what office may ye haud yersel', sir, i' the ministry o' the temple?"

"I think I un'erstan' ye," replied Donal; "my mother says curious things like you."

"Curious things is whiles no that curious," remarked Andrew.

A pause following, he resumed:

"Gien onything gie ye reason to prefar waitin' till ye ken Doory an' me a bit better, sir," he said, "coont my ill-mainnert queston no speirt."

"There's naething," answered Donal. "I'll tell ye onything or a'thing aboot mysel'."

"Tell what ye wull, sir, an' keep what ye wull," said the cobbler.

"I was broucht up a herd-laddie," proceeded Donal, "an' whiles a shepherd ane. For mony a year I kent mair aboot the hill-side nor the ingle-neuk. But it's the same God an' Father upo' the hill-side an' i' the king's pailace."

"An' ye'll ken a' aboot the win', an' the cloods, an' the w'ys o' God ootside the hoose! I ken something hoo he hauds things gaein' inside the hoose—in a body's hert, I mean—in mine an' Doory's there, but I ken little aboot the w'y he gars things work 'at he's no sae far ben in."

"Ye dinna surely think God fillsna a'thing?" exclaimed Donal.

"Na, na; I ken better nor that," answered the cobbler; "but ye maun alloo a tod's hole 's no sae deep as the thro't o' a burnin' m'untain! God himsel' canna win sae far ben in a shallow place as in a deep place; he canna be sae far ben i' the win's, though he gars them du as he likes, as he is, or sud be, i' your hert an' mine, sir!"

"I see!" responded Donal. "Could that hae been hoo the Lord had to rebuke the win's an' the wawves, as gien they had been

gaein' at their ain free wull, i'stead o' the wull o' him 'at made them an' set them gaein'?"

"Maybe; but I wud hae to think aboot it 'afore I answert," replied the cobbler.

A silence intervened. Then said Andrew, thoughtfully,

"I thoucht, when I saw ye first, ye was maybe a lad frae a shop i' the muckle toon—or a clerk, as they ca' them, 'at sits makin' up accoonts."

"Na, I'm no that, I thank God," said Donal.

"What for thank ye God for that?" asked Andrew. "A' place is his. I wudna hae ye thank God ye're no a cobbler like me! Ye micht, though, for it's little ye can ken o' the guid o' the callin'!"

"I'll tell ye what for," answered Donal. "I ken weel toon-fowk think it a heap better to hae to du wi' figures nor wi' sheep, but I'm no o' their min'; an' for ae thing, the sheep's alive. I could weel fancy an angel a shepherd—an' he wad coont my father guid company! Troth, he wad want wings an' airms an' feet an' a' to luik efter the lambs whiles! But gien sic a ane was a clerk in a coontin' hoose, he wad hae to stow awa the wings; I cannot see what use he wad hae for them there. He micht be an angel a' the time, an' that no a fallen ane, but he bude to lay aside something to fit the place."

"But ye're no a shepherd the noo?" said the cobbler.

"Na," replied Donal, "—'cep' it be I'm set to luik efter anither grade o' lamb. A freen'—ye may 'a' h'ard his name—sir Gilbert Galbraith—made the beginnin' o' a scholar o' me, an' noo I hae

my degree frae the auld university o' Inverdaur."

"Didna I think as muckle!" cried mistress Comin triumphant. "I hadna time to say 't to ye, Anerew, but I was sure he was frae the college, an' that was hoo his feet war sae muckle waur furnisht nor his heid."

"I hae a pair o' shune i' my kist, though—whan that comes!" said Donal, laughing.

"I only houp it winna be ower muckle to win up oor stair!"

"I dinna think it. But we'll lea' 't i' the street afore it s' come 'atween 's!" said Donal. "Gien ye'll hae me, sae lang's I'm i' the toon, I s' gang nae ither gait."

"An' ye'll doobtless read the Greek like yer mither-tongue?" said the cobbler, with a longing admiration in his tone.

"Na, no like that; but weel eneuch to get guid o' 't."

"Weel, that's jist the ae thing I grutch ye—na, no grutch—I'm glaid ye hae't—but the ae thing I wud fain be a scholar for mysel'! To think I kenna a cheep o' the word spoken by the Word himsel'!"

"But the letter o' the word he made little o' comparet wi' the speerit!" said Donal.

"Ay, that's true! an' yet it's whaur a man may weel be greedy an' want to hae a'thing: wha has the speerit wad fain hae the letter tu! But it disna maitter; I s' set to learnin' 't the first thing whan I gang up the stair—that is, gien it be the Lord's wull."

"Hoots!" said his wife, "what wad ye du wi' Greek up there! I s' warran' the fowk there, ay, an' the maister himsel', speyks

plain Scotch! What for no! What wad they du there wi' Greek, 'at a body wad hae to warstle wi' frae mornin' to nicht, an' no mak oot the third pairt o' 't!"

Her husband laughed merrily, but Donal said,

"'Deed maybe ye're na sae far wrang, guidwife! I'm thinkin' there maun be a gran' mither-tongue there, 'at 'll soop up a' the lave, an' be better to un'erstan' nor a body's ain—for it'll be yet mair his ain."

"Hear til him!" cried the cobbler, with hearty approbation.

"Ye ken," Donal went on, "a' the languages o' the earth cam, or luik as gien they had come, frae ane, though we're no jist dogsure o' that. There's my mither's ain Gaelic, for enstance: it's as auld, maybe aulder nor the Greek; onygait, it has mair Greek nor Laitin words intil 't, an' ye ken the Greek 's an aulder tongue nor the Laitin. Weel, gien we could work oor w'y back to the auldest grit-gran'mither-tongue o' a', I'm thinkin' it wad come a kin o' sae easy til 's, 'at, wi' the impruvt faculties o' oor h'avenly condition, we micht be able in a feow days to haud communication wi' ane anither i' that same, ohn stammert or hummt an' hawt."

"But there's been sic a heap o' things f'un' oot sin' syne, i' the min' o' man, as weel 's i' the warl' ootside," said Andrew, "that sic a language wad be mair like a bairn's tongue nor a mither's, I'm thinkin', whan set against a' 'at wad be to speyk aboot!"

"Ye're verra richt there, I dinna doobt. But hoo easy wad it be for ilk ane to bring in the new word he wantit, haein' eneuch common afore to explain 't wi'! Afore lang the language wad hae

intil 't ilka word 'at was worth haein' in ony language 'at ever was spoken sin' the toor o' Babel."

"Eh, sirs, but it's dreidfu' to think o' haein' to learn sae muckle!" said the old woman. "I'm ower auld an' dottlet!"

Her husband laughed again.

"I dinna see what ye hae to lauch at!" she said, laughing too. "Ye'll be dottlet yersel' gien ye live lang eneuch!"

"I'm thinkin'," said Andrew, "but I dinna ken—'at it maun be a man's ain wyte gien age maks him dottlet. Gien he's aye been haudin' by the trowth, I dinna think he'll fin' the trowth, hasna hauden by him.—But what I was lauchin' at was the thoucht o' onybody bein' auld up there. We'll a' be yoong there, lass!"

"It sall be as the Lord wulls," returned his wife.

"It sall. We want nae mair; an' eh, we want nae less!" responded her husband.

So the evening wore away. The talk was to the very mind of Donal, who never loved wisdom so much as when she appeared in peasant-garb. In that garb he had first known her, and in the form of his mother.

"I won'er," said Doory at length, "'at yoong Eppy 's no puttin' in her appearance! I was sure o' her the nicht: she hasna been near 's a' the week!"

The cobbler turned to Donal to explain. He would not talk of things their guest did not understand; that would be like shutting him out after taking him in!

"Yoong Eppy 's a gran'child, sir—the only ane we hae. She's

a weel behavet lass, though ta'en up wi' the things o' this warl' mair nor her grannie an' me could wuss. She's in a place no far frae here—no an easy ane, maybe, to gie satisfaction in, but she's duin' no that ill."

"Hoot, Anerew! she's duin' jist as well as ony lassie o' her years could in justice be expeckit," interposed the grandmother. "It's seldom the Lord 'at sets auld heid upo' yoong shoothers."

The words were hardly spoken when a light foot was heard coming up the stair.

"—But here she comes to answer for hersel'!" she added cheerily.

The door of the room opened, and a good-looking girl of about eighteen came in.

"Weel, yoong Eppy, hoo 's a' wi' ye?" said the old man.

The grandmother's name was Elspeth, the grand-daughter's had therefore always the prefix.

"Brawly, thank ye, gran'father," she answered. "Hoo 's a' wi' yersel'?"

"Ow, weel cobblet!" he replied.

"Sit ye doon," said the grandmother, "by the spark o' fire; the nicht 's some airy like."

"Na, grannie, I want nae fire," said the girl. "I hae run a' the ro'd to get a glimp' o' ye 'afore the week was oot."

"Hoo 's things gaein' up at the castel?"

"Ow, sic-like 's usual—only the hoosekeeper 's some dowy, an' that puts mair upo' the lave o' 's: whan she's weel, she's no

ane to spare hersel'—or ither fowk aither!—I wadna care, gien she wud but lippen til a body!" concluded young Eppy, with a toss of her head.

"We maunna speyk evil o' dignities, yoong Eppy!" said the cobbler, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Ca' ye mistress Brookes a dignity, gran'father!" said the girl, with a laugh that was nowise rude.

"I do," he answered. "Isna she ower ye? Haena ye to du as she tells ye? 'Atween her an' you that's eneuch: she's ane o' the dignities spoken o'."

"I winna dispute it. But, eh, it's queer wark yon'er!"

"Tak ye care, yoong Eppy! we maun haud oor tongues aboot things committit til oor trust. Ane peyt to serve in a hoose maunna tre't the affairs o' that hoose as gien they war her ain."

"It wad be weel gien a'body about the hoose was as partic'lar as ye wad hae me, gran'father!"

"Hoo's my lord, lass?"

"Ow, muckle the same—aye up the stair an' doon the stair the forepairt o' the nicht, an' maist inveesible a' day."

The girl cast a shy glance now and then at Donal, as if she claimed him on her side, though the older people must be humoured. Donal was not too simple to understand her: he gave her look no reception. Bethinking himself that they might have matters to talk about, he rose, and turning to his hostess, said,

"Wi' yer leave, gudewife, I wad gang to my bed. I hae traivelt a maitter o' thirty mile the day upo' my bare feet."

"Eh, sir!" she answered, "I oucht to hae considert that!—Come, yoong Eppy, we maun get the gentleman's bed made up for him."

With a toss of her pretty head, Eppy followed her grandmother to the next room, casting a glance behind her that seemed to ask what she meant by calling a lad without shoes or stockings a gentleman. Not the less readily or actively, however, did she assist her grandmother in preparing the tired wayfarer's couch. In a few minutes they returned, and telling him the room was quite ready for him, Doory added a hope that he would sleep as sound as if his own mother had made the bed.

He heard them talking for a while after the door was closed, but the girl soon took her leave. He was just falling asleep in the luxury of conscious repose, when the sound of the cobbler's hammer for a moment roused him, and he knew the old man was again at work on his behalf. A moment more and he was too fast asleep for any Cyclops' hammer to wake him.

CHAPTER VII.
A SUNDAY

Notwithstanding his weariness Donal woke early, for he had slept thoroughly. He rose and dressed himself, drew aside the little curtain that shrouded the window, and looked out. It was a lovely morning. His prospect was the curious old main street of the town. The sun that had shone into it was now shining from the other side, but not a shadow of living creature fell upon the rough stones! Yes—there was a cat shooting across them like the culprit he probably was! If there was a garden to the house, he would go and read in the fresh morning air!

He stole softly through the outer room, and down the stair; found the back-door and a water-butt; then a garden consisting of two or three plots of flowers well cared for; and ended his discoveries with a seat surrounded and almost canopied with honeysuckle, where doubtless the cobbler sometimes smoked his pipe! "Why does he not work here rather than in the archway?" thought Donal. But, dearly as he loved flowers and light and the free air of the garden, the old cobbler loved the faces of his kind better. His prayer for forty years had been to be made like his master; and if that prayer was not answered, how was it that, every year he lived, he found himself loving the faces of his fellows more and more? Ever as they passed, instead of

interfering with his contemplations, they gave him more and more to think: were these faces, he asked, the symbols of a celestial language in which God talked to him?

Donal sat down, and took his Greek Testament from his pocket. But all at once, brilliant as was the sun, the light of his life went out, and the vision rose of the gray quarry, and the girl turning from him in the wan moonlight. Then swift as thought followed the vision of the women weeping about the forsaken tomb; and with his risen Lord he rose also—into a region far "above the smoke and stir of this dim spot," a region where life is good even with its sorrow. The man who sees his disappointment beneath him, is more blessed than he who rejoices in fruition. Then prayer awoke, and in the light of that morning of peace he drew nigh the living one, and knew him as the source of his being. Weary with blessedness he leaned against the shadowing honeysuckle, gave a great sigh of content, smiled, wiped his eyes, and was ready for the day and what it should bring. But the bliss went not yet; he sat for a while in the joy of conscious loss in the higher life. With his meditations and feelings mingled now and then a few muffled blows of the cobbler's hammer: he was once more at work on his disabled shoe.

"Here is a true man!" he thought, "—a Godlike helper of his fellow!"

When the hammer ceased, the cobbler was stitching; when Donal ceased thinking, he went on feeling. Again and again came a little roll of the cobbler's drum, giving glory to God by doing

his will: the sweetest and most acceptable music is that which rises from work a doing; its incense ascends as from the river in its flowing, from the wind in its blowing, from the grass in its growing. All at once he heard the voices of two women in the next garden, close behind him, talking together.

"Eh," said one, "there's that godless cratur, An'rew Comin, at his wark again upo' the Sawbath mornin'!"

"Ay, lass," answered the other, "I hear him! Eh, but it 'll be an ill day for him whan he has to appear afore the jeedge o' a'! He winna hae his comman'ments broken that gait!"

"Troth, na!" returned the former; "it'll be a sair sattlin day for him!"

Donal rose, and looking about him, saw two decent, elderly women on the other side of the low stone wall. He was approaching them with the request on his lips to know which of the Lord's commandments they supposed the cobbler to be breaking, when, seeing that he must have overheard them, they turned their backs and walked away.

And now his hostess, having discovered he was in the garden, came to call him to breakfast—the simplest of meals—porridge, with a cup of tea after it because it was Sunday, and there was danger of sleepiness at the kirk.

"Yer shune 's waitin' ye, sir," said the cobbler. "Ye'll fin' them a better job nor ye expeckit. They're a better job, onygait, nor I expeckit!"

Donal made haste to put them on, and felt dressed for the

Sunday.

"Are ye gaein' to the kirk the day, Anerew?" asked the old woman, adding, as she turned to their guest, "My man's raither pecooliar aboot gaein' to the kirk! Some days he'll gang three times, an' some days he winna gang ance!—He kens himsel' what for!" she added with a smile, whose sweetness confessed that, whatever was the reason, it was to her the best in the world.

"Ay, I'm gaein' the day: I want to gang wi' oor new freen'," he answered.

"I'll tak him gien ye dinna care to gang," rejoined his wife.

"Ow, I'll gang!" he persisted. "It'll gie's something to talk aboot, an' sae ken ane anither better, an' maybe come a bit nearer ane anither, an' sae a bit nearer the maister. That's what we're here for—comin' an' gaein'."

"As ye please, Anerew! What's richt to you's aye richt to me. O' my ain sel' I wad be doobtfu' o' sic a rizzon for gaein' to the kirk—to get something to speyk aboot."

"It's a gude rizzon whaur ye haena a better," he answered. "It's aften I get at the kirk naething but what angers me—lees an' lees agen my Lord an' my God. But whan there's ane to talk it ower wi', ane 'at has some care for God as weel's for himsel', there's some guid sure to come oot o' 't—some revelation o' the real richteousness—no what fowk 'at gangs by the ministers ca's richteousness.—Is yer shune comfortable to yer feet, sir?"

"Ay, that they are! an' I thank ye: they're full better nor new."

"Weel, we winna hae worship this mornin'; whan ye gang to

the kirk it's like aitin' mair nor's guid for ye."

"Hoots, Anerew! ye dinna think a body can hae ower muckle o' the word!" said his wife, anxious as to the impression he might make on Donal.

"Ow na, gien a body tak it in, an' disgeist it! But it's no a bonny thing to hae the word stickin' about yer moo', an' baggin' oot yer pooches, no to say lyin' cauld upo' yer stamack, an' it for the life o' men. The less ye tak abune what ye put in practice the better; an' gien the thing said hae naething to du wi' practice, the less ye heed it the better.—Gien ye hae dune yer brakfast, sir, we'll gang—no 'at it's freely kirk-time yet, but the Sabbath 's 'maist the only day I get a bit o' a walk, an' gien ye hae nae objection til a turn aboot the Lord's muckle hoose afore we gang intil his little ane—we ca' 't his, but I doobt it—I'll be ready in a meenute."

Donal willingly agreed, and the cobbler, already clothed in part of his Sunday best, a pair of corduroy trousers of a mouse colour, having indued an ancient tail-coat of blue with gilt buttons, they set out together; and for their conversation, it was just the same as it would have been any other day: where every day is not the Lord's, the Sunday is his least of all.

They left the town, and were soon walking in meadows through which ran a clear river, shining and speedy in the morning sun. Its banks were largely used for bleaching, and the long lines of white in the lovely green of the natural grass were pleasant both to eye and mind. All about, the rooks were feeding in peace, knowing their freedom that day from the persecution to

which, like all other doers of good, they are in general exposed. Beyond the stream lay a level plain stretching towards the sea, divided into numberless fields, and dotted with farmhouses and hamlets. On the side where the friends were walking, the ground was more broken, rising in places into small hills, many of them wooded. Half a mile away was one of a conical shape, on whose top towered a castle. Old and gray and sullen, it lifted itself from the foliage around it like a great rock from a summer sea, and stood out against the clear blue sky of the June morning. The hill was covered with wood, mostly rather young, but at the bottom were some ancient firs and beeches. At the top, round the base of the castle, the trees were chiefly delicate birches with moonlight skin, and feathery larches not thriving over well.

"What ca' they yon castel?" questioned Donal. "It maun be a place o' some importance!"

"They maistly ca' 't jist the castel," answered the cobbler. "Its auld name 's Graham's Grip. It's lord Morven's place, an' they ca' 't Castel Graham: the faimily-name 's Graham, ye ken. They ca, themsel's Graeme-Graham—jist twa w'ys o' spellin' the name putten thegither. The last lord, no upo' the main brainch, they tell me, spelled his name wi' the diphthong, an' wasna willin' to gie't up a'thegither—sae tuik the twa o' them. You 's whaur yoong Eppy 's at service.—An' that min's me, sir, ye haena tellt me yet what kin' o' a place ye wad hae yersel.' It's no 'at a puir body like me can help, but it's aye weel to lat fowk ken what ye're efter. A word gangs speirin' lang efter it's oot o' sicht—an' the answer

may come frae far. The Lord whiles brings aboot things i' the maist oonlikly fashion."

"I'm ready for onything I'm fit to do," said Donal; "but I hae had what's ca'd a good education—though I hae learned mair frae my ain needs than frae a' my buiks; sae i wad raither till the human than the earthly soil, takin' mair interest i' the schoolmaister's craps than i' the fairmer's."

"Wad ye objec' to maister ane by himsel'—or maybe twa?"

"Na, surely—gien I saw mysel' fit."

"Eppy mentiont last nicht 'at there was word aboot the castel o' a tutor for the yoongest. Hae ye ony w'y o' approachin' the place?"

"Not till the minister comes home," answered Donal. "I have a letter to him."

"He'll be back by the middle o' the week, I hear them say."

"Can you tell me anything about the people at the castle?" asked Donal.

"I could," answered Andrew; "but some things is better f'un' oot nor kenned 'afore han'. Ilka place has its ain shape, an' maist things has to hae some parin' to gar them fit. That's what I tell yoong Eppy—mony 's the time!"

Here came a pause, and when Andrew spoke again, it seemed on a new line.

"Did it ever occur to ye, sir," he said, "'at maybe deith micht be the first waukin' to some fowk?"

"It has occurrt to me," answered Donal; "but mony things

come intil a body's heid 'at he's no able to think oot! They maun lie an' bide their time."

"Lat nane o' the lovers o' law an' letter perswaud ye the Lord wadna hae ye think—though nane but him 'at obeys can think wi' safety. We maun do first the thing 'at we ken, an' syne we may think aboot the thing 'at we dinna ken. I fancy 'at whiles the Lord wadna say a thing jist no to stop fowk thinkin' aboot it. He was aye at gettin' them to mak use o' the can'le o' the Lord. It's my belief the main obstacles to the growth o' the kingdom are first the oonbelief o' believers, an' syne the w'y 'at they lay doon the law. 'Afore they hae learnt the rudimen's o' the trowth themsel's, they begin to lay the grievous burden o' their dullness an' ill-conceived notions o' holy things upo' the min's an' consciences o' their neebours, fain, ye wad think, to haud them frae growin' ony mair nor themsel's. Eh, man, but the Lord 's won'erfu'! Ye may daur an' daur, an' no come i' sicht o' 'im!"

The church stood a little way out of the town, in a churchyard overgrown with grass, which the wind blew like a field of corn. Many of the stones were out of sight in it. The church, a relic of old catholic days, rose out of it like one that had taken to growing and so got the better of his ills. They walked into the musty, dingy, brown-atmosphered house. The cobbler led the way to a humble place behind a pillar; there Doory was seated waiting them. The service was not so dreary to Donal as usual; the sermon had some thought in it; and his heart was drawn to a man who would say he did not understand.

"Yon was a fine discoorse," remarked the cobbler as they went homeward.

Donal saw nothing fine in it, but his experience was not so wide as the cobbler's: to him the discourse had hinted many things which had not occurred to Donal.

Some people demand from the householder none but new things, others none but old; whereas we need in truth of all the sorts in his treasury.

"I haena a doobt it was a' richt an' as ye say, Anerew," said his wife; "but for mysel' I could mak naither heid nor tail o' 't."

"I saidna, Doory, it was a' richt," returned her husband; "that would be to say a heap for onything human! but it was a guid honest sermon."

"What was yon 'at he said aboot the mirracles no bein' teeps?" asked his wife.

"It was God's trowth 'at," he said.

"Gie me a share o' the same I beg o' ye, Anerew Comin."

"What the man said was this—'at the sea 'at Peter gaed oot upo' wasna first an' foremost to be luikit upon as a teep o' the inward an' spiritual troubles o' the believer, still less o' the troubles o' the church o' Christ. The Lord deals wi' fac's nane the less 'at they canna help bein' teeps. Here was terrible fac's to Peter. Here was angry watter an' roarin' win'; here was danger an' fear: the man had to trust or gang doon. Gien the hoose be on fire we maun trust; gien the watter gang ower oor heids we maun trust; gien the horse rin awa', we maun trust. Him 'at canna trust

in siclike conditions, I wadna gie a plack for ony ither kin' o' faith he may hae. God 's nae a mere thoucht i' the warl' o' thoucht, but a leevin' pooer in a' warl's alike. Him 'at gangs to God wi' a sair heid 'ill the suner gang til 'im wi' a sair hert; an' them 'at thinksna he cares for the pains o' their bodies 'ill ill believe he cares for the doobts an' perplexities o' their inquirin' speerits. To my min' he spak the best o' sense!"

"I didna hear him say onything like that!" said Donal.

"Did ye no? Weel, I thoucht it cam frae him to me!"

"Maybe I wasna giein' the best heed," said Donal. "But what ye say is as true as the sun. It stan's to rizzon."

The day passed in pleasure and quiet. Donal had found another father and mother.

CHAPTER VIII.
THE GATE

The next day, after breakfast, Donal said to his host—

"Noo I maun pey ye for my shune, for gien I dinna pey at ance, I canna tell hoo muckle to ca' my ain, an' what I hae to gang by till I get mair."

"Na, na," returned the cobbler. "There's jist ae preejudice I hae left concernin' the Sawbath-day; I firmly believe it a preejudice, for siller 's the Lord's tu, but I canna win ower 't: I canna bring mysel' to tak siller for ony wark dune upo' 't! Sae ye maun jist be content to lat that flee stick to the Lord's wa'. Ye'll du as muckle for me some day!"

"There's naething left me but to thank ye," said Donal. "There's the ludgin' an' the boord, though!—I maun ken aboot them 'afore we gang farther."

"They're nane o' my business," replied Andrew. "I lea' a' that to the gudewife, an' I coonsel ye to du the same. She's a capital manager, an' winna chairge ye ower muckle."

Donal could but yield, and presently went out for a stroll.

He wandered along the bank of the river till he came to the foot of the hill on which stood the castle. Seeing a gate, he approached it, and finding it open went in. A slow-ascending drive went through the trees, round and round the hill. He

followed it a little way. An aromatic air now blew and now paused as he went. The trees seemed climbing up to attack the fortress above, which he could not see. When he had gone a few yards out of sight of the gate, he threw himself down among them, and fell into a reverie. The ancient time arose before him, when, without a tree to cover the approach of an enemy, the castle rose defiant and bare in its strength, like an athlete stripped for the fight, and the little town huddled close under its protection. What wars had there blustered, what rumours blown, what fears whispered, what sorrows moaned! But were there not now just as many evils as then? Let the world improve as it may, the deeper ill only breaks out afresh in new forms. Time itself, the staring, vacant, unlovely time, is to many the one dread foe. Others have a house empty and garnished, in which neither Love nor Hope dwells. A self, with no God to protect from it, a self unrulable, insatiable, makes of existence to some the hell called madness. Godless man is a horror of the unfinished—a hopeless necessity for the unattainable! The most discontented are those who have all the truthless heart desires.

Thoughts like these were coming and going in Donal's brain, when he heard a slight sound somewhere near him—the lightest of sounds indeed—the turning of the leaf of a book. He raised his head and looked, but could see no one. At last, up through the tree-boles on the slope of the hill, he caught the shine of something white: it was the hand that held an open book. He took it for the hand of a lady. The trunk of a large tree hid the

reclining form. He would go back! There was the lovely cloth-striped meadow to lie in!

He rose quietly, but not quietly enough to steal away. From behind the tree, a young man, rather tall and slender, rose and came towards him. Donal stood to receive him.

"I presume you are unaware that these grounds are not open to the public!" he said, not without a touch of haughtiness.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Donal. "I found the gate open, and the shade of the trees was enticing."

"It is of no consequence," returned the youth, now with some condescension; "only my father is apt to be annoyed if he sees any one—"

He was interrupted by a cry from farther up the hill—

"Oh, there you are, Percy!"

"And there you are, Davie!" returned the youth kindly.

A boy of about ten came towards them precipitately, jumping stumps, and darting between stems.

"Take care, take care, Davie!" cried the other: "you may slip on a root and fall!"

"Oh, I know better than that!—But you are engaged!"

"Not in the least. Come along."

Donal lingered: the youth had not finish his speech!

"I went to Arkie," said the boy, "but she couldn't help me. I can't make sense of this! I wouldn't care if it wasn't a story."

He had an old folio under one arm, with a finger of the other hand in its leaves.

"It is a curious taste for a child!" said the youth, turning to Donal, in whom he had recognized the peasant-scholar: "this little brother of mine reads all the dull old romances he can lay his hands on."

"Perhaps," suggested Donal, "they are the only fictions within his reach! Could you not turn him loose upon sir Walter Scott?"

"A good suggestion!" he answered, casting a keen glance at Donal.

"Will you let me look at the passage?" said Donal to the boy, holding out his hand.

The boy opened the book, and gave it him. On the top of the page Donal read, "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia." He had read of the book, but had never seen it.

"That's a grand book!" he said.

"Horribly dreary," remarked the elder brother.

The younger reached up, and laid his finger on the page next him.

"There, sir!" he said; "that is the place: do tell me what it means."

"I will try," answered Donal; "I may not be able."

He began to read at the top of the page.

"That's not the place, sir!" said the boy. "It is there."

"I must know something of what goes before it first," returned Donal.

"Oh, yes, sir; I see!" he answered, and stood silent.

He was a fair-haired boy, with ruddy cheeks and a healthy

look—sweet-tempered evidently.

Donal presently saw both what the sentence meant and the cause of his difficulty. He explained the thing to him.

"Thank you! thank you! Now I shall get on!" he cried, and ran up the hill.

"You seem to understand boys!" said the brother.

"I have always had a sort of ambition to understand ignorance."

"Understand ignorance?"

"You know what queer shapes the shadows of the plainest things take: I never seem to understand any thing till I understand its shadow."

The youth glanced keenly at Donal.

"I wish I had had a tutor like you!" he said.

"Why?" asked Donal.

"I should done better.—Where do you live?"

Donal told him he was lodging with Andrew Comin, the cobbler. A silence followed.

"Good morning!" said the youth.

"Good morning, sir!" returned Donal, and went away.

CHAPTER IX.
THE MORVEN ARMS

On Wednesday evening Donal went to The Morven Arms to inquire for the third time if his box was come. The landlord said, if a great heavy tool-chest was the thing he expected, it had come.

"Donal Grant wad be the name upo' 't," said Donal.

"'Deed, I didna luik," said the landlord. "Its i' the back yard."

As Donal went through the house to the yard, he passed the door of a room where some of the townsfolk sat, and heard the earl mentioned.

He had not asked Andrew anything about the young man he had spoken with; for he understood that his host held himself not at liberty to talk about the family in which his granddaughter was a servant. But what was said in public he surely might hear! He requested the landlord to let him have a bottle of ale, and went into the room and sat down.

It was a decent parlour with a sanded floor. Those assembled were a mixed company from town and country, having a tumbler of whisky-toddy together after the market. One of them was a stranger who had been receiving from the others various pieces of information concerning the town and its neighbourhood.

"I min' the auld man weel," a wrinkled gray-haired man was saying as Donal entered, "—a varra different man frae this

present. He wud sit doon as ready as no—that wud he—wi' ony puir body like mysel', an' gie him his cracks, an' hear his news, an' drink his glaiss, an' mak naething o' 't. But this man, haith! wha ever saw him cheenge word wi' brither man?"

"I never h'ard hoo he came to the teetle: they say he was but some far awa' cousin!" remarked a farmer-looking man, florid and stout.

"Hoots! he was ain brither to the last yerl, wi' richt to the teetle, though nane to the property. That he's but takin' care o' till his niece come o' age. He was a heap aboot the place afore his brither dee'd, an' they war freen's as weel 's brithers. They say 'at the lady Arctoora—h'ard ye ever sic a hathenish name for a lass!—is b'un' to merry the yoong lord. There 's a sicht o' clapper-clash aboot the place, an' the fowk, an' their strange w'ys. They tell me nane can be said to ken the yerl but his ain man. For mysel' I never cam i' their coonsel—no' even to the buyin' or sellin' o' a lamb."

"Weel," said a fair-haired, pale-faced man, "we ken frae scriptur 'at the sins o' the fathers is veesitit upo' the children to the third an' fourth generation—an' wha can tell?"

"Wha can tell," rejoined another, who had a judicial look about him, in spite of an unshaven beard, and a certain general disregard to appearances, "wha can tell but the sins o' oor faithers may be lyin' upo' some o' oorsel's at this varra moment?"

"In oor case, I canna see the thing wad be fair," said a fifth: "we dinna even ken what they did!"

"We're no to interfere wi' the wull o' the Almichty," rejoined the former. "It gangs its ain gait, an' mortal canna tell what that gait is. His justice winna be contert."

Donal felt that to be silent now would be to decline witnessing. He feared argument, lest he should fail and wrong the right, but he must not therefore hang back. He drew his chair towards the table.

"Wad ye lat a stranger put in a word, freen's?" he said.

"Ow ay, an' welcome! We setna up for the men o' Gotham."

"Weel, I wad spier a question gien I may."

"Speir awa'. Answer I winna insure," said the man unshaven.

"Weel, wad ye please tell me what ye ca' the justice o' God?"

"Onybody could tell ye that: it consists i' the punishment o' sin. He gies ilka sinner what his sin deserves."

"That seems to me an unco ae-sidit definition o' justice."

"Weel, what wad ye mak o' 't?"

"I wad say justice means fair play; an' the justice o' God lies i' this, 'at he gies ilka man, beast, an' deevil, fair play."

"I'm doobtfu' aboot that!" said a drover-looking fellow. "We maun gang by the word; an' the word says he veesits the ineequities o' the fathers upo' the children to the third an' fourth generation: I never could see the fair play o' that!"

"Dinna ye meddle wi' things, John, 'at ye dinna un'erstan'; ye may wauk i' the wrang box!" said the old man.

"I want to un'erstan'," returned John. "I'm no sayin' he disna du richt; I'm only sayin' I canna see the fair play o' 't."

"It may weel be richt an' you no see 't!"

"Ay' weel that! But what for sud I no say I dinna see 't? Isna the blin' man to say he's blin'?"

This was unanswerable, and Donal again spoke.

"It seems to me," he said, "we need first to un'erstan' what's conteened i' the veesitin' o' the sins o' the fathers upo' the children, afore we daur ony jeedgment concernin' 't."

"Ay, that 's sense eneuch!" confessed a responsive murmur.

"I haena seen muckle o' this warl' yet, compared wi' you, sirs," Donal went on, "but I hae been a heap my lane wi' nowt an' sheep, whan a heap o' things gaed throuw my heid; an' I hae seen something as weel, though no that muckle. I hae seen a man, a' his life 'afore a douce honest man, come til a heap o' siller, an' gang to the dogs!"

A second murmur seemed to indicate corroboration.

"He gaed a' to the dogs, as I say," continued Donal; "an' the bairns he left 'ahint him whan he dee'd o' drink, cam upo' the perris, or wad hae hungert but for some 'at kenned him whan he was yet in honour an' poverty. Noo, wad ye no say this was a veesitin' o' the sins o' the father upo' the children?"

"Ay, doobtless!"

"Weel, whan I h'ard last aboot them, they were a' like eneuch to turn oot honest lads an' lasses."

"Ow, I daursay!"

"An' what micht ye think the probability gien they had come intil a lot o' siller whan their father dee'd?"

"Maybe they micht hae gane the same gait he gaed!"

"Was there injustice than, or was there favour i' that veesitation o' the sins o' their father upo' them?"

There was no answer. The toddy went down their throats and the smoke came out of their mouths, but no one dared acknowledge it might be a good thing to be born poor instead of rich. So entirely was the subject dropped that Donal feared he had failed to make himself understood. He did not know the general objection to talking of things on eternal principles. We set up for judges of right while our very selves are wrong! He saw that he had cast a wet blanket over the company, and judged it better to take his leave.

Borrowing a wheelbarrow, he trundled his chest home, and unpacking it in the archway, carried his books and clothes to his room.

CHAPTER X
THE PARISH CLERGYMAN

The next day, Donal put on his best coat, and went to call on the minister. Shown into the study, he saw seated there the man he had met on his first day's journey, the same who had parted from him in such displeasure. He presented his letter.

Mr. Carmichael gave him a keen glance, but uttered no word until he had read it.

"Well, young man," he said, looking up at him with concentrated severity, "what would you have me do?"

"Tell me of any situation you may happen to know or hear of, sir," said Donal. "That is all I could expect."

"All!" repeated the clergyman, with something very like a sneer; "—but what if I think that all a very great deal? What if I imagine myself set in charge over young minds and hearts? What if I know you better than the good man whose friendship for your parents gives him a kind interest in you? You little thought how you were undermining your prospects last Friday! My old friend would scarcely have me welcome to my parish one he may be glad to see out of his own! You can go to the kitchen and have your dinner—I have no desire to render evil for evil—but I will not bid you God-speed. And the sooner you take yourself out of this, young man, the better!"

"Good morning, sir!" said Donal, and left the room.

On the doorstep he met a youth he had known by sight at the university: it was the minister's son—the worst-behaved of all the students. Was this a case of the sins of the father being visited on the child? Does God never visit the virtues of the father on the child?

A little ruffled, and not a little disappointed, Donal walked away. Almost unconsciously he took the road to the castle, and coming to the gate, leaned on the top bar, and stood thinking.

Suddenly, down through the trees came Davie bounding, pushed his hand through between the bars, and shook hands with him.

"I have been looking for you all day," he said.

"Why?" asked Donal.

"Forgue sent you a letter."

"I have had no letter."

"Eppy took it this morning."

"Ah, that explains! I have not been home since breakfast."

"It was to say my father would like to see you."

"I will go and get it: then I shall know what to do."

"Why do you live there? The cobbler is a dirty little man! Your clothes will smell of leather!"

"He is not dirty," said Donal. "His hands do get dirty—very dirty with his work—and his face too; and I daresay soap and water can't get them quite clean. But he will have a nice earth-bath one day, and that will take all the dirt off. And if you could

see his soul—that is as clean as clean can be—so clean it is quite shining!"

"Have you seen it?" said the boy, looking up at Donal, unsure whether he was making game of him, or meaning something very serious.

"I have had a glimpse or two of it. I never saw a cleaner.—You know, my dear boy, there's a cleanness much deeper than the skin!"

"I know!" said Davie, but stared as if he wondered he would speak of such things.

Donal returned his gaze. Out of the fullness of his heart his eyes shone. Davie was reassured.

"Can you ride?" he asked.

"Yes, a little."

"Who taught you?"

"An old mare I was fond of."

"Ah, you are making game of me! I do not like to be made game of," said Davie, and turned away.

"No indeed," replied Donal. "I never make game of anybody.—But now I will go and find the letter."

"I would go with you," said the boy, "but my father will not let me beyond the grounds. I don't know why."

Donal hastened home, and found himself eagerly expected, for the letter young Eppy had brought was from the earl. It informed Donal that it would give his lordship pleasure to see him, if he would favour him with a call.

In a few minutes he was again on the road to the castle.

CHAPTER XI.
THE EARL

He met no one on his way from the gate up through the wood. He ascended the hill with its dark ascending firs, to its crown of silvery birches, above which, as often as the slowly circling road brought him to the other side, he saw rise like a helmet the gray mass of the fortress. Turret and tower, pinnacle and battlement, appeared and disappeared as he climbed. Not until at last he stood almost on the top, and from an open space beheld nearly the whole front, could he tell what it was like. It was a grand pile, but looked a gloomy one to live in.

He stood on a broad grassy platform, from which rose a gravelled terrace, and from the terrace the castle. He ran his eye along the front seeking a door but saw none. Ascending the terrace by a broad flight of steps, he approached a deep recess in the front, where two portions of the house of differing date nearly met. Inside this recess he found a rather small door, flush with the wall, thickly studded and plated with iron, surmounted by the Morven horses carved in gray stone, and surrounded with several mouldings. Looking for some means of announcing his presence, he saw a handle at the end of a rod of iron, and pulled, but heard nothing: the sound of the bell was smothered in a wilderness of stone walls. By and by, however, appeared an old servant, bowed

and slow, with plentiful hair white as wool, and a mingled look of childishness and caution in his wrinkled countenance.

"The earl wants to see me," said Donal.

"What name?" said the man.

"Donal Grant; but his lordship will be nothing the wiser, I suspect; I don't think he knows my name. Tell him—the young man he sent for to Andrew Comin's."

The man left him, and Donal began to look about him. The place where he stood was a mere entry, a cell in huge walls, with a second, a low, round-headed door, like the entrance to a prison, by which the butler had disappeared. There was nothing but bare stone around him, with again the Morven arms cut deep into it on one side. The ceiling was neither vaulted nor groined nor flat, but seemed determined by the accidental concurrence of ends of stone stairs and corners of floors on different levels. It was full ten minutes before the man returned and requested him to follow him.

Immediately Donal found himself in a larger and less irregular stone-case, adorned with heads and horns and skins of animals. Crossing this, the man opened a door covered with red cloth, which looked strange in the midst of the cold hard stone, and Donal entered an octagonal space, its doors of dark shining oak, with carved stone lintels and doorposts, and its walls adorned with arms and armour almost to the domed ceiling. Into it, as if it descended suddenly out of some far height, but dropping at last like a gently alighting bird, came the end of a turnpike-stair, of

slow sweep and enormous diameter—such a stair as in wildest gothic tale he had never imagined. Like the revolving centre of a huge shell, it went up out of sight, with plain promise of endless convolutions beyond. It was of ancient stone, but not worn as would have been a narrow stair. A great rope of silk, a modern addition, ran up along the wall for a hand-rail; and with slow-moving withered hand upon it, up the glorious ascent climbed the serving man, suggesting to Donal's eye the crawling of an insect, to his heart the redemption of the sons of God.

With the stair yet ascending above them as if it would never stop, the man paused upon a step no broader than the rest, and opening a door in the round of the well, said, "Mr. Grant, my lord," and stood aside for Donal to enter.

He found himself in the presence of a tall, bowed man, with a large-featured white face, thin and worn, and a deep-sunken eye that gleamed with an unhealthy life. His hair was thin, but covered his head, and was only streaked with gray. His hands were long and thin and white; his feet in large shoes, looking the larger that they came out from narrow trousers, which were of shepherd-tartan. His coat was of light-blue, with a high collar of velvet, and much too wide for him. A black silk neckerchief tied carelessly about his throat, and a waistcoat of pineapple shawl-stuff, completed his dress. On one long little finger shone a stone which Donal took for an emerald. He motioned his visitor to a seat, and went on writing, with a rudeness more like that of a successful contractor than a nobleman. But it gave

Donal the advantage of becoming a little accustomed to his surroundings. The room was not large, was wainscoted, and had a good many things on the walls: Donal noted two or three riding whips, a fishing rod, several pairs of spurs, a sword with golden hilt, a strange looking dagger like a flame of fire, one or two old engravings, and what seemed a plan of the estate. At the one window, small, with a stone mullion, the summer sun was streaming in. The earl sat in its flood, and in the heart of it seemed cold and bloodless. He looked about sixty years of age, and as if he rarely or never smiled. Donal tried to imagine what a smile would do for his face, but failed. He was not in the least awed by the presence of the great man. What is rank to the man who honours everything human, has no desire to look what he is not, has nothing to conceal and nothing to compass, is fearful of no to-morrow, and does not respect riches! Toward such ends of being the tide of Donal's life was at least setting. So he sat neither fidgeting nor staring, but quietly taking things in.

The earl raised himself, pushed his writing from him, turned towards him, and said with courtesy,

"Excuse me, Mr. Grant; I wished to talk to you with the ease of duty done."

More polite his address could not have been, but there was a something between him and Donal that was not to be passed a —nameless gulf of the negative.

"My time is at your lordship's service," replied Donal, with the ease that comes of simplicity.

"You have probably guessed why I sent for you?"

"I have hoped, my lord."

There was something of old-world breeding about the lad that commended him to the earl. Such breeding is not rare among Celt-born peasants.

"My sons told me that they had met a young man in the grounds—"

"For which I beg your lordship's pardon," said Donal. "I did not know the place was forbidden."

"I hope you will soon be familiar with it. I am glad of your mistake. From what they said, I supposed you might be a student in want of a situation, and I had been looking out for a young man to take charge of the boy: it seemed possible you might serve my purpose. I do not question you can show yourself fit for such an office: I presume it would suit you. Do you believe yourself one to be so trusted?"

Donal had not a glimmer of false modesty; he answered immediately,

"I do, my lord."

"Tell me something of your history: where were you born? what were your parents?"

Donal told him all he thought it of any consequence he should know.

His lordship did not once interrupt him with question or remark. When he had ended—

"Well," he said, "I like all you tell me. You have testimonials?"

"I have from the professors, my lord, and one from the minister of the parish, who knew me before I went to college. I could get one from Mr. Sclater too, whose church I attended while there."

"Show me what you have," said his lordship.

Donal took the papers from the pocket-book his mother had made him, and handed them to him. The earl read them with some attention, returning each to him without remark as he finished it, only saying with the last,

"Quite satisfactory."

"But," said Donal, "there is one thing I should be more at ease if I told your lordship: Mr. Carmichael, the minister of this parish, would tell you I was an atheist, or something very like it —therefore an altogether unsafe person. But he knows nothing of me."

"On what grounds then would he say so?" asked the earl —showing not the least discomposure. "I thought you were a stranger to this place!"

Donal told him how they had met, what had passed between them, and how the minister had behaved in consequence. His lordship heard him gravely, was silent for a moment, and then said,

"Should Mr. Carmichael address me on the subject, which I do not think likely, he will find me already too much prejudiced in your favour. But I can imagine his mistaking your freedom of speech: you are scarcely prudent enough. Why say all you think?"

"I fear nothing, my lord."

The earl was silent; his gray face seemed to grow grayer, but it might be that just then the sun went under a cloud, and he was suddenly folded in shadow. After a moment he spoke again.

"I am quite satisfied with you so far, Mr. Grant; and as I should not like to employ you in direct opposition to Mr. Carmichel—not that I belong to his church—we will arrange matters before he can hear of the affair. What salary do you want?"

Donal replied he would prefer leaving the salary to his lordship's judgment upon trial.

"I am not a wealthy man," returned his lordship, "and would prefer an understanding."

"Try me then for three months, my lord; give me my board and lodging, the use of your library, and at the end of the quarter a ten-pound-note: by that time you will be able to tell whether I suit you."

The earl nodded agreement, and Donal rose at once. With a heart full of thankfulness and hope he walked back to his friends. He had before him pleasant work; plenty of time and book-help; an abode full of interest; and something for his labour!

"'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee!'" said the cobbler, rejoicing against the minister; "'the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.'"

In the afternoon Donal went into the town to get some trifles he wanted before going to the castle. As he turned to the door of a draper's shop, he saw at the counter the minister talking to

him. He would rather have gone elsewhere but for unwillingness to turn his back on anything: he went in. Beside the minister stood a young lady, who, having completed her purchases, was listening to their conversation. The draper looked up as he entered. A glance passed between him and the minister. He came to Donal, and having heard what he wanted, left him, went back to the minister, and took no more notice of him. Donal found it awkward, and left the shop.

"High an' michty!" said the draper, annoyed at losing the customer to whose dispraise he had been listening.

"Far beyond dissent, John!" said the minister, pursuing a remark.

"Doobtless, sir, it is that!" answered the draper. "I'm thankfu' to say I never harboured a doobt mysel', but aye took what I was tauld, ohn argle-barglet. What hae we sic as yersel' set ower's for, gien it binna to haud's i' the straicht path o' what we're to believe an' no to believe? It's a fine thing no to be accountable!"

The minister was an honest man so far as he knew himself and honesty, and did not relish this form of submission. But he did not ask himself where was the difference between accepting the word of man and accepting man's explanation of the word of God! He took a huge pinch from his black snuffbox and held his peace.

In the evening Donal would settle his account with mistress Comin: he found her demand so much less than he had expected, that he expostulated. She was firm, however, and assured him

she had gained, not lost. As he was putting up his things,

"Lea' a buik or twa, sir," she said, "'at whan ye luik in, the place may luik hame-like. We s' ca' the room yours. Come as aften as ye can. It does my Anerew's hert guid to hae a crack wi' ane 'at kens something o' what the Maister wad be at. Mony ane 'll ca' him Lord, but feow 'ill tak the trible to ken what he wad hae o' them. But there's my Anerew—he'll sit yon'er at his wark, thinkin' by the hoor thegither ower something the Maister said 'at he canna win at the richts o'. 'Depen' upo' 't,' he says whiles, 'depen' upo' 't, lass, whaur onything he says disna luik richt to hiz, it maun be 'at we haena won at it!'"

As she ended, her husband came in, and took up what he fancied the thread of the dialogue.

"An' what are we to think o' the man," he said, "at's content no to un'erstan' what he was at the trible to say? Wad he say things 'at he didna mean fowk to un'erstan' whan he said them?" "Weel, Anerew," said his wife, "there's mony a thing he said 'at I can not un'erstan'; naither am I muckle the better for your explainin' o' the same; I maun jist lat it sit."

Andrew laughed his quiet pleased laugh.

"Weel, lass," he said, "the duin' o' ae thing 's better nor the un'erstan'in' o' twenty. Nor wull ye be lang ohn un'erstan't muckle 'at's dark to ye noo; for the maister likes nane but the duer o' the word, an' her he likes weel. Be blythe, lass; ye s' hae yer fill o' un'erstan'in' yet!"

"I'm fain to believe ye speyk the trowth, Anerew!"

"It 's great trowth," said Donal.

CHAPTER XII.
THE CASTLE

The next morning came a cart from the castle to fetch his box; and after breakfast he set out for his new abode.

He took the path by the river-side. The morning was glorious. The sun and the river and the birds were jubilant, and the wind gave life to everything. It rippled the stream, and fluttered the long webs bleaching in the sun: they rose and fell like white waves on the bright green lake; and women, homely Nereids of the grassy sea, were besprinkling them with spray. There were dull sounds of wooden machinery near, but they made no discord with the sweetness of the hour, speaking only of activity, not labour. From the long bleaching meadows by the river-side rose the wooded base of the castle. Donal's bosom swelled with delight; then came a sting: was he already forgetting his inextinguishable grief? "But," he answered himself, "God is more to me than any woman! When he puts joy in my heart, shall I not be glad? When he calls my name shall I not answer?"

He stepped out joyfully, and was soon climbing the hill. He was again admitted by the old butler.

"I will show you at once," he said, "how to go and come at your own will."

He led him through doors and along passages to a postern

opening on a little walled garden at the east end of the castle.

"This door," he said, "is, you observe, at the foot of Baliol's tower, and in that tower is your room; I will show it you."

He led the way up a spiral stair that might almost have gone inside the newel of the great staircase. Up and up they went, until Donal began to wonder, and still they went up.

"You're young, sir," said the butler, "and sound of wind and limb; so you'll soon think nothing of it."

"I never was up so high before, except on a hill-side," returned Donal. "The college-tower is nothing to this!"

"In a day or two you'll be shooting up and down it like a bird. I used to do so myself. I got into the way of keeping a shoulder foremost, and screwing up as if I was a blob of air! Old age does make fools of us!"

"You don't like it then?"

"No, I do not: who does?"

"It's only that you get spent as you go up. The fresh air at the top of the stair will soon revive you," said Donal.

But his conductor did not understand him.

"That's all very well so long as you're young; but when it has got you, you'll pant and grumble like the rest of us."

In the distance Donal saw Age coming slowly after him, to claw him in his clutch, as the old song says. "Please God," he thought, "by the time he comes up, I'll be ready to try a fall with him! O Thou eternally young, the years have no hold on thee; let them have none on thy child. I too shall have life eternal."

Ere they reached the top of the stair, the man halted and opened a door. Donal entering saw a small room, nearly round, a portion of the circle taken off by the stair. On the opposite side was a window projecting from the wall, whence he could look in three different directions. The wide country lay at his feet. He saw the winding road by which he had ascended, the gate by which he had entered, the meadow with its white stripes through which he had come, and the river flowing down. He followed it with his eyes:—lo, there was the sea, shining in the sun like a diamond shield! It was but the little German Ocean, yet one with the great world-ocean. He turned to his conductor.

"Yes," said the old man, answering his look, "it's a glorious sight! When first I looked out there I thought I was in eternity."

The walls were bare even of plaster; he could have counted the stones in them; but they were dry as a bone.

"You are wondering," said the old man, "how you are to keep warm in the winter! Look here: you shut this door over the window! See how thick and strong it is! There is your fireplace; and for fuel, there's plenty below! It is a labour to carry it up, I grant; but if I was you, I would set to o' nights when nobody was about, and carry till I had a stock laid in!"

"But," said Donal, "I should fill up my room. I like to be able to move about a little!"

"Ah," replied the old man, "you don't know what a space you have up here all to yourself! Come this way."

Two turns more up the stair, and they came to another door.

It opened into wide space: from it Donal stepped on a ledge or bartizan, without any parapet, that ran round the tower, passing above the window of his room. It was well he had a steady brain, for he found the height affect him more than that of a precipice on Glashgar: doubtless he would get used to it, for the old man had stepped out without the smallest hesitation! Round the tower he followed him.

On the other side a few steps rose to a watch-tower—a sort of ornate sentry-box in stone, where one might sit and regard with wide vision the whole country. Avoiding this, another step or two led them to the roof of the castle—of great stone slabs. A broad passage ran between the rise of the roof and a battlemented parapet. By this time they came to a flat roof, on to which they descended by a few steps. Here stood two rough sheds, with nothing in them.

"There's stowage!" said the old man.

"Yes, indeed!" answered Donal, to whom the idea of his aerie was growing more and more agreeable. "But would there be no objection to my using the place for such a purpose?"

"What objection?" returned his guide. "I doubt if a single person but myself knows it."

"And shall I be allowed to carry up as much as I please?"

"I allow you," said the butler, with importance. "Of course you will not waste—I am dead against waste! But as to what is needful, use your freedom.—Dinner will be ready for you in the schoolroom at seven."

At the door of his room the old man left him, and after listening for a moment to his descending steps, Donal re-entered his chamber.

Why they put him so apart, Donal never asked himself; that he should have such command of his leisure as this isolation promised him was a consequence very satisfactory. He proceeded at once to settle himself in his new quarters. Finding some shelves in a recess of the wall, he arranged his books upon them, and laid his few clothes in the chest of drawers beneath. He then got out his writing material, and sat down.

Though his window was so high, the warm pure air came in full of the aromatic odours rising in the hot sunshine from the young pine trees far below, and from a lark far above descended news of heaven-gate. The scent came up and the song came down all the time he was writing to his mother—a long letter. When he had closed and addressed it, he fell into a reverie. Apparently he was to have his meals by himself: he was glad of it: he would be able to read all the time! But how was he to find the schoolroom! Some one would surely fetch him! They would remember he did not know his way about the place! It wanted yet an hour to dinner-time when, finding himself drowsy, he threw himself on his bed, where presently he fell fast asleep.

The night descended, and when he came to himself, its silences were deep around him. It was not dark: there was no moon, but the twilight was clear. He could read the face of his watch: it was twelve o'clock! No one had missed him! He was

very hungry! But he had been hungrier before and survived it! In his wallet were still some remnants of oat-cake! He took it in his hand, and stepping out on the bartizan, crept with careful steps round to the watch-tower. There he seated himself in the stone chair, and ate his dry morsels in the starry presences. Sleep had refreshed him, and he was wide awake, yet there was on him the sense of a strange existence. Never before had he so known himself! Often had he passed the night in the open air, but never before had his night-consciousness been such! Never had he felt the same way alone. He was parted from the whole earth, like the ship-boy on the giddy mast! Nothing was below but a dimness; the earth and all that was in it was massed into a vague shadow. It was as if he had died and gone where existence was independent of solidity and sense. Above him was domed the vast of the starry heavens; he could neither flee from it nor ascend to it! For a moment he felt it the symbol of life, yet an unattainable hopeless thing. He hung suspended between heaven and earth, an outcast of both, a denizen of neither! The true life seemed ever to retreat, never to await his grasp. Nothing but the beholding of the face of the Son of Man could set him at rest as to its reality; nothing less than the assurance from his own mouth could satisfy him that all was true, all well: life was a thing so essentially divine, that he could not know it in itself till his own essence was pure! But alas, how dream-like was the old story! Was God indeed to be reached by the prayers, affected by the needs of men? How was he to feel sure of it? Once more, as often heretofore, he found

himself crying into the great world to know whether there was an ear to hear. What if there should come to him no answer? How frightful then would be his loneliness! But to seem not to be heard might be part of the discipline of his darkness! It might be for the perfecting of his faith that he must not yet know how near God was to him!

"Lord," he cried, "eternal life is to know thee and thy Father; I do not know thee and thy Father; I have not eternal life; I have but life enough to hunger for more: show me plainly of the Father whom thou alone knowest."

And as he prayed, something like a touch of God seemed to begin and grow in him till it was more than his heart could hold, and the universe about him was not large enough to hold in its hollow the heart that swelled with it.

"God is enough," he said, and sat in peace.

CHAPTER XIII.
A SOUND

All at once came to his ear through the night a strange something. Whence or what it was he could not even conjecture. Was it a moan of the river from below? Was it a lost music-tone that had wandered from afar and grown faint? Was it one of those mysterious sounds he had read of as born in the air itself, and not yet explained of science? Was it the fluttered skirt of some angelic song of lamentation?—for if the angels rejoice, they surely must lament! Or was it a stilled human moaning? Was any wrong being done far down in the white-gleaming meadows below, by the banks of the river whose platinum-glimmer he could descry through the molten amethystine darkness of the starry night?

Presently came a long-drawn musical moan: it must be the sound of some muffled instrument! Verily night was the time for strange things! Could sounds be begotten in the fir trees by the rays of the hot sun, and born in the stillness of the following dark, as the light which the diamond receives in the day glows out in the gloom? There are parents and their progeny that never exist together!

Again the sound—hardly to be called sound! It resembled a vibration of organ-pipe too slow and deep to affect the hearing;

only this rather seemed too high, as if only his soul heard it. He would steal softly down the dumb stone-stair! Some creature might be in trouble and needing help!

He crept back along the bartizan. The stair was dark as the very heart of the night. He groped his way down. The spiral stair is the safest of all: you cannot tumble far ere brought up by the inclosing cylinder. Arrived at the bottom, and feeling about, he could not find the door to the outer air which the butler had shown him; it was wall wherever his hands fell. He could not find again the stair he had left; he could not tell in what direction it lay.

He had got into a long windowless passage connecting two wings of the house, and in this he was feeling his way, fearful of falling down some stair or trap. He came at last to a door —low-browed like almost all in the house. Opening it—was it a thinner darkness or the faintest gleam of light he saw? And was that again the sound he had followed, fainter and farther off than before—a downy wind-wafted plume from the skirt of some stray harmony? At such a time of the night surely it was strange! It must come from one who could not sleep, and was solacing himself with sweet sounds, breathing a soul into the uncompanionable silence! If so it was, he had no right to search farther! But how was he to return? He dared hardly move, lest he should be found wandering over the house in the dead of night like a thief, or one searching after its secrets. He must sit down and wait for the morning: its earliest light would perhaps enable him to find his way to his quarters!

Feeling about him a little, his foot struck against the step of a stair. Examining it with his hands, he believed it the same he had ascended in the morning: even in a great castle, could there be two such royal stairs? He sat down upon it, and leaning his head on his hands, composed himself to a patient waiting for the light.

Waiting pure is perhaps the hardest thing for flesh and blood to do well. The relations of time to mind are very strange. Some of their phenomena seem to prove that time is only of the mind—belonging to the intellect as good and evil belong to the spirit. Anyhow, if it were not for the clocks of the universe, one man would live a year, a century, where another would live but a day. But the mere motion of time, not to say the consciousness of empty time, is fearful. It is this empty time that the fool is always trying to kill: his effort should be to fill it. Yet nothing but the living God can fill it—though it be but the shape our existence takes to us. Only where he is, emptiness is not. Eternity will be but an intense present to the child with whom is the Father.

Such thoughts alighted, flitted, and passed, for the first few moments, through the mind of Donal, as he sat half consciously waiting for the dawn. It was thousands of miles away, over the great round of the sunward-turning earth! His imagination woke, and began to picture the great hunt of the shadows, fleeing before the arrows of the sun, over the broad face of the mighty world—its mountains, seas, and plains in turn confessing the light, and submitting to him who slays for them the haunting demons of their dark. Then again the moments were the small cogs on

the wheels of time, whereby the dark castle in which he sat was rushing ever towards the light: the cogs were caught and the wheels turned swiftly, and the time and the darkness sped. He forgot the labour of waiting. If now and then he fancied a tone through the darkness, it was to his mind the music-march of the morning to his rescue from the dungeon of the night.

But that was no musical tone which made the darkness shudder around him! He sprang to his feet. It was a human groan—a groan as of one in dire pain, the pain of a soul's agony. It seemed to have descended the stair to him. The next instant Donal was feeling his way up—cautiously, as if on each succeeding step he might come against the man who had groaned. Tales of haunted houses rushed into his memory. What if he were but pursuing the groan of an actor in the past—a creature the slave of his own conscious memory—a mere haunter of the present which he could not influence—one without physical relation to the embodied, save in the groans he could yet utter! But it was more in awe than in fear that he went. Up and up he felt his way, all about him as still as darkness and the night could make it. A ghostly cold crept through his skin; it was drawn together as by a gently freezing process; and there was a pulling at the muscles of his chest, as if his mouth were being dragged open by a martingale.

As he felt his way along the wall, sweeping its great endless circle round and round in spiral ascent, all at once his hand seemed to go through it; he started and stopped. It was the door

of the room into which he had been shown to meet the earl! It stood wide open. A faint glimmer came through the window from the star-filled sky. He stepped just within the doorway. Was not that another glimmer on the floor—from the back of the room—through a door he did not remember having seen yesterday? There again was the groan, and nigh at hand! Someone must be in sore need! He approached the door and looked through. A lamp, nearly spent, hung from the ceiling of a small room which might be an office or study, or a place where papers were kept. It had the look of an antechamber, but that it could not be, for there was but the one door!—In the dim light he descried a vague form leaning up against one of the walls, as if listening to something through it! As he gazed it grew plainer to him, and he saw a face, its eyes staring wide, which yet seemed not to see him. It was the face of the earl. Donal felt as if in the presence of the disembodied; he stood fascinated, nor made attempt to retire or conceal himself. The figure turned its face to the wall, put the palms of its hands against it, and moved them up and down, and this way and that; then looked at them, and began to rub them against each other.

Donal came to himself. He concluded it was a case of sleepwalking. He had read that it was dangerous to wake the sleeper, but that he seldom came to mischief when left alone, and was about to slip away as he had come, when the faint sound of a far-off chord crept through the silence. The earl again laid his ear to the wall. But there was only silence. He went through the same

dumb show as before, then turned as if to leave the place. Donal turned also, and hurriedly felt his way to the stair. Then first he was in danger of terror; for in stealing through the darkness from one who could find his way without his eyes, he seemed pursued by a creature not of this world. On the stair he went down a step or two, then lingered, and heard the earl come on it also. He crept close to the newel, leaving the great width of the stair free, but the steps of the earl went upward. Donal descended, sat down again at the bottom of the stair, and began again to wait. No sound came to him through the rest of the night. The slow hours rolled away, and the slow light drew nearer. Now and then he was on the point of falling into a doze, but would suddenly start wide awake, listening through a silence that seemed to fill the whole universe and deepen around the castle.

At length he was aware that the darkness had, unobserved of him, grown weaker—that the approach of the light was sickening it: the dayspring was about to take hold of the ends of the earth that the wicked might be shaken out of its lap. He sought the long passage by which he had come, and felt his way to the other end: it would be safer to wait there if he could get no farther. But somehow he came to the foot of his own stair, and sped up as if it were the ladder of heaven. He threw himself on his bed, fell fast asleep, and did not wake till the sun was high.

CHAPTER XIV.
THE SCHOOLROOM

Old Simmons, the butler, woke him.

"I was afraid something was the matter, sir. They tell me you did not come down last night; and breakfast has been waiting you two hours."

"I should not have known where to find it," said Donal. "The knowledge of an old castle is not intuitive."

"How long will you take to dress?" asked Simmons.

"Ten minutes, if there is any hurry," answered Donal.

"I will come again in twenty; or, if you are willing to save an old man's bones, I will be at the bottom of the stair at that time to take charge of you. I would have looked after you yesterday, but his lordship was poorly, and I had to be in attendance on him till after midnight."

Donal thought it impossible he should of himself have found his way to the schoolroom. With all he could do to remember the turnings, he found the endeavour hopeless, and gave it up with a not unpleasing despair. Through strange passages, through doors in all directions, up stairs and down they went, and at last came to a long, low room, barely furnished, with a pleasant outlook, and immediate access to the open air. The windows were upon a small grassy court, with a sundial in the centre; a door opened on

a paved court. At one end of the room a table was laid with ten times as many things as he could desire to eat, though he came to it with a good appetite. The butler himself waited upon him. He was a good-natured old fellow, with a nose somewhat too red for the ordinary wear of one in his responsible position.

"I hope the earl is better this morning," said Donal.

"Well, I can't say. He's but a delicate man is the earl, and has been, so long as I have known him. He was with the army in India, and the sun, they say, give him a stroke, and ever since he have headaches that bad! But in between he seems pretty well, and nothing displeases him more than ask after his health, or how he slep the night. But he's a good master, and I hope to end my days with him. I'm not one as likes new faces and new places! One good place is enough for me, says I—so long as it is a good one.—Take some of this game pie, sir."

Donal made haste with his breakfast, and to Simmons's astonishment had ended when he thought him just well begun.

"How shall I find master Davie?" he asked.

"He is wild to see you, sir. When I've cleared away, just have the goodness to ring this bell out of that window, and he'll be with you as fast as he can lay his feet to the ground."

Donal rang the handbell. A shout mingled with the clang of it. Then came the running of swift feet over the stones of the court, and Davie burst into the room.

"Oh, sir," he cried, "I am glad! It is good of you to come!"

"Well, you see, Davie," returned Donal, "everybody has got

to do something to carry the world on a bit: my work is to help make a man of you. Only I can't do much except you help me; and if I find I am not making a good job of you, I shan't stop many hours after the discovery. If you want to keep me, you must mind what I say, and so help me to make a man of you."

"It will be long before I am a man!" said Davie rather disconsolately.

"It depends on yourself. The boy that is longest in becoming a man, is the boy that thinks himself a man before he is a bit like one."

"Come then, let us do something!" said Davie.

"Come away," rejoined Donal. "What shall we do first?"

"I don't know: you must tell me, sir."

"What would you like best to do—I mean if you might do what you pleased?"

Davie thought a little, then said:

"I should like to write a book."

"What kind of a book?"

"A beautiful story."

"Isn't it just as well to read such a book? Why should you want to write one?"

"Because then I should have it go just as I wanted it! I am always—almost always—disappointed with the thing that comes next. But if I wrote it myself, then I shouldn't get tired of it; it would be what pleased me, and not what pleased somebody else."

"Well," said Donal, after thinking for a moment, "suppose you

begin to write a book!"

"Oh, that will be fun!—much better than learning verbs and nouns!"

"But the verbs and nouns are just the things that go to make a story—with not a few adjectives and adverbs, and a host of conjunctions; and, if it be a very moving story, a good many interjections! These all you have got to put together with good choice, or the story will not be one you would care to read.—Perhaps you had better not begin till I see whether you know enough about those verbs and nouns to do the thing decently. Show me your school-books."

"There they all are—on that shelf! I haven't opened one of them since Percy came home. He laughed at them all, and so Arkie—that's lady Arctura, told him he might teach me himself. And he wouldn't; and she wouldn't—with him to laugh at her. And I've had such a jolly time ever since—reading books out of the library! Have you seen the library, Mr. Grant?"

"No; I've seen nothing yet. Suppose we begin with a holiday, and you begin by teaching me!"

"Teaching you, sir! I'm not able to teach you!"

"Why, didn't you as much as offer to teach me the library? Can't you teach me this great old castle? And aren't you going to teach yourself to me?"

"That would be a funny lesson, sir!"

"The least funny, the most serious lesson you could teach me! You are a book God has begun, and he has sent me to help him

go on with it; so I must learn what he has written already before I try to do anything."

"But you know what a boy is, sir! Why should you want to learn me?"

"You might as well say that, because I have read one or two books, I must know every book. To understand one boy helps to understand another, but every boy is a new boy, different from every other boy, and every one has to be understood."

"Yes—for sometimes Arkie won't hear me out, and I feel so cross with her I should like to give her a good box on the ear. What king was it, sir, that made the law that no lady, however disagreeable, was to have her ears boxed? Do you think it a good law, sir?"

"It is good for you and me anyhow."

"And when Percy says, 'Oh, go away! don't bother,' I feel as if I could hit him hard! Yet, if I happen to hurt him, I am so sorry! and why then should I want to hurt him?"

"There's something in this little fellow!" said Donal to himself. "Ah, why indeed?" he answered. "You see you don't understand yourself yet!"

"No indeed!"

"Then how could you think I should understand you all at once?—and a boy must be understood, else what's to become of him! Fancy a poor boy living all day, and sleeping all night, and nobody understanding him!"

"That would be dreadful! But you will understand me?"

"Only a little: I'm not wise enough to understand any boy."

"Then—but isn't that what you said you came for?—I thought —"

"Yes," answered Donal, "that is what I came for; but if I fancied I quite understood any boy, that would be a sure sign I did not understand him.—There is one who understands every boy as well as if there were no other boy in the whole world."

"Then why doesn't every boy go to him when he can't get fair play?"

"Ah, why? That is just what I want you to do. He can do better than give you fair play even: he can make you give other people fair play, and delight in it."

"Tell me where he is."

"That is what I have to teach you: mere telling is not much use. Telling is what makes people think they know when they do not, and makes them foolish."

"What is his name?"

"I will not tell you that just yet; for then you would think you knew him, when you knew next to nothing about him. Look here; look at this book," he went on, pulling a copy of Boethius from his pocket; "look at the name on the back of it: it is the name of the man that wrote the book."

Davie spelled it out.

"Now you know all about the book, don't you?"

"No, sir; I don't know anything about it."

"Well then, my father's name is Robert Grant: you know now

what a good man he is!"

"No, I don't. I should like to see him though!"

"You would love him if you did! But you see now that knowing the name of a person does not make you know the person."

"But you said, sir, that if you told me the name of that person, I should fancy I knew all about him: I don't fancy I know all about your father now you have told me his name!"

"You have me there!" answered Donal. "I did not say quite what I ought to have said. I should have said that when we know a little about a person, and are used to hearing his name, then we are ready to think we know all about him. I heard a man the other day—a man who had never spoken to your father—talk as if he knew all about him."

"I think I understand," said Davie.

To confess ignorance is to lose respect with the ignorant who would appear to know. But there is a worse thing than to lose the respect even of the wise—to deserve to lose it; and that he does who would gain a respect that does not belong to him. But a confession of ignorance is a ground of respect with a well-bred child, and even with many ordinary boys will raise a man's influence: they recognize his loyalty to the truth. Act-truth is infinitely more than fact-truth; the love of the truth infinitely beyond the knowledge of it.

They went out together, and when they had gone the round of the place outside, Davie would have taken him over the house; but Donal said they would leave something for another time, and

made him lie down for ten minutes. This the boy thought a great hardship, but Donal saw that he needed to be taught to rest. Ten times in those ten minutes he was on the point of jumping up, but Donal found a word sufficient to restrain him. When the ten minutes were over, he set him an addition sum. The boy protested he knew all the rules of arithmetic.

"But," said Donal, "I must know that you know them; that is my business. Do this one, however easy it is."

The boy obeyed, and brought him the sum—incorrect.

"Now, Davie," said Donal, "you said you knew all about addition, but you have not done this sum correctly."

"I have only made a blunder, sir."

"But a rule is no rule if it is not carried out. Everything goes on the supposition of its being itself, and not something else. People that talk about good things without doing them are left out. You are not master of addition until your addition is to be depended upon."

The boy found it hard to fix his attention: to fix it on something he did not yet understand, would be too hard! he must learn to do so in the pursuit of accuracy where he already understood! then he would not have to fight two difficulties at once—that of understanding, and that of fixing his attention. But for a long time he never kept him more than a quarter of an hour at work on the same thing.

When he had done the sum correctly, and a second without need of correction, he told him to lay his slate aside, and he

would tell him a fairy-story. Therein he succeeded tolerably—in the opinion of Davie, wonderfully: what a tutor was this, who let fairies into the school-room!

The tale was of no very original construction—the youngest brother gaining in the path of righteousness what the elder brothers lose through masterful selfishness. A man must do a thing because it is right, even if he die for it; but truth were poor indeed if it did not bring at last all things subject to it! As beauty and truth are one, so are truth and strength one. Must God be ever on the cross, that we poor worshippers may pay him our highest honour? Is it not enough to know that if the devil were the greater, yet would not God do him homage, but would hang for ever on his cross? Truth is joy and victory. The true hero is adjudged to bliss, nor can in the nature of things, that is, of God, escape it. He who holds by life and resists death, must be victorious; his very life is a slaying of death. A man may die for his opinion, and may only be living to himself: a man who dies for the truth, dies to himself and to all that is not true.

"What a beautiful story!" cried Davie when it ceased. "Where did you get it, Mr. Grant?"

"Where all stories come from."

"Where is that?"

"The Think-book."

"What a funny name! I never heard it! Will it be in the library?"

"No; it is in no library. It is the book God is always writing at

one end, and blotting out at the other. It is made of thoughts, not words. It is the Think-book."

"Now I understand! You got the story out of your own head!"

"Yes, perhaps. But how did it get in to my head?"

"I can't tell that. Nobody can tell that!"

"Nobody can that never goes up above his own head—that never shuts the Think-book, and stands upon it. When one does, then the Think-book swells to a great mountain and lifts him up above all the world: then he sees where the stories come from, and how they get into his head.—Are you to have a ride to-day?"

"I ride or not just as I like."

"Well, we will now do just as we both like, I hope, and it will be two likes instead of one—that is, if we are true friends."

"We shall be true friends—that we shall!"

"How can that be—between a little boy like you, and a grown man like me?"

"By me being good."

"By both of us being good—no other way. If one of us only was good, we could never be true friends. I must be good as well as you, else we shall never understand each other!"

"How kind you are, Mr. Grant! You treat me just like another one!" said Davie.

"But we must not forget that I am the big one and you the little one, and that we can't be the other one to each other except the little one does what the big one tells him! That's the way to fit into each other."

"Oh, of course!" answered Davie, as if there could not be two minds about that.

CHAPTER XV.
HORSE AND MAN

During the first day and the next, Donal did not even come in sight of any other of the family; but on the third day, after their short early school—for he seldom let Davie work till he was tired, and never after—going with him through the stable-yard, they came upon lord Forgue as he mounted his horse—a nervous, fiery, thin-skinned thoroughbred. The moment his master was on him, he began to back and rear. Forgue gave him a cut with his whip. He went wild, plunging and dancing and kicking. The young lord was a horseman in the sense of having a good seat; but he knew little about horses; they were to him creatures to be compelled, not friends with whom to hold sweet concert. He had not learned that to rule ill is worse than to obey ill. Kings may be worse than it is in the power of any subject to be. As he was raising his arm for a second useless, cruel, and dangerous blow, Donal darted to the horse's head.

"You mustn't do that, my lord!" he said. "You'll drive him mad."

But the worst part of Forgue's nature was uppermost, in his rage all the vices of his family rushed to the top. He looked down on Donal with a fury checked only by contempt.

"Keep off," he said, "or it will be the worse for you. What do

you know about horses?"

"Enough to know that you are not fair to him. I will not let you strike the poor animal. Just look at this water-chain!"

"Hold your tongue, and stand away, or, by—"

"Ye winna fricht me, sir," said Donal, whose English would, for years, upon any excitement, turn cowardly and run away, leaving his mother-tongue to bear the brunt, "—I'm no timorsome."

Forgue brought down his whip with a great stinging blow upon Donal's shoulder and back. The fierce blood of the highland Celt rushed to his brain, and had not the man in him held by God and trampled on the devil, there might then have been miserable work. But though he clenched his teeth, he fettered his hands, and ruled his tongue, and the Master of men was master still.

"My lord," he said, after one instant's thunderous silence, "there's that i' me wad think as little o' throttlin' ye as ye du o' ill-usin' yer puir beast. But I'm no gaein' to drop his quarrel, an' tak up my ain: that wad be cooardly." Here he patted the creature's neck, and recovering his composure and his English, went on. "I tell you, my lord, the curb-chain is too tight! The animal is suffering as you can have no conception of, or you would pity him."

"Let him go," cried Forgue, "or I will make you."

He raised his whip again, the more enraged that the groom stood looking on with his mouth open.

"I tell your lordship," said Donal, "it is my turn to strike; and

if you hit the animal again before that chain is slackened, I will pitch you out of the saddle."

For answer Forgue struck the horse over the head. The same moment he was on the ground; Donal had taken him by the leg and thrown him off. He was not horseman enough to keep his hold of the reins, and Donal led the horse a little way off, and left him to get up in safety. The poor animal was pouring with sweat, shivering and trembling, yet throwing his head back every moment. Donal could scarcely undo the chain; it was twisted—his lordship had fastened it himself—and sharp edges pressed his jaw at the least touch of the rein. He had not yet rehooked it, when Forgue was upon him with a second blow of his whip. The horse was scared afresh at the sound, and it was all he could do to hold him, but he succeeded at length in calming him. When he looked about him, Forgue was gone. He led the horse into the stable, put him in his stall, and proceeded to unsaddle him. Then first he was re-aware of the presence of Davie. The boy was stamping—with fierce eyes and white face—choking with silent rage.

"Davie, my child!" said Donal, and Davie recovered his power of speech.

"I'll go and tell my father!" he said, and made for the stable door.

"Which of us are you going to tell upon?" asked Donal with a smile.

"Percy, of course!" he replied, almost with a scream. "You are

a good man, Mr. Grant, and he is a bad fellow. My father will give it him well. He doesn't often—but oh, can't he just! To dare to strike you! I'll go to him at once, whether he's in bed or not!"

"No, you won't, my boy! Listen to me. Some people think it's a disgrace to be struck: I think it a disgrace to strike. I have a right over your brother by that blow, and I mean to keep it—for his good. You didn't think I was afraid of him?"

"No, no; anybody could see you weren't a bit afraid of him. I would have struck him again if he had killed me for it!"

"I don't doubt you would. But when you understand, you will not be so ready to strike. I could have killed your brother more easily than held his horse. You don't know how strong I am, or what a blow of my fist would be to a delicate fellow like that. I hope his fall has not hurt him."

"I hope it has—a little, I mean, only a little," said the boy, looking in the face of his tutor. "But tell me why you did not strike him. It would be good for him to be well beaten."

"It will, I hope, be better for him to be well forgiven: he will be ashamed of himself the sooner, I think. But why I did not strike him was, that I am not my own master."

"But my father, I am sure, would not have been angry with you. He would have said you had a right to do it."

"Perhaps; but the earl is not the master I mean."

"Who is, then?"

"Jesus Christ."

"O—oh!"

"He says I must not return evil for evil, a blow for a blow. I don't mind what people say about it: he would not have me disgrace myself! He never even threatened those that struck him."

"But he wasn't a man, you know!"

"Not a man! What was he then?"

"He was God, you know."

"And isn't God a man—and ever so much more than a man?"

The boy made no answer, and Donal went on.

"Do you think God would have his child do anything disgraceful? Why, Davie, you don't know your own Father! What God wants of us is to be down-right honest, and do what he tells us without fear."

Davie was silent. His conscience reproved him, as the conscience of a true-hearted boy will reprove him at the very mention of the name of God, until he sets himself consciously to do his will. Donal said no more, and they went for their walk.

CHAPTER XVI.
COLLOQUIES

In the evening Donal went to see Andrew Comin.

"Weel, hoo are ye gettin' on wi' the yerl?" asked the cobbler.

"You set me a good example of saying nothing about him," answered Donal; "and I will follow it—at least till I know more: I have scarce seen him yet."

"That's right!" returned the cobbler with satisfaction. "I'm thinkin' ye'll be ane o' the feow 'at can rule their ane hoose—that is, haud their ain tongues till the hoor for speech be come. Stick ye to that, my dear sir, an' mair i'll be weel nor in general is weel."

"I'm come to ye for a bit o' help though; I want licht upon a queston 'at 's lang triblet me.—What think ye?—hoo far does the comman' laid upo' 's, as to warfare 'atween man an' man, reach? Are we never ta raise the han' to human bein', think ye?"

"Weel, I hae thoucht a heap aboot it, an' I daurna say 'at I'm jist absolute clear upo' the maitter. But there may be pairt clear whaur a' 's no clear; an' by what we un'erstan' we come the nearer to what we dinna un'erstan'. There's ae thing unco plain—'at we're on no accoont to return evil for evil: onybody 'at ca's himsel' a Christian maun un'erstan' that muckle. We're to gie no place to revenge, inside or oot. Therefore we're no to gie blow for blow. Gien a man hit ye, ye're to take it i' God's name. But whether

things mayna come to a p'int whaurat ye're bu'n', still i' God's name, to defen' the life God has gien ye, I canna say—I haena the licht to justifee me in denyin' 't. There maun surely, I hae said to mysel', be a time whan a man may hae to du what God dis sae aften—mak use o' the strong han'! But it's clear he maunna do 't in rage—that's ower near hate—an' hate 's the deevil's ain. A man may, gien he live varra near the Lord, be whiles angry ohn sinned: but the wrath o' man worketh not the richteousness o' God; an' the wrath that rises i' the mids o' encoonter, is no like to be o' the natur o' divine wrath. To win at it, gien 't be possible, lat's consider the Lord—hoo he did. There's no word o' him ever liftin' han' to protec' himsel'. The only thing like it was for ithers. To gar them lat his disciples alane—maybe till they war like eneuch til himsel' no to rin, he pat oot mair nor his han' upo' them 'at cam to tak him: he strak them sair wi' the pooer itsel' 'at muvs a' airms. But no varra sair naither—he but knockit them doon!—jist to lat them ken they war to du as he bade them, an' lat his fowk be;—an' maybe to lat them ken 'at gien he loot them tak him, it was no 'at he couldna hin'er them gien he likit. I canna help thinkin' we may stan' up for ither fowk. An' I'm no sayin' 'at we arena to defen' oorsels frae a set attack wi' design. —But there's something o' mair importance yet nor kennin' the richt o' ony queston."

"What can that be? What can be o' mair importance nor doin' richt i' the sicht o' God?" said Donal.

"Bein' richt wi' the varra thoucht o' God, sae 'at we canna

mistak, but maun ken jist what he wad hae dune. That's the big Richt, the mother o' a' the lave o' the richts. That's to be as the maister was. Onygait, whatever we du, it maun be sic as to be dune, an' it maun be dune i' the name o' God; whan we du naething we maun du that naething i' the name o' God. A body may weel say, 'O Lord, thoo hasna latten me see what I oucht to du, sae I'll du naething!' Gien a man ought to defen' himsel', but disna du 't, 'cause he thinks God wadna hae him du 't, wull God lea' him oondefent for that? Or gien a body stan's up i' the name o' God, an' fronts an airmy o' enemies, div ye think God 'ill forsake him 'cause he 's made a mistak? Whatever's dune wantin' faith maun be sin—it canna help it; whatever's dune in faith canna be sin, though it may be a mistak. Only latna a man tak presumption for faith! that's a fearsome mistak, for it's jist the opposite."

"I thank ye," said Donal. "I'll consider wi' my best endeevour what ye hae said."

"But o' a' things," resumed the cobbler, "luik 'at ye lo'e fairplay. Fairplay 's a won'erfu' word—a gran' thing constantly lost sicht o'. Man, I hae been tryin' to win at the duin' o' the richt this mony a year, but I daurna yet lat mysel' ac' upo' the spur o' the moment whaur my ain enterest 's concernt: my ain side micht yet blin' me to the ither man's side o' the business. Onybody can un'erstan' his ain richt, but it taks trible an' thoucht to un'erstan' what anither coonts his richt. Twa richts canna weel clash. It's a wrang an' a richt, or pairt wrang an' a pairt richt 'at clashes."

"Gien a'body did that, I doobt there wad be feow fortins

made!" said Donal.

"Aboot that I canna say, no kennin'; I daurna discover a law whaur I haena knowledge! But this same fairplay lies, alang wi' love, at the varra rute and f'undation o' the universe. The theologians had a glimmer o' the fac' whan they made sae muckle o' justice, only their justice is sic a meeserable sma' bit plaister eemage o' justice, 'at it maist gars an honest body lauch. They seem to me like shepherds 'at rive doon the door-posts, an' syne block up the door wi' them."

Donal told him of the quarrel he had had with lord Forgue, and asked him whether he thought he had done right.

"Weel," answered the cobbler, "I'm as far frae blamin' you as I am frae justifeein' the yoong lord."

"He seems to me a fine kin' o' a lad," said Donal, "though some owerbeirin'."

"The likes o' him are mair to be excused for that nor ither fowk, for they hae great disadvantages i' the position an' the upbringin'. It's no easy for him 'at's broucht up a lord to believe he's jist ane wi' the lave."

Donal went for a stroll through the town, and met the minister, but he took no notice of him. He was greatly annoyed at the march which he said the fellow had stolen upon him, and regarded him as one who had taken an unfair advantage of him. But he had little influence at the castle. The earl never by any chance went to church. His niece, lady Arctura, did, however, and held the minister for an authority at things spiritual—one

of whom living water was to be had without money and without price. But what she counted spiritual things were very common earthly stuff, and for the water, it was but stagnant water from the ditches of a sham theology. Only what was a poor girl to do who did not know how to feed herself, but apply to one who pretended to be able to feed others? How was she to know that he could not even feed himself? Out of many a difficulty she thought he helped her—only the difficulty would presently clasp her again, and she must deal with it as she best could, until a new one made her forget it, and go to the minister, or rather to his daughter, again. She was one of those who feel the need of some help to live—some upholding that is not of themselves, but who, through the stupidity of teachers unconsciously false,—men so unfit that they do not know they are unfit, direct their efforts, first towards having correct notions, then to work up the feelings that belong to those notions. She was an honest girl so far as she had been taught—perhaps not so far as she might have been without having been taught. How was she to think aright with scarce a glimmer of God's truth? How was she to please God, as she called it, who thought of him in a way repulsive to every loving soul? How was she to be accepted of God, who did not accept her own neighbour, but looked down, without knowing it, upon so many of her fellow-creatures? How should such a one either enjoy or recommend her religion? It would have been the worse for her if she had enjoyed it—the worse for others if she had recommended it! Religion is simply the way home

to the Father. There was little of the path in her religion except the difficulty of it. The true way is difficult enough because of our unchildlikeness—uphill, steep, and difficult, but there is fresh life on every surmounted height, a purer air gained, ever more life for more climbing. But the path that is not the true one is not therefore easy. Up hill is hard walking, but through a bog is worse. Those who seek God with their faces not even turned towards him, who, instead of beholding the Father in the Son, take the stupidest opinions concerning him and his ways from other men—what should they do but go wandering on dark mountains, spending their strength in avoiding precipices and getting out of bogs, mourning and sighing over their sins instead of leaving them behind and fleeing to the Father, whom to know is eternal life. Did they but set themselves to find out what Christ knew and meant and commanded, and then to do it, they would soon forget their false teachers. But alas! they go on bowing before long-faced, big-worded authority—the more fatally when it is embodied in a good man who, himself a victim to faith in men, sees the Son of God only through the theories of others, and not with the sight of his own spiritual eyes.

Donal had not yet seen the lady. He neither ate, sat, nor held intercourse with the family. Away from Davie, he spent his time in his tower chamber, or out of doors. All the grounds were open to him except a walled garden on the south-eastern slope, looking towards the sea, which the earl kept for himself, though he rarely walked in it. On the side of the hill away from the town, was

a large park reaching down to the river, and stretching a long way up its bank—with fine trees, and glorious outlooks to the sea in one direction, and to the mountains in the other. Here Donal would often wander, now with a book, now with Davie. The boy's presence was rarely an interruption to his thoughts when he wanted to think. Sometimes he would thrown himself on the grass and read aloud; then Davie would throw himself beside him, and let the words he could not understand flow over him in a spiritual cataract. On the river was a boat, and though at first he was awkward enough in the use of the oars, he was soon able to enjoy thoroughly a row up or down the stream, especially in the twilight.

He was alone with his book under a beech-tree on a steep slope to the river, the day after his affair with lord Forgue: reading aloud, he did not hear the approach of his lordship.

"Mr. Grant," he said, "if you will say you are sorry you threw me from my horse, I will say I am sorry I struck you."

"I am very sorry," said Donal, rising, "that it was necessary to throw you from your horse; and perhaps your lordship may remember that you struck me before I did so."

"That has nothing to do with it. I propose an accommodation, or compromise, or what you choose to call it: if you will do the one, I will do the other."

"What I think I ought to do, my lord, I do without bargaining. I am not sorry I threw you from your horse, and to say so would be to lie."

"Of course everybody thinks himself in the right!" said his lordship with a small sneer.

"It does not follow that no one is ever in the right!" returned Donal. "Does your lordship think you were in the right—either towards me or the poor animal who could not obey you because he was in torture?"

"I don't say I do."

"Then everybody does not think himself in the right! I take your lordship's admission as an apology."

"By no means: when I make an apology, I will do it; I will not sneak out of it."

He was evidently at strife with himself: he knew he was wrong, but could not yet bring himself to say so. It is one of the poorest of human weaknesses that a man should be ashamed of saying he has done wrong, instead of so ashamed of having done wrong that he cannot rest till he has said so; for the shame cleaves fast until the confession removes it.

Forgue walked away a step or two, and stood with his back to Donal, poking the point of his stick into the grass. All at once he turned and said:

"I will apologize if you will tell me one thing."

"I will tell you whether you apologize or not," said Donal. "I have never asked you to apologize."

"Tell me then why you did not return either of my blows yesterday."

"I should like to know why you ask—but I will answer you:

simply because to do so would have been to disobey my master."

"That's a sort of thing I don't understand. But I only wanted to know it was not cowardice; I could not make an apology to a coward."

"If I were a coward, you would owe me an apology all the same, and he is a poor creature who will not pay his debts. But I hope it is not necessary I should either thrash or insult your lordship to convince you I fear you no more than that blackbird there!"

Forgue gave a little laugh. A moment's pause followed. Then he held out his hand, but in a half-hesitating, almost sheepish way:

"Well, well! shake hands," he said.

"No, my lord," returned Donal. "I bear your lordship not the slightest ill-will, but I will shake hands with no one in a half-hearted way, and no other way is possible while you are uncertain whether I am a coward or not."

So saying, he threw himself again upon the grass, and lord Forgue walked away, offended afresh.

The next morning he came into the school-room where Donal sat at lessons with Davie. He had a book in his hand.

"Mr. Grant," he said, "will you help me with this passage in Xenophon?"

"With all my heart," answered Donal, and in a few moments had him out of his difficulty.

But instead of going, his lordship sat down a little way off,

and went on with his reading—sat until master and pupil went out, and left him sitting there. The next morning he came with a fresh request, and Donal found occasion to approve warmly of a translation he proposed. From that time he came almost every morning. He was no great scholar, but with the prospect of an English university before him, thought it better to read a little.

The housekeeper at the castle was a good woman, and very kind to Donal, feeling perhaps that he fell to her care the more that he was by birth of her own class; for it was said in the castle, "the tutor makes no pretence to being a gentleman." Whether he was the more or the less of one on that account, I leave my reader to judge according to his capability. Sometimes when his dinner was served, mistress Brookes would herself appear, to ensure proper attention to him, and would sit down and talk to him while he ate, ready to rise and serve him if necessary. Their early days had had something in common, though she came from the southern highlands of green hills and more sheep. She gave him some rather needful information about the family; and he soon perceived that there would have been less peace in the house but for her good temper and good sense.

Lady Arctura was the daughter of the last lord Morven, and left sole heir to the property; Forgue and his brother Davie were the sons of the present earl. The present lord was the brother of the last, and had lived with him for some years before he succeeded. He was a man of peculiar and studious habits; nobody ever seemed to take to him; and since his wife's death, his health

had been precarious. Though a strange man, he was a just if not generous master. His brother had left him guardian to lady Arctura, and he had lived in the castle as before. His wife was a very lovely, but delicate woman, and latterly all but confined to her room. Since her death a great change had passed upon her husband. Certainly his behaviour was sometimes hard to understand.

"He never gangs to the kirk—no ance in a twalmonth!" said Mrs. Brookes. "Fowk sud be dacent, an' wha ever h'ard o' dacent fowk 'at didna gang to the kirk ance o' the Sabbath! I dinna haud wi' gaein' twise mysel': ye hae na time to read yer ain chapters gien ye do that. But the man's a weel behavet man, sae far as ye see, naither sayin' nor doin' the thing he shouldna: what he may think, wha's to say! the mair ten'er conscience coonts itsel' the waur sinner; an' I'm no gaein' to think what I canna ken! There's some 'at says he led a gey lowse kin' o' a life afore he cam to bide wi' the auld yerl; he was wi' the airmy i' furreign pairts, they say; but aboot that I ken naething. The auld yerl was something o' a sanct himsel', rist the banes o' 'im! We're no the jeedges o' the leevin' ony mair nor o' the deid! But I maun awa' to luik efter things; a minute's an hoor lost wi' thae fule lasses. Ye're a freen' o' An'rew Comin's, they tell me, sir: I dinna ken what to do wi' 's lass, she's that upsettin'! Ye wad think she was ane o' the faimily whiles; an' ither whiles she 's that silly!"

"I'm sorry to hear it!" said Donal. "Her grandfather and grandmother are the best of good people."

"I daursay! But there's jist what I hae seen: them 'at 's broucht up their ain weel eneuch, their son's bairn they'll jist lat gang. Aither they're tired o' the thing, or they think they're safe. They hae lippent til yoong Eppy a heap ower muckle. But I'm naither a prophet nor the son o' a prophet, as the minister said last Sunday —an' said well, honest man! for it's the plain trowth: he's no ane o' the major nor yet the minor anes! But haud him oot o' the pu'pit an' he dis no that ill. His dochter 's no an ill lass aither, an' a great freen' o' my leddy's. But I'm clean ashamed o' mysel' to gang on this gait. Hae ye dune wi' yer denner, Mr. Grant?— Weel, I'll jist sen' to clear awa', an' lat ye til yer lessons."

CHAPTER XVII.
LADY ARCTURA

It was now almost three weeks since Donal had become an inmate of the castle, and he had scarcely set his eyes on the lady of the house. Once he had seen her back, and more than once had caught a glimpse of her profile, but he had never really seen her face, and they had never spoken to each other.

One afternoon he was sauntering along under the overhanging boughs of an avenue of beeches, formerly the approach to a house in which the family had once lived, but which had now another entrance. He had in his hand a copy of the Apocrypha, which he had never seen till he found this in the library. In his usual fashion he had begun to read it through, and was now in the book called the Wisdom of Solomon, at the 17th chapter, narrating the discomfiture of certain magicians. Taken with the beauty of the passage, he sat down on an old stone-roller, and read aloud. Parts of the passage were these—they will enrich my page:—

"For they, that promised to drive away terrors and troubles from a sick soul, were sick themselves of fear, worthy to be laughed at.

"…For wickedness, condemned by her own witness, is very timorous, and being pressed with conscience, always forecasteth

grievous things.

"…But they sleeping the same sleep that night, which was indeed intolerable, and which came upon them out of the bottoms of inevitable hell,

"Were partly vexed with monstrous apparitions, and partly fainted, their heart failing them: for a sudden fear, and not looked for, came upon them.

"So then whosoever there fell down was straitly kept, shut up in a prison without iron bars.

"For whether he were husbandman, or shepherd, or a labourer in the field, he was overtaken, and endured that necessity, which could not be avoided: for they were all bound with one chain of darkness.

"Whether it were a whistling wind, or a melodious noise of birds among the spreading branches, or a pleasing fall of water running violently,

"Or a terrible sound of stones cast down, or a running that could not be seen of skipping beasts, or a roaring voice of most savage wild beasts, or a rebounding echo from the hollow mountains; these things made them to swoon for fear.

"For the whole world shined with clear light, and none were hindered in their labour:

"Over them only was spread an heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterward receive them: but yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the darkness."

He had read so much, and stopped to think a little; for through

the incongruity of it, which he did not doubt arose from poverty of imagination in the translator, rendering him unable to see what the poet meant, ran yet an indubitable vein of awful truth, whether fully intended by the writer or not mattered little to such a reader as Donal—when, lifting his eyes, he saw lady Arctura standing before him with a strange listening look. A spell seemed upon her; her face was white, her lips white and a little parted.

Attracted, as she was about to pass him, by the sound of what was none the less like the Bible from the solemn crooning way in which Donal read it to the congregation of his listening thoughts, yet was certainly not the Bible, she was presently fascinated by the vague terror of what she heard, and stood absorbed: without much originative power, she had an imagination prompt and delicate and strong in response.

Donal had but a glance of her; his eyes returned again at once to his book, and he sat silent and motionless, though not seeing a word. For one instant she stood still; then he heard the soft sound of her dress as, with noiseless foot, she stole back, and took another way.

I must give my reader a shadow of her. She was rather tall, slender, and fair. But her hair was dark, and so crinkly that, when merely parted, it did all the rest itself. Her forehead was rather low. Her eyes were softly dark, and her features very regular—her nose perhaps hardly large enough, or her chin. Her mouth was rather thin-lipped, but would have been sweet except for a seemingly habitual expression of pain. A pair of dark brows

overhung her sweet eyes, and gave a look of doubtful temper, yet restored something of the strength lacking a little in nose and chin. It was an interesting—not a quite harmonious face, and in happiness might, Donal thought, be beautiful even. Her figure was eminently graceful—as Donal saw when he raised his eyes at the sound of her retreat. He thought she needed not have run away as from something dangerous: why did she not pass him like any other servant of the house? But what seemed to him like contempt did not hurt him. He was too full of realities to be much affected by opinion however shown. Besides, he had had his sorrow and had learned his lesson. He was a poet—but one of the few without any weak longing after listening ears. The poet whose poetry needs an audience, can be but little of a poet; neither can the poetry that is of no good to the man himself, be of much good to anybody else. There are the song-poets and the life-poets, or rather the God-poems. Sympathy is lovely and dear—chiefly when it comes unsought; but the fame after which so many would-be, yea, so many real poets sigh, is poorest froth. Donal could sing his songs like the birds, content with the blue heaven or the sheep for an audience—or any passing angel that cared to listen. On the hill-sides he would sing them aloud, but it was of the merest natural necessity. A look of estrangement on the face of a friend, a look of suffering on that of any animal, would at once and sorely affect him, but not a disparaging expression on the face of a comparative stranger, were she the loveliest woman he had ever seen. He was little

troubled about the world, because little troubled about himself.

Lady Arctura and lord Forgue lived together like brother and sister, apparently without much in common, and still less of misunderstanding. There would have been more chance of their taking a fancy to each other if they had not been brought up together; they were now little together, and never alone together.

Very few visitors came to the castle, and then only to call. Lord Morven seldom saw any one, his excuse being his health.

But lady Arctura was on terms of intimacy with Sophia Carmichael, the minister's daughter—to whom her father had communicated his dissatisfaction with the character of Donal, and poured out his indignation at his conduct. He ought to have left the parish at once! whereas he had instead secured for himself the best, the only situation in it, without giving him a chance of warning his lordship! The more injustice her father spoke against him, the more Miss Carmichael condemned him; for she was a good daughter, and looked up to her father as the wisest and best man in the parish. Very naturally therefore she repeated his words to lady Arctura. She in her turn conveyed them to her uncle. He would not, however, pay much attention to them. The thing was done, he said. He had himself seen and talked with Donal, and liked him! The young man had himself told him of the clergyman's disapprobation! He would request him to avoid all reference to religious subjects! Therewith he dismissed the matter, and forgot all about it. Anything requiring an effort of the will, an arrangement of ideas, or thought as to

mode, his lordship would not encounter. Nor was anything to him of such moment that he must do it at once. Lady Arctura did not again refer to the matter: her uncle was not one to take liberties with—least of all to press to action. But she continued painfully doubtful whether she was not neglecting her duty, trying to persuade herself that she was waiting only till she should have something definite to say of her own knowledge against him.

And now what was she to conclude from his reading the Apocrypha? The fact was not to be interpreted to his advantage: was he not reading what was not the Bible as if it were the Bible, and when he might have been reading the Bible itself? Besides, the Apocrypha came so near the Bible when it was not the Bible! it must be at least rather wicked! At the same time she could not drive from her mind the impressiveness both of the matter she had heard, and his manner of reading it: the strong sound of judgment and condemnation in it came home to her—she could not have told how or why, except generally because of her sins. She was one of those—not very few I think—who from conjunction of a lovely conscience with an ill-instructed mind, are doomed for a season to much suffering. She was largely different from her friend: the religious opinions of the latter—they were in reality rather metaphysical than religious, and bad either way—though she clung to them with all the tenacity of a creature with claws, occasioned her not an atom of mental discomposure: perhaps that was in part why she clung to them! they were as she would have them! She did not trouble herself

about what God required of her, beyond holding the doctrine the holding of which guaranteed, as she thought, her future welfare. Conscience toward God had very little to do with her opinions, and her heart still less. Her head on the contrary, perhaps rather her memory, was considerably occupied with the matter; nothing she held had ever been by her regarded on its own merits—that is, on its individual claim to truth; if it had been handed down by her church, that was enough; to support it she would search out text after text, and press it into the service. Any meaning but that which the church of her fathers gave to a passage must be of the devil, and every man opposed to the truth who saw in that meaning anything but truth! It was indeed impossible Miss Carmichael should see any meaning but that, even if she had looked for it; she was nowise qualified for discovering truth, not being herself true. What she saw and loved in the doctrines of her church was not the truth, but the assertion; and whoever questioned, not to say the doctrine, but even the proving of it by any particular passage, was a dangerous person, and unsound. All the time her acceptance and defence of any doctrine made not the slightest difference to her life—as indeed how should it?

Such was the only friend lady Arctura had. But the conscience and heart of the younger woman were alive to a degree that boded ill either for the doctrine that stinted their growth, or the nature unable to cast it off. Miss Carmichael was a woman about six-and-twenty—and had been a woman, like too many Scotch girls, long before she was out of her teens—a human flower cut

and dried—an unpleasant specimen, and by no means valuable from its scarcity. Self-sufficient, assured, with scarce shyness enough for modesty, handsome and hard, she was essentially a self-glorious Philistine; nor would she be anything better till something was sent to humble her, though what spiritual engine might be equal to the task was not for man to imagine. She was clever, but her cleverness made nobody happier; she had great confidence, but her confidence gave courage to no one, and took it from many; she had little fancy, and less imagination than any other I ever knew. The divine wonder was, that she had not yet driven the delicate, truth-loving Arctura mad. From her childhood she had had the ordering of all her opinions: whatever Sophy Carmichael said, lady Arctura never thought of questioning. A lie is indeed a thing in its nature unbelievable, but there is a false belief always ready to receive the false truth, and there is no end to the mischief the two can work. The awful punishment of untruth in the inward parts is that the man is given over to believe a lie.

Lady Arctura was in herself a gentle creature who shrank from either giving or receiving a rough touch; but she had an inherited pride, by herself unrecognized as such, which made her capable of hurting as well as being hurt. Next to the doctrines of the Scottish church, she respected her own family: it had in truth no other claim to respect than that its little good and much evil had been done before the eyes of a large part of many generations —whence she was born to think herself distinguished, and to

imagine a claim for the acknowledgment of distinction upon all except those of greatly higher rank than her own. This inborn arrogance was in some degree modified by respect for the writers of certain books—not one of whom was of any regard in the eyes of the thinkers of the age. Of any writers of power, beyond those of the Bible, either in this country or another, she knew nothing. Yet she had a real instinct for what was good in literature; and of the writers to whom I have referred she not only liked the worthiest best, but liked best their best things. I need hardly say they were all religious writers; for the keen conscience and obedient heart of the girl had made her very early turn herself towards the quarter where the sun ought to rise, the quarter where all night long gleams the auroral hope; but unhappily she had not gone direct to the heavenly well in earthly ground—the words of the Master himself. How could she? From very childhood her mind had been filled with traditionary utterances concerning the divine character and the divine plans—the merest inventions of men far more desirous of understanding what they were not required to understand, than of doing what they were required to do—whence their crude and false utterances concerning a God of their own fancy—in whom it was a good man's duty, in the name of any possible God, to disbelieve; and just because she was true, authority had immense power over her. The very sweetness of their nature forbids such to doubt the fitness of others.

She had besides had a governess of the orthodox type, a large proportion of whose teaching was of the worst heresy, for it was

lies against him who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all; her doctrines were so many smoked glasses held up between the mind of her pupil and the glory of the living God; nor had she once directed her gaze to the very likeness of God, the face of Jesus Christ. Had Arctura set herself to understand him the knowledge of whom is eternal life, she would have believed none of these false reports of him, but she had not yet met with any one to help her to cast aside the doctrines of men, and go face to face with the Son of Man, the visible God. First lie of all, she had been taught that she must believe so and so before God would let her come near him or listen to her. The old cobbler could have taught her differently; but she would have thought it improper to hold conversation with such a man, even if she had known him for the best man in Auchars. She was in sore and sad earnest to believe as she was told she must believe; therefore instead of beginning to do what Jesus Christ said, she tried hard to imagine herself one of the chosen, tried hard to believe herself the chief of sinners. There was no one to tell her that it is only the man who sees something of the glory of God, the height and depth and breadth and length of his love and unselfishness, not a child dabbling in stupid doctrines, that can feel like St. Paul. She tried to feel that she deserved to be burned in hell for ever and ever, and that it was boundlessly good of God—who made her so that she could not help being a sinner—to give her the least chance of escaping it. She tried to feel that, though she could not be saved without something which the God of perfect love could give her

if he pleased, but might not please to give her, yet if she was not saved it would be all her own fault: and so ever the round of a great miserable treadmill of contradictions! For a moment she would be able to say this or that she thought she ought to say; the next the feeling would be gone, and she as miserable as before. Her friend made no attempt to imbue her with her own calm indifference, nor could she have succeeded had she attempted it. But though she had never been troubled herself, and that because she had never been in earnest, she did not find it the less easy to take upon her the rôle of a spiritual adviser, and gave no end of counsel for the attainment of assurance. She told her truly enough that all her trouble came of want of faith; but she showed her no one fit to believe in.

CHAPTER XVIII.
A CLASH

All this time, Donal had never again seen the earl, neither had the latter shown any interest in Davie's progress. But lady Arctura was full of serious anxiety concerning him. Heavily prejudiced against the tutor, she dreaded his influence on the mind of her little cousin.

There was a small recess in the schoolroom—it had been a bay window, but from an architectural necessity arising from decay, it had, all except a narrow eastern light, been built up—and in this recess Donal was one day sitting with a book, while Davie was busy writing at the table in the middle of the room: it was past school-hours, but the weather did not invite them out of doors, and Donal had given Davie a poem to copy. Lady Arctura came into the room—she had never entered it before since Donal came—and thinking he was alone, began to talk to the boy. She spoke in so gentle a tone that Donal, busy with his book, did not for some time distinguish a word she said. He never suspected she was unaware of his presence. By degrees her voice grew a little louder, and by and by these words reached him:

"You know, Davie dear, every sin, whatever it is, deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come; and if it had not been that Jesus Christ gave himself to turn away

his anger and satisfy his justice by bearing the punishment for us, God would send us all to the place of misery for ever and ever. It is for his sake, not for ours, that he pardons us."

She had not yet ceased when Donal rose in the wrath of love, and came out into the room.

"Lady Arctura," he said, "I dare not sit still and hear such false things uttered against the blessed God!"

Lady Arctura started in dire dismay, but in virtue of her breed and her pride recovered herself immediately, drew herself up, and said—

"Mr. Grant, you forget yourself!"

"I'm very willing to do that, my lady," answered Donal, "but I must not forget the honour of my God. If you were a heathen woman I might think whether the hour was come for enlightening you further, but to hear one who has had the Bible in her hands from her childhood say such things about the God who made her and sent his Son to save her, without answering a word for him, would be cowardly!"

"What do you know about such things? What gives you a right to speak?" said lady Arctura.

Her pride-strength was already beginning to desert her.

"I had a Christian mother," answered Donal, "—have her yet, thank God!—who taught me to love nothing but the truth; I have studied the Bible from my childhood, often whole days together, when I was out with the cattle or the sheep; and I have tried to do what the Lords tells me, from nearly the earliest time I can

remember. Therefore I am able to set to my seal that God is true—that he is light, and there is no darkness of unfairness or selfishness in him. I love God with my whole heart and soul, my lady."

Arctura tried to say she too loved him so, but her conscience interfered, and she could not.

"I don't say you don't love him," Donal went on; "but how you can love him and believe such things of him, I don't understand. Whoever taught them first was a terrible liar against God, who is lovelier than all the imaginations of all his creatures can think."

Lady Arctura swept from the room—though she was trembling from head to foot. At the door she turned and called Davie. The boy looked up in his tutor's face, mutely asking if he should obey her.

"Go," said Donal.

In less than a minute he came back, his eyes full of tears.

"Arkie says she is going to tell papa. Is it true, Mr. Grant, that you are a dangerous man? I do not believe it—though you do carry such a big knife."

Donal laughed.

"It is my grandfather's skean dhu," he said: "I mend my pens with it, you know! But it is strange, Davie, that, when a body knows something other people don't, they should be angry with him! They will even think he wants to make them bad when he wants to help them to be good!"

"But Arkie is good, Mr. Grant!"

"I am sure she is. But she does not know so much about God as I do, or she would never say such things of him: we must talk about him more after this!"

"No, no, please, Mr. Grant! We won't say a word about him, for Arkie says except you promise never to speak of God, she will tell papa, and he will send you away."

"Davie," said Donal with solemnity, "I would not give such a promise for the castle and all it contains—no, not to save your life and the life of everybody in it! For Jesus says, 'Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I deny before my father in heaven;' and rather than that, I would jump from the top of the castle. Why, Davie! would a man deny his own father or mother?"

"I don't know," answered Davie; "I don't remember my mother."

"I'll tell you what," said Donal, with sudden inspiration: "I will promise not to speak about God at any other time, if she will promise to sit by when I do speak of him—say once a week.—Perhaps we shall do what he tells us all the better that we don't talk so much about him!"

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Grant!—I will tell her," cried Davie, jumping up relieved. "Oh, thank you, Mr. Grant!" he repeated; "I could not bear you to go away. I should never stop crying if you did. And you won't say any wicked things, will you? for Arkie reads her Bible every day."

"So do I, Davie."

"Do you?" returned Davie, "I'll tell her that too, and then she will see she must have been mistaken."

He hurried to his cousin with Donal's suggestion.

It threw her into no small perplexity—first from doubt as to the propriety of the thing proposed, next because of the awkwardness of it, then from a sudden fear lest his specious tongue should lead herself into the bypaths of doubt, and to the castle of Giant Despair—at which, indeed, it was a gracious wonder she had not arrived ere now. What if she should be persuaded of things which it was impossible to believe and be saved! She did not see that such belief as she desired to have was in itself essential damnation. For what can there be in heaven or earth for a soul that believes in an unjust God? To rejoice in such a belief would be to be a devil, and to believe what cannot be rejoiced in, is misery. No doubt a man may not see the true nature of the things he thinks she believes, but that cannot save him from the loss of not knowing God, whom to know is alone eternal life; for who can know him that believes evil things of him? That many a good man does believe such things, only argues his heart not yet one towards him. To make his belief possible he must dwell on the good things he has learned about God, and not think about the bad things.

And what would Sophia say? Lady Arctura would have sped to her friend for counsel before giving any answer to the audacious proposal, but she was just then from home for a fortnight, and she must resolve without her! She reflected also that she had

not yet anything sufficiently definite to say to her uncle about the young man's false doctrine; and, for herself, concluded that, as she was well grounded for argument, knowing thoroughly the Shorter Catechism with the proofs from scripture of every doctrine it contained, it was foolish to fear anything from one who went in the strength of his own ignorant and presumptuous will, regardless of the opinions of the fathers of the church, and accepting only such things as were pleasing to his unregenerate nature.

But she hesitated; and after waiting for a week without receiving any answer to his proposal, Donal said to Davie,

"We shall have a lesson in the New Testament to-morrow: you had better mention it to your cousin."

The next morning he asked him if he had mentioned it. The boy said he had.

"What did she say, Davie?"

"Nothing—only looked strange," answered Davie.

When the hour of noon was past, and lady Arctura did not appear, Donal said,

"Davie, we'll have our New Testament lesson out of doors: that is the best place for it!"

"It is the best place!" responded Davie, jumping up. "But you're not taking your book, Mr. Grant!"

"Never mind; I will give you a lesson or two without book first."

Just as they were leaving the room, appeared lady Arctura with

Miss Carmichael.

"I understood," said the former, with not a little haughtiness, "that you—"

She hesitated, and Miss Carmichael took up the word.

"We wish to form our own judgment," she said, "on the nature of the religious instruction you give your pupil."

"I invited lady Arctura to be present when I taught him about God," said Donal.

"Then are you not now going to do so?" said Arctura.

"As your ladyship made no answer to my proposal, and school hours were over, I concluded you were not coming."

"And you would not give the lesson without her ladyship!" said Miss Carmichael. "Very right!"

"Excuse me," returned Donal; "we were going to have it out of doors."

"But you had agreed not to give him any so-called religious instruction but in the presence of lady Arctura!"

"By no means. I only offered to give it in her presence if she chose. There was no question of the lessons being given."

Miss Carmichael looked at lady Arctura as much as to say —"Is he speaking the truth?" and if she replied, it was in the same fashion.

Donal looked at Miss Carmichael. He did not at all relish her interference. He had never said he would give his lesson before any who chose to be present! But he did not see how to meet the intrusion. Neither could he turn back into the schoolroom,

sit down, and begin. He put his hand on Davie's shoulder, and walked slowly towards the lawn. The ladies followed in silence. He sought to forget their presence, and be conscious only of his pupil's and his master's. On the lawn he stopped suddenly.

"Davie," he said, "where do you fancy the first lesson in the New Testament ought to begin?"

"At the beginning," replied Davie.

"When a thing is perfect, Davie, it is difficult to say what is the beginning of it: show me one of your marbles."

The boy produced from his pocket a pure white one—a real marble.

"That is a good one for the purpose," remarked Donal, "—very smooth and white, with just one red streak in it! Now where is the beginning of this marble?"

"Nowhere," answered Davie.

"If I should say everywhere?" suggested Donal.

"Ah, yes!" said the boy.

"But I agree with you that it begins nowhere."

"It can't do both!"

"Oh, yes, it can! it begins nowhere for itself, but everywhere for us. Only all its beginnings are endings, and all its endings are beginnings. Look here: suppose we begin at this red streak, it is just there we should end again. That is because it is a perfect thing.—Well, there was one who said, 'I am Alpha and Omega,'—the first Greek letter and the last, you know—'the beginning and the end, the first and the last.' All the New

Testament is about him. He is perfect, and I may begin about him where I best can. Listen then as if you had never heard anything about him before.—Many years ago—about fifty or sixty grandfathers off—there appeared in the world a few men who said that a certain man had been their companion for some time and had just left them; that he was killed by cruel men, and buried by his friends; but that, as he had told them he would, he lay in the grave only three days, and left it on the third alive and well; and that, after forty days, during which they saw him several times, he went up into the sky, and disappeared.—It wasn't a very likely story, was it?"

"No," replied Davie.

The ladies exchanged looks of horror. Neither spoke, but each leaned eagerly forward, in fascinated expectation of worse to follow.

"But, Davie," Donal went on, "however unlikely it must have seemed to those who heard it, I believe every word of it."

A ripple of contempt passed over Miss Carmichael's face.

"For," continued Donal, "the man said he was the son of God, come down from his father to see his brothers, his father's children, and take home with him to his father those who would go."

"Excuse me," interrupted Miss Carmichael, with a pungent smile: "what he said was, that if any man believed in him, he should be saved."

"Run along, Davie," said Donal. "I will tell you more of what

he said next lesson. Don't forget what I've told you now."

"No, sir," answered Davie, and ran off.

Donal lifted his hat, and would have gone towards the river. But Miss Carmichael, stepping forward, said,

"Mr. Grant, I cannot let you go till you answer me one question: do you believe in the atonement?"

"I do," answered Donal.

"Favour me then with your views upon it," she said.

"Are you troubled in your mind on the subject?" asked Donal.

"Not in the least," she replied, with a slight curl of her lip.

"Then I see no occasion for giving you my views."

"But I insist."

Donald smiled.

"Of what consequence can my opinions be to you, ma'am? Why should you compel a confession of my faith?"

"As the friend of this family, and the daughter of the clergyman of this parish, I have a right to ask what your opinions are: you have a most important charge committed to you—a child for whose soul you have to account!"

"For that I am accountable, but, pardon me, not to you."

"You are accountable to lord Morven for what you teach his child."

"I am not."

"What! He will turn you away at a moment's notice if you say so to him."

"I should be quite ready to go. If I were accountable to him for

what I taught, I should of course teach only what he pleased. But do you suppose I would take any situation on such a condition?"

"It is nothing to me, or his lordship either, I presume, what you would or would not do."

"Then I see no reason why you should detain me.—Lady Arctura, I did not offer to give my lesson in the presence of any other than yourself: I will not do so again. You will be welcome, for you have a right to know what I am teaching him. If you bring another, except it be my lord Morven, I will take David to my own room."

With these words he left them.

Lady Arctura was sorely bewildered. She could not but feel that her friend had not shown to the better advantage, and that the behaviour of Donal had been dignified. But surely he was very wrong! what he said to Davie sounded so very different from what was said at church, and by her helper, Miss Carmichael! It was a pity they had heard so little! He would have gone on if only Sophy had had patience and held her peace! Perhaps he might have spoken better things if she had not interfered! It would hardly be fair to condemn him upon so little! He had said that he believed every word of the New Testament—or something very like it!

"I have heard enough!" said Miss Carmichael: "I will speak to my father at once."

The next day Donal received a note to the following effect:—

"Sir, in consequence of what I felt bound to report to my father

of the conversation we had yesterday, he desires that you will call upon him at your earliest convenience He is generally at home from three to five. Yours truly, Sophia Agnes Carmichael."

To this Donal immediately replied:—

"Madam, notwithstanding the introduction I brought him from another clergyman, your father declined my acquaintance, passing me afterwards as one unknown to him. From this fact, and from the nature of the report which your behaviour to me yesterday justifies me in supposing you must have carried to him, I can hardly mistake his object in wishing to see me. I will attend the call of no man to defend my opinions; your father's I have heard almost every Sunday since I came to the castle, and have been from childhood familiar with them. Yours truly, Donal Grant."

Not a word more came to him from either of them. When they happened to meet, Miss Carmichael took no more notice of him than her father.

But she impressed it upon the mind of her friend that, if unable to procure his dismission, she ought at least to do what she could to protect her cousin from the awful consequences of such false teaching: if she was present, he would not say such things as he would in her absence, for it was plain he was under restraint with her! She might even have some influence with him if she would but take courage to show him where he was wrong! Or she might find things such that her uncle must see the necessity of turning him away; as the place belonged to her, he would never go dead

against her! She did not see that that was just the thing to fetter the action of a delicate-minded girl.

Continually haunted, however, with the feeling that she ought to do something, lady Arctura felt as if she dared not absent herself from the lesson, however disagreeable it might prove: that much she could do! Upon the next occasion, therefore, she appeared in the schoolroom at the hour appointed, and with a cold bow took the chair Donal placed for her.

"Now, Davie," said Donal, "what have you done since our last lesson?"

Davie stared.

"You didn't tell me to do anything, Mr. Grant!"

"No; but what then did I give you the lesson for? Where is the good of such a lesson if it makes no difference to you! What was it I told you?"

Davie, who had never thought about it since, the lesson having been broken off before Donal could bring it to its natural fruit, considered, and said,

"That Jesus Christ rose from the dead."

"Well—where is the good of knowing that?"

Davie was silent; he knew no good of knowing it, neither could imagine any. The Catechism, of which he had learned about half, suggested nothing.

"Come, Davie, I will help you: is Jesus dead, or is he alive?"

Davie considered.

"Alive," he answered.

"What does he do?"

Davie did not know.

"What did he die for?"

Here Davie had an answer—a cut and dried one:

"To take away our sins," he said.

"Then what does he live for?"

Davie was once more silent.

"Do you think if a man died for a thing, he would be likely to forget it the minute he rose again?"

"No, sir."

"Do you not think he would just go on doing the same thing as before?"

"I do, sir."

"Then, as he died to take away our sins, he lives to take them away!"

"Yes, sir."

"What are sins, Davie?"

"Bad things, sir."

"Yes; the bad things we think, and the bad things we feel, and the bad things we do. Have you any sins, Davie?"

"Yes; I am very wicked."

"Oh! are you? How do you know it?"

"Arkie told me."

"What is being wicked?"

"Doing bad things."

"What bad things do you do?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Then you don't know that you are wicked; you only know that Arkie told you so!"

Lady Arctura drew herself up; but Donal was too intent to perceive the offence he had given.

"I will tell you," Donal went on, "something you did wicked to-day." Davie grew rosy red. "When we find out one wicked thing we do, it is a beginning to finding out all the wicked things we do. Some people would rather not find them out, but have them hidden from themselves and from God too. But let us find them out, everyone of them, that we may ask Jesus to take them away, and help Jesus to take them away, by fighting them with all our strength.—This morning you pulled the little pup's ears till he screamed." Davie hung his head. "You stopped a while, and then did it again! So I knew it wasn't that you didn't know. Is that a thing Jesus would have done when he was a little boy?"

"No, sir."

"Why?"

"Because it would have been wrong."

"I suspect, rather, it is because he would have loved the little pup. He didn't have to think about its being wrong. He loves every kind of living thing. He wants to take away your sin because he loves you. He doesn't merely want to make you not cruel to the little pup, but to take away the wrong think that doesn't love him. He wants to make you love every living creature. Davie, Jesus came out of the grave to make us good."

Tears were flowing down Davie's checks.

"The lesson 's done, Davie," said Donal, and rose and went, leaving him with lady Arctura.

But ere he reached the door, he turned with sudden impulse, and said:—

"Davie, I love Jesus Christ and his Father more than I can tell you—more than I can put in words—more than I can think; and if you love me you will mind what Jesus tells you."

"What a good man you must be, Mr. Grant!—Mustn't he, Arkie?" sobbed Davie.

Donal laughed.

"What, Davie!" he exclaimed. "You think me very good for loving the only good person in the whole world! That is very odd! Why, Davie, I should be the most contemptible creature, knowing him as I do, not to love him with all my heart—yes, with all the big heart I shall have one day when he has done making me."

"Is he making you still, Mr. Grant? I thought you were grown up!"

"Well, I don't think he will make me any taller," answered Donal. "But the live part of me—the thing I love you with, the thing I think about God with, the thing I love poetry with, the thing I read the Bible with—that thing God keeps on making bigger and bigger. I do not know where it will stop, I only know where it will not stop. That thing is me, and God will keep on making it bigger to all eternity, though he has not even got it into

the right shape yet."

"Why is he so long about it?"

"I don't think he is long about it; but he could do it quicker if I were as good as by this time I ought to be, with the father and mother I have, and all my long hours on the hillsides with my New Testament and the sheep. I prayed to God on the hill and in the fields, and he heard me, Davie, and made me see the foolishness of many things, and the grandeur and beauty of other things. Davie, God wants to give you the whole world, and everything in it. When you have begun to do the things Jesus tells you, then you will be my brother, and we shall both be his little brothers, and the sons of his Father God, and so the heirs of all things."

With that he turned again and went.

The tears were rolling down Arctura's face without her being aware of it.

"He is a well-meaning man," she said to herself, "but dreadfully mistaken: the Bible says believe, not do!"

The poor girl, though she read her bible regularly, was so blinded by the dust and ashes of her teaching, that she knew very little of what was actually in it. The most significant things slipped from her as if they were merest words without shadow of meaning or intent: they did not support the doctrines she had been taught, and therefore said nothing to her. The story of Christ and the appeals of those who had handled the Word of Life had another end in view than making people understand how God arranged matters to save them. God would have us live: if we live

we cannot but know; all the knowledge in the universe could not make us live. Obedience is the road to all things—the only way in which to grow able to trust him. Love and faith and obedience are sides of the same prism.

Regularly after that, lady Arctura came to the lesson—always intending to object as soon as it was over. But always before the end came, Donal had said something that went so to the heart of the honest girl that she could say nothing. As if she too had been a pupil, as indeed she was, far more than either knew, she would rise when Davie rose, and go away with him. But it was to go alone into the garden, or to her room, not seldom finding herself wishing things true which yet she counted terribly dangerous: listening to them might not she as well as Davie fail miserably of escape from the wrath to come?

CHAPTER XIX.
THE FACTOR

The old avenue of beeches, leading immediately nowhither any more, but closed at one end by a built-up gate, and at the other by a high wall, between which two points it stretched quite a mile, was a favourite resort of Donal's, partly for its beauty, partly for its solitude. The arms of the great trees crossing made of it a long aisle—its roof a broken vault of leaves, upheld by irregular pointed arches—which affected one's imagination like an ever shifting dream of architectural suggestion. Having ceased to be a way, it was now all but entirely deserted, and there was eeriness in the vanishing vista that showed nothing beyond. When the wind of the twilight sighed in gusts through its moanful crowd of fluttered leaves; or when the wind of the winter was tormenting the ancient haggard boughs, and the trees looked as if they were weary of the world, and longing after the garden of God; yet more when the snow lay heavy upon their branches, sorely trying their aged strength to support its oppression, and giving the onlooker a vague sense of what the world would be if God were gone from it—then the old avenue was a place from which one with more imagination than courage would be ready to haste away, and seek instead the abodes of men. But Donal, though he dearly loved his neighbour, and that in the fullest concrete sense, was capable of

loving the loneliest spots, for in such he was never alone.

It was altogether a neglected place. Long grass grew over its floor from end to end—cut now and then for hay, or to feed such animals as had grass in their stalls. Along one border, outside the trees, went a footpath—so little used that, though not quite conquered by the turf, the long grass often met over the top of it. Finding it so lonely, Donal grew more and more fond of it. It was his outdoor study, his proseuche {Compilers note: pi, rho, omicron, sigma, epsilon upsilon, chi, eta with stress—[outdoor] place of prayer}—a little aisle of the great temple! Seldom indeed was his reading or meditation there interrupted by sight of human being.

About a month after he had taken up his abode at the castle, he was lying one day in the grass with a book-companion, under the shade of one of the largest of its beeches, when he felt through the ground ere he heard through the air the feet of an approaching horse. As they came near, he raised his head to see. His unexpected appearance startled the horse, his rider nearly lost his seat, and did lose his temper. Recovering the former, and holding the excited animal, which would have been off at full speed, he urged him towards Donal, whom he took for a tramp. He was rising—deliberately, that he might not do more mischief, and was yet hardly on his feet, when the horse, yielding to the spur, came straight at him, its rider with his whip lifted. Donal took off his bonnet, stepped a little aside, and stood. His bearing and countenance calmed the horseman's rage; there was

something in them to which no gentleman could fail of response.

The rider was plainly one who had more to do with affairs bucolic than with those of cities or courts, but withal a man of conscious dignity, socially afloat, and able to hold his own.

"What the devil—," he cried—for nothing is so irritating to a horseman as to come near losing his seat, except perhaps to lose it altogether, and indignation against the cause of an untoward accident is generally a mortal's first consciousness thereupon: however foolishly, he feels himself injured. But there, having better taken in Donal's look, he checked himself.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Donal. "It was foolish of me to show myself so suddenly; I might have thought it would startle most horses. I was too absorbed to have my wits about me."

The gentleman lifted his hat.

"I beg your pardon in return," he said with a smile which cleared every cloud from his face. "I took you for some one who had no business here; but I imagine you are the tutor at the castle, with as good a right as I have myself."

"You guess well, sir."

"Pardon me that I forget your name."

"My name is Donal Grant," returned Donal, with an accent on the my intending a wish to know in return that of the speaker.

"I am a Graeme," answered the other, "one of the clan, and factor to the earl. Come and see where I live. My sister will be glad to make your acquaintance. We lead rather a lonely life here, and don't see too many agreeable people."

"You call this lonely, do you!" said Donal thoughtfully. "—It is a grand place, anyhow!"

"You are right—as you see it now. But wait till winter! Then perhaps you will change your impression a little."

"Pardon me if I doubt whether you know what winter can be so well as I do. This east coast is by all accounts a bitter place, but I fancy it is only upon a great hill-side you can know the heart and soul of a snow-blast."

"I yield that," returned Mr. Graeme. "—It is bitter enough here though, and a mercy we can keep warm in-doors."

"Which is often more than we shepherd-folk can do," said Donal.

Mr. Graeme used to say afterwards he was never so immediately taken with a man. It was one of the charms of Donal's habit of being, that he never spoke as if he belonged to any other than the class in which he had been born and brought up. This came partly of pride in his father and mother, partly of inborn dignity, and partly of religion. To him the story of our Lord was the reality it is, and he rejoiced to know himself so nearly on the same social level of birth as the Master of his life and aspiration. It was Donal's one ambition—to give the high passion a low name—to be free with the freedom which was his natural inheritance, and which is to be gained only by obedience to the words of the Master. From the face of this aspiration fled every kind of pretence as from the light flies the darkness. Hence he was entirely and thoroughly a gentleman. What if his clothes

were not even of the next to the newest cut! What if he had not been used to what is called society! He was far above such things. If he might but attain to the manners of the "high countries," manners which appear because they exist—because they are all through the man! He did not think what he might seem in the eyes of men. Courteous, helpful, considerate, always seeking first how far he could honestly agree with any speaker, opposing never save sweetly and apologetically—except indeed some utterance flagrantly unjust were in his ears—there was no man of true breeding, in or out of society, who would not have granted that Donal was fit company for any man or woman. Mr. Graeme's eye glanced down over the tall square-shouldered form, a little stooping from lack of drill and much meditation, but instantly straightening itself upon any inward stir, and he said to himself, "This is no common man!"

They were moving slowly along the avenue, Donal by the rider's near knee, talking away like men not unlikely soon to know each other better.

"You don't make much use of this avenue!" said Donal.

"No; its use is an old story. The castle was for a time deserted, and the family, then passing through a phase of comparative poverty, lived in the house we are in now—to my mind much the more comfortable."

"What a fine old place it must be, if such trees are a fit approach to it!"

"They were never planted for that; they are older far. Either

there was a wood here, and the rest were cut down and these left, or there was once a house much older than the present. The look of the garden, and some of the offices, favour the latter idea."

"I have never seen the house," said Donal.

"You have not then been much about yet?" said Mr. Graeme.

"I have been so occupied with my pupil, and so delighted with all that lay immediately around me, that I have gone nowhere—except, indeed, to see Andrew Comin, the cobbler."

"Ah, you know him! I have heard of him as a remarkable man. There was a clergyman here from Glasgow—I forget his name—so struck with him he seemed actually to take him for a prophet. He said he was a survival of the old mystics. For my part I have no turn for extravagance."

"But," said Donal, in the tone of one merely suggesting a possibility, "a thing that from the outside may seem an extravagance, may look quite different when you get inside it."

"The more reason for keeping out of it! If acquaintance must make you in love with it, the more air between you and it the better!"

"Would not such precaution as that keep you from gaining a true knowledge of many things? Nothing almost can be known from what people say."

"True; but there are things so plainly nonsense!"

"Yes; but there are things that seem to be nonsense, because the man thinks he knows what they are when he does not. Who would know the shape of a chair who took his idea of it from its

shadow on the floor? What idea can a man have of religion who knows nothing of it except from what he hears at church?"

Mr. Graeme was not fond of going to church yet went: he was the less displeased with the remark. But he made no reply, and the subject dropped.

CHAPTER XX.
THE OLD GARDEN

The avenue seemed to Donal about to stop dead against a high wall, but ere they quite reached the end, they turned at right angles, skirted the wall for some distance, then turned again with it. It was a somewhat dreary wall—of gray stone, with mortar as gray—not like the rich-coloured walls of old red brick one meets in England. But its roof-like coping was crowned with tufts of wall-plants, and a few lichens did something to relieve the grayness. It guided them to a farm-yard. Mr. Graeme left his horse at the stable, and led the way to the house.

They entered it by a back door whose porch was covered with ivy, and going through several low passages, came to the other side of the house. There Mr. Graeme showed Donal into a large, low-ceiled, old-fashioned drawing-room, smelling of ancient rose-leaves, their odour of sad hearts rather than of withered flowers—and leaving him went to find his sister.

Glancing about him Donal saw a window open to the ground, and went to it. Beyond lay a more fairy-like garden than he had ever dreamed of. But he had read of, though never looked on such, and seemed to know it from times of old. It was laid out in straight lines, with soft walks of old turf, and in it grew all kinds of straight aspiring things: their ambition seemed—to

get up, not to spread abroad. He stepped out of the window, drawn as by the enchantment of one of childhood's dreams, and went wandering down a broad walk, his foot sinking deep in the velvety grass, and the loveliness of the dream did not fade. Hollyhocks, gloriously impatient, whose flowers could not wait to reach the top ere they burst into the flame of life, making splendid blots of colour along their ascending stalks, received him like stately dames of faerie, and enticed him, gently eager for more, down the long walks between rows of them—deep red and creamy white, primrose and yellow: sure they were leading him to some wonderful spot, some nest of lovely dreams and more lovely visions! The walk did lead to a bower of roses—a bed surrounded with a trellis, on which they climbed and made a huge bonfire—altar of incense rather, glowing with red and white flame. It seemed more glorious than his brain could receive. Seeing was hardly believing, but believing was more than seeing: though nothing is too good to be true, many things are too good to be grasped.

"Poor misbelieving birds of God," he said to himself, "we hover about a whole wood of the trees of life, venturing only here and there a peck, as if their fruit might be poison, and the design of our creation was our ruin! we shake our wise, owl-feathered heads, and declare they cannot be the trees of life: that were too good to be true! Ten times more consistent are they who deny there is a God at all, than they who believe in a middling kind of God—except indeed that they place in him a fitting faith!"

The thoughts rose gently in his full heart, as the flowers, one after the other, stole in at his eyes, looking up from the dark earth like the spirits of its hidden jewels, which themselves could not reach the sun, exhaled in longing. Over grass which fondled his feet like the lap of an old nurse, he walked slowly round the bed of the roses, turning again towards the house. But there, half-way between him and it, was the lady of the garden descending to meet him!—not ancient like the garden, but young like its flowers, light-footed, and full of life.

Prepared by her brother to be friendly, she met him with a pleasant smile, and he saw that the light which shone in her dark eyes had in it rays of laughter. She had a dark, yet clear complexion, a good forehead, a nose after no recognized generation of noses, yet an attractive one, a mouth larger than to human judgment might have seemed necessary, yet a right pleasing mouth, with two rows of lovely teeth. All this Donal saw approach without dismay. He was no more shy with women than with men; while none the less his feeling towards them partook largely of the reverence of the ideal knight errant. He would not indeed have been shy in the presence of an angel of God; for his only courage came of truth, and clothed in the dignity of his reverence, he could look in the face of the lovely without perturbation. He would not have sought to hide from him whose voice was in the garden, but would have made haste to cast himself at his feet.

Bonnet in hand he advanced to meet Kate Graeme. She held

out to him a well-shaped, good-sized hand, not ignorant of work —capable indeed of milking a cow to the cow's satisfaction. Then he saw that her chin was strong, and her dark hair not too tidy; that she was rather tall, and slenderly conceived though plumply carried out. Her light approach pleased him. He liked the way her foot pressed the grass. If Donal loved anything in the green world, it was neither roses nor hollyhocks, nor even sweet peas, but the grass that is trodden under foot, that springs in all waste places, and has so often to be glad of the dews of heaven to heal the hot cut of the scythe. He had long abjured the notion of anything in the vegetable kingdom being without some sense of life, without pleasure and pain also, in mild form and degree.

CHAPTER XXI.
A FIRST MEETING

He took her hand, and felt it an honest one—a safe, comfortable hand.

"My brother told me he had brought you," she said. "I am glad to see you."

"You are very kind," said Donal. "How did either of you know of my existence? A few minutes back, I was not aware of yours."

Was it a rude utterance? He was silent a moment with the silence that promises speech, then added—

"Has it ever struck you how many born friends there are in the world who never meet—persons to love each other at first sight, but who never in this world have that sight?"

"No," returned Miss Graeme, with a merrier laugh than quite responded to the remark, "I certainly never had such a thought. I take the people that come, and never think of those who do not. But of course it must be so."

"To be in the world is to have a great many brothers and sisters you do not know!" said Donal.

"My mother told me," she rejoined, "of a man who had had so many wives and children that his son, whom she had met, positively did not know all his brothers and sisters."

"I suspect," said Donal, "we have to know our brothers and

sisters."

"I do not understand."

"We have even got to feel a man is our brother the moment we see him," pursued Donal, enhancing his former remark.

"That sounds alarming!" said Miss Graeme, with another laugh. "My little heart feels not large enough to receive so many."

"The worst of it is," continued Donal, who once started was not ready to draw rein, "that those who chiefly advocate this extension of the family bonds, begin by loving their own immediate relations less than anybody else. Extension with them means slackening—as if any one could learn to love more by loving less, or go on to do better without doing well! He who loves his own little will not love others much."

"But how can we love those who are nothing to us?" objected Miss Graeme.

"That would be impossible. The family relations are for the sake of developing a love rooted in a far deeper though less recognized relation.—But I beg your pardon, Miss Graeme. Little Davie alone is my pupil, and I forget myself."

"I am very glad to listen to you," returned Miss Graeme. "I cannot say I am prepared to agree with you. But it is something, in this out-of-the-way corner, to hear talk from which it is even worth while to differ."

"Ah, you can have that here if you will!"

"Indeed!"

"I mean talk from which you would probably differ. There is

an old man in the town who can talk better than ever I heard man before. But he is a poor man, with a despised handicraft, and none heed him. No community recognizes its great men till they are gone."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.