

"It's ower dark noo tae read it, an, mither 'ill sune be comin'."

Drumsheugh, in an agony, whispered into his ear, "'My dwelling-place,' Weelum."

"That's it, that's it a' noo; wha said it?"

"'And in God's house for evermore  
My dwelling-place shall be.'

"A'm ready noo, an' a'll get ma kiss when mither comes; a' wish she wud come, for a'm tired an' wantin' tae sleep.

"Yon's her step . . . an' she's carryin' a licht in her hand; a' see it through the door.

"Mither! a' kent ye wudna forget yir laddie, for ye promised tae come, and a've feenished ma psalm.

"'And in God's house for evermore  
My dwelling-place shall be.'

"Gie me the kiss, mither, for a've been waitin' for ye, an' a'll sune be asleep."

The gray morning light fell on Drumsheugh, still holding his friend's cold hand, and staring at a hearth where the fire had died down into white ashes; but the peace on the doctor's face was of one who rested from his labors.

## V.

## THE MOURNING OF THE GLEN.

Dr. MacLure was buried during the great snowstorm, which is still spoken of, and will remain the standard of snowfall in Drumtochty for the century. The snow was deep on the Monday, and the men that gave notice of his funeral had hard work to reach the doctor's distant patients. On Tuesday morning it began to fall again in heavy, fleecy flakes, and continued till Thursday, and then on Thursday the north wind rose and swept the snow into the hollows of the roads that went to the upland farms, and built it into a huge bank at the mouth of Glen Urtach, and laid it across our main roads in drifts of every size and the most lovely shapes, and filled up crevices in the hills to the depth of fifty feet.

On Friday morning the wind had sunk to passing gusts that powdered your coat with white, and the sun was shining on one of those winter landscapes no townsman can imagine and no countryman ever forgets. The Glen, from end to end and side to side, was clothed in a glistening mantle white as no fuller on earth could white it, that flung its skirts over the clumps of trees and scattered farmhouses,



and was only divided where the Tochtly ran with black, swollen stream. The great moor rose and fell in swelling billows of snow that arched themselves over the burns, running deep in the mossy ground, and hid the black peat bogs with a thin, treacherous crust. Beyond the hills northward and westward stood high in white majesty, save where the black crags of Glen Urtach broke the line, and, above our lower Grampians we caught glimpses of the distant peaks that lifted their heads in holiness unto God.

It seemed to me a fitting day for William MacLure's funeral, rather than summer time, with its flowers and golden corn. He had not been a soft man, nor had he lived an easy life, and now he was to be laid to rest amid the austere majesty of winter, yet in the shining of the sun. Jamie Soutar, with whom I toiled across the Glen, did not think with me, but was gravely concerned.

"Nae doot it's a graund sicht; the like o't is no gien tae us twice in a generation, an' nae king wes ever carried tae his tomb in sic a cathedral.

"But it's the fouk a'm conseederin', ae' hoo they 'ill win through; it's hard enuch for them 'at's on the road, an' it's clean impossible for the lave.

"They'll dae their best, every man o' them, ye may depend on that, an' hed it been open weather there wudna hev been six able-bodied men missin'.

"A' wes mad at them, because they never

said onything when he wes leevin', but they felt for a' that what he hed dune, an', a' think, he kent it afore he deed.

"He hed juist ae faut, tae ma thinkin', fer a' never jidged the waur o' him for his titch of rochness—guid trees hae gnarled bark—but he thoct ower little o' himsel'.

"Noo, gin a' hed asked him hoo mony fouk wud come tae his beerial, he wud hae said, 'They'll be Drumsheugh an' yersel', an' maybe twa or three neeburs besides the minister,' an' the fact is that nae man in oor time wud hae sic a githerin' if it werena for the storm.

"Ye see," said Jamie, who had been counting heads all morning, "there's six shepherds in Glen Urtach—they're shut up fast; an' there micht hae been a gude half-dizen frae Dunleith wy, an' a'm telt there's nae road; an' there's the heich Glen, nae man cud cross the muir the day, an' it's aucht mile round;" and Jamie proceeded to review the Glen in every detail of age, driftiness of road and strength of body, till we arrived at the doctor's cottage, when he had settled on a reduction of fifty through stress of weather.

Drumsheugh was acknowledged as chief mourner by the Glen, and received us at the gate with a labored attempt at every-day manners.

"Ye've hed heavy traivellin', a' doot, an' ye'll be cauld. It's hard weother for the sheep, an' a'm thinkin' this 'ill be a feeding storm.

"There wes nae use trying tae dig oot the



front door yestreen, for it would hae been drifted up again before morning. We've cleared awa the snow at the back for the prayer; ye'll get in at the kitchen door.

"There's a puckle Dunleith men——"

"Wha!" cried Jamie in an instant.

"Dunleith men," said Drumsheugh.

"Div ye mean they're here, whar are they?"

"Dryin' themsel's at the fire, an' no without need; ane o' them gied ower the head in a drift, and his neeburs hed tae pu' him oot.

"It took them a gude fower oors tae get across, an' it wes coorse wark; they likit him weel doon that wy, an', Jamie man,"—here Drumsheugh's voice changed its note, and his public manner disappeared—"what div ye think o' this? every man o' them hes on his blacks."

"It's mair than cud be expeckit," said Jamie; "but whar dae yon men come frae, Drumsheugh?"

Two men in plaids were descending the hill behind the doctor's cottage, taking three feet at a stride, and carrying long staffs in their hands.

"They're Glen Urtach men, Jamie, for ane o' them wes at Kildrummie fair wi' sheep, but hoo they've wun doon passes me."

"It canna be, Drumsheugh," said Jamie, greatly excited. "Glen Urtach's steikit up wi' sna' like a locked door.

"Ye're no surely frae the Glen, lads?" as the men leaped the dyke and crossed to the back

door, the snow falling from their plaids as they walked.

"We're that, an' nae mistak, but a' thocht we wud be lickit ae place, eh, Charlie? a'm no sae weel acquaint wi' the hill on this side, an' there wer some kittle [hazardous] drifts."

"It wes grand o' ye tae mak the attempt," said Drumsheugh, "an' a'm gled ye're safe."

"He cam' through as bad himsel' tae help my wife," was Charlie's reply.

"They're three mair Urtach shepherds 'ill come in by sune; they're frae Upper Urtach, an' we saw them fordin' the river; ma certes, it took them a' their time, for it wes up tae their waists and rinnin' like a mill lade, but they jined hands and cam' ower fine." And the Urtach men went into the fire.

The Glen began to arrive in twos and threes, and Jamie, from a point of vantage at the gate, and under an appearance of utter indifference, checked his roll till even he was satisfied.

"Weelum MacLure 'll hae the beerial he deserves in spite o' sna' and drifts; it passes a' tae see hoo they've githered frae far an' near.

"A'm thinkin' ye can collect them for the minister noo, Drumsheugh. A'body's here except the heich Glen, an' we mauna luke for them."

"Dinna be sae sure o' that, Jamie. Yon's terrible like them on the road, wi' Whinnie at their head;" and so it was, twelve in all, only old Adam Ross absent, detained by force, being eighty-two years of age.

"It wud hae been temptin' Providence tae



cross the muir," Whinnie explained, "and it's a fell stap roond; a' doot we're laist."

"See, Jamie," said Drumsheugh, as he went to the house, "gin there be ony anern body in sicht afore we begin; we maun mak allooances the day wi' twa feet o' sna' on the grund, tae say naethin' o' drifts."

"There's somethin' at the turnin', an' it's no fouk; it's a machine o' some kind or ither—maybe a bread cart that's focht it's wy up."

"Na, it's no that; there's twa horses, ane afore the ither; if it's no a dogcart wi' twa men in the front; they'll be comin' tae the beerial."

"What wud ye sae, Jamie," Hillocks suggested, "but it might be some o' thae Muirtown doctors? they were awfu' chief wi' MacLure."

"It's nae Muirtown doctors," cried Jamie, in great exultation, "nor ony ither doctors. A' ken thae horses, and wha's ahint them. Quick, man, Hillocks, stop the fouk, and tell Drumsheugh tae come oot, for Lord Kilspindle hes come up frae Muirtown Castle."

Jamie himself slipped behind, and did not wish to be seen.

"It's the respeck he's gettin' the day frae high an' low," was Jamie's husky apology; "tae think o' them fechtin' their wy doon frae Glen Urtach, and toilin' roond frae the heich Glen, an' his lordship drivin' through the drifts a' the road frae Muirtown, juist tae honor Weelum MacLure's beerial."

"It's nae ceremony the day, ye may lippen tae it; it's the hert brocht the fouk, an' ye can see it in their faces; ilka man hes his ain rea-

son, an' he's thinkin' on't, though he's speakin' o' naethin' but the storm; he's mindin' the day Weelum pued him oot frae the jaws o' death, or the nicht he savit the gude wife in her oor o' tribble.

"That's why they pit on their blacks this mornin' afore it wes licht, and warstled through the sna' drifts at risk o' life. Drumtochty fouk canna say muckle, it's an awfu' peety, and they 'ill dae their best tae show naethin', but a' can read it a' in their een.

"But wae's me"—and Jamie broke down utterly behind a fir tree, so tender a thing is a cynic's heart—"that fouk 'ill tak a man's best wark a' his days without a word an' no dae him honor till he dees. Oh, if they hed only githered like this juist aince when he wes livin', an' lat him see he hedna labored in vain. His reward hes come ower late, ower late."

During Jamie's vain regret, the Castle trap, bearing the marks of a wild passage in the snow-covered wheels, a broken shaft tied with rope, a twisted lamp, and the panting horses, pulled up between two rows of farmers, and Drumsheugh received his lordship with evident emotion.

"Ma lord . . . we never thocht o' this . . . an' sic a road."

"How are you, Drumsheugh? and how are you all this wintry day? That's how I'm half an hour late; it took us four hours' stiff work for sixteen miles, mostly in the drifts, of course."

"It wes gude o' yir lordship tae mak' sic an



effort, an' the hale Glen wull be gratefu' tae ye, for ony kindness tae him is kindness tae us."

"You make too much of it, Drumsheugh," and the clear, firm voice was heard of all; "it would have taken more than a few snowdrifts to keep me from showing my respect to William MacLure's memory."

When all had gathered in a half circle before the kitchen door, Lord Kilspindle came out—every man noticed he had left his overcoat, and was in black, like the Glen—and took a place in the middle with Drumsheugh and Burnbrae, his two chief tenants, on the right and left, and as the minister appeared every man bared his head.

The doctor looked on the company—a hundred men such as for strength and gravity you could hardly have matched in Scotland—standing out in picturesque relief against the white background, and he said:

"It's a bitter day, friends, and some of you are old; perhaps it might be wise to cover your heads before I begin to pray."

Lord Kilspindle, standing erect and gray-headed between the two old men, replied:

"We thank you, Dr. Davidson, for your thoughtfulness; but he endured many a storm in our service, and we are not afraid of a few minutes' cold at his funeral."

A look flashed round the stern faces, and was reflected from the minister, who seemed to stand higher.

His prayer, we noticed with critical apprecia-

tion, was composed for the occasion, and the first part was a thanksgiving to God for the life-work of our doctor, wherein each clause was a reference to his services and sacrifices. No one moved or said Amen,—it had been strange with us,—but when every man had heard the gratitude of his dumb heart offered to Heaven, there was a great sigh.

After which the minister prayed that we might have grace to live as this man had done from youth to old age, not for himself, but for others, and that we might be followed to our grave by somewhat of "that love wherewith we mourn this day Thy servant departed." Again the same sigh, and the minister said Amen.

The "wricht" stood in the doorway without speaking, and four stalwart men came forward. They were the volunteers that would lift the coffin and carry it for the first stage. One was Tammas, Annie Mitchell's man; and another was Saunders Baxter, for whose life MacLure had his great fight with Death; and the third was the Glen Urtach shepherd for whose wife's sake MacLure suffered a broken leg and three fractured ribs in a drift; and the fourth, a Dunleith man, had his own reasons for remembrance.

"He's far lichtter than ye wud expeck for sae big a man—there wesna muckle left o' him, ye see—but the road is heavy, and a'll change ye aifter the first half mile."

"Ye needna tribble yerself, wricht," said the man from Glen Urtach; "the'ill be nae



change in the carryin' the day," and Tammas was thankful some one had saved him speaking.

Surely no funeral is like unto that of a doctor for pathos, and a peculiar sadness fell on that company as his body was carried out who for nearly half a century had been their help in sickness, and had beaten back Death time after time from their door. Death after all was victor, for the man that saved them had not been able to save himself.

As the coffin passed the stable door a horse neighed within, and every man looked at his neighbor. It was his old mare crying for her master.

Jamie slipped into the stable, and went up into the stall.

"Puir lass, ye're no gaein' wi' him the day, an' ye'll never see him again; ye've hed yir last ride thegither, an' ye were true tae the end."

After the funeral Drumsheugh came himself for Jess, and took her to his farm. Saunders made a bed for her with soft, dry straw, and prepared for her supper such things as horses love. Jess would neither take food nor rest, but moved uneasily in her stall, and seemed to be waiting for some one that never came. No man knows what a horse or a dog understands and feels, for God hath not given them our speech. If any footstep was heard in the courtyard, she began to neigh, and was always looking around as the door opened. But nothing would tempt her to eat, and in the night-time

Drumsheugh heard her crying as if she expected to be taken out for some sudden journey. The Kildrummie veterinary came to see her, and said that nothing could be done when it happened after this fashion with an old horse.

"A've seen it aince afore," he said. "Gin she were a Christian instead o' a horse, ye might say she was dying o' a broken hert."

He recommended that she should be shot to end her misery, but no man could be found in the Glen to do the deed, and Jess relieved them of the trouble. When Drumsheugh went to the stable on Monday morning, a week after Dr. MacLure fell on sleep, Jess was resting at last, but her eyes were open and her face turned to the door.

"She wes a' the wife he hed," said Jamie, as he rejoined the procession, "an' they luvud ane anither weel."

The black thread wound itself along the whiteness of the Glen, the coffin first, with his lordship and Drumsheugh behind, and the others as they pleased, but in closer ranks than usual, because the snow on either side was deep, and because this was not as other funerals. They could see the women standing at the door of every house on the hillside, and weeping, for each family had some good reason in forty years to remember MacLure. When Bell Baxter saw Saunders alive, and the coffin of the doctor that saved him on her man's shoulder, she bowed her head on the dyke, and the bairns in the village made such a wail



for him they loved that the men nearly disgraced themselves.

"A'm gled we're through that, at ony rate," said Hillocks; "he wes awfu' taen up wi' the bairns, conseederin' he hed nane o' his ain."

There was only one drift on the road between his cottage and kirkyard, and it had been cut early that morning.

Before daybreak Saunders had roused the lads in the bothy, and they had set to work by the light of lanterns with such good will that, when Drumsheugh came down to engineer a circuit for the funeral, there was a fair passage, with walls of snow twelve feet high on either side.

"Man, Saunders," he said, "this wes a kind thocht, and rael weel dune."

But Saunders' only reply was this:

"Mony a time he's hed tae gang roond; he nicht as weel hae an open road for his last traivel."

When the coffin was laid down at the mouth of the grave, the only blackness in the white kirkyard, Tammas Mitchell did the most beautiful thing in all his life. He knelt down and carefully wiped off the snow the wind had blown upon the coffin, and which had covered the name, and when he had done this he disappeared behind the others, so that Drumsheugh could hardly find him to take a cord. For these were the eight that buried Dr. MacLure—Lord Kilspindie at the head as landlord and Drumsheugh at the feet as his friend; the two ministers of the parish came first on the

right and left; then Burnbrae and Hillocks of the farmers, and Saunders and Tammas for the ploughmen. So the Glen he loved laid him to rest.

When the bedrel had finished his work and the turf had been spread, Lord Kilspindie spoke:

"Friends of Drumtochty, it would not be right that we should part in silence and no man say what is in every heart. We have buried the remains of one that served this Glen with a devotion that has known no reserve, and a kindness that never failed, for more than forty years. I have seen many brave men in my day, but no man in the trenches of Sebastopol carried himself more knightly than William MacLure. You will never have heard from his lips what I may tell you to-day, that my father secured for him a valuable post in his younger days, and he preferred to work among his own people; and I wished to do many things for him when he was old, but he would have nothing for himself. He will never be forgotten while one of us lives, and I pray that all doctors everywhere may share his spirit. If it be your pleasure, I shall erect a cross above his grave and shall ask my old friend and companion, Dr. Davidson, your minister, to choose the text to be inscribed."

"We thank you, Lord Kilspindie," said the doctor, "for your presence with us in our sorrow and your tribute to the memory of William MacLure, and I choose this for his text:



"Greater love hath no man this this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Milton was, at that time, held in the bonds of a very bitter theology, and his indignation was stirred by this unqualified eulogium.

"No doubt Dr. MacLure hed mony natural virtues, an' he did his wark weel, but it was a peety he didna mak mair profession o' re-leegion."

"When William MacLure appears before the Judge, Milton," said Lachlan Campbell, who that day spoke his last words in public, and they were in defense of charity, "He will not be asking him about his professions, for the doctor's judgment hass been ready long ago; and it iss a good judgment, and you and I will be happy men if we get the like of it.

"It iss written in the Gospel, but it iss William MacLure that will not be expecting it."

"What is't, Lachlan?" asked Jamie Souter eagerly.

The old man, now very feeble, stood in the middle of the road, and his face, once so hard, was softened into a winsome tenderness.

"'Come, ye blessed of My Father . . . I was sick, and ye visited Me.'"

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