GEORGE MACDONALD

WHAT'S MINE'S MINE — VOLUME 2

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Содержание

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CHAPTER I.
THE STORY TOLD BY IAN

"There was once a woman whose husband was well to do, but he died and left her, and then she sank into poverty. She did her best; but she had a large family, and work was hard to find, and hard to do when it was found, and hardly paid when it was done. Only hearts of grace can understand the struggles of the poor—with everything but God against them! But she trusted in God, and said whatever he pleased must be right, whether he sent it with his own hand or not.

"Now, whether it was that she could not find them enough to eat, or that she could not keep them warm enough, I do not know; I do not think it was that they had not gladness enough, which is as necessary for young things as food and air and sun, for it is wonderful on how little a child can be happy; but whatever was the cause, they began to die. One after the other sickened and lay down, and did not rise again; and for a time her life was just a

waiting upon death. She would have wanted to die herself, but that there was always another to die first; she had to see them all safe home before she dared wish to go herself. But at length the last of them was gone, and then when she had no more to provide for, the heart of work went out of her: where was the good of working for herself! there was no interest in it! But she knew it was the will of God she should work and eat until he chose to take her back to himself; so she worked on for her living while she would much rather have worked for her dying; and comforted herself that every day brought death a day nearer. Then she fell ill herself, and could work no more, and thought God was going to let her die; for, able to win her bread no longer, surely she was free to lie down and wait for death! But just as she was going to her bed for the last time, she bethought herself that she was bound to give her neighbour the chance of doing a good deed: and felt that any creature dying at her door without letting her know he was in want, would do her a great wrong. She saw it was the will of God that she should beg, so put on her clothes again, and went out to beg. It was sore work, and she said so to the priest. But the priest told her she need not mind, for our Lord himself lived by the kindness of the women who went about with him. They knew he could not make a living for his own body and a living for the souls of so many as well, and the least they could do was to keep him alive who was making them alive. She said that was very true; but he was all the time doing everything for everybody, and she was doing nothing for anybody. The priest

was a wise man, and did not tell her how she had, since ever he knew her, been doing the work of God in his heart, helping him to believe and trust in God; so that in fact, when he was preaching, she was preaching. He did not tell her that, I say, for he was jealous over her beauty, and would have Christ's beloved sheep enter his holy kingdom with her wool white, however torn it might be. So he left her to think she was nobody at all; and told her that, whether she was worth keeping alive or not, whether she was worth begging for or not, whether it was a disgrace or an honour to beg, all was one, for it was the will of God that she should beg, and there was no word more to be said, and no thought more to be thought about it. To this she heartily agreed, and did beg—enough to keep her alive, and no more.

"But at last she saw she must leave that part of the country, and go back to the place her husband took her from. For the people about her were very poor, and she thought it hard on them to have to help a stranger like her; also her own people would want her to bury. For you must know that in the clans, marriage was thought to be dissolved by death, so far at least as the body was concerned; therefore the body of a dead wife was generally carried back to the burial place of her own people, there to be gathered to her fathers. So the woman set out for her own country, begging her way thither. Nor had she any difficulty, for there were not a few poor people on her way, and the poor are the readiest to help the poor, also to know whether a person is one that ought to be helped or not.

"One night she came to a farm house where a rich miserly farmer dwelt. She knew about him, and had not meant to stop there, but she was weary, and the sun went down as she reached his gate, and she felt as if she could go no farther. So she went up to the door and knocked, and asked if she could have a nights lodging. The woman who opened to her went and asked the farmer. Now the old man did not like hospitality, and in particular to such as stood most in need of it; he did not enjoy throwing away money! At the same time, however, he was very fond of hearing all the country rumours; and he thought with himself he would buy her news with a scrap of what was going, and a shake-down at the foot of the wall. So he told his servant to bring her in.

"He received her not unkindly, for he wanted her to talk; and he let her have a share of the supper, such as it was. But not until he had asked every question about everybody he could think of, and drawn her own history from her as well, would he allow her to have the rest she so much needed.

"Now it was a poor house, like most in the country, and nearly without partitions. The old man had his warm box-bed, and slept on feathers where no draught could reach him, and the poor woman had her bed of short rumpled straw on the earthen floor at the foot of the wall in the coldest corner. Yet the heart of the man had been moved by her story, for, without dwelling on her sufferings, she had been honest in telling it. He had indeed, ere he went to sleep, thanked God that he was so much better off than she. For if he did not think it the duty of the rich man to

share with his neighbours, he at least thought it his duty to thank God for his being richer than they.

"Now it may well seem strange that such a man should be privileged to see a vision; but we do read in the Bible of a prophet who did not even know his duty to an ass, so that the ass had to teach it him. And the man alone saw the vision; the woman saw nothing of it. But she did not require to see any vision, for she had truth in the inward parts, which is better than all visions. The vision was on this wise:—In the middle of the night the man came wide awake, and looking out of his bed, saw the door open, and a light come in, burning like a star, of a faint rosy colour, unlike any light he had ever before seen. Another and another came in, and more yet, until he counted six of them. They moved near the floor, but he could not see clearly what sort of little creatures they were that were carrying them. They went up to the woman's bed, and walked slowly round it in a hovering kind of a way, stopping, and moving up and down, and going on again; and when they had done this three times, they went slowly out of the door again, stopping for a moment several times as they went.

"He fell asleep, and waking not very early, was surprised to see his guest still on her hard couch—as quiet as any rich woman, he said to himself, on her feather bed. He woke her, told her he wondered she should sleep so far into the morning, and narrated the curious vision he had had. 'Does not that explain to you,' she said, 'how it is that I have slept so long? Those were my dead children you saw come to me. They died young, without any sin,

and God lets them come and comfort their poor sinful mother. I often see them in my dreams. If, when I am gone, you will look at my bed, you will find every straw laid straight and smooth. That is what they were doing last night.' Then she gave him thanks for good fare and good rest, and took her way to her own, leaving the farmer better pleased with himself than he had been for a long time, partly because there had been granted him a vision from heaven.

"At last the woman died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. She was now with her own people indeed, that is, with God and all the good. The old farmer did not know of her death till a long time after; but it was upon the night she died, as near as he could then make out, that he dreamed a wonderful dream. He never told it to any but the priest from whom he sought comfort when he lay dying; and the priest did not tell it till after everybody belonging to the old man was gone. This was the dream:—

"He was lying awake in his own bed, as he thought, in the dark night, when the poor woman came in at the door, having in her hand a wax candle, but not alight. He said to her, 'You extravagant woman! where did you get that candle?' She answered, 'It was put into my hand when I died, with the word that I was to wander till I found a fire at which to light it.' 'There!' said he, 'there's the rested fire! Blow and get a light, poor thing! It shall never be said I refused a body a light!' She went to the hearth, and began to blow at the smouldering peat; but, for all she

kept trying, she could not light her candle. The old man thought it was because she was dead, not because he was dead in sin, and losing his patience, cried, 'You foolish woman! haven't you wit enough left to light a candle? It's small wonder you came to beggary!' Still she went on trying, but the more she tried, the blacker grew the peat she was blowing at. It would indeed blaze up at her breath, but the moment she brought the candle near it to catch the flame, it grew black, and each time blacker than before. 'Tut! give me the candle,' cried the farmer, springing out of bed; 'I will light it for you!' But as he stretched out his hand to take it, the woman disappeared, and he saw that the fire was dead out. 'Here's a fine business!' he said. 'How am I to get a light?' For he was miles from the next house. And with that he turned to go back to his bed. When he came near it, he saw somebody lying in it. 'What! has the carline got into my very bed?' he cried, and went to drive her out of the bed and out of the house. But when he came close, he saw it was himself lying there, and knew that at least he was out of the body, if not downright dead. The next moment he found himself on the moor, following the woman, some distance before him, with her unlighted candle still in her hand. He walked as fast as he could to get up with her, but could not; he called after her, but she did not seem to hear.

"When first he set out, he knew every step of the ground, but by and by he ceased to know it. The moor stretched out endlessly, and the woman walked on and on. Without a thought of turning back, he followed. At length he saw a gate, seemingly in the side

of a hill. The woman knocked, and by the time it opened, he was near enough to hear what passed. It was a grave and stately, but very happy-looking man that opened it, and he knew at once it was St. Peter. When he saw the woman, he stooped and kissed her. The same moment a light shone from her, and the old man thought her candle was lighted at last; but presently he saw it was her head that gave out the shining. And he heard her say, 'I pray you, St. Peter, remember the rich tenant of Balmacoy; he gave me shelter one whole night, and would have let me light my candle but I could not.' St. Peter answered, 'His fire was not fire enough to light your candle, and the bed he gave you was of short straw!' 'True, St. Peter,' said the woman, 'but he gave me some supper, and it is hard for a rich man to be generous! You may say the supper was not very good, but at least it was more than a cup of cold water!' 'Yes, verily!' answered the saint, 'but he did not give it you because you loved God, or because you were in need of it, but because he wanted to hear your news.' Then the woman was sad, for she could not think of anything more to say for the poor old rich man. And St. Peter saw that she was sad, and said, 'But if he die to-night, he shall have a place inside the gate, because you pray for him. He shall lie there!' And he pointed to just such a bed of short crumpled straw as she had lain upon in his house. But she said, 'St. Peter, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! Is that the kind of welcome to give a poor new-dead man? Where then would he have lain if I had not prayed for him?' 'In the dog-kennel outside there,' answered St. Peter. 'Oh, then, please, let

me go back and warn him what comes of loving money!' she pleaded. 'That is not necessary,' he replied; 'the man is hearing every word you and I are this moment saying to each other.' 'I am so glad!' rejoined the woman; 'it will make him repent.' 'He will not be a straw the better for it!' answered the saint. 'He thinks now that he will do differently, and perhaps when he wakes will think so still; but in a day or two he will mock at it as a foolish dream. To gather money will seem to him common sense, and to lay up treasure in heaven nonsense. A bird in the hand will be to him worth ten in the heavenly bush. And the end will be that he will not get the straw inside the gate, and there will be many worse places than the dog-kennel too good for him!' With that he woke.

"'What an odd dream!' he said to himself. 'I had better mind what I am about!' So he was better that day, eating and drinking more freely, and giving more to his people. But the rest of the week he was worse than ever, trying to save what he had that day spent, and so he went on growing worse. When he found himself dying, the terror of his dream came upon him, and he told all to the priest. But the priest could not comfort him."

By the time the story was over, to which Mercy had listened without a word, they were alone in the great starry night, on the side of a hill, with the snow high above them, and the heavens above the snow, and the stars above the heavens, and God above and below everything. Only Ian felt his presence. Mercy had not missed him yet.

She did not see much in the tale: how could she? It was very odd, she thought, but not very interesting. She had expected a tale of clan-feud, or a love-story! Yet the seriousness of her companion in its narration had made some impression upon her.

"They told me you were an officer," she said, "but I see you are a clergyman! Do you tell stories like that from the pulpit?"

"I am a soldier," answered Ian, "not a clergyman. But I have heard my father tell such a story from the pulpit."

Ian imagined himself foiled in his attempt to interest the maiden. If he was, it would not be surprising. He had not the least desire to commend HIMSELF to the girl; and he would not talk rubbish even to a child. There is sensible and senseless nonsense, good absurdity and bad.

As Mercy recounted to her sister the story Ian had told her, it certainly was silly enough. She had retained but the withered stalk and leaves; the strange flower was gone. Christina judged it hardly a story for a gentleman to tell a lady.

They returned almost in silence to find the table laid, a plentiful supper spread, and the company seated. After supper came singing of songs, saying of ballads, and telling of tales. I know with what incredulity many highlanders will read of a merry-making in their own country at which no horn went round, no punch-bowl was filled and emptied without stint! But the clearer the brain, the better justice is done to the more etherial wine of the soul. Of several of the old songs Christina begged the tunes, but was disappointed to find that, as she could not

take them down, so the singers of them could not set them down. In the tales she found no interest. The hostess sang to her harp, and made to revering listeners eloquent music, for her high clear tones had not yet lost their sweetness, and she had some art to come in aid of her much feeling: loud murmurs of delight, in the soft strange tongue of the songs themselves, followed the profound silence with which they were heard, but Christina wondered what there was to applaud. She could not herself sing without accompaniment, and when she left, it was with a regretful feeling that she had not distinguished herself. Naturally, as they went home, the guests from the New House had much fun over the queer fashions and poverty—stricken company, the harp and the bagpipes, the horrible haggis, the wild minor songs, and the unintelligible stories and jokes; but the ladies agreed that the Macruadh was a splendid fellow.

CHAPTER II
ROB OF THE ANGELS

Among the peasantry assembled at the feast, were two that had neither danced, nor seated themselves at the long table where all were welcome. Mercy wondered what might be the reason of their separation. Her first thought was that they must be somehow, she could not well imagine how, in lower position than any of the rest—had perhaps offended against the law, perhaps been in prison, and so the rest would not keep company with them; or perhaps they were beggars who did not belong to the clan, and therefore, although fed, were not allowed to eat with it! But she soon saw she must be wrong in each conjecture; for if there was any avoiding, it was on the part of the two: every one, it was clear, was almost on the alert to wait upon them. They seemed indeed rather persons of distinction than outcasts; for it was with something like homage, except for a certain coaxing tone in the speech of the ministrants, that they were attended. They had to help themselves to nothing; everything was carried to them. Now one, now another, where all were guests and all were servants, would rise from the table to offer them something, or see what they would choose or might be in want of, while they partook with the same dignity and self-restraint that was to be noted in all.

The elder was a man about five-and-fifty, tall and lean, with a wiry frame, dark grizzled hair, and a shaven face. His dress, which was in the style of the country, was very poor, but decent; only his plaid was large and thick, and bright compared with the rest of his apparel: it was a present he had had from his clan-some giving the wool, and others the labour in carding, dyeing, and weaving it. He carried himself like a soldier-which he had never been, though his father had. His eyes were remarkably clear and keen, and the way he used them could hardly fail to attract attention. Every now and then they would suddenly fix themselves with a gaze of earnest inquiry, which would either grow to perception, or presently melt away and let his glance go gently roving, ready to receive, but looking for nothing. His face was very brown and healthy, with marked and handsome features. Its expression seemed at first a little severe, but soon, to reading eyes, disclosed patience and tenderness. At the same time there was in it a something indescribably unlike the other faces present-and indeed his whole person and carriage were similarly peculiar. Had Mercy, however, spent on him a little more attention, the peculiarity would have explained itself. She would have seen that, although everybody spoke to him, he never spoke in reply—only made signs, sometimes with his lips, oftener with hand or head: the man was deaf and dumb. But such was the keenness of his observation that he understood everything said to him by one he knew, and much from the lips of a stranger.

His companion was a youth whose age it would have been

difficult to guess. He looked a lad, and was not far from thirty. His clothing was much like his father's—poor enough, yet with the air of being a better suit than that worn every day. He was very pale and curiously freckled, with great gray eyes like his father's, which had however an altogether different expression. They looked dreamy, and seemed almost careless of what passed before them, though now and then a certain quick, sharp turn of the head showed him not devoid of attention.

The relation between the two was strangely interesting. Day and night they were inseparable. Because the father was deaf, the son gave all his attention to the sounds of the world; his soul sat in his ears, ever awake, ever listening; while such was his confidence in his father's sight, that he scarcely troubled himself to look where he set his feet. His expression also was peculiar, partly from this cause, mainly from a deeper. It was a far-away look, which a common glance would have taken to indicate that he was "not all there." In a lowland parish he would have been regarded as little better than a gifted idiot; in the mountains he was looked upon as a seer, one in communion with higher powers. Whether his people were of this opinion from being all fools together, and therefore unable to know a fool, or the lowland authorities would have been right in taking charge of him, let him who pleases judge or misjudge for himself. What his own thought of him came out in the name they gave him: "Rob of the Angels," they called him. He was nearly a foot shorter than his father, and very thin. Some said he looked always cold; but I

think that came of the wonderful peace on his face, like the quiet of a lake over which lies a thin mist. Never was stronger or fuller devotion manifested by son to father than by Rob of the Angels to Hector of the Stags. His filial love and faith were perfect. While they were together, he was in his own calm elysium; when they were apart, which was seldom for more than a few minutes, his spirit seemed always waiting. I believe his notions of God his father, and Hector his father, were strangely mingled—the more perhaps that the two fathers were equally silent. It would have been a valuable revelation to some theologians to see in those two what *love* might mean.

So gentle was Rob of the Angels, that all the women, down to the youngest maid-child, gave him a compassionate, mother-like love. He had lost his mother when he was an infant; the father had brought him up with his own hand, and from the moment of his mother's departure had scarce let him out of his sight; but the whole woman-remnant of the clan was as a mother to the boy. And from the first they had so talked to him of his mother, greatly no doubt through the feeling that from his father he could learn nothing of her, that now his mother seemed to him everywhere: he could not see God; why should not his mother be there though he could not see her! No wonder the man was peaceful!

Many would be inclined to call the two but poachers and vagabonds—vagabonds because they lived in houses not quite made with hands, for they had several dwellings that were mostly

caves—which yet they contrived to make warm and comfortable; and poachers because they lived by the creatures which God scatters on his hills for his humans. Let those who inherit or purchase, avenge the breach of law; but let them not wonder when those who are disinherited and sold, cry out against the breach of higher law!

The land here had never, partly from the troubles besetting its owners, but more from their regard for the poor, of the clan, been with any care preserved; little notice was ever taken of what game was killed, or who killed it. At the same time any wish of the chief with regard to the deer, of which Rob's father for one knew every antlered head, was rigidly respected. As to the parts which became the property of others-the boundaries between were not very definite, and sale could ill change habits, especially where owners were but beginning to bestir themselves about the deer, or any of the wild animals called game. Hector and Rob led their life with untroubled conscience and easy mind.

In a world of the devil, where the justification of existence lay in money on the one side, and work for money on the other, there could be no justification of the existence of these men; but this world does not belong to the devil, though it may often seem as if it did, and father and son lived and enjoyed life, as in a manner so to a decree unintelligible to him who, without his money and its consolations, would know himself in the hell he has not yet recognized. Neither of them could read or write; neither of them had a penny laid by for wet weather; neither of

them would leave any memory beyond their generation; the will of neither would be laid up in Doctors' Commons; neither of the two would leave on record a single fact concerning one of the animals whose ways and habits they knew better than any other man in the highlands; that they were nothing, and worth nothing to anybody—even to themselves, would have been the judgment of most strangers concerning them; but God knew what a life of unspeakable pleasures it was that he had given them-a life the change from which to the life beyond, would scarce be distracting: neither would find himself much out of doors when he died. To Bob of the Angels tow could Abraham's bosom feel strange, accustomed to lie night after night, star-melted and soft-breathing, or snow-ghastly and howling, with his head on—the bosom of Hector of the Stags-an Abraham who could as ill do without his Isaac, as his Isaac without him!

The father trusted his son's hearing as implicitly as his own sight. When he saw a certain look come on his face, he would drop on the instant, and crouch as still as if he had ears and knew what noise was, watching Kob's face for news of some sound wandering through the vast of the night.

It seemed at times, however, as if either he was not quite deaf, or he had some gift that went toward compensation. To all motion about him he was sensitive as no other man. I am afraid to say from how far off the solid earth would convey to him the vibration of a stag's footstep. Bob sometimes thought his cheek must feel the wind of a sound to which his ear was irresponsive.

Beyond a doubt he was occasionally aware of the proximity of an animal, and knew what animal it was, of which Rob had no intimation. His being, corporeal and spiritual, seemed, to the ceaseless vibrations of the great globe, a very seismograph. Often would he make his sign to Kob to lay his ear on the ground and listen, when no indication had reached the latter. I suspect the exceptional development in him of some sense rudimentary in us all.

He had the keenest eyes in Glenruadh, and was a dead shot. Even the chief was not his equal. Yet he never stalked a deer, never killed anything, for mere sport. I am not certain he never had, but for Rob of the Angels, he had the deep-rooted feeling of his chief in regard to the animals. What they wanted for food, they would kill; but it was not much they needed, for seldom can two men have lived on less, and they had positively not a greed of any kind between them. If their necessity was meal or potatoes, they would carry grouse or hares down the glen, or arrange with some farmer's wife, perhaps Mrs. Macruadh herself, for the haunches of a doe; but they never killed from pleasure in killing. Of creatures destructive to game they killed enough to do far more than make up for all the game they took; and for the skins of ermine and stoat and fox and otter they could always get money's worth; money itself they never sought or had. If the little birds be regarded as earning the fruit and seed they devour by the grubs and slugs they destroy, then Hector of the Stags and Rob of the Angels also thoroughly earned their food.

When a trustworthy messenger was wanted, and Rob was within reach, he was sure to be employed. But not even then were his father and he quite parted. Hector would shoulder his gun, and follow in the track of his fleet-footed son till he met him returning.

For what was life to Hector but to be with Rob! Was his Mary's son to go about the world unattended! He had a yet stronger feeling than any of the clan that his son was not of the common race of mortals. To Hector also, after their own fashion, would Rob of the Angels tell the tales that suggested the name his clanspeople gave him—wonderful tales of the high mountain-nights, the actors in them for the most part angels. Whether Rob believed he had intercourse with such beings, heard them speak, and saw them, do the things he reported, I cannot tell: it may be that, like any other poet of good things, he but saw and believed the things his tales meant, the things with which he represented the angels as dealing, and concerning which he told their sayings. To the eyes of those who knew him, Rob seemed just the sort of person with whom the angels might be well pleased to hold converse: was he not simplicity itself, truth, generosity, helpfulness? Did he not, when a child, all but lose his life in the rescue of an idiot from the swollen burn? Did he not, when a boy, fight a great golden eagle on its nest, thinking to deliver the lamb it had carried away? Knowing his father in want of a new bonnet, did not Rob with his bare hands seize an otter at the mouth of its hole, and carry it home, laughing merrily over

the wounds it had given him?

His voice had in it a strangely peculiar tone, making it seem not of this world. Especially after he had been talking for some time, it would appear to come from far away, not from the lips of the man looking you in the face.

It was wonderful with what solemnity of speech, and purity of form he would tell his tales. So much in solitude with his dumb father, his speech might well be unlike the speech of other men; but whence the impression of cultivation it produced?

When the Christmas party broke up, most of the guests took the road toward the village, the chief and his brother accompanying them part of the way. Of these were Rob and his father, walking hand in hand, Hector looking straight before him, Rob gazing up into the heavens, as if holding counsel with the stars.

"Are you seeing any angels, Rob?" asked a gentle girl of ten.

"Well, and I'm not sure," answered Rob of the Angels.

"Sure you can tell whether you see anything!"

"Oh, yes, I see! but it is not easy to tell what will be an angel and what will not. There's so much all blue up there, it might be full of angels and none of us see one of them!"

"Do tell us what you see, Rob, dear Rob," said the girl.

"Well, and I will tell you. I think I see many heads close together, talking."

"And can you hear what they will be saying?"

"Some of it."

"Tell me, do tell me-some-just a little."

"Well then, they are saying, one to the other—not very plain, but I can hear—they are saying, 'I wonder when people will be good! It would be so easy, if only they would mean it, and begin when they are little!' That's what they are saying as they look down on us walking along."

"That will be good advice, Rob!" said one of the women.

"And," he resumed, "they are saying now—at least that is what it sounds to me—'I wish women were as good as they were when they were little girls!'"

"Now I know they are not saying that!" remarked the woman. "How should the angels trouble themselves about us! Rob, dear, confess you are making it up, because the child would be asking you."

Rob made no answer, but some saw him smile a curious smile. Rob would never defend anything he had said, or dispute anything another said. After a moment or two, he spoke again.

"Shall I be telling you what I heard them saying to each other this last night of all?" he asked.

"Yes, do, do!"

"It was upon Dorrachbeg; and there were two of them. They were sitting together in the moon—in the correi on the side of the hill over the village. I was lying in a bush near them, for I could not sleep, and came out, and the night was not cold. Now I would never be so bad-mannered as to listen where persons did not want me to hear."

"What were they like, Rob, dear?" interrupted the girl.

"That does not matter much," answered Rob; "but they were white, and their eyes not so white, but brighter; for so many sad things go in at their eyes when they come down to the earth, that it makes them dark."

"How could they be brighter and darker both at once?" asked the girl, very pertinently.

"I will tell you," answered Rob. "The dark things that go in at their eyes, they have to burn them in the fire of faith; and it is the fire of that burning that makes their eyes bright; it is the fire of their faith burning up the sad things they see."

"Oh, yes! I understand now!" said the girl. "And what were their clothes like, Rob?"

"When you see the angels, you don't think much about their clothes."

"And what were they saying?"

"I spoke first—the moment I saw them, for I was not sure they knew that I was there. I said, 'I am here, gentlemen.' 'Yes, we know that,' they answered. 'Are you far from home, gentlemen?' I asked. 'It is all one for that,' they answered. 'Well,' said I, 'it is true, gentlemen, for you seem as much at home here on the side of Dorrachbeg, as if it was a hill in paradise!' 'And how do you know it is not?' said they. 'Because I see people do upon it as they would not in paradise,' I answered. 'Ah!' said one of them, 'the hill may be in paradise, and the people not! But you cannot understand these things.' 'I think I do,' I said; 'but surely,

if you did let them know they were on a hill in paradise, they would not do as they do!' 'It would be no use telling them,' said he; 'but, oh, how they spoil the house!' 'Are the red deer, and the hares, and the birds in paradise?' I asked. 'Certain sure!' he answered. 'Do they know it?' said I. 'No, it is not necessary for them; but they will know it one day.' 'You do not mind your little brother asking you questions?' I said. 'Ask a hundred, if you will, little brother,' he replied. 'Then tell me why you are down here to-night.' 'My friend and I came out for a walk, and we thought we would look to see when the village down there will have to be reaped.' 'What do you mean?' I said. 'You cannot see what we see,' they answered; 'but a human place is like a flower, or a field of corn, and grows ripe, or won't grow ripe, and then some of us up there have to sharpen our sickles.' 'What!' said I, for a great fear came upon me, 'they are not wicked people down there!' 'No, not very wicked, but slow and dull.' Then I could say nothing more for a while, and they did not speak either, but sat looking before them. 'Can you go and come as you please?' I asked at length. 'Yes, just as we are sent,' they answered. 'Would you not like better to go and come of yourselves, as my father and I do?' I said. 'No,' answered both of them, and something in their one voice almost frightened me; 'it is better than everything to go where we are sent. If we had to go and come at our own will, we should be miserable, for we do not love our own will.' 'Not love your own will?' 'No, not at all!' 'Why?' 'Because there is one—oh, ever so much better! When you and your father are

quite good, you will not be left to go and come at your own will any more than we are.' And I cried out, and said, 'Oh, dear angel! you frighten me!' And he said, 'That is because you are only a man, and not a—' Now I am not sure of the word he said next; bat I think it was CHRISTIAN; and I do not quite know what the word meant."

"Oh, Rob, dear! everybody knows that!" exclaimed the girl.

But Rob said no more.

While he was talking, Alister had come up behind him, with Annie of the shop, and he said—

"Rob, my friend, I know what you mean, and I want to hear the rest of it: what did the angels say next?"

"They said," answered Rob, "—'Was it your will set you on this beautiful hill, with all these things to love, with such air to breathe, such a father as you've got, and such grand deer about you?' 'No,' I answered. 'Then,' said the angel, 'there must be a better will than yours, for you would never have even thought of such things!' 'How could I, when I wasn't made?' said I. 'There it is!' he returned, and said no more. I looked up, and the moon was shining, and there were no angels on the stone. But a little way off was my father, come out to see what had become of me."

"Now did you really see and hear all that, Rob?" said Alister.

Rob smiled a beautiful smile—with something in it common people would call idiotic—stopped and turned, took the chief's hand, and carried it to his lips; but not a word more would he speak, and soon they came where the path of the two turned away

over the hill.

"Will you not come and sleep at our house?" said one of the company.

But they made kindly excuse.

"The hill-side would miss us; we are expected home!" said Rob—and away they climbed to their hut, a hollow in a limestone rock, with a front wall of turf, there to sleep side by side till the morning came, or, as Rob would have said, "till the wind of the sun woke them."

Rob of the Angels made songs, and would sing one sometimes; but they were in Gaelic, and the more poetic a thing, the more inadequate at least, if not stupid is its translation.

He had all the old legends of the country in his head, and many stories of ghosts and of the second sight. These stories he would tell exactly as he had heard them, showing he believed every word of them; but with such of the legends as were plainly no other than poetic inventions, he would take what liberties he pleased —and they lost nothing by it; for he not only gave them touches of fresh interest, but sent glimmering through them hints of something higher, of which ordinary natures perceived nothing, while others were dimly aware of a loftier intent: according to his listeners was their hearing. In Rob's stories, as in all the finer work of genius, a man would find as much as, and no more than, he was capable of. Ian's opinion of Rob was even higher than Alister's.

"What do you think, Ian, of the stories Rob of the Angels

tells?" asked Alister, as they walked home.

"That the Lord has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty," answered Ian.

"Tut! Rob confounds nobody."

"He confounds me," returned Ian.

"Does he believe what he tells?"

"He believes all of it that is to be believed," replied Ian.

"You are as bad as he!" rejoined Alister. "There is no telling, sometimes, what you mean!"

"Tell me this, Alister: can a thing be believed that is not true?"

"Yes, certainly!"

"I say, NO. Can you eat that which is not bread?"

"I have seen a poor fellow gnawing a stick for hunger!" answered Alister.

"Yes, gnawing! but gnawing is not eating. Did the poor fellow eat the stick? That is just it! Many a man will gnaw at a lie all his life, and perish of want. I mean LIE, of course, the real lie —a thing which is in its nature false. He may gnaw at it, he may even swallow it, but I deny that he can believe it. There is not that in it which can be believed; at most it can but be supposed to be true. Belief is another thing. Truth is alone the correlate of belief, just as air is for the lungs, just as form and colour are for the sight. A lie can no more be believed than carbonic acid can be breathed. It goes into the lungs, true, and a lie goes into the mind, but both kill; the one is not BREATHED, the other is not BELIEVED. The thing that is not true cannot find its way

to the home of faith; if it could, it would be at once rejected with a loathing beyond utterance; to a pure soul, which alone can believe, nothing is so loathsome as a pretence of truth. A lie is a pretended truth. If there were no truth there could be no lie. As the devil upon God, the very being of a lie depends on that whose opposite and enemy it is. But tell me, Alister, do you believe the parables of our Lord?"

"With all my heart."

"Was there any real person in our Lord's mind when he told that one about the unjust judge?"

"I do not suppose there was; but there were doubtless many such."

"Many who would listen to a poor woman because she plagued them?"

"Well, it does not matter; what the story teaches is true, and that was what he wanted believed."

"Just so. The truth in the parables is what they mean, not what they say; and so it is, I think, with Rob of the Angels' stories. He believes all that can be believed of them. At the same time, to a mind so simple, the spirit of God must have freer entrance than to ours—perhaps even teaches the man by what we call THE MAN'S OWN WORDS. His words may go before his ideas—his higher ideas at least—his ideas follow after his words. As the half-thoughts pass through his mind—who can say how much generated by himself, how much directly suggested by the eternal thought in which his spirit lives and breathes!—he drinks and is

refreshed. I am convinced that nowhere so much as in the highest knowledge of all—what the people above count knowledge—will the fulfilment of the saying of our Lord, "Many first shall be last, and the last first," cause astonishment; that a man who has been leader of the age's opinion, may be immeasurably behind another whom he would have shut up in a mad-house. Depend upon it, things go on in the soul of that Rob of the Angels which the angels, whether they come to talk with him or not, would gladly look into. Of such as he the angels may one day be the pupils."

A silence followed.

"Do you think the young ladies of the New House could understand Rob of the Angels, Ian?" at length asked Alister.

"Not a bit. I tried the younger, and she is the best.—They could if they would wake up."

"You might say that of anybody!"

"Yes; but there is this among other differences—that some people do not wake up, because they want a new brain first, such as they will get when they die, perhaps; while others do not wake up, because their whole education has been a rocking of them to sleep. And there is this difference between the girls, that the one is full of herself, and the other is not. The one has a close, the other an open mind."

"And yet," said Alister, "if they heard you say so, the open mind would imagine itself the close, and the close never doubt it was the open!"

CHAPTER III
AT THE NEW HOUSE

The ladies of the New House were not a little surprised the next day when, as they sat waiting their guests, the door of the drawing-room opened, and they saw the young highlanders enter in ordinary evening dress. The plough-driving laird himself looked to Christina very much like her patterns of Grosvenor-square. It was long since he had worn his dress-coat, and it was certainly a little small for his more fully developed frame, but he carried himself as straight as a rush, and was nowise embarrassed with hands or feet. His hands were brown and large, but they were well shaped, and not ashamed of themselves, being as clean as his heart. Out of his hazel eyes, looking in the candle-light nearly as dark as Mercy's, went an occasional glance which an emergency might at once develop into a look of command.

For Ian, he would have attracted attention anywhere, if only from his look of quiet UNSELFNESS, and the invariable grace of the movement that broke his marked repose; but his entertainers would doubtless have honoured him more had they understood that his manner was just the same and himself as much at home in the grandest court of Europe.

The elder ladies got on together pretty well. The widow of the chief tried to explain to her hostess the condition of the country

and its people; the latter, though knowing little and caring less about relations beyond those of the family and social circle, nor feeling any purely human responsibility, was yet interested enough to be able to seem more interested than she was; while her sweet smile and sweet manners were very pleasing to one who seldom now had the opportunity of meeting a woman so much on her own level.

The gentlemen, too, were tolerably comfortable together. Both Alister and Ian had plenty of talk and anecdote. The latter pleased the ladies with descriptions of northern ways and dresses and manners—perhaps yet more with what pleased the men also, tales of wolf-and bear-shooting. But it seemed odd that, when the talk turned upon the home-shooting called sport, both Alister and Ian should sit in unsmiling silence.

There was in Ian a certain playfulness, a subdued merriment, which made Mercy doubt her ears after his seriousness of the night before. Life seemed to flash from him on all sides, occasionally in a keen stroke of wit, oftener in a humorous presentation of things. His brother alone could see how he would check the witticism on his very lips lest it should hurt. It was in virtue of his tenderness toward everything that had life that he was able to give such narratives of what he had seen, such descriptions of persons he had met. When he told a story, it was with such quiet participation, manifest in the gleam of his gray eyes, in the smile that hovered like the very soul of Psyche about his lips, that his hearers enjoyed the telling more than the tale.

Even the chief listened with eagerness to every word that fell from his brother.

The ladies took note that, while the manners of the laird and his mother were in a measure old-fashioned, those of Ian were of the latest: with social custom, in its flow of change, he seemed at home. But his ease never for a moment degenerated into the free-and-easy, the dry rot of manners; there was a stateliness in him that dominated the ease, and a courtesy that would not permit frendliness to fall into premature familiarity. He was at ease with his fellows because he respected them, and courteous because he loved them.

The ladies withdrew, and with their departure came the time that tests the man whether he be in truth a gentleman. In the presence of women the polish that is not revelation but concealment preserves itself only to vanish with them. How would not some women stand aghast to hear but a specimen of the talk of their heroes at such a time!

It had been remarked throughout the dinner that the highlanders took no wine; but it was supposed they were reserving their powers. When they now passed decanter and bottle and jug without filling their glasses, it gave offence to the very soul of Mr. Peregrine Palmer. The bettered custom of the present day had not then made progress enough to affect his table; he was not only fond of a glass of good wine, but had the ambition of the cellar largely developed; he would fain be held a connaisseur in wines, and kept up a good stock of distinguished

vintages, from which he had brought of such to Glenruadh as would best bear the carriage. Having no aspiration, there was room in him for any number of petty ambitions; and it vexed him not to reap the harvest of recognition. "But of course," he said to himself, "no highlander understands anything but whisky!"

"You don't mean you're a teetotaler, Macruadh!" he said.

"No," answered the chief; "I do not call myself one; but I never drink anything strong."

"Not on Christmas-day? Of course you make an exception at times; and if at any time, why not on the merriest day of the year? You are under no pledge!"

"If that were a reason," returned Alister, laughing, "it would rather be one for becoming pledged immediately."

"Well, you surprise me! And highlanders too! I thought better of all highlanders; they have the reputation of good men at the bottle! You make me sorry to have brought my wine where it meets with no consideration.—Mr. Ian, you are a man of the world: you will not refuse to pledge me?"

"I must, Mr. Palmer! The fact is, my brother and I have seen so much evil come of the drinking habits of the country, which always get worse in a time of depression, that we dare not give in to them. My father, who was clergyman of the parish before he became head of the clan, was of the same mind before us, and brought us up not to drink. Throughout a whole Siberian winter I kept the rule."

"And got frost-bitten for your pains?"

"And found myself nothing the worse."

"It's mighty good of you, no doubt!" said the host, with a curl of his shaven lip.

"You can hardly call that good which does not involve any self-denial!" remarked Alister.

"Well," said Mr. Peregrine Palmer, "what IS the world coming to? All the pith is leaking out of our young men. In another generation we shall have neither soldiers nor sailors nor statesmen!"

"On what do you found such a sad conclusion?" inquired Ian.

"On the growth of asceticism in the young men. Believe me, it is necessary to manhood that men when they are young should drink a little, gamble a little, and sow a few wild oats—as necessary as that a nation should found itself by the law of the strongest. How else can we look for the moderation to follow with responsibilities? The vices that are more than excusable in the young, are very properly denied to the married man; the law for him is not the same as for the young man. I do not plead for license, you see; but it will never do for young men to turn ascetics! Let the clergy do as they please; they are hardly to be counted men; at least their calling is not a manly one! Depend upon it, young men who do not follow the dictates of nature—while they are young, I mean—will never make any mark in the world! They dry up like a nut, brain and all, and have neither spirit, nor wit, nor force of any kind. Nature knows best! When I was a young man,—"

"Pray spare us confession, Mr. Palmer," said Ian. "In our case your doctrine does not enter willing ears, and I should be sorry anything we might feel compelled to say, should have the appearance of personality."

"Do you suppose I should heed anything you said?" cried the host, betraying the bad blood in his breeding. "Is it manners here to prevent a man from speaking his mind at his own table? I say a saint is not a man! A fellow that will neither look at a woman nor drink his glass, is not cut out for man's work in the world!"

Like a sledge-hammer came the fist of the laird on the table, that the crystal danced and rang.

"My God!" he exclaimed, and rose in hugest indignation.

Ian laid his hand on his arm, and he sat down again.

"There may be some misunderstanding, Alister," said Ian, "between us and our host!—Pray, Mr. Palmer, let us understand each other: do you believe God made woman to be the slave of man? Can you believe he ever made a woman that she might be dishonoured?—that a man might caress and despise her?"

"I know nothing about God's intentions; all I say is, we must obey the laws of our nature."

"Is conscience then not a law of our nature? Or is it below the level of our instincts? Must not the lower laws be subject to the higher? It is a law—for ever broken, yet eternal—that a man is his brother's keeper: still more must he be his sister's keeper. Therein is involved all civilization, all national as well as individual growth."

Mr. Peregrine Palmer smiled a contemptuous smile. The other young men exchanged glances that seemed to say, "The governor knows what's what!"

"Such may be the popular feeling in this out-of-the-way spot," said Mr. Peregrine Palmer, "and no doubt it is very praiseworthy, but the world is not of your opinion, gentlemen."

"The world has got to come to our opinion," said the laird—at which the young men of the house broke into a laugh.

"May we join the ladies?" said Ian, rising.

"By all means," answered the host, with a laugh meant to be good-humoured; "they are the fittest company for you."

As the brothers went up the stair, they heard their host again holding forth; but they would not have been much edified by the slight change of front he had made—to impress on the young men the necessity of moderation in their pleasures.

There are two opposite classes related by a like unbelief—those who will not believe in the existence of the good of which they have apprehended no approximate instance, and those who will not believe in the existence of similar evil. I tell the one class, there are men who would cast their very being from them rather than be such as they; and the other, that their shutting of their eyes is no potent reason for the shutting of my mouth. There are multitudes delicate as they, who are compelled to meet evil face to face, and fight with it the sternest of battles: on their side may I be found! What the Lord knew and recognized, I will know and recognize too, be shocked who may. I spare them, however, any

more of the talk at that dinner-table. Only let them take heed lest their refinement involve a very bad selfishness. Cursed be the evil thing, not ignored! Mrs. Palmer, sweet-smiled and clear-eyed, never showed the least indignation at her husband's doctrines. I fear she was devoid of indignation on behalf of others. Very far are such from understanding the ways of the all-pardoning, all-punishing Father!

The three from the cottage were half-way home ere the gentlemen of the New House rose from their wine. Then first the mother sought an explanation of the early departure they had suggested.

"Something went wrong, sons: what was it she said?"

"I don't like the men, mother; nor does Ian," answered Alister gloomily.

"Take care you are not unjust!" she replied.

"You would not have liked Mr. Palmer's doctrine any better than we did, mother."

"What was it?"

"We would rather not tell you."

"It was not fit for a woman to hear."

"Then do not tell me. I trust you to defend women."

"In God's name we will!" said Alister.

"There is no occasion for an oath, Alister!" said his mother.

"Alister meant it very solemnly!" said Ian.

"Yes; but it was not necessary—least of all to me. The name of our Lord God should lie a precious jewel in the cabinet of our

hearts, to be taken out only at great times, and with loving awe."

"I shall be careful, mother," answered Alister; "but when things make me sorry, or glad, or angry, I always think of God first!"

"I understand you; but I fear taking the name of God in vain."

"It shall not be in vain, mother!" said the laird.

"Must it be a breach with our new neighbours?" asked the mother.

"It will depend on them. The thing began because we would not drink with them."

"You did not make any remark?"

"Not until our host's remarks called for our reasons. By the way, I should like to know how the man made his money."

CHAPTER IV.
THE BROTHERS

Events, then, because of the deeper things whence they came, seemed sorely against any cordial approach of the old and the new houses of Glenruadh. But there was a sacred enemy within the stronghold of Mr. Peregrine Palmer, and that enemy forbade him to break with the young highlanders notwithstanding the downright mode in which they had expressed their difference with him: he felt, without knowing it, ashamed of the things he had uttered; they were not such as he would wish proclaimed from the house-tops out of the midst of which rose heavenward the spire of the church he had built; neither did the fact that he would have no man be wicked on Sundays, make him feel quite right in urging young men to their swing on other days.

Christian and Sercombe could not but admire the straightforwardness of the brothers; their conventionality could not prevent them from feeling the dignity with which they acted on their convictions. The quixotic young fellows ought not to be cut for their behaviour! They could not court their society, but would treat them with consideration! Things could not well happen to bring them into much proximity!

What had taken place could not definitely influence the ideas, feelings, or opinions of the young ladies. Their father would

sooner have had his hand cut off than any word said over that fuliginous dessert reach the ears of his daughters. Is it not an absolute damnation of certain evil principles, that many men would be flayed alive rather than let those they love know that they hold them? But see the selfishness of such men: each looks with scorn on the woman he has done his part to degrade, but not an impure breath must reach the ears of HIS children! Another man's he will send to the devil!

Mr. Palmer did, however, communicate something of the conversation to his wife; and although she had neither the spirit, nor the insight, nor the active purity, to tell him he was in the wrong, she did not like the young highlanders the worse. She even thought it a pity the world should have been so made that they could not be in the right.

It is wonderful how a bird of the air will carry a matter, and some vaguest impression of what had occurred alighted on the minds of the elder girls—possibly from hints supposed unintelligible, passing between Mr. Sercombe and Christian: something in the social opinions of the two highlanders made those opinions differ much from the opinions prevailing in society! Now even Mercy had not escaped some notion of things of which the air about her was full; and she felt the glow of a conscious attraction towards men—somehow, she did not know how—like old-fashioned knights errant in their relations to women.

The attachment between the brothers was unusual both in

kind and degree. Alister regarded Ian as his better self, through whom to rise above himself; Ian looked up to his brother as the head of the family, uniting in himself all ancestral claims, the representative of an ordered and harmonious commonwealth. He saw in Alister virtues and powers he did not recognize in himself. His love blossomed into the deeper devotion that he only had been sent to college: he was bound to share with his elder brother what he had learned. So Alister got more through Ian than he would have got at the best college in the world. For Ian was a born teacher, and found intensest delight, not in imparting knowledge —that is a comparatively poor thing—but in leading a mind up to see what it was before incapable of seeing. It was part of the same gift that he always knew when he had not succeeded. In Alister he found a wonderful docility—crossed indeed with a great pride, against which he fought sturdily.

It is not a good sign of any age that it should find it hard to believe in such simplicity and purity as that of these young men; it is perhaps even a worse sign of our own that we should find it difficult to believe in such love between men. I am sure of this, that a man incapable of loving another man with hearty devotion, can not be capable of loving a woman as a woman ought to be loved. From each other these two kept positively nothing secret.

Alister had a great love of music, which however had had little development except from the study of the violin, with the assistance of a certain poor enough performer in the village, and what criticism his brother could afford him, who, not himself

a player, had heard much good music. But Alister was sorely hampered by the fact that his mother could not bear the sound of it. The late chief was one of the few clergymen who played the violin; and at the first wail of the old instrument in the hands of his son, his widow was seized with such a passion of weeping, that Alister took the utmost care she should never hear it again, always carrying it to some place too remote for the farthest-travelling tones to reach her. But this was not easy, for sound will travel very far among the hills. At times he would take it to the room behind Annie's shop, at times to the hut occupied by Hector of the Stags: there he would not excruciate his host at least, and Rob of the Angels would endure anything for his chief. The place which he most preferred was too distant to be often visited; but there, soon after Christmas, the brothers now resolved to have a day together, a long talk, and a conference with the violin. On a clear frosty morning in January they set out, provided for a night and two days.

The place was upon an upland pasture-ground, yet in their possession: no farm was complete without a range in some high valley for the sheep and cattle in summer. On the north of this valley stood a bare hilltop, whose crest was a limestone rock, rising from the heather about twenty feet. Every summer they had spent weeks of their boyhood with the shepherds, in the society of this hill, and one day discovered in its crest a shallow cave, to which thereafter they often took their food, and the book they were reading together. There they read the English Ossian,

troubled by no ignorant unbelief; and there they made Gaelic songs, in which Alister excelled, while Ian did better in English.

When Ian was at home in the university-vacations, they were fonder than ever of going to the hill. There Ian would pour out to Alister of the fullness of his gathered knowledge, and there and then they made their first acquaintance with Shakspere. Ian had bought some dozen of his plays, in smallest compass and cleanest type, at a penny a piece, and how they revelled in them the long summer evenings! Ian had bought also, in a small thick volume, the poems of Shelley: these gave them not only large delight, but much to talk about, for they were quite capable of encountering his vague philosophy. Then they had their Euclid and Virgil—and even tried their mental teeth upon Dante, but found the Commedia without notes too hard a nut for them. Every fresh spring, Ian brought with him fresh books, and these they read in their cave. But I must not forget the cave itself, which also shared in the progress of its troglodytes.

The same week in which they first ate and read in it, they conceived and began to embody the idea of developing the hollow into a house. Foraging long ago in their father's library for mental pabulum, they had come upon Belzoni's quarto, and had read, with the avidity of imaginative boys, the tale of his discoveries, taking especial delight in his explorations of the tombs of the kings in the rocks of Beban el Malook: these it was that now suggested excavation.

They found serviceable tools about the place at home, and

the rock was not quite of the hardest. Not a summer, for the last seventeen years, had passed without a good deal being done, Alister working alone when Ian was away, and the cave had now assumed notable dimensions. It was called by the people uamh an ceann, the cave of the chief, and regarded as his country house. All around it was covered with snow throughout the winter and spring, and supplied little to the need of man beyond the blessed air, and a glorious vision of sea and land, mountain and valley, falling water, gleaming lake, and shadowy cliff.

Crossing the wide space where so lately they had burned the heather that the sheep might have its young shoots in the spring, the brothers stood, and gazed around with delight.

"There is nothing like this anywhere!" said Ian.

"Do you mean nothing so beautiful?" asked Alister.

"No; I mean just what I say: there is nothing like it. I do not care a straw whether one scene be more or less beautiful than another; what I do care for is—its individual speech to my soul. I feel towards visions of nature as towards writers. If a book or a prospect produces in my mind a mood that no other produces, then I feel it individual, original, real, therefore precious. If a scene or a song play upon the organ of my heart as no other scene or song could, why should I ask at all whether it be beautiful? A bare hill may be more to me than a garden of Damascus, but I love them both. The first question as to any work of art is whether it puts the willing soul into any mood at all peculiar; the second, what that mood is. It matters to me little by whom our Ossian was

composed, and it matters nothing whoever may in his ignorance declare that there never was an Ossian any more than a Homer: here is a something that has power over my heart and soul, works upon them as not anything else does. I do not ask whether its power be great or small; it is enough that it is a peculiar power, one by itself; that it puts my spiritual consciousness in a certain individual condition, such in character as nothing else can occasion. Either a man or a nation must have felt to make me so feel."

They were now climbing the last slope of the hill on whose top stood their playhouse, dearer now than in their boyhood. Alister occasionally went there for a few hours' solitude, and Ian would write there for days at a time, but in general when they visited the place it was together. Alister unlocked the door and they entered.

Unwilling to spend labour on the introductory, they had made the first chamber hardly larger than the room required for opening the door. Immediately within, another door opened into a room of about eight feet by twelve, with two small windows. Its hearth was a projection from the floor of the live stone; and there, all ready for lighting, was a large pile of peats. The chimney went up through the rock, and had been the most difficult part of their undertaking. They had to work it much wider than was necessary for the smoke, and then to reduce its capacity with stone and lime. Now and then it smoked, but peat-smoke is sweet.

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