

man of humble birth and position, being only a foreman in one of the great woollen mills, but a man of fine mind, and possessing poetical gifts of no mean order; and, moreover, a gentle, almost a Christlike soul, beloved by all who came within touch of his benign influence. For many fitting reasons he had been chosen above those of high birth and standing to propose "The Immortal Memory of Burns." He had done so in words which would be long remembered by those privileged to hear them. It seemed to the most discriminating among those present that never had so just and accurate an estimate of the poet's character been given, or one more humanly sympathetic. The errors and faults of his life, so largely a matter of temperament, were not glossed over, but weighed and judged by a delicate perception, an exquisite clearness, and rugged tenderness which made a powerful impression on all present. They felt inclined to make much of him, and to pour unstinted praise on his achievement; but honest John Fletcher was a modest man, possessing in a very high degree the reticence of his nationality, and when his task was done he slipped away before the proceedings were half over, anxious to hear the verdict which was of more account to him than the praise of lords and judges and others in high places of the earth.

The little woman who had seen him rise, and, accepting the signal, had herself slipped out to meet him at the door, clasped her two hands proudly on his arm, and looked up with adoring eyes into his face.

"Hoo did I dae, Mary?" he asked with a furtive touch of anxiety. "I was terrible nervous: the words were like to choke me."

"Oh, my man, it was grand! I was like to greet.

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