

CHAPTER IV.

"Then here's to ilka cannie Scot,
' mony gude broths he boils his pot,
' rare hotch-potch beats a' th' lot,
It smells and smacks sae brawly.
For there's carrots intil't, and neeps intil't,
There's peas and beans and beets intil't,
And hearty halesome meats intil't,
That steek the kyte sae brawly."

—*Old Ballad.*

AT table Jamie adroitly turned the conversation mineralogicalwards, and a learned dissertation on Tertiary, Carboniferous and Eozoic formations, on Laurentian and Huronian systems, on crystalline rocks, on magnetite, hematite, apatite, mica schist, and conglomerates ensued. All of it was not clearly intelligible to the listeners, but much native shrewdness gave Jamie and Douglas a good idea of the general drift, and ere long they were able to give some valuable leads as to conditions in their section. Margaret and Jean listened without comment or question as became the women folk.

But Philip Maxwell's scientific enthusiasm waned, and polite attention to his host's choice in a topic of conversation was receiving a severe strain, ere he was able to direct a few words to the ladies of the household. As Jean was not disposed to recognize a previous acquaintance, neither did he allude to the *contretemps* of last night, though he looked sincere penitence for the misadventure.

Barley brose and kail, pigs' feet, potatoes grown on new land (each year a little clearing was done), no later crop is so rich, dry and "mealy," and by-and-bye bannocks and maple syrup, from pure Canadian sap, with its subtle suggestion of ferns