

the guineas as they were than stowed away in his boots.

"Sometimes on the road home," he used to say, "I ran my head on a tree or splashed into a bog, for it's sair work to keep your een on twelve buttons when they're all in different places. Lads, I watched them as if they were living things."

William and I crossed from the drain edge to the hill, where the next scene in the drama was played. The hill is public ground to the north of Thrums, separated from it by the cemetery and a few fields. So steep is the descent that a heavy stone pushed from the south side of the hill-dyke might crash two minutes afterwards against the back walls of Tillyloss. The view from the hill is among the most extensive in Scotland, and it also exposes some dilapidated courts in Thrums that are difficult to find when you are within a few feet of them. Fifty years ago the hill was nearly covered with whins, and it is half hidden in them still, despite the life-work of D. Fittis.

For some reason that I probably never knew, we always called him D. Fittis, but tradition