

when he recollected me. Fumbling in his pocket, he picked out a coin and put it into my hand, and the door closed. At the first lamp I looked at it; sure enough, he had given me a sixpence. I was overjoyed, and I said to myself, I can leave for Ayrshire now. I wakened early next morning and began my preparations. I got speldrins and seones, tying them in the silk handkerchief mother wore round her neck on Sundays. That and her bible was all I had of her belongings. Where the rest had gone, a number of pawn tickets told. I was in a hurry to be off and telling the woman I was going to try the country I bade her goodbye. She said, God help you, poor boy, and kissed my cheek. The bells at the Cross were chiming out, The blue bells of Scotland, when I turned the corner at the Saltmarket.

It was a beautiful spring-day and when I had cleared the city and got right into the country everything was so fresh and pleasant that I could have shouted with joy. The hedges were bursting into bloom, the grass was dotted with daisies, and from the fields of braird rose larks and other birds, which sang as if they rejoiced with me. I wondered why people should stay in the city when the country was so much better. It had one draw-back, the country-road was not as smooth as the pavement. There was a cut in my left foot from stepping on a bit of glass, and the dust and grit of the road got into it and gave me some pain. I must have walked for three hours when I came to a burn that crossed the road. I sat on a stone and bathed my foot,