

derstand how tedious the passage of time appears to young hearts upon the rack. At last, at last, however, the looked-for paper arrived. The father sat in his chair with an air of fathomless imperturbability; the mother affected a special interest in a letter or two that had come by the same mail; a younger brother, in whom the spirit of mischief had been less repressed than in the older ones, snatched the paper and darted with it under the sofa. Finally it was recovered and spread out upon the table. Some four or five pairs of eyes were fixed upon the columns. There was a big heading, "Matriculation Results," then a sub-heading, "Passed. (In alphabetical order.)" From the letter A downwards the glances of the four or five pairs of eyes followed swiftly until in the middle of the column they all paused. A shout went up, "McCheyne," and the shrill voice of eight-year-old Donald was heard, "Oh, Fergie, ye'r passed!" There was a slight movement of the father's rugged face, and a sound as of the clearing of the throat. The mother dropped the letter, and gazed upon her son with glistening eyes. Then the four or five pairs of eyes were again fixed upon the paper. There were other sub-headings—the subjects, and under each the names of the candidates in order of merit. Wild became the excitement sparkling in those four or five pairs of eyes when they discovered that, out of nine subjects in all, Fergus was at the top of the list in four, in the first class in three more, and twice in the second, his name never appearing in the third class. And the excitement came to its height when, in the summing up of the results, he was at the head of the whole class.