

door an' tak the near road thro' the garden."

For once in my life I had sufficient of Jamie, and yet a curious loneliness came over me as his shambling figure disappeared among the bushes, covered with snow, and I turned to re-enter the house. It was a comfort, however, to know that some one was beneath the same roof, and I was tempted to go to the kitchen and make some excuse for a talk with Jess. But she would be certain to bring a lamp—she was moving about as if getting it ready—and so I turned into my study and sat down by the fire. At this point it is necessary to be tiresome and to describe the plan of the Cottage. It stood on a height above the Tochtty, in a solitary place with pinewoods behind and on the two sides, and a marvellous view of the setting sun from the front windows. On one side of the front door was the room I used as a study, and on the other the dining-room, where I once entertained potentates, but I can't go into that just now. A little lobby terminated in a door which shut off a back wing containing the kitchen, and, beyond it, a scullery as well as a dreary compartment intended for a servants' bed-room. The stairs started at the study door, and on the upper floor were four bedrooms; the largest over the study was kept for guests; my housekeeper used one of the small ones above the dining-room, and my own room and dressing-room were above the kitchen and scullery. The house had lain empty for some years before I came in search of quietness to Drumtochty, and who the former tenants were was a mystery.

"Man an' wife," Jamie once explained, "sae far as we kent, but what he did, or what for they cam' here nobody cud tell. Bell Baxter's mother gaid in the mornin' and did their wark for them and left in the forenoon. His wife died sudden, and he took her awa' to England and never cam' back. A'm thinkin' they did na gree ower well."

Jamie's weird story, true or untrue, coming on the back of the conversation at the lodge had affected my nerves, and I was conscious of a distinct wish that Jess would come with rural gossip and the lamp. What was she about now? She knew I was in darkness, and there had been time to trim twenty lamps. So I rang the bell vigorously with a suggestion of impatience, but with a curious misgiving. Was Jess really in the house, or had we imagined her movements? No opening door in the lobby, no sound in the kitchen. It shows how one is deceived by fancies, but just to make sure—

"Jess" from the study door, "Jess, are you there?" No answer.

Had often done the same thing before—bad habit of shouting orders instead of ringing—but never noticed how unpleasant is the sound of a voice in an empty house; quite gruesome. Might go into kitchen and make certain she had not come back, but it would be absurd, for I could be heard in the stable. Besides, what good was there in a man rambling through the house? Very likely the lamp was lying ready, and I went to the lobby door and hesitated. Why? Liked to sit in the dark? No, not that evening. Did not want to work? It happened that an article was overdue and the editor had allowed himself to write evil words. An unaccountable dislike to go into the kitchen seized me, and I went back to the big chair by the study fire. The black and

tan, who had been very restless all evening, jumped upon my knee and licked my hand as if grateful for protection, although not a dog usually carried by sentiment. The house was perfectly still and the fire was soothing and I fell asleep.

I could not have slept more than a few minutes when I was awakened by a terrific crash evidently in the kitchen. The noise was unmistakable, the fall of tin dishes on the floor, and I at once jumped to a conclusion. For some months a number of suspicious characters had been taking refuge in the district under pretence of working in our quarry, and we had been warned to be careful. For the first time in the history of the Glen doors were locked and windows bolted. Dr. Davidson was actually stopped on the road after dark and asked for the time, in a menacing tone, by a stranger who was, however, so awed by the minister's manner that he disappeared into a field, and Mrs. Macfadyen, a woman not given to hysteria, came into Hillocks' breathless, one Friday evening, because footsteps had dogged her through the pine woods. We were, in short, prepared for a burglary that would raise us to the privileges of town life, and, in the supposed absence of its inmates, the Cottage had been plainly selected for a first experiment. Burglars are understood to be unpleasant persons, ours were said to be also murderous, and without being afraid, one may have a becoming modesty about his skill in single combat, but I was conscious of a distinct sense of relief. One had at least escaped from an atmosphere of horror and now it was merely the question of a scrimmage. Ought I to lie quiet till the intruders came along the lobby, and then meet them with polite words at the study door? "This is quite an unexpected pleasure. Will you come into the study, take care of the table," that kind of thing? Or had I better dash down the passage noisily, and pull open the door amid a fit of coughing to find that the visitors had naturally departed through the kitchen window? The latter course commended itself to me, mainly on charitable grounds. No one wishes to put his fellow man to shame nor leave him without a way of escape; it is in such circumstances that misguided men grow hard, and do things they (as well as other people) must regret. No, the poor fellows, however unfortunate may have been their intentions, will have a timely warning. I suggested to Jerry that he might begin by expressing himself, but he would not move from the chair in which he was now crouching, and yet a more offensive dog for his size, or apart from it, competent judges had never seen. Much, however, can be done in passing a hat-stand if you happen to collide with it, and the upsetting of a bundle of sticks is fairly audible. Fumbling with the lock of the kitchen door gave one chance more, and when I burst in with a mighty show of bravery it was not surprising to find the kitchen empty. But where had they gone? The window was closed and bolted, the back door was locked, and through the scullery door I could see no one was concealed among the pans. Perhaps they had taken refuge—no, the little room was as dreary as usual. What about the crash? The covers hung in a row, polished and bright, and a meat-jack stood with unimpeachable respectability in a corner. There was nothing to account for that clatter of falling dishes—or for the footsteps before. How sudden and irresist-

ible is a panic and—accelerating! Would it be three seconds between the fireplace of the kitchen and the fireplace of the study, including stumbling over the sticks and locking the study door? There could be no person in that kitchen, for the firelight showed every corner—but one felt as if he were in danger—in fact going to be crushed—what nonsense! First time I ever saw the perspiration fall from my forehead, and my hand is shaking. How ghostly is the light from the snow; darkness would be better. Why did I not bring the lamp with me? I would not go for it now though one gave me—disgraceful cowardice! I'll draw the curtain at any rate—if I didn't think that was a face looking in—this is most humiliating. Now that's better—and more coals—lie down Jerry, and don't whine. No, I did not fall asleep again, and I was not dreaming. From first to last I remember every movement.

It began in the kitchen as of one pacing noiselessly back and forwards. Then it opened the intermediate door and came to the foot of the stairs. For a minute there was perfect silence, and then Jerry lifted up his nose and howled. The step went up-stairs, and went to the housekeeper's room. After a few minutes it came along the landing dragging something, and I heard it over my head in the dig guest room.

Whatever was being done—it's the bed being pulled across the floor—that's bed clothes falling on the floor—a cupboard is opened—the blinds are pulled down—not crying, only a soft, pleading wail—could one get through the window and bolt for Milton? Too late, the step comes down again—if I had the spirit of a man I would fling the door open and solve the mystery. Nothing; but I saw the lobby door close of its own accord, or—not another sound till the back door was unlocked and the kitchen fire vigorously poked.

"Yes, Jess, I was wearying for the lamp; but the roads are heavy, and it must be four miles to Barbara's; on the writing-table, please, I wish to make some notes."

"No, I know it was not likely you would come in and go out without lighting the lamp. It was Jerry perhaps rambling about. He's been restless all evening; you have heard noises too—I dare say. Those old houses do creak, and I fancy I've noticed the sound myself. That's how silly people come to believe in ghosts."

Then Jess went her evening round from room to room, but when she visited that room I heard an exclamation, and went up-stairs quickly.

The bed was striped of blankets, which lay in a heap near the door. The mattress was covered with a sheet, and another sheet was spread over the whole bed from its foot to the top of a pillow which had replaced the bolster. The ends of this upper sheet hung over the sides of the bed. There was a distinct indentation on the pillow and a fainter one down the middle of the bed as if—

Jess was a matter-of-fact woman and not easily disturbed, but the suggestion was enough to shake any one, and I took my resolution swiftly. Ghosts were bad enough, but this might be only a solitary visitation, and I could not afford to lose such a housekeeper.

"You may well be horrified, but I heard you say once no man could make up a bed. Yes, I tried my hand to pass the time before it grew dark—got sheets out of the cupboard you see—but it wouldn't do—sorry for the mess I've made."

But it was not I that laid out that bed for the dead. Nor have I any doubt a footstep from the unseen paced the Cottage that evening.—*Good Cheer.*

Our Young Folks.

THE REASON.

When Minnie and Mamie are both at play,
Everything runs in the smoothest way;
Each dear little face is so sunny and sweet
To watch them together is surely a treat.

They never quarrel and disagree,
Nor snatch the playthings, nor come to me
With pitiful stories, as Jennie and Sue
When they play together are sure to do.

I wondered what the reason could be,
Since they all are sweet little girls, you see,
So I called them up and the case made plain,
And asked if they could the riddle explain.

And Minnie looked puzzled, and shook her head,
But our wise little Mamie quickly said,
With a wee, droll smile; "I think it must be
"Cause I let Minnie, and Minnie let me!"

—Exchange.

NEW FRUITS FROM LABRADOR.

In spite of latitude and Arctic current Labrador is the home of much that is delicious in the berry world. Three varieties of blueberries, huckleberries, wild red currents, having a pungent, aromatic flavor, unequalled by the cultivated varieties, marshberries, raspberries, tiny white capillaire tea-berries, with a flavor like some rare perfume, and having just a faint suggestion of wintergreen; squash berries, pear berries and curlew berries, the latter not so grateful as the others, but a prime favorite with the Esquimaux, who prefer it to almost any other; and lastly, the typical Labrador fruit, which, excepting a few scattering plants in Canada and Newfoundland, is found nowhere outside of the peninsula—the gorgeous bake apple. These cover the entire coast, from the St. Lawrence to Ungava. Their beautiful geranium-like leaves struggle with the reindeer moss upon the islands, carpet alike the low valleys and the highest hilltops, and even peep from banks of everlasting snow. Only one berry grows upon each plant, but this one makes a most delicious mouthful. It is the size and form of a large dewberry, but the color is a bright crimson, half-ripe, and a golden yellow at maturity. Its taste is sweetly acid, it is exceedingly juicy, and so delicate that it might be thought impossible to preserve it.—*Outing.*

One day a large black ant and a small red one had a battle. They hugged and bite each other fiercely. The red one gnawed a black feeler, while the black one pulled off a red leg. Another red ant coming along, thought that his brother, being much the smaller, needed help; so he sprang on the black ant's back and commenced chewing his neck. Soon the black head tumbled off in the dirt, and the two red brothers went home to bind up their bruises.

On the motion of Principal Rainy, Edinburgh Presbytery, unanimously agreed to send a cablegram to the Moderator of the American Presbyterian Church, expressing the hope that "everything consistent with the will of Christ will be done on both sides to secure a worthy and peaceful settlement of the Venezuela boundary dispute." Dr. Russell Booth has sent a cordial reply.

If wicked men could not endure Christ's presence on earth, how could they hope to endure His presence in heaven? Why should men wish to go to heaven who do not wish to have heaven upon earth?