

name of the Good Being now, what did you on your face? I did not know one bit of you, and you before with such a noble whisker!"

"*Coma leat sin!*—Never mind that, just man!" said Æneas, also in the Gaelic. "What am I but looking for two rangers? Didst thou by chance see any sight of my scholars and they a-wandering?"

The Muileach, as they called him from the isle of Mull he came from, was Drimdorran's man, and had learned in that employ to be discreet in seeing anything. He shook his head, a hand about the candle for the draughts, and said: "I have put no eye on them since dinner, Master Æneas"—but there he stopped, being friendly with the tutor, threw a glance across his shoulder to be sure they were alone, gave a pull at his nose and whispered in the loof of his hand, "It might be them, when I think of it, I saw at the mouth of evening down beside the river."

Some dash of the conspirator, a twinkle in his eye, annoyed the tutor. "So?" said he shortly; "I'll take a turn that road and maybe come on them," and he walked out at the porch into the darkness.

It was little more than a step to the clean, cool night from the celery-scented lobby of Drimdorran House, but every step in life has its own particular fate attending it, and Æneas Macmaster, though he could not guess it, gave a twist to his seeming destiny on the moment he had crossed the threshold.

He was fairly launched upon the great adventure of his life.

Drimdorran House, with two or three hundred years of weather in its bones, stood on the slope that rose to the north above the river. Immediately about it lay its garden, sheltered from the east by clumps of high-grown firs and a belt of holly round them. From the windows of the house its owner, at a glance, could see his whole estate—not great, but snug and compact, tucked in a