

and torture poor misguided girls who have the courage of the faith that's in them. The real blame lies on the heads of those who've *driven* us to extremes."

"That sounds very fine, Miss O'Neill, but I'm afraid it won't hold water," Macnair put in quietly from the other boat. "It has been the standing excuse of fanatics and—dare I add?—criminals all down the ages. Your latest forms of argument will simply harden and justify opposition to a cause that is not without certain elements of justice and right."

His pleasant voice had the clear, leisured enunciation of the scholar, a quality peculiarly exasperating to the red-hot enthusiast whose thoughts are, in the main, emotions intellectually expressed. "Justice and right indeed!" Miss O'Neill fairly hurled the words at him. "That's all we're asking, isn't it? And precisely what we'll never be getting under a man-made Government and man-made laws."

Macnair smiled and shrugged his shoulders. He had no mind to let argument and recrimination desecrate the peace and glowing beauty of a Highland summer evening; with practised ease he slid into the calmer waters of generalisation, as much in the hope of weaning Lady Forsyth from troubled thoughts as for the pleasure of expressing his own.

"The truth is," he said, resting on his oars, while the boats drifted into a luminous bay, "every age, like every country, has its moral microbe; and the microbe of this one is 'Down with everything'; 'Can't; won't; shan't; don't; Pass it along the line,' that's about the tune of it, in all ranks. Kipling may or may not be a classic poet, but his 'Commisariat Camels' put the present-day spirit into a nutshell. For nearly a hundred years the world has been fed on a steady diet of revolt; and now we have the climax, distaste for duties and clamour for rights.