

"Its no that I'd tak th' lee off ony mon mysel," Sandy is saying, "an' happen my fist wad be readier'n my tongue to tell't."

"Deed an' that same fist wad tak as gude care o' ony man's honor as a pistol-ball could," chuckled Jamie, in gleeful remembrance of some "settlements" in days of auld lang syne. "Aye," he continued, "an' no need for a crowner to tak tent o't neither."

"That's the ke-nei o' th' nut, Jamie—the need for th' crowner. Is there no t' be room for a mon till he's kilt someone else? An' for why? To fill Heeven wi' those fittest tae gang? Lang before we cam frae Auld Scotia I'll aye noticed it'll not be always the mon wha's richt wha leaved t' tell th' why o't."

"I've minded that mysel'," said Jamie, "an' I've whiles wonnered at. We hae need o' gude people doon here, amang's a'."

"It's the wiles o' th' deevil, Jamie, an' th' honor that taks th' killin' o' ither men t' preserve 't, is ain o' his geefts. A pickle chesteesment 's aiblins gude fer ae body, an' there be words said in haste that nae mon 'll thole wi'out a blow; but when 'tis dune an' ower, ye'll can gie'in your han', an' mony a gude turn ae may do th' ither a' your lives aifter. But tae rid a mon aff th' face o' th' airth because ye'll want his hoose or his gear (or happen the gudewife hersel), sal, mon, Dauvit himsel found th' Laird 'd no staun that."

"Aye," said Jamie, "an sin He's gie's th' pooer, He'll expect us tae warstle wi' th' enemy an' destroy sic plans. We can doo't noo, as yon did in th' beginnin' o't, th' evil o' keepin' men's bodies in bondage."

"Yon did excel't that, Jamie," said Sandy,