

## FRIENDLY GREETINGS.

an' Colin struck yin o' them on the head wi' a hammer he had in his han'; and the man fell down dead; an' they had ta'en Colin up for murder, an' he was i' the Falkirk jail.

"I didna scream when they tellt me, an' I didna faint, but I just up an' said, 'Then I maun awa' to him.' They tried to persuade me to stay, for I just tottered like a two-year-auld bairn whan I tried to walk alane; but I wad gang, sae Dugal he gaed wi' me, an' we set aff that nicht.

"I fand him i' the prison; but I canna speak o' thae days. He was unco sorry, an' I think God had forgien him though the law couldna. They didna hang him, for he had had nae intent to murder; but he was condemned to transportation for life. I wad hae married him then, an' gane wi' him to the world's end, for I lo'ed him, lassie, but the authorities wadna allow it. I wad hae gane to the place he was sent to, my lane, just to be near him an' see his face sometimes, though I couldna speak to him, and could only see him workin' in irons. But faither wadna let me, an' he wadna pay my passage, an' I had nae siller.

"That was hoo I cam' to be schulemistress at Braeclench, that I nicht mak' money to gang oot to Van Diemen's Land. I counted that in five years I'd have saved enouch to pay my way oot, an' whan I was once there I'd try to get into service; but I didna think muckle o' what was to be dune after I got there—a' my thoct was hoo I was to mak' money enouch to go. Weel, I worked on as best I could, an' stinted mysel' as muckle as I daured; an' I had been here four years, an' had a' the money saved but twa pund, whan ae day the post brocht me a letter. It wasna aften I got letters, an' this yin had a foreign post-mark, an' a sort o' feelin' cam' ower me whan I took it i' my han', as if I kent there was bad news in't; an' whan I opened it, it was frae the jailer's wife oot yonder, an' Colin was deed.

"It was a beautiful letter. It tellt hoo hard he had worked, an' hoo he had been just a pattern to the ither convicts, an' made a' the folk about the jail his freens, an' hoo he had ta'en the fever they ha' there, an' the ledly that wrote had nursed him, an' a' the convicts had dune a' they could for him for they a' lo'ed Colin—an' hoo, whan he was delirious wi' the fever, he was aye speaking about Mary M'Graw, an' the bonny burnie at the foot o' Ben Nevis.

"An' the vera day afore he deed he had gi'en the ledly that wrote the address o' my faither's farm (he didna ken I was at Braeclench, for I had nae means o' writin' to him, or he to me), an' axed her to write to me an' tell me that he deed blessin' me, an' that he hoped the Lord had forgien him for His dear Son's sake, an' that we wad meet by-an'-by in heaven; an' he tellt her to send me his half o' the sixpence we had broken thegither, on the muckle stane aside the burn, and to tell me he had aye worn it roun' his neck since then.

"Here it is," said the schoolmistress, pulling out a black string which always hung round her neck and was hidden in her bosom. "Here it is, his half and mine; I hae worn them thegither, wakin' an' sleepin', aye since then."

She kissed the little relie, big tears rolling down her face. In a few minutes she recovered herself, and replacing the broken sixpence in her bosom, and drying her eyes, she said:

"I'm ashamed o' mysel', lassie, to cry this way; but I've no tellt that story for twenty years, an' I wadna hae tellt it noo, but I thoct it nicht help ye to thole yer ain grief, gin ye kent that ither folk had had their troubles too; an' maybe ye wadna hae believed what I wanted to say to ye gin ye hadna kent that I knew what the sorrow was.

"Whan I kent that Colin was deed, I didna fa' sick, for my body was strang, but mony and mony's the time, God forgie me! that I prayed I nicht fa' sick an' dee, for that was the only way I could see Colin again; an' I was a foolish lassie then, an' cared nair to see him nor to do God's wark i' the world. But God was ower kind to gie me my foolish will. I gaed about the schule as usual, an' got through the day's wark somehow, but it just seemed as if the life had been ta'en oot o' me an' I were naethin' but a walkin' machine. I dinna ken hoo I lived through that time, but God was very gude to me, an' by-an'-by He began to send comfortin' thochts into my heart, that Colin was safe, an' gin I could just be brave an' true too I wad meet him by-an'-by, an' it wadna be sae very lang after a'. An' I began to think hoo Jesus had come into this world, no' for His ain pleasure, but for ither folk; an' to understand what God wanted to teach me, that Jesus' disciples maun be like Him in that; that there lives werena gi'en them for their ain pleasure, but to do God's wark i' the world, an' to help their neebors. An' syne a great peace cam' into my heart, an' I kent that God wad gie me happiness too, though maybe no' i' this world. Oh, Jessie, lassie, the lesson was worth the pain o' the learnin'; an' I think maybe it's just that the Lord wants to teach you too. Will ye try to learu it, Jessie? An' mind ye've aye the Lord Himsel' to gang to whan yer ain heart's sair; an' nane can comfort like Him; an' I think He has a warmer corner in His heart for the pair lambs that hae naebody but Himsel' to comfort them than for any ither. An' believe me, Jessie, ye'll fin' there's naethin' soothes the pain i' yer ain heart like tryin' to heal ither folks'. Will ye try, lassie?"

"Ay, I'll try," said the girl earnestly. "Thank ye, Miss M'Graw. I'll be gain' hame noo, or mither 'll be anxious."

She drew her shawl over her head, and stepped out into the night; but there was a resolute look in her swollen eyes, as she said good-night, that promised well for Jessie Glendinning's future.

From a little book recently published by the Religious Tract Society, entitled "Miss M'Graw."