

feel naethin', I tell ye, except, aiblins, a mischance to his meeserable dog."

When the two met, as they often must, it was always M'Adam's endeavor to betray his enemy into an unworthy expression of feeling. But James Moore, sorely tried as he often was, never gave way.

He met the little man's sneers with a quelling silence, looking down on his asp-tongued antagonist with such a contempt flashing from his blue-gray eyes as hurt his adversary more than words.

Only once was he spurred into reply. It was in the tap-room of the Dalesman's Daughter on the occasion of the big spring fair in Grammoach-town, when there was a goodly gathering of farmers and their dogs in the room.

M'Adam was standing at the fireplace with Red Wull at his side.

"It's a noble pairt ye play, James Moore," he cried loudly across the room, "settin' son against father, and dividin' hoose against hoose. It's worthy o' ye wi' yer churchgoin', and yer psalm-singin', and yer godliness."

The Master looked up from the far end of the room.

"Happen ye're not aware, M'Adam," he said sternly, "that, an' it had not bin for me, David'd ha' left you years ago—and 'twould nob'but ha' served ye right, I'm thinkin'."

The little man was beaten on his own ground, so he changed front.

"Dinna shout so, man—I have ears to hear. Forbye ye irritate Wullie."

The Tailless Tyke, indeed, had advanced from the fireplace, and now stood, huge and hideous, in the very centre of the room. There was distant thunder in his throat, a threat upon his face, a challenge in every wrinkle. And the Gray Dog stole gladly out from behind his master to take up the gage of battle.

Straightway there was silence; tongues ceased to wag, tankards to clink. Every man and every dog was quietly gathering about those two central figures. Not one of them all but had his score to wipe off against the Tailless Tyke; not one of them but was burning to join in, the battle once begun. And the two gladiators stood looking past one another, muzzle to muzzle, each with a tiny flash of teeth glinting between his lips.

But the fight was not to be; for the twentieth time the Master intervened.

"Bob, lad, coom in!" he called, and, bending, grasped his favorite by the neck.

M'Adam laughed softly.

"Wullie, Wullie, to me!" he cried. "The look o' you's enough for that gentleman."

"If they get fightin' it'll no be Bob here I'll hit, I warn ye," M'Adam said the Master grimly.

"Gin ye sae muckle as touched Wullie d'ye ken what I'd do, James Moore?" asked the little man very smoothly.

"Yes—sweer," the other replied, and strode out of the room amid a roar of derisive laughter at M'Adam's expense.

Owd Bob had now attained wellnigh the perfection of his art. Parson Leggy declared roundly that his like had not been seen since the days of Rex son of Rally. Among the Dalesmen he was a heroic favorite, his prowess and gentle ways winning him friends on every hand. But the point that told most heavily for him was that in all things he was the very antithesis of Red Wull.

Barely a man in the country-side but owed that ferocious savage a grudge; not a man of them all who dared pay it. Once Long Kirby, full of beer and valor, tried to settle his account. Coming on M'Adam and Red Wull as he was driving into Grammoach-town, he leant over and with his thong dealt the dog a terrible sword-like slash that raised an angry ridge of red from hip to shoulder; and was twenty yards down the road before the little man's shrill curse reached his ear, drowned in a hideous bellow.

He stood up and lashed the colt, who, quick on his legs for a young un, soon settled to his gallop. But, glancing over his shoulder, he saw a hounding form behind, catching him as though he were walking. His face turned sickly white; he screamed; he flogged; he looked back. Right beneath the tail-board was the red devil in the dust; while racing a furlong behind on the turnpike road was the mad figure of M'Adam.

The smith struck back and flogged forward. It was of no avail. With a tiger-like bound the murderous brute leapt on the flying trap. At the shock

of that great body the colt was thrown violently on his side; Kirby was tossed over the hedge; and Red Wull pinned beneath the debris.

M'Adam had time to rush up and save a tragedy.

"I've a mind to knife ye, Kirby," he panted, as he bandaged the smith's broken head.

After that you may be sure the Dalesmen preferred to swallow insults rather than to risk their lives; and their impotence only served to fan their hatred to white heat.

The working methods of the antagonists were as contrasted as their appearances. In a word, the one compelled where the other coaxed.

His enemies said the Tailless Tyke was rough; not even Tammas denied he was ready. His brain was as big as his body, and he used them both to some purpose. "As quick as a cat, with the heart of a lion and the temper of Nick's self," was Parson Leggy's description.

What determination could effect, that could Red Wull; but achievement by inaction—supremest of all strategies—was not for him. In matters of the subtlest handling, where to act anything except indifference was to lose, with sheep restless, fearful forebodings hymned to them by the wind, panic hovering unseen above them, when an ill-considered movement spelt catastrophe—then was Owd Bob o' Kenmuir incomparable.

Men still tell how, when the squire's new thrashing-machine ran amuck in Grammoach-town, and for some minutes the market square was a turbulent sea of blaspheming men, yelping dogs, and stampeding sheep, only one flock stood calm as a mill-pond by the bull-ring, watching the riot with almost indifference.

And in front, sitting between them and the storm, was a quiet gray dog, his mouth stretched in a capacious yawn: to yawn was to win, and he won. When the worst of the uproar was over, many a glance of triumph was shot first at that one still pack, and then at M'Adam, as he waded through the disorder of huddling sheep.

"And wheer's your Wullie noo?" asked Tupper scornfully.

"Weel," the little man answered with a quiet smile, "at this minute he's killin' your Rasper doon by the pump." Which was indeed the case; for big blue Rasper had interfered with the great dog in the performance of his duty, and suffered accordingly.

Spring passed into summer; and the excitement as to the event of the approaching Trials, when at length the rivals would be pitted against one another, reached such a height as old Jonas Maddox, the octogenarian, could hardly recall.

Down in the Sylvester Arms there was almost nightly a conflict between M'Adam and Tammas Thornton, spokesman of the Dalesmen. Many a long-drawn bout of words had the two anent the respective merits and Cup chances of red and gray. In these duels Tammas was usually worsted. His temper would get the better of his discretion; and the cynical debater would be lost in the hot-tongued partisan.

During these encounters the others would, as a rule, maintain a rigid silence. Only when their champion was being beaten, and it was time for strength of voice to vanquish strength of argument, they joined in right lustily and roared the little man down, for all the world like the gentlemen who rule the Empire at Westminster.

Tammas was an easy subject for M'Adam to draw, but David was an easier. Insults directed at himself the boy bore with a stolidity born of long use. But a poisonous dart shot against his friends at Kenmuir never failed to achieve its object. And the little man evinced an amazing talent for the concoction of deft lies respecting James Moore.

"I'm hearin'," said he, one evening, sitting in the kitchen, sucking his twig; "I'm hearin' James Moore is gaein' to git married agin."

"Ye're hearin' lies—or mair-like tellin' 'em," David answered shortly. For he treated his father now with contemptuous indifference.

"Seven manths sin' his wife died," the little man continued meditatively. "Weel, I'm on'y 'stonished he's waited sae lang. Ain buried, anither come on—that's James Moore."

David burst angrily out of the room.

"Gaein' to ask him if it's true?" called his father after him. "Gude luck to ye—and him."

David had now a new interest at Kenmuir. In Maggie he found an endless source of study. On the death of her mother the girl had taken up the reins of government at Kenmuir; and gallantly she played her part, whether in tenderly mothering the baby, wee Anne, or in the sterner matters of household work. She did her duty, young though she was, with a surprising, old-fashioned womanliness that won many a smile of approval from her father, and caused David's eyes to open with astonishment.

And he soon discovered that Maggie, mistress of Kenmuir, was another person from his erstwhile playfellow and servant.

The happy days when might ruled right were gone, never to be recalled. David often regretted them, especially when in a conflict of tongues, Maggie, with her quick answers and teasing eyes, was driving him sulky and vanquished from the field. The two were perpetually squabbling now. In the good old days, he remembered bitterly, squabbles between them were unknown. He had never permitted them; any attempt at independent thought or action was as sternly quelled as in the Middle Ages. She must follow where he led on—"Ma word!"

Now she was mistress where he had been master; hers was to command, his to obey. In consequence they were perpetually at war. And yet he would sit for hours in the kitchen and watch her, as she went about her business, with solemn, interested eyes, half of admiration, half of amusement. In the end Maggie always turned on him with a little laugh touched with irritation.

"Hant' ye got nothin' better'n that to do, nor lookin' at me?" she asked one Saturday about a month before Cup Day.

"No, I hant," the pert fellow rejoined.

"Then I wish ye had. It mak's me fair jumpety ye watchin' me so like ony cat a mouse."

"Niver ye fash ye'sel' account o' me, ma wench," he answered calmly.

"Ye wench, indeed!" she cried, tossing her head.

"Ay, or will be," he muttered.

"What's that?" she cried, springing round, a flush of color on her face.

"Nowt, my dear. Ye'll know so soon as I want ye to, ye may be sure, and no sooner."

The girl resumed her baking, half angry, half suspicious.

"I dunno' what ye mean, Mr. M'Adam," she said.

"Don't ye, Mrs. M'—"

The rest was lost in the crash of a falling plate; whereat David laughed quietly, and asked if he should help pick up the bits.

On the same evening at the Sylvester Arms an announcement was made that knocked the breath out of its hearers.

In the debate that night on the fast-approaching Dale Trials and the relative abilities of red and gray, M'Adam on the one side, and Tammas, backed by Long Kirby and the rest, on the other, had cudgelled each other with more than usual vigor. The controversy rose to fever-heat; abuse succeeded argument; and the little man again and again was hooted into silence.

"It's easy laffin'," he cried at last, "but ye'll laff t'other side o' yer ugly faces on Cup Day."

"Will ye, indeed? Us'll see," came the derisive chorus.

"We'll whip ye till ye're deaf, dumb, and blind, Wullie and I."

"Ye'll not!"

"We will!"

The voices were rising like the east wind in March.

"Ye'll not, and for a very good reason, too," asseverated Tammas loudly.

"Gie us yer reason, ye muckle liar," cried the little man, turning on him.

"Becos—" began Jim Mason, and stopped to rub his nose.

"Ye 'old ye' noise, Jim," recommended Rob Sanderson.

"Becos—" it was Tammas this time who paused.

"Git on wi' it, ye stammerin' stirk!" cried M'Adam. "Why?"

"Becos—Owd Bob'll not rin."

Tammas sat back in his chair. "What!" screamed the little man, thrusting forward.

"What's that!" yelled Long Kirby, leaping to his feet.

"Mon, say it agin!" shouted Rob.

"What's owd addled egg tellin'?" cried Liz Burton.

"Dang his 'ead for him!" shouts Tupper.

"Fill his eye!" says Ned Hoppin.

They jostled round the old man's chair: M'Adam in front; Jem Burton and Long Kirby leaning over his shoulder; Liz behind her father; Sanderson and Tupper tackling him on either side; while the rest peered and elbowed in the rear.

The announcement had fallen like a thunderbolt among them.

Tammas looked slowly up at the little mob of eager faces above him. Pride at the sensation caused by his news struggled in his countenance with genuine sorrow for the matter of it.

"Ay, ye may well 'earken, all on ye.' 'Tis enough to mak' the deadies listen. I says agin: We's'll no rin oor Bob for t' Cup. And ye may guess why. Baint every mon, Mr. M'Adam, as'd pit aside his chanst o' the Cup, and that 'maist a gift for him'—M'Adam's tongue was in his cheek—and it a certainty," the old man continued warmly, "oot o' respect for his wife's memory."

The news was received in utter silence. The shock of the surprise, coupled with the bitterness of the disappointment, froze the slow tongues of his listeners.

Only one small voice broke the stillness.

"Oh, the feelin' man! He should git a reduction o' rent for sic a display o' proper speerit. I'll mind Mr. Hornbut to let auld Sylvester ken o't."

Which he did, and would have got a thrashing for his pains had not Cyril Gilbraith thrown him out of the parsonage before the angry cleric could lay hands upon him.

CHAPTER X.

Red Wull Wins.

Tammas had but told the melancholy truth. Owd Bob was not to run for the Cup. And this self-denying ordinance speaks more for James Moore's love of his lost wife than many a lordly cenotaph.

To the people of the Daleland, from the Black Water to the Market-cross in Grammoach-town, the news came with the shock of a sudden blow. They had set their hearts on the Gray Dog's success; and had felt serenely confident of his victory. But the sting of the matter lay in this: that now the Tailless Tyke might well win.

M'Adam, on the other hand, was plunged into a fervor of delight at the news. For to win the Shepherds' Trophy was the goal of his ambition. David was now less than nothing to the lonely little man, Red Wull everything to him. And to have that name handed down to posterity, gallantly holding its place among these of the most famous sheep-dogs of all time, was his heart's desire.

As Cup Day drew near, the little man, his fine-drawn temperament strung to the highest pitch of nervousness, was tossed on a sea of apprehension. His hopes and fears ebbed and flowed on the tide of the moment. His moods were as uncertain as the winds in March; and there was no dependence on his humor for a unit of time. At one minute he paced up and down the kitchen, his face already flushed with the glow of victory, chanting:

"Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled!"

At the next he was down at the table, his head buried in his hands, his whole figure shaking, as he cried in choking voice: "Eh, Wullie, Wullie, they're all agin us."

David found that life with his father now was life with an unamiable hornet. Careless as he affected to be of his father's vagaries, he was tried almost to madness, and fled away at every moment to Kenmuir; for, as he told Maggie, "I'd sooner put up wi' your h'airs and h'mperences, miss, than wi' him, the venom that he be!"

At length the great day came. Fears, hopes, doubts, dismays, all dispersed in the presence of the reality.

Cup Day is always a general holiday in the Daleland, and every soul crowds over to Silverdale. Shops were shut; special