

tags on which the missing chapters and verses were indicated in script fine as the point of a needle.

Paul stood uneasily, shifting from foot to foot, uncertain how to begin.

"Well, Paul, my lad," said the minister at last, "has Cicero been too much for you, or is it the Greek?"

This he said because it was his favourite jest. He knew very well that his boy was more apt to be found out in a broad-buttocked Orraland fishing-smack hauling on a line, or curled up with a book, high in some shy wood corner warmed by the sunshine and over-rustled by the breeze. Paul would not touch his Greek and Latin books till the beginning of the next school term.

True, when Paul first reached home, the minister would appoint a day when the lad was yet fresh off the irons. The "Pilgrim's Progress," he would call it, because he wished to test his nephew's advance along the highway of letters.

It was on the tip of Paul's tongue to reveal the threatened incursion of the Lees and the treachery to which, in a moment of madness, he had promised to lend himself. But each time something seemed to seal his tongue. The faint sweetness of the little gipsy's blood glued his lips, together with the admixture of his own, while all the time his ears buzzed with the words she had made him say, "Thus we mingle our hearts' blood and are for ever and ever bound one to the other!"

He stood dizzy and confounded, till his uncle called him from his daydream by bidding him help himself from the library and be off. The minister was busy that day and could not work while his nephew—yes, even the flower of his heart, stood awkward and uncertain before him. As he always wanted a book himself, he supposed that was what Paul came for.

So Paul took from the shelves the second volume of Chambers's *Ballads of Scotland* and departed, the bitterness of a repentant Judas in his heart, but nevertheless supremely happy, because conscious of the faint sweet taste on his lips.