

And a lot of lumber wagons near the church upon the hill,  
 And a crowd of country people, Sunday-dressed and very still.  
 Now each window is pre-empted by a dozen heads or more,  
 Now the spacious pews are crowded from the pulpit to the door;  
 For with coverlet of blackness on his portly figure spread,  
 Lies the grim old country doctor, in a massive oaken bed.  
 Lies the fierce old country doctor,  
 Lies the kind old country doctor.  
 Whom the populace considered with a mingled love and dread.

Maybe half the congregation now of great or little worth,  
 Found this watcher waiting for them, when they came upon the earth,  
 This undecorated soldier of a hard unequal strife  
 Fought in many stubborn battles with the foes that sought their life.  
 In the night-time or the day-time he would rally brave and well,  
 Though the summer lark was piping, or the frozen lances fell;  
 Knowing if he won the battle, they would praise their Maker's name,  
 Knowing if he lost the battle, then the doctor was to blame.  
 'Twas the brave old virtuous doctor,  
 'Twas the good old faulty doctor,  
 'Twas the faithful country doctor fighting stoutly all the same.

When so many pined in sickness he had stood so strongly by,  
 Half the people felt a notion that the doctor couldn't die;  
 They must slowly learn the lesson how to live from day to day,  
 And have somehow lost their bearings—now this landmark is away.  
 But perhaps it still is better that his busy life is done;  
 He has seen old views and patients disappearing one by one;  
 He has learned that Death is master both of science and of art;  
 He has done his duty fairly and has acted out his part.  
 And the strong old country doctor,  
 And the weak old country doctor,  
 Is entitled to a furlough for his brain and for his heart.

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“So Drumsheugh knelt and prayed with many pauses:

“Almighty God . . . dinna be hard on Weelum MacLure, for  
 he's no been hard wi' onybody in Drumtochty. . . . Be kind tae  
 him as he's been tae us a' for forty year. . . . We're a' sinners  
 afore Thee. . . . Forgive him what he's dune wrang, an' dinna  
 cuist it up tae him. . . . Mind the fouk he's helpit . . . the  
 weemen an' bairnies . . . an' gie him a welcome hame, for he's  
 sair needin't after a' his wark. Amen.”—“*Beside the Bonnie Briar  
 Bush.*”