



IT could not possibly be as good," I said. "No book could equal 'The Bonnie Brier Bush.' And in spite of my friend's assurance that it was a worthy successor to that heart-capturing volume, I carried my book home in fear, looking long at the title page and brief dedication before turning the first leaves.

"In the Days of Auld Lang Syne;" "In Memory of My Mother." Title and dedica-

tion are simple enough. Simple, yet holding a world of tender association in their brief phrasing. They are holy conjurers, before whose touch rough speech becomes gentle, the hard heart soft as a little child's. Rare magic of memory! dear gift of words! to move us thus by their simple spell.

"The Days of Auld Lang Syne;" "In Memory of My Mother." It sounds homely, - as the Scotch folk say - and heartsome; it has a grand simplicity about it also suggestive of Drumtochty, and encouraging one to turn the opening pages - and then we need no further invitation.

Ah me! It is "The Bonnie Brier Bush" over again; - yet not again, but further revealed. We are in Drumtochty glen once more, grasping each of the strong, splendid men and women by the hand; we are spending our hours among them, and our smiles and tears are blending just as they did when we first met these dear people at their firesides and in their kirk. How good it is to be among them again! How good it is!

And now we have the advantage of auld acquaintances, and are given the privileges of such in the heart glimpses permitted us of these crusty Scotch peasants. We are admitted into the inner circle, and discover the solid gold that lies beneath the rough earthy exterior. We see the rare uprightness of stern Burnbrae, the tender loyalty of cynical Jamie Soutar, the heroism of poor Posty. We take our seats beside Drumseugh's fireside, and listen with reverence to the beautiful secret of his lifelong parsimony.

Aye, we know Drumtochty now. We have learned its cunning, so that not even Jamie Soutar can lead us astray. Every habitant of the little glen has grown dear to us; we bear with them, smile at them, love them, as they did each the other, and at last we lay them away in "their lang hame" in the kirkyard, with a tender reverence too deep for words. But as we put the book down, the glistening eyes, the smile upon our lips, the swelling of our heart, pay voiceless tribute to our dear Drumtochty friends and the author's genius.

"In the Days of Auld Lang Syne" is a worthy successor of "The Bonnie Brier

Bush," and in saying that we have said all. It is always a venture for an author to add a sequel to any book dearly loved by the public, since the latter demands not merely that the plot be sustained, but increased in interest, and that the characters be harmoniously developed. And since each reader has his own conception of what that development should be, nor is willing to abate one jot of his ideal, the author rarely succeeds in giving satisfaction.

Yet Ian Maclaren has accomplished this perfectly. The sketches in the second volume have a trifle less of humor and more of tenderness in them, perhaps. We are made to feel that the twilight shadows are gathering around these dear people of the glen; that the night is coming when they shall lie with their forefathers; a new generation shall arise, and Drumtochty - *our* Drumtochty - be known no more. But the humor is just as dry, the diplomacy just as skillful, the speech every whit as slow and circumspect, the right staunch hearts of the gude



IAN MACLAREN.  
(REV. JOHN WALSON)

folk wholly as true. The author's pen has not lost its wondrous cunning, - only he gives us a Beulah land glimpse.

Perhaps in this second series of sketches, those contained in "Drumseugh's Love Story" will be the favorites, since in them we are brought once again in touch with that finest creation in Scotch literature - "A Doctor of the Old School," and that sweet glen woman, Marget Howe.

It is the winter before the doctor dies, when "everyone knew he had begun to fail." Drumseugh lures him from stormy night rides, to take shelter at his fireside, and the confidences of these two strong, reserved men are told in words of splendid simplicity. Their reminiscences of boyhood, of trout fishing, truancy, and the after home-coming, bring them bye and bye to graver thoughts.

"We did what we sanna, Weelum, an' we feared to meet oor fathers, nae Joat; but we kent it wud be waur oot on the cauld hill, an there w as a house tae shelter 's at any rate. Weelum, a'm feared at times . . . about . . . the home-comin' "

"A dinnar wunner, Drumseugh, a m' often the sam' mase! we're baith t'nant laddies, and maybe we'll get oor parks, an' it 'ill dae us gude. But, be that as it may, we maun just risk it, an' a'm houpin' the Almighty 'ill no be waur tae us than oor mither, when the sun gaes doon and the nicht wind sweeps ower the hill."

Drumseugh's love and secret service for Marget Howe is revealed to Dr. Maclure, and later on, before the latter dies, he indirectly hints at the romance to Marget herself. Her sudden recognition of his great love, her sweet and humble surprise, and the wholesome uplifting of them both thereby, is one of the finest touches in the book.

We are shown more of Jamie Soutar, too - Jamie, the imperturbable, the cynic, the man of cunning speech; and many a laugh he wins from us until we find ourselves amid his circle of admirers, and give vent to our feelings in Drumtochty's favorite exclamation, "Sall!"

But Jamie has his love story, too, and the rusty band of crape about his hat tells of a tryst kept faithfully for over forty years.

"Put it in the fire, doctor," he said, "whar a' can see it burn; a've worn it forty-four years, but a'll no need it again, for a'm gaen' oot o' meurin' sune." When the first ray of morning light shot thro' the window, Jamie raised himself and listened. He shaded his eyes as if he were watching for some one and could not see for excess of light.

"Menie," he cried, suddenly, "a've keptit oor tryst."

When they laid him in the coffin the smile was still on his face, and he appeared a man some forty years of age.

In Burnbrae's trial we view the struggles of the loyal Scotch conscience, and in Hillock's bargaining we get an equal glimpse of the canny Scotch cunning, traits curiously contrasted, yet often found in the same individual; while in "Good News From a Far Country," "Milton's Conversion," and "A Servant Lass," we have typical Drumtochty sketches, wholesome and heart-grappling.

A last sheaf is garnered in the closing sketch, and, standing in the churchyard, we bid a farewell - a final farewell to the little Scotch glen and its people, whose friends are numbered by tens of thousands all the world over.

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Ah, we need not fear decadent literature; we need not despair for the uplifting of souls, when books such as these leap into such a passion of popularity. The heart of the world beats pure and true still.

REVIEWER.

THE DAYS OF AULD LANG SYNE. Fleming Revell Co., Toronto.

A very enjoyable recital by Miss Norma Reynolds's senior pupils was given at the Conservatory of Music on Monday evening, 18th Nov. A very large audience was attracted, which showed, by much enthusiastic applause and several recalls, its hearty appreciation of the excellent rendering of a program of choice compositions. Miss Reynolds had much cause to feel gratified at the excellent showing of her pupils.



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