

"Well, what about the business? Did you manage it all right, and hear things?"

"Yes, and I saw every one of 'em. They intend to keep together, but they are not unanimous. MacKenzie tries to lead 'em all by the nose, but he can't."

"Why not swoop down on the whole batch and have done with it?"

"It'll be better to let 'em fry in their own fat. They arranged to meet regularly once a week in the same place, to mature their plans. Let 'em do it, I say, till they think they have 'em perfect; I'll watch 'em with a cat's eye. Then we'll do the eagle business; and if we calculate right, the Governor can nab every man of 'em, put 'em in the stocks, and give us the glory."

Madge came out again to gather an armful of wood, still crooning:

'Twas a soldier lad  
That drove her mad  
When Maggie was a minnie.

"Shut up, Madge!" exclaimed Cronch, testily. "You needn't be a greater fool than you have to be."

"So I'm a fool too," she replied, with gaping eyes. "One's bad enough without t'other:

A fool's an imp without any brains,  
A madman's got too many;  
Don't lose your share, or you will be  
As big a fool as any."

"Stop, I say!"