

Some one may come! I—I—well, if you like, but you know I didn't intend to say it, for I knew you would yourself some time, and now I'm sorry I didn't wait. Oh, Mister—"

A nurse with a towel in one hand and a half-dry scalpel in the other might appear dangerous to some people, but he trusted her very fully. If the blade had been directed against his heart he would have been accessory to his own death, for, as it was, he held the whole combination in a very decided embrace.

"All right, dear. I'll go and tell your mother to-night. Call me 'Bob,' I like it better than Mister and—what is your first name?"

D. I. A.

THE HOME OF CARLYLE.

I went to Ecclefechan and worshipped at the shrine of the great Carlyle. I found a village clachan, where the "bodies" still foregathered on Saturday night, and where the goodwives still made brose and oatmeal cakes. The village lay in a valley between the famous Birrenswark and the Woodcock Air, and down the middle of the village street ran a babbling burn. Here on the west side of the street was the shrine, the arched house in which the great man was born. One could stand in the room where the great miracle had taken place. Nearby at the end of the loaning was the small stone barn where the Carlyles next lived, and the outhouse where Thomas Carlyle used to sleep with the cattle. The stone wall was still there on which he used to sit as he supped his evening brose. The ruined fireplace was there by which he doubtless used to learn his lessons.

It was pure delight to wander over the country-side and pick from the lips of the old men stories of the "Cairles" (Carlyles). "Oh, ay," said an old catter, "he minded them fine; they were a dour, strechtforrit folk. He himsel' had worked out in the fields with Jeem; Carlyle."

The old father, a latter-day Covenanter, is still remembered in the district. He was a kindly, stern man, peacable in his way, but capable of just and terrible anger. He was a mason, but when scamping came into the trade he quitted his mason's work and went into farming, for conscience sake. I have seen somewhere that Carlyle based his style very much on the way his father used to speak.

Of the mother all readers of Carlyle's life know. It is well known that she practically held the hands and tamed the heart of her wild son when he meditated an attack on modern Christianity. Carlyle used to go back every year to Scotsbrig and spend a week with her. An almost pathetic fact is that when on the borders of old age she actually learned to write in order to correspond with Thomas when at college.

There were three sons. John, the eldest, became a doctor, and made a notable translation of Dante; but otherwise he was rather ordinary, and lacked backbone. Thomas corresponded with him considerably, and did not spare to give him advice.

Thomas came second, and then James. James, according to my informant who had worked out in the fields with him, was "wild, fecht, and whiles drucken." Often was the Saturday night when he came home with a sad tale of the gig having "coupit cwer." Once on a bitter autumn day he and his son had occasion to drive to Kirtlebridge. At Kirtlebridge they visited the inn, and had a dram. It was getting late when they set off home, and they had not gone far when they began to quarrel. They stopped the horse, got out, and fought it out in an

adjacent field. The son knocked his father down, and then incontinently got into the gig and drove home. How the father got home, the legend does not say.

On the other hand, James possessed many of his famous brother's best qualities. Sham was as much a red rag to him as to Thomas. He doubtless tried to live a good life, according to his possible; he was a steady worker and good farmer, practising what his brother preached, and he thoroughly detested laziness or slipshodness in himself and others.

"Come in by, man," he once said to a mason who had been doing some work for him—rather poorly, James thought; "come in by, man, an' I'll pay ye for yer glaurin'—and gin I ever tell ye to come again, doan't ye come."

Another time he had some men in to help him with the harvesting, and things had not gone to his satisfaction. He paid the men in grim silence; but when he saw them idly loitering about, his anger flared out, and he cried, "Slant the bogs, noo, and bame wi' ye!"

This style of language, forceful and imaginative (cf. the uses of the words "glaurin'" and "slant the bogs"), makes one think that if he had had his opportunities, he might have been as great a writer as his brother.

Nor are stories about Thomas Carlyle himself lacking. There is one, possibly apocryphal, which illustrates excellently his admiration for the book of Job. When on one of his annual visits to Ecclefechan he was approached by one of the village fathers and asked to conduct the evening prayers of the family. He at first demurred, but afterwards consented. At the appointed hour he turned up. Without a word, he took down the calfskin Bible, opened it at Job 1, and, starting at the beginning, read right through to the end of the entire book. Great was the discomfiture of the village father and all his family; and it is recorded that Carlyle was afterward discovered sitting on the edge of his bed chuckling with unholy glee.

One of the most illuminating anecdotes ever told of a great man was told me by a gentleman who was native of Ecclefechan, but who is now a man of note. When a boy he once had occasion to run a message out to the farm of Crahame of Birrenswark, and when he got there he found Crahame and Thomas Carlyle sitting by the ingleside smoking their long churchwardens. He was introduced to Carlyle as a promising scholar in the village school. Carlyle took him by the hand. "Aye," he said, "I'm gled to hear ye're a guid scholar; an' I hope ye'll be a guid man, too—that's mair."

The same gentleman told me of a recollection he had of Carlyle crossing the track at Ecclefechan in a shower of rain, and in no good humor. A long greatcoat covered him from his neck to beneath his knees. A slouch hat hung around his head as if he had slept on it. Two burning eyes looked out from under the brim, and all the rest was grizzled beard and moustache. This was the dyspeptic.

Carlyle's motto was "Humilitate," and one cannot stand in the birthplace room in the arched house without conceiving its appropriateness. There is his quill pen, his tobacco-cutter, a sixpenny paper-rack, a plain bookcase, the big straw wideawake he wore, such as the harvesters wear in the fields. Up till his death he had his trousers made of Ecclefechan homespun by the Ecclefechan tailor. In London are exhibited several books of his that were bound by the shoemaker in Annan. And yet this was a man honored by Germanic orders of merit, wreaths from Emperors, by the friendship of the great Goethe, and by the offers of baronetcies and pensions and honors. In the birthroom is a note from Bismarck: