

CHAPTER V.

"The nicht was still, and o'er the hill
The moon shone on the castle wa',
The mavis sang, while dewdrops hang
Around her on the castle wa'."

—Burns.

PHemie waited decorously for Jean to go over and tell her who he was and how he happened; which Jean did ere the stranger's broad back was out of sight down the road. She told everything, from the time she left the milking-yard, after Bess, the night before.

"Ye suld hae seen him, Phemie! he gied a real scairt look when he said happen he could drive a coo; ye'd think Bess was a bear."

"'Deed," answered Phemie, at once assuming championship of the stranger at their gates, "it's like he kens naething about th' ways o' coos. Ane can see he's frae th' toun."

"Oh, he's frae th' town fast eneuch, but he kens muckle about the braes wi' it a'. The very stanes are at his tongue's end wi' their lang-like names. I'll no mind juist a' about 't, but Da 'n' Douglas are fair wild wi' 's gab about th' mines."

"Ye'll no be feart o' 'im yersel, Jean," said Phemie, just a little hurt over this first adventure unshared. "Ye clacked at 'm like ye was auld friens."

"The 's naething t' be feart ower," answered Jean in a most matter-of-fact tone, "he's ony a mon, t' be sure, an' if he kens gowd an' siller stanes i' th' earth, I ken butter an' eggs, milkin' the kye an' feedin' th' chuckies, necklin' th' flax an' spinnin' th' yarn. Aebody canna ken a' things, an' aething 's as gude's anither t' know."

Such rank heterodoxy as this took Phemie's breath; there having been no previous occasion,