

tapping nervously with his fingers upon the arm of his chair.

"An old custom in the Highlands," he explained. "I set, perhaps, too little store by it myself, but Mungo likes to maintain it, though he plays the pipe but indifferently, and at this distance you might think the performance not altogether without merit."

"I love all music," replied Count Victor with polite ambiguity, and he marvelled at the signs of some deep feeling in his host.

Till a late hour they sat together while Count Victor explained his mission to the Highlands. He told much, but, to be sure, he did not at first tell all. He recounted the evidences of the spy's guilt as a correspondent with the British Government, whose pay he drew while sharing the poor fortunes and the secrets of the exiled Jacobites. "Iseariot, my dear Baron," he protested, "was a Bayard compared with this wretch. His presence in your locality should pollute the air; have you not felt a malaise?"

"It's dooms hard," admitted the Baron, throwing up distressed hands, "but, man, I'm feared he's not the only one. Do you know, I could mention well-kent names far ben in the Cause—men not of hereabouts at all, but of Lochaber no less, though you may perhaps not guess all that means—and they're in Paris up to the elbow now in the same trade. It's well known to some of yourselves, or should be, and it puzzles me that you should come to the shire of Argyll on account of one, as I take it, no worse than three or four you might have found by stepping across the road to Roisin's coffee-house in the Rue Vaugirard. The commoners in the late troubles have been leal enough, I'll give them that credit, but some of the gentry wag their tongues for Prince Tearlach and ply their pens for Geordie's pay."

The servant came in with two candles, placed them on the table, and renewed the fire. He had on a great woollen night-cowl of gaudy hue with a