

before Montaignon was awake and the bird, as the Gaelic goes, had drunk the water.

"Gude mornin' to your honour," he cried with an elaborately flourished salute as Montaignon sauntered up to him. "Ye're early on the move, monsher; a fine caller mornin'. I hope ye sleepit weel; it was a gowsty nicht."

In spite of his assumed indifference and the purely casual nature of his comment upon the night, there was a good deal of cunning, thought Montaignon, in the beady eyes of him, but the stranger only smiled at the ease of those Scots domestic manners.

"I did very well, I thank you," said he. "My riding and all the rest of it yesterday would have made me sleep soundly inside the drum of a marching regiment."

"That's richt, that's richt," said Mungo, ostentatiously handling the fish with the awkward repugnance of one unaccustomed to a task so menial, to prove perhaps that cleansing them was none of his accustomed office. "That's richt. When we were campaignin' wi' Marlborough oor lads had many a time to sleep wi' the cannon dirlin' aboot them. Ye get us'd to't, as Annapla says aboot bein' a weedow woman. And if ye hae noticed it, Coont, there's nae people mair adapted for fechtin' under difficulties than oor ain; that's what maks the Scots the finest sogers in the world. It's the build o' them, Lowlan' or Hielan', the breed o' them; the dour hard character o' their country and their mainner o' leevin'. We gied the English a fleg at the 'Forty-five,' didnae we? That was where the tartan cam' in: man, there's naethin' like us!"

"You do not speak like a Highlander," said Montaignon, finding some of this gasconade unintelligible.

"No, I'm no' exactly a'thegether a Hielan'man," Mungo admitted, "though I hae freends connekit wi' the auldest clans, and though I'm, in a mainner o' speakin', i' the tail o' Doom, as I was i' the tail o'