

with their men, they had their reward later in a fresh cup of tea, and a dish of gossip, dear to their hearts, uttered without malice, innocuous. Gossip of apron patterns; of bird's-eye and kersey weaves; of cross-banded and doubled and twisted yarns; of Cochin Chinas and Dorkings; of the virtues of boneset and elecampane, of knitted lace, and petticoat frills.

But to return to the first table. Reminiscences were being exchanged.

"D' ye min' th' bee tree we'll found, Jamie Taylor," asked Peter McPherson.

"Ay, I'll ne'er seen it's like—fu' t' th' top! Losh, mon! 'twas a gift cam frae Heeven itsel'! Leeby 'n th' bairns was fair scunnered wi' suppon, suppon, and na kitchen to 't; 'twas a fair misery t' min' th' puir bit bodies try till stay their hoonger."

"Ay, them was ae times o' hoonger, but ne'er of cauld," said William Rutherford; "fegs, I'll of'n 'n th' winter noo shiver for the muckle blazing fire o' logs in th' auld shanty."

"I'll min' when my Phemie burned a bear's snoot b' stirrin' oop th' auld log fire: th' doors 'n windows was barred, 'n he thocht t' pay a veesit down the chimbley," said Jamie McLaren.

"I'll min' o't mysel'," said Hugh McKay. "I'd wrought wi' ye th' day i' th' back road, 'n we's juist winnin' thro' th' bush, when th' bear cam tearin' past, bellowin' like mad an' no mindin' 's a stiver. Phemie's allus quick like at th' thocht, 'n a bear 'd hae hard wark t' even himsel t'r."

"She was that 'n she ae had ways o' turnin' 'n doin' things," said Alex. McFarlane, "'t 'd put maist wummin bodies oot o' their wits t' think o'."

"Ye'll no min' th' Dorothys, Jamie McLaren," queried Jamie McDonald, "'n how she redded oop