

PART III

THE SHEPHERDS' TROPHY

CHAPTER IX

RIVALS

M'ADAM never forgave his son. After the scene on the evening of the funeral there could be no alternative but war for all time. The little man had attempted to humble himself, and been rejected; and the bitterness of defeat, when he had deserved victory, rankled like a poisoned barb in his bosom.

Yet the heat of his indignation was directed not against David, but against the Master of Kenmuir. To the influence and agency of James Moore he attributed his discomfiture, and bore himself accordingly. In public or in private, in tap-room or market, he never wearied of abusing his enemy.

"Feel the loss o' his wife, d'ye say?" he would cry. "Ay, as muckle as I feel the loss o' my hair. James Moore can feel naethin', I tell ye, except, aiblins, a mischance to his meeserable dog."

When the two met, as they often must, it was always M'Adam's endeavor to betray his enemy into an unworthy expression of feeling. But James Moore, sorely tried as he often was, never gave way. He met the little man's sneers with a quelling silence, looking down

on his asp-tongued antagonist with such a contempt flashing from his blue-gray eyes as hurt his adversary more than words.

Only once was he spurred into reply. It was in the tap-room of the Dalesman's Daughter on the occasion of the big spring fair in Grammoch-town, when there was a goodly gathering of farmers and their dogs in the room.

M'Adam was standing at the fireplace with Red Wull at his side.

"It's a noble pairt ye play, James Moore," he cried loudly across the room, "settin' son against father, and dividin' hoose against hoose. It's worthy o' ye we' yer churchgoin', and yer psalm-singin', and yer godliness."

The Master looked up from the far end of the room.

"Happen yo're not aware, M'Adam," he said sternly, "that, an' it had not bin for me, David'd ha' left you years ago—and 'twould nob'but ha' served yo' right, I'm thinkin'."

The little man was beaten on his own ground, so he changed front.

"Dinna shout so, man—I have ears to hear. Forbye ye irritate Wullie."

The Tailless Tyke, indeed, had advanced from the fireplace, and now stood, huge and hideous, in the very centre of the room. There was distant thunder in his throat, a threat upon his face, a challenge in every wrinkle. And the Gray Dog stole gladly out

from behind his master to take up the gage of battle.

Straightway there was silence; tongues ceased to wag, tankards to clink. Every man and every dog was quietly gathering about those two central figures. Not one of them all but had his score to wipe off against the Tailless Tyke; not one of them but was burning to join in, the battle once begun. And the two gladiators stood looking past one another, muzzle to muzzle, each with a tiny flash of teeth glinting between his lips.

But the fight was not to be; for the twentieth time the Master intervened.

"Bob, lad, coom in!" he called, and, bending, grasped his favorite by the neck.

M'Adam laughed softly.

"Wullie, Wullie, to me!" he cried. "The look o' you's enough for that gentleman."

"If they get fightin' it'll no be Bob here I'll hit, I warn yo', M'Adam," said the Master grimly.

"Gin ye sae muckle as touched Wullie d'ye ken what I'd do, James Moore?" asked the little man very smoothly.

"Yes—sweer," the other replied, and strode out of the room amid a roar of derisive laughter at M'Adam's expense.

Owd Bob had now attained wellnigh the perfection of his art. Parson Leggy declared roundly that his like had not been seen since the days of Rex son of Rally. Among the

Dalesmen he was a heroic favorite, his prowess and gentle ways winning him friends on every hand. But the point that told most heavily for him was that in all things he was the very antithesis of Red Wull.

Barely a man in the country-side but owed that ferocious savage a grudge; not a man of them all who dared pay it. Once Long Kirby, full of beer and valor, tried to settle his account. Coming on M'Adam and Red Wull as he was driving into Grammoch-town, he lent over and with his thong dealt the dog a terrible sword-like slash that raised an angry ridge of red from hip to shoulder; and was twenty yards down the road before the little man's shrill curse reached his ear, drowned in a hideous bellow.

He stood up and lashed the colt, who, quick on his legs for a young un, soon settled to his gallop. But, glancing over his shoulder, he saw a hounding form behind, catching him as though he were walking. His face turned sickly white; he screamed; he flogged; he looked back. Right beneath the tail-board was the red devil in the dust; while racing a furlong behind on the turnpike road was the mad figure of M'Adam.

The smith struck back and flogged forward. It was of no avail. With a tiger-like bound the murderous brute leapt on the flying trap. At the shock of the great body the colt was thrown violently on his side; Kirby was tossed

over the hedge; and Red Wull pinned beneath the débris.

M'Adam had time to rush up and save a tragedy.

"I've a mind to knife ye, Kirby," he panted, as he bandaged the smith's broken head.

After that you may be sure the Dalesmen preferred to swallow insults rather than to risk their lives; and their impotence only served to fan their hatred to white heat.

The working methods of the antagonists were as contrasted as their appearances. In a word, the one compelled where the other coaxed.

His enemies said the Tailless Tyke was rough; not even Tammis denied he was ready. His brain was as big as his body, and he used them both to some purpose. "As quick as a cat, with the heart of a lion and the temper of Nick's self," was Parson Leggy's description.

What determination could effect, that could Red Wull; but achievement by inaction—supremest of all strategies—was not for him. In matters of the subtlest handling, where to act anything except indifference was to lose, with sheep restless, fearful forebodings hymned to them by the wind, panic hovering unseen above them, when an ill-considered movement spelt catastrophe—then was Owd Bob o' Kenmuir incomparable.

Men still tell how, when the squire's new

thrashing-machine ran amuck in Grammochtown, and for some minutes the market square was a turbulent sea of blaspheming men, yelping dogs, and stampeding sheep, only one flock stood calm as a mill-pond by the bull-ring, watching the riot with almost indifference. And in front, sitting between them and the storm, was a quiet gray dog, his mouth stretched in a capacious yawn: to yawn was to win, and he won.

When the worst of the uproar was over, many a glance of triumph was shot first at that one still pack, and then at M'Adam, as he waded through the disorder of huddling sheep.

"And wheer's your Wullie noo?" asked Tupper scornfully.

"Weel," the little man answered with a quiet smile, "at this minute he's killin' your Rasper doon by the pump." Which was indeed the case; for big blue Rasper had interfered with the great dog in the performance of his duty, and suffered accordingly.

Spring passed into summer; and the excitement as to the event of the approaching Trials, when at length the rivals would be pitted against one another, reached such a height as old Jonas Maddox, the octogenarian, could hardly recall.

Down in the Sylvester Arms there was almost nightly a conflict between M'Adam and Tammas Thornton, spokesman of the Dales-

men. Many a long-drawn bout of words had the two anent the respective merits and Cup chances of red and gray. In these duels Tammas was usually worsted. His temper would get the better of his discretion; and the cynical debater would be lost in the hot-tongued partisan.

During these encounters the others would, as a rule, maintain a rigid silence. Only when their champion was being beaten, and it was time for strength of voice to vanquish strength of argument, they joined in right lustily and roared the little man down, for all the world like the gentlemen who rule the Empire at Westminster.

Tammas was an easy subject for M'Adam to draw, but David was an easier. Insults directed at himself the boy bore with a stolidity born of long use. But a poisonous dart shot against his friends at Kenmuir never failed to achieve its object. And the little man evinced an amazing talent for the concoction of deft lies respecting James Moore.

"I'm hearin'," said he, one evening, sitting in the kitchen, sucking his twig; "I'm hearin' James Moore is gaein' to git married agin."

"Yo're hearin' lies—or mair-like tellin' 'em," David answered shortly. For he treated his father now with contemptuous indifference.

"Seven months sin' his wife died," the little man continued meditatively. "Weel, I'm on'y

'stonished he's waited sae lang. Ain buried, anither come on—that's James Moore."

David burst angrily out of the room.

"Gaein' to ask him if it's true?" called his father after him. "Gude luck to ye—and him."

David had now a new interest at Kenmuir. In Maggie he found an endless source of study. On the death of her mother the girl had taken up the reins of government at Kenmuir; and gallantly she played her part, whether in tenderly mothering the baby, wee Anne, or in the sterner matters of household work. She did her duty, young though she was, with a surprising, old-fashioned womanliness that won many a smile of approval from her father, and caused David's eyes to open with astonishment.

And he soon discovered that Maggie, mistress of Kenmuir, was another person from his erstwhile playfellow and servant.

The happy days when might ruled right were gone, never to be recalled. David often regretted them, especially when in a conflict of tongues, Maggie, with her quick answers and teasing eyes, was driving him sulky and vanquished from the field. The two were perpetually squabbling now. In the good old days, he remembered bitterly, squabbles between them were unknown. He had never permitted them; any attempt at independent thought or action was as sternly quelled as in

the Middle Ages. She must follow where he led on—"Ma word!"

Now she was mistress where he had been master; hers was to command, his to obey. In consequence they were perpetually at war. And yet he would sit for hours in the kitchen and watch her, as she went about her business, with solemn, interested eyes, half of admiration, half of amusement. In the end Maggie always turned on him with a little laugh touched with irritation.

"Han't yo' got nothin' better'n that to do, nor lookin' at me?" she asked one Saturday about a month before Cup Day.

"No, I han't," the pert fellow rejoined.

"Then I wish yo' had. It mak's me fair jumpety yo' watchin' me so like ony cat a mouse."

"Niver yo' fash yo'sel' account o' me, ma wench," he answered calmly.

"Yo' wench, indeed!" she cried, tossing her head.

"Ay, or will be," he muttered.

"What's that?" she cried, springing round, a flush of color on her face.

"Nowt, my dear. Yo'll know so soon as I want yo' to, yo' may be sure, and no sooner."

The girl resumed her baking, half angry, half suspicious.

"I dunno' what yo' mean, Mr. M'Adam," she said.

"Don't yo', Mrs. M'A——"

The rest was lost in the crash of a falling plate; whereat David laughed quietly, and asked if he should help pick up the bits.

On the same evening at the Sylvester Arms an announcement was made that knocked the breath out of its hearers.

In the debate that night on the fast-approaching Dale Trials and the relative abilities of red and gray, M'Adam on the one side, and Tammas, backed by Long Kirby and the rest, on the other, had cudgelled each other with more than usual vigor. The controversy rose to fever-heat; abuse succeeded argument; and the little man again and again was hooted into silence.

"It's easy laffin'," he cried at last, "but ye'll laff t'ither side o' yer ugly faces on Cup Day."

"Will us, indeed? Us'll see," came the derisive chorus.

"We'll whip ye till ye're deaf, dumb, and blind, Wullie and I."

"Yo'll not!"

"We will!"

The voices were rising like the east wind in March.

"Yo'll not, and for a very good reason too," asseverated Tammas loudly.

"Gie us yer reason, ye muckle liar," cried the little man, turning on him.

"Becos——" began Jim Mason and stopped to rub his nose.

"Yo' 'old yo' noise, Jim," recommended Rob Saunderson.

"Becos——" it was Tammas this time who paused.

"Git on wi' it, ye stammerin' stirk!" cried M'Adam. "Why?"

"Becos—Owd Bob'll not rin."

Tammas sat back in his chair.

"What!" screamed the little man, thrusting forward.

"What's that!" yelled Long Kirby, leaping to his feet.

"Mon, say it agin!" shouted Rob.

"What's owd addled egg tellin'?" cried Liz Burton.

"Dang his 'ead for him!" shouts Tupper.

"Fill his eye!" says Ned Hoppin.

They jostled round the old man's chair: M'Adam in front; Jem Burton and Long Kirby leaning over his shoulder; Liz behind her father; Saunderson and Tupper tackling him on either side; while the rest peered and elbowed in the rear.

The announcement had fallen like a thunderbolt among them.

Tammas looked slowly up at the little mob of eager faces above him. Pride at the sensation caused by his news struggled in his countenance with genuine sorrow for the matter of it.

"Ay, yo' may well 'earken all on yo'. Tis enough to mak' the deadies listen. I says

agin: We's'll no rin oor Bob fot' Cup. And yo' may guess why. Bain't every mon, Mr. M'Adam, as'd pit aside his chanst o' the Cup, and that 'maist a gift for him"—M'Adam's tongue was in his cheek—"and it a certainty," the old man continued warmly, "oot o' respect for his wife's memory."

The news was received in utter silence. The shock of the surprise, coupled with the bitterness of the disappointment, froze the slow tongues of his listeners.

Only one small voice broke the stillness.

"Oh, the feelin' man! He should git a reduction o' rent for sic a display o' proper speerit. I'll mind Mr. Hornbut to let auld Sylvester ken o't."

Which he did, and would have got a thrashing for his pains had not Cyril Gilbraith thrown him out of the parsonage before the angry cleric could lay hands upon him.

CHAPTER X

RED WULL WINS

TAMMAS had but told the melancholy truth. Owd Bob was not to run for the cup. And this self-denying ordinance speaks more for James Moore's love of his lost wife than many a lordly cenotaph.

To the people of the Daleland, from the Black Water to the market-cross in Grammochtown, the news came with the shock of a sudden blow. They had set their hearts on the Gray Dog's success; and had felt serenely confident of his victory. But the sting of the matter lay in this: that now the Tailless Tyke might well win.

M'Adam, on the other hand, was plunged into a fervor of delight at the news. For to win the Shepherds' Trophy was the goal of his ambition. David was now less than nothing to the lonely little man, Red Wull everything to him. And to have that name handed down to posterity, gallantly holding its place among those of the most famous sheep-dogs of all time, was his heart's desire.

As Cup Day drew near, the little man, his fine-drawn temperament strung to the highest pitch of nervousness, was tossed on a sea of

apprehension. His hopes and fears ebbed and flowed on the tide of the moment. His moods were as uncertain as the winds in March; and there was no dependence on his humor for a unit of time. At one minute he paced up and down the kitchen, his face already flushed with the glow of victory, chanting:

"Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled!"

At the next he was down at the table, his head buried in his hands, his whole figure shaking, as he cried in choking voice: "Eh, Wullie, Wullie, they're all agin us."

David found that life with his father now was life with an unamiable hornet. Careless as he affected to be of his father's vagaries, he was tried almost to madness, and fled away at every moment to Kenmuir; for, as he told Maggie, "I'd sooner put up wi' your h'airs and h'imperences, miss, than wi' him, the wemon that he be!"

At length the great day came. Fears, hopes, doubts, dismays, all dispersed in the presence of the reality.

Cup Day is always a general holiday in the Daleland, and every soul crowds over to Silverdale. Shops were shut; special trains ran in to Grammoch-town; and the road from the little town was dazed with char-a-bancs, brakes, wagonettes, carriages, carts, foot-passengers, wending toward the Dalesman's Daughter.

And soon the paddock below that little inn was humming with the crowd of sportsmen and spectators come to see the battle for the Shepherd's Trophy.

There, very noticeable with its red body and yellow wheels, was the great Kenmuir wagon. Many an eye was directed on the handsome young pair who stood in it, conspicuous and unconscious, above the crowd: Maggie, looking in her simple print frock as sweet and fresh as any mountain flower; while David's fair face was all gloomy and his brows knit.

In front of the wagon was a black cluster of Dalesmen, discussing M'Adam's chances. In the centre was Tammas holding forth. Had you passed close to the group you might have heard: "A man, d'yo say, Mr. Maddox? A h'ape, I call him"; or: "A dog? more like an 'og, I tell yo'." Round the old orator were Jonas, 'Enry, and oor Job, Jem Burton, Rob Saunderson, Tupper, Jim Mason, Hoppin, and others; while on the outskirts stood Sam'l Todd prophesying rain and M'Adam's victory. Close at hand Bessie Bolstock, who was reputed to have designs on David, was giggling spitefully at the pair in the Kenmuir wagon, and singing:

"Let a lad aloan, lass,
Let a lad a-be."

While her father, Teddy, dodged in and out among the crowd with tray and glasses: for

Cup Day was the great day of the year for him.

Past the group of Dalesmen and on all sides was a mass of bobbing heads—Scots, Northerners, Yorkshiremen, Taffies. To right and left a long array of carriages and carts, ranging from the squire's quiet landau and Viscount Birdsaye's gorgeous barouche to Liz Burton's three-legged moke-cart with little Mrs. Burton, the twins, young Jake (who should have walked), and Monkey (ditto) packed away inside. Beyond the Silver Lea the gaunt Scaur raised its craggy peak, and the Pass, trending along its side, shone white in the sunshine.

At the back of the carriages were booths, cocoanut-shies, Aunt Sallies, shows, book-makers' stools, and all the panoply of such a meeting. Here Master Launcelot Bilks and Jacky Sylvester were fighting; Cyril Gilbraith was offering to take on the boxing man; Long Kirby was snapping up the odds against Red Wull; and Liz Burton and young Ned Hop-pin were being photographed together, while Melia Ross in the background was pretending she didn't care.

On the far bank of the stream was a little bevy of men and dogs, observed of all.

The Juvenile Stakes had been run and won; Londesley's Lassie had carried off the Locals; and the fight for the Shepherds' Trophy was about to begin.

"Yo're not lookin' at me noo," whispered Maggie to the silent boy by her side.

"Nay; nor niver don't wush to agin." David answered roughly. His gaze was directed over the array of heads in front to where, beyond the Silver Lea, a group of shepherds and their dogs was clustered. While standing apart from the rest, in characteristic isolation, was the bent figure of his father, and beside him the Tailless Tyke.

"Doest'o not want yo' feyther to win?" asked Maggie softly, following his gaze.

"I'm prayin' he'll be beat," the boy answered moodily.

"Eh, Davie, hoo can ye?" cried the girl, shocked.

"It's easy to say, 'Eh, David,' " he snapped. "But if yo' lived along o' them two"—he nodded toward the stream—"appen yo'd understand a bit. . . . 'Eh, David,' indeed! I never did!"

"I know it, lad," she said tenderly; and he was appeased.

"He'd give his right hand for his bless'd Wullie to win; I'd give me right arm to see him beat. . . . And oor Bob there all the while,—he nodded to the far left of the line, where stood James Moore and Owd Bob, with Parson Leggy and the Squire.

When at length Red Wull came out to run his course, he worked with the savage dash that always characterized him. His method

was his own; but the work was admirably done.

"Keeps right on the back of his sheep," said the parson, watching intently. "Strange thing they don't break!" But they didn't. There was no waiting, no coaxing; it was drive and devilry all through. He brought his sheep along at a terrific rate, never missing a turn, never faltering, never running out. And the crowd applauded, for the crowd loves a dash-ing display. While little M'Adam, hopping agilely about, his face ablaze with excitement, handled dog and sheep with a masterly precision that compelled the admiration even of his enemies.

"M'Adam wins!" roared a bookmaker. "Twelve to one agin the field!"

"He wins, dang him!" said David, low.

"Wull wins!" said the parson, shutting his lips.

"And deserves too!" said James Moore.

"Wull wins!" softly cried the crowd.

"We don't!" said Sam'l gloomily.

And in the end Red Wull did win; and there were none save Tammas, the bigot, and Long Kirby, who had lost a good deal of his wife's money and a little of his own, to challenge the justice of the verdict.

The win had but a chilling reception. At first there was faint cheering; but it sounded like the echo of an echo, and soon died of in-anition. To get up an ovation, there must be

money at the back, or a few roaring fanatics to lead the dance. Here there was neither; ugly stories, disparaging remarks, on every hand. And the hundreds who did not know took their tone, as always, from those who said they did.

M'Adam could but remark the absence of enthusiasm as he pushed up through the throng toward the committee tent. No single voice hailed him victor; no friendly hand smote its congratulations. Broad backs were turned; contemptuous glances levelled; spiteful remarks shot. Only the foreign element looked curiously at the little bent figure with the glowing face, and shrank back at the size and savage aspect of the great dog at his heels.

But what cared he? His Wullie was acknowledged champion, the best sheep-dog of the year; and the little man was happy. They could turn their backs on him; but they could not alter that; and he could afford to be indifferent. "They dinna like it, lad—he! he! But they'll e'en ha' to thole it. Ye've won it, Wullie—won it fair."

He elbowed through the press, making for the rope-guarded inclosure in front of the committee tent, round which the people were now packing. In the door of the tent stood the secretary, various stewards, and members of the committee. In front, alone in the roped-off space, was Lady Eleanour, fragile, dainty,

graceful, waiting with a smile upon her face to receive the winner. And on a table beside her, naked and dignified, the Shepherd's Trophy.

There it stood, kingly and impressive; its fair white sides inscribed with many names; cradled in three shepherds' crooks; and on the top, as if to guard the Cup's contents, an exquisitely carved collie's head. The Shepherds' Trophy, the goal of his life's race, and many another man's.

He climbed over the rope, followed by Red Wull, and took off his hat with almost courtly deference to the fair lady before him.

As he walked up to the table on which the Cup stood, a shrill voice, easily recognizable, broke the silence.

"You'd like it better if 'twas full and yo' could swim in it, you and yer Wullie," it called. Whereat the crowd giggled, and Lady Eleanour looked indignant.

The little man turned.

"I'll mind drink yer health, Mr. Thornton, never fear, though I ken ye'd prefaire to drink yer ain," he said. At which the crowd giggled afresh; and a gray head at the back, which had hoped itself unrecognized, disappeared suddenly.

The little man stood there in the stillness, sourly smiling, his face still wet from his exertions; while the Tailless Tyke at his side fronted defiantly the serried ring of onlookers,

a white fence of teeth faintly visible between his lips.

Lady Eleanour looked uneasy. Usually the lucky winner was unable to hear her little speech, as she gave the Cup away, so deafening was the applause. Now there was utter silence. She glanced up at the crowd, but there was no response to her unspoken appeal in that forest of hostile faces. And her gentle heart bled for the forlorn little man before her. To make it up she smiled on him so sweetly as to more than compensate him.

"I'm sure you deserve your success, Mr. M'Adam," she said. "You and Red Wull there worked splendidly—everybody says so."

"I've heard naethin' o't," the little man answered dryly. At which some one in the crowd sniggered.

"And we all know what a grand dog he is; though"—with a reproving smile as she glanced at Red Wull's square, truncated stern—"he's not very polite."

"His heart is good, your Leddyship, if his manners are not," M'Adam answered, smiling.

"Liar!" came a loud voice in the silence. Lady Eleanour looked up, hot with indignation, and half rose from her seat. But M'Adam merely smiled.

"Wullie, turn and mak' yer bow to the ledly," he said. "They'll no hurt us noo we're up; it's when we're doon they'll flock like corbies to the carrion."

At that Red Wull walked up to Lady Eleanour, faintly wagging his tail; and she put her hand on his huge bull head and said, "Dear old Ugly!" at which the crowd cheered in earnest.

After that, for some moments, the only sound was the gentle ripple of the good lady's voice and the little man's caustic replies.

"Why, last winter the country was full of Red Wull's doings and yours. It was always M'Adam and his Red Wull have done this and that and the other. I declare I got quite tired of you both, I heard such a lot about you."

The little man, cap in hand, smiled, blushed and looked genuinely pleased.

"And when it wasn't you it was Mr. Moore and Owd Bob."

"Owd Bob, bless him!" called a stentorian voice. "There cheers for oor Bob!"

"'Ip! 'ip! 'ooray!" It was taken up gallantly, and cast from mouth to mouth; and strangers, though they did not understand, caught the contagion and cheered too; and the uproar continued for some minutes.

When it was ended Lady Eleanour was standing up, a faint flush on her cheeks and her eyes flashing dangerously, like a queen at bay.

"Yes," she cried, and her clear voice thrilled through the air like a trumpet. "Yes; and now three cheers for Mr. M'Adam and his Red Wull! Hip! hip——"

"Hooray!" A little knowt of stalwarts at the back—James Moore, Parson Leggy, Jim Mason, and you may be sure in heart, at least, Owd Bob—responded to the call right lustily. The crowd joined in; and, once off, cheered and cheered again.

"Three cheers more for Mr. M'Adam!"

But the little man waved to them.

"Dinna be bigger heepocrites than ye can help," he said. "Ye've done enough for one day, and thank ye for it."

Then Lady Eleanour handed him the Cup.

"Mr. M'Adam, I present you with the Champion Challenge Dale Cup, open to all comers. Keep it, guard it, love it as your own, and win it again if you can. Twice more and it's yours, you know, and it will stop forever beneath the shadow of the Pike. And the right place for it, say I—the Dale Cup for Dalesmen."

The little man took the Cup tenderly.

"It shall no leave the Estate or ma hoose, yer Leddyship, gin Wullie and I can help it," he said emphatically.

Lady Eleanour retreated into the tent, and the crowd swarmed over the ropes and round the little man, who held the Cup beneath his arm.

Long Kirby laid irreverent hands upon it.

"Dinna finger it!" ordered M'Adam.

"Shall!"

"Shan't! Wullie, keep him aff." Which

the great dog proceeded to do amid the laughter of the onlookers.

Among the last, James Moore was borne past the little man. At sight of him, M'Adam's face assumed an expression of intense concern.

"Man, Moore!" he cried, peering forward as though in alarm; "man, Moore, ye're green—positeevly verdant. Are ye in pain?" Then, catching sight of Owd Bob, he started back in affected horror.

"And, ma certes! so's yer dog! Yer dog as was gray is green. Oh, guid life!"—and he made as though about to fall fainting to the ground.

Then, in bantering tones: "Ah, but ye shouldna covet——"

"He'll ha' no need to covet it long, I can tell yo'," interposed Tammas's shrill accents.

"And why for no?"

"Becos next year he'll win it fra yo'. Oor Bob'll win it, little mon. Why? thot's why."

The retort was greeted with a yell of applause from the sprinkling of Dalesmen in the crowd.

But M'Adam swaggered away into the tent, his head up, the Cup beneath his arm, and Red Wull guarding his rear.

"First of a' ye'll ha' to beat Adam M'Adam and his Red Wull!" he cried back proudly.

CHAPTER XI

OOOR BOB

M'ADAM's pride in the great Cup that now graced his kitchen was supreme. It stood alone in the very centre of the mantelpiece, just below the old bell-mouthed blunderbuss that hung upon the wall. The only ornament in the bare room, it shone out in its silvery chastity like the moon in a gloomy sky.

For once the little man was content. Since his mother's death David had never known such peace. It was not that his father became actively kind; rather that he forgot to be actively unkind.

"Not as I care a brazen button one way or t'ither," the boy informed Maggie.

"Then yo' should," that proper little person replied.

M'Adam was, indeed, a changed being. He forgot to curse James Moore; he forgot to sneer at Owd Bob; he rarely visited the Sylvester Arms, to the detriment of Jem Burton's pocket and temper; and he was never drunk.

"Soaks 'isself at home, instead," suggested Tammas, the prejudiced. But the accusation was untrue.