

to tree in the larch-copse by the lane. The Master, however, irritated by these constant alarms, dismissed the story summarily.

"One thing I'm sartin o'," said he. "There's not a critter moves on Kenmuir at nights but Th' Owd Un knows it."

Yet, even as he said it, a little man, draggled, weary-eyed, smeared with dew and dust, was limping in at the door of a house barely a mile away. "Nae luck, Wullie, curse it!" he cried, throwing himself into a chair, and addressing some one who was not there—"nae luck. An' yet I'm sure o't as I am that there's a God in heaven."

M'Adam had become an old man of late. But little more than fifty, yet he looked to have reached man's allotted years. His sparse hair was quite white; his body shrunk and bowed; and his thin hand shook like an aspen as it groped to the familiar bottle.

In another matter, too, he was altogether changed. Formerly, whatever his faults, there had been no harder-working man in the country-side. At all hours, in all weathers, you might have seen him with his gigantic attendant going his rounds. Now all that was different: he never put his hand to the plough, and with none to help him the land was left wholly untended; so that men said that, of a surety, there would be a farm to let on the March Mere Estate come Michaelmas.

Instead of working, the little man sat all day in the kitchen at home, brooding over his wrongs, and brewing vengeance. Even the Sylvester Arms knew him no more; for he stayed where he was with his dog and his bottle. Only, when the shroud of night had come down to cover him, he slipped out and away on some errand on which not even Red Wull accompanied him.

So the time glided on, till the Sunday before the Trials came round.

All that day M'Adam sat in his kitchen, drinking, muttering, hatching revenge.

"Curse it, Wullie! curse it! The time's slippin'—slippin'—slippin'! Thursday next—but three days mair! and I haena the proof—I haena the proof!"—and he rocked to and fro, biting his nails in the agony of his impotence.

All day long he never moved. Long after sunset he sat on; long after dark had eliminated the features of the room.

"They're all agin us, Wullie. It's you and I alane, lad. M'Adam's to be beat somehow, onyhow; and Moore's to win. So they've settled it, and so 'twill be—onless, Wullie, onless—but curse it! I've no the proof!"—and he hammered the table before him and stamped on the floor.

At midnight he arose, a mad, desperate plan looming through his fuddled brain.

"I swore I'd pay him, Wullie, and I will. If I hang for it I'll be even wi' him. I haena the proof, but I *know*—I *know*!" He groped his way to the mantel piece wth blind eyes and swirling brain. Reaching up with fumbling hands, he took down the old blunderbuss from above the fireplace.

"Wullie," he whispered, chuckling hideously, "Wullie, come on! You and I—he! he!" But the Tailless Tyke was not there. At nightfall he had slouched silently out of the house on business he best wot of. So his master crept out of the room alone—on tip-toe, still chuckling.

The cool night air refreshed him, and he stepped stealthily along, his quaint weapon over his shoulder: down the hill; across the Bottom; skirting the Pike; till he reached the plank-bridge over the Wastrel.

He crossed it safely, that Providence whose care is drunkards placing his footsteps. Then he stole up the slope like a hunter stalking his prey.

Arrived at the gate, he raised himself cautiously, and peered over into the moonlit yard. There was no sign or sound of living creature. The little gray house slept peacefully in the shadow of the Pike, all unaware of the man with murder in his heart laboriously climbing the yard-gate.

The door of the porch was wide, the chain hanging limply down, unused; and the little

man could see within, the moon shining on the iron studs of the inner door, and the blanket of him who should have slept there, *and did not*.

"He's no there, Wullie! He's no there!"

He jumped down from the gate. Throwing all caution to the winds, he reeled recklessly across the yard. The drunken delirium of battle was on him. The fever of anticipated victory flushed his veins. At length he would take toll for the injuries of years.

Another moment, and he was in front of the good oak door, battering at it madly with clubbed weapon, yelling, dancing, screaming vengeance.

"Where is he? What's he at? Come and tell me that, James Moore! Come doon, I say, ye coward! Come and meet me like a man!"

" 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots wham Bruce has aften led—
Welcome to your gory bed
Or to victorie !' "

The soft moonlight streamed down on the white-haired madman thundering at the door, screaming his war-song.

The quiet farmyard, startled from its sleep, awoke in an uproar. Cattle shifted in their stalls; horses whinnied; fowls chattered, aroused by the din and dull thudding of the blows: and above the rest, loud and piercing, the shrill cry of a terrified child.

Maggie, wakened from a vivid dream of David chasing the police, hurried a shawl around her, and in a minute had the baby in her arms and was comforting her—vaguely fearing the while that the police were after David.

James Moore flung open a window, and, leaning out, looked down on the dishevelled figure below him.

M'Adam heard the noise, glanced up, and saw his enemy. Straightway he ceased his attack on the door, and, running beneath the window, shook his weapon up at his foe.

"There ye are, are ye? Curse ye for a coward! curse ye for a liar! Come doon, I say, James Moore! come doon—I daur ye to it! Aince and for a' let's settle oor account."

The Master, looking down from above, thought that at length the little man's brain had gone.

"What is't yo' want?" he asked, as calmly as he could, hoping to gain time.

"What is't I want?" screamed the madman. "Hark to him! He crosses mi in ilka thing; he plots agin me; he robs me o' ma Cup; he sets ma son agin me and pits him on to murder me! And in the end he——"

"Coom, then, coom! I'll——"

"Gie me back the Cup ye stole, James Moore! Gie me back ma son ye've took from me! And there's anither thing. What's yer gray dog doin'? Where's yer——"

The Master interposed again:

"I'll coom doon and talk things over wi' yo'." he said soothingly. But before he could withdraw, M'Adam had jerked his weapon to his shoulder and aimed it full at his enemy's head.

The threatened man looked down the gun's great quivering mouth, wholly unmoved.

"Yo' mon hold it steadier, little mon, if yo'd hit!" he said grimly. "There, I'll coom help yo'!" He withdrew slowly; and all the time was wondering where the gray dog was.

In another moment he was downstairs, undoing the bolts and bars of the door. On the other side stood M'Adam, his blunderbuss at his shoulder, his finger trembling on the trigger, waiting.

"Hi, Master! Stop, or yo're dead!" roared a voice from the loft on the other side the yard.

"Feyther! feyther! git yo' back!" screamed Maggie, who saw it all from the window above the door.

Their cries were too late! The blunderbuss went off with a roar, belching out a storm of sparks and smoke. The shot peppered the door like hail, and the whole yard seemed for a moment wrapped in flame.

"Aw! oh! ma gummy! A'm waounded! A'm a goner! A'm shot! 'Elp! Murder! Eh! Oh!" bellowed a lusty voice—and it was not James Moore's.

The little man, the cause of the uproar, lay

quite still upon the ground, with another figure standing over him. As he had stood, finger on trigger, waiting for that last bolt to be drawn, a gray form, shooting whence no one knew, had suddenly and silently attacked him from behind, and jerked him backward to the ground. With the shock of the fall the blunderbuss had gone off.

The last bolt was thrown back with a clatter, and the Master emerged. In a glance he took in the whole scene: the fallen man; the gray dog; the still-smoking weapon.

"Yo', was't Bob lad?" he said. "I was wonderin' wheer yo' were. Yo' came just at the reet moment, as yo' aye do!" Then, in a loud voice, addressing the darkness: "Yo're not hurt, Sam'l Todd—I can tell that by yer noise; it was nob'but the shot off the door warmed yo'. Coom away doon and gie me a hand."

He walked up to M'Adam, who still lay gasping on the ground. The shock of the fall and recoil of the weapon had knocked the breath out of the little man's body; beyond that he was barely hurt.

The Master stood over his fallen enemy and looked sternly down at him.

"I've put up wi' more from you, M'Adam, than I would from ony other man," he said. "But this is too much—comin' here at night wi' loaded arms, scarin' the wimmen and childer oot o' their lives, and I can but think

meanin' worse. If yo' were half a man I'd gie yo' the finest thrashin' iver yo' had in yer life. But, as yo' know well, I could no more hit yo' than I could a woman. Why yo've got this down on me yo' ken best. I niver did yo' or ony ither mon a harm. As to the Cup, I've got it and I'm goin' to do ma best to keep it—it's for yo' to win it from me if yo' can o' Thursday. As for what yo' say o' David, yo' know it's a lie. And as for what yo're drivin' at wi' yer hints and mysteries, I've no more idee than a babe unborn. Noo I'm goin' to lock yo' up, yo're not safe abroad. I'm thinkin' I'll ha' to hand ye o'er to the p'lice."

With the help of Sam'l he half dragged, half supported the stunned little man across the yard; and shoved him into a tiny semi-subterraneous room, used for the storage of coal, at the end of the farm-buildings.

"Yo' think it over that side, ma lad," called the Master grimly, as he turned the key, "and I will this." And with that he retired to bed.

Early in the morning he went to release his prisoner. But he was a minute too late. For scuttling down the slope and away was a little black-begrimed, tottering figure with white hair blowing in the wind. The little man had broken away a wooden hatchment which covered a manhole in the wall of his prison-house, squeezed his small body through, and so escaped.

"Happen it's as well," thought the Master, watching the flying figure. Then, "Hi, Bob, lad!" he called; for the gray dog, ears back, tail streaming, was hurling down the slope after the fugitive.

On the bridge M'Adam turned, and, seeing his pursuer hot upon him, screamed, missed his footing, and fell with a loud splash into the stream—almost in that identical spot into which, years before, he had plunged voluntarily to save Red Wull.

On the bridge Owd Bob halted and looked down at the man struggling in the water below. He made a half move as though to leap in to the rescue of his enemy; then, seeing it was unnecessary, turned and trotted back to his master.

"Yo' nob'but served him right, I'm thinkin'," said the Master. "Like as not he came here wi' the intent to mak' an end to yo.' Well, after Thursday, I pray God we'll ha' peace. It's gettin' above a joke." The two turned back into the yard.

But down below them, along the edge of the stream, for the second time in this story, a little dripping figure was tottering homeward. The little man was crying—the hot tears mingling on his cheeks with the undried waters of the Wastrel—crying with rage, mortification, weariness.

CHAPTER XXV

THE SHEPHERDS' TROPHY

CUP Day.

It broke calm and beautiful, no cloud on the horizon, no threat of storm in the air; a fitting day on which the Shepherds' Trophy must be won outright.

And well it was so. For never since the founding of the Dale Trials had such a concourse been gathered together on the North bank of the Silver Lea. From the Highlands they came; from the far Campbell country; from the Peak; from the county of many acres; from all along the silver fringes of the Solway; assembling in that quiet corner of the earth to see the famous Gray Dog of Kenmuir fight his last great battle for the Shepherds' Trophy.

By noon the gaunt Scaur looked down on such a gathering as it had never seen. The paddock at the back of the Dalesman's Daughter was packed with a clammering, chattering multitude: animated groups of farmers; bevvies of solid rustics; sharp-faced townsmen; loud-voiced bookmakers; giggling girls; amorous boys,—thrown together like toys in a

sawdust bath; whilst here and there, on the outskirts of the crowd, a lonely man and wise-faced dog, come from afar to wrest his proud title from the best sheep-dog in the North.

At the back of the enclosure was drawn up a formidable array of carts and carriages, varying as much in quality and character as did their owners. There was the squire's landau rubbing axle-boxes with Jem Burton's modest moke-cart; and there Viscount Birdsaye's flaring barouche side by side with the red-wheeled wagon of Kenmuir.

In the latter, Maggie, sad and sweet in her simple summer garb, leant over to talk to Lady Eleanour; while golden-haired wee Anne, delighted with the surging crowd around, trotted about the wagon, waving to her friends, and shouting from very joyousness.

Thick as flies clustered that motley assembly on the north bank of the Silver Lea. While on the other side the stream was a little group of judges, inspecting the course.

The line laid out ran thus: the sheep must first be found in the big enclosure to the right of the starting flag; then up the slope and away from the spectators; around a flag and obliquely down the hill again; through a gap in the wall; along the hillside, parallel to the Silver Lea; abruptly to the left through a pair of flags—the trickiest turn of them all; then down the slope to the pen, which was set up close to the bridge over the stream.

The proceedings began with the Local Stakes, won by Rob Saunderson's veteran, Shep. There followed the Open Juveniles, carried off by Ned Hoppin's young dog. It was late in the afternoon when, at length, the great event of the meeting was reached.

In the enclosure behind the Dalesman's Daughter the clamor of the crowd increased tenfold, and the yells of the bookmakers were redoubled.

"Walk up, gen'lemen, walk up! the ole firm! Rasper? Yessir—twenty to one bar two! Twenty to one bar two! Bob? What price Bob? Even money, sir—no, not a penny longer, couldn't do it! Red Wull? 'oo says Red Wull?"

On the far side the stream is clustered about the starting flag the finest array of sheep-dogs ever seen together.

"I've never seen such a field, and I've seen fifty," is Parson Leggy's verdict.

There, beside the tall form of his master, stands Owd Bob o' Kenmuir, the observed of all. His silvery brush fans the air, and he holds his dark head high as he scans his challengers, proudly conscious that to-day will make or mar his fame. Below him, the mean-looking, smooth-coated black dog is the unbeaten Pip, winner of the renowned Cambrian Stakes at Llangollen—as many think the best of all the good dogs that have come from sheep-dotted Wales. Beside him that hand-

some sable collie, with the tremendous coat and slash of white on throat and face, is the famous MacCallum More, fresh from his victory at the Highland meeting. The cobby, brown dog, seeming of many breeds, is from the land o' the Tykes—Merry, on whom the Yorkshiremen are laying as though they loved him. And Jess, the wiry black-and-tan, is the favorite of the men of of the Derwent and Dove. Tupper's big blue Rasper is there; Londeley's Lassie; and many more—too many to mention: big and small, grand and mean, smooth and rough—and not a bad dog there.

And alone, his back to the others, stands a little bowed, conspicuous figure—Adam M'Adam; while the great dog beside him, a hideous incarnation of scowling defiance, is Red Wull, the Terror o' the Border.

The Tailless Tyke had already run up his fighting colors. For MacCallum More, going up to examine this forlorn great adversary, had conceived for him a violent antipathy, and, straightway, had spun at him with all the fury of the Highland cateran, who attacks first and explains afterward. Red Wull, forthwith, had turned on him with savage, silent gluttony; bob-tailed Rasper was racing up to join in the attack; and in another second the three would have been locked inseparably—but just in time M'Adam intervened.

One of the judges came hurrying up.

"Mr. M'Adam," he cried angrily, "if that

brute of yours gets fighting again, hang me if I don't disqualify him! Only last year at the Trials he killed the young Cossack dog."

A dull flash of passion swept across M'Adam's face. "Come here, Wullie!" he called. "Gin yon Hielant tyke attacks ye agin, ye're to be disqualified."

He was unheeded. The battle for the Cup had begun—little Pip leading the dance.

On the opposite slope the babel had subsided now. Hucksters left their wares, and bookmakers their stools, to watch the struggle. Every eye was intent on the moving figures of man and dog and three sheep over the stream.

One after one the competitors ran their course and penned their sheep—there was no single failure. And all received their just meed of applause, save only Adam M'Adam's Red Wull.

Last of all, when Owd Bob trotted out to uphold his title, there went up such a shout as made Maggie's wan cheeks to blush with pleasure, and wee Anne to scream right lustily.

His was an incomparable exhibition. Sheep should be humored rather than hurried; coaxed, rather than coerced. And that sheep-dog has attained the summit of his art who subdues his own personality and leads his sheep in pretending to be led. Well might the bosoms of the Dalesmen swell with pride as they watched their favorite at his work; well might Tammas pull out that hackneyed

phrase, "The brains of a mon and the way of a woman"; well might the crowd bawl their enthusiasm, and Long Kirby puff his cheeks and rattle the money in his trouser pockets.

But of this part it is enough to say that Pip, Owd Bob, and Red Wull were selected to fight out the struggle afresh.

The course was altered and stiffened. On the far side the stream it remained as before; up the slope; round a flag; down the hill again; through the gap in the wall; along the hillside; down through the two flags; turn; and to the stream again. But the pen was removed from its former position, carried over the bridge, up the near slope, and the hurdles put together at the very foot of the spectators.

The sheep had to be driven over the plank-bridge, and the penning done beneath the very nose of the crowd. A stiff course, if ever there was one; and the time allowed, ten short minutes.

The spectators hustled and elbowed in their endeavors to obtain a good position. And well they might; for about to begin was the finest exhibition of sheep-handling any man there was ever to behold.

Evan Jones and little Pip led off.

Those two, who had won on many a hard-fought field, worked together as they had never worked before. Smooth and swift, like a yacht in Southampton Water; round the flag, through the gap, they brought their sheep. Down between the two flags—accomplishing right well that awkward turn; and back to the bridge.

There they stopped: the sheep would not face that narrow way. Once, twice, and again, they broke; and each time the gallant little Pip, his tongue out and tail quivering, brought them back to the bridge-head.

At length one faced it; then another, and—it was too late. Time was up. The judges signalled; and the Welshman called off his dog and withdrew.

Out of sight of mortal eye, in a dip of the ground, Evan Jones sat down and took the small dark head between his knees—and you may be sure the dog's heart was heavy as the man's. "We did our pest, Pip," he cried brokenly, "but we're peat—the first time ever we've been!"

No time to dally.

James Moore and Owd Bob were off on their last run.

No applause this time; not a voice was raised; anxious faces; twitching fingers; the whole crowd tense as a stretched wire. A false turn, a wilful sheep, a cantankerous

judge, and the gray dog would he beat. And not a man there but knew it.

Yet over the stream master and dog went about their business never so quiet, never so collected; for all the world as though they were rounding up a flock on the Muir Pike.

The old dog found his sheep in a twinkling and a wild, scared trio they proved. Rounding the first flag, one bright-eyed wether made a dash for the open. He was quick; but the gray dog was quicker: a splendid recover, and a sound like a sob from the watchers on the hill.

Down the slope they came for the gap in the wall. A little below the opening, James Moore took his stand to stop and turn them; while a distance behind his sheep loitered Owd Bob, seeming to follow rather than drive, yet watchful of every movement and anticipating it. On he came, one eye on his master, the other on his sheep; never hurrying them, never flurrying them, yet bringing them rapidly along.

No word was spoken; barely a gesture made; yet they worked, master and dog, like one divided.

Through the gap, along the hill parallel to the spectators, playing into one another's hands like men at polo.

A wide sweep for the turn at the flags, and the sheep wheeled as though at the word of

command, dropped through them, and travelled rapidly for the bridge.

"Steady!" whispered the crowd.

"Steady, man!" muttered Parson Leggy.

"Hold 'em, for God's sake!" croaked Kirby huskily. "D——n! I knew it! I saw it coming!"

The pace down the hill had grown quicker—too quick. Close on the bridge the three sheep made an effort to break. A dash—and two were checked; but the third went away like the wind, and after him Owd Bob, a gray streak against the green.

Tammas was cursing silently; Kirby was white to the lips; and in the stillness you could plainly hear the Dalesmen's sobbing breath, as it fluttered in their throats.

"Gallop! they say he's old and slow!" muttered the Parson. "Dash! Look at that!" For the gray dog, racing like the Nor'easter over the sea, had already retrieved the fugitive.

Man and dog were coaxing the three a step at a time toward the bridge.

One ventured—the others followed.

In the middle the leader stopped and tried to turn—and time was flying, flying, and the penning alone must take minutes. Many a man's hand was at his watch, but no one could take his eyes off the group below him to look.

"We're beat! I've won bet, Tammas!" groaned Sam'l. (The two had a long-standing

wager on the matter.) "I allus knoo hoo 'twould be. I allus told yo' th' owd tyke—" Then breaking into a bellow, his honest face crimson with enthusiasm: "Coom on, Master! Good for yo', Owd Un! Yon's the style!"

For the gray dog had leapt on the back of the hindmost sheep; it had surged forward against the next, and they were over, and making up the slope amidst a thunder of applause.

At the pen it was a sight to see shepherd and dog working together. The Master, his face stern and a little whiter than its wont, casting forward with both hands, herding the sheep in; the gray dog, his eyes big and bright, dropping to hand; crawling and creeping, closer and closer.

"They're in!—Nay—Ay—dang me! Stop 'er! Good, Owd Un! Ah-h-h, they're in!" And the last sheep reluctantly passed through—on the stroke of time.

A roar went up from the crowd; Maggie's white face turned pink; and the Dalesmen mopped their wet brows. The mob surged forward, but the stewards held them back.

"Back, please! Don't encroach! M'Adam's to come!"

From the far bank the little man watched the scene. His coat and cap were off, and his hair gleamed white in the sun; his sleeves were rolled up; and his face was twitching but set as he stood—ready.

The hubbub over the stream at length subsided. One of the judges nodded to him.

"Noo, Wullie—noo or niver!—Scots wha hae'!"—and they were off.

"Back, gentlemen! back! He's off—he's coming! M'Adam's coming!"

They might well shout and push; for the great dog was on to his sheep before they knew it; and they went away with a rush, with him right on their backs. Up the slope they swept and round the first flag, already galloping. Down the hill for the gap, and M'Adam was flying ahead to turn them. But they passed him like a hurricane, and Red Wull was in front with a rush and turned them alone.

"M'Adam wins! Five to four M'Adam! I lay agin Owd Bob!" rang out a clear voice in the silence.

Through the gap they rattled, ears back, feet twinkling like the wings of driven grouse.

"He's lost 'em! They'll break! They're away!" was the cry.

Sam'l was half up the wheel of the Kenmuir wagon; every man was on his toes; ladies were standing in their carriages; even Jim Mason's face flushed with momentary excitement.

The sheep were tearing along the hillside, all together, like a white scud. After them,, galloping like a Waterloo winner, raced Red Wull. And last of all, leaping over the ground like a demoniac, making not for the

two flags, but the plank-bridge, the white-haired figure of M'Adam.

"He's beat! The Killer's beat!" roared a strident voice.

"M'Adam wins! Five to four M'Adam! I lay agin Owd Bob!" rang out the clear reply.

Red Wull was now racing parallel to the fugitives and above them. All four were travelling at a terrific rate; while the two flags were barely twenty yards in front, below the line of flight and almost parallel to it. To effect the turn a change of direction must be made almost through a right angle.

"He's beat! he's beat! M'Adam's beat! Can't make it nohow!" was the roar.

From over the stream a yell—

"Turn 'em, Wullie!"

At the word the great dog swerved down on the flying three. They turned, still at the gallop, like a troop of cavalry, and dropped, clean and neat, between the flags; and down to the stream they rattled, passing M'Adam on the way as though he was standing.

"Weel done, Wullie!" came the scream from the far bank; and from the crowd went up an involuntary burst of applause.

"Ma word!"

"Did yo' see that?"

"By gob!"

It was a turn, indeed, of which the smartest team in the galloping horse-gunners might well have been proud. A shade later, and

they must have overshot the mark; a shade sooner, and a miss.

"He's not been two minutes so far. We're beaten—don't you think so, Uncle Leggy?" asked Muriel Sylvester, looking up piteously into the parson's face.

"It's not what I think, my dear; it's what the judges think," the parson replied; and what he thought their verdict would be was plainly writ on his face for all to read.

Right on to the centre of the bridge the leading sheep galloped and—stopped abruptly.

Up above in the crowd there was utter silence; staring eyes; rigid fingers. The sweat was dripping off Long Kirby's face; and, at the back, a green-coated bookmaker slipped his note-book in his pocket, and glanced behind him. James Moore, standing in front of them all, was the calmest there.

Red Wull was not to be denied. Like his forerunner he leapt on the back of the hindmost sheep. But the red dog was heavy where the gray was light. The sheep staggered, slipped, and fell.

Almost before it had touched the water, M'Adam, his face afire and eyes flaming, was in the stream. In a second he had hold of the struggling creature, and, with an almost superhuman effort, had half thrown, half shoved it on to the bank.

Again a tribute of admiration, led by James Moore.

The little man scrambled, panting, on to the bank and raced after sheep and dog. His face was white beneath the perspiration; his breath came in quavering gasps; his trousers were wet and clinging to his legs; he was trembling in every limb, and yet indomitable.

They were up to the pen, and the last wrestle began. The crowd, silent and motionless, craned forward to watch the uncanny, white-haired little man and the huge dog, working so close below them. M'Adam's face was white; his eyes staring, unnaturally bright; his bent body projected forward; and he tapped with his stick on the ground like a blind man, coaxing the sheep in. And the Tailless Tyke, his tongue out and flanks heaving, crept and crawled and worked up to the opening, patient as he had never been before.

They were in at last.

There was a lukewarm, half-hearted cheer; then silence.

Exhausted and trembling, the little man leant against the pen, one hand on it; while Red Wull, his flanks still heaving, gently licked the other. Quite close stood James Moore and the gray dog; above was the black wall of people, utterly still; below, the judges comparing notes. In the silence you could almost hear the panting of the crowd.

Then one of the judges went up to James Moore and shook him by the hand.

The gray dog had won. Owd Bob o' Kenmuir had won the Shepherds' Trophy outright.

A second's palpitating silence; a woman's hysterical laugh,—and a deep-mouthed bellow rent the expectant air: shouts, screams, hat-tossings, back-clappings blending in a din that made the many-winding waters of the Silver Lea quiver and quiver again.

Owd Bob o' Kenmuir had won the Shepherds' Trophy outright.

Maggie's face flushed a scarlet hue. Wee Anne flung fat arms toward her triumphant Bob, and screamed with the best. Squire and parson, each red-cheeked, were boisterously shaking hands. Long Kirby, who had not prayed for thirty years, ejaculated with heartfelt earnestness, "Thank God!" Sam'l Todd bellowed in Tammas's ear, and almost slew him with his mighty buffets. Among the Dalesmen some laughed like drunken men; some cried like children; all joined in that roaring song of victory.

To little M'Adam, standing with his back to the crowd, that storm of cheering came as the first announcement of defeat.

A wintry smile, like the sun over a March sea, crept across his face.

"We might a kent it, Wullie," he muttered, soft and low. The tension loosed, the battle lost, the little man almost broke down. There were red dabs of color in his face; his eyes

were big; his lips pitifully quivering; he was near to sobbing.

An old man—utterly alone—he had staked his all on a throw—and lost.

Lady Eleanour marked the forlorn little figure, standing solitary on the fringe of the uproarious mob. She noticed the expression on his face; and her tender heart went out to the lone man in his defeat.

She went up to him and laid a hand upon his arm.

"Mr. M'Adam," she said timidly, "won't you come and sit down in the tent? You look so tired! I can find you a corner where no one shall disturb you."

The little man wrenched roughly away. The unexpected kindness, coming at that moment, was almost too much for him. A few paces off he turned again.

"It's reel kind o' yer ladyship," he said huskily; and tottered away to be alone with Red Wull.

Meanwhile the victors stood like rocks in the tideway. About them surged a continually changing throng, shaking the man's hand, patting the dog.

Maggie had carried wee Anne to tender her congratulations; Long Kirby had come; Tammis, Saunderson, Hoppin, Tupper, Londesley—all but Jim Mason; and now, elbowing through the press, came squire and parson.

"Well done, James! well done, indeed! Knew you'd win! told you so—eh, eh!" Then facetiously to Owd Bob: "Knew you would, Robert, old man! Ought to—Robert the Dev—musn't be a naughty boy—eh, eh!"

"The first time ever the Dale Cup's been won outright!" said the Parson, "and I dare say it never will again. And I think Kenmuir's the very fittest place for its final home, and a Gray Dog of Kenmuir for its winner."

"Oh, by the by!" burst in the squire. "I've fixed the Manor dinner for to-day fortnight, James. Tell Saunderson and Tupper, will you? Want all the tenants there." He disappeared into the crowd, but in a minute had fought his way back. "I'd forgotten something!" he shouted. "Tell your Maggie perhaps you'll have news for her after it—eh! eh!"—and he was gone again.

Last of all, James Moore was aware of a white, blotchy, grinning face at his elbow.

"I maun congratulate ye, Mr. Moore. Ye've beat us—you and the gentlemen—judges."

"'Twas a close thing, M'Adam," the other answered. "An' yo' made a gran' fight. In ma life I niver saw a finer turn than yours by the two flags yonder. I hope yo' bear no malice."

"Malice! Me? Is it likely? Na, na. 'Do onto ivery man as he does onto you—and somethin' over,' that's my motter. I owe ye mony a good turn, which I'll pay ye yet. Na.

na; there's nae good fechtin' again fate—
and the judges. Weel, I wush you well o'
yer victory. Aiblins' twill be oor turn next."

Then a rush, headed by Sam'l, roughly
hustled the one away and bore the other off
on its shoulders in boisterous triumph.

In giving the Cup away, Lady Eleanour made
a prettier speech than ever. Yet all the while
she was haunted by a white, miserable face;
and all the while she was conscious of two
black moving dots in the Murk Muir Pass op-
posite her—solitary, desolate, a contrast to the
huzzaing crowd around.

That is how the champion challenge Dale
Cup, the world-known Shepherds' Trophy,
came to wander no more; won outright by the
last of the Gray Dogs of Kenmuir—Owd Bob.

Why he was the last of the Gray Dogs is
now to be told.

PART VI

THE BLACK KILLER