

composition, and with the mother as strong in her heart as ever, though she lost the last of her children more than twenty years ago."

We found the good woman sitting beside a small but very cheerful fire. The hearth was newly swept, and the floor newly sanded; and, directly fronting her, there was an empty chair, which seemed to have been drawn to its place in the expectation of some one to fill it.

"You are going to leave me, Robert, my bairn," said the woman, "an' I kenna how I sall ever get on without you. I have almost forgotten, sin' you came to live with me that I have neither children nor husband." On seeing me she stopped short.

"An acquaintance," said my companion, "whom I have made bold to bring with me for the night; but you must not put yourself to any trouble, mother; he is, I dare say, as much accustomed to plain fare as myself. Only, however, we must get an additional pint of *yill* from the *clachan*; you know this is my last evening with you, and was to be a merry one, at any rate." The woman looked me full in the face.

"Matthew Lindsay!" she exclaimed, "can you have forgotten your poor old aunt Margaret!" I grasped her hand.

"Dearest aunt, this is surely most unexpected! How could I have so much as dreamed you were within a hundred miles of me?" Mutual congratulation ensued.

"This," she said, turning to my companion, "is the nephew I have so often told you about, and so often wished to bring you acquainted with. He is, like yourself, a great reader and a great thinker, and there is no need that your proud, kindly heart should be jealous of him; for he has been ever quite as poor, and maybe the poorer