

trepanned by a recruiting party, — and there were strange arts used for the purpose fifty years ago, — the case was a difficult one indeed if Mr. Forsyth did not succeed in restoring him to his friends. He acted as a sort of general agent for the district, and in every instance acted without fee or reward. The respect in which he was held by the people was shown by the simple title by which he was on every occasion designated. They all spoke of him as “the Maister.” “Is the Maister at home?” or, “Can I see the Maister?” were the queries put to his servants by the townspeople perhaps ten times a day. Masters were becoming somewhat common in the country at the time, and esquires not a great deal less so; but the “Maister” was the designation of but one gentleman only, and the people who used the term never forgot what it meant.

In all his many acts of kindness the merchant was well seconded by his wife, whose singularly compassionate disposition accorded well with his own. She had among the more deserving poor a certain number to whom she dealt a regular weekly allowance, and who were known to the townspeople as “Mrs. Forsyth’s pensioners.” Besides, rarely did she suffer a day to pass without the performance of some act of charity in behalf of the others who were without the pale; and when sickness or distress visited a poor family, she was sure to visit it too. Physicians were by no means so common in the country at the time as they have since become; and, that she might be the more useful, Mrs. Forsyth, shortly after her marriage, had devoted herself, like the ladies of an earlier period, to the study of medicine. Her excellent sense more than compensated for the irregularity of her training; and there were few professors of the art of healing in the district whose prescriptions were more implicitly or more success-