

two, apparently quite in a flurry,—“O come, come away,” she said, “I have been seeking you ever so long.” “Is this you, L——?” was the staid reply: “Why, what now?—you have run yourself out of breath.” The young lady was, I saw, very pretty; and, though in her nineteenth year at the time, her light and somewhat *petite* figure, and the waxen clearness of her complexion, which resembled rather that of a fair child than of a grown woman, made her look from three to four years younger. And as if in some degree still a child, her two lady friends seemed to regard her. She stayed with them scarce a minute ere she tripped off again; nor did I observe that she favored me with a single glance. But what else could be expected by an ungainly, dust-besprinkled mechanic in his shirt-sleeves, and with a leathern apron before him? Nor *did* the mechanic expect aught else; and when informed long after, by one whose testimony was conclusive on the point, that he had been pointed out to the young lady by some such distinguished name as “the Cromarty poet,” and that she had come up to her friends somewhat in a flurry, simply that she might have a nearer look of him, he received the intelligence somewhat with surprise. All the first interviews in all the novels I ever read are of a more romantic and less homely cast than the special interview just related; but I know not a more curious one.

Only a few evenings after, I met the same young lady, in circumstances of which the writer of a tale might have made a little more. I was sauntering, just as the sun was sinking, along one of my favorite walks on the Hill,—a tree-skirted glade,—now looking out through the openings on the ever-fresh beauties of the Cromarty Frith, with its promontories, and bays, and long lines of winding shore, and anon marking how redly the slant light fell through interstitial gaps on pale lichened trunks and huge boughs, in the deeper recesses of the wood,—when I found myself unexpectedly in the presence of the young lady of the previous evening. She was sauntering through the wood as leisurely as myself,—now and then dipping into a rather bulky volume which she carried,