

worse than useless advices on other people who did not want them, and could not take them, and had no need of them. As the work goes on, however, the interest increases ; there are new characters introduced, truthful glimpses of the Scotch people given, the incidents thicken, and the narrative, though always quiet, as becomes the grave and gentle narrator, gathers headway, and grows more rapid. We know few things more masterly than the character of Rhoda, a wild, clever, ill-taught girl, brought up by a reckless, extravagant father, who, after utterly neglecting her himself, introduces her into the house of her half-sister, an excellent but somewhat proud and cold woman, who evinces but little sympathy for her provoking and haughty but very unhappy relation. Mrs Margaret, however, after encountering many a rebuff, at length wins her ; and there are few things finer in our novel literature than the scene in which she does so :—

“ As I was going to my bed, I tarried in the long gallery, where Miss Rhoda’s door opened into, to look at the bonnie harvest moon mounting in the sky, the which was so bright upon the fields and the garden below the window, that I could not pass it by without turning aside to glance upon the grand skies, and the warm earth, with all routh and plenty yet upon her breast, that were both the handiwork of the Lord. I had put my candle upon a table at the door of my own room ; and as I was standing here, I heard a sound of crying and wailing out of Miss Rhoda’s room. It was not loud, but for all that it was very bitter, as if the poor bairn was breaking her heart. Now, truly, when I heard that, I never took two thoughts about it, nor tarried to ponder whether I would be welcome to her or no ; but hearing that it was her voice, and that she was in distress, I straightway turned and rapped at the door.

“ The voice stoppit in a moment, so quick, I scarce could think it was real ; and then I heard a rustling and motion in the room. I thought she might be feared, seeing it was late ; so I said,—‘ It is me, my dear ; will you let me speak to you ? ’ It was all quiet for a moment more, and then the door was opened in an impatient way, and I entered in. Rhoda was there, turning her back upon me ; and there was no light but the moonlight, which made the big room, eerie though it was, so clear that you could have read a book. The curtains of the bed were drawn close, as Ceey had drawn them when she sorted the room for the young lady, and