

house empty for me, and offers to settle on me fifty pounds a year, whenever I choose to give up my wandering life and go and live with him. But what's bred in the bone won't come out of the flesh, master, and I have not yet closed with his offer. And really, to tell you my mind, I don't think it quite respectable. Here I am, at present, a free, independent tinker, — no man more respectable than a tinker, master, all allow that, — whereas, if I go and live with Bill, on an unwrought-for fifty pounds a year, I will be hardly better than a mere master-tailor or shoemaker. No, no, that would never do! Nothing like respectability, master, let a man fare as hard as he may."

I thanked the gipsy for his story, and told him I thought it almost worth while putting into print. He thanked me, in turn, for liking it so well, and assured me I was quite at liberty to put it in print as soon as I chose. And so I took him at his word.

"But yonder," said he, "is the moon rising, red and huge, over the three tops of Belrinnes, and throwing, as it brightens, its long strip of fire across the frith. Take care of your footing just as you reach the top of the crag; there is an awkward gap there, on the rock edge, that reminds me of an Indian trap; but as for the rest of the path, you will find it quite as safe as by day. Good-bye."

I left him, and made the best of my way home, where, while the facts were fresh in my mind, I committed to paper the gipsy's story.