

**JAMES INWICK:
PLOUGHMAN
AND ELDER**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649617302

James Inwick: Ploughman and Elder by P. Hay Hunter

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P. HAY HUNTER

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AND ELDER**

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JAMES INWICK

PLOUGHMAN AND ELDER

BY
tel P. HAY HUNTER
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WITH A GLOSSARY



NEW YORK
HARPER &
BROTHERS

NEW YORK CITY

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS

1896

© 1896

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TO

R. J. H.

This Book is Dedicated

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JAMES INWICK

I

THE BACKSLIDING OF PATE PEFFERS

YE mind the year whan the Auld Kirk was dung-doun? It was a late hairst that year, an' a mighty puir ane. First there cam a muckle daddin wind, juist whan the staff was a' stan'in deid ripe, an' we'd gotten the roads cut an' a' ready to start, an' it threshed abüne half the crap on the grund. An' syne it begoud to poor, an' it poored on maist o' the month o' September, wi' awfu' jaws an' skelps o' rain, an' no' a blink o' the sun frae the tae end o' the week to the tither. There was a pouter o' snaw lyin on the stooks i' the upland fields afore a' was düne, an' the barley was jimp worth leadin in—whan we cam to pit it through the mill, there wasna eneuch to mak a daacent sample: it was juist fit to feed nowt.

I couldna help feelin kind o' wae for the mais-

ter—auld Britherston, that had the twa fairms o' Toombucht an' Cauldshiel; ye'll mind o' him?—a quait, hairmless man he was, an' never spak an ill word to onybody. He ūsed to gang up and doun amang the stocks o' a mornin, pu'in a heid here an' a heid there, an' lookin gey doun i' the mooth, I can tell ye. We a' kent that he was ahint wi' his rent, and no' like to get muckle o' a let-aff frae the laird, an' wi' the shake an' the weet thegither, an' sic prices as were gaun, this hairst was like to break him. We a' peetied him, for he was an auld, dūne body, an', of coorse he hadna oor prospec's.

Ye can easy understan' that if it was an ill back-end for the maister, it was faur frae pleasant for us workin folk. Oot ilka day an' a' day, takin doun the stocks atween the shoo'rs, an' layin them in braid-band, an' syne bindin them up, an' than haein't a' to dae ower again--never a dry steek on oor backs, an' oor verra buits beginnin to let in, an' the wind comin reishlin an' skreighin ower the muirs snell eneuch to gar ye whistle in your fingers—it was a weary hairst, I can tell ye. Mony's the nicht I brocht a sark-fu' o' sair banes hame wi' me.

There was juist ae thing that keepit us up, like, for there wasna muckle daffin gaun in the hairst-field that back-end. An' that was the thoct o' the gran' times that were comin for the pleuchman, whan we wad a' be set up in

bits o' fairms o' oor ain, an' nae need to dae a day's dairg for ony man but coorsels. An'ra Wabster, wha was first horseman to auld Brith-erston, used to tell us a' aboot it, the time we were sittin doun on the bielly side o' the stooks, haein oor baps an' yill at the twal-hours.

"Ye'll sune see the hinder end o' this, lads," says he. "Nae mair slavin an' swattin at ithre folk's wark. Ye'll yoke whan ye like an' ye'll lowse whan ye like. Ye'll scoug it whan it's weet, and ye'll tak a cairt an' gang an' veesit your frien's ony day ye pleaso. Ye'll a' be maisters thegither; ye'll sit ilka ane under his ain vine an' his ain feg-tree, an' enjoy the fruits o' the yirth," says he.

"I'm thinkin'," says Dave Da'gleish the orra-man — he wasna very gleg o' the uptak, Dave, an' mony's the lauch we got oot o' him—"I'm thinkin'," says he, "that thae craps 'll no' dac up here-a-way, sae nigh the hills. I ettled to pit the maist pairt o' my land under gress," says he, "wi' mebbe twa acres or thereby o' aits, an' a wheen baggies, an' twa-three rows o' tatties. I'm no' heedin muckle aboot growin fegs," says he.

"Houts, ye gowk, that's what they ca' a feegur o' speech," says An'ra; "it juist means that ye'll hae rowth o' a' things. Ye'll get your ain bit lan', and ye'll get the siller to stock it, and syne ye can grow ony kind o' crap ye like."