

## “THE OGILVIAD”.

As an addendum to the foregoing sketch we may here notice a clever little brochure which Dr. Ogilvie's son, James, while a student at King's College, had the repute of being at once hero and part author. This poetical discharge, a small octavo of 16 pages, is one of those rarities which collectors of

local literature prize so much but find so seldom. It had its origin, we believe, in a love affair, but all that comes to the front in its pages is the resentment of the initial insult, a bit of fracas which afforded a deal of mirth to their fellow-students. Who was the insulter or the insulted we cannot tell, both writers claimed being the one and denied being the other, but some one (probably Mr. Grant) having satirised his adversary (Mr. Ogilvie) in some verses entitled "The Ogilviad", the latter replied at once. Attack and reply, probably in MS., went on until the poem, as it now stands, was completed, when Mr. Ogilvie, whose powers as a writer of satirical verse were considerably beyond those of his opponent, collected the whole, and dedicating it to his fellow-students, issued it as "*The Ogilviad, a heroic poem, with its Answers; being a dispute between two gentlemen at King's College. Aberdeen, 1789*". Like every production of the kind, there is an abundance of hard hitting in it; but Mr. Ogilvie's antagonist having to descend to personalities, the conflict soon closed by the more honourable foe declining the contest unless the person who opposed him made himself known. The "Answers", to be written by a young lad in his teens, show a considerable share of literary faculty and rhyming power. To those who are curious over such matters we give the following extracts, the first by Mr. Ogilvie, the other by his rival:—

From the Answer to part I.—

Ignoble coward, I've read thy jingling verse,  
Which vainly strives a combat to rehearse;  
Yourself, ev'n conscious of inferior fame,  
Sent forth your empty rhymes without a name,  
Attack'd your foe beneath the gloom of night,  
And show'd yourself unequal for the fight.  
As when a robber, searching for his prey,  
Waits with impatient haste the closing day,  
Then when black shades involve the dreary sky,  
When night's dim curtain bounds the wilder'd eye,  
Creeps slow and silent near the peaceful bed,  
Where some great mortal lays his weary head,  
Slow draws the dagger, all is calm around,  
He gives the stroke but fails t' inflict the wound.  
Rous'd from his slumbers then his mighty foe  
Stretches his arms to find whence came the blow;

But ah! the cowardly hated wretch is fled,  
 Black night conceals him in a friendly shade.  
 Thus you a nerveless satire strive to write,  
 Like one who shows his teeth, but cannot bite,  
 Willing to aim, you raise the bended bow,  
 The arrow flies, but fails to strike the foe.  
 Forbear, ah! hapless youth, ere 'tis too late,  
 Mourn for the past, and think of Cibber's fate.

From "Ogilviad", part 3.—

A poet has of late begun to sing,  
 Who has drunk deep of the Pierian spring,  
 Ogilvie the man, a name to none unknown,  
 Even from the meanest subject to the Throne,  
 Mov'd with a share of that poetic fire  
 Which animates the bosom of his sire,  
 He now in numbers does begin to flutter,  
 And with his verses all around besputter.  
 Vain is the fool who would with him contend,  
 Or who would dare the poet to offend?  
 A poet who alike is bold  
 A sword to brandish, or a pen to hold.  
 For he the muses constant fav'rite is,  
 Who pour out verses on his godlike phiz.

\* \* \* \* \*

Reader, I pray thee, cease from this to think  
 That I intend great Ogilvy to pink,  
 For should I once but fight with such a sot  
 I'd lose, I fear, more glory than I got.  
 Still let him live, and still let him amuse  
 His fellow-students when they lack of news.  
 The hero's dress I'll now describe,  
 But not by any means deride;  
 With sky-blue ribbons decking both his knees,  
 He proudly struts with unaffected ease.  
 The tiny buttons his green coat adorn  
 That by his sires in former times were worn.  
 The coat itself was bought at second hand,  
 And half a crown was the immense demand;  
 The boots, an ornament to him not mean,  
 Their fiftieth year, I'm confident, have seen;  
 From sire to son preserv'd with reverend care,  
 They now adorn great Ogilvy the bear.

We have seen a copy of the above with a MS. note, in which Robert Alves, an Aberdeen student, and a versifier of

some note in his day, is said to be the author of the "Ogilviad". This can scarcely be correct, for Alves graduated in 1766, was successively schoolmaster at Deskford and Banff, and went to Edinburgh in 1779, where he remained till his death, in 1791.

---