

## Part I.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL AND CHARACTERISTIC

**John Cuthbert, Violinist, Crieff.**—Our music, like its sister sciences, is improving with improving tastes. The further back we trace its existence, the more we understand how difficult it was in less enlightened times to preserve the melodies which enchanted in “the days of other years.” One age produced part of a scale, another completed it. One age invented eleven lines for the stave; another reduced it to five, with the use of the spaces between.

Upwards of three hundred years ago the tonic stave sol-fa notation was in use, and succeeding ages consigned it to oblivion. Recently, however, it has been revived on exactly the *same principles* as then, and called *new*. For centuries notes were used without any indication of time or accent. It is only very recently that the bars came into use. Almost all the older tunes in the old notations cannot in modern phraseology be called music, and they have long ceased to delight any but those who love to trace music in its different phases. Musicians by name in all districts float like phantoms in the dawn; and since the days when Ossian sung, hosts of minstrels have come and gone of whom we know nothing; but they had their influence, and, like the verging wavelets on the lake, they influenced all within reach, and

each generation in succession, down to our times. To the present generation, in our own district, even the names of Peter and Alexander Rogie, who flourished in the early part of the century, are myths ; but they were realities, and musicians besides. They seem as guards set to prevent us from seeing further into the past ; so much have their shadows darkened the vista beyond. Their mantle fell on their nephew, Peter M'Gibbon, who, though he died when manhood was reached, had the abilities to lead for years the assemblies of Glasgow and the West of Scotland. He was a familiar of the then Earl of Eglinton—a famous musician—and both have left their impress on the music of their country. The subject of our sketch was alive when the publications of the Gows made the land resound with music and dancing ; when cheerfulness and mirth were introduced into many a humble dwelling. The music of Scotland was fashionable, and its best melodies made popular through the editions of the famous Neil Gow and his talented sons. The fiddle was soon a household god, and the humble artisans made their homes joyful by the inspiring strains of their native land.

John Cuthbert was born at the Mill of Gorthy, in the parish of Methven, on the 21st of June 1778. Soon thereafter his father removed to the Mill of Monzie, where he wrought about five years, when he died, leaving a widow and three children, of whom John was the eldest. Mrs Menzies of Ferntower engaged him to look after the poultry, and carry the letter-bag to and from Crieff. Her grand-daughters, the Misses Preston, residing with her, were in the habit of engaging Colin M'Ainsh, the celebrated Monzie violinist, to play while practising their dancing. Young Cuthbert, hearing Colin occasionally, took a great fancy to learn, but had not the wherewith to purchase a violin. "Where there's a will there's a way," and he by some means got possession of a horse's skull, on which he put four

strings, and in a short time he managed to play a few tunes on the rude instrument. Mrs Menzies, hearing of this, called him before her one day, when he astonished her by his performances. Taking an interest in him, arrangements were made with the Messrs Bowie, the violinists at Huntingtower, with whom he remained about five years, appearing once a week at Ferntower to report progress. His kind benefactress died about this time, and Miss Preston, afterwards Lady Baird, succeeded to the estates, and John remained with the family till he was about eighteen, when he removed with his widowed mother to Crieff, and began to teach the violin and pianoforte, and was occasionally assisted on the violincello by his brother William. His first pianoforte pupil was the late Lady Willoughby d'Eresby. The first ball at which he was employed came off in the old Masons' Lodge, Crieff, in connection with a county meeting. The other members of the orchestra were Neil Gow, his bass-player, and the Messrs Bowie. This being his first interview with the famous Neil, he felt rather afraid. At the rehearsal, however, Neil said to the Bowies that they had made a good stick to break their own heads, and gave young Cuthbert much encouragement, causing him to lead occasionally during the night, and ever afterwards, when Neil was employed in the district, he engaged Cuthbert to assist. Balls being all the rage, dancing was considered a most essential part of a young lady's education, and envied was the damsel who excelled in this accomplishment. At the balls of the nobility and gentry it was the custom that one or more of the young ladies of the family should dance a minuet (this was a *solus* stately dance) in presence of the whole assembly, and happy and applauded was the performer if she passed through the ordeal without a breakdown. So much was this latter feared, that the intending *dansante* practised incessantly in terror for many months previous to the *debut*. In this graceful

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accomplishment the young ladies of Abercairny excelled.

About 1800 he got acquainted with Colonel Hamilton of Pinketland, East Lothian, who, in company with Colonel Elphinston, Saughton Hall, Nisbet of Dirleton, and Dundas of Arniston, engaged him for three months annually for five years. During this engagement he occasionally played with the sons of Neil Gow at the Edinburgh assemblies. In the autumn of these years he went for two months with the same party to their shooting-lodge at Loch Erichside. In 1804 he and his brother went to Aberdeen to lead the assemblies, and remained about three months at a time for four successive years, and made the acquaintance of the well-known Marquis of Huntly, and his celebrated valet, both being among the first of Scottish composers. Cuthbert was present when the Marquis offered £500 for a violin and violincello (Cremonas), belonging to one of the College Professors, and was refused. The rage for dancing continued for a time to increase, and favourite musicians were generally engaged many weeks previous to the balls taking place. When the late Lord Strathallan received his titles, the festivities lasted from Monday to Saturday. On the Perth estate there was a ball once a-year, which lasted two days and nights, to which all on the estate were invited; and private balls were of constant occurrence. Cuthbert was generally chief musician, and, knowing the Jacobite leanings of many of the guests who usually visited Drummond Castle, he could, when occasion suited, play tunes, the names even of which could "call up spirits from the vasty deep," and set the dancers half frantic—often making them cry to stop that music. The "sound of revelry by night" was the fashion, and births, birthdays, christenings, marriages, and visits were all celebrated by the necessary rounds of feasting and dancing. The lairds mingled with the tenantry, and did not disdain a hulichan with them. Often the laird was best man at



a tenant's wedding. At the balls given to the servants, it was the custom for the laird and lady, and the oldest workman and his wife, to open the ball by dancing the first reel. It was at one of these weddings that Cuthbert had the good fortune to come into contact with Sir William Murray of Ochtertyre, the present baronet's great-grandfather. The music having attracted his attention, the musician was ever after employed by the family as long as he was able to play, being a period of nearly sixty years. The then Miss Murray of Ochtertyre was a famous musician and composer, and Cuthbert was frequently at the house rehearsing her compositions previous to publication. Many of her pieces will be found in the musical repositories published by Gow. About this time the local Militia and Volunteers were raised, causing music and dancing to be in greater favour than ever; and such were the demands for ball music that for many consecutive weeks Cuthbert could only get one night in bed out of the seven. Dancing schools were regularly kept in all available corners, the monthly terminations of which called out the dancing as well as the musical power of the district. The parents of the pupils, having a free pass, generally attended, and revived their dancing steps with a few refreshing reels. The last new country dance was criticised, and all the setting, wheeling, and winding intricacies of the "Duke of Perth" were duly attended to, accompanied with the usual amount of sweating and excitement. During the winter months the dancing-master, besides being the recognised master of the revels, was generally the country model of elegant and polite bearing, and his port and sentiments were more attended to than the instruction and example of the parson and church clerk. He felt his influence, and gave himself jaunty airs, and cut capers during the winter months, which were gradually dropped as the day lengthened. For a time, each succeeding season increased the love for dancing and fiddling.

All concerts and parties generally ended with a ball, and the numerous Friendly Societies springing into existence required fiddlers to play in their yearly processions, and accompany the toasts with appropriate music. On these occasions tams of whisky and toddy disappeared with the usual "Here's to ye," and eternal friendship was vowed under the influence of an evaporating spirit. Customs like these in time told on the musicians, and too often was fiddler and piper synonymous with intemperance.

In 1814 Cuthbert married Matilda Seton, daughter of John Seton, nurseryman, by whom he had five of a family, of whom three—two sons and a daughter—survived him. The sons occasionally assisted him with violin and violincello. He was long the only violin teacher in the district, and his pupils were legion. Amongst the best of these were Alexander Baxter, son of the late respected minister of Monzievaird; Thomas Shields, son Mr Shields, supervisor, Crieff; and J. M'Culloch, officer of Excise. Mr Baxter, being in London, went one evening to call at Ochertyre House, when near the place he saw an old street-fiddler doing his utmost, but coming little speed. Baxter went up to him, and offered to give him a hand, which was accepted. After getting the instrument in proper tune, he stepped out before the house, and commenced with "The Braes of Ochertyre," "Miss Murray," "Glenturret Glen," and other local tunes. In a few minutes the windows were up and a silver shower was the reward. Other families from Strathearn living in the neighbourhood were served in the same manner, with a like result. The old musician had enough to do to gather in the rich harvest, and remarked that it was the best night he ever had, and offered to divide the collections with his unknown but valuable musical friend.

In 1839, after concluding a ball at Comrie, he was anxious to get home as quickly as possible, and hastened out into the storm without allowing him-

self to get cooled after the heating excitement of his engagement. The result was inflammation of the eyes, which in a few years ended in total loss of sight. He bore up manfully in his old age with the sad calamity, and often in the long evenings of winter, when seated by the fireside, he would recite the tales and play the tunes which were popular nearly a century ago, to the delight and amusement of admiring listeners. Age came stealing on, and the cheery old man gradually withdrew from public performances. He continued, however, for a time to enjoy his favourite chair, and call up the sunny memories of other years by the aid of the instrument he so fondly loved ; but by-and-bye his hand lost its cunning, and he died on the 23rd of May 1857, being nearly four-score years of age.

Cuthbert was generally engaged as leader, and when in proper trim, and things going to satisfaction, his music acted like a charm. He was one of the few who could make you feel that he gave forth the feelings of his heart, and his marvellous bowing made the notes spring from the instrument like so many imprisoned spirits rejoicing to be free. His tones were powerful, but in no ways harsh. His rendering of our reels and strathspeys was in that bold, decisive, and vigorous style which is reported to have been the leading features of Neil Gow's performances. He was the last of a band of celebrated Scottish musicians who made native music their study, and raised it to a position it never before attained, making Perthshire the most musical county in the kingdom, and its straths and mountains household words. We wish in vain to hear their like again.

**Apt Illustration.**—Some years before the Crieff Junction Railway was opened, the principal means of communication to the south was by stage coaches to the Greenloaning Station of the Scottish Central Railway. On one occasion a Crieff banker took his way southwards on one of the coaches, and at Muthill the

late Rev. James Walker was picked up. The day being cold, the banker had a good allowance of haps of all kinds. After reaching the station, the banker and minister entered the same compartment of the railway carriage. The minister was accustomed to travel, and had only his comfortable overcoat for an extra protection against the weather. The banker felt chill, and immediately set to work to intrench his position with outworks of rugs, etc. Having one rug over, he offered it to the minister. "Na, na!" said Mr Walker, "but I'm much obliged for your kind offer. The love of happing a person in the way you do is just like sin, the more it's encouraged, the more it creeps in."

**Difficulties of Command.**—Sir David and Lady Baird were accustomed to walk occasionally through their estate of Ferntower. He was anxious for alterations and improvements, but she, apparently more for the love of showing that she ruled than disagreement with his views, would now and again thwart his intentions. Being on one occasion much annoyed at what he considered her needless interference, he remarked that he could command 10,000 men, but could not command one woman.

**Death of a Centenarian.**—On Monday night, 23rd August 1880, about twelve o'clock, Janet Arnott, widow of James M'Nab, weaver, died at her house, Bank Street, aged 101 years and 5 months. She was born within twenty yards of the place where she died, and with the exception of being occasionally a few months a servant in her younger days, she lived continuously in Crieff. Her husband died a quarter of a century ago. For some years latterly she passed a considerable part of her time in bed, but could still sit and chat with much vigour, and the scenes of her early life were quite fresh in her memory. Her sight and hearing were of late much impaired, but her appetite continued keen till within a month of her decease. She continued sensible to the last. The parish register bears that she was baptised 4th April 1779, and was the daughter of

"Robert Arnott and Isobel Garrow, in Pittenzie." Her great age is further confirmed by the evidence of old people (two or three of whom over 80 years), who remembered her a married woman from their earliest recollection.

**Honour at a Discount.**—Previous to Strowan House being built, General Stirling, the proprietor, lived in the house of Lochlane, adjoining his estate. At that time there were a considerable number of tall old fir trees near the house, and the crows had their rookeries on the branches. One day some youngsters had climbed a tree, and were harrying the nests, when the General appeared. He called on them to come down, but they were afraid of him. He was afraid they would fall and be hurt, and he insisted on their descent. After a little parleying he assured them "upon his honour" that he would not touch them. One of them said that they "knew nothing about honour, but if he would say as 'sure as death' he would not touch them, they would descend." The General smiled and left them to their will. As soon as they saw him off they quickly reached the ground and were soon out of the way.

**Marrying for a Consideration.**—About fifty years ago there lived in the Bridgend a woman past middle age called "Kate Stratton." In her early life she had a sweetheart, but something occurred to prevent marriage and he joined the army. It is not reported that any other young man came to woo, and Kate moved with circling years into old maidenhood. Her soldier lover served his time with his regiment, and having learned much of the blackguardism of his companions, he roamed at his own sweet will through the country. Happening to come to Crieff, he made inquiries regarding his *quondam* sweetheart, and on finding that she was still "to the fore," called upon her, and found that she was well, and had just got a fine large pig killed. Old love was renewed, and both agreed to be each other's for life. The marriage took

place in due form, and feasting continued so long as the pig lasted. Finding that there was no appearance of high feeding after the pig was eaten, he again took the road, and she never heard more of him.

**Political Zeal.**—Duncan Campbell, better known as *Millochan*, was in the habit of keeping singing classes in the district, and during the heat of a coming election, about the year 1835, he had a class in the barn of a well-to-do farmer at Logiealmond, who treated Duncan with much kindness during his stay. Soon thereafter the polling took place, and the farmer attended at Crieff to record his vote, which was not on the popular side, and he was subjected to much annoyance and abuse at the hands of the populace, amongst whom, very actively engaged throwing rotten eggs, etc., was the music-teacher. The ill-treated farmer on looking around noticed Duncan, and remarked that he expected better treatment after the kindness shown in Logiealmond last winter. "That may be," was the reply, "but I cannot let private matters interfere with my public duties," and impressed his argument with another egg.

**Taking Things Very Easy.**—There once lived in Crieff a worthy named John M'Ewan. He had learned country weaving in his youth, for which he had no great relish, and preferred any other employment where payment and drams of whiskey were abundant. Latterly the drams were most attractive, and much he did and suffered for their sake. He was a rigid seceder, and occasionally strengthened his orthodoxy with a visit to Comrie on a Sunday, and both in going and coming he wet his throat with the goods sold at the various public-houses by the way. More than once he was found quite oblivious to evil on the Monday forenoons in a park near Strowan. When in need of wood he would go to the Broad Haugh wood, belonging the Perth estate, and select a tree to suit his purpose. He would then put his hand to his blue bonnet and say, "With your leave, Lady Perth,

will I take this tree?" He would then make a short pause, as it were, for the absent lady to answer, and he would then say, "Thank your ladyship, you are always very kind;" then taking his axe, he would fell the tree and have it conveyed home.

The Seceder Session having had John's drinking proclivities before them, it was resolved that the minister call upon him, and learn the facts of the case. In due time his Reverence called and asked the delicate question, "if it were true he drank?" "You are right," said John, "but I only take *one* glass at a time." The minister, wishing to favour him as much as possible, was pleased with the answer and went his way. At the next meeting of the church court, the minister reported the fact of John's saying, that he took but *one* glass at a time. One of the elders, who knew more than the minister, asked, "Did John say what time elapsed between his *one* glasses?" This was a poser.

Mr M'Donald, the Roman Catholic priest, lived in good neighbourhood with people of all creeds, and most in turn did kindly services. The priest had the whole of the ground south from the wool mills of Dallerie to opposite the cemetery, where he cultivated the soil in sweet content, and made a well for the use of the people. These places were known as the "Priest's Haugh," and the "Priest's Well." One year he had a large quantity of green kail plants, and he arranged with John M'Ewan to dispose of them at threepence a hundred. The first few hundreds sold brought John often to the Priest's house with the cash, which was considered losing valuable time, and it was agreed that John collect all the money, and have a day of reckoning when the kail were all disposed of. The plants were duly sold, and the priest meeting John one day, asked if the money was all paid, which was answered in the affirmative, and a day arranged to settle accounts. John told his Reverence the amount collected, and said that he had handed the cash

regularly to Lucky Cameron, the publican at the corner, who could tell him all about it. The priest called on Mrs Cameron, and asked for the money handed to her on his account by John. "Siller for you, Mr M'Donald!" said she, "I never got siller fra' the body but what I gae'd him whisky for. Aye when he gae me threepence I gae him a gill, and the account was aye kept square." The priest understood matters, and as he left the premises was heard to mutter, "Ah, John! John!"

**The Drucken Drummer o' Crieff.**—In former times the town's criers had generally drums, which were beat previous to giving forth proclamations. A bell was occasionally substituted for the drum, but the individual still retained the appellation of "The Drummer." Like too many public officials, these drummers were thirsty souls, and would willingly defer their duties to enjoy a "richt gude willie waucht" wi' ony body. It seems that in the last century the Crieff drummer had to make an annual proclamation at the farm of King William's Town, Madderty, and there being many watering places on the way, he was usually oblivious by the time he reached his destination. After recovering, he would make the proclamation, and on his return home he would, if he could, be as oblivious as on his outward journey. In time "the drucken drummer o' Crieff" became a byeword, and "drink first and then work" was a proverb.

**Putting in a word Edgeways.**—When the last Mr Campbell of Monzie was trying his best to be elected M.P. for Edinburgh, he found it rather up-hill work. Calling one day on an elector for his vote, the elector told him that he would rather vote for the devil than for the Laird of Monzie. Mr Campbell asked, "In the event of your *friend* not standing, will I expect your suffrage?" The elector was non-plussed.

**Let Justice Flow.**—In days when the minister's stipend was paid in kind, a farmer on the brae north



of Crieff Manse sent his servant with his dues of meal to the Rev. Mr Stirling. Mr Stirling had it carefully measured, and the last firloft was something like a lippy short. The servant said that it could be made up the next time, but Mr Stirling insisted on the difference being made up at once; it was his due, and he only wanted justice. The servant went his way, and soon returned with more than the quantity required, on seeing which the minister said he could leave the overplus, as it was not much, and it would be a trouble to take it back. "Na, na," said the servant, "you have got your due, and my master requires justice as well as you."

**Willie Lochlane.**—This worthy, whose name was M'Gregor, was long famed for practical joking. When serving as maltman with Mr Graham, Pittenzie, his drouth was pressing one morning, and his pockets being empty, he set his thinking apparatus a-scheming. At the time a coachman of Mr O'Brien's, at Pittachar, was lying dangerously ill in a neighbouring house, and Willie had a faint idea that he might make capital out of the sick man. He went up to the High Street and west to James' Square, but saw no hope of relief. On looking down King Street he observed a well-known wright taking a look at the signs of the weather previous to commencing work. Willie moved quickly towards him with a solemn air, and said that O'Brien's coachman had just died, and he had better come along with his stretching board, and then make the coffin. This was at once agreed to, and Willie, putting his hand in his pocket, remarked that tradesmen on such occasions generally got a dram, but unfortunately he had not taken any siller with him. "Never mind," said the wright, "I'll put that all right. Just come awa' into Gannachen's, and I'll be a gill." Both went to the well-known public house and had a gill or two, and Willie rose and left. After going up to James' Square he felt uncertain how to proceed, and halted a few minutes to cogitate as to probable results. On

looking down the street he saw the wright with his stretching board below his arm proceeding down the street, and east the Feus (now Commissioner Street). Here was a dilemma. He knew what the ire of the wright was, and fearing the discovery, he went from home, and by the time he got back he learned that the wright had gone to the coachman's door, and on knocking was answered by the supposed corpse. The truth flashed upon the wright's mind at once, and he resolved to be about with Willie at first opportunity ; but Willie kept out of the way until his anger was cooled, and both laughed at the clever trick.

**Mungo Murray.**—This worthy had a cloth shop many years ago near the Cross, and was well known as a "canny Scot." In his latter days scarcely anything new was added to his stock, and most of his goods were a generation old. He had an ancient servant, who got occasional holidays ; and when she would be absent for a week Mungo acted as his own cook and bottle-washer, and to save time and trouble he made a week's porridge at a time, which was put in a basin. This, with a supply of milk, he served for his principal meals till his servant's return. One day other two worthies—Mr Scott, banker, and Mr Leitch, writer—called on him while his faithful attendant was from home, and they insisted that he would give them a dinner. After a time he consented, and they duly appeared at the hour appointed. When seated, Mungo brought forth the basin and placed before them a round of porridge like a grindstone, and invited them to partake. Their stomachs were not equal to the task, and they had to own being done for. On hearing of the death of John Drummond—who was at one time agent for the Bank of Stirling, and reputed to be a man who could, when occasion served, do what the Americans call a "clever" thing—he remarked that "he died with the approbation of all men."

**"Change Arms."**—One day as Sir David Baird of Ferntower was taking a round of his estate, he came

to where a man named M'Naughton and others were erecting a paling. He looked at their work and lifted his arm—he lost his other arm at Corunna—and gave the paling a shake, and expressed himself not satisfied with the work. M'Naughton said—"Tak' yer other arm, sir." Sir David somewhat warmly remarked—"Had you been where I lost my arm, you would not be here to-day." "I was there," replied M'Naughton. Sir David looked at him closely, and asked, "Were you at Corunna?" "Yes, and I was the right hand man of the regiment under your immediate command at the time your arm was shot off." "What is your name?" "M'Naughton." After a short conversation regarding the events of that eventful day, Sir David found that his humble workman was a former companion in arms.

**Proposing Thanks to Singers.**—When the manse of the Relief congregation was being built, a soiree in connection with the event took place in the Old Church, off High Street, and the late Rev. John Martin, the pastor, presided. Speeches and jokes abounded, and as things were drawing to a close the usual votes of thanks were proposed to the various speakers, etc., and the returning of thanks to the vocalists fell to the Chairman. On getting to his feet, he remarked that he was unfit for doing justice to the singers, as he was unacquainted with the art. He would, however, do his best:—"One time at a party a young lady was asked to sing a song. She consented, and on placing herself beside the piano she set to work with fingers and voice. A young gentleman seemed to take great interest in her performance, and turned over the leaves as required. The lady was delighted at his kind attentions, and did her best. At the conclusion of the song she turned smilingly towards him, and asked how he liked the music. He said he liked it as well as any other noise. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I am somewhat like the gentleman. I know the choir have sung, and by the way

they opened their mouths, I think they have sung well ; but I must say that I liked their performances as well as any other noise." Great applause followed this deliverance.

**Tibbie Law.**—During the earlier part of the present century this woman was well known over the district. She belonged to Monzie, and being of unsound mind, wandered at her own sweet will, no one troubling her, and few caring to incur her wrath. One Sunday she appeared at the church of Muthill, and the beadle, fearing that she might show her displeasure, gave her sixpence on condition that she would sit quiet. She agreed, and got the sixpence. The minister had not long commenced his discourse when he uttered something displeasing to Tibbie. She at once called the beadle, and, giving him back the sixpence, exclaimed "that she would rather want the siller and have her liberty."

**Acting on a False Rumour.**—One day the late Mr Alexander Monteath, the laird of Broich, was going to Crieff, and when passing Duchlage farmhouse he was suddenly seized by a fainting fit, and was carried into the house apparently lifeless. A rumour spread that he was dead, and it was generally believed, seeing that he was an old man and in delicate health. He had kept strict watch on his grounds, and those inclined to have a burden of wood from his plantations had to act very warily to be successful. The rumour of his demise set all such restraints to the wind, and numerous parties made free with the spoils of the estate. The laird soon recovered, and in a short time was able to walk about. As he was moving leisurely along one of his carriage drives he espied a party of women with large burdens of brushwood on their backs. He kept out of sight till they were near where he was, and then placing himself in front of them, demanded by whose authority they had entered his plantation. They stood aghast, and could scarcely believe their senses. Was it the laird's ghost? They

were at a loss how to proceed, when one of them bolder than the rest, said that they had been told that he had given permission to take away the wood. "You heard no such thing!" was his reply. "You heard that I had died, and you were taking advantage of my supposed death; but that event has not yet taken place. I will let you go this time, but take care in future."

**Angus Gow.**—In the Reform Bill times, when blood was at fever-heat, Angus Gow caught the infection. That was a period of processions, when, besides the Crieff instrumental band being almost permanently on duty, every fiddle and set of bagpipes for miles round were often called into requisition—Donald Dougal from the Bridgend, and our old friend Archie included. I cannot remember whether Angus went out with the clarionet or not, but he acted as standard-bearer and carried flags and, in the common belief of a general rising of the people, used to indulge sometimes in swearing by his "gutcher's braid swerd." And when Lord Ormelie had been elected member of Parliament for the county, Angus sung a song of triumph on the occasion. The following verse of the first edition is somewhat curious in its way:—

"Brave Perthshire voters, ye did stand  
To freedom's cause like rocks of sand;  
Unshaken, beat the Tory band,  
And gained the day wi' Ormelie."

When told that in the poetical figure of "rocks of sand" he had introduced a simile unstable as water, "I don't know that, chaps," replied the poet; what's a freestane quarry, I wud like to ken, but just a lump o' bucket sand?" Whether Angus was geologically correct or not, the loomshop criticism prevailed, and the questionable figure was altered to "To freedom's cause with heart and hand," and so it stood. A delightful episode from the every-day life of shuttles

and bad yarn was afforded Angus about that period by a sojourn for some weeks at Taymouth Castle. It so happened that a smith and bell-hanger in Crieff was engaged to set the Marquis of Breadalbane's bells in order, and as the smith required an assistant, he had Angus taken from the loom and installed in Taymouth Castle—not, however, as Angus Gow, willing at a moment's notice to jump off his loom in Crieff, but as Mr Gow, an experienced bell-hanger, taken with much trouble and expense from Glasgow. When they settled down in the princely halls of the Campbells they were happy beyond measure; master and man pulled sweetly together. Angus was useful to the smith in many ways. One of his duties was to act as interpreter, doing the Gaelic with any of the aborigines about Kenmore, whose English had scarcely reached the Johnsonian standard. Their chief study was how to prolong their stay at the castle. One might think that their incessant occupation was like some of Poe's verses, all "bells, bells, bells, bells." But no. When left alone the bell-hangers sat them down, and like the Roman augers, indulged in a quiet laugh at the outside world. Angus told his stories, which were not few, and sung over his list of songs, that seemed without end; but one song, "Home, Sweet Home," awoke no echo in their hearts—Taymouth Castle was worth a dozen homes, for a time at least, which the smith would have been willing to extend to a time and times, and half a time, so long as his pay ran on and the labour remained a labour of love. Angus learned something, and that was the names of the tools. The first time they were left alone together the smith thus addressed his subordinate—"Noo, Angus, they think here that ye're a Glasgow bell-hanger, so we maun keep them in that belief, an' it wad look rather odd if ye didna ken the names o' the tools when I wad be wantin' ony o' them. That's a hammer: I needna tell ye the name o' that. That's the pliers, that's the dooker, but that's,

etc. etc.," making Angus go over the budget, repeating the names something after the manner of a medical student reading up the skeleton. But everything has an ending. The time come when all the smith's ingenuity could spin out the job no longer; but during their rambles the smith made the discovery of a gate that had got out of repair and had fallen off the hinges, so the fallen gate was marked as a supplement to the castle bell-hanging. "Man, Angus," said he, "I wish ye wad speak tae the overseer tae let us hing that gate afore we hae tae gang awa'; it'll come better aff your hand than mine." Accordingly, on Angus meeting the great man, he proposed the hanging of the gate. "Can you do work of that sort?" inquired the overseer. "Hang a gate!" replied Angus, "its our principal wark about Crieff;" and so they got the job, and if that gate be not in working trim until this day, it is not for the want of time that was taken up by the smith and Angus in setting it to rights. The gate was the last of the work, or rather amusement; the tools were packed up, and the smith paid a good round sum, as Angus used to affirm; and on the way home the smith bought a cow, and when driving the beast down the Sma' Glen, he, in the exuberance of spirits, remarked, "Lord, Angus, hoo Betty 'ill smile when she sees Bruckie comin';" and so ended the Breadalbane job. Light-hearted Angus died unmarried. The following anecdote may serve as a sort of substitute for a reason. At the back of the hill, north from the kirk of Monzievaird, there is, or at least was, a place called the "Whins," tenanted at that period by two brothers. One of the brothers had one solitary son, the other had none; but both were blessed with a large flock of daughters. With one of these Whins' girls Angus had somehow fallen in love—rather a troublesome quagmire to fall into; and likely he had floundered deep enough, as he had arranged to visit the fair one in her father's house at the Whins on a certain night; but there

was one drawback to the lover's anticipated pleasure—he had no watch. But knowing a friend who had, Angus took him into confidence, and borrowed the watch for the occasion. But the owner of the indispensable chronometer being a prudent lad (I think he is still alive, and may not write the name), attached certain conditions to the loan—first, that Angus was to use the watch as tenderly as if it were his own ; and likewise that he was to accompany him to the Whins in order to see that the first condition was duly attended to. As there seemed nothing unreasonable in taking his friend along with him, Angus agreed thereto, and on the appointed night the two were duly seated at one of the firesides in the Whins, entertaining with the “feast of reason and the flow of soul” a large bevy of happy, smiling country lasses. And Angus did astonish the natives. At all times an entertaining character, he was extra so on that occasion. Sweet were the songs that he sang, and spicy the anecdotes that he tickled them with. But in an unlucky moment he remembered the watch, and forthwith it was produced and consulted. In the “Night Thoughts” Young says—“We take no note of time but from its loss ;” but if Angus noted not the time, he noted oft enough the borrowed timepiece—consulted the unlucky thing with superfluous frequency. At length he ceased returning it to his pocket, and commenced toying with it, twirling the chain and seal round his finger. This ostentatious display of the watch continued a little while, the eye of his companion fixed upon him, his brow getting darker and more dark, till in terror that his old chronometer might be shaken to ruin, he exclaimed, “Now, d——t Gow, if that's the wey ye're tae use my watch ye'll keep it nae langer—lat's see a haud o't here !” The reader can imagine the sudden collapse of Angus Gow's hilarity—the crimination and recrimination that passed between him and his friend—the charge of a spoiled courtship, and the counter-charge of a



spoiled watch, when, having left the Whins for good in midnight silence, and in sullen mood, the love-crossed wooer reached his bed in Crieff marvelling what fiend put the idea into his brain to borrow a confounded old warming-pan of a watch.

**The Fenwicks.**—The last of the Fenwicks, who were well-known watchmakers over a large tract of the country, died in 1875, aged 80 years. The elder, Peter Fenwick, had a great fear of death, and nothing gave him greater offence than meeting old Johnnie Brown, the gravedigger. Johnnie knew this, and he preferred to put himself in his way. Returning one day from a long watch and clock cleaning expedition in the Highlands, old Fenwick met Johnnie in his official capacity carrying the mort-cloth and coffin spokes on his way to a funeral, and felt perfectly horrified. Meeting an old acquaintance immediately thereafter, he expressed to him his feelings in no measured terms, telling that he met Johnnie "carrying a black, greasy thing like a sow's skin under his arm, and whistling, too. He (Fenwick) had just been three months in the Highlands, and he had neither heard of a death or seen a funeral, and every one attended to his own business and nobody was kept looking out for folk to bury." On another occasion, as the old man was going east the town at dawn on a winter morning he met Johnnie, but did not recognise him, and Johnnie, seeing this, said, "It's a fine morning, Mr Fenwick." Fenwick, startled with fear, exclaimed, "Go to h——, sir!" Finding no rest for some time afterwards, he told all his cronies that he doubted that "he would go for't noo, as Johnnie had marked him out for his hole in the kirkyard." Peter Fenwick, the son, had no such fears, and possessed an experienced intelligence in most things relating to everyday life; but, unfortunately, not being a member of any Temperance Association, his habits of wandering about from house to house when in his erratic moods, or toddling, as he called it, rendered him liable to

occasional severe lectures on his debasement of mind and body, which he bore with evident indications of resentment. When strangers, or those with whom he was not intimately acquainted, interfered, his biting sarcastic replies generally put an end to further remarks. On one occasion a publican with a humpback gave him a severe rebuff, and a few words to the bargain. Peter retorted that "if he would not hold his tongue he would take him down to Cook's Dam and give him a good plunge, and gather all the pobtow weavers in the Bridgend to see an antediluvian pud-dock coming ashore." On another toddle a dandy young grocer rated him unmercifully on his conduct in presence of a number of strangers. Peter heard him out, and, looking contemptuously in his face, said, "Man, my mother washed ye in a plate"—evidently referring to the grocer's earliest days, which called forth shouts of laughter. One day he toddled into a merchant's shop, which happened to be thronged with customers, amongst whom were two Free Church ministers, now deceased—the Rev. Mr M'Allister, Crieff; and the Rev. Mr Grant, Braco. The Crieff minister spoke kindly to Peter, and expressed a hope that better times were in store for him. Mr Grant, who had a sort of sneevil when speaking, denounced Peter in Highland accents, spiced strongly with brimstone. Peter patiently heard his fate foretold, and, looking in Mr Grant's face, asked him if he would be kind enough to answer one question, which being answered in the affirmative, "Well," says Peter, "can you tell me why you Highland bodies speak so much through your nose?" Mr Grant could not say. "But I'll tell you," says Peter. "You are so accustomed to the bagpipes that even in your ordinary conversation you require a drone." These answers confirm an oft-repeated saying of the late James Dow—"That it is throwing water on a duck's back to attempt to make a teetotaller of a drunk man."

**An Incident of the Peninsular War.**—Some years ago there died at Crieff, at an advanced age, a man named Peter M'Neil, who for some fifty years previously was well known all over the district as a most successful angler. Peter could get plenty of trout when others did not even get nibbles, and for many years prior to his decease he lived entirely by the rod and line. In his younger days he joined the 68th Regiment, and saw some hard fighting in the Peninsula under Wellington, and was at the taking of Badajoz, which he described as terrible. He was one of those daring men that most regiments possess, having little fear in their composition, and ready at a moment's notice to volunteer for a forlorn hope or undertake any dangerous exploit. On the occasion of a long and dangerous march through a part of Spain he had the charge of a mule laden with stockings. One day the mule fell behind, and Peter, taking matters quite easy, took no thought of evening coming on, and by dark he lost track of his regiment. Knowing that it could not be very much ahead, and being much fatigued, he thought the best way would be to rest at the first favourable place, and by rising an hour earlier he could easily overtake his comrades in the morning. On passing a kind of barn he stopped, and finding the place suitable, he led in the mule to a corner where there was some straw, on which he placed the stockings, and without supper he laid himself down to repose, with his loaded musket placed across the straw. When the regiment halted the roll was called, and he was found awanting; but, as stragglers were coming in, no further notice of his absence was taken. During the night he felt disturbed, and on opening his eyes he beheld a Spanish priest trying to get the stockings from under his head. Peter signalled to him to desist, but he would not, and on further sounds and signs failing, the priest drew a sword and attempted to wound him, but Peter instantly raised his musket and shot him dead. Knowing that there would be

a searching investigation anent a priest's death, he thought it better to decamp, and so, re-loading his mule, he resumed his march, and by-and-by overtook the regiment, and reported what had taken place to the adjutant, who in due course informed the commanding officer. Being in a priest-ridden country, the officers were at a loss how to act, for strict orders had been issued not to disturb the inhabitants, and the apparent murder of the priest would of necessity create unpleasant feelings among the peasantry. In the morning the affair got wind, and the whole district was aroused, and soldiers suspected. The Spanish officials took the officers to task, and they promised to investigate and report. Peter being rather a favourite, and extremely useful at times, his officers were determined by hook or by crook to save him. An action with the French army being imminent, the regiment had to resume its march next day, and the day following it was engaged in battle, and suffered severely. After order was restored, the priest's death was again forced upon the attention of the officers. They resolved, as the easiest way out of the difficulty, to advise the circumstances of the case as reported, and enter Peter in the list of killed in the battle, which ended the matter. Peter could not help himself, and so lost his chance of promotion and pension. Long afterwards, when an order was issued to grant medals to those who had fought in the battles previous to Waterloo, he applied, and received a medal with three or four clasps.

**An Awkward Highland Soldier.**—Not long ago, there lived in Bridgend, and latterly in Burrell Street an old Lochaber Highlander named Duncan M'Intosh. He had a great belief in the old adage that "a man should try and make the best of everything." Like most Highlanders of his time, he enjoyed a tasting of grouse and venison, and he would not go out of his way to let anything of the kind pass him. In later times tame pigeons did as well, and when he saw a few

of them feeding on the street, he loaded his carbine and fired at them, and neither looked nor cared whether or not any person was in the line of fire. More than once some of the lieges ran narrow risks from the effects of the spent shot, and he was remonstrated with but to no purpose; he said it was their duty to keep out of the way when he was going to shoot. In his earlier days, with the spirit of a Gael, he joined a fencible regiment which was marching to Edinburgh. After arriving there, Duncan commenced to learn drill, but was extremely awkward. In the course of a day or two, as he was passing across one of the courts of the Castle with his dinner—a bowl of broth being in one hand and a roll of bread in the other—he espied one of his officers coming along, and having been so far instructed that an officer had to be saluted when met, he felt considerably at a loss what to do when both hands were full. He could not put down the bowl, as there was a considerable incline, and the broth would *skail*, and if he laid down the roll it would be dirtied, so in desperation he raised the roll to the salute as the officer was passing, for which indignity Duncan passed some time in the black hole. As he progressed in his drill his peculiarities became known, and soon he became the butt at which his company fired their jokes. Being on sentry one night he overheard a party of three of his comrades trying to persuade a neighbouring sentry to allow them to get over the Castle wall, but were unsuccessful, and they resolved to try the next; and on nearing M'Intosh one of them exclaimed, "Oh, there is Duncan; he is a good chap, and will let us out." When they approached one of them slapped him familiarly on the back and asked if he could suggest any way of their getting down to the town, but he could recommend none. Climbing the wall was mooted, but Duncan would not sanction it. Close to the wall where they were standing was an ashpit, and one of the party said, "Well, M'Intosh, since you are so

sticking, just turn your back, and we can get over here, and you can swear you did not see us going out," which was no sooner said than done, and the party marched down to some of the public houses, and latterly entered a questionable place in the Canongate, where, to their astonishment, they found some of the officers of the regiment, who ordered the privates out of the house; but they would not go, and a *mêlée* ensued, in which the officers came off second best. The officers immediately ran up to the Castle, and had the roll called, and the absentees' names noted. They were arrested next day, and a court-martial held. The sentries on guard the previous night were called in, but they denied any knowledge of their escalade. The matter went the length of pardoning the three delinquents if they would tell what sentry let them out; but, knowing that the divulging of this secret would be death to poor Duncan, they rather preferred to bear 200 lashes each, during the receipt of which M'Intosh actually shook in his brogues, and for many a night thereafter he did not sleep soundly. A terror would creep over him long afterwards when reciting this nearly tragic event of his history.

**Tit for Tat—A General Out-Generalled.**—About the beginning of the present century a number of gentlemen of mark resided in the locality, and not the least conspicuous of these were Colonel Sir Patrick Murray, Baronet, of Ochtertyre, and General Campbell, of Monzie, who figured in the Indian campaigns. According to the traditions and records of these eventful times, dancing parties or assemblies were very common, and practical joking not unusual. General Campbell, having a number of friends residing with him at Monzie Castle, took the liberty one day of inviting himself and them to dinner at the mansion of his neighbour, the Baronet; so, without any previous warning, the arrival of the General and his party was announced to Sir Patrick and his good lady as they were going to sit down to dine. Both of them

felt a little put about in their unprepared state for visitors, but, notwithstanding, gave the strangers a hearty welcome. The Baronet, suspecting the nature of the visit, took things quietly, and allowed the cooks, prepare an ample supply, of which the General and etc., plenty of time between the dinner courses to his friends were pressingly invited to partake. Previous to the removal of the cloth, Sir Patrick quietly sent a messenger to Crieff, and engaged John Cuthbert and his brother, the famous reel players, to be at Monzie Castle at a certain hour that evening. After a hearty repast, and healths and friendships were toasted to the satisfaction of all, the General and party bade good-bye to Ochertyre; and as they drove along the fine avenues they gave vent in loud shouts of laughter to their merriment at the success of the joke, and the apparent uneasiness of the gallant Baronet and his lady. As soon as the party were gone, Sir Patrick, with some friends, entered the Ochertyre carriage and drove post haste after the General, who had scarcely quitted his carriage at Monzie Castle when the sound of a carriage was heard, and immediately the party halted at the door. The arrival was announced, and the General was perfectly thunderstruck. Sir Patrick, on entering, signified his intention of being present, with a few friends, at a ball in Monzie Castle that night. The General was nonplussed. A ball! He was not aware there was to be any such thing. The Baronet insisted on being present. A cold sweat crept over the General as the thought of a return joke flashed on his mind. "There can be no dancing, as there is no music." This seemed a favourable escape, but Sir Patrick would take what could be had—he would not be particular. The General said there was no music at all, and consequently could be no ball, otherwise he would be exceedingly glad of Sir Patrick's company. On a signal the Crieff players appeared, and on being ushered into the hall, Sir Patrick looked at them and

then at the General, and exclaimed—"Really, General, this is too bad; I knew that there was to be a ball, or I would not be here with my friends, and, in the face of your positive denial of such a thing, the very musicians engaged for the purpose make their appearance. I am determined to do myself the pleasure of dancing with you." The General, finding himself fairly out-generalled, had just to make the necessary preparations, and the night was passed in mirth, dancing, and the best of good humour. In conducting subsequent operations the General reconnoitred more carefully before attempting to storm with impunity the stronghold of "Bonnie Ochertyre."

**John Dougall.**—This worthy was for many a day one of the best known men in the town. He was below the middle stature, and of strong form, with a large, well-developed head. He was for a time letter-deliverer, when the general practice for those who received letters was to pay for their carriage and delivery. John, being of simple mind, often allowed the people to get their letters on the faith of future payment, and too often he had to pay for their shortcomings. One day he was passing east towards Murrayfield Cottage, and on his way he was turning over the few letters he had to deliver, one of which was for the tenant of the cottage. He had a habit of "thinking aloud," and he was overheard to say, "Well, you will not be delivered till I get payment for those that went before you." It is said that his losses in the posting line almost ruined him, and he gave it up for a bad job. He afterwards went largely into cultivating plots of ground, and had some "pecks" on Broich estate and an acre or two on the Braes of Alichmore. To suit his undertakings he had an unusually large barrow made, with which he wheeled his implements, crop, etc., as required. Living in the middle of the town his peregrinations to and from the Braes up and down hill were no joke, and his loads were no shams. As he passed up and down the Bridgend the weaving



fraternity did their best to take their fun off him, but it was seldom that they succeeded. The following is a specimen of the talk they would enter into:—One dinner hour he was passing up with a large quantity of potatoes in his barrow, when a number of weavers were sitting on the footpath opposite Deacon Roy's house, and one of them remarked that he had a large barrowful. John halted, and replied, "If it were not for the quickness of the delivery I would have taken half a boll more." Another weaver remarked that it was a very large barrow he had. John replied, "It was a good size, and he could hurl Torleum (a large wooded hill in sight) into the Loch of Balloch with it in seven years." On another occasion he was passing during a very heavy rain, and a voice from inside one of the doors said that it was a very wet day. "Oh," said John, "its raining a small dag." His habit of talking to himself, or thinking aloud, was remarkable for the curious expressions and train of thought brought out. One afternoon when returning to Crieff from the farm of South Forr with a burden of grass on his back, a farm servant happening to be going the same road overtook him, and as he was in the act of passing he heard John humming to himself, and he stopped short to hear what he was saying. After a few preliminary hums he cleared his throat and said—"I've been a member of the Church of Christ and parish of Crieff for more than fifty years." Another *entr'acte* of hums followed, and then he said—"If any man was to come to me with a load of meal I would turn my back and do my best to take it into my house; but if I had to take it upstairs I need not try it, for I have been failing these thirty years." Another few hums, and "Man was made for action; he must either be doing good or evil," and so he talked and hummed all the way. One Sunday evening he, along with some weavers, were discussing the day's sermons at the corner of King Street, and the subject latterly turned on the last day. Several ideas were aired, and

John in turn delivered his. He said "My opinion is, that the land will be turned into peats and the sea in oulie (oil), and little fire will be needed to set the whole burning." James Rutherford, one of the party, hinted that the Power that could turn the land into peats and the sea into oil, could make them burn as they are. "That may be," replied John, "but don't you see that my plan would make the best blaze." He believed thoroughly in witches and others of a kindred species, and he had no doubts of his Satanic Majesty's prowling habits for waylaying the unwary; but he as firmly believed in an overruling Power who would protect those who trusted in Providence. He said he would do his duty conscientiously, and he knew that no power on earth or air could touch him unless it was permitted by Supreme authority. He died many years ago.

**Hugh Gillies, Piper.**—The earliest bagpiper belonging the town of which tradition faintly speaks was Alexander Rogie, who lived at Pittenzie. He must have been a man of note—musically speaking—in his day, for he owned the house in which he resided. One very windy morning the thatch was blown off his house, and some of the neighbours on looking in found him sound asleep. On being awakened he was informed of the disaster, when he coolly replied, "Weel, if the wind has blawn 't aff, the wind 'ill blaw't on again," referring, of course, to the wind of his pipes. The only veteran piper of recent times was Hugh Gillies, who was duly initiated into the manners and customs of military life and music in the "Black Watch." His form and features were known to every one in the district, and his martial bearing when decked fully in his old regimentals, with pipes in position sounding "loud and clear," made him a most distinguished feature in a procession. His sayings had a strong spice of military parlance, and a halt or "mant" in his speech often gave his expressions a peculiar turn. He was one of the few old men who could take as

much pleasure in keeping up regular musical practisings as any young man. When he lived in Upper King Street the neighbourhood was made vocal in the fine evenings by the martial strains streaming for hours from his pipes, and the sounds were properly divided by the heavy tramp of his foot. He occasionally practised the violin, and a determined player he was. He is reported to have at times performed a tune, called something like "*Soutar a meshie Hadie*," having ninety-nine parts or variations, which took all his spare time for a week to get to the end of it, his foot having extra work among the variations, tramping and kicking them into their own places. This he considered as by-play. His *ne plus ultra* of human greatness was his playing the "Great Highland Pipe." At one time he did not disdain to instruct pupils, and put a notice into his window to inform those interested to "apply within." After a time he considered that the notice might be with propriety put in a more conspicuous place, and accordingly attached it to one of the trees at the Meadow, where the "apply within" created many a hearty laugh. A good story is told of his finding a shilling on the street. He had scarcely lifted the coin when the woman to whom it belonged went to him and said that it was hers. Hugh asked her very knowingly "If there was a ho—hole in her shilling?" She, thinking that there must be a hole in it when such a question was asked, answered "Yes." "Well," said he, opening his hand, "it cannot be yours, for there is no ho—hole in it," and so the poor woman was sold. He took a rather good way of testing the musical qualifications of a young lad who was reported to know a few things in music. One evening, when Hugh was leaning on the side of the doorway, the lad in question came up the street, and Hugh, moving towards him, remarked that it was a good night, and asked him to come into the house, as he wished to say something about music. The lad went into the house, and no sooner was he seated than

Hugh locked the door. A desultory conversation ensued, in which it came out that the lad had not seen a new strathspey called "Stirling Castle." Hugh at once brought the music and fiddle, and, handing them to him, asked him to play the tune. The lad, thinking that there was a reason annexed to the strange proceedings, and determined not to be done, took up the instrument, and rattled the music off at once, on which Hugh remarked that there were too many whirlies in't for him. After a short interval Hugh asked him if he could play "Lady Mary Ramsay's Strathspey." An affirmative being given, he was asked if he would write a copy, which was also answered affirmatively; and Hugh brought a sheet of ruled paper, with pen and ink, and took away the fiddle. The youngster, nothing daunted, asked what key it was wanted to be copied on, for it was all one copying either on A, B, C, D or any other key. Hugh replied that he wanted it put on "its proper key," meaning the key on which it is in "Gow's Repository." It was noted down in a twinkling, much to Hugh's astonishment, and on bringing back the fiddle he put on his spectacles and examined the MS., and asked the lad to play it slowly and he would watch if it were noted as played, which being done and found correct, Hugh exclaimed—"Tha—that brings me in mind i' bandmaster i' 42d." Hugh knew what he was doing, and being satisfied with the lad's abilities, showed his appreciation thereof by offering him the use of all his music books, and promised to learn him the pipes. On one occasion when the instrumental band and Hugh were going to a neighbouring village to perform, something went wrong with the bass drum. Various members of the band tried their best at putting it right, but without success; and they insisted that Hugh should try his hand. Hugh, willing to do what he could, took a look of the instrument, and while operating amongst the ropes, this one and that one was pestering him with advices, till he could stand

it no longer; when, drawing himself up to his full height, he gave the drum a kick, and exclaimed—"If ye st-stick at anything whatsoever, just se-send for a Bridgend person," which exclamation has passed into common expression in cases of emergency. At one time he practised as village barber; but it is doubtful if ever he gave a drier shave than the following:—During a winter season two or three young men were accustomed to serenade some young ladies who resided in the street, and the frequency of the performances at rather late hours became rather annoying to those not interested, and amongst them was our friend Hugh. Suspecting who caused the sounds, and seeing a friend of the party passing, he gave him a signal to speak. Having halted, Hugh, without any reference as to who made the night hideous, asked the young man if "he would be so good as to inform the lads who were in the habit of playing such beautiful music at night that he would give them a ha-ha'penny to play in some other street, as the people hereabout have very bad ears." Hugh died in Stirling several years ago.

**Matthew Don.**—In April 1880, Matthew Don, smith, died in his eighty-third year. He was well known all over the district, and his lithesome figure, blythe countenance, and witty remarks made him a favourite wherever he went. He formed decided ideas regarding things, which at times made him appear a little odd, and he laughed when oddities were pointed out. The oddness consisted in people not conforming to his ideas. He was the oldest member of the Episcopal Church in the district, and for many years previous to a chapel being erected in Crieff, he regularly went to Muthill. There was no dubiety of its being Sunday when Matthew was seen marching along the highway at the rate of five miles an hour, dressed in spotless white trousers, black coat, and a hat polished as his shoes, which glanced gaily in the sunbeams. In church his sonorous voice sounded distinctly in the responses,

and joined heartily in the praise. He was a great pedestrian, and in his younger-days he took a thought, as he wrought at his anvil, that he would like to see St Paul's, London. In a trice he threw off his apron, went into the house, informed his wife of his intention, washed his face, and donned clean clothes, and started for London. In about six weeks thereafter he returned, having travelled almost the whole way on foot. The incidents of the journey he afterwards related were amusing. He again visited London during the Exhibition of 1851. He was well known by a large circle of Perthshire Highlanders, and his appearance at the markets of Killin, Kenmore, and Forthingall was one of the sights of the fair, where, in the centre of the circle of his extensive and varied smithwork, he held all comers at bay, and disposed of his goods with the greatest of good humour. Crowds circled round him on these occasions, and he kept them in roars of laughter. In the winter, when few people went from Crieff to these markets, he would have thought little of taking a hundred-weight of goods on his back, and trudging to Kenmore amid the snow—a distance of 23 miles. He had always a store of goods at these places, which he exposed for sale only at the markets. The companies of tradesmen who formerly went from Crieff to these once famous markets were always glad of Matthew's cheery company. He could sing a good song, and his repertoire ranged from the patriotic song of "Brave Nelson" to the side-splitting "Haggis o' Dunbar," and he used to boast that a singing-master taught him a bass which would suit any tune. For a number of years he had been unable to follow his employment, and he was kindly attended to by some of his family. Gradually his feeble steps became more enfeebled, and he withdrew from the streets. He will long be kindly remembered by those who knew him.

**Somewhat Marvellous.**—We often read of Americanisms, most of which appeared as shooting with a

long bow. We have had in our midst, and have still, individuals who can draw a long bow at a venture. At one time there wrought on Abercairny estate a man belonging to Comrie, named Peter M'Naughton, who could relate extraordinary doings connected with himself, of which the following are specimens:— He had been a servant to General Campbell of Monzie, and one day he and the General were repairing a paling on the north of the Knock of Crieff. The large nails were not going to his mind, and when driving one he gave the hammer a tremendous sweep, which sent the nail out of sight. A diligent search was made, but it could not be found. It so happened that on that day twelve months he was at the same spot, and on hearing a kind of whirring sound, he looked round, and, behold! the nail played clink into the hole he made for it the previous year. Whether the hammer sent it straight up, or made it take the circuit of the earth, does not appear. He was one day fishing in Glenalmond, and, while standing in front of a high rock, he felt his line getting a nervous tug. In an instant he gave a "wap," and sent an eel which he had hooked the whole length of his line up the rock, were it stuck. He pulled, and better pulled, but his hook remained firm. He then went up the edge of the precipice, and discovered five herons ("craiget-herons") fighting, and fixed on his hooks and line. He cried "*Shoo!*" and in an instant he found himself dangling by his line in mid-air, and moving upwards. By-and-bye he was carried away southwards over the front range of the Grampians, far above Monzie. Still keeping southwards, he passed the Knock of Crieff the full length of his line below the wondrous birds. In a little he came into contact with the earth on the Braes of Alichmore, which so stunned him that he had to let go his hold, and the herons went off triumphantly with his fishing apparatus, which he never heard of more. He had thus been conveyed a distance of about ten miles. We

often read about the Comrie earthquakes, but the modern articles are as a "bumbee" passing to what they were in M'Naughton's young days. He said he heard the first of them on a day when a number of people on a farm in Comrie parish were digging potatoes. He, with some others, had graips in their hands, when, on a sudden, they heard a tremendous sound, and, on looking round, the earthquake passed, shaking them to such a degree that the graips were sent upwards like darts out of their hands, several of which were sent beyond human ken, and were never recovered. He was sure they would come down some day. If they still move about in space, the natives west about will be as well to keep a good look-out. One time he drove the General to Edinburgh by way of Gleneagles and Queensferry. On the return journey the ferry boat was unusually long in putting in an appearance, and Peter was most anxious to get quickly over, so as to reach home that night. During the stay the General fell asleep in the carriage. Peter's patience being exhausted, he applied the whip to the horses and they plunged in the water, and by good management and guidance they swam safely across the two miles of the ferry without allowing the carriage to sink uncomfortably. As the noble animals sprung ashore, the rough ride over the stones awoke the General, who, looking back, discovered the unexampled ferry passage, and exclaimed, "Well done, Peter!"

**Willie Lochlan.**—Not long ago there died, at the entrance to the Sma' Glen, a very old man known all over the country in his younger days as Willie Lochlan. He was a man verging on six feet in height, full chested, and very powerful, played the bagpipes, and loved a practical joke. When in his prime he was long serving in Crieff and neighbourhood, and for several years was in the employ of a farmer west from the town. Both master and servant understood each other, and agreed to differ on many points. As one



of the annual feeing markets was approaching, Willie was wondering that his master was making no signs for a re-engagement, and felt considerably annoyed. The master, on the other hand, thought that Willie made no signs that he intended to remain. The market morning arrived, and the master proceeded to Crieff. Willie eyed him, and resolved to go to Crieff too ; and dressing himself partly in tartans, followed the wake of his employer. They passed and repassed at the market place, the farmer taking little or no notice of Willie. Willie felt very keenly, and resolved to engage with the first tempting offer, and soon was arled to a farmer near Blackford. A neighbouring man soon spread the news, and Willie's master felt rather chagrined, and took the first opportunity to inquire as to the truth of the report, which his servant confirmed. An explanation then ensued, and both were vexed at what had taken place. The master tried hard to get him to give back his arles, but he would not. Willie, however, told his employer not to engage another servant till he would see. The term day arrived, and Willie arrayed himself in the "garb of old Gaul," and with a full complement of skeandhus, etc., and the bagpipes under his "oxter," started on the march to Blackford. On his arrival, his new master welcomed him most heartily, and introduced him to the other ploughmen and servants on the town, and then treated him to a tempting repast. Willie all the while looked as demented-like as possible, never quitting hold of his pipes. On sitting down to partake, he cautiously took off his braid blue bonnet, and laid it on the seat, and then with great solemnity tuned his pipes, and run his fingers over the chanter holes two or three times, and as he laid them down, said (*sotto voce*) that he could take no food without playing grace. This being without a precedent in the parish, made the on-lookers stare at Willie's bewildered looks and actions. Bedtime came, but he was in no hurry. The other men all went to their

rest in a loft above the stables. After tiring the patience of the farmer, he made the most minute inquiries as to who were to be his companions, and all about them. He was shown to the loft by the light of a short candle, and found his bedfellow to be the halfin boy. After bidding good-night to his master, he took a close survey of the apartment, holding the light close to the eyes of the sleepers, till, with coughing and trailing his large shoes on the floor, he awakened the whole garrison, who, however, lay still and scarcely dared to move. He then drew out his array of skeans, and proceeded to sharpen them, taking occasionally a determined glance towards the beds, and would now and again move stealthily towards them, and start back as if to hide his knife. On sitting down he would howl a Highland dirge through his nose, and would wind up with whistling a march, beating time furiously with his foot. This sort of amusement continued most of the night. The inmates in the morning rose early, and slipped down the trap ladder, and in the greatest terror informed their master of the dreadful sights and sounds they had witnessed, and would on no account remain on the farm with such a bloodthirsty vagabond. The farmer had his mind made up, for he had listened during the night to the unearthly noises, and resolved with daylight to part as quietly as possible with his new man. On saluting his master in the morning, Willie said it seemed to be a fine quiet sort of a farm-town, and he thought he would like his fellow-workers admirably. The master hummed and hawed, and at last suggested to Willie that he would give him back his arles if he would go home. Willie appeared not to understand him, but on being offered a pound note to leave the premises, it was at once accepted, and Willie, drawing himself up to his full height, placed the bagpipes in position, and to the popular air of "Bundle and Go," returned with joy to his old home, where, to the delight of his

master and old comrades, he related his adventure at Blackford.

**"Whipping the Cat" in the Olden Times.**—About forty years ago, when "whipping the cat" was still the fashion, a small great master tailor named Clow, who hailed from near Greenloaning, was well known in Crieff district. Like most great men of the species, he generally kept two or three apprentices, who taught one another all sorts of tricks and mischief, and the talent was transmitted to juniors after they joined the squad. One day the master and one of the apprentices, named Joe, were "whipping" at a neighbouring farm, where the mistress treated them to a tempting breakfast, to which the master tailor did ample justice, and kept the young scion of the craft doing little more than looking on. Joe felt annoyed at the usage, and resolved to be upsides with old Clow before night. After removing the dishes, the mistress went out to work in the fields, intending to return in time to make the dinner, but left orders to call her if anything was required. The tailors pushed on, and about half-way betwixt breakfast and dinner, Clow felt dry, and ordered Joe to inspect the premises to see if there was any milk to be had. Joe did so, and reported plenty in the milk-house. Both went to the milk-room, and to their great delight found plenty of cream in the churn. Clow lifted a basin, and Joe pulled out the churn pin, and a plenteous stream ran into the dish. Joe said he heard some one at the door, and went out to see; but instead of finding any person he signalled to the mistress to come, and then returned to find his master in the utmost perplexity. The cream had filled the basin and was running over, and he had not the pin to stop the hole. Joe said he thought it was dropped at the door, and as he was going out, the mistress came to him and asked what was wanted. He answered that his master had lost his goose, and was seeking it in the milkhouse; if she would look in she might assist him. She went in,

and on discovering the state of matters—her cream all run out, and Clow bent over the basin calling on Joe for the pin—she completed the catastrophe by giving him a blow in the hinder parts, which sent the master tailor sprawling on the floor, and besmearing his fine plush waistcoat and breeches with the cream. Before he had time to gather his wits she was at him with the besom, which made him desperate, and with a rush he cleared the premises and was soon out of sight in the fields, where, with the water from a burn, he did his best to resuscitate his coverings. The apprentice also retired from the field of action, laughing like to split his chin and sides. Not long afterwards Joe committed some trivial offence, for which his master belaboured him most unmercifully; and Joe again resolved to be upsides with him when a favourable opportunity occurred. At that time bands of tinklers roamed through the country more frequently than now, and many of them were well known at the tailor's shop. One day some of them annoyed Master Clow, and he ordered them off his premises, desiring them never to darken his door again. On leaving they vowed revenge. In the course of a week or two after, when Clow and Joe were returning one afternoon from a "whipping" expedition, they espied the tinklers encamped on the side of the road before them. What was to be done? Retreat was cowardly, and to advance was decidedly dangerous. The master, considering discretion the better part of valour, despatched Joe to reconnoitre, and discover their intentions. Joe went with right goodwill, and was soon hob-a-nobbing with the wanderers. They saw Clow in the distance, and asked Joe what he was doing. He answered that, being afraid of them, he was terrified to come past. They said that they would not harm him, and told Joe to bring him up to get a drink of *Ferintosh*. Joe advised them to give him a fright instead, to which they readily agreed. Joe returned and reported that

things looked unfavourable, and that broken heads or worse were sure to be the result of his disagreement with them. This intelligence was scarcely concluded when the tinkler loons were seen advancing. Clow took to flight, but his pursuers were soon at his heels, and, having caught him by the collar, held a consultation as to whether they should drown or hang him. Clow pleaded for dear life, but they would not listen. A fierce debate ensued. One party was getting a rope ready for hanging, another was preparing for drowning, and in a scuffle that ensued, they gave him an opportunity to escape, which he took advantage of and ran, clearing dikes and ditches like a roe. On arriving at home he was exhausted and out of breath, and almost fainting, he sank on a chair in the corner of the shop. By the time he recovered Joe arrived, and his master upbraided him for not coming to his assistance. Joe excused himself, as he said he saw his master giving the tinks a good pounding, making the dust fly out of their coats like as if carpets were being beaten. The master felt much relieved with this turn of the story, and continuing the strain, told of a dreadful encounter (six to one), but one after another he made them spin heels-over-head like ninepins; and dreading an attack from the whole gang, he picked up his bundle and staff, and was not long in leaving a park or two between him and them. As a climax to the tale, he asked, almost demanded, at Joe how he looked when attacked by the murderers. "As bold as a lion," said Joe. "But you never saw a lion, Joe?" "Yes," retorted Joe, "many times." "Where?" cried his master. "Carrying the tinkers' tents," answered Joe. "That's a cuddy, ye gowk." "Aweel," cried Joe, "ye looked like a cuddy."

**A Coffin Story.**—Some time ago there lived near the bridge of Crieff a Jack-of-all trades named Emsley Drummond. In his younger days he learned to weave, and though he afterwards tried many things he often had to return to his shuttle. Like too many

of his neighbours he took occasionally a glass too many, which kept him often bare of pocket money ; but being a kind of wag, with not a little wit, his pleasing stories now and again relieved his wants, and when the after effects of a ball told rather heavily, he generally joined teetotal, and would "stump" in its behalf until the next fall, and so on *ad infinitum*. Being on the tramp at one time, he found employment at Milngavie, and lodged with a widow, who had a ne'er-do-weel of an only son, with whom Emsley often hob-a-nobbed, to the great grief of the widowed mother. At last the old woman died, and there were only some thirty shillings in the house. The son and Emsley held a consultation, which resulted in both going to Glasgow to buy a coffin. There being no railway, the two set off next morning, and duly refreshing themselves by the way, called at an undertaker's, where, after examining several articles, from eight shillings upwards, pitched on one ticketed £1, which left a shilling or so to refresh on the way home. The thought now flashed on them for the first time, how were they to get their purchase home? There would be no carrier for some days, so there was no alternative but to carry it home with them. Making up their minds to the task, they put the coffin on their shoulders, and away they went. After they had gone some distance out of Glasgow the burden was becoming rather heavy, and at the first public house they reached they halted to rest and refresh, and leaned the coffin against the wall. A gill or two was called and drank, and their drouth was greater than ever, but their cash was done. The landlord would give no "tick," as they were strangers. Another consultation was held, and Emsley suggested that they go back to Glasgow and exchange the coffin for one at ten or twelve shillings, and get the difference, which would amply supply their needs, and the dead would know no difference. The other, after some persuasion, agreed, and out they went. The landlord did his best to get

their load steadied on their shoulders, but it seemed heavier than before, and it was continually losing its balance and coming to the ground. A rope was ultimately tied round it, and each in turn carried it a bit, and so they managed to get it back to the undertaker. Emsley told a plausible story, and a twelve shilling article was given in exchange, and the eight shillings paid back. The two worthies again started for home in high spirits. As they were passing a public house at the outskirts they had a hearty refresher, which heated them to the supreme degree, and set them a-singing in chorus, to the great amusement of all who saw them. By-and-bye they got oblivious, and when they came to themselves next morning they discovered that they had reached home all covered with mud and bruises, and the coffin amissing. The story got wind, and the village wags found the coffin in a ditch by the roadside, and brought it home. Emsley declared that he could give his oath that he carried it out of Glasgow, and that there must have been a highway robbery somewhere.

**John Wright.**—John Wright was one of the most industrious, upright, and successful men of the district. He commenced business in his father's tanworks when twelve years of age. Two of his brothers afterwards also became connected with the works, but in course of years they dropped off the scene, and John was left sole master of the celebrated establishment. Things continued to prosper with him, and he died in 1865, aged seventy-three, reputed to be worth far beyond £100,000. He was much respected, and those who were favoured with his intimate acquaintanceship knew how worthily he deserved it. He was tall, and of stern and commanding appearance, possessed a warm and sympathetic heart, and preferred to do his alms without ostentation. Any shoemaker or other customer, however humble, who acted in an honest, straightforward manner, always found in him a friend. If they found difficulties in the way, such as sickness,

accidents, or any other cause which they could not foresee nor prevent, and which made the needful short on settling days, he heeded not if he had faith in their integrity. He took what they offered, and they got what they desired, without comment. But were a customer, whether rich or poor, to attempt to do a mean transaction, he reversed the treatment, and kept him short in his accounts, and terrible was his ire. He enjoyed a good joke, and could, when he liked, do a smart thing. One day a Highland carter called at the tanyard gate, as was his wont, with a cart-load of sheepskins. It was difficult to make a bargain with him, and Mr Wright, being a little busy, resolved to transact business as quickly as possible, and if possible teach the carter a lesson. He looked carefully over all the skins, and took a note of their worth. After summing up their total value he made an offer for the goods, and, as usual, it was refused, the carter demanding some pounds more. Mr Wright, in great haste, agreed to the demand, brought the carter into the office, and as quickly as possible handed out the money. The carter, thinking that he had sold the skins too cheap, tried to get out of the bargain ; but Mr Wright would not yield, and so the carter took the cash, and went away much discontented, resolving that he would be upsides with Mr Wright the next time. Next time soon arrived, and Mr Wright narrowly inspected the load of skins, and made a fair offer for them. The carter would not accept the offer, hinting that he was done last time, but would take care now. Much "haggling" ensued, with the result that the carter reloaded his skins, and went to Stirling—a distance of 22 miles. Here he had great difficulty in disposing of them, and had in the long run to accept a much less figure than he was offered in Crieff. When next he appeared at the tanworks a bargain was much more easily struck. He often made shrewd remarks which savoured of proverbs. One day an acquaintance was making some severe



remarks on what he considered the small salary a friend of his was allowed by a well-to-do firm. Mr Wright slyly remarked that the fault was sometimes not so much in what was received as in what was spent. One time he was balancing accounts with a trader who sometimes went into company with him for a speculation. The trader examined the balance-sheet, and finding all correct, expressed a little astonishment that the profit divisible was so small, and during the conversation that ensued hinted that it would be a graceful act of Mr Wright to concede a little. Receiving no answer, he thought the thing might be pressed a little further, and said—"Seeing you are a rich man, Mr Wright, you might allow a few pounds to my side of the balance." Mr Wright replied, "A man may have plenty of money and still be poor," and so the matter ended. He had never any objections to assist any deserving person, and did not require much thinking to do so when properly approached. A widow, who kept a small shop of groceries in Bank Street, found that she had not enough of money to meet a bill becoming due, and resolved to make her want known to Mr Wright the first time he passed her door on his way to the eastern tanyard. At his usual time she saw him approaching, and moving up to meet him, told her tale as he walked on, and promised to repay on a named day. He put his hand into his pocket and gave her the sum required in bank notes, without opening his mouth or stopping. When the day of promised payment came round she waited his approach, and handing him the money, returned her heartfelt thanks for his great kindness. He took the cash without counting it or speaking, and walked on. One Friday he was driving in his gig, as was his wont, to Perth, and overtook a townsman travelling on foot. Mr Wright—Are you for Perth? Traveller—Yes. Mr W.—You'll better come up, and I'll give you a drive. Traveller—That will be too much trouble, Mr Wright. Mr W.—Very well; and driving

off, left the traveller lamenting. Both reached Perth in course, and the traveller, knowing that Mr Wright returned at a set hour, was trudging on the road to Crieff in time for Mr Wright to pass. The gig came duly, and the traveller, looking round, asked if he would get the favour of a drive. Mr Wright halted the gig, the traveller took his seat, and it is said no remarks passed between them all the way home. He was a great reader, and touching incidents would bring tears to his eyes. He gave much money away for charitable purposes, and the last letter he attempted to write, and failed, was to enclose a £50 cheque to be forwarded through a friend as a subscription for a charitable object. The respect and esteem in which he was held was fully testified at his funeral, which was the largest attended of any townsman in recollection. His name will long be remembered.

**Three Wonderful Stories.**—In times gone by marvellous tales were not uncommon, and by many listeners thoroughly believed. Each district had its working stock of witches, who kept the "country side in steer," and the thousand and one traditionary stories of their sayings and doings engendered a strong desire to relate superhuman adventures of ordinary mortals. Many of these "tales of other years" float dimly in the memories of the older inhabitants of the strath, and will soon pass away. The three following adventures were well known in the early days of this century, and were related by one Archie Tainsh, a grandfather of Andrew Smith, the town's crier, as facts of his own experience, for which he could give undoubted testimony. The narrow minds of the present generation will receive them dubiously. The story goes that once on a time, when Archie was thatching an outhouse on the south side of East High Street, the wind began to rise, and soon became so annoying that he had no sooner placed a wisp of straw in its proper position than it was blown over the house.

Seeing how things were tending, and to save part of his work, he fetched a harrow and placed it upon the thatch. For a time this did nicely, and he went into the house to have a quiet snuff. On again going out of doors he saw that the wind had risen to a gale, and its increasing violence was beginning to lift the edge of the thatch and harrow. He immediately mounted the ladder, and placed himself on the harrow to keep it down. While sitting there musing as to what next, a whirlwind whirled round to the place and lifted both him and the harrow over the roof, and on rising into mid-air they spun like a "peerie." On passing east over Tomacknock, Archie began to apprehend that something no canny was going on, and in the act of collecting his bewildered senses, the gale suddenly ceased, and he dropped behind a dyke on Greenhead farm, about a mile away, and was much stunned. On recovering a little, he was congratulating himself on his narrow escape, and making arrangements to carry home the harrow, when he observed another whirlwind coming rapidly along the dyke-side, twirling sheaves, clothes, branches of trees, and a cart, like bits of paper, and before he could get out of the way he was again spinning at a great rate on his harrow in the midst of the heterogeneous mass, the cart going at it like an Irish shillelah, and the wheels booming round like the scutchions of a lint mill in close proximity to his head. On feeling the harrow thump on something (which turned out to be the roof he left), he instinctively clutched it, when several sheaves whisked in his face and made him dip his head just in time to save his skull, for the cart was sweeping round with great force, and the trams on grazing his head hit the ladder, which was leaning against the house, and sent it into fifty pieces, and the cart itself struck the gable of another house with a tremendous smash, and went into a thousand fragments. Archie slipped quietly down from the roof, and believing that a Monzie witch who had a grudge at him was at the

bottom of the whole affair, he considered quietness best, and he kept his own counsel. One very warm day when he was tending a drove of oxen on Craig Rossie, south from Auchterarder, the herd suddenly erected their tails, and, turning their heads westwards, swept down the mountain side like an avalanche, and passed by Blackford at full speed. Archie kept his eye on them till they neared Greenloaning. Thinking that they would turn to the left up over the Sheriffmuir, he ascended the highest part of the Craig, and kept a good look-out. In a short time the leading files moved into sight on the ridge of the muir, some five miles off. With great presence of mind he lifted a large stone, and giving it a tremendous heave, sent it spinning through the sky in a direct line to the top of the muir, where it descended with great force into a pool, and sent water, mud, and moss in the faces of the foremost cattle, making them wheel about and rush in the utmost confusion down the hill. When they reached the level they reformed their ranks, corrected distances, and soon returned past Blackford at the double, and were in a little occupying their original ground on Craig Rossie, to the great delight of their shepherd, whose gladness found vent in chanting a snatch of the good old Highland song called, what a Lowlander would spell, "*Couie meshan raut more*," meaning, "I'll keep the high road," but better known of late years as "Kafoozlum." After an extraordinary wet and stormy morning, Archie was journeying on the road leading from Crieff to Auchterarder. When nearing Kinkell he observed the river Earn rolling from bank to brae in a tremendous flood. It happened to be a preaching day with the people of Kinkell, and they were assembled in the kirk. On nearing the kirk, Archie found the river which passes close by surging and sweeping up round the walls of the edifice. As he stood in amazement watching the progress of the torrent, he noticed a large something rushing and spouting up the water from the Earn

towards the kirk, and when it was opposite the building it made a halt, as if listening, and looked like a whale. After it surveyed the premises for a minute or so, it opened its tremendous jaws, and with a bolt swallowed the edifice and congregation entire, and glided into the deep water. When moving down past where Archie was standing, he distinctly heard the congregation concluding a strain of "Bangor," and then rising to commence the next part of the service.

**A Touch of the Marvellous.**—There once lived in town a worthy member of the gentle craft of shoemakers, named Sandy Crerar. He could tell or make a good story as he plied his busy hands, and many of the country lads looked forward to the evening they were to wait for an hour or two beside him when repairing their "understandings." Many of them vied with him in story-telling, and seldom did they take their departure without feeling that he was more than a match for any of them. On one occasion, after a Perth market, a few farm servants called, and after a good heat at the fire the subject of discussion turned to Perth, and the sights and wonders of the feeing time. Each in turn told his queerest story, and latterly one related what he saw at the shows on the Inches. After dilating largely on the marvels of leaping, jumping, and dwarfs dancing with houses on their backs, he went minutely into a description of a merryman hopping and dancing up a ladder till he reached the top, when, passing through between the upper spars, he descended on the other side, and "all the time the ladder was leaning on nothing." "Man," said Sandy, "I've seen that often; but one time I was in Perth, and it was not at a market, I saw a merryman jumping and louping up a longer ladder than the one you saw, and after he went to the top, *he drew the ladder up after him.*"

**A Reason Why.**—Once on a time, when Monzie sacraments were largely patronised, a worthy old Crieff resider of the West End, named John, along

with some young scions of his family, went north to see what was going on. After putting a bawbee into the plate and hearing a discourse, they visited other parts of the village, where they saw the varied modes of drinking carried on in and out of doors, and witnessed a determined fight on the bridge. On their way home, when passing one of the wickets in Monzie Castle Park, the famed Patie Whisks confronted them, holding out his hat for a copper, a number of which rattled in the crown. "Man, Patie," said John, "I wonder you would be at that kind of work to-day, and it the sacrament." "Man, John," answered Patie, "it just comes aince a year, and I hae just ae chance, take it or la'ed."

**Tailor versus Saddler.**—Much joking is often got up at the tailor's expense, the reason for which is difficult to understand. We have heard a good story concerning "leein' Davie Tamson," the tailor, one of old Crieff's worthies, who is immortalised in song. The story runs that one evening a selection of the leading merchants and tradesmen met in the Drummond Arms, and had "just plenty," and considering that there would be better fun if Davie Tamson could be got, sent for him, and he soon put in an appearance. Learning that he was intended to be the butt of the company, he resolved to bide his time. One of those who was most assiduous in his annoyance was a swell saddler named Stewart. Davie, after being severely cornered, said to him—"I think we sometimes visit at the same gentlemen's houses." "Oh yes," said the saddler. "We both go to Ferntower," said Davie. "Certainly," said the saddler. "But with this difference," said Davie, "I am shown into the drawing-room, and you are shown into the stables."

**Beadle and Precentor of the West Church—Musical Tuition under Difficulties.**—Beadles and precentors are important personages in all rural parishes. The beadle is often an oldish man, and intimately acquainted with all the ins and outs of the

family affairs within the bounds. His good offices are in request at baptisms and funerals, and in time he comes to consider that these things can only be properly managed by himself. Precentors are a kind of birds of passage. The singing apparatus is apt to get out of order and used up long before what is necessary to make a beadle valuable gets deranged, and hence a cause of change, thus in most cases making the latter the senior officer. Little jealousies occasionally crop up, though not to such an extent as to disturb the equanimity of the parish, or prevent them from enjoying a pinch of snuff or a gill with any decent parishioner. The precentor cannot feel more pride in slurring up the turns of "Gainsborough" or "Arnolds" than the beadle does when marching up the turns of the pulpit stair with the pulpit Bible beneath his arm. At one time, when there was no settled minister in the West Church of Crieff, a worthy, named Emsley Drummond, was precentor, and Sandy Scott, a man of short stature, was beadle. The latter, being a musical enthusiast, considered himself both officially and musically superior, and occasionally hinted that the psalm-singing might be better than it was. Emsley was riled at this, and resolved to have his revenge. Sandy at this time was *factotum* for the church. He gave stranger ministers instructions how to proceed, and also "lifted" the collections, for there were no elders then. Emsley often insisted to have day about at the "plate," but Sandy would not yield a point. The salary attached to the beadleship was allowed for some time to remain unpaid, and Sandy's appeals to the Presbytery anent his arrears were unheeded. The collections some way or other did not cover the outlay, and the beadle was at a loss what to do. A Presbytery meeting was to be held in the church, and Emsley advised the beadle to keep the doors locked, and allow the reverend brethren to send for the keys. Sandy considered the advice wholesome, and did as advised. The Presbytery appeared at the

appointed time, and found the doors shut. They felt quite indignant, and the clerk sought out the beadle, and both repaired to the church-gate, where the reverend brethren had assembled. The beadle told them that he would neither open the doors nor give up the keys till all arrears were settled. This was satisfactorily arranged, and the brethren got into the church, and transacted their business. On another Presbyterianial occasion, the meeting extended beyond twilight, and the clerk called Sandy, and instructed him to procure candles. Sandy, in reply, said that the last candles he got for them were not paid, and he would not trust them another penny. The clerk felt his pockets, but could find no coppers, as also did others of the Court. At last the minister of Monzie found a sixpence in his pocket, which cleared arrears, and left balance enough to procure more light. One evening the beadle and precentor had a confidential crack, and they came to the conclusion that a choir in the church would be an improvement, and help to draw better audiences—the beadle undertaking to conduct practisings. A canvass of the congregation was made, and a number promised to join; but when the night of meeting came only some half-dozen waggish young fellows put in an appearance at the vestry. It was agreed that, as the nights were cold, the next meeting should be in the beadle's house. Sandy was glad at this, as it would give him a better chance of instructing them by using his fiddle. Meeting after meeting was held with no apparent improved results, though there was no lack of fun. A favourite tune, called "Castlemilk," occupied much attention; but the wags were continually doing something amiss, and the chords, or, as they were occasionally termed, ropes, would not, as the beadle said, "complouter." The fiddling was the great attraction. Sandy was not what is termed a ready reader, so lots of difficulties stood in the way. After getting himself properly seated, and the "specs" properly adjusted on his



nose, a good pinch of snuff or *huzel* was taken, and one of the wags trimmed the candle. The fiddle was then brought out and properly tuned to what was said to be the best A pitchfork in the parish. The instrument was then placed in position, the fingers of the left hand properly set, and a well-rosined bow in the right hand ready for use. The music-book being opened, he took a glance at the first note, then a look to his fingers, and with a long draw of the bow sounded a note; then another glance at the book, another look at his fingers, and then another draw, and so on, till he considered the tune was played. The wags, or "band," as he termed them, then joined in, but they could never finish the music together. Various excuses were always ready—a cold—a damp night—had not been practising, or had been practising too much—did not think the fiddle in tune with the pitchfork—not keeping proper time—singing too slow, or singing too quick—or the candle not properly trimmed. The candle would be snuffed, and the machinery set agoing again, but all to no purpose. The proceedings would then degenerate into a *conversazione*, with a smoking accompaniment. Sandy, when in proper humour, would be induced to give his experiences by way of choir instructions, of which the following is a specimen:—"Well, lads, ye see that thing at the beginning o' that tune like a B; that is called a *flat*—it brings doon a note a semitone. Look at that other tune; you see a small thing there like a midge—that is a *sharp*; it raises a note a semitone. Noo, anither thing connected wi' thae twa things, is the flats mak' a' tunes minors, and sharps mak' a' tunes majors. Mr Walker, the minister o' Muthill, agrees wi' me in this." "And what for no?" said Emsley. "If they dinna do that, there is nae use o' them. In fact, it's my humble opinion that a' music would do better wantin' them, and we would then sing a' tunes natural." Sandy resumes—"I met Kippen the other morning in Mr Fisher's house, and I just thought I

would bring him doon a peg, and says I to him, 'What mak's tunes minors?' He commenced a palaver about tones and semitones; but I just cut him short, and says I, 'A' tunes wi' flats are minor, and a' tunes wi' sharps are major;' and says I, 'How mony sharps does A carry?' Says he, 'Three, I'm thinking.' 'Man,' says I, 'it can carry a barrowfu!' and so I shut him up. I didna let on to him that I was reading *Chambers's Information*." The beadle resided amongst a determined set of practical jokers, who daily annoyed him in every possible manner. Disturbing the band practisings was a favourite annoyance. The choir, who styled themselves "The Copper Band," soon grew tired of their instructor's attentions, and required much entreating to put in an appearance. One extra night, however, shelved the whole concern. The jokers without and the musical wags within understood one another, and scarcely had the performance commenced when the most tremendous noises from old pans outside mingled in the chorus. Gravel and gutters rattled on and bespattered the window. The band-room was up one stair, and the window looked into a court, where the perpetrators of the mischief easily got out of the way. The annoyance got intolerable, and the beadle (though so short that, in military parlance, "he would not measure," had a spirit when roused that disdained restraint) rose in haste and ran to the door, but it would not open, for the jokers outside had made it secure. Then ensued a scene. The "copper band" roared and yelled, and each in turn tried the door, but without effect. What was to be done? It was dark, and, on looking out at the window, parties outside were invisible, though audibly challenging the "copper band" to come on. One of the band proposed that Emsley be lowered from the window by a rope. To this Emsley willingly agreed. The beadle soon found a rope, and after fastening one end securely to the bed, the other was tied round Emsley, and he was let down. He

was scarcely down four feet when he cried to be taken up, for he thought he would never manage to get to the pavement. The others tried in their way to pacify his fears, but he would not listen, and roared that he would be killed. They took him up, and the beadle volunteered to go down. This was the very thing the "band" wanted, though, while tying the rope round his waist, they expressed their sorrow at having put him to such a trial. The window was again opened, and he was let down a few feet, when they roared, as if he were half a mile off, "Are you near the bottom?" which brought up a determined "No; let me down a bit yet." He was lowered another few feet, and the same question put, with a like reply. Emsley roared at the pitch of his stentorian lungs that he was as far as the rope would allow. A voice from the court said, "Let him down an octave," which was chorused by shouts of laughter. Poor Scott was hauled up and down for some time, and at last drawn up, and taken into the house. The door being still bolted, a general set to was arranged. The beadle caught the "sneck," and the others arranged themselves as they best could. On a signal all were to pull, but it so happened that as the door was forced open one of the tails parted from poor Scott's coat. When the "band" got out they expressed their joy at the success of their scheme by bursting into yells of laughter. The beadle, seeing how his kind intentions were repaid, drew his breath up through his nose with a peculiar "snivel," and vowed that no band, whether "copper" or cast-iron, would ever darken his threshold again.

**Geordie Ronaldson and his Pear Tree.**—For a number of years subsequent to the commencement of the century, Geordie Ronaldson owned the house in which he kept a shop in the Bridgend, or, as his old charters called it, the "Bridgend of Earn." He was a rope-maker, and had his roperie or ropewalk in a field near South Bridgend. At the time to which we refer he was a shrewd, oldish man, and believed in the

proverb, "Man, mind thyself." The house was a thatched one-storey building, which he wished to get enlarged. It was built in days when the breadth of the highways was not of great importance ; but afterwards enactments authorised the Road Trustees to widen and improve public thoroughfares. The road opposite Geordie's premises was so broadened that he stepped out of his shop door on to the cart track, the narrow footpath having been cleared away. Whenever a roof fell in or was taken off such houses as were built close upon the street, the Trustees had the power of preventing them being rebuilt on the same site. Geordie contemplated the addition of another storey to his house, but it could not be easily accomplished without the authorities knowing. The road inspector lived close by, and although occasionally of a jovial disposition, he was *siccar*. Having fully made up his mind to improve, Geordie determined to carry out his plan. He quietly got the joiner and mason to prepare their materials as far as possible against a certain day on which the inspector was going to Perth. The day arrived, and it being the age of slow travelling, a day was nearly spent in going thither. It was late ere his business was transacted, and Geordie had arranged to have the inspector so amply supplied with after-dinner draughts that he forgot where he was, and was kept so for two days thereafter. On his return another storey was on Geordie's shop, all nicely roofed in. The inspector swore, and threatened to pull the whole fabric to the ground, but Geordie quietly remarked that it had a roof, and he might not be at Perth when it next required alterations. Behind the house was a small garden, which was thickly planted with fine fruit trees. Amongst them was—and is still in existence—a peculiar pear tree, a kind of jargonelle, which bears three distinct crops annually. After the first fruit is about half grown, it puts forth blossoms, and when the first crop is ripe the second is half grown, and again a third

blossom appears all over the tree. The second crop is ripe about Michaelmas, but although the third crop in warm autumns grows to the size of large nutmegs, it never gets ripened before the frosts come. Long after the leaves have fallen, the pears, generally in clusters of three, dangle on the branches far into winter. They are fine sweet fruit, and keep exceedingly well. The kind of tree, or where it came from, is unknown. Many twigs have been engrafted on other trees, several of which have thriven well, and specimens can be seen in Ochertyre garden, where Mr Croucher, the head gardener, has brought on some grafts very successfully. Geordie knew the value of his orchard, and took much delight in waiting on and fostering his favourites, more especially the pear tree. As he could not be always in the garden when the fruit was nearing ripeness, and being surrounded by batches of plundering weavers, who took every opportunity of making free with his goods, he tied cords here and there among the trees and attached them inside the house to a bell, which rung when there occurred any undue waving of the branches. When a suspicious ring was given he quickly edged himself out at the back door, and with an old rusty blunderbuss on "cock," he reconnoitred his domain, and frequently frightened both folk and birds by his shooting proclivities. In spite of his watchfulness, the weaving fraternity would occasionally taste his good things. One day the tempting pear clusters were rather much for two professors of the shuttle, who, acting cautiously, got a string attached to one of the bell strings and gave a pull. In a twinkling Geordie was heralded by the point of his weapon making its appearance outside the door. His head next was seen protruding beyond the door cheek, moving up and down and in and out, as if he were making sure of his aim. Seeing nothing suspicious, he ventured out, and took a close survey of things and returned. He was scarcely into the house when

another pull was followed by a somewhat similar result; and the thing being frequently repeated, Geordie attributed the cause to the wind, and ceased to heed the warning bell. The two, now seeing that they had blunted his watchfulness, ventured into the garden and climbed, one the pear, and the other an apple tree. In a short time all their pockets were filled, and the apple-tree depredator, slipping down, gave the branch to which the bell-string was attached a good shake and made his exit. The pear-tree worthy, after filling his pockets, had tied his trousers at the ankles and filled up the legs with the luscious fruit. As he tried to descend, his legs would not bend, and in his efforts he tumbled between two rows of peas, just as Geordie's blunderbuss appeared outside the door. His companion cleared the boundary hedge at a spring, but not without being detected by Geordie's keen eye. The weaver dodged round a big ash tree and some piggeries, doing his best to keep Geordie from noticing his companion. Geordie, seeing that he could make nothing of the plunderer where he was, went, or rather *steched*, round by an entry between two neighbouring houses, and entered a neighbour's garden. By the time he got round the thief had escaped into his workshop, from whence he and his shopmates beheld Geordie moving amongst the piggeries. One of the weavers went out and questioned Geordie as to his right to trespass on his garden, and more especially to go near the piggeries with a gun. Geordie in vain tried to explain the cause of his appearance; but the weaver told him that as he allowed no one to enter *his* garden, he had a stock of presumption to enter another man's garden like a burglar with his gun. The weaver called assistance, and soon a bevy of shopmates unceremoniously put Geordie to the street, and before he got round to his own garden the depredator with his trousers tied was quickly caught by his companions, pitched over the hedge like a guy, and carried into the weaving shop, where much

merriment was enjoyed at the success of the bold scheme.

**"Earl Roy."**—For many years James Roy, familiarly known as the "Earl Roy," was well known in the district. In his early years he, with some of his family, lived at Mill Howlet, near the Hosh. He learned the trade of a joiner, and for a time was a master, and was also deacon of the Wrights' Society, and for many years afterwards wrought with Messrs Drummond & Monteath. He was an intelligent and attentive workman, but as years wore on he showed symptoms of weakness, more especially when flattered in regard to the respect in which he was held by the fair sex. This weakness increased with increasing years, till latterly it became the source of much annoyance, and a kind of imbecility. He did not want numerous acquaintances who led him onward in his favourite path, till his mind drank in almost all that could be said or imagined regarding the adoration that rank and beauty could bestow. He was deeply enamoured of a lady who was reported to live at Schiehallion (a high mountain at Rannoch), whose charms were transcendental, and was dying for love of him. She was reported to be here and there at times, and James went to the places, but there was always a reason given for her absence. The lady of the Knock of Crieff was another of his fairy sweet-hearts, and she was also invisible to him when wanted. She was reported to have a great palace underground, and a giant for an outer guard. This he implicitly believed, and did penance night and day to merit her good graces. He was known to travel barefoot in winter, and roam all over the hill amongst the snow in search of the entrance to the palace. One morning he got a fright with something in the wood on the Knock, which his imagination magnified in an extraordinary degree; and on being asked some days afterwards when he had seen the lady, he answered that the last time he was up, the giant was pulling

trees out of the ground, and he feared to go further. For many of his latter years his time and attention were so taken up with his love affairs, and defending himself from thieves and robbers of all kinds, that he was unable to pursue his trade. Presents of money were said to be sent by his grand ladies, but they were always intercepted in transit. He got notice that Mr Malcolm, the supervisor of Excise, had received a large quantity of specie for him, and next morning the "Earl" was seen entering the supervisor's house with a sack under his arm for the needful, and he was not put away empty. Things of this kind occasionally occurred, and the "Earl" took small amounts in part payment. The penances he performed were at times amusing, and he believed in the power of charms. On one occasion he by some means got a drum belonging to the Crieff band, and beat it up and down the North Bridgend for many hours in solitary state, and caused much wonder and amusement to the inhabitants. He was "beating a charm." On another occasion he got possession of a sword, and walked sentry in the same locality, with the drawn weapon at the "slope," for hours. His appearance at the time was anything but peaceable, and strangers, seeing his stolid features and strange movements, kept as far out of his way as possible. This was also called a charm; but all proved unavailing, so far as seeing his adored was concerned. He was sometimes much troubled in spirit with robbers, a gang of whom were said to be frequently on the alert for his capture, and he would be for days under hiding, keeping out of their reach. One day he appeared in the Bridgend in great terror; he had got information of a gang in pursuit of him, and he craved assistance. Two weavers volunteered their services, and each taking an arm led him rapidly by a back road towards home. A third weaver got a musket, and loaded it with powder only, and followed the others. When at a convenient place he fired; at



the same time another weaver threw a handful of gravel at the party. One of the "Earl's" supporters gave a great yell, and fell on his face. The "Earl" was rather put about, but was hurried on by the other loon. In a little another shot was fired and gravel thrown, and the other weaver yelled and fell, and the "Earl" quickly got out of the way, and was afterwards found hiding in an overturned barrel. Besides money, goods, eatable and wearable, were said to be now and again forwarded to his address; but there was always an excuse for non-delivery. "The carrier was robbed" was a frequent and easy get out. The "Earl's" appetite was often much disappointed at the want of promised supplies. One day he called, as was his wont, at a Glasgow carrier's quarters at the top of Burrell Street, and asked for his goods. The carrier said he had nothing for him but a ham. The "Earl" quietly looked amongst the multitude of goods, and at last espied a thumping ham. Watching a favourable opportunity, when the carrier was out of the way, he made sure of his own, and walked off with the ham. Towards evening the carrier missed the ham, and had much searching for it. At last he remembered what he had told the "Earl," and at once went to his domicile. On entering, the "Earl" received him graciously, and the carrier, by the smell, learned the locality of the missing article. He impeached the "Earl" with stealing it. This was stoutly denied, and the "Earl" told him that he made sure of the ham, as it was the only thing he ever saw of the many things sent from Glasgow, and, to make assurance doubly sure, when he got home he at once put it into the pot to boil. The carrier was furious, but had to leave the house minus the ham. The "Earl" lived to be an old man, but up to the last he affected youth, and occasionally wore dandy slippers, and pulled off his spectacles when any one entered the house. For several years previous to his death, which occurred upwards of twenty years ago, he was supported by charity.

**The Guidman of Ballengeich and the Woodman.**—In days long gone by, when the greater part of Strathearn was a forest, parties occasionally graced by Royalty frequently resorted hither to enjoy its balmy breezes, redolent of the perfumes of the mountain, and to pursue the bracing exercise of "chasing the wild deer and hunting the roe." These excursions were always attended by numerous merry-makers, so as to cause the time of the courtiers to pass pleasantly away; but all the denizens of the forest did not heartily enjoy the mirth. One poor woodman, whose sons had been forced from home to join the army, and never returned, always felt forebodings of evil when the season of these visits came round. On one occasion he was far up among the hills, gathering a particular kind of heather with which to make ropes and small besoms or ranges. King James, who was out with a hunting party, had left his comrades to have a quiet stroll, and, observing the solitary man among the moss, went along to where he was. The King, seeing that the woodman did not recognise him, entered into a long conversation on various topics, and latterly landed on the severe toil of the working man. The woodman gave his opinion freely, and laid the whole blame on the eating of the apple by Adam, rating his great progenitor severely for his delinquency in yielding to the solicitations of his jade of a wife. The King defended Adam, and remarked that many a man since Adam's time had done as foolish things for the sake of a quiet life. The woodman would not allow any extenuating circumstances in Adam's favour. He should not have taken the fruit when he was forbidden; and if Eve was not content to live with him, she should have been allowed to take up her bundles and tramp, as many of her daughters have had to do since. Had he been there he would have acted differently. The King, on leaving, arranged with him to deliver several bundles of the heather at Scone Palace on a certain day, and to ask for the

"Guidman of Ballengeich," who would take them, and pay the account of both heather and carriage. At the time specified, the woodman presented himself at the gates, and on announcing his message was shown into a room, and took a seat. He had not waited long ere his acquaintance of the hills entered and took delivery of the heather, and paid accounts. On rising to leave, the "guidman" invited him to take dinner, of which he was not loth to accept, after such a long journey. The King, for such was the "guidman," showed him all the dishes, etc., on the table, but told him not upon any account to touch a particular covered dish on the corner. After the King retired, the woodman feasted in right earnest, and as he gradually lost his appetite his curiosity regarding the covered dish increased. He thought it must be something very grand, and surely worth seeing, at least, if not worth tasting. His curiosity became so powerful that it induced him to consider that there could be no great harm in merely lifting the lid, and he accordingly moved nearer the mystic dish. After satisfying himself that no one was watching, he tremblingly lifted the corner, when out popped a mouse, which went out of sight in an instant. The woodman considered that the "guidman" had placed the dish there by mistake. After wrapping himself in his plaid, he was preparing to leave, when the King entered, and expressed a hope that the woodman had enjoyed himself, and not touched the corner dish. As the woodman was returning thanks for the kindness shown, the King lifted the dish cover. "What!" said the King, "after all the fine things you have had, how dared you touch the dish?" The woodman tried to excuse himself, "that he just wanted to see what was beneath it." "But," said the King, "did I not strictly forbid you to touch it?" "Yes, you did; but I could not resist the temptation to open it." "Well," said the King, "you remember of our conversation on the hill regarding Adam eating the apple, and how you condemned him

severely for so doing?" "Yes, I do," answered the woodman; "but I now think that Adam was not such a bad man after all, for had I been there and got the chance, most likely I would have taken a bite myself."

**Andrew Drummond.**—Several years ago there lived in the Bridgend a well-known resider, called Andrew Drummond, who for many years had been a workman on the estate of Perth. His principal employment was the erecting of wooden fencing, and keeping it in order, which caused him to peregrinate over the extensive properties connected with Drummond Castle. Being of a studious temperament, and often alone in his wanderings, he by degrees acquired much natural philosophy, and would predict the coming weather by the echoes of his hammer, the varying hues of his brass snuff-box, the singing and movements of birds, and the appearance of the firmament. Being often correct in his forecasts, he was by-and-by looked up to as an oracle, and consulted as such. Feeling the importance of his authority, he gradually extended the sphere of his observations, and disdained to prognosticate small events. Storms of snow formed a leading theme, and even in summer he would announce a snowfall which would take you to the "pouch-lids," and several yards of ice "betwixt you and the sun" was no unusual remark. On occasions when his forecasts were not verified, and he was twitted thereanent, he would remark, "Well, ochrae! were ye in the black bog o' Russia, ye would ken better about it. He could not prevent a cloud blowing past." When asked why the east wind was so cold, he replied, "Because it comes frae the black bog; and nae wonder so many diseases come with it, for a' Bonaparte's sojers lie there unburied." He believed thoroughly in the earth being a plain, and that Scriptures mentioned the "four corners of the earth," the "four winds of heaven," and the "foundations of the earth." He pooh-poohed the idea of

ministers preaching Sabbath after Sabbath that the earth whirled round. He had crossed the "Brig o' Crieff" morning and evening almost daily for sixty years, and the north end pointed north and the south end pointed south on every occasion, which was proof positive that the bridge, at least, did not move. As regards the sun, there was no doubt of its movements; they were visible daily, and Scripture referred to the going back of the dial, and the sun standing still. If the sun did not move, what was the use of saying it stood still at that particular time. He affirmed that the sun went round the earth like a candle carried round a "big stane." It went round underneath the earth at night, to resume operations next morning. He studied the movements of the heavenly bodies, and was much concerned with the vagaries of Saturn, as the great ruler of the shining host. The planets met once a month to arrange the weather for the ensuing four weeks, when Saturn or Mars presided. When watching these meetings he felt personally interested in the decisions, and could tell the resolutions come to by the manner in which the planets returned to their former stances. They were jealous of being observed, but Andrew would frequently look round a corner at them, and report progress. Any one who could take note of such momentous occurrences could not but see shadows of coming events. He was much interested in the observatory at Ochertyre, and on one occasion, when going to get a "keek" through Sir William K. Murray's telescopes, and passing in front of Craig-na-culloch, he remarked emphatically that Sir William was a great fool for putting his telescopes where they were. He should have put them on the top of the Craig. One of his companions said that he thought they were first-rate where they were, and asked what advantage would be gained by putting them on the Craig. "Advantage, my joe!" replied Andrew. "Do ye no see that they would be at least 300 feet nearer the stars?" He

believed thoroughly in witches. He said, "There is a command, 'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.' If there were no witches, what was the use of the commandment?" He allowed, however, that witches were getting scarce, owing to some cause or other; but he positively declared that there were still witches to people who believed in them. He detested the use of artificial manures, and traced the potato blight and cattle diseases to the use of the various compounds put into the ground. He was a regular attender at the Parish Church, and when the preacher in any way referred to the earth, sea, or sky other than what he considered orthodox, he immediately opened his Bible, and read for his own edification till the minister thought fit to return from wandering. He was a quiet, good-natured man, and his ready remarks and affability made him much missed when he went to his rest.

**William Smeaton.**—William Smeaton was well known in his day as a keen angler, and his narrative powers were of a very high order. This latter was generally used to recount the deeds of the former, which were at times extraordinary. He lived in North Bridgend, near the River Earn, and had ample scope to improve his talents. He could dress a good fly hook, and while at work, with a good listener beside him, his hands and eloquence would work at high pressure. He assured his hearers that the best way to make sure of having the proper fly for a particular stream was to go to the stream, catch a specimen of the water flies in the locality, dress a hook to the pattern, and, to make assurance doubly sure, fix the newly-made hook to the line and hang it so as to touch the water, strip yourself, and after plunging into the water, look up through the liquid element and judge of your handiwork. He had now and again presentiments of fish being at particular places, and one instance he occasionally told as follows:—One day while working at his loom, and happening to look down to his treadles, he imagined he observed a

number of large salmon. On looking more closely it appeared as if the place was at the Isle of Dargill. He immediately rose off his loom, seized his spear or leister, and hurried to the place indicated. On reaching it he saw the fish exactly as in the vision, and with a little caution and expertness he soon secured the lot. He sometimes "skied" the water when it was in flood. This consisted in holding a piece of red cloth above the pools, which, he affirmed, shaded the water so that he could see to the bottom and discover if any fish were about ; for, he said, there was no use in fishing if there were no fish. He had a belief that the finny tribe had more sense than was generally believed. As an instance, he said that one summer there was a pike in the pool above the ford in the Earn at Forr, and he had tried it frequently when passing up and down, but to no purpose. One time when passing, he bethought himself of a little scheming. At some distance from the haunted pool he got his tackle all right, and crawled through the furze and broom to the proper spot, and lying on his belly, he cautiously threw the line across the stream which ran into the eddy. As the current carried it down, he felt sure that a fair chance of success was approaching ; but judge of his astonishment. The pike put its head above water, and on looking round discovered William moving the rod. The creature turned its eye full upon him, and, with a knowing wink, hinted, "Oh, it's you, Smeaton ; you needn't try't." His exploits were not all connected with fishing. He was for a time a member of a local militia or volunteer company in the early years of the century, and when at the annual training of his regiment at Perth many were the doings he reported of his prowess. One Saturday he got leave of absence to come to Crieff to see his aged mother, and to show his filial respect he purchased for her a large bundle of fish, and was proceeding along the Crieff road at a quick march with the bundle on his shoulder. When about a mile

out of Perth a returned Crieff post-chaise or noddy came up to him, and he asked a lift from the driver. This was declined, and William, feeling annoyed, said that it would be seen who would be first home. The coachman gave his horses rein, and William smartly slipped up to the back of the chaise, and tied his fish on the luggage board, and in a trice was tripping along the road in gallant style. A little farther on he left the high turnpike road, and turning to the left brushed along what is called the mid-road, and in an incredibly short space of time he finished his  $17\frac{1}{2}$  miles journey, and turned up round the east toll-gate of Crieff, and walked leisurely eastwards along the high turnpike. In a little he observed the chaise clearing Callum's Hill, and as it neared he observed the coachman taking observations, and when they met, William asked, "Who was first in Crieff?" The coachman looked bewildered, and William, to show that he was actually the individual passed near Perth, darted to the back of the chaise, and, unloosing his fish, held them up to the astonished gaze of the driver. He often told of a daring encounter he had with a large dog which attacked him one time when he was fishing at Lochearn. Seeing that there was no escape from it, he quickly rolled his handkerchief round his right hand, and when the infuriated animal had its mouth wide for attack, William with a tremendous effort sent his hand down its throat and through its body, and catching its tail firmly, drew back his hand and turned the animal inside out. William was a quiet, hard-working man, and seemed capable of filling a station much higher than that in which his lot was cast. He had a large family, several of whom emigrated to America. He died many years ago.

**Donald Macfarlane—"Raising the Wind."**—About the year 1838, Crieff possessed a few natives who loved a dram and blythe companions; who considered that the sweat was not intended to be rushing in continuous streams over their brows, and that a night's boisterous mirth, when in company of congenial



spirits, was a relaxation. Chief among these was a shoemaker named Donald Macfarlane. He could sing a good song, either sentimental or comic, make a telling speech, or imitate almost anybody, as he once expressed, from the Pope of Rome down to the beadle of Monzievaird. Being in company one night with a select party, the fun grew fast and furious, and morning broke in on them before they were aware; but the Forbes Mackenzie Act not being in force then, they just continued a bit, and afterwards sallied out and proceeded west the town. The West Church being then almost completed, it was resolved to open the church, and accordingly the party forced the door, and Donald was duly ushered into the pulpit, and delivered a sermon in imitation of the then minister of Kinkell. The affair got wind, and some seven worthies were lodged in Perth jail. On being asked by one of the jail officials what was the cause of their coming, he was told it was for opening a kirk. "Well," said he "ye are the first that have been sent here for doing such a thing." On one occasion they were very dry, and the funds were exhausted, and being known in many of the public-houses, no small skill was required to get the landlord to draw. In such straits Donald's wits were put in operation, and generally succeeded. In their distress they entered a public-house at Gallowhill, kept by Parlane Macfarlane, a real Highlander, where they called in half a mutchkin. The landlord being from home, his daughter, a young blooming lass, brought the needful. Donald spoke his sweetest to the girl, who appeared much pleased with his attentions. A few more half-mutchkins were discussed, along with tempting cakes. On a signal, all the party, with the exception of Donald, made their exit by a back window. The girl hearing an unusual noise, looked in and saw the feet of the last man disappearing. Donald expressed himself much disgraced by his companions' conduct, and moving towards the door, bade the lass "good-day." When Parlane came

home and learned the facts of the case, his wrath knew no bounds, and he vowed vengeance against the offenders. He would let them know, although he was newly come to Crieff, that he knew the law. Donald and his party, on learning that a lawyer was being consulted, proceeded at once to Gallowhill, and before Parlane could say a word, the debt was paid, and the party thereafter, along with the landlord, had a "tasting." Donald claimed clanship with Parlane, and told his most fascinating stories, till in the long run the party left owing more debt than before. Often in distress Donald called, and although Parlane frowned at meeting, he laughed at parting, and welcomed his clansman back. One night, when the batch were dry and on the rocks, they resolved to give a landlord named Mac a benefit. Mac could play a spring passably on the "great Highland pipe," and, like most of those men who do so, had a share of pride and self-sufficiency, which blossoms pleasantly when the player struts like a peacock to the sounds made "by her nainsel." Donald and his followers, knowing their man, entered the house, making good-natured remarks to the landlord as they passed upstairs. When Mac entered with the second half-mutchkin, he was treated to a glass, which went down his throat very sweetly. After it disappeared, he slyly remarked, as he cast his eyes towards the door, "It's a good thing the wife didna saw ous." Donald, seeing the humour of the landlord, proposed a dance, if the landlady had no objections, and the landlord willing to play. Mac retired, and soon returned with his wind apparatus, which he immediately placed under his arm, and, squeezing out its unpolished sounds, instantly set the *bon vivants* hallooing and dancing. After a reel or two, another half-mutchkin was called, and Mac amply regaled. A bet of half a mutchkin was laid that Donald would play the pipes better than Mac. Both tried it, and Mac, of course, came off triumphantly, and when dealing round the

wager, he received glowing compliments on his victory. Reels and drams succeeded till some seven or eight half-mutchkins were scored, and Mac, when quaffing his share, emphasised his entertainers as "my braw lads." Another wager was laid that Donald could carry more chairs than Mac. Mac, being in full blow with spirits and pipes, gladly accepted the challenge. Donald lay down on his face on the floor, and his cronies tied a number of chairs on his back. On trying to rise he stumbled, but with an apparent effort he managed another chair, defying Mac to do his best. On being relieved the landlord took his place, and soon every moveable in the room was either tied on his back or connected with those already there, and the bagpipes put on the top. On being asked to rise he found himself a fixture, and the company, on a signal from their leader, skedaddled, pushing, rushing, and hallooing down the stair like madmen. The landlady ran to see what was up, and witnessed the last of the gang disappearing. On looking up the stair she saw her husband's head peeping out at the door beneath the household furniture, his face flushed with anger, and his voice hoarse with rage at having allowed himself to be "sold" by his "braw lads."

**Chairman Dow.**—The following lines were written in 1858, when Mr James Dow was assiduously engaged in the Temperance movement:—

Who has not heard of Chairman Dow,  
A northern star that ne'er gets fu' ?  
He leads the folk from mountain dew  
And other trash ;  
He lectures well, he's comic too,  
And seldom rash.

A smile's aye on the chairman's face—  
He thinks a smile ne'er out of place—  
Oft with a smile he turns the chase  
On wise and noddy ;  
He's willing to try a Temperance race  
With any bodie.

At Temperance meetings he's i' chair,  
 His guid auld lecture's ne'er threadbare ;  
 He shakes his head, and something rare  
     Is sure to come ;  
 And with a laugh and little mair,  
     His text goes home.

He tells with glee how he was nickit,  
 By Temperance policeman convickt,  
 When in the very bud he stickit  
     A jolly chap,  
 For o'er the top i' *goose* he kicket  
     The drinking cap.

To cronies' jeers he ne'er would crouch ;  
 To brewers' dogs he just cried "couch ;"  
 Takes Temperance candles in his pouch  
     To light the meeting,  
 And posts hand-bills o'er every notch  
     Aye when recruiting.

Eighteen or twenty years are past  
 Since he an eye on whisky cast,  
 He hopes sincerely it will last  
     His whole life-time.  
 He likes his young folk to keep fast  
     When in their prime.

The Band of Hope's his real delight,  
 He thinks about it day and night,  
 And speaks and sings with all his might  
     To keep them moving ;  
 To him 'twould be a sad, sad sight  
     To see them roving.

At singing whiles he tries his hand,  
 And makes his head his magic wand,  
 In spite of all he's like to strand  
     'Mong keys and things,  
 Somehow he keeps a glimpse of land,  
     And on he sings.

His favourite song is "Little Jock,"  
A lad that hadna shoe or sock,  
But now he is like other folk,  
    With plenty lear ;  
The "Band of Hope" 's to him a rock  
    That ne'er will steer.

The chairman's motto is "Take care,"  
And of all stimulants beware,  
For if you don't, it's very rare  
    You'll keep your foot ;  
Besides, your clothes and pouch get bare  
    When drink takes root.

Ne'er in your strolls on Bacchus ca',  
To fond entreaties just say "Na,"  
From a' temptation keep awa'  
    As far 's ye may,  
Or else your pride may get a fa'  
    Some other day.

**A Note of Changes.**—The demise of Mr Alexander MacRosty of Earnbank, in 1878, at over 95 years of age, caused a good amount of reflection regarding the many changes which took place during his long life. Seeing that one of the last links which connected us with such a distant past is broken, it may not be out of place to notice a few of the principal changes which have occurred in the locality, and some of the events of history which called the attention of the natives during these years. America had just become independent at Mr MacRosty's birth, and he saw it rise to be one of the most restless, inventive, speculative, and progressive nations—so far as numbers and mercantile efforts are concerned—in the world. He witnessed the extraordinary development of our numerous colonies all over the world, and the exodus of the natives of our straths and glens to people these mighty regions. In his early days our public roads were merely cart-tracks, which were by and bye

improved to such a degree that mail and stage coaches were enabled to run upon them, and this was considered so interesting an event that Palmer, the promoter of the mail coaches, had medals struck to his honour and memory. In the early part of this century roads were still further improved by Mr Macadam, of Ayrshire, who received £10,000 from Government for his invention of *macadamising*. Mail and stage coaches thereafter increased to a wonderful degree, and Crieff became a coach station, and one of the daily interesting episodes of village life was the passing and repassing of the mails. The road they took through Crieff was along the old road which leads eastwards from Cemetery Road up by Duchlage to Pittenzie, and then eastwards and up Ramsay Street to High Street. Railways, with their iron network, have sent stage coaches to move on the by-ways of the world. The French Revolution broke out when Mr MacRosty was a young man, and the infection was caught by a number of "Black Nebs" here, who, sworn to secrecy, met in the Wood of Balloch during the night, and discussed plans for revolutionising the country. He eagerly listened to the news regarding the progress of the French movements, and felt his patriotism glow with satisfaction at the march of the Crieff Volunteers to Stirling, to repel the expected Gallic invasion up the river Forth. They left the village resolved, under their favourite commander, Sir Patrick Murray, to do or die. Almost every day witnessed the marching and countermarching of soldiers along the roads. Many of his neighbours and acquaintances marched to the wars, and never returned. During the terrible struggle with Bonaparte, he felt the excitement of the time, and gladly joined in the shout of victory at the triumph of Waterloo. In his early youth premiums were offered for improvement in scutching mills, and the cultivation of flax was considered a necessity with almost all farmers, whose wives and daughters cultivated the "rock and

the wee pickle tow," and the spinning-wheel, as do the modern misses the pianoforte. Scutching or lint mills "are a' wede away," and flax cultivation is voted bad for the land. Factories now take the place of mills, and people get their clothes made for show—wear being a 'secondary consideration. In those days a man would buy a hat and coat for his marriage, which would last a generation ; and a lady's silk gown would last and be fashionable for half a century. There were no lady-milliners then, and men made the women's principal outfits, and the tailors sat on chairs at their work. During the first fifty years of Mr MacRosty's life cottaring was all the rage, and any one who had manure would get as much ground from any farmer as it could be spread upon, and the crop which grew there was his own. There were poor people then, but they did not want for potatoes or bannocks, and young and old found plenty of agricultural employment. Cottages and hamlets studded the rural districts, and, although the population were not rich, they generally were content. Mr MacRosty's experience extended over extremes in the manner of servitude. Farm servants at one time had to rise early and work late. The female servants had to knit or spin after the ordinary farm duties were over, and the ploughmen rose at four o'clock in winter to thrash as much grain as would give sufficient straw for fodder and bedding for the horses and cows during the day. The servants not unusually remained on the farm half a lifetime. Tradesmen's working days had no limit but that of rising from and going to bed ; and a master country weaver was a power in the village. We all know what a revolution has taken place in the relation of employer and employed since then. High wages, high living, strikes, short hours, holidays and half-holidays are the fashion, and the whole world seems in a state of unrest, hastening to be rich.

In Mr MacRosty's youthful days strips of fir roots were in general use for giving light at night, and

peats were the principal fuel, and he lived to witness the general use of coals and gas. In his early days the heat of the sun was so strong in the summer months that out-door labour was impossible during the height of the day, and in winter the storms were such as we now only read of. The winter of 1880-1 gave the present generation an idea of these olden times. It was nothing unusual for a farmer to rise in a winter morning to find the snow drifted in wreaths above the doors and windows, and he would have to cut his way out to his barns and byres. The ice-bound brooks would for months be frozen over, and so covered with snow that their whereabouts were almost unknown. He connected the days of the beacon fires with those of the telegraph and telephone, and the time when short-hand writers were a myth, with that of the phonograph. He was alive when women were as beasts of burden, and carried coals up winding stairs to the pit-mouth, and he witnessed steam triumphant. He knew Torleum Hill a bare mountain, and lived to see it a noble wooded forest. Much of the valley which he saw growing with ferns and underwood he witnessed waving with luxuriant grain. He lived at a time when the eagle was not a rare bird, when the crossbills flocked in winter to feed on the cones of the fir trees at Broich, and when the goldfinch, with its resplendent plumage, was no stranger in the groves. He remembered when Crieff was a village on the hill-side, with its rows of thatched "biggins" and "midden-dubs" along the streets; and saw the morass called the Sochies or Lochies, which passed from east to west at the Gallowhill, and separated the village of "Bridgend of Earn" from Crieff. The road between the two places passed on the east of the morass. He saw the ground where Burrell Street and many of the adjoining buildings are erected, tilled fields; and, in his earliest recollection, corn grew in James' Square. He saw all this changed, and Crieff made a burgh, with its stately houses and places of



business, having two railways to facilitate the transit of the thousands upon thousands of tourists and visitors who annually seek the invigorating air of this now famous locality; and he had the pleasure of seeing one of his sons nine years Provost of his native town. Instead of hearing in autumn the song of the reapers among the yellow corn, we have now the clatter of the reaping-machines and the dull boom of the steam thrashing and stackbuilding machine. The fierce political events which culminated on the death of Baird and Hardy in 1820 are succeeded by quietness and peace. Instead of the weary and uncertain waiting for newspapers and letters, we have them in abundance each morning on our tables. Religion, too, has had its share of changes. Things which in Mr MacRosty's earlier days were considered of moment are now looked upon as matters of expediency, or trifles light as air; and what our forefathers considered as the roots of religion are now being laid bare, and the axe is applied with no unsparing hand in all directions. But, curiously enough, as of old, although the noble forest be cleared, the ground will not remain unoccupied; a noble oak may be succeeded by brambles and a vine by thorns, and in midst of all weeds will arise. During these ninety-five years what changes must the subject of this review have seen in the human face divine. Not one of those who reigned or ruled in his infancy is alive, and generation after generation have passed away. He outlived all the men in the parish who were alive at his birth, and at last the weight of years sunk him to rest. He was laid in his lowly bed, beside the murmuring Earn, by the loving hands of his children and his children's children, and the flowers of the valley wave over his tomb.

**Old Local Song.**—About the beginning of the century tailors in the rural districts went from home to their work, or "whipped-the-cat," *i.e.*, when any cottar or farmer required the services of the tailor,

this important tradesman was sent for, and he shaped and sewed in the house of the employer. He not unusually wrought till late at night, and the neighbours gathered in around him to hear his news and stories, which generally were of the most miscellaneous description, and kept the audience in the best of good-humour. The writer of the following song was James Stewart, a shoemaker belonging to Perth, who came to Crieff about 1826, and was employed for about two years in Crieff in the shop of the late Robert Donaldson. He entered into all the hilarities of the town with a will. Often running himself ashore for want of funds, his ingenuity seldom failed to find ways and means of keeping himself "wet" till satiated. The district of Monzie joins Crieff parish on the north, and was long and widely known for its witches, and Stewart has made its tailor celebrated. The picture he presents is faithful of the times; but there are no lassies now with spindles, and the parish is much depopulated, and there is a large number of bachelors and maids in the locality, who follow in this respect the footsteps of their genial pastor. The song was familiar in Crieff half-a-century since :—

#### THE TAILOR O' MONZIE

Our guidman's breeks were riven sair,  
 The tailor cam' to mak' a pair;  
 When gloamin' fell assembl'd were  
     O's a' 'bout thretty-three, man;  
 On stools an' auld tree-roots we sat,  
 An' O, sae muckle fun's we gat,  
 Frae funny Patie Whip-the-cat,  
     The Tailor o' Monzie, man.  
     O, he's a curiosity,  
     A curious curiosity,  
     A perfect curiosity,  
 The Tailor of Monzie, man.

The lassies' spindles hadna space  
 To whirl an' bod their circlin' race,  
 For head an' thwart, back and face,  
     We sat promis-couslie, man;  
 "Like midges i' the motty sun,  
 Or corbie craws on tattie grun',"  
 Sae thick were we to hear the fun  
     Frae Patie o' Monzie, man.

A lang dispute anent the State  
 Gley'd Andro Toshack held wi' Pate,  
 Wha, drawin' a steek wi' nettled heat,  
     Drobb'd Andro's ringle e'e, man;  
 Andro roared, grew pale and faint,  
 "My feth," quo' the gudeman, "I kent,  
 He'd gie ye piercing argument,  
     Our Tailor o' Monzie, man."

Wee Gibbie Bryce was greetin' vext  
 That he had made the kirk his text,  
 For Patie gat him jamm'd an' fixt  
     In Patronage's plea, man.  
 He rave poor Gibbie's sense to rags,  
 Made him a lauchin'-stock to wags,  
 The hale house waved their arms like flags,  
     "Hurrah for Pate Monzie, man!"

Wi' canty tale an' funny joke,  
 Wi' lauchin' when the tailor spoke,  
 The nicht wore by till twal' o'clock  
     In loud guffaw an' glee, man.  
 The gudewife reavilt a' her yarn,  
 She tint the thread-end o' her pirn,  
 Lauchin' like her youngest bairn  
     At Patie o' Monzie, man.

'T wad tak' a tale as lang's an ell,  
 'T wad tak an hour that tale to tell,  
 O' what I heard an' saw mysel,  
     That nicht o' nichts to me, man.

If there's a man that we should dawt,  
 Whom Nature made without a faut,  
 He's surely Patie Whip-the-cat,  
 The Tailor o' Monzie, man !

**Rocking Stone Episode.**—In the memory of men still living, two well-known weavers, named James Livingstone and James M'Laren, lived in Barnkettick, at the west end of the town. Livingstone was a thorough wag, and M'Laren was somewhat of a simpleton. Livingstone was in the habit of telling his neighbour all sorts of extravagant stories about ghosts and witches. The facility with which the latter fraternity could turn themselves into hares and scamper about was an accepted fact, which M'Laren as truly believed as his Bible. The Rocking or Cradle Stone on the brow of the Knock, behind the town, was supposed to be of Drudical origin, and for ages drew forth the fear and wonder of the natives. A belief prevailed that something valuable was buried in its foundation, and worth lifting, if it could only be got at. Livingstone having heard of "Whang, the Miller," directed M'Laren's attention to the subject of valuable treasure being beneath the cradle stone, which was greedily swallowed, and he expressed his astonishment that no one tried digging for it. Livingstone suggested that they both should try it, and divide the spoil. M'Laren agreed, and it was resolved to make the attempt that night after dusk. The necessary picks and spades were soon borrowed. Livingstone called on an acquaintance or two, and informed them of the "ploy," and they readily agreed to arrange and have some fun at the "howking" of the treasure. The acquaintances were up at the spot early, with a view to set some snares for hares, so that the journey would combine pleasure with profit. They had also provided a few "squibs" for contingencies. At the time appointed the two weavers, with their implements on

their shoulders, arrived at the stone and set to work. M'Laren did so with strong impressions of a coming calamity, which soon made him feel the greatest terror. Livingstone worked with a will, and upbraided M'Laren with cowardice. With that a strange, unearthly sound came up the hill, and on looking round, a ball of fire was seen careering through the underwood. M'Laren felt queerish and almost speechless. Another hissing sound was heard, and the strange fire came nearer. Livingstone still wrought on, telling M'Laren never to heed, as these things were only bits of falling stars. M'Laren thought otherwise. They were in the neighbourhood of Monzie, where it was certain there were plenty of witches, and it was evident something "no canny" was brewing. He would have given anything to have been at his loom. In an instant three or four fiery darts from different directions came hissing along, and darted through the heath at their feet. M'Laren was paralysed with fear. Livingstone ceased work instantly, and jumping out of the trench he made, yelled he smelt brimstone, rushed from the stone and was lost in the darkness. Poor M'Laren's limbs trembled like a leaf and were scarcely able to support him. As he was trying to follow his companion, another fire shower rained about him, and down the hill he went like a deer, yelling on Livingstone to wait on him. As he neared the parks above Milnab the hares and rabbits were scampering in all directions, and a few found their necks in the snares, which caused them to squeal at the pitch of their voices too. M'Laren being now thoroughly convinced that the witches were let loose, speed was added to his limbs, and with supernatural fleetness he bounded over all obstructions and found himself in an instant or two in his room, and jumped into bed. A cold sweat broke out all over his body, and his heart beat with sharp thuds, shaking the bed. It was some time ere he could collect his scattered senses, so as to realise

whether or not he was dreaming. The moisture in his eyes caused every blink of the fire to appear like the horrid hissing fire darts of the Knock. After a time he fell into a stupor, the recent events being still vividly before his mind. His cronies on the Knock tumbled amongst the heather and broom, shouting with joy at the success of the scheme. After giving vent to their excited feelings they went back to the Cradle Stone and lifted the picks and spades, and on their way home went round the snares and found a good "take." As they were killing the hares, Livingstone suggested that a live one be taken to M'Laren, which was readily agreed to. On reaching home, Livingstone slipped into M'Laren's house, and all seemed at rest. Creeping quietly ben to Jamie's end of the bigging, he tied the live hare to the foot of his bed. As he was retiring he jostled against the hen roost and set the cock a-crowing, which so far roused Jamie that he thought it was scarcely morning yet. The cock crowed away, and soon the neighbouring roosts bestirred themselves, and all the cocks in the neighbourhood returned the vocal sound, as if it were morning. Poor Jamie, on reflecting, resolved that if he got over the present raising of "Auld Cloutie" scathless, he would pledge himself never to trouble him or his again. As he thus pondered he thought he heard a strange pattering on the floor, and an occasional slight pull at the bed. On straining his eyes and looking floorwards he saw something not unlike a reputed witch moving about the foot of the bed. On closer observation this was fully confirmed, and he instinctively roared for help. His daft brother was now roused, and he roared also, and the hamlet dogs lent a willing voice. The wags who had collected outside rushed in, and on putting some fir roots on the fire the blaze showed Jamie, nearly demented, in bed, with his wearing clothes still on, and some dogs entering the room set a-worrying the hare. At the sight of well-known faces Jamie jumped out of bed,

so much excited that it was feared that the joke had been carried rather far. Livingstone was still equal to the occasion, and drawing a bottle of whisky from his pocket handed round a few glasses, and in a short time "they didna care for deils a boddle." Jamie was advised to divest himself of his clothes and go to bed, which he did, and soon fell into a deep sleep, and awakened next morning not much the worse. The affair got wind, and many a country fireside was made merry by the story of the Cradle Stone treasure.

**Charlie Robertson.**—Some fifty or sixty years ago there lived, in one of the neighbouring glens, an aged farmer with his son and daughter. Things had thriven so far well with the old man that he owned a few scores of sheep, a cow or two, and perhaps a score of pounds sterling. The daughter was obedient and dutiful, always doing her best to anticipate the wants and cheer the drooping spirits of her aged parent. Charlie, the son, was somewhat different. He had now reached man's estate, and had been little more than a hindrance, and savoured much of a scapegrace. At "foyes," dancing balls, markets, poaching expeditions, and the thousand and one odds and ends which go to make up the merry-makings of a country life, Charlie figured prominently, and thereby neglected his work at home. "He was everything by turns, and nothing long." His father was sorely grieved at the son's behaviour, and, as the days of his pilgrimage were drawing to a close, he wisely arranged that the daughter should have a full share of his effects after his decease. At the old man's death, Charlie felt quite indignant at what he considered the shabby treatment he had received by his father's will, being cut off, as the saying goes, "with a shilling." He had persuasive gifts, and he was aware that his sister, although "dour," was at times quite amenable to a tender tale. Charlie allowed his sister for a time to feel the full weight and responsibility of the new order

of things, which made her feel uncomfortable. He tried once or twice to get round her for a share of her good things, but he found that he might as easily "wile an egg from a crow." He then resolved to try another mode, and, as opportunity offered, he now and again carried away some of the household gods which his father respected—such as his staff, snuff-mull, pocket knife, watch, etc., and secreted them in the neighbourhood. When his sister was dilatory in noticing their disappearance, Charlie would mention the loss with mysterious air, and hint that surely something no "canny" was going on. He had a voice somewhat like his father's, and one dark night, betwixt twelve and one o'clock, he went to his sister's bedroom window and made a few successive mysterious noises by rubbing a stone on the wall, and uttered incoherent exclamations in his father's tone of voice. The sister heard the whole with a halo of superstition, and slept none. At the usual time in the morning Charlie commenced his daily routine of work, and soon thereafter his sister went to him, and tremblingly told of the terrible sounds she had heard. Charlie feigned amazement, and said that he had long been sure that something no canny was brewin'. In the course of a week or so the same was done again, with more distinctness, and she plainly recognised the voice of her father. Charlie, of course, got the whole story in the morning, and on questioning her what her father said, she said she could not tell, but she was sure it was his ghaist. Charlie advised her the next time it came to ask if it was her father, and what he wanted. If it was his ghaist, it was evident that he could not rest in his grave till he had got something he had done amiss rectified. He impressed upon her not to be afraid, for it was evident it was her that he wanted to speak with, as the ghaist never came to his window. One day Charlie took away the lamp or "cruisie," and in the evening the sister, on proceeding to light it, found it amissing. Charlie "improved" on the stray



utensil, and concluded by attributing its disappearance to supernatural agency. At midnight Charlie found himself at his sister's window as before, and after a few preliminary warnings, his sister, in a voice tremulous with terror, asked, "Who is there?" "Your father's ghaist," answered the voice; "and in confirmation thereof, you will find the 'cruisie' in the cave on the hillside." "What do you want, father?" she asked. "I have done great wrong," said the voice, "and can get no peace in my grave. You can put all right if you wish, and give me peace. If you don't, I will haunt you all the days of your life, and you will never be married." "Let me know what to do, and I will do it," she said. "Give Charlie the sheep and the siller, and I'll get rest," answered the voice. In the morning she went to Charlie and related the whole proceedings, and asked him for any sake to take the sheep and the siller, and let her dear father get rest in his grave. Charlie said he would require to examine into the matter, and, in furtherance of this, went to the cave and other places and brought home a burden of the missing articles, including, of course, the "cruisie." More conclusive proof was not required, and so Charlie got all, which was squandered in a short time. The sister died, and Charlie was cast forth a vagabond. In his later years he frequently was seen wandering about accompanied by two or three terriers, and was the butt of annoyance for the boys of the villages through which he passed. The last time he was in Crieff was during a religious revival, a few years ago, when, in imitation of others, he delivered his religious sentiments to the people who were passing to the churches one Sacrament Sunday evening. With his pocket Bible closed in his left hand, the forefinger inserted marking the place of text, he used his stentorian lungs to their utmost. When asked next day how he succeeded, he said, "Not a copper—not a single bawbee—and it was a good sermon they got. A'boddy that has heard it says that. I have seen it

often drawing frae one shilling to one shilling and sixpence, but there must be a great many sinners and heathens amang ye, or else they would have paid better for what I gae them." According to many people at the present time Charlie judged rightly, for Christianity is often judged by the amount it brings. We believe Charlie's wanderings are past, and his sad communings at an end.

**A Sad Tale—A Romance of Real Life.**—About the beginning of the century there lived at the hamlet of Braehead, which stood a little west from the Parish Manse, a tall and comely young woman named Fanny M'Glashan. Her face and mien were far beyond those of her class, which, added to a sweet temper and long, golden tresses, made her the most loved and loveable girl in the countryside. Like most of those in her station, she bore a hand in the domestic duties, and went to service, in the course of which she resided in Edinburgh, where her lady-like appearance drew many suitors around her. She preferred the hand of a young merchant named M'Diarmid, to whom she was married. For a time all went merrily, and his business prospered; but changes came, and the gallant and gay husband found his fortunes declining, and ultimately he was declared bankrupt. In his distress of mind he enlisted in the East India Company's service, and soon thereafter set sail for that distant country, taking his young wife along with him. He had not been long landed when he fell sick and died, leaving his wife a penniless stranger in a strange land. Her noble womanly appearance even amongst Eastern beauties shone conspicuously; and though unknown, her character and behaviour again attracted many aspirants for her hand, and her choice was a Mr Thomas, a wealthy banker, who was proud to find he had not wooed in vain, and soon made her the light of his home. In a little she became quite at ease in her exalted sphere, and moved about arrayed in gorgeous Eastern dresses, which only served to show

her charms to greater advantage. In a few years her husband proposed to return to this country, and resolved to arrange for the passage of Mrs Thomas by an earlier vessel than that by which he intended to sail. After furnishing her with jewels and gold in plenty, she bade farewell, and returned about the year 1823 to the Bridgend, where her old father resided. Having engaged servants, she kept up a style as became her exalted position, causing her former friends and acquaintances to be filled with wonder and amazement. On Sundays she attended the Secession Church, where her father was an elder, and groups of young and old eagerly gazed on and admired the seemingly more than mortal being who passed along attended by her maid. Her dreams of happiness were again short-lived. One day when dressed in state a messenger brought the sad intelligence that her husband was dead. The news, being so sudden and unexpected, threw her into the utmost paroxysm of grief. After coming round a little, she could not realise that she was again a widow, till further communications confirmed the sad tale. An agent was employed to look after her affairs, and several letters passed to and fro, by which it was learned that there would still be something handsome for her share, and that her husband's friends would see justice done to her. With weary waiting her heart grew sick, and her jewels slowly parted from her. At length news came that a friend of her husband in Glasgow had realised her property, and she sent her agent to find him out, which he did, and managed to return with five or six pounds as an instalment of what was due. Smaller sums were subsequently handed to her at times, but remittances soon ceased, and the sender was nowhere to be found. Mystery hovered o'er the scene for well-nigh thirty years, during which she had to dispose of all her rich ornaments and dresses, and was reduced to the greatest straits, and finally was forced to fill or wind

weavers' pirns or bobbins. Many kind friends sympathised with and assisted her in her distress, but they could not revive her saddened heart. One day a letter from Glasgow inquiring for a Mrs Thomas was delivered to Miller & White, drapers, who, on making diligent search, could find no such person in the district, and were on the eve of returning it "not to be found," when an old residenter, Mr Alexander MacRosty, Earnbank, entered the shop, and was asked if he knew a Mrs Thomas. On thinking, his mind wandered back thirty years, when he remembered of the now almost unknown Fanny M'Glashan or Mrs Thomas. One of the firm at once called on her in her humble room, and found her to be the person wanted. He informed her that were she to communicate with such an one in Glasgow, she would find something to her advantage. Communication was immediately made, which resulted in her and an agent going to Glasgow, where they found the writer of the letter ready to receive them, who told them that he knew the man who had retained her property, and would, if desired, let them see him, which being at once accepted, he led the way, and they were soon shown into a fashionable house and ushered into the presence of the man who had been a principal agent in managing Mr Thomas' estate. On the reason of their visit being made known, the agent turned pale, and was quite taken aback. On being threatened for his delinquency, he promised anything and everything if they would only keep quiet and not expose him, and he gave her two or three pounds as an earnest of his intentions, and they parted. A Glasgow lawyer was instructed to watch matters in Mrs Thomas' interest, and affairs appeared favourable. All her friends and neighbours rejoiced at the new turn in her favour. But fortune, ever fickle, cheated her again. The lawyer allowed the case to slip through his fingers, and the man who held her money disappeared, and never was heard of more. Poor Fanny sunk

into the deepest despondency, and died broken-hearted about the year 1858.

### Donald Murray and the Sark.

Auld Donald Murray was Hieland and cute,  
Though looking so simple and sitting so mute ;  
He could carry his point, though ne'er in a hurry,  
And speak broken English, could auld Donald Murray.  
Donald Murray delved with his spade on Ferntower  
ground,

And whiles wi' his hedge-bill the fences went round,  
And great show he made, wi' a wee thing o' wark—  
He look'd sae wark-like, aye stripped t' the sark.

But Donald could rest when the coast it was clear,  
And work like a nigger when danger was near ;  
When the foreman cam' roond he was seen in his  
prime,

After that he would sit for an' oor at a time,  
Till the auld clock o' Crieff would hammer oot six,  
And then he would leave baith his spade and his  
picks,

And hame he would daunder at nicht frae his wark,  
Wi' his coat in his oxter, displaying his sark.

But Donald was summoned one day to the hall,  
And muckle he wondered at that honoured call,  
Till Sir David said, "Murray, take away this dead  
hound,

And put the poor creature six feet in the ground.  
This dog was my friend, long faithful and true,  
And now, Donald Murray, take him out of my view,  
And wrap round him this shirt ere he's laid in the  
park"—

"Cot's grace," muttered Donald, "a praw linen sark!"

"O ay! Sir David, it's auld Tonalld kens grand,  
Hoo t' purry a dog deep doon in the sand,  
She's made graves in the Hielands a long time afore,  
She's made them in hunders—hooch! ay, near a score."

Then Donald marched oot wi' the dog an' the sark,  
 Pulling up in the Knock after crossing the park,  
 And often he muttered, "Sir David's mad stark,  
 For t' purry a dog in a praw linen sark."

"Feech! tam stinkin' baste," auld Donald exclaimed  
 With a Gaelic expletive, hardly fit to be named ;  
 Then the hound from his back like rubbish was  
     thrown,  
 In a quiet little spot that to Donald was known.  
 Then the sark it was scann'd, baith inside an' oot,  
 And Donald kept muttering, "grand sark she's nae  
     doot ;  
 She'll purry the dog when the nicht she gets dark,  
 Then *trout sho*, puir collie, faith aff gaes yer sark."

Then Donald brought up his shovel and pick,  
 And commenced grave-digging at once like a brick ;  
 Some feet he went down, then came out with his  
     tools,  
 Threw in the dead dog, and then threw the mools.  
 Just then a thought struck him, "If Sir David be ken,  
 Auld Donald may shank t' the Hielands again ;  
 She'll be in great rage about this kind o' wark,  
 And kick up teevil's row for her praw linen sark."

Then clutching again at his spade in great haste,  
 He wrought, and he muttered, "Ye nasty tead baste,  
 Come oot for yer sark you ugly tead brute ;  
 Aye Tonald's nain sark's shust her nain ragget clood ;"  
 Then stripping his sark, which he put on the hound,  
 The beast was put quietly once more in the ground,  
 While beside a fir tree that nicht in the dark,  
 Donald Murray got dressed in the laird's linen sark.

Then Donald he shouldered his pick and his spade,  
 After sorting the turf on the hound's lonely bed,  
 And groping his way to the side of the wood,  
 Once more in the park auld Donald he stood.

"Diabhol! \* what's that? hooch, shust a horse stan'in' sleeper,

Faith, she was frichted for wild Duncan, gamekeeper.†  
Noo Tonal'd's aff hame, an' the dog she'll ne'er bark  
About her nainsel dressing praw wi' the sark."

Then Donald jugged hame by the licht o' the moon,  
As he whistled with vigour some old Gaelic tune—  
"She's Sir David Baird noo wi' her sark on her back,  
Fine shentleman's English auld Tonal'd maun crack."  
Next morning at six, Donald searched through his  
pack,

For anither auld sark that he put on his back;  
But on Sabbath he rose as blythe as a lark,  
And dressed for the kirk wi' the fine linen sark.

Noo Donald himsel' lies still in the mools,  
His labour is finished, and rusted his tools,  
By the "witch's stane" ne'er will he daunder at morn,  
The fragrance inhaling on soft breezes borne.  
Nae mair in the Knock will he blaeberries pu'  
By the "auld cradle stane," wi' the Strath in his view;  
Ah, no! he lies cold noo, wi' but little to mark,  
Where reposing he rests in his last linen sark.

**John M'Niven.**—John was for many years well known, and being a feuar or laird in the Gallowhill, his voice and opinions had some authority and weight among his fellows. In his youthful days he enlisted in the 44th regiment, as a seven years' man, and shared in the brunt of several severe battles in the Peninsula, including Corunna, Salamanca, and Badajoz, and was also at the taking of Washington and the battle of New Orleans. He was in one of the advance companies or forlorn hope which entered Washington, of which only eleven survived to tell of their daring. When asked by one of his neighbours how he felt when marching to the town, he answered, "I dinna

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\* Pronounce 'dgehol,' or more shortly, 'geehol.'

† The well-known Duncan M'Naughton.

ken; I was just there." At times his temper would show itself when he was in any way thwarted or not getting joined in any conversation that might be going on. Along with the late Daniel M'Kenzie, he used daily to frequent John Kippen's shoe shop in the Bridgend, and many were the debates they had about past and passing events. On one occasion a somewhat lengthened discussion took place regarding the superior education young people received now, to what it was in their school days, and especially in geography. John could not get in a word, and the other two had it all to themselves. He got fidgety, and in a fit of irritation exclaimed in his squeaky voice, "Ay, ay! the childer at the skules now-a-days ken better about Spain and Portugal than them that were in't! (in it). Is that fair, eh?" He occasionally took a hearty glass, but very seldom went beyond this. On one occasion some acquaintances waylaid him as he was proceeding down Brown's Row, and took him into a public-house, where they drank to an unusual extent, and John got rather over the score, and became extremely crabbed. The occurrence got wind, and a number of Gallowhill weavers gathered about the entry leading to his house, so as to take their fun out of him. A friend, however, met him half-way down the Row, and led him by a back lane to the door of his domicile, and got him safely housed before the weavers knew. Next day when John made his appearance, several wags gathered round him to have a banter regarding his public-house adventure of the previous evening. He did what he could to change the subject, but they irritated him beyond endurance, and, making his way clear of them, he exclaimed, by way of relief, "If they dodge me, it's at their own expense." One day he was detailing the hardships undergone in the Peninsula, and the effects of hunger were such that the soldiers were compelled to eat their shoes. A young lad asked how they did when they came to the tacketts.



John replied, "We just ate round about them." He and his friend, Mr M'Kenzie, were natives of glens in the neighbourhood of Comrie, and their forefathers were buried in the graveyard of Tulliechettle. There were few interments latterly taking place in it, and being much neglected, the dyke surrounding it was getting much dilapidated, and a report reached the two cronies that it was high time for them to protect their property from the inroads of cattle. John being acquainted with building dykes, he and his friend set off west to Comrie to repair the damaged fence. About this time (forty years ago), earthquakes were terrifying the inhabitants considerably, and were the talk of the district. The day was dull and damp, with occasional showers, which hindered John's building operations much, and irritated him to an unusual degree. At length he got one side of the wall so far repaired that he thought he would take a look at its appearance from one of the corners. As he was looking along with one of his eyes shut, a strange, low, rumbling sound was heard, and before he could look round the earth shook to such a degree that the new building toppled over. John was like to burst with anger, but believing that the earthquake was sent for a high purpose, he said nothing, and along with his friend returned home in low spirits. The catastrophe was told, and the old man was much annoyed by the weavers and children asking, "Where's your braw new dyke?" Some time afterwards he again visited the old burial-place, when the grave-digger happened to be present. The graves were overgrown with rank vegetation, and John was much annoyed at the state of matters, and waxing wroth, he rated the sexton soundly, adding, "And mind ye, if ye don't have the nettles out here and the grass nicely cut when my funeral comes west, I'll tak ye a rap in the side o' the head with my niece." When his wife was alive he had occasionally one or two tradesmen lodging in his house, who seldom scrupled to take their fun off him

when time and opportunity served. John, like many more, had strong religious feelings, which, by tradition and use, were more attached to particular names and things than from being formed from study and knowledge. He read his Bible on Sundays, spelling the difficult words, and giving pronunciations unknown in English dictionaries. On reading such a line as "up spake the seraph," he would say, "up spak the scrap." His knowledge of sacred and secular history was meagre, and he would now and again confound the one with the other. He had several parts of a work entitled "The Life of Christ," and one of his lodgers had some parts of a work entitled "The Scottish Chiefs," and both publications had similar covers. One Sunday his lodgers and a neighbour were talking of things worldly to such a degree, that John thought fit to challenge their proceedings, and told them it would be wiser were they reading their Bibles; and if they would not do so, he would read it himself. To this latter they at once agreed, and he reached out his hand to where the parts of the "Life of Christ" lay, but it so happened that he lifted a part of "The Scottish Chiefs." On opening it he commenced reading and spelling at a determined rate, the lodgers doing their best to assist him in mispronunciation. After reading a little he got bewildered with an adventure connected with Wallace. His hearers could scarcely keep their gravity, and the neighbour ventured to ask who this Wallace was. He replied, "Ye micht ken that brawly, wi' yer education. He was one i' (of the) apostles." He was much annoyed when addressed as *Maister* M'Niven. To such an extent would this sometimes irritate him that he would give chase and vociferate—"My name's *John*, and it was paid for when I was baptised!" He opposed the adoption of the Police Act for Crieff, and was once chairman of an opposition meeting of the Gallowhill lieges held in the Gallowhill School to consider what steps were to

be taken. A large sprinkling of the audience was bent on fun, and the chairman delivered several characteristic speeches during the proceedings, in the course of which he denounced the then laird of Broich, who promoted the scheme at the time, as very insignificant, and his estate was nothing better than a kail-yard. He occasionally contracted for the erection of dykes, and his contract offers were sometimes amusing. Amongst the offers for erecting a stone fence on a neighbouring feu was one from John, undertaking to erect the dyke "at a penny below the lowest offer." On another occasion the laird of Broich was taking offers for the erection of a fence, and he was anxious that John should give an offer, and for this purpose sent a servant to inform John of his intention. John, not being a ready writer, asked the servant to write out the offer. This the servant refused, as his writing would be known at Broich. "Well," said John, "just tell the laird that I'll put the dyke up for what he likes." Several years before his death—which happened about a dozen years ago—he received the Peninsular medal with the clasps to which he was entitled, and also a small pension. This latter was given on account of his being wounded in the ankles by slug shot during the American War of 1814.

### Auld Johnny Shaw.

Auld Johnny Shaw lived near by the Cross,  
An' noo that he's gane we a' ken the loss ;  
Ye micht seek for his match, an' seek a long while,  
For the equal o' Johnny doon by the kirk-stile.  
Johnny Shaw was a soutar, o' soutars the chief,  
There wasna his equal in Muthill or Crieff,  
Nor yet in Blackford, or the toon lang an' sma',  
For a wonderfu' soutar was auld Johnny Shaw.

He could mak' ye dress boots, or mend yer auld shoes,  
Could hone yer auld razors, or tell ye the news ;

Could set yer watch richt wi' the ancient toon clock,  
 Or file an auld key doon to fit an auld lock ;  
 Put a valve in yer bellows or a foot to yer pat,  
 Or brush up like new an auld battered hat ;  
 He could box ye the compass or leather a ba',  
 For a versatile genius was auld Johnny Shaw.

A wonderfu' place was his warkshop, I ween ;  
 Sic marvels o' nick-nacks were there to be seen !  
 And the soutar—himsel' a mechanical riddle—  
 Micht be makin' a boot or mendin' a fiddle—  
 Thumpin' the lapstane, the glue-pot a-boiling,  
 Or bent owre a last, at an in-seam hard toiling ;  
 For a boot he could mak', or a fiddle fu' braw,  
 An' fit on the cat-gut could auld Johnny Shaw.

He had bottles on shelves fu' o' scorpions an' snakes,  
 An' queer-looking fish frae the rivers an' lakes ;  
 Had sharks' teeth an' spears frae the cannibal isles,  
 An' fragments o' pottery an' auld-warld tiles ;  
 An auld parritch-pat frae the days o' the Bruce,  
 An' lang rusty dirks that were ance o' some use ;  
 A big shoe frae Lapland for trampin' owre snaw,  
 An' mony mair fairlies had auld Johnny Shaw.

He keepit a squirrel that turned roond a wheel,  
 An' a nest o' white mice in an auld tattie-creel ;  
 A wonderfu' monkey, weel kenn'd through the toon,  
 That folk ran to see, young an' auld, up an' doon ;  
 He had linties frae Dornock, and starlings in cages,  
 He could tell ye their pedigrees, sexes, an' ages ;  
 An' a droll gabbie parrot, besides a jackdaw,  
 For a student o' nature was auld Johnny Shaw.

He had beetles in boxes, and puddocks an' teads,  
 An' een for stuffed birds, just like strings o' glass  
     beads ;  
 He had stuffed birds and butterflies, stuffed mice an'  
     rats ;  
 He had hedgehogs an' wild cats, an' otters an' bats ;

He could stuff ye a cat, or a pig, or a dog,  
 An' eel frae the loch or a snipe frae the bog ;  
 He could stuff ony beast, frae a horse to a crow—  
 There ne'er was a stuffer like auld Johnny Shaw.

But his hammer nae langer is heard at the Cross,  
 An' aiblins his lapstane is covered wi' moss ;  
 His birds an' his fiddles, that strangers gaed seein',  
 Hae lang, lang ere this time been "barkin' an' fleein'."  
 A rare hand was the soutar—the wonder o' Crieff,  
 Amang the bright natives auld Johnny was chief ;  
 But noo he has gane to his lang hame awa',  
 An' nane fills the bannet o' auld Johnny Shaw.

**Waifs and Wanderers.**—One wanderer well known in Crieff in bygone days was a blind piper from Auch-nafauld, Glenquoich, who used to come annually to play the pipes at the trades' processions, and although stone blind, he always found his way alone, not keeping by the road even, but across the country—"mang muirs and mosses many, O," and never lost his way. Some will yet remember seeing the sightless old man in his red tartans. There was a fiddler, too, who came with his fiddle sometimes to play at the processions from about Fowlis. He used to be called "King Crispie," but I can remember nothing worth recording about him. A well-known Highlander that used to come down to Crieff annually was called M'Arracher, but better known as "Toll Gilmour." As many sentences in Gaelic stand reverse to English, it was his manner in broken English to speak of Gilmerton, or Gilmour's Toll as it was often called, in the Gaelic form—hence the appellation. Toll Gilmour was a cripple, and his mode of locomotion was by walking on his knees—having them shod with leather—and a stick in each hand. To travel from Breadalbane in that way must have been laborious work for the poor creature. He might, perhaps, get a chance lift in a

cart sometimes ; but there he was every summer begging through Crieff, holding out his horny palm for a *poun shae*. Poor Toll Gilmour ! It was always a great bit of news for the first boy that might chance to see him about the east end to impart the tidings down the way of the Feus—"Toll Gilmour's come tae the toon again !" Another poor cripple who sometimes visited Crieff was much more helpless than Toll Gilmour. He was called Charlie Stewart, and had neither legs nor arms, but was carried from door to door on a hand barrow ; and Charlie's mode of defending himself from boys wishing to tease him was to spit on them, and as we all held the belief that he could *spit venom*, we gave him a wide berth, as from long practice he could spit a considerable distance, and the dread of the venom made us scamper in greater haste than we would have run from another armed with stones.

Another well-known visitor to Crieff in those days—and perhaps down to later times—was a certain divine from Dundee, called Jamie Duncan. Jamie used to wear a suit of orthodox black, and carry about a Bible and some old sermons. People alleged that he was a big rogue, but as it could not be shown that he ever stole his neighbour's ox or his ass, the uncharitable opinion was balanced by others, who regarded him as a saint. His appearance, however, bespoke him as of the earth earthy. He was much too gross and greasy looking for an ideal divine ; but as appearances are sometimes deceptive, Jamie might have been a saint after all. But he certainly was all things unto me in a sense never intended by the apostle. When he got a few devoted hearers gathered around him, the hat was set on the ground to receive the offerings of his "Christian friends," and then a prayer would be offered with much unction, and perhaps a psalm sung, and then he went at the sermon—never too long—and if the offering came up to the mark, Jamie would bestow on them a loving

benediction. But Jamie could tell stories as well as deliver sermons, and sometimes stories of a very cerulean hue—very queer stories for a preacher to tell; but if they brought in the coppers, it was all one to Jamie. He knew what suited a meeting of saints as well as what would please a shoal of sinners taken from a wicked and perverse generation. I remember of the Government, for some reason or other, putting down the Irish coinage, or “harps,” as they were called, but they came after a while into circulation again; but for a time—I have forgotten how long—no person would take them. Well, during the time that “harps” were in disgrace there took place the summer sacrament at Monzie. It was a great affair the sacrament in those days. There was the tent preaching on the banks of the Shaggy, and there were “rows and ale” in other places, and there were the Crieff weavers by the score, just as Burns tells about the Kilmarnock wabsters and their doings at Mauchline; and the lads and lasses returning over the Knock in the afternoon, and pulling blaeberries on their way home. It occasionally happened that lasses went north in the morning in white dresses and returned in the evening in prints; the blaeberries dyed nice round spots on the white muslin while they sat among the bushes. When a boy, I have seen several Monzie sacraments, and I am not overdrawing the picture in the least. But the one that I remember most about was the one when the “harps” were out of circulation. Most people had less or more of these useless coins, held of no value. Well, on that particular Sabbath, among other clergy officiating at Monzie was Jamie Duncan. He was not in the tent, however, his credentials not admitting him there. He took his stand on the bridge with his hat at his feet, and soon his congregation was about equal in size to the more orthodox gathering farther down the Shaggy; and Jamie did not spare his lungs, being heard even at the tent. When I passed by—I was not allowed to linger there—his hat

was nearly full of coppers ("harps"). The young fellows tossed them in by way of a joke, but Jamie was no fool, although he saw well enough what his offerings were composed of. He knew that copper had an intrinsic value independent of the stamp, and if he kept them till they came into circulation again that day's stipend would be worth something. The next oddity was so often in Crieff that he might have been almost considered a native—"Daft Willie Smith o' Dornock." Those readers who have seen Willie can never have forgotten him. He lived, I think, with his brother, a farmer at Dornock; but he was almost every day in Crieff—came, it was said, for a purpose that he could have accomplished just as well at home; but it was a notion, and Willie had strange notions. He was what is called a sticket minister, and when attending the college the Greek had turned his head; and so we always find a learned lunatic having the strangest whims. One craze of Willie's was to wear a strip of tin, about half an inch broad, folded tight across his nose, curled up at both ends like ram horns. That ridiculous contrivance, he told people, was to prevent his nose from seeking snuff. Then his head was encased in a small net, such as girls wore in after years. Now, fancy a man with a net on his head, his nose ornamented with tin, a suit of coarse blue cloth, the sleeves of the coat reaching mid-way between the elbows and the wrists, the trouser legs a world too short, a stout cudgel in his hand, and a dangerous gleam in his eye, and you have Willie Smith. I wish some of the superfine summer visitors could have seen him. I think that he would have rather astonished them; indeed, he rather astonished the natives now and then. One day, coming along past the Broich's plantation, he met Mr Scott the banker, and fastened on him like a fury. The banker found himself in the hands of a terrible Philistine, but luckily John Kemp of the Braehead happened to be near by, and rescued the banker from Willie's clutches.



The banker, from some cause or other, seemed particularly obnoxious to daft people. Kate Ogilvie used to insult him wherever she met him. About the last of my list is the old dummy, Sandy Taylor. I remember the dummy since I can remember anything. Sandy had been apprenticed to the shoemaking in his young days with "Cork Rogie," but Sandy disliked the gentle craft—a thing I don't wonder much at—and when the Cork required to go out the dummy always took the opportunity of bolting; so the Cork got a large stone fitted with a staple and chain, and when he required to go out the dummy was manacled by the leg to the stone. But even that was not enough to keep him on the stool, for he would then take the stone in his hands to the street and sit upon it until the Cork would appear round a corner; then the stone would be carried in again. Whether or not he served out the term of his apprenticeship is more than I can tell, but leave the trade he did. When I remember of him first he used to be sitting on fine summer days on Miss Caw's stair basking himself in the sun, but when the Drummond family came down he was always ready for running messages to the Castle. There were shillings to be got in that quarter, and the dummy was partial to siller. He always knew, as if by instinct, when the family came to Scotland, and with what life would he tramp over to the Castle with a basket full of beef on his shoulder; and the first sight he would get of Lady Willoughby entering a shop in Crieff he was sure to be in at her heels. A shopkeeper informed me that on one occasion when the lady came into his shop she was barely over the threshold when the dummy was at her shoulder, "ba, ba-ing" as loud as was his wont. Well knowing that without the accustomed shilling Sandy would stick like a "bur," the lady dropped the coin into his hand, when, without the least ceremony or indication of gratitude, he turned his face from her ladyship and walked out at the door. But she knew the dummy's manners well

—had known him for long years—so she merely observed, “He’s an ungrateful old scoundrel that.” One night the dummy got rather into a scrape—I think it was for thrashing his mother; but they put him into the black hole and locked him up for the night, but, like La Tude, he managed to ascend the chimney, and in the morning, to the astonishment of the people, there was Sandy sitting on one of the steps on the gable of the old jail. But as the dummy died not so long ago, it is unnecessary to say more about him.

There were very few English waifs ever came the way of Crieff. I remember of only one—a Yorkshire man, called Sam Hall. What star guided him to Crieff is more than I ever learned. He seemed rather a simple fellow for a tramp. He remained some years in Crieff doing odd jobs, and married a waif in Crieff and took her to England; but she was such an ugly specimen that I am afraid no other Yorkshire man ever came to Crieff looking for a wife. At that time there were three Irish in Crieff, and no more—at least that I ever heard of. There was a man called Irish John that wrought with Mr Graham of Pittenzie; and there was an Irish woman in the Bridgend called Wilson, the widow of some soldier belonging to Crieff, that he had picked up somewhere, and her son, the half-breed, was known in Selkirk’s school as “Paddy Wilson.” The other was Archie M’Feelie, a musician, but his wife was said to be a Glasgow woman, and the half-breed, young Neil, was well known in Crieff.

My list of waifs and wanderers is now complete, with the exception of some three or four outsiders that somehow managed to mix and mingle their blood with that of some of the natives, which, for obvious reasons, it will be better to pass over. Gentle reader, you have now got a list of the oddities of other years, most of whom have passed away or are passing;

and so, reader and writer, we too are passing, as the poet beautifully puts it—

“From the stars of heaven and the flowers of earth,  
From the pageant of power and the voice of mirth,  
From the mist of morn on the mountain's brow,  
From childhood's song and affection's vow ;  
From all save that o'er which soul bears sway,  
There breathes but one record—‘passing away !’”

**The Herd of Pittentian, by Mr Miller, Broadlea.—**

About the middle of last century there was a cottage at the foot of the Broom Brae of Pittentian, about a mile south from Crieff, which was occupied by Maggie Habbins or Armstrong. She was reported to be much wiser than her neighbours, and was frequently consulted by the young of her own sex as to who would-be-who, and kindred future events. She attributed much of the disappointments of life to aërial beings, who flung about elf arrows and did much skaith to man and beast. Her medicine consisted in a pebble-looking article, about the size of a pigeon's egg, which she kept in a napkin tied with nine knots. She carried this always with her; its use was external, and during application she drew strange signs, at the same time uttering a strange gibberish. When cures were effected, or fortunes were prognosticated favourably, she considered herself well paid by receiving a sample of butter or a small cheese at Hallow-e'en, or a goupin or two of groats when the melder came from the mill, or a load or two of scaddins from the Muir of Dornock. Maggie, when dressed in her clean sooback (mutch), blue duffle puipp, and her father's poll-staff in her hand, looked a strapping quean, and when on a mission she marched smartly and straight as a rush. Her forebears were the Armstrongs of Northumberland. Her father was six feet in height, and was in his day a gallant fellow, and running footman to the Laird of Glenderwel. Maggie had a daughter called Alice, who had a son to a young laird who attended Muthill school. The

boy was called Hugh, and in due course was fee'd as herd to the ten or twelve tenants who then occupied the farm of Pittentian. During his engagement a party of the 93d Regiment, or Sutherland Fencibles, as they were then called, lay in Crieff, and the officers often amused themselves hunting with greyhounds in the district. The man who generally acted as their ghillie was a well-known character called "Shirra" Don. One day a hunting party visited Pittentian haugh, where Hugh was herding. On coming up to him one of the party asked, "Any hares here, my lad?" "I dinna ken if there are hares, but there are plenty of maukins." "Well, well," said one of the officers, "show us a maukin, and I will give you a shilling." Hugh led them down the Earn side, and on coming to a bank of willows, smote them with his stick and cried "Puss! haluoo!" when a fine hare started out before the hounds. Puss out-distanced her pursuers, sweeping round and round the Broom Brae till the hounds began to fag. The hare on turning a circle at the north end of the haugh was noticed by one of the hounds, which darted across the shortest way, and just as it was within its own length of the hare, Hugh, who was standing on an eminence, cried out, "Run, mother! run, or the dun dog 'll hae ye." The hare instantly darted into the cottage by the halland bole, and the hounds were completely put out of scent and sight. The party expressed themselves well pleased with the day's sport, and willingly paid the shilling to Hugh. After some summers at herding, Hugh was sent to Muthill school, and the fees were duly paid by some unknown person. He was kept at his education, and when qualified, he received a commission and joined the army, and in 1791 went out to India under Lord Cornwallis, and took part in most of the battles with Tippoo Saib. His intelligence, and cool and determined bravery, attracted the attention of his superior officers, and he rose through all the military grades

till he was made a Colonel, and afterwards was knighted. Being detailed for reconnoitring the ground around Seringapatam previous to the assault by storm, he was shot while carrying out his instructions. Alice received a pension from Government for the loss of her son, and both she and Maggie, her mother, removed to a comfortable cottage on the estate of Glenderwel. Sir Hugh was much beloved by the soldiers, and on learning that a number of men from the Crieff district were in the army, he sought them out, and often during the weary days of marching and watching he did his utmost to make them comfortable, and frequently recited the tales of his schoolboy days with much glee. One of the soldiers who shared Colonel Campbell's kindness was Duncan M'Owan, who for several years after his discharge from the army, at the end of the last century, was dryster at the Mill of Balloch, near Drummond Castle. During the long winter evenings Duncan used to fight his battles o'er again, and recite the daring deeds of the herd of Pittentian.

**A Concluding Stroke.**—During the heat of the French war the recruiting sergeant occasionally addressed audiences at public-house doors on the honour, dignity, promotion, and emoluments attendant on his profession of arms, and too often the gaping rustics believed his blarney, and accepted his drams and shilling, and marched off to fight their country's battles. One evening a sergeant was elevated on a chair beside the door of a well-known public-house at the north-east side of West Commissioner Street, where it joins King Street. A party of sturdy villagers were passing, amongst whom was Thomas Wright, a tanner. Thomas stopped a minute to listen, and made some remark disagreeing with the doctrine promulgated. The sergeant defied him to single combat. Thomas quietly went towards him, and with one blow of his powerful arm sent the sergeant and chair spinning heels over head in the street, to the great delight of the audience.