Part II.

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, ETC.

The Volunteers.—Although the "drill-park" is seldom mentioned now-a-days in Crieff, yet the time has been, within the present century, when some six hundred men, all good and true, were wont to assemble regularly for drill within that field across the Turret, and near the celebrated "Eppie Callum's Tree." Much has of late years been said and sung of the "rising importance of Crieff," and though it may seem ungracious to gainsay a belief so fondly indulged in by some of the villagers, we must remind them that the village is not of yesterday, and that though Crieff in the days of old had neither bowling-greens, nor Bailies, nor Commissioners, nor summer visitors, it had a larger population than the present, every man rejoicing in the inheritance of his own individuality, and all revelling in that joyousness of life which can only flow from an utter absence of stranger rule. However, when we see the present nucleus of sixty or seventy volunteers in Crieff augmented to six hundred members, we will believe in the rising importance of the village, but not till then.

A company or two of the old volunteer regiment was doubtless gathered in from the surrounding districts, but the great bulk, we believe, were lads belonging to the village. Now, amongst so many Crieff men, there were, as might have been expected, a number of arrant wags, as also the usual percentage

of simpletons, so that the monotony of drill was oftentimes enlivened by a good deal of fun. Even the different companies had distinctive appellations, somewhat different from any that we find in "James's Military Dictionary." For instance, there was the "Wild Company." There was also the "Daft Company." This celebrated daft company was commanded by Captain John Murray, better known as "Lord John." All accounts agree in representing Lord John as the most simple-minded officer that ever wore epaulettes—"meek as Moses or Melancthon," a man who would not trample on a worm, much less on any of his beloved lambs, the erratic members of the Daft Company. The little we could ever learn of his history from surviving members of the regiment only amounted to the fact of his being of the same lineage as the Athole family, and that while in the service of the East India Company he had been blown up by the explosion of a magazine, and this accident was believed to have so impaired his intellect as to have induced the extreme gentleness, verging on imbecility, which marked his character. Having said this much of the captain, we may take up one or two of the company, "Lord John's daft men." But let not the reader suppose that they were generally what this appellation betokened; for, with the exception of Doctor Sinclair, and one or two others, they were considered by the rest of the regiment as greater rogues than fools, and so perhaps will the reader think when we have related an anecdote of Private John M'Laren, better known as "Gill Jock." The prodigious number of stories told of this worthy makes the task of selection somewhat difficult, but we will just pick up one at random. It was customary in those days for the weaver lads in Crieff to engage as reapers for the harvest with the farmers in the neighbourhood. This habit arose from no necessity to eke out a scanty living, as it unfortunately became at a later period, when work became scarce and wages were broken down,

but rather to get away for a time from the irksome confinement of the loom-shop, and both the drill-park and the hairst-rig were excellent outlets for the exuberant flow of animal spirits so largely enjoyed by the weavers of that time. Now, it happened one harvest that Jock went to fulfil his engagement with a farmer somewhere on Drummond estate, and after working for about a week without anything remarkable taking place, it began at last to rain, and that so heavily that there seemed no prospect of any outdoor work being done that day. This break in the toil was just what M'Laren wanted; so, after asking the farmer if there would be any shearing that day, and being assured there would be none, Jock remarked—"I suppose that I may gae awa owre tae Crieff, and come back in the morning." "My sang, but that wud be a caper," said the farmer. "Na, na, lad. We'll no learn ye nae tricks o' that kind. Come awa' in t' the barn wi' me, an' let us begin an' thresh." "I can thresh nane," was Jock's response. "Maybe no," said the farmer, "but ye'll ne'er learn younger. Come awa! we'll sune mak' a thresher o' ye. Ye're strong eneuch, ony wey." Jock remonstrated no further, but meekly followed his master to the barn, and got a flail put in his hand. The farmer then laid a sheaf or two on the floor; then, grasping his own flail, took up his position opposite his pupil, and gave his instructions, which, we need scarcely inform our Crieff readers, were simply to raise the handstaff nearly to the perpendicular, bringing the supple overhead with a circular sweep, then down on the grain with as heavy a stroke as possible, keeping exact time in alternate strokes with your fellow-worker, something after the manner of switching carpets. All that seemed so simple that the farmer fancied M'Laren might pick it up in ten minutes, and so he might; but he did not, nor in twenty either. No eye ever saw such an awkward pupil. When he lifted his flail no mortal could guess in what spot it was likely to fall. At last,

one of his wild strokes made the farmer's flail spin out of his hands. This was followed by a shout from the farmer—"Od, preserve us, what d'ye mean? Hae ye nae brains at a'? Confoond ye, try and strik even this time." The flails were set in motion again, with no improvement on M'Laren's part. Sometimes he would fall short of the sheaf, sometimes would strike beyond it—now at the one end, now at the other. At length he contrived by a dexterous stroke to bring the supple over the farmer's foot with great accuracy and considerable force. That blow put an end to the threshing, as the farmer flung himself yelling among the straw, holding the unlucky foot in both his hands. His first words when he was able to articulate were—"Gae oot o' my sicht, ye stoopid idiot. Ye can gang tae Crieff noo if ye like, and ne'er come back for onything that I care." M'Laren took the farmer at his word, gruff as it was, and was out at the barn-door before his master had left off speaking, which was just as well, as the last sentence contained anything but a benediction. Jock, however, was at his post early next morning, and soon got into grace again by using his sickle in grand style till the harvest was ended. Then came the "kirn," an annual festival in those days, on almost every farm, when the "maiden was catched." This was a business after M'Laren's own heart—quite in his glory, drinking and joking with all around, the soul of the company, in short. At length he proposed to the farmer to go to the barn, and try the threshing once more. "The drink's surely takin' his head noo," was the farmer's remark. This caused a general laugh, as the threshing affair had been a standing joke all harvest; but M'Laren pleaded and urged to get "just another trial." "Weel," said the farmer, "awa ye gae; but I'll take care ye'll no break my legs this time; ye can thresh yer lane, an' if ye kill onybodie, it's likely tae be yersel'. Them that will tae Cupar maun tae Cupar." When M'Laren got the thing settled there was an adjournment of the

household to the barn, including the farmer himself, whose final warning to his people was—"Keep weel back frae him every ane o' ye, or he'll be sure to knock some o' yer brains oot." But Jock had no intention of killing any one, as in a few minutes he demonstrated the fact that he was about the best thresher on the farm! Great was the farmer's wrath on finding how he had been sold, but Jock had received his fee in his pocket, and took his leave, enjoying the thing immensely. Such was one of Lord John's daft men—a practical joker of the first water in his day and generation, though long gone "where the good niggers go."

We shall only mention particularly one more of the Daft Company. This was a man called Tam Black. A very odd character was Tam—a singular compound of shrewdness and simplicity. Tam was what was called a customer-weaver—a manufacturer, in fact, on a small scale, and he could buy and sell like a Tyrian. During the volunteering times, when he went to the Highland markets to purchase yarn, Tam always went attired in his regimentals—shako, belts, and all; and if any one asked the reason of such strange procedure, the ready reply always was—"Oh! a person's money is always safe under a red coat. No one would ever think of robbing a soldier." Although Tam was often made the butt of his comrades' jokes, he took the thing wonderfully cool, and seldom or never *chased*. On one occasion, when lying in Stirling Castle (the only night, I believe, that the regiment was ever quartered in the fortress), one of the sentries entered the room in which Tam slept in the middle of the night, and shouted at the top of his voice, "Thomas Black." Tam, getting up through his sleep, and thinking it was the roll-call, responded "Here," upon which the sentry continued—"Ye'll hae tae come awa oot, Tam. Here's yer cat oot in the coort, come a' the way frae Crieff after ye, an' its like tae

poo doon the Castle tae get in." "No possible!" exclaimed Tam, "I left plenty o' meat till't afore I cam' awa." Tam, however, pulled on his trousers, and followed the sentry out, greatly to the amusement of that worthy, as he wandered about the batteries calling "Pussy, pussy;" but of course no pussy was forthcoming, and he had to return shivering to his bed, to be laughed at by the fellows inside.

But there was another story often told of Tam, which we feel some delicacy in relating, lest we should be thought guilty of plagiarism, as we have read a similar anecdote, to the best of our recollection, in one of Dr Moir's novels. If we remember right, it was a character called Benjie that the doctor makes to act the same part somewhere about Dalkeith that Tam Black played in the drill-park. Now, whether the story reached the Doctor somehow from Crieff, or if a similar affair really occurred at Dalkeith, we cannot tell; but the story was told of Tam Black a hundred times long before I had heard of either Dr Moir or his works, and I am sure many of the Crieff people yet living will say the same. It happened at a review of the regiment in the drill-park, when, after going through certain evolutions, they were placed in line, and set to what is known as "independent firing." On this occasion Tam seems to have considered that the command included *independent loading* as well, for though one of his charges missed fire, it gave him no manner of concern, as he continued to ram down cartridge after cartridge till he had in the half-dozen, all the while going through the routine of cocking and snapping. At length it went off with a report like a culvereen, the recoil laying Tam sprawling on the ground, the firelock pitching some yards rearward. Sir Patrick Murray, on galloping up, ordered Sergeant M'Kenzie to lift the musket. Getting alarmed for the safety of his Colonel and the Sergeant, Tam shouted out—"Tak' care, gentlemen; there's ither five to come yet!" Such is a specimen of what Lord John's daft

warriors were, and with such a band it was no easy matter for the Captain to get them into order on field-days. The Daft Company, as a rule, was always last in getting into line. There was another company, commanded by Geordie Gardiner of Trowan, and they, being chiefly country lads, used to squat down on the grass as soon as they entered the park, and no bugle call could bring them to their feet till Geordie would get into a frenzy, running about like a drover at Falkirk Tryst, shouting to the recumbent red-coats, "Rise and dress up there, or I'll tak' ye a crack wi' a stane!" When Geordie's rurals had taken up a formation, it was then Lord John's time to bestir himself, and during the scene we have described the Daft Company might be all seen huddled together in a compact mass around a Bridgend man called Drummond, hearing him telling stories, the Captain all the while calmly pacing backwards and forwards outside the group; but so soon as Geordie Gardiner's company got into formation, he would then ram his head over the shoulders of some of the outsiders, and recall the story-teller to his military duty. "John, you must have done with these stories now." That admonition seldom ended Drummond's story, however, but only brought in something additional as an interpolation. "Ou, aye, sir, I'll be dune in twa-three minutes. I've just a wee bit t' tell noo." And even after the Captain had got his men in tolerable order, the next trouble was Geordie Sharp coming puffing and running in at the park-gate to take his place in the ranks. Geordie had always a private morning drill of his own to attend to: some dozen or eighteen exceedingly volatile apprentices to keep on their looms, and so Geordie was always late. "Oh; there's George Sharp!" the Captain would exclaim. "He always comes hopping up in the rear. This won't do, George; you must attend better. And there's Thomas Black. O goodness! Just like a pob miller. Thomas, you must take more pains to clean yourself."

Time, however, was money with Tam, for he could never see the thrift of dressing twice on one day. Accordingly, on parade days he put on his uniform when he rose in the morning, and continued weaving till drill time in the red coat, and, as he "couldna be fashed" brushing himself, he had only to throw off his apron and shoulder the firelock to be in what he considered marching order. Consequently he often took his place in the ranks with a quantity of pack-thread ravellings about him, to the great annoyance of the Captain, and amusement of the regiment. These are specimens of Lord John's ordinary troubles; but there were special difficulties that sometimes crossed his path, entailing on the poor man nights of study of Marshall Saxe, and the last "General Regulations," or that old treatise, the manual "De l'Artileur Dictionaire Milatare," that appeared in France in 1801, and made its way into Britain shortly afterwards. One of those weighty questions regarding His Majesty's service devolved upon Lord John to settle on occasion of a Bridgend lad applying for admission into the Daft Company. The Captain liked his appearance well enough, but it happened that he got his living by the manufacture of horn spoons. Now, although the calling was perfectly lawful, the Captain got dubious as to how the company might receive the recruit; so he told the lad that he would first require to consult his men, after which he hoped to have him enrolled. Accordingly, on the first parade day he took his place at the centre of the line, and craved the company's attention, saying that his duty required him to state a matter of much importance to them. Of course the lads were all attention, expecting to hear some proposal about volunteering into the line, or the East India Company's service, when the Captain spoke as follows:—"Gentlemen, there has been a young man applying to be admitted a member of the company I have the honour to command, but I have considered it prudent first to ask if you will be willing

to serve along with him. As to personal appearance the lad will do, but as to trade, he is a tinker!" Having submitted this case of conscience to the rank and file, the Captain paused for a reply. But the reply was soon enough forthcoming, for Gill Jock, constituting himself speaker for the occasion, replied —"Ou, aye, sir, tak' him by a' means. We get the name o' the Daft Company ony wey, and then there 'ill be naething but daft folk and tinklers in't." Poor Lord John, feeling himself, as it were, "rebuked and put down," merely added—"Oh! I'll inform the young man that he'll not be accepted of," and thus the tinker patriot, longing to "follow to the field some warlike lord," had his military ardour summarily quenched by the vote of that redoubtable joker, Gill Jock. Sometimes the regiment was quartered in Perth, and while there they were occasionally privileged to behold what none of the present Volunteers have yet seen, batches of French prisoners marching in captivity along the streets of Perth, looking rather askance at the Crieff lads, as they rushed in a mob, out of all order, along the line of march, to get a look at them. Another grand affair at that period was the famous battle of Bambreach. There was drilling also late and early on the Inch of Perth, for it was the ambition and pride of Sir Patrick to bring his men in point of discipline up to the regiments of the line, and his officers being animated with the same spirit, the Crieff lads, with all their fun and frolic, were kept up to the mark.

I think it was on one of these occasions when the regiment was quartered in Perth that the celebrated Battle of Bambreach was lost and won. We cannot undertake to give an accurate description of this engagement, never having seen any official account of it; but, as we have conversed with men who fought on both sides, we may risk a few particulars. So far as we could understand the programme, it appears to have been the task of Sir Patrick and his Crieff

warriors to dislodge the enemy from a strong position on one of the banks of the Almond, with the river in front, said enemy being the City of Perth heroes and others from about Dunkeld; while a bridge on which one of their flanks rested was defended by a battery of the Mid-Lothian Artillery, the whole of that force being commanded by Sir Alexander M'Kenzie. And now, all arrangements being complete, Sir Patrick led on the Crieff men to the attack. The artillerymen stood to their guns, and the battle began, then the rattle of musketry ran along the opposing lines, shrouding the combatants in smoke, and for a while independent firing was the order of the day, both parties remorselessly augmenting the National Debt by a reckless waste of His Majesty's gunpowder. Like the greenhorns described by the poet,

> "They sometimes, with a hankering for existence,
> Kept merely firing at a foolish distance."

But they were led to the water's edge at last, and ordered to cross. This movement was executed with wonderful celerity—considering the enemy's galling fire, and the slippery boulders in the bottom of the stream. The charge was sounded, and in two lines they took the brae, driving the enemy at the bayonet's point pell-mell before them, and—hurrah for Crieff!—won the battle. The carnage, considering all things, was not great. There was some blood spilt, however, in charging up the steep bank, the late John M'Farlane having slid backwards on the bayonet of his rear-rank man, the point of which went clean through his hand. This was the only casualty recorded, except numerous streams caused by the bootfuls of water that were got in crossing the stream. One incident more remains to be noticed of the fight. It refers to a man called Davie M'Ewan, who fell out of the ranks when the company to which he belonged was about to cross the Almond, and adopted the desperate resolve of a flank movement on his own account. So,

instead of splashing mid-leg in the water, Davie took the bridge, literally walking up to the cannon's mouth. Whether or not he attempted to spike the guns is not recorded, but he cleared the battery safe and sound, making his appearance on one of the enemy's flanks just as his own regiment was debouching from the coppice on the river's bank. But Poor Davie had to wander about all day like an injured ghost, being too loyal to go over to the enemy, although his comrades closed their ranks against him. But, for all that, we used to regard Davie as the "bravest of the brave," crossing the Almond, as Bonaparte crossed the Adda, along the celebrated Bridge of Lodi, for which he was so much extolled; though poor Davie had both his tactics and his bravery denounced at the close of the action, being summoned before a self-constituted court-martial of privates, and censured as a despicable poltroon, afraid to wet his feet, and sentenced to be taken by a corporal's guard to the river, and pitched neck and heel into the deepest pool that could be found. Davie tried to avert the grim joke being carried out in his person by pleading ill health, and offered to wade through the stream if they would only let him alone; but whether or not the penance was exacted we are uncertain. Probably some of the officers interfered to prevent the ducking, and let him return dry shod with the victors and vanquished to Perth; but as our materials are somewhat scanty, we must finish this meagre description of the battle by referring the readers, "for further particulars," to some of the remaining veterans who fought in the battle of Bambreach long, long ago.

Although the regiment was frequently in Perth, we believe that they were only once in Stirling, and great was the consternation in Crieff when the Volunteers were ordered south—an impression having gone abroad that they were to be shipped off for the Continent; but to do the regiment justice, there were very few recorded cases of wishing to back out of the

thing. But on the day that they did march, there was weeping among the women, and lamentation and woe. The knapsacks were duly stuffed with biscuits for the march, and linen rags to bind up wounds when the conflict came, and weeping maidens crowded the line of march till they were out of the parish. The most demonstrative in grief, however, was the sister of Archie Menzies, who caught him round the neck, clinging to him with the tenacity of despair, exclaiming—"My dear Archie, I'll ne'er see ye again." But Archie was equal to the occasion, for, with a mighty effort, he shook her off, showing his contempt of danger and geography at the same time by exclaiming—"Hold away, Mary, we're all bound for Europe!" thereby earning the nickname of "Europe" to the end of his days. The next incident was an attempt at desertion. It appears that one hero at least had got tired of the service, and when his company had got between King Street and Brown's Row he took his musket by the muzzle and flung it into the Meadow, and then, jumping the ditch on the opposite side of the road, was making ingloriously away; but as a matter of course, he was captured, and marched a prisoner to Stirling. Nothing very particular took place on the march afterwards, except that the officers were always required to clear the wayside public-houses of the thirsty rank and file. There were no teetotallers in those days, so that on a long march few thought there was any harm in a dram. After much threatening and pulling of belts by the officers—from the Colonel to the Sergeant-Major—the "six-hundred" were all safely quartered at last in Stirling Castle.

After holding the fortress of Stirling for one night, as already stated, the Crieff men were obliged to evacuate it on the following day, being permitted, however, to march out with the honours of war. The reason of this sudden change of quarters was the advance upon Stirling of a corps that had been newly

raised in Ireland, and had not had time to get their uniforms. What the actual strength of this body was we cannot tell. It might be a thousand strong; but whatever the number was, the appearance of the corps beggared all description, and was sufficient to throw the whole country on their line of march into a lively state of consternation. Happily for our forefathers, they knew much less of the Pope's "thunder-and-turf" worshippers than we in these latter days know to our cost—their knowledge of the "finest pisentry" being limited to stray packmen now and then lodging in Molly M'Kay's. Now, these packmen were rather favourable specimens of what *Punch* some time ago styled the "MISSING LINK," as packmen in those days, both Scotch and Irish, were all capitalists, in proof of which we refer the Crieff folk to a village not a thousand miles from Kelso, where the Chief Magistrate and Free Kirk minister are both descendants of packmen. The magistrates of Stirling being apprised by a Government despatch that the Connaught "boys" would be quartered amongst them, had made up their minds for the worst; but the first notice that the general public got of this motley legion was from a farmer on horseback, who, on his way to Stirling, had come suddenly upon their rear, and being afraid to pass what seemed so many Yahoos on the king's highway, he struck into the open country, and making the detour of some fields, and getting past in this manner, rode hot haste into the town with the terrible news that the *French* were coming, and while he yet spake, in galloped another, confirming the same alarming intelligence. Then pedestrians came hastening in, all uttering that fearful word, the "French."

"While thronged the citizens, with terror dumb,
Or whispering with white lips—the foe, they come, they come!"

To realise anything like the public feeling of those times, it is well to remember that a long war had raged between Britain and France, and that the

hatred engendered by hearing details of relatives and friends stricken down in battle, and the never-ending alarms of invasion, had caused the people to connect everything hideous and grotesque which the imagination could conjure up with the terrible Frenchman. In the Stirling scare, however, the Crieff men took the thing pretty cool, for, as we have mentioned, they had seen plenty of French soldiers in Perth, and knew that the present invaders were not from Gaul, wherever they had come from; and moreover, being well armed, they did not very much care. At length it came out that the wild-looking savages on the street were Irishmen—friends and protectors, in short; so the Stirling people breathed more freely. But if their united aspirations could have found vent in one voice, it would have issued in the short prayer—"Heaven save us from our friends!" But men were scarce at that period, and the Government were at their wits' end how to fill up the blanks that were constantly occurring in the army, and so this batch of heroes had been gleaned in Ireland amongst the refuse of the population, the authorities likely consoling themselves with the saying—"The theifer-like the better soger." Most of them had been discharged seven-years' men, and other rif-raf that had been at one time or another connected with the army; but such a congregation of "tattie-bogles" had not been seen in this world since Falstaff led his ragamuffins to the battle of Shrewsbury. After the panic of the Stirling people had somewhat subsided, they were thrown into a fresh uproar by the tatterdemalians dispersing themselves all over the town, and presenting their billets. This was more than flesh and blood could bear, and the town rose *en masse*. Such a tumult had not been in Stirling since the battle of Bannockburn. A petition was hastily got up and presented to the authorities, praying that, if they were to have soldiers billeted on them, to give them the Perthshire men, and shut the Irish in the castle. Accordingly, the

billets were transferred to the Crieff lads, who were allowed to march out of the fortress with the honours of war, leaving the castle and garrison duty to the subsidiary Fenians, and took up their quarters in the town, where they soon found themselves in clover, as every family where they were billeted seemed to consider a couple of armed men in the house quite a windfall, considering the importation from Connaught amongst them.

When the Irish appeared on parade the day succeeding their appearance in Stirling, there was a fair muster of the townspeople to see the "boys," and most of the Strathearn Volunteers were there as well, and very amusing was the inspection. There was scarcely an entire dress in the whole battalion. There were a number of old regimental coats *minus* the skirts. These appendages, being considered unnecessary, were doing duty as patchwork on the corduroy breeches, the body and sleeves being worn in the way of a spenser; while some old blue vests had the sleeves of old red coats tacked to the armholes with pack thread. Amongst so many scarecrows there was one whom the Crieff men seemed to regard as a sort of Beau Brummel in his way. This exquisite was distinguished from the ragged warriors around from having a complete suit, nothing wanting. On his head was the smart foraging cap, with a coat of the composite order—half civil, half military—one half being red, showing two stripes on the arm, the corresponding side being of grey frieze, the two sides connected by a seam up the centre of the back, while the end of the red skirt was supplemented with a piece of blue to make it of uniform length with the opposite side. There was also a fair quantity of straw rope doing duty as garters. Some had shoes, and some had none; but, whatever else they wanted, they all had hats. Some sported old battered shakos, others had cast-off Vandykes, some *minus* the rim, which gave occasion to the Crieff men to inquire at

one another—"Whaur the mischief did they get a' thae pirn-hats?" How long they remained in Stirling is somewhat uncertain, but their *outré* appearance formed the subject of comment amongst the members of the Volunteer force for many years after.

After remaining a short time in Stirling, the Volunteers got safely back to Crieff, resuming their several occupations and occasional drill till about the end of the great war, when their services being no longer required, they were finally disbanded.

A Poser.—At the second annual election of members for the Town Council, when open voting was in vogue, Sheriff Barclay and a clerk were in attendance. According to the *modus operandi*, the clerk called over the roll, and each voter as called signified for whom he voted. The stir and hubbub of the assemblage frequently drowned the voice of the clerk, and on one occasion he had to call a name, say—Donald Roy. Some of the voters, mistaking the name, said he was present. After a pause "Donald Roy" was again called in a louder tone. Some one again said that he thought he was present, and others expressed doubts of his presence. The clerk got irritated at the delay, and in a threatening tone exclaimed—"If you're not there, Donald Roy, don't answer to your name, sir!" The learned Sheriff's face grew radiant with a smile, and the meeting roared with laughter. When the clerk discovered that he had perpetrated a bull he also joined in the chorus.

Notes of a Crieff Soiree.—When soirees were not so common an enjoyment as now, an entertainment of the kind came off in the Weavers' Hall, and a choir of about a dozen voices, conducted by the late James Rutherford, was in attendance. There was a full house, and tea was manufactured in a room off the west end of the hall, and a well-known orator presided. At a signal from the chairman the clatter of dishes was heard, and soon a bevy of active officials

ushered out of the room. Tables being dispensed with, so as to afford extra sitting accommodation, each individual present had to do his or her best with cup and saucer in hand. The foremost rows of seats were served first, and eating and drinking commenced at once. It proved a difficult task for the officials to get amongst the audience to dispense their goods, and by the time the fifth or sixth row of seats was served, the front seat occupants were clamouring for a second supply. Those in the back seats became as clamorous for a first round, and a general debate ensued, resulting in the chairman deciding that all must get a first supply previous to any getting a second. When the backmost seat was served, the chairman called on a well-known native—who was residing at a distance, but was back on a visit—to say grace. The gentleman did so, and as he was concluding, the audience, as an earnest of their appreciation of his services, applauded his deliverance most heartily with hands and feet. The evening wore on amid songs, speeches, and scattered remarks, the chairman bearing off the belt with an oration on "Liberty," which was well seasoned with sound and fury against aristocrats, and other people who, he said, had little else to do than commune with one another as to what was the best way of keeping down the working man. He was much applauded at each climax. When the proceedings were drawing to a close, several votes of thanks were passed vociferously, and the choir ranged themselves round the chair to give their closing piece, when the chairman, descending from his seat, demanded of the conductor what he was to sing. "The Queen's Anthem," was the reply. The chairman turned up his head indignantly, and drawing himself to his full height, exclaimed—"'The Queen's Anthem!' Ye may sing 'Auld Langsyne,' or 'The Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon,' or anything ye like, but ye shall not sing 'The Queen's Anthem!'" The conductor hinted

that he could not see any harm in singing it, even although she and the chairman had some public disagreement. We are even commanded to pray for our enemies. The chairman was inexorable, and turning with dignity on his heels, mounted the rostrum. The conductor ordered "Auld Langsyne," at the conclusion of which the altogether peculiar assemblage dispersed.

Raising the Wind.—A citizen purchased a drill or two of potatoes, and after a little pinching managed to pay them. Some days thereafter he foregathered with two or three drouthy cronies and had a tasting, after which arose a strong desire for another glass, but the necessary funds were awanting. The cronies, having learned of the potato purchase, managed to get a tacit sanction to dig a few of them. This was done, and the tubers were soon converted into cash, and a spree was fairly inaugurated, which could not be carried on without more cash. Another and another levy of potatoes was made, till the whole purchase was disposed of. When the burgher came again to his right mind, he resolved to put his tabernacle into working order with a good dinner of potatoes, and shouldering his graip and creel went whistling to the field. On looking at the drills he discovered the blanks, and thinkhe was mistaken, he counted the number, and was soon convinced that there was something wrong—either the potatoes were stolen or strayed. A neighbour, who was aware of the facts of the case, had observed him in a "brown study," and on going up to him asked if there was anything wrong. "Yes; where are my potatoes? I had as many here as would have kept me eating all winter." "It may be," replied the neighbour, "but they have not kept you long drinking." The truth at once flashed across the burgher's mind, and on going home he sought out his drouthy cronies to help him to drown his sorrows once more in a dram. They were most anxious to oblige

him in this respect, but, as one of them remarked, "They required more 'tatties.'"

A Grave Incident.—The beadle of Muthill, like many of his country brethren, had to be reminded occasionally of his shortcomings, and the Rev. James Walker, minister of the parish, after giving a reminder, hoped that things would continue in the way of improvement. One day as the beadle was digging a grave in the kirkyard opposite the back window of a public-house, Mr Walker happened to stroll into the kirkyard. Seeing the parish officer at work he went to the place, and while in conversation with him, a knock was heard on the back window. The beadle looked up, and feeling sure that he was wanted in the public house, he was uncertain what to do in presence of his minister. As he cogitated, another knock was heard, and he looked across to the window and made preparations to leave off work. The minister, judging what was in the wind, said—"Ah, John! will ye not repent, and give up your sinful ways?" "You know well enough, Mr Walker, that there is no repentance in the grave," and springing out of the grave he went where he was wanted, and left his superior to think what he liked.

Shoemaking Extraordinary.—In the last century Strowan Market was a great annual gathering. All craftsmen and country people were well represented in the neighbourhood of the Custom Knowe, on which still stands the market cross. Boots were then only reserved for lords and lairds, and the plebeians toddled in brogues and shoes. One celebrated maker lived at Tomacknock, and tradition speaks highly of his expertness. It is said that his custom was to commence making his brogues for the market the evening previous. After being fairly set agoing his speed increased to such a degree that on making a brogue, and throwing it into a large empty boiler or pot, the pot would not have ceased ringing when another brogue was thrown in, and this continued till he had

the number wanted. In the morning he would have them conveyed west to the market stance, and make a clearance ere he returned.

Willie Morrison's Fiddle.—The late Mr Patrick M'Farlane, Comrie, was a genius of no mean order, and he was often pressed to lecture on the sciences of astronomy and geology in his native village and other places in the district. Occasionally he would lose the "thread of his discourse," and scratch his head thoughtfully till he recovered it, amusing his audience meanwhile with some taking anecdote. On one occasion he had got bewildered in the mazes of his subject, and confessed himself at a loss, remarking "that his head was something like Willie Morrison's fiddle: Willie declared that the music was in it, if he could but get it out."

Constant Work.—At one time there was a vacancy in the office of beadle and grave-digger for the parish of Madderty. The minister was anxious that a man he considered qualified for the duties should accept the situation. The man was well employed otherwise, and he was not desirous to give it up for what he considered uncertain or irregular employment. On being pressed to accept the office, he said to the minister that he would take it, provided he got "constant wroucht" (constant work). "I canna promise that," replied the minister, "for you would soon bury all the people in the parish." "Weel," replied the man, "I'll no hae'd" (have it).

Which is the Proper Word.—Many years ago, a case for defamation of character, connected with the village of St Fillans, was causing much comment and speculation amongst the inhabitants of this beautiful spot. The legal terms applied to the case had an astounding and confusing effect on the primitive denizens, and words having a similar length or sound were made to do duty for each other. One evening an unlettered villager looked in on the village shoemaker, John M'Laren, and addressing him, said, "John, do

ye ken what that shabby body A. says about the case?" "No," replied the shoemaker. "Well, he says that B. is to be tried for damnation of character, when it should be definition."

Drawing the Line.—Among the crowd who congregated in 1879 to witness the laying of the foundation stone of the Comrie Free Church, were two reporters, one of whom hailed from the Fair City. Previous to the ceremony the two had a stroll through the village, and at the Bridge they greatly enjoyed the varied and fine surrounding scenery. On going along to the site of the new church, the Fair City friend charged his pipe, and with it in full blast marched along the street. On passing a public-house door, a tinkler woman was sitting near by, who, on observing the smoker going at it with all his might, asked, "Will ye gie me a licht, man?" The smoker took no note of the request. As he moved on, his companion hinted that she seemed to expect an answer. "That may be," replied the smoker, "but the line must be drawn somewhere. It would never do for the Perth people to be able to say that I smoked with tinklers."

Questionable Shooting.— Some years after the embodiment of the 8th or Crieff Company of Volunteers in 1859, a squad was at Bennybeg Range firing, and a horse which happened to be near the target was hit by a bullet, which caused much talk. A short time afterwards, when a recruit squad was forming, the excellences of the "gallant 8th" were being extolled by one of the members in presence of a well-known Breadalbane Highlander named Duncan. He heard the praises of the Volunteers for a time, and becoming exasperated, exclaimed, "Tam you and your gallants and eights and things; the first *man* ye shot was a *horse!*"

Two Alternatives.—Some of the Highlanders who came to Crieff about the beginning of the century, although young at the time, could never adapt their English, even in ordinary talk, without making

ridiculous expressions. A woman named Kate, who for a time lived at Gallowhill, was notorious in this respect. The following is an example of her style:—She had a son whom she intended either to learn the smith trade with the professor of this art at Bennybeg, or to learn road-making and repairing with Robert Ewing, road surveyor. Addressing her son Tonnach, she said, "Whether will ye be a smiddy to Bennybeg or a toll road to Rob Ewing?"

A Potent Reason.—One winter afternoon a Muthill villager, who was not considered altogether sound in mind, called at the shop of Mr Clement, baker, Crieff, where he was well known. The shopkeeper, addressing him, said, "Well, A., what's awanting to-night?" "Oh, no very muckle. Can ye change a pound?" "I think I can, but could ye not have got that done at Muthill, and not have come three miles to get it?" "Ay, I could hae deen that, but ye see, I'm awn a tick here and there in Muthill, and had I gane into ony o' the shops and gi'en my pound for change, I would hae gotten naething back."

About Roads in Olden Times.—Roads and road-making have always been a source of anxious consideration with all communities, and various modes were adopted in this country in olden times to improve the means of transit. At a time not very remote the Highlands had no systematic highways, and travellers just kept their noses in the direction wanted and marched on. With a view to improve matters the Justices of the Peace were empowered to make roads, and in 1740 they determined to make two roads from Crieff to Perth, one on each side of the river Pow, as the following excerpts of the minutes of a meeting held at Crieff on the 11th September of that year testifies:—"1mo. Resolved, that the intending of the road from Crieff to Perth, on the south side of the Pow of Inchaffary, be commited to Thomas Caw, commonly called Provost; that he take the charge of the tools and instruments appointed by the

Quarter Session to be put in the hands of the undertakers of that road, and the said Thomas Caw is hereby authorised to call out the tenants of the respective parishes where the road commences, viz., the parishes of Madartie, Trinity Gask, with the assistance of those residing in the south part of the parish of Crieff, and so on as the road proceeds, with the express injunction that the said Thomas Caw reports the names and places of abode of all such as, being duly summoned to work on the said road, do not punctually attend that service; but with this caution, that none be summoned till the harvest is quite over, and that he begin the roads after the gentlemen through whose grounds the same pass have settled the course of the road. 2do. Resolved, That it is the earnest request of the Committee that Major Canfield would travel from Crieff to Perth on both sides of the Pow, take the two intendants nam'd for both sides along with him, mark out the course on which he judges the roads on both sides can be made with the least expense and to the best purpose, and that it be so marked that the intendants can point out to the parties cencern'd the road so designed by the Major; but in case his affairs cannot allow his travelling both roads, he is hereby entreated to be so good as direct Ensign Carrick to do it." It was further resolved to give Mr Caw a certain sum "for the days he shall attend the aforesaid service. (Signed) Pat. Campbell (of Monzie), J.P.; Pat. Murray (of Ochtertyre) J.P.; Laurence Oliphant (of Gask), J.P.; and Anthony Murray (of Dollerie,) J.P." On the 30th of May 1741, John Galloway, constable, received the following instructions from the Justices:—"You are hereby ordered to call out the inhabitants of the parish of Crieff, according to lists to be given you, and on the days appointed by Thomas Caw, senior, Crieff, overseer appointed for that road, and you are to intimate to all those you call out to work upon that road the penalties of the law in case they delay, or refuse to

come to the roads when commanded thereto; and as there is another road intended on the north side of the Pow, you are to summon such of the town and parish to the south road as live on the south side of street, or great road going through Crieff from east to west, and such of the tenants as live on the south side of the present road leading from Crieff to Corrievechter Easter and Dollerie, and leave the others on the north thereof to assist at the north road." The foregoing gives a curious insight into the customs of our forefathers. After the Jacobite rising General Wade surveyed a system of roads through the Highlands, on which his soldiers were long employed, and taught the inhabitants the use of pick and spade, and the utility of systematic working. His roads gave rise to the following couplet:—

"Had you seen these roads before they were made,
You would lift up your hands and bless General Wade."

Along the route were erected King's houses . . . . made to accommodate about 100 men, which were used as resting-stations by soldiers on the march, or by working parties on the roads. Up to the commencement of the present century this system was pursued, but squads of civilians latterly engaged in the work. It was a common practice to commence operations where the Highland road leads off by Monzie, about two miles east from Crieff, and carry on over the leading roads to the far north. Often the men were encamped on the hills far from human habitations, living on brose continuously for weeks, and for want of milk they often supped them with a cup of cold water, and occasionally concluded the plain repast with a glass of *aqua vitæ* got from any of the numerous smuggling stills. Most of the fine turnpikes in the neighbourhood were made shortly after the beginning of this century. Macadam published his system of road-making in 1819, which has proved such a boon to the public. In recognition

of his eminent services, Parliament voted him £10,000, and appointed him Surveyor-General of Roads.

Old Local Song.—Of late years many old Scottish songs and melodies have been resuscitated, and it is not an unpleasing task to study the poetic expressions of bygone rural life as uttered by the forefathers of our hamlets. We give a song taken from a book of Scottish songs with music, the title page of which is awanting. It seems as if published upwards of fifty years ago. The music is a fair specimen of what used to be the rage in Vauxhall Gardens, and the words evidently refer to our own immediate locality. There is no author's name attached:—

THE BANKS OF EARN

As I came by yon purling rill,
Where winding Earn smoothly glides,
The sun shone o'er the highest hill,
And playful flocks adorned its sides.
The lovely scene quite cheered my mind,
Whilst spring-tuned warblers fluttered near
Where charming Marion sat reclined,
Her more melodious voice to hear.

Her voice so sweet, the birds sat mute,
Young Colin near, enraptured, cried—
"'Mong all the nymphs on Earn's banks,
I'd choose sweet Marion for my bride.
On these dear banks and meadows green
Where nymphs and swains all beauteous shine,
To vie with thee not one is seen—
Thy face so fair, thy form so fine.

"O! Marion, dear, if thou wert mine,
How great my bless possessed of thee,
Thy matchless virtues, wholly thine:
None has such grace, such modesty.

If king of all these banks I were,
From Strowan haughs to Forgie green,
Marion alone should grace my throne,
The charming Marion be my queen."

There are various renderings of the derivation of the word "Earn." Some say it is from the Celtic "Eryn" or "Heryn" (the west), meaning that the river runs from that quarter. The river is referred to in a poem written fifteen hundred years ago. The Roman Claudian speaks of it when celebrating the victories of the elder Theodosius as follows:—

"*Madeurunt Saxone fulso,*
Orcades; incaluit Pictorium sanguine Thule,
Scotorum cumulos flevit glacials Ierne."

"The Orkneys first he dyed with Saxon gore,
Then Thule with Pictish blood grew hot,
Icy Strathearn bemoaned huge heaps of Scots."

A "Dead" Candle.—In times not so long ago the dulness of country life was varied with many strange sights and sounds, to which we of recent date are entire strangers. Events of interest were foretold quite intelligibly to those who could read signs or had the second sight, and many things happened, the index to which could be read by the most illiterate. Before a death ravens would croak, wraiths would be seen, and dead candles moved abroad. The planes of those who made coffins were always heard agoing the night before they would be required. Our forefathers were prepared to swear that they heard, saw, and consequently believed, these things. We neither see nor hear such portents, and, in consequence, neither believe in them nor believe that they ever existed, except in imagination. So much the worse for us, say the old people. About forty years ago there lived in the one-storied house opposite the Lochlane toll-bar, at the south end of the bridge, a well-known most respectable, truthful man, named Robert Armstrong. One wintry

night, as was his usual before locking the door and going to rest, he took a look of the sky and smelt the weather. As he was so doing he espied a light coming across the bridge from the north side. Wishing to see who was coming with the lantern, he stayed a little. Keeping his eyes keenly fixed on the light, he observed it moving steadily southwards. When it came to the end of the bridge it turned to the west and entered Lochlane Road. Mr Armstrong began to wonder at not hearing footsteps, and felt much excited. Onwards the light moved along the middle of the road, and when just opposite, and within two yards of his own door, it suddenly went out before his face. He naturally felt very uneasy, and could scarcely manage to close and lock the door. After going into the house the thought of what he had seen almost paralysed his energies. After the family retired to rest his mind was wrought up to anticipating some sad calamity, and yet he did not believe that any supernatural agency was ever brought to bear in relation to matters such as was disturbing his rest. Next night a sad cry for help was heard, and a knock at the door. He started up at once, and ran and opened the door, when a voice in the dark asked him imploringly to get a light and come and assist, for a cart had fallen over the steep part west the road. Mr Armstrong at once got a candle, and with some of the neighbours, who were also alarmed, went west some 300 yards, where he found a horse and cart tumbled over the place, and a man underneath almost dead. He was carefully lifted, and taken back to the house, but he soon expired. It seems that he was a farmer who, with his wife, were returning from a distant journey, and a halflin, not well acquainted with the road, was driving. At the place where the accident occurred, a road leads off the turnpike down to the cow park, and the horse, taking this road, came to a stand at the park gate. The lad, discovering his mistake, pulled the left rein, and the animal, not

having room enough to turn, pushed the whole back over the low dyke down the brae, the woman escaping underneath the cart when it tumbled over, but the man was severely smashed, and the lad escaped unhurt. The curious coincidence of the light, the cart passing exactly in the track of the light, so far as Mr Armstrong saw it, and the received belief in dead lights, called forth much curions speculation long afterwards.

A Good Excuse, Certainly.—When weaving was the fashion, a webster named Scheldoch was informed that the doctor who was attending a sick woman at Pittenzie said that she could not live above two hours. Scheldoch went home to his loom, where, with his shopmates, he plied the busy shuttle for two hours, when he halted and told his companions that the woman was dead. The story soon spread, and was flatly contradicted, and Scheldoch was brought to substantiate his tale. "Well," said he, "if she be not dead, it is no fault of mine, for the doctor said that she could not live two hours, and I allowed two hours to pass ere I spoke about it."

Bohemian Episode.—Strolling players often experience strange vicissitudes of life. The manager in advance of a party of these applied to the lessee of the Masons' Hall for the use of it for a performance. The lessee having heard that prepayment would be desirable, made this a part of the bargain. When the night of performance arrived, the lessee could not conveniently attend to receive the dues, but appointed a deputy, who was instructed not to let them remove their *traps* without paying their way. They had no musician with them, and a well-known performer in town was engaged. The doors were duly opened, but the audience showed a beggarly account of empty benches. The deputy had to leave for a short time to attend to his employer, and on his way back he learned that the strollers were removing. He hastened to the scene, to find the last man with his bundle

moving out at the door. The deputy collared him, and a struggle ensued, in which the stroller was forced inside, and the deputy drew the door close and locked it from the outside, and walked sentry. In a little the musician, much excited, called on the lessee and informed him "that they were done." "How done?" asked the lessee. "The theatre folk have slopped us. They are off, and have not paid a rap. Your deputy has one of them locked in. Come away and see what is to be done." "I cannot get just now," said the lessee; "but see and get some one with you and secure the stroller." The musician accordingly found a fit and proper person, and both went to the hall door where the deputy was watching. The door was unlocked, and on searching inside it was discovered that the "last man" had made his exit by a window.

The Pitkellony Tragedy.—The following details of this tragedy, which for generations was the most horrible tale of the locality, are gleaned from the records of that time:—In the beginning of September 1749, a dog was seen running about Muthill, having in its mouth part of a human leg, with a stocking and a woman's shoe on it. The neighbourhood was soon alarmed, and search being made, there was found in one of Pitkellony parks a green skull and a woman's clothes, and about forty yards off was part of her backbone, and another leg and thigh, and in the body of the gown was a quantity of putrid flesh, a child's frock, part of its ribs and backbone, and putrid flesh. Near by was a new reaping-hook and a small luggie. Some days previously there were found in the same enclosure two women's shifts, some mutches, a cheese, and some bread, from which it was concluded that the woman had been on her way to the Lothians to shear. Suspicion of a murder soon spread, and that the woman was Alison M'Owan, Comrie, and the murderer Alexander M'Owan of the same place. A warrant for his apprehension was put into the hands

of Grigor Murray, the Crieff constable, and M'Owan was arrested at Comrie as he was making preparations to go to a dancing ball. He was tried in the end of September at Perth for the murder of the woman and child, found guilty, and sentenced to death. During the trial he appeared remarkably unconcerned, but after sentence he owned his guilt, and made a full confession that he murdered Alison M'Owan. He had been much in her company, and on her telling him that she was with child to him, he enlisted as a soldier, and left her and went abroad. On his return he went to see Alison and his child, stayed with her, and she bore him another child; but, on her teazing him for his doings with other women, he left her. He then paid his addresses to Catherine Robertson, daughter of a woman who kept a public-house, and intended to marry her and make money by the match; but Alison was a trouble to them both. This tempted him to commit the murder, and with that view he proposed marriage to Alison. She told some friends of the proposal, and borrowed thirteen shillings to defray the expense of the marriage at Edinburgh. On a Saturday evening he went to her house, stayed till it was dark, and then both set out for Edinburgh. When they came to Pitkellony parks he advised her to go over the dyke to rest, for that she must be tired and weary with her child on her back. When they got within the enclosure he pretended great fondness for her, and, drawing his dirk, stabbed her in the back. The poor woman cried, "My dear!" and as she was falling, he again stabbed her. He then cut the throat of the sleeping child with a razor. After rifling the woman's pocket of what money she had, he took the shift which she had provided for the marriage and a pair of stockings, and then laid the two dead bodies together, covering them with her plaid. Returning in great haste to Comrie, rejoicing in the success of his wickedness, he told all to Catherine Robertson. She also rejoiced, and said there was no fear of his being

discovered, as no one saw the murders committed. The shift and stockings which he carried with him helped materially to discover the murderer. He was executed at Perth on fifteenth June 1750. His right hand was first struck off with an axe. The cart being immediately after driven from under him, his weight broke the rope attached to the gibbet, and he fell to the ground, but was soon hoisted up by a pulley and hanged till dead. His body was then hung in chains, and his right hand nailed to the top of the gallows.

The Tow Bairn.—This was rather a scandal for so small a place as Crieff, and any one who looks up a file of newspapers about the time of the Reform Bill will find a full, true, and particular account of this exhibition of the fine arts; but as few have access to newspapers published more than a quarter of a century ago, we will, without further preface, give the story as a "Recollection." The principal actors in this original farce were natives of Fowlis—a man set down in the newspaper reports of that day as a basket-maker (commonly called a riddle-maker), and the nymph, afterwards celebrated as "The Tow"—and took their seats one Sabbath day on that nice little parochial purgatory, the cuttie stool. This penance was done by reason of a little trouble looming in the distance, cognisable by Kirk Sessions, which Courts require the culprits thus to be white-washed, prior to their restoration to Church privileges. When this couple of Fowlis sinners had sat before the congregation and received a "rebuke," the interesting young lady came to reside *pro tem.* with a relative in Crieff, as she said, "*to be near skill.*" After a few weeks sojourn in Crieff, a bulletin announced the delivery of an infant, still-born, "the mother doing as well as could be expected." The next act in the drama was our friend, Johnny Broon, getting orders to dig a grave for the riddle-maker's first-born. This job the grave-digger soon accomplished, and, according to custom, went at the

hour appointed for the funeral to the house with the mort-cloth under his arm, and, as we have heard him relate with great gusto, "got a glass o' whisky, and a guid lang grace into the bargain." There had also been a missive despatched to the "parent," that he would be required to attend the funeral and meet current expenses. The riddle-maker could not deny liability, but, being a prudent lad, he wished to see what he was paying for. "If I'm the bairn's father, it's but fair that I should see its corpse." But "The Tow" and her relatives shut him up, by telling him "that it was nae desirable sicht," upon which the stingy riddle-maker flatly refused to pay. However, the defunct received the rites of Christian burial. But the refusal to allow the remains to be seen caused it to be whispered about that foul play had been used. This rumour reached the Fiscal through the usual channel, and that functionary appeared in Crieff along with Dr Malcolm in due time. Great was always the excitement in Crieff whenever they came west. Had Napoleon and the Grand Army landed on our shores, and the eagles of the first division appeared in the Gallowha', it could hardly have caused a greater commotion than the Fiscal's and Dr Malcolm's visits always occasioned. After getting some refreshment in Robertson's inn, and being joined by the Depute-Fiscal in Crieff, and a surgeon or two, the party proceeded to the kirk-yard, when Johnny Broon lost no time in exhuming the coffin, and placing it on the vestry-table, where the *post-mortem* examination was to take place. At this juncture the Depute-Fiscal, the late John Gowans, bolted, pleading want of nerve to witness a human dissection; but the surgeons being too hardened to boggle at a "murdered bairn," were coolly opening their cases of instruments while the beadle was undoing some drapery; but lo! at last the subject was unrolled, and lay revealed to their astonished gaze, a figure modelled in tow and turnip—the turnip representing the head, which was neatly

joined to a trunk of tow, the leaves of the turnip forming the neck. Very offended looked the Fiscal, very foolish looked the surgeons, to be so egregiously hoaxed by a lass from a place like Fowlis. "She deserves the jail," said one. "She ought to be transported," exclaimed another. But it was found that there was no law on the statute-book prohibiting the manufacture of tow bairns, and the inventor got off scot free. Without giving any deliverance, the Fiscal picked up his hat and made for the door, and the doctors pocketed their instruments and followed. When they reached the steeple-door, they found a large crowd assembled, anxious to learn the result, but the dignified reserve depicted on the official countenances repelled all attempts at questioning. As soon, however, as Johnny Broon appeared in the doorway, with a merry twinkle in his eye, the coffin in his arms, and the keys in his hand, he was immediately asked—"Has she killed it, Johnny?" "Gae awa' wi' ye," said the beadle; "ill-daers are ill-dreaders. It was ne'er livin' t' kill. Yon puir lass wadna kill a flee, lat alane a bairn. Her head, puir thing, has gotten a wee thing agee, and when she couldna get a bairn ony ither wey, she made ane oot o' a neep and a puckle tow." "Man, Johnny, let us see it," was the request from every side. "Haud oot o' the road wi' ye," said the beadle. "Wud ye hae me to set up a show i' the kirkyard? Come awa doon t' the hoose wi' me, and if ye behave yersells, I'll maybe gie ye a sicht o't." Making his way through the postern in the south wall, with the rabble at his heels, the exhibition of the tow bairn commenced in Johnny's house; and had the beadle been as greedy as most public officials are, he might soon have filled his purse by charging "only the small sum of one penny" from each visitor for admission; but it is due to the memory of this upright public servant to make the tribute to his virtues, by stating that, though his house was open to the public for about a week, and hundreds of all ages

and both sexes saw the show, yet the beadle took neither fee nor reward. But Johnny was a Brown among ten thousand. The present writer was among those who visited the exhibition, and in justice to the artist we must say that, setting aside the rather questionable morality of the transaction, and viewing it merely in an artistic light, it was a very creditable performance. No doubt but Madam Tussaud, with all her means and appliances to boot, might have turned out a more elaborate figure; but taking it all in all, as the production of a Fowlis amateur, it was a marvel of fine art. As the sorrowing mother showed no desire to regain the *caput mortuum*, it became the beadle's property.

The Crispin Procession.—As Crispin processions seem to be numbered with past events, and those in Crieff who may have witnessed them are now one by one passing away. I will endeavour, for the sake of the generation that never beheld one, to give some faint idea of a great sensation experienced every seventh year in Crieff, in days when "George the Third was King."

When it came to be known that the Crispin procession—profanely called the "Shoemakers' Parade"—was to take place, the whole town was full of wonder and conjecture, for everybody was interested in the Crispin procession, it was such a "rare event." The Crieff Crispins were not overburdened with much surplus cash, and the crown and sceptre, and other grandeur, such as velvet dyed in Syrian purple, with other fabrics in other tints, as Pate Smith used to say, "too numerous to mention"—all that, and much besides, were borrowed, hired like a carriage or a steamboat for a gala day. Lodges in more affluent circumstances had robes provided of their own; and so with one or other of them our Crieff friends had always to negotiate a loan—generally with the Kilmarnock soutars. But on the last occasion, in a fit of economy, they hired the Perth robes, finding

that they were lent on more reasonable terms, and really these same Perth robes caused an immense sensation in Crieff, although some old connoisseurs affirmed that "they were naething to the Kilmarnock robes." And then, how town and country were ransacked for swords and old uniforms! Every country laird for miles round was laid under contribution. Among other distinguished personages in the procession was the Lord Lyon King-at-arms, whom Duncan Clark, fresh from the heather about that period, transposed to "Lord Glenlyon, King of Terrors." There was a Lord Mayor, too, besides two aldermen; Willie Wiggie and old Geordie Tainsh, as aldermen, flanking his lordship, the Mayor, a man about six feet tall, called Wright, with, it is said, the biggest nose in Britain. There was, of course, a Prime Minister, an office filled on one occasion by the late James Stewart, the poet. What an ingathering of old bugles and trumpets took place besides, making night hideous for a month or so by a succession of discordant sounds. Just fancy two raw heralds at bugle practice. Happily there were no town councillors in those days, and so the heralds were allowed to go on manfully with their studies. One of them was taken under the wing of an old cavalry man in Crieff, who undertook to teach him one or two of the military calls. Whistling over the notes of a turn-out, he would then slowly repeat the verse commencing, "Corn your horses and give them some hay," in a sort of chanting tone. Then the herald in training would attempt a few bars of music; and, after giving out some false notes, the old dragoon would cry—"Stop! you're wrong again; 'corn your horses'—now!" Such is a specimen of herald-training in Crieff in the olden time. It was on the occasion referred to, I think, that Robert Donaldson was elected to the imperial purple; but certain old Crispins regard him as a miserable failure, contrasting his appearance with that of some former monarch whom they loved

to describe as "every inch a king." There was a set of robes for an Indian prince, rather fanciful-looking drapery. It included, however, a scimitar and jewelled handled dagger, and other articles befitting a representative of Sujah Dowlah or Meer Jaffier. The writer endeavoured to do for the prince what the old dragoon was doing for the herald—give him some necessary training. My whole heart was in the thing, wishing everything, in fact, to be done decently and in order; and although young at the time, and my knowledge of men and things small enough, yet I had read that both Indian princes and people were rather dark complexioned, and being acquainted with the prince-elect, I applied myself with all the fervour and logic of youth to convince him that unless he darkened his skin on procession day he would be sure to be set down as a walking absurdity. Well, after having, with much trouble, brought him over to my view of the matter, he resolved to give his hands and face a coating of shoe-blacking or burnt cork, and some of us were exulting in the idea of soon beholding a prince black as Othello. In an evil hour the prince divulged the painting business to the female part of the family, and the consequence was that the project was instantly vetoed. "They wud just like to see him making a fule o' himsel', blaiking his face," demanding, too, to know "who put that norrie in his head." The name was given, of course, and while I was black-balled for giving black counsel, the Indian prince "walked as a pale-face" after all; and that was all my reward for endeavouring to bring out a prince in character. There were printed programmes of the procession—a long line of human greatness—of mortals high and exalted; but as more than thirty years have rolled away since I read this over, I may not trust my memory to give the Crispins *seriatim;* but the most important personage was the champion. He was always regarded as the key-stone of the arch, and so the ever-recurring question was,

"Wha's t' be champion?" So all the men of bone and muscle in the Crispin ranks came to the poll, and Tam Sutar was taken. Let us endeavour to describe the champion. Truly, he seemed born to live with harness on his back. Strong of limb and well proportioned, with armour on and battle axe in hand, he might have stood a model for the figure-head of some ironclad. Tam was at that time a young fellow living in his father's house in King Street, now, alas! a ruin. There was but little remarkable to record about old Andrew; but his mother, who was only known by her maiden name, with a complimentary prefix, was always spoken of as "Haverin' Kate Ritchie;" and an awful haverer was Kate, and no mistake. But Tam was a tolerably decent lad, and old Kate considered him quite an exemplary son until he got the championship; and then, like other daring spirits, from Cardinal Wolsey downwards, greatness turned his head. Being elected champion, he received the coat of mail, as it was called, although the term seemed a misnomer. Referring to James' military dictionary, the word cuirasse is defined as "a piece of defensive armour, made of plate hammered, serving to cover the body from the neck to the girdle, both before and behind, called breast and back plate." This was exactly the sort of thing that was brought from Perth to cover the Crieff champion, and was taken, along with the helmet and battle-axe, to "Rob Donaldson's garret," the workshop where Tam and his shopmates wrought, and where there was a daily encasing of the champion in armour, in order to bring him up to the mark before the great day came on, Tam quaintly remarking that he would require "to try the *stove* on again." Being champion, he received numerous congratulations on the honour thrust upon him, and many gills of whisky besides, and under the intoxication of knighthood and whisky combined, he went home one night exceedingly glorious. "Waes me, Tammy, whaur hae ye been till this time o' nicht?"

was old Kate's first question. "Mither," replied the knight, "ye'll mind an' tak nae mair freedoms o' that kind wi' me. Hae ye forgotten that I'm the champion? But just t' humour ye this time, I may tell ye that I've been wi' some chaps up in Chippie M'Rostie's, getting a dram frae them; but ye see I cudna sit on their coat-tails ony langer, so ye'll better lat's see a half-crown." "Hauf-a-croon t' drink, Tammy! you'll break yer mither's heart. Ye're like's ye were in a creel since they've made a champion o' ye. I had some houps o' ye yesterday when ye sat a' day reading Matthew Henry, but ye'll break yer puir mither's heart—and seekin' hauf-a-croon! But champion here or champion there, neither you nor hauf-a-crown 'ill get oot between the twa door-cheeks this nicht." Kate then bolted the door, and stood her ground, daring the champion to "the unequal fight." Tam, however, was too gallant to lay violent hands upon his mother. He merely observed—"Weel, mither, I'll sune lat ye see whither or no this auld rickle o' a house 'id keep in a champion." Tam then ascended to the garret which served as his bed-room, and held his chest and other belongings. Then seizing the axe, he commenced without a moment's delay to cut his way out. For a minute or two the slates were on the wings like a flock of crows; the old rotten "sarkin'" followed, and having effected what military men call "a practical breach," he clambered through the aperture. The champion was free, and old Kate "was left lamenting." Plunging among a group of neighbours that the unwonted noise had gathered at Kate's door, the old woman gave vent to her troubles in the following strain:—"Waes me, Tam's gane clean daft sin' they've made a champion o' him! Because I wudna faizle (flatter) him, an' gie him hauf-a-croon t' drink, he's gane an' knocket a hole out through the top o' the house. What 'ill the laird say? I'll hae t' get Willie Maltmen the morn t' mend it. An' wha kens but he may play some mair mischief afore he

comes hame? He's awfu' wild when he gets whisky, an' he's so strong he could knock down Paul Dewar's horse."

As the Crispins required to engage a band of musicians, they applied in the first instance to the "Crieff Band," but they, knowing that they were wanted to play to a king and his nobility, raised their tariff—went, in short, on strike. The Crispins refused to give the advance, and the band refused to play. The bandsmen called the Crispins "skinflints;" the Crispins retorted by terming the bandsmen "a pack o' greedy scoondrels," and, to the great disgust of the "scoondrels," engaged a band from Auchterarder. The Crieff band, thirsting for revenge, called to their aid an old man called Sandy M'Coul, who, I think, played the triangles in the band at one time, and being reputed something of a bard, he was desired at the conclave, after getting a dram, to commence and caricature the soutars in verse. "Weel," said Sandy, "I'll set my head asteep the nicht, an' try what I can dae." And Sandy did try, and succeeded too, after a fashion.

After weeks of feverish excitement and running to and fro, the heralds sounding unmusical notes of preparation, "the great, th' important day" dawned at last, and on that eventful morning Pate Smith, the village bellman, as a precautionary step, went round with the following announcement:—"This is to give notice—As the shoemakers are gaun t' hae a procession through the principal streets o' Crieff this day, an' as the champion an' some mair o' them are gaun to *walk on horseback*, a' the inhabitants that hae bairns 'ill require t' keep them in the hoose; for if any o' them be hurt wi' the horses' feet after this notice, they'll hae themsel's t' blame." As the day wore on crowds came in from all directions—gentry in carriages, farmers and their families in carts—from all points people came in, from Ardoch to Buchanty, from Fowlis to Comrie. Such gatherings had never

been in Crieff from the day Prince Charlie passed through till Queen Victoria honoured it with her presence; for, besides the decent people of the strath, there were, in the words of the poet—

> "Beggars and vagabonds, blind, lame, and sturdy;
> Minstrels and singers, with their various airs."

And such a crowd was round the Masons' Lodge, all striving to secure a place. Then there were the Crispins forcing their way in, some armed and in uniform, and the cry was "still they come," while inside all was activity and bustle—two barbers busily powdering wigs; others acting as valets, robing king and princes. The crown and sceptre lay displayed on a table in the centre of the hall, and beside it stood old Johnny M'Owan, acting *pro tem.* as Archbishop of Canterbury, and when His Majesty, and twelve pages bearing his train, advanced to the table, Archbishop M'Owan, with much apparent solemnity, placed the crown upon his head—the assembled peers, officers of state, and commoners present shouted "Long live the king," the band struck up the Crispin March, and the procession commenced to defile from the hall. Then outside the gate surged a great expectant swelling mass of people; equerries holding saddled horses; and inside the railing stood the grim old janitor, Cossack Taylor, looking as savagely at the crowd as if he could have killed them all, and eaten them too. At last the heralds are mounted, the trumpets bray out, and the pageant pass through the gateway, shining in "purple and gold," making the usual round of the village—every street crowded—every window crammed—every succeeding character a fresh wonder; the king and his twelve pages, the champion on a black charger, and then the heralds and the trumpets. It was what might be termed a great success, but it came to an end. When they returned to the Lodge the romance was over. His Majesty and Court, including warriors and states-

men, were required to strip. All the Crispin habiliments from Perth were deposited in a large chest or two, and sent "east" on David M'Leishe's cart; while the numerous articles obtained in the neighbourhood were returned at convenience. Censorious people affirmed that some whisky was drunk in honour of the affair, which might be possible, seeing that teetotalism was not invented in those days. It is not unlikely that the reader may find a few anachronisms in the present sketch, it being so long since the scenes I have attempted to describe took place. It is quite possible that some of the incidents of two different processions may be mingled together, but to the best of my recollection it is tolerably correct. I trust that I may have done something like justice to it, as everybody agreed that it was "a grand procession;" but, alas! it was the last, and with it ended the days of chivalry in Crieff.

Crieff Meal Riot of 1780.—From 1771 till 1781 there were numerous meal riots in the country. Sometimes between 300 and 400 people, armed with saws, dirks, cudgels, etc., would proceed to the dwelling of an obnoxious meal-dealer or farmer, and pillage and destroy property and grain out of mere wantonness. No doubt there was much scarcity, and instances of undue hoarding were exposed; but the reckless manner in which armed mobs perambulated the country was quite uncalled for. At a meeting of Justices and heritors held at Perth on 19th January 1773, the unsettled state of things was anxiously discussed, and the following resolutions, amongst others, passed:—"That this (the quelling of mobs) may be done in an orderly and effectual manner, a signal shall be made at Perth—in case the mob proceeds from thence—by firing a cannon once every five minutes for an hour at least; and in case it proceeds from any other place, by ringing of the parish bell, as well as by sending notice from one place to another. That as soon as such signals are

heard or notice given, the same shall be further communicated by ringing the parish bells of the other parishes who perceive the same, and the minister and precentor of such parish shall take care the bells be so rung upon such signals and notices, and all noblemen, gentlemen, and other heritors, with their tenants, servants, and dependants, shall thereupon assemble at the respective parish churches, mounted on horseback, so far as they have horses, and armed (at least with clubs or stout sticks); after which they are to repair to the place where such mobs are, or if they have certain information thereof, they are to repair to the North Inch of Perth, where they will be joined by the Sheriff, with His Majesty's forces, and receive directions where to proceed." The meeting recommended the resolutions to be read to the different congregations on the two subsequent Sundays. These things show in what a dangerous state society existed, and the use that can be made of a minister and precentor. On the 12th February 1781 came on before the High Court of Justiciary the trial of James Maxtone, stocking-maker; James Fisher and David Campbell, his apprentices; James Fisher, servant or apprentice to William Kay, weaver; and William Ross, day labourer, Pittenzie—all of Crieff, indicted at the instance of the King's advocate for having, on the evening of 16th December last, assembled with others, their associates, in a riotous and tumultuous mob in the village of Crieff, and broke into the dwelling-house of William Maclellan, meal-seller, whom they believed to be hoarding meal, and assaulted his person, dragged him violently out of his house, put him upon a cart, carried him in that manner through the streets of the village, and then along the public highway to the water of Earn, where they threw him into the river, with the cart above him, putting him in fear and danger of his life. On account of the non-appearance of a material witness, the case was adjourned till the 19th, and next day

after the jury returned their verdict, finding the libel not proven against Maxtone, and Fisher, his apprentice, but finding the others all guilty. Fisher and Campbell were recommended to mercy, Campbell especially so, as he had gone into the water to assist Maclellan when he was all but drowned. Both were dismissed with a suitable caution. Ross was sentenced to be kept in Edinburgh prison till 18th April, then to be delivered over from one Sheriff to another till he was lodged in Perth prison, and on the first market day he was publicly whipped through the streets and set at liberty, after which, within twenty days, he was bound to leave Scotland, never to return, on pain of being whipped and banished as often as he shall be found in Scotland. Fisher was sentenced to be kept in prison for five months, and Campbell three months, and afterwards till they found caution to keep the peace for twelve months after their liberation, under a penalty of 300 merks each.

Schoolmasters of Bygone Times.—Schoolmasters in our fathers' younger days had onerous duties to perform as compared with their representatives of the present day. A master did the whole duties of the school single-handed — taught the alphabet, spelling, reading, and grammar, ruled copybooks, wrote headlines, and mended pens; and much ado there was at the introduction of steel pens, at a penny and twopence each, about forty years ago. He taught the rustics to figure and recite the dry facts of the multiplication, liquid, and dry measure tables, unmercifully thrashed truants, and lectured laggards, and in general taught "the young idea how to shoot" for five and a half days in the week, during ten and a half months in the year. A parish schoolmaster would be session-clerk, heritors' clerk, and precentor, and do a little in measuring growing crops previous to sales, and bear an active part in all public matters relating to the parish. He collected his fees when he could get them, and had much trouble sometimes in

getting the necessary amount in cash and kind for the school fires. Some scholars would pay this in cash, and many just carried a few sticks, or a peat or two, to school when the thought struck them. He was expected to give a hearty, long-winded speech at a convivial meeting, and make learned remarks on anything.

"The wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew."

It was not uncommon for one school to give another an arithmetical challenge, when both teacher and taught earnestly entered into the contest, and great was the crowing over a victory. The master smiled approvingly on all kinds of sports, and took the direction of the birds at the cock-fightings, which usually took place at Auld Handsel Monday, and claimed all *fugies* or cowardly cocks as his perquisites. The great event of the year was the examination of the school by a Committee of the Presbytery, previous to which the lessons for that day were read and conned for weeks beforehand, and several recitations and selections from plays were prepared with much care; and great was the excitement each evening at rehearsal when the bigger boys would go through some of the scenes from "Douglas," more especially at "Draw and defend thy life!" when a long, dirty, grocer's cheese-knife would be drawn from inside a buttoned jacket, and flourished to the amazement and terror of the youngsters. "My name is Norval," "Lochiel and the Wizard," and "A Chieftain to the Highlands bound," were favourites, and were always applauded on examination days. The parish minister being the most noted personage in the schoolboy's estimation, the closing remarks delivered by him with dignified gravity were listened to with awe, which was relieved by the announcement of a holiday. In rural districts almost all the population were engaged in agricultural affairs from mid spring till the end of autumn, and consequently the schools were

thinly attended; but during the winter young men and women of full stature, anxious to improve in the three R's, crowded the benches. The men lightened their tasks with stories of resurrectionists, witches, and bogles, making one another's hair stand on end with fright. The women spiced the rule of three with confidential cracks about dancing balls and sweethearts, varied occasionally with details of family affairs, and beasts' meat. Defaulters were severely punished. Immediately before the morning prayer the biggest boys were sent to the back of the door to keep out all that were out until the prayer was ended. Often severe struggles ensued. When the door was opened all defaulters were summoned before the master, and each received a pandy with the tawse. For extra offences a wig was placed on the offender, and he was carried round the room, so that all could smite him if they chose. For special faults the culprit would occasionally be placed in the desk, and the scholars were at liberty to spit on him through any chink or hole, which indignity was often revenged on the perpetrators by a sound thrashing. The boys in the village had a keen appetite for the fine scones and bannocks of the farmers' sons, for the possession of which many a hard bargain was driven in the way of working sums, sundry instructions, and bartering "peeries, taps, and strings." The dancing-school also flourished well in winter, and the dancing-master aired his newest becks and bows to admiring rustics, who tried their best to follow his example. All the young people attended the dancing-school for a month or two for a few years, and at the balls the parents were duly represented, and renewed their youth and dancing steps with the "Duke of Perth," the "Flowers of Edinburgh," or "Bab at the Bowster." The heavier duties of reels and country dances were occasionally relieved by some of the pupils dancing a hornpipe, or pipehorn, as it was sometimes called. These schools were generally kept in the largest

room of a public-house, and the moral tendencies were none of the best. The singing-master had also hay to make in winter. As a rule, he professed much and knew little. Instructions commenced with the major and minor scales; the exact spots where the semitones made their appearance was a cuckoo rhyme, and as for learning the art of reading music, it was never thought of. "Gie us Bangor, Auld Hunner, French, St Paul's, St Neot's, or Coleshill," was the nightly cry, and these were often practised with reading out the words of each line, and then singing them. Thereafter came a course of song singing, many of the selections being anything but free of blemishes. The month ended with a concert and ball, and the night passed with songs, reels, and the clatter of gill stoups. The peculiar tendencies of those times found great relief in a man shaking himself for the greater part of a night before the tails of his best coat. When at all practicable, convivial meetings of all kinds found relief, and brought their duties of good fellowship to a close for a time, by shaking their heads, legs, and arms to the thrumming strains of a fiddle or bagpipe.

The Kirk and the Minister.—When the parish church was being built, some dispute, it was said, arose between the heritors and feuars regarding the settlement of the contract, whereby the church was left in much the same predicament as the Tower of Babel, and the National Monument at Edinburgh. The tower was carried to about the height of the walls, when the masons left off building. The church was roofed in, however, and seated, and then a generation or two of Crieff people had to worship in it as it stood. It contained a pulpit, though of fir deal, *sans* paint or varnish, which was entered from the steeple, as at present; and on the top, by way of ornament, was fixed a sort of canopy, made of plain deal also, like the top of an old box-bed. A few inches of cornice projected round the edge, giving it the appearance

of a large riddle; and, as this was always full of straw, the resemblance was complete. We may here explain how the pulpit came to be adorned with straw. In the tower-wall, a few inches above the canopy, was a square hole or bole, such as is made in gables for dovecot entrances; but for what purpose such an aperture was left in a church wall would be best known to the architect; but, as the opening admitted rather much of the winter's blast to be either safe or agreeable to the worshippers, Johnny Broon, being more considerate of the people's health than beadles generally are, was in the habit of stuffing the hole with straw; and as the wind sometimes blew the straw in, it fell, of course, into the canopy or riddle, and lay there. As it seemed in perfect keeping with the interior of the church, no one thought anything about it. In the summer season, when the hole was generally open, it was a common thing for the cats to get up the steeple stairs during sermon time, and, entering by the bole, jump down into the canopy among the straw, and, after giving the congregation a look of feline interest, deliberately coil themselves up a few feet above the minister's head, and take a snooze until the sermon was ended. But the cats were not the only disturbers of the minister's sermons. The swallows also used to enter by the bole, and take a turn or two among the sheets of cobweb that festooned the rafters far aloft, departing as they came. We have seen a pair of these birds wheeling along the church from end to end during the service, and leaving them in full flight as we left the church. Some of the worshippers, too, had as odd ways with them as either the cats or birds; and we are free to confess that *their* movements possessed much more interest for us juveniles than either the minister or his sermon. There was one person in particular whose motions often engrossed our attention, and greatly diverted us. This was one of the village innkeepers, a very fidgety man in church. It was often averred that "he was just like

a hen on a het girdle;" and truly, so long as he sat in that front pew in the gallery, he seemed a fair illustration of the perpetual motion. The sermon would be scarcely commenced when he would pull out his watch and look the hour; then, seemingly not satisfied with the progress it was making, it would be applied to his ear to ascertain if it was in motion; then, hitching up his vest and replacing the chronometer, the handkerchief would be pulled out, and on being applied to his nose a sound would be emitted like the blast of a bugle. The startled congregation would now behold the innkeeper indulging in a vigorous round of scratching; then the snuff-mull would be produced—a large twisted horn ornamented with silver. After stuffing his proboscis with a "housal," the mull would be placed on the bookboard, and anon the Bible would be clutched, and the command to "search the Scriptures," if not to the spirit, would be most literally fulfilled to the letter.

It happened one Sabbath, while a part of the congregation were watching with much interest, as usual, what turn the innkeeper's motions would take, that he commenced to move the snuff-mull backwards and forwards along the book-board, as if checkers or chess practice occupied his thoughts, till, giving it an unlucky move, it went clean overboard, alighting with mathematical precision on the cranium of a bald-headed man sitting beneath, just on the spot where phrenologists tell us to look for veneration. As it had a fall of something like ten feet, it "stotted" several inches off the man's head, and fell with a rattle to the floor; while, quick as thought, the poor man's hand was on the top of his head, and his eyes were upturned in terror to the rafters, to see if anything else was coming. A very general titter ran round the gallery, and some laughed outright—the innkeeper's face having suddenly turned crimson, while a new bump was being rapidly developed on the man's head below, having but little connection with Dr Gall's philosophy.

A little in front of the pulpit was the dummy's seat, and there he used to sit beside his mother, looking as knowing at the minister as if he heard and understood his sermons; but if the dummy lost the matter he caught the manner, as he was ready at any time (for a halfpenny) to give a correct imitation of the minister's pulpit gestures. In fact he could imitate almost every minister in the Presbytery of Auchterarder, and the town-crier of Crieff to boot.

There were other strange people besides the dummy, whom we could name, that sat in the church in these days, and not the least odd in the collection of characters was the minister himself, whose mistakes, we are bound to say, were neither few nor small. Although it was generally admitted that the minister was a well-meaning man, and an excellent scholar, he was so absent in mind, and knew so little of the common affairs of life, that he almost justified an old wife's remark regarding him, "that he was just like he had fa'en frae the mune." He was very near-sighted too, and from that and other causes knew scarcely any person in the parish. When he entered any house on a ministerial visitation, there were two questions that, without any salutation whatever, were always fired off in quick succession, like the barrels of a fowling-piece—"Do you attend my church?" and then, "What is the chief end of man?" In the church he would have been continually blundering except for the watchfulness of his faithful *locum tenens*, Johnny Broon. For instance, it was a common thing for him to ignore the presence of half a dozen children waiting to be baptised. When the singing of the last psalm would be ended he would start to his feet, evidently thinking that all was over, pronounce the benediction, and be preparing to make his exit. Then was the beadle's time to rush up the pulpit stair, and capture the minister before escaping through the doorway in the back. Knowing when thus arrested that some screw would be loose, he would bend down his

head to learn what might be wrong. Whatever the beadle on these occasions whispered in his ear was, of course, inaudible to the congregation; but from the effect produced we may fancy the Corsair's address, slightly altered, to have been pretty near the mark—

> "Much has been done, but more remains to do;
> Your sermon's read—christen the babies too."

Then he would resume the service, and administer the rite of baptism, when the beadle would allow him to dismiss the congregation. Scenes like that we have witnessed frequently, and it seems but as yesterday; but, alas! what a change has passed over Crieff since then. Crieff then was free; now some half-hundred strangers, not one of whom was born in the parish, virtually, by means of the Burgh Act, hold the destinies of the village in their hands; and where are the old familiar faces now—those patriarchs of bygone days? Mostly dead and gone—hidden away under the churchyard mounds as they had never been. Even our school companions, where are they? Some have followed their fathers to their long homes; others are scattered far and wide in foreign lands. Some sought the battle-field, "and foremost fighting fell." One lies in the depths of the South Pacific; some still linger about the old haunts; and a few, it may be, like ourselves will sometimes revisit the dear old village, only to find ourselves like strangers in a strange land. Long has the grave closed over the parish minister; the beadle, too, lies in the churchyard—that burial-ground where it was said he had twice gone over almost every lair, "with mattock in his hand," in the poet's words, "digging through whole rows of kindred and acquaintance." But honest Johnny Broon could feel for human woe, and when he made the graves could sympathise for family bereavements as well as earn his fee. Johnny's manner formed a striking contrast to Ben Mhar, the Highland grave-digger of Monzievaird. This worthy, when deploring the healthy state

of the parish, used to complain that he "could hardly get snuff, the way sae few folk were deein'." His wife, too, had always the same lament. A neighbour meeting her once, inquired how she was getting on. To this she replied, in not the best of English, "We're shust no getting on weel ava; hissel's no at nae wark i' the kirkyard. Shust twa or three bairns an' ae auld wife deed a' winter, an' ye see there's naething maist for howkin' bairns' graves. If naebody be dead an' be buried afore next month, we'll no get nae taties for seed, deed no, this spring."

Although the beadle kept the minister from blundering in the church, his oversight of his superior ended there, consequently the minister got stumbling into strange vagaries through the week when the directing hand of the beadle was withdrawn. A rather amusing affair took place at the manse on one occasion, in connection with a man named Culbert, but better known as Old Hob. This was an indigent old man, whose means being exhausted, and himself bedridden, was forced to ask parochial relief; but from some cause or other the minister always refused to grant an order for an aliment from the kirk funds. At length the neighbours, finding further application useless, hit upon the following rather novel plan of placing Hob's name upon the paupers' roll. Engaging a carter for the occasion, the old man was lifted from his bed and put into the cart, the carter getting orders to drive with all convenient speed to the manse. As the intended project was pretty well known a day or two before it took place, there was a splendid gathering ready to escort Hob to the manse; the weavers left their looms, the tailors skipped off their boards, a number of lap-stones were deserted, one smithy at least was shut up, some wrights, too, left their shops, with the usual fragments of shaving in their mouths. When the minister beheld some hundreds of his parishioners entering his gate, he concluded probably that some ovation for himself was

intended, and on opening the front door found the manse green full of people, with a cart pushed back to within a yard of where he stood, in which sat a human figure staring from under a blanket like some ogre in his face. "Who is that?" inquired the minister at the late Mr M'Nab, who happened to be standing close at hand. "That's Lazarus," replied M'Nab. "You sometimes preach about Lazarus, but here he is in person." "What does he want?" asked the minister. "Well, seeing that he is come of age, you had better ask himself," was M'Nab's reply. Turning to the invalid in the cart, the minister, in his usual abrupt way, asked, "What do you want here?" "I want to die in your kitchen, sir," was Hob's dismal answer. "Die in my kitchen!" exclaimed the horrified minister; "the thing is absurd. I could not allow that; take him away. Why was he brought here?" Then the aliment was mentioned as a requisite preliminary to carting old Hob away, but the minister was inflexible—would grant no order. "Very well," said John M'Nab. Then, addressing the carter, "Lift him from the cart, John, and two or three of us will assist you to carry him into the manse." That settled the business. The minister gave his reluctant consent to the parochial allowance, and half an hour after Hob entered Crieff in triumph, ready to exclaim with Cæsar, "*Veni, vidi, vici.*"

But the greatest of all the minister's troubles was the agitation that the people raised about a helper. Not satisfied with his pulpit ministrations, they raised an outcry that he required an assistant. The minister told them plainly that he wanted nothing of the sort; that he was both able and willing to do a pastor's duty. But the people had made up their minds for a helper, and a helper they would have; and so, after badgering the poor pastor for a considerable time, although he showed great pluck, and resisted like a Trojan, the odds were so overwhelming that he was forced to strike his colours, and the triumphant

worshippers of the parish church got *their* helper. As in all places, there are a certain portion of flighty people who make a terrible rush after any new thing, so in Crieff the helper's diets of worship were always crowded, while the minister's audience presented little else than "a beggarly account of empty boxes." This want of feeling and common decency on the part of his hearers, after thrusting a helper upon him, naturally made the minister to feel the whole transaction as a great humiliation, and made him shrink from mingling with the helper's audiences, when it came to that gentleman's turn to preach; so on these occasions the minister took his seat in the vestry behind the pulpit-door, where he could hear without being seen; but the people were too exacting in their notions to allow him the enjoyment of that "luxury of woe." Many fancied they saw an implied slight in the thing, and therefore grudged their pastor allowance "to hide himsel' in the steeple," as they phrased it; and very soon they let him know their feelings anent such conduct. Making a visitation one day to a man named James Alexander, a stocking-weaver, living in a house in Hill's Wynd or Hale's Wynd, "for fame sounds the heroic syllables both ways,"—he put the usual query, "Do you attend my church?" Now, as James happened to be afflicted with a rather distressing stutter, his reply came in the following style: — "Ye-ye-yes, off-off-oftener than you." "Oftener than me," exclaimed the minister, in blank astonishment; "how can that be, when I am in the church every Sabbath-day?" "Ye-ye're there just the ha-ha-half o' the d-d-day, but I gang b-b-baith times." O, but you're mistaken," replied the minister, "regarding the regularity of my attendance, as I am always sitting in the vestry during the time that Mr Drummond is preaching." "In the ste-ste-steeple." "Yes, you well know that the vestry is a small room in the church tower." "I k-k-ken that well eneuch, but the ste-steeple's nae mair a ki-kirk than a but-

but-button's a coat." "O, nonsense," said the minister, "your statement is an entire abuse of logic. Architects are agreed that steeples are necessary as ornaments to churches." "And so but-buttons, the tail, the tailors say, are nec-necessary for ornaments to co-co-coats." "O dear! don't mention buttons again; they are quite irrelevant. What is the chief end of man?" With a spasmodic effort at articulation, the old stocking-weaver vouchsafed the orthodox answer, jerking out the syllables *seriatim*. The minister, seeing the physical difficulty that James required to surmount in answering questions, very considerately told him that, as his utterance was so difficult, he would not trouble him any further; so taking his leave he made his way through the Square and King Street, so entirely lost in thought that he neither recognised man nor the dwelling-place of man in all his route. Possibly he might be pondering the stocking-weaver's analogy between coat, buttons, and church-towers. When, however, he reached the corner of the Feus, he seemed to remember that he was on a visitation tour, as he came to a sudden stand, and then turned aside into one of the nearest houses. The inmates of this house consisted at that period of three unmarried sisters, named Garrow, one of whom, called Jenny, the minister found in the house winding pirns. It was rather an unusual circumstance for Jenny to be house-keeper, as she liked much better to be gadding about, and gossiping. Very garrulous was Jenny Garrow. Clash might be said to be meat and drink to her. Every one averred that she was a "havering body," and truly Jenny was ever ready to clatter with all and sundry whom she could clutch by the button; but beyond all others Jenny preferred a clergyman for an auditor. This might be owing to their good manners preventing them from cutting her short as other people did. If Jenny saw any of the helpers passing along the street, there would be an immediate

pursuit, and though she was somewhat lame, she could keep up the chase with such an extraordinary waddling run that in a few minutes her hand would be on the young gentleman's shoulder in the true Sheriff-Officer style, and then the poor helper was in for half an hour of what Jenny termed "a religious crack." But the nuisance became so intolerable that at last Mr Drummond told her to "go home to your wheel, you idle woman," as near, perhaps, as a clergyman might quote the well-known command. "Go spin, ye jade, go spin." Such was the character the minister stumbled upon after leaving the house of James Alexander, but if he found the old stocking-weaver "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue," he soon found that he had no cause to complain of Jenny Garrow on that score—Jenny's tongue resembled very much the Dutchman's cork leg, having a tendency "to go on for ever;" so, seeing the parish minister crossing the threshold, Jenny felt all the excitement of a coming windfall stirring her into life and action. Rising from her wheel instanter, she advanced to meet her visitor, saying—"Come awa, sir, an' sit doon. I'm real glad t' see ye. Aye, gie me yer umbrella, and I'll hing 't up beside the bellows till ye're gaun awa."

The minister handed his travelling companion to Jenny, and while she was hanging it up he lifted an old hat off a chair, and sat down, but no sooner was his weight upon the rickety old affair than it parted in the centre, letting the minister plump on his back to the floor.

"Dinna sit on that chair," called out Jenny, but the warning came too late.

"'Od, keep me if ye hinna fa'n fairly through't. I houp ye're no hurtet. I'm awfu' vext, sir. I'll hae that chair brunt noo; it's an auld rickle o' a thing that oor Jean keeps at the fireside tae keep pirn-hats on, but I'll hae it brunt noo, whether she's pleased or angry."

The minister got to his feet quickly enough, very

red in the face, while Jenny commenced to brush some ravelled cottons off his coat, repeating, "I houp ye're no hurtet, sir?"

"Oh, never mind," replied the minister, "it is of no consequence. I might have met with a worse accident than falling on the floor."

"'Deed, that's very true," remarked Jenny, handing him another chair. "Ye needna be frichtit tae sit on this ane—it's strong eneuch; oor Jean gied hauf-a-croon for't at a roup. But as ye was saying ye micht hae met a waur accident than tummelin' through an auld chair, an' that pits me in mind o' that wild cow; I'm sae glad ye got in here safe withoot meetin' it on the street."

"What wild cow?" asked the minister, getting another chance of speaking.

"'Deed, sir," replied Jenny, "I'm no very sure after a' whether the ill-gatit baste was a cow or a stot, but it belanged till Jamie Dryburgh, the flesher, an' his men waur takin' it in frae the country tae kill't, an' somehoo it got awa' frae them aboot the tap o' the street, an' it cam' gallopin' doon past the corner here wi' a lang rope trailin' ahint it."

"Was it very furious?" asked the minister.

"Furious! I wish ye had seen't, sir; it gaed past here like a very mail coach, an' tummel'd heels-owre-head a young lass wi' a burden o' ferns on her back that she was takin' hame for beddin' till' her father's sow."

"Was the girl much hurt?" inquired the minister anxiously.

"I'se warrant she got a gude fricht," said Jenny; "but they say what saved her was the ferns. After the brute flung the puir lass in at Bawbie Cammell's shop door, its attention seems tae hae been ta'en up by the burden o' ferns, for it began flingin' them up i' the air wi' its horns till they were a' scattered and trampit i' the glaur—the gude clean ferns that the lass carried a' the wey frae Drumcriffel; but she keepit at the

back o' Bawbie's coonter till the butchers cam' an' got a haud o' the rope an' took the brute awa' up the street again. Weel, after they got it awa', I hadna a minute's peace till I gaed doon and speered at her faither a' aboot her, and he says there's nae banes broken; that's ae mercy, but the honest man's ferns are a' lost."

After listening, willingly or otherwise, to Jenny's recital of the pranks of Jamie Dryburgh's cow, the minister made a dash with his leading professional question—"Do you attend my church?"

"Ou aye, sir," said Jenny, "it's till the Auld Kirk I gang for ord'nar'; but if that wild brute o' a cow gets awa' frae them again it may tak' a notion tae come doon this wey again an' loup in through the window."

The minister with a shudder observed, "Oh, don't mention it again; no doubt it is secure enough now."

At this stage of the visitation a distant shout was heard, and then something swept along the street like a mighty rushing wind. The minister looking somewhat aghast, inquired, "What is that?"

"Od, I'll beat ye it's that brute o' a cow again," replied old Jenny as she hobbled to the street to take an observation.

After a minute or two she waddled back again, exclaiming, "Thae confoondit weavers! that's their wark."

"What have they done?" asked the minister.

"Dune!" repeated Jenny. "They're aye at some mischief—they've gotten a haud o' Laird M'Laurin's muckle dog an' tied an auld kettle till its tail."

"And where has it gone?" asked the minister.

"I'll warrant ye," said Jenny, "if the kettle sticks till its tail it wud gang straught hame. It gaed east the Wabstergate, an' roond the corner o' Miss M'Gruther's afore ye could say Andrew Brander."

Returning to his question, the minister remarked, "I think you said you attended my church?"

"Ou aye, 'deed did I," replied Jenny. "When I'm weel I gang for ord'nar' till the Auld Kirk; some antrim times I gang up till hear the Relief folk, an' I gaed ance till the Seceder Kirk tae hear Maister Buccleuch, after he cam' tae toun, but I never gaed back again; they turn up their noses at the Auld Kirk folk, an' ca' us bawbee hearers. I'm an Auld Kirk woman, an' I think myself just as guid's them—the saucy pack. But whyles, when it's a wet day, I gae owre to the Wabsters' Ha' to hear the Bereans. They're wonderfu' folk the Bereans, sir—they read the Scriptures every day—search them, as we're a' bidden."

"So should everyone," remarked the minister.

"Sae they shud," continued Jenny, "but plenty o' folk ne'er think o' sic a thing. There's Muckle Duncan, doon at the Brigend: when he was getting married the ither week, he had in a woman reddin' up his hoose afore the weddin'. Weel, she got something on a shelf covered wi' stoor; an' says she, 'Here's a book, Duncan.' 'Lat's see a haud o't, Tibbie,' says the muckle allagrugas. 'Od, that's my Bible! I havena seen't this seven year afore.' An' it micht hae been on that shelf for ither seven if he hadna been gettin' a wife. But the Bereans are different folk frae that. The last time we were there we got a sermon frae Jamie Bayne that wud hae astonished ye; an' he's just a weaver. Ye micht hae met him in the Wabstergate wi' his dressin'-boat aneath his oxter. Puir man! he has to study his sermons on his loom; an' I've seen him on a Saturday nicht washing his brushes in the Meadow stank, an' preaching the next day. But he has sic gifts, sir; I dinna think the Baron Bailie, or Provost Hally either, cud haud a cawnel till him. Geordie Sharp's anither Berean; but *he* doesna trouble them muckle; he's a pear aff anither tree. He sits at hame an' reads the newspapers the hale Sabbath day. He's an awfu' bodie for papers. He'll be at the Post Office seekin's

paper on Sabbath mornin' afore the office folk get their breakfast. Deaf John, at the wast end o' the toon, is anither Berean; an' the folk says *he* has the hale Bible on his tongue."

Here the minister, getting afraid that he was likely to be treated to a running commentary on the entire communion-roll of the Berean Church, made a desperate plunge in with his next question—

"What is the chief end of man?"

"The chief end o' man, sir? The—chief—end—o'—man! I had it on the neb o' my tongue just the noo. The—chief—end—. Am I really forgettin' my carritch? Weel, that's extraordinar'. The chief end—ou, no, I canna hae forgotten't; it's just the sudden wey the question cam' on me—it's jummel'd ma brains a' hither an' yont. I mind o' Maister Strongbow, worthy man, ance speerin' that very question at me. an' I gaed ower it that time like shellicote. 'Deed, I had every question in the carritch be heart when I was a bit lassie nae bigger than thae whisks. The time I was at the schule, auld Sandy Calstram (Coldstream) was the dominie. An', my certie, he gart us pey attention till the carritch. He aften tald us it was the marrow o' the Christian faith. I ne'er forgat that. 'Deed, no; mony a time sin' syne I thought on Sandy Calstram an' his marrow."

The Minister rising to go, said—"Perhaps you will have these questions perfect when I call again."

"Sit doon, sir. The chief end o' man? It 'ill maybe come intill my head afore ye gang awa'. Sit doon a wee; it's comin' on rain."

"Oh, it won't be much," replied the minister; "only a slight shower."

"I dinna ken that, sir," said Jenny; "that's a gey black clud hinging owre Drumcriffel, an' there's no a place to scug a shooer atween this an' the manse sin Laird M'Laurin's plantin' was taen awa'; an' the rain's no the warst o't—ye micht meet daft Willie Smith, o' Damhead, on the road. He's a wild creater yon—a

real ettercap o' a bodie. He flees whyles on folk like an evil speerit; if he wud just stey at hame, but he comes traikin' maist every day to the toun. He gaed doon past this yesterday wi' a nasty little net on his head, an' a thing on his nose like a pair o' callipers. They say he puts yon thing on his nose tae keep it frae seekin' snuff. But for a' that, he was at the College langsyne; his freends intendit tae mak' a minister o' him, but the Greek turned his head. It's surely an awfu' fashous thing that Greek afore it wud set ony body tae wear a pair o' callipers on his nose. But there's auld Jamie's folk next door; they're aye tearin' at the Gaelic, an' I think it's as kittle as ony Greek."

"Who is old Jamie—does he sit in my church?" asked the minister.

"He's a queer bodie," replied Jenny, "that's come frae the Hielands tae live in the Wabstergate here, but the only place that I'm certain he attends is the Hieland markets, buyin' goats an' sheep, an' ony ither thing that he thinks he can mak' siller o'. He has a lot o' geese the noo. If yer reverence 'ill just sit doon a wee, I'll tell ye a' aboot them."

"No, thank you; I am not caring to know," and, clutching the umbrella from the wall where it hung beside Jenny's bellows, the minister bolted to the street, and went east the Wabstergate looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, and turned the corner at Miss M'Gruther's in almost as great a velocity as Laird M'Laurin's dog did half an hour before with the kettle at its tail.

Notes of Auld Langsyne.—Crieff, about the year 1810 had 2876 inhabitants, and the neighbouring parishes contained—Comrie, 2458; Muthill, 2880; Monzie, 1157; Monzievaird, 641; Strowan, 392; Fowlis Wester, 1614; Madderty, 650; Trinity-Gask, 769; and Auchterarder, 2042. The writers in the town were John Tainsh, Samuel Miller, and Robert Adie. The bankers were J. Drummond, agent for the

Bank of Stirling; and John Tainsh, for the Bank of Leith. Both banks went to the wall. The stamp-masters—important functionaries in those days—were James Glass and David M'Ewan. William Drummond was Postmaster, and the Edinburgh mail came by Perth, and arrived at eight o'clock at night and departed at ten, and the Glasgow and south mail arrived at one o'clock P.M., and departed at three. The postage was—to or from Crieff and London, 1/2½d; Edinburgh and Glasgow, 8½d; and Perth and Stirling, 5½d, and also the charge for delivery. Money orders were charged a commission of 8d per pound. The messengers-at-arms were John White and Benjamin Ferguson. The district parish ministers were:—Crieff, Robert Stirling; Monzievaird, Colin Baxter; Madderty, Jas. Ramsay; Comrie, Peter M'Isaac; Monzie, Ralph Taylor; Fowlis Wester, John Murray; and Muthill, John Scott. At that time Muthill had four annual fairs, viz.:—in January, May, August, and December; but it is long since they all "wede away." The tax on windows was—house with 1 to 6 windows, 4s; 7 windows, 16s 6d; 8 windows, 28s; 9 windows, 36s; 10 windows, 48s; and so on. 100 windows paid £52 7s. Dogs were 10s each. There was a judicious abatement in the Income Tax regulations which allowed 4 per cent. off incomes from £60 to £400 for each child after the second, and on incomes of from £400 to £1000 3 per cent. was allowed for the like purpose. The 1st Perthshire Regiment, or Strathearn Battalion of Volunteer Infantry, had its headquarters in Crieff, and the following gentlemen were the commissioned officers, viz:—Sir Patrick Murray, Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant; James Johnston, Lieutenant-Colonel. The Captains were—Gavin Drummond, Alexander Campbell, John Murray, Thomas Keir, John Tainsh, John Davidson, William Menzies, George Gardiner, and Michael Stirling. The Lieutenants were—John Hepburn, James Peddie, John Drummond, Robert Adie, Alexander Tainsh,

William Malcolm, Donald Murray, John M'Laren, William Johnston, Archibald Knox, Thomas M'Comish, and William Murray; and the Ensigns were—Robert Haldane, John Gardiner, Thomas Wright, James Robson, Andrew Bannerman, Robert Nielson, Hugh M'Intyre, and Peter M'Rostie. Adjutant, Colin Campbell; Paymaster, Alexander Tainsh; Chaplain, Rev. Colin Baxter; Quartermaster John Drummond; and the Surgeons were—Drs G. Trail and James Peddie. The sayings and doings of the members of this gallant regiment used to engross more than half the stories of the district. Besides this volunteer regiment there were in the county the Perth Battalion, commanded by Colonel T. Hay Marshall; Athole Battalion, Colonel Hope Stewart; Strathmore, Stormont, and Dunkeld Battalion, Colonel Sir A. Muir M'Kenzie; Breadalbane Battalion, Colonel the Earl of Breadalbane; Belmont and North Strathmore Battalion, Colonel James Rattray; Monteith Battalion, Colonel Sir John M'Gregor; Prince of Wales' Light Infantry, or Royal Carse of Gowrie Volunteers, Colonel Lord Kinnaird; Loyal Clandonachie Battalion of Horse Artillery and Volunteer Infantry. Major-Commandant Robert Robertson; Perthshire Regiment of Gentlemen and Yeomanry Cavalry, Colonel the Earl of Kinnoull; and last, though not least important, was the Royal Perth Artillery Company, commanded by Captain John Young of Bellwood, and numbering 2 lieutenants, 60 privates, 2 drummers, and 12 non-commissioned officers—being in all some ten regiments of horse and foot and a company of artillery, besides a strong militia regiment. This shows what a strong spirit for soldiering prevailed. The volunteers in the country at the time numbered 341,600. The regiments of the line which belong to Perthshire are the 42d, 73d, 79th, and 90th, all world-renowned.

Sharp and Cutting.—One keen winter morning the late Mr John Bayne, builder, met the late Mr

Andrew Sharp, farmer, Forr, when the former in passing remarked—"Its a *sharp* morning, Mr Sharp." The latter added—"Cutting to the *bane*, Mr Bayne," and passed on.

Public Proclamations.—In years gone past there seems to have been more of what are called characters of all kinds than what the present age can boast of, and vendors of various articles partook largely of this distinction. About 1840 the last of the race of women called "Buy a Brooms" itinerated the town. They consisted of a party of four stout "hussies," with short dresses, who stood opposite likely looking dwellings, and with their lusty voices sang "Buy a Broom," and offered their fancy brooms for sale. Occasionally a strange individual made his appearance, making house-to-house visitations, and uttering in a sharp business tone, with a view to purchasing, "Any old ram, tup, or wether horn, the bones of an old umbrail, a bit fiddle rosum, a bit of an old leather aper (apron), or a bit of an any ould anything." A worthy couple of hawkers called Willie and Bell M'Pick for many years pushed a roaring trade through the district. Willie had stentorian lungs, and, as he moved along with his barrow, would bawl, "Gather out rags or bones, or broken crystal, or rabbit skins, or old iron, or yettlin, for candy rock, or boddle preens, or pictures, or stocking needles, or bools; gather away." About Hallowe'en and onwards till after the New Year raffles were not uncommon, and the two sometimes speculated in a thing of the kind. Bread and fruit were generally the articles thrown for. On occasions of the kind Bell proclaimed the event after rattling two bowls together. For a time they lived in Brown's Row, and the place of raffle was announced to be held "at Willie M'Pick's, opposite the Cattle Market." One time a more convenient room was secured for rattling the dice, and Bell announced it—"There is to be raffled this evening a large quantity of bread and

pears; three throws of the dice a penny; and the raffle is to take place at eight o'clock in Mr Kay's school shop, opposite the Slategreen." Both died several years ago. Neil M'Phellie, or as he was better known, Neillie M'Phillie, was another well-known character. His mother—a cleanly, prim old woman—resided in the town, and was heart-broken with the wandering propensities of Neillie. He tried various ways of keeping life in, and latterly attended the fairs with a shooting barrow. The last fair he was at in Crieff "he seemed to the manner born," and delivered his calls and exhortations in a truly business manner. The following is one of his utterances on that day:—"Hire (fire) away! hire away! try Neillie M'Phellie's new patent spring gun. A ha'penny a shot! hire away! Thirty every time you go into the ring! Sport for your money and nuts for nothing! That's it, my man! That's four shots you've had and not struck the ring yet! Well, I can't help it! There you are! There you are! Six and six is half-a-dozen; twice four's eight and three's a eleven; two from it, my hearty, try again! Hire away! Hire away!" It is supposed that poor Neillie's peregrinations ended soon after this, for his mother up to the day of her death, which was eight or ten years afterwards, never heard more of her only son. The following is pretty near the announcement of a song vendor on the market day referred to, and will serve to show what was popular at the time:—"Saw ye my sister;" "The Braw New Gown;" "Kate Kearney;" "Dark and Weary Garret;" "Riding on a Rail;" "Rough Will and the Cudgel;" "The Deil on Twa Sticks;" "O'er Bogie;" "Cripple Kirsty;" "The Queer Folk o' the Shaws"—"all for the low charge of a halfpenny." The following hails from the city of earthquakes, and shows what would induce the Comrie denizens to leave their homes for the heavy work of harvest. It must be understood that the denizens of the parish at the time referred to had a

curious uncouth drawl and mode of expressing themselves, such as "Are ye gaun to Dalginross owre?" "East at Lawers there wast;" and were a man and horse coming along, the salutation to them would most likely be, "Whare are ye baith gaun?" About the year 1834 a bare-legged herd was in Comrie, and for the first time heard John M'Laren, the public crier, in his official capacity, and was so struck with the wonderful deliverance that he followed him all over the village to learn the proclamation, which was as follows:—"A tear o' shearers wanted; neither at Auchinchelloch up, nor Millermore wast; Sandy Morrison's auld Rashy Park; fine rank corn, thruppence the thrave; three fill fou's o' the parritch and the braxy, and a' the rest ta yer meat." Monzie, the parish of witches, had little to boast of in this line, but the following poetical effusion, which, we understand used to be a recitation in the glen, may still be of use to any talented musician who desires words for a fashionable glee:—

"When I go by
A zotai
A man in a kiln,
Zealoty purr,
Dog dawtie."

Muthill Soiree—Speaking under Difficulties.—About the year 1839 temperance societies were in their infancy in the rural districts. By that time Crieff had felt the pulse of abstinence, and lectures and soirees were the luxuries of the humbler classes. The principal local speakers were the late Messrs J. Martin and W. Ramsay. These two worthy men did their utmost to stem the flood of inebriety. Statistics and literature relating to the new cause were scarce, and consequently a monotony of phrases and illustrations could not be avoided. All the Scripture passages that could be turned to bear on the subject were in a short time in the mouths of the new proselytes. By-and-bye a prominent office-

bearer or two of the society ventured to address an audience, and not the least successful of these was Mr Gould, a painter. These young birds soon mastered the whole temperance vocabulary, and as their practice increased their boldness increased, and an occasional flight to a neighbouring village was attempted. If more than one temperance advocate was to speak at a meeting, the first to do so had the advantage of all the rest, and the longer he spoke, the lesser grew the store on which those who followed could draw. In such cases many go-byes were offered for speeches, such as, "At this late hour of the night it would be a waste of time to detain you," etc.; or, "After the eloquent and telling addresses of previous speakers, it would be useless to dilate further on the abuses of the spirit traffic at this time, but I hope soon to have another opportunity of exposing the insidious workings of the soul-and-body-destroying drinking customs of the land." At that time, Muthill, a village three miles south from Crieff, bestirred itself and formed a temperance society, and at Hansel-Monday made arrangements for a grand temperance soiree in their Masons' Hall. The committee being new to such undertakings, were determined to give a full surfeit, and accordingly make appointments with a dozen or so of speakers—a number of Crieff orators, including Mr Gould, being on the list. A host of local vocal talent was secured, and the then instrumental band was engaged to enliven the proceedings and to fill up any interstices that might occur. When the hour of meeting arrived and the performers gathered, it was found that they alone would nearly fill the hall—to which they could scarcely get entrance, owing to the large audience who were packed in every corner. But what of the programme of the performance? Aye, that was the rub! After serious deliberation, it was seen that were each one on the programme to get full swing, the meeting would be continued well into next morning, and it was resolved

to allow each speech or performance only five minutes at most—the only exception being Mr Gould, who being an able speaker from a distance, was to be allowed ten minutes. The chairman, on taking his place, put his watch before him, and set the entertainment agoing. Speeches, songs, buns, sweeties, and choruses followed each other in quick succession, and drums and trumpets rattled in their rear. This sort of thing continued for three hours, during which the newly-fledged orators harried the temperance literary nest of all its stock terms, anecdotes, and applications, and now came Mr Gould's turn to display his talents. The chairman, on announcing him, called attention to his fame as a shining light in the temperance firmament, and craved a patient hearing. As Mr Gould rose he trembled, for his intended address had been perfectly honey-combed—iterated and reiterated by previous speakers. He must, however, say something, but what was he to say? His speeches had been conned like the multiplication-table, and he could not deviate. Amid profound silence he opened his lips and said, "Mr Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen"—(great cheering)—"between bonnie lassies and bonnie sangs I have forgotten my speech"—(more applause)—"but I'll do the best I can, and, as the saying is, 'The best that is can do nae mair.'" This was received with a great outburst of applause, mingled with taps on the bass drum. When order was restored, he felt an inclination to faint or sink through a trap-door. Feeling perfectly bewildered and uncertain what to do, he raised his right hand and exclaimed, "The lion, the tiger, and the whale," which was instantly followed by a tremendous roar of laughter and cries of "Again! again!" But no; he sunk on his seat, and a cold sweat oozed out of his exhausted frame. He felt that his borrowed plumes were plucked, and he never soared again.

"**Home, Sweet Home!**"—Man being the child of circumstances is generally inclined to change his

views and feelings as circumstances change. A man at home seldom troubles himself with the common-place things of life, and looks upon them as of little or no moment. But no sooner is he removed from the scene of his earlier years than a charmed halo is thrown around every incident which recalls "the old familiar faces." None but those who have been abroad for a time can understand the magic of "news from home." Every thing worth having or knowing seems to have more or less an affinity to home. When long intervals intervene betwixt the "news," the heart yearns with increasing intensity for tidings of the old country, and stories, the most common-place, never wear tiresome, however often repeated. The *locale* of a story or song often has a charm for the imagination, which in time occasionally becomes a resting-place of delight. Many thousands of people who annually visit this locality made their first acquaintance with the "capital" by the singing of the (at one time very popular) ballad, "Butcher Rab he lived in Crieff," and on nearing the town the words are spontaneously called to remembrance. Another song which had a great run of popularity, and is yet occasionally sung by old people in various parts of the country, is "Kind Sir, is this the Road to Crieff?" It has a peculiar melody, quite characteristic of olden times. The exodus of natives from the Highland glens during the last hundred years has very considerably circumscribed the field for gleanings of traditions and songs. Many years ago a young man named Edgar left his father's home near the Cross to push his fortune, and in doing so had to roam through many lands. For a time he sojourned in America, pursuing the occupation of a travelling merchant or packman. One day he travelled far and was weary, and success did not crown his efforts. Towards evening heavy rain fell, which added much to depress his already wearied frame. Still trudging on, he at last sighted an inn in a small village by the banks of a stream. On entering he

found it well occupied by noisy work people, who, when forced to leave off out-door work, seemed determined to raise a shout to Bacchus. The appearance of the premises did not lighten Edgar's cares. The landlord seeing he had a respectable appearance and a pack, found a snug bedroom for his use, and soon thereafter brought in a most acceptable tea. Our packman was not long in doing justice to the welcome cheer, and afterwards ensconced himself in an easy chair beside the window, where, as the shades of evening fell, his eyes rested on the rippling stream, and its murmurs soothed his aching head. In a short time his thoughts turned to things far, far away. The burden of love of home was unpacked, and in a reverie he roamed 'mid the beauties of "bonnie Strathearn." Old faces and old scenes passed in quick succession before his mind, and a fishing party of old cronies was organised, and all were on their way to the Earn, west from his old home. As they were nearing the Bridge of Turret, a volume of sound, like thunder on the distant hills, reverberated on his dreamy ears, and he started in his chair. As he came to himself he heard the voice of song sounding along the lobby. It was sweet though faint, and he could distinguish it to be a something he felt he knew. All in a sudden the lusty chorus was again taken up, and what was it but

> "Blythe, blythe, and merry was she;
> Blythe was she but and ben;
> Blythe by the banks of Earn,
> And blyther in Glenturret glen."

Poor Edgar was fairly overcome, and he burst into a flood of tears, which was a relief to his heart. In a little he found himself in company of the choristers, most of whom belonged to the old country, which they revisited that night, in song and story, and all again felt in their inmost soul the soothing influences of home, though far away from their native valley.

The Royal Visit in 1842.—When it became known that the Queen was to visit the district the utmost excitement prevailed, and hearts beat high with the prospect of seeing a sovereign in the town. A century previously Prince Charlie rested in passing, but the attendant circumstances were not of the most pleasant character. The Queen's visit was different, it was a universal wish, and all resolved to give her a Royal welcome. Gentlemen met, discussed, and arranged as to the best mode of showing their fealty, and the plebians were not behind. Lord Willoughby had about one hundred of his Gaelic-speaking tenantry drilled and dressed in the Drummond tartan, and armed with battle-axes, swords, and targets, and all the neighbouring gentry had their tenantry, on horse and foot, prepared to welcome and escort Her Majesty past their different estates. In the town, along Burrell Street and Bridgend, every available space was lined with platforms, and the streets leading into the line of route were barricaded. Opposite the West Church was erected a grand triumphal arch, decorated with heather, flowers, and evergreens, with the motto, "Queen of our Highland Hearts, Welcome Victoria!" the whole being surmounted by a beautiful crown. Arches were also erected at the north and south ends of the bridge, and the toll-bar was removed to the north end of the bridge to prevent crowding. The morning of the memorable Saturday, the 10th of September, was charming, and the district was early astir. From all the surrounding glens and hamlets horsemen and footmen kept steadily pouring in, and a little after mid-day the people had taken up their various positions. The tenantry of Ochtertyre were drawn up west of the town, and Mr M'Laurin of Broich had his banner placed on the south side of the cemetery road, and his feuars and tenants lined both sides of North Bridgend with rods in their hands. The Ferntower tenantry, commanded by Lady Baird on horseback, occupied the road south of Bridgend.

As Her Majesty progressed from Lochearnhead each proprietor met her at the western boundary of his estate, and escorted her to its eastern point, where the next laird guarded her in like manner. At a quarter past six o'clock, the battery of Ochtertyre fired a Royal salute, and the dense masses who crowded the route got perfectly excited, many of whom had never heard a cannon fired before, and the excitement increased as the rounds progressed, and drops of rain began to fall. At half-past six Her Majesty passed through the West Church arch amidst the most deafening cheers and waving of hands and handkerchiefs, and in passing along Burrell Street one continued voice of joyous welcome rent the air, which the Queen gracefully acknowledged. Lord Willoughby d'Eresby led the way on horseback. When crossing the Bridge the rain fell so heavily that it was found necessary to close the carriage, but before doing so Her Majesty stood up and bowed to all around. At Drummond Castle gate was a magnificent triumphal arch, and the avenue to the castle was lined with five hundred gentlemen, tenants of the estate, all wearing plaids of Drummond tartan, and at the entrance to the castle a body of the 42d regiment and the Drummond Highlanders were drawn up as a guard of honour, and the band of the 6th Dragoons was stationed at the lawn. Lord and Lady Willoughby received the royal guests at the entrance and conducted them into the castle. In the evening Crieff was brilliantly illuminated, and there was a great display of fireworks. Numerous banners floated from the tops of the houses, and bonfires blazed on almost every high hill in the district. On Sunday the Queen and Prince Albert walked in the flower garden, and the chaplain afterwards conducted religious services. Heavy rain fell all afternoon, and the Queen read to the Prince the three first cantos of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." On Monday the weather was fine, and about half-past five in the morning Prince Albert

started for Glenartney Royal Forest, shot four deer, and returned about three in the afternoon. The Queen walked about the castle and inspected the Highlanders, and a little past four, with the Prince and some other ladies, she again passed through the town, and visited Ferntower, Abercairney, Monzie, and Ochtertyre, and returned to the castle in the evening. A grand ball took place afterwards, when Her Majesty joined in the country dance, "Meg Merilees." On Tuesday morning about nine o'clock the Royal party bade adieu to Strathearn. The excitement caused by the daily parades of the dragoons, which were new sights to many of the inhabitants, and the residence in the locality for the time of many of Scotland's leading nobility, also the passing and repassing of the band of the 66th Regiment to and from Taymouth, added to the principal centre of attraction—the Royal party—and was long felt and spoken of with pride. Since then Her Majesty passes and repasses frequently every year through Strathearn and many of the denizens never hear of it.

Old Contracts.—It is not uninteresting occasionally to peruse the old charters and leases of the district, as they throw a peculiar halo around the men and things of ancient times. In a lease dated 1761 in the possession of Mr Caw, cabinetmaker, which was granted to his forefathers by one of the Baronets of Ochtertyre, some curiosities are mentioned which are unknown in the tacks of the present generation. There were a number of dyers about the town, and several waulk mills were driven by the river Turret. To one of these the following lease applies :—"Letts to the said James Caw, his heirs and executors, all and haill the wake miln below the bridge of Turrett, with the miln lead, out lett, and haill pertinents thereof. . . for nineteen years. And rent free the first year. . . with liberty also and previledge of casting yearly a few turfs for the purpose of lighting his candle in the long nights in the miln. As also of casting what feal or

divot may be necessary for keeping the miln house in repair, with this express provision that neither turf, feal, or divot are to be cast at any time but in the place and plans to be pointed out by the ground officer, under a penalty of three pounds Scots for each offence, during the tack." The rent was to be "twelve pounds Scots during the first nine years," and "eighteen pounds Scots the latter nine years." "He," Mr Caw, "also binds and obliges himself and his foresaids to attend the Master's Barron Courts when warned thereat, and obey the acts and statutes thereof." The tack was renewed in 1780 for fifteen years at a rise of 5s annually, and the next renewal was for nineteen at an additional rise of 7s 6d. The Baron Bailie Courts were then of some consequence, and care was taking in granting charters and tacks that they be respected. The following extract from a charter granted by James Drummond, to whom the Perth Estates were restored, dated 27th October 1787, will show how keenly alive superiors were to their privileges. The parties to whom the charter was granted had "to furnish a man, when required by the Baillie or factor, for watching and guarding the fairs and markets of Crieff, and assisting in keeping the peace thereof, and to give suit and presence to the Baron Baillie Courts that may be holden in the said village of Crieff, when and as often as they shall be required thereto, and submit to, and obey all acts and regulations to be made in the said Courts by the Baillies to be appointed by me, my heirs, and successors." Mr Adie, writer, was the last Baron Bailie in the town, and people yet alive remember the guard with their halberts patrolling the town on market days.

"**Auld Langsyne.**"—Amidst the high wages and high living of the present day the question is often asked, "How did the people in old times manage to live?" Certain it is that they did exist and subsist, and it may not be out of place to give a rough sketch of how the latter was managed about the beginning of

the present century. At that time the rural districts contained more inhabitants than now, and Crieff was a centre of industry. Country weaving flourished, and the various other tradesmen were actively employed. The numerous farmers and pendiclers managed some way or other to raise as much grain, potatoes, wool, and flax as fed and clad their dependants; and, though little money passed through their hands, they generally felt comfortable and healthy, and had a bite and a drink to spare for a friend, a stranger, or a beggar. In the town the programme was more varied. The head of a family, besides being occupied with his trade, generally reared two or three pigs yearly. There being plenty of grass, leaves, and ferns in the neighbouring woods, plenty of bedding for them was had for the taking, which produced a large quantity of manure, which the neighbouring farmers gladly carted to their fields; and so far as it could be spread in the drills, the owner planted potatoes, and at the end of the season had sufficient wealth of potatoes to feed family and animals. A pig could be sold to pay house rent, and the others went into the "beefboat." Hens were frequently kept, and their eggs varied the contents of the frying-pan and breakfast table on a Sunday morning. Plenty of braxy hams were to be had at a nominal price, and a whole sheep skinned and ready for use could be had on Thursday at the Cross for 2s 6d to 5s. Oat and barley meal was generally purchased with the proceeds of the father's occupation, but it not unfrequently happened that several "pecks" or acres of ground were rented, the working of which was in a great measure performed by the family, and the crops coming in in due season saved a penny. In the summer and autumn the younger branches of the family were employed herding with neighbouring farmers. The Lothian harvests being much earlier than those between the Ochil and Grampian hills, the young men managed to shear there and be back in time for a second engagement of

the same kind at home. The mother, when circumstances permitted, brought in a pound or two by thraving (shearing) on the harvest fields. Besides being able to knit and spin, she was an adept at baking cake bannocks and barley scones, both of which were sweeter than honey when spread (either by knife or thumb) with butter, and, as often happened, the zest was increased by the addition of a good fry of parr or trout from the river or hill streams, or a piece of salmon, fresh or kippered; no hindrance then to fish to your heart's content. There were plenty of distilleries in and around the town, where abundance of draff and "brunt ale" were to be had at a cheap rate for feeding cows and swine. When milk was scarce the brunt ale, when mixed with treacle, did service with the porridge at breakfast. Broth and potatoes, with a bit of some dead beast, constituted dinner, and beat potatoes and milk, varied now and again with sowens, made a palatable supper. The gardens were well-stocked, and the best of the bourtree berries, blaeberries, brambles, and junipers grew among the neighbouring woods and hills. Torleum was famed for the two latter, and many made a yearly visit to this famed mountain, and carried home pitchers of both. The junipers gave a relish to whisky, and the blaeberries were generally eaten as a dainty. Coals were a scarce commodity, but there was a supply of peats, and plenty of firewood was to be had for the carrying in any of the neighbouring plantations. The woods of Whitedrums and Torleum were principal resorts for such like, and batches of trig Feus weavers did not disdain to go regularly for burdens, and their boisterous mirth was heightened when passing and repassing the Bridgend by the sound of fiddles. The scientific art of cleaving was not then generally developed, and after a burden journey, many faces showed unmistakable signs of recent wood-splitting. Occasional cases occurred when the long branches were thurst endwise under the pot; but an incident at

Pittenzie ended this plan. The branch was so long that it reached from below the pot out into the street, and a cart passing, either by accident or design, overturned the stick, pot and all. An old weaver named David Roy used to say that nothing cured a colic like carrying a burden from Torleum, and he acted up to his belief. In those days fashions changed at leisure. A wedding beaver hat would wear a lifetime, and the coat and vest when too gaudy for the old man would be made down by whip-the-cat for the youngsters. Dress boots would serve at church, sacraments, and marriages for well nigh twenty years. A bride's plenishing, though not so varied as now-a-days, was really substantial, and often served generations; the most of it was spun by her own hands, and the family weaver did his best. Borrowing and lending formed a feature of life's entertainments, and a big pot, or a favourite frying-pan, or brass jelly-pan, would now and again feel the effects of most of the fires in the neighbourhood. Borrowing a light was also common. Before the age of lucifer matches, Spunk Geordie and others sold halfpenny bunches of fir dipped in sulphur, which were used to catch the flickering fire in the tinder box, but this belonged to expense and trouble. The proper thing was to let your neighbours fire be kindled, and then call and borrow a fiery peat, which, with a little blowing, made things go nicely. Beds, chests, and presses were almost all made of Rannoch fir; many of the two latter remain in use to the present day. At the district fairs all kinds of tradesmen attended and vended their wares. Farmers' gaucy wives in goodly numbers sold their butter, cheese, eggs, and hams; and Cheap John and a shoal of packmen and ballad-singers did a thriving trade. Begging at that time was a regular profession, and swarms perambulated the country. Some travelled on foot; others sat in coaches, drawn by dogs; and not unfrequently a member of the fraternity would pass along in a box hand-barrow, in which he sat, and each residenter had

to help him from his own door on to that of the next neighbour, the load always increasing with donations of meal, cakes, and scones. In connection with one of these the late Thomas Taylor, weaver, Bridgend, used to tell a good story. When a young man he was employed on a farm. One day the neighbouring farm-servants brought across a beggar in his box. After having been charitably entertained, Thomas and another servant were instructed to convey the beggar across a park to the next farm. In passing, an angry bellowing announced the adjacency of an angry bull, and, on looking round, they saw it making for them. They at once saw that escape with the beggar was impossible, so, throwing down the box, Thomas and the other servant made for the nearest dyke, and "sprindit" (jumped) over at a bound; but judge of their astonishment, on looking round, to see the supposed decrepit beggar spanking on before them like a deer. If the old proverb be true, that there is a certain amount of joy and sorrow allotted for all, and by judicious management or careless indifference each may turn the scale, our forefathers had as good means for enjoyment or sorrow as we, and certainly their feeding commodities, though less varied, were as substantial as ours, and their clothing, though not so fine, was better adapted for the climate than that of the present day, and brotherly kindness and good neighbourhood were virtues cultivated to a degree which is not apparent in the present generation.

An Opinion of Sir Walter Scott.—Many years ago Mr Thomson, druggist, lived in good neighbourhood with a shrewd Highlander named Donald. One day their conversation turned to Glenartney, and in the course of talk Mr Thomson asked Donald if he had seen Sir Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake," which gives a grand description of the glen. On receiving a negative answer, he went for the book and gave it Donald, who, while perusing it, could not understand many of the descriptive parts. He knew

the glen, but could not for the life of him identify it through Sir Walter's spectacles. Everything in the poem was so highly coloured, and the distance and direction the hunters careered perfectly bewildered Donald's imagination. As he read he could not account for the extraordinary proceedings recorded, and on finishing the tale ceased to believe them. When returning the volume, Mr Thomson asked what he thought of it. "Weel, Mr Tamson," replied Donald, "Mr Scott may be a very clever man, but he's a great leear" (liar).

Friendly Societies in Bygone Times.—Friendly societies, a little after the beginning of the present century, occupied much of the public mind, and few rural villages were without a Masons' or Weavers' Friendly Association, and Crieff was pre-eminent in this respect. Being the centre of a thriving community and the "capital" of Upper Strathearn, it had many inducements and opportunities of showing that it was so. At one period some ten Friendly Societies flourished in the town, and many men were members at the same time of a number of these. The amount of business of one kind and another which a good membership entailed, gave to many young men much experience in the ways of the world and a ready utterance and power in debate which in time gave them a decided lead in all matters of public interest, whether political or ecclesiastical, and they entered as keenly into the debates of the Reform Bill of 1832 and the celebrated Auchterarder cases as those more immediately interested. The Societies were the Masons', Weavers', Shoemakers,' Gardeners', Patriotic, Hammermen, Hecklers', Ploughmen, Friendly, and Wrights'. The Masons' was almost always a strong association, and dates out beyond the '45. The Duke of Perth was Worshipful Master at the time of the Rebellion; and the Duke of Athole and many other noblemen and gentlemen acted as office-bearers in the Crieff St Michael's Lodge. The place of

meeting in early times was in that house in James' Square (at that time called King's Square), presently occupied and owned by Mr Faichney, tailor. They afterwards acquired ground and built a hall at the west end of West High Street, and in 1816 it was pulled down and replaced by the present large and commodious structure. It is the only Society now existing of those mentioned. Its membership is still strong, and its revenues amount to well nigh £100 annually, the most part of which is freely distributed to sick and infirm members. On 27th December they annually meet for the settlement of business and appointing office-bearers, and there is generally a grand parade by torchlight through the town, the members being dressed in what is fashionably known as "full dress," with the addition of neat aprons having Masonic devices painted thereon, and ornamented with silk and rosettes. The Weavers' Society for long held an honourable place, and had an excellent hall erected about the close of the last century, which for many a day was the principal place for the numerous dancing assemblies of both gentle and simple. Their annual meeting day was the 4th of June, being the birth-day of King George III., and the town was gaily dressed, and many a branch and shrub were cut in the neighbouring wood to deck the doors and windows, and no end of flags and streamers waved from the chimney-tops of the more enthusiastic denizens. Being held often in the week of the great annual fair, immense numbers of people from great distances were in town, and were on the *qui vive* for the procession. In the Society there were always two parties who annually contended for the honour of carrying the red flag in the procession. The strongest got it, and the weakest got a blue one. The members were very trimly dressed in blue coats with yellow buttons, dark trousers and white stockings, a white sash, ornamented with two or three rows of red and blue ribbons, hung over the dress, and a white apron completed the attire.

The chief men or deacons and the committee had red sashes and blue staves, and the others had unornamented staves. Occasionally from 150 to 200 joined in the procession, and their appearance justified the pride of the "gallant weavers." The Association broke up about eighteen years ago, when their property in Commissioner Street was sold and realised some £450, which was divided according to time of membership. The Shoemakers' flourished for a short time, and their procession was a thing to be remembered. They had robed knights, kings, and princes, with a host of other officers of state—some on horses and some on foot—and a champion clad in complete armour led the way. It sometimes happened that the armour did not suit exactly, and among the last processions the champion was short of stature, and when clad and mounted his arms stuck out from him like a "tatie bogle." The Gardeners had a short reign. Their procession was rather a gay affair. Being in the season of the year "when Flora blooms," they decked their blue coats with selected flowers, and carried a gem of a bouquet in their hands, and a large Scotch thistle showed prominently in the passing show. In the other processions an office-bearer carrying a sword cleared the way, but the Gardeners preferred a hedgebill; and on one occasion, when the last of the procession was filing into the hall, the officer got irritated at the crowd's behaviour, and, giving vent to his anger, made his weapon sweep amongst them, and lamed a man for life. A wooden bill was thereafter placed in the official's hands. The Patriotic Society lived for a few years after 1819. It was composed principally of old soldiers, militiamen, and volunteers. Their dress was varied according to individual fancy, but all had tartan plaids, and the country was ransacked for swords, for each processionist had to carry one. The chief man was named commandant, and his subs. were majors, captains, etc., to some of whom the titles stuck during their life.

Colours that had seen service were borrowed for the procession from Ochtertyre House, Strowan House, or Culdees Castle, and a glorious job was the returning of them next day by the committee. After "falling in" at the hall door, swords were drawn, and the procession at "quick march" moved forward, to the great terror of women and children. Some carried their weapons much in the style of an umbrella, and others looked as if afraid the steel would fall out of the hilt and do mischief. On returning to the hall there was always more or less of drinking, and on one occasion two worthies quarrelled, and soon swords were drawn. An awful confusion immediately prevailed, which soon communicated itself to the people outside, and the women—many of whom had sons and husbands inside—made a rush to get inside, but couldn't. On a sudden John Mullins, an active member, was seen from the outside jumping on the table and flourishing two swords and gesticulating furiously. The women screamed and a rush was made, the door carried, and soon the hall was filled and peace restored. A resolution was immediately passed that no member would thereafter be allowed to trust himself with his sword in the hall. The Ploughmen had a procession or two on horseback, and got a famous treat at Drummond Castle; but they soon decayed. The Wrights also "processed," and were short lived. None of the others attempted an annual display. The great demonstration at the passing of the Reform Bill called out the full pride and pomp of display of these Associations, which ever after gradually subsided till the Friendly Societies' Act, which was soon thereafter passed, extinguished the greater part of them. Though these Societies had many good qualities, they were accompanied by much lost time and expense, and many days after the annual carnivals the effects of revelling and drunkenness were plainly visible, which more than counterbalanced the benefits received.

About Fish and Fishing.—People living near rivers often enjoy with pleasure and profit an occasional day's fishing. In times not so long gone by, it was the favourite sport of working men. For thirty years after this century commenced, the numerous rivers and streams in the district swarmed with trout, and a very plentiful supply of salmon, grilse, and sea trout appeared in their season. Previous to the system of hill drainage being introduced, the floods in the rivers would come gradually, and continue to a more or less extent for weeks. The fish had thus ample opportunities of moving about, more especially when ascending from the sea in the autumn, and they were well fed with worms, which bred in the cattle droppings which were then abundant on the river banks. It was a common practice for tradesmen to lay in a stock of kippered salmon, which were hung, along with hams and puddings, from the joists of the houses. With the exception of a month or two in the height of summer salmon could be taken with little trouble, and a fisher went to the water with the belief that fish were there—not as now, each asking the other if they had heard of any having been seen. Cleeking and speering were modes of capture regularly practised, and a party going to the fords, selected the best fish, for there were plenty from which to pick and choose. The hecks in mill lades caught immense quantities of fish which were returning seawards, and on a morning the pools behind water wheels often displayed a goodly selection of all sizes, which had been killed in their passage below the wheels. We have heard old men reporting as many as fifty having been caught in one night in the heck of the South Bridgend Mills. It was a practice with millers, more especially those whose "tail race" joined the Earn, to spread a net at the mouth of the lade previous to setting off the water from the wheel, and thereby securing all fish attempting to get up which were in the lade. Often when there was a rise in the river in autumn, this mode of

fishing was very successful. Netting the mill lades for trout in summer was also attended with satisfactory results. Many people who could not get a dish by the usual method managed a good fry with this. The most notable scheme in the district for catching fish was that set on foot upwards of thirty years ago, by three adventurous spirits who wrought at the Bridgend Saw-mill. They made a box like a drawer, about 6 feet square by 20 inches in depth, and in this frail bark they would launch forth on the roaring waters. One carried the spear, another the torch, and the other managed the piloting with a long pole. The steersman had onerous duties to perform where the stream was rapid. He had to bear up against the current so as to allow the others on the outlook for fish sufficient time to see and spear them. The novelty continued most of a season, and wound up with a catastrophe in the boat-hole of Dalpatrick. One dark night the float and crew were practising below Dornock Dam, and a few Crieffites were witnessing the operations from the banks. At the conclusion some of those on the south bank wanted to be taken over to the north side, so as to get easier home. They were taken on board, and the float, in being steered across, went so far down with the current that the ferry-boat rope, which extended across the river, caught the passengers, and tumbled all on board heels over head in the water, when

> "Those who could swim spread out their fins,
> And those who couldn't waded."

How the wreck was taken ashore is not reported, but after having lain high and dry for some time near the mouth of the Pow it was removed to Crieff. The stirring life of the crew spread far and wide, and many took a peep at the strange vessel. A dandy, who had been for some time residing in the south, on his return to the north could not rest satisfied till he had a peep too, and on seeing it insisted on getting a sail across

Cook's Dam, so that he might be able to say that he had been voyaging in the famous vessel. One of the crew agreed to act as pilot, and the float was launched with the two on board. On reaching the opposite bank the dandy put his foot on the bulwarks to spring ashore, and when in the act of springing the pilot pushed the float seawards, and the dandy went down into the deep, giving his superfines a thorough sousing. When he got righted he observed his black "tile" gliding out of sight over the dam dyke. This after-piece closes the journal of the voyages of the famous float. A more questionable mode of fishing with a horse's head was said to have been tried. The head, with a string attached, was placed at the foot of a pool or stream frequented by salmon. A person at the top of the pool held the other end of the string, and pulled the head up the middle of the water, at the sight of which all fish darted under cover at the sides of the river, and were easily secured. It is said that of late a dead cat has been used for a like purpose. Yet another style of fishing was that called the "otter." The otter consisted of a piece of board, about 2 feet long by 6 inches deep, to which a long cord was tied at such an angle that when pulled the "otter," as it is called, moved across the water in any direction required. Attached to the cord were a number of fly hooks, which generally did good execution. This mode is forbidden, and in disuse. The "trolling" was a favourite with most salmon fishers. Two fishers—one on each side of the river—joined their lines, from which a selection of hooks dangled and bobbed, and were brought over every spot in which a fish could rest. When a salmon was hooked it was landed on the side of the river most suited for the purpose, each fisher winding and unwinding his reel as circumstances required. This was a deadly method, but is also prohibited. Many people, still alive, relate with pleasure their youthful trout girning doings in the Turret. At that time there was always

a supply of water running over the Milnab Weir, and the pools betwixt it and the junction with the Earn swarmed with parr and trout, and daily might be seen, when the weather and water were favourable, parties of boys, with top pieces of fishing rods, or other suitable pieces of wood, having hair nooses attached to the points, "paidling in the burn," and often bringing home to their mothers five or six dozen to fry to tea. All the hill burns abounded with trout, from which abundant takes were always got. Loch Turret, Loch Earn, Loch Fruchie, the Loch of Balloch, and other lochs of minor importance in the district, were periodically visited by all keen anglers, and they seldom returned without good baskets. The Act passed upwards of thirty years ago was the death-knell of these pleasant piscatorial rambles. By it the right to fish, which from time immemorial had been enjoyed by all, was invested in the proprietors on the banks of the waters, and so one of the sources of the working man's income and recreation was taken from him without equivalent, and now with very few exceptions indeed, he cannot fish on grounds he fondly thought were as free for his use as the king's highway. Notwithstanding the increased protection to salmon it is vexing to learn that the monarchs of the flood are getting so scarce and dear, that common people can only afford to feast their eyes by a survey of the fishmonger's windows. When parr fishing was legal it was nothing unusual to secure a gross of them any afternoon in the months of July and August. The finest of them were got in the "Rough water," at the Isle of Dargill, Innerpeffray, and Colquhalzie. Parr, like burn trout, have very much decreased both in size and quantity.

What's in a Name?—Dominies in former times as well as now delighted in expressing themselves in fine rounded redundant sentences, and in making the younkers feel as well as see that superiority dwells with "oor maister." In country districts time often

hung heavily on the teacher's hands, and he not unfrequently was a convivial companion, and was usually a leading man at all Masonic doings, and was thereby enabled to know things in connection with the nether regions which none but Masons can comprehend. One of these worthies at one time kept the school at the "Laigh Kirk Style," and did his best to "lounder" the little folks along the highway of knowledge with a good birch. Having got a fine new double-bladed knife, he frequently displayed its attractions in the way of pen-mending. The haflin boys envied such a knife, and would willingly have given their first arles for such another. One day after using it, the master inadvertently left it on one of the tables. In a short time he missed it, and although diligent search and inquiry were made, the missing article was not forthcoming. The master, in serious and high-flown language, then addressed the scholars, telling them that the thief was among them, and must have told a lie, and now nothing remained for him (the master) to do but call up "Auld Clootie," who was the father of lies, to claim his son. He further told them that two Masons could at any time call him up out of his brimstone den, and in the meantime he would go for a neighbouring brother of the "mystic tie." In a short time he returned with said brother, and in order to do things properly the windows were darkened and terror reigned triumphant. The boys grat and roared and the girls screamed, so that those in one corner thought Clootie was doing business at the other. The dominie, to give another chance, allowed some light to come in at one of the windows for an instant or two and then shut it up. The noise and hubbub was more intense than before. Apprehending something serious if longer continued, and thinking the end served, the window shutters were opened, and on examination the knife was found lying on the floor. The dominie said that he was glad that the boy had returned it, for "Auld Clootie" was keen to get him off with him.

After such an adventure the knife became famous, and was as much a terror as the tawse.

The Bereans.—Very few persons in the locality remember of the Berean Congregation which used to meet regularly in the town, or know that such a community existed, and that the founder belonged to the district; but such is the fact. John Barclay was born in 1734 at Strageath, about two miles down the Earn from Crieff, where his father, Ludovic Barclay, rented a farm. He was designed for the ministry, and received a classical education, and on 27th September 1759 was licensed by the Presbytery of Auchterarder. Shortly thereafter he was engaged as assistant to Mr Jobson, the parish minister of Errol. At that time there were violent disputes in the churches, which led Mr Barclay to study the Scriptures in relation to what was going on around, and led him to consider the doctrines of all the belligerent sects wrong, that he himself had been taught opinions which Scripture did not warrant, and he fearlessly preached what he believed to be the truth. Having prepared a sermon for a Communion occasion, and neglected to take it with him to church, he did not discover the circumstance till he was in the pulpit. He instantly resolved to choose Romans x. 9—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved"—from which he discoursed on the connection which subsists between the truth as believed in the heart, and its inseparable consequences in the present and eternal welfare of the believer, in such a way that Mr Jobson found it necessary to dismiss him. About the time of his leaving Errol, Mr Dow, minister of Fettercairn, being old and infirm, desired of his son, the minister of Dron, to procure an assistant, which he did by engaging his acquaintance Mr Barclay. He entered on his new duties in June 1763, and continued nine years, and became a great favourite in the district by

his undeviating desire to be useful in every way he could for the good of religion. In 1766 he published a dissertation on the Psalms, which called down on him the wrath of the Presbytery of Fordoun, who warned the people against receiving Mr Barclay's doctrines, and enjoined them not to receive his instructions. In 1772 Mr Dow died, and Mr Barclay was prohibited from preaching in the kirk of Fettercairn, and the Presbytery did their utmost to prevent him preaching in the Mearns. The heritors were advised to reject him as a fit person to be presented to the parish, although the whole congregation, with the exception of three, were for him, and they also refused him a certificate. The case was carried to the Synod and General Assembly, both of which were at one against Mr Barclay, and he left the communion of the Church of Scotland. He soon after went to Edinburgh and formed a congregation, and occasionally returned to Fettercairn, where his friends pressed him hard to remain; but he prevailed on them to accept as their minister James Macrae, a young man who had been a schoolmaster in Crieff, and professed the same doctrines. The congregation numbered nearly 1200. Mr Barclay afterwards visited various cities in England, and established churches in several of them. On returning to Scotland his doctrine spread, and many towns and villages accepted his teaching, and churches were formed in a number of places. He died of apoplexy on the 29th of July 1798, aged 64. Mr Barclay occasionally visited Crieff, where a church was formed, which flourished up till about thirty years ago, when the survivors divided the collection plate, plate-stand, forms, etc., by lot. When he resided in Crieff he generally lodged with a family who lived in the east side of King Street, second door up from Commissioner Street, and tradition says that after an animated discourse on the people of Berea in a malt barn, which occupied the site of the present Free Church, some one wrote

with chalk on the door of the house in which he lodged, "Noble Bereans," which so pleased him that he adopted "Berean" as the title of his sect. Those who formed the congregation here were almost all, if not all, men of rather more than average talent, and were possessed of good debatable powers, and keen for an argument in matters of faith and doctrine. A good story illustrative of this is told of two brothers named Miller, who lived near Balloch Loch, about two miles south-west from Crieff. One of them, named James, was a strict Berean, and the other was as keen a Kirk of Scotland adherent. As a matter of course, religious discussions were almost of daily occurrence, and on one occasion a fierce dispute on faith ran so high that James exclaimed—"I have as muckle faith as I could walk o'er the Loch o' Balloch!" The brother retorted—"Try the midden dub first, Jamie; try the midden dub."

Taking it Easy. — Two well-to-do tradesmen belonging to Comrie travelled into Crieff one morning to catch the eight o'clock train to Perth. On arriving at the station they found that they were in good time, and after securing their tickets they rested themselves in the covered platform of the south train. After seeing the south train depart they sat and chatted contentedly, expecting that the north or Perth train would take up its position on the siding vacated by the south train. After sitting for about four hours, one of the men engaged in the coal trade observed them taking their long seat, and on going up to them, asked if they were waiting for any person. One of them replied that they were waiting till the Perth train would start. "The Perth train," exclaimed the man of coals, "has started twice since you arrived this morning, and will not start again till near three o'clock." "Losh, man, that's extraordinar'," exclaimed the other Comrie man, "and us waiting here all this time for it." After a short consultation the two worthies considered that they might have

time to take a dram before the next train started, and accordingly adjourned to a neighbouring public-house. When duly refreshed, they returned to their old seat to watch with increased earnestness. In due time the Perth train came and went, our Comrie friends being oblivious to the fact. The gentleman of the coals happening again to pass down, saw his friends chatting to each other to their hearts' content. On questioning them again as to what they were still waiting for, the reply was that they had not seen the train yet. On being told that it had started for the third time, one of them remarked that if the railway is to keep starting in that manner, the sooner they were in Comrie Wast the better, and away home they went, much disappointed and disgusted at the manner in which Crieff folks treat decent strangers.

Highland Customs.—The Highlanders who removed to Crieff about the beginning of the century, made the customs and superstitions of their day form a never-failing theme of interest. The following are some notes in connection with their habits:—After marriage the bride walked round the church unattended by the bridegroom, and every knot about the newly married pair was unloosed. The first food of babes was a small spoonful of earth and whisky. Previous to baptism children had to be carefully watched lest they should be stolen or changed by the fairies, and one of the sure ways of protection was the putting of the family Bible in bed with the youngster. After baptism the first meat the company who assembled thereafter partook of was *crowdie*, a mixture of meal and water, or meal and ale, of which each present took three spoonfuls. The mother never set out on any walk until she was "kirked." This was done in company with some of the neighbours. She generally went into the church some time during the service, and occasionally when it was empty. She did not remain long, and when she got out she went round the edifice, refreshed herself, and returned

home. Till all this was done she was never permitted to eat with the family, nor was anyone permitted to eat of the victuals she had dressed. After baptism the father generally placed a basket filled with bread and cheese on the pot hook hanging over the fire in the middle of the room, round which the company sat, and the child was thrice handed across the fire, with the design of frustrating all attempts of evil spirits or evil eyes. At death the corpse was stretched on a board and covered with a coarse linen wrapper, and a wooden platter, containing salt and and earth unmixed, was laid on the breast. All fires were extinguished where the corpse was, and the cat was often placed below a washing tub, for in the event of it or the dog passing over the body, they were killed immediately; for were they to touch any person afterwards, some direful calamity was unavoidable. Late wakes were universal, and the evening after death the relations and friends of the deceased met at the house, and watched the corpse. In earlier times they were accompanied by a bagpiper or fiddler, and the nearest of kin—be it wife, son, or daughter — opened a melancholy dance, crying or weeping, which continued till daylight. Too often the unlimited use of stimulants turned their grief to merriment. This sort of thing continued till the funeral. At the funeral sometimes the *coronach*, or song of grief, was sung or recited. Before the women baked bannocks they formed a cross on the last they made; and a Highlander, in order to protect himself from any harm apprehended from the fairies, would draw a circle with an oak sapling round himself. Nothing of consequence was begun on the day of the week on which the 3d of May fell, which day was called *la skeauchanna na cleanagh*, or dismal day. The 14th of the same month was also an unlucky day. When journeying the looks, garb, and character of the first person met were carefully scanned. If favourable, they passed on; if otherwise,

they marched on in fear, or oftener returned home and began the journey anew. Hallowe'en was most sacredly observed. As soon as it was dark a person set fire to a bush of broom, with which he ran round the hamlet, attended by a crowd, and then flung it amongst the combustible matter collected for the great bonfire, which soon gave the signal of fire to all the other inhabitants of the hills. The weather was presaged for the ensuing year as follows, viz.:—They made observations on twelve days, beginning at the last of December, and held as an infallible rule that whatever weather happened on each of those days, the same would agree to the corresponding months—thus January would answer to the weather of December, February to January, and so on.

A Note of Changes.—In no similar period of the world have so many changes occurred relating to the industrial habits of the people as during the past eighty years. At the beginning of the century innumerable cots and hamlets studded the surrounding district, and the inhabitants had greatly to depend on their own resources for the varied necessaries belonging to rural life. Many of their occupations are numbered amongst the things that were, and other modes of living, considered improvements, are substituted. In olden times home brewed ale was much run upon; but now no such article exists; and the locality cannot even boast of a brewery. The matron did not disdain to bake cakes and barley bannocks, and instruct her daughters in the art, but now a loaf is considered more fashionable, and much aversion is displayed in the baking department. Lint growing was part of the farm economy, and the various processes which it underwent were carefully attended to. There was the lint dam for steeping it; then the drying and putting up into bunches; then the lint mill rolled and cleaned the lint from the "pob." Next came the hecklers, who with their rows of sharp heckle-teeth prepared the lint for spinning. The

damsels then took the lint or tow and rolled it round their "rocks," and span it into linen threads. In later times the spinning wheels did the work much more expeditiously. After being spun, it was reeled into hanks for the weaver, who warped and wrought it into shirting, sheeting, towelling, etc., in a manner which served the purposes of well nigh a life-time. Young ladies did not consider it the right thing to marry till they had provided themselves with all their *trousseau* home-made. Lint mills are now unknown, and our last heckler was Johnnie Brown, the beadle. Rocks, reels, and spinning wheels may yet occasionally be found in odd corners of old lumber rooms, and the country weaver, douce, cleanly, and intelligent man, is almost vanished from the earth. The woollen cloth was also mostly all homespun, and waulk mills and dyers did a thriving trade; but these old country requisites are awanting. Stockings were all made in the family, although the more wealthy would sometimes indulge in a pair made by the stocking weaver —a being now unknown in the district. Wheelwrights had full employment, and their individual merits were often keenly discussed. Among the last, if not the last, of these ingenious mechanics, was James Clement, who lived a few doors east from the Cross. The farms were not enclosed with fences as now, and plenty of employment was given to the young *nackets* of boys in the way of herding cattle and sheep. The parents from the glens to the north brought their young lads and maidens to the feeing markets, and generally found "places" for them among the low country farmers. Many a sore heart was caused at parting from fathers and mothers, but the youngsters were invariably left in the land of the stranger to learn to speak English and to work till the Martinmas term. In autumn troops of men and women clad in blue "duffel" cloth came from the north, often as far as Skye, to harvest in the lowland counties, and the young men of Strathearn also found

their way south over the Queensferry to the Lothians, where they "shore" the heavy grain of these rich districts, and returned in time to "thrave" at home. Previous to the introduction of the machine and scythe, extra hands were engaged on the farms to reap during harvest by piecework, latterly prices ranging from 2½d. to 3d. the thrave of two stooks, each stook having twelve sheaves. Women often earned from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. a day. During the harvest all the available talent of the district was fully employed. In the winter thrashing occupied much of the ploughmen's time. Astir a little after four o'clock each morning, they had to thrash with flails, previous to yoking their horses, as much straw as served a day for food and bedding for the bestial of the farm. The ploughmen have now comparatively pleasant times. During winter many hands were employed at thrashing for crofters. Previous to the invention of lucifer matches, spunks were the order of the day, and spunkmakers regularly perambulated the country with their wares. Spunks were narrow pieces of fir roots, about six inches long, with brimstone on the points, which ignited at the sparks in the tinder-box. The tinder-box was filled with burnt cotton, called tinder, over which a piece of steel was struck on flint, and the sparks fell into the tinder, and kept so far burning that the spunk in touching them caught fire. Metal spoons were not in vogue, and horners was one of the industries of the district. One of the most famous snuffmill and spoon-makers of his day dwelt in the town. The handicraft of Donald M'Dougall frequently adorned the best windows of Princes Street, Edinburgh. He died many years ago, but the tinklers and itinerating spoon-makers of the present day remember in their traditions the fame of M'Dougall. Our grandfathers could not replace a broken pot or pan with the ease of their grandsons; but when a foot got knocked out a man could easily be got to melt metal or *yettlin* and put in another.

Broguers were plentiful, and the lieges got their shoes sewed with thongs of leather and fitted to be changed for any foot without inconvenience. Paper was manufactured in the district, and Mr Joseph Don, although over eighty years, and who still lithely follows his occupation of slater, is the last of those who served their seven years' apprenticeship in the mill, which occupied the site of one of the manufactories west from the town. Sawyers had plenty of work, and many men did scarcely any other thing than work with the frame saws all the year round. Whipping-the-cat, or working in the house of the customer, was a usual mode for the tailor and shoemaker. Many of the country people tanned a hide or two in a peat moss, and when dried were as hard as wood. The morning the broguer, or shoemaker, arrived, carrying his awls, lasts, and other *bouliments* of his profession, a roving fire was kindled, and he held the leather to the heat and rubbed as much grease into it as made it workable, and then set to work. His left hand was his principal pattern. If for a small shoe upper, he kept the fingers close; and if for any size larger, he opened the fingers to suit; and found little difficulty in shoeing a family in a day for a shilling and his meals. The manners and customs of these times appear to us somewhat rude and unpleasant; but there is no doubt of the people having been as happy and contented as we are. In eighty years hence our daily life will also appear antiquated. Each succeeding year discloses a growing desire to win in the race for riches, and in the excitement of the chase the important fact is overlooked that money is not happiness, but only one of the many means whereby it may be attained. The anxious inquiry after death is not "has he been happy and benevolent?" but "has he left much wealth?" One evening two or three neighbours were recounting the merits and lamenting the death of a comparatively wealthy acquaintance who had recently died, when another neighbour who was

listening brought the matter to an abrupt conclusion by exclaiming, "Let him dee, he had plenty of siller!"

Monzie.—This quiet rural parish joins Crieff on the north side of the Knock, and consists principally of wild mountain steeps along the front of the Grampians. The village, which was wont to resound with wild mirth and laughter on Sacrament days, is now almost deserted, and many of the thatched "biggings" are levelled with the ground. Among its braes the clan M'Ara was nursed, but few of the name now remain to tell the tales of their fathers. Like all other localities, it had its traditions, and with few exceptions all are forgotten. It is said that at one time the M'Aras had enraged some neighbours, who, in retaliation, caught a number of the clan, and forced them into a boat, which was scuttled, and launched on Lochlog, and all were drowned; but being allied to witches their ghosts haunt the borders of the lake still in the shape of hares, which may be seen in the neighbourhood any day. Another story is that one of the clan was a giant and the terror of Highland raiders. On one occasion some of the M'Gregors from west the country were anxious to cross swords with him, and made a visit to his cottage one evening. M'Ara, who was beyond the hearth, guessed the mission of the strangers, and was on the alert. A quarrel soon arose about some sheep, and the M'Gregors drew their swords. M'Ara at once knocked the nearest man down, and, reaching above the bed, caught hold of his broadsword, and, sweeping it downwards, missed the next M'Gregor, but cleft a large pot in two, which so disheartened the intruders that they retreated with all speed, and were soon lost in the darkness. Monzie is best known in connection with the burning of a witch. In 1715 Kate M'Niven lived a little down the river Shaggie from the Manse, and was reputed a witch. One of the principal things against her appears to have been in connection with Inchbrakie, where she had been a nurse. The laird

one day rode over to Dunning, and, according to the usage of the times, carried his knife and fork with him. While at dinner he was annoyed by a bee buzzing about his ears, and he laid down the knife and fork to put off the annoyer, which flew out by the window. On looking for the knife and fork he found that they were amissing, and could not be found. On his return to Inchbrakie the nurse produced the missing articles. Some time thereafter she was lodged in "durance vile," tried and condemned for witchcraft, and burnt in the spring of 1715. Mr Bowie was the minister of Monzie, and officiated on the occasion, and was, it seems, most bitter against her, as were also some of the other neighbouring gentlemen present, and she predicted that so long as the Shaggie Burn ran west there should not be a lineal descendant to the house of Monzie, nor the minister of the parish ever prosper, both of which prophecies have been realised in an astonishing manner. The laird who was a means of condemning her was the only one who interposed in her behalf at the eleventh hour, and Kate in gratitude spat a bead out of her mouth, and declared that so long as that charm was preserved by the family the house of Inchbrakie would never want a direct heir, which has been duly verified to the present time. Like all Highland parishes, the people entered heartily into smuggling; their only drawback being their fear of being caught by the "gauger loons." Flocks of sea birds used to frequent the fields above the village, and the superstitious, mistaking cause for effect, considered that these were birds of ill omen, as storms usually followed in their wake. In connection with this, the young people immediately previous to the present century frequently listened at the door of an old villager to hear his grace, which finished with a petition "to be kept from King's officers and sea maws." The first Presbyterian minister ordained at Monzie was Mr Chalmer, who was placed in 1691.

At that time the parishioners were in the habit of assembling upon the Green of Monzie on the Sunday mornings to play at football. The minister, finding them reluctant to attend religious services, occasionally joined in the pastimes, and in time gained their esteem, and they were prevailed upon to accompany him to church. Of the clan M'Ara who claimed the parish as the place of their birth, only one family bearing the name resides on a farm near headquarters. A Colonel M'Ara commanded the 42d Regiment at Quartre Bras in 1815, and fell on the battle-field.

Modes of Conveyance Long Ago.— Previous to the beginning of this century there were few turnpike roads such as we now have. The leading thoroughfares were what are called country roads, which the inhabitants kept in repair by annually turning out for the purpose, or when ordered by the Justices of the Peace. These roads in winter were in such a state that carts could scarcely pass along, and much of the traffic was carried on horseback. The droves of horses, cattle, and sheep, which annually made an exit from the north, took the nearest way through glens and straths south to the low country, the proper direction being the great desideratum. A near way from Breadalbane was along Glenlednock; or over by Glenturret. All animals on travel were understood to try their best to fill their bellies as they progressed, and at regular distances there were places for resting and watering, which were from time immemorial common to all who required them; but, by a change of habits, they have almost all disappeared. The Sheriffmuir was one of the largest of these commons, and it has grown beautifully less. First trees are planted, then a fence is erected to protect the trees, and then the people are warned not to break down the fence or the law officers will be let loose on them. So much for modern improvement. The road-makers in olden times had a great desire to keep a straight line, and though there was often

little difference in the distance in going round the hip of a hill to passing over it, the latter was generally taken, which made the passage of heavy loads impossible. A traveller, writing in 1769, says of the Breadalbane tenants—"They fetch peats, bring coals from Crieff, etc., which they do at their own expense, on horses' backs, travelling in strings, the tail of one horse being fastened by a cord which reaches to the head of the next." Our Loch Tay neighbours of to-day will scarcely believe this. An important event in a Highland country district in these times was the taking north of a millstone. We have heard an old man tell with much glee of his having witnessed such an event in his younger days. A beam was pass through the centre of the stone, on each end of which were rings and chains with ropes, and attached to these were some score of small horses. Nearly forty Highlanders gave a helping hand up King Street, Hill's Wynd, and on by Ferntower, the stirring peals of some half-dozen of bagpipes cheering them on. It seems they had to try their best when passing away up-hill above Monzie, where, notwithstanding numerous halts, the frequent "draps" of pure *aqua* made them perform herculean feats, and the minstrels had the supreme satisfaction that night of heading the procession over the old road by Cleikem Inn down into the Sma' Glen. The authorities, believing that horses might be overloaded, had power to regulate the weight they were obliged to carry when employed in the public service. The following interesting order is copied, with kind permission, from the original document which was in the possession of the late Councillor William Caw:—

"The Justices of the Peace, Crieff District, for preserving an equality among the parishes in the neighbourhood of the town of Crieff, where quartering of soldiers is become more frequent than formerly, have appointed that the several parishes shall be called in their turns to serve with carriage, horses, or carts, beginning with the parish of Crieff. And in regard that the horses of this county are but weak, the Justices have established

it as a rule that no constable or quarter-master do impose upon any who bring horses a greater burden than ten stones, trois weight, for one horse, and twenty stones for a cart, if the carriage go above ten miles from Crieff. But if it go only six miles, or under that, they may oblige those called upon for carriages to take twelve stones on a horse, or twenty-four stones on a cart. And to the end that quartering and carriages may be duly regulated according to the circumstances of those who, by law and the custom of the country, are subject and liable thereto, the Justices resolve to nominate and appoint proper persons as quarter-masters from year to year, with power to them to manage and oversee the same; and for this year did appoint David Lyell, brewer in Crieff; Thomas Caw, vintner there (commonly called Provost); and William Murray, merchant there, jointly and severally.

"Given at Crieff the eighteenth day of May, seventeen hundred and thirty-two years. PAT. CAMPBELL, J.P."

The rebel army in '45 were neither particular as to weight nor distance. Most of the farmers and pendiclers who had horses were pressed into the service; and right glad they were to make a night escape after going the length of Aberfeldy, asking neither fee nor reward.

Incidents of the Voluntary Controversy.—The Voluntary controversy, which agitated the country for several years about 1838, found plenty of material in Crieff and neighbourhood to keep things wagging. The parish ministers met, discussed, adjourned, and re-discussed as to the best modes of stamping out the effervesence of Dissent, and preventing sheep diseased with Voluntaryism from pasturing with their flocks. Public meetings were held, and star speakers depicted in no measured terms the extraordinary tendencies of the evil. One of the most violent of the meetings was held in the parish church, and the hearers were excited to an unusual pitch, and many felt glad that they were not belonging to the condemned. There was a good sprinkling of people from the surrounding parishes present, many of whom after the meeting broke up had a refresher, and not a few had something more previous to leaving the town. One Comrie worthy got very much excited, and as he moved westwards his feelings found vent in tirades

against the common enemy. As he was passing Ochtertyre he espied two carters coming along with their carts. They were decent enough men, were it not that they were Seceders. Our friend's ire was at the boiling point, and on meeting the carters he felt his utterance almost choked, but drawing himself up to his full height he, with a blow, sent each in succession sprawling on the ground, exclaiming—"Ye d—d Voluntaries!" As he marched home, he felt his cares considerably lightened, for he considered that if every one dealt with Seceders as he had done, there would soon be fewer of them in the parish. Chapels of ease sprang up all over the country, and a large edifice of the kind was erected in Crieff in 1838. The opening day was a great day, and the Rev. Mr M'Kenzie of Comrie officiating, expressed his high satisfaction with the state matters had assumed. Amongst the most notable things he uttered were—"We have now a church for poor weavers and other mechanics;" and "It does not do for the ministers of the Gospel to depend on the paltry contributions of the public." By the former he raised the bile on the weavers' stomachs. Why call them *poor* in contra-distinction to other mechanics? was the cry. He showed how far he carried out his latter sentiments by joining the Disrupting body in 1843. Notwith-standing all the haranguing, arguing, and church extending, the Dissenters stood their ground, which caused much uneasiness, and forced a *high* dignitary in the neighbourhood to remark "that there can be no peace till they harried the nest in the Broom," meaning the Seceder Church of Broom, near Forteviot. The Seceders, besides defending themselves from outward attacks, had a heavy handful in their own house. Much heart-burning followed in the slough of Burghers and Anti-Burghers, or the "auld and new licht." A story is told of a keen Seceder lady who sometimes had a drappie in her e'e. One evening when "geyan dry" an animated discussion on both

"lichts," and the way Voluntaries were persecuted, was going on in her brother's house, where she was. Finding that she could stand the thing no longer she slipped out into the garden, where, taking a quiet sip, she remarked, "There is muckle wark made aboot the auld licht and the new licht, but I think a body's nane the waur o' a wee thing o' the gloamin' licht." The Seceders kept their flocks and herds with much strictness, and any delinquent who jumped the dyke to get a nibble of State clover generally heard of it. On one occasion in a neighbouring parish a decent member, who thought that the rope was pulled just a little too tight, took it into his head one Sunday on which there was no service in his own chnrch to go into the State fold. The affair got wind, and he, *pro forma*, had to appear before his betters. Previous to getting a rebuke, he begged to be allowed to ask a question, which being granted, he put his request thus:—"Is Heaven so fu' now that naebody can get in but Seceders?" It was a poser, and the rebuke was held in *rententis*. Religion, politics, and whisky were much mingled together in these days, and there being no restrictions on Sunday drinking, many were the excuses for visiting a neighbouring church and ale-house. We knew one violent Voluntary who in spite of wind and rain would go occasionally to Comrie, and more than once was found lying on the road. Most people remember what like a rural Sacrament Sunday was when the Voluntary element was warmly discussed with spirits and ale. It is not a little startling that almost all those who on the side of Establishment took a leading part in theVoluntary controversies, and lectured that Dissent

> "To be hated needs but to be seen,"

in time proved

> "That often seen, familiar with its face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

With only one exception, all the ministers in this locality who were actively engaged against the Volun-

taries came out in '43, and treated their *quondam* friends as they did the Voluntaries of 1838. In time those who professed Voluntaryism showed that they were weight for weight equal to their oppressors, and now they are marshalling for an aggressive movement on their entrenched foe. It is a pity that a religion so replete with goodness should be surrounded by so many roots of bitterness, and that the vastness of its ramifications should afford such a wide area for angry disputes. On one day the Pope of Rome asserts his power to be infallible; on another, the minister of Dunblane asserts that he has power to make his beadle stand on his head.

Getting a Fright.—In times not long gone stories of ghaists and witches were told and retold by the coteries who nightly gathered round the country firesides to pass an hour or two in "daffin." The marvellous and terrible tales occasionally turned over had often the effect of making the wisest feel eerie when passing a lonely place or kirkyard after dusk, and the unexpected cry of a "houlet" would sometimes make the stoutest heart beat somewhat unpleasantly. It not unfrequently happened after the breaking up of these social parties that the younger portion felt afraid of their own footfall, and the smallest unexpected rustling sound, or any unlooked for appearance in or under the "lifts," was quite sufficient to make an adult's hair stand on end. A short time after the beginning of the century the Braes of Alichmore were in great part covered with whins and broom, more especially the northern part overlooking Lochlane Road leading past the haunted cave of the Pebble Quarry. Occasionally in the autumn large portions of the broom were cut for farming purposes and allowed to wither where it stood. One fine harvest afternoon a Crieff tailor took a walk west to Lochlane, about two miles distant, to see how the crops were looking, and visit a farmer friend. The farmer was in the best of humour, and the tailor

stayed till after the shades of evening fell, when glass, story, and song followed each other in quick succession, and made him oblivious to passing time. By-and-bye the tailor had to bid his friend good-night, and, with strange forebodings of danger, he proceeded on his return journey. "He wasna fou, but just had plenty," and as he stepped along the moon glinted down upon him through the trees of Knockmary. When rounding the turn of the road he felt the sharp breeze blowing from the north-west. On nearing South Bridgend his eye caught a glimpse of a large something "far up the height" moving between him and the moon. What could it be? He looked again; there it was, and going at a good speed too. If it was a witch she was not riding on her broom. It was decidedly a bogle of some kind, and as certainly taking a near cut across the brae toward him. He quickened his pace; it did so too. Things were getting serious, and his limbs trembled. On again taking observations, it was evident that the distance between them was decreasing uncomfortably. On nearing the cave, the weird moonlight showed the object of his terror taking a straight line down before him so as to cut off his retreat, and the strange, rustling sound told of its near approach. Becoming desperate, he dashed on at the top of his speed, and in the act of passing the quarry a stone caught his foot, and down he went all his length on the road. He felt his days were numbered, and terror riveted him to the spot. He had scarcely time to draw a breath when the terrible thing came over the bank and was on him in an instant. For a time his senses wavered, and when recovered he found that the object of his fears was a large "broom cowe."

An Affecting Story.—About thirty years ago there lived at Gallowhill a respectable aged couple named Donald and Jenny Cameron. They had been brought up in Breadalbane or Rannoch, and Donald in his younger days came to Crieff, and was much engaged

in tending cattle and orra work. Jenny was his second wife, but having no children, her affections naturally were much interested in her cows. They lived happily for many years, but old age coming on, with its attendant infirmities, they resolved to keep only one milk cow. Their favourite "crummie" had a calf which turned out a rather fine animal, and was petted much by its owners. In due time the old cow was disposed of, and the young one was more petted than ever. Jenny toiled for it by night and by day, gathering bedding and wheeling *draff* and *burnt-ale* from the neighbouring distilleries, and occasionally herding it at the road-sides. One day she was at one of the distilleries, and there was a great crowd of people awaiting the running of the lees or ale, and much jostling ensued when the hot liquid was running into the tank. As Jenny was preparing to fill her dish some one jostled her, and in she stumbled, and before she was extricated her legs were very severely scalded. She was taken home, but succumbed in a few weeks, and her husband, with a sore, sore heart, lowered her head in her last resting place. During the time of Jenny's illness the cow could not be properly attended to, and was in consequence much confined indoors. Donald, being so old and infirm, could not take charge of it, and young crummie was sold to a cow-feeder near the Bridge. Poor Donald had great reluctance in parting with what was so great a favourite with his wife and himself, and as it was being taken away he felt a great inclination to go with it, and so, catching the rope which was tied to its horns, he conducted it on the way to its new abode. Owing to the recent confinement, the animal showed a desire to be rather frolicsome, and was rather much for Donald. He, however, would allow none to conduct it but himself. As it was nearing its destination it got more furious, and Donald tried to pet it, and spoke in the kind Gaelic terms which Jenny used to employ, but to no effect. At parting he was making efforts to

fondle it, when it rushed at him and knocked him over, and he fell heavily on his thigh and leg. He was taken up and placed in an arm-chair, and carried home, but he never rallied, and died in a short time. The circumstance called forth much curious comment at the time, and the tale was told and retold at the firesides many an evening thereafter, and the gossips occasionally hinted that the death of the two was a judgment for making an idol of their cow.

"My Eye."—Some time ago a Mutual Improvement Association was formed in Crieff, and each member was called upon in turn to read, speak, or perform in one way or other at the weekly meetings. At the conclusion of one of their recent meetings a young man was appointed to do the needful on the next meeting night. He tried to excuse himself as being unaccustomed to anything of the kind, and had never delivered a speech or read an essay of his own in public during "all his life." No excuse would be taken, and he was told that he must exert himself to do something, although it were only writing out the synopsis of an essay. He complied, and here is the result:—"Synopsis of an Essay on the Eye.—The eye as seen from without; ditto as seen from within; the black eye, the brown eye, the hazel eye, and the grey eye; the bleared, evil, bloodshot, and squint eyes; the eagle, cat, and sheep eyes; the piercing and intelligent eyes; do you see anything in my eye? the radiant eye, and the sparkling eye; the far-seeing eye, and an eye in the back of your head, with an eye looking up the chimney; the open, prying, and closed eyes, and keeping your eye on things; the rolling, glaring, and doting eyes, and the languid and wistful eyes; the meek-eyed maid, and the meek-eyed morn, and the eye of a potato; an eye for the beautiful, and an eye for the ridiculous; a weather eye; the downcast eye; the twinkling eye; the eyebrows; any eye that sees further than your neighbours, and a blind eye; eye service, and mind your eye; the needle's

eye; the eye of day, and eyeing out a hole; the catching eye; the killing eye, and hooks and eyes; the wet and dry eyes, and the tail of your eye; the hawk's eye; the eyelids, and eyelets that are not connected with lids. Concluding with all in my eye; a bird's-eye view of things in general, and an eye to business in particular. Aye! I!"

Observations on Manners.—We have often been amused to observe the differences of taste and actions of people in manners of etiquette. Some gentlemen will wear gloves in and out of doors, and affect to wear the newest patterns so persistently, that an impression gains that they sleep with them on. It used to be the rule not to wear gloves under a roof. As dinner in many families takes up the greater part of an afternoon, it almost necessarily follows that etiquette is somewhat strict on these occasions. Being the most important meal of the day, ladies and gentlemen "*dress* for dinner," and, according to rule, sit upright, neither leaning to the right or left, or back or fore. All round get a plate of soup, and woe be to any guest who dares to ask a second supply. The breeding of any one is quickly discerned by the mode in which the plate and spoon are used as the plate gets empty. Those who catch the plate at the off side and raises it, so as to facilitate the supping out of the near side, had better take care what they are are doing. We have seen a well-to-do farmer cause much excitement by opening his mouth as the spoon commenced its gradient, instead of waiting for the spoon taking the level of his mouth before opening. Different sizes of spoons are used for different purposes. It would most effectually endanger your position in society were you to use a dessert spoon to your soup, or *vice versa.* So much has this soup business been a matter of strict etiquette, that the famous Beau Brummell, when speaking lightly of a man, and wishing to convey his contempt for him, said, "He is a fellow, now, that would send his plate up twice for

soup." The proper use of knife and fork is a feat every one cannot accomplish. It requires long and continuous training to master the art. Different sets of instruments are placed before you, and woe betide you if you conduct your surgical operations with the wrong implements. Elbow-room must be minimised, and a long farewell be to him who attempts to feed himself with his knife; he runs the risk of being banished Christian society. One of our parish ministers lately remarked that one who broke this rule would be considered by society as a greater delinquent than if he had broken any one of the Ten Commandments. However much disposed, a gentleman must take care not to cross his legs in such company, or lean on his chair. Many people would naturally think that the proper use of a chair-back was to lean on it. Such ideas must be put into practice with caution. After dinner comes drinking. The rule regarding soup does not apply to this—why, it is difficult to say. It seems that you are at liberty to hold out your tumbler or glass as often as you can, and at this stage of the proceedings you can sit cross-legged, lean, stand, lie, or spit, and declare that you "feel it to be the happiest moment in all your life," and be still quite in order. In companies of ladies and gentlemen after dinner, a self-elected master of ceremonies is often a great acquisition, when he does his spiriting gently and with tact. Music, both vocal and instrumental, when well executed, forms the greatest attraction; but any lady who has been pressed to perform need not be surprised, after she has been fairly set agoing, to find that those who used their most coaxing smiles and wiles to set her agoing, have set to speaking with loud voices, and are perfectly heedless of the music till its conclusion, when they clap their hands, and otherwise demonstrate their appreciation of the performance. This has been long the fashion. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Vauxhall and Ranelagh Gardens were the Crystal Palaces of the fashion at

the time; and what a poet of that day characterises as the custom then, is applicable now:—

"The music was truly enchanting,
Right glad was I when I came near it;
But in fashion I found I was awanting—
'Twas the fashion to walk, and not hear it."

In many companies the sitting still when music is being performed is considered a bore, and there are still tracings of what Bloomfield says of the gardens previously referred to:—

"What wonders were there to be found,
That a clown might enjoy or disdain:
First we traced the gay circle all round,
Aye, and—then we went round it again.
Fair maids who at home, in their haste,
Had left all clothing else but a train,
Swept the floor clean as slowly they passed,
And then—walked round it again."

A Fairy Tale.—About the beginning of the century, and for several years afterwards, a considerable number of Highlanders came and settled in the town. They hailed principally from Glenquoich, Breadalbane, and Rannoch, and, like all strangers, they imported ideas and habits which were strange to the townsfolk. In fact, some of these thorough Highlanders seemed to have transplanted hither the kind of atmosphere in which they formerly lived, and their surroundings were redolent of their mountain homes. The traditions of their fathers came along with them, and all the race of brownies, fairies, witches, wraiths, and all banshee appliances seemed to follow in their wake as surely as their favourite collie. In fact, the people could not subsist without such followings, which apparently were thoroughly Highland, for after the Highlanders were laid in their graves they "a' wede away." It is only when communities live long together that stores of traditions accumulate, and serve as a stock-in-trade for retail in the long evenings of winter. The following is a fair specimen of what frequently constituted a

good "winter's tale" of these Breadalbane natives:— In those times sawing with the "frame saw" was the universal practice, and all over the country were "sawpits," where sawyers came and went in pairs as required. As a rule, they did not overwork themselves, and, like the millers, they every evening took home something in the way of "moulter," if not to make, at least to boil their supper. Being often working at a distance from home, they generally took their dinner with them, which often consisted of bannocks and cakes, thumb-spread with butter, a piece of cheese or cold ham, and a flagon of milk. This did first-rate in fine summer weather, and a loll on the grass after its disappearance was very enjoyable. It was after such a dinner that two well-known sawyers were stretched by the banks of Acharn burn, near Kenmore. One of them, known by a Gaelic expression which sounds to southern ears somewhat like "Sclatch na Moucht" (sclatching sow), was looking up the burn, and seemed to his companion to get excited. "Look, look!" cries Sclatch, "there goes another." His companion immediately moved near the brink of the stream, and to his astonishment saw a fairy, nicely dressed in green, coming out of a cavern; and, on shaking a shell-studded bridle, a beautiful small pony came out, and the fairy, after adjusting the bridle, vaulted on its back, and careered away up the hill out of sight. Another and another followed in like manner; and Sclatch felt a strong impulse to try the bridle shaking. On mentioning his feelings to his cronie, he was answered that there were no bridles here. Sclatch said he would try his burden rope; and "suiting the action to the word," sprung down to the mouth of the cavern, and, on shaking the noose of his rope, out cantered a beautiful piebald, over which Sclatch stretched his leg, and away up the hill it bore him out of sight. No more fairies appeared, and his companion lay and wondered. When Sclatch reached the top of the hill he found the fairy ranks forming,

and on joining the squadron they all faced southwards, and galloped or moved through the air as circumstances required, hills or dales being no hindrance in the way. In a short time they arrived in Italy, where Sclatch was detailed for guard or scout duty, his principal employment being to watch on chimney-tops when a child was being stolen, and on no account to utter a word. This sort of duty continued every evening for many months, and changelings were left in almost all the houses visited, and mothers cheated of their own children. One night Sclatch remained long on duty on a chimney-top, and beginning to wonder what was the cause of delay, looked down the vent and listened. In a little he learned that great difficulty was experienced in getting the young heir of the family secured. After a short time he again looked down, and saw the fairies in great hurry and excitement shoving the youngster up the chimney, and in their haste had put his feet up and his head down, which Sclatch observing, called down to "put his head first." In an instant the fairies disappeared, leaving baby in the fire-place, the unlucky sawyer astride the chimney-top, and all enchantment gone. Sclatch felt sorely annoyed at his indiscretion, and after recovering himself a little, he considered it the best policy to make his exit as quickly as possible. With much despondency he had to return to his former ways of descending houses, and with much ado he managed to reach the ground, and had quietly to use much caution in making good his retreat from the premises. After an incredible amount of adventures, and hair-breadth escapes, he reached a seaport, where he got on board a home-bound ship, and ultimately reached his loved Breadalbane, careworn and weary, and an altered man, a warning to all those who would in any way interfere with the fairies or "men of peace."

Consulting a Witch.—One all-absorbing topic at the beginning of the century was smuggling. Most of the working men were crofters, and the farmers

were, in comparison to modern farmers, little more than crofters also. Money was a scarce commodity, and in consequence the acquiring of any household article was a serious question. For a time undreamed-of facilities for making money came in with the era of smuggling, and soon all the available talent of these glens were employed in the traffic. Young and old actively entered into the excitement of whisky-making, which for years brought quick returns. Employers, whether tradesmen or farmers, tried to secure the hands who could best attend at night to the still by the burnside on the hill. Apprentices and halflins were coerced to the work, and many bad habits were engendered, which still fructify in Highland inns. It was no unusual occurrence where so many *raw* distillers were engaged to find their *mash* made brose of, and the following is one of the many stories related in connection therewith:—One night two farm servants at Acharn, with the herd boy, were instructed by their master to go to their secret cave up the burn and do a little smuggling. Towards midnight they ascended the steeps behind the hamlet, and on arriving at the place set to work. For a time things went well, but unfortunately they made the water rather warm, and after pouring it on the malt found that they had made it into brose. Here was a fix: the liquor would not run off, and how were they to face the fierce anger of their master? Their heads were put in *steep*, and the result of the conference was a resolve to consult a reputed witch who lived in the neighbourhood. In a little they were winding their way down the hill in the direction of her house, but as they neared the dwelling their hearts began to feel rather agitated and their steps to slacken. Something had to be done, and with much fear and trembling the oldest man, with the others as a tail, approached the door of the weird sister. On rapping, a voice from within demanded, "Who is there?" which on being satisfactorily answered, another demand was

made—"What do ye seek at this hour?" which was answered, "That they had put the water too hot on the malt, and the liquor would not run off. Could she do anything for them, as they were terrified to go home?" She rose, lighted her cruisie, opened the door, and invited them to come in; but they felt so much afraid that they could not move or utter a word. By-and-bye, the one pressing close to the other caused them to find themselves inside the dwelling, the youngest with the sneck of the door in his hand. The strange flickering shadows caused by her blowing the peat fire sent shoots of terror to the men's hearts, and they pushed themselves back to the door. She commenced some cantrips, mumbling and moving about, and then took down some small stones or pebbles from the top of her box-bed, and laid them on the hearth, making signs and muttering strange, weird sounds over them, during which the three smugglers were perfectly bewildered and spell-bound. How long this sort of thing continued they could not tell, but when she said "to go and try it now," they never thought of thanking her for her efforts, but, turning round, rushed out, and tumbled over one another at the door-stones in their haste to escape. Without uttering a word, and by a kind of instinct, they moved up the hill to the cave, and on trial found, to their amazement, the liquor running off as if nothing had previously impeded its pure flow. Although rejoicing at this, there was a curious foreboding hovering round their hearts, which made them afraid to breathe the woman's name, and on no account would they afterwards dare to meet her on the road, but would either turn back or move round a park to get beyond her. This is no fanciful tale, but noted as the writer heard it told many years ago by him who was the herd; and although in after years he did not believe in witches, he always felt a strange sensation stealing over him as he narrated the events which passed that night before his eyes.

A Prophet of the "Saints" in Strathearn in 1878.—Crieff has never been behind for preachers, and at present the labourers are more numerous than ever. Besides the seven churches, which have each the usual ecclesiastical erections and staff of officials, there are a number of smaller communities busily employed during the week, and out-of-door addresses are added to the regular Sunday services. At present the district is honoured by an unusual visitant in the person of a veritable apostle from the Salt Lake on a missionary tour. Seeing that he is a native of Monzie, and has kept himself prominently before the lieges here for a week or two, it may not be out of place to give a few incidents of the Latter Day Saints in connection with the locality. In 1839, a shrewd, intelligent, and far-seeing man left the town and went to America. He returned in 1844, bringing with him numerous tracts, which were circulated, purporting that the end of the world was to be in harvest of 1845 (old style). He backed up these publications by eloquent addresses, urging on his hearers the necessity of fleeing from the impending danger, and going to America, where the Latter Day Saints were awaiting the faithful to ascend to heaven. The new doctrine took root, and we understand that a chosen few responded to the call, and amongst them was a young lad, named Kippen, who was a carter with Mr Buchan, builder. Time wore on, and the harvest of 1845 drew nigh, and certainly there was more or less excitement experienced by many as the news of the great stir and movements of the "saints" in America came by each successive mail. Some of the prophets were reported to have foretold that there was to be a great fall of snow, and the faithful were to ascend the mountains. The snow was to turn into rosin, and be set on fire, and so consume all things earthly, while the "saints" were to witness the end, and be taken upwards in glass cases. The harvest, both new and old styles, came and went, and the globe rolled

on as before, and some excuse was found for its so doing. All faith in the returned citizen, however, was lost when he ordered a new barrow. In 1844 the lad already referred to went out to the land of promise in the State of Illinois, and abode at Nauvoo, the Jerusalem of the Mormons. In due time he was considered worthy of honour, and was promoted to fill several of the sacred offices. When the United States Government and the Mormons disagreed, the latter had to shift their camp, undertaking not to settle again within the jurisdiction of the States. Then commenced the harassing journey to the Salt Lake, which was then part of the Mexican dominions, where the quondam carter assisted to lay the first foundation-stone at Utah, the headquarters of his sect. This territory was afterwards ceded to the States, and the Mormons again became members of the American Republic. The recent events connected with the history of the two powers are well known, and several transactions on both sides are open to grave charges of faith and action. Our hero, still acting in strict accordance with the spirit of his religion, was exalted amongst the chosen, and was regularly in the company of Brigham Young and the superior officials, and was duly served at table by his famous high priest. Recently our native was set apart for a journey to his original home, and being consecrated for the work in due form by the high priest by laying on of hands and anointing with oil, he sold his possessions, taking with him neither purse nor script, and went on his far journey, and arrived safely at his destination. Since his arrival he has called on many of his old acquaintances, and had frequent debates or "threps" with them, and daily he addresses audiences in the open air, occasionally calling forth replies and queries from his audience, which sometimes ends in his denouncing his interrogators with Brigham Young's wrath hereafter. He boldly asserts his possession of inspired qualifications, which

he is able to transmit to those who will accept of his doctrine. All who reject his offers are, he avers, to be consigned to everlasting punishment; but those who accept him are to be allowed to ascend the Rocky Mountains with the "Saints," and after witnessing the destruction of terrestrial things—which he says will occur very soon—they will mount upwards to their heaven of rest, and their wives and children with them. He has publicly expressed his opinion of the people of the district, and several of the Free Church ministers have been allotted future woe. Many other ministers are reported to share a similar fate. The minister of his native parish is, it seems, to be an exception. The apostle claims for his sect and himself the power to prophesy, work miracles, and do many wondrous works; and on being asked to try his gifts in this way, he has declined. Being a veritable follower and legate of the many-wived "saint," as well as being a native, he created a considerable amount of interest in the locality.

Peculiarities in Street Preaching (1878)—Mormon versus Plymouth Brother.—For several years there has been no lack of street preaching of one kind or another by day or night. A person seldom misses hearing some preacher at the favourite corners in the evenings, and all these itinerants, however diversified in tenets and tone, hold that the way they recommend is the only way to be saved. It is to be deplored that the "charity which vaunteth not itself" is not more apparent in the addresses of too many of the would-be leaders of their fellows. The speaker almost invariably assumes that he is saved, and takes it for granted that those who do not care to listen, and many who do, are perishing. One Tuesday evening at dusk a crowd collected at the corner of Commissioner Street to hear the Mormon apostle holding forth. His voice sounded "loud and clear" as he upheld the infallible articles of his creed, and the heavenly joys of Mormonism. A sturdy native faced

up to him, and asked if he wanted a collection ; and if so, that he should send round his hat, and give half-a-crown himself. No heed was paid to the generous offer, and the native went into a neighbouring shop and changed his half-crown for pennies. When he returned, the speaker was still going on glibly. The native forced his way into the centre of the crowd, and, slapping his hand on his thigh, cried, "Whist!" "Whist, man!" "Do ye ken what Bonaparte said?" The apostle still went on, and the native, feeling much annoyed, whistled loudly in his face. This did not produce the desired effect, and he shouted, "Hang him on a dyer's pole!" The address still went on, and the native, as a last resource, rattled the pennies at the feet of the apostle, for which the boys made a most determined scramble, and nearly upset him. The eloquence, however, never abated, and the representative of Utah still continued to extol the sublimity of his creed, and maintained that it was the only one which had the proper complement of prophets, apostles, elders, deacons, etc., who could do all that was good and great as none other could do. This town, he said, had sets of men who pretended to be able to teach and preach the way of salvation, but this was a great delusion. The town had neither apostle, prophet, nor minister who had proper authority to teach or preach, and they were incapable of doing so. With this another pert itinerant placed himself in front of the Mormon, and in the loudest tones of his voice uttered a series of sentences which it was impossible to say whether or not they were prayers, praises, or curses, owing to the still unsubdued voice of the other speaker. The Mormon was getting rather exhausted with speaking, and in the interim of a short halt his opponent took the wind out of his sails, and moved through a maze of religious expressions triumphantly. The Mormon was much annoyed that his audience should be thus rudely taken advantage of, and he pushed the other

gently, and signified that there was plenty of room elsewhere to gather a meeting for himself. The other itinerant, however, having the advantage of being fresh, held on, and the Mormon withdrew eastwards, followed by a crowd, some of whom insisted that he should go back and get fair play. He would not go back, and the next view seen of him was with his head considerably further up in his hat. The newcomer had now the field to himself, and used much the same expressions as the previous speaker regarding his section of religious professors, said to be Plymouth Brethren. He concluded his short address by inviting those present to go across the road to the Weaver' Hall, and they would there find something to comfort them. The audience felt that there was much unfairness in the intrusion of his ideas while the previous speaker was going on, and audible tokens of disapproval were uttered.

Smuggling—The Battle of Corriemuckloch.—Smuggling was carried on to a very great extent in the northern parts of Perthshire till about forty years ago. A little after the beginning of this century almost every hill farmer, small and great, with their dependants, were more or less interested in the fortunes of illicit distillation. The most notable districts were Glenquoich, Breadalbane, Strathtay, and adjoining localities. The rills and burns which run among the hills were led by unseen tracts into some cavern or turf-covered hiding, where the contraband occupation was carried on during the night. The Government tried their utmost to put the traffic down, but were for a long time unsuccessful. The Excise officers or gaugers were very numerous, and wore "sword and pistol by their side." They were looked on with the utmost aversion, and roughly treated when an opportunity occurred. The officers knew well the respect in which they were held, and often paid their visits with their lives in their hands, assisted, as occasion required, by a few soldiers, who as a rule rejoiced to

see the "gauger loons" discomfited and the smugglers getting off scot free. John Mullions, a once well-known Crieff worthy, was in his younger days in the Excise. On being appointed to a northern ride, he was so terrified at the rough and dangerous adventures of his calling, that rather than go he gave up his situation. In his later years he used to say that had he taken a bite of himself as often as he rued not going north, he would have been eaten long ago. Any officer, however, who was civil and obliging, had nothing to fear, and presents in abundance (including an occasional smuggled keg) were given to his wife. A story is told of the late Willie M'Gregor, better known as Willie Lochlane, in connection with a cart of small barrels for a customer. Willie was then a young man and connected with a smuggling still on the Monzie Hills, behind Callander farm. Being sent to Crieff with the goods he met the Supervisor, whom we shall call Graham, opposite Ferntower. The Supervisor smelt a rat, and moved round the cart to inspect. Willie, nothing daunted, mentioned that he need not trouble himself, for ere long he would be more than smelling what was there, for there was a *bit bundle* for Mrs Graham. The Supervisor nodded and passed on. Willie delivered the goods to the proper merchant, but fearing to return the same road, took west the Comrie Road, and round hy Hosh, where who should meet him but the Supervisor! Willie volunteered the statement that all was right—the other did the genteel by treating Willie to his heart's content at the nearest public house. When Willie arrived at home he related his adventure with great glee, but his companiontook the matter seriously, and had a *bit barrelie* carefully conveyed that evening to Mrs Graham. All manner of dodges were adopted to cheat the Excise. Often double journeys with loads of spirits with one permit were taken to Edinburgh and other towns to the south. At that time there was what was called a boundary line, and

the distances from the numerous distilleries on the north of it were measured so as to calculate the time necessary for a loaded cart to get beyond it. When practicable many arts were tried by interested parties to lead the measurers by every circuitous road, so as to lengthen the distances. In this way the Hosh was managed to be about six miles from Crieff, which in ordinary cases is only two miles. Being thus lengthened, the carts had, according to a rule laid down, much longer time to cross the line, and so occasionally performed the double journey. We have heard old people saying that in their younger days the consumption of spirits must have been enormous, for they counted some sixty public-houses as being in Crieff, a place of under 5000 inhabitants, and that from the top of Torleum Hill the smoke of from fifteen to a score of licensed distilleries and breweries could be seen, where a gallon or two of the best—which never paid King's dues—could easily be procured. Tarns of pure mountain dew in flasks and barrels found their way southward from the northern hills and glens, and Crieff being a convenient central depôt, much of it was sold there, or stored in hiding places in and around the town. A few soldiers were generally stationed in the villages to assist the gaugers in their raids on smugglers. The most celebrated encounter was "The Battle of Corriemuckloch," in Glenquoich—an affair which caused much excitement at the time, and is still the principal theme of smuggling reminiscences. The scene of the action was near the old inn, where a good stone dyke runs along the south side of the road, and a morass borders the north side. Some half a century ago an Auchterarder Exciseman got an inkling that some smugglers were expected to pass along the Highland road on a certain night, and he, with much zeal, took six dragoons with him, and marched out of his own district to earn distinction. As they were passing the Sma' Glen the smuggler scouts gave the alarm,

and the convey of three carts, containing a score of full barrels, which was nearing Corriemuckloch, was quickly put out of harm's way, and the barrels hid in the moss, and the men prepared themselves for action. By the time the horsemen reached the inn, a distance of twenty miles from Auchterarder, the shades of evening had fallen. The smugglers, armed with stout cudgels and rackpins, were drawn across the road, with the dyke on their left. When the soldiers came up the smugglers made an instantaneous rush, and before the soldiers got time to fire or draw their swords their horses were capering madly, and some of them rushed into the moss. Soon recovering from their surprise, the soldiers fired their carbines, by the flashes of which they saw the dangerous predicament they were in, and not knowing how to go, more of the horses got into the morass, and sunk deeper at every step. The smugglers wielded their sticks furiously, and the soldiers drew their swords, and cut and thrust manfully, but having no heart in the work, and uncertain of the number of assailants, they confined their operations to defence. By-and-bye the horses were extricated from the moss, and then ensued a furious assault. The smugglers, knowing the ground well, watched every opportunity to hit with effect. One time they would be inside the dyke, and the next time on the firm banks of the moss, where the troopers would not dare to follow. At length one of the soldiers was knocked from his horse, much stunned. The smugglers by this time thought they had gone far enough, and disappeared in the darkness. The wounded man was carried to the inn, and had his wounds dressed. His horse was found next morning some five miles down Strathbraan, on the way to Dunkeld. The smugglers never looked after their barrels, being, it was supposed, afraid that the Excise were continuously on the watch. They were, however, gradually removed by parties who considered that their lying in the moss did not improve their contents.

One of those who had an active hand in securing the barrels is still alive, and pursuing his avocation as a member of the "gentle craft" in Comrie Street, Crieff.

The following song was written shortly afterwards, and obtained considerable local celebrity:—

December, on the twenty-first,
A party of the Scottish Greys
Came up our lofty mountains steep
To try and Highland whisky seize,
With sword and pistol by their side,
They thought to make a bold attack
And a' they wanted was to seize
Poor Donald wi' his smuggled drap.

Chorus—Dirim dye a dow a dee,
Dirim dye a dow a daddie,
Dirim dye a dow a dee,
Poor Donald wi' his smuggled drap.

The gauger loon drew up his men,
And soon poor Donald did surround;
He said, "Your whisky I must seize
By virtue of the British Crown."
"Hip, hip!" said Donald, "not so fast,
The wee bit drappie's a' our ain;
We care not for you, nor your horse,
Nor yet your muckle bearded men."

The Highland chields were soon drawn up,
With Donald chief to give command;
But a' the arms poor Donald had
Was a good oak stick in ilka hand.
Brave Donald smartly ranged his men
Where a stane dyke was at their back;
And when their sticks to *prunock* went,
Wi' stanes they made a bold attack.

But ere the action's brunt was o'er
A horseman lay upon the plain,
And Sandy then to Donald said,
"We've killed ane o' the bearded men."
But up he got and ran awa',
And east to Amulree he flew,
And left the rest to do their best,
As they had done at Waterloo.

When Donald and his lads struck fast,
The beardies had to quit the field;
The gauger's men were thumpit weel
Ere driven back and forced to yield.
"If e'er ye come this gate again,
Ye filthy, ugly gauger loon—
If e'er ye come through Almond's glen,
Ye'll ne'er see Auchterarder toun."

When the battle's din was o'er,
And not a horseman to be seen,
Brave Donald to his men did say,
"Come, sit ye doun upon the green.
And noo, my lads, ye just shall taste
A drappie o' the thing we hae.
My troth," quo' Donald, "they did get
A filthy hurry doun the brae."

Processional Musicians.—Military music has in all times been a source of pleasure. Having an elevating tendency, and giving expression to the mutual feelings of assembled multitudes, the sound of the drum is indispensable to a complete out-door gathering. About half a century ago a strong desire was springing up in rural districts to organise village bands, and amongst the foremost to form and keep up a superior instrumental band was the capital of Upper Strathearn. Bagpipes and fiddles used to be the staple commodities, and many traditionary stories of the famous Neil Gow's peregrinations in the district, as well as those of the Messrs Rogie, of local celebrity, float dimly about. Rather better remembered are the wayward doings of Colin M'Ainsh of Monzie, and "King Crispie" of Fowlis. These two "violiners" for many a day enlivened the friendly societies, parades, and meetings, and headed numerous marriage processions. When both played for any length of time together, there was generally a "cast-out" previous to parting. It is a well-known fact that when one musician has a few glasses of *aqua* more than another it is impossible to step together, let alone playing in tune.

On one occasion, when Colin and Crispie were bringing up the rear of a Masonic procession, they somehow got ravelled in their music and marching. One was driving the heels over the head of some reel, and the other was exerting himself to his utmost to gain a hearing, and in this state they led the Right Worshipful Master to the "Lodge" door. They felt that they were the observed of all observers, and neither would yield the palm. After their elbows ceased jinking and diddling their "birse" remained up, and Crispie in his irritated squeak asked, "What were ye playing, Colin?" "'New Monzie'" says Colin; "but what were you playing, Crispie?" "'New Fowlis,'" answered Crispie, amid shouts of laughter from the bystanders. There was also a drum and fife band, composed of five as dashing, light-hearted, and jovial boys as ever headed a procession. They were educated under military rule, and feared no one. They were—John Stalker, Peter Young, and Peter Arnott, fifers; and John M'Callum, side-drummer, and David Cramb, bass-drummer. When a little influenced, their rehearsal of their military exploits sounded marvellously *crescendo*. A favourite story was a band competition. It seems that on a time when three regiments were brigaded on the North Inch of Perth, each regimental band supplied its own regiment with music when "marching past." The difference in the time or speed that each band played was very apparent, so much so that at the officers' mess that afternoon it became a very animated subject of discussion, each maintaining that his regimental band played the proper time. A heavy wager was taken, and the three bands were ordered to parade the following day, in total ignorance of the reason why. On the given signal the first band marched off, and in due time halted; then the second and third did likewise. At the conclusion the 1st Western Regiment, or Crieff band, was victorious, having marched so correctly that they were only half a step wrong,

whilst the others did not come within ten or twelve steps of the proper number. The John Stalker above referred to beat the bass drum at this competition, and he looked upon it as the crowning point of his life. In 1825 a few of the leading inhabitants, including John Gowans, writer; David Arnott, Bleachfield; Captain Drummond; and Wm. Spottiswood, banker, set a movement afloat to organise a town's band. The late Lady Willoughby d'Eresby and Sir Patrick Murray were also interested in the matter, and did much to complete the arrangements. Thomas Gaunt, an old regimental bandsman, was appointed leader and instructor. The following list of the earlier bandsmen will not be uninteresting to the present inhabitants:—Clarionet players, James Gow, William Tainsh, William M'Innes, Peter Roy, Robert Arnott, and John Seaton; flutes, John Stewart and John Rose; keyed bugle, Peter Arnott; serpent, Alex. Rose; bass trombones, Donald M'Omish and Peter Matthew; bassoons, William Roy and William Campbell; French horns, Duncan Campbell and Thomas Matthew; bass horns, Angus Berry and Thos. Edington; tambourine, Alex. M'Dougall; cymbals, John Ritchie; and bass drum, Anthony Cuthbert. Their first uniform consisted of blue jackets, faced with white, and trousers of Drummond tartan. Their first tune was a march from the opera of "Blue Beard." In a short time they mastered a good selection of Scotch music, and their fame spread far and wide. Amongst the famous processions in which they bore a conspicuous part were the laying of the foundation-stones of Muthill Church, Sir David Baird's Monument, and Stirling Bridge. At the latter they were selected out of nearly a score of bands to play at the dinner which followed. During the Reform agitation of 1832 they were very frequently enlivening the disturbed elements of that eventful time. At all the leading meetings and processions for many miles round their presence was indispensable to give *éclat* to the proceedings, and they

always carried off the honours of a Perth demonstration. In a few years considerable changes took place in the membership, and Alexander Roy was appointed leader and instructor, which he retained with much credit up to the breaking up of the band in 1864, when the Rifle band was formed. Crieff was much indebted to this veteran musician, who for many years was the centre round which the wind instrumentalists gathered to receive instruction. He was the principal means of keeping a taste for this kind of music alive in the district. The Rifle band was formed in 1864, and numbered about a score of members. The instruments were—one E flat clarionet, one flute or picolo, one E flat saxophone, three first B flat cornets, three second B flat cornets, three horns, one solo bass saxhorn, one bass trombone, one A flat saxhorn, one E flat bombardon, one bass and two side drums. A town's brass band was re-organised in 1878, and their instruments were—four first cornets, two second cornets, two tenor horns, three euponions, two baritone horns, one tenor trombone, one bass trombone, one double-circular bombardon, and one bass drum. As we write both these bands are in active practice, with increased numbers, being in all about forty players.

Hogmanay in the Olden Times.—This ancient festive evening used to be observed with great ado on the Saturdays previous to Auld Handsel Monday; but since the modern arts of civilisation shifted the New Year's festivities to the first days of the year, *guizors* have deteriorated from full-grown men and women to children. At one time bevies of young men and maidens decked themselves in the most antic and ridiculous apparel their imaginations could suggest. All the available musical talent was pressed into service, and when at all possible, each squad secured the services of a fiddler, who also donned antic habiliments, of which the following is a sample, worn by a Bridgend fiddler known as "The Doctor:" —Shoes, with spats; blue duffel trousers, with

spatterdashes; long drab vest; drab coat, with short body, high collar, and long tails, with clear brass buttons that would do for lids to ale tumblers, *à la mode* 1800—the whole being surmounted by a red Kilmarnock nightcap with a black top as large as a dahlia. To one of the coat buttons hung a staff or *cormack*, which dangled on his knees. These parties generally made it a point to visit the different houses in the country at separate times, where they sung and danced. If possible, the members of the household were enticed to join in the reels, which had its effect when the largess was given. For a circle of three or four miles out from the town every house, whether "gentle or semple," was visited by more than one squad. The gentlemen's mansions were, as a rule, a decided success; but it was often rather a difficult undertaking to "draw" a farmer more than twice. The songs most in favour were those that had more of the ballad than the sentimental in their composition. Sly, pawkie humour then as now held its own, and the "Laird of Cockpen," "Jenny's Bawbee," and "The Brisk Young Lad" were good money-takers. Little did the singers or listeners at that time know that the accomplished lady who wrote the "Laird of Cockpen" belonged to the locality, and resided within a few miles of Crieff. Other favourites were "Toddlin' Hame," "Jockie's Content," "Kate Dalrymple," "Flora and Charlie," "The Bonnie House of Airlie," "Blythe, Blythe and Merry was She," "O, let me in this ae nicht!" "Kind Robin lo'es me," "Duncan Campbell," "Bold Brannin on the Moor," etc. This latter continued long a favourite, and the late Mr M'Levy, the Edinburgh detective, mentions in his reminiscences that it still is a favourite amongst the thieving fraternity. It has rather a pretty melody, and the words being scarce, three verses are subjoined to show what rudeness our fathers would be pleased to listen to when in humour:—

As Brannin was walking on yon mountains high,
A coach with four horses he chanced to spy;
He robbed them of their riches, which he gave to the poor;
He's over yon mountains, you'll never see him more.

Chorus—Bold Brannin on the moor, Bold Brannin on the moor;
So bold and undaunted stood Bold Brannin on the moor.

But Brannin was taken and condemned for to die,
And many a fair maid for Brannin did cry;
But he said all their cries will not save me,
Nor take me down from your gallows tree.

Chorus—Bold Brannin, etc.

"I'm wae for my wife and my children three;
My poor aged mother I never will see;
My poor aged father, with grey locks, he cried—
I wish my Bold Brannin in his cradle he had died."

Chorus—Bold Brannin, etc.

It was frequently midnight or after ere the different "skeaching" parties returned. Sunday was too often spent in rehearsing the incidents of the previous evening, and all evenings of the kind in recollection, varied with joyous anticipations of the morrow. On Sunday the pulpits rang with exhortations to drink in moderation, and on Monday and following days a large proportion of the hearers interpreted the injunction by getting "fou," and "geyan drunk."

Shooting to Purpose.—Many years ago, when the late Joseph M'Intyre, watchmaker, better known as "Joseph the Quaker," and his mother lived in West High Street, they had a pretty large garden behind their house, in which a number of fine berry bushes thrived luxuriantly. One year the crop was most tempting, and three of Erskine the coppersmith's apprentices, and a neighbour lad named John, had great inclinations in the direction of the bushes. The old lady, however, was too wary for them, and waited constantly in the garden. One day she had been pulling the fruit, and had nearly filled a large bowl with the luscious "honeydrops," when the squad resolved to have them by hook or by crook. But how was the conquest to be made? Aye, that was the rub. One suggested this and another that, and finally it

was determined to try the effect of an old pistol upon her. The pistol was duly loaded with powder, and handed to John; another of the squad held the shot in his hand; a third had a light to fire the match; and the fourth was detailed in ambush to seize the spoil. Having cautiously placed themselves in a shaded garden-seat close by, the gunner, with trembling hand, lighted the match, and almost instantaneously the report followed, when the lad with the shot threw it at the woman, who gave an unearthly scream that she was killed. As she moved towards the house, No. 4 darted out, and secured the bowl heaped with berries, and the squad decamped to the coppersmith's shop, where they divided the spoil. When the woman reached her own door, almost breathless, she hailed a neighbour wife, who, not knowing what was the matter, assisted the wounded woman inside, and laid her on the chairs in front of the bed. She then called in another neighbour wife, who was considered to have much experience in extra-household duties. The wounded woman recovered herself so far as to be able to relate the murderous attack on her life, and the pain she felt from her wounds. The two wives considered her case hopeless, and proceeded to strip off her clothes previous to lifting her into bed. There was much difficulty in getting her shoes loosed, and the one wife said to the other, "Never mind; just put her in with them on." "Na, na," said the other; "it's a most unlucky thing for onybody to dee wi' their shoes on," and the shoe-strings were cut to facilitate the unshoeing. As the undressing proceeded, a sharp eye was kept for wounds, but none were discovered, although the patient moaned and bewailed her state most piteously. Joseph, her son, was sent for, and, on learning the circumstances, at once sent for the constable, or "buff-the-beggar," who soon arrived, and made minute inquiries as to the state of matters, and proceeded to the coppersmith's shop, as suspicions

were strong in that direction. The squad had just finished the "honeydrops," but little calculated the effects of their practical joke. On being interrogated, each denied having any hand in shooting the woman. A doctor was called, and he, like the wives, could discover neither wounds nor bruises; but still she insisted that she was murdered. In a short time she recovered from her fright, and got up, but the squad got such a fright as most effectually prevented them from afterwards attempting another such raid on their neighbour's property.

Social Habits Long Ago.—The time was when nearly every house had a "greybeard," or whisky jar, as one of the household gods, and libations were duly offered on the recurrence of particular events, and on all favourable and unfavourable occasions, when an excuse for drinking could be conjured up. At births all visitors had to drink health to the newly-born infant, and it was not unusual for a "drop" to be mixed with something and given to the child. At marriages, besides the necessary preliminary drinkings, days were spent in quaffing glass after glass, none escaping the exciting effects thereof, and many were *decently* drunk, including the musicians. When put to bed both bride and bridegroom had their eyes bathed with spirits. All visitors on the newly-married "bent a bicker" to their future welfare, which compliment was returned. At death lamentations found vent frequently in Bacchanalian orgies. All who entered the house drank; and, late wakes being the fashion, young people and those of maturer years waited in rotation beside the corpse, and whisky refreshments were in abundance. On the day of funeral, after the mourners gathered at the door, whisky was again handed round. When the grave-yard was a few miles away, another round was dealt out there, and all public-houses on the way home were visited, and a few "mortal" drunk mourners testified their grief to all beholders. The most celebrated occasion of this

kind on record came to pass at a Monzie funeral nearly sixty years ago. A party returning called at the Blind Inn, and having got their load, were unable to proceed past the Hosh, where a cart was procured, and the inebriates were carted to Crieff, and each delivered at his own door. The late James Stewart, shoemaker and poet, being in Crieff at the time, celebrated the event in a drama entitled "The Merry Mourners." On ordinary occasions, when the funeral party returned, the friends and next neighbours were invited into the house of mourning, and had another turn of the bottle, and weeping too often turned to jesting and laughing, and "Here's to ye," and "May nae waur be among us," were welcome toasts. When ministers visited the "pure stuff" was handed to him, when he drank the healths of the household, and the compliment was returned. At Presbytery and ordination dinners, and at the extra meetings of Sacrament times, the "horn" had to be exalted. At public and private sales and bargain-makings things had to be "wet," and accounts were "squared" with a glass. Agents and clients drank success when they met, and a "taste" was the thing for a fright or a swoon. If dumbfoundered by anything there was no cure equal to another dumbfounderation with a "drappy." A "nip" was the eye-brightener when anything required a mend. At building, heating, and demolishing houses a "caulker" did duty. Meetings of societies, committees, and friends parted with a "nightcap," and a "hair of the dog that bit him" was a reviver for the morning. An obligement or a little extra work was paid with a "tasting." The old year was bid farewell with *dochan-duris*, and the new was welcomed with a "first footing." An apprentice had to get his "apron wet," and when he became a journeyman his first pay purchased "free citizenship." At the engaging, coming home, and leaving of servants some one "stood treat." What was called the social strata of the community was formed into numerous small

coteries, each of which had its own room in the public-house or inn it patronised, where nightly reunions took place, and cards, draughts, and drinking continued until the small hours. Whisky, in fact, seemed to be the great elixir of society, and the principal business of life appeared to be the creating of opportunities for using it. Many who were looked up to as good and religious men considered "running over with mountain dew once or twice a-year as beneficial."

Pipers and Pipe Music.

"And music first on earth was heard
In Gaelic accents deep,
When Tubal in his oxter squeezed
The blether o' a sheep."

Numerous complaints have lately been made regarding the distribution of prizes at bagpipe competitions, and in many instances they are too well founded. Unsuccessful candidates for honours, as a natural consequence, will grumble; but to these we do not refer. One of the primary causes of complaint is that neither piper nor judges, as a rule, know what they are about, more especially at minor competitions. The performer presents himself, "all plaided and plumed in his tartan array," with his instrument duly bedecked with tartan, and streamers waving in the breeze. He mounts the platform and commences; or it may be the place of contest is at a retired corner of the field, where his pibroch begins, and with might and main he plies his wind and fingers, and moves about in all the pride and glory of a representative of Clan Albyn. The judges sit in silent dignity listening to the strains, the name of the piece to be performed being handed to them on a slip of paper. They nod, or beat time approvingly, as fancy leads. When done the performer stands erect, gives a salaam, and then makes way for a successor. Marches, reels, and strathspeys follow in order due, and where there are eight or ten competitors the

contest often extends nearly a whole day. When there are one or two pipers present of recognised ability, the judges easily settle the matter—not, however, resting on their own judgment at all. The lesser prizes are distributed in a way which, if handed to the most meritorious, is more the result of chance than knowledge. As an example of how things are sometimes judged—a piper who has taken a number of prizes previously comes forward. His drones get out of tune and order. Knowing what is wrong, but dare not put things right, he plays away, and finishes approvingly. If he is wise, he will keep quiet. Another steps forward. His instrument is nicely in order. He knows what was out of joint with his predecessor, and plays away with a will, and perhaps in a superior manner, but only to come in second rate. In marches, reels, and strathspeys it is necessary that the most exact time be kept; but usually the piper plays by ear, after the manner of his teacher, the first learned set of the tune being generally the favourite, no matter how deficient it may be in what constitutes true cadences. He who makes the sweetest sounds, and is best at fingering, may be a mediocre march and reel player, the most important feature of which is exact time. It is not unusual when marching for a piper to have one foot on the ground at the musical accent or beginning of a bar, and in a short time the other comes to the ground with the same accent, showing clearly something wrong, but of this not one judge out of fifty could take any note. So long as pipers continue to plod away in the unscientific manner they do, they need not expect better treatment. Were they to produce their music sheets when going to compete, the judges that were incompetent would very soon find excuses for retiring. Even as things are, were a screen placed between the judges and performers very different awards of prizes would be the consequence.

The prizes usually offered for pipe music are the

highest on the programme of Highland games, and should be a powerful stimulus to improvement. Were such sums offered for any other musical performance, a noticeable improvement would be observable every year. The Great Highland Bagpipe, as it is called, must assuredly have something worthy about it when it has kept its place so long. A common occurrence is to affect to despise it—"it is so rude and unbearable, not at all suited for ears polite." It is quite true it is not suited for a drawing-room, or for performing Mozart's Twelfth Mass; but then what instrument can fill its place? A pianoforte in a Highland glen would not *deave* a humble bee, and the most accomplished vocalist would have less effect than the mountain ousel. The old story of the cock and the spider exemplifies the case.

The sound of the bagpipe is heard for many miles, and what instrument, or band of instruments, can send music pealing over lakes, dales, mountains, and moorlands to be compared with it? and 'tis a pity it has not long ere now been rescued from the hands of those who seem to know little difference betwixt noise and music.

The only piper in our day deserving the name was the late John M'Kenzie, piper to the last Marquis of Breadalbane. He was a Highland minstrel in form and mien, and a master of his instrument. His music resounding through the towering woods of Taymouth was no ordinary treat. "The gathering," the march, the combat, the confusion, and lament, and his vast repertory of music, as it rose and fell in the valley, and passed away on the mountain breezes, could create an impression never to be forgotten. Our Royal lady was not insensible to his music, and after her visit to Taymouth, in 1842, she showed her appreciation by communicating to the late Marquis her desire to have a piper such as his. His lordship communicated this to John, whose answer was characteristic—"That's impossible, me lord."

Although she did not secure John's services, she has since had a Highland piper on the staff of the Royal Household. John took first prizes as long as he was allowed to compete, and racy and piquant are the many stories related of his sayings and doings. His life, more especially his married life—extending over a space of some forty years—was an ever-varying romance. Being blessed with a virtuous and high-born lady for a wife, and blooming children, he felt himself more highly exalted than his master. He despised menial employment. He was his lordship's piper, and would pipe willingly as long and often as required; that was his duty, and he kept to it. Other pipers piped only when not otherwise employed, but John was always a piper, and gloried in the fact. At last days of trial came, and when his failing strength confined him at home, his kind master was a frequent visitor, ready to anticipate any little want. Like a true Highlander, "he must be laid with the ashes of his fathers;" and, notwithstanding promises and protestations, he was carried to the far north, and died and was buried amongst his kinsmen. We hope in vain to see his like again. May his ashes rest in peace with the dust of heroes.

Notes on Sacrament Sundays. — The quietness and decorum which are now observable show a very marked contrast to what used to be seen on the communion days. The churches hold the congregations comfortably, and the services are conducted in quietness and order. It is not so very long since a different state of matters existed, and the term "Holy Fair" was not an inept name. Great numbers would attend all the sacraments on the round; in fact, an individual's orthodoxy was suspected if he did not do as others did, and attend several of these gatherings. To accommodate the multitude, it was not unusual for services to be conducted in the open air, and the parish tent was a regular institution. It was often placed in a corner

of the kirkyard, from which some stranger minister addressed the people, whilst another minister served the tables in the church. It not unfrequently happened that there would be no service in several of the parishes adjoining that where a sacrament was being celebrated, which gave these parishioners ample opportunity to proceed to the gathering of the people. The services commenced generally before eleven o'clock, and often continued with little intermission till late in the summer evenings. In Crieff, the tent preachings were conducted in James' Square as well as in the kirkyard, and besides the customary services on Fast-days, there were sermons on Saturday afternoons, and not unfrequently sermons by two different ministers were given at one sitting on Mondays; but it was not considered derogatory for any hearer to leave after one sermon. On Monday afternoon, the parish minister gave the ministers who assisted and his session a dinner at the manse, and the people generally took to working in their gardens and "pecks," and the sacramental season so far passed over. The Secession Church—or what was best known as the "Seceders"—kept their sacrament day most rigidly. There being only three ministers in the district—at Crieff, Comrie, and Kinkell—the one assisted the other, and the flocks devoutly followed their leaders. There were great gatherings at Kinkell, as this was a favourite place of attendance. We have frequently seen notes of these ministers' sermons taken by a James Cramb, who was a ruling elder and precentor in the Crieff Secession Church. He not unfrequently sat at the church-door and gathered the collection, and then entered the "littern" or precentor's desk, and carefully adjusted his inkhorn, and took copious notes of the sermon as it proceeded. The writing is carefully done, and contains many shorthand signs. The honoured name of the Rev. Mr Barlas is attached to many of these notes, which he appears to have delivered both in his

church at Crieff and at the Kinkell sacraments. There is another side of this sacramental picture, which we will try to describe.

In the foregoing we noticed some of the features attendant on summer sacramental occasions, and we now relate some details to fill up the picture. As a natural consequence of multitudes of people assembling at a rural kirk, they could neither be accommodated in the kirk nor in the houses of refreshment, viz., "public-houses," and the result was that a tent was erected in the kirkyard, or on some adjoining green, where extra ministers preached, and tents were erected close by for the use of those wishing refreshments. At the time to which we principally refer, "Forbes Mackenzie's Act" was afar off, and any one with a publican's licence could open premises other than his headquarters in any place where trade suggested. Not unfrequently the symptoms of a rural Sacramental Sunday could be observed on the previous Saturday evening by the direction the publicans took with their tent-poles and blanket coverings, so as to be in time to secure a favourite stance. Comrie called out a goodly number of sacramental hearers, who left Crieff early in the morning, and not a few carts were called into requisition by the more feeble travellers. Those who went afoot generally went and returned by different routes. People going the south road returned by the north, on each of which there was a public-house about half-distance from Crieff. On arrival at Comrie, people unaccustomed to much travelling were not in the very best state to hear sermons, and, after entering an appearance in the congregation, an adjournment was soon thereafter made to one of the public-houses, where, after a repast of rolls, ale, and whisky, they would wend their way amongst the crowds of visitors and strangers who went to and fro. Having satisfied their consciences that they had heard the preachers, many early in the afternoon showed unmistakable

signs of the god they worshipped, causing much unseemly annoyance to the fair portion of the community. As the afternoon wore on, the public-houses did literally a "roaring" trade, and by-and-bye small parties would start for home, making it a point of honour to call at the half-way house for further stimulants, and on arrival at Crieff many presented an appearance which would be very discreditable on a Turret market night. Madderty and Fowlis were two places which sent back the lieges in a similar predicament to Comrie. Neither of the places was considered as a bad place to go to. Muthill, however, being much nearer, and having ample refreshing power, marked the votaries more decidedly. A fight or two was always looked for. A regular attender at sacraments, being asked on his return how things were tending, said "that he just saw ae fecht. A man and woman were going at it at the toll bar, and on being separated, and the bar shut between them, they sparred across the top of it." It used to be quite common for the inhabitants of Gallowhill and Bridgend to turn out on a Muthill sacrament evening to see the people returning. Among the last scenes of the kind, the morning, being fine, had enticed a large number to leave for Muthill, but a thunder-shower fell at mid-day, which drenched the summer dresses of the women, and sent the men scampering into the public-houses. In the evening there was an extra turnout to witness the return to town—and such a return! The women were downcast and annoyed about having to appear in such a plight, and more than the usual number of the men swayed from side to side of the street—some *minus* a coat-tail or hat—and threatening with foul language all who came in their way. This was the last great turnout on such an occasion to Muthill. Monzievaird lay quite handy, and early in the forenoon the publican at House o' Burn had his tent duly in order, and it was often a question with wanderers whether the kirk

or ale tent would be visited first. Late in the day, signs showed that the *aqua vita* of "mine host" was preferred by most of the strangers. Monzie sacrament bore the bell, and immense flocks of people from all the surrounding parishes attended. Most of the houses of the hamlet were taken possession of by licensed people in and out of the parish, and green plots spread inviting dainties to view, and parties in pic-nic style sat scattered in profusion. The smithy generally was a kind of headquarters, and the more advanced sinners attended here. There being little chair accommodation, they sat on the earthen floor, and drank to the prosperity of one another. Songs now and again burst on the ear; and on one occasion a Crieffite, on looking in, saw a Feus worthy astride the anvil, giving vent to "Loudin's bonnie woods and braes." The return to Crieff was a scene. The drouths who took the west road called a halt to refresh at the "Blind Inn," and those who chose the east road had Gilmerton to supply their needs. Stragglers returned sometimes on Monday morning. The Monzie publicans found that the annual fair and the sacrament day were their two red letter days; and when interested parties made a movement, some fifty years ago, to remove the Monzie market to Crieff, one of the publicans said that they might also take the sacrament with them. The climax—or, in country parlance, the "hooding-sheaf"—of profanation of which we have heard was reached on one occasion at Rhynd parish, near Perth, where the usual orgies were concluded by dancing in a barn to the music of the minister's man's fiddle. One of those who took part in this sad affair is still in the flesh. It was customary for the women on farms to take plenty of bannocks and cheese along with them, and when treated by friends to ale or whisky, they drew forth "doldies" from their big side-pouches, as their contributions to the refreshments. There were individuals who attended all the sacraments in the round, and a

few who travelled to a great distance to hear a favourite minister. One year Donald Carrick—once a King Street worthy—was asked by a neighbour if his sister had got through with the sacraments. "Na," said Donald, "there is Glenlyon yet;" this place being upwards of thirty miles distant.

The foregoing imperfect sketch will so far give an idea of what not unfrequently occurred. Many of both sexes attended merely for the purpose of seeing and being seen, and others attended because it was the custom. There is not the least doubt that a number of well-disposed people found much good on these occasions, but the apparent tendency savoured much, very much, of evil. Happily, these doings are almost all a matter of history, and people can now worship in peace.

Sunday Doings Long Ago.—It is often said that the Sundays are not so well observed now as they were a generation or two ago, and it may not be much out of place to note a few things which were not uncommon in those days. People were generally earlier at the church than at present, but a great part of them sat on the turf and grave-stones in the kirk-yard discussing—often bitterly—the political ministry as well as the doings of ecclesiastical courts; and the state of the flocks, herds, and crops called out much grave comment. The softer sex tried to unravel the mazy gossip and love affairs within their ken. The church was well attended, and often there were unseemly scrambles for seats. The discourse was listened to with much earnestness, and duly criticised. The precentor read out the line, and occasionally two lines, of the psalm at a time, and then sung them, the congregation joining in heartily. In this department Peter Sinclair for many a day was the terror of the leaders of psalmody in the Crieff parish church. His stentorian voice sounded like a trumpet, and he swayed the singing as he chose, the precentor having to follow. Affairs of this latter description generally took up more attention than the preaching. The

elders went round with ladles to lift the collections. The precentor at stated times read long notices of statutory and other meetings as the people were dismissing. The public crier had himself placed on the steps of the Cross Stone, and as the people crowded out of the kirkyard he commenced to proclaim notices of sales of household furniture, farming utensils, growing crops, payments of rents and feu-duties, etc., etc., and not unfrequently at the same time John Shaw's parrot, at an open window close by, would add to the variety of the entertainment by whistling at the pitch of its powerful pipe, "Happy we've been a' thegither." There were fewer of what are called religious tracts or novels then, and the Bible was the great text-book, as was shown by the apt quotations of men and women of the past generation. There was a resting from labour; and with the exception of public-houses, all places of business were closed. Forbes M'Kenzie not then having made his appearance, any one was free to use his pence and patience at the spirits and ale. In landward parishes, where house accommodation could not be conveniently had, tents, on extra days, were pitched conveniently near the church, where dry and "drouthy neebors met" to discuss the preachings, auld acquaintanceship, and the crops; and many a sacrament day ended more like a rural fair than a Sunday. Sunday funerals were another feature of this period. The greater part of the inhabitants having originally belonged to the surrounding braes and glens, the ideas of sepulture caused their friends to carry their remains back to the graves of their fathers. When it could be so arranged, Sunday was the day selected, and many of the neighbours looked forward to having a day's enjoyment going either to Fowlis, Madderty, Monzievaird, Monzie, Muthill, Comrie, or Dalachattal. Plenty of cakes and liquids being had on either route, the return too often showed much over-indulgence, of which wounds, bruised hats, or coats *minus* a tail

or two amply testified. Another peculiarity of the time was a custom of the men keeping their hats on in church till the minister made his appearance in the pulpit, and a number of the older church-goers moved from seat to seat asking for each other and gossiping so long as the pulpit was unoccupied. The people were nearly all seated before the conclusion of the prayers, and during the benediction there was always an unseemly scramble for hats and umbrellas, and "Amen" was not pronounced when hats were on, and a rush made for the door. The minister often in the intervals between the services would take a turn through the pews and make inquiries after the welfare of his hearers. In those days the parish minister was respected as a great man. When he walked through the streets his people generally took to their dwellings, and when he made his periodical visitations he was received with awe and reverence.

The Crieff Fire Brigade at their First Fire.—(Time—Saturday, at Mid-day, 29th July 1876)—"Fire, fire! The smiddy at the Seceder Kirk is on fire! Ring the Bell. Gang ane o' ye and fa' in wi' the bellman!" By this time the residents round the Goosedubs were beginning to smell smoke, and heads began to pop out of doors. "Is the bell no ringin' yet? Get the fire-engine." A spanking carpenter was soon at the inspector's. "Where's the engine? The town is on fire!" A Councillor's form appears on the horizon. "Come awa', man. Whar's yer fire apparatuses?" "Run ane o' ye wast the town and find Tracy; and if he canna get himsel', get the key i' the engine-house." Great uproar and excitement at the fire. "Ah, sic a big lowe!" "Its no a big fire that; its only a wooden strae shed and a pig-stye." "Pull down the boards and smother the flame." "I wonder what can hae come ower the Fire Brigade." "Hurrah! here it's comin' in Tracy's barrow." "Whar's the fire plug?" "Does anybody ken whar the fire plug is?" "Howk a hole there and ye'll find

it." "Be quick, for if the wind rise the kirk will be burnt." "I'm vexed for the poor pig—how it squeals!" "Don't steal the strawberries, you folk that are putting out the fire." "Save the sow." "Tak' care; haud out of the way, the hose is fixed to the fire-plug." "Let on the water. Hurrah! What a skite!" "The hose is too short; tak' another length out of the barrow." "Put off the water. Will ye screw back the spigot?" Citizen to Councillor—"Will ye let *me* put on the other bit i' hose." "Certainly; be quick." [Citizen tries to attach additional hose, and nearly succeeds.] "Let on the water." The water rushes on, and sent the hose spinning out of the citizen's hand, and soused him tremendously. Congregated inhabitants shout "Hurrah!" Hose, by accident or intention, turns round, and the multitude are instantly drenched. Several of the willing hands at the fire take to saving the strawberries in the garden, and place them in their stomachs. "Haud out i' licht; there, the engine's skitting richt noo;" and just in good time to put out the ashes and souse the fruit gatherers. The town's fire implements are again rolled together and lifted on the barrow. Mr Tracy when wheeling it along met a Councillor, who accosted him. "Weel, Tracy, what's up?" "Up! an't plaise yer honour, we've put out the fire." "What fire?" "The fire that nearly brunt the Seceder Kirk."

The Crieff Fire Brigade at their Second Fire.—The following sketch will give an idea of how a fire, which happened in Hill's Wynd on April 1877, was got under:—

"What's up? What are a' the folk runnin' up Hill's Wynd for?" "There's a fire in the twa-storey hoose opposite the armoury!" "What a reek's comin' out i' lum!" "Get the fire-hose!" "Whare's Tracy and the Fire Brigade?" "Some o' ye run wast and get Tracy!" "Tell him to tak' a' his fire pipes wi' him!"

The cry of fire makes many of the citizens gather from the surrounding streets, and crush each other on the opposite side of the wynd to get a good view. The chimney sends up a stifled smoke, and some whiffs of smoke are seen issuing from beneath the slates in front of the chimney. "If the brigade dinna come ere lang, the toun 'ill be brunt!" "Here the big policeman comin'; he'd soon put it out." "Whare's the rest i' policemen?" "Is there a ladder ony gate about the toun that could be got?" "Yes, there's a ladder doun in the entry doun by." Away scamper two or three citizens who, denying themselves the pleasure of seeing the smoke, search for the ladder, and seizing hold thereof, bear it off in triumph up the wynd. "Hurrah! here's a ladder." "Open up there, and let them in wi' the ladder!" "Run; run wi' the ladder!" "Tak' care; yer ladder's losing its spars!" The ladder comes asunder owing to rotten spars. "Hurrah! hurrah!" "Run quick, and get another ladder, or else the hoose 'ill be in a blaze." "Here comes Tracy's man." "It's no a pig-house this time, man." "In troth, it's not." "Nor a clothes chest either." "Haud out i' way!" "Here's the fire-plug." "Fix yer pipes, man." A tradesman catches hold of the nozzle. "Here ye go!" "How it skites the water!" "Yer hose is owre short!" "Run for another pipe or twa!" Tradesman with hose tumbles, and nozzle points back over his shoulder. "The fire's no on that side o' the street!" "Help him up!" "Here's another ladder!" "It's owre short; it's just t' easing." "Ah! how the smoke's comin' below the slates!" A young man mounts the roof, and takes off a few slates below the chimney. "There it goes now!" "Point the hose lower!" "It's no the can that's burning!" "Skite the water lower down!" "He's fa'n wi' the pipe again!" "Man, can ye no skite the water on the right house?" Great consternation ensues—the nozzle slips round and souses all and sundry, clearing the street like a

discharge of artillery. As a detachment of the brigade appears rounding the turn from the High Street with additional pieces of fire-hose, they observe the nozzle pointing up to the stars. "What are ye putting out up there?" "Are ye no sure on what side i' street the fire is?" "Come, let us get this pipe joined to that ane!" As the junction of pipes is being effected the citizens who took refuge from the water storm in the neighbouring houses came forth. "Be quick! see how the reek is comin' frae below the slates!" "The town will be brunt ere yer pipes are ready!" "There noo; let on the water again!" "Keep atour frae the hose!" "That's it. Keep the nose firm!" "There ye go!" "Point tae slates below the lum!" "Haud the nose steady!" "Dinna skite the water ti' wrang side i' street that way!" "What a stream o' water's runnin' doun the slates!" "A' the road's runnin' doun like a mill-lade!" A great concourse of the inhabitants are now gathered, and move about with their hands in their pockets, giving all kinds of directions, and doing nothing but standing in the way. "There's Drysdale on the roof now!" Mr Drysdale, on nearing the chimney, sees part of the broken can lying across the vent, and on lifting it a tremendous volume of smoke escapes. "The house will soon go for it now!" "What a lowe!" Smoke now ceases to issue through the slates, and in a short time all danger—if there was any—is over. The crowd thereafter come and go till a late hour, and look up to the roof to see where the two or three slates had been removed to let out the smoke. After the hose was rolled up, it was carried west to the store-room in a kind of triumph, followed by a crowd of boys.

Notes and Traditions of Balloch.—The beautiful valley of Balloch lies about three miles westward from Crieff. The loch is half a mile in circumference, and seems as if set in a basin. From its west margin rises the deer forest of Torleum to a height of 1400

feet, finely wooded, and well stocked with deer. On the north are the steeps of Knockmawhinner and the Whitedrums. On the south are the famed forest terraces of Drummond, with the castle crowning the height, and on the east is an opening down into Strathearn. A century ago some hundred families lived in the quiet retirement of this sequestered spot, snugly sheltered from the rude blasts which shook the surrounding districts. At that time the loch was much larger than at present, and a great undertaking by the Earl of Perth was the cutting of the den to drain off the loch. This improvement brought numerous workmen from great distances, a few of whom settled in the locality, and became the progenitors of many denizens still living in the Strath. Artificers expert in their occupations were scarce, and in 1762 the commissioners of the forfeited estates, of which Drummond or the Perth estate was one, advertised for weavers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, masons, etc., to settle at Crieff, when "feus and other suitable encouragements are to be given to such artificers if found duly qualified." A number did settle down on the estate, and a detachment of old soldiers was located in the adjoining field of Bennybeg, which so far accounts for the multiplicity of surnames in the district. In the days of James IV. the clan M'Robbie inhabited Balloch, and rendered the Drummonds signal service on an adjoining height at the battle of Knock Mary, where both defeated the Murrays. The Drummonds granted the M'Robbies an aisle in Muthill Church for the burial of their slain, which right is still held by the chief of the clan, and a document in connection therewith was produced in 1826, when the dispute was brought up regarding the right to erect an Episcopal Chapel on the old site of the Muthill Parish Church. In the beginning of the century the ruins of an old castle were distinctly visible in the field adjoining the east side of the loch, but to whom it originally belonged, or who owned it,

is unknown. Latterly, tradition says that it was occupied by the lairds of Balloch, the last of whom died in lodgings many years ago. It is reported of him that, trying to vie with the neighbouring family of Perth, he got into debt, and his creditor took possession of the estate, and so the laird had to shift his quarters. A story is told of him in his latter days. When getting his porridge one morning, his landlady remarked that they were "gey an' thin." "They have a worse fault than that," said the laird; "there are few of them." At that period there were numerous small lairdships owned by Drummonds surrounding Drummond Castle, such as the Drummonds of Concraig, Pitkellony, Strageath, etc., but all merged into one. A number of years ago, when cutting oak copse, the workpeope found flint arrowheads in the neighbourhood of the old castle. As noticed, some 100 families lived and moved in the vicinity of the loch. About the commencement of this century they were reduced to 70. Father M'Donald, the priest, who died forty years ago at Bridgend, lived on the west of the loch, and had his primitive thatched small cell or chapel behind the house. His room is still intact. The system of cottaring, or a large farm being sub-divided to cottars, was greatly in fashion, and often the occupier of the farm more than paid his rent by his drawings from his cottars. A number of these cottars lived in the vicinity of the loch, and it was customary when the harvest was over, and the stacks secured under "thatch and rope," for a cottar to employ a bagpiper to play his wildest music for an evening round the stacks so as to frighten the rats to the opposite side of the loch. The valley had its quota of tailors, hacklers, lint-millers, dyers, wrights, thatchers, and broguers. The last representative of the latter was George Tainsh, who in his early days was a broguer in Balloch, and made and mended for the late Lady Willoughby. He removed to Crieff, where he pursued

his calling of shoemaker to an old age. His firmly knit body, although of stature small, was well known in all the market stances of the surrounding market towns and villages. He never wore a neckcloth or a buttoned shirt-collar, disdaining the enervating habits of his neighbours. He scarcely had an ailment, and when he had a cold he washed it off by copious draughts of spring water. The Howe of Balloch was famed for witches, who had an abominable fashion of turning themselves into black cats. The last reported cantrip by one of the fraternity happened about forty years ago at a displenishing sale at Newbigging, when the reputed witch was caught milking one of the cows, causing the milk to pass through a charmed ring, with a view to take the milkness from all the other cows to the one she purposed buying. She was unceremoniously turned out. Rowan tree branches were fastened at the byre doors to prevent witches from having any influence on the cows, and a horse shoe which had been lost from a horse's foot was by the fortunate finder nailed inside the door for luck. Fairies and brownies roamed at their own sweet will, and death raps and other signals, along with "dead candles," foretold the decease of neighbours. Large numbers of wild cats, foxes, polecats, and other wild animals prowled in the neighbourhood, and all kinds of hawks were so numerous that a person had to remain beside chickens when being fed out of doors to prevent their winged enemies from carrying them off.

Shortly after Lord Willoughby came to Drummond Castle—about seventy years ago—he caused frequent raids to be made on the wild cats, and by ingenious traps placed on the dykes, he soon made these pests scarce. His lordship also introduced the rearing of pheasants from eggs brought from England. The young ones were fed for some time on ants brought from Torleum, and thereafter allowed to haunt the woods. The rearing of rabbits was for a time carried

to a great extent, and a view of the myriads that thronged the fields was one of the "sights" of the locality, more especially when dogs were sent round to chase them up the slopes. At that time boars were introduced into the forest, and hunting them was sometimes indulged in; but one day one of the hunters having got isolated from the rest, a boar attacked him, and he narrowly escaped with his life. This put an end to the sport, and the dangerous animals were disposed of. The Hill of Torleum was previous to this mostly bare of firs and larches, and the junipers and blaeberries grew and throve to an astonishing extent, so much so that the inhabitants of the surrounding districts annually made excursions for the purpose of bringing home the large and luscious berries of the famous hill. After the wood was planted the berries degenerated, and few if any are now to be found there. The top of Torleum is the weather-glass of the surrounding parishes. According to the appearance and movement of the mist or cap which often rests on the top of the hill are the prognostications of the weather. The following rhyme regarding it has long been familiar:—

"On Torleum tap there is a mist,
And in the mist there is a kist,
And in the kist there is a cap,
And in the cap there is a drap,
Coup up the cap, and leave the drap on Torleum tap."

The Strath has produced a sprinkling of great men, but we believe that the following will be new to most readers. The truth of the story was duly vouched for by the late intelligent tenant of Broadlea, Mr James Miller. About the middle of the last century a hedger named Bayne, and his family, lived in Balloch. Having had a strong leaning to the Duke of Perth and Prince Charlie, and having seen the last of the '45, resolved to seek a home in another land, and with this intent he and his family and others set sail for France. A storm came on, and they were driven on

Corsica, where they were hospitably received, and were known as Bayne, or Buon and his party. In course of time his sons were called Buon-de-party, and his grandson was named Buon-de-parte, or Buonaparte, and who now figures in the history of the world as the great Napoleon. Hurrah for Balloch!

A Reminiscence of the Royal Review.—Twenty-two years are past and gone since the present Volunteer movement was called into existence, and he who regulated the affairs across the Channel, and was a principal cause of the movement, became a prisoner, and afterwards sought refuge in Britain's hospitable isle.

The "gallant" 8th (Crieff Company) was formed in November 1859, and sworn in by Sheriff Barclay in May following, and the Sheriff elected an honorary member. With Sir Wm. K. Murray at their head, things moved progressively and well. To raise a Company at that time was no easy task. Government was chary of supplying rifles, and no capitation grant was allowed; so that the onerous burden of providing uniform, and all the necessary accessories, had to be raised by subscription. Money came in wonderfully, and by the month of July 1860 the Company managed to appear with their new rifle caps at the never-to-be-forgotten *fête* at Ochtertyre. Then followed the preparations for the Edinburgh Review: drill every evening, and occasionally in the morning. With constant exercise the arms gradually felt lighter, and the wheeling was superb. At last came the morning of the 7th of August. Each man was afraid he would sleep too long, and was up and doing long before the hour for parade. The muster was full, and the hamper arrangements were very complete. A short time after eight o'clock the train was bearing its precious load onwards. A short halt was made at Crieff Junction till the Perth Companies would come up. During this halt the Colour-Sergeant was anxious to have a few company movements to steady the

ranks. The men "fell in," and "Number" was ordered. "One," "two," "three," and so on, to "twenty-seven."

"That is fifty-four men in the ranks," says the Sergeant, and with four supernumeraries in rear, make fifty-eight. We want a man. We had fifty-nine when we left Crieff. Number again."

"One," "two," etc., to "twenty-seven."

"That still only makes fifty-eight. Who is absent? See if he is in the station. It is most extraordinary that some people will not pay attention, keeping the whole Company waiting for them. They must just be left behind; and what will the Queen say?"

A voice—"There's nobody in the station."

"Most annoying. Number again. We are losing a good half-hour, which might have been employed in proving the company."

"One," "two," "three," etc., to "twenty-seven."

"Isn't that confounded, Lieutenant, there is a man amissing. We left Crieff with fifty-nine, not including officers, and now we have only fifty-eight."

"A man amissing already," says the Lieutenant; "what will it be at this rate ere we reach Edinburgh?"

"Number again."

"One," "two," "three,"—"twenty-seven."

"That is fifty-four, and four supernumeraries make only fifty-eight."

A voice—"Count yoursel', Neil!"

Tremendous laughter wound up the perplexity, and the good-humoured face of the Colour-Sergeant relaxed into a smile as he found so pleasant a termination of the difficulty.

By the time each man was served with his rations —and what rare rations—the train from Perth arrived, and we were not long in being placed in position. The train being special, we had a quick run. When we reached the Haymarket Station our gallant Captain was out of all patience awaiting our arrival. When "falling-in," we were perfectly aston-

ished at the number of companies, in their varied uniforms, formed and forming amongst the clouds of coal-dust (of which we got a share); and the shouting of those in command was deafening. In a little we were more at ease and ready to undertake anything. After a battalion or two had "formed fours," and marched off, we did so likewise, and followed suite along Princes Street, where flags, bunting of all kinds and colours, etc. etc., decorated the line of march. When about half-way a rather heavy shower fell, which washed the coal-dust into our fine new uniforms. We entered the Queen's Park at the Old London Road entrance, in rear of what we understood to be the Glasgow Engineers. As we were moving to the left up the incline, who should be confronting us but the Fife Mounted Rifles in all their gorgeous trappings. Their appearance was truly dazzling, and for a time we could not keep our eyes off them. We were marched round by the loch, and halted—we knew not where—amidst what seemed the utmost confusion of men and horses. Companies and mounted officers were doubling and dancing hither and thither in great excitement, noise, and bustle. In a short time there was order and quietness. Our battalion was the third of the third brigade, first division, commanded by Major Sir A. G. Cumming. We had now time and opportunity to look about, and truly the sight was magnificent and bewildering. Front, flank, and rear were bodies of men in the utmost haste to take up their positions—staff and field officers galloping in all directions, shouting and gesticulating most determinedly, and clouds of dust occasionally almost choked utterance. The grand stand behind the saluting flagstaff was literally crammed; somewhere about 3000 of the rank and beauty of Scotland were packed into it. In rear of the battalions Arthur's Seat and neighbouring heights were indescribable; in fact, the slopes seemed as if by enchantment the fairies had come again and taken possession. Some 200,000

people were gazing on the plain below, where 20,000 of the patriotic chivalry of Scotland were assembled and preparing to salute Queen Victoria. Truly, such scenes make a man, who sees them for the first time, feel as a drop in the ocean.

By half-past three o'clock all were ready, and the booming of artillery and distant cheering announced the approach of the Royal party. Two notes on the bugle gave the signal, and 20,000 rifles gave the Royal salute. All the officers in the battalions rushed to the front to salute also, and the bands played the National Anthem. When the bands ceased, the royal *cortége* proceeded to the right, and passed along the front of the whole line to the left, and then took up a station at the saluting flag. On the signal being given, the whole army was put in motion, and the marching past commenced. It took some time ere we marched round so as to march past, and during the intervals between the short marches in fours in column we had ample opportunities to view the shifting scene, and many a harmless joke passed. The best remembered was that which passed between the Captain and Corporal M'Rorie. As previously hinted, our visages were not the very cleanest, owing to the coal-dust—Captain and Company appearing much alike. The Corporal had eyed the Captain's physiognomy repeatedly, and was more than once on the eve of giving valuable information regarding its general appearance—but didn't. However, as we were approaching the critical moment to march past, the Corporal, fully alive to the Queen's anxiety for cleanliness, summoned courage, and addressed his superior —"I hope you will excuse me, Sir William; but I think there's bleck (black) on your nose." "I daresay that, Corporal," answered the Captain, "and I think that there is some on your own." Both cleaned noses and marched on. When passing in front of the grand stand, and approaching the Royal carriage, we were not a little excited. Each would have preferred

to "keek" at Her Majesty, but previous orders were imperative, and "eyes front" was attended to. The music which struck up was not what was best adapted to Volunteer marching, consisting of long notes, and the bass drum beating two beats in a bar made it impossible to say what foot should be *foremost.* When judging what was what, "Well done, Crieff," followed by a short hurrah, sounded from the grand stand. When passing the Queen every man felt that the honour and stability of the Volunteer movement depended on his present deportment, and past we went in gallant trim. When Holyrood was reached the companies closed up, and the battalion wheeled round at the double, and halted for a time. By-and-bye we took up our original position, and felt more at ease. In all, 348 companies, consisting of nearly 22,000 men, marched past, which occupied one hour and twenty minutes. The Queen again passed along the front of the line on leaving, and each battalion as she passed presented arms and cheered. But such cheering. It sounded more as a mighty cataract than anything else. In due time it came to our turn, and it seemed as if Spout Hoick in its wildest rage was rushing over us. You might hurrah to your utmost, but you could not hear yourself. The only satisfactory evidence you could obtain that you were trying it, was by putting your hand to your mouth, and feeling that it was actually open. When the Royal party reached Holyrood, General Sir George Wetherall conveyed Her Majesty's approval of the proceeding to officers commanding battalions, and by them to their respective corps. The order was to leave the park by battalions, but we got "fours right," "quick march," "right wheel," and so we were wheeled in rear of the battalions, and were out of the park in rear of the first battalion. When marching up the street the crowding was excessive, and the leading companies were progressing slowly. As we were passing a narrow part, a narrow stair was observed on

our right, leading to a road on a higher level, and crowded with people. The order was, "Form two deep," "right wheel," "double." The wondering citizens skedaddled in an instant, and we immediately gained the high road, where we marched at will. When marching down to Circus Place School, which was our place of rendezvous, we were wheeled in line across the street, and marched in line. The wheel was done to perfection, and all who took part in it will remember the effect produced on the onlookers. We piled arms in the schoolroom, and refreshed. It was now fully six o'clock, and we had two hours to look about. Many wandered over to the High Street, which was the rallying place of many of the regiments. The hubbub and confusion was great, and the few street wells were duly patronised by those whose throats and faces were full of dust. A general washing of both was extensively carried on. The excitement grew apace, and soon the bugles sounded "The assembly" and company calls, till every close and street in the vicinity re-echoed the military notes. The screaming of those in command and the telling off of companies, mingled with the deafening noise and jostling of a suffocating crowd, filled up the scene. We "fell in" at Circus Place after dark, and discovered a corporal amissing. There was no time to wait, and we were marched westward along a number of ill-lighted streets. When turning a corner, "Can any of you tell if the gallant 8th passed this way?" sounded like a trumpet far in rear. By degrees the voice came nearer, and soon the stray corporal joined his company. After a good march we were halted, no one seemed to know where. There were no lights, and no one could see his neighbour. The screaming of railway engines sounded away on our right, and we occasionally noticed a passing light. After standing for an hour or two there was apparently some search made for something whereon to sit, but in vain. After standing under

arms from nine o'clock till about two o'clock in the morning, we were ordered to "double," and so reached what turned out to be the platform of the Haymarket Depot, just in time to catch the train destined for our use. All of us felt the luxury of a seat—though hard—after a five hours' stand. The comforts of the situation raised our spirits to the highest pitch, and singing, joking, and laughing, intermixed with recounting the various incidents of the previous day, made the time pass unfelt. We alighted at Crieff after five o'clock, and when the company formed on the platform they seemed as if they had been doing duty in a coal-pit during their absence. A number of friends were anxiously awaiting, and the thunder of the drums announced to the half-awake inhabitants that their warlike sons had returned in safety to their Highland home.

Seeing that this great review was a red letter day for the Volunteers, it may not be out of place to annex the muster-roll of the Crieff Company on the occasion:—*Captain*—Sir William Keith Murray, Bart. *Lieutenant*—John Gibson. *Ensign*—Alex. Graham. *Surgeon*—Dr Matthew B. Gairdner. *Secretary*—John Ironside. *Chaplain* — Rev. John Cunningham. *Colour-Sergeant* — Neil Sime. *Sergeants* — John M'Nab, Duncan M'Laren, John Knox, and Archibald Gibson. *Corporals*—George M'Culloch, James Roy, Donald M'Rorie, Swanston Drysdale. *Privates*—Alex. Anderson, James Arnott, Alexander Baxter, James Campbell, John Campbell (1st), John Campbell (2nd), John Caw, Alex. Christie, John Christie, Jas. Clement, Robt. Clement, Wm. Crerar, Wm. Copland, John Dinnie, James Douglas, Wm. Drummond, Chas. Drysdale, James Edgar, Peter Edgar, David Keay, Chas. Kennedy, Duncan Kippen, John M'Ara, Peter M'Ewen, James M'Farlane, Gregor M'Gregor, John M'Gregor, James M'Guire, Alex. M'Innes, William M'Kenzie, John M'Owan, Thomas M'Rostie, Donald Miller, Henry Miller, Wm. Miller, Andrew Morrison,

James Philips, Thomas Philips, John Robertson, Thos. Roy (1st), Thomas Roy (2nd), John Sharp, John Sinclair, Adam Stewart, Peter Stewart, Colin Taylor, Hugh Taylor, William Taylor, and Alexander Thomson.

At present (1881) the Company numbers 77 rank and file, and of those who were at the review in 1860 only three besides the surgeon and chaplain remain in the company, viz., Captain Archibald Gibson, Lieut. D. Kippen, and Sergeant Peter Stewart. Sir Wm. K. Murray was promoted to be Lieut.-Colonel of the battalion, and Sergeant John M'Nab is now Major.

Crieff Vocal Music Society.—This institution took its rise from a friendly meeting of a few of the inhabitants of Crieff and its vicinity in August 1806, "who, having considered that music appears to be one of the most ancient arts, and has been acknowledged and admired as an ingenious and delightful study, but when it is engaged in with due reverence as an act of devotion, it is so becoming and excellent that it is certainly one of the grandest employments in which good men on earth can be engaged. Nothing is more sublime and elevating than singing the praises of God, and an exercise so pleasing and attractive seems only to want regulation and method, that the pleasing hope might be rationally indulged in that it would be cultivated with success, and accompanied with many advantages; that it would make the praise of God to be glorious, and promote the interest of vital piety and religion. And having likewise considered the great ignorance of music which prevails in this place, owing to neglecting the practice of it, and the great proficiency which has been made in this art in other places in consequence of the inhabitants forming themselves into societies for practising it, they agreed to offer an opportunity to such of their friends and neighbours as would willingly engage with them in the formation and support of such an institution."

Such is the preface to the rules of this time-honoured institution, penned at a time when he or she who could sing loudest and longest was considered the best singer, and the more the intricacies of graces were introduced, so much the better. Keys were known by name, but difficult to determine. As for relationship, the relations were undiscovered. When attempts were made by the most learned to sing at sight, thirds, fourths, fifths, etc., were guessed at from the last note sounded, and the key-note might be third, etc., from any other note, or this note a third, etc., from the key, so far as the mental effect of the key was taken into account. Another annoyance was the length of the various notes, and the effect the tail of a note had when turned up from one turned down. A common occurrence was each performer when acting in concert to beat his own time, and blame his neighbour if his beating was different. The harmonic effect of these was bewildering. It was an understood thing that all keys with sharps at the signatures were major or nearly so, and those with flats were minor. The tenor voices sung the treble parts, and the trebles screamed away at the tenor the octave above its proper pitch. Between the two the basses had sore work, and a common church tune generally fell a tone in pitch each time it was gone over, and the utmost discord prevailed, the basses being unable to sound in tune the sinking notes, as they gradually went beyond their depth. A bass fiddle was occasionally introduced to keep the peace, but too often without success; for the instrument kept steady and the voices sunk, thus showing the failing without correcting it.

By slow degrees things improved, and a few members shot ahead, and did their utmost to improve the others; so in time the various parts moved together with something like order, each voice feeling and being felt. In a few years the Society was held in great estimation, and was the centre of vocal

attraction for many miles around, and to be a member gave an individual status which was coveted. Precentors in all the neighbouring parishes were either members, or the pupils of members, who in the long evenings of winter taught the art in all available corners of the surrounding country. It also supplied the necessary talent for all local concerts and merry-makings. Each member had to take his turn of officership, take charge of the books and other property of the Society for the ensuing week, and have the door opened in due time the following Saturday for the meeting at seven o'clock. For many years he had to carry the properties with him, and take them back, and have them arranged in proper order next meeting night; but the erection of a box in the hall window obviated this porterage.

The following few extracts from the minutes will give an idea of how affairs were conducted :—

"CRIEFF, 3d Jan. 1807.—The following members were appointed office-bearers, who, together with Robert Smitton, were to form the Committee until August 21, 1807, viz., Thomas Arnott, president; William Roy, vice-president; James Arnott, treasurer; and James Ferguson, clerk."

"CRIEFF, 6th June 1807.—A breach was made in this Society on Sunday, 1st May, by the sudden and much-lamented death of William Roy, in improvement of which the Society's meeting on 6th June was occupied in singing plaintive tunes, and an anthem (words) composed by a member for the occasion."

This William Roy was rather an exemplary young man. The Weavers' Society also paid a high compliment to his memory.

"CRIEFF, 4th Sept. 1807.—This Society held a concert in the Weavers' Hall for the benefit of the poor, the profits of which—being £2—was paid to the Session-Clerk."

"CRIEFF, 6th August 1808.—On 31st July Thomas Arnott, President of this Society, departed this life, in

the 22d year of his age; therefore, the Society's meeting this night was occupied in singing plaintive tunes, and the following verses composed by a member to his memory:—

"'Lo, slippery are the paths of life,
And dreary is the way
That leadeth from this vale of strife
Unto eternity.
The blooming youth who long did lead
And preside o'er this core (corps),
Now lies low, numbered with the dead,
We hear his voice no more.

"'The charming voice that cheered the heart,
The tongue that taught the lay,
The hand and foot that beat the time—
All moulder in the clay.
The fairest flowers the soonest fade,
And we must soon decay—
The wise, the fool, the meek, the proud,
Must pass Death's dreary way.'"

"CRIEFF, 10th March 1815.—The Society held a concert for the benefit of the Bible Society, and, after paying the necessary expenses, £1 was sent to the Treasurer of the Perthshire Bible Society."

"CRIEFF, 11th August 1821.—This evening the Society engaged with Mr Thomson, schoolmaster, to precent three months for him in the Parish Church. Salary, 15s. per quarter."

So much for precenting in those days.

"CRIEFF, February 25, 1819.—This Society held a concert of sacred music in the Masons' Hall upon the 24th day of February, for the benefit of the Crieff Female Society, the profits of said concert—being £2, 2s. 6d.—was this day delivered to the said Female Society."

"CRIEFF, 18th December 1821.—This evening this Society held a concert in the Masons' Hall; collected £7, 14s. £4 was given to the Crieff Auxiliary Bible Society, and £1 to the Sabbath Evening Schools. The

remaining profits of the concert were put into the funds of the Society."

The Society had a concert on the evening of 17th November 1847, when the proceeds—£5, 19s. 2d.—were handed to the Treasurer of the Perth Infirmary.

"CRIEFF, 21st August 1856.—The Society met this evening to commemorate the jubilee of the Club, it having survived the wreck of fifty years. In that time more than one Musical Society had existed and died, but here were met this evening the representatives of the Crieff Vocal Music Society as healthy and strong as ever, proving that their spirit is unity in feeling as well as unity in harmony."

There was no member present who had seen the commencement of the Society. The oldest member was James Rutherford, he having joined in May 1813, being a member of forty-three years standing, and is at present precentor of Monzie. The meeting closed with "Auld Langsyne."

We have given the first, and perhaps it will not be out of place to give a note of the office-bearers last elected:—

"WEAVERS' HALL, 23d November 1867. — The Society held their annual meeting this evening for the purpose of electing office-bearers for the ensuing year, when the following were appointed, viz., D. Kippen, president; Alex. Christie, vice-president; John Christie, treasurer; and James Clement, secretary."

These extracts will give a good idea of the inner life of the Society as recorded.

The unrecorded notes of the sayings and doings of the members on meeting nights were often amusing. The following are a few of them:—

On one occasion the difference in the fees for pupils attending the evening classes for singing and dancing was the subject of talk, the one being only 2s. while the other was 5s. A member expressed his astonishment at so great a difference. The answer was—"It

was quite easily seen, for it is much easier to wag the tongue than the feet." A newly-fledged member being at a ball at which Campbell, the chief minstrel, played the fiddle by a kind of instinct—the member, being anxious to have a musical talk, commenced with the signatures of various keys, and the necessary amount of sharps and flats, at last ventured to ask what the fiddler played the last tune on. Campbell gave a patronising look, and said—"The first three strings." "That is not what I mean," said the other; "I want to know how many sharps or flats you used." "Me use? I never need flats or sharps either on the fiddle."

A local teacher had an evening class in a barn. His knowledge was small, and his experience less. After addressing his pupils one night about the third and fourth and sev enth and eighth notes of the scale, where half-tones ought to make their appearance, he cautioned them to pay particular attention, and "swirl in the semitones."

At a tent-preaching the precentor, when reading out the line and singing alternately, happened to change the tune from "Bedford" to "St David's." He afterwards mentioned this to an acquaintance, who had not noticed the mistake. The next day another of his acquaintances came up to him and upbraided him with his sticking the psalms yesterday. "Who told you that?" said the precentor. "It was so-and-so, and he noticed you the moment you went wrong," said the other. "I see it all. I told that man myself, but the lesson shall not be lost on me in future."

The following good ruse might be followed with advantage. At a concert given by the late James Rutherford, precentor of the Free Church, at the conclusion of his class in the schoolroom, South Bridgend, the duet, "When the morn stands on tiptoe," was taken up by him and James Rutherford, precentor, parish church, both able musicians. After they had

gone on a bit something went wrong, and a pause ensued. What was to be done? Here were two men who were never known to stick, "keeking like rams through drift." A happy thought struck one of them. The candles looked rather dim, so the music-book was laid down, and the candles placed higher, and topped properly. The duet was recommenced under apparently more favourable circumstances, and finished amidst applause, the audience being quite in the dark as to the motive of the renewed light.

The last survivor of the original members was Alex. M'Qwan, plasterer, who died nearly twenty years ago. He was a musical enthusiast, and cultivated the art assiduously. His voice was rich and full, and of great compass. He was for many years leader, but his unassuming modesty prevented him from taking the rank to which his musical abilities entitled him. James Rutherford, for many years leader of the East Church choir, and latterly precentor of Monzie, was another of the most celebrated members. He used to listen when a child at the door of the hall, and drink in the swelling harmonies on the Saturday evenings. He joined the Society when a boy, and attended regularly up to the day of his death some years ago, when he was upwards of seventy years of age. He was honoured as the most experienced vocalist of the district, and his knowledge of the sublime art was far before that of his contemporaries.

The business of the Society was conducted in a quiet and orderly manner, free from the jealous and unpleasant passages which interrupt too many musical associations. It did its work orderly and well, without intruding itself before the public or begging support. About 300 members were enrolled, and had taken the pinch of peaceful brotherhood from the snuff-mull of their *alma mater*.

Comrie Earthquakes—Comrie has long been noted as the apparent centre of British earthquakes. It is a village snugly situated by the banks of the

River Earn, at the junction of the rivers Ruchill and Lednick. It is about twenty-three miles west from Perth, and six from Crieff. On the north, south, and west are high hills, mostly of volcanic origin, and the valley widens eastwards by Crieff to the Ochill Hills. The hill immediately behind the village is called Dunmore, and is considered to be the centre from which the earthquakes vibrate.

It seems a little strange that though now so much associated with earthquakes, Comrie, before the end of the last century, does not seem to have been more frightened than the rest of the country. The dreadful earthquakes which sunk Lisbon on the 1st of November 1755 are not reported to have been felt at Comrie, though Lochlomond, a few miles further west, suddenly rose so high as to throw a boat forty yards into the land, and then recede in five minutes as low as ever it was seen; in other five minutes it rose as rapidly, and as quickly receded; and Loch Tay and Loch Katrine were similarly affected.

In 1789 earthquakes were felt at Comrie and neighbourhood, and the ice on a pond at Lawers, about a mile eastward, was shattered to atoms. In 1792, several minor tremors are recorded. On the 17th January and 24th February 1799, a number of earthquakes were felt at Comrie. On the 12th September 1784, Loch Tay, a few miles northwards, was in great commotion. It receded from both ends, and rose to a great wave, after which it flowed towards the shores much above the usual level. This strange phenomenon continued every day for a week with decreasing force. Many earthquakes were felt that year in different parts of the world, but nothing unusual is recorded of Comrie.

About six o'clock on the morning of 7th September 1801, a heavy shock was felt all over Scotland, and was pretty severe at Comrie and Crieff. In Edinburgh the sensation within doors was as if a house had been lifted upwards, and then shaken from north to south.

A house in the old town sank so much that it had to be taken down, and a gable near the city fell upon some reapers, and crushed two to death. Another severe shock was felt at Comrie on 6th September 1821. It was preceded by a morning of uncommon beauty; in a few minutes after the shock, the air thickened into a gloom, and the barometer was little affected. A severe tremor was felt about two o'clock on the morning of 17th April 1822. It was, as usual, most violent at Comrie. It extended beyond Crieff, and west beyond St Fillans. The hollow thundering noise continued much longer than usual.

The most violent shocks of earthquakes recorded occurred on the night of the 23d September 1839. For a fortnight, about the middle of the month, many slight tremors were felt. At a quarter past ten o'clock at night, a powerful low rumbling noise was heard, and suddenly a terrible upheaving took place, which caused the sensation of being placed, in view of some direful calamity, in a state of dreadful suspense and helplessness. Bells were set a-ringing, all moveables in the houses were tumbling and rattling, and slates, lime, and stones were falling from the house-tops. The earth felt as if it were to open up and swallow all on its surface. About an hour later there was another rather severe shock, and during the night some twenty-seven lesser tremors were felt. The inhabitants fled from their houses, and many assembled in one of the churches, where religious exercises were engaged in till well on in the morning. Numbers were impressed with the belief that the end of the world was come, and many seemed possessed with the idea that the village would be a heap of ruins before sunrise; but the houses being of one and two storeys, comparatively little damage was done. The gable of a three-storey house was rent, and corn stacks were thrown down, bells rung, and pieces of crockery were smashed against one another and dashed on the floor. The two principal shocks were severely felt at

Crieff. The two were also felt at Inverness and Montrose, and pretty severely at Dunkeld, where the preceding sounds seemed like a heavy carriage being driven along the road. At Cupar the earth trembled for fully a minute. The convulsions seemed to pass eastwards with considerable violence, accompanied with a disagreeable complex motion, which subsided into a slight horizontal rocking, and gradually died away. Houses and shutters rocked and rattled, plaster fell, and light articles of furniture moved in their places. At Dollar there was a sudden shock, accompanied with a loud, uncommon sound, and the ground suddenly undulated from the west to east. The noise seemed as if heavy furniture was being moved in a room, but much louder. About half an hour afterwards there was a second shock, but not so severe, which lasted about four seconds. The reservoir of Cringate Muir in Stirlingshire, for supplying the manufactories on the Carron, burst, and did great damage. A small tract of boggy land in Morayshire, which for ages was half filled with water during the winter months, dried up; and several wells near Inverness, which derive their springs from the fissures of the old red sandstone, also dried up. At Perth the shock was violent, and continued nearly a minute. At Ballater the movement was from west to east, and continued five seconds, rattling crockery, chairs, etc., furiously. At Aberdeen it produced a horizontal movement not unlike the rolling of a vessel at sea. The weather was wet, and the atmosphere southward from Comrie appeared in great commotion. For some days afterwards at Edinburgh the barometer stood at *set fair*, although there was heavy rain every day. On the night of the 12th November, ten tremors were felt at Comrie, but passed unnoticed beyond the district. On 19th January 1840 another pretty severe shock was felt in Strathearn, the noise of which was heard in passing through the Carse of Gowrie, but the tremor was not perceptible. On 30th June 1842, a

little after mid-day, a number were felt at Comrie, and one pretty severely at Crieff, causing the people to run out of their houses to see what was wrong. The sound was not unlike that of a heavy coach crossing the bridge, and the feeling was something akin to that felt when sitting on a chair and it suddenly bent backwards, causing a person to throw out his hands. On the 24th November 1846 above thirty tremors were felt at Comrie, some of them severe. Though there are usually a number of sounds and tremblings felt annually at Comrie and neighbourhood, there has been no shock of consequence for many years. The last tremor felt was a little after ten o'clock at night on the 29th April 1870, at Crieff. The sound was heard by many people, but the tremor, if at all felt, was scarcely perceptible.

The earthquakes are often preceded by a track of either wet or dry stormy weather, which sinks to unnatural stillness on the eve of the shock, thereby causing the noise and shaking to be more readily heard and felt. After the concussion, the wind often veers northward. It has been remarked that the earthquakes generally move in the direction from which the storm blows, and, curiously enough, reports of shocks are always received from the east, and often from the north and south, but rarely from the west. Heavy shocks have been felt at Comrie, and no reports of their having passed a mile or two westwards are recorded.

The severe shocks very often take place within two hours *before* midnight, or two hours *after* mid-day. In damp, foggy weather the tremors are protracted and heavy, and are preceded by sounds of a peculiar, heavy, dull, rumbling nature. In dry weather the sounds are usually quick and sharp, and the tremor passes with the clap of a hand, and often nothing but the sound is perceptible.

The local philosophers are much divided as to the cause of so many local earthquakes. Some say that

previous to the opening of a quarry near Comrie, in 1778, none were noted; but since, and especially after a continuance of wet, they often occur. They think that the water which gathers in the quarry penetrates the earth till it comes into contact with subterranean fire, and hence the cause of the noise and shock, being nothing more or less than subterranean thunder. Others think electricity is the moving power. There are great difficulties in the way of getting at a properly authentic solution to the mystery.

There is a general belief that the volcanic agency which formed the surrounding hills still slumbers in the bowels of the earth, and may at any time show itself either by upheavings or a bursting out at the old craters on the hill tops.

Psalmody in the Eight Parish Churches of the District, 1875-6.—For several years there has been an extra desire on the part of Church Sessions and managers to induce their congregations to improve themselves in psalmody. New hymns in great variety of metres have been recommended and introduced; new music books, containing fashionable tunes, new and old, in all styles, have been brought into use, the old melodies being stript of what are considered meretricious graces, and the old harmonies altered and arranged to make them new. Music is more systematically studied, and precentors are getting increasing salaries, and certificates of merit are granted which carry a reward. In many places vocal and instrumental music blend together, and chants and anthems swell in the chorus of the church services. The following report on eight parish churches in the district is taken from notes of visits made within the past twelve months. It is quite possible that the singing on the days reported upon was either better or worse than the average performances, and in a measure unsatisfactory. Being ignorant of this point, the following speaks for itself in the order in which the visits were made:—*Muthill.*—There is a pretty

well-balanced choir of ten women, four boys, and eleven men. Psalm 122d was sung to "St Paul's," 124th Psalm to "Old CXXIV.," 39th Hymn to "Borlan," and 182d Hymn to "Dessan." The first and second tunes were somewhat out of tune; the others were much better. The time was good, but there was a want of tone in the harmony. The style was good, and would be much improved by a little more feeling. The choir sits in front of the pulpit, and has one good leading treble. The precentor sits, while the choir stands. The congregation do not join in the singing, and make great preparations for leaving the church during the singing of the last hymn and the benediction. *Crieff.*—There is an organ, and a choir of some six women and four men. The 58th Paraphrase was sung to "Soldau," 102d Psalm, second version, and 13th verse, to "Melcombe;" 122d Psalm to "Spohr;" and the 173d Hymn to "Italian Chorale." The first three were not well sung. There was a weakness and want of decision apparent. The organ was steadily played, but there was a want of union of the voices with the instrument. A fine bass voice and one or two good treble voices were very distinctly heard. The congregation joined in the singing, more especially in the first tune, with a will, amounting almost to vigour. The people stand while singing the closing tune. *Monzievaird.*—89th Psalm, 1-4 verses, sung to "St Andrew's;" 97th Psalm, 9-12 verses, to "Bedford;" 24th Paraphrase, 4 verses, to "Effingham;" and the 34th Paraphrase, to "Tallis." The services are led by a precentor. The singing was not commendable, and a great want of energy was apparent. The congregation contains a few good treble voices. *Comrie.*—The 122d Psalm was sung to "Kilmarnock;" 30th Psalm to "Bedford;" 8th Paraphrase, 10th verse, to "Evan;" and the 11th Paraphrase to "Tallis." The services are led by a choir, which is led by a precentor. The pitch was taken high, and fell in proportion. The trebles

were flat, and the harmony was meagre and unpleasant. The time was moderately quick. The people do not join heartily in the singing. *Madderty.*—The 26th Psalm, 1-8 verses, was sung to "Evan;" second Paraphrase to "St Paul's;" 53d Paraphrase to "French;" and the 50th Paraphrase, 5th verse, to "Stroudwater." A precentor leads with a steady, strong voice, and sings correctly. The pitch was well sustained, and the people chimed in faintly. *Crieff.*—West Church—Psalm 58th, 1-6 verses, was sung to "Bedford;" 73d Psalm to "St Ann's;" 147th Psalm to "Evan;" and 59th Paraphrase to "Effingham"—all of which were well led by a precentor, and the congregation joined heartily. *Monzie.*—Psalm 5th, 1st verse, was sung to "St Paul's;" 80th Psalm to "Evan;" 44th Paraphrase to "St Gregory;" and 51st Paraphrase to "Bedford." A precentor with a fine voice led with precision, and such of the congregation as were present did not exert themselves audibly in the services. *Fowlis Wester.*—Hymn 180 was sung to "St Ann's;" 39th Paraphrase, 3d verse, to "Barrow;" 78th Hymn to "Spohr;" 89th Psalm, 15th verse, to "Bedford;" and 198th Hymn to "Harts." The precentor gave a good steady lead, singing and sustaining the pitch very correctly. The congregation appeared inclined to join in the services, but their voices seem stiff and unwieldy, and dragged much.

From the foregoing it will be seen that "Bedford" was sung in five of the churches on the days visited. In three of them 3-4 time was pretty correctly sung. In the other two the time was neither common nor triple, and the congregations jumped from note to note as led. The minims in all the places were nearly of the same speed, being in common time about sixty in a minute, and in triple time about sixty-six a minute. "Barrow" was only once sung. There is a prejudice against this tune in high musical quarters; but of all the new tunes recently introduced, it is the one which the congregations of the district

learn easiest and sing most heartily. It is unfortunate that some of those in authority should do so much to prevent the tune being used, even although it ranks a secondary place in their estimation. With the exception of one, all the congregations have a quantity of good singing material amongst them, which could, with a little trouble, make more desirable psalmody than was obtained when these notes were taken.

In the foregoing the psalmody of the eight parish Churches in and around Crieff was reported upon. The following is a kindred report of the Dissenting Churches in the same bounds:—*Muthill Free Church.*—There is a choir of six male and six female voices, led by a precentor. Psalm 145, verse 1, was sung to "St Lawrence;" ditto, verse 17, to "St Mirren's;" Paraphrase 15, verse 1, to "Soldau;" and Paraphrase 26, verse 7, to "Warwick." The choir sits, and the singing on the whole was very inferior, much out of time and tune; it flattened in pitch, and could not be called harmony. The tenors were very flat, and what was audible of the bass was of bad quality. There were two or three good treble voices, which, if properly trained, would be valuable in any choir. *Comrie Free Church.*—The leading depends principally on the precentor, who has a good voice. A choir sits in pews near the pulpit, but do not tell well together. Psalm 107, verse 1, was sung to "St Paul's;" Paraphrase 51, to "Effingham;" Psalm 48, to "Melrose;" Hymn 4, to "St Andrew's." The first tune was passably sung, and the congregation, though dragging, sung heartily, but not vigorously. The second tune was neither in triple nor common time, and lost fully a tone in pitch. "Melrose" was fairly sung. The time of "St Andrew's" was something similar to "Effingham." *Gilmerton Free Church.*—A precentor led creditably, and the congregation chimed in moderately and without dragging. Psalm 73, verse 23, was sung to "Tallis;" Psalm 31, verse 1, to "St Stephen's;" and Psalm 39, verse 2, to "Salzburg."

The time of the latter was occasionally uncertain, and the whole were sung at a speed of sixty minims a minute. *Madderty Free Church.*—A precentor led fairly, but the congregation did not exert themselves much to follow. All the tunes fell about a tone. Psalm 99, verse 1, was sung to "Irish," and Psalm 62, verse 10, to "St Lawrence;" Psalm 139, verse 20, to "Farrant," and Psalm 138, verse 7, to "Eastgate." *Crieff Free Church.*—A precentor leads very steadily. Psalm 1, verse 5, was sung to "Tallis;" Psalm 139, verse 2, to "Balerma;" Paraphrase 64, to "Jackson's;" and Psalm 36, verse 5, to "New London." All were sung at a good speed, the first being seventy minims a minute, and the pitch was well sustained. The time of "Balerma" was as in almost all cases of triple time tunes, irregularly kept. The congregation joined fairly, but kept up a continuous dragging with the first three tunes, more especially with "Jackson's." "New London" was well sung, and without any tendency to retard the speed. *Crieff U.P. Church.*—A choir of six male and female voices sit on a platform in front of the pulpit. Psalm 45, 2d version, verses 1-5, was sung to "Franconia;" Psalm 45, verse 6, to "Hampton;" Paraphrase 63, verse 3, to "Ravensburg;" and Hymn 4, verse 5, to "Langdon's Chant." The leading trebles sung steadily, and gave a good lead. The basses at times were inaudible, and consequently produced a meagre harmony. The pitch and time were well kept. The minims were sung at the speed of sixty-six a minute. "Ravensburg" was the most unsatisfactorily sung; the others went fairly. The congregation did not join heartily. *Comrie U.P. Church.*—A precentor leads very distinctly. Psalm 65, verse 1, was sung to "Moravia;" Psalm 45, verse 1, to "Bedford;" Paraphrase 39, verse 3, to "New London;" and Psalm 72, verse 18, to "Melrose;" "New London" was well led and followed. "Bedford," as regards time, was a complete medley, but the people seemed

acquainted with the peculiarities, and followed all the intricacies wonderfully. The congregation did not show any heartiness in their singing. *Crieff Independent Church.*—A precentor raises the tune, which appears to be all that is required. Psalm 122 was sung to "Durham;" Paraphrase 63 to "Newington;" Paraphrase 66, verse 4, to "Tallis;" and Paraphrase 67, verse 12, to "Martyrdom." The congregation contains a number of fine treble voices, and, although acting independently, keep finely together, and carry the others along with them. All were sung with a heartiness and vigour unknown in any of the other churches on the days they were visited. With the exception of the triple time of "Martyrdom"—which was slightly unsteady—all the tunes went correctly and with a will, which was refreshing. With the exception of three, all the churches had boards indicating the tunes to be sung.

It will be seen that out of the sixteen Protestant churches in the eight neighbouring parishes one congregation did not join in the singing, nine did not join heartily, two sung fairly, three sung with some heart and attention, and only one joined with heartiness and vigour. Of the six churches that have choirs only two could be said to sing with any degree of heartiness; the other four lacked an apparent desire to sing. In the ten churches led by precentors four sung fairly and willingly, and six did not show any desire to do so. It will thus appear that a choir has no more power to incline the people to sing than a precentor, but when willing, a congregation can follow either well enough. On the whole, the evidence shows psalmody to be in a very unsatisfactory state. It is much inferior to what it was in several of the churches many years ago. If triple-time tunes were sung faster they would be improved. Of late there has been a craze for introducing many new tunes, and altering old ones to suit new tastes. The rate of speed is much quickened, and little breathing time is

given between the phrases of the melody. Any or all of these innovations on ancient usages may account for the state of transition in most of the congregations, and may in time work improvement. In bygone days a congregational *repertoire* was limited, and most of the members were well accustomed to sing all the music in stock, and when well led did it willingly. When too many new tunes are introduced, the people get into a bad habit of only listening, which in a short time extends to music they know. The art of breathing while singing seems to be unknown amongst our leaders of psalmody. Most of them never look before them, but just breathe at the beginning, end, or middle of any word as inclination suggests. In the Dissenting churches the posture in prayer and praise is in a transitional state; many of the people sit, or rather lean forward, during prayers, and sit when singing. Only two congregations stand while singing. In the Comrie Free Church the minister, in the course of lecturing on one of the Psalms, remarked that he believed that David, while using an instrument in praise, did so conscientiously, and he believed Christians could do so still. He further remarked that there was far too much narrow bigotry in matters of this kind. The great desideratum was to have the heart right; and whether an instrument were used or not did not matter. It is not a little curious how opinions change. In December 1854, Dr Cunningham, in the course of a lecture in the parish church, said that it was expediency only which prevented the introduction of instrumental music into the church. Some ten years later the congregation considered it expedient, and an organ was soon thereafter placed in the gallery. Its notes were heard far and wide, and vehemently denounced by other congregations as anti-Christian and unscriptural, for no instrumental music should be heard on Sunday. In 1875 the American revivalists moved about the country, and one of the leading features of their services was

singing with an instrument accompanying. A change came over the dreamings of the people, and an instrument was looked upon as not such a wicked thing after all; and now it is nothing uncommon in the land to hear on the first day of the week voices and instruments blending in sweetest harmony in the houses of those who formerly denounced their use, and consigned the user to condign punishment. It is quite evident that a strong tide of opinion is setting in in favour of the introduction of instruments in the churches, and it will be nothing surprising to see in a few years the General Assemblies of all the Churches sanctioning their use for congregational purposes. There is a general idea that an organ improves bad singing, but it is quite fallacious. Bad singing will always be bad, and an instrument well played will only make the badness more apparent. An instrument to be of use will require much better musical training than was evident in almost all the sixteen churches previously referred to. In all rural choirs there is much difficulty experienced in getting the voices balanced. The rule is, all singers are welcome to come, and generally there is a preponderance of one or more of the parts. A good choir may have an equal number of voices at each part; but as things go in this district, this arrangement will not suit well. Taking the average voices, a choir of fifteen would be about balanced when arranged thus:—Four trebles, three altos, three tenors, and five basses. When practising together, the less time allowed for talking the better, and no choir should rest satisfied till their continued practice enabled them to sing four double verses of a common metre psalm or hymn at a speed of sixty-six or seventy minims a minute, without losing pitch. When this point is reached, the introduction of an instrument might be beneficial. Many people have formed strong opinions regarding the introduction of hymns and organs. They argue that the psalms, as we have them in metre, are inspired, and hymns are

not, being, as is said, of human invention. It might be advisable for such people to instruct themselves regarding the adoption of the metrical psalms. They do not seem to know that they were written by one Mr Rous or Rouse, an English gentleman, and that politics, along with some other questionable movements, completed their adoption by the Scottish Kirk. With regard to instruments, the following wind-up of a fierce debate in a private circle may illustrate both sides of the question. Gentleman No. 1—"Can you tell me—yea or nay—that singing with an instrument will be more acceptable than without?" Gentleman No. 2—"That is what I cannot tell any more than whether 'French' or 'St Paul's' will be most acceptable to sing to the 122d Psalm." Gentleman No. 3—"I am of opinion that we are left in a great measure to choose for ourselves. It requires a player's heart to be with his playing as much as that of a singer with his singing, to carry an audience with him; and I would answer No. 1 by asking him to say—yea or nay—whether singing the 100th Psalm long metre is more acceptable than either singing it in common metre or chanting it in prose?" This settled the dispute, for all found that they were beyond their depth.

The South Bridgend Town Council.—It appears to have been always an innate desire of the human family to rule and be ruled. A towering intellect will command respect, and people feel it their interest, however reluctantly, to yield to the sway of genius. In all communities there are men who naturally lead the minds of others, and the respect in which they are held adds much to the weight of their words and power of ruling. It is a natural desire to have leaders or rulers in communities, and this desire blossoms into Members of Committees, Chairmen, Town Councillors, M.P.'s, Prime Ministers, Presidents, Kings, and Emperors. Previous to the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, the feeling of the country was much exercised on the subject of political liberty, and one

of the steps of the ladder which it was generally believed reached to this, was a wider area of municipal government; and the inhabitants of the little village of South Bridgend, having the feeling in common, resolved themselves into a Royal Burgh in 1808, and appointed their most influential men as their Council, with ample powers. It is to be feared, however, that their powers were seldom or never exercised, except at their Handsel-Monday elections, where their oratorical and convivial gifts shone in native purity. The *modus operandi* of becoming a member of the burgh was by paying sixpence, and having the head properly washed with whisky. The following are a few extracts from the minute-books:—

"The Provost and a number of the Magistrates of South Bridgend having met previous to the yearly meeting, and appointed a number of citizens to draw out some articles for the benefit and order to be attended to when the Handsel-Monday meeting takes place.

"*January 18, 1808*

"Article I. There is to be an annual meeting of the inhabitants of South Bridgend, to be held always on Old Handsel-Monday, and after the citizens having met on that day, do think it necessary to elect magistrates to keep due order and regularity until they shall be replaced by the citizens at their next election.

"Art. II. The magistrates to be elected from among the citizens, and to consist of a Provost, a Dean of Guild, a Convener, with four Bailies, a Ruling Elder, a Secretary, and an Officer; and after the citizens having nominated any person to stand candidate for any of the offices afore-mentioned, if he does not accept of it, the Provost (so nominated) to pay one shilling, and the rest to pay sixpence.

"Art. III. And after the magistrates are duly elected, they are to be invested with full power to act and decide on all cases that may happen with

regard to any citizen's rights in having their weights and measures duly attended to.

"Art. IV. After the magistrates are duly elected, the citizens are to conform themselves to their decision; but if they think that they have acted partially, they have only to appeal to a trial by jury, and the aggrieved have to attend and represent their case in presence of the jury, which is to consist of seven members chosen from among the citizens. The jury to be chosen by the magistrates and citizens, after a general meeting being called—the panel having it in his power to throw two out of the seven of the jury.

"Art. V. After the citizens are assembled at Handsel-Monday, it is annexed that they shall behave themselves during the election and in giving their votes, and that none but one citizen shall speak at once, and that they shall address all speeches to the Provost."

There are other five articles, from which it appears that any citizen, when elected, had to pay his share of the (public-house) expenses of the company so long as he remained in the company; complaints had to be lodged with the Provost; swearing or unruliness was punished with a fine of one penny for the first offence, twopence for the second, and threepence for the third; thereafter the offender was to be left to the mercy of the Court. If the Provost was behind time, he was fined threepence, a magistrate twopence, and a citizen one penny, if a reasonable excuse was not given.

On 3d March 1832 a special meeting of the inhabitants was called "to return a vote of thanks to the Provost (Thomas Drummond), and a number of citizens, who had risked their lives on the 1st inst. in an open attack made upon the inhabitants of South Bridgend by a band of tinkers to the number of four, and how they quelled them and got the royal borrough into peace again."

"January 14, 1834.—They saw that they could not go on under the old rotten borrough system, so that

they have agreed for time to come to meet on the first Tuesday night after Old Handsel-Monday, at seven o'clock, under the new Reform Act, to elect their magistrates as usual. The next night a fiscal was elected 'to assist the magistrates in the discharge of their duties.'"

At the first election in 1808 the office-bearers appointed were—*Provost*, Robert Ferguson; *Bailies*, John Buchanan, William Bruce, John Thomson, and William Ferguson; *Dean of Guild*, James Sharp; *Convener*, James Glass; *Governor*, John Mailer; *Ruling Elder*, Thomas Drummond; *Secretary*, John Soutar; *Officer*, Duncan Cameron.

On 13th January 1852, the annual meeting, *inter alia*, "unanimously agreed to vote a vote of thanks to John Soutar, sen., clerk of the Royal Borrough of South Bridgend, for the good manner he has conducted our business for the last forty-four years, viz., since 1808."

The list of Provosts includes Thomas M'Ewen, sen., William Bruce, James Graham, James Ferguson, James Seton, Robert Mailer, James Drummond, Thomas Drummond, Henry Drummond, Thomas M'Ewen, jun., James Drummond, jun., and John Soutar, jun.

For want of honour, interest, or something or other, the "Royal Borrough's" annual elections came to an end in 1854, when the following were left in charge of the lives and goods of the inhabitants:—*Lord Provost*, John Soutar, jun.; *Bailies*, David Bayne, Robert Mailer, John Duff, Henry Drummond; *Dean of Guild*, James Drummond; *Convener*, James Stalker; *Ruling Elder*, Thomas M'Ewen, jun.; *Warden*, Peter Soutar; *Secretary*, John Soutar; and *Officer*, Thomas Drummond.

The meetings generally took place in the South Bridgend public-house, and in the majority of instances most of the "citizens" managed, or made arrangements, to be home that night. It was considered the proper thing to have as much of the

house's goods as graduated the state of parties from "elevated" to "very bad" and "obstructionists."

The number of citizens' names registered in the citizen roll from 1808 to 1854 is 123. From a jotting on the top of the scroll minute of the last meeting, it appears that there was an accounting for two half-mutchkins and two gills of whisky, one mutchkin and six half-mutchkins of toddy, and two bottles of table beer.

The Crieff Square Well.

Have ye stood by the lime-tree that grows in the square?
The old square of Crieff, that spot ever fair—
Where the glories of day show the strath so sublime,
And the night dew falls there on the beautiful lime.
The beautiful lime-tree, so gnarled and old,
That for ages have stood in the sunshine and cold!
How blessed is the spot where its broad shadow fell,
That fountain of fountains, the Crieff Square Well.

The Crieff Square Well, where the maidens so fair
May be seen with their pails by the trees in the square,
With eyes like the diamond, so brightly they shine,
And their light step so graceful, so seeming divine.
Who could forget them though far from the square,
On some foreign shore, never more to be there?
But their thoughts they must wander, wherever they dwell,
To the scenes of their youth by the Crieff Square Well.

Thou dear Square Well, in the village of Crieff,
What rapture when near thee—to leave thee what grief!
What a flood of old memories come surging when there,
By the old grey well, and the trees in the square!

As we stand by the well, in the evening alone,
And muse on the natives departed and gone,
We feel in that spot to be held by some spell,
Under the limes, by the Crieff Square Well.

When the armies of Britain, in Egypt and Spain,
Drove the baffled invaders full oft o'er the plain—
When Napoleon the Grand scowl'd black on our isle,
As we grappled his power on the Tagus and Nile;
And long was the struggle when gallant Moore bled,
And Graham at Barossa his brave heroes led,
Where some of that band who fought and who fell,
Babbled in death of the Crieff Square Well.

Another day closed, and the battle was done,
And Wellington slept on the field he had won;
And the watch-fires burn'd low where the sentinel trod,
By the dying and dead on the blood-crimsoned sod;
And a sad murmuring voice he listened to hear,
As a poor dying comrade he chanced to come near,
Mangled and gory with splinters of shell—
"Oh, water," he said, "from the Crieff Square Well!"

With his life ebbing fast, far away into Spain,
His thoughts wandered back to the village again;
Though the world for ever was leaving his view,
The last throb of his heart to Crieff it beat true.
Cold, then, he lay on the foe's bloody track,
Where the columns of Gaul were there hurled back;
Where charging, that Crieff youth, in glory he fell,
Thirsting in death for the Crieff Square Well.

Where is the villager—breathe not his name!
It would crimson the cheek with feelings of shame—
Who the dear old village could ever forget,
Where his days they be spent, or his lot it be set?
What Crieff man forgets the old village square,
Where in days of his youth he attended the fair,
When the showmen around of their wonders did tell,
By the old linden trees and the Crieff Square Well?

Some towns may have fountains more graceful to see,
But the Square Well of Crieff is the fountain for me.
How pure is its water, in summer how cold—
Delightful to taste, with virtues untold!
Then guard well the fountain that stands in the square,
For where is the fountain so rich or so rare?
Oh, where is the fountain will ever excel
That purest of fountains, the Crieff Square Well?

Crieff Weavers' Society.—This once celebrated Society appears to have been formed in 1768, when eight members were entered, and each succeeding year showed increasing numbers till most of the weavers in the surrounding districts were attached to it. A code of rules and regulations was drawn up in 1770, and approved of in due form. On 18th August 1775 the first complement of office-bearers were elected as follows:—*Deacon*, Donald M'Cara; *Depute-Deacon*, David Cram; *Masters*, James Mullion, David M'Ewan, Alex. Roy, John Taylor; *Clerk and Treasurer*, James Cram; *Officer*, Alex. Sharp.

At a meeting held on 9th November 1775, it was resolved to have an annual procession, and to purchase the necessary flags, etc., for such occasions. The following is the minute of the important event:—"Immediately after this meeting they set about getting the colours with all possible speed, and employed a painter in Paisley to paint them after the pattern of their colours at Paisley, and they were soon got home, and their price was for six yards of crimson silk, £2, 2s.; for painting, £2, 2s.; for the pole to carry them, 1s. 6d.; for the iron and brass for the top of the pole, 2s.; for two tassels, 5s. There was also got 12½ yards of crimson Persian silk for sashes, at 2s. 4d. per yard. There was also provided 80 rods to carry in their hands, at 1½d. each. Having got everything provided necessary for the procession, they agreed to have their parade upon the 4th day of June 1776 years, being His Majesty's birthday, George

III., and a good number of the brethren being present, they having by this time increased to about 80, and so after choosing persons to bear office for the ensuing year and going through some other business, they for the first time made a very regular and orderly procession through the town between five and six o'clock afternoon, having a very good band of music attending them, and after the parade spent the night in taking a glass with one another in a most cheerful and harmonious manner." What would the present natives not give to have a photograph and detailed account of this procession? the appearance of the actors, their dresses, demeanour, size, style of marching, and the music and musical instruments to which they marched? also, the appearance of the streets, made of rows of thatched biggings, and the crowds of onlookers, would make a most interesting and instructive study.

The annual processions thereafter were sights worth seeing, and the rural inhabitants crowded the village on such occasions. On 4th June 1795, "a petition from the brethren in Comrie was presented, craving that the Society would grant them the favour of the colours and sashes belonging the corporation upon the 13th day of July next, in order that they may have a parade on that day, which they think may be for the honour and advantage of the Society, and that a number of the members from Crieff might attend," which petition was unanimously agreed unto.

At a meeting held on 19th June 1781, the members of the Society belonging to Auchterarder craved authority to be allowed "erect themselves into a society at Auchterarder," and "they would pay instantly five shillings as an acknowledgment of having sprung" from the Crieff Society; which was agreed to. A similar petition came from Fowlis Wester in 1819, and Muthill followed suit in 1822, and "they solicit us (not only as being their maternal society, but being the first and most honourable society in Scotland) for obtaining the weaver craft."

About the year 1790 a committee was appointed to provide meal to be sold to members; and the scarcity of this article was extreme in 1812. The minute of 31st December of that year runs—"The scarcity of meal in this place has been so hurtful, and more especially to our trade, on account of our very small rates of wages, it is hoped that this useful and urgent design (buying meal) will be unanimous amongst us, AS MEAL WE CANNOT WANT." At that time the Masons' Society (St Michael's Lodge) unanimously agreed to give £200 for the purpose, and the weavers agreed to give £100. The Strathearn Meal Society was formed, and on 11th January 1813 "the Shoemakers' Society appeared, and offered the Meal Society £82 at 4½ per cent., which was accepted."

The following extracts show how the Society cared for the morals of the community. On 4th June 1815, "resolved unanimously that all play-actors, of whatever denomination, are prohibited from entering into the Hall;" and on 5th June 1820 "it was agreed that all cockers be excluded from entering the hall with fighting cocks." On 3d June 1829 this latter resolution was further extended to "badger baiters, or any other games that excite cruelty." At this meeting it was agreed to let members of the Society "have the use of the hall for their weddings and funerals gratis."

A special meeting was held on 6th May 1831, when it was resolved "That an address be transmitted to His Majesty William IV. for what he has done in supporting his ministers in reforming the representation of his subjects, and dissolution of Parliament. It was also resolved to assemble in the Market Park on 12th May, and to send orders to the Comrie and Muthill weavers to put in an appearance." The day came round and the utmost excitement prevailed amongst the congregated thousands. The minute detailing the affair is dated "Town Park, Crieff, 12th May 1831," and says, "This Society, along with the rest of the societies, having assembled, and after an

able address delivered by Mr John Kidd, Preses of the Shoemakers' Society, to His Majesty King William IV., the procession moved on three and three through the principal streets of the town, South Bridgend, etc., returned to the Town Park, and dismissed with the greatest regularity. They then assembled in the Masons' Hall and Weavers' Hall, when appropriate sentiments were given, and the healths of these brave men who supported the Reform were given and drunk with great applause. The scene of the day closed with a fine display of fireworks, and passed with the greatest harmony." Addresses were also delivered by Dr Fyfe, William Clement, merchant, John M'Nab, weaver, and John M'Farlane, shoemaker. This procession was in reality a general procession of the inhabitants of the district. Each trade society and party had appropriate banners and equipments, and each had its band of music. The procession was about half a mile in length, and the day was a red letter one for all who witnessed these doings, and old people still look back to it with admiration through the vista of half a century. The subsequent doings of the Society, as recorded in the minutes, show that they had many annoyances in common with kindred associations. Sick and indigent members were regularly alimented out of the funds. At the breaking up of the Society, about twenty-five years ago, the houses and lands were sold, and about £460 was realised and divided amongst the members. The Weavers' Hall was for many a day the chief place for all kinds of entertainments, and for many years the Bereans and Baptists occupied it on the Sundays. In the Sunday evenings it was usually reserved for a Sunday school. The small charges made for its use caused it to be much in request for social gatherings. A dozen of Feus weavers, by subscribing a penny each, could send the bellman round the town to summon a political meeting, and they could have for their shilling a political crack or fracas as occasion suited.

Strathearn.

O let me roam in summer time,
'Mong Earn's leafy bowers,
Where scented groves, with cooling shade
And milk-white spray in every glade
Oft taste the dew and showers.

Beside the daisy-spangled knowes
The sweet wild violets grow;
The hyacinths of a lovely blue,
And orchises of varied hue,
Bloom by the beechen row.

The cowslips and primroses peep
Along the grassy way;
At sunrise water-lilies wake,
And ope their bosoms on the lake,
Along the sheltered bay.

In beauty the laburnum bends,
And waves its golden head;
The furze and broom, with yellow bloom,
And roses with their rich perfume,
Their choicest treasures spread.

The stately oak o'ertops the bowers,
Where birds sing 'mid the leaves,
The linden, ash, and silver pine
In grandeur stand; the eglantine
A beauteous garland weaves.

Healthgiving is thy lovely strath,
My native mountain stream,
When west-winds breathe in summer tide
Thy hills and dales and valley wide
Seem an enchanting dream.

The Bridgend Fiddlers.—The Bridgend was long famous for its fiddlers, there being some thirteen players of varied qualifications out of the eighty families that were located within the bounds. The most celebrated in their day were Alexander Cleghorn and James Allan. Alexander was a most devoted performer—night or day made little difference when the spirit moved him. He would fiddle as composedly during the night as in the evening; and occasionally on the Sundays, when his wife and daughter were hearing mass at the chapel, he would shut himself in his box-bed and fiddle away determinedly till the family returned. All accounts tell of his very superior playing. James Allan was another fine player, and did much to improve the musical taste of his contemporaries. It was the custom for all players to carry their repertoire in their mind, so that they did not require to take music with them when they went from home. It was an irritating thing to be asked frequently to play tunes they had not, and James had a fine way of getting out of the difficulty by asking the party wishing an unknown tune "to whistle it over." The other old hands had nothing particularly noticeable; their playing could not be called good, but they pleased themselves, and so thrummed along through life. The aversion to read music when on duty was peculiar. One day a player was telling of the performances of a band of Hungarian musicians he heard in Edinburgh. "They played fairly, but they had their music before them. Had any person taken their music away, they could not have played a note, and yet they were considered good players." Music was scarce about the beginning of the century. One of the fiddlers used to tell of his going to Blackford—a distance of twelve miles—for a copy of "Mrs M'Leod's Reel," and paying two shillings and sixpence for it. When modern music was introduced the names "waltz" and "quadrille" sounded of foreign climes. "Waltz" was considered

the plural of the noun, and "walt" the singular, and for a time, "play the new walt" was a common request. At hallow-e'en, hogmanay, and new year times, parties disposed to patrol the farmers in the round had little difficulty in getting sufficient music for the purpose, and a plentiful supply was left for home merrymakings. In fact, at almost all times music might be heard in some of the dwellings. The Bridgend had makers and menders of fiddles, and representatives of both fiddlers and makers reside in the locality still.

Rather Frightsome.—Not long ago there lived in King Street a well-known man named Willie——. He had seen much in his time, and considered himself as far advanced as his neighbours, and could heartily discuss local affairs while in Mary Sharp's public-house enjoying her whisky and cakes. One evening, after having a crack with an old cronie in Mary's, he went home in good humour with himself and all mankind. On taking his accustomed seat beside the large open fireplace, he thought the fire was scarcely up to the mark, and there being no one in the house, he commenced to pile a few fir faggots on the smouldering ashes, which soon sent forth a cheery blaze. As he sat ruminating on former joys a slight shower of soot came down the chimney, causing an unpleasant odour to fill the room. This being the usual precursor of wet weather, Willie's thoughts turned to rain. As he was thinking of a fishing excursion another shower came down, and a strange faint sound was heard up the vent. In a short time the effects of the heat and Mary's "best" began to make him feel drowsy, and he commenced giving an occasional nod. Another shower of soot descended, which caused a sudden gleam of the fire, and made Willie start out of his reverie. The sound up the chimney seemed nearer and more continued, and there was no doubt that some mystery was being unravelled. Another shower fell, and Willie involun-

tarily drew back his chair, and he felt an unpleasant "all-overishness." The sound was by degrees wearing downwards, and seemed a strange "fluffing" and scraping. The sweat began to break over Willie's noddle, and he moved his chair backwards. He had often heard of fairies going down people's "lums" and stealing children; and who could say but that some of their scouts were reconnoitring? It was no improbable thing that, in the event of not getting youngsters, old people might do in a strait. The idea was alarming, and Willie's hair moved within his blue bonnet. The soot was now falling continuously, and the strange weird fluttering and scraping was getting very distinct and near. Willie had learned by the old world lore that witches and bogles could not abide the sight of a Bible, and he instinctively started up, reached for the family volume, and stood trembling at the far corner of the room. He turned over the leaves, but in his excitement could see nothing therein, as his eyes were riveted on the fire. Amidst a cloud of soot a dark object was seen emerging from up the chimney and alighting on the "sway." This was the culminating point of human bearing, and Willie threw down the book and rushed to open the door. As he was turning out his eye glanced at the fire, and he discovered that the object of his fears was only a jackdaw.

Gang of Coiners.—About the beginning of the century two or three strangers settled for a short time in North Bridgend. Being weavers, their coming did not cause much attention. After a little their movements and reserved speech began to be noticed, and many were the opinions formed regarding their peculiarities. There was a general opinion that they were wanted by the authorities for their misdeeds. Some rumours began to circulate that bad money had been passed in the neighbourhood, and a sharp look-out for such was instituted, and a carter was taken up on suspicion of being concerned, and circumstances

pointed to him so strongly that he was tried before the court at Perth. After a lengthy trial the presiding Judge found the case not proven, and dismissed him *simpliciter* from the bar. The carter, mistaking what his Lordship meant, replied, "It was just simplicity, my Lord, just simplicity." His agent, Mr Tainsh, at once hurried him from the bar to prevent unpleasant consequences. The strangers, finding that their actions were closely watched, suddenly decamped, and with the exception of a bad coin or two they left no trace at the time to connect them with the bad money. About forty years ago some boys were amusing themselves one Sunday on the road near the bridge leading to Earnbank, and on pulling out some stones in the dyke came upon some bags filled with half-crowns. The news soon spread, and it was discovered that they were all bad, and the authorities took possession of them. The dyke being beside where the strangers dwelt, the find called up reminiscences of their actions, and pointed to them as the coiners.

Not to be Done.—A man named M'Arthur was for a time one of the overseers on the Perth estate. He gave his instructions with authority, and could ill brook contradiction. One day he called at Concraig Quarry with a friend, and entered into conversation with some of the workers. The conversation got animated, and gradually wore into a warm debate. M'Arthur advanced some most extraordinary statements, and left the place in high dudgeon. After he had cooled down a little, his friend expressed astonishment at the manner in which he argued things most improbable. M'Arthur looked his friend full in the face, and exclaimed, "Do you think I would let them get the better of me, and lose my threep?"

Stentorian Voices.—During the early years of the present century the Volunteers or local Militia of the western district of the county of Perth assembled at Crieff annually for a month's training. They

numbered nearly 1000 strong, and were daily drilled in the Drill Park at Bridge of Turret. Many of the inhabitants turned out occasionally to witness the manœuvres, and those who placed themselves on the western slopes of the town would not only have seen what was going on, but would have heard the commands of the Colonel, Sir Patrick Murray, quite distinctly, the distance being fully half a mile. At that time James Brown was town's crier, and his powerful voice would sound along the streets like a trumpet. When proclaiming in North Bridgend his voice would be distinctly heard in the plantations beyond Alaihmore, a distance of about a mile.

An Awkward Apprentice.—When Sir David Baird, along with many British soldiers, were made prisoners in India, much care was taken to prevent his rank from being known, and he was forced in these circumstances to become an assistant to a soldier-shoemaker. Sir David of necessity was very awkward in his new sphere of duties, and tried the temper of his instructor considerably. The ruse succeeded, and his rank was known only to his enemies after his release, when they saw him leading the British army against them. The shoemaker frequently visited Ferntower after Sir David settled on this beautiful Strathearn estate, and he was always received with especial welcome. He often remarked that "Sir David was the most awkward 'prentice ever he had."

A Boast Curtailed.—During the wars of the first Napoleon the whole district was alive with news of battle and soldiering, and many a sheep donned the lion's skin to appear brave and patriotic as was the fashion. One evening a Balloch tailor, who was infected with the spirit of the times, was marching home along Balloch Road, and with his staff was whipping off the heads of the rank grass which grew in profusion along the sides of the unfenced road. He, in imagination, was hewing off the heads of the French, and in his fervour said,

"Had I the opportunity I would let the French see that I would chop off their heads like that." Just as he uttered these words a large covey of partridges flew out of a field behind and whirred over him in an instant, making his heart beat vehemently, and in his fright he exclaimed, "Oh save me, for I am but a poor tailor!"

Disturbing a Feast.—A Highlander named M'Donald lived for a number of years in the Gallowhill with his large family. His two eldest sons were named John and Gilbert, and all were endowed with keen appetites. On one occasion the dinner consisted of beat potatoes and milk. The potatoes were in the pot in which they were beat, and the family sat on stools in a circle, and plied their spoons with busy care. The old man was getting worsted, and his two sons were making terrible inroads in the pot. His feelings got wrought to a terrible pitch, and, becoming exasperated, shouted, "Man, Shock, you're a swine! Chilbert, lay by your spune!" He sent them back from the pot, and all looked on in amazement as he devoured the fragments.

Once First and Aye First.—When Mr Maxton was minister of Fowlis Wester he engaged a stout young man named John Maxton to be his ploughman. The adjoining parish of Madderty was long famous for its ploughmen, and John, being of the number, was anxious to shine. One fine spring morning the minister, on looking out of his window, observed John bedecking his horses in an extraordinary manner with ribbons and what not; and the harness was shining. He went out, and on inquiry learned that his man was preparing for a ploughing match. The minister was not impressed with the belief of his man taking a prize, and he advised John to stay at home, as there was nothing urgent to take him to the match. John, however, was "entered," and would not stay. The match came off, and after the judges had consulted and re-consulted, John was

declared first, which made him a proud man, and the minister also felt much pride in his success. Many of the crack ploughmen of the district were much chagrined at John's success, and never ceased taunting him that it was the first and last time he would take the prize. The minister on his visits amongst the farmers took frequent occasion to refer to his "prize" man. Next year, about the same time, the minister observed John decking out his horses, and, suspecting what was in the wind, went to where he was, and learning that another match was coming off, advised John to wait at home. John showed evident symptoms that he would prefer to do this if he had a proper excuse. The minister asked him what was the value of the first prize. John told him. "Well," said he, "you run the risk of not gaining the prize, and I will prefer to pay you the amount and save our credit; for I intend to keep a first-prize ploughman, and you will be the man." John agreed, and the minister continued to boast of his ploughman. Many years afterwards, when John had run a lease of Dallerie farm, and retired from business, and settled in North Bridgend, he frequently recited the incidents above related with great glee.

Among the Fairies. — In olden times when broguers and shoemakers regularly attended the country markets, the story goes that two worthies belonging to the "gentle craft," from the neighbourhood of Auchterarder, were at a Crieff Michaelmas market, their goods being carried in satchels which hung over their shoulders. When the day's marketing was over there was a quantity of their goods unsold. After partaking of some refreshments, they slung their satchels over their shoulders, and proceeded on their homeward march by the road leading past Dalpatrick to the ford on the Earn. When passing the Fairy Knowe it was well on in the night, and on looking in that direction they discovered the fairies in their hall within the knowe holding high

carnival—it being their annual festival. The two broguers gazed, and better gazed, and felt themselves involuntarily drawn towards the scene. The music, scenery, and dancing put them into ecstasies, and one of them was constrained to join in the festivities, and he was instantly whirled round and round in paroxysms of delight, his satchel swinging extraordinarily. His cronie managed to keep outside, and tried by signs and sounds to wile his neighbour from the fairies, but nothing would avail. In a little the knowe was closed, and the broguer outside had to toddle home alone much depressed. Next year, at the same time, he again attended Michaelmas market, and knowing that the annual festival of the fairies would take place that night, and that it would be the only chance he would have for a twelvemonth to free his cronie, he resolved to have his marketing done in time to be at the knowe before midnight. He was duly at the spot, and so soon as the performances commenced he descried his companion as he left him the previous year, dancing and capering prodigiously. The broguer outside pulled his blue bonnet firmly over his brow, and rushing in amongst the fairies, seized his cronie and pushed him out of the enchanted circle, and he was immediately brought back to his senses. He put his hand to his shoulder, and easing his satchel, remarked that it felt unusually heavy. It was believed that he had been dancing continuously during his fascinating captivity, and was unconscious of fleeting time. The weight of brogues in his satchel had made his shoulder feel tired during his year's dance.

Curious Judgment.—On one occasion towards the end of last century, a man of rieving disposition determined to have some of the sheep which were grazing on a field at Ferntower. To accomplish his object he forced a young lad to assist him in his nefarious project. A short time afterwards the two were charged with the depredation, and during the

trial it came clearly out in the evidence that the lad could not help himself, being forced against his will to act as he did. The judge said it might be all true, but it was likely to form a bad habit in the boy, and the best way to prevent subsequent danger was to hang the two together, which was accordingly done. It would have been a fitting sequel to have hanged the sheep, seeing that they allowed themselves to be driven away by those who had no right to do so.

Acting a Lie.—The last time we had the privilege of listening to the Rev. John Martin in his church, his text led him into the definition of lying. He divided the subject into as many heads as he considered there were kinds of lying. Amongst them were the deliberate lie, the white lie, consenting to a lie, acting a lie, etc. Each head was duly taken up in course, and expounded and illustrated with examples. His illustration of acting a lie was as follows:—Mothers by example often teach their children to act a lie. Suppose a child was getting sleepy while the mother was busily engaged in her household duties, and as the child became more sleepy it would get more troublesome and hinder her work, so she, to get it to sleep quickly, would put it to bed, and, partly undressing herself, would lie down beside it, thereby making it believe that she intended to lie beside it till it awakened. No sooner would the child be asleep than she would cautiously rise, put on her clothes, and resume work. This was acting a lie.

Courting under Difficulties. — Some years ago there lived in the neighbourhood a mechanic named Graham, who was simple-minded in many respects, and was easily flattered—more especially by nice-looking servant girls. He often made love to them and they to him, but he could never get any of them to become his partner. At last he found one who seemed willing and anxious, and he was much elated in consequence. The term wore round, and, no definite arrangements being entered into, she left for

Glasgow, without leaving her new address. After a time he felt an inexpressible longing to see his charmer, and he set out for Glasgow in search of her whereabouts. On arriving there his preconceived ideas of a large town were greatly at fault, and on reaching the principal streets he felt perfectly astonished and bewildered at the immense multitude of people who thronged the thoroughfares, as if many of the houses had been kirks dismissing. He more than once stepped aside to let the crowd of unknown faces pass, but there seemed no end of it, and he frequently wondered where they were all going to. A happy thought struck him—he would wait at the well if he could find it, and after several inquiries and windings he found a well. He watched all comers for many hours, but his lady-love did not appear with her pitchers. He got wearied waiting, and his anxious inquiries gave him no clue to her location, so he had just to retrace his steps home to find himself a sadder man. He travelled most of the road—fifty-six miles each way—on foot.

A Friendly Darg Unthanked.—At one time there lived at the foot of Brown's Row (now King Street) a sturdy shoemaker called George Tainsh. In his early days he was a broguer in Balloch, and was in favour with the noble family which ruled in Drummond Castle close by. In time the inhabitants of this quiet retreat grew scant, and George removed to Crieff, working at his calling and attending to the selling of sand from a pit west of the Gallows Knowe. He seldom required a doctor, although he went without cravat or any tie round his neck. When he caught cold, he doctored himself by drinking plenty of cold water. He liked a dram and a crack, and occasionally spoke his mind with vehemence, terrifying weak-nerved people. On the occasion of a customer calling one day at the sand-pit and settling scores, they adjourned to the well-known public-house in Bridgend kept by Clementina Crerar, better known as "Clemie."

They had two or three drams of her best whisky, and they got very friendly. During their stay a large part of one of the sides of the sand-pit fell in. George being wanted at home, one of the family was sent to the pit to bring him hither. On reaching the scene of operations, George could not be seen, but the top of his spade handle was visible above the fallen earth, and there was no doubt of his being buried. The alarm was immediately given, and soon a number of active and willing neighbours were digging for the missing man, and several more were taking the nearest way to the pit through his growing corn. When they had cleared the stuff well away, a voice like a trumpet blast sounded in their ears, and looking round, they discerned the man they were seeking in one of his highest states of passion, swearing at large, and denouncing all and sundry for interfering with his property. Those in the pit were not long in being out of the way, and left "Geordie" to vent his wrath at leisure.

Burning of Crieff.—By an order of the Pretender, dated at Scone 17th January, and fifteenth of his reign, 1716, the towns of Auchterarder, Muthill, Blackford, Dunning, and several smaller villages were burnt, and the inhabitants of every age and sex left exposed to the rigour of the cold. His reason was to obstruct the march of the King's forces towards Perth. The part of the Highland army that marched to Crieff in November 1715, after the battle of Sheriffmuir, knocked down the south arch of the Crieff bridge and took possession of the town. On the 28th January 1716 a number of houses were burnt, and notably the principal inn, which belonged to Thomas Caw, and stood upon the site now used by his descendant, Mr John Caw, as a wood-yard, on the north side of the High Street. From "An accompt of what loss Thomas Caw, son to the deceased Thomas Caw, Crieff, sustained by the rebells, who burnt his house and most of his household stuff on the 28th January

1716," in MS. in possession of Mr John Caw, it appears that the inn contained a most heterogenous collection of "stuff," valued at 894 10s. 8d. Scots. "John Ross, mason, and John Smith, wright, having considered what would repair the stone and timber worke of the house and make it also sufficient as formerly, do reiken that 50 Lib. Ster. now but a modest allowance, and is 600 'Lib.' 'Scots'—making a total of 1494 16s. 8d. Scots." The following short "account of the loss sustained by Mrs Mario Caw" on the same occasion will be interesting:—

Item, 2 Lairge chists a bead furnished, a press and a bink amrie - - - - - - - - -	26	0	0
Item, A Lairge bibell, 2 chairs and armed chair and pan - - - - - - - - - -	7	10	0
Item, A pair shits 2 pair of bead plaids a dubel plaid a goold ring 2 hokes - - - - -	25	0	0
Item, A tub, a dison and half of spoons, 5 pleats 5 winchies 2 bots. 7 bottals - - - - -	6	0	0
Item, 3 pair Kardes, a chopin stop, a pint stop, a little ghill and mikoll gills 2 canabatos, 2 broas chandleis - - - - - - - - -	12	0	0
Item, A weight amand 2 grot skopts a caf bead -	3	0	0
	79	10	0

The principal part of the town at that time would be contained within a circle of something over 100 yards in diameter from the Town House. There is a tradition that the adjoining houses on the south side of East High Street, east from the old parish church, were saved from the burning by a simple stratagem. The laird, expecting that his property, like that of Mr Caw, would be burnt, gathered a quantity of straw into the houses, and after he got it well watered, set it on fire, causing the smoke to issue from the windows, which the rebels seeing as they left the town caused them to imagine that the thing was all right. So soon as they were clear off the laird got the straw thrown out, and so saved his lairdship. It appears that at the coronation of George I., "excepting at Crieff, where a few low Tories laid hold of a John M'Allen

and cut off his ear, saying, 'they had marked him for Hanover,' there were no mobs in Scotland."

Rather Awkward.—The late Rev. James Walker, parish minister of Muthill, some years before his death did much to educate and improve his parishioners, but he had considerable difficulty in taming about half a dozen of the old independent farmers. These worthies regularly attended the Crieff weekly markets, and many cantie tales and funny jokes were weekly retailed in the various public-houses visited during the day's peregrinations. Two or three of them usually had a parting glass and chat in the Black Bull Inn, Muthill, previous to separating. The respected minister was much grieved at the waywardness of these sturdy parishioners, and resolved to try the effect of a weekly sermon in the Muthill Masonic Hall. The scheme so far succeeded that there was a good attendance of the villagers, and an occasional visit of some of those most wanted. One Thursday evening in the winter, two of the farmers, named John and David, had their parting cup as usual, and both agreed to give Mr Walker a hearing, and to the hall both went. They got nicely set on opposite sides of a table, and during the sermon both fell asleep. The preacher, waxing eloquent, raised his stentorian voice to a climax, and half awakened David, who, observing his ancient cronie through the dim light nodding opposite, and thinking they were still in the midst of conviviality and annoyed by some unwelcome brawling, called across the table, "Come awa hame, Johnnie, and no hear that man blethering mere nonsense a' nicht." Both woke up, and realising their awkward predicament at once betook themselves to the door, and immediately mounting their horses proceeded to their homesteads, resolving to do better some other time.