WHILE THERE'S LIFE THERE'S HOPE.

A clergyman, remarkable for the simplicity and force of his style, was one day discoursing on the text, "Unless ye repent, ye shall all perish." Anxious to impress upon his hearers the importance of the solemn truth conveyed in the passage, he made use of a very *striking* figure.

"Yes, my friends," he emphatically urged, "unless ye repent ye shall all likewise perish,"—placing one of his fingers on the wing of a large fly which alighted on his Bible, and having his right hand uplifted, "just as sure, my friends, as I'll ding the life out o' this blue flee."

Before the blow was struck the fly got off; upon which the minister, at the top of his voice, exclaimed—

"There's a chance for ye yet, my friends!"

WERSH, WERSH!

Kirsty and Jenny, two country lassies, were supping their "parritch" from the same bicker in the harvest-field one morning—

"Hech," said Kirsty to her neighbour, "Jenny, but thae's awfu' wersh parritch!"

"Deed are they," said Jenny, "they are that. D'ye ken what they put me in mind o'? Just o' a kiss frae a body that ye dinna like."

NOR' LOCH TROUTS.

A Nor' Loch trout was formerly a familiar term in Edinburgh for a roast of beef or a leg of mutton. There was a club of citizens who used to meet in a tavern in one of the closes between the High Street and the Nor' Loch. The invitation to join their company was generally thus:—"Will ye gang and eat a Nor' Loch trout the day?" The reason of the designation is obvious. This was the only species of *fish* which the North Loch, on which the shambles were situated, could supply.

HOW TO HEAT A CHURCH.

A minister of West Anstruther applied to Sir Robert of that ilk, who was an extensive heritor in the parish, to assist in putting a stove in the church, which, he said, the congregation found very cold.

"Cauld, sir! cauld!" exclaimed Sir Robert; "then warm them with your doctrine, sir. John Knox never asked for a stove in his kirk."

JOHN STRACHAN, FLESH-CADDIE.

September 22, 1791. At Edinburgh, in his 105th year, John Strachan, flesh-cady. He retained his senses till within a short time of his death, and seldom had a complaint of any kind. He recollected the time when no flesher would venture to kill any beast, till all the different parts were bespoke, butcher-meat being then a very unsaleable article.—*Scots Mag.*

LITTLE ENOUGH, BOTH WAYS.

A Scotch farmer's wife called to her cow-herd: "Jock, come in to your parritch, or the flees 'ill a' droon in the milk;" to which the urchin roguishly replied—

"There's nae fear; they may wade through't."

His mistress, indignant at this aspersion on her liberality, exclaimed—

"What, ye loon, d'ye say ye dinna get enough?"

"Ou ay," said Jock, "there's aye enough for the parritch."

EPPIE RORIE.

A certain young preacher, who was very anxious to show off his profound learning, was in the habit of using "lang-nebbit" and cramp words in his sermons. On one occasion he was preaching on the existence of God; and making free use of the *à priori* argument, he repeated the italicised words so frequently that they seemed to form the burden of his discourse. After the sermon was over, a wag of a writer, accosting an old woman, whom he knew to be a great theological critic, asked her how she liked the discourse?

"Likit the discoorse!" quoth she. "How could ony body like a discoorse whaur mair than half o't was ta'en up wi' Eppie Rorie? What had he to dae yowling sae muckle about her that's been dead and buried twa years come Yule; and a little-worth hizzie she was to mak sic a sang about!"

CIVIC LEGISLATION.

In the year 1559, the town-council of Glasgow enacted, that the best ale sold in the town should not exceed four pennies Scots for the Scots pint, which is one third of a penny sterling for two quarts; that the fourpenny loaf should weigh thirty-two ounces; that a stone of tallow should not be dearer than eight shillings; a peck of horse corn eight pennies; and a pound weight of candles sixpennies, or one halfpenny sterling.—*Cleland.*

ABDUCTING A VOTER.

April 1791. His Majesty has been pleased to grant a free pardon to John Lockerbie, Peter Forest, and James Thorburn, who, in February last, were sentenced by the High Court of Justiciary to be whipped, but which sentence had been hitherto respited, for carrying away William Walls, a counsellor of Lochmaben, previous to the day fixed for electing a member of Parliament.—*Scots Mag.*

A NOTED MOSSTROOPER.

Walter Scott, commonly styled "Auld Wat of Harden," was a renowned freebooter, and used to ride with a numerous band of followers. The spoil which they carried off was concealed in a deep precipitous glen, on the boundary of which the old tower of Harden was situated, in the deep narrow vale of Borthwick water. When the last bullock was devoured a dish was placed on the table, which, on being uncovered, was found to contain nothing but *a pair of clean spurs*—a hint from the wife that it was time to set off for more cattle. On one occasion when he was returning from a foray, with "a bow of kye and a bassened bull," he passed a very large haystack; but having no means of carrying it away, he was fain to take leave of it with this apostrophe, which became proverbial, "By my conscience, had ye but four feet, ye should not stand lang there!" Wat of Harden took for his first wife, Mary Scott, celebrated as "the Flower of Yarrow." Two songs in her praise bear the names of "Mary Scott," and "The Rose of Yarrow." By their marriage contract, her father, Philip Scott of Dryhope, in Selkirkshire, bound himself to find Harden in horse and man's meat at his tower of Dryhope for a year and a day; and five barons pledged themselves that, at the end of that period, the son-in-law should remove. Harden also agreed to give Dryhope the profits of the first Michaelmas moon. A notary public signed for all the parties to the deed, none of whom could write their names.

A LESSON FROM NATURE.

Lord Cockburn, the proprietor of the estate of Bonaly, at the foot of the Pentland hills, was sitting on the hillside with a shepherd, and observing the sheep reposing in the coldest situation, he remarked to him, "John, if I were a sheep I would lie on the other side of the hill." "Ah, my lord," said the shepherd, "but if ye was a *sheep* ye would hae mair sense."

ROBBY BELL AND HIS CUDDIE.

Some years bygone, this formerly well-known and singular character was wont to travel in several of the southern counties of Scotland, accompanied by an old and faithful long-eared friend, who bore two enormous panniers, containing Robby's merchandise. This consisted of wooden, pewter, and horn-spoons, needles and thread, pins, two-penny penknives, superb glittering brass rings and brooches, old ballads; in short, the most motley and miscellaneous collection of articles ever offered to the vulgar gaze. These, made up into bundles, Robby used to call his *pingles*. As he and his ass were doucely jogging along, under the genial influence of a fine May morning, the drooping ears of the latter were suddenly and majestically erected at the sound of an astounding braying on the other side of the hedge. In proof that even asses are not devoid of companionable qualities, away brushed the mercantile one through a gap in the hedge, scattering panniers and pingles to the four winds of heaven. Robby, who, with bonnet on head, and hands contemplatively screwed behind his back, had been trudging in the rear, witnessed the behaviour of the brute, and its direful consequences, with feelings of mingled rage and despondency. But previous to trying to regather the unfortunate pingles, prudence suggested the propriety of catching the delinquent. So unwearied and agile was the plaguy animal in his gambols, that an hour elapsed, and an acre of young wheat was completely trodden under foot, before he was clutched in the grasp of his justly incensed master. Crying with vexation, Robby next proceeded to collect his pingles, lying in heart-breaking confusion over the whole terrene surface; but he had scarcely commenced this agreeable task, when the lord of the manor appeared, and claimed the ass as a stray, or trespasser. Poor Robby, fairly at his wit's end, cried out in a fury—

"It sets ye weel to speak that way o' my *cuddie*, when it was your ain deevil o' a cuddie's menseless thrapple brocht him ower. If yours had keepit his confounded cleck to himsel', naether me nor mine wad hae seen you or your wheat, but been five mile farrer on our gate."

"Weel, Robby," said the laird, "a' this passion o' yours will no pay me for my acre o' wheat; but as I believe ye are an honest man, I'll let you gang wi' your bread-winner ('deil be in his feet!' muttered poor Robby), but no before you gie me your word to meet me at the Jeddart court, to answer this trespass, conform to law."

There was no remedy, and the unfortunate vender of pingles was obliged to promise he would do so. When the trying hour arrived, he made his appearance before "the Lords," at the Jedburgh circuit. Robby, it seems, had been in trouble before, and given more than one guinea to counsel without effect. He was now resolved to speak for himself. The prosecutor's charge for asinine delinquency was easily made, when Robby was called upon for his defence. He went on about the two asses in such an unintelligible rigmarole way, that the worthy judges were completely at fault.

"My good man," said Lord G., "I

am most willing to hear what you have to say, but really I do not understand you."

"No understand me!" bellowed the incensed Robby like a furnace; "weel, man, gin you will ha' it, suppose ye were ae ass, an' that man (pointing to Lord H.) another, an' ye were to *bray*, and he were to rin after ye, hoo the deil could I help it?" Then writhing himself a little aside in his vexation, he muttered, "A pair o' hairy, lang-lugged land-loupers *too*, by my faith!" Robby came off victorious.

JOHN BELL'S EPITAPH.

John Bell lived in Annandale, on the Scots side, and is buried in Reid kirkyard. He has a stone 200 years old on him, with this inscription upon it:—

I Jocky Bell o' Braikenbrow, lyes under this stane,
Five of my awn sons laid it on my wame;
I liv'd aw my dayes, but sturt or strife,
Was man o' my meat, and master o' my wife.
If you done better in your time, than I did in mine,
Take the stane aff my wame, and lay it on o' thine.

A WELL-MATCHED PAIR.

Lord Hermand's love of children was warm-hearted and unaffected. He always treated them seriously, exactly as if they were grown up. Few old men's speeches are more amiable than his about his grandnephew, who happened to be his partner in a match at bowls. "No wonder that that little fellow and I are such friends; there are just seventy years between us." He was eighty, the boy ten!—*Lord Cockburn.*

TREE-CLOUT SHOON.

Till about a hundred years ago the heels of shoes were made of birch-wood in the south of Scotland. The heel thus put upon them was called the clout, and required to be frequently renewed, and this operation the wearers themselves performed. For this purpose a supply of birch was always kept in their houses. The shoes were called tree-clout shoon.—*Jamieson.*

LORD PRESIDENT HOPE.

I remember the President some years ago, at the special commission for the trials of the rioters of Bonnymuir—a job he did not seem to relish much. To the great consternation of the English functionaries, he began by desiring the prisoners to be allowed seats. Taking some refreshment, after the trial had lasted some hours, and observing the eyes of the prisoners following the morsels, he ordered them beef and bread; and still later in the day, noticing their flushed and anxious faces, he permitted them to retire two and two into the open air. This kindness quite overcame them, and, in passing me, one of them remarked (and I concur heartily in the feeling which dictated the observation), "My God, if they had been a' like that chap, we would not have been here the day."—*Court of Session Garland.*

SOLD AND "SOLD."

Two farmers, in the neighbourhood of Perth, were so fortunate as to have a large stock of hay on hand at a time when that article, from some cause, suddenly rose greatly in price. One of them, hitting the time when the market was at its height, realized so much money that he was able to set up a gig,

and otherwise to improve his style of living. The other, being a man of narrower and more avaricious character, retained his hay on hand, and only railed at the precipitation and extravagance of his neighbour. At length, when he thought it utterly impossible that the markets could rise any higher, he set out for Perth to sell his hay. Jock Kilgour, the man who had already sold out, happened that day to be driving home from Perth in his gig, or, as he called it, his "*charrit*," in company with his sonsy wife Leezie; when, whom should he meet but his neighbour plodding along on his old broken-down gray mare, *serio sed sero*, to market. The latter immediately began to rally Jock, in the most unmerciful manner, about his *bravery* and presumption in setting up an equipage, and even prophesied, with more jealousy than good breeding, that a vehicle of that kind could scarcely lead a farmer anywhere else than to poverty.

"Gang ye awa', my man," cried Jock, "an' tak a ride on your hay-soo; it's fa'n fourpence a stane the day!"

BURNS AND HIS OWN POETRY.

Speaking one day of his own poetry, Burns said—

"I have much to answer for: my success in rhyme has produced a shoal of ill-spawned monsters, who imagine, because they make words clink, that they are poets. It requires a will-o'-wisp to pass over the quicksands and quagmires of the Scottish dialect. I am Spunkie—they follow me, and sink."

A SHEEP'S-EYE VIEW.

A gentleman of Edinburgh, being in love with a lady at Portobello, a sea-bathing village three miles from the capital, used to take walks along with a friend to the top of Arthur's Seat, for no other purpose than to get a distant peep at the residence of the dear object. This his friend called "Taking a *sheep's-eye view* of Portobello."

A BORDERER.

An English packman called at a farm-house in the Lothians in order to dispose of his wares. The goodwife was startled by his southern accent, and his high talk about York, London, and other large places.

"An' whaur come ye frae yersel'?" was the question of the guidwife.

"Ou! I am from the Border!"

"The Border. Oh! I thocht that; for we aye think the *selvidge* is the wakest bit o' the wab!"

PROFIT AND LOSS.

"Well, John," said a minister to one of his hearers, "I hope you hold family worship regularly?"

"Ay, sir," answered John, "in the time o' year o't."

"In the time o' year o't! What do ye mean?"

"Ye ken, sir, we canna see in winter."

"But, John, you should buy candles."

"Ay, sir," replied John, "but, in that case, I'm afraid the cost might owergang the profit."

HIS FIRST VOYAGE.

A man from the far North, who had never seen either ship or sea in his life, had to cross from Kinghorn to Leith on a very stormy day. The vessel rolled greatly, and the poor frightened Highlander ran to the cords, and held them down with his whole vigour, to keep, as he thought, the boat from upsetting.

"For te sake of our lives, shentles,

come and hold town!" he cried; "or, if ye will not pe helping me, I'll let you all to the bottom in one moment. And you ploughman there," he continued, turning to the man at the helm, "cannot you keep te howe of te furr, and no gang ower te crown of te riggs avaw? Heich?"

The steersman laughed at him, and the Highlander becoming irritated, seized a handspike, and knocked him down.

"Now, laugh you now, you Lowland rogue?" said he; "and you weel deserve it all, for it was you made all the too-hoo, kittling the poatie's tail with tat pin!"

THE ARTIST AND THE PORTER.

Geikie was fond of sketching odd figures and remarkable features in the streets. An amusing story is told of a porter in the Grassmarket of a peculiar appearance in figure and physiognomy, who, aware of his desire to take his likeness, contrived to elude him on all occasions, when he saw him approaching. One crowded market day, however, Geikie, determined to attain his object, followed the doomed porter wherever he went, until, at last, when the market began to thin, the latter lost all patience, and threatened and abused the young artist with great fury, both of words and action. The first were lost on the poor deaf lad, and although there was no mistaking the meaning shake of the angry porter's fist, he proceeded to the exercise of his pencil with the utmost enthusiasm, but was soon obliged to fly from the scene, pursued by the porter. He took refuge in an open stair. His pursuer halted in the street opposite, and placing his arms behind his back, waited there at his leisure to catch the young artist when he should emerge from his hiding-place. From a window in the stair Geikie had a perfect view of his subject, and a few touches of his rapid pencil speedily transferred him to his sketch-book. When the porter's patience was exhausted, he moved slowly away, and thus enabled the imprisoned artist to find his way home, unscathed, with his purpose accomplished. This individual makes a conspicuous figure among the characters to be found in Geikie's etchings.

THE EARTH'S THEORY.

"Dinna tell me," said a sapient Forfarshire laird of the old school, "dinna tell me that the earth's shapit like an orange, an' that it whirls round about ilka twenty-four 'oors. It's a' nonsense. Seidley Hills lie to the north, an' the Tay to the south, at nicht when I gang to my bed; i' the mornin' when I rise I find them the same; an' that's gude proof that the earth disna turn round. I'll tell you what it is—an' I speak wi' the authority o' ane wha's gi'en the subject a deal o' thocht—the earth's spread oot just like a muckle barley-scone, in which the Howe o' Strathmore represents a knuckle mark."

WHY THE FRENCH LOST.

During the long French war, as two old women in Stranraer were going to the kirk, the one said to the other—

"Was it no a wonderfu' thing that the Breetish were aye victorious ower the French in battle?"

"Not a bit," said the other old wife; "dinna ye ken the Breetish aye say their prayers before gaun into battle?"

"But didna the French say their prayers as weel?"

"Hoot! jabbering bodies, wha could understan' them?"

TRUTH TELLS BEST.

To an accident which befell daft Jamie Fleeman when following his avocation of cow-herd, is to be ascribed the origin of a proverb very current in Buchan: "The truth tells best." Fleeman had, in repelling the invasion of a cornfield by the cattle under his charge, recourse to the unwarrantable and unherd-like expedient of throwing stones. One of his missiles, in an evil moment, broke the leg of a thriving two-year-old. Towards sunset, when the hour of driving the cattle home had arrived, Jamie was lingering by a dyke-side, planning an excuse for the fractured limb of the unfortunate *stot*.

"I'll say," he soliloquised, "that he was loupin' a stank an' fell an' broke his leg. Na! that winna tell! I'll say that the brown stallion gied him a kick and did it. That winna tell either! I'll say that the park yett fell upon't. Na! that winna tell! I'll say—I'll say—what will I say? Od, I'll say that I flung a stane and did it! That'll tell!"

"Ay, ay, Jamie," cried the laird, who had been an unseen listener to this soliloquy; "ay, ay, Jamie, the truth aye tells best!"

A DRY JOB.

Some time ago, an elderly matron, no way famed for her liberality, employed the village mason to make some alterations on her kitchen fire-place. During the operation, John observed several times, "that it was a gey *stourie* job, and that he would not be the worse of something to *synd* it down." The hint was at length reluctantly taken and the bottle brought forward, along with a very small thistle glass, which was filled to a genteel and respectful distance from the brim, and handed to the mason. "Ye'll no be muckle the waur o' that, I'm thinkin', John," said the lady with a would-be genial smile, when he finished his dram.

"Atweel no, mem," said John, "casting a contemptuous look on the dwarfish glass, "although it had been *vitriol!*"

A MUSICAL HINT.

A certain sheriff-substitute was one of the most facetious members of that order. He had a habit of *crooning*, or whistling in an undertone, some of the more popular Scottish airs while sitting on the bench. A youthful panel was, in his court, found guilty of an act of larceny. After pronouncing a sentence of imprisonment, the sheriff added—

"Take care you don't come here again, young man, or ———," he closed the sentence by humming the tune, "Ower the water to Charlie." This suggestive hint was no doubt readily understood.—*Dr Rogers.*

A HIGHLAND BARGAIN.

In a bargain between two Highlanders, each of them wets the ball of his thumb with his mouth, and then joining them together, it is esteemed a very binding act.—*Burt.*

A REASON WHY.

"How is it, John," said a minister to his man, "that you never go a message for me anywhere in the parish but you contrive to take too much spirits? People don't offer me spirits when I'm making visits in the parish."

"Weel, sir," said John, "I 'canna precisely explain it, unless on the supposition that I'm a wee bit mair popular wi' some o' the folks maybe than you are."

QUITE AT SEA.

A country woman who had never before been more than five miles from her home among the hills, happened on one rare occasion, to visit a seaport. Observing some of the large vessels with a small boat in tow, she said :—

"Eh ! but it's wonderfu' to see the works o' natur too ; the very ships to ha'e young anes !"

AN HONEST CATECHIST.

Robert Ross, minister of Tain, having a public examination one day, asked an old woman—

"Who made you?"

The old woman being a little deaf, and unwilling to have her ignorance exposed, answered in a whisper, loud enough to be overheard—

"I'll send you a stane o' cheese the morn, sir."

He replied aloud, "Very well answered, Jenny, my woman ; indeed, I wish all my parishioners would say so as readily."

A THRIVING CROP.

One trait in Jamie Fleeman's character was, that he watched every opportunity to annoy those whom he did not like, and often adopted means for this purpose as singular as they were sure. Factors were no favourites with Jamie ; and, indeed, he was strongly prejudiced against the whole fraternity.

One day a proprietor, at whose house Jamie was staying, was walking out with his factor, and showing him a field of hill-land which he had cultivated at considerable expense, but which had proved very unproductive. "I have," said the gentleman, "tried many things in this field, but have succeeded in none, and I know not what to put in it that would thrive. I should be glad, Mr ———, to have your advice with regard to the matter."

As sometimes happens, the man of business was not very intelligent in any thing with regard to farming but the collection of the rents. Yet, unwilling to be thought ignorant, he put on an air of great consequence, and mused for a time, as if about to give a very sagacious and useful advice. In the meantime, Jamie, who was near, was overheard saying—

"Od, I could tell you what would thrive in't."

"Well, Fleeman," said the laird, "and what might that be?"

"Plant it wi' factors," said the fool ; "they thrive in every place ; but for all that," added he, "deil curse the crap if it be very profitable." Both the laird and the factor were covered with confusion.

HOW TO PLEASE THE LAIRD.

During the reign of the feudal system amongst the Highlanders, the Laird of Grant had condemned one of his followers to be hanged. When Donald came to the gallows, accompanied by Janet his faithful wife, he seemed very reluctant to mount the ladder, and stood a long time below the fatal tree, shrugging his shoulders. "Hoot awa, Donald," said Janet, clapping him on the back, "gang up noo, just like a man, and please the laird." Donald could not resist such a powerful motive to obedience, but gallantly sprung to meet the reward of his loyalty.

YOUNG LAIRDS.

The Laird of Logan, of humorous memory, whose property was originally very extensive, was in time necessitated to dispose of a great part of his patri-

monial inheritance. At a meeting of heritors, the propriety of rebuilding the wall of the churchyard being discussed, some of those gentlemen who had recently become portioners of his estate, were of opinion that a certain wall should be repaired, and matters put in more decent order; but the witty and wayward laird, finding that all his rhetoric against the measure was likely to be of no avail, dryly and suggestively replied, "It's weel seen, gentlemen, ye are but young lairds; or ye would ken that it's time enough to mend dykes when the tenants complain."

CAPTAIN M'TAVISH'S JOKE.

Donald M'Tavish, commander of the Mull boat, was a fair specimen of his shrewd and jovial brotherhood who, in common with all captains of river boats, are fond of a joke.

On one occasion, being annoyed by the ignorant and constant inquisitiveness of a Cockney tourist, he took his revenge very quietly. The young swell was anxious to know if any of the old Highland caterans, cattle-raiders, and lifters of black-mail were still in existence.

"Na, sir," replied M'Tavish, with a wink aside, "the last o' the squad was transported for life some time since."

"Ay," interpolated the inquirer, anxiously, "Indeed! for what?"

"For picking the locks o' the Crinan Canal!"

A NEW OPINION OF ADAM.

There must have been some curious specimens of humour brought out at the ministerial examinations of the flock before the administration of the sacrament. Thus, with reference to human nature before the fall, a farm-servant was asked—

"What kind of a man was Adam?"

"Oh, just like ither folk."

The minister insisted on having a more special description of the first man, and pressed for a further explanation.

"Weel," said the catechumen, "he was just like Joe Simpson, the horse couper."

"How so?" asked the minister.

"Weel, sir, just this way—nobody got onything by him, and mony lost."

AN HONEST WITNESS.

A minister in Aberdeenshire paid his devotions so often and so freely to the shrine of the jolly god, that the Presbytery could no longer overlook his proceedings, and summoned him before them to answer for his conduct. One of his elders, and a constant companion in his social hours, was cited as a witness against him.

"Well, John, did you ever see Mr C—— the worse for drink?"

"Weel a wat no; I've mony a time seen him to be the better o't, but I never saw him the waur o't."

"But did you ever see him drunk?"

"That's what I'll ne'er see; for lang or he's half-slocken'd, I'm aye blind fu'."

MAKING A BARGAIN.

"Have you ony letter for her nainsel' ta day?" asked an uncouth and newly-caught Highlander, as he entered a small post-office in the north.

"And who may her nainsel' be?" said the man of letters, shuffling over his little store of epistles, and imitating the phraseology of the querist.

"Ou ay, her name, you'll be askin' her name; weel, weel, since ye maun ken, its just Tonald M'Leod and nae mair," rejoined the Celt.

"M'Leod, M'Leod," repeated the

postmaster; "exactly so, here's a letter to Mr Donald M'Leod, son to Mr Hector M'Leod, gamekeeper to the laird of Clairnabrechan, and sixth cousin to the laird's ain wife," &c. &c. "Exactly so," added he, "all right; tenpence halfpenny postage." At this request the Highlander shrugged up his shoulders, and, taking a monstrous pinch from a horn-mull which he grasped in his sinister paw, asked, "If he widna tak eightpence ha'penny for her and be deen we't!"

"Toot, toot," said the postmaster, "you're a fool, you're a fool; down with your money."

"Na faise, I ken better nor that," said the economical Donald, "I will just give you ninepence for her, and not a bodle more, and it's teo much too." The postmaster was contumacious, and Donald equally so; so that, in all probability, the letter directed to the son of the gamekeeper of the Laird of Clairnabrechan was returned to head-quarters to be *interred* in the *dead* letter office.

FOLLOWING A FOOL'S ADVICE.

The Laird of Waterton, it is told, was held by Jamie Fleeman in especial aversion. One day, when the "feel" was lolling on a bank of the Ythan, basking himself in the sun, he was hailed from the other side of the water by the laird, who asked him where was the best ford. The malicious knave directed the laird to the deepest pool in the river, and, in attempting to cross it, he narrowly escaped drowning. When he arrived, sorely drenched, on the other side, he made up to Fleeman, and, in a voice hoarse with passion and cold water, accused the poor fool of a design to drown him. "Gosh be here, laird!" said he, "I've seen the geese and the dyeucks hunners o' times crossin' there; and I'm sure your horse has langer legs than the dyeucks or the geese either."

THE DEVIL'S CRADLE.

In a church not far north of Aberdeen, one of the members was in the habit of sleeping every Sabbath during the sermon. One day, however, the quietness and gravity of the church were fairly upset by the sleeper losing his equilibrium, and falling bump right on his head in the passage. The minister, who was an eccentric and quaint plain-spoken old man, stopped short in his sermon, and, addressing himself to the now wide-awake member, said, "John, ye've gotten mony a soun' sleep in the devil's cradle, but he has fairly coupit it on ye the day."

AN UNADMIRABLE WIFE.

An Aberdeenshire laird, who kept a very good poultry-yard, strangely enough could not command a fresh egg for his breakfast, and felt much aggrieved by the want. One day, however, he met his grieve's wife going towards the market, and, very suspiciously, with a nice basket. On passing and speaking a word, he discovered the basket was full of beautiful white eggs. Next time he talked with his grieve, he said to him—

"James, I like you very well, and I think you serve me faithfully, but I cannot say I admire your wife." To which the cool reply was—

"O deed, sir, I'm no surprised at that, for I dinna muckle admire her mysel'."

AN EVIL CUSTOM HAPPILY MET.

Shortly after the accession of James I., when Scotch gentlemen were beginning to feel at home in London, Lord Harewood gave a dinner party, to which were invited a large number of courtiers and officers, both civil and military. After the bottle had circulated freely,

and the spirits of the assembly had begun to rise, General S——, an English trooper of fame, and a reckless *bon vivant*, rose and said—

"Gentlemen, when I am in my cups, and the generous wine begins to warm my blood, I have an absurd custom of railing against the Scotch. Knowing my weakness, I hope no gentleman in the company will take it amiss." He sat down, and a Highland chief, Sir Robert Blackie of Blair Atholl, presenting a front like an old battle-worn tower, quietly rose in his place, and with the utmost simplicity and good-nature, remarked—

"Gentlemen, when I am in my cups, and the generous wine begins to warm my blood, if I hear a man rail against the Scotch, I have an absurd custom of kicking him at once out of the company. Knowing my weakness, I hope no gentleman will take it amiss." General S——did not on that occasion suffer himself to follow his usual custom.

SCOTTISH JUDGES FORTY YEARS AGO.

The Judges present were Boyle (the Justice-Clerk), and Lords Robertson, Bannatyne, and Craigie. After the usual wrangle at the Bar, the Court began to decide a commonplace cause. Glenlee, then about threescore and ten, had just commenced, when Clerk, who was counsel for one of the parties, rose, plainly to say something more, but in a way perfectly inoffensive, and though irregular not very unusual. Glenlee, contrary to his usual patience and good-breeding, instantly said—

"Na, Mr Clerk. I'm not to be interrupted. That's *really impertinent.*"

Clerk was in a blaze in a moment. "Impertinent!! *I wish you would say that anywhere else.*"

Glenlee, famous once at the small sword, and a thorough gentleman, instead of shrinking behind his gown, fired up too, and answered—"I'll say it *wherever you like!!*"

The Bar, and the audience, and the Bench were dumbfoundered. At last the head of the Court (Boyle) broke in, and declared that a gross impropriety had been committed, and that nothing could be done till Mr Clerk made an ample apology. Most people in the Court thought the apology ought rather to have been required from Glenlee. However, since it was imperatively ordered to be made by Clerk, I trembled for the result, for I expected him to repeat the defiance. But the instinct that never failed to come to his aid in every professional peril saved him. He kept his own, and gave the Lord worse than he had yet got.

"My Lord," said he, in a calm, firm, resolute style, "I'll make *no* apology!"

This produced another united *order* from all the Judges.

"Very well, my Lords," said Clerk, with a soft, sly sneer, "*since your Lordships will have it*, I'll make an apology!" But it shall be an apology *to the Court.* For I'll make *no* apology to *my Lord Glenlee!*"—(these last words with contemptuous burr.)

This made bad worse; and there was a more positive order for an instant apology "*to Lord Glenlee.*" Then came the triumph of Clerk's skill. Drawing himself up, full length, on his sound leg, and surveying them all, as a terrier does a rat that he means to worry at a bite, calmly and scornfully, and with a half-smiling leer at what he knew he was going to do, he said, steadily and coolly—

"Very well, my Lords, since *your Lordships insist upon't*, I now make an apology to Lord Glenlee, IN RESPECT OF YOUR LORDSHIPS' COMMANDS!!"

These last words were spoken with the utmost scorn—as much as to say, what the better are ye of that, my Lord?—*Lord Cockburn's Journal.*

A HEALTHY FAMILY.

John Gordon, who died near Turiff, Banffshire, some time ago, attained the remarkable age of a hundred and thirty-two years. All the travellers who chanced to call at the neighbouring inn of Turiff, were uniformly directed by the landlady, Mrs Wallace, to the cottage of the patriarch, where they would see, she used to say, the oldest man in Banffshire—"ay, or in the warld." Among the visitors one day about the close of harvest, was a young Englishman, who, coming up to the door of the cottage, accosted a venerable-looking man employed in knitting hose, with—

"So, my old friend, can you see to knit at your advanced period of life? one hundred and thirty-two is truly a rare age!"

"Deil's i' the man, it will be my grandfather ye're seeking—I'm only seventy-three—ye'll find him round the corner o' the house."

On turning round the corner, the stranger encountered a debilitated old man, whose whitened locks bore testimony to his having long passed the meridian of life, and whom the stranger at once concluded to be John Gordon himself.

"You seem wonderfully fresh, my good sir, for so old a man. I doubt not but you have experienced many vicissitudes in the course of your very long life."

"What's your wull, sir?" inquired the person addressed, whose sense of hearing was somewhat impaired. The observation was repeated.

"Oh, ye'll be wanting *my father*, I reckon—he's i' the yard there." The stranger now entered the garden, where he at last found the venerable old man busily employed in digging potatoes, and humming the ballad of the Battle of Harlaw. "I have had some difficulty in finding you, friend, as I successively encountered your grandson and son, both of whom I mistook for you: indeed they seem as old as yourself. Your labour is rather hard for one at your advanced age."

"It is," replied John, "but I'm thankfu' that I'm able for't, as the *laddies*, puir things, are no verra stout now."

The united ages of the worthy trio amounted to upwards of *three hundred years!*

A SHREWD YOUNG PRINCE.

Adam Newton, tutor to Prince Henry, son of James VI. (who died in his eighteenth year), was once irritated at losing a game at which he was playing with the Prince, and said,—

"I am meet for whipping boys."

"You vaunt, then," retorted the Prince, "that which a ploughman or cart-driver can do better than you."

"I can do more," said the tutor; "for I can govern foolish children."

On this the Prince, who in respect for his tutor would not carry the jest farther, rose from the table, and in a low voice said to those near him,—

"He had need be a wise man that could do that."

THE USE OF A BELL-ROPE.

A clergyman who read sermons beautifully, but was a poor hand at extemporary preaching, on a Saturday before the communion made an effort in the latter line by attempting to give the substance of a sermon he had heard that day preached by a friend. After proceeding a few sentences, however, he fairly came to a standstill. After gaping for a considerable time, he at length stammered out, "The bell will begin to ring to-morrow at eleven o'clock;" and announced the concluding psalm.

A wag sitting beneath whispered to

his neighbours, "Od, if he hadna got haud o' the bell-raip, he wad hae fa'n, as sure's ocht."

AN UNFORTUNATE TAILOR.

In the days of that infernal persecution of the innocent and independent covenanters, tailors had the clothes of both males and females to make among the common folks. There were no mantuamakers concerned with the rural natives in these times, and the women had a fashion of having pieces of lead about different points of their dresses, to make these points gravitate, in what was then considered the *bon mode;* so the sons of the "thimble" were obliged to have always plenty of this metal about them, that they might go on with their trade, and supply their customers.

One of these tailors fell unfortunately into the hands of a party of Grier(son) o' Lagg's men, as he was going to one of his houses to work, and these bloodsnckers finding lead in the pockets of the poor fellow, they instantly charged him that he was going to cast bullets with it.

In vain did the lad deny the charge, and still in vain did he implore them to mercy; then and there they bound a napkin to his eyes, and shot him through the heart.—*Mactaggart.*

A WORD TO WOULD-BE POETS.

Dr Jamieson, the Scottish lexicographer, was a little vain of his literary reputation, and, like many others who know not where their great strength lies, thought himself gifted with an intellectual ability to do everything. He published a poem entitled "Eternity." This poem, soon after publication, became the subject of conversational remark at a party where the doctor was present, and a lady was asked her opinion of it.

"It's a bonny poem," said she; "and it's weel named 'Eternity,' for it will ne'er be read in Time!"

THE TOWN PIPER OF FALKIRK.

"Once upon a time" the town piper of Falkirk was sentenced to be hanged for horse stealing. On the night before his execution he obtained as an indulgence the company of some of his brother pipers; and as the liquor was abundant, and their instruments in tune, the noise and fun grew "fast and furious." The execution was to be at eight o'clock in the morning. The poor piper, in the midst of his revelry, was recalled to a sense of his situation by the morning light dawning on the window. He suddenly silenced his pipe, and exclaimed—

"Oh, but that wearyfu' hangin' rings in my lug like a new tune."

A TRUE STORY, IF NOT OTHERWISE.

A Scotsman who had accidentally fallen over a six-storey window in Edinburgh, in his descent observed a friend looking out of a third-storey window and exclaimed contemplatively, "Eh man, Sandy, sic a fa' as I'm gaun to hae!"

Three or four clothes poles sticking out from several windows, however, acted as buffers and broke his fall, and, to the surprise of every one, he was found on the ground below coolly rubbing the dust off his coat tails, and ruefully saying—

"Deil tak thae heigh hooses; od, a body's life's no safe gin they happen to mistak the window for the door!"

VERY GRAVE DIGGING.

Geordie Girdwood, the ancient grave-digger of the Greyfriars' churchyard, was a remarkable member of his fraternity. He was an uncommonly drunken-looking, withered, little old man, with sore eyes. It was said of him, by the common people of Edinburgh, that he had, in the course of his professional duties, turned over the churchyard seven times. He died at an advanced age. Like Blair's sexton, he had a great turn for wit; but, unfortunately, his conversation smelt wofully of the shop, and that smell was not the most pleasing possible. A friend one day made up to him as he was digging a grave, and found him contemplating a skull, which he had just unearthed, and was holding in his hand. Knowing that Geordie was quite as well acquainted with the faces of the dead as he was with the living population of the parish of Greyfriars, the intruder asked him "who that had been."

"Ah! man," quoth Geordie; "this was the great preacher, Dr ———, ane of the ministers of Edinburgh. He was weel kenn'd to be a queer minister in his day. He could drink glass for glass wi' a big dinner party, till they were a' aneath the table but himsel'; and he would then gang into another room, call for the servants of the house, and give them a discourse, as well as if he had never tasted a drap. Ah, he's been lang dead and gane noo! Od, I believe, I've haen him sax times in my hands since I pat him first aneath the yirth! Deil care how mony mae times I may hae him to turn ower yet!"

EPITAPH ON SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON OF WHYTLAW, LORD JUSTICE-CLERK.

Stand, passenger, and pass not by,
Till that ye know who here doth lye.
A Lord he was, some time ago deceast,
Abhorer of King, Prophet, and of Priest,
And of Archbishops, Bishops, and their kynd;
Brawler of men who were not of his mynd.
His means were still his God, his dog, his child,
His wife the Dalilah who him beguiled;
His Scripture creed, and his new Gospel light,
Were all confined into his claim of right;
For which he's damned, and his body rotten;
He's mocked by the age, and his practiques forgotten.

Court of Session Garland.

AN EXPERT ENGINEER.

1319. There was in the service of the Scots one John Crab, a Fleming, esteemed a most expert engineer. He constructed a moveable crane, whereby stones of a great weight might be raised on high, and then let fall upon the enemy.—*Dalrymple.*

THE PULPIT AND THE AGE.

The notion that the pulpit is getting behind the age has long obtained considerable currency; and a young popular preacher, at Newmilns, one Sunday dauntlessly homologated the sentiment. One day afterwards, one of his hearers, a lady well advanced in years, while expressing her admiration of his sermon, thought she had observed one blemish in it, as every sun has its spots, and that was in his saying that the pulpit was behind the age.

"Indeed," said she, "he micht hae lutten the poopit alane for ae day, it micht he. And really naebody could wi' ony grace say the poopit was ahint the age, for its nearly a split new ane, it is't, and, cover't wi' braw red claith, micht please the best gentry in the kintra, it micht it."

Upon being shown that the meaning was that ministers were not keeping up in learning with other classes, and not so far before their congregations as they should be, she replied—

"That may be no—that may be ay; but as the ministers in my young days wad say among themsel's, in a kin' o' a joking way, they sood joost 'draw up t'er breeks;' tho' as wurrin the maist o' the young men noo are like as monie spinnles, it ir'ra, an' hae nae hainches to haud up breeks, it hinna they, an' maun tie them up wi' strings an' rhynies. But as oor young lad said—an' I see the drift o't tae—they sood, as he weel said, joost 'buckle up their sleeves' an' luk wark like, it sood they; for atweel, there plenty o' need for't baith here an' a' whaurs, it ir'ra."

THE PLAGUE IN SCOTLAND.

1361. The plague broke out again in Scotland, with redoubled violence, and continued its ravages through this year. It was computed, that one-third of the people perished in this great calamity; among them were many persons of distinction. The Earl of Angus died in his prison at Dumbarton, and some of the hostages died in England. —*Dalrymple.*

SHORT TEXTS.

A shrewd but homely Scottish matron, in speaking of preachers, said she "had nae great brew of the minister that had a lang screed of the Bible for a text; for she aye noticed that ae man's work was but little seen on a big job."

A SETTLER.

An English tourist met with a Scots lassie going barefoot towards Glasgow.

"Lassie," said he, "I should like to know if all the people in this part go barefooted?"

"Part o' them do, and the rest mind their own business," was the rather sharp reply.

THE BURGH-MUIR.

In 1504 the Borough-Muir, to the south of Edinburgh, was so overgrown with wood that the Town Council allowed the inhabitants to extend their houses seven feet forward into the street to get the wood disposed of, and this accounts for the wooden fronts still presented by some of the old houses in the High Street and closes adjoining.—*Anderson.*

AN EXECUTION IN 1600.

June 16. Robert Weir broken on a cart wheel, with ane coulter of a plough in the hand of the hangman, for murdering of the Guidman of Warriston.

WORK AFTER DEATH.

In a village in Aberdeenshire, where it was believed that the ghost of the person last buried kept the gate of the churchyard till relieved by the next victim of death, a singular scene frequently occurred when two burials were to take place in one churchyard on the same day. Both parties staggered forward as fast as possible to consign their respective friend in the first place to the dust. If they met at the gate, the dead were thrown down, till the living decided by blows whose ghost should be condemned to porter it. — *Stat. Account.*

THE "TAIL" OF A HIGHLAND CHIEF.

"Ah!" said Evan Dhu, "if you Saxon Duinhé-wassel (English gentle-

men) saw but the chief with his tail on!"

"With his tail on?" echoed Edward, in some surprise.

"Yes; that is, with all his usual followers, when he visits those of the same rank. There is," he continued, stopping and drawing himself proudly up, while he counted upon his fingers the several officers of his chief's retinue —"there is his *hanchman*, or right-hand man; then his *bard*, or poet; then his *bladier*, or orator, to make harangues to the great folks he visits; then his *gilly-more*, or armour-bearer, to carry his sword and target, and his gun; then his *gilly-casflinch*, who carries him on his back through the sikes and brooks; then his *gilly-comstrian*, to lead his horse by the bridle in steep and difficult paths; then his *gilly-trushharnish*, to carry his knapsack; and the piper and the piper's man; and it may be a dozen young lads beside, that have no business, but are just boys of the belt, to follow the laird, and do his honour's bidding."

"And does your chief regularly maintain all these men?" demanded Waverley.

"All these?" replied Evan; "ay, and many a fair head beside, that would not ken where to lay itself, but for the mickle barn at Glennaquoich."—*Waverley.*

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

Sir James Carvet, a Popish priest, being taken up for reading Mass in the Cowgate, contrary to an Act of Parliament; the Edinburghers arrayed him in his sacerdotal habiliments, and fixing a chalice in his hand, mounted him upon, and tied him to the Market Cross, where, for the first time, he was exposed for the space of an hour; during which he was severely pelted by the populace with rotten eggs. Nevertheless, he was the day after tried for the said offence, and the penalty, which was capital, converted into his being re-exposed on the Market Cross; where, instead of an hour, as at first, was sentenced to stand four, attended by the hangman; and the mob being very great, was more severely handled than at first.—*Maitland.*

"BLACK AGNES."

During the war which Edward III. maintained in Scotland, part of the English army, led on by Montague, besieged Dunbar, which the Countess of March, commonly called "Black Agnes," defended with uncommon courage and obstinacy. This extraordinary woman exhibited her scornful levity towards the besiegers, by ordering her waiting maids to brush from the walls the dust produced by their battering engines, and this in sight of the English; and when a tremendous warlike engine called a *sow*, approached the walls, the countess cried out,—

"Montague, beware! your sow shall soon cast her pigs."

At the same time she made a signal, when a huge fragment of a rock, which had been made ready on purpose, was hurled from the battlements upon the ponderous engine, and its roof was at once dashed in pieces. As the English soldiers enclosed within it were running in all directions to escape with their lives, the heroic lady scoffingly exclaimed —"Behold your litter of English pigs!"

A SELF-RIGHTEOUS SECEDER.

A tailor, who was a member of the Secession Church at Dunbarrow, parish of Dunnichen, where he had long resided, having occasion to remove with his family to a place considerably dis-

tant, where he was little known, and where there were but few Seceders, was, some time after his removal, kindly waited on by his former minister, who inquired, among other things, how he was finding work in his new situation.

"Ou, 'deed, sir," said the tailor, gravely, "I canna be enough thankfu': I'm doin' verra weel for wark here. I sew to a' our ain folk, an' to some o' the civilest o' the profane."

SCOTLAND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY.

Lady Minto, writing from Edinburgh, February 21, 1802, says, "This country has arrived at the true pitch of comfort and happiness. The people are full of information, are natural, unassuming, and social, but with a great mixture of occupation. People meet together to be pleased, cheerful, and easy; even the Scotch pride has its uses by putting the poor often on an equal footing with the rich. A Douglas or a Scott would consider himself on a par with persons of the highest title and rank; their education is equally good, their society the same, their spirit and love of their country possibly much greater. Almost every family can boast of heroes in some generation, which excites emulation; and nothing is so uncommon as to see idle men and listless manners. All is energy, and every one has some object in view to exercise his faculties and talents. I must say, at the present time, I think the race very superior to the English, who are too far gone in luxury and dissipation to be agreeable or happy. Morals here are certainly very good, and yet the manners are much more free, and one scarcely ever meets with affectation and airs. People meet like friends, and not with a cold bow and a distant curtsey."

SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE.

In an old Lanarkshire kirk, long ago, the minister was accustomed, in connection with the "occasion" or communion, to enumerate in detail different classes of offenders. Lady Betty, an elderly spinster, sat erect in her family pew, and in the pew next to hers sat a certain old bachelor laird, with whom she was on intimate terms. When the minister made mention of "card players and gamblers," the laird used politely but wickedly to offer his snuff-box across to Lady Betty, hoping that "her ladyship was hearin'." Then, when the minister, in due course, came to "profane swearers," &c., Lady Betty quietly bent over, and, tapping the laird with her fan on the shoulder, said, "Ye're no sleepin', laird, I hope?"

AN INDIRECT CURE.

1308. The Earl of Buchan, with Moubray, an English commander, assembled a numerous body of troops, eager to efface a dishonour of the former year. Not far from Inverury, in Aberdeenshire, the armies met. Bruce requested that he might be lifted from his couch, and placed on horseback. Too feeble to support himself, he was held up on each side. He led on his companions, charged and discomfited the enemy, and pursued them for many miles with great slaughter. It is a traditionary report, that, by the agitation of his spirits on that day, he was restored to health. "The insults of those men," said he, "have wrought my cure."—*Dalrymple.*

A SCOTTISH VICAR OF BRAY.

In Ruthwell churchyard is an inscription in memory of Mr Gawin Young, and Jean Stewart, his spouse. He was

ordained minister in 1617, when the church was presbyterian: soon after James VI. established a moderate sort of episcopacy. In 1638, the famous league and covenant took place: the bishops were deposed, and their power abolished: presbytery then flourished in the fulness of acrimony. Sectaries of all kinds invaded the church in Cromwell's time, all equally hating, persecuting, and being persecuted in their turns. In 1660, on the Restoration, episcopacy arrived at its plenitude of power, and presbyterianism was expelled; and that sect which in their prosperity showed no mercy now met with retributory vengeance. Mr Young maintained his post amidst all these changes, and, what is much to his honour, supported his character; was respected by all parties for his moderation and learning; lived a tranquil life; and died in peace, after enjoying his cure fifty-four years.

The epitaph on him, his wife, and family, merits preservation, if but to show the number of his children—

Far from our own, amids our own we ly;
Of our dear Bairns, thirty and one us by.

ANAGRAM.

Gavinus junius
Unius agni usui
Jean Steuart
a true saint
a true saint I live it, so I die it,
tho men saw no, my God did see it.
Pennant.

ROBBERIES IN EDINBURGH.

1554. The frequent robberies and disorders committed in the streets of Edinburgh by night, occasioned the council to order lanterns or bowets to be hung out in the streets and closes, by such persons, and in such places as the magistrates should appoint, to continue burning for the space of four hours, viz., from five o'clock in the evening till nine; which was judged a proper time for people to repair to their respective habitations.—*Maitland.*

CHICKENS IN THE HIGHLANDS.

Of all those ill-fated creatures that creep about a Highland inn, whose lives are short and precarious, there are none more precarious than those hordes of chickens of all sizes and denominations that are collected for the sustentation and consumption of hungry tourists. Unconscious of their fate, a dozen of these creatures will have their necks pulled, their bodies divested of their feathers, placed on a gridiron, and in less than one hour presented smoking as a *bon bouche* for the luxurious sons and daughters of the British plains.—*Stewart Grant.*

KING JAMES' "JOCKTELEG."

The word "jockteleg," which is still Scotch for a clasp-knife, was of unknown etymology till a knife was found with the inscription "Jacques de Liege," who was a famous cutler, and supplied Scotland with clasp knives. It is said of James VI. that, to puzzle his courtiers in England, he one day said to his stable boy, "Callan, hae, there's threttty pennies; gae wa and buy me a jockteleg; an' gin ye bide, I'll gang to the kipples o' the house, and tak a caber and reesle your riggin wi't."

A HIGHLAND EPITAPH.

There is something singularly beautiful and affecting in the following epitaph, which an old newspaper represents as translated from one in the parish church of Glenorchy, in Argyleshire:—

"Lo, she lies here in the dust, and her memory fills me with grief; silent is the tongue of Melody, and the hand of Elegance is now at rest. No more shall the poor give thee his blessing, nor shall the naked be warmed with the fleece of thy flock; the tear shalt thou not wipe away from the eye of the wretched. Where now, O feeble, is thy wonted help? No more, my Fair, shall we meet thee in the social hall; no more shall we sit at thy hospitable board. Gone for ever is the sound of mirth; the kind, the candid, the meek, is now no more. Who can express our grief! Flow, ye tears of woe!"

EDINBURGH IN 1612.

1612. Edinburgh, the speciall and head burgh in Scotland, chief justice seat of the realme, strongly builded with stone. The most part of the houses are five, sixe, or seven stories high, wherein is a goodly universitie, florishing in all sciences for instruction of the youth, fortified on the west with a most strong castle, builded upon a high rocke, kept by the king's captaines, which castle commands the said burgh, called of old the Maiden Castle, founded by Cruthneus Camelon, the first king of Picts, before the birth of our Saviour, 330 yeres, circuit upon the east, south, and west with a stone wall, and upon the north strengthened with a loch.—*Monipennie.*

BLACK-MAIL.

"And what is black-mail?"

"A sort of protection-money that low-country gentlemen and heritors, lying near the Highlands, pay to some Highland chief, that he may neither do them harm himself, nor suffer it to be done to them by others; and then, if your cattle are stolen, you have only to send him word, and he will recover them; or, it may be, he will drive away cows from some distant place, where he has a quarrel, and give them to you to make up your loss."—*Waverley.*

LINLITHGOW CASTLE.

In the county of Linlithgow there is an eminence called Binnie Crag, which rises to the height of about four hundred and fifty feet. In 1307, during the wars of independence under Robert the Bruce, a peasant named Binny, styled the William Tell of Scotland, by a successful stratagem, obtained possession of the Castle of Linlithgow, which was held by an English garrison under Peter Lubard. This daring exploit is thus related by Tytler in his History of Scotland: "Binny, who was known to the garrison, and had been employed in leading hay into the fort, communicated his design to a party of Scottish soldiers, whom he stationed in ambush near the gate. In his large wain he contrived to conceal eight armed men, covered with a load of hay; a servant drove the oxen, and Binny himself walked carelessly at his side. When the portcullis was raised, and the wain stood in the middle of the gateway, interposing a complete barrier to its descent, the driver cut the ropes which harnessed the oxen; upon which signal the armed men suddenly leapt from the cart, the soldiers in ambush rushed in, and so complete was the surprise that with little resistance the garrison were put to the sword, and the place taken." According to tradition, six of the armed men concealed in the wain were Binny's sons. Bruce rewarded the brave peasant with a grant of the lands of Easter Binning, and his descendants long survived, bearing in their coat of arms a hay wain, with the motto, "virtute doloque."

SCOTS MONEY IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

The money in circulation in Scotland in the 12th century appears to have been of silver only. Indeed, down to the reign of Robert the Second, the gold coinage of England, then current in Scotland, seems to have been the only gold money in use. Of the early silver money of Scotland, the most ancient specimens yet found are the pennies of Alexander the First, which are now extremely rare. They are described as being of the same firmness, weight, and form as the contemporary English coins of the same denomination, and down to the time of Robert the First, the money of Scotland was precisely of the same value and standard as that of England.

SCOTCH "WUT."

An English gentleman recently arrived at a hotel in the North of Scotland late in the afternoon, and asked the waitress to get him something to eat.

"What will you have, sir?"

"Roast goose and peas, if you have it."

"Goose! then you maun gang on the spit yoursel', sir," said the smiling attendant, as she left the apartment.

A CURLING LORD.

During the curling season the landowners, yeomanry, and athletic males of the country side meet on "the roaring rink." A former Earl of Eglinton was an enthusiastic curler, and when the ice was keen was seldom absent from the meetings of his club on the Kilwinning curling-pond. Con, a farmer and innkeeper, was director of the earl's party. When his lordship's curling-stone was moving in the right direction, Con would exclaim, besom overhead—

"Come on, Eglinton, my boy; I like ye, come on."

If the stone made a decided hit, he would add, "Man, lord, that's grand."

When the stone missed, he would, unable to restrain himself, call out, "Dag on't, Eglinton, ye've spoilt a'."

A ROYAL COMPLIMENT.

Sir Gideon Murray, ancestor of Lord Elibank, held the office of treasurer-depute of Scotland under King James the Sixth, with whom he was a great favourite. Once, when upon a visit to the king at London, happening to drop his glove in the bed-chamber, and no other person being present, James, though old and stiff, stooped and lifted it up, saying, "My predecessor, Queen Elizabeth, thought she did a favour to any man who was speaking with her, when she let her glove fall, that he might take it up and give it to her again; but, sir, you may say that a king lifted up your glove."—*R. Chambers.*

A NEST-EGG.

An old maid, who kept house in a thriving weaving village, was much pestered by the young knights of the shuttle constantly entrapping her serving-women into the willing noose of matrimony. This, for various reasons, was not to be tolerated. She accordingly hired a woman sufficiently ripe in years, and of a complexion that the weather would not spoil. On going with her, the first day after the term, to "make her markets," they were met by a group of strapping young weavers, who were anxious to get a peep at the "leddy's new lass." One of them, looking more eagerly into the face of the favoured handmaid than the rest,

and then at her mistress, could not help involuntarily exclaiming, "Hech, mistress, ye've gotten a nest-egg noo!"

FIRES IN SCOTLAND.

1244. About this time Haddington, Rokesburgh, Lanerk, Stirling, Perth, Forfar, Montrose, and Aberdeen, were consumed by accidental fire.—*Dalrymple.*

A PLAIN SPOKEN MINISTER.

The minister of a rural parish having, in a season of protracted drought, neglected, as his hearers thought, to pray for rain, was waited upon by a deputation to remonstrate with him on the omission.

"Weel a weel," he replied, after hearing what they had to say, "I'll pray for't to please ye; but the feint a drap ye'll get till the change o' the moon!"

GRETNA GREEN MARRIAGES.

At a little distance from the bridge over the Sark, stop at the little village of Gretna, the resort of all amorous couples, whose union the prudence of parents or guardians prohibits; here the young pair may be instantly united by a fisherman, a joiner, or a blacksmith, who marry from two guineas a job to a dram of whisky; but the price is generally adjusted by the information of the postilions from Carlisle, who are in the pay of one or other of the above worthies; but even the drivers, in case of necessity, have been known to undertake the sacerdotal office. If the pursuit of friends proves very hot, and there is not time for the ceremony, the frightened pair are advised to slip into bed; are shown to the pursuers, who, imagining that they are irrecoverably united, generally retire and leave them.

This place is distinguished from afar by a small plantation of firs, the Cyprian grove of the place, a sort of landmark for fugitive lovers. As I had a great desire to see the high-priest, by stratagem I succeeded; he appeared in the form of a fisherman—a stout fellow, in a blue coat, rolling round his solemn chops a quid of tobacco of no common size. One of our party was supposed to come to explore the coast: we questioned him about his price; which, after eyeing us attentively, he left to our honour. The Church of Scotland do what they can to prevent these clandestine matches, but in vain, for these infamous couplers despise the fulmination of the kirk, and excommunication is the only penalty it can inflict.—*Pennant.*

A BOLD ANSWER.

The brave Sir Walter Scott of Buccleugh, having rescued Kinmonth Willie, the celebrated reiver, from his place of confinement at Carlisle, was summoned by Elizabeth, to answer for his misdeed at her court. On being introduced to the presence of her majesty, she upbraided him with great bitterness, and concluded by saying, that she wondered how he dared to do what he had done. "Madam," said the high-spirited borderer, turning away from her with contempt, "what is there that a man dare not do?"

PUNISHMENT OF A SUICIDE.

1600, Feby. 20. Thomas Dobbie drowned himself in the Quarry Holes, besyde the Abbey; and upon the morn he was harilt through the town backward, and thereafter hangit on the gallows.

BURNS: A CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM.

The following brief but discriminating criticism on the poems of Burns appeared in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, October 1786, immediately after the "Edinburgh," or second, edition of the work was published:—

The author is indeed a striking example of native genius bursting through the obscurities of poverty and the obstructions of laborious life. He is said to be a common ploughman; and when we consider him in this light, we cannot help regretting that wayward fate had not placed him in a more favoured situation. Those who view with the severity of lettered criticism, and judge by the fastidious rules of art, will discover that he has not the Doric simplicity of Ramsay, nor the brilliant imagination of Fergusson; but to those who admire the exertions of untutored fancy, and are blind to many faults for the sake of numberless beauties, his poems will afford singular gratification. His observations on human characters are acute and sagacious, and his descriptions are lively and just. Of rustic pleasantry he has a rich fund; and some of his softer scenes are touched with inimitable delicacy. He seems to be a boon companion, and often startles us with a dash of libertinism which will keep some readers at a distance. Some of his subjects are serious, but those of the humorous kind are the best.

BOTH RIGHT.

A worthy old Ayrshire farmer had the portraits of himself and his wife painted. When that of the husband, in an elegant frame, was hung over the fireplace, the gudewife remarked in a sly manner—

"I think, gudeman, noo that ye've gotten your picture hung up there, we should just put in below't, for a motto like, 'Aye richt!'"

"Deed may ye, my woman," replied her husband in an equally pawkie tone; "and when ye get yours hung up ower the sofa there, we'll just put up anither motto on't, and say, 'Never wrang!'"

THE BRANK.

The magistrates of Langholm are very attentive to the suppression of all excessive exertions of that unruly member the tongue; the *Brank*, an instrument of punishment, is always in readiness, and I was favoured with a sight: it is a sort of headpiece, that opens and incloses the head of the impatient, while an iron, sharp as a chisel, enters the mouth, and subdues the more dreadful weapon within. This had been used a month before; and as it cut the poor female till blood gushed from each side of her mouth, it would be well that the judges in this case would, before they exert their power again, consider not only the humanity, but the legality of it.

The learned Doctor Plot has favoured the world with a minute description and a figure of the instrument, and tells us he looks on it "as much to be preferred to the *ducking stool*, which not only endangers the health of the party, but also gives the tongue liberty 'twixt every dip; to neither of which this is at all liable."—*Pennant.*

"SHOOTING AMONG THE DOOS."

This expression is used in Scotland as an equivalent to the English phrase "drawing the long bow."

It is told, in the county of Angus, that, in a former age, when the use of a Scottish proverb, or of the Scots language, was not deemed vulgar by a native of the northern part of the island, a newly-married lady, who was a stranger in that district, had heard her

husband mention to one of his friends that such a gentleman, who was invited to dinner, was thought to *shoot among the doos*. She immediately became alarmed; and scarcely had the gentleman taken his seat at the dinner-table, when she said to him with great eagerness—

"Oh! sir, I have a great favour to ask of you. My husband says you shoot among the doos: now, as I am very fond of my pigeons, I beg ye winna meddle with them!"—*Jamieson.*

PARACLETE AND PARAKYTE.

A certain pedantic young preacher, fresh from college, and eager to display his talents, was one day descanting on the *Paraclete*, which word he made use of so often that an old woman remarked, at the close of the service, "I ha'e heard a vast lot o' queer discoorses in my time, but the like o' that never. It's a black burning shame that ony man should be allowed to profane the Lord's house on the Sabbath-day wi' sic rigmarole havers about a parakyte—that's the name, ye ken, o' the braw fool that Captain Goldie brought hame till his mother frae some o' the outlandish places that he sails tae. I would advise that birkie to ha'e dune wi' the pu'pit; it would ser' him better to be learning macaws and cockytoos to clatter nonsense like himsel', than attemptin' to preach the Word to decent Christians."

ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF DOUGLAS.

According to popular tradition, the first of this great family came to distinction on account of his achievements in one of Bruce's battles. When the conflict had ceased, Bruce enquired after the hero whose feats he had such particular occasion to admire; and, in doing so, described him (in Gaelic) as the *dhuglas*—that is, "the dark-grey man." This supplied him with a name.

READING AND READING.

Dr Chalmers used to "read" his sermons. One day, while dining with a friend, the conversation happened to turn on the intense dislike of the common people in Scotland to the reading of sermons, or "the paper," as it was called. One of the company remarked, that if ministers who read would do it with more spirit, the popular prejudice would ere long disappear, adding that she knew of a country wife who, in spite of her great general abhorrence of the *paper*, was much attached to the preaching of a reading minister, and who, on this strange inconsistency being remarked upon, replied, in her own defence, "Ay, very true; but then he has *pith* wi' his paper."

"That reminds me," said Dr Chalmers, "of an old anecdote of myself. A friend of mine expressing his surprise to a country woman in Fife, that she who so hated reading should yet be so fond of Mr Chalmers, she replied, with a serious shake of the head, 'Nae doubt; but it's *fell readin' thon!*'"

THE SCOTS DIALECT.

In the *Scots Magazine* for November 1743, the following appears as "A specimen of the dialect spoke in some country places of Scotland":—

All brethren and sisters, I let you to witt that there is a twa-year-auld lad littleane tint, that ist' ere'en.

It's a' scabbit i' the how hole o' the neck o'd, and a cauler kale-blade and brunt butter at it, that ist'er. It has a meickle maun blue pouch hingin at the carr side o'd, fou o' mullers and chuckystanes, and a spindle and a whirle, and it's daddy's ain jockteleg in't. It's a'

black aneath the nails wi' houkin' o' yird, that is't. . . . It has its daddy's cravatt ty'd about the craig o'd, and hingin down the back o'd. The back o' the hand o'd's a' brunt; it got it i' t' smiddy ae day.

Wha' e'er can find this said twa-year-auld lad littleane, may repair to *M——o J——n's*, town-smith in *C——n*, and he shall hae for reward quall bear sconns, and a ride o' our ain auld beast to bear him hame, and nae mair words about it, that wilt'er no.

TAM FLECK.

Tam Fleck was a "flichty chield" belonging to Peebles, and was the envied possessor of a copy of the works of Josephus, the Jewish historian. Not particularly steady at his legitimate occupation, Tam struck out a new line of employment for himself by going about the houses of the cottars and small weavers of the town in the evenings with his Josephus, which he read to his hearers as the current news of the day. It was his practice not to read more than two or three pages at a time, which he interlarded with very original and sagacious remarks of his own by way of foot-notes; and in this way he contrived to sustain the interest of the narrative to an extraordinary degree. Retailing the matter with great equability in different households, Tam kept all at the same point of information, and wound them up with a corresponding anxiety as to the issue of some moving event in Hebrew annals.

"Weel, Tam, what's the news the nicht?" one of his customers would say, as he appeared with his *Josephus* under his arm.

"Bad news, bad news," would be Tam's reply. "Titus has begun to besiege Jerusalem; it's gaun to be a terrible business," as he took his seat and proceeded to open his budget of intelligence. The protracted and severe famine which was endured by the besieged Jews was a theme which kept several families in a state of agony for a week; and when Tam, in the course of his reading, came to the final conflict and destruction of the city by the Roman general, there was a perfect paroxyism of horror.—*W. Chambers.*

MRS BLOWER ON STAGE PLAYS.

Even the Doctor's eloquence could not press Mrs Blower into the scheme, although she was particularly wanted to represent Thisbie.

"Truth is," she replied, "I dinna greatly like stage plays. John Blower, honest man, as sailors are aye for some spree or another, wad tak me ance to see Mrs Siddons. I thought we should hae been crushed to death before we gat in—a' my things riven aff my back, forbie the four lily-white shillings that it cost us—and then in came three frightsome carlines wi' besoms, and they wad bewitch a sailor's wife. I was lang eneugh there, and out I wad be, and out John Blower gat me, but wi' nae sma' fight and fend. My Lady Penelope Penfitter, and the great folk, may just tak it as they like; but in my mind, Dr Cacklehen, it's a mere blasphemy for folk to gar themselves look otherwise than their Maker made them; and then the changing the name which was given them at baptism is, I think, an awfu' fallin' away from our vows; and though Thisbie, which I take to be Greek for Tibbie, may be a very good name, yet Margaret was I christened, and Margaret will I die."—*St Ronan's Well.*

ISLANDS IN THE FORTH.

In the middle of Forth, upon a rock, is the fortresse and decayed castle of Inchgarvy. By east lies, in the same

water, St Colm's Inch, with a demolished abbey abundant with conies, and good pasturing for sheep. Next, in the mid Firth, lyes Inchkeith, with a demolished fortressie, fertile of conies, and gud for pasturing of sheep. East from Inchkeith, within Forth, lyes a verie high and big rock, invironed with the sea, called the Basse, invincible, having upon the top a fresh spring, where the Solanie geese repayre much, and are very profitable to the owner of the said strength. Next the Basse, in mouth of Forth, lyes the Isle of May, a mile long, and three quarters of a mile in bredth. There was a religious house, with many fresh water springs, with a fresh loch, abundant with eeles. This isle is a goodly refuge for saylers in time of tempest.—*Monniepennie.*

A HIGHLANDER PUZZLED.

A drover, fresh from the land of heather, and whose knowledge of the sea and its ebb and flow was confined to the grand idea of its magnitude, arrived one day at the Craig Pier, with a flock of sheep, intending to cross over to Fife. It being low water, and the boat already well laden, the captain told him that he must wait for an hour, as he was afraid he would not have water enough to float from the pier.

"Water enough!" quoth John Highlandman, with the utmost amazement. "Och, man! if ye dinna hae water enough in the muckle sea, where will you'll get it?"

ELF-SHOTS.

"Elf-shots," or arrow-heads of flint, were formerly used in the Highlands as amulets.

"While she spoke, she was searching about her bed, and at length produced a small stone, shaped something like a gun flint. 'Now,' proceeded she, 'ye'll just sew that within the lining of your stays, lady; or, with your leave, in the band of your petticoat; and there'll naebody *can* harm you.' These bolts are believed to be discharged by fairies with deadly intent. Nevertheless, when once in the possession of men they are accounted talismans against witchcraft, evil-eyes, and elvish attacks. They are especially used in curing all such diseases of cattle as may have been afflicted by the malice of unholy powers."—*Miss Ferrier.*

THE FEET-WASHING.

The eve of the wedding-day is termed the *feet-washing*,—when a party of the neighbours of the bride and bridegroom assemble at their respective houses. A tub of water is brought in, in which the feet of the party are placed, and a small piece of silver or copper money dropped into the water; but at this moment one of the company generally tosses in a handful of soot, by which the water is completely blackened. A most eager and ludicrous scramble now takes place among the lads and lasses, striving who shall get the piece of money, pushing, shoving, and splashing above the elbows; for the lucky finder is to be the first married of the company. A second and more cleanly ablution afterwards takes place.—*Edin. Mag.*

THE PIG A WEATHER PROPHET.

Grumphie smells the weather,
And Grumphie sees the wun;
He kens when cluds will gather,
And smoor the blinking sun;
He to his den will gae:
Grumphie is a prophet, bad weather
we will hae.

A HIZZIE-FALLOW.

A hizzie-fallow, a wife-carle, or cot-quean, is a man who interferes with his wife's domestic duties, or who attends more to housewifery than becomes his sex.

"Are things no dear aneugh already, that ye maun be raising the very fish on us, by giving that randy, Lucky Mucklebackit, just what she likes to ask? An' ye will be a wife-carle and buy fish at your ain hands, ye suld never bid mickle mair than a quarter."—*The Antiquary.*

LAST SEDAN-CHAIR IN EDINBURGH.

Miss Jean Elliot, the gifted author of the version of the "Flowers of the Forest" beginning, "I've heard them lilting," is said to have been the last lady in Edinburgh who, after the era of the fly, kept standing in her lobby a private sedan-chair, in which she was borne abroad by the last of the caddies when she wanted to take an airing or to make a call.

A SCOTCH ANSWER.

A clergyman, who owed his situation to his patron rather than to his abilities, in visiting his parishioners for the purpose of catechising them, asked one old stern Presbyterian—

"Who made Paul a preacher?"

"It wasna the Duke of Queensberry," replied the old man, with a grim smile.

"IT'S DONE, SIR."

A minister, who sacrificed rather freely to the jolly god, having made his libation one Sunday morning, proceeded to the discharge of his ministerial duties. The melody of the psalm, operating with the inward potation, lulled him asleep, and the people had finished their praises ere he had finished his nap. The precentor finding it necessary to wake him, gently touched him, and whispered, "It's done, sir."

"Weel, weel, Kirsty," replied the minister, in an audible whisper, "just fill't again out o' the greybeard!"

ANOTHER MATTER.

When the French Cuirassiers pounced down upon the Twenty-First, at Dettingen, Sir Andrew Agnew, deeming it impossible to withstand their charge, ordered the regiment to fall back from the centre by right and left. The cuirassiers rushed madly into the lane they had formed, believing that the line had been broken. The Fusiliers then delivered a volley, and, charging with the bayonet, nearly annihilated the French cavalry. The King did not fail to perceive the movement and its result.

"Ah, Sir Andrew," said his Majesty, pleasantly, after the battle—"the *gens d'armes* got in among you to-day!"

"Ou ay, yer Majesty," answered the brave Scottish knight; "but they didna get out again!"

EDINBURGH VOLUNTEERS.

After the war broke out again in 1803, Edinburgh, like every other place, became a camp, and continued so till the peace in 1814. We were all soldiers one way or other. Professors wheeled in the college area; the side-arms and the uniform peeped from behind the gown at the bar, and even on the bench; and the parade and the review formed the staple of men's talk and thoughts. Hope, who had kept his lieutenant-colonelcy when he was Lord Advocate, adhered to it, and did all his duties after he became Lord Justice-

Clerk. This was thought unconstitutional by some; but the spirit of the day applauded it. Brougham served the same gun in a company of artillery with Playfair. James Moncrieff, John Richardson, James Grahame (the *Sabbath*), Thomas Thomson, and Charles Bell, were all in one company of riflemen. Francis Horner walked about the streets with a musket, being a private in the Gentlemen Regiment. Dr Gregory was a soldier, and Thomas Brown the moralist, Jeffrey, and many another since famous in more intellectual warfare. I, a gallant captain, commanded ninety-two of my fellow-creatures from 1804 to 1814—the whole course of that war. Eighty private soldiers, two officers, four sergeants, four corporals, and a trumpeter, all trembled (or at least were bound to tremble) when I spoke. —*Cockburn.*

ON JAMES CRAIG'S MONUMENT, IN HADDINGTON CHURCHYARD.

Hout Atropos! hard hearted hag,
To cut the sheugh of Jamie Craig;
For had he liv'd a wheen mae years,
He had been o'er teugh for your sheirs.
Now Jamie's dead, sae man we a',
And for his sake I'll say this sa,
In heien Jamie be thy saul!

A COWARDLY TRIUMPH.

After the final overthrow of the Highland army at Culloden, a species of triumph was exhibited in Edinburgh, in full accordance with the magnanimity of the duke, who claimed the entire credit of a victory achieved rather by the policy of Duncan Forbes of Culloden. Fourteen of the standards that had been taken from the insurgents were burned at the Market Cross with every mark of contempt. They were ignominiously carried thither by chimney-sweepers,—the Prince's own standard being particularly distinguished by being borne by the common hangman; and, as each was thrown into the fire, the heralds proclaimed the names of the commanders to whom they had belonged.—*Wilson's Memorials.*

SCOTCH WASHING.

I shall take notice of one thing more, which is commonly to be seen by the sides of the river, and that is, young women with their coats tucked up, stamping, in tubs, upon linen by way of washing; and this not only in summer, but in the hardest frosty weather, when their legs and feet are almost literally as red as blood with the cold; and often two of these wenches stamp in one tub, supporting themselves by their arms thrown over each other's shoulders.—*Burt.*

JUSTICE'S JUSTICE.

A boy was brought before a Glasgow magistrate, charged with stealing a handkerchief from a gentleman's pocket. The indictment having been read, the bailie, addressing the boy, said:

"I hae nae doot ye did the deed, for I had a handkerchief ta'en out o' my ain pouch this vera week, so you maun gang to the jail for sixty days."

A friend of the boy's remarked that the case had not been proved against him.

"Oh then, in that case," replied the worthy bailie, "I'll just gie ye thirty days."

On being again informed that even this sentence was a strain upon the law, he finally disposed of the case by saying:

"Weel, my lad, the evidence is a wee bit jimp this time, so I'll let ye aff; but see and no do't again!"

NO DECEPTION.

Dr Skene Ogilvy carried his contempt of the external appearances of religion to a length which some were disposed to regard as inconsistent with the gravity of the clerical character. In reference to this trait, he used to relate the following with glee :—Soon after his settlement at Skene, he overheard the beadle and the sexton of the parish discussing his merits as a preacher.

"I dinna think," said the sexton, "that our new man has the religion o' the auld."

"Weel," rejoined the beadle, "if he has nae the religion, he pretends to just as little."

A STRANGER IN THE COURT OF SESSION.

The "Daft Highland Laird," a noted character in Edinburgh at the latter end of last century, one day accosted the Hon. Henry Erskine as he was entering the Parliament House. Erskine inquired of the "laird" how he did.

"Oh, very well!" answered the laird; "but I'll tell ye what, Harry, tak in Justice wi' ye," pointing to one of the statues over the old porch of the House; "for she has stood lang i' the outside, and it would be a treat to see her inside, like other strangers!"

MANNERS.

William Martin was at one time a book auctioneer in Edinburgh. He was no great scholar, and occasionally made some humorous blunders during the exercise of his vocation. One night he had made a clumsy attempt to unravel the title of a French book. A young dandy, wishing to have a laugh at Martin's expense, asked him to read the title again, as he did not quite understand him.

"Oh!" said Martin, "it's something about manners, and that's what neither you nor me has ower muckle o'."

THOMAS TYRE'S EPITAPH, IN WEST KILBRIDE CHURCHYARD.

Here lie the banes of Thomas Tyre,
Who lang had drudg'd through dub and mire,
In carrying bundles and sik lyke,
His task performing with small fyke.
To deal his snuff Tam aye was free,
And serv'd his friend for little fee.
His life obscure was nothing new,
Yet we must own his faults were few.
Although at Yule he sup'd a drap,
And in the kirk whiles took a nap;
True to his word in every case,
Tam scorn'd to cheat for lucre base.
Now he is gane to taste the fare,
Which none but honest men will share.

He died 2 January 1795, aged 72 and ½.

SEEKING A SITUATION IN 1710.

To the much Honoured the
LADY THUNDERTON—These:

"RANES, HUNTLY, *Jan.* 30*th*, 1710.

"MADAM,—Robert Gordon has writ now twice to my father (as by your ladyship's desire as I suppose) concerning me, if I be willing and fit for your service. In his last he desires I should writ to your ladyship to show that I can sow white and coloured seam, dress headsuits, play on the Treble and Gambo, Viol, Virginelles, and Manicords, which I can do, but on no other. He desires to let know what fie I wold have, which is threttie pound and gown and coat, or then fourtie pound and shoes and linnens, which is for a year. If those terms please your ladyship, I am content to serve for half-a-year conform, to try if I please your ladyship.

I

I expect an answer with the first occasion; and I am, Madam, your most humble servant,

JEAN CHEIN.

Dunbar-Dunbar.

TAR-MARKING FOR THE LADIES.

When the wearing of patches came first in fashion, an old Angus laird, who was making a visit to a neighbouring baronet, on observing that one of the young ladies had both ear-rings and patches, cried out in feigned surprise, and in obvious allusion to the means employed by store-farmers for preserving their sheep:

"Wow, wow! Mrs Janet, your father's been michtilie fleyd for tyning you, that he's baith lug-markit ye and tar-markit ye!"

POST HASTE!

Feb. 1787. A mercer in Edinburgh lately received some valuable goods from London by the mail-coach in the short space of five days and sixteen hours from the time he commissioned them. The letter was sent off on Wednesday afternoon, and on the Tuesday following, at eight o'clock in the morning, the goods were delivered at his shop.—*Scots Mag.*

THE MACDONALD'S DISEASE.

There is a disease called *Glacach* by the Highlanders, which, as it affects the chest and lungs, is evidently of a consumptive nature. It is called "The Macdonald's disease," because there are particular tribes of Macdonalds who are believed to cure it with the charms of their touch, and the use of a certain set of words. There must be no fee given of any kind, as it completely nullifies the effect of the charm. The faith of the peasantry in the efficacy of the touch of a Macdonald is very great. —*Stat. Account.*

PLATCHES, OR PLAIN-SOLES.

There is a superstition in Roxburghshire that, if you are going on a journey on Monday morning, and meet a man who has *platches* or plain-soles, it is necessary that you should turn again, as it is an evil omen. The only way to prevent the bad effect of so fatal an occurrence is to return to your own abode, to enter it with the right foot foremost, and to eat and drink. Then you may safely resume your journey, the spell being dissolved.

A HINT TO THE CLERGY.

The General Assembly, 1575, in regulating the dress of ministers, say:—

"We think all kind of broidering unseemly, all begairies of velvet in gown, hose, or coat; all superfluous or vain-cutting out, steeking with silks; all kind of costly sowing-on of pasments, or sumptuous and large steeking with silks; all kind of costly sowing or variant hewes in shirts; all kind of light and variant hewes of clothing, as Red, Blue, Yellow, and such like, which declare the lightness of the mind."—*Calderwood.*

A BRAVE OLD LAIRD.

The day before the battle of Glenlivet, the Marquis of Huntly came to the house of Pitlurg of Cairnborrow, and applied to his wife, who was supposed to rule the roast, for her assistance. She said she had got short warning; but that her old man, with her eight sons, with a jackman and a footman to each,

should attend him immediately. Huntly thanked her, and after some conversation desired Cairnborrow, who never spoke a word, to stay at home, telling him, that at his advanced years it was not proper to take him, especially as he had so many of his sons. The old man heard him out, and, shrugging up his shoulders, said—

"Na, na, my lord, I'll blead the whelps mysel'; they'll bite the better."

This was the reply at once of a sportsman and a soldier, and the whole family went to battle with the laird at their head. They defeated Argyle, and returned to Cairnborrow.

"NO COMPLIMENTS."

An aged divine had occasionally to avail himself of the assistance of probationers. One day a young man, very vain of his accomplishments as a preacher, officiated, and, on descending from the pulpit, was met by the old gentleman with extended hands.

Expecting high praise, he said—

"No compliments, I pray."

"Na, na, na, my young friend," said the minister; "now-a-days I'm glad o' onybody!"

THE BOUNDS OF MODERATION.

A minister once preached a sermon against intemperance, a vice very prevalent in his parish, and from which, report says, he was not himself wholly exempt.

"Whatever ye do, brethren," said he, "do it in moderation, and, aboon a', be moderate in dram-drinking. When ye get up, indeed, ye may tak a dram, and anither just before breakfast, and perhaps anither after; but dinna be always dram-drinking. If ye are out in the morning, ye may just brace yoursel' wi' anither dram, and tak anither in the forenoon, but dinna be always dram—dramming. Naebody can scruple for ane just afore dinner; and when the dessert is brought in, and after it's ta'en awa'; and perhaps ane, or it may be twa, in the course of the afternoon, just to keep you frae drowsying and snoozling; but dinna be always drinking. Afore tea, and after tea, and between tea and supper, and before and after supper, is no more than right and gude; but let me caution ye, brethren, no to be always dram—dramming. Just when you're gaun to bed, and when your ready to pop into't, and perhaps when ye wake in the night, to tak a dram or twa is no more than a Christian may lawfully do; but, brethren, let me caution you not to drink more than I've mentioned, or maybe ye may pass the bounds o' moderation."

GREAT FIRE IN GLASGOW.

On the 17th July 1652, a dreadful fire took place, which had nearly ruined the city of Glasgow. The fire broke out in a narrow lane on the east side of the High Street, and, having destroyed a great number of houses in that neighbourhood, the flames were communicated to the Saltmarket, by which the houses on both sides were totally consumed; from this the conflagration extended to the Trongate, Gallowgate, and Bridgegate streets, destroying everything in its way. At length, after eighteen hours, the violence of the consuming element somewhat abated towards evening; but on the following morning it again broke out, and burned violently till noon. By this disastrous event nearly one-third of the city was destroyed. The citizens were obliged to betake themselves to huts in the fields, not less than one thousand families being deprived of their habitations, the loss, which was estimated at £100,000, was too great for the town

to bear; they were, therefore, under the necessity of applying to other towns for relief. To this cause, however afflicting, the city was subsequently indebted for the regular arrangement of the streets, and the erection of stone buildings, the houses being chiefly formed of timber previous to the fire.—*Cleland.*

SPINNING WITHOUT TOW.

As a verbose preacher was addressing the congregation on a communion occasion, one by one his ministerial brethren dropped out of the church into the vestry. As the last one who left put his head into the vestry, those who preceded him inquired if the prolix speaker had not yet finished his address.

"Weel," said he, "his tow's dune lang syne, but he's aye spinnin' yet."

A DIFFICULT UNDERTAKING.

At a meeting of the inhabitants of the Gorbals, Glasgow, Bailie Mitchell in the chair, it was resolved and unanimously agreed, that a new bridge be erected on the site of the present wooden one, at the foot of Portland Street, and that the bridge trustees be requested to repair and keep open the said wooden bridge till the new one be built!

HIGHLAND ANCESTRY.

A dispute arose between a Campbell and a M'Lean upon the never-ending subject of their ancestors. M'Lean would not allow that the Campbells had any right to rank with the M'Leans in antiquity, who, he insisted, were in existence as a clan from the beginning of the world. Campbell had a little more biblical knowledge than his antagonist, and asked him if the clan M'Lean was before the flood?

"Flood? what flood?" said M'Lean.

"The flood that, you know, drowned all the world but Noah and his family and his flocks," said Campbell.

"Pooh! you and your flood," said M'Lean, "my clan was afore ta flood."

"I have not read in my Bible," said Campbell, "of the name of M'Lean going into Noah's ark."

"Noah's ark!" retorted M'Lean, in contempt; "who ever heard of a M'Lean tat had not a boat of his own!"

A PROUD DOMINIE.

While a youth, Dr Chalmers was for a time under the scholastic charge of Mr Daniel Ramsay. There was a dash of eccentricity in this same dominie. When the whole powers of the kingdom lay for a short time in the hands of the Duke of Wellington, he wrote to his Grace in the true schoolmaster spirit, but with almost as much wisdom as wit—that he could tell him how to do the most difficult thing he had in hand, namely, to cure the ills of Ireland; he should just take, he told him, "the taws in the tae hand, and the Testament in the tither." Engrossed as he was, the Duke sent an acknowledgment, signed by himself, and for some time it was difficult to say which of the two Daniel Ramsay was proudest of—having taught Dr Chalmers, and so laid, as he was always accustomed to boast, the foundation of his fame, or of having instructed the Duke of Wellington as to the best way of governing Ireland, and having got an answer from his Grace himself.

BREAKING BREAD.

When a bride is conducted home to the bridegroom's house, before she is allowed to enter it, or at the very

threshold, a cake is broken on her head, the fragments of which all the young people are eager to gather, it being used as *dreaming bread*. This being laid under the pillow of each person who gets a share of it, it is pretended that it has the virtue of producing pleasant dreams in regard to one's sweetheart.

"The bride now stopped short on the threshold, while the old man broke a triangular cake of short-bread over her head, the pieces of which he threw out among the young people. These scrambled for them with great violence and earnestness. 'Now,' continued she, 'ye maun lay this aneath your head, sir, when ye gang to your bed, and ye'll dream about the woman ye are to get for your wife.'"—*Edin. Mag.* 1817.

EPIGRAM ON WOMAN.

Take *man* from *woman*, all that she can show
Of her own proper, is nought else but wo.

Sir Thomas Urquhart, of Cromartie, circ. 1640.

The time and place of Sir Thomas Urquhart's death have not been ascertained. There is a curious tradition that he died of an inordinate fit of laughter, on hearing of the restoration of Charles II.

THE COOLIN.

The Coolin is a sport, transmitted from very remote antiquity, which is still retained in the Hebrides and West Highlands of Scotland on the last night of the year.

"On the last night of the year, the men-servants are turned out of the house, and the females secure the doors. One of the men is decorated with a dried cow's hide, and is provided with cakes of barley, or oat bread, and with cheese. He is called The Coolin, and is belaboured with staves, and chased round the house by his roaring companions. To represent noise and tumult seems the principal object in this stage of the ceremony. The door is next attacked, and stout resistance made from within; nor is admission granted till the assailant has shown that his savage nature is subdued by the influence of humanizing music. When he has repeated a few verses the door flies open. Others rush in, but are repelled, till all have proved, by the exercise of their musical and poetical talents, their fitness for civilized life. When the whole company are admitted a new ceremony begins. A piece of dried sheep-skin, with the wool still on it, is singed in the fire, smelt to, and waved three times round the head. It is again and again singed and waved, till every individual has three times held it to the fire, three times smelt to it, and nine times waved it round his head. The bread and cheese of the Coolin are next divided and eaten; and thus are the calamities of the expected year provided against."—*Mrs Johnstone.*

WHISKY IN HEAVEN.

A clergyman was administering consolation to a dying Highlander, when he was shocked by the patient asking him if there "was any whisky in heaven?" Half apologetically he added, "Ye ken, sir, it's no that I care for it, but it looks weel on the table."

THE CROOPIN' CORBIE.

The following anecdote is related of David Ferguson, one of the early reformers, minister at Dunfermline:—

"Having met at St Andrews, along with other ministers of the Church, to

protest against the inauguration of Patrick Adamson as archbishop of that see, one came in and told that there was a crow 'crooping' on the church. 'That's a bad omen,' said he, shaking his head, 'for *inauguration* is from *avium garritu;* the raven is *omnimodo* a *black* bird, and it cries *corrupt, corrupt, corrupt.*'"

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

Lord Kames, returning from the north circuit to Perth, happened one night to sleep at Dunkeld. The next morning, walking towards the ferry, but apprehending he had missed his way, he asked a man whom he met to conduct him. The other answered with much cordiality—

"That I will do, with all my heart, my lord. Does not your lordship remember me? My name's John ——; I have had the honour to be before your lordship for stealing sheep."

"Oh, John, I remember you well; and how is your wife? She had the honour to be before me, too, for receiving them, knowing them to be stolen."

"At your lordship's service. We were very lucky, we got off for want of evidence; and I am still going on in the butcher trade."

"Then," replied his lordship, "we may have the honour of *meeting again.*"

A "SELL."

In Galloway large craigs are met with having ancient writings on them. One on the farm of Knockleby has, cut deep on the upper side, "Lift me up and I'll tell you more." A number of people gathered to this craig, and succeeded in lifting it up, in hopes of being well repaid; but, instead of finding any gold, they found written on it, "Lay me down as I was before."

"GO TO FRUCHIE."

Fruchie, a little village about a mile from Falkland Palace, was assigned as a place of temporary banishment and penance for courtiers who had incurred the royal displeasure; and hence, it is said, the common ejaculation when any one wishes to get rid of an obnoxious person, "Go to Fruchie," which is certainly a much more civil mandate than many maledictions enunciated in more modern days.—*Charles Mackie.*

A SETTLER SETTLED.

"I have come," said a farmer to a neighbour laird who was just dying; "I have come to settle about that bit of land."

"Settle't!" cried the old wrangler; "how will you settle't? Your father couldna settle't, and your grandfather couldna settle't, and the 'fifteen' couldna settle't, and how will you settle't?"

"Oh," said the rival claimant, "I'll let you have it altogether."

"But I'll no tak it," cried the stout old litigant, and turned his face resolutely to the wall.

PASSING ROUND THE CROOK.

In Logierait, when a child was baptized privately, it was, not long since, customary to put the child upon a clean basket, having a cloth previously spread over it, with bread and cheese put into the cloth, and thus to move the basket three times successively round the iron crook, which hangs over the fire, from the roof of the house, for the purpose of supporting the pots when water is boiled, or victuals are prepared. This might be anciently intended to counteract the malignant arts which witches and evil spirits were imagined to practise against new-born infants.—*Stat. Acc.*

PRACTICAL CHEMISTRY.

When Dr Chalmers was settled at Kilmany, he delivered a series of lectures on chemistry. Among other experiments, the powers of bleaching liquids were exhibited. At the close the following colloquy between two old wives was overheard :—

"Our minister," said the one, "is naething short o' a warlock; he was telling the folk hoo to clean claes, but without soap."

"Ay, woman," was the reply, "I wish he wad tell me hoo to mak parritch without meal."

AFRAID OF THE LADIES.

The natives of Barvas, in the Western Islands, retain an ancient custom of sending a man very early to cross Barvas River, every first day of May, to prevent any females crossing it first; for that, they say, would hinder the salmon from coming into the river all the year round.—*Martin.*

THE "PEST" OF ANCIENT TIMES.

From "Ane Breve Descriptioun of the Pest. Set forth be Maister Gilbert Skeyne, Doctoure in Medicine. Imprentit at Edinburgh be Robert Leprevik. Anno Do. 1568." Published for the ostensible purpose of informing the people how to avoid or cure the plague then recently introduced into the realm.

"The pest is the corruptioun or infectioun of the air, or ane venemous qualitie and maist hurtful vapour thairof, quhilk hes strenthe and wickitnes above al natural putrefactioun, beand contractit, first maist quietlie infectis the spiritall partis of manne's bodie, thairefter the humoris, *puttand* sairest at the natural humiditie of the hart, quhilk is tholand corruptioun ane fevir maist wikit queitlie and thieflie strikis the patient."

After describing the plague as being generally the result of God's indignation at the sins of men, he proceeds to state as "inferiour causis"—"Standand watter, sic as stank, pule, or loche, most corrupte and filthe: Erd, dung, stink-and closettis, deid carriounis unburiet, in speciale of man kynd, quhilkis, be similitude of nature, is maist nocent to man, as everie brutall is maist infectand to thair awin kynd. Farther," he continues, "continual schouris of weit with grete southin wynde, or the samyn blawand from pestiferous places. The cause of pest in ane privet citie is stikand corruptioun and filths, quhilkis occupeis the comune streetis and gaittis, gret reik of colis without winde to dispatche the sam, corruptioun of herbis, sic as caill and growand treis," &c. &c.

A GOOD REASON.

The minister of Biggar, in Lanarkshire, whose abilities, whatever they might be, were held in the utmost scorn, on account of his *reading*, was one day concluding his discourse as an old woman of the true leaven was leaving the church. He closed the leaves of his sermon, and those of the Bible at the same time, saying, with emphasis, intended as a sort of clencher to his argument, "I add no more."

"Because you canna!" cried the old woman.

A GOOD PLAN.

The working men of Edinburgh were in a very destitute state towards the end of the year 1816, and the excellent plan was adopted of marshalling them into bands, and employing them to make roads round the Calton Hill, which paths embrace views almost unrivalled

in the world; also a new line of road through Holyrood Park, and in levelling Bruntsfield Links, part of the common ground of Edinburgh, where the game of golf is followed as a healthy recreation.—*Anderson.*

THE SCOT ABROAD.

Marshal Keith had command of the Austrian army which long combated the Turkish forces on the Danube under the Grand Vizier, and, after a long and bloody combat, the two generals came to a conference together. The Grand Vizier came mounted on a camel, with all the pomp of eastern magnificence. The Scotch Marshal Keith, from the neighbourhood of Turiff in Aberdeenshire, at the head of the Austrian troops, approached on horseback. After the conference, the Turkish Grand Vizier said to Marshal Keith that he would like to speak a few words in private to him in his tent, and he begged that no one should accompany him. Marshal Keith accordingly went in, and the moment they entered, the Grand Vizier threw off his turban, tore off his beard, and, running to Marshal Keith, said, "Ou, Johnnie, foo's a' wi' ye, man?" And he then discovered that the Grand Vizier of Turkey was a school-fellow of his own, who had disappeared thirty years before from a parish school near Methlic.—*Alison.*

A CAUTIOUS MAN.

On one occasion a sma' laird was waited on by a neighbour to request his name as an accommodation to a "bit bill," which led to the following characteristic colloquy:—

"Na, na, I canna dae that."

"What for no, laird? Ye hae dune the same thing for others."

"Ay, ay, Tammas, but there's wheels within wheels ye ken naething aboot; I canna dae't."

"It's a sma' affair to refuse me, laird."

"Weel, ye see, Tammas, if I was to pit my name till't, ye wad get the siller frae the bank, and when the time cam' round ye wadna be ready, and I wad hae to pay't; sae then you and me wad quarrel; sae we may just as weel quarrel the noo, as lang as the siller's in my pouch."

A "WIGGING."

The Rev. Dr MacLeod (father of the late Dr Norman MacLeod) was proceeding to open a new place of worship. As he passed slowly and gravely through the crowd gathered about the doors, an elderly man, with the peculiar kind of wig known in that district—bright, smooth, and of a reddish-brown—accosted him—

"Doctor, if you please, I wish to speak to you."

"Well, Duncan," said the venerable doctor, "can ye not wait till after worship?"

"No, doctor, I must speak to you now, for it is a matter upon my conscience."

"Oh, since it is a matter of conscience, tell me what it is; but be brief, Duncan, for time presses."

"The matter is this, doctor. Ye see the clock yonder on the face of the new church. Well, there is no clock really there—nothing but the face of the clock. There is no truth in it, but only once in the twelve hours. Now it is, in my mind, very wrong, and quite against my conscience, that there should be a lie on the face of the house of the Lord."

"Duncan, I will consider the point But I am glad to see you looking so well. You are not young now; I remember you for many years; and what a fine head of hair you have still!"

"Eh, doctor, you are joking now; it is long since I have had my hair."

"Oh, Duncan, Duncan, are you going into the house of the Lord with a lie upon your head?"

This settled the question, and the doctor heard no more of the lie on the face of the clock.

A WORD OF ADVICE.

A church in the north country which required a pastor had a beadle who took an active interest in all proceedings taken to fill up the vacancy. One of the candidates, after the afternoon service was over, put off his cloak in the vestry and stepped into the church, in which our worthy was just putting things to rights.

"I was just taking a look at the church," said the minister.

"Ay, tak a guid look at it," said the beadle, "for it's no likely ye'll ever see't again."

WILLIE COSSAR PINS.

The large pins which the common people used to denominate *Willie Cossars*, were previously called *bodle preens*, on account of their price, only four of them being given by the chapman for a halfpenny. The change of their name is said in the south country to have been occasioned by a remarkable circumstance. There was once a wandering madman, named Willie Cossar, who bore a terrible character every where for his rabid disposition. This personage one day walking along an unfrequented road met a poor woman, who did not know his person. He asked her if she were not afraid to walk abroad by herself, considering the numerous dangers which beset solitary, and especially female travellers. She answered, that she never dreaded anything in her journeys, except the chance of encountering a wild man of the name of Willie Cossar. Willie was so enraged at this, that, out of revenge, he picked out her eyes with a large bodle pin. That species of pins thenceforward received his name.

"A FEAST OF THE ANCIENTS."

A story is told of Dr Ferguson, the historian, and Dr Black, the discoverer of latent caloric (which led to the invention of the steam-engine by Watt), who once met to regale in the manner of the ancients. The feast was to be of snails, and a classical soup was prepared therefrom for the epicurean delight of the learned pair. They sat down to table, and began to sup. A mouthful or two satisfied both that the experiment was a failure, but each was ashamed to yield first. At last Black, stealing a look at his friend, ventured to say, "Dinna ye think they're a little green?"

"Confoundedly green!" emphatically responded Ferguson; "tak 'em awa'; tak 'em awa'!"

GEORGE IV. AND SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Charles Young in his *Diary* describes the visit of George IV. to Edinburgh. He quotes Lockhart's account of Sir Walter Scott visiting the king on board his yacht to beg him to defer his landing because of the rain which poured in torrents; and adds the following speech as having been made by Sir Walter to the king:—

"Impatient, sire, as your loyal subjects are to see you plant your foot upon their soil, they hope you will consent to postpone your public entry until to-morrow. In seeing the state of the weather, I am myself forcibly reminded of a circumstance which once occurred to me. I was about to make a tour

through the Western Highlands with part of my family. I wrote to the innkeeper of a certain hostelry, where I meant to halt a day or two, to have rooms prepared for me. On the day appointed it rained, as it does to-day, ceaselessly. As we drew near our quarters, we were met on the hill over his house by our Boniface, with bared head, and backing every yard as I advanced, who thus addressed me :—

"'Guid guide us, Sir Walter! This is just awfu'! Siccan a downpour! Was ever the like? I really beg your pardon! I'm sure it's no fault o' mine. I canna think how it should happen to rain this way, just as you, o' a' men in the warld, should come to see us! It looks amaist personal! I can only say, for my part, I'm just ashamed o' the weather!'

"And so, sire, I do not know that I can improve upon the language of the honest innkeeper! I canna think how it should rain this way, just as your Majesty, of all men in the world, should have condescended to come and see us. I can only say, in the name of my countrymen, I'm just ashamed o' the weather!"

AN ORIGINAL IN THE PULPIT.

Mr Shirra, formerly a dissenting minister in Kirkcaldy, was a very worthy man, but exceedingly eccentric, and took the liberty of saying and doing many odd things. The story is well known of his having gone down to the sands on the sea-shore, to pray that a wind might spring up to drive the invading squadron of Paul Jones back from the Firth of Forth to the ocean, and which wind actually did arise, and effected the desired purpose.

Like other old-fashioned clergymen of his day, he occasionally rebuked members of his congregation by name from the pulpit, and put them to the blush. On one occasion, when a person seemed to be somewhat ostentatious in standing up in his pew, in order to show off a new article of dress, Mr Sheriff stopped in the midst of his sermon and said, "Ou ay, Johnnie, we a' see that you hae got a braw new pair o' breeks; just sit doun, and we'll look at them when the kirk scailis." What Johnnie's feelings were may easily be imagined.

As Kirkcaldy is a considerable seat of the linen manufacture, many of Mr Sheriff's hearers were weavers. One of these having a child to be baptized in the church, took a slip of paper on which he had before written the set of a check web he was going to begin, and put the name of the child on the other side of it, to hand up to the minister. Unluckily Mr Sheriff turned up the wrong side of the paper, and looking a little at it, he said aloud, "Ay, ay, six threads of blue and four of white; that's the drollest name that ever I heard. We'll pray a little till John recollects himself." John immediately whispered the minister to give him back the paper, when he showed him the other side with the name upon it, and all was set to rights.

AN EAST LOTHIAN GRACE.

In *Satan's Invisible World Discovered*, written for the purpose of confounding atheists, the following is given as an East Lothian grace, in the time of ignorance and superstition :—

Lord be bless'd for all his gifts,
Defy the devil and all his shifts.
God send me mair siller. Amen.

PROPER PRIDE.

Some years ago a Scotch gentleman, who went to London for the first time, took the uppermost storey of a lodging-house, and was very much surprised to

get what he thought the genteelest place of the whole at the lowest price. His friends who came to see him, in vain acquainted him with the mistake he had been guilty of.

"He ken't very weel," he said, "what gentility was; and after having lived all his life in a sixth storey, he had not come to London to live upon the ground."

EPITAPH ON GEORGE HERIOT.

Passenger, who art wise, hence know whence you are, what you are, and what you are to be. 1610.

Life, gate of death; death, gate of life, to me;
Sole death of death gives life eternallie.
Therefore, whoever breath draws from the air,
While live thou may'st, thyself for death prepare.

In Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh.

RHYME ON A BAD INN.

Baron of Bucklivie,
May the foul fiend drive ye,
And a' to pieces rive ye,
For building sic a town;
Where there's neither horse meat nor man's meat,
Nor a chair to sit down.

A MORTIFICATION.

"We have lately got a mortification here," said a northern burgess to a gentleman from England.

"I am very sorry to hear it," replied his friend.

The Scotsman stared, and added, "Yes, a very considerable mortification; an old miser died the other day, and left us ten thousand pounds to build an hospital."

"And call you that a mortification?" said the stranger.

"Yes," answered he; "and we think it a very great one."—*Sir J. Carr.*

LORDS OF SESSION.

Dr Pitcairne, in *The Assembly*, a humorous but licentious play written in 1692, gives an amusingly sarcastic description of the new batch of Lords of Session who had been appointed by King William. One of them has a wooden leg, and his mind is said to be as crooked as his body. Of another he says, "He neither speaks nor thinks; and were it not for his long wig, hat, and blackcoat, he might pass for a horse in the Grassmarket."

DEAR SPORT.

A gentleman who had leased a large tract of ground for the grouse-shooting season at a high rent, went out on the eventful 12th of August, but bagged only two brace. After counting the price, he grumblingly remarked to the tenant of the moor, that the birds had cost him at the least two guineas the brace. The tenant very innocently replied, "Aweel, sir, ye may be thankfu' ye hae gotten sae few o' them; for they're far ower dear."

PROVOST TOD'S MONUMENT.

D. O. M.

Archibald Tod, by nativity a citizen of Edinburgh, ordered what of him was mortal to be depositat here. He was a man far from all guile; and he was godly, without pride. Four times he was married; but only by his first wife Helen, daughter to John Jackson, a

famous citizen, he left one daughter alive, Katharine, spouse to David Wilkie, an honourable burgess, and dean of gild this present year, 1656. But Provost Tod himself, whether in the prosperity of peace or adversity of war, was still the same, for his country and this city; and, in all exigencies, equally deserved the magistracy; having been thrice bailie, twice dean of gild, and counsellor for 6 lustres, or 30 years. He died much lamented, the 9 February, in the year 1656, and of his age the 71 year.

Here worthy Provost Tod doth ly,
Who dy'd, and yet who did not die.
His golden name, in fame's fair roll,
Claims the liferent tack of a soul.
Edinburgh, in this man alone,
Lost both a father and a son.
For twice three lustres that he sat,
In council, for her publick state;
For two years care of late, which more
Avail'd, than fifty twice before;
For the great pains he then did take,
T' avert the cry, kill, burn, and sack:
Sure he deserves a tomb of jeat,
Or one of purest porphyrite.
And ev'ry house should bring a stone,
To build him a mausoleon.
But outward pomp he still did flye,
And thus, in single dust, would lye.

In Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh.

BURNS' SENSIBILITY.

"I was a lad of fifteen in 1786-7," writes Walter Scott to Lockhart, "when Burns came first to Edinburgh, but had sense enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given worlds to know him; but I had very little acquaintance with the literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country—the two sets that he most frequented. Mr Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner, but had no opportunity to keep his word; otherwise, I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Ferguson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation; among whom I remember the celebrated Mr Dugald Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sate silent—looked and listened. The only thing I remember was remarkable in Burns' manner was the effect produced upon him by a print of Banbury's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow—his dog sitting in misery on the one side—on the other, his widow with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath:—

"Cold on Canadian hills, or Minden's plain,
Perhaps that parent wept her soldier slain;
Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolved in dew,
The big drops mingling with the milk he drew,
Gave the sad presage of his future years—
The child of misery, baptised in tears."

Burns seemed much affected by this print, or rather the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He actually shed tears. He asked whose the lines were, and it chanced that but myself nobody remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten poem of Langhorne's, called by the unpromising title of 'The Justice of the Peace.' I whispered my information to a friend present, who mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though of mere civility, I then received, and still recollect, with very great pleasure."

CURIOUS RULE OF OLD SCOTTISH HOSPITALITY.

A rude law of ancient Scottish hospitality bound the guest to take part with his host, in any quarrel or danger, so long as the food eaten under his roof remained in his stomach.

ANKER-STOCKS.

The Anker-stock was a round loaf made of rye-flour, and seasoned with spice and currants, and used as "New Year bread." One of the first demonstrations of the approach of Christmas in Edinburgh was the annual appearance of large tables of Anker-stocks at the head of the Old Fishmarket Close. These Anker-stocks, the only species of rye that I have ever observed offered for sale in the city, were exhibited in every variety of size and price, from a half-penny to a half-crown."—*Blackwood*, 1821.

A SENSIBLE SERVANT.

A very old domestic servant of the familiar Scottish character common long ago, having offended his master extremely, was commanded to leave his service instantly.

"In troth, and that will I not," answered the domestic; "if your honour disna ken when ye hae a gude servant, I ken when I hae a gude master, and go away I will not."

On another occasion of the same nature, the master said, "John, you and I shall never sleep under the same roof again:" to which John replied, with much *naïveté*, "Where the deil can your honour be ganging?"—*Old Mortality.*

DRINKING IN THE WEST HIGHLANDS.

The manner of drinking used by the chief men of the isles is called in their language *Streak, i.e.*, "A Round." The company sat in a circle, the cup-bearer filled the drink round to them, and all was drunk out, whatever the liquor was, whether strong or weak. They continued drinking sometimes twenty-four, sometimes forty-eight hours. It was reckoned a piece of manhood to drink until they became drunk, and there were two men with a barrow attending punctually on such occasions. They stood at the door until some became drunk, and they carried them upon the barrow to bed, and returned to their post as long as any continued fresh, and so carried off the whole company one by one as they became drunk. Several of my acquaintance have been witnesses to this custom of drinking; but it is now abolished.—*Martin.*

THE NEW CUT.

Shrewd Saunders Grant was village tailor and parish beadle at M——, and, being a bit of a character in his way, the minister and him frequently indulged in a "twa-handed crack" together.

"How is it, Saunders," said the latter one day, "that these two young neighbours of mine have their churches quite full, while, though I preach the same sermons that I did twenty years ago, my people are falling off?"

"Weel, sir, I'll tell ye," said Saunders; "it's just wi' you as it's wi' mysel'. I sew just as weel as ever I did; yet that puir elf —— has ta'en my business maist clean ower my head. It's no the sewing that lets him do that, sir; it's the new cut—it's just the new cut!"

TAGHAIRN.

"Taghairn" was a mode of divination formerly used by the Highlanders. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or some other strange wild, or unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed, and whatever was impressed

upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt these desolate recesses.

"Last evening-tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be,
Unless in dread extremity,
The *Taghairn* called; by which, afar,
Our sires forsaw the events of war."
Lady of the Lake.

A REPROOF TO VANITY.

Burns was dining with Maxwell of Terraughty, when one of the guests chose to talk of the dukes and earls with whom he had drank or dined, till the host and others got tired of him. Burns, however, silenced him with an epigram:

"What of earls with whom you have supt,
And of dukes that you dined with yestreen?
Lord! a louse, sir, is still but a louse,
Though it crawl on the curls of a queen."

A BANQUET OF GENIUS.

One of Raeburn the artist's earliest associates was John Clerk, afterwards Lord Eldin. The young artist and the young advocate were frequently together; and as the one had to purchase costly colours and the other expensive books, it is said they were sometimes so poor that they scarcely knew how to live till more money came in.

On one of these occasions Raeburn received an invitation to dine with Clerk; and hastening to his lodgings, he found the landlady spreading a cloth on the table, and setting down two dishes, one containing three herrings, and the other three potatoes.

"And is this all?" said John,

"All," said the landlady.

"All! did I not tell ye woman," he exclaimed, "that a gentleman was to dine with me, and that ye were to get six herrings and six potatoes?"

The tables of both were better furnished before the lapse of many years; and they loved, it is said, when the wine was flowing, to recall those early days, when hope was high, and the spirit unrebuked by intercourse with the world.

CUPAR JUSTICE.

Cupar justice is akin to the Jeddart justice of Scotland and the Lidford law of England, and signifies trial after execution; "hang a man first, syne try him." The popular tradition is, that a man who was confined in Cupar jail obstinately refused to come out to trial; and that water was let into his cell, under the idea of compelling him to forsake it, till he was actually drowned; that those who had the charge of him, finding this to be the case, brought his dead body into Court, and proceeded regularly with the trial, till it was solemnly determined that he had met with nothing more than he deserved.

CANINE METAMORPHOSIS.

At a certain mansion, notorious for its scanty fare, a gentleman was inquiring of the gardener about a dog which he had given to the laird some time before. The gardener showed him a lank greyhound, on which the gentleman said—

"No, no; the dog I gave your master was a mastiff, not a greyhound;" to which the gardener answered—

"Indeed, sir, ony dog would soon be turned into a greyhound if it stoppit lang here."

THE CAPTURE OF EDINBURGH.

The fate of the city was decided early in the afternoon (Sept. 16, 1745), when the two regiments of dragoons were seen about four o'clock on their march from the Coltbridge to Leith, by the long dykes, as then called; now George Street, in the New Town. Then the clamour arose, that it would be madness to think of defending the town, as the dragoons had fled. The alarm bell was rung—a meeting of the inhabitants with the magistrates was convened, first in the Goldsmith's Hall, and when the crowd increased, in the New Church aisle. The four companies of Volunteers rendezvoused in the Lawnmarket, and, growing impatient, sent two of their lieutenants to the Provost for orders, for the captains had been sent for to the meeting. They soon returned without any orders, and said all was clamour and discordance. While they were absent, two Volunteers in the rear rank (Boyle and Weir), just behind, quarrelled, when debating whether or not the city should be surrendered, and were going to attack one another, one with his musket and bayonet, and the other with his small sword, having flung down his musket. They were soon separated without any harm, and placed asunder from each other. At this time, a man on horseback, whom nobody knew, came up from the Bow, and, riding at a quick pace along the line of Volunteers, called out that the Highlanders were at hand, and that they were 16,000 strong. This fellow did not stop to be examined, but rode off at the gallop. About this time, a letter had come, directed to the Provost, summoning the town to surrender, and alarming them with the consequence in case any opposition was made.

The Provost made a scrupulous feint about reading the letter, but this point was soon carried, and all idea of defence was abandoned. Soon after, Captain Drummond joined us in the Lawnmarket with another captain or two. He sent to General Guest, after conversing a little with the lieutenant, to acquaint him that the Volunteers were coming to the Castle to deliver their arms. The messenger soon returned, and we marched up, glad to deliver them, lest they should have fallen into the hands of the enemy, which the delay of orders seemed to favour, though not a little ashamed and afflicted at our inglorious campaign. —*Alex. Carlyle.*

A CURIOUS MODE OF SWEEPING CHIMNEYS.

Some of the cottage chimneys in Scotland were very curious in their internal as well as external structure. As viewed from the fire-place below, they looked like the vast cone of a glass-house, or like an amphitheatre, peopled with spectator hams, and a huge black beam, from which depended by iron rods, chains, and hooks, various culinary vessels. These chimneys never required sweeping; though I remember hearing a traditionary account of one being cleared of its venerable soot by the goodman, who had accomplished his singular task by going head foremost into a sack, and ascending by a ladder to the rannle-tree, where he stood and rubbed the sides of the chimney all round with his shoulders! This custom might be practised with effect in the cure of *lum-bag-o!*—*R. Chambers.*

SIR DAVID LINDESAY AND JAMES V.

Alike celebrated for his courage as his wit, Sir David Lindesay was no stickler at ceremony when in the mood On one occasion, when the king was surrounded by a numerous train of nobility and prelates, Lindesay ap

proached the monarch with due reverence and solemnity, and began to prefer a humble petition to be installed in an office which was then vacant. "I have," said the knight, "servit your grace lang, and luik to be rewardit as others are; and now your maister taylor, at the plesure of God, is departit; wherefore I would desire your grace to bestow this little benefit upon me." The king replied, that he was amazed at such a request from a man who could neither shape nor sew. "Sir King," rejoined the poet, "that maks nae matter, for you have given bishopricks and benefices to mony ane standin heir about you, and yet they can nouther teach nor preach; and why may not I as weil be your taylor though I can nouther shape nor sew? seein teachinge and preachinge are nae less requisite to thir vocation than shapinge and sewinge to ane taylor."—*Charles Mackie.*

THE CRANSTOUN CREST.

The crest of the Cranstouns, in allusion to their name, is a crane dormant, holding a stone in his foot, with an emphatic Border motto, "Thou shall want ere I want."

A FORTUNATE MISFORTUNE.

Mr Dale, whose portrait figures in *Kay*, was very short in stature, and also very stout. Having mentioned to a friend one day that "he had slipped on the ice, and fallen all his length,"—

"Be thankful, sir," was the consolatory and apt reply, "that it was not all your breadth!"

CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES.

In giving his opinion on the validity of a qualification to vote for a member of Parliament, after it had been sustained both in the Court of Session and in the House of Lords, Lord Hermand declared that, nevertheless, it was not only bad, but so bad that "I defy Omnipotence to make it good."

"Then," said the quiet, philosophic Playfair, "it must be very bad indeed; for his lordship assured me, in a conversation about Professor Leslie's case [*Leslie* v. *Blackwood*, July 22, 1822], that he had no difficulty at all in conceiving God to make a world where twice three was not six."—*Cockburn.*

THE WAR-CRY OF HAWICK.

"Teeribus and Teeriodin" was the ancient war-cry of the town of Hawick. This, according to tradition, was that of the band which went from Hawick to the battle of Flodden; and it is still shouted by the inhabitants of the burgh when they annually ride the marches.—*Jamieson.*

THE CURSE OF SCOTLAND.

The "Curse of Scotland" is a name given to the nine of diamonds in a pack of cards. It is said to have originated from the tidings of a severe defeat of the Scots having been written on the back of this card. Grose, however, gives a different account of the reason of this singular designation.

"The nine of diamonds; diamonds, it is said, imply royalty, being ornaments to the imperial crown; and every ninth king of Scotland has been observed, for many ages, to be a tyrant and a curse to that country. Others say it is from its similarity to the arms of Argyle; the Duke of Argyle having been very instrumental in bringing about the union, which, by some Scottish patriots, has been considered as detrimental to their country."

GOOD FOR EVIL.

While Commissioner Edgar was residing at Pendreich Cottage, Lasswade, he was frequently annoyed, and his fences injured, by nocturnal depredators, who entertained a strong love for his fine fruits. He however caused the following notice to be put up, which effectually stopped their nefarious proceedings:—"All thieves are in future to enter by the gate, which will be left open every night for the purpose."—*Kay.*

THE COCK OF THE NORTH.

The Duke of Gordon, who was the chief of the clan, was usually styled, "The Cock of the North." The most ancient title was the "Gudeman of the Bog," from the Bog of Gight, a morass in the parish of Bellie, Banffshire, in the centre of which the former stronghold of this family was placed, and which forms the site of Gordon castle, considered the most magnificent edifice in the north of Scotland. The Marquis of Huntly is now the chief of the clan Gordon, In Berwickshire, the original seat of the Gordons, the gipsies still retain the surname; and the natives of the parish of Gordon in that county, from their simplicity of manners, were usually styled "the Gowks of Gordon."

AN INDEPENDENT MUSICIAN.

Lord Glenlee, who resided in Brown Square, Edinburgh, was greatly annoyed by an itinerant minstrel, who, frequenting the square, endeavoured to "discourse sweet music" by blowing upon a cracked clarionet, deficient of one key, and marvellously stiff in the others. For an hour at least every Monday were the visits of this "blind Apollo" repeated, awakening the slumbering echoes with "Black-eyed Susan," till the very name of that popular air became as hateful to the inhabitants as that of Monsieur Tonson was to the ear of Monsieur Morblieu. The annoyance was the more insufferable to Lord Glenlee, as, the Court not sitting on Monday, that day was usually set apart by the Judges of the Inner House for studying the cases they had to advise during the week. At length, on one occasion, he despatched his servant with half-a-crown, and a request to the musician that he would discontinue his favours for the future, particularly on the Mondays. Highly incensed, the latter replied—

"Give my compliments to Lord Glenlee, and tell him,"—pocketing the half-crown—"that I canna change my rounds for a' the lords in Edinburgh."

So saying, he appeased his wounded dignity by blowing more fiercely, furiously, and inharmoniously than ever upon his cracked instrument.

AULD YEAR WAUKIN.

To "wauke the auld year into the new," is a popular and expressive phrase for watching until twelve o'clock announces the new year, when people are ready at their neighbours' houses with het-pints and buttered cakes, eagerly waiting to be first-foot, as it is termed, and to regale the family yet in bed. Much care is taken that the persons who enter be what are called *sonsie folk*, for on the admission of the first-foot depends the prosperity or trouble of the year.—*Cromek.*

A TERMAGANT BREWSTER-WIFE.

A Highland gentleman stopped at a country inn in the north-west Lowlands, and a large porringer full of minced collops was brought for his dinner; they were so musty that he begged the

girl to ask her mistress if there was nothing else to be had. On this the landlady straddled into the room, with her arms akimbo.

"Musty indeed, say ye!" said she; "O the deil swall ye, that I should say sae! It sets ye weel to be sae nice-gabbit, a fulthy flesher o' Dunblane, as I ken weel ye are! Better folk nor you has lickit their lips after *that very collops*, a month sinsyne, and mair, atweel!"

With that she thrust her fat, dirty paw into the middle of the dish, clutched as much of the minced beef as she could grasp, which she conveyed to her mouth; and, having tasted it, dashed the remainder back into the dish, and telling him, "it was far ower gude for him," flung out of the room, and left him to "dine with what appetite he might."—*Jamieson.*

MALISE GRAHAM AND THE ROE-SKIN PURSE.

About the year 1680, many of the great and noble of the land, and even the king himself, were comparatively beggars; and the courtiers themselves were obliged to keep close to the king's court to avoid being arrested. At this period, the Earl of Monteath retired from his paternal domain, and sought protection in the precincts of the abbey of Holyrood House from a vindictive creditor, where he resided for a short time until he applied to one of his kinsmen and namesakes, Malise Graham, residing at Glassart, on the south shore of Loch Katrine, to release him from durance. Faithful to the call of his lord and master, Malise quitted his highland home on foot and alone, attired as—

> "A highlandman, a savage loun,
> Wi' barkit houghs and burly croun;"

and in this guise he presented himself at the earl's lodgings near the abbey. A well-dressed lowlander opened the door, and, mistaking his errand, by way of commiserating the poverty of the stranger, offered him charity. Malise was in the act of thankfully accepting the proffered alms, when the earl, having caught a glance of his faithful vassal, chid his well-meaning official for doing what might tend to give offence to his friend. The highlander, making an appropriate obeisance, with the utmost nonchalance, took from his bosom a purse, and, handing it to his lord, he addressed him in Gaelic to the following effect:

"Here, my lord, see and clear your way with that; as for the gentleman that had the generosity to hand me a bawbee, troth, I would have no objections to take as many as he had."

The earl's temporary embarrassment having vanished by means of the talismanic contents of the roe-skin purse, he accompanied his faithful follower to his ancestral home on the lake of Monteath.—*Charles Mackie.*

AN ILL-WINTERED MINISTER.

A young minister, good-looking and agreeable enough in manners and appearance, but somewhat thin and delicate, was introduced for the first time to one of his hearers. After he had departed, the latter said to his wife—

"Jean, woman, I dinna ken what to mak o' oor new minister. He's weel-faured, and I maist think he'll be weel liket here; but, waes me, he's been ill-wintered where he cam frae!"—*Dr Rogers.*

A HINT TO THE CLERGY.

The Rev. Mr Hutton of Dalkeith was rather notorious for lengthy sermons. An anecdote is told of him and the Rev. Mr Shirra of Kirkcaldy. The Dalkeith minister was on one occasion preaching

before the Synod, when, at the expiry of the first hour, by way of giving him a gentle hint, Mr Shireff held out his watch in such a way as he could not fail to observe it. The preacher paused for a moment; but immediately went on with renewed vigour till another hour had expired. Mr Shireff then repeated his former motion, but still without effect; and a third hour elapsed ere the sermon was brought to a conclusion. At dinner the preacher ventured to inquire the reason of his friend's having acted the part of monitor.

"I will tell you," said Mr Shireff. "The first hour I heard you with pleasure and, as I hope every one else did, with profit; the second I listened with impatience; and the third with contempt!"

A HAGGIS CATASTROPHE.

Shepherd. I recollec ance the awfu'est scene wi' a haggis, in auld Mr Laidlaw's house. It was a great muckle big ane, answering to Robert Burns's description, wi' its hurdies like twa distant hills, and occupied the centre o' the table, round whilk sat about a score o' lads and lasses. The auld man had shut his een to ask a blessing, when some evil speerit put it into my head to gie the bag a slit wi' my gully. Like water on the breaking o' a dam, out rushed, in an instantaneous overflow, the inside o' the "great chieftain o' the pudding race," and the women-folk brak out into sic a shriek, that the master thocht somebody had drapped down dead. Meanwhile, its contents didna stop on the edge o' the table, but gaed ower wi' a sclutter upon the lads' breeks and the lassies' petticoats, burnin' the wearers to the bane; for what's hetter than a haggis?

Tickler. Nothing on this side of the grave.

Shepherd. What a skirlin'! And then a' the collies began yelpin and youffin, for some o' them had their tauted hips scalded, and ithers o' them couldna see for the stew that was rinnin' down their chafts. Gleed Shooshy Dalgleish fell a' her length in the thickest part o' the inundation, wi' lang Tommy Potts aboon her, and we thocht they would never hae foun' their feet again, for the floor was as sliddery as ice; and—

North. Now, James, were you to write that down, and give it to the world in a book, it would be called coarse.

Shepherd. Nae doubt. Everything nat'ral, and easy, and true, is ca'd coorse.—*Noctes Ambros.*

THE BANKER'S QUESTION.

Robin Carrick was at one time manager of the famous "Ship Bank," in Glasgow. He was waited upon one day by a spruce young customer, with a number of bills to discount. They seemed all to pass current, with the exception of one, the largest in amount. Robin shook his head.

"Oh, you need not hesitate about him, Mr Carrick," said the intending discounter, "for he has started, and keeps his carriage."

"Ou ay," replied the banker, "that may be; but the question wi' me is, can he keep his feet?"

A DUNFERMLINE "RANDY."

1651, 3 June. This day, Myse Bonar, spouse to William Bowie, webster, being found guilty by the probation of witnesses, of cursed and slanderous speeches in saying, "God or fire, and red lows come upon the haill town as it did before, and God or Cromwell come and take all the town upon his back, if she were out of it." Therefore according to the act of ses-

sion made the 7 of May 1626, against those y^t^ cast up the burning of the town, in a cursed and blasphemous way, she is ordaint to pay 3^lib.^ money, and to stand in the Cross or Tron, on ane publick mercat day, with ane paper on her head, signifying her cursing and blasphemies, betwixt 11 and 12 before noon, and thereafter ask God's forgiveness on her knees:—And on the Sabbath immediately following, shall also after sermon before noon stand in the face of the congregation, before the pulpit, confess her cursing and blasphemies, and ask God forgiveness and declare her repentance therefore, and promise never to do the like again.—*Kirk Session Records.*

JOHN CLERK AT A LOSS.

John Clerk, the famous advocate, had been at his "potations pottle deep" one fine morning in Edinburgh, and was wending his way home to Picardy Place. At one particular place he stopped confused, with his back to the wall, and hied a street *caddie*, or porter.

"Can ye tell me, my man, the road to John Clerk's house?"

"Ye're a fine fellow," replied the caddie, "to ask the road to John Clerk's house, when ye're John Clerk himsel'."

"I ken that very weel," replied the advocate; "but I'm no John Clerk's *house*. Oxter me to his house, and there's a shilling!"

THE WITCHES OF FORFAR.

It appears that in 1661 the town of Forfar was divided into eight districts, with a councillor in each district, "for setting and changing the gairds for the witches." It was also decreed that "persones imprisoned for witchcraft shall have no watch with them in their prisones, nor fyre, nor candle, but that sex men nightly and daily attend and watch them in the vper tolbooth, and that the quarter-master shall order the watchmen to visit them at every three hours end night and day." It appears that, for the sin of looking out at the window of the prison, two of these unfortunate women were ordered to be "put in the stockes," or to have the window of their chamber nailed up. In such an arbitrary state of matters it will not appear very wonderful to find the council, with all due solemnity, approving of the "care and diligence" of Alexander Heigh, a dealer in "aquavitie" (from whom, as appears in evidence, much of the liquor was got that "the devill" gave to the unfortunate dupes whom he met periodically in the churchyard), "for his bringing over Johne Kinked, for trying of the prisoners suspect of witchcraft." Nay, so exceedingly well pleased were the council with the manner in which Kinked performed his disgusting business, that within ten days after Keith of Caldhame, sheriff-depute of the county of Forfar, and a cadet of the noble family of Keith-Marischal, had been admitted a burgess and freeman of the burgh, the same honour was conferred by the same magistrates upon "John Kinked, priker of the witches in Trennent!"—*Jervise.*

"WADNA LIKE TO BE."

"Noo, Geordie!" said an amiable lady of disciplinarian views, "ye're no to stir ootower the door till the procession's by!" But the temptation was too strong for Master George, who was in Princes Street (Edinburgh) long before the "Grand Master" reached the monument. Quickly to the street went his careful mother, and spying, as she thought, in the crowd, the side of "Geordie's" head, administered thereto a rapid slap with the palm of her hand; whereupon the

subject of percussion turned up indignant eyes that didn't belong to George.

"Losh me, laddie!" exclaimed the mistaken mother, "I thocht ye was ane o' my ain sons!"

"Nae, I'm no ane o' your sons!" replied the boy; "an' I wadna like to be ane o' them aither, if that's the way ye use them!"

"AFTER A SORT."

"Umph!" replied Jarvie, with a precautionary sort of cough: "Ay, he has a kind o' Hieland honesty—he's honest after a sort, as they say. My father the deacon used aye to laugh when he tauld me how that the by-word came up. Ane Captain Costlett was cracking crouse about his loyalty to King Charles, and Clerk Pettigrew asked him after what manner he served the king when he was fighting again him at Wor'ster in Cromwell's army; and Captain Costlett was a ready body, and said that he served him *after a sort*. My honest father used to laugh weel at that sport—and sae the by-word came up."—*Rob Roy.*

A GREAT WOMAN.

June 2, 1724. There was this day buried in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh, the wife of Captain Burd of Ford, thought to be the largest woman in Scotland. Her coffin was a Scotch ell and four inches wide, and two feet deep.

THE ORIGIN OF FOREIGN TRADE IN GLASGOW.

The origin of foreign trade in this great city is extremely worthy of attention. A merchant, of the name of Walter Gibson, by an adventure first laid the foundation of its wealth. About the year 1668 he cured and exported, in a Dutch vessel, 300 lasts of herrings, each containing six barrels, which he sent to St Martin's, in France, where he got a barrel of brandy and a crown for each. The ship returning, laden with brandy and salt, the cargo was sold for a great sum. He then launched farther into business, bought the vessel and two large ships besides, with which he traded to different parts of Europe, and to Virginia. He also first imported iron into Glasgow, for before that time it was received from Stirling and Borrowstounness, in exchange for dyed stuffs; and even the wine used in this city was brought from Edinburgh. Yet I find no statue, no grateful inscription to preserve the memory of Walter Gibson. —*Pennant.*

FEMALE ASTRONOMERS.

Two decent housewives in Fifeshire, who had gone out to give the pigs their supper, met at the loan-head, and naturally took advantage of such a favourable opportunity for a "twa-handed crack."

"Losh, Peggy, woman," said one to the other, "I hear folk say there's a man i' the moon."

"Ou ay," said Peggy, "I've heard about him; but he canna be very fond o' his ain wife, for he's aye glowerin' this way."

A COURAGEOUS WIDOW.

April 1732. Jean Johnston of Old Deer, in Buchan, being aged 80, and the widow of three husbands, lately married for her fourth a young man of eighteen, who afterwards bound himself apprentice to a wheelwright. "She seems exceedingly well pleased with him, and remarks that, had it not been

for the many changes of husbands she had been blessed with, she must have long ago been dead." She lived, too, in hopes of a fifth husband, should this one unfortunately not live long.

THE ADVANTAGE OF TRAVEL.

A countryman from Fife, visiting Edinburgh for the first time, was very much astonished at the extent of the town and the elegance of the buildings.

"I see," said he, "there's mair places in the world than Torryburn."

"SUNDAY STRAE."

The late Rev. Mr Foote, of Fettercairn, having occasion to attend a marriage party on a Saturday evening, was about to retire at an early hour, and had bidden the company good night, when one of his own parishioners, a farmer who seldom attended church, and who had always something to say, remarked—

"Ay, ay, sir, ye'll be gaun awa hame to thresh your Sunday strae."

"Indeed Mr S——", replied the worthy clergyman, "ye require so little fodder, I think I might even give you a sheaf without threshing it."

THE PLAGUE IN EDINBURGH.

1513. A great and dreadful plague raging in Edinburgh. The Town Council, to prevent its progress, ordered all shops to be shut up during the space of fifteen days, and neither doors nor windows to be opened within that time, but on extraordinary occasions, and nothing to be dealt in but necessaries for the immediate support of life.

Remark. This certainly was a very wrong step, for by shutting up the people in their houses, the distemper, by heat and want of air, was thereby increased, and the verminous effluvia nourished, which augmenting the number of atoms, the pest was propagated; whereas cold air destroyed them, and restored health.—*Maitland.*

TWO SIDES TO A STORY.

An Epitaph in Hoddam Churchyard.

To the memory of Mary Clow, &c.,
A vertuous wife, a loving mother,
And one esteemed by all who knew her,
And to be short, to her praise, *she was the woman* Solomon speaks of in the xxxi. chapter of the Book of Proverbs, from the 10th verse to the end.

So far posthumous flattery—now for the other side of the story: After the monument had been set up, a candid and plain-speaking teacher, named Irving, the author of a poetical tract well known in Scotland under the name of *Lag's Elegy*, wrote upon the monument the following lines:—

She was the wife! oh, Solomon, thou fool,
To make a pattern o' this grabbing tool;
She clothe her house in silk or scarlet fine!
Say rather i' the linsey-wolsey twine.
Her husband 'mongst the elders at the gate!
Yes—known for nothing but an empty pate,
For guzzling down whole chappins o' sma' beer,
And selling meal or maut a groat o'er dear:
Such were the honest silly Clows—say clowns,
Which every roll of honest fame disowns.

Were tombstone criticism general, there would be few without similar post-scripts.

A SENSITIVE WIFE-BEATER.

A "riding of the stang," attended with tragical results, happened in March 1736. George Porteous, smith at Edmondstone, having severely beaten and abused his wife, was subjected to this ignominy by his neighbours, which so highly affronted him that he went and hanged himself.

"O WAD SOME POWER."

On Burns's first appearance in Edinburgh, he was introduced, among many others, to Mr Taylor, the overweening parochial schoolmaster of Currie, who was also a competitor in verse-making, and whose opinion of his own merits far overbalanced what little estimation he might have formed of the plain, unlettered peasant of Ayrshire, whose name was as yet new to the public.

Mr Heron, at whose table Burns was a frequent guest, invited Taylor one day to dine with them, when the evening was spent with the usual good humour and jocularity. Taylor had brought his manuscript poems, a few of which were read to Burns for his favourable opinion previous to printing. Some of the passages were odd enough, such as—

"Rin, little bookie, round the world loup,
Whilst I in my grave do lie wi' a cauld doup;"

at which Burns laughed heartily. Notwithstanding the pedantic and absurd perversity of the poems, he gave him a recommendatory note to the printer. Next morning, Mr Heron meeting Taylor, inquired of him what he thought of the Ayrshire poet.

"Hoot," quoth the self-admiring pedagogue, "the lad 'll do; considering his want o' lear, he's weel eneugh."

A LIBERAL PROVOST.

The following pleasant joke of the witty King James is not generally known. In his first journey to London, his majesty was treated to a splendid entertainment by the mayor of an English town, whose liberality was such that he kept an open house in honour of the new sovereign for several days. Some of the English courtiers took occasion from this to hint, that such examples of munificence must be very rare among the civic dignitaries of a certain other kingdom.

"Fient a bit o' that are they," cried King James; "the provost o' my burgh o' Forfar, whilk is by nae means the largest town in Scotland, keeps open house a' the year round, and aye the mae that comes the welcomer!"

The secret was that the chief magistrate of Forfar kept an ale-house.

WISER THAN SOLOMON.

Old Hackstoun of Rathillet one day said to Mr Smibert, the minister of Cupar, who, like himself, was blessed with a foolish, or rather wild, youth for a son, "D'ye ken, sir, you and I are wiser than Solomon?"

"How can that be, Rathillet?" inquired the startled clergyman.

"Oh, ye see," said Hackstoun, "Solomon didna ken whether his son was to be a fool or a wise man; but baith you and I are quite sure that our sons are fools."

RICHIE MONIPLIES IN FLEET STREET.

"And how came you by that broken head, Richie? Tell me honestly."

"Troth, sir, I'se no lee about the matter," answered Moniplies. "I was coming along the street here, and ilk ane was at me with their jests and roguery. So I thought to mysel', ye