This Brochure is presented to
The University of Michigan
by the writer, at the suggestion of
his respected friend Professor Tyler
- a suggestion by which the donor
feels highly honored.

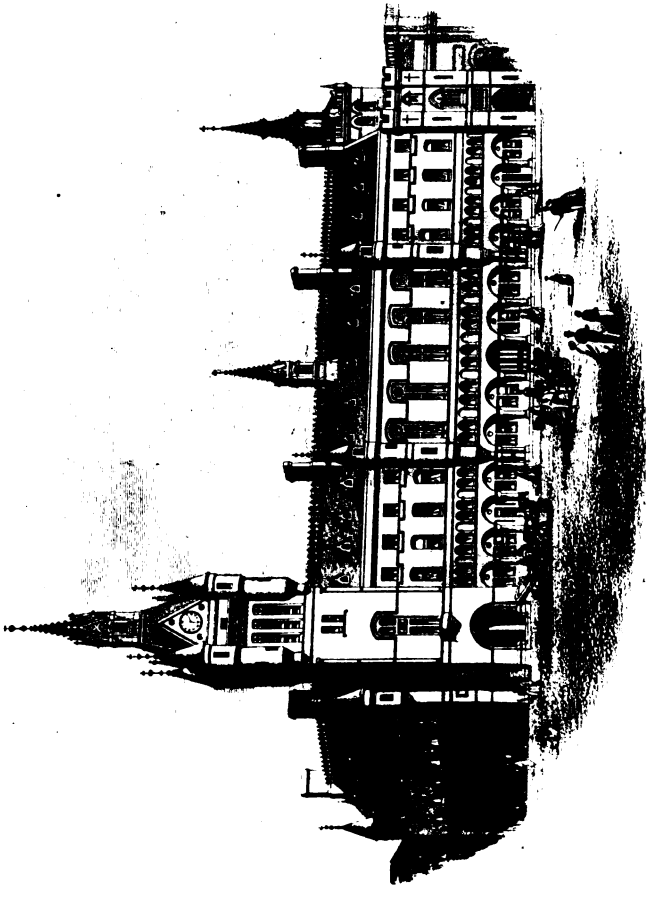
Montreal, Canada,
29 February 1872.

---

* * The Vignette on the title-page represents
* Wallace Nook, one of the most ancient localities
in Aberdeen. The baronial tower on the structure in
the foreground, (which is 300 or 400 years old), contains
a statue of the Scottish Hero, in stone, rudely sculptured,
but in good preservation though executed 500 or 600
years ago.

The County and Municipal Buildings, of which
an engraving is inserted opposite the Vignette, are
now in the course of being completed.

ABERDEEN AND ITS FOLK.



D. CHALMERS AND COMPANY, PRINTERS, ABERDEEN.

ABERDEEN AND ITS FO

FROM

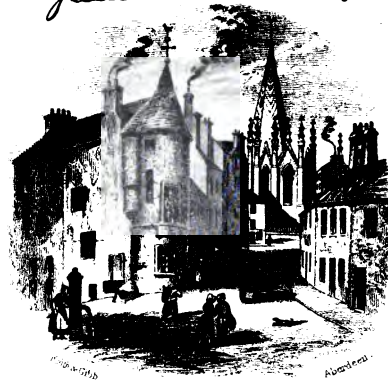
THE 20TH TO THE 50TH YEAR OF THE PRESENT CENT

BY

A SON OF BON-ACCORD

IN NORTH AMERICA.

James Riddell, Esqr.



Ethereal Power! whose smile, at noon of night,
Recalls the far-fled spirit of delight;
Instils that musing, melancholy mood,
Which charms the wise, and elevates the good;
Blest Memory, hail!

Rogers.

DAWSON BROTHERS, MONTREAL; J. CAMPBELL & SON, TOR

ABERDEEN:

LEWIS SMITH, 3, McCOMBIE'S COU

A. MORISON, 28, MARISCHAL STREET

1868.

Blythe Aberdeine, thou beriall * of all townis,
The lampe of beautie, bountie, and blitheneſse;
Unto the heaven aſcendit thy renown is,
Off vertue, wiſdome, and of worthineſſe;
Hie notit is thy name off noblenesse,
Into the coming off our lusty Queen,
The wale off wealthe, guid cheer, and merrineſſe;
Bee blithe and blisfulle, brughe off Aberdeine.
* * * * * * * * *

—*The Queen's (of James IV.) Reception at Aberdeen, by William Dunbar, the Scottish Laureate. May*, 1511.

* Brightest, from *beryl*, a precious stone.

PREFACE.

THE following pages were written for occupati
amusement, during a portion of my leisure time
course of the summer of 1867. They appeared
the title of *Reminiscences of Aberdeen*, in the
American Journal, published in New York—
paper of the highest class, extensively read
North America and in the mother country, to t
prietor of which I am under obligations for his c
on several occasions. I have reason to belie
these "shreds and patches" were, upon the
favourably received on this side of the Atlanti
good many who cherish associations connecte
Scotland; and, as they may probably affor
interest to the dwellers in my native city, I ha
induced, at the suggestion of some esteemed fri
the "braif toun," to publish them in their
shape. They are now submitted, as they or
appeared in print, with a few unimportant
dations. I have, however, added some
anecdotes, communicated to the Journal in q
by different correspondents, in notices of the
scences contributed after my papers had a
along with a few sketches of individual
which it has since occurred to me to inclu

also been kindly allowed to draw on the recollections of a few friends in Aberdeen, long known and cherished, for some note-worthy additions now made.

In preparing this little venture for the press, I have profited by the valued directions and advice (spontaneously afforded) of Mr. Lewis Smith, whose lengthened experience as a Publisher so well enables him to direct the "'prentice han'" of a candidate for the honours of Grub Street like myself.

This brochure lays no claim to literary merit, its aim and style not being intended or calculated either

To point a moral or adorn a tale.

I was induced to gather the motley collection together and put it in print, by the consideration that I might perchance be able to invest my reminiscences with some little interest, there being few people of ordinary intelligence, however limited their sphere for observation, who cannot say something more or less worthy of record of the scenes and incidents of their past life, and of the folk among whom their lot has been cast.

It is perhaps unnecessary to say that, like all Aberdonians I have ever met with, whose fate has led them to encounter the cares of life elsewhere over the world than within the "city of St Nicholas," I look back with genial recollections on the days when I used to tread its familiar precincts—

The Guestrow, Gallowgate, and Green,
Eke Fittie, Broadgate, and Broadford,
A' the four bows o' Aberdeen—
Our ain "braif toun" o' Bon-Accord.

Nor need I add that I should consider it an honour to be able so to depict my associations connected with the city and its inhabitants, as to uphold in some degree the credit and regard with which the sons of Bon-Accord invest the place of their birth and education.

In this attempt to delineate the salient points of character peculiar to the various individuals spoken of in this little tome, I have done my best to keep off forbidden ground; and while, in regard to some of them, I may unintentionally have incurred the imputation of so colouring my statements as to fulfil only the first portion of Othello's request, when he charges his friends in speaking of him, to

Nothing extenuate—

I trust it will be found that I have not overlooked its conclusion—

Nor set down aught in malice.

I am not sure but that, in connection with some portions of these reminiscences, I may be dealt with by the reader after the fashion depicted by Shenstone in anticipating the critic's award on one of his productions :—

As he who now with 'sdainful fury thrill'd,
Surveys mine work; and levels many a sneer,
And furls his wrinkly front, and cries "What stuff is here?"

Such criticism may, however, be expected after what has been said even of that great Epic itself, which ranks among the loftiest in the realms of poetry—

Thus, of your heroes and brave boys,
With whom old Homer makes such noise,
The greatest actions I can find,
Are, that they did their work and din'd—

seeing that I cannot claim for the personages whom my unskilful pen has attempted to portray either the celestial origin, or the heroic attributes with which "the blind old man of Scio's isle" has invested the actors in his famous story.

But, notwithstanding the imperfections of this brochure, it may yet perhaps be allowed to take rank with many another more imposing product of the art of typography, in one respect at least, viz.—that though neither of portentous dimensions, nor very lofty in its aim, it is, after all, a BOOK, and, being so, I am entitled to plead for it the dictum of a critic, whose ability will not be disputed—

A book's a book, although there's nothing in it.

——— CITY, NORTH AMERICA,
September, 1868.

Aberdeen and Its Folk.

CHAPTER I.

THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

Gay hope is theirs, by fancy fed,
Less pleasing, when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue:
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Gray.

I FEEL that, to introduce my little sketches to the reader, in a manner not too much savouring of egotism, is a task "approaching to onerousness;"* and, having ventured to commence in a domain with

* The expression here quoted I once saw employed in an official report, which happened to come under my notice, by the late Mr. John Kay, teacher in the Aberdeen Prisons. In addressing the Prison Board, in this document, he designated himself as "your teacher," and being evidently fond of "fine writing," even on the most trifling details connected with the routine of his humble office, he made use of the phrase in question in rounding-off a paragraph stating the difficulty he experienced in finding anything to say more than he had already said in previous reports. The task, he averred, was one "approaching to onerousness."

so many personal belongings as that of the family circle, of whom, in days long gone by, I was a member, I may probably lay myself open to the charge of obtruding details, which, unless in rare instances, can afford interest only to those more immediately connected with the circle itself. I shall, however, go no farther than the attempt to delineate a few traits of ordinary character, and the narration of one or two every-day incidents in the "trivial round" of domestic life, as it is passed among the middle classes in my native city. I have nothing to chronicle beyond what might be related in depicting the associations clustering round many another Scottish family in this rank of life; and in this unpretentious compilation of my recollections of those to whom I was bound by ties which no time should either impair or efface, I shall withdraw the veil that, to the outer world, ought to be kept suspended over

Their homely joys, their destiny obscure,

only so far as to enable me to present a faithful outline of the "short and simple annals" treasured in my memory.

Not the least prominent character, in the picture which my recollections enable me to draw of the household, is our faithful nurse, Kirsty T——, who was in every respect a worthy type of the old-fashioned Scottish domestic servant—a class whose attachment and fidelity Dean Ramsay has so well illustrated. She deserves a grateful notice at my hand, for, as the family quiver became replenished,

she had work enough among us, and did it well. In the nursery Kirsty ruled supreme, having a delegated power (which I here testify she never abused) of applying the rod of correction. She laid down the law after the fashion of the Medes and Persians, and her decrees were never called in question by either head of the household. Her custom was to threaten offenders against her code with what, to us in the nursery, was a fate too awful to be adequately realized—the being "harled afore the judges," by whom, clad in cocked-hat, wig, and robes, and attended by their gorgeously-arrayed trumpeters, the town is visited, in spring and autumn, when they go on circuit. Kirsty had a grandly-sounding lyric, where or how picked up I know not, which she used to repeat to us, in illustration of the dread power vested in these dignitaries—

> Doom, doom for the robbers!
> Call, call for the judges!
> Them that's clear needs not fear
> Although the judges do draw near.

To her "laddies," when encouraging them to the fulfilment of her behests, she held out the prospect that, by obeying them, they might, some day, become either a laird or a minister—these being the two orders in the community whom Kirsty specially honoured. She was very particular in regard to the saying of our "gweed words," especially at night, for it often happened that her hands were too full in the morning to allow her to attend so closely to this portion of our duty. Kirsty had not the faculty of tune, and her attempts to sing for our amusement were lamentably deficient in this requisite, but the

deficiency was made up by her heartiness. The songs she liked best were Allan Ramsay's "O'er Bogie," (a stream flowing past her native town, Huntly), "The Smith's a Gallant Fireman," the first line of which, "Lang, lang wad I want or I took a hireman," she rendered with great emphasis, and "Johnnie lad:"

Johnnie's nae a gentleman,
And Johnnie's nae a laird,
But I wad follow Johnnikie,
Although he were a caird.

And it's you, and it's you,
And it's you, my Johnnie lad,
I'll drink the buckles o' my sheen,
For you, my Johnnie lad.

Kirsty had an extensive collection of Scotch nursery rhymes and stories, some of which, I believe, have not hitherto appeared in print. Besides a number of these simple compositions given by Mr. Robert Chambers in his admirable collection, such as, "Tingle, lingle, lang tang, wha's this deid?" "The cattie sits i' the kiln ring, spinnin', spinnin'," "This is the way the ladies ride, jimp an' sma', jimp an' sma'," Kirstie had the following, which does not appear to have come under Mr. Chambers' notice:—

[Said to a child getting a ride on the nurse's knee.]

The carle raid to Aberdeen, to buy white bread,
But lang or he cam' back again, the carline she was deid,
Sae, he up wi's muckle stick, an' gae her ow'r the head,
Cryin', Fie! rise carline, an' eat white bread!

Rhymes attached to the Christian name had a

great attraction for Kirsty. Thus we had from her many a repetition of

> Tam o' the lynn, wi's wife an's mither,
> They gaed a' to the kirk thegither;

as well as—

> Peter, my neeper,
> Had a wife,
> And he couldna' keep her.
> He pat her i' the wa',
> And lat a' the mice eat her;

and other ditties, which the lapse of time has failed to eradicate from our memories.

Kirsty was a good many years in the family, and, when long-protracted illness obliged her to leave us the parting took place with much regret on both sides. Her reign in the nursery reminds me of a kitchen maid, Nelly D——, who was with us for a time, along with her, and with whom Kirsty sorted well. This girl played me a terrible trick, on one occasion, when I was some three or four years old, the dread recollection of which yet cleaves to my memory. I had left the nursery, and had gone into the kitchen, in which I was amusing myself, when, suddenly, in came, as I thought, a dreadful *rudas*, the terror of all the infant population of the town, Jean Carr by name, the common account of her habits and propensities being that she carried off bairns, to eat them at her leisure. After being threatened, in tones which sounded in my affrighted ears as no other than Jean's own savage lingo, I was seized, and incontinently borne off, frozen with horror, to a dark cellar, in the arms of her adroit personator. To my great relief, however, I was, by and by, addressed in Nelly's usual good-humoured

tones, and brought by her again into the light of day, after she had doffed the duds in which she had ingeniously disguised herself for the occasion. Nelly had some quaint peculiarities, her manner being abrupt and decisive. One of her principal reasons for liking Sunday above other days of the week was that, getting the latter half of that day to herself, she "wad spen' the nicht wi' her mither, an' get green tea an' a penny bun," these being her favourite dainties.

Another prominent individual in the family picture is a maiden aunt, whose kindly disposition continued throughout her life to endear her to a tribe of nephews and nieces. She used with great glee to tell a story of one of us laddies as affording an amusing instance of childish "pawkiness." When we paid her a visit, whether singly or in a body, we had the pleasing prospect of receiving a "jeelie piece," which was discussed with all the relish induced by such delicacies. On a certain occasion, one of us, a youngster of some three years old, visiting her singly, in charge of the nurse, had, in eating his piece, soiled his clothes to such an unpardonable extent as to call down auntie's solemn rebuke, the offence being considered so great as to induce her to pass sentence on the little culprit of being deprived of pieces by her in all time coming. At the next visit to auntie, paid singly, as it happened, the offender was received in her usual couthy way, and the conversation went on between her and him as if the offence, so severely reprimanded at the last visit, had never been committed. Time passed

on, however, and there seemed to him no likelihood of the coveted dainty being forthcoming. Many longing looks were cast by the youngster at the region in which he knew were stored the materials for pieces. These looks auntie saw "wi' the tail o' her e'e," but took no apparent notice of them. At last, after having relapsed into silence for a time, the little fellow asked her the question—*apropos* of nothing which had passed in the previous conversation, but the drift of which she at once perceived—"Have ye a towel, auntie?" "Aye, my laddie," she answered, "twa or three, but what wad ye want wi' a towel?" To this the little man replied, hesitatingly, "I wadna spoil mysel', auntie." "Fat wad ye spoil yoursel' wi', my laddie?" was the next query, when the final object of the colloquy on the part of the juvenile was at last revealed on his saying, in the most winning tones he could adopt for the occasion, "O, wi' the piecie, ye ken, auntie." It is needless to say that the diplomacy thus practised proved irresistible, and a good-sized piece was administered, out of auntie's "aumrie."

Another of my aunt's favourite stories referred to a queer character, with a decided "want"—to use that expressive Scotticism—who, by the bounty of friends, enjoyed a small annuity, sufficient to maintain him in tolerable comfort. He boarded with a decent "widow woman" occupying the lower part of the house in which my aunt resided, his occupation when in-doors being the repairing of fiddles, after a style of his own. He prided himself as excelling in two other pursuits—fiddle playing, and fishing with the rod; but his scraping on catgut

was a terrible infliction on all human ears in the neighbourhood, and in his piscatorial attempts, often as he essayed the gentle art, he was equally unsuccessful, for he was never known to have captured even a "bandstickle." His disposition was not like that of genial Isaak Walton, within "whose cheerful heart," (as he himself discourses), "wisdom, peace, patience, and a quiet mind did cohabit," but was gruff and taciturn, and though he was quite harmless, his kindly hostess had often great difficulty in overcoming his sullen humours. One day he had gone, rod in hand, to fish in his favourite stream, the Tile Burn, in the Auld Town Links, when the weather suddenly changed, and a severe storm of wind and rain came on while he was at the burn side. He was so long in returning home that his hostess became uneasy about him, fearing lest he might have met with an accident. At last his step was heard by her watchful ears ascending the common stair. She anticipated his knock, and opened the door to her lodger, whom she found shivering with cold, and wet to the skin. In her blandest manner she greeted him with, "Come awa, my peer (poor) fiddlerie, ye're unco caul' an' weet the day." Bouncing past her, he sped at once to his quarters, saying only—but that in his gruffest fashion—"Deil fiddle oot the fite (white) o' yer een." Philosophers and schoolmen have speculated, and ponderous tomes have been written, on less interesting and important questions than that suggested by this saying, viz., why the white of the eye should be fiddled out rather than the whole of that bodily organ!

I have many reminiscences, both grave and gay, of our family life, and of the training and discipline to which we laddies were amenable under the parental roof. On this subject, both our parents, while truly kind, and disposed, like sensible folk, to make all due allowance for youthful peccadilloes, regulated their code of discipline according to the royal sage's proverb, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." It was only, however, on comparatively rare occasions, when some grave breach of parental authority had been committed, that recourse was had to the "tards," of which it could not be affirmed, as the *Duke* says in "Measure for Measure,"

> Now as fond fathers
> Having bound up the threat'ning twigs of birch,
> Only to stick it in their children's sight
> For terror, not for use; in time the rod
> Becomes more mock'd than fear'd.

I well remember both the appearance and the effects of the tards which my father carried in his pocket, its application being in his department of the household regime. It was not of very portentous dimensions, but when smartly laid on, its effects were akin to those of the class of appliances, characterized in modern Pharmacopeias as "stimulant and rubefacient." We were thus trained to regard the commandment standing fifth in the decalogue as of equal authority with the rest; and I feel certain that every member of the large family thus dealt with, now surviving, is convinced that in adhering to this code of discipline—more followed in Scotland, perhaps, than in other countries—our parents gave us good cause to cherish their me-

mories, from having acted as they did in the regulation of our conduct, and the formation of our principles and character.

In connection with the administration of discipline in the family, I may be allowed to notice an amusing incident. On a certain occasion, some three or four of the laddies had got into trouble in regard to some "ploy" of a mischievous kind in which they had been engaged, and which, when detected by the parental authorities, was considered of so glaring a character, that, to prove they were determined, in the regulation of the family, to be "a terror to evil-doers," the culprits were sentenced to the direst and most extreme punishment known in the household. The sentence was pronounced, as it happened, in the afternoon, but, to render it more impressive, its execution was deferred until the offenders should have undressed for bed. Being conscious of the magnitude of their offence, and knowing that the authorities with whom they had to deal stuck pretty closely to their word, the laddies did not, it may be supposed, get through the time intervening between the announcement of their threatened doom and its anticipated experience in

> The way in which in due degree
> They sweeten'd every meal with social glee,
> The heart's light laugh applauding every jest,
> While all is sunshine in each youthful breast,

but the hours passed somehow. At length came the dread moment when the tards was expected. They waited and waited, each moment of suspense seeming more bitter in the endurance; but no sign was given by the administrator of discipline that he in-

tended to execute his sentence. At last they resolved by a *coup-de-main* to bring their state of suspense to an end, and the boldest of the culprits, leaving the bed-room in which they were expecting their fate, called down stairs in a voice sufficiently loud to be heard by the authorities in the room below, "Father, come up and gie 's our licks, for we winna sleep till ye dee 't." This bold appeal averted the threatened punishment, for neither father nor mother could resist giving way to a hearty laugh at the oddity of the request. The fact was, that something had occurred in the course of the evening to occupy my father's attention so closely as to have made him forget all about the sentence which had caused so much disquietude to the offenders.

We had handed down to us by a grandmother, I believe—a matron of the school of speech and manners prevailing among the middle classes in Scotland about a century ago, who died in my mother's girlhood—a stock of Scotch proverbs and quaint sayings, some of them peculiar to the district in which the "Granite City" is situated, and all more or less worthy of record. I shall note a portion of them at random, without attempting any classification:

"Saut! quo' the sutor, when he ate the coo and worried on the tail."

I suppose this to mean that if it is attempted, by inadequate means, to overcome a difficulty, already almost vanquished, the feat will not be accomplished.

"When your head's fite (white), ye wad hae 't curlin'."

This refers to the custom of wearing hair powder.

It is intended as a reproof of unreasonable expectations.

"Ye've neither been biggin' kirks nor placin' ministers."

You have been engaged in some kind of questionable occupation.

"Spit upon 't, an' ca 't thegither wi' a stane."

Said when too much ado is made about a trifling cut or scratch.

"When that fa's oot, we'll see twa meens (moons) i' the lift, an' anither i' the aiss midden."

Said to express most forcibly the improbability of better conduct for the future.

"Na! but for questions ye ding,
Ye wad speer the doup frae a peer (poor) wife."

In reproof of inquisitiveness.

"Yer mou' is like the scutter-hole (out of which the muckin' is effected) o' a byre."

Spoken in reproof of uncleanly habits in eating, &c.

"Sell yer pig (jar or dish) and buy a can."

A punning reproof of an excuse for inability to perform a task—the excuse having been, "I canna."

"Ye may say the grace o' Cooperhill."

Said when intending to reprove gluttony. The grace is—

"Deil rive the ruggest (hungriest), and cleave the clungest (emptiest)."

"Keep yer taunts to tocher yer maidens."

A specimen of the Scottish "retort courteous."

"I doubt ye've been at the kirk o' crack-about faar (where) the kail pot's the minister."

Spoken in reproof of not "frequenting the ordinances" on the Sabbath day.

"Ye're a gweed gar-me-true."

Said to one promising more than he is likely to perform.

"Garr'd girss is ill to grow,
And chappit stanes is ill to chow."

When the heart is not interested in the performance of a thing, it is difficult to accomplish it.

"Ye're as mim as a May puddock."

Spoken of a mincing, ultra-modesty-affecting manner in a woman.

"Girnie-gash, the laird's piper!"

Said to a whimpering child.

"Ye've the conscience (the greed) o' a coal horse."

Spoken in reproof of greediness. Horses owned by "coal-carters" in Aberdeen are generally half-starved.

"Ye're gyan on like a curn lowse nowt."

Or,

"Ye're caperin' like a corn't horse."

In reproof of over-noisy or boisterous play.

As an instance of humorous exaggeration in the description of a person lank and lean in bodily condition, I give the following:—

"A peer (poor) pykit-to-dead-like pictarntie (a species of seagull) o' a forfairn (forlorn) craeter."

This description of leanness will bear comparison with Sydney Smith's humorous amplification in

regard to a lady about to be married, who was of considerable dimensions :—"Going to marry her! impossible! you mean a part of her; he could not marry her all himself. It would be a case not of bigamy, but trigamy; the neighbourhood or the magistrates should interfere. There is enough of her to furnish wives for a whole parish. One man marry her! it is monstrous. You might people a colony with her; or give an assembly with her; or perhaps take your morning's walk round her, always provided there were frequent resting places, and you were in rude health. I once was rash enough to try walking round her before breakfast, but only got half way, and gave it up exhausted. Or, you might read the Riot Act and disperse her; in short, you might do anything with her, but marry her."

Mr. R. Chambers, in his work before referred to, gives the saying, "Clim' Criffel" (a hill in Dumfriesshire), "clever cripple," as affording an *experimentum crucis* to test the ability to repeat a set of words both rapidly and accurately. There are two such sayings current in Aberdeen as difficult, perhaps, to enunciate with rapidity as this. They are—

"A peacock pykit a peck o' paper oot o' a paper pyock. Pyke paper, peacock."

"I snuff shop snuff. Dae ye snuff shop snuff."

Let my readers try all the three sayings, and they will be found a pretty tough mouthful.

There are a good many expressive words peculiar to Aberdeenshire and the surrounding district, some of which, often heard by me in childhood and youth, I have pleasure in recalling to memory. Such of them as are found in Jamieson's "Etymological

Dictionary of the Scottish Language" (a work, by the way, which in its own sphere may well match that of the great English lexicographer, Johnson), are quoted mostly from the works of Alexander Ross, author of "The Fortunate Shepherdess." Let me here enumerate a few as specimens :—

Amshach—misfortune.
Bumbazed—stupefied.
Confeerin—consonant to.
Floanin'—indiscreetly showing fondness.
Freedomfu'—plentiful and economical.

There is a saying of a thrifty gudewife on a farm-town—she "lykit taties, 'cause they're sic a fine freedomfu' diet."

Geet—contemptuous designation of a child.
Jinnipperous. This is not in Jamieson. As its termination indicates, it is an adjective, and, as I understand it, means cleanly, tidy, but over-scrupulous in regard to dress and manners. Perhaps I am not quite correct in my interpretation of this curious word.
Knorlack—a blow or heavy stroke.
Lyowmans—the legs.
Sconfice—to stifle, applied to bad smells.
Sharger—a weakly child.
Skutter—confusion.
Weel a' wins—an expression of pity.

CHAPTER II.

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE DAYS.

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
We love the play-place of our early days.
* * * * * *
This fond attachment to the well-known place,
Whence first we started into life's long race,
Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,
We feel it even in age, and at our latest day.

Cowper.

——— whom all unite to praise,
The dear preceptor of my early days!
* * * * * *
With him, for years, we search'd the classic page,
And fear'd the master, though we loved the sage.

Byron.

I SHALL now attempt to set down a few reminiscences of my "Schools and Schoolmasters," to borrow the title of a well-known admirable work, by one of Scotland's most eminent sons, the late lamented Hugh Miller.

And here let me interpolate an expression of my grateful sense of the educational advantages, which, owing in a great measure to the generosity of more than one noble-minded benefactor to his kind, in days long gone by, I enjoyed in Aberdeen, particularly at the Grammar School. Every fellow-townsman, whose progress in life has in any degree depended upon the aptitude and completeness of his education, will join in this tribute. What but these advantages have made Aberdonians, all the world

over, able at least to "hold their own" with other competitors, educated elsewhere, in the multiform pursuits and avocations by which man earns his daily bread? The quality and extent of the education, which has from generation to generation been within the reach of all but the poorest of the sons of Bon-Accord, has verified, in its best and noblest sense, the truth of the now hackneyed saying of the poet—

> 'Tis education forms the common mind;
> Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined.

And I cannot help avowing that, in these days, when in Britain itself, and more especially on the western side of the Atlantic, where my lot is cast, so much talk is spent on the necessity of adapting education specially to the nature of the pursuits to be followed in after-life, it is refreshing to hear a word said in favour of the "good old paths" by which, in my day, the ultimate object in view was sought to be attained by my several instructors, in the time-honoured system they pursued. I devoutly trust that system characterised by the predominant place it assigns to classical literature, as affording the means best adapted for a course of vigorous mental training, will continue in practice among generations of Aberdonians yet unborn. May the time never come when it will be supplanted, to any noticeable extent, in the good city by such a system as is practised in North America by the proprietors of schools, dignified with the high-sounding title of "Commercial Colleges," for the manufacture of boys, before they are out of their teens, into men, indoctrinated mainly with a sordid greed after the

"almighty dollar," and trained in no higher arts than those by which a man can, by hook or crook, "make his pile." Towards the Grammar School and the several kindred institutions in Aberdeen, I add the fervent aspiration, *Semper floreant!* May the University also, under whose *benignum numen* the once "rival sisters twain" have been united, continue to send forth a succession of men who will uphold before the world, by head and hand, the undiminished credit of their *alma mater*.

When I had reached what I then thought the mature age of five years, I went one day in my father's hand to be entered at an excellent school in Long Acre, kept by the late Mr. David Grant, of whom, in common with such of his numerous pupils as now survive, I have many pleasant recollections. His predecessor in the school (I cannot say whether immediate or not) was "Budsie Bowers," referred to in Moore's "Life of Byron" as the pedagogue by whom the noble poet was taught until he entered the Grammar School of Aberdeen. Mr. Grant, a man of comely countenance, whose features indicated the possession of a fair share of intellect and refinement, was rather below the middle size, with a pleasant voice and cheerful manner. Although he had the misfortune to be lame of one foot, causing him to waddle as he walked, he dressed well in canonical black, and was really a "trig bodie." His lameness was the cause of his having got conferred upon him, at a period considerably before that at which I became one of his scholars, the sobriquet of "Cripple Frostie," or, shortly, "Frostie."

The "tards" was an institution in this seminary, as Mr. Grant designated his school, to which recourse was had pretty frequently. When punishment was to be inflicted on any transgressor of his not over-stern rules, he used to fling the tards from one end of the school-room to the other, calling to the culprit to pick up the instrument of punishment, and bring it with him to the rostrum from which Mr. Grant dispensed justice to his youthful subjects. The tards being then duly handed over, the fitting number of "pandies" was administered, according to the magnitude of the offence. Continued disobedience and turbulent conduct were punished by summary expulsion from the school; and I remember one occasion on which he refused to take back a boy who had been guilty of these offences, although urged to do so by the youngster's father. Talking of punishment reminds me of one of rather a strange kind which I myself experienced oftener than once at this school. One of Mr. Grant's younger brothers, who for a time acted as his usher, was gifted with a rather strong beard, and as in those days this masculine appendage was worn only by Jews, he had, like the multitude, to submit his chin to the razor. He did not, however, undergo the operation of shaving daily, for when his beard had attained some days' growth, he would jocularly seize hold of a boy at fault in his lessons, and rub his bristly chin smartly over the culprit's cheek—a discipline the recollection of which is anything but pleasant.

Mr. Grant was very proud of his good fortune in having succeeded to the occupation of the school-

room in which his favourite poet, Byron, then in the zenith of his fame, had been taught. After I had entered at the Grammar School, Mr. Grant asked me as a great favour to him to make a thorough examination of all the "factions" (wooden benches) in that establishment, in order to ascertain whether the poet, following the usual practice of the youth who imbibed their Latinity at that Institution, had left the marks of his pocket-knife behind him anywhere throughout the school—a practice which he commemorates as prevailing in the public school he attended in England:—

> No splendid tablets grace her simple hall,
> But ruder records fill the dusky wall;
> There, deeply carved, behold! each tyro's name
> Secures its owner's academic fame.

I was asked to look for the letters G. B., or G. G. B., particularly the latter, which would stand for the initials of the poet's full name, George Gordon Byron, which he bore until he became a peer. I examined every "faction" in the school, but, I am sorry to say, without success. Mr. Grant was a tolerably good elocutionist, and taught this accomplishment with some success, his text-book being a work by the late Sheridan Knowles, the dramatist. He prided himself on his penmanship, and had hung up on the walls of the school-room above the fireplace, in all its glory, framed and glazed, a specimen of his ornamental work in that line, containing the usual swan, spread eagle, &c., which his pupils looked upon, I well remember, as a marvel of caligraphy. I must do him the justice to say that to this department of school-work he paid marked at-

tention, and turned out a generation or two of good penmen. When the "copy books" were completed, one after another, his scholars had to submit them to his inspection before taking them home. They were carefully scrutinized on these occasions, and his written verdict upon them, intended for the parental eye, was recorded on the inside of the fly-leaf. These used to be—"Going on well and worthy of one penny, D. G." "Careful and improving" was deemed worthy of twopence; while, to complete his ratio of progression, "excellent" was set down as deserving of sixpence, beyond which coin Mr. Grant did not consider himself warranted to go in his not very deadly attacks on the parental pocket.

We had an annual grand field-day at this school, when it was visited by the provost and magistrates in state, and examined, being, if I am not mistaken, the only school in the town not under the immediate patronage of the civic authorities thus honoured. On these occasions the Provost presided at a table on which were spread out the prizes to be bestowed on such of the scholars as had acquitted themselves best in school-work for a certain period previous to the examination. It was a proud day for me when Provost Gavin Hadden, in his suave and dignified manner, presented me, then an urchin of some seven years, with a little book, my first prize; and with what disdain did I look down on my juniors in age whose prizes consisted only of packages of "sweeties!"

Let me wind up my reminiscences of Mr. Grant by referring to the judicious literary taste he displayed in the compilation of a volume entitled "Grant's Modern British Poetry," containing selec-

tions from Byron, Scott, Campbell, and the other more eminent poets of this and the last century. A boy attending his school and paying ordinary attention to the course of lessons could not fail to imbibe some of the master's taste for poetry. Mr. Grant's declining years were passed in comfort in charge of a small endowed school in the country, and he closed his useful, though uneventful life, spent in single blessedness, with the respect and esteem of all who knew his genuine worth.

Having proceeded so far in the path of learning under Mr. Grant as to fit me for the Grammar School, I was taken by him, along with several other boys of my age, who had been fellow-scholars in Long Acre, on the first day of the winter quarter, to this excellent school, to be entered in the junior class, about to be opened by the late James Melvin, LL.D. At this time the late Mr. Cromar was rector, but being laid aside from duty by illness, his classes, the two most advanced in the school, were taught by an assistant. I had not been many days at the Grammar School before I had learned the couplet in which the boys had embodied the epithets they had bestowed on the rector and the three masters in charge of the junior classes (Messrs. James Watt, Robert Forbes, and James Melvin),

> Crow Cromar, and Jamie Watt,
> Chuckle-head, and Girdle-hat.

The last of these appellations was conferred on Mr. Melvin, who then wore a hat with a brim of such dimensions as to have been likened to a girdle—an

implement in use in Scottish kitchens, defined by Jamieson as "a circular plate of malleable or cast iron for toasting cakes over the fire."

Mr. Cromar having died shortly after the commencement of the winter quarter, Mr. Melvin was chosen rector by the Magistrates and Town Council, the patrons of the school. He was succeeded in charge of the junior class, in which I was a pupil, by the late Mr. John Dun, who, from a peculiar habit he had of disposing of his hands, as he walked about the school, was nicknamed "Catcher." This gentleman proved an excellent teacher, and his classes were always larger than he could well do justice to. He kept good order, without very often employing the tards, an implement of stout leather about half-a-yard in length, one moiety of which was divided into some six tails. He was a determined enemy to everything in the conduct of the boys tending to take their attention off the business of the class during school hours, and employed the tards in punishment for whispering or making signs —one of which was asking and telling each other what's o'clock by an ingenious, though silent, use of the fingers. I had a taste of this grim implement, as wielded by Mr. Dun's firm hand, after having been caught asking a fellow-scholar in a whisper how many errors he had had in his "version," as a theme is still called in the school. On another occasion, I had to hold up one hand after another to be "pandied" for gross carelessness in not having prepared, as I should have done, the prescribed portion of Latin Grammar. I was then well and deservedly trounced, but, I must say, the discipline did me good, and I

was thus kept from transgressing on this score for the future.

In those days, the extreme penalty of the law, the nature of which I have already hinted at, was occasionally resorted to at the Grammar School to punish offences of very grave character—the authorities in the Institution having viewed this particular mode of discipline as did the author of Hudibras :—

> Whipping, that's Virtue's governess,
> Tut'ress of Arts and Sciences;
> That mends the gross mistakes of Nature,
> And puts new life into dull matter;
> That lays foundation for renown,
> And all the honours of the gown.

I never saw this punishment administered except twice during all the five years I attended the school. On the first occasion, the punishment was inflicted by Mr. Melvin, the rector, in the public hall, in presence of all the pupils composing the five classes. It was nobly borne by the little fellow who was the victim. He might have attempted to escape punishment by laying the blame elsewhere than on himself, but he did not do so, and his subsequent honourable career in life is no other than might have been expected from his conduct on this trying occasion. For the benefit of such of the survivors among my then fellow-scholars as may happen to see these reminiscences, I may mention that I learned only recently from a friend who was in the same class with W——, that he was entirely innocent of the offence laid to his charge—the fact having been that the master who made the complaint against him was mistaken in regard to the

identity of the transgressor in lodging with the rector the complaint which occasioned this punishment, and thus the poor fellow, in undergoing it, furnished an illustration of the couplet—

> As Romish penitents let out their skins
> To bear the punishment of others' sins.

I came once more under Mr. Melvin's charge on entering the fourth class. By this time the reputation of the school had been raised to the high standard it enjoyed till his death.

His reputation as a ripe and exact scholar, and a man of elegant and cultivated mind, is so well established, over the north of Scotland more especially, that I need not enlarge upon it. Though, as Elia says of the schoolmaster of the old type, Melvin was necessarily obliged to be "revolving in a perpetual cycle of declensions, conjugations, syntaxes, and prosodies," he would have shone in any walk in the realms of literature.

In person, he was tall, upright, and well formed —always well dressed in good black cloth. His face, pale and strongly marked with small-pox, indicated intelligence and culture, with a more than ordinary share of Scotch shrewdness. His disposition was kindly and cheerful, and he had the manners and bearing of a gentleman. Possessing a fund of quiet humour, he thoroughly relished a good joke or pawky saying, especially if expressed in the vernacular of his country, the terseness and vigour of which he appreciated, and could well illustrate.

He kept at all times the most perfect order in his classes, and, while he was present in the public school as rector, the most unruly and turbulent

boys under any of the other masters were awed into decorum, well knowing that they dared not, with impunity, commit a breach of discipline in his presence. When anything had occurred to call for grave reprehension, he could assume a most portentous frown, pursing up his mouth in a way peculiar to himself, and uttering his censures in quiet, though determined tones, which never failed in telling effect. After such displays, the common saying among his scholars on their dismissal from school, was, "the mou's been on the day." The practice referred to of pursing up his mouth earned him the epithet of *Grim*, another nickname by which he was irreverently designated among the boys, while I was in his classes.

I shall not attempt to illustrate in detail the methods he so successfully adopted in imparting to his scholars a knowledge of Latin, this having been most ably done by two of his quondam pupils, Professor Masson, lately editor of *Macmillan's Magazine*, and Dr. John Hill Burton, author of "The Scot Abroad," and other works.

Melvin's chief characteristic as a teacher of Latin was the attention he devoted to what has become celebrated in its way as the "version system" of the school. On two days of the week he commenced proceedings by dictating to his two classes (both taught together in the same room of the building) a theme in English to be turned by them into Latin, with the help of grammar, dictionary, and their own M.S. "Phrase Books," the latter being compiled from his remarks on the classical authors read in the school. To have a well-stocked Latin "Phrase

Book" was considered as the mark of a careful and attentive scholar. Such of the pupils as had completed their versions before the hour of dismissing the classes had them examined at once. This examination was made by the rector, seated at his elevated desk or rostrum, each scholar having in turn to stand in attendance beside him, while his production was commented upon, and the errors marked. He rated these according to a well-defined scale, a *minimus* (or "minie," as the boys called it,) reckoning as one, a *medius* ("medie") two, and a *maximus* ("maxie") as four, and the aggregate value of such errors in each version, when summed up, determined the relative places of the various version-makers in the classes until the next trial of strength among them. These examinations (during which he imbibed immense quantities of snuff, of which he was very fond) generally afforded Melvin opportunities of saying things to individual scholars, either commendatory or the reverse, which, uttered in his quiet and peculiar way, were not likely to be forgotten. He often relaxed his mind on these occasions by the use of the broad Scotch of the district. Thus, I remember one of my class-fellows, a tolerably fair scholar, though occasionally somewhat careless, was having his version examined, and, as a good many errors had been committed in the production, each of which had subjected the offender to a smart rap over the nose with Melvin's bulky, old-fashioned silver pencil-case, which he employed on these occasions in this mode of discipline, he wound up his remarks on the version by saying, "Aye, Sandie man, I'll need to be gi'ein' ye a lickin' some

day sune." At another time he had examined a version which was correct in every respect, except in the use of one unfortunate word near the end, by which mischance a "maxie" had to be marked on the paper. Melvin had highly commended the rendering of the English into Latin, as he went along, much to the gratification of the scholar at his side, who was looking for a place as Dux of the class, by his fondly expected *sine errore* production, until at the close, when the examiner's eye came upon the blunder. Turning to the scholar, on observing the mistake, he said, in mock pathetic tones, "Oh, Willie, Willie, man, ye've eaten the coo and worried o' the tail."

Although he thus at times indulged in the use of the Doric, while conducting the business of the school, he was uniformly careful in guarding his pupils against Scotticisms in writing or speaking English; taking a peculiar pleasure, however, in illustrating the pith and force of the Scottish tongue. As an instance in point, I may give two stanzas of poetry, in each of the two languages, founded on the line in Ovid's Metamorphoses (Book iv., fab. 11)—one of the class-books in the school—*Aut petis aut urges ruiturum, Sisyphe, saxum*, which were repeated with great gusto. The lines in English are:—

With many a weary sigh and many a groan
Up the high hill he heaves the huge round stone;
The huge round stone, revolving with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the ground.

The Doric runs thus:—

There I saw Sisyphus, wi' mickle wae,
Birsin' a big stane up a heich brae,

Wi' a' his micht oot ow'r the knowe,
Wi' baith his han's an' feet, but wow!
When it's maist dune, wi' awfu' dird,
Doun stots the stane, an' thumps upo' the yird.

Melvin took every fitting opportunity of combining amusement with instruction. To do this he did not go out of his way, and his occasional excursions into the realms of wit and humour were thus all the more appreciated. His pupils were introduced by him to Porson's happy Latin pun, inscribed on a tea caddy, *Tu doces* (thou tea-chest), and to the equally good *Janitor a te sed* (Porter from the butt.) The best effort, however, in this way, on which he expatiated with satisfaction, was the sentence, *Mea mater est mala sus*, which, having been rendered into English by the scholar who happened to be pitched upon to translate it, "My mother is a wicked sow," was interpreted by the rector, to the delectation of his classes, as meaning also, "Run, mother, the sow is eating the apples."

His dissertations on Latin prosody afforded opportunities of his introducing us to sundry quaint productions of modern scholars, among others to the alliterative poem commencing—

Plaudite porcella porcorum pigra propago—

to the line

Nomina parietibus stultorum semper adherent,

and to the rhyming versicle,

Finis coronat opus
Et opus coronat me
Nunquam vidi stultum
Donec vidi te—

the two latter productions being occasionally used

as vehicles for conveying a smart reproof by his quoting them to a careless scholar.

For several years previous to the death of the late Dr. James Davidson, Professor of Humanity (Literæ Humaniores) and Natural History in Marischal College, Melvin took charge of the Humanity class in that institution, as Dr. Davidson's substitute, doing duty in this capacity as "Lecturer on Humanity." On the death of the Professor, Melvin (in common with the whole inhabitants in the north-east of Scotland) naturally expected that the Professorship of Humanity, in the gift of the Government of the day, would have fallen to him. He and they, however, were disappointed, the Whigs, then in power, having conferred it upon the versatile Professor Blackie, now adorning the Greek chair in the University of Edinburgh. Should this meet that gentleman's eye, he will pardon me, I trust, for here quoting a saying indicative of the feelings with which his appointment to the chair in Marischal College was at the time regarded in Aberdeen, where, as he has told us, he "fought with beasts." In a brochure, written by a local litterateur, professing to give biographical sketches of the clergy and the Professors in Aberdeen, Professor Blackie, then recently installed in the Humanity chair, was incidentally alluded to as "a young gentleman who may be seen going about without anybody to take charge of him." His subsequent career, it does not need my saying, has proved to the full that the Professor can well enough take care of himself, and that he will leave his mark on the University with which he is now connected.

Melvin's accurate scholarship, and his success as a teacher of Latin, were fittingly acknowledged by the Senatus of Marischal College, who conferred upon him the degree of LL.D., and it is no exaggeration to say that the honour was never more worthily bestowed than in his case.

My reminiscences of this excellent man are all of a genial kind. Not the least pleasing among these is the recollection of the dutiful attention he paid to his widowed mother, who lived with him till her death, which took place at an advanced age. It did one's heart good to see the Doctor going to church with the old lady on his arm, carefully adjusting his paces to hers, his face beaming with the look of one performing a work of love. He never married, and his modest, but comfortable establishment, first in the Gallowgate, and subsequently for many years in Belmont Street, was presided over by a much-attached and intelligent sister, who survives him. His house brimmed over with books, some of them very scarce and valuable, and, in speaking of them, he used to say, with the satisfied smile of a genuine book-hunter, that he had a different edition of Horace for every day in the year.

Take Dr. Melvin, all in all, and it may be said, without disparagement to his successors, that the like of him, so entirely fitted for the important position he so long and so successfully occupied, may not be found for another hundred years. He continued hard at work to the last, and died at the age of some fifty-seven, universally respected and lamented.

I am sure there is not one of his many successful

scholars who will not gratefully accord him the tribute paid by Byron to one of his preceptors in England :—

> When Probus' praise repaid my lyric song,
> Or placed me higher in the studious throng;
> Or when my first harangue received applause,
> His sage instruction the primeval cause,
> What gratitude to him my soul possest,
> While hope of dawning honours fill'd my breast!
> * * * * * *
> Yet why for him the needless verse essay?
> His honor'd name requires no vain display:
> By every son of grateful IDA blest,
> It finds an echo in each youthful breast;
> A fame beyond the glories of the proud,
> Or all the plaudits of the venal crowd.

Having undergone the usual course of five years' tuition at the Grammar School I went, in 18—, to the "competition" at Marischal College, the *alma mater* of the renowned Ritt-Master, Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket. On this occasion there were sixteen "bursaries," each tenable for the four years' curriculum of the arts classes—ranging in value from £14 down to £5 per annum, to be competed for by means of a written theme rendered, with the help of grammar, dictionary, &c., from English, as dictated, into Latin. Some eighty competitors came forward on the occasion when I entered the lists, a larger number than usual, and, out of those found entitled to a bursary, all except, I think, two, had been pupils of Dr. Melvin. I am happy here to record an instance of my former master Dun's thoughtful kindness to me in connection with this competition. On the eve of the eventful day he sent for me to offer the use of a folio Latin dictionary containing a mine

of erudition, to be consulted in the construction of my theme. With this, and a host of other helps in the shape of phrase books, &c., I commenced my all-important task, which occupied me about six hours —a work which, had there been no such consequences as the gaining of a bursary attending it, I could have easily accomplished in an hour. Besides Dr. Glennie, Professor of Moral Philosophy, by whom the theme for the competition was dictated, I recollect no other person so prominent on the occasion as the ancient sacrist, George Pirie—a jolly little man, who, during his lengthened tenure of office, bore the college mace on state occasions with great dignity, and was liked both by professors and students. He had to remain in the hall where the competition took place until it was finally cleared, to see that the regulations laid down had been complied with. He administered to each competitor who desired it a "bawbee bun," a stock of which he carried round the tables in a large wicker basket — this, with water *ad libitum*, being the only refreshment allowed the aspiring youths on these great occasions. George was a shrewd, "canny bodie," and though residing within the precincts of an institution devoted to learning and science, knew no other tongue than the broad Doric of the district, which he spoke without any attempt at modification.

The bursary list was not made public till 9 o'clock on the morning after the competition had taken place, and I well remember the anxiety I experienced during the interval—to me, as well as most other competitors, "big with the fate of Cæsar and of Rome"—(the theme, by the way, referred to Cæsar

Augustus)—until the publication took place. I owed it to my training at the Grammar School, under Dun and Melvin, that my name found a place, though not a very prominent one, on that list.

I shall not enlarge on the feeling of pride, and the sense of incipient manliness with which, like most of my youthful fellows, I donned the red gown worn at the college, glorying in the epithet of "Butterie," bestowed by the street urchins on freshmen in Aberdeen. Nor is it worth while saying anything regarding my career during the first session in the Greek class, under Dr. Robert J. Brown, that kindly and now venerable man, who retired from active duty on the union of King's and Marischal Colleges, some seven years ago. The humanity class, as above stated, was under charge of Dr. Melvin.

Before entering the classes in the second session, the usual preliminary examinations had to be undergone, and I remember a scheme, practised with success, whereby, at the examination in Greek, it came to be known what particular passage from the authors read during the first session was the subject of trial on the occasion. The students were called up to the public hall of the college, where the examination took place, in the order of their Christian names (Alexander, Charles, David, &c.), and, on going through the necessary ordeal, each retired to seats in another part of the hall, there to remain until the whole business of the day had been concluded. By inquiry at the sacrist, it was ascertained that these seats were ranged close to the

windows overlooking the college grounds below, where the students were lounging about waiting their turn to be called up to the hall. It was arranged before the first student went up that, on his going to these seats after being examined, he should place his cap in a particular place in one or other of the windows, in view of his fellows below, such place to be indicative of the author selected. It was thus, almost at once, discovered that the examining professor had selected the tragedy of Œdipus at Colonos. By the same kind of signal, given in turn by each of the first few students who went up, the page and even the very lines selected were discovered, and thus the great majority of the class went up well prepared for the ordeal, the difficulties in the passage being all surmounted with apparent credit. No such chance, however, was given for the other branches in which entrants in the classes taught during the second session had to be examined, as the trials for these took place in another room not affording the opportunity of practising such a scheme.

The course of study during the second session embraced Latin, Greek (advanced), Mathematics, and Natural History—the first two of these branches being taught by Drs. Brown and Melvin, as in the first session.

The Mathematical chair was held by Professor John Cruickshank, who still survives, although, like his quondam colleague, Dr. Brown, not now in active duty. He was a most efficient teacher, well versed in every branch of the science, as well

as an excellent man of business, in his capacity of secretary and treasurer to the College. He ruled his class with a decidedly firm, though gentle hand, and I do not recollect a single instance of an attempt being made by any student, however unruly elsewhere, to question his authority, nor, except on one occasion, when he delivered a really touching farewell address, at the close of the session, did I ever hear a "ruff" in the class-room. He was a thorough gentleman in his treatment of the students, while the business of the class was going forward, although he could say severe things at times in reproof of carelessness or stupidity. Thus, a luckless fellow had been called on for several days in succession to demonstrate the propositions in Euclid forming the subject of study at the time, but he failed on each occasion in going beyond the first few steps in the demonstrations. At last, conscious of his inability to make anything of the proposition finally put to him, he did not rise from his seat, as usual, when called on, indicating thereby his state of unpreparedness. Dr. Cruickshank looked him steadily in the face for a few seconds, and then said, in his usual quiet, precise manner: "Is your bottom glued to the seat, sir?" This brought the young fellow at last to his legs, but failed in getting him to open his mouth. After another short pause, the Professor again addressed him, in the same manner, "Now, sir, you may sit down again." I certainly did not envy his mental condition after such a rebuke.

On one occasion, he called up a student, saying "Alexander, will you be so good as demonstrate

the 47th proposition of the first Book?" Alexander stood up, showing visible signs of fear, and after enunciating its terms correctly, made a plunge at it. He had evidently committed it carefully to memory, letters of the alphabet and all, as in Playfair's Euclid; but as Dr. Cruickshank had put other letters on the black board to designate the various lines and angles in the figure, poor Alexander failed. The Doctor encouraged him to try it again, at the same time, with great kindness, going over the first steps of the demonstration with him. Alexander made a second attempt, and failed; again the worthy Professor came to the rescue, and again the luckless student tried his best in vain. At last, the Doctor turning round from the board and looking keenly at him over the flat tops of his spectacles, said: "Sit down, Sir! You have mistaken your calling; you ought to have been a shoemaker." *(a.)*

At another time, one of his class was called upon to demonstrate a proposition in the sixth book of Euclid. Poor G—— broke down three or four times, and each time the Doctor tried to smooth the way for him. At last, his patience, which had been well tried, having become exhausted, the Doctor said "You remind me, sir, of one walking between two high walls, who, not content to travel on the road between them, is determined to overleap one of them. Sit down, sir." *(b.)*

(a.b.) These anecdotes are given by a contributor to the *Scottish American Journal*, dating from 73, Crown Street, Newark, New Jersey, who thus speaks of Dr. Cruickshank:

I remember an instance in which, by the remission of a fine incurred by absence from the class, without an adequate excuse, Dr. Cruickshank proved his admirable skill in maintaining discipline, as well as his knowledge of the characters of the youth with whom he had to deal. Two of my class-fellows (one of them I may mention, subsequently an officer in the Indian army during the mutiny in 1857, whose sad fate with that of his attached and heroic wife formed one of the most terrible episodes in the story of that period) had absented themselves from the Mathematical class for two days in succession, in order to enjoy the rarely obtained opportunity of skating in the Auldtown Links. When asked by the Professor, on their next appearance, to account for their absence, they made no reply, but at once tendered the fine incurred. His remark on the occasion (I repeat it almost word for word) was—"I infer from your silence how you have been occupying your time in this weather. I do not like having either to impose or to receive a fine. I would rather, therefore, not have your money on this occasion, but I trust to your honour, gentlemen, that this will not occur again." The youths themselves, as well as the whole of their class-fellows, were effectually gained by this mode of dealing with the offence in question. I am sure none of the nu-

"In common with all his pupils, I retain a profound respect and love for him. I think he was the best teacher I ever saw —clear, methodical, and never using a word too many, while each word fell as a sunbeam. * * * Not a session passed without many proofs of his great kindness of heart, such as giving lapsed bursaries, procuring private teaching, &c., for deserving students. His own career was a noble struggle."

merous students passing through his hands closed their connection with him as the Mathematical Professor without forming the same well-founded estimate of his sterling worth as I did.

Dr. James Davidson, who held the chair of Natural History, was pretty far advanced in years when I joined his class, and had well nigh lost whatever faculty he may have ever had in preserving order among his students. He was a man of an easy disposition, and not naturally disposed to rule despotically, but, when provoked by the displays of turbulence and disorder which too frequently took place in the class, he fined smartly. These often arose out of little matters, so much tinctured with the ludicrous, that even the most attentive and best disposed students could not help enjoying the rich scenes witnessed on such occasions, and, to a certain extent, countenancing the tricks played and breaches of discipline committed by the more unruly members of the class. I shall give, as I proceed, a few of the more prominent of my reminiscences of the session spent in the Natural History class, in illustration of these scenes.

Dr. Davidson did not teach the science of Natural History in accordance with the generally understood idea of the meaning of these terms, but his lectures and illustrations proved him not unworthy of ranking in the path of science on a par with the

> Ancient sage philosopher
> Who had read Alexander Ross over.

They were generally instructive, and deserving of

being characterized as "verra enterteenin'." He commenced his course of lectures by explaining the ideas held by the ancients as to the nature and properties of matter. Referring next to the labours of the alchemists, of which he gave an interesting history, and noticing the inestimable service done to Science when

> Bacon, at last, a mighty man arose,
> Whom a wise King and nature chose
> Lord Chancellor of both their laws,

he then passed on to a description in detail of the simple substances, or elements, in their three forms —solid, liquid, and gaseous, and the various combinations of these, whether found in nature or produced by human skill. On two days of the week he illustrated the subjects on which he had been lecturing by experiments, having materials and apparatus for the purpose at hand, kept in a little closet attached to the class-room, a peep into which reminded one of the ingredients specified in Surly's speech to Subtle the alchemist :—

> Chalk, merds, and clay;
> Powder of bones, scalings of iron, glass,
> And worlds of other strange ingredients
> Would burst a man to name.

His prelections were thus explanatory rather of chemistry than of the science of natural history. The experiment days were looked forward to with considerable interest by such of the students as desired to profit by the course of instruction thus imparted, while, to the less quietly-disposed portion of the class, they afforded an opportunity, always embraced, of "letting off the steam," to their own

gratification and the annoyance of the "duketer," as he was termed, his attention on these occasions being necessarily called off the discipline of the class, and concentrated upon the experimenting table. His first set of experiments, I remember, was intended to illustrate the distinctive properties of acids and alkalis, and their different effects on vegetable colours. Some irreverent youth had (years before I was at College) characterized the vegetable solutions thus operated upon as "cabbage bree," a designation handed down from one set of the doctor's students to another. So when he happened at any time throughout his course of experiments to be occupied in the illustration of a subject less interesting as regards visible effects than that referred to, he would be saluted by some one or other of the "black sheep" in the class saying, in a feigned voice, "That's nae worth, duketer, gie's yer cabbage bree."

In those days, before gas had come into such universal use for lighting purposes, the class-rooms in Marischal College (the dingy-looking building in existence before that which now ornaments the town) were lighted with tallow candles. One of the tricks played the Doctor was to wet the wicks of the two candles attached to his desk or rostrum, so that although these had been tipped with turpentine by the college janitor before being lighted, the effects of the wetting were speedily manifested, and, after sundry hissings and sputterings, both of the candles went out, leaving the doctor in comparative darkness. This necessitated the janitor being sent for to provide fresh candles, while to discover the

delinquent, the whole class was called upon, one after another, from the catalogue, to "declare upon honour" their knowledge on the subject of the delinquency. This method of getting at the authors of such tricks, which I have witnessed the Doctor put in operation on several occasions, it is perhaps needless to say was never successful.

Another candle-trick was unwittingly suggested by the Doctor himself. He had been speaking of the nature and properties of glass, and had referred to the little toy known as glass bomb-shells, which explode, with a sharp report, into dust, on being thrown with some force on the ground, or on coming into contact with flame. Some one or other of the class on the look-out for a chance of getting fun, having procured some of these bomb-shells, took a convenient opportunity of embedding them in the candles (which were hung in a frame from the roof of the class-room), in such a way as to escape the notice of the janitor when he came to light up the room. Taking a few congenial spirits into confidence with him, it was arranged by the youth in question, that when each bomb-shell went off, which they all did, blowing out and destroying the candles, a yell of surprise and affright should be given by those in the secret. The scheme succeeded quite to the expectation of its contriver, and the Doctor's bewilderment and utter confusion, as well as the row on the occasion, may be readily conceived.

He was, on one occasion, illustrating the *modus operandi* of volcanoes when in a state of activity by having ignited in a crucible a quantity of chemicals,

which, compounded according to the art whereby ancient Sidrophel could

> Spit fire out of a walnut shell,
> Which made the Roman slaves rebel;
> And fire a mine in China here,
> With sympathetic gunpowder—

heaving and tossing, sent up such dense clouds of suffocating vapour as soon filled the room. The Doctor was speedily lost to view, as he tended the miniature volcano, and, amid cries and yells, "Oh, duketer! ye've chokit us; we'll a' be smored," &c., the whole class rushed out to the college grounds, glad to breathe the fresh air again. There was no more experimenting for that day, the Doctor's volcano having gone more energetically to work than he had calculated upon when compounding its ingredients.

In connection with his propensity to resort to the imposition of fines as a mode of upholding the discipline of the class, I may note an incident which struck me as very droll at the time I witnessed it. The bulk of the youths attending Scotch colleges, it is needless to say, are not gifted with the possession of much pocket-money, ready to be disbursed at immediate call. In consequence of this well-known state of matters, the Doctor's habit was to collect every Friday morning all the fines he had imposed during the previous week, of which he kept a register in a little book for the purpose. It happened, however, on the occasion to which I refer, that the Doctor, to his surprise, got his money "down on the nail." It was an experiment day, and, as usual, when the Doctor was thus engaged at his table in

front of the benches, in which his students were seated, they rose up to their feet, leaning over the book-boards in front of each seat, to get as good a view of the table as possible. While the experiments were going on, a young fellow on the second seat from the table jocularly gave the student immediately in front of him a smart slap on the back, which coming unexpectedly caused him to turn round, and call out to know who had hit him. The Doctor immediately left off his experiments to inquire into the matter, and the delinquent's confusion speedily betrayed him as the originator of the disturbance. Having confessed his delinquency, he was addressed:—"Duncane P———" (the Doctor, according to academical practice, using the Latin vocative for the christian name), "I fine you a shilling." D. P., taking the coin instantly from his pocket, and stretching over the intervening seat, laid it down with a whack on the table within reach of the Doctor's hand, saying, "There's your money, Doctor." I well remember the burst of laughter which greeted this sally, and the hearty "ruff" which the youth received from the class. The Doctor, however, took the money, without further comment.

The largest fine he was in the habit of imposing was five shillings—a breach of discipline of greater enormity than he considered could be dealt with by a pecuniary mulct being referred to the Senatus Academicus. I remember at least three occasions on which this sum was paid over to the Doctor. The first was, I think, for "cheek" given to him in the class-room. The fine was paid over by the

transgressor, on this occasion, mostly in farthings, a piece of impertinence which so irritated the Doctor, that he was on the point of referring the youth to the dealings of the Senatus. On the next occasion, a student (whose many drolleries while at school and college have not impaired his efficiency as the staid vicar of ——), had to pay this sum for having treated the Doctor to some ten minutes' imprisonment in the class-room after dismissal of the class, by holding the "sneck" of the door on the outside. He had hoped to escape detection, and bolted incontinently on quitting hold of the "sneck," but the Doctor happened for once to be too nimble for him, recognizing his tormentor beyond doubt, and he had to pay the piper for the escapade. The third occasion on which the five shilling fine was imposed afforded the Doctor great satisfaction. One of the students (whose subsequent eminently useful and exemplary career does him credit) had got hold of a pitchfork which, during the Doctor's lectures, he for a whole fortnight kept constantly twanging in contact with the under side of the book-board. The Doctor had remonstrated in vain, and had put the class "on honour" without discovering the author of this irritating infliction, till at length he had the satisfaction of witnessing the pitchfork in the hands of the delinquent, who, emboldened by his long success, was flourishing it about with the intention of continuing the twanging of it. The fine was imposed, *con amore*, on this occasion by the Doctor, who rejoiced in his victory so long desired and so hardly won.

Although, as it will thus be seen, there was a chro-

nic state of warfare between Dr. Davidson and some of his students throughout the session, it is right to state that at its close he took leave of the class with the expression of kindly feelings towards every student in it, and I believe that he cherished no animosity towards even those whose conduct had most annoyed him. The information he communicated by his lectures and experiments was well worthy of being treasured as carefully as the worthy skipper in *Dombey and Son* did in his practice—"when found, make a note of," and it may fairly be said of the Doctor that he played a useful part in the arts curriculum of the college during his tenure of the Natural History chair, in which he was succeeded by the eminent naturalist, the late Wm. McGillivray, LL.D.

The work of the third session lay mainly in the Natural Philosophy class, taught by the late Dr. William Knight, of whom, in a paper which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Professor Masson says:

"Lecturing to us thus, we saw a man in the prime of mature life, of middle height, of fairish or pale complexion, with a fringe of scant fair hair about the temples and round by the ears, but bald a-top, so that his head looked of the laterally compressed type, long from back to front, rather than round, broad, or high. On the whole, it was a handsome enough face, but with a curious air of lurking irony about the corners of the mouth."

There was a peculiarity, however, about Knight's face, when seen sideways, which this writer has not noticed. The first time I recollect being struck

with it was at one of the annual visitations of the Grammar School by the Magistrates, Professors, and Clergy, among whom the Doctor regularly appeared on such occasions. The expression his features wore when thus seen forcibly suggested the idea of a cat watching its prey, and ready for a spring, and that this was no mere fancy confined to myself I was convinced a good many years after I first saw him by a droll circumstance. I was looking through a lot of second-hand books about to be sold by auction, when I came upon an abridgement of Lavater's physiognomy, containing copies, on a reduced scale, of some of the more interesting plates in the large work. Among these is the well-known one, illustrative of the physiognomy of the feline tribe, containing a head so ludicrously like Dr. Knight's, that some person, through whose hands the book had passed, had written the Doctor's name below the head in question!

Professor Masson goes on to say :—"But Knight's greatest personal peculiarity—a peculiarity known to us before, from his appearance in the public hall, but now noted more particularly—was his voice. Though, as we came to know afterwards, he was an unusually muscular man—so that, in an experiment testing the degree of force necessary to pull asunder two metal hemispheres, he could easily, planting firmly his somewhat out-bowed legs, pull towards him, or across the room, with his left hand only, the strongest student selected to pull against him—his voice was remarkably feeble and of high pitch."

Professor Masson's paper so well describes

Knight's method of teaching his science, and so fully illustrates his personal peculiarities, that there is little left for me to say on either of those subjects.

He ruled his class without having recourse to fines, for, as the writer in question says, notwithstanding his feeble voice, "he governed us tightly, and now and then tongued us with a sarcastic scurrility which no other professor ventured on, and which was far from pleasant." On one occasion, I recollect, he manifested this propensity in a way which fully verifies the latter part of the statement just quoted. He was at the apparatus-table engaged in illustrating by models the mechanical power developed by the wheel and axle, and having occasion to speak of the employment of this kind of mechanism on board ship, he mentioned the nautical term *winch*. Happening, just as he did so, to cast a glance round the class, his quick eye detected a smile on the faces of some of the students at this word. He stopped his work for an instant, and said, "Some of you blackguards who smile at this word know it better spelled with an *e*."

Dr. Knight followed the academical practice of preceding the business of the class in the morning by a prayer, which he uttered with his eyes open, and looking keenly round among the students during its delivery. His stock of prayers was limited to two—the Lord's Prayer and another of his own composition, of about equal length, each of these formulæ serving in turn for the whole week. In connection with the Doctor's habit of looking round the class during prayers, I may relate an incident told me by a student not of my class. A certain

youth had annoyed him on more than one occasion, and had been sharply rebuked. The measure of his guilt, however, was filled up by his coming one morning into the class-room (lateness was with Knight a great fault) just as the Doctor was concluding the prayer, which happened to be that first above mentioned. The youth in question opened the door and entered the class-room just as the last sentence commenced. It was delivered with an addendum, in his sharpest tones and without pause, "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever.—Amen. You're late, you brute!"

The Doctor did not excel in the classics or in mathematics, and could not compose Latin fit to stand the scrutiny of Melvin's "version"-makers. On one occasion, he ventured to give the invitation to the opening prayer in the Latin language; but, instead of using the word *precemur* (let us pray), he employed the term *precamur*. The students disregarded a call made in bad Latin, and remained in a sitting posture. Dr. Knight thought for a little, and, perhaps, guessing the true state of the case, made another venture, and called "*precamus*." Still not a student budged. After another equally vain attempt to get the students to respond to his call, the Doctor's knowledge and patience were both alike exhausted, and giving up the attempt to be academic, he said, in a tone of mingled petulance and good nature—"Very well, then, my lads, let's have a bit of a prayer." The students were all on their legs at once, and the prayer went on.*

* This anecdote is contributed by "A.M." to the *Scottish American Journal*, along with another of the Rev. Dr. Kidd, in a sequel page.

I concur with Professor Masson in the belief expressed by him, at the end of his paper, that "a good many more *memorabilia* of Knight might be collected, all consisting of such-like satirical outbreaks, tending to the disintegration of one's juvenile reverence for conventional beliefs and customs;" and I should be glad to see some of his quondam students add to the collection.

Having commenced my training for the business to which I was bred while in Dr. Knight's class, I did not complete the four years' curriculum by attending the Moral Philosophy class, and I therefore here conclude my rambling account of my associations connected with Marischal College.

CHAPTER III.

THE CLERGY IN ABERDEEN.

Judge not the preacher; for he is thy judge.
If thou mislike him, thou conceivest him not.
God calleth preaching folly. Do not grudge
To pick out treasures from an earthen pot.
The worst speak something good: if all want sense,
God takes a text, and preacheth patience.

George Herbert.

Of the clergy in Aberdeen, both of the Established Church and other denominations, who laboured in their vocation during the time I dwelt in the "braif toun," I have a good many reminiscences.

Before recounting such of these as I deem noteworthy—which I venture upon with the freedom claimed in the couplet—

Shall I speak plain, and, in a nation free,
Assume an honest layman's liberty?

but with no improper or unfriendly spirit, I may advert to the notoriety the people of Aberdeen have acquired in choosing their clergy upon the principle illustrated by the proverb, "Far fowls hae fair feathers;" the instances having been comparatively "few and far between" in which, when the *vox populi* prevailed in clerical appointments, natives of the place were the successful candidates. Many a preacher, however, whose earliest ambition it was, with the local attachment of a native, to "wag his pow in a poopit" within "the four bows o' Aber-

deen," but who failed to obtain a settlement among his kith and kin, has won name and fame elsewhere; and, in after days, when reverting to his disappointment, he could afford to contemplate it with no other feeling towards the flock that had failed to appreciate his gifts, than that the loss was theirs, not his. In my notices of this order of the community, I shall, therefore, have to deal mainly with individuals who, though, in the exercise of their sacred vocation in the good city, they became in time Aberdonians in habit and feeling, were originally "incomers," and thus not endowed by nature with the idiosyncrasy which, in things both sacred and secular, entitles the natives to the pre-eminence they enjoy as "canny."

To an Aberdonian, it affords ground for genial recollection and association, as well as for genuine respect towards the clergy of all denominations in the town, that, as a class, they have for long taken a zealous and efficient part in furthering works of charity and benevolence, and have devoted fully more of their time to the management of schemes having this object in view than is generally exacted from "the cloth" in their capacity as leading citizens in Scottish towns.

I cannot help also noting this further circumstance, that, although during the series of stirring events crowding the page of Scotland's ecclesiastical annals during the last thirty or forty years, differences have arisen among them, on topics which past history shows no sooner arise to agitate men's minds than

Debate, like sparks from flints' collision spring—

the clergy of Aberdeen have yet, upon the whole, in their bearing to each other, afforded no unbefitting illustration of the truth embodied in the quaint old verse :—

Behold how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together such as brethren are
In unity to dwell.

The earliest of my recollections goes back to the days of the late Dr. Ross of the (old) East Church. The affectionate Kirsty, before-mentioned, used in my infancy to take me along with her to this Church (which she attended) on the Sunday forenoons. Before the service commenced, we generally had a walk through the Town's Churchyard, by which the East and West churches are surrounded on three sides, and I remember her on one of these occasions directing my attention to a grim work of art on a monument, erected some two hundred years ago (Ardo's Tomb, I think, upheld by the city fathers from the revenue of a "mortification" left for that purpose by the local magnate whom it commemorates), representing in basso-relievo a recumbent human skeleton. Kirsty's sermon on the occasion, illustrated by a text from a headstone in the neighbourhood (Isaiah xl. 6), "The voice said, Cry," &c., must have been more effective in adhering to my memory, as it has, at least in its drift, than all the sermons of Dr. Ross, of whose personal appearance even I can recall only a vague and imperfect recollection.

There is a little story, still current in Aberdeen,

in which this worthy man figures, illustrative of the propensity, prevailing more in Scotland than in either of the sister countries, to talk of and criticise the sermon, on the "skailin o' the kirk." In the old East Church, built in ante-Reformation times, there was an entrance to one of the ugly galleries by a door connected with a flight of steps from the outside. On a certain occasion, when the Doctor was preaching, this door had been accidentally left open, and, as the weather was cold, he felt uncomfortable, as many people in the church did. He paused in the course of his sermon, calling to the beadle, and pointing to the proper quarter, "John, shut that door." This functionary obeyed, and the Doctor went on with his discourse. As the story goes, when the congregation were wending their several ways homeward through the churchyard, on the services being concluded, two "auld wives" were overheard in conversation commending the various telling points in the Doctor's sermon, the one of greater skill as a critic saying to the other, "Eh! he was bonnie," on this, that, and the other subjects in the sermon which had struck her more particularly. The other less pretentious critic could add nothing as her quota of criticism but the sagacious remark, "Eh, woman, but was na he bonnie o' the door?" *

The College Church, or Greyfriars, as it has since

* A learned friend, hailing from the west of Scotland, tells me that this story is narrated in relation to the preaching of another minister in his quarter of the country. I take leave, *however, to claim it as* indigenous to Aberdeen.

been called, was in my early school-boy days under the ministry of the late Dr. Paull, subsequently for many years the respected incumbent of the parish of Tullynessle, and one of the leaders of the Moderate party in the Synod of Aberdeen and in the General Assembly during the stirring conflict which eventuated in the Disruption. My only reminiscence of him as the minister of the College church, has reference to the rather mincing and affected style of speaking which he practised in the earlier days of his clerical career—a habit which he latterly almost entirely got rid of, and which, even had he continued it, would have been more than compensated for by the power he manifested both as a preacher and a debater. It is well known that Aberdonians "tak a gweed moufu' o' the word," and they used to illustrate Dr. Paull's style, when commenting upon it, by quoting the Scotch version of the first line of the 47th psalm, "All people clap your hands," which, as enunciated by him, they said, became "All people clip your hens."

Another worthy man, of whom the days of my boyhood and youth afford me some noteworthy reminiscences, was the Rev. John Thomson, M.D., minister of Footdee chapel, erected in 1829 into one of the city charges, the territory assigned to it being designated the parish of St. Clements. A tradition among the Doctor's people was that, when he first came among them, he used, on being sent for to visit the sick, to ask whether his aid was required "for the body or the soul!" His congregation at this time was very small, and his

income as their minister corresponded. It is not, therefore, inconsistent with the careful and economical habits which he followed throughout his long life, to presume that he did not in these days object to "earn an honest penny" by the exercise of the secular profession to which (as well as the sacred) he had been bred. Long before I knew him, however, he confined himself entirely to his clerical duties. He was a little thin man, and wore a scratch wig curiously cocked up over his brow. His manners, of the old school, were formal and precise, and these he carried with him into the pulpit, his delivery and action having much quaintness about them. One of his favourite gestures during the delivery of the emphatic passages in his prayers was to throw back his head, fixing his eyes on a point in the roof of the church directly above him, while he uttered the first part of the sentence, and then to lower his head till his eye rested on the floor of the pulpit, when the remaining portion of the sentence was enunciated, all this time his arms down to the elbow being held close to his sides, his hands directed upwards, with the palms outwards. A clerical friend, who sometimes officiated for the doctor, told me that the first portion of this his favourite attitude was said among the Doctor's brethren in Aberdeen to resemble nothing so much as a hen holding up her head after drinking, to complete the process of gulping water down her gullet, and I have often been struck with the odd aptness of the comparison on seeing him in the attitude in question.

Dr. Thomson was very careful and economical

in all matters involving pecuniary expenditure.* He had four daughters, two of whom predeceased their parents by a good many years. The monu-

* In appending this note, which I am induced to do from the recollection of this gentleman's economical habits, I beg to disclaim any wish to insinuate that he descended to the level of actual *meanness*, as that term is understood on this side of the Atlantic, more especially in the *Yew*-nited States, where it is not considered necessary to practise the virtue of thrift to the same extent as in Scotland, and other "Eurōpĭan" countries. Dr. Thomson would not have been reckoned a "mean man" in Scotland, and this addendum may therefore be considered as to some extent *mal-apropos*. I cannot, however, resist the opportunity here afforded of depicting the illustrations of the term which I heard, on the occasion of one of my visits to New York city a few years ago. I spent an evening with a friend residing at a village distant about 16 miles from the city, and, in the course of conversation after dinner, he happened to advert to some project then on hand in the locality, in which he intended to take part. It appeared that he had inadvertently omitted to inform his wife, who was sitting with us at table, of his intention; and in rallying him on his forgetfulness, the lady jocularly concluded by saying to him "you're a mean man, J—— S——, you're a mean man!" I heard this characteristic again attributed, on the following evening, but then the speaker was not in joke. To pass the time, and endeavour to gather something noteworthy of the people frequenting the hotel, where I put up during my stay in the city—that famous monster establishment, the "St. Nicholas," in Broadway—I sauntered for a while round the bar-room, which was crowded with an assemblage composed partly of the guests then quartered in the house, and partly of casual visitors. Some were engaged in "liquoring-up," the usual multiform "drinks,"—"cocktails," "slings," "smashes," "cobblers," "stone-fences," "pick-me-ups," "chain-lightnings," "moral-suasions," &c., being in constant requisition. Some were gathered in groups, earnestly discussing the national or local politics of the day, according to the free and out-spoken manner of the country, while others talked of dollars and cents, and descanted on the various methods whereby a man can "make his pile." In the course of my saunter through the bar-room, I came upon a group, one of whom was talking in a loud voice and gesticulating excitedly in reference to some individual

ment which he erected on the churchyard wall over the grave of these ladies indicated this propensity in the Doctor. The inscription on it ran thus: "Erected in memory of the Rev. ———, minister of Footdee, who died ———, aged — years, and of ———, his wife, who died ———, aged — years. They were blessed with four daughters," &c. The inscription then went on to name the two deceased ladies, giving particulars as to the date of death and age. The Doctor thus did at once, in his own lifetime, doubtless on the most economical terms he could secure, what would have to be done some time hence, when he should no longer have the personal control of the expenditure. When the present tasteful church was erected, after the little barn-looking chapel in which the Doctor so long ministered had been "dung down" to make way for it, the Town Council entered into an arrangement with him, whereby, in consideration of his undertaking the seating of the new church, he was to draw the seat rents during his life. True to his principle of economy,

---

whom he appeared to hate "with a perfect hatred." Shortly after my approach, my ear caught the words, from the interlocutor in question—evidently in continuation of what he had previously been saying—"He's so mean, sir, that his own shadow would not follow him if it could help doing so." After this outburst, the talk went on for a little among the other persons in the group, but the interlocutor whom I had specially remarked took the first opportunity of returning to the charge, and, in the same excited way, exclaimed "He's so mean that he would steal the coppers off a dead nigger's eyes!" My reflection upon this saying when I heard it was, that surely "than this the force of meanness could no further go." Let it not be supposed that I played the eaves-dropper on the occasion, for the sayings quoted were evidently intended to be heard all over the room.

the Doctor did not at once erect the whole number of pews which the building now contains, but seated only the body of the church and a portion of the galleries, so as to suit the number of hearers he had when it was opened. The galleries had thus an awkward, empty-like look, which detracted much from the otherwise fitting appearance of the structure inside. New pews were added as the congregation gradually increased in number.

Dr. Thomson's sermons were delivered without the aid of the obnoxious "paper." They were generally divided into "heads," and as he often insisted that the grounds both of doctrine and of practice should be "nail't wi' Scripture," he quoted texts in profusion in proof of his positions, chapter and verse being named. For a considerable time the repeating of the texts thus quoted formed part of the occupations of my brothers and myself, along with the "sayin' o' the catechis," on the Sunday evenings, in the family circle. His prayers were well composed, and singularly appropriate to the occasion, and in this important part of clerical duty he was much above the ordinary run of ministers who have to lead the devotions of the people by extempore prayer.

The Doctor's congregation was partly made up of the fisher population—a distinct tribe inhabiting a nook of his parish situated near the entrance to the Aberdeen harbour, having all the peculiarities, good and bad, distinguishing the amphibious race to which they belong, scattered along the eastern and northern coasts of Scotland.* He sometimes tongued

* The Aberdeen fisher people so much resemble those of

them heartily in the course of his sermon, especially for their inordinate use of whisky, and, on such occasions, he used to turn round in the pulpit so as to face them, as they sat all together in a portion of the gallery on his right hand. In those days temperance and teetotal societies had not been

---

Newhaven in dress, speech, and manners, that I may be excused for here appending an amusing anecdote, for which I am indebted to an esteemed friend, of a fish-wife belonging to the latter village, as illustrative of one phase of Scottish character: A fish-wife engaged in disposing of her share of the previous night's "take," calling at a house in Edinburgh (from which Newhaven is distant about two miles), had the door opened to her, not by a servant, but by the lady of the house herself, who commenced the conversation by saying, "Well, what have you got to-day?" The fish-wife, taking a fish out of her creel, which she had unslung from her back and set on the ground, replied, "Jist look at this bonnie cod, mem." Lady—"What's the price?" Fish-wife—"A shillin', an' weel worth the siller." Lady—"A shilling! I'll give you fourpence." Fish-wife, disdainfully throwing the cod back into her creel, which she again slung on her shoulders, closed the colloquy with the withering remark—"Fourpence for a shillinie cod! Gae 'wa into the hoose, mem, an' play yer peehawnee."

The fish-wives of Aberdeen and of the neighbouring villages on the Kincardineshire coast rival their sisters of Newhaven in the various attributes for which these dames and demoiselles are celebrated, viz., a frame strong and well-knit, a comely face, a frank and hearty manner, and a "gift o' the gab," which often stands them in good stead in the disposal of their commodities. And, while Newhaven has been justly famed for its succulent bivalves, in the vending of which, while in season, the streets of the Scottish metropolis are made musical by the well-known cry, "Cauler oo-oo"—a dainty on which Fergusson thus fervently descants:—

Auld Reekie's sons blythe faces wear;
September's merry month is near,
That brings in Neptune's caller cheer,
New oysters fresh—
The halesomest and nicest gear
O' fish or flesh—

thought of, and I am afraid that the Doctor's advice to the fishermen, given, after having soundly rated them for drinking together in "publics," of which there are several in the immediate neighbourhood of their quarter, would now-a-days be regarded with horror by the advocates and adherents of the "temperance principle," although it did not then seem

---

Aberdeen can, nevertheless, boast of the world-renowned Finnan haddock, possessing a flavour and yielding a fragrance due, not, as the Southron imagines, to the effects of pungent wood-smoke, but to the mellowed and sublimed ether of peat-reek. Nor will the boast exclude the tender, cress-like dulse, gathered on the rocks skirting the coast immediately south of the city—that perennial bounty of old Ocean, obtainable, in like perfection, in no other quarter of the world I ever heard of. What Aberdonian, at any distance from the "four bows," is there, with recollections dating back to the time when the "Plainstanes" formed the centre of the stir and bustle attending the Friday markets on the Castlegate, who does not treasure in his memory the cheery call, from one after another of the double row of smiling fish-wives skirting the Plainstanes, on these occasions, as they attempted to wile the passing schoolboy out of his Friday's copper—"Come awa', my bonny lad, and get fine short dilse, and pepper dilse, and batherlyocks?" Will he not also gratefully dedicate a small chamber in his memory to the recollection of the delicious "partens,"—their well-filled and juicy "taes," and the toothsome fish-roes, which, in the vernacular of the district, are famous under the designation of "raans?"

This reference to the Castlegate reminds me of an amusing scene between two "couper" wives, or dealers in fish, who frequented the market held in that locality. The two had disagreed, and one of them, to show her contempt for the other, maintained, under a torrent of abuse, the most perfect silence. This exasperated the other, a little "hoggit" woman, so much, that she took up a bunch of her haddocks and belaboured her opponent about the shoulders with them, scattering the fragments of the fish among the onlookers, until the tails only remained, when, throwing these in her opponent's face, she finished off her abuse by screaming out—"Speak, ye jaud, or I'll burst."

to any of the Doctor's congregation as at all inconsistent either with morality or common sense.

The Doctor rated the men for drinking together in batches, according to their wont, when they sat long and spent money which might have been devoted to other and better purposes. "If you are to have spirits," he said, by way of advice, "and I know that your hard life may sometimes make stimulants of service to you, never use them but in moderation and in your own houses. I cannot think you would besot yourselves in presence of your wives and families." I do not repeat his exact words, but I give the gist of what I heard him say on one occasion in particular.

The precentor of Footdee church for many years was a "wee auld mannie," named Archie Gordon, a "wyver" by trade, who, like the famous "Jeems" depicted by that master of pathos and humour, the author of "Rab and his Friends," had some noteworthy peculiarities about him. Lacking anything so decisive and portentous in his appearance as Jeems's nose, he was "kenspeckle" from the possession (although he was partially bald) of a crop of dark-coloured hair without a streak of gray in it, which he wore in a long straight bushy fringe hanging half down his back. He "sported" a hat of large dimensions and copious brim, under which his hair was bestowed in several folds on the top of his head, and when he doffed this article of attire, on entering church, he gave his head a peculiar jerk, which, with some little manipulation, brought his locks into the required pendant position. Archie was very proud of this

appendage, and evidently devoted some attention to his toilet. He had a rather weak, quavering voice, in respect to which he might have said with his brother tradesman, Bottom, in ancient Athens, "I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you as gently as a sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale." Archie had no proper musical taste, and he never had the assistance of a choir, but the good "folk o' Fittie," Dr. Thomson included, were not gifted with critical ears, and his performance "pleased fine." He had the habit of naming the tune before "raising the psalm," which he did in pompous style. He often used the tune "Condescension"—a good flowing melody of its kind—which he pronounced "Kyowndissension." "Bangor," "Missionary," "Staughton," and "Devizes" were also great favourites. Archie's strong point, however, in the performance of his duties in the "lattern," was his reading of the names of the sick and distressed on whose behalf prayers were about to be offered. His formula for many years, which he read off a paper conspicuously displayed in his hand, with all the graces of his original elocution, was:

"The prayers of this congregation are requested on behalf of the following distressed persons:

"John Gunn,
Mattha Marr,
Widow King,
An aged woman
In great distress."

The names and the widow's condition were enunciated as if Archie was delivering himself of a piece of choice poetry. This trio figured on his paper for

a long time, and I am not sure but that he predeceased some of them himself. I never knew whether the second personage was Matthew or Martha.

He was a decent, well-behaved old-fellow, and, with all his amusing pomposity, was respected by the congregation.

Dr. Thomson was for many years assisted, on communion occasions, by Dr. James Kidd, minister of Gilcomston, a populous suburb of Aberdeen, of whom a good many notices and anecdotes have at various times appeared in print. He was a "burly and big" man, with a figure not unlike that of Dr. Samuel Johnson, the autocrat of literature, whom he resembled in brusqueness of manner and impatience of opposition or contradiction. In addition to his clerical office in Gilcomston chapel he held the chair of Oriental Languages in Marischal College, and, when he had to sign his name on formal occasions, he adhibited to it a string of initial letters, indicative of his academical position. His signature was James Kidd, D.D., L.L.O.O.P. Mar. Coll., a fac-simile of which is attached to an excellent steel-engraved portrait of him, copies of which, in abundance, are still cherished in Aberdeen, occupying the post of honour on the wall, as mementoes of one who, with his originality and eccentricities, so long occupied a most prominent position in the community. He was a native of the North of Ireland, and early in life emigrated to America, having for some time taught a school in the State of New York. Before finally settling in Aberdeen, he had to overcome many difficulties, and his success well entitled him

to the credit of being a self-made man. He had not long been minister of Gilcomston before he attracted an overflowing congregation, to accommodate whom a "cock-loft" had to be erected in the large church, which, in the east end, has thus two storeys of galleries. His popularity continued to the last, and his memory will long survive him as a preacher and divine of the school of Willison, the Erskines, Brown of Haddington, and others, who testified against the *regime* of the Moderate party in the Church during last century, as well as for the intensity with which he wrote and spoke against the "Scarlet Lady." My earliest recollections of Dr. Kidd are of an agreeable kind. Though often brusque and overbearing in his intercourse with grown-up people, he was kindly and affectionate in his manner to the young. During the college session, the Grammar School boys encountered him daily on his way homeward from his Hebrew class in the forenoon. He generally walked deliberately along the middle of the street, and each schoolboy who came within his reach was tenderly patted on the head, the Doctor's face beaming with kindly feeling as he said, "Be all good. Be all good." I remember well that for years I never missed a chance of thus getting "the Doctor's blessing," as this practice of his was designated.

Being of a robust and healthy constitution, and gifted with good lungs, although his voice was pitched in rather a high key, he got through a great deal of pulpit duty, and thought nothing of preaching three times every Sunday The evening service was the most numerously attended, the church

being often inconveniently crowded on these occasions, and it was then that he "came out" most thoroughly, proclaiming his message with more regard to sincerity and distinctness than to elegance in diction.

His practice was, after the first prayer, to read, without a running commentary, except to include the marginal renderings, a pretty long passage of scripture. He then commenced his exposition by dividing the passage into so many "lessons," the first running from such a verse to such another, each lesson being pointed out in this way. His off-hand explanation, in which he generally said something striking, lasted some twenty minutes. To afford him a little relaxation, he now gave out five or six verses of a psalm or paraphrase, after the singing of which (and he always joined heartily in the psalmody, sometimes raising the tune along with the precentor) he announced his text, on which he enlarged often for an hour or more, speaking without "the paper," the non-employment of which was one of the grounds of his extraordinary popularity.

Many of Dr. Kidd's sayings in the pulpit have found their way into print. The following one, however, which I heard on a Sunday evening not very long before his death, has not appeared. He happened in the course of his sermon to quote from Scripture the verse, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked—who can know it?" a portion of his commentary on which was, "Ye know no more of your own hearts than a grocer does of a sugar-loaf before he breaks it up."

On another occasion, this condition of the human

heart was illustrated by his saying, "Ye are all rotten at the heart, like John C———'s potatoes," naming a gardener, one of his own elders, from whom he had just purchased for use in his household a quantity of that useful esculent, which had turned out unsound.

Lecturing, on one occasion, on the "God of this world" blinding the eyes of men, he took two half-crown pieces from his pocket, and, by way of practical illustration, he placed one over each of his eyes. *(a.)*

In reproving some of his hearers for their neglect of the bible, he told them, "You keep your bibles lying in dust in your houses so long, that one could write *damnation* on the boards of them."

He had no mercy on sleepers in church. On one occasion, seeing a man holding down his head on the book-board of the pew in which he sat, the Doctor paused in his sermon, and called out in his most stirring tones, pointing to the slumberer—"Rouse up that man—rouse him up. There'll be no sleeping in hell." At another time his eye caught a man asleep, whom he knew, and whose wife was seated beside him. The Doctor called out to the latter —"Go home, Bettie, and bring John's night-cap"—a speech which effectually cured the sleeper of his somnolency for the time.

Sitting near the pulpit, when a minister from Arbroath was preaching, Dr. Kidd threw a pocket-bible at a man in his vicinity whom he saw sleeping, saying, "If you will not hear the word of God, I will make you feel it!" *(b.)*

When political feeling ran high regarding the

treatment of Queen Caroline, the hapless consort of George IV., the Doctor was called to account by the Presbytery of the bounds for having included this lady among the individuals of rank and station for whom he offered prayers in public. His reason—characteristic as well as satisfactory—was "I pray for her, I pray for you, and for every sinner out of hell," and he was henceforth permitted to lead the devotions of his people in his own way. *(c.)*

A highly characteristic anecdote is told of Dr. Kidd by "A. M." (a gentleman referred to in the note at page 49,) which I give in the narrator's own words.

Gilcomston Chapel, being a *quoad sacra* church, was, like other charges similarly situated, a mere appendage to the parish church. The incumbents of such churches were under the jurisdiction of the parish minister, who was a sort of bishop over them; and they had no seat in the church courts. This position of inferiority was considered, by those who occupied it, to be contrary to the principles and genius of Presbyterianism; and in particular their subjection to the parish minister was felt by them as an unrighteous bondage. This bondage was rendered all the more galling by the fact, that the

(a. b. c.) These anecdotes are communicated to the *Scottish American Journal* by the Rev. Thomas Alexander, Percy-Norham, Ontario, who mentions another saying of the Doctor's to himself—that, on a certain Sunday, he had had "three Scots Greys preaching for him." The saying was not understood until the Dr. explained that three of Mr. Alexander's fellow-students had all officiated in Gilcomston Church in one day—Andrew Gray of Woodside Church, and latterly of Perth, Thomas Gray of Kirkurd, and Charles Gray, who never had a stated charge.

parish minister was not unfrequently a far inferior man to his subordinate, and did not always, especially when the two ministers took opposite sides in church politics, exercise his authority in the mildest and most generous way. Accordingly, it was with intense interest that the *quoad sacra* ministers watched the progress of a movement that had been originated to place them on an equal footing with the parish ministers. The Rev. Andrew Gray, (the narrator's informant,) then of Woodside, one of these charges, was sent to the General Assembly at Edinburgh, to watch and report to his brethren in the north the proceedings that should arise on a motion to be made in the Assembly to give them their proper ecclesiastical status. The motion was carried to the great joy of the liberated ministers. Mr. Gray immediately on his return from the Assembly met Dr. Kidd, and, after giving an account of the proceedings, said, "Well, Doctor, my feelings on hearing the result of the vote announced cannot be better expressed than in the words of the psalm:

> When Zion's bondage God turn'd back,
> As men that dream'd were we,
> Then fill'd with laughter was our mouth,
> Our tongue with melody." (Psalm 126—1.)

"Ah," replied Dr. Kidd, "that's not it, man; here's the right thing:

> The plowers plow'd upon my back,
> They long their furrows drew,
> The righteous Lord did cut the cords
> Of the ungodly crew." (Psalm 129—3.)

Dr. Kidd undertook, evidently under a strong sense of duty, the spiritual care and direction of unhappy convicts before undergoing the last dread

sentence of the law. He spared no pains to bring these unfortunate persons to a proper frame of mind, spending much of his time with them, and attending them to the scaffold, where, after himself adjusting the rope and white cap, he made it a point to see that the executioner's office was properly performed. He "improved" such occasions by preaching on the first Sunday after the event a special sermon pertinent to the solemn duties in which he had been occupied. The church was densely crowded on these occasions.

There was found among his papers after his death a farewell address affectingly written, in which he takes leave of his family and friends, his Bible, his Church, and the various realms of external nature. His attached congregation got this printed on white satin, and many copies of it are yet to be seen in Aberdeen, neatly framed, and hung on the wall in fitting proximity to his portrait.

One of the earliest of my reminiscences connected with the clergy in Aberdeen has reference to the late Minister of the Free Church of Culsalmond—the Rev. Peter Robertson, whose first charge was that of the small seceder congregation at Craigdam, which he held for many years. When pretty far advanced in life, he got a call to one of the United Presbyterian churches in Aberdeen, on his settlement in which one of his congregation, a humble votary of the muses, published a panegyric on the reverend gentleman, containing the following lines:

Mr. Peter Robertson,
Who long did serve the Lamb,
In that department of his Church,
In Tarves at Craigdam.

He held this charge for a short time only, having sought and obtained admission to the ministry of the Free Church, on which he got a third call from the congregation of that denomination at Culsalmond.

In a recent Aberdeen newspaper, I observe an announcement of Mr. Robertson's death, at the ripe age of ninety years. From the short obituary notice given of him in this paper, I quote the following remarks taken from Professor Masson's "Men whom I have known."

"His congregation in Aberdeen," says the Professor, "was a chance gathering of the poorest of the poor, but was overflowing on Sunday evenings. He was a gray-haired veteran, whose natural genius, I should say, was mainly that of a humorist, and who carried something of the comic with him into the pulpit, where he spoke a dialect not far removed from vernacular Scotch, but where he was very shrewd, very fervid, and very evangelical. Passionate searchers after 'ideas,' as some of us were, we were willing to try what even Patrick Robertson could do for us in that commodity, and occasionally dropped in upon his Sunday evening lecture. It was really racy matter. Not only did he give us what we were willing to call 'ideas,' but I once heard from him what I can only call an idea respecting 'ideas.' It came in this wise: 'And now, my friends,' he said, beginning a new section of his discourse, and speaking in his habitual semi-Scotch, which spelling will hardly indicate, 'and now, my friends, I am going to give you an idea (pronounced *eedaia.*) This idea that I am goin' to give you is not of so

much use in itself as it will be of use in makin' way in your minds for anither idea, that I mean to give you afterwards, but which you wouldna be sae likely to understand if I didna give you this idea first. There are lots of pairs of ideas, my brethren, that are connectit in this way; you may ca' them needle-and-thread ideas.' What the two ideas were, and which was the needle and which the thread on the occasion, I have quite forgotten; but, though I have read Whately and other books of rhetoric, I do not know that any phrase in them has stuck to me as better worth remembering than Patrick Robertson's 'needle and thread ideas,' with the maxim which it involves, that one ought to take care always, in discoursing, to put the needle first."

His style in the pulpit resembled not a little that which Dean Ramsay has depicted as characterising the Rev. Mr. Shirra of Kirkcaldy, and thus he attracted crowds to hear him. He practised few of the graces of oratory, but was always plain-spoken and emphatic in the delivery of his message. He abounded in metaphor and illustration, not inapt, though always quaint, and sometimes tinctured with the ludicrous.

Thus, in speaking of the doctrine enunciated in the Shorter Catechism, in answer to the question, "Is any man in this life able perfectly to keep the commandments," &c., Mr. Robertson is said to have addressed his hearers, in confirmation of the negative given in the answer, "Ye can nae mair do't, my freens, than a coo can clim' up a tree."

His illustration on a certain occasion of the richness and variety of the gospel feast is traditionally

stated to have contained the following passage: "Oh, my freens, the pot's on the day, an' its no kail an' petawtos that's in't. Ye'll get something better than that."

Mr. Robertson's commentary on the sublime and mysterious passage in the Revelation (chapter xii.) referring to the great red dragon, whose tail "drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth," &c., included a contrast, rendered in the vernacular, of the feeble effects following the wielding of the caudal appendage of the lion, the tiger, the horse, the ox, and other animals, as compared with the consequences depicted in the passage in question, the dragon being designated by Mr. Robertson throughout his commentary as "the deevil."

His quaintness of style was not confined to his pulpit ministrations. I had occasion to read a letter written by him a year or two after his settlement in Aberdeen, in which he accounted for his not having been able to attend to a certain matter of business. His excuse (in itself most reasonable) was that he had been prevented by the severe and protracted illness of one of his family, followed by some other domestic trouble. "These had hardly been overcome," he went on to say "when lo! my wife was laid on a sick bed," &c. Altogether the letter was expressed in a vein not unlike that of the prelections of douce David Deans in Scott's "Heart of Mid-Lothian."

With all these peculiarities, Mr. Robertson was an eminently pious, worthy man. He attached his three different congregations to him, and did some

good in his day and generation, though in a fashion not generally followed by his clerical brethren.

The Rev. Hugh Hart, for many years pastor of the congregation in Aberdeen in connection with the United Christian Church, exercised his office in a very free and independent way. His first appearance in the good city was in the pulpit of the Methodist Church, where he preached, wearing the uniform of a serjeant in the army. On his retirement from that service, he became a minister in the small body above mentioned. He was about the middle-size, and inclined to stoutness, his features somewhat resembling those of the jovial and witty Patrick (Lord) Robertson, designated by Sir Walter Scott as "Peter of the Paunch," and, like this legal celebrity, he wore spectacles. Mr. Hart was always neat and tidy in his appearance, and had a military air about him. For some reason or other, probably because his orders were not considered to have come up to the generally recognized standard, the clergy in Aberdeen showed him the cold shoulder. The only exception to this state of feeling was manifested by the late Rev. John Brown of St. Paul's (English) Episcopal Chapel, a worthy but eccentric man, who, when he happened to meet Mr. Hart on the street, used to salute him with "Hillo, Hart!" this salutation containing a reference to the nickname by which Mr. Hart's church was known, viz., "The Hillo Kirk." Mr. Hart's congregation consisted almost entirely of working people, by whom he was very much loved and respected. They exercised towards him a generous

hospitality, according to their means, inviting him and one or more of his family on their festive occasions, to be seated above the salt, and treated as the chief among the guests. This state of matters gave rise to the following irreverent squib, which some wag let off against Mr. Hart's appreciation of his reception at such entertainments. His pseudo grace before the commencement of the festivities, in which he is made to address one of his family, runs thus :—

Eat, Ebenezer, eat, my dearest boy,
No scruples over-nice thy thoughts employ,
Eat, and be full, whate'er our host affords,
His be the cost—the glory be the Lord's!

The son here mentioned must have been the favourite of Mr. Hart in the family circle, one of his sayings having been that he was particularly fond of just three objects in his lot, "my bible, my pipe, and my son Ebenezer."

In his public ministrations, Mr. Hart was both original and effective, as he had a considerable command of language and a good delivery, which was animated and energetic. He was thus of the type of preachers flourishing in the days when the

Pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick.

He was fond of showing off his learning, and, in elucidating his subject, he often quoted liberally from the original Hebrew or Greek. Besides this,

He was in logic a great critic,
Profoundly skill'd in analytic;
He could distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and south-west side,
On either which he would dispute,
Confute, change hands, and still confute.

His people were thus profoundly impressed with the extent of his erudition, and, like Goldsmith's schoolboys, they wondered "that one small head could carry all he knew."

In his prayers he was plain, and pointed in his allusions, when offering petitions on behalf of individuals. So, when his church in the Shiprow was purchased at a good price by the Aberdeen Market Company, to enable them to open up Market Street, Mr. Hart, on the last occasion when service was conducted in it, prayed most earnestly for the Company and the success of their project, as well as for Messrs. Adam & Anderson, the public-spirited originators of the scheme, and for their clerk, Mr. Duthie. It is also said that he added that they deserved to succeed in business for having treated his people so liberally as they did in regard to the purchase of the church. His petitions for the army and the navy were full and explicit:—"Bless the British army. Bless the officers—bless the serjeants—bless the corporals—and bless the privates. Bless also the navy, from the officer on the quarter-deck to the sailor on the bow." Mr. Hart also remembered in particular that class in the community of whom, as has been said, his congregation mainly consisted. "Bless the working classes," was his formula, in praying for them, "and give them an adequate remuneration for their labour." It was usual for him also to take notice of the passing seasons; and one year, after a plentiful harvest had been nearly all reaped, he offered up thanks for the abundance of the "precious fruits of the earth, which have now been

safely gathered in, all except a few patches 'twixt this and Stonehaven, not worth mentioning."

Some years before he left the Shiprow, he had changed his views on the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, and he promulgated from his pulpit a set of opinions very much resembling what is known as the Sabellian heresy. It is beside my present purpose to enter into any particulars regarding this subject. Suffice it to say that Mr. Hart's new views attracted the attention of a young probationer of the Established Church—a Mr. Henderson—who, besides publishing a pamphlet strongly condemnatory of the heresy in question, gave a series of lectures on Sunday evenings in the East Church, to elucidate the true doctrines and expose the errors of Mr. Hart's views.

He replied from his own pulpit on several consecutive Sunday evenings, in a set of sermons duly advertised in the local newspapers, in the course of which he defended his position and carried the war into the enemy's camp by a powerful battery of Hebrew and Greek quotations from the Scripture.

> Squadrons of texts he marshall'd in the field,
> With texts point-blank and plain he faced the foe.

I had the privilege of hearing two of these sermons, in which Mr. Hart strove hard to show that

> He knew what's what, and that's as high,
> As metaphysic wit can fly—

and, that in the elucidation of his doctrinal positions

> Whatever sceptic could inquire for
> For ev'ry why he had a wherefor.

On these occasions, if Mr. Hart failed in convincing me that he was right, I was at least well satisfied

with his sincerity, besides being interested in observing the free and independent fashion in which he promulgated his views and "pitched into" his opponent.

At the close of one of these services, before pronouncing the blessing, he announced that he should continue the discussion of the subject next Sunday evening, winding up by the following graphic passage: "Who is this most potent, grave, and reverend Mr. Henderson, whose pamphlet and preaching are to demolish me? He cannot be a very great gun, otherwise we should have heard something of him before now. He has, however, been taken up by the town's ministers, who give him the use of the East Church pulpit in which to hold forth against me. If they acted fairly in the matter, they would give it alternately to him and myself. But—tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon! —I suppose they do not consider poor Hart respectable enough for their standard. If I had a fine house and fine clothes to cut a dash with, and if I were to break and cheat half the world, I should be *respectable* then! But I am content; let them do as they may, I care not (this he uttered with flashing eyes, and smiting his breast), poor Hart, you know, is a happy fellow." I quote his words, as nearly verbatim as I can recollect them.

After the erection of his new church in John Street, he adopted the plan of occasionally requesting his congregation to suggest texts of Scripture for him to preach upon. This resulted in his having to deal with a good many topics, not usually treated in the pulpit, in his minute and plain-speak-

ing way. Among other subjects which he had thus to discuss, was the verse (Prov., xviii. 22), "Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing," &c., his sermon on which was long famous for the gusto with which he dwelt on the goodness of a wife in the management of the family and household. He retained the regard and attachment of his people to the last, and passed the evening of his days in comfort and ease, departing at a good old age, a few years ago.

A leading and useful part among the people of Aberdeen was long taken by the late Rev. Charles Gordon, the venerable-looking incumbent of the Roman Catholic congregation in the town, of whom Dean Ramsay tells a characteristic anecdote in his "Reminiscences" (13th edition, page 37.) Mr. Gordon was deservedly respected, not only by his own people, but by those of other denominations, and, after his death, at an advanced age, a few years ago, a handsome monumental statue was erected to his memory in front of the Roman Catholic Schools, in Constitution Street, the expense of which was defrayed by the citizens, without regard to sect or party. He practised, in a kindly and unostentatious way, to the extent of his modest means, the virtue for which, according to quaint old Chaucer, the most generous and loveable among the Canterbury pilgrims was noted :—

A good man ther was of religioun,
That was a poure Parsone of a toun.
* * * * *
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his poure parishens, aboute,

Of his offring and eke of his substance.
He coude in litel thing have suffisance,
Wide was his parish, and houses far asonder;
But he ne left nought, for no rain ne thonder,
In sikeness and in mischief to visite
The ferrest in his parish, moche and lite,
Upon his fete, and in his hand a staf.

* * * * * *

A better preest I trow that no wher non is.
He waited after no pompe, ne reverence,
Ne maked him no spiced conscience:
But Criste's love, and his apostles twelve,
He taught—but first he folwed it himselve.

He spoke the broad vernacular of the district, and his addresses sometimes contained homely utterances in this tongue, which were often not without effect. He had a dry humour, of which, in private life, he could make good use. A young priest having been appointed to a charge in a neighbouring town, thinking to signalize himself by getting a new chapel erected for his congregation, had plans made of the proposed building. These were to be submitted to Mr. Gordon for his approval. For this purpose, the young man, accompanied by a member of Mr. Gordon's congregation, proceeded in quest of him, and, having met him at the gate of the Schools in Constitution Street, at once produced his plans, and became very earnest in praise of them, as well as of the excellence of his scheme, urging its importance, &c., &c. Mr. Gordon having heard him quietly for a time, abruptly interrupted him, saying, "Haud, man, haud; I've something o' mair consequence than that to tell ye. I doot ye dinna ken that oor rabbit claikit this mornin'." Being naturally of a kindly disposition, he had no relish for controversy on the distinctive tenets of

his faith, but he was occasionally led into it, and, one winter in particular, he delivered a set of lectures on the Sunday evenings in his own chapel, in reply to a course of sermons then being delivered in the North Church, by the six town's ministers—each of them preaching in turn—on the doctrines and principles of the Church of Rome, against which the Reformers protested. The course, if I recollect aright, was commenced by the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Davidson, incumbent of the West Church.* The programme of the subjects to be discussed was duly published in the local newspapers. Mr. Gordon was thus made aware of the topics with which he would have to deal, in defending the tenets of his Church, as well as of the champions he had to encounter. He also published his intention to reply to the attacks of his oppo-

* The mention of this talented and respected gentleman's name recals to recollection a good anecdote told of the late Mrs. ——— of W———, an old lady who, though of the "upper ten," spoke in the vernacular, and told her mind, when she thought necessary, very plainly. She attended the West Church at the period of the late Dr. Glennie's retirement from the incumbency, and the "transportation" thither of Mr. Davidson from the South Church. The new minister brought along with him a number of the members of his former congregation, who, belonging as they did almost entirely to the classes of the community ranking lower in the social scale than did the family to which the lady in question belonged, were not viewed with any great favour by her and her compeers. On one occasion, shortly after Mr. Davidson's settlement as minister of the West Church, she was asked by an acquaintance why she had ceased attending the afternoon service, as she had done in Dr. Glennie's time, when the "believers' seats"—(so called because their occupants, not *seeing* the minister, on account of the huge intervening pillars supporting the roof, could only *believe*)—were untenanted, and

nents, and in consequence his chapel was crowded, both by Catholics and Protestants, during the whole course of his own controversial lectures. On one of these occasions he stated that he had come to the resolution of engaging in the controversy with great reluctance, and that nothing but an imperative sense of duty would have made him enter the lists. He said that he desired to live in peace with all mankind, and to "let be for let be," but his opponents had resolved to pursue another course. He concluded his explanations by saying: —"They hae brocht sax ministers against me, my freens, and ane o' them (naming him), I wad hae thocht, sud hae keepit oot o' it, considerin' a' things, and they've pitten forrit, in the front rank, that michty, michty man, John Murray." The point in the allusion to the minister "that sud hae keepit oot o't" lay in the circumstance that a very near relative of his was a Roman Catholic, and a devout member of Mr. Gordon's congregation, while the epithet applied to Dr. Murray (afterwards minister of the Free North Church), arose from his

---

the congregation, not very numerous, consisted mainly of the local *creme de la creme*. Her reply, in her usual Doric, was, "I gaed to the kirk the first Sunday afternoon after Sandie Davidson cam till's, but he brocht sic a trail o' folk wi' him, and I was sae scunner't wi' the smell o' broth an' ingans, that I vow'd I wadna gang back, excep' to the forenoon's preachin'." It is, perhaps, needless to explain to Aberdonians wherein the point of the old lady's would-be-scornful saying lay—namely, in the vulgarity, in her estimation, of the new-comers in dining "between sermons," on the plain but wholesome fare, which I doubt not yet continues to grace the Sunday's dinner table of the burghers of the "braif toun," instead of, as she did, at a later and more fashionable hour of the day, and on dishes of a more pretentious order than "broth and beef."

fame as a stirring preacher and a debater on the Evangelical side in the Established Church Courts. After the excitement caused by this controversy had subsided, as it speedily did, Mr. Gordon pursued the even tenor of his way, continuing throughout his long life to discharge his duties in the quiet unostentatious way so congenial to his nature.

CHAPTER IV.

NOTABLE CITIZENS.

——— Such a man
Might be a copy to these younger times,
Which, followed well, would demonstrate them now
But goers backward.

Shakspeare.

I HAVE already referred to the epithet "canny" conferred upon the folk of Aberdeen *par excellence*, by such as claim not to belong to the capital of the "Yorkshire" of Scotland. My intercourse with men since I left it has satisfied me that, along with that characteristic—which no individual system of scholastic training can impart—Aberdonians in general bear about with them the readily distinguishable marks of the *quality* of the education already reverted to as imparted in the town, a quality which fails not, to whatever region it is carried, to bestow

Upon the throng'd abodes of busy men
An air and mein of dignified pursuit—

and I say so with no desire either to induce or encourage a vainglorious spirit, for my sentiments are shared by those bound to Bon-Accord by no such ties as are cherished by her sons, wherever Aberdonians have to make their way in the world.

Out of the many citizens of Aberdeen, of whom I retain the recollection, it is pleasant in looking back on the "days o' lang syne," to recal the once-familiar

lineaments of not a few who have exemplified in their character, each in one aspect or another, the attributes enumerated in the lines:

> Discreet, who men as books have known,
> Brave, generous, witty, and exactly free
> From loose behaviour, and formality;
> Airy and prudent; merry, but not light;
> Quick in discerning, and in judging right:
> * * * * * *
> In reas'ning cool, strong, temperate, and just;
> Obliging, open, without huffing, brave;
> Brisk in gay talking, and in sober, grave;
> Close in dispute, but not tenacious; tried
> By solid reason, and let that decide.

But as most of those who crowd my memory's page "pursued the even tenor of their way" without exhibiting, to a noteworthy extent, such peculiarities as would have invested them with special interest, I select from my store only the following reminiscences.

The most prominent among the citizens of Aberdeen, in my day, was the late Provost James Hadden of Persley, the leading partner of two extensive manufacturing firms in the town. It is to this gentleman's public spirit and ability that Aberdeen owes its reputation as a well-built and elegant city, the fine streets forming the principal thoroughfares, as well as the beautiful bridge of one arch spanning the Denburn Valley, having been projected by him. He was also the prime mover in the scheme for supplying the town with water from the Dee, and he took an active interest in the improvements on the harbour, which have done so much to increase the prosperity of the town.

The following humble tribute to his memory is

here offered, and it is hoped it may not be unacceptable to his surviving fellow-citizens :—

"SI MONUMENTUM QUÆRIS, CIRCUMSPICE."

Lo! on yon Northern Ocean's bill'wy strand,
Where rock and cliff give place to bent-clad sand,
A City stands—in aspect chaste and fair—
Pattern of skill, with "plummet, rule and square."
Here Art has shap'd what Nature left awry,
And progress marks each scene that greets the eye;
While, ne'er the past forgetting, genial taste
Sustains each antique relic undefac'd.
See stately streets, by granite fabrics lin'd,
Displaying simple grace, with strength combin'd.
Yon central valley, mark how boldly spann'd
By one proud arch, with daring genius plann'd.
Behold a healthful stream, in conduits led,
Through all the City's bounds its bounties spread.
See many a gallant bark now crowd the Port,
To which but pigmy craft could once resort.

Th' admiring stranger asks whose master-mind,
On progress bent, these various schemes designed?
"'Twas HADDEN'S mind," the denizen replies,
"In project fertile, and in judgment wise."
Again the stranger asks—"Has Bon-Accord
No statue rear'd, or column to record
A lasting tribute to her prescient son,
Of gratitude so well, so justly won?"
The answer follows—apt, and promptly found—
"*If monument you seek, look all around!*"

He was an excellent man of business, punctual and attentive in the discharge of his many public duties, and exacted from the employés connected with the public bodies in the town, over whom he presided, *ex-officio*, the same punctuality in keeping appointments as he himself practised. He administered a rebuke, ever after remembered, on an occasion when the official he was to meet did not appear for a minute or two after the exact time.

Having heard the apology offered—that the individual in question had been so closely occupied in preparing for the meeting as to have inadvertently overlooked the lapse of time—Provost James said to him, "Sir, the expectation entertained by your employers of your appearing first at these meetings, as you ought always to do, is one of the reasons why they remunerate you as they do."

He was much respected by the whole community, even in the stirring times which preceded the passing of the Burgh Reform Bill, of which, being a staunch Tory, he was an opponent. The system of self-elections, which led to the passing of that measure, obtained in Aberdeen, as in other Scotch burghs, and, in consequence, the civic dignities ran in cliques and families, often from one generation to another. It thus happened that the chief magistracy of the city was held for many years alternately by Mr. Hadden and his brother Gavin, of Union Grove, a gentleman of good administrative ability, though not so far-seeing as Provost James. The circumstance of their thus occupying by turns the highest civic position in Aberdeen, I once saw rather humorously referred to in an inscription, scribbled on the wall of a barber's shop, when, in my boyhood, I had to wait my turn for the exercise of the tonsor's art. The couplet ran thus :—

> Twa hauchty Haddens wore the civic croun ;
> Gavin gaed up when Jamie cam doun.

One of the most prominent among the public men of Aberdeen, in his day, was the late Mr. William Carnegie, advocate, who filled the office of

Town-Clerk for nearly forty years. Had the town in his lifetime been honoured by royal visits, as it has been since his death, it is likely we should have had such commemorative prints as that which was published on the occasion of Her Majesty's landing in Aberdeen in 1848. No picture of the kind would have been complete without containing in the foreground his stately and imposing figure. He was tall, and inclined to stoutness, with a handsome set of features, and always dressed well, generally preferring a claret-coloured coat, which he kept buttoned up to the chin, and light drab pantaloons, and he continued to the last to wear hair powder, delicately scented with violets. Mr. Carnegie had somehow acquired the reputation of being, as regarded business qualifications and general intelligence, what is expressively called "a muff." This was, however, a mistake. I have been told by those who came much in contact with him in matters pertaining to his public duty, that he acquitted himself most creditably, and that his official correspondence and the records of procedure drawn up by him show that he possessed abilities a good deal above the average. The reputation referred to arose, as I believe, more from his having given way to habits of mental laziness, than from anything else. Thus, it is said, that he would not take the trouble himself to sum up a few columns of figures, if he could get a clerk to do it for him, nor would he make or mend a pen as people generally needed to do before the introduction of steel pens. He was fiery and imperious in his temper, and ruled his dependents, the clerks in the Town-House, and

the town serjeants, with a rod, not of iron certainly, but nearly as formidable, in the shape of a portentous walking-stick, cut from the garden of Hugomont, on the field of Waterloo, which was known in the Town-House as "The Clerk's Hugomont." Mr. Carnegie was born and grew up in the days when, as Dean Ramsay remarks, conversation could not be conducted without the "accompaniments of those absurd and unmeaning oaths, which were once considered an essential embellishment of polite discourse." Like most people who had acquired the habit of swearing, he had doubtless come to think of these "accompaniments" in no more grave light than that "oaths are but words, and words but wind," and he manifested the habit more especially on occasions when anything occurred to ruffle his temper. His favourite oath was applied, not like Jack Tar's, to the "eyes," but to "your blood, sir." His utterances in this line, however, might have afforded a good illustration of the faculty possessed by the Perth writer, commemorated by the Dean, who "didna sweer at onything particular, but juist stude in ta middle of ta road, and swoor at lairge." He was the terror of street and coal porters, who were in the habit of transgressing the police regulations of the town, by walking, with their loads, along the side pavements, instead of keeping "the crown of the causeway." When such transgressors caught a glance of him coming along, armed with his formidable Hugomont, they quickly left the forbidden territory, well knowing what they had to expect from him. I once saw him turn a shore porter, bent double under a heavy bale of goods,

off the pavement in Marischal Street, which, in those days, was the only thoroughfare between the Harbour and Castle Street, and which is so steep in its inclination, that even powerful and stalwart men, such as the shore porters are, could not carry heavy loads up the street without using the smoother side pavement. A little story is told of his wrath on an occasion when, being in a quarter of the town where he was not so well known as in the vicinity of the Town-House, one of a lot of boys, through whom he passed, called after him, "Eh, man, the neck o' your coat's a' fite." This condition of the garment in question was caused by the use of hair powder, and the urchin's offence, which the Clerk resented in his wonted style, was accounted for by the rarity of that peculiar fashion, clung to throughout life by only two other persons in Aberdeen, within my recollection, the late Mr. John Booth, publisher of the *Chronicle* newspaper, and Provost George Henry, recently deceased.

In evidence of Mr. Carnegie's reputed mental inferiority, there used to be quoted the answer he made when under examination before a committee of the House of Commons relative to the subject of a bill promoted before Parliament by the authorities of Aberdeen. He was asked by counsel, "How long have you been Town Clerk of Aberdeen?" To which he replied, "Ever since my father died." This answer has an apparent tinge of weakness in it, but it can readily be accounted for by the consideration that the counsel had no doubt been instructed by Mr. Carnegie in all the local matters bearing on the subject under consideration by the

committee, among which was the circumstance that Mr. Carnegie's father had been his immediate predecessor in the office of Town Clerk. One can readily suppose, therefore, that he had gone to be examined before the Committee, with the idea that he would merely have to repeat what he had previously communicated to counsel in private.

Other stories are related of Mr. Carnegie, tending in the same direction, the point of which lies in his having been the victim of practical jokes, perpetrated upon him by the knot of acquaintances with whom in his earlier days he used to dine at Affleck's—an establishment in a close in Exchequer Row, long noted for its *recherché* entertainments — in the Lemon Tree Tavern, famous in particular for Finnan haddocks and crab claws—and elsewhere. These jokes, (some of them rather rough,) were, it is said, amply atoned for by their perpetrators, and the Clerk's chagrin was mollified by the subsequent conduct of his waggish friends towards him. It must not be inferred, however, that Mr. Carnegie, bachelor as he remained throughout life, had any title to be classed among such worthies as Sir Walter Scott depicts figuring at "High Jinks," or at the symposia, chronicled by Lord Cockburn in his Memorials. In my day, at any rate, the Clerk was most regular and temperate in his habits, and enjoyed, on the whole, very good health, his only ailment being the aristocratic complaint of gout, from which he occasionally suffered.

Having come into office as Town Clerk, and performed his public duties from year to year under the regime of a close Tory Town Council, Mr. Car-

negie shared the sentiments of the City Fathers on the question of Parliamentary and Burgh Reform, when so much political excitement prevailed,

> And some for brooms, old boots and shoes,
> Bawl'd out to purge the Commons' House,

and he looked upon the passing of the Reform Bills of 1831 and 1832 in the light of a revolution. *

The dreaded measure, however, once passed, was found by Mr. Carnegie to be by no means so formidable in its aspects as he had anticipated, for after the electoral rolls for the Burgh had been made up by him—a piece of duty which had yielded him a good many fees, he said one day, in the course of conversation in a bookseller's shop which he frequented: "Reform is not such a bad thing after all. It has put nearly three hundred pounds in my pocket." He had the reputation of being somewhat close and stingy in money matters, but I have been

* The new order of things, both in the Parliamentary and Municipal representation of the Burgh, was not acquiesced in by the Conservative electors for some years, although, being greatly outnumbered by the Liberal party, they had but a poor chance of regaining their former ascendancy. Attempts were made, at different periods, on the seat of Mr., afterwards Sir Alexander, Bannerman, the first M.P. for Aberdeen, after the passing of Earl Grey's famous measure of 1831, who held it "against all comers," till he resigned in 1847, and was succeeded by the late Captain Dingwall Fordyce of Brucklay. A good many anecdotes, illustrative of the Aberdonian character, could doubtless be related, in connection with these election contests, but as I did not take any part in them, I can give only one—told to me by the late Convener Alexander Mortimer—of the late worthy and respected Deacon William Levie, who in the practice of the craft of King Crispin, long plied awl and hammer in his little unpretentious shop, at the south-east corner of Commerce Street. Being a staunch Tory, the Deacon was a member of the Election Committee when the late Ad-

told that he did many kind things in a quiet unostentatious way. His domestic servants were well treated and remained long in his establishment, which was presided over by an unmarried sister, who survived him, a kindly gentlewoman to whom he was much attached.

The late Provost James Milne long occupied a leading position in Aberdeen. He was best known by the designation of Bailie, having been originally appointed to that office while a member of the Town Council, under the Tory regime. For some cause or another, he differed from his colleagues in the corporation, and left the Council, taking up thereafter with the Whig party in the town, on whose

---

miral (then Captain) Sir Arthur Farquhar came forward as a candidate for the representation of the City, in opposition to Mr. Bannerman. The Captain was frank and easy in manner, as became his profession, and the members of his Election Committee assisted him in his canvass with great zeal and heartiness. Though under the middle size in stature, he was handsome, and was always "weel put on" in dress. Sir Arthur had made an appointment to call for the Deacon at his shop, on a certain day, in order that, together, they might canvass the electors in the neighbourhood, with whom the latter was best acquainted. The would-be M.P., however, for some reason or other, did not make his appearance at the hour appointed, and the Deacon had to wait so long until Sir Arthur arrived, that he had almost despaired seeing the candidate that day. At last, to the great joy of the long expecting Committeeman, whose place of business was filled with acquaintances gathered for the occasion, the Captain was descried coming along, and on his entering the shop he was greeted with an ardent and demonstrative reception—the Deacon saying to him in his couthiest tones—"Come awa, my bonnie Sir Erthurie, ye're here at last, I thocht we wisna to see ye the day." The Deacon's greeting, though it contained an allusion to Sir Arthur's petite stature, was cordially received, and the intended canvass duly proceeded.

accession to power after the passing of the Reform Bill, he was appointed Senior Bailie, and on the death of Provost James Blaikie, he was elected Provost and Chief-Magistrate, with the general approbation of the citizens.

Provost Milne, who had somehow been irreverently nicknamed "Birdie," was plain and homely in his manners, and, except when on his p's and q's, spoke the broadest Doric. When sitting on the bench administering justice in the Police Court—a portion of his duty of which he was very fond—he took great pains in investigating the charges against the unlucky culprits brought before him. I was present in court on the first occasion when the Reform Magistrates, (as they were called,) commenced their reign as "a terror to evil doers," Bailie Milne being in the chair.

In regard to this tribunal, a general expectation had prevailed among the community that the newly elected dignitaries would shed greater lustre on the bench from which they were to dispense justice than had their self-chosen predecessors, and that the Police Court would henceforth, under their administration, verify, in its attributes, the description given of the critical Forum in the Rosciad, of which we are told that there

> Rose a tribunal: from no other court
> It borrow'd ornament, or sought support;
> No juries here were pack'd to kill or clear,
> No bribes were taken, no oaths broken here;
> No gownsmen, partial to client's cause,
> To their own purpose turn'd the pliant laws.
> Each judge was true and steady to his trust,
> As Mansfield wise, and as old Foster just.

Many people were thus attracted to the scene

to witness the first judicial display of the Reform Magistrates, and the "chaumer" was consequently crowded to the door. It happened that the first person who appeared in the dock to answer to a charge of assault and breach of the peace, was the late well known Geordie Weir, tailor, whose figure, curiously "crookit like an izzit," had earned him the cognomen of the "Parten"—his diminutive proportions recalling Petruchio's tirade against the tailor—

> Thou thimble,
> Thou yard, three-quarters, half-yard, quarter, nail,
> Thou flea, thou nit, thou winter-cricket thou.

The Parten pled his case with volubility and address, reiterating, in almost every sentence, the statement, "I'm a humane man, sir Bailie, I'm a humane man." Bailie Milne bestowed great pains in the examination of the witnesses in the case, and I remember his formula, when examining a witness, on what he considered a point of importance, was, "Noo, jist answer me this ae question." The result was that the charge of assault and "batterification" (as Mansie Waugh, the renowned tailor of Dalkeith, calls it) was found not proven against the Parten, *

* On a certain anniversary of King George the Third's birth-day, the Parten, then in the hey-day of his youth, having imbibed rather freely, got into a squabble with some one on the street, and a row was likely to be the consequence. A tall and burly sailor coming along interfered and insisted on knowing the cause of the disturbance. Not liking the tar's formidable appearance and determined manner, the little man attempted to propitiate him by answering, "Oh, its only a tradesman on a bit of a spree." On which, Jack, who was a few sheets in the wind, seized the Parten by the "scruff

and he retired from the dock with his reputation as a "humane man" unimpaired.

Mr. Milne, being of a kindly disposition, and ready to look at the fair side of things, was not a very stern ruler while he sat dispensing justice among the hapless wights of both sexes who came into the clutches of the police, and his sentences were thus as lenient as the interests of justice would allow. In both the public offices which he filled, he acquitted himself creditably, devoting almost his whole time to his official duties, and dispensing the rights of hospitality with no niggard hand, in his old-fashioned house in the Gallowgate, where his *major domo*, "Black Tom," the negro, as well known in the town as Provost Milne himself, reigned supreme.

At a riot which took place in Castle Street, on the evening of one of the late King William's birthdays, Provost Milne, though an old and not over-robust man, behaved with great pluck and spirit, in attempting to disperse a turbulent and mischievously-disposed mob of roughs, who had let fly a shower of stones at the Town-House windows, by which almost every pane of glass in them was

---

o' the neck," with one hand, and by the seat of his inexpressibles with the other, and, holding him, thus grasped, at arm's length, walked about for a while among the crowd which had gathered, in the character of a showman, assumed for the occasion, saying, "Come here, good people, come here and see a tradesman on a bit of a spree!" By the time the Parten was again set upon *terra firma*, he was no longer desirous of continuing his "spree." To those who can recal his odd-looking figure, the idea of such an exhibition must be amusing.

broken. He led a small body of police in charging the rioters—

> And bravely threw himself among
> Th' enemy i' th' greatest throng;
> But what could single valour do
> Against so numerous a foe?

In this "forlorn hope" adventure, he was "crowned," hustled, and "put in chancery" by the ringleaders; but some of these fellows were captured, and paid smartly for their share in this *emeute*, while Provost Milne was deservedly complimented for the courage he had displayed.

There have been few men whose lot it has been to hold office in Aberdeen, in the service of their fellow-citizens, more deserving of a tribute of respect than James Milne, who died at a good old age, universally esteemed by the people among whom his useful and honourable career was passed.

The Town-Serjeants of Aberdeen have long occupied a prominent place among the public functionaries of the town. Although a large portion of their duty consists in attendance on the Provost and Magistrates, they do good service as criminal officers within the city limits, and they acted as constables until the introduction of the regular police force, which has guarded the lives and property of the citizens for the last five-and-thirty years. The most efficient member of this body of Town-Serjeants was the late Simon Grant, whose very name was, for nearly fifty years, a terror to all evil-doers within the jurisdiction of the Magistrates. Grant was about the middle size, lithe and active

in his movements, and remarkably fertile in expedients for hunting down criminals. He was also plucky and determined, and fought bravely

> In many desperate attempts
> Of warrants, exigents, contempts—

in apprehending and securing his prisoners. He seemed to have been fitted by nature for the business of a detective, and displayed great foresight and intelligence in making his investigations, so that there were few instances in which he was baffled in tracing the perpetrators of evil deeds. Most of the hapless beings who came through his hands in his professional capacity had cause eventually to rue the skill, by virtue of which

> Although they nothing would confess,
> Yet, by their very looks he'd guess,
> And tell what guilty aspect bodes,
> Who stole, and who received the goods.

There are many stories told illustrating the wondrous skill he manifested in his not very inviting vocation, ever regarding his destined prey

> As (poets sing)
> Grimalkin, to domestic vermin sworn
> An everlasting foe, with watchful eye,
> Lies nightly brooding o'er a chinky gap,
> Protending her fell claws, to thoughtless mice
> Sure ruin—

and for his abilities he was often highly complimented by the authorities. One of these may be cited as a sample of the manner in which he brought his experience into operation. A very daring burglary had been committed during the night in a house at the west end of Aberdeen, a large quantity

of silver plate and other valuables having been carried off. The robbers left no trace behind them, to indicate either the perpetrators of the deed, or the manner in which their booty had been disposed of. The case was put into Grant's hands for investigation, and knowing, as he did, all the suspicious characters about the town, he fixed upon two or three as the probable depredators. He then set about the difficult, but to him the interesting and exciting task of tracking out their movements for some time before, as well as subsequent to, the night of the robbery. After a minute and very careful investigation, he came to the conclusion that the plunder must be secreted in a house in College Street, occupied by one or more of the gang or their *confrères*. Entering this house with his assistants, and carrying in his hand, as he usually did, a small walking cane, he cast his eyes rapidly over the rooms, and, finding that a pretty large portion of the plaster of the ceiling had been recently repaired, he poked his cane through the still damp material, when he had the gratification of finding, secreted among the rafters, all the stolen articles of which he was in search. The burglars were convicted and sent to the Hulks.

Grant's skill and success became known among the criminal authorities throughout the whole of Scotland, and he was often employed out of Aberdeen in cases of difficulty. His well-known figure, wearing the scarlet swallow-tailed coat indicative of his office as town-serjeant, long filled the public eye in Aberdeen, and on his death, at an advanced age, his remains were honoured by a public funeral—a

mark of respect seldom paid at the interment of one in his rank of life.

The last of the Town House worthies, flourishing in my day, of whom I have any note-worthy recollections, is the late John Home, Town House Keeper, who occupied this post upwards of forty years.

In figure he was rather tall, with good features, though very lean.

> Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
> Ylike a staf, ther was no calf ysene;

and, like the character depicted by Chaucer, he had a "kittle" temper;—

> The Reve was a slender colerike man,
> His berd was shave as neighe as ever he can.

When angry, he could discharge, after the fashion of many of his betters, a pretty heavy battery of strong expletives, but such explosions did not last very long at a time, and his usual sedateness speedily returned. John was so long custodier of the Town House, including the wine cellar—

> Wel coude he kepe a garner and a binne,

that he had come to consider himself almost as the owner of the building and all its appurtenances, and he used to resent the slightest allusion to any oversight that might have occurred in the execution of his duty, for he evidently seemed to think "he could do as he liked with his own." In the old close corporation days, when the revenues of the "Guild Wine Fund" were spent to a great extent

on breakfasts, "snacks," and dinners, by the Council and their friends, John Home was an important personage. He was an excellent caterer, and there are legends in the Town House of his skill in providing Finnan haddocks, "parten-taes," Highland honey, and other toothsome cates for breakfast. On these occasions when good cheer was dispensed, it was the unvarying experience of the Council and their guests that John

> Did all the stores produce that might excite
> With various tastes the *burgher's* appetite.

He was also a good judge of wine, and had a pretty large stock of various brands under his charge in the Town's wine cellar.

John was a Tory of the most uncompromising order, and looked upon the Burgh Reform Act as a measure which would drive out of the Town Council such gentlemen as the Haddens, Baillies Cruden, Galen, and others, among whom all John's associations lay, and of letting in, as he said, "a puckle souter an' tailor bodies, an' sic like trash." He therefore entered into the spirit of a Lament, written after the passing of the Burgh Reform Act by one of the clerks in the Town House, of which I happened to see a copy at the time, commencing thus :—

> In the year eighteen hundred and thirty-three,
> A very great change in this house is to be ;
> The clerks, town-serjeants, town's drummers, and all,
> Must speedily, out of its door, "tak' their crawl."

The new Town Council, however, came into power, without causing any such dire effects, but

John continued, for a long time after the new regime began, to lament over the departed greatness of the city corporation; and although at their meetings he received each member of the Reformed Town Council with a low bow and a gracious smile, as he ushered them into the Council Chamber, he used to sneer and scoff behind their backs, at "the bodies," as he called them, contrasting them with the race of dignitaries whom they had supplanted. John thus proved himself an "auld sneck-drawer," by the way he treated his new masters, but he became in time reconciled to the order of things which has prevailed since 1833, in the disposal of the Town's revenues. Towards the close of his life, passed in single blessedness, John manifested some concern about the arrangements for his funeral and interment. In connection with this, I may relate a saying of his to one of the clerks in the Town House, after the public funeral of the late much respected Baillie Harper. On the occasion referred to, John asked this young man what sort of a place the churchyard of Forgue was, where the Baillie's remains had been interred. He was answered that nothing was known on the subject. John's next query was, "Faar div ye lie?" He was duly informed on this point, and he then proceeded to say:—"I gang to Dyce, ye see. It's a bonnie kirk-yardie, an' oh man, it's fine and dry." This was uttered in a tone of great satisfaction, and it was evident that he appreciated the peculiar quality which, according to him, characterised the spot of earth where his dust was to repose.

John's instructions in reference to his funeral were carried out to the letter, and he "rests his head upon the lap of earth" in the "bonnie dry kirk-yard" referred to. A story is told of his obsequious politeness towards the Provost in office at the time when George IV. visited Scotland. John went to Edinburgh, in the retinue of the Provost and Magistrates of Aberdeen, who paid their respects to the King in that city, upholding, by their handsome equipages and well-dressed attendants, the dignity of the town they represented. On one of the state occasions, in which John Home figured in his official livery, he happened to get rather a severe fall. The Provost having asked, in a voice of concern, whether he was hurt, John answered with a low bow, and in his most fitting tones, "Quite the reverse, my lord."

Peace be to his ashes. With all his peculiarities he was a faithful servant, and did his best in his sphere to uphold the dignity of the town.

Aberdeen has, at no period of her history, fallen behind other towns in the possession of characters. The best known of these, some forty or fifty years ago, was the late eccentric Robbie Troup, grocer and general dealer, whose unpretentious and not over-orderly-kept place of business was a shop in an old-fashioned tenement in Castle Street. Many stories are told illustrative of Robbie's humour and eccentricity. The following have never, I believe, till now, appeared in print.

On a certain occasion, when the late Principal Brown, of Marischal College, was in Robbie's shop,

which he frequented for a chat, the conversation turned to the practice of smuggling, which was roundly condemned by the Principal. Robbie attempted to defend the practice by the usual arguments adopted by those who think it no great sin to break the revenue laws. The Principal, however, would not listen to Robbie's special pleading. To close the argument, he quoted the text, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," which he expected would shut Robbie's mouth. It failed to do so, for he rejoined, "Aye aye, Aye aye, that's a' verra weel o' you, Principal, preaching's your trade, an' sellin' the drappie drink's mine, but ye see our Cæsar's sic a greedy Cæsar, he would seize a'."

On one occasion a servant girl hurriedly entered his shop and asked for a gill of vinegar. "I'm verra sorry, my lassie," Robbie said, "that I hae nae ony but fat's *soor*." Not perceiving at once the absurdity of this remark, the girl replied, "Aweel, than, I doot it winna dee," and immediately left the shop, his joke thus depriving Robbie of a customer.

Robbie's fame as a dealer in every article of which merchandise could be made, whether connected with his business as a grocer or not, was well known to his fellow citizens, and he rarely failed to supply, out of the miscellaneous stock of articles on his premises, any demand that might be made "from a pin to an anchor." It is related that a townsman well acquainted with Robbie, on one occasion, talking with a friend from England about Troup's miscellaneous stock, laid a bet of

some amount that whatever article might be asked for would be furnished by Robbie on demand. As the story goes, the Englishman kept his own counsel as to the article he was to purchase, and the two wagerers visited Robbie's shop next day, to have the bet settled. Robbie was asked "if he had any sentry-boxes in stock," to which he replied, "Oh, aye; I was at the sojers' barracks the ither day, at a roup o' auld stores, and I bocht a sentry-box. Come awa' oot to the back-yard and see 't." The stranger at once acknowledged that he had lost the bet.

Robbie is said to have made a good deal of money, and his business continued to flourish till his death, when he was succeeded in it for a time by the late genial and accomplished William Duncan, so long the efficient Treasurer to the Police and Water Commissioners of the city.

The people of Aberdeen were long familiar with the tall and not very gainly figure of the late James Andrew Sandilands, of Cruives, a gentleman of kindly disposition, who dispensed his hospitality to a small circle of friends in his house in Belmont Street, which was presided over by his sister, Miss Paul, that being the family name. On account of his tallness he had got conferred upon him the sobriquet of "the Panorama," and he was unfortunately subject to the infirmity of a stutter in his speech, which made it difficult for those not intimately acquainted with him to understand what he said. When he sang, however, which he sometimes did on festive occasions, he betrayed no

symptom of the infirmity in question. I once heard him at an anniversary party in the Lemon Tree, that famous hostelry, sing, in capital style, the ancient ditty :—

Amo, amas, I love a lass,
As a cedar, tall and slender,
The cowslip's grace, of the nominative case,
And she's in the feminine gender.
Horum, scorum, sunt divorum,
Harum, scarum, divo,
Tag-rag, merry-derry, perriwig and hatband,
Hic, hoc, horum, genitivo.

Mr. Sandilands spent his life in bachelorhood, lavishing his regards on a tribe of elegant little dogs of the King Charles' breed, that trotted around him as he walked along the streets, the admiration and envy of all dog-fanciers in the town. These pets were carefully attended to by a henchman, Peter McDonald by name, who followed the vocation of a street porter. Mr Sandilands, during his life, gave away a good deal of his means in charity, which he bestowed in a quiet and unostentatious way, and all his servants and dependents were greatly attached to him.

The list of notable citizens who figured prominently in the town in my day, is by no means complete, without including others than those of whom I have attempted to chronicle my recollections, namely—Count Duthie; James Ignatius Massie; William Philip, of Philip & Taylor (the lively and eccentric "Baillie" Philip); Peter Brown (the first), auctioneer, glib of tongue and full of humour; Convener Affleck; Deacon Robb,

the facetious singer of "The Little Farthing Rushlight;" Alexander Webster, advocate; Dr Alexander Fraser; and last, though not least, except in point of stature, "Budsie" Elgen, teacher of Navigation.

I leave other chroniclers, however, to illustrate the peculiarities of these worthies, and of sundry Aberdonians not named, regarding each of whom, it may be said, in one respect or another,

> —— Take him for all in all,
> We shall not look upon his like again.

CHAPTER V.

STREET VENDERS, MENDICANTS, ETC.

But deem not this man useless, Statesmen! ye
Who are so restless in your wisdom—ye
Who have a broom still ready in your hands
To rid the world of nuisances; ye proud
Heart-swollen, while in your pride ye contemplate
Your talents, power, and wisdom, deem him not
A burden of the earth.

Wordsworth.

I come now to notice a class of characters of the humble order of mendicants, venders of almanacs, and other et ceteras, and generally the members of the fraternity who earn a precarious living on the streets. Of this motley tribe, Aberdeen had, in my day, a goodly share, and their several peculiarities are worthy of being noted, for, since the passing of the Scottish Poor Law Amendment Act, upwards of twenty years ago, most of these luckless wights have been immured in poor's houses, and, as Charles Lamb says in his "Complaint of the Decay of Beggars," "the all-sweeping besom of sectarian reformation—your only modern Alcides' club to rid the time of its abuses," has been plied "with many-handed sway to extirpate the last fluttering tatters of the bugbear mendicity" from the town.

The people of Aberdeen were long familiar with the picturesque and venerable figure of an "ancient mariner," who, with "lyart haffets wearing thin

and bare," sat for some years during my boyhood at the gate of Gordon's Hospital, hat in hand, craving an alms. His figure would have afforded a most fitting study for a painter, desirous of portraying the lineaments of a mendicant, such as appears in the picture, with the legend "*Date obolum Belisario.*" His pitiful story was chanted in plaintive tones and measured cadences all day long, while he turned his sightless orbs upwards—a spectacle well calculated "to move sweet charity." His mournful lay was :—

I am a poor old creature—
Both lame and blind--in great distress ;
I ploughed the raging sea
For more than thirty years,
And lost my precious eye-sight,
And the use of my limbs,
At Kingston, in Jamaica,
By *a heavy flash*
Of thunder and lightning ;
O you that is Christian parents of children—
That you may never
See any of your dear little ones
In my deplorable state!

It was a peculiarity of old "Thunder and Lightning," as he was called, that at whatever point in his story a copper might be dropped into his outstretched hat by a passer-by, the donor was rewarded with a fervent "God bless you"—while the story was continued without pause. This gave rise to a practice adopted by some of those in the habit of bestowing a trifle on the venerable old fellow, of dropping their coppers into the hat just as he had uttered the words "Kingston in Jamaica." The consequence was that they were rewarded with a fervent "God bless you by a heavy flash of thunder

and lightning." This worthy, and really devout mendicant, was affectionately tended by his wife, who led him to and from his station, and kept his habiliments always clean and tidy. A little anecdote is related illustrative of the pious and resigned feeling he always manifested. He was, on one occasion, being led along Justice Street, a locality, like the Cowgate of Edinburgh, famous for brokers' shops—when, by some mischance, he stumbled, and fell over an article of furniture standing on the outer edge of the side pavement. When picked up and asked whether he had been hurt, his reply was "Oh, no, thank God, there is no danger done," uttered in his usual plaintive and fervent tones. His venerable figure continued to adorn the town (if I may so speak) for many years, and he obtained, by recounting his "pitiful story," enough to meet the wants of himself and his wife. When increasing age and infirmity had unfitted him for pursuing his humble vocation, he was taken in charge by the parochial authorities and sent to his native parish, where he was properly cared for till his death.

One of the most noted characters in my day in Aberdeen, was a little nimble old fellow, who went by the name of Jumpin' Judas. He either had, or affected to have, a "want;" and the only means he had of earning a scanty living was by the sale of "Drunken Summonses," and by singing, to a tune of his own, the ballad of "Maggie Lauder." His usual place of resort was the plain-stones in front of the Town House, and his appearance on

the scene always attracted an admiring crowd, particularly of juveniles. He was lithe and active in his motions, and bounced about as he called out in a peculiar, tremulous kind of voice, "Drunken Summonses, gentlemen; Drunken Summonses, tow derum"—holding out a bundle of broad sheets in his hand, as he offered them for sale among the spectators. He carried a little stick, which, when selling summonses, he disposed of under his arm-pit. When about to commence his musical performance, the stick came into requisition. Having cleared a space of some six yards each way, he stationed himself at one end of the "clearing," and, grasping the stick by the middle with his right hand, the arm being elevated above his head, he began the exhibition of his powers as a vocalist. Each line of the ballad referred to was trolled as he skipped from one end of the clear space to the other alternately, the stick being rapidly twirled all the time to give effect to the performance—

> A speaking Harlequin, made up of whim,
> He twists, he twines, he tortures every limb.

It was really laughable to see the keen-eyed, brisk little fellow, go through his droll exhibition, and his antics reminded one of the Scotch saying, "Happin' like a hen on a het girdle."

By some means or another, Jumpin' Judas at one time became possessed of a cast-off suit of livery, including a cocked hat, and in this gorgeous array he had his portrait taken by some local artist, of which coloured prints were published, and found a ready sale, Judas being a general favourite in the

town. He was depicted in his most characteristic attitude, while singing "Maggie Lauder," hopping on one leg, the other being deftly employed in executing the "shuffle and cut" of the Highland fling, the right arm held up, and his hand grasping the little stick ready to be twirled. Jumpin' Judas continued for many years to minister to the amusement of the people of Aberdeen in his grotesque fashion, and when his little figure was missed from the plain-stones, there were few of them but thought "they could have spared a better man."

In my schoolboy days, Aberdeen was frequently visited by a daft character, who went by the sobriquet of "Moorikan Room," and was said to live, Robinson-Crusoe fashion, in a hut among the woods of Udny, some ten miles from the town. "Moorikan," it was generally believed, was a Dane by birth, and the only survivor of the crew of a Danish vessel wrecked on the Black Dog, a rock on the sands, a few miles north of Aberdeen. The legend about him was that he was picked up in a state of insensibility, and on his recovery it was found that his reason was completely shattered. The only English words which he could speak, when he was thus found, were those forming the name by which he went ever after. By "Moorikan Room" he meant to say *American Rum*, that being a beverage he must have become acquainted with in his seafaring experiences. This unfortunate fellow, though not tall, was strong and well built, but like his ancient prototype Caliban, was inclined neither to

> —— Fetch in firing
> At requiring,
> Nor scrape trenchering, nor wash dish—

and he could never be got to do any work. He wandered about the country as a mendicant, making his wants known more by signs than by speech, for he never learned more than a few words of the vernacular of the district. He was very fond of a dram, which he asked for by the two words already quoted. His usual attire, thread-bare and tattered, was a soldier's red coat, trousers of any kind, and a shako, decorated by himself with a variety of feathers. In those days the peace of the city was under charge of the six town serjeants, and it thus happened that the juvenile part of the population could indulge in a row in any quarter of the town more or less distant from the Town House. "Moorikan," therefore, on making his appearance in the Gallowgate, by which he generally came into Aberdeen, was saluted by a crowd of boys, who, shouting his name, and thronging round and hustling him, speedily roused his vengeance. At such times his appearance was anything but inviting, every feature being convulsed with passion. His assailants were glad to take to their heels, followed by him throwing stones and brick-bats, which, fortunately for them, seldom did any damage. When let alone, "Moorikan" stalked about the streets in an aimless, vacant way, heeding no one except when, in his peculiar manner, he solicited charity. Having myself witnessed "Moorikan" in a rage (although I never joined in tormenting him), I had a salutary dread of his stalwart arm and of the cudgel which he often carried, but, being once in a house, on the occasion of one of his visits there, I found that the poor

fellow could appreciate to some extent an act of kindness done to him. It must be many years since his pilgrimage ceased, but I never learned how he was cared for at the last.

There are few Aberdonians, whose recollections extend back for some thirty years, but can readily recall the well-known figure of Turkey Willie, as he groped his way along the streets. Willie was certainly anything but a beauty. He was blind of one eye, and with the other he squinted so horribly that the eye-ball had almost disappeared behind his nose. He had an ungainly stoop, and when walking along, his head was held to one side, his body jerking backwards and forwards at every step he took. He generally carried under his arm a well-fed specimen of the gallinaceous birds in which he dealt—most commonly a turkey. In habiliments and person he realised, almost to the letter, the description given in Thomson's graphic lines (in the Castle of Indolence), of one of the "hapless wretches," whom he depicts as

> ——— with base dunghill rags yclad,
> Tainting the gale, in which they flutter'd light;
> Of morbid hue his features, sunk, and sad;
> His hollow eyne shook forth a sickly light;
> And o'er his lank jaw-bone, in piteous plight,
> His black, rough beard was matted rank and vile;
> Direful to see, an heart-appalling sight!

His wife's appearance and attire were very little less repulsive than those of her liege lord, and it thus required some courage on the part of the matrons, who were customers of Willie's, to do business with either of the unsavoury pair. His

stock of poultry lived in family with him and his wife, and the condition of his house inside may thus be readily imagined. I once had occasion to enter it, and the recollection of what I then witnessed is anything but pleasant.

Willie drove hard bargains, and, if he could, he would have exacted unconscionable prices for his poultry; but the careful and economical housewives of Aberdeen seldom allowed themselves to be over-reached by him. He continued to ply his trade for many years, and had reached about fourscore when he died.

Contemporary with Turkey Willie was another well-known character, Willie Godsman, who held a badge from the civic authorities, entitling him to exercise the rights and privileges of a licensed mendicant. In person Godsman was as ugly as a satyr. His forehead was low, his eyes gray and fish-like, his nose curiously perked up at its extremity.

> His nose thirls black were and wide, and
> His mouth as wide was as a forneis.

Add to this that he was endowed with one of the most marked peculiarities of the famous Sir Hudibras—

> His back, or rather burden, show'd
> As if it stoop'd with its own load—

also that a deformity in one of his feet obliged him to use a crutch in walking, and Willie's not very engaging portrait is complete. He had a different beat for every day of the week except Sunday, when

he regularly went to church. In going his rounds he carried capacious wallets, in which he stowed away the broken meats and scraps bestowed upon him by the families whom he visited.

> Through they were lined with many a piece
> Of ammunition, bread and cheese—

and his calls were made with unvarying punctuality. Willie was neither greedy nor ungrateful, and I never heard of an instance in which he misconducted himself in plying his humble calling. When the town was in difficulties, some fifty years ago, a number of squibs were published reflecting upon the Town Council's management of the corporation funds, and in one of these broad sheets Willie was introduced as lamenting that his "broth was ta'en awa'." He was furnished by some wags with a supply of this stinging satire to be hawked through the town; but his career as a vender of this document was speedily stopped by the magistrates, who threatened, if he persevered in distributing it, to take from him his badge. Notwithstanding Willie's lowly condition and ungainly appearance, he had contrived to get a wife, who must have proved a good manager, for he was always clean and decent in his clothes on Sundays.

This couple had a daughter, who gained the affections of a pretentious and dandified journeyman tailor, a man of colour, who, it is said, made a good husband. Willie's figure and belongings for many years formed an "institution" in the town, and he died at an advanced age.

Among the characters of whom I retain the recollection there was one who went by the name of Preachin' Sandie. He was a native of some town in Forfarshire, and had been bred to the trade of a heckler, which he gave up after a time, having found it, as he said, "owre stoury" to suit him. He then took up the street preaching line, and visited in succession a number of towns, including Aberdeen, remaining for weeks in each place in the exercise of his office, to which he was self-ordained. When he wished to hold forth he looked about for a suitable spot where he thought it likely he might attract an audience. Having chosen his stand-point, he doffed his hat, which he laid on the ground in a convenient position to receive the expected coppers. He then said off a prayer, his eyes all the time wandering round watching his chances of pecuniary success. After this he gave out the text, and proceeded with his discourse, which had the usual introduction, "heads," and improvement of the subject, and his service was concluded by another prayer. His stock of sermons was limited, for I never knew of his having more than two. I recollect, however, an occasion when I happened to be one of his audience, and heard him talk as if he intended to increase his store of this commodity. Some boys among his audience having complimented him on the excellence of his sermon, he accepted the compliment, although ironically paid, and replied :—"It is a gude ane, nae dout, but I'm learnin' a muckle better ane—the Prodigal. Jist wait till ye hear it." Sandy owed his gifts as a preacher, such as these were, entirely to

his good memory, and his only object in holding forth was "to mak' an easy livin'." This became known among the juveniles of the town, who, instead of putting coppers in his hat, as he expected, used to fill it with pebbles off the street. When this happened, Sandy's clerical decorum was thrown to the winds, and he tongued them heartily, giving vent to a volley of oaths and curses. It is perhaps charitable to conclude that this queer character wanted at least "tippence i' the shillin'," as the saying is, otherwise he could not have gone on for years as he did, making a trade of sacred things. The last I saw of him was about five-and-twenty years ago.

Among the peripatetic venders of odds and ends through the streets of Aberdeen, in my day, there was none better known than a blind man, who went by the appellation of "Belfast Almanacs." He was led about by a boy, and called his wares in harsh, grating tones, which might well have caused his audiences exclaim—

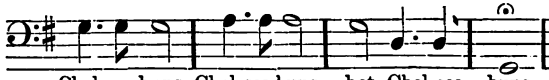
> List to that voice—did ever discord hear
> Sounds so well fitted to her untun'd ear?

His refrain was—"Almanics, Royal Belfast Almanics, for the enshooin' year." He then elevated the pitch of his voice, as he uttered the remainder of it—"small horn reddin' combs, stoot an' strong, for a ha'penny the piece. Moose traps and loose traps. Superior French penny blecknin'." This poor fellow must have contrived to make a

tolerably good livelihood out of the miscellaneous articles in which he dealt, as he was always "weel put on," and appeared to conduct himself properly. If I am not mistaken, he was received into the Blind Asylum in Huntly Street on its being opened—that useful institution for the erection and endowment of which the many inmates who partake of its benefits may well bless the memory of its founder, Miss Cruickshank.

One of the most notable of the street characters in Aberdeen about thirty years ago, was a fine hearty Englishman, who earned a livelihood by making and selling through the streets the dainty known by the name of "Chelsea Buns." He lived, if I am not mistaken, in Littlejohn Street, from whence he issued forth about five o'clock in the afternoon, dressed in a white blouse, and bearing a large wicker basket slung in front with a strap over his neck, convenient to his hand. The cakes in which he dealt were covered with a tidy white cloth, and his whole get-up was calculated to inspire the assurance that his "Chelsea Buns" had been cooked with all due regard to cleanliness. His beat did not extend beyond Gallowgate, Broad Street, and Upperkirkgate, and his basket was generally emptied in the course of an hour, for his buns were eagerly purchased, and highly prized as an edible at the thrifty tea tables of the dwellers in that quarter of the town which he frequented. He had the jolly *bonhommie* of a well-fed Englishman, and it was pleasant to witness his free and independent bearing, as he turned himself round and

round, while disposing of his dainties, proclaiming them in a fine sonorous baritone—

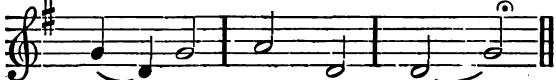


This well-doing fellow, humble though his sphere was, it has struck me, might, not inaptly, have had applied to him, for the diligence and assiduity which he manifested in following his lowly, though useful calling, Longfellow's beautiful lines :—

Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees its close:
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

It is generally believed that "Chelsea Buns," as he was called, made a good deal of money during the time he remained in Aberdeen, and none of his numerous customers would have grudged him his success.

The notice of this character recals to my recollection a class of street-venders who flourished in great numbers in my schoolboy days. The commodity in which they dealt was mutton pies, carried in a tin stove, heated by a lamp. They did not appear on the streets until near the time when "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day," which, according to immemorial usage, is proclaimed from the city bells at eight o'clock, P.M. When that hour approached, they commenced their peregrinations, enlivening the shades of evening by the cry—



The pies vended in this fashion found customers mostly among the poorer classes, there being a general suspicion among the better-off portion of the community, that the flesh of other animals besides the sheep entered into the composition of those viands. That there was actually some truth in this, I am satisfied from a tonguing-match I heard between two pie-men one day as I was passing along the Castlehill. These young fellows were abusing each other to their heart's content when I approached, and as I passed them the one said to the other, "Your pies is made o' auld horse," to which the rejoinder was, "And yours is made o' mice banes."

This fraternity by and by disappeared, the manufacture of mutton pies having been commenced and successfully carried on for many years by a man of the name of Sutherland, whose cuisine (combining a refectory on a limited scale) was in the Upper-kirkgate, opposite the head of the Guestrow. Sud, as he was called, did a roaring trade, and his pies, excellently cooked and abounding in a luscious gravy, always "warm, reekin', rich," became celebrated throughout the town as an economical and toothsome dish for lunch or supper. I believe the manufacture of this commodity has been carried on and now flourishes in the same tenement, and the fame of Sud's pies has descended to his successors in the business.*

* Mutton pies compounded, cooked, and served with their appropriate "sappy" gravy, in the artistic style achieved by Sud and some of the adepts contemporary with him in the mysteries of pie-crust architecture in Aberdeen, were, in my

Most Aberdonians of my age will recollect an ancient-looking pawky fellow, who wore the old-fashioned Scottish blue bonnet, with its accompanying knee-breeks, and gained his living by the sale of firewood, from a wheel-barrow, which he trundled through the streets. His talk afforded a most

---

schoolboy days, a dainty ranking almost on a par with the succulent dish, of which the gentle Elia, in a certain famous "Dissertation," so eloquently descants; and, adapted, as they were, to all the "niceties of gustation," they deserved an encomium little less fervent than that which he pronounces when he says:—"Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it to be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum*."

Of one feast, in particular, on this dainty, I still treasure a grateful recollection, although my share of the banquet was only half of a pie, whose modest proportions brought a price no higher than a penny. A grammar school chum having communicated to me the pleasing fact of his possessing a bawbee, and it happening that I was at the same time the lucky owner of a coin of the same denomination, we agreed to put our cash into a common fund, and go on "joint-adventure" in spending this "fund in medio" on one or other of the edible delicacies within the reach of our exchequer. Some time was spent in deliberation, on this, to us, important subject, as we walked along the streets—every boyish dainty, including 'candy-glue," Jeannie Milne's rock, "gray pizz," "sweetie wigs," cheese-cakes, and other cates coming up in due succession for consideration. At length happening to approach the odour-laden region of a mutton-pie factory in George Street, our minds till then distracted how to choose, were at once made up. The Gordian Knot was cut, and, with a courage equal to the occasion, we entered the establishment, ordering a penny pie to be served on a plate, with a spoon for each of the two, and, seated at table, one on each side, we leisurely discussed our pie, having first "drawn a score" on its tempting top-crust, to ensure an equal share to each. The kindly matron in charge of this humble refectory was as attentive to her juvenile customers on the occasion, as if our order had been for a dozen of "tippenies." Of the other delicacies above referred to, I must speak with a grateful sense of the ever-recurring relish with which they were enjoyed, when the possession of a stray copper had enabled

fitting illustration of the broad hard Doric of the district, and he abounded in "chaff" as he disposed of his useful commodity. He made known his presence by calling out in sharp distinct tones, "Sticks, my bonnie lasses, wooden sticks, crackin' dry." On one occasion he was engaged in selling his sticks with his usual volubility, when the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Spence happened to pass. On seeing him, the old fellow exclaimed, "Sticks, *my beloved brethren*, sticks," employing an expression which this rev. gentleman occasionally used

---

its youthful owner to invest in any of them. They each deserve in a greater or less degree a tribute such as would entitle them to as warm a nook in the memory of those who in boyhood's lightsome days were wont to enjoy them, as Shenstone kept for the dainty forming the theme of his lines:—

> Ah! midst the rest, may flowers adorn his grave,
> Whose art did first those dulcet cates display!
> A motive fair to learning's imps he gave,
> Who cheerless o'er her darkling regions stray;
> Till reason's morn arise and light them on their way.

The fame of one kind of "candy-glue" especially, was established among several generations of Grammar School boys. It was sold in a "shoppie" in Mutton Brae, where a good-sized "bawbee's-worth" was given, and it was artistically flavoured with lemon. Jeannie Milne's rock, sold by her in her confectionary shop in Netherkirkgate, was *sui generis*. No other confectioner in town sold rock so much prized as hers, and in weighing it she placed the copper tendered in the scales for a weight, thus giving exact value for the money. "Gray pizz," especially when toasted over the fire, were highly relished, and, as a good-sized "cogie"-ful was obtainable for a bawbee, they were a favourite investment. Of the "sweetie-wig"—long, I am afraid, among the edibles that were—every Aberdonian who knew its virtues must speak with the genial recollection of having had it administered as a "piece"; and, when eaten with jelly, it was a tit-bit worthy of discussion by Apicius himself.

in his sermons. This will give some idea of "Sticks'" style of doing business. He was a great favourite among servant girls, whose good graces he gained by his jokes. He must have made a decent livelihood, as he was always clean and orderly in his appearance.

The last of the peripatetic dealers whom it occurs to me to notice is the well-known "Quill Charlie." This strange character was bred a quill-dresser, but, having proved an indifferent hand at this occupation, he devoted himself to the trade of hawking quills and steel pens, which he carried in a tattered carpet bag, going his rounds among lawyers' offices, merchants' counting-houses, &c., with great assiduity. Charlie, who, perhaps, still survives, was not formed by nature in the same mould as Adonis. A low forehead, bleared eyes, *sans* eyelashes, a club-like nose of portentous dimensions, and a mouth graced with lips of the exaggerated negro type, were the characteristics of Charlie's countenance. As he moved along the street, bag in hand, unwashed, unkempt, and unshaved, with battered hat and clothes thread-bare and dirty, his look and attitude suggested the idea of a hound after a beating. When Charlie wished to do business, he slunk noiselessly into the room, and watched his opportunity of displaying his wares, which, although slightly "tongue-tacked," he vaunted

> With that dull, rooted, callous impudence,
> Which, dead to shame, and ev'ry nicer sense,
> Ne'er blushed.

His principle was to declare every article in his stock an extraordinary bargain at the price he put upon it, and, if a doubt was expressed by any of his customers on this head, Charlie always clinched his asseverations by, "As fac' as death," and "As sure as God made me." It most commonly happened, however, that if he effected a sale, the price he obtained was not more than a half or a third of what he had at first asked. When he had once succeeded in securing a customer, Charlie stuck to him like a leech, and many a young fellow on his list had cause to rue the day when he first invested in Charlie's "Kwullths," as he called them, and steel pens, his demands often including, "Sic a thing as an auld coat, or a pair o' breeks." Charlie, though himself "cheated of feature by dissembling nature," rejoiced in a helpmate, who, albeit not a beauty, had a fair share of comeliness. Be this as it may, he became a benedict, feeling proud of the conquest he had made, for, on the morning of his marriage-day, as he was leaving work, he called to his fellow-workmen, with an air of great self-importance, "Noo, lads, tak yer last look o' a single man." From some cause or another Charlie's vocation failed him, and, when I last saw him, he was engaged in the humble occupation of a scavenger, in the employment of the Police Commissioners. His portrait was taken by a local artist, and he is delineated most truthfully in gait and features, the picture illustrating the converse of the proposition, that "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

A good many of my fellow-townsmen, whose recollections go as far back as mine, will remember the familiar figure of Sandie Campbell, a one-legged, ruddy-faced mariner, about the middle size, who, when not employed, as was often the case, was to be found lounging about Regent Quay, near Water Lane, with his hands in his pockets, waiting for any chance job that might turn up. Sandie was better known by the appellative "Stumpie" Campbell. He was bred a seaman, and, after following that line of life for some time, he met with an accident which made it necessary to amputate one of his legs, half-way below the knee. Poor Stumpie was thus unfitted for farther service afloat, and, for a living, he had to trust to the often precarious chances of procuring odd jobs about the shipping in port. The first time I can remember seeing him was in my boyhood, at the launch of one of the steamboats (of the class of the "Duke of Wellington," so long in the trade between Aberdeen and London), built by Ronald, whose vessels were rather famous in their day as good specimens of naval architecture. On this occasion Stumpie made himself very active in the ship-yard, both before and after the vessel had left the ways. He hopped about nimbly in his "dot-and-go-one" style, puffing and blowing, quite full of business, and with an air of great self-importance. I recollect one of the orders he gave in the yard—several times repeated—at the top of his voice, was "'Vast haulin' there, boys!" My remembrance of the scene, however, in which Stumpie was thus so prominent an actor, somehow carries along with it

the impression that he got snubbed for the over-zeal he displayed, either by the shipbuilder or some one in charge of the launch.

Campbell's appearance had an oddity about it which could not fail to strike an observer at the first glance. His "timber-toe" was fitted at the upper end with a bulky and ungainly-looking socket, containing a pad, on which his bent knee rested, the stump sticking out at right angles at some length behind. Thus shorn of a member, he realised the description of the hero in Hudibras, whose

> ——leg then broke
> Had got a deputy of oak,
> For when a shin in fight is cropt
> The knee with one of timber's propt,
> Esteem'd more honourable than the other,
> And takes place, though the younger brother.

In connection with poor Sandie's misfortune, I was told a little story by a medical friend, who for some years acted as house surgeon of the Aberdeen Infirmary, illustrative of Campbell's desire to make the best of his not very enviable lot. When his leg was first amputated, the operation had been imperfectly or unskilfully performed, in consequence of which the stump had not effectually healed, and he was troubled every now and then with racking pains in it. To effect the removal of these, he had at last to submit to another operation by which a new stump was formed, and he went into one of the surgical wards of the Infirmary for this purpose. Being naturally of a healthy constitution, he did well after the second amputation, and

when the pain and discomfort following upon it had nearly subsided, Stumpie began to notice the prescriptions, given in Latin, by the Hospital Surgeon, then in charge of the ward, as dictated to the student in attendance who wrote the prescription-book. A day came when the order was given "*Sumenda serevisia*," on which, at the proper time, Sandie was served with an allowance of porter *(serevisia)*, of which he was very fond. For a number of days in succession there followed the prescription for Sandie "*Repetatur serevisia*," the beverage in question being duly administered to him. At last, one day, when his cure was nearly completed, Stumpie noticed that the welcome prescription referred to had been omitted. Putting on a rueful look, he exclaimed, as the surgeon in charge was leaving the bedside, along with his class of students, "Hoot, doctor, ye've forgotten the "*rippitawtir shirryveeshee.*" The poor fellow certainly deserved another sip of the flowing can for this, whether he got it or not.

When I came to manhood, Stumpie contrived to scrape an acquaintance with me, as I met him frequently on the quay, when I was taking, *more Aberdonice*, a "constitutional" to and from the new pier, and, when he was out of luck, many a small coin did he contrive to extract from my not overplethoric purse by his appeals for "jist a saxpence, for faith I'm sair needin't." Before I left Aberdeen, Stumpie was turning into the "sere and yellow leaf," and I am not aware of the particulars of his subsequent career.

Like most other towns in Scotland, Aberdeen had its share of street musicians, those hapless sons of Orpheus, whose only property is the instrument out of which they strive to bring "the concord of sweet sounds," in order to earn a scanty pittance for their daily needs. The best known of this fraternity were the "blin' fiddlers," Johnnie Melvin, or Mellen, as he was called, Willie Milne, and Johnnie Hogarth. The first-named of these worthies lived in the Shiprow, near Union Church, in a house decorated with a sign-board, bearing a view of a ship-launch, with his name and avocation of "musician" appended. This representation was so well executed, that it may have been painted (who knows?) by the late accomplished Royal Academician, John Phillip, in the days when he worked as an apprentice house and sign painter, for some of his works in this lowly sphere of art still remain. Johnnie Mellen was a little man of comely and venerable appearance, always clean and tidy in his clothes, his "get-up" including a white neck-cloth. He was much noticed by seafaring people, and on festive occasions, such as that depicted on his sign-board, he was usually employed and well remunerated as the chief musician, one of his sons generally accompanying him as violoncellist. For many years he had free quarters during the summer season on one of the steamers trading between Aberdeen and Newhaven, and picked up a good deal of money by the exercise of his vocation on the passages. He did not often resort to the streets, but when he did he was generally well rewarded, as, although obliged to follow a humble

occupation for the support of himself and his family, he was much respected.

Willie Milne was dry and taciturn in his manner, and it was not often that he would unbend so far as to favour his audiences with the "Sow's tail to Geordie," which he executed with all its screeching variations extorted from the "back" of the fiddle brig, and the "Hen's March," to which he performed an accompaniment with his voice, in imitation of a clockin' hen. These feats of skill on Willie's part were highly appreciated by his hearers on the rare occasions when he could be got to exhibit them. Willie's familiar figure long haunted the streets of Aberdeen, and he contrived to earn enough by his fiddle to keep his sneeshin mull replenished, and meet his other simple wants.

Johnnie Hogarth was not remarkable for his skill as a player. Being an Englishman by birth, he never learned to execute with precision the reels, strathspeys, &c., which form the staple of the street musician's catalogue of tunes in Scottish towns. The principal peculiarity about him was a habit he had when fiddling of keeping his sightless eyeballs turned obliquely upwards, which made him look as if intently wrapped up in the contemplation of his strains. He used also, as he wielded his bow, to keep his jaws in constant motion—a practice which induced the urchins in the streets to bestow upon him the nick-name of "Chaw-Cheesie." I remember once witnessing in a fiddlemaker's workshop which he frequented, a contest between him and a youthful amateur in the performance of the well-known strathspey, "Lady Mary Ramsay," in

which Johnnie was beaten, his antagonist having succeeded in playing the tune with more rapidity and precision than he was capable of. This touched Johnnie's pride to the quick, and he left the workshop in a towering passion. On the opening of Miss Cruickshank's Blind Asylum, Johnnie was received as an inmate, and passed his days comfortably in spinning yarns for rope-making.

Among the category of "blin' fiddlers," although much better off than any of the three above mentioned, was the late John Ross, whose signboard in the Spital proclaimed him as "teacher of the fiddle and player." His blindness was caused by an attack of small-pox which he had in boyhood, and being thus deprived of one sense, he cultivated the others so effectually as almost to make up for the loss. He knew every corner of the old and new towns, and found his way without difficulty by the help of his stick, generally carrying his fiddle at his back inside his coat. He had an ingenious method of noting music, the contrivance he employed consisting of a board some two feet in length by six or eight inches in breadth, stuck full of wooden pins, variously notched, so as to represent the positions in the stave and the value of the different notes in the composition. From this he could dictate to an amanuensis with as much accuracy as if he had seen the notes. John was an ardent florist, and cultivated a small garden attached to his house with great success. Altogether this worthy man well deserved the respect with which the people of Aberdeen regarded him, and from those now surviving who knew him, I doubt not I shall have

a hearty concurrence in paying this passing tribute to his memory.*

* The mention of these humble votaries of the *ars divina* recalls the recollection of another musician, the late well known Geordie Donald, a mason by trade, whose skill as a player of strathspeys and reels was famous among the fiddling fraternity far beyond the bounds of Aberdeen. When Geordie was in his "potestatur," as I recollect him, he was without a rival in his line of performance. I was then myself a devotee, and spent a good deal of spare time in endeavouring, as I best could, to solve the intricacies of the problem stated in the couplet:—

Strange that such difference should be
'Twixt tweedledum and tweedledee!

To hear Geordie's solution of it, as the lively and inspiriting strains flowed from his bow, was a treat of no ordinary kind to an amateur, and his performance was the more admirable that, from hard work at his trade, his fingers had become enlarged and stiff. His precision and delicacy of touch were wonderful notwithstanding, and his style of playing so clear, accurate, and tasteful, has never, I believe, been excelled by any performer of Scottish dance-music. Geordie was in great requisition at the several musical instrument makers' workshops in the town, and on most occasions of a "raffle" for disposing of a fiddle—a method of "raising the wind" often resorted to, when trade was dull and funds low—he sat at the head of the table as "Magnus Apollo," illustrating, by his performances on the instrument thrown for, its powers and capacities—a good "fourth string" being with Geordie a great recommendation. At such gatherings the competitors, while the dice box went its rounds, generally regaled themselves by potations, more or less extensive, of the national beverage, and Geordie, who relished a dram, had many a "gill" and "half-mutchkin" heartily bestowed upon him for his music. I was once a competitor at an assemblage of this nature where he performed, being drawn thither chiefly to hear his delightful strains. He was then, however, less discursive than usual, for the only tunes he played during my stay in the room were "Farewell to Whisky," as the "stoup" before him waxed lower, and "Welcome whisky back again," as it was replenished.

Contemporary with Geordie there flourished another performer of Scottish music, the late Jamie Young, who led the

It remains to notice, without attempting to describe in detail, the public characters of the softer sex, who flourished in Aberdeen in my day. No Aberdonian, whose recollection extends back for thirty years, can fail to recall the quaint and peculiar figure of "Mary wi' the Hat," a douce and rather comely woman, whose little story accounting for her persisting in wearing as her head-

---

orchestra in the Aberdeen Theatre for a good many years. Though in handling the bow he was much above the ordinary run of professionals in provincial towns, his performances were not considered by *cognoscenti* as at all approaching the unique style of Geordie, to whom, in the rendering of some of the capricious and lightsome graces of the strathspey, they one and all declared that Jamie "cou'd na' haud the can'le." He was, however, a good composer of that kind of strain, and his "Brig o' Dee," played in the course of a gathering of strathspey and reel players at the celebration of Burns' centenary in Edinburgh, was the favourite tune, the performance of which, by the player selecting it, gained the prize in that style of melody. Jamie's avocation consisted partly in the supply of music to the citizens of Aberdeen on festive occasions, his *corps de musique* being made up mostly of veterans of the local militia band, among whom was one Davie Kitson or *Kitchen*, as he was called, a clarinet player, of whose taste in the matter of refreshment, when engaged in discoursing harmony on such occasions, I may here relate a little anecdote with which to wind up this notice. My informant was a member of the once famous Maryculter Club, in which he held office as minstrel, if I mistake not, and having in this capacity to arrange for the music to be discoursed at one of the club's joyous *symposia*, he made terms with Jamie Young for the course of instrumental performances during the evening, as well as in regard to the refreshments to be furnished to the musicians. The beverage fixed upon by the gentleman in question to be discussed by Jamie Young and his band was porter, which was readily accepted for the leader himself and his party, all except Kitson, who required whisky, as his "particular wanity,"—Jamie's explanation of this being that "Maister Kitchen, ye see, canna blaw upo' porter." The more esteemed liquor was duly furnished.

piece a man's hat, was that she had been jilted by a lover. Mary's quiet and abstracted manner as she moved about the Upperkirkgate, where she lived, personifying

> Melancholy, silent maid,
> With leaden eye, that loves the ground—

could not fail to strike an observer with the conviction that she had a history, which, if written, might have furnished materials for a humble romance of real life. As a boy, I was impressed with the air of pensive resignation always on her countenance, and though she was in the humblest rank of life, always invested her with a halo of interest such as would attach to a hapless maid whose experience of the tender passion had resulted in her having thus to upbraid her faithless lover :—

> Why did you promise love to me,
> And not that promise keep ?
> Why did you swear my eyes were bright,
> Yet leave those eyes to weep ?

Another character of the same order as Mary, was "Methodist Meg," of whom my recollection extends only to her coming once a week to my father's house to get dinner. This poor woman, though weak-minded, was truly pious, and grateful for any little attention shown to her. She was much annoyed by the juvenile population of the town, who used to torment her by tricks of various kinds, but she never resented this ill-usage, and used to pray most fervently for her tormentors. Her simple-minded piety secured her friends, and the poor woman was attended to in her declining years.

Of another cast altogether from these quiet and gentle characters, was the termagant Jean Carr—

A bold virago stout and tall,

to whom I have already alluded. She carried a big stick, which she used with great freedom and vigour. With it she

Laid about in fight more busily
Than the Amazonian Dame Penthesile.

Jean was a determined hater of the male sex, and of children of both sexes, and her name was sufficient when pronounced to restore quiet in the nursery, as I know from personal experience, being the *bete noir* employed on occasions when rebellion in that region had to be subdued.

Lowest in the scale comes "Dickie Daw," a poor creature, with a cast in the eye, and a marked impediment in her speech, who solicited alms, her only utterance being, "Gie's a bawbee, gie's a bawbee." She was led through the streets by her mother, "an auld rudas," who traded on the hapless imbecile's deficiencies. The spectacle of the two—the mother showing off the daughter mouthing and grinning, was anything but pleasant, and it was a relief to the people of Aberdeen when the two were at length laid hold of and consigned to a poor's house.

As I take leave of the little task which has afforded me pleasant occupation and lightened care during its execution, let me express the conviction that the vein I have attempted to explore in illustration of character in Aberdeen, during the period embraced

in my recollection, is by no means exhausted by the preceding imperfect sketches. I believe there are abundant materials throughout the last half century, beyond those retained in my individual memory, for the compilation of a goodly volume or two devoted to this or a kindred subject; and, haply, although among those who attempt to wield the pen, I cannot appropriately claim a place higher than in the ranks of that humble section of the fraternity

> Whose chief, whose only merit's to compile,

I am not without the hope that the "canny," shrewd, and withal kindly denizens of the place, where

> Busy folk, frae man to bairn,
> Wi' thocht and thrift to win and hoard,
> By horn, corn, woo', and yarn,
> Ply a' their skill in Bon-Accord—

may yet have their peculiar characteristics portrayed by a hand more apt than mine, and with a skill as effective in its sphere as was that in his chosen walk of literature, displayed by the noble poet, whose infancy and early youth were spent among the scenes, so familiar to every Aberdonian, fraught with the associations which he recalls in his stirring lines:—

> —— My heart flies to my head—
> As "Auld Lang Syne" brings Scotland one and all,
> Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills, and clear streams,
> The Dee, the Don, Balgownie's brig's *black wall*,
> All my boy feelings, all my gentler dreams—
> * * * * * *
> —— floating past me seems
> My childhood in this childishness of mine:
> I care not—'tis a glimpse of "Auld Lang Syne."

24

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE SECOND PARAGRAPH ON PAGE 70.

Since the foregoing pages passed through the press, the writer has been favored by a young friend, one of Dr. JAMES KIDD's great-grandsons, with the use of a volume of the reverend gentleman's Sermons, published in 1835, containing an interesting biography of the Doctor, with a copy of the FAREWELL ADDRESS, referred to in the paragraph in question, which is as follows :—

"ABERDEEN, *3rd October*, 1833.

"I feel myself advancing fast to the grave, and upon a back look of past life, I can say in truth that GOD hath been very merciful to me, and I now leave my testimony to His providential care of me, from my infancy hitherto. He has given my heart's desire to me in my standing in society, and I bless and praise Him for all, and am willing to lay down my Professorship and my Ministry, when He may please to call me to do so.

"I now bid adieu to the Universe, and to all things beneath the Sun. Farewell, ye Sun, Moon and Stars, which have guided my wanderings in this valley of tears,—to you I acknowledge much assistance in all my attainments.

"Farewell, thou Atmosphere, with thy clouds, and thy rains, and thy dews,—thy hail, and snow, and different breezes, which contributed so much to my life and comfort.

"Farewell, ye Earth and Sea, which have borne me from place to place, where Providence has ordered my lot,—and with your productions have supported my bodily wants so often and so long.

"Ye Summers and Winters, adieu!

"Farewell, my native Country, and every place where I have had my abode. Adieu, Aberdeen! May peace and prosperity for ever be in you,—to all your inhabitants I bid farewell.