Howe Walter Henry

Scotch Wit and Humor

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Preface

Scotch Wit and Humor is a fairly representative collection of the type of wit and humor which is at home north of the Tweed – and almost everywhere else – for are not Scotchmen to be found everywhere? To say that wit and humor is not a native of Scotch human nature is to share the responsibility for an inaccuracy the author of which must have been as unobservant as those who repeat it. It is quite true that the humor is not always or generally on the surface – what treasure is? – and it may be true, too, that the thrifty habits of our northern friends, combined with the earnestness produced by their religious history, have brought to the surface the seriousness – amounting sometimes almost to heaviness – which is their most apparent characteristic. But under the surface will be found a rich vein of generosity, and a fund of humor, which soon cure a stranger – if he has eyes to see and is capable of appreciation – of the common error of supposing that Scotchmen are either stingy or stupid.

True, there may be the absence of the brilliancy which characterizes much of the English wit and humor, and of the inexpressible quality which is contained in Hibernian fun; but for

point of neatness one may look far before discovering anything to surpass the shrewdness and playfulness to be found in the Scotch race. In fact, if Scotland had no wit and humor she would have been incapable of furnishing a man who employed such methods in construction as were introduced by the engineer of the Forth Bridge.

W. H. HOWE.

LIST OF KNOWN WORKS AND AUTHORITIES QUOTED

(Indicated in the Text by a Corresponding Number)

1 *Life and Labor*	(Smiles)
2	(Robert Burns)
3	(Pall Mall Gazette)
4	(Dr. Chas. Stewart)
5	(Norman Macleod)
6	(Dr. Begg)
7	(Dean Ramsay)
8 *National Fun*	(Maurice Davies)
9 *Anecdotes of the Clergy*	(Jacob Larwood)
10	(William Arnott)
11	(Moncure D. Conway)
12 *Rab and His Friends*	(Rev. John Brown)
13 *Memoir of R. Chambers*	(William Chambers)
14 *Memorials*	(Lord Cockburn)
15	(Dr. Guthrie)
16	(Anonymous)
17	(Daily News)
18 *Turkey in Europe*	(Colonel J. Baker)
19 *All the Year Round*	(Charles Dickens)
20 *Red Gauntlet*	(Sir Walter Scott)
21	(Chambers' Journal)
22	(Dr. Hanna)
23	(Sir W. Scott)
24	(James Hogg)

Scotch Wit and Humor

Scoring a Point

A young Englishman was at a party mostly composed of Scotchmen, and though he made several attempts to crack a joke, he failed to evoke a single smile from the countenances of his companions. He became angry, and exclaimed petulantly: "Why, it would take a gimlet to put a joke into the heads of you Scotchmen."

"Ay," replied one of them; "but the gimlet wud need tae be mair pointed than thae jokes."

A Cross-Examiner Answered

Mr. A. Scott writes from Paris: More than twenty years ago the Rev. Dr. Arnott, of Glasgow, delivered a lecture to the Young Men's Christian Association, Exeter Hall, upon "The earth framed and fitted as a habitation for man." When he came to the subject of "water" he told the audience that to give himself a rest he would tell them an anecdote. Briefly, it was this: John Clerk (afterwards Lord Eldon) was being examined before a Committee of the House of Lords. In using the word water, he pronounced it in his native Doric as "watter." The noble lord, the chairman, had the rudeness to interpose with the remark, "In England, Mr. Clerk, we spell water with one 't.'" Mr. Clerk was for a moment taken aback, but his native wit reasserted itself and he rejoined, "There may na be twa 't's' in watter, my lord, but there are twa 'n's' in manners." The droll way in which the doctor told the story put the audience into fits of laughter, renewed over and over again, so that the genial old lecturer obtained the rest he desired. [3]

One "Always Right," the Other "Never Wrong"

A worthy old Ayrshire farmer had the portraits of himself and his wife painted. When that of her husband, in an elegant frame, was hung over the fireplace, the gudewife remarked in a sly manner: "I think, gudeman, noo that ye've gotten your picture hung up there, we should just put in below't, for a motto, like, 'Aye richt!'"

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

"A Nest Egg Noo!"

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

One of them, looking more eagerly into the face of the favored handmaid than the rest, and then at her mistress, could not help involuntarily exclaiming, "Hech, mistress, ye've gotten a nest egg noo!"

Light Through a Crack

Some years ago the celebrated Edward Irving had been lecturing at Dumfries, and a man who passed as a wag in that locality had been to hear him.

He met Watty Dunlop the following day, who said, "Weel, Willie, man, an' what do ye think of Mr. Irving?"

"Oh," said Willie, contemptuously, "the man's crack't."

Dunlop patted him on the shoulder, with a quiet remark, "Willie, ye'Il aften see a light peeping through a crack!" [7]

A Lesson to the Marquis of Lorne

The youthful Maccallum More, who is now allied to the Royal Family of Great Britain, was some years ago driving four-in-hand in a rather narrow pass on his father's estate. He was accompanied by one or two friends – jolly young sprigs of nobility – who appeared, under the influence of a very warm day and in the prospect of a good dinner, to be wonderfully hilarious.

In this mood the party came upon a cart laden with turnips, alongside which the farmer, or his man, trudged with the most perfect self-complacency, and who, despite frequent calls, would not make the slightest effort to enable the approaching equipage to pass, which it could not possibly do until the cart had been drawn close up to the near side of the road. With a pardonable assumption of authority, the marquis interrogated the carter: "Do you know who I am, sir?" The man readily admitted his ignorance.

"Well," replied the young patrician, preparing himself for an effective *dénouement*, "I'm the Duke of Argyll's eldest son!"

"Deed," quoth the imperturbable man of turnips, "an' I dinna care gin ye were the deevil's son; keep ye're ain side o' the road, an' I'll keep mine."

It is creditable to the good sense of the marquis, so far from seeking to resist this impertinent rejoinder, he turned to one of his friends, and remarked that the carter was evidently "a very

clever fellow."

Lessons in Theology

The answer of an old woman under examination by the minister, to the question from the Shorter Catechism, "What are the *decrees* of God?" could not have been surpassed by the General Assembly of the Kirk, or even the Synod of Dart, "Indeed, sir, He kens that best Himsell."

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An answer analogous to the above, though not so pungent, was given by a catechumen of the late Dr. Johnston of Leith. She answered his own question, patting him on the shoulder: "Deed, just tell it yersell, bonny doctor (he was a very handsome man); naebody can tell it better."

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A contributor (A. Halliday) to *All the Year Round*, in 1865, writes as follows:

When I go north of Aberdeen, I prefer to travel by third class. Your first-class Scotchman is a very solemn person, very reserved, very much occupied in maintaining his dignity, and while saying little, appearing to claim to think the more. The

people whom you meet in the third-class carriages, on the other hand, are extremely free. There is no reserve about them whatever; they begin to talk the moment they enter the carriage, about the crops, the latest news, anything that may occur to them. And they are full of humor and jocularity.

My fellow-passengers on one journey were small farmers, artisans, clerks, and fishermen. They discussed everything, politics, literature, religion, agriculture, and even scientific matters in a light and airy spirit of banter and fun. An old fellow, whose hands claimed long acquaintance with the plow, gave a whimsical description of the parting of the Atlantic telegraph cable, which set the whole carriage in a roar.

"Have you ony shares in it, Sandy?" said one.

"Na, na," said Sandy. "I've left off speculation since my wife took to wearing crinolines; I canna afford it noo."

"Fat d'ye think of the rinderpest, Sandy?"

"Weel, I'm thinking that if my coo tak's it, Tibbie an' me winna ha' muckle milk to our tay."

The knotty question of predestination came up and could not be settled. When the train stopped at the next station, Sandy said: "Bide a wee, there's a doctor o' deveenity in one o' the first-class carriages. I'll gang and ask him fat he thinks aboot it." And out Sandy got to consult the doctor. We could hear him parleying with the eminent divine over the carriage door, and presently he came running back, just as the train was starting, and was bundled in, neck and crop, by the guard.

"Weel, Sandy," said his oppugner on the predestination question, "did the doctor o' deveenity gie you his opinion?"

"Ay, did he."

"An' fat did he say aboot it?"

"Weel, he just said he dinna ken an' he dinna care."

The notion of a D.D. neither kenning nor caring about the highly important doctrine of predestination, so tickled the fancy of the company that they went into fits of laughter. [38]

Double Meanings

A well-known idiot, named Jamie Frazer, belonging to the parish of Lunan, in Forfarshire, quite surprised people sometimes by his replies. The congregation of his parish had for some time distressed the minister by their habit of sleeping in church. He had often endeavored to impress them with a sense of the impropriety of such conduct, and one day when Jamie was sitting in the front gallery wide awake, when many were slumbering round him, the clergyman endeavored to awaken the attention of his hearers by stating the fact, saying: "You see even Jamie Frazer, the idiot, does not fall asleep as so many of you are doing." Jamie not liking, perhaps, to be designated, coolly replied, "An' I hadna been an idiot I wad ha' been sleepin', too." [7]

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Another imbecile of Peebles had been sitting in church for some time listening to a vigorous declamation from the pulpit against deceit and falsehood. He was observed to turn red and grow uneasy, until at last, as if wincing under the supposed attack upon himself personally, he roared out: "Indeed, meenister, there's mair leears in Peebles than me." [7]

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A minister, who had been all day visiting, called on an old dame, well known for her kindness of heart and hospitality, and begged the favor of a cup of tea. This was heartily accorded, and the old woman bustled about, getting out the best china and whatever rural delicacies were at hand to honor her unexpected guest. As the minister sat watching these preparations, his eye fell on four or five cats devouring cold porridge under the table.

"Dear me! what a number of cats," he observed. "Do they all belong to you, Mrs. Black?"

"No, sir," replied his hostess innocently; "but as I often say, a' the hungry brutes i' the country side come to me seekin' a meal o' meat."

The minister was rather at a loss for a reply.

Scotch "Fashion"

The following story, told in the "Scotch Reminiscences" of Dean Ramsay, is not without its point at the present day: "On a certain occasion a new pair of inexpressibles had been made for the laird; they were so tight that, after waxing hot and red in the attempt to try them on, he *let out* rather savagely at the tailor, who calmly assured him, 'It's the fashion – it's the fashion.'

"'Eh, ye haveril, is it the fashion for them *no' to go on*?'" [7]

Wattie Dunlop's Sympathy for Orphans

Many anecdotes of pithy and facetious replies are recorded of a minister of the South, usually distinguished as "Our Wattie Dunlop." On one occasion two irreverent young fellows determined, as they said, to "taigle" (confound) the minister. Coming up to him in the High Street of Dumfries, they accosted him with much solemnity: "Maister Dunlop, hae ye heard the news?" "What news?" "Oh, the deil's dead." "Is he?" said Mr. Dunlop, "then I maun pray for twa faitherless bairns." [7]

Highland Happiness

Sir Walter Scott, in one of his novels, gives expression to the height of a Highlander's happiness: Twenty-four bagpipes assembled together in a small room, all playing at the same time different tunes. [23]

Plain Scotch

Mr. John Clerk (afterwards Lord Eldon), in pleading before the House of Lords one day, happened to say in his broadest Scotch accent: "In plain English, ma lords."

Upon which a noble lord jocosely remarked: "In plain Scotch, you mean, Mr. Clerk."

The prompt advocate instantly rejoined: "Nae matter! in plain common sense, ma lords, and that's the same in a' languages, ye'll ken."

Caring for Their Minister

A minister was called in to see a man who was very ill. After finishing his visit, as he was leaving the house, he said to the man's wife: "My good woman, do you not go to any church at all?"

"Oh yes, sir; we gang to the Barony Kirk."

"Then why in the world did you send for me? Why didn't you send for Dr. Macleod?"

"Na, na, sir, 'deed no; we wadna risk him. Do ye no ken it's a dangerous case of typhus?"

Three Sisters All One Age

A Highland census taker contributed the following story to *Chambers'*: I had a bad job with the Miss M'Farlanes. They are three maiden ladies – sisters. It seems the one would not trust the other to see the census paper filled up; so they agreed to bring it to me to fill in.

"Would you kindly fill in this census paper for us?" said Miss M'Farlane. "My sisters will look over and give you their particulars by and by."

Now, Miss M'Farlane is a very nice lady; though Mrs. Cameron tells me she has been calling very often at the manse since the minister lost his wife. Be that as it may, I said to her that I would be happy to fill up the paper; and asked her in the meantime to give me her own particulars. When it came to the age column, she played with her boot on the carpet, and drew the black ribbons of her silk bag through her fingers, and whispered: "You can say four-and-thirty, Mr. M'Lauchlin." "All right, ma'am," says I; for I knew she was four-and-thirty at any rate. Then Miss Susan came over – that's the second sister – really a handsome young creature, with fine ringlets and curls, though she is a little tender-eyed, and wears spectacles.

Well, when we came to the age column, Miss Susan played with one of her ringlets, and looked in my face sweetly, and said: "Mr. M'Lauchlin, what did Miss M'Farlane say? My sister,

you know, is considerably older than I am – there was a brother between us."

"Quite so, my dear Miss Susan," said I; "but you see the bargain was that each was to state her own age."

"Well," said Miss Susan, still playing with her ringlets, "you can say – age, thirty-four years, Mr. M'Lauchlin."

In a little while the youngest sister came in.

"Miss M'Farlane," said she, "sent me over for the census paper."

"O, no, my dear," says I; "I cannot part with the paper."

"Well, then," said she, "just enter my name, too, Mr. M'Lauchlin."

"Quite so. But tell me, Miss Robina, why did Miss M'Farlane not fill up the paper herself?" – for Miss Robina and I were always on very confidential terms.

"Oh," she replied, "there was a dispute over *particulars*; and Miss M'Farlane would not let my other sister see how old she had said she was; and Miss Susan refused to state her age to Miss M'Farlane; and so, to end the quarrel, we agreed to ask you to be so kind as to fill in the paper."

"Yes, yes, Miss Robina," said I; "that's quite satisfactory; and so, I'll fill in your name now, if you please."

"Yes," she uttered, with a sigh. When we came to the age column – "Is it absolutely necessary," said she, "to fill in the age? Don't you think it is a most impertinent question to ask, Mr. M'Lauchlin?"

"Tuts, it may be so to some folk; but to a sweet young creature like you, it cannot matter a button." "Well," said Miss Robina – "but now, Mr. M'Lauchlin, I'm to tell you a great secret"; and she blushed as she slowly continued: "The minister comes sometimes to see us."

"I *have* noticed him rather more attentive in his visitations in your quarter of late, than usual, Miss Robina."

"Very well, Mr. M'Lauchlin; but you must not tease me just now. You know Miss M'Farlane is of opinion that he is in love with her; while Miss Susan thinks her taste for literature and her knowledge of geology, especially her pamphlet on the Old Red Sandstone and its fossils as confirming the old Mosaic record, are all matters of great interest to Mr. Frazer, and she fancies that he comes so frequently for the privilege of conversing with her. But," exclaimed Miss Robina, with a look of triumph, "look at that!" and she held in her hand a beautiful gold ring. "I have got that from the minister this very day!"

I congratulated her. She had been a favorite pupil of mine, and I was rather pleased with what happened. "But what," I asked her, "has all this to do with the census?"

"Oh, just this," continued Miss Robina, "I had no reason to conceal my age, as Mr. Frazer knows it exactly, since he baptized me. He was a young creature then, only three-and-twenty; so that's just the difference between us."

"Nothing at all, Miss Robina," said I; "nothing at all; not worth mentioning."

"In this changeful and passing world," said Miss Robina, "three-and-twenty years are not much after all, Mr. M'Lauchlin!"

"Much!" said I. "Tuts, my dear, it's nothing – just, indeed, what should be."

"I was just thirty-four last birthday, Mr. M'Lauchlin," said Miss Robina; "and the minister said the last time he called that no young lady should take the cares and responsibilities of a household upon herself till she was – well, eight-and-twenty; and he added that thirty-four was late enough."

"The minister, my dear, is a man of sense."

So thus were the Miss M'Farlanes' census schedules filled up; and if ever some one in search of the curiosities of the census should come across it, he may think it strange enough, for he will find that the three sisters M'Farlane are all ae year's bairns!

Distributing His Praises with Discernment

Will Stout was a bachelor and parish beadle, residing with his old mother who lived to the age of nearly a hundred years. In mature life he was urged by some friends to take a wife. He was very cautious, however, in regard to matrimony, and declined the advice, excusing himself on the ground "that there are many things you can say to your mither you couldna say to a fremit (strange) woman."

While beadle, he had seen four or five different ministers in the parish, and had buried two or three of them. And although his feelings became somewhat blunted regarding the sacredness of graves in general, yet he took a somewhat tender care of the spot where the ministers lay. After his extended experience, he was asked to give his deliberate judgment as to which of them he had liked best. His answer was guarded; he said he did not know, as they were all good men. But being further pressed and asked if he had no preference, after a little thought he again admitted that they were all "guid men, guid men; but Mr. Mathieson's claes fitted me best."

One of the new incumbents, knowing Will's interest in the clothes, thought that at an early stage he would gain his favor by presenting him with a coat. To make him conscious of the kindly service he was doing, the minister informed him that

it was almost new. Will took the garment, examined it with a critical eye, and having thoroughly satisfied himself, pronounced it "a guid coat," but pawkily added: "When Mr. Watt, the old minister, gied me a coat, he gied me breeks as weel."

The new minister, who was fortunately gifted with a sense of humor, could not do less than complete Will's rig-out from top to toe, and so established himself as a permanent favorite with the beadle.

Mallet, Plane and Sermon – All Wooden

In olden times, the serviceable beadle was armed with a small wooden "nob" or mallet, with which he was quietly commissioned to "tap" gently but firmly the heads of careless sleepers in church during the sermon. An instance to hand is very amusing.

In the old town of Kilbarchan, which is celebrated in Scottish poetry as the birthplace of Habbie Simpson, the piper and verse maker of the clachan, once lived and preached a reverend original, whose pulpit ministrations were of the old-fashioned, hodden-gray type, being humdrum and innocent of all spirit-rousing eloquence and force. Like many of his clerical brethren, he was greatly annoyed every Sunday at the sight of several of his parishioners sleeping throughout the sermon. He was especially angry with Johnny Plane, the village joiner, who dropped off to sleep every Sunday afternoon simultaneously with the formal delivery of the text. Johnny had been "touched" by the old beadle's mallet on several occasions, but only in a gentle though persuasive manner. At last, one day the minister, provoked beyond endurance at the sight of the joiner soundly sleeping, lost his temper.

"Johnny Plane!" cried the reverend gentleman, stopping his discourse and eyeing the culprit severely, "are ye really sleeping already, and me no' half through the first head?"

The joiner, easy man, was quite oblivious to things celestial and mundane, and noticed not the rebuke.

"Andra," resumed the minister, addressing the beadle, and relapsing into informal Doric, "gang round to the wast loft (west gallery) and rap up Johnny Plane. Gie the lazy loon a guid stiff rap on the heid – he deserves 't."

Round and up to the "wast loft" the old-fashioned beadle goes, and reaching the somnolent parishioner, he rather smartly "raps" him on his bald head. Instantly, there was on the part of Johnny a sudden start-up, and between him and the worthy beadle a hot, underbreath bandying of words.

Silence restored, the reverend gentleman proceeded with his sermon as if nothing unusual had occurred. After sermon, Andra met the minister in the vestry, who at once made inquiry as to the "words" he had had with Johnny in the gallery. But the beadle was reticent and uncommunicative on the matter, and would not be questioned at the reception the joiner had given his salutary summons.

"Well, Andra," at length said the reverend gentleman, "I'll tell ye what, we must not be beaten in this matter; if the loon sleeps next Sunday during sermon, just you gang up and rap him back to reason. It's a knock wi' some *force* in't the chiel wants, mind that, and spare not."

"Deed no, sir" was the beadle's canny reply. "I'll no' disturb him, sleepin' or waukin', for some time to come. He threatens to knock pew-Bibles and hymn-books oot o' me, if I again daur to

'rap' him atween this and Martinmas. If Johnny's to be kept frae sleepin', minister, ye maun *just pit the force into yer sermon*."

Using Their Senses

The following story is told by one of the officers engaged in taking a census: One afternoon, I called up at Whinny Knowes, to get their schedule; and Mrs. Cameron invited me to stay to tea, telling me what a day they had had at "Whins" with the census paper.

"'First of all,' said she, 'the master there' – pointing to her husband – 'said seriously that every one must tell their ages, whether they were married or not, and whether they intended to be married, and the age and occupation of their sweethearts – in fact, that every particular was to be mentioned. Now, Mr. M'Lauchlin, our two servant lasses are real nice girls; but save me! what a fluster this census paper has put them in. Janet has been ten years with us, and is a most superior woman, with good sense; but at this time she is the most distressed of the two. After family worship last night, she said she would like a word o' the master himsel'.'

"'All right,' says John, with a slight twinkle in his eye.

"'When they were by themselves, Janet stood with her Bible in her hand, and her eyes fixed on the point of her shoe. 'Sir,' said she, 'I was three-an'-thirty last birthday, though my neighbor Mary thinks I'm only eight-an'-twenty. And as for Alexander' – this was the miller, Janet's reputed sweetheart – 'he's never asked my age exactly; and so, if it's all the same, I would like you just

to keep your thumb upon that. And then, as to whether he's to marry me or not, that depends on whether the factor gives him another lease of the mill. He says he'll take me at Martinmas coming if he gets the lease; but at the farthest, next Martinmas, whether or no.'

"'Janet,' said my husband, 'you have stated the matter fairly; there is nothing more required.'

"And John, there," continued Mrs. Cameron, "has made good use of Janet's census return. This very forenoon Lady Menzies called to see us, as she often does. Said John to her ladyship, says he: 'He's a very good fellow, Alexander Christie, the miller – a superior man. I'm sorry we are like to lose him for a neighbor.'

"'I never heard of that,' said her ladyship. 'He is a steady, honest man, and a good miller, I believe. I should be sorry to lose him on the estate. What is the cause of this?'

"'Oh,' replied my husband, 'it seems the factor is not very willing to have a new lease of the mill without one being built. Your ladyship,' added John, 'can see what Alexander is after.'

"'Oh, yes, I understand,' said she, laughing. 'I will try and keep the miller'; and off she set without another word. Down the burnside she goes, and meets Alexander, with a bag of corn on his back, at the mill-door. When he had set it down, and was wiping the perspiration off his brow with the back of his hand, Lady Menzies said: 'You are busy to-day, miller.'

"'Yes, my lady,' said he; 'this is a busy time.'

"'I wonder,' said her ladyship, coming to the point at once,

'that a fine young fellow like you does not settle down now and take a wife, and let me have the pleasure of seeing you as a tenant always with us.'

"'You wouldn't, my lady,' said the miller, 'have me bring a bird before I had a cage to put it in. The factor grudges to build me a house; therefore, I fear I must remove.'

"'Well, Christie,' said her ladyship with great glee, 'you'll look out for the bird, and leave it to me to find the cage.'

"'It's a bargain, my lady,' said Alexander. 'My father and my grandfather were millers here for many a long year before me; and to tell the truth, I was reluctant to leave the old place.'

"In the course of the forenoon, the miller made an errand up the burn to the 'Whins,' for some empty bags; and as we had already got an inkling of what had passed between him and Lady Menzies, I sent Janet to the barn to help him look them out. When Janet returned, I saw she was a little flurried, and looked as if there was something she wished to say. In a little while – 'Ma'am,' says she to me, 'I'm no' to stop after Martinmas.'

"'No, Janet?' says I. 'I'm sorry to hear that. I'm sure I've no fault to find with you, and you have been a long time with us.'

"'I'm not going far away,' said Janet, with some pride; 'the bairns will aye get a handful of groats when they come to see us!'

"So you see, Mr. M'Lauchlin, what a change this census paper of yours has brought about."

"Ay, ay, good wife," said Whinny Knowes, laughing; "Although you have lost a good servant, you must admit that I've

managed to keep the miller."

Qualifications for a Chief

When Glengarry claimed the chieftainship of the Macdonald clan, the generally acknowledged chief wrote to him as follows: "My dear Glengarry: As soon as you can prove yourself my chief I shall be ready to acknowledge you. In the meantime, I am, *Yours*, Macdonald."

A Beadle Magnifying His Office

The story of Watty Tinlin, the half-crazy beadle of Hawick parish, illustrates the license which was, on certain occasions, supposed to be due to his office. One day Wat got so tired of listening to the long sermon of a strange minister, that he went outside the church, and wandering in the direction of the river Teviot, saw the worshipers from the adjoining parish of Wilton crossing the bridge on their way home.

Returning to the church and finding the preacher still thundering away, he shouted out, to the astonishment and relief of the exhausted congregation: "Say, amen, sir; say amen! Wulton's kirk's comin ower Teviot Brig!"

No Wonder!

The Lord Provost of a certain well-known city in the north had a daughter married to a gentleman of the name of Baird; and speaking of names of several friends, he happened to remark: "My grandmother was a Huisband, and my mother a Man," these having been the maiden names of the ladies.

"Why, in that case," said the celebrated Dr. Gregory, who happened to be present, "we may the less wonder at your daughter having got a Baird."

Virtuous Necessity

Robbie Fairgrieve was sexton as well as kirk-beadle in a Roxburghshire parish, and despite the solemn duties attaching to his vocation, was on the whole a genial man, about equally fond of a joke and a good dram. In fact, Robbie was affected with a chronic "spark in his throat" which was ill to quench, and was, indeed, never fairly extinguished during the fifty years he officiated as kirk-beadle and sexton. One day, the minister of the parish met Robbie coming home from a visit to Jedburgh fair much sooner than was expected, he (Robbie) having found the fair painfully *dry*, in the sense of an unprecedented absence of friendly drams. Curious to know the cause of the beadle's quick return, the minister inquired as to the reason of such correct conduct, since most of his fellow-parishioners would likely stay out the fair.

"Oh, sir," said Robbie, "huz yins (us ones) wha are 'sponsible kirk-officers" (alluding to the minister and himself), "should aye strive to be guid ensamples to the riff-raff o' the flock."

Strangers – "Unawares" – Not always Angels

Dr. Ferguson's first residence in Peebleshire was at Neidpath Castle, which was then just about to fall into its present half-ruinous state. On settling there, he told his family that it was his desire that any respectable people in the neighborhood who called should be received with the utmost civility, so that they might remain on pleasant terms with all around. Ere many days had elapsed, a neatly-dressed, gentleman-like little man was shown into Dr. Ferguson's own room, and entered easily into miscellaneous conversation. The bell for their early family-dinner ringing at the time, the courteous professor invited his visitor to join the family in the dining-room, which he readily consented to do. The family, remembering their father's injunction, of course received the unknown with all possible distinction, and a very lively conversation ensued. Dr. Ferguson, however, expressed his concern to see that his guest was eating very little – indeed, only making an appearance of eating – and he confessed his regret that he had so little variety of fare to offer him.

"Oh, doctor," said the stranger, "never mind me: the fact is, on *killing days* I scarcely ever have any appetite."

Not small was the surprise, but much greater the amusement of the family, on discovering that he of the stingy appetite was

Robert Smith, the Peebles butcher, and that the object of his visit was merely to bespeak Dr. Ferguson's custom!

"Reflections"

A young preacher was holding forth to a country congregation, with rather more show than substance; after discussing certain heads in his way, he informed his audience that he would conclude with a few reflections.

An old man, who seemed not greatly gratified, gave a significant shrug of his shoulders, and said in a low tone of voice, "Ye needna fash. There'll be plenty o' reflections I'se warn ye, though ye dinna mak' ony yersel'."

An Observant Husband

Willie Turnbull and his wife used to sup their evening meal of brose out of one "cog," but the gudewife generally took care to place the lump of butter at one side of the dish, which she carefully turned to her own side of the table. One night, however, Mrs. Turnbull inadvertently turned the "fat side" from her, and did not discover her error till she was about to dip in her spoon. She could not, without exposing her selfishness, actually turn the bowl round before her husband, but the butter she must have, and in order to obtain it she resorted to artifice.

"Willie," said she, as if seized with a sudden inspiration, "isn't this a queer world? I'm tell't that it just turns round and round about, as I micht take this bowl and turn it round this way," and she prepared to suit the action to the word.

Willie, however, saw this at a glance, and promptly stopped the practical illustration, saying, "Ay, ay, Maggie, the world's queer enough, but you just let it stand still e'enow, and the brose bowl, too!"

"Bulls" in Scotland

Two operatives in one of the Border towns were heard disputing about a new cemetery, beside the elegant railing of which they were standing. One of them, evidently disliking the continental fashion in which it was being laid out, said in disgust, "I'd rather dee than be buried in sic a place!"

"Weel, it's the verra reverse wi' me," said the other, "for I'll be buried naewhere else if I'm spared."

"Brothers" in Law

A countryman, going into the Court of Session, took notice of two advocates at the bar, who, being engaged on opposite sides of the case in hand, wrangled with and contradicted each other severely, each frequently, however, styling his opponent "brother." The countryman observed to a bystander that there did not seem to be much brotherly love between them.

"Oh," said he, "they're only brothers *in law*."

"I suppose they'll be married on twa sisters, then," replied he; "and I think it's just the auld story ower again – freen's 'gree best separate."

A Family Likeness

Some soldiers, quartered in a country village, when they met at the roll-call were asking one another what kind of quarters they had got; one of them said he had very good quarters, but the strangest landlady ever he saw – she always took him off. A comrade said he would go along with him and would take her off. He went and offered to shake hands with her, saying, "How are you, Elspa?"

"Indeed, sir," said she, "ye hae the better o' me; I dinna ken ye."

"Dear me, Elspa," replied the soldier, "d'ye no ken me? I'm the devil's sister's son."

"Dear, save us!" quoth the old wife, looking him broadly in the face; "'od man, but ye're like your uncle!"

"Unco' Modest"

A Scottish witness in the House of Lords once gave in a rather dictatorial style his notions as to the failings in the character of Irishmen and Englishmen.

He was allowed to say his say, and when out of breath Lord Lucan asked him to oblige the committee with his ideas relative to Scotch character.

"Aweel, my laird, they're just on the contrary, unco' modest and" – the rest of the sentence was drowned in uproarious merriment.

Objecting to "Regeneration"

"What is the meaning of 'regeneration,' Tommy?" asked a teacher in the north, of one of the most promising pupils.

"It means 'to be born again,' sir," was the answer.

"Quite right, quite right, my man. Would you like to be born again, Tommy?" said the examiner.

"No, sir, I wadna;" replied the heretical youth, boldly.

"Indeed, laddie, and wha for no'?" inquired the astounded preceptor.

"Because, sir," answered Tommy, "I'm fear'd I might be born a lassie."

Reasons For and Against Organs in Kirk

At a certain gathering of Presbyterian clergymen one of them urged that organs should be introduced in order to draw more young people to the church; upon which an old minister remarked that this was acting on the principle of "O whistle, an' I'll come to ye, my lad!"

Too Much Light and Too Little

A parish minister in Stirlingshire, noted for his parsimonious habits, had his glebe land wholly cropped with corn upon one occasion. After the ingatherings of harvest, news reached him that a considerable fall in prices was expected, and he ordered his serviceable "man," John, to get the corn threshed and taken to market with all possible speed. Now the beadle, having a well-founded hatred for his master's greed, set about his work in his ordinary style – a slow, if sure, process. John's style, however, did not on this occasion please the minister, who ordered him to get through with the task, even though he should get it done by candle-light.

"Weel, weel," said the beadle; "say nae mair aboot it; it'll be done, sir, e'en as ye desire."

Next day the minister, hearing the sound of the flail, entered the barn to see what progress was being made with the work, when, to his astonishment and anger, he found his beadle "flailing" away with might and main, and a candle burning brightly on each side of the threshing-floor.

"What's this I see? What's the meaning of this?" demanded his master. "Candles burning in broad daylight!"

"Oh, contain yersel', sir – contain yersel'," replied John with provoking coolness. "I'm daein' nae mair than ye bade me, for I'm daein' the job baith by day-licht and by can'le-licht."

The beadle, after being severely lectured on his extravagant conduct, was ordered to take the candles to the kitchen, and henceforth and at all times he was to be deprived of their use.

One night shortly after, a message came to the minister that one of his parishioners, who lived at a distance, was supposed to be dying, and was anxious to see him. John was dispatched to saddle the horse; and his master set about equipping himself for the journey. He then stepped across to where John was waiting with the animal, and seizing the reins, was about to mount, when suddenly, seeing a pair of horns on the crest of the steed, he shouted: "What in all the earth is this you have done, John?"

The beadle, comically peering in the darkness at the creature, exclaimed: "I declare, sir, if I hav'na saddled the coo instead o' the horse, for the want o' can'le-licht!"

A Reproof Cleverly Diverted

The punctuality which reigned over the domestic regulations of Dr. Chalmers was sometimes not a little inconvenient to his guests.

His aunt, while living in the house, appearing one morning too late for breakfast, and well knowing what awaited her if she did not "take the first word o' flyting," thus diverted the expected storm.

"Oh! Mr. Chalmers," she exclaimed, as she entered the room, "I had such a strange dream last night; I dreamt that you were dead. And I dreamt," she continued, "that the funeral cards were written; and the day came, and the folk came, and the hour came; but what do you think happened? Why, the clock had scarce done chapping twelve, which was the hour named in the cards, when a loud knocking was heard in the coffin, and a voice, gey peremptory and ill-pleased like, came out of it, saying, 'Twelve's chappit, and ye're no liftin'!'"

The doctor was too fond of a joke not to relish this one; and, in the hearty laugh which followed, the ingenious culprit escaped. [22]

A Scotch "Squire"

"What name, sir?" said a booking clerk at a coach office in Paisley, to a person who was applying for a seat in the Glasgow coach.

"What hae ye to dae wi' my name, gin I gie ye the siller?" replied the applicant.

"I require it for the way-bill; and unless you give it, you can't have a place in the coach," said the clerk.

"Oh! gin that be the case, I suppose ye maun hae't. Weel, then, my name's John Tamson o' Butter Braes, an' ye may put 'Esquire' till't, gin ye like; at least, I live on my ain farm."

Peter Peebles' Prejudice

"Ow, he is just a weed harum-scarum creature, that wad never take his studies; daft, sir, clean daft."

"Deft!" said the justice; "what d'ye mean by deft – eh?"

"Just Fifish," replied Peter; "wowf – a wee bit by the East – Nook, or sae; it's common case – the ae half of the warld thinks the tither daft. I have met folk in my day that thought I was daft mysell; and, for my part, I think our Court of Session clean daft, that have had the great cause of Peebles against Plainstanes before them for this score of years, and have never been able to ding the bottom of it yet." [20]

English versus Scotch Sheep's Heads

A Scottish family, having removed to London, wished to have a sheep's head prepared as they had been accustomed to have it at home, and sent the servant to procure one.

"My gude man," said the girl, "I want a sheep's head."

"There's plenty of them," replied the knight of the knife, "choose one for yourself."

"Na, na," said she, "I want ane that will sing (singe)."

"Go, you stupid girl," said he, "whoever heard of a sheep's head that could sing?"

"Why," said the girl in wrath, "it's ye that's stupid; for a' the sheep's heads in Scotland can sing; but I jalouse your English sheep are just as grit fules as their owners, and can do naething as they ocht."

Seeking, not Help, but Information – and Getting It

The landlord of the hotel at the foot of Ben Nevis tells a story of an Englishman stumbling into a bog between the mountain and the inn, and sinking up to his armpits. In danger of his life he called out to a tall Highlander who was passing by, "How can I get out of this?" to which the Scotchman replied, "I dinna think ye can," and coolly walked on.

Compulsory Education and a Father's Remedy

One of the members of a Scottish School Board was recently discussing the question of compulsory education with a worthy elector, who addressed him as follows: "An' that's gospel, is't, that ye're gaun to eddicatt my bairns whuther I will or no?"

The member proceeded to explain.

"Weel, I'll just tell ye. Ye say they're to be eddicatt; I say they're no' an' they sanna. I'll droon them first!"

"No Lord's Day!"

In a certain district in the Highlands, the bell-man one day made the following proclamation: "O yes, O yes, and O yes; and that's three times! You'll all pe tak' notice, that there will pe no Lord's day here next Sabbath, pecause the laird's wife wants the kirk to dry her clothes in!"

Dead Shot

An ironmonger who kept a shop in the High Street of Edinburgh, and sold gunpowder and shot, when asked by any ignorant person in what respect "patent" shot – a new article at that time – surpassed the old kind, "Oh, sir," he would answer, "it shoots deader."

Quid Pro Quo

An old Scottish beggar, with bonnet in hand, appealed to a clergyman for "a bit of charity." The minister put a piece of silver into his hand.

"Thank ye, sir; oh, thank ye! I'll gie ye an afternoon's hearing for this ane o' these days."

The Scottish Credit System

An intimation hung in a warehouse in Glasgow was to this effect: "No credit given here, except to those who pay money down."

Scotch "Paddy"

"Noo, my gude bairns," said a schoolmaster to his class "there's just another instance o' the uncertainty o' human life; ane o' your ane schulemates – a fine wee bit lassie – went to her bed hale and weel at night and rose a corpse in the morning."

The Importance of Quantity in Scholarship

Charles Erskine was, at the age of twenty, a teacher of Latin in Edinburgh University. On one occasion, after his elevation to the bench, a young lawyer in arguing a case before him used a false Latin quantity, whereupon his lordship said, with a good-natured smile, "Are you sure, sir, you are correct in your *quantity* there?"

The young counsel nettled at the query, retorted petulantly, "My lord, I never was a schoolmaster."

"No," answered the judge, "nor, I think, a scholar either."

Capital Punishment

Andrew Leslie, an old Scotchman, always rode a donkey to his work and tethered him, while he labored, on the road, or wherever else he might be. It was suggested to him by a neighboring gentleman that he was suspected of putting him in to feed in the fields at other people's expense.

"Eh, laird, I could never be tempted to do that, for my cuddy winna eat anything but nettles and thistles."

One day, however, the same gentleman was riding along the road when he saw Andrew Leslie at work, and his donkey up to his knees in one of his own clover fields feeding luxuriously.

"Hollo! Andrew," said he, "I thought you told me your cuddy would eat nothing but nettles and thistles."

"Ay," was the reply, "but he misbehaved the day; he nearly kicked me ower his head, sae I put him in there just to punish him!"

"Plucked!"

Scotch parish schoolmasters are, on their appointment, examined as to their literary qualifications. One of the fraternity being called by his examiner to translate Horace's ode beginning, "Exegi monumentum ære perennius," commenced as follows: "Exegi monumentum – I have eaten a mountain."

"Ah," said one of the examiners, "ye needna proceed any further; for after eatin' sic a dinner, this parish wad be a puir mouthfu' t' ye. Ye maun try some wider sphere."

An Instance of Scott's Pleasantry

Sir Walter Scott was never wanting in something pleasant to say, even on the most trivial occasions. Calling one day at Huntly Burn, soon after the settlement of his friend in that house, and observing a fine honeysuckle in full blossom over the door, he congratulated Miss Ferguson on its appearance. She remarked that it was the kind called trumpet honeysuckle, from the form of the flower. "Weel," said Scott, "ye'll never come out o' your ain door without a flourish o' trumpets."

Turning His Father's Weakness to Account

Many good stories are told of old Dr. Lawson, a Presbyterian minister in Scotland, who was so absent-minded that he sometimes was quite insensible of the world around him. One of his sons, who afterwards became a highly esteemed Christian minister, was a very tricky boy, perhaps mischievous in his tricks.

Near the manse lived an old woman, of crabbed temper, and rather ungodly in her mode of living. She and the boy had quarreled, and the result was that he took a quiet opportunity to kill one of her hens. She went immediately to Dr. Lawson and charged his son with the deed. She was believed; and, as it was not denied, punishment was inflicted. He was ordered to abide in the house; and to make the sentence more severe his father took him into the *study*, and commanded him to sit there with him.

The son was restless, and frequently eyed the door. At last he saw his father drowned in thought, and quietly slipped out. He went directly to the old woman's and killed another hen, returning immediately and taking his place in the library, his father having never missed him.

The old woman speedily made her appearance, and charged the slaughter again upon him.

Dr. Lawson, however, waxed angry – declared her to be a false accuser, as the boy had been closeted with him all the time –

adding: "Besides, this convinces me that you had just as little ground for your last accusation; I therefore acquit him of both, and he may go out now."

The woman went off in high dudgeon, and the prisoner in high glee.

Curious Idea of the Evidence for Truth

Jean M'Gown had been telling a story to some friends who seemed inclined to doubt the truth thereof, when Jean, turning round quite indignantly, said, "It mon be true, for father read it out o' a *bound book*!"

Dry Weather, and Its Effects on the Ocean

The family of Mr. Torrance were about leaving the town of Strathaven, for America. Tibby Torrance, an old maiden sister of Mr. Torrance's was to accompany them.

Before they left, some of the neighbors were talking to Tibby of the dangers of the "great deep," when she suddenly exclaimed, "Aweel, aweel, it's been a gay dry summer, and I think the sea'll no' be very deep!"

Laughing in the Pulpit – With Explanation

A Scotch Presbyterian minister stopped one morning, in the middle of his discourse, laughing out loud and long. After a while he composed his face, and finished the service without any explanation of his extraordinary conduct.

The elders, who had often been annoyed with his peculiarities, thought this a fit occasion to remonstrate with him. They did so during the noon intermission, and insisted upon the propriety of his making an explanation in the afternoon. To this he readily assented; and after the people were again assembled, and while he was standing, book in hand, ready to begin the service, he said:

"Brethren, I laughed in midst of the service this mornin', and the gude eldership came and talked wi' me aboot it, and I towld them I would make an apology to you at once, and that I am now aboot to do. As I was preaching to you this mornin', I saw the deil come in that door wi' a long parchment in his hand, as long as my arm; and as he came up that side he tuk down the names of all that were asleep, an' then he went down the ither side, and got only twa seats down, and by that time the parchment was full. The deil looked along down the aisle, and saw a whole row of sleepers, and no room for their names; so he stretched it till it tore; and he laughed, and I couldn't help it but laugh, too – and that's my apology. Sing the Fiftieth Psalm."

A Good Judge of Accent

A Canadian bishop, well known for his broad Scotch accent as well as his belief that it was not perceptible, was called upon by a brother Scot one day, whom he had not seen for several years. Among other questions asked of him by the bishop was, "How long have you been in Canada?"

"About sax years," was the reply.

"Hoot, mon," says the bishop, "why hae ye na lost your accent, like mysel'?"

"Haudin' His Stick"

On my first visit to Edinburgh, having heard a great deal of the oratorical powers of some of the members of the General Assembly, I was anxious to hear and judge for myself. I accordingly paid an early visit to it. Seated next me I saw an elderly, hard-featured, sober-looking man, leaning with both hands on a stick and eyeing the stick with great earnestness, scarcely even moving his eyes to right or left.

My attention was soon directed to the speaker above me, who had opened the discourse of the day. The fervidness of his eloquence, his great command of language, and the strangeness of his manner excited my attention in an unusual degree. I wished to know who he was, and applied to my neighbor, the sober-looking, hard-featured man.

"Pray, sir, can you tell me who is speaking now?"

The man turned on me a defiant and contemptuous look for my ignorance, and answered, looking reverently at the cane on which his hands were imposed: "Sir, that's the great Docther Chawmers, and I'm haudin' his stick!" [16]

Indiscriminate Humor

The late Archibald Constable, the well-known Edinburgh publisher, was somewhat remarkable in his day for the caustic severity of his speech, which, however, was only a thin covering to a most amiable, if somewhat overbearing, disposition.

On one occasion a partner of the London publishing house of Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown was dining with Mr. C – , at his country seat near the beautiful village of Lasswade. Looking out of the window, the Londoner remarked, "What a pretty lake, and what beautiful swans!"

"Lake, mon, and swans! – it's nae a lake, it's only a pond; and they're naething but geese. You'll maybe noteece that they are just five of them; and Baldy, that ne'er-do-weel bairn there, caws them Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown!"

Sir Walter Scott, in telling the story, was wont to add: "That skit cost the 'crafty' many a guinea, for the cockney was deeply offended, as well he might be, not knowing the innocent intent with which his Scotch friend made such speeches."

Scotch Undergraduates and Funerals

The reported determination of a Scottish professor not to allow the students of his class more than one funeral in each family this session sounds like a grim joke; but it is fair to note that this gentleman, who has presumptively some experience of the ways of undergraduates, was lately reported to have come to the conclusion that the very high rate of mortality of late among the relatives of members of his class has been "artificially produced." Dark reminders of the hero of "Ruddigore," who was bound by the decrees of fate to commit one crime a day, have been heard in connection with this mysterious reference; but the *University Correspondent* has thrown a little light on the subject. The suggestion is that the northern undergraduate – not unlike his English brother – when he is feeling a little bored by his surroundings at the university, has a habit of producing a sad telegram informing him of the demise of a maiden aunt or second-cousin who never existed. [17]

Honest Johnny M'Cree

In one of his speeches Sheridan says: I remember a story told respecting Mr. Garrick, who was once applied to by an eccentric Scotchman to introduce a work of his on the stage. This Scotchman was such a good-humored fellow, that he was called "honest Johnny M'Cree."

Johnny wrote four acts of a tragedy which he showed to Mr. Garrick, who dissuaded him from finishing it, telling him that his talent did not lie that way; so Johnny abandoned the tragedy, and set about writing a comedy. When this was finished he showed it to Mr. Garrick, who found it to be still more exceptionable than the tragedy, and of course could not be persuaded to bring it forward on the stage.

This surprised poor Johnny, and he remonstrated. "Nay, now, David," said Johnny, "did you not tell me that my talents did not lie in tragedy?"

"Yes," said Garrick, "but I did not tell you that they lay in comedy."

"Then," exclaimed Johnny, "gin they dinna lie there, where the deil dittha lie, mon?"

Heaven Before it was Wanted

A Scotch newspaper relates that a beggar wife, on receiving a gratuity from the Rev. John Skinner, of Langside, author of "Tullochgorum," said to him by way of thanks, "Oh, sir, I houp that ye and a' your family will be in heaven the nicht."

"Well," said Skinner, "I am very much obliged to you; only you need not have just been so particular as to the time."

Curious Delusion Concerning Light

A hard-headed Scotchman, a first-rate sailor and navigator, he, like many other people, had his craze, which consisted in looking down with lofty contempt upon such deluded mortals as supposed that light was derived from the sun! Yet he gazed on that luminary day after day as he took its meridian altitude and was obliged to temper his vision with the usual piece of dark-colored glass.

"How," I asked him, "do you account for light if it is not derived from the sun?"

"Weel," he said, "it comes from the eer; but you will be knowing all about it some day."

He was of a taciturn nature, but of the few remarks which he did make the usual one was, "Weel, and so yer think that light comes from thesun, do yer? Weel! ha, ha!" and he would turn away with a contemptuous chuckle. [18]

Less Sense than a Sheep

Lord Cockburn, the proprietor of Bonally, was sitting on a hillside with a shepherd; and observing the sheep reposing in the coolest situation he observed to him, "John, if I were a sheep, I would lie on the other side of the hill." The shepherd answered, "Ay, my lord, but if ye had been a sheep, ye would hae mair sense."

Consoled by a Relative's Lameness

For authenticity of one remark made by the Rev. Walter Dunlop I can readily vouch. Some time previous to the death of his wife Mr. Dunlop had quarreled with that lady's brother – a gentleman who had the misfortune to lose a leg, and propelled himself by means of a stick substitute.

When engaged with two of the deacons of his church, considering the names of those to whom "bids" to the funeral should be sent, one observed, "Mr. Dunlop, ye maun send ane to Mr. – " naming the obnoxious relative.

"Ou, ay," returned the minister, striving that his sense of duty should overcome his reluctance to the proposal. "Ye can send *him* ane." Then immediately added, with much gravity, and in a tone that told the vast relief which the reflection afforded, "He'll no be able to come up the stairs." [4]

Curious Sentence

Some years ago the celebrated Edward Irving had been lecturing at Dumfries, and a man who passed as a wag in that locality had been to hear him.

He met Watty Dunlop the following day, who said, "Weel, Willie, man, an' what do ye think of Mr. Irving?"

"Oh," said Willie contemptuously, "the man's crack't."

Dunlop patted him on the shoulder, with a quiet remark, "Willie, ye'll aften see a light peeping through a crack!" [7]

Too Canny to Admit Anything Particular

An elder of the parish kirk of Montrose was suspected of illegal practices, and the magistrates being loth to prosecute him, privately requested the minister to warn the man that his evil doings were known, and that if he did not desist he would be punished and disgraced. The minister accordingly paid the elder a visit, but could extort neither confession nor promise of amendment from the delinquent.

"Well, Sandy," said the minister, as he rose to retire from his fruitless mission, "you seem to think your sins cannot be proved before an earthly tribunal, but you may be assured that they will all come out in the day of judgment."

"Verra true, sir," replied the elder, calmly. "An' it is to be hoped for the credit of the kirk that neither yours nor mine come oot afore then."

Mortifying Unanimity

I said, to one who picked me up,
Just slipping from a rock,
"I'm not much good at climbing, eh?"
"No, sirr, ye arrrn't," quoth Jock.

I showed him then a sketch I'd made,
Of rough hill-side and lock;
"I'm not an artist, mind," I said;
"No, sirr, ye arrrn't," quoth Jock.

A poem, next, I read aloud —
One of my num'rous stock;
"I'm no great poet," I remarked;
"No, sirr, ye arrrn't," said Jock.

Alas! I fear I well deserved
(Although it proved a shock),
In answer to each modest sham,
That plain retort from Jock.

A Consoling "If"

Bannockburn is always the set-off to Flodden in popular estimation, and without it Flodden would be a sore subject.

"So you are going to England to practice surgery," said a Scottish lawyer to a client, who had been a cow-doctor; "but have you skill enough for your new profession!"

"Hoots! ay! plenty o' skill!"

"But are you not afraid ye may sometimes kill your patients, if you do not study medicine for awhile as your proper profession?"

"Nae fear! and if I do kill a few o' the Southrons, it will take a great deal of killing to mak' up for Flodden!"

Happy Escape from an Angry Mob

The most famous surgeon in Edinburgh, towards the close of the last (the eighteenth) century, was certainly Mr. Alexander Wood, Member of the Incorporation of Chirurgeons, or what is now called the Royal College of Surgeons. In these days he was known by no other name than Lang Sandy Wood (or "Wud," as it was pronounced). He deserves to be remembered as the last man in Edinburgh who wore a cocked hat and sword as part of his ordinary dress, and the first who was known to carry an umbrella.

It is generally supposed that he was induced to discontinue the wearing of the sword and cocked hat by an unfortunate accident which very nearly happened to him about 1792. At that time the then lord provost, or chief magistrate of the city, a Mr. Stirling, was very unpopular with the lower orders of society, and one dark night, as Sandy was proceeding over the North Bridge on some errand of mercy, he was met by an infuriated mob on their way from the "closes" of the old town to burn the provost's house in revenge for some wrong – real or imaginary – supposed to be inflicted by that functionary. Catching sight of an old gentleman in a cocked hat and sword, they instantly concluded that this must be the provost – these two articles of dress being then part of the official attire of the Edinburgh chief magistrate. Then arose the cry of "Throw him over the bridge" – a suggestion no sooner made than it was attempted to be carried into execution.

The tall old surgeon was in mortal terror, and had barely time to gasp out, just as he was carried to the parapet of the bridge, "Gude folk, I'm no' the provost. Carry me to a lamp post an' ye'll see I'm Lang Sandy Wood!"

With considerable doubt whether or not the obnoxious magistrate was not trying to save his life by trading on the popularity of Sandy, they carried him to one of the dim oil-lamps, with which the city was then lit, and after scanning his face closely, satisfied themselves of the truth of their victim's assertion. Then came a revulsion of feeling, and amid shouts of applause the popular surgeon was carried to his residence on the shoulders of the mob.

The End Justifying the Means

Sandy Wood had the most eccentric ways of curing people. One of his patients, the Hon. Mrs. – , took it into her head that she was a hen, and that her mission in life was to hatch eggs. So firmly did this delusion take possession of her mind that, by-and-bye she found it impossible to rise off her seat, lest the eggs should get cold. Sandy encouraged the mania, and requested that he might have the pleasure of taking a "dish of tea" with her that evening, and that she would have the very best china on the table.

She cordially agreed to this, and when her guest arrived in the evening he found the tea-table covered with some very valuable crockery, which did not belie its name, for it had really been imported from China by a relative of the lady, an East Indian Nabob.

The surgeon made a few remarks about the closeness of the room, asked permission to raise the window, and then, watching an opportunity when the hostess' eye was upon him, he seized the trayful of fragile ware and feigned to throw them out of the window.

The lady screamed, and, forgetful in her fright of her supposed inability to rise, she rushed from her seat to arrest the arm of the vandal.

The task was not a hard one, for the eccentric old surgeon laughed as he replaced the tray on the table, and escorted his

patient to her seat. The spell had been broken, and nothing more was ever heard of the egg-hatching mania.

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Another lady patient of his had a tumor in her throat, which threatened her death if it did not burst. She entirely lost her voice, and all his efforts to reach the seat of the malady were unavailing. As a last resort, he quietly placed the poker in the fire; and after in vain attempting to get his patient to scream, so as to burst the tumor, he asked her to open her mouth, and seizing the then red-hot poker, he made a rush with it to her throat. The result was a yell of terror from the thoroughly frightened patient, which effected what he had long desired – the breaking of the tumor, and her recovery.

A Lecture on Baldness – Curious Results

Edinburgh laughed heartily, but was not at all scandalized, when one famous university professor kicked another famous professor in the same faculty, down before him from near the North Bridge to where the Register House now stands. The *casus belli* was simple, but, as reported, most irritating.

The offending professor was lecturing to his class one morning, and happened to say that baldness was no sign of age. "In fact, gentlemen," said the suave professor, "it's no sign at all, nor the converse. I was called in very early yesterday morning to see the wife of a distinguished colleague, a lady whose raven locks have long been the pride of rout and ball. It was in the morning, and I caught the lady in deshabille, and would you believe it, the raven locks were all fudge, and the lady was as bald as the palm of my hand."

The professor said nothing more, but no sooner was his lecture ended than the students casually inquired of the coachman whom the professor was called to see yesterday morning. The coachman, innocently enough, answered, "Oh, Mrs. Prof. – ."

This was enough, and so before four-and-twenty hours went round, the story came to Prof. A – that Prof. B – had said, in his class, that Mrs. Prof. A – wore a wig. For two days they did not meet, and when they did, the offender was punished in the ignominious manner described.

A Miserly Professor

An Edinburgh professor was noted for his miserly habits, though, in reality, he was a rich man and the proprietor of several ancestral estates. He once observed a Highland student – proverbially a poor set – about to pick up a penny in the college quad, but just as he was about to pick it up, the learned professor gave him a push, which sent the poor fellow right over, when Dr. – cooly pocketed the coin and walked on, amid the laughter of a crowd of students who were watching the scene. He did not always stick at trifles. Going down the crowded street he saw a street boy pick up a shilling. Instantly the professor chucked it out of the boy's hand, and then, holding it between his thumb and forefinger, with his gold-headed cane in the other, carefully guarding it, he read out to the whimpering boy a long lecture on honesty being the best policy; how the "coin" was not his; how it might belong to some poor man whose family might be suffering for the want of that coin, and so on, concluding by pocketing the shilling, and charging the finder that "if ever he heard of anybody having lost that shilling, to say that Prof. – had got it. Everybody knows me. It is quite safe. Honesty, my lad, is always the best policy. Remember that, and read your catechism well."

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On one occasion he was called, in consultation with Prof. Gregory, about a patient of his who happened to be a student of medicine. The day previously, however, Dr. Gregory had called alone, and on going away was offered the customary guinea. This the stately physician firmly refused; he never took fees from students. The patient replied that Prof. – did. Immediately Gregory's face brightened up. "I will be here to-morrow in consultation with him. Be good enough to offer me a fee before him, sir."

To-morrow came, and the student did as he had been requested.

"What is that, sir?" the professor answered, looking at his proffered guinea: "A fee, sir! Do you mean to insult me, sir? What do you take us to be – cannibals? Do we live on one another? No, sir. The man who could take a fee from a student of his own profession ought to be kicked – kicked, sir, out of the faculty! Good morning!" and with that the celebrated physician walked to the door, in well-affected displeasure. Next day, to the astonishment of the patient, Prof. – sent a packet with all the fees returned.

It is said that he once took a bag of potatoes for a fee, and ever after boasted of his generosity in the matter: "The man was a poor man, sir. We must be liberal, sir. Our Master enjoins it

on us, and it is recommended in a fine passage in the admirable aphorisms of Hippocrates. The man had no money, sir, so I had to deal gently with him, and take what he had; though as a rule – as a rule – I prefer the modern to the ancient exchange, *pecunia* instead of *pecus*. Hah! hah!"

Silencing English Insolence

"There never was a Scotchman" said an insolent cockney, at Stirling, to a worthy Scot, who was acting as guide to the castle "who did not want to get out of Scotland almost as soon as he got into it."

"That such may be the fack, I'll no' gainsay," replied the Scot. "There were about twenty thousand o' your countrymen, and mair, who wanted to get out of Scotland on the day of Bannockburn. But they could na' win. And they're laying at Bannockburn the noo; and have never been able to get out o' Scotland yet."

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It was Johnson's humor to be anti-Scottish. He objected theoretically to haggis, though he ate a good plateful of it.

"What do you think o' the haggis?" asked the hospitable old lady, at whose table he was dining, seeing that he partook so plentifully of it.

"Humph!" he replied, with his mouth full, "it's very good food for hogs!"

"Then let me help you to some mair o' 't," said the lady, helping him bountifully.

Helping Business

Prof. James Gregory, perhaps the most celebrated physician of his day, but who, in popular estimation, is dolefully remembered as the inventor of a nauseous compound known as Gregory's Mixture. He was a tall and very handsome man, and stately and grave in all his manners, but, withal, with a touch of Scotch humor in him. One evening, walking home from the university, he came upon a street row or bicker, a sort of town-and-gown-riot very common in those days. Observing a boy systematically engaged in breaking windows, he seized him, and inquired, in the sternest voice, what he did that for.

"Oh," was the reply, "my master's a glazier, and I'm trying to help business."

"Indeed. Very proper; very proper, my boy," Dr. Gregory answered, and, as he proceeded to maul him well with his cane, "you see I must follow your example. I'm a doctor, and must help business a little." And with that, he gave a few finishing whacks to the witty youth, and went off chuckling at having turned the tables on the glazier's apprentice.

Sandy Wood's Proposal of Marriage

When proposing to his future wife's father for his daughter, the old gentleman took a pinch of snuff and said, "Weel, Sandy, lad, I've naething again' ye, but what have ye to support a wife on?"

Sandy's reply was to pull a case of lancets out of his pocket with the remark, "These!"

Rival Anatomists in Edinburgh University

Perhaps the most eminent teacher of anatomy in Edinburgh, or in Britain, early in this century, was Dr. Robert Knox. He was a man abounding in anything but the milk of human kindness towards his professional brethren, and if people had cared in those days to go to law about libels, it is to be feared Knox would have been rarely out of a court of law. Personality and satirical allusions were ever at his tongue's end. After attracting immense classes his career came very suddenly to a close. Burke and Hare, who committed such atrocious murders to supply the dissecting-room with "subjects" were finally discovered, and one of them executed – the other turning king's evidence. Knox's name got mixed up with the case, being supposed to be privy to these murders, though many considered him innocent. The populace, however, were of a different opinion. Knox's house was mobbed, and though he braved it out, he never after succeeded in regaining popular esteem. He was a splendid lecturer, and a man, who, amid all his self-conceit and malice, could occasionally say a bitingly witty thing.

It is usual with lecturers at their opening lecture to recommend text-books, and accordingly Knox would commence as follows: "Gentlemen, there are no text-books I can recommend. I wrote one myself, but it is poor stuff. I can't recommend it. The man

who knows most about a subject writes worst on it. If you want a good text-book on any subject, recommend me to the man who knows nothing earthly about the subject. The result is that we have no good text-book on anatomy. We *will* have soon, however – Prof. Monro is going to write one."

That was the finale, and, of course, brought down the house, when, with a sinister expression on his face, partly due to long sarcasm, and partly to the loss of an eye, he would bow himself out of the lecture-room.

The Prof. Monro referred to by Knox was the professor of anatomy of Edinburgh University, and the *third* of that name who had filled the chair for one hundred and twenty years. He succeeded his father and grandfather, as if by right of birth – and if it was not by that right he had no other claim to fill that chair.

Knox lectured at a different hour from Monro, namely, exactly five minutes after the conclusion of the latter's lecture. Accordingly the students tripped over from Monro to Knox, greatly to the annoyance, but in no way to the loss of the former. It may well be supposed that during their forced attendance on Monro's lectures they did not spend much time in listening to what he had to say. In fact they used to amuse themselves during the hour of his lecture, and always used to organize some great field days during the session. So lazy was Monro that he was in the habit of using his grandfather's lectures, written more than one hundred years before. They were – as was the fashion then – written in Latin, but his grandson gave a free translation

as he proceeded, without, however, taking the trouble to alter the dates. Accordingly, in 1820 or 1830, students used to be electrified to hear him slowly drawling out, "When I was in Padua in 1694 – " This was the signal for the fun to begin. On the occasion when this famous speech was known to be due, the room was always full, and no sooner was it uttered than there descended showers of peas on the head of the devoted professor, who, to the end of his life could never understand what it was all about. [19]

"Discretion – the Better Part of Valor"

A spirited ballad was written on the Jacobite victory at Prestonpans by a doughty Haddingtonshire farmer of the name of Skirving, in which he distributed his praise and blame among the combatants in the most impartial manner. Among others, he accused one "Lieutenant Smith, of Irish birth," of leaping over the head of "Major Bowie, that worthy soul," when lying wounded on the ground, and escaping from the field, instead of rendering the assistance for which the sufferer called. Smith, being aggrieved, sent the author a challenge to meet him at Haddington. "Na, na," said the worthy farmer, who was working in his field when the hostile message reached him, "I have no time to gang to Haddington, but tell Mr. Smith to come here, and I'll tak' a look at him. If he's a man about my ain size, I'll ficht him; but if he's muckle bigger and stronger, I'll do just as he did – I'll run awa'!"

Losing His Senses

A census taker tells the following story: The first difficulty I experienced was with Old Ronaldson. He was always a little queer, as old bachelors often are. As I left the census paper with him, he held the door in one hand while he took the paper from me in the other. I said I would call again for the paper. "Ye needn't trouble yourself!" said he, in a very ill-natured tone; "I'll not be bothered with your papers." However, I did not mind him much; for I thought when he discovered that the paper had nothing to do with taxes he would feel more comfortable, and that he would fill it up properly.

The only person whom Old Ronaldson allowed near him was Mrs. Birnie; she used to put his house in order and arrange his washing: for Ronaldson was an old soldier; and although he had a temper, he was perfect in his dress and most orderly in all his household arrangements. When Mrs. Birnie went in her usual way to his house on the morning referred to, the old gentleman was up and dressed; but he was in a terrible temper, flurried and greatly agitated.

"Good morning, sir," said Mrs. Birnie – I had the particular words from her own lips – "Good morning," said she; but Old Ronaldson, who was as a rule extremely polite to her, did not on this occasion reply. His agitation increased. He fumbled in all his pockets; pulled out and in all the drawers of his desk;

turned the contents of an old chest out on the floor – all the time accompanying his search with muttered imprecations, which at length broke into a perfect storm.

Mrs. Birnie had often seen Mr. Ronaldson excited before, but she had never seen him in such a state as this. At length he approached an old bookcase and, after looking earnestly about and behind it, he suddenly seized and pulled it toward him, when a lot of old papers fell on the floor, and a perfect cloud of dust filled the room. Mrs. Birnie stood dumbfounded. At length the old gentleman, covered with dust and perspiring with his violent exertions, sat down on the corner of his bed, and in a most wretched tone of voice said: "Oh, Mrs. Birnie, don't be alarmed, but I've lost my *senses*!"

"I was just thinking as much myself," said Mrs. Birnie; and off she ran to my house at the top of her speed. "Oh, Mr. M'Lauchlin," said she, "come immediately – come this very minute; for Old Ronaldson's clean mad. He's tearing his hair, and cursing in a manner most awful to hear; and worse than that – he's begun to tear down the house about himself. Oh, sir, come immediately, and get him put in a strait jacket."

Of course I at once sent for old Dr. Macnab, and asked him to fetch a certificate for an insane person with him. Now, old Dr. Macnab is a cautious and sensible man. His bald head and silvery hair, his beautiful white neck-cloth and shiny black coat, not to speak of his silver-headed cane and dignified manner, all combined to make our doctor an authority in the parish.

"Ay, ay," said the good doctor, when he met me; "I always feared the worst about Mr. Ronaldson. Not good for man to be alone, sir. I always advised him to take a wife. Never would take my advice. You see the result, Mr. M'Lauchlin. However, we must see the poor man."

When we arrived, we found all as Mrs. Birnie had said; indeed by this time matters had become worse and worse, and a goodly number of the neighbors were gathered. One old lady recommended that the barber should be sent for to shave Ronaldson's head. This was the least necessary, as his head, poor fellow, was already as bald and smooth as a ball of ivory. Another kind neighbor had brought in some brandy, and Old Ronaldson had taken several glasses, and pronounced it capital; which everyone said was a sure sign "he was coming to himself." One of his tender-hearted neighbors, who had helped herself to a breakfast cupful of this medicine, was shedding tears profusely, and as she kept rocking from side to side, nursing her elbows, she cried bitterly: "Poor Mr. Ronaldson's lost his senses!"

The instant Dr. Macnab appeared, Old Ronaldson stepped forward, shook him warmly by the hand, and said: "I'm truly glad to see you, doctor. You will soon put it all right. I have only lost my *senses*– that's all! That's what all these women are making this row about."

"Let me feel your pulse," said the doctor gently.

"Oh, nonsense, doctor," cried Ronaldson – "nonsense; I've only lost my *senses*." And he made as if he would fly at the heap

of drawers, dust, and rubbish which lay in the centre of the floor, and have it all raked out again.

"Oh, lost your senses, have you?" said the doctor with a bland smile. "You'll soon get over that – that's a trifle." But he deliberately pulled out his big gold repeater and held Ronaldson by the wrist. "Just as I feared. Pulse ninety-five, eye troubled, face flushed, muckle excitement," etc. So there and then, Old Ronaldson was doomed. I did not wish a painful scene; so, when I got my certificate signed by the doctor, I quietly slipped out, got a pair of horses and a close carriage, and asked Mr. Ronaldson to meet me, if he felt able, at the inn in half an hour, as I felt sure a walk in the open air would do him good. He gladly fell in with this plan, and promised to be with me at noon certain.

As I have said, he is an old soldier, was an officer's servant in fact, and is a most tidy and punctual person. But old Mrs. Birnie had, with much thoughtfulness, the moment he began to make preparations for this, put his razors out of the way. Hereupon he got worse and worse, stamped and stormed, and at last worked himself into a terrible passion. I grew tired waiting at the inn, and so returned, and found him in a sad state. When he saw me, he cried: "Oh, Mr. M'Lauchlin, the deil's in this house this day."

"Very true," said Mrs. Birnie to me in an aside. "You see, sir, he speaks sense – whiles."

"Everything has gone against me this day," he went on; "but," said he, "I'll get out of this if my beard never comes off. Hand me my Wellington boots, Mrs. Birnie; I hope you have not swallowed

them, too!"

The moment Ronaldson began to draw on his boots, affairs changed as if by magic. "There," cried he triumphantly – "There is that confounded paper of yours which has made all this row! See, Mrs. Birnie," he exclaimed, flourishing my census paper in his hand; "*I've found my senses*!"

"Oh," cried the much affected widow, "I am glad to hear it," and in her ecstatic joy she rushed upon the old soldier, took his head to her bosom, and wept for joy. I seized the opportunity to beat a hasty retreat, and left the pair to congratulate each other upon the happy finding of Old Ronaldson's *senses*.

It's a Gran' Nicht

The following is a fine comic sketch of an interview between a Scotch peasant lover and "Kirsty," his sweetheart, who was only waiting for him to speak. It is in fine contrast with the confident, rushing away in which that sort of thing is done in other countries.

The young lover stands by the cottage gable in the fading light, declaring, "It's a gran' nicht!" Ever so often he says it, yet he feels its grandeur not at all, for the presence of something grander or better, I suppose – the maiden, Kirsty Grant. Does he whisper soft somethings of her betterness, I wonder, while thus he lingers? His only communication is the important fact, "It's a gran' nicht." He would linger, blessed in her presence, but the closing day warns him to be gone. It will be midnight before he can reach his village home miles away. Yet was it sweet to linger. "It's a very gran' nicht, but I maun haist awa'. Mither 'ill be wunnerin'," said he.

"'Deed, ye'll hae tae draw yer feet gey fast tae win hame afore the Sabbath; sae e'en be steppin'," she answered, cooly.

"It's gran'!" said he; "I wish ilka Saiturday nicht was lik' this ane."

"Wi' ye, Saiturday nicht shud maist be lik' Sunday morn, if ye bevil it richt," said she, with a toss of her head, for she rightly guessed that somehow the lad's pleasure was referable to herself.

"I maun shut up the coo."

"Good-nicht!" said he.

"Good-nicht!" said she, disappearing.

He stepped away in the muirland, making for home. "Isn't she smairt?" said he to himself; "man, isn't she smairt? Said she, 'Saiturday nicht shud aye be wi' ye lik' Sunday morn, if ye beviled it richt!' Was it na a hint for me? Man, I wish I daur spaik oot to her!"

A Highlander on Bagpipes

Mr. Barclay, an eminent Scotch artist, was engaged in painting a Highland scene for Lord Breadalbane, in which his lordship's handsome piper was introduced. When the artist was instructing him as to attitude, and that he must maintain an appearance at once of animation and ease by keeping up a conversation, the latter replied that he would do his best, and commenced as follows:

"Maister Parclay, ye read yer Bible at times, I *suppone* (suppose), sir?"

"Oh, yes."

"Weel, Maister Parclay, if ye do tat, sir, ten you've read te third and fifth verses of te third chapter of Daniel, when te princes, te governors, te captains, te judges, te treasurers, te counsellors, te sheriffs and all te rulers of te provinces were gathered together into te dedication of te image tat Nebuchadnezzar, te king, had set up, and tey were told tat whenever tey began to hear te sound of te cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, tey were to fall down and worship te golden image that Nebuchadnezzar, te king, had set up. I tell ye, Maister Parclay, if tey had a Hielandman, wi' his pipes tere, tat nonsense would not hae happened. Na, na, he would hae sent tem a' fleeing. It would hae been wi' tem as Bobby Burns said, 'Skirl up to Bangor, for ye maun a' come back to te bagpipe at last.'"

Walloping Judas

The late Dr. Adamson, of Cupar-Fife, colleague to Dr. Campbell, father to the lord chancellor of that name, at a late Saturday night supper was about to depart, alleging that he must prepare for the Sunday service. For two previous Sundays he had been holding forth on Judas Iscariot, and a member of his congregation, who sat at the table detained him with: "Sit down, doctor, sit down; there's nae need for ye to gang awa'; just gie Judas another wallop in the tow."

"'Alice' Brown, the Jaud!"

An old offender was, some years ago, brought up before a well-known Glasgow magistrate. The constable, as a preliminary, informed his bailieship that he had in custody John Anderson, *alias* Brown, *alias* Smith. "Very weel," said the magistrate, with an air of dignity, "I'll try the women first. Bring in Alice Brown! what has she been about, the jaud?"

Earning His Dismissal

Dean Ramsay tells an amusing story of the cool self-sufficiency of the young Scottish domestic – a boy who, in a very quiet, determined way, made his exit from a house into which he had lately been introduced. He had been told that he should be dismissed if he broke any of the china that was under his charge.

On the morning of a great dinner party he was entrusted (rather rashly) with a great load of plates, which he was to carry upstairs from the kitchen to the dining-room, and which were piled up and rested upon his two hands.

In going upstairs his foot slipped, and the plates were broken to atoms. He at once went up to the drawing-room, put his head in at the door, and shouted, "The plates are a' smashed, and I'm awa'!" [7]

Paris and Peebles Contrasted

In the memoir of Robert Chambers, by his brother William, allusion is made to the exceedingly quiet town of Peebles, their birthplace, and the strong local attachments of the Scottish people. An honest old burgher of the town was enabled by some strange chance to visit Paris, and was eagerly questioned, when he came back, as to the character of that capital of capitals; to which he answered that, "Paris, a' things considered, was a wonderful place; but still, Peebles for pleasure!"

Short Measure

An old woman who had made a great deal of money by selling whiskey was visited when on her death-bed by her minister, to whom she spake, as is usual on such occasions, about her temporal as well as her spiritual affairs. As to her temporalities, they seemed to be in a very flourishing condition, for she was dying worth a very large sum of money.

"And so, Molly," said the minister, "you tell me you are worth so much money?"

"Indeed, minister," replied Molly, "I am."

"And you tell me, too," continued the minister, "that you made all that money by filling the noggin?"

"Na, na, minister," said the dying woman; "I didna tell you *that*. I made the maist of it by *not* filling the noggin."

Two Views of a Divine Call

Of Scotland's great preacher, the late Rev. Dr. Macleod, the following is told: In visiting his Dalkeith parishioners to say farewell, he called on one of those sharp-tongued old ladies whose privileged gibes have added so much to the treasury of Scottish humor.

To her he expressed his regret at leaving his friends at Dalkeith, but stated that he considered his invitation to Glasgow in the light of "a call from the Lord."

"Ay, ay," was the sharp response; "but if the Lord hadna called you to a better steepend, it might hae been lang gin ye had heard Him!"

A Scotch View of Shakespeare

A Scotchman was asserting that some of the most celebrated poets and brightest intellects the world ever produced were descendants of his race, and quoted Scott, Burns, and others as evidence.

An Englishman who was present retorted: "I suppose that you will claim next that even Shakespeare was a Scotchman."

"Weel," he replied, "I'm nae so sure o' that; but ane thing I do ken —*he had intellect eneuch for a Scotchman*."

"As Guid Deid as Leevin!"

There was a mixture of shrewdness and simplicity in the following: Shortly after the establishment of the Ministers' Widows' Fund, the minister of Cranshaws asked in marriage the daughter of a small farmer in the neighborhood.

The damsel asked her father whether she should accept the clergyman's offer. "Oh," said the sire, "tak' him, Jenny; he's as gude deid as leevin." The farmer meant that his daughter would, owing to the new fund, be equally well off a widow as a wife.

The Mercy of Providence

An old minister was once visiting his hearers, and accosted a humble farmer who had been lazy with his crops in the wet season. "I hear, Jamie," said the minister, "that ye are behind with your harvest."

"Oh, sir," was the reply, "I hae got it all in except three wee stacks, and I leave them to the mercy of Providence."

A Scotch Curtain Lecture on Profit and Pain

The man who said this was not an atheist, but simply a druggist – a Scotch druggist – who was aroused by the ringing of his night-bell. He arose, went downstairs, and served a customer with a dose of salts.

His wife grumbled: "What profit do you get out of that penny?"

"A ha'penny," was the reply.

"And for that ha'penny you'll be awake a long time," rejoined the wife.

"A-weel," replied the placid druggist, "the dose of salts will keep him awake much longer; let us thank Heaven that we have the profit and not the pain of the transaction."

A Definition of "Fou"

A gentleman recently gave an entertainment in London on the peculiarities of Scotchmen, in the course of which he gave this definition of the national word *fou*: "Being gently excited by the moderate use of dangerous beverages."

The Journeyman Dog

A gentleman, staying in the family of a sheep-farmer, remarked that daily as the family sat down to dinner a shepherd's dog came in, received its portion, and soon after disappeared.

"I never see that dog except at dinner," said the visitor.

"The reason is," said the farmer, "we've lent him to oor neibor, Jamie Nicol, and we telt him to come hame ilka day to his dinner. When he gets his dinner, puir beast, he gaes awa' back till his wark."

Church Economy

A congregation was once looking out for a minister, and after hearing a host of candidates with more or less popular gifts, their choice fell upon a sticket probationer, whose election caused great surprise in the country.

One of the hearers was afterward asked by an eminent minister how the congregation could have brought themselves to select such a minister.

His reply was quite characteristic: "Weel, we had twa or three reasons – first, naebody recommended him; then he was nae studier, and besides, he had money in the bank."

It appeared that of the two former ministers, who had not come up to expectation, one of them had brought flaming testimonials, and the other had buried himself among his books, so that the people never saw him but in the pulpit, while the third reason was, perhaps the most cogent of all, for the people did not care to burden themselves with a too generous support of their pastor.

In another case the minister usurped the functions of session and committee, and ignored the office bearers altogether. One of the elders observed to another one Sunday morning, as the minister was trotting up to the meeting-house on his smart little pony, "It's a fine wee powny the minister rides."

"Ay," said the other, "it's a gey strange ane; it can carry

minister, session, and committee without turnin' a hair."

Tired of Standing

A Paisley man, visiting Glasgow, much admired the statue of Sir John Moore, which is an erect figure. Soon afterwards he brought another Paisley man to see the statue, but not being topographically posted, he stared at the statue of James Watt, which is in a sitting attitude. Feeling somewhat puzzled as to the identity of what was before him with what he recollected to have seen, he disposed of the difficulty by exclaiming: "Odds, man, he's sat down since I last saw him!"

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