

THE HUMILIATION OF PETER.

AN OLD TIME INCIDENT.

By J. R. Craig.

"Gavin was a farmer and had never seen a bottle of smelling salts. Concerning bottles he had only one idea."

It happened that our esteemed precentor, having, in the words of our leading deacon, "Received his call to join the Great Invisible Choir," the office of leader of psalmody was vacant. Many were the applicants for the coveted position, and the village gossip for a few weeks centred around that band. The characteristics of each were discussed by all, and even Grannie Graham attended service during the trials of the candidates. (Grannie, as she was called, was the widow of a former beadle, and much afflicted with rheumatism; since the demise of John, she had not frequented "The House of the Lord as often as her heart desired.")

Three of the aspirants were local men. The gardener, and the joiner, at the Laird's, had each in turn been tried, and Sabbath next Peter the tailor was to "stand." The tests were severe, and lay entirely with the minister. The psalm and tune were announced from the pulpit, and the man who got a "swing on" right off was, according to the critics, "the man for us." Sabbath came, and with it a crowded church. Expectation was keen, for Peter was regarded as quite a singer and had many admirers. The first time "Martyrs" was sung with quite a professional swing, and as the last notes died away, Sandy Frew, Peter's neighbor in business and principal supporter for the office, was noticed shaking his head gleefully at Thomas Paterson, the Laird's coachman, and chief admirer of the musical abilities of Richard the gardener, as if to say, "What think ye o' that, man."

The suspense during the long prayer was indeed great, and when at last it ended, and in stentorian tones came the announcement, "Let us again sing praise from Psalm 43, beginning at the third verse, to the tune 'Invocation,'" a sigh of relief, mingled with the usual rustle of the handkerchiefs and the flutter of the leaves as all eagerly "turned to the place."

"Invocation" was not a common tune in our church. It was