

fashion) he was too honest to think of a profession for which he felt himself so scantily qualified. As he himself used to observe when the subject chanced to be broached:—"You might as weel expect to see a moudie-wart threading a sma'-headed needle, or a cow climbing up a fir-tree, to herric a crow's nest, as to behold me looking mim and grave in a gown and bands!"

How it came to pass that the sober Quaker maiden, and the rattling Kilmarnock laird got so thick, I must leave to wiser heads than mine to expiscate. I can only state the simple, undoubted fact that they loved, devolving upon philosophers and phrenzyologists to fathom the reason,—though I daresay such gentry would make as little of the matter as their more rational neighbours. The lassie, possibly, accustomed to a quiet and demure life, was captivated with Wattie's mirth and fun—women always having had a notion of novelty from that limmer Pandora, downwards. And as for the lad, he, perchance, was taken with the maiden's simplicity and artlessness, so different from the wiles and airs of the females he had been in the habit of coming in contact with. According to the same rule, a confirmed snuffer generally comes, in the long-run, to prefer sober brown or black, to high scented mixtures. This fact in natural history can be certified by any respectable merchant in the retail tobacco trade!

Malachi Sampson was not so deeply engrossed in his phrenology as to be blind to what was going on in his household; and to tell the plain unvarnished truth, he was not overly pleased at the aspect of affairs.

He had a genuine liking for the lassie entrusted to his care; and feeling the importance of his curatorial office, he was anxious to provide her with a suitable helpmate, according to his notions of such a part of speech. Having taken the whole matter into consideration, Malachi discovered sundry stern and weighty objections to a verdict in favour of the laird in his suit matrimonial.

The Quaker had set out in the race of life with no other capital than what was supplied by nature's bank, viz., a liberal allowance of prudence and mother wit. Sore was the wrestle which he had in climbing the Hill Difficulty of fortune. When copper was his most plentiful metal, his study was to make a pen-

ny do the work of a sixpence; and when he progressed to silver, a shilling, for many a day, mounted guard in the room of a guinea. The natural upshot of such a state of things was, that, without being what the world would call a miser, he gained the habit of looking, even when his corn and wine most abounded, at both sides of a groat, before expatriating it from his treasury. Having, likewise, experienced in his own case the necessity of economy and retrenchment, he came to the conclusion, that such qualifications were indispensable in all others.

Entertaining such feelings, it is not to be wondered at that friend Sampson looked upon poor Wattie with a suspicious and unfriendly eye, as a nephew-in-law, and set his brain to work, to prevent the dissipating of his niece's patrimony, which he predicted would, as a matter of necessity, result from the incongruous conjunction.

A bright thought struck the anxious Quaker! The new doctrine, to which he had become a heart and soul convert, suggested a test for a husband, superior, in his opinion, to what anything else could supply; and the idea no sooner found a lodgment in his scone than he determined to act upon it.

Here I must observe, in passing, the frenzyologists affirm, that on a certain region of the human skull is situated a bump, called *acquisitiveness*. I am sure of the word, seeing that I was at the pains to question one of the craft upon the subject. The dimensions, be they great or small, of this same *organ* (that's one of their cant phrases!) demonstrate whether a man is likely, or the reverse, to keep a firm clutch of the *siller*, and add eke to the same.

"This," quoth Sampson, "this shall be the test and qualification of my niece's husband;" and forthwith he took care to promulgate that without such a testimonial to character, written, so to speak, in Mother Nature's own hand, no one could hope to win his consent to wed with Bathsheba.

You may safely swear that young Laird Ogilvie was not the last to get tidings of this resolution, and as he knew literally nothing about the matter of bumps, he opined that he had as good a chance of succeeding in the new-fangled ordeal as another. Accordingly, having dressed himself in his newest red hunting-