

Nought like religion they retain,
Of moral honesty they're clean;
In nothing they're accounted sharp,
Except in bagpipe and in harp,
For a mis-obliging word
She'll dunk her neighbour o'er the board;
And then she'll flee like fire from doubt,
She'll scarcely ward the second doubt;
If any ask her of her thrift,
Forsooth, her tansell lives by thift.

Robert Wodrow (1679-1734), Scottish Church historian, was born at Glasgow and studied in its university, where his father was Professor of Divinity; in 1703 he became minister of Eastwood. His *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland 1660-88* (1721-22) was dedicated to George I. He was a zealous Presbyterian, an indefatigable collector, and an honest recorder, though not free from partisanship and credulousness; and his work is of very high value for his period. Not till next century were published his *Lives of the Scottish Reformers* (Maitland Club, 1834-45; *Analecta, or a History of Remarkable Providences* (Maitland Club, 1842-43; *Correspondence* (Wodrow Soc., 1842-43; and *Biographical Collections* (New Spalding Club, 1860). The following passages are both from the *Analecta*:

The Divel and the Divinity Student.

When Mr Robert Blair was minister of St Andrews, there was a youth who applied to that presbytery to be admitted to trials. Though he was very unfit, the presbytery appoints him a text, and after he had been at all the pains he could in consulting help, yet he got nothing done, so that he turned very melancholy; and one day, as he was walking all alone in a remote place front St Andrews, there came up to him a stranger, in habit like a minister, with black coat and band, and who addressed the youth very courteously, and presently falls into discourse with him after this manner: 'Sir, you are but a young man, and yet appear to be very melancholy; pray, why so pensive?' He answered, 'It's to no purpose to communicate my mind to yow, seeing yow cannot help me.' 'How know you that? Pray let me know the cause of your pressure.' Says the youth, 'I have got a text from the presbytery. I cannot for my life compose a discourse on it, so I shall be affronted.' The stranger replied, 'Sir, I am a minister; let me hear the text.' He told him, 'O, then, I have an excellent sermon on that text here in my pocket, which yow may peruse and commit to your memory. I engage, after yow have delivered it before the presbytery, yow shall be greatly approved and applauded;' so pulls it out and gives it to him, which he received very thankfully. Then says the stranger, 'As I have obliged yow now, sir, so yow will oblige me again in doing any piece of kindness or service when my business requires it;' which the youth promises. 'But, sir,' says the stranger, 'yow and I are strangers, and therefore I would require of yow a written promise, subscribed with your hand, in case yow forget the favour which I have done yow;' which he granted likewise, and delivered it to him subscribed with his blood. And thus they parted.

Upon the presbytery day the youth delivered an

excellent sermon upon the text appointed him, which pleased and amazed the presbytery to a degree; only Mr Blair smelt out something in it which made him call the youth aside to a corner of the church, and thus he began with him: 'Sir, yow have delivered a nate sermon, every way well pointed. The matter was profound, or rather sublime; your style was fine and your method clear; and no doubt young men at the beginning must make use of helps, which I doubt not but yow have done.' The young man acknowledged he had. 'But,' says Mr Blair, 'besydes the use of books, I know sometimes they are obliged to consult men that are scholars and well versed in divinity, to help them in their composours. Have yow not done soe?' He said he had. Mr Blair says, 'Yow may use all freedom with me; I intend yow no hurt. Did yow not get the whole of this discourse written and ready to your hand from one who pretended to be a minister?' He acknowledged the same. Mr Blair says, 'No doubt but yow would give him thanks for his favour, and promise to do him any piece of service he called for, when his business [doth] lye in yowr way?' He answered 'Yes.' 'But yowr verbal promises would not be sufficient: did yow not give him a written promise subscribed with your blood?' All which he confessed with fear, blushing, and confusion. Then Mr Blair, with an awful seriousness appearing in his countenance, began to tell the youth his hazard, and that the man whom he took for a minister was the Divel, who had trepanned him and brought him into his net; advised him to be earnest with God in prayer, and likewise not to give way to despair, for there was yet hope.

In the meantime the youth was so overcome with fear and terror that he was like to fall down. Mr Blair exhorts him to take heart, and brings him in with him into the presbytery; and when all except the ministers were removed, Mr Blair recalls the whole story to them. They were all strangely affected with it, and resolved unanimously to dispatch the presbytery business presently, and to stay all night in town, and on the morrow to meet for prayer in one of the most retired churches of the presbytery, acquainting none with there busines, but taking the youth alongst with them, whom they kepted awise close by them. Which was done, and after the ministers had prayed all of them round, except Mr Blair, who prayed last, in time of his prayer then came a violent rushing of wind upon the church, so great that they all thought the church should have fallen down about there ears, and with that the youth's paper and covenant droops down from the roof of the church among the ministers. I heard no more of the story.

Gilleesple's End.

It came to that, he kept his chamber still to his death, wearing and wasting, hoasting [coughing] and sweating. Ten dayes before his death his sweating went away, and his hoasting lessened, yet his weaknes still increased. His wife seeing the time draw near, spake to him and said, 'The time of your releife is now near and hard at hand!' He answered, 'I long for that time! O happy they that are there!' This was the last word he was heard sensibly to speak. Mr Frederick Carmichael being there, they went to prayer, expecting death so suddenly. In the midst of prayer he left his rattling, and the pangs and fetches of death began. Since his senses went away. Whereupon they rose from prayer, and beheld till in a very gentle manner the pins of his tabernacle wer loosed.