

in the kirk except on an extra occasion, with Lady Sourocks, as I have before hinted; and even when he did make his appearance there, his demeanour was far from being decent or edifying. Indeed, the general rumour was, that he was but few doors removed from being an infidel; and it was even whispered that he had christened his cat, and buried his defunct greyhound in the kirk-yard! Doubtless his sceptical wickedness was the foundation of the unconcern with which he witnessed the prodigies I have above enumerated, proving to a dismal demonstration that the dogged unbelief of such Sadducees was not to be shaken even by a miracle wrought before their very noses!

As I hinted before, the Beau sat as unmoved and unconcerned as if nothing beyond ordinary had been going on. He merely tapped his shell snuff-box at each successive camtrip of the wallock, muttering some such contemptuous words as—"well enough, considering!" "*pretty well for Dleepdaily!*" as if the feats performed were not real and genuine facts and truths!

Monsheer Nong-tong-paw, who had borne with complacency the execrations of the company, as if glorying in his shame, appeared to be sorely nettled at the sneering observes of the sceptic, seeming to regard him as a scoffing interloper. He bore with him for a considerable season, till at length, his patience being clean exhausted, he stepped to the front of the stage, and, addressing him with a bow and a slrug of the shoulders, requested the honour of his assistance at the next feat of glamourie!

Many, considering the peril to which Donald Sheerie had been exposed by a similar act of compliance, would have dissuaded Mr. Balderston from risking his precious soul and body; but as the old proverb says—"he must needs go when Cloutie drives!" The Beau jumped at the proposal like a cock at a gooseberry (or *gracet*, as I would say, if I wrote in less fastidious times!)—and whispering to his neighbour that he would show up the old quack in grand style, he ascended the diabolical platform!

I trow he was a wiser and a soberer man, before he was done with the quack, as he was pleased to style him! Like the Christmas goose his time was come—and I'll be sworn that he

never made mouths at miracles again, till the day of his decease! But I must not bring in the toddy till the dinner be over.

Accommodating the Beau with a seat, the Magician—for so, I presume, all orthodox readers will agree with me in designating Monsheer,—proceeded to put certain drugs and medicaments into a thing like a white bowl, with a long strop proceeding out of the side thereof, after the manner of a tea pot. He called it a *Retort* or a *Report*, I really forget which,—but I can testify that it made a loud enough report in the Burgh for many a day thereafter!

Having mixed the ingredients, which I trow were never weighed in Christian scales, the Pythagorean turned the end of the strop to Mr. Balderston instructing him to hold his nose firm, and draw in the vapour from the bowl with his breath. Our friend at first seemed to hesitate and boggle a little at this injunction. Being certified that it would do no injury to his health, and being ashamed moreover to draw back, after having put his hand to the plough, he followed the directions given him, even as a mouse rushes into the cheese-baited ambushade—and commenced sucking and blowing like a three weeks old calf at its matin or vesper refectation!

At this verse of the ballad, I heard my name called from the door, and on turning round I beheld Betty Bachelles, the ancient maid of all work of Lady Sourocks, wagging and coughing upon me to come away. I started up in a perfect fever of consternation, having utterly forgotten, the absconding of time, and my practice to be with her ladyship betimes for her gala! You may well believe it was with a sore and unwilling heart that I took my Exodus, often looking back upon Beau Balderston who, as long as he was visible I could note drawing away at his black draught, and holding his nose as if he had been stooping over a badgers's kennel!

When I reached the mansion, as her ladyship was pleased to dignify her two story tenement, I found her in a perfect stew of vexation. Half a dozen of her guests had arrived, and she could not venture to face them with her head gear out of order. Of course I had to do penance for the forgetfulness of which I had been guilty, and verily hard words were not spared upon me! There is not a