

only inmates were rats and mice, the aforesaid spirit always excepted. Mr. McMurrich, however, took a fancy to the message, and rather looked upon the visitations of its former possessor as an advantage than otherwise, seeing that in consequence the rent demanded was almost nominal. To speak the naked truth I very much incline to the opinion that he was strongly tinged with infidelity on the subject of apparitions. He used sometimes to observe that in the earlier part of his life he had watched with a great schoolmaster named Johnson, for a ghost in a house which was situated in a part of London called Cock Lane, and that the affair turned out to be an impudent imposition. I may here mention in passing, that my relative gained a very unhealthy reputation on account of his dogged refusal to be frightened by the disembodied self-murderer. The serious old women shook their heads solemnly when they alluded to the matter, and expressed their conviction that Mr. Mungo was a perfect Sadducee, who should be taken to task by the Kirk Session. As the suspected personage, however, was a member of the Episcopal communion he was not amenable to the suggested overhauling, and thus, in all probability, escaped the *éclat* of a stance on the stool of repentance.

Returning to the house, I may observe, that the windows thereof were so darkened with dust, and shrouded with spiders' webs, that it was next to an impossibility to see into them. Whether any one could see *out* of the same, was a problem which few could solve. My grand-uncle was a man who was of a costive and misanthropical turn of mind, and with the exception of the doctor, and Mr. Rubric the prelatie priest, and they only at an orra time, few, even of his own kith and kin, ever were permitted to darken his door.

From the above-mentioned particulars it will be clear that the denizens of Peterhead had full cause for the wonderment with which they regarded Mr. Mungo McMurrich. Most natural was it that he should have been the leading attraction of a community which had nothing in the shape of theatres, or horse races, or even executions to raise their minds from the stagnation of every day life.

I mentioned before that my great grand-uncle enjoyed the reputation of being the possessor of untold wealth. This rumour had

the effect of procuring him the attentions of all who could count the most remote consanguinity with such a highly favoured personage. Every now and then, he was getting donations of sweet milk cheeses, rizzard haddies, and skeps of honey from his disinterested nephews and nieces, who evinced a degree of solicitude in his welfare which would have been absolutely sublime, had the object of it been a supplicant for the necessaries of life. By the way, it is rather a remarkable circumstance that when a man has more than he can eat, there are officious hands ever ready to burden his table with superfluous sustentation. The solution of this mystery I leave to a more philosophical head than I can boast of. As the Sheriff's officer said when he was remonstrated with by a bankrupt whose goods he was carrying off, "I know nothing of *causes*, and only trouble myself with *effects*!"

Once in every twelve months, viz. New-Year's Day, a legion of all who could claim the most distant connection with Mr. McMurrich, used to proceed to his dwelling house in a body, and fairly take it by storm, to demonstrate how profoundly they had, his health and comfort, at heart. These conventions were composed of individuals hailing from every quarter of bonnie Scotland. Glasgow sent its representative in the shape of a polemical weaver, who used to entertain his relative with dissertations on yarn and free will. There was a cattle dealer from Perthshire, a cousin only thirty-six times removed, whose visits were the more acceptable that they were generally accompanied with a peace-offering of cured tongues. An Edinburgh lawyer, a writer to the signet, likewise swelled these annual reunions, and used to discourse in a most religious and edifying strain, touching the duty of Christian mendi sposing of their substance, whilst in the full possession of their senses, and employing a member of the learned faculty to draw up the requisite instrument.

Mungo McMurrich did not appear to appreciate the attentions of his relatives to the extent which might reasonably have been expected. Though he did not precisely shut the door in their faces, he never permitted them to penetrate farther than the kitchen, and always looked impatient till the sederunt came to an end, seeming to think that the exhibition