

Indeed, for that matter, her ladyship used often to boast, when in a bragging mood, that the majority of them were *eunuchs*,* by which she meant, so far as I could gather or expiscate, that no duplicates of them had escaped the destructionfull claws of Time!

To give anything like a list of these literary rarities, is altogether out of the question, because, even if I could manage to transcribe the heathenish names thereof, I verily believe that the catalogue would more than fill all the spare paper in the burgh! I may mention, however, that the most remarkable item of the lot was a tall Bible, bound in timber boards, imprinted in Latin, or some such barbarous tongue, by that notorious magician and serf of Satan, Dr. Johann Faustus. Some of the larger letters thereon were stamped with blood, instead of orthodox ink,—a fact to the verity of which I can depose, seeing that I had ocular demonstration of the same. Never could I look upon that grewsome memorial of necromancy without shuddering, and marveling at the lengths to which a thirst after forbidden knowledge will carry the wayward children of Adam! Many serious folk were of opinion that it ill became a professing Christian to keep such a monument of iniquity within herdwelling, and worthy Mr. Whiggie's Elders used to hold it up, and with justice, as a matter of reproach against the Establishment, that the Kirk Session did not interfere and put an end to the scandal! Alas! the good old times of faggots and tar-barrels have long since passed away, never more, I sorely fear, to return!

But to revert to the museum. I have ever been of opinion that the immortal Robert Burns (the bard whose genius made the plough as illustrious as a Duke's coronet) must have had the collection of Lady Sourocks in view, when he penned the lines on "*Captain Gros's peregrinations through Scotland, collecting the antiquities of that kingdom.*" The following verses could only have been inspired by an inspection of the wonders of "the mansion," more by token that the glorious ploughman once visited the same, but never had an opportunity of overhauling the memorabilia of the Gross Gatherings:—

"She has a routh o' auld nick-nackets;
O' rusty airm and jinglin' jackets,
Wad haud the Lothians three in tacketts,
A towmont gaid;
And parrich-pits and, and auld saut-backetts,
Afore the flood!

Of Eve's first fire she had a cinder;
Auld Tubal Cam's fire-shool and tender."

It is an old saying, that the longer a greedy man drinks, the thirstier he grows; and in like manner, her ladyship's itch for the acquisition of the rare and wonderful, increased in equal ratio with the replenishment of her cabinets. Never did she lose an opportunity of becoming the possessor of everything that was mouldy, worm-eaten, or useless, provided only that it was uncommon. She was a constant attendant at the auctions for twenty miles round, at which, instead of inspecting the napery and furniture, like other sensible folk, she was always to be seen prying and *pouter-ing* amongst bunches of old ballads, and such like unprofitable trash. Every gang of tinkers which passed through Dreepdaily, visited "the mansion," with queer-shaped ram's-horns, for which they always found a ready market; and many an honest, sterling sixpence has she paid away to Hosea Twist, the tobacconist, in the purchase of moulded farthings and superannuated groats. Hosea knew his customer's weak side, and generally contrived to take a liberal measure of her foot.

At the cycle which I am now recording, Mr. Gideon Mucklekyte was the incumbent of the parish of Dreepdaily. Verily and truly he was in more senses than one, a *great* man in his day and generation, seeing that he weighed considerably more than nineteen stone. Beloved reader, if you have ever seen the effigy of Daniel Lambert in the *Eccentric Biography*, you will be able to form a pretty correct idea of the excellent pastor's bulk and ponderosity. If his *cloth* had permitted him to exhibit his person for filthy lucre, he would unquestionably have realized a mint of money; for assuredly such a mass of animated tallow was rarely to be met with. Like the fat Knight of Shakespear, he "larded the lean earth as he walked along," and when he chanced to stand beside a prize-competing ox at a cattle show, the quadruped, dwindled down by the contrast into a puny skeleton!

Mr. Thom, the witty minister of Govan, (who may well be termed the Scottish Dean

* *Queer*?—"*Unique*," P. D.