

The bank of the river took fire, and from the Tower Street bridge it smouldered and burnt as far up as opposite what is now Mr. James Wilson's house, and being of a peaty nature it was impossible to extinguish it. The timber, mostly hemlock, cedar and birch, along the whole front of my lot (some thirty-three chains wide—was set fire to at once, and was, I daresay, the first blaze ever seen hereabouts; however, no harm was done, although my good old neighbour the Provost was in great agitation, and was seen now and then on guard before his house, and complained to some of our neighbors that that "scoonrel Ferrier wanted to burn him oot—hoose, barn, fences and a'." The late Mr. Fergusson and family lived in the village this summer, and I can remember the old gentleman watching the bridge to prevent its catching fire, having taken it specially under his charge. He was instructed to form a new militia regiment up here, so a good many of our old Fergus Rifle Company were appointed officers in the 13th Gore, and Colonel Fergusson, after the appointments were made, gave us a very handsome entertainment in what was then "Webster's new store," which was just then built, and was very tastefully ornamented for the occasion. It was a very pleasant party, and such a gathering of officers as no Colonel had reason to be ashamed of. The Fergus Curling Club was also organized this year, and I am happy to say is a flourishing institution still. With regard to curling as a game, as I was quite a lad when I left Edinburgh, skating was the winter amusement which was preferred by the boys, and I looked upon curling as a very good respectable sort of amusement for ministers, teachers, and middle aged gentleman, and indeed I had seen the learned professor of logic and metaphysics in the Edinburgh University—a fine tall handsome man he was,—the Rector of the Edinburgh Academy, a jolly round made man, well known as "Punch," and many other men of weight and high standing, both physically and morally, all busy curling away on Duddingstone Loch, near Edinburgh. So when I heard of the curling here I skated down the river or took a walk on snow shoes to see the fun, and to be honest I thought it a very dull, stupid game. However, as it was impossible to get any place to skate, I at last gave it up, and when the curling club was formed I joined it, and soon became a keen curler. The two great chieftains of the game were old Mr. Black and the "Provost," Mr. Buist, and as they almost always played on opposite sides there was a keen rivalry between them. Mr. Black was a tall bandsome man, and very often wore a red nightcap and red overstockings, and of an afternoon when it began to look a little dark, he looked as like some of the fine pictures of an Italian bandit as any one could wish. The Provost was a little stout built man, but a strong player, and very steady. As they both talked excellent broad Scotch, the game as far as language went was most correct, and the way the two leaders joked one another was a treat. Mr. Black would cry out, "Noo, Provost, ye'r scooping afore the tee." "Na, na, Mr. Black." "Haud up your broom, sir." "Hoots, man, be canny." "If ye dinna tak' yer leg awa' frae that, sir, I'll ca' ye ow'r