

THE TWO ELDERS,

AND THE SEQUEL,

THE MEAL CLUB PLOT.

BY TOOTS.

*Synods are mystical bear gardens,
Where elders, deputies, Churchwardens,
And other members of the Court
Manage the Babylonish sport.*

HUDIBRAS, Canto III.

*How most degraded were their situation
Before he went to them to preach the Gospel
Sunk deep into depravity were their nation
And very deep in misery they had fell.*

POEMS, LATE SIR JOHN SMYTH, L.L.D.,
Poet Laureate and Engineer.

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—
1856.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY A CONVERTED CABMAN.

This is an age of wonders, and no doubt ;
For all things can be turned inside out,
Or upside down, which surely's much the same :--
Virtue is but a covering for shame,
Truth, but the shining husk of rotten lies,
And honour but a spider's web for flies.
And e'en the Christian toga cannot hide
The fact that it has got a dirty side.
All friendship is unworthy of the name,
And honesty the greatest bar to fame ;
And man, however great or small his pelf,
Is but a contradiction of himself,
For ever stultifying his own lot,
In struggling to appear what he's not.
But here, to-night, I think that, Sirs, we'll show
How matters stand amongst us here below.
We'll bone each other, and we'll tease and snub
Diogenes, there, in that Christian tub,
And make him rush out on this motley pack,
Shewing his teeth by turns, by turns his back,
While news-boys roar aloud, " to one here's ten,
Go it, old boy, Knox is himself again."
And we give to the gaping world the news,
That the elect that always fill those pews,
Are quite at home in any way you please,
From pitch and toss to gambling on their knees ;
Until, at last, we gain the appellation
Of " Doctor Burns' model congregation."

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THE TWO ELDERS.

THE TWO ELDERS, A LOW COMEDY, IN TWO ACTS.

BY TOOTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DR. BURNS, *Pastor of Knox's Church.*
HARRIS, *Moderator.*
McMURRICH, *1st. Elder.*
SHAW, *2nd. Elder.*
PYPER, *1st. Elder elect.*
CAMPBELL, *2nd. Elder elect.*
BAIN, *of the Colonist.*
FRASER, *a weak Brother.*
M'PHERSON.
M'KAY.
MASON.
SIMPSON.
OAL.

MUSICIANS and disorderly crowd in the distance.

ACT I.

SCENE 1.—*Library of Knox's Church—The MODERATOR in the Chair, gazing on nearly the whole strength of the company, while the musicians strike up "Jordan is a hard road to travel."*

DR. BURNS—*advancing towards the MODERATOR with ungraceful haste.*

DR. BURNS.—This vile man Pyper will not suit my ends;
He is of a conceited mind, my friends,
And makes unfounded statements and does hold
Strange views about Church property I'm told.
He is a great admirer, too, it's clear,
Of how St. Andrew's Church is managed here;
And lauds another fane, in Montreal,
As if his heart were built into its wall.

We'll leave both him and Campbell in the lurch,
They both absent themselves from Knox's
Church,

Observing not its holiest ordinance,
Nor making t'wards its Pastor one advance—
A man who, loving heaven and his creed,
With constant prayer is almost camel kneed,
Who in their cause got bunions on his toes,
And spends four hundred on the poor and brose.

FRASER.—Most reverend Sir, I can attest
your fears,

For this same Pyper stated in mine ears—
Yea, on occasions oft, the boast has made,
His ancestor before great Moses played;
And that if e'en the heaven's fell at his feet,
He should in Knox's Session take his seat.
And then he'd suddenly, before he'd stop,
His hands into his breeches pockets pop,
And, eyeing me contemptuously by turns,
Roar out that I might "go and tell old Burns."

A VOICE.—Sirs, a reporter from the *Globe* is
here,
And some one asked him to attend, I fear.

McMURRICH.—Not I, and bear me witness
moon and stars,
I know the *Globe* respects not bolts or bars,
Or hearthstones, or the world whose name he
shames,

But that he in foul practices disclaims
The axiom, that has made us proud so long,
That each man's house is his own castle strong,
And that he'd force his way in with the rest,
Although received like "the unbidden guest."

DR. BURNS, *aside*.—I now must make a hit
and aid the *Globe*,
For he can dull the point of Pyper's probe.

Aloud, Sirs, let this fair reporter now remain,
His goodly office may our tongues restrain;
He has a right that none may here deny,
Tho' Bain in doubts contemptuous shuts his eye.

BAIN.—This, reverend Sir, is not the time or
place
To hold this mirror up to our disgrace.

McMURRICH.—I've never moved in this affair,
by Job,
Nor subborned any man, nor asked the *Globe*.

OAL.—This fair reporter, Sirs, it would appear
An edict from the pulpit led him here.

PYPER.—By my great ancestor—that favored
man
Who was first pibroch to a Hebrew clan—
I nothing know of this same *Globe's* intent,
Or at whose instance he was hither sent.

DR. BURNS.—I trust our fair reporter won't
presume
Those worthy knights would wish he'd leave
the room;
This is a Presbyterian meeting, friend,
At which all men may properly attend.

McMURRICH.—A Session, learned Doctor, let
me say,
I twig you my old boy, so fire away.

DR. BURNS.—No, not a Session, elder, I pre-
sume
All Sessions must be in the Session-room.

McMURRICH.—Dear Doctor, please give up
your splitting straws,
We're guided by the spirit of our laws,
Nor shall you, to obtain your ends, conspire
To make it else; if so I shall retire.

MASON.—Yes, Doctor, we have got you on the
hip,
In Session you can't wag your under lip,
Therefore, you'd knock the Session on the head,
And frame a common meeting in its stead;
So as that things you might have your own way,
And thus deprive those elders of fair play.

DR. BURNS, *aside*.—The fellow is as snappish
as a cur,

Aloud.—This is a common open meeting, sir,
Where all good men with freedom may attend.
Churchmen, or of no church, or foe or friend.

MASON.—'Tis useless, Doctor, we are up to
snuff,
So on this subject we have had enough.

DR. BURNS.—Let the reporter stay, is all I
beg,

Aside.—By all that's good, he shall not move a
peg.

McMURRICH.—On this we're all agreed—the
subject's flooded;
But, then, another question's on the board.

DR. BURNS.—The only question now, as I
suppose,
Is simply whether that he stays or goes;
And Mason's observations you'll perceive,
Were only made in hopes that he might leave.

MASON.—I have not, for a moment, breathed
a word
About him, but believing it absurd
That Doctor B—, upon this very spot,
Should try to make this meeting what it's not,
I rose to give his reverence a dig
And snub him slightly. Brethren, don't you
twig?

DR. BURNS, *aside*.—Oh! shade of Knox, this is
a vicious ass;

I never can allow the thing to pass.
I—I in error—Skein of Rodrick Dhu!
If I but had you, I should run him through.
And leave a spluttering cascade of brose,
Gushing between his stomach and his toes,
The porcupine; he chafes me with his quills,
As did the heather on my native hills,
Before to me the saving grace was given
To make my way in breeches towards heaven,
Or change my bonnet for a stove pipe hat,
Oh! was there ever anything like that?
An unwashed Caitiff speaking thus to me—
To Dr. Burns, of Knox's Church, D.D.

Aloud.—Come, Mason, I won't let the thing end
here,
The matter's as I stated it,—that's clear.

MASON.—Were you to rave for hours in this
same way,
This Session would not believe a word you'd
say.

DR. BURNS, *aside*.—Oh land of Johnny Knox
and Bobby Burns,

I feel myself both hot and cold by turns;
I feel my very hair in anger bristle,
I who could sit of yore on beds of thistle,
As if they were composed of eider down,
Now to be cuffed and gagged by such a clown.
And then this sweet four hundred, I'm afraid
That Pyper and this Campbell's friends have
laid

A plot to thwart my schemes and mock my
power

Which kept them both at bay up to this hour;
However, I must be myself again.

Aloud.—All now is right; Sir *Globe* you can
remain. *Exeunt omnes.*

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ACT II.

SCENE 1.—*Basement Story, Knox's Church.—
Nearly the whole strength of the company present.
MODERATOR in the Chair. Music—"Pop goes
the Weasel."*

M'KAY, *addressing the Moderator.*

M'KAY.—'Gainst Campbell and 'gainst Pyper
I protest,
They are but two conceited men at best.
Elders of Knox's Church they must not be,
For they promote both strife and enmity;
And if we take them in, I tell you flat,
They'll knock us all into a three-cocked hat.

MODERATOR.—[*While the Doctor gives a suppressed growl that would do credit to an evening's repast at the Zoological Gardens.*]

Now for George Campbell and his friend give way,
And let us hear all that they have to say.

ENTER CAMPBELL.

CAMPBELL.—Here, Sirs, I am, and truth is on
my tongue,
But then, this very night my heart is wrung
To see some here who, in that old man's cause,
Are placed in the position of cats' paws,
And at his beck would sacrifice two men
Who'd dare to do their duty how and when
They pleased, and drag relentlessly to light
Deeds that are wrought beneath a veil of night.
Men who would not in justice's cause be dumb,
Or twisted round that reverend Doctor's thumb.
A paper now I'll read that you may see
What's due unto those gentlemen and me.

DR. BURNS.—I cannot sit to hear that paper
read;
If thus detained we'll never get to bed.

SIMPSON.—The paper speaks of me; I'd learn
the rest;
Campbell, go on, old fellow, do your best.

McPHERSON.—This meeting, Sirs, is for another
end,
And not the slaughter of my honest friend.

CAMPBELL.—Pardon, kind Sirs, for know, I
shall not hence
Until that I am heard in my defence.
Others have wronged me foully here this night,
And all the world shall know whose in the
right.
This Simpson, then, I call a precious dog,
Who mixes up the gospels with his grog;
And th' other day God's holy name profaned,
In swearing that I should not be ordained.

Nor Pyper neither—neither one nor th' other,
Oh! Simpson but you are a blessed brother.
But what the Doctor thinks of you—you see;
You did not get the vote of Mrs. B—,
He uses you when he has ought to do,
Then throws you slap aside like an old shoe.
And Fraser and M'Kay—the dull and shrewd
Are chickens of the very self same brood.
Then hear me now, yes, hear on every hand
I now resign my office where I stand.
Because that men who once stood by my side
Have failed, in virtue's crucible when tried;
And he whose pride should have been laid in
dust,
Is haughty still, relentless and unjust.

Exit Campbell, to the air:—

"The world may wag since I got the bag."

DR. BURNS.—Oh! foul—most foul, can this
be called fair play,
To butcher me and others in this way.
I who have never laid a single plan
To keep out Pyper or this dreadful man.
Or interfere with any brother's choice.
But now that he has mizzled I rejoice;
For if he had succeeded with his arts,
I'd cut you all myself, and break your hearts.

ATR—"BURNS' Farewell."

MODERATOR.—Let Mr. Pyper now approach
this board,
With all that he has in his noddle stored.

Enter PYPER, without the slightest hesitation.

PYPER.—Thanks to you, brethren, that I've
got a chance
To break with old Abaddon a stout lance;
I must declare you're in a pretty plight,
With topers, rogues, and hypocrites to night,
Men who, from first to last, leave in the lurch,
The fame if not the honour, of our church.
Men who are bought or sold or changed by
turns,
According to the whim of Doctor Burns,
And sacrifice all truth and common sense
At the dark shrine of shillings, pounds, and
pence.

Oh such a pack!—the Lord supply our need,
Or else good bye to christian love indeed.
I can't get here the pure milk of the word;
I find it thin or sour or turned to curd.
To Streetsville, then, I'll go each Sabbath day,
And drink no more of Doctor Burns' whey.
So now my eldership I here resign,
Into the hands of this renowned divine.
Ye gave it once—it was an open act,
But then, we know the jury wasn't packed.

And now, in opposition to our laws,
You'd take it back without the slightest cause,
For not a charge that now lies at my door
But you all know had lain there long before;
If it had e'en been truth, which I deny,
But truth, to you, is, Sirs, "all in my eye."

DR. BURNS.—I throw your words back in
your teeth again,
You dreadful Pyper—vilest of all men.

[Exit Pyper with his finger to his nose.]

Enter McMURRICH and SHAW from an adjoining
room, to which they had retired during the lat-
ter part of Pyper's remarks.

McMURRICH, reading a document in his hand,
approaches the MODERATOR.

McMURRICH.—This matter well, we've weighed
and now we know

That Pyper has received a treacherous blow,
And Campbell too; for both these worthies were
Chosen our elders openly and fair;
But it would seem that influence undue
Was brought to bear upon them, Sir, by you,
[turning to Dr. Burns.]

Therefore, we, too, resign, but ere we go
We'd have you and the congregation know,
That neither one nor th' other e'er returns
While Knox's Church belongs to Dr. Burns.

[Exeunt McMurrich and Shaw, arm and arm,
like two bricks, to the air of "Fare you
well Killavay."]

DR. BURNS, with his eyes a complete circle,
takes the chair.

DR. BURNS.—The Session's burst and my own
boiler's strained,
I've played too bold, so nothing has been
gained

Friend Cal, don't let us give it up this way,
Come, have you not a soothing word to say?

OAL is doggedly silent, but looks at the Doctor,
as much as to observe, "I think we have said
enough between us already."

DR. BURNS.—Then if there's nothing to be
said or done,

I think that we had better cut and run;
But we shall have another bout by and bye,
At which, I think, I'll open Pyper's eye;
Till then my disappointments I shall bear.
Come, brethren, let us have a word of prayer.
Reporter, wait [Exit Reporter on hearing the
word prayer] The-fellow is away,
I'm certain that those people never pray.
However, let the godless villain start;
Down on your marrow bones before we part.

The curtain falls while the Doctor is inflating
his lungs, and some news-boy are whistling and
kicking up all sorts of shillies outside. The
musicians performing at the same time,

"It'll never do to give it up so, Mr. Brown."

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THE MEAL CLUB PLOT.

THE MEAL CLUB PLOT, A SEQUEL TO THE TWO ELDERS.

BY TOOTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

DR. BURNS, *Pastor of Knox's Church.*
REV. MR. McTAVISH, *Moderator.*
McMURRICH, *ex Elder.*
REV. MR. LAING.
REV. MR. GRAY,
REV. MR. LACHLAN,
PROFESSOR YOUNG,
REV. MR. REID,
REV. MR. LOWRY,
REV. MR. NESBIT,
REV. DR. WILLIS.
MESSRS. OAL, PYPHER AND CAMPBELL.

ACT I.

SCENE 1st—*Basement of Knox's Church—
Moderator in the Chair—Music heard
in the distance, "The Campbells Are
Coming."*

Enter DR. BURNS, *with some papers in his hand,
and a decided touch of pink about the gills.*

DR. BURNS.—Here, Sirs, once more, I meet
those bantam cocks,
That crow upon the dunghill of John Knox ;
A scurvy breed, 'mongst whom it may be said
There can't be found one orthodox "black red."
For when I touched them with my Christian
spurs,
Last time we met, they cut this cockpit, Sirs,
And e'en McMurrich and his neighbor, Shaw,
Against all order, precedent and law,
Took up their hats, and left us in the lurch ;

But I've in steep a Calvinistic birch
That yet shall tickle them for their transgres-
sion,
If you but hunt me up an honest Session.
'Tis all I ask to get into my trammels
That precious nest of Pypers and of Campbells ;
All that I need, those schemes and plots to
probe,
And find out how that good man of the *Globe*,
Whose days in Christian charity are spent !
Became possessed of that strange document.
Surely he was betrayed by some foul trick,
For he's a well-burnt Presbyterian brick !

REV. MR. LAING.—Sirs, tho' the Doctor eye
me with surprise,
Now, to a point of order I arise.

MODERATOR.—Please, Rev. Doctor, your re-
marks suspend,
Until this point is mentioned by our friend.

DR. BURNS—Not I my cove ; shut up ; I've
got the floor ;
I'm up to trap ; so you need gab no more.
I'm always badgered in this petty way,
But now, believe me, I shall say my say.

MODERATOR—He rises, Sir, to order, from his
seat ;
And we must hear what brings him to his feet.

DR. BURNS—I will submit ; but then I won't
sit down
For you, Sir, or for all the Laings in town.
This is the way, when coming to the point,
That some one always knocks me out of joint.
[*Aside*] But now I'll try to listen and be cool,
A madman shouldn't tamper with a fool.

REV. MR. LAING—Come, Reverend Doctor,
won't you tell us, pray,

Why you persist, in this provoking way,
In stating that those worthies, standing there,
With whom you've often had a word of pray'r,
Gave up that paper and their situation,
The last for fun, the first for publication.

DR. BURNS--Your senseless cries of "order,"
raise my dander,
Whene'er I give a covey a left-hander,
I always get a verbal kick or cuff,
But who's afraid? Hurrah! Lay on Macduff.

MODERATOR--What do you mean, Sir, by a
"senseless cry" ?
By all that's good I shan't let that pass by.
[*Aside*] "A senseless cry of order." What a bit,
He has my joker fairly on the spit.

DR. BURNS *addressing Moderator*--You ask me
sir, what is it that I mean
By pointing my last sentence with such spleen.
I'll tell you sir, here in my ripe old age
I find this platform turned into a stage,
And I myself dragged out to play a part,
Whose very justice wounds me to the heart.
And when I take the matter into bits,
I almost lose my porridge and my wits,
And wish that still with worsted cap, and fea-
ther,
I roamed up to my hocks in highland heather,
With but an oaten bannock for my cheer,
And a small taste of what I can't get here.
Indeed I almost wish it. Yes I do,
[*Aside*]--Hang him he looks as tho' he wished
to too.
[*Aloud*]--And its no wonder: See how I've
been served,
As I have said, I'm totally unnerved
Whene'er I think of it. Oh what a shock
To learn that wolves alone compose one's flock,
Or when you believe you tend a gentle lamb,
To find it turn out an old, tricky ram.
Look at my elders. See what they have done,
Deserted me; yes, every mother's son,
The last of them M' Murrich linked with a Shaw,
[*Aside*]--Two nuts that sorely puzzle this old
jaw.
They both come here a certain case to try,
But with their verdict nicely cut and dry,
Like Paddy Flinn who left his with a friend,
Because he could'n't wait to hear the end
Of a long case; but quietly stole out
To quench the fever of a three hours' drought.
Yes, thus they came and thus they went away,
Campbell and Pyper men, as people say,
And fain would drag me from my elevation
Down to the level of my congregation;
And, God knows, that I think's about as low
As any living mortal wants to go.

And then they cut up such a blessed caper
With all the stuff they crammed into that paper,
They made me out a very knave forsooth,
A meddling headstrong man devoid of truth,
Because I would not clasp unto this breast
A brace of brainless sinners, at the best,
'Twere well, I think, had they ne'er learned to
write,
That paper left them in so sad a plight.
Although I'm sure this pious congregation
Wont suffer greatly from their resignation.

Ans--"When first that I believed thee true."
McMURRICH--Sirs, to myself although its not
quite clear
In what capacity I'm standing here,
I think I'm not a member of this Court,
So I don't care a button for report,
For christian friends, I feel I've done what's
right
In busting up that business on that night,
You all know what I mean, I know you do;
'Twas when we had that general set-to,"
When Pyper made the Doctor fume and bel-
low--

That Pyper is a plucky little fellow--
And when Oal, Campbell, Mason and McKay
Pitched into every one in every way.
Oh, 'twas a battle royal to be sure,
Upon a sort of Presbyterian moor:
Although the Doctor says I've cut and run,
I can assure him I enjoyed the fun.
But as it would appear, from his oration,
He does not understand this resignation,
I'll tell you all about it, first and last,
Without the fear of censure for the past.
The fact is then,—the Doctor crossed the ocean,
His poddle stuffed with many a hig'n church
notion,
For though he slipped his Christian cable once,
He never cut it clearly from his scone,
And when he came amongst us, as you see,
He went to work with his old rule of three,
A strict disciplinarian, with a birch
That sought to make the members of this
Church
Kneel at his feet, and on their very knees
Acknowledge him and his to be the cheese.
In working out his system, then I saw,
As did my worthy confrere, Mr Shaw,
That he bestrode the congregation's back,
And rode them through the mud like any hack.
And now that he has kicked up such a noise
Through some old women's signatures and
boys',
Brought, by his countenance, at least, to bear,
On these two unfledged elders standing there,
Men who were chosen by our common voice,

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But who were not the creatures of his choice,
 And therefore met, in every sort of way,
 His bitter opposition night and day,
 This then we saw; and wishing to be free,
 We cut him and we cut his ministry.
 And where's the use of all this declamation,
 About the manner of our resignation,
 When it was our intention to resign,
 Whatever grounds we pleas'd we could assign.
 The reasons that we gave were honest stuff—
 We didn't like him—and that's plain enough.

REV. MR. GRAY—Oh! Sirs, this subject I approach with pain;

My feelings I'm scarce able to restrain;
 Believe me, I could fairly weep o'er this.
 [Aside] Just now, an onion wouldn't be amiss.
 But let us have assessors, or you'll find
 This congregation scattered to the wind;
 Or else a Presbyterial visitation
 To help us out of our sad situation;
 For now, so high those wordy conflicts run,
 That we must soon pair off, or soon be done.

DR. BURNS—Appoint assessors first, for let me say,

Unless that you proceed in this same way,
 Your visitation won't be worth a snap.
 [Aside] I'm the old genius that is up to trap.

REV. MR. LACHLAN—I second brother Gray's clear-headed motion;

I like his clever visitation notion;
 A Presbyterial visitation now,
 Is just the thing to quell this holy row.

MODERATOR [arising and requesting Professor Young to take the Chair].—Sirs, I would not indeed have left my place,
 But the most serious feature of this case
 Has been o'erlooked, though much upon it turns;

I mean the charges against Doctor Burns.
 In justice to his character and ours,
 We must appoint the necessary powers
 To sift the matter and see how it stands,
 For he has been accused, at certain hands,
 Of insincerity—a moral charge,
 And one that must not go the rounds at large
 Without a thorough, prompt investigation
 By a sound Presbyterial visitation.

[Aside] Although among those blackened Christian embers
 'Twill be a precious job to hunt up members.
 For take them all in all, rich, poor and proud,
 I think I never met a harder crowd.

DR. BURNS—The silly charges, Sirs, referred to here,
 Went in at one and out at t'other ear;

From higher sources I have heard the same,
 But as from common elders now they came
 I would have let them pass unheeded by,
 Had they not caught that famed Professor's eye
 But now we shall have nothing in the dark,
 So those two gentlemen must toe the mark.

MR. McMURRICH.—Our resignation, Sirs, I do maintain,

Was based at once on reasons just and plain;
 We made no charges 'gainst that tough old lad,
 But we'd substantiate them if we had.
 All that we simply felt, was all we said—
 Our honest, cool convictions on th's head.

PROFESSOR YOUNG.—I think it but correct,
 that Doctor Burns,

Who now an angry glance upon me turns,
 When he has read those papers, where he stands,
 Shall place them in the Presbytery's hands,
 For these are all the evidence we've got
 To lead us fairly through this meal-club plot.

DR. BURNS, turning to Prof. Young—Sir, it's no wonder that I now stare at you.

These documents you know are *in hoc statu*,
 What can the Presby'try do with them then?
 [Aside] Professor! Heaven preserve us! Oh!
 such men.

PROF. YOUNG, eyeing the Doctor rather sharply
 A motion now I make, with the intent
 That you shall give up every document.

DR. BURNS—The matter now indeed begins to pinch,

But then, my boy, I shan't give way an inch;
 My congregation's rights I shall defend,
 Not only here but everywhere my friend;
 Appoint assessors, that's the only way
 In which we can succeed, or get fair play;
 For then, the congregation, it is clear,
 Before the Presbytery may appear,
 When they are summon'd, otherwise you know
 Your Presbytery game would be no go.
 These minutes then, good sir, can be completed.
 But b'lieve me, Sirs, I shall not be defeated,
 For these imperfect jottings I shall keep
 Until a session's raised among my sheep,
 Then they can be perfected, and you all
 May turn them into holey or to gall.

PROF. YOUNG—In what capacity do you retain
 Those papers? Sir, I have you now. Explain.

DR. BURNS—As session Moderator, Sir, I ween,
 [Aside]—Who ever heard the like? He must
 be green.

PROF. YOUNG—If that's the case, Sir; then
 it's my impression,

That you as Moderator of the Session,
Must fork out all those papers to our friends,
Although it may not answer your own ends,
The Session's property they are, we know,
Therefore, you Sir, cannot retain them so.

DR. BURNS—Now, Mr. Young, be easy with
your capers,
They're private jottings and not public papers.
[*Aside*]—Although, if of the stamp that I'd
arrive at
I would not think they were so very private.

PROF. YOUNG—If they are private jottings,
by what right
Do you, an officer, hold them so tight.

DR. BURNS—Who else, Sir, could have taken
them in charge?
[*Aside*]—I wonder that they let him run at
large.

PROF. YOUNG—I'll press this motion, for I
smell a rat
In his refusing us, good Sirs, so flat;
Besides, Sirs, he has oftentimes inveighed,
In language strange, that ought to be well
weighed,
Against Church Courts, and laws that we re-
vere.
It's wonderful how long you've stood him here.

DR. BURNS, *aside*—Shade of my fathers, in
ethereal tartan,
Who lived, of yore, the life of any Spartan,
But now who are on heavenly bannocks fed,
Look down, alas! on this defenceless head,
Stop your angelic bagpipes, stop the fling,
And consolation to this bosom bring.
Leave your celestial haggis and your brose,
And hasten to this child of many woes;
For here I am, beset, on every side,
With malice, envy, ignorance and pride;
The sport of fools, the pity of the wise,
And food for gaping strangers' curious eyes;
Because that I have not made common cause
With men who know nor heaven nor wisdom's
laws.
On with your ærial kilts, and rush together
Down yonder burning slopes of heavenly hea-
ther,
Kicking from out your path, as on you travel,
These glittering stars and all that sort of gravel,
Until you reach this rowdiest of Kirks,
With countless unseen claymores, shields and
dirks,
To spit those ragamuffins, one by one,
Till you've got thro' with every mother's son;
Yes, every one; for I no difference know
Between a snivelling friend and open foe

Come, loose your shining bars and golden locks,
And hoist the glorious standard of John Knox—
That is, if you're allowed to live in towns,
And are not shepherds scattered o'er yon
downs—

And ask the mighty saint himself to come,
At the first tap of your immortal drum,
To try and help us, in this hour of need,
By touching up our people and our creed.
But what's the use of raving in this way,
Perhaps you cannot hear one word I say,
Or, if you now, know all that we're about,
Where you're shut in, perchance you can't get
out,
I, therefore, on myself must still depend—
Although some say I'm not my own best
friend—

However, I'll give way a little here,
And tell them I don't hold those papers dear;
For it looks rather strange, I must confess,
Yes, very strange, indeed, and nothing less,
That I, alone, should seize the whole contents
Of all those scraps and precious documents.
[*Aloud*]—Sirs, if you want the papers, its
enough,
Take them; they are not worth a pinch of snuff.

REV. MR. GRAY—Whereas the mild and gentle
Doctor Burns,
In consequence of some few twists and turns,
Requires a Session, from this Congregation,
He'll get a Presbyterial visitation,
And this I move, in hopes it may assuage
The fiery elements that round us rage.

PROF. YOUNG—I'll go the visitation ticket,
Gray;
But they must probe the Doctor night and day.

DR. BURNS—Sir, I object in toto to this mo-
tion,
For in this noddle I have got a notion
That, as the resolution now appears,
The Presbytery might go back for years,
And, on those elders' trivial resignation,
Rip up the whole of my administration.
Just let them stick to order and to law,
And to McMurrich and his crony Shaw.

REV. MR. GRAY—Dear Doctor, you mistake
my inclination;
You won't be injured by this visitation;
They'll let you down as gently on your legs
As if your bunions had been turned to eggs.

DR. BURNS to Mr. Gray—I have my doubts,
Sir, of their being my friends,
For, lately, when to answer their own ends,
They asked me to ordain two worldly men,
Nay, ordered me; were they my friends, Sir,
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I trow not; though those two young gentlemen
 May, on some future day, step forth again,
 As candidates for christian honors here,
 When they grow better. Still I can't but fear
 It will require a miracle of grace
 To work the change required in their case;
 For when they, last, retired from the strife,
 I never felt so happy in my life.
 But to appoint such sweeping visitations
 To overhaul the whole of my relations,
 Is what I shan't give in to, and that's flat,
 So make whate'er you please, Sirs, out of that.

MODERATOR to Dr. Burns---Would you object,
 Sir, that this visitation
 Enquired into your open condemnation,
 By the two elders, on that stormy night,
 When they pitched into you both left and right?

DR. BURNS---No: but a single sentence they
 shan't bandy
 About my holy *modus operandi*;
 Or how with Dr. Willis now I stand.
 These matters they shall never take in hand.

Prof. Young---The Doctor's language, Sirs,
 about Church Courts,
 Has put me so completely out of sorts,
 That I insist it shall, on consideration,
 Form a grave part of this investigation.

DR. BURNS---I did use searching language, I
 admit,
 Because the Synod, Sirs, deserved a hit,
 Their justice or their wisdom I can't see;
 The King case and the case of bigamy
 Disgusted me with the whole godless pack;
 And I would Sirs, have tried another tack
 And left them, if but sure this congregation
 Would keep me, without Pyper's ordination,
 But if on his or Campbell's they were bent,
 To cut them one and all was my intent.

Rev. Mr. LAING---The language mentioned,
 Doctor, we'll report
 At the right time before the proper Court;
 But rest assured this self same visitation
 Shan't have a word to say in that relation.
 So now the Presbytery we'll appoint
 And that your nose shall not be out of joint
 We'll give you your assessors. So you see
 We all can mizzle, for its half-past three.

*Exeunt omnes, to an air from some News
 boys, never heard in polite circles, and
 evidently superinduced by the reference
 to the bigamy case.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Basement Knor's Church.
 Intolerable odour of sulphur, Scotch snuff,*

*and tobacco. Humourous Cabman hum-
 ming "My name is Paddy Burns, of
 mighty great big knowledge, O!" Most
 of the company present.*

*Enter DR. BURNS, a little more collected
 than usual.*

DR. BURNS---According to the Presby'try's
 commands,
 Sirs, I have summoned here to-night all hands;
 But now, it would be well if it appear
 In what capacity my flock is here.
 Let us have delegates, for, Sirs, it might
 Be strange to catechise them all to-night.
 But, recollect, I hear what you now say;
 And let me tell you, you shan't have your way,
 For I'm determined that this visitation
 Shall not go back, in their investigation,
 Commencing with the year of forty-five;
 Although I can meet any man alive
 On any matter touching my career,
 Since I became your pastor in that year.

Rev. Mr. REID---This congregation, Sir's in
 such a state,
 The Presby'try must, or soon or late,
 Look into its condition. For I say,
 The didoes they kick up on the Lord's Day,
 Are most unseemly---Horrible indeed;
 Therefore the Presbytery, Sir, have need,
 If they don't lance the abscess of the past,
 To search the mould in which the present's cast.

DR. BURNS---What didoes, Sir? or is it your
 intent
 To vilify that legal document---
 The Constitution, hither brought and read
 On the Lord's Day, that runs so in your head?
 Yes, hither brought with one important paper,
 Are these the didoes, sir, at which you vapor?

Rev. Mr. REID---Those papers, Sir, are useful
 in their way,
 But should they be brought here on such a day?

DR. BURNS---I see no reason why they should
 not be;
 But there the difference lies 'twixt you and me.

Rev. Mr. REID, *pathetically*---Nay, is it right
 to wage this war, I pray,
 At such a period and in such a way?
 Right, to distribute papers through these pews
 Replete with scandal and ungodly news?
 Who was it stuck up placards here and there
 As if we advertised a Holy Fair?
 Oh! innocence, thou'rt fled for evermore!
 Gone with the cross-barr'd Highland saints of
 yore.

DR. BURNS---Believe me, Sir, that I do not ap-
 prove

Of this same scandal propagation move,
But then its said the Trustees led the way
And brought this style of warfare into play.
And worse than that, and tell it North and
South,
They sought to put vile falsehoods in my mouth,
But, give me honest elders and you'll find
I'll sift those gentry in no gentle wind.

REV. MR. REID—There is another feature in
this case ;
Can we permit Reporters in this place ?
For on the last two Sabbaths, it is plain,
The Doctor stated they should not remain.

REV. MR. LOWRY---This matter 'tis imprudent
to discuss,
Our people know their rights. Let's have no
fuss.

DR. BURNS---In stating this, you see, Sirs. I
was right ;
For well I knew that we should have a fight
If, finding any of this tribe about,
We went to turn the godless villain out ;
So round I passed the word, that they might
hear,
And stay at home among their pipes and beer.

REV. MR. LOWRY---Pray Doctor Burns, what !
have you been in doubt ?
The Presbytery would not turn them out.

DR. BURNS---Between this meeting and the
former, Sir,
There is a difference, so you can't demur,
Reporters then, mig it wel: be on the spot,
That was a public meeting ; this is not.

REV. MR. LAING, with exceeding wisdom---Pray
Reverend Sirs, what do you mean to drive
at ?
Our meetings, they are public or they're private,
Therefore, I now may state with every ease,
We can to night have either sort we please.
Unless it be so fixed by some wise brother,
That we shall have what's neither one nor
t'other.

DR. BURNS---I know that Presbyterial visita-
tions
Are usually thought private by all nations.

REV. MR. LOWRY---The meeting in the even-
ing should be open,
And, Sirs, 'tis I, remember, that have spoken.

REV. MR. NESBIT---When I've a visitation up
my way,
Shall I invite our Editor, I say,
And let the world know all I have to tell,
Through that hard case, the Oakville *Sentinel* ?

DR. BURNS to Mr. Nesbitt---By no means ; and
should he approach the door,
Start him at once, without a sentence more.

REV. MR. REID to Dr. Burns---'Tis strange that
you who were inclined to fight
For a Reporter, but the other night,
Should now so quickly alter your own tune,
[*Aside*]---I'm thinking that it must be nigh full
moon.

DR. BURNS becoming more energetic---Aye, aye,
but now we'll keep things in the dark,
In backing up that rogue I missed my mark ;
I did not think he'd nip me as he did,
When for his friendship I made such a bid.
Sirs, now we'll cut such villains, as I'm born,
What, shall the *Citizen's* contempt and scorn
Be poured again on our devoted heads,
Till we, Sirs, can't sleep soundly in our beds ?
[*Aside*]---Oh ! how I long to wear out these
old boots
On that audacious foul-mouthed scoundrel,
Toots.
[*Aloud*]---If thus with me you'll let such jour-
nals deal,
Sirs, to the Synod I'll at once appeal.

REV. MR. REID---Oh, Doctor, what a dreadful
state your wit is in,
Do you suppose the Presby'try's the *Citizen* ?

DR. BURNS---I charge them, Sir, with nothing ;
tho' I think,
They must have given the daily *Globe* the wink,
For there I get a couple of sharp hits,
While Pyper's speech is purged of its bad bits ;
And not a word of Mr. Oal is said,
Although his speech was really thorough-bred.

REV. MR. REID---Sirs, for Reporters I don't
wish to plead ;
But when you let them in to serve your need,
You'll find, when you don't like what they're
about,
How difficult it is to keep them out.

DR. BURNS---Sir, you forget, that we have got
police
To nab such jokers, should they break the
peace.

MODERATOR---'Tis usual, Sirs, when we o'er-
haul our pastors,
To close our doors, and guard against disasters.

PROF. YOUNG---I, too, Sir, would with you
adopt closed doors.
In short I would exclude all sorts of bores.

DR. BURNS---Sir, do you mean by that strange
observation

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That you would thus exclude the congregation?

Prof. YOUNG---I can't say, all, Sir; no, I can't say all;

But then the number would be precious small
That I'd admit. If I could have my way,
For all that we could glean from what they say
Would be of little use for any ends.
But now its four; and we must mizzle friends.

Exeunt omnes, to the tune of "bannocks of barley meal," and during an ineffectual appeal for half-pence on the part of some pale faced, ragged urchins.

ACT III.

SCENE I—*Interior of Knox's Church. Great excitement evinced by the whole company. Music, "McGregor's Gathering." A dog fight outside, and indications of a general row. Dr. Burns seen advancing towards the foot-lights with an air of fierce determination, and the alacrity of a lad of fourteen.*

Dr. BURNS---I'm sick at heart of all this filthy work,

I could not be worse treated, if a Turk:
A man like me, to feel this galling rod,
Who carried forty years the Christian hod.
Well, to be sure, no doubt it may appear
My conduct on some points looks rather queer,
And I myself cannot exactly say,
But I, just now and then, have gone astray;
Still, Sirs, see how they tease me in their gall,
McMurrich, Pyper, Campbell and them all,
These gentry charge me in the first relation,
With playing foul with my own congregation,
Professing that I love them without guile
Tho' trying to get rid of them the while;
And then that I opposed with desperation
The Pyper and the Campbell confederation,
And basely tampered with the evidence
That those two persons brought in their defence,

Saying right out that I was known to beg
A certain witness to come down a peg,
Because his predilection did not tend
To blow up Pyper and his worthy friend.
And, Sirs, not only thi-, but then again,
Because I said that out of fifteen men
Brought forward at the Elders' nomination,
There were not six fit for the situation.
They say, that was a crime, although I know
I told the truth, and that the case was so;
For let me, Sirs, assure you to your face,
That godly men are scarce about this place.
And further, Sirs, they find another flaw
And state that I once said to Pyper's Shaw,

In language that must every heart appal,
"Thy God shall smite thee yet, thou whited wall."

And thus, they turn their swords against my breast,

But, Sirs, the whole of them may do their best,
They'll soon find out which of us is the strongest.

It's said the toughest hide holds out the longest,
And in that case I think I'm fully safe,
No matter how they fret, an' I foam and chafe.
Again, those Trustees are a precious set;
A jolly sort of hail fellows well met,
Working against me with their main and might,
Just hear what they have told us all to-night;
They say the Congregation [*Aside humorously*]
it's so odd!

[*Aloud*]---Are out of cash and of the grace of God.

Showing that I their vengeance should provoke,
Who rob their souls and pockets at one stroke.
How strange that those same gentlemen now try

To pension off a man so vile as I.
Surely, if I were all that they would say
They ought not to dispose of me this way.

Aside musingly, while the company are engaged in mutual recrimination in the distance at the back of the stage.

Then, after all, it was not so uncivil,
I feel they've hung my purpose on a swivel;
My mind is in a dreadful state of tension
To be or not to be without the pension,
Aye that's the question, Whether I should suffer
The kicks and cuffs of fortune, that old buffer,
Or take this purse against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing knock them into bubbles?
But no, 'twill never do; they might betray me,
And when they get me out or get to pay me.
I'll not give way. I'll bear the ills I've got,
Rather than fly to those that I know not.

[*Aloud*]---But I don't care, Sirs, for those vile Trustees,

My ministrations are pronounced the cheese;
And if you doubt what I would now maintain,
You can enquire of Mason, Stewart and Bain.

REV. MR. LAING [*while the whole Company advances towards the Doctor.*]

Oh, Rev. Sirs, I am refreshed to find
That sympathies so gentle and so kind
Have been evinced by all through this affair,
But doubtless it is the result of prayer,
By this, God's people, pure, in the long run,
[*Aside*]---The Lord forgive me for this bit of fun.

[*Aloud*]---Although it is but right, I should confess,

That we have been in a tremendous mess.
 For five long days, Oh, what humiliation,
 Between the Doctor and this congregation;
 But having oft the fact before our eyes
 That great effects from trifling causes rise,
 We ought to mind our Christian Q's and P's
 And be, my friends, more often on our knees.

PYPER, nudging Campbell---We'll soon have
 sport, old fellow; lots of sport.
 For now there is a budget in this court,
 Which, emptied out before the Doctor, there,
 Will make him fret and fume and stamp and
 stare
 Worse than the nip 'bout Paul and the high
 priest,
 That brought him down on me like any ^{old}beast.
 If I were judge and jury, Oh! my eyes,
 But I should put him thro' his exercise.
 That budget, aye, but it's a great vexation
 That it applies to the whole congregation,
 And that into it's godless bulk are wedged
 Pastor and elders fledged, and yet unfledged;
 Trustees and Ministers, aye, one and all;
 Old Knox's Church is down, and what a fall;
 I'm growing sad, indeed I'm growing sad,
 As now I think that I who should be clad
 In christian purple and fine linen, each,
 Can scarcely get a Sunday School to teach.
 How dreadful; from the way that now I'm
 placed

The memory of my Father's disgraced.
 How can I think of him who stood of yore,
 On Chaldean hills, upwards of six feet four,
 In his full bloom, and flaming tartan frock,
 The pride of many a Hebrew turkey cock;
 Who with his pibroch made the welkin ring,
 Astonishing all Israel and its king;
 These are the memories, friend, that touch my
 mutton,
 But all this murmuring is not worth a butter;
 So who's afraid! or what's to be afraid of?
 I'll be the stuff that some men think I'm made
 of.

This little upset only makes me riper;
 The young shall yet be worthy the old Pyper.
 And all I ask for is, a few short turns
 At that old, gnarled, stubborn bruiser---Burns.

Mr. OAL---Oh, Mr. Pyper, I the thing have
 noted,
 Against our pastor you have scripture quoted.

PYPER [with ineffable contempt]- Oh, Mr. Oal,
 Now have you? What a pity!
 With all your notes you gave us a sad ditty.
 Though, if we credit all Old Hick'ry says,

You're nothing short of a Demosthenes,--
 That "admirable speech"---that verbal wonder,
 I never met the like of such a blunder!
 Such drivelling, such awkward kicks and pucks.
 Be off and teach your mother to milk ducks.

CAMPBELL, with his left eye closed---I say, Py-
 per; do you hear me, Pyper?
 Hang me old fellow, but that was a wiper.

REV. Mr. LOWRY---My friends, on Mr. Young
 I now shall call
 To plainly lay before you, one and all,
 What I shall term, this grave Deliverance,
 Through every clause of which he will advance.

PROF. YOUNG rising with a paper in his hand---
 Its now no matter how the case may wag,
 I'll let this huge black cat out of the bag;
 [Reads]---"From evidence adduced it does ap-
 pear

You're all at sixes and at sevens here;
 The cause of these heart-burnings may be found
 In what we think to be defects all round.
 'Tis said the Doctor leaves this congregation
 Too often for some distant ministration,
 And that to Campbell and to Pyper too,
 He offered opposition most undue,
 And tampered with each witness on this case,
 When they were running in that elder race.
 'Tis also said that he is not sincere
 In his relations with his people here,
 And that, beside, his public ministry,
 Is not exactly what it ought to be.
 This is not all, for some have found a flaw
 In friend McMurrich and our brother Shaw,
 And say that they occasionally slip
 In the grave duties of their eldership;
 And further it's asserted the Trustees
 Evince great haughtiness whenever they please,
 And turn their nose up at the Congregation,
 From whom 'tis plain they hold their situation.
 But it is thought by those who are reflective,
 The Constitution's---in their case---defective.
 All this is said, and between me and you,
 There's much of it that's false and much that's
 true.

So after all our work and such confusion,
 This, brethren, I must say, is our conclusion.

REV. Mr. LOWRY, rising---This motion, Sirs, I
 make with the intent,
 That we adopt this ab'e document.

MODERATOR---Sirs, let us have your views
 upon this case,
 But I shall give you mine in the first place:
 In being too severe there is no use;
 In every one of us some screw is loose.

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Therefore this paper answers all our ends,
 Because you see there's nothing in it, friends.
 Read it from first to last, from last to first,
 And if you can say who has got the worst;
 For when it cracks the head of your old pastor
 It's ready the next moment with a plaster,
 And so with all the rest, therefore, we know
 It butters o'er the case from head to toe.

But we must touch up, though we've spared the
 birch,

The Constitution of this Knox's Church;
 See, the Precentor, is a man of prayers,
 And not inclined to sing new fangled airs,
 For I believe the real old Scotch "Och Hone"
 To be the very thing itself alone.

REV. DR. WILLIS—Now to an end this business
 seems to taper,

To help it I shall therefore back this paper,
 But congregations should be very prayerful,
 And if their guides particularly careful.

MODERATOR, [*rising to move the adoption of
 the paper.*]

Now, Sirs, this motion with your leave I'll put,
 And when it's carried we can homewards cut.

DR. BURNS—Not yet, sir, if you please, with all
 your pains,
 Till I cut up the whole that it contains.

MODERATOR, [*and several others at once.*]

No, doctor, we shan't hear another word,
 All that can now occur, has just occurred.
 The case has got the fullest consideration,
 Therefore, you'd but delay the congregation.

DR. BURNS, [*solus as the whole Company fall
 back to the rear of the stage after having caught
 the observation that he appeared to the Synod.*]

Then to the Synod I appeal; for know,
 This head that's bleached with sixty years of
 snow.

You shall not trample in your godless dust,
 You sons of Mammon and of every lust.
 Sooner than bow beneath this yoke of yours
 I'll seek in my old age my native moors,
 And with an empty wallet at my side
 Traverse them once more in bare-legged pride.
 Think you, that where Ben Lomond meets the
 eye

Heaved up in Majesty against the sky,
 I could not gather in some heathery dell
 A flock a trifle farther off from hell,
 Aye that I could; nor would I cock my nose
 At dirty women making dirty brose,
 In cabins at the back of some old ditch,
 Like those where young Prince Charley got
 the itch.

For God, whom I've been always taught to
 bless,

Would fit my stomach to the doubtful mess;
 The back He to the burden fits, 'tis said,
 Then why not fit the belly to the bread?

I'd leave you all; You're not the stuff for me,
 There's not one of your whole fraternity,
 That has a soul much bigger than a mouse,
 Or that possesses anything like *nouse*.

I'm sick of you, sick of you, kith and kin,
 Your very names oft drive me into sin.
 Pyper and Campbell, Oh, if I'd a chance
 I'd lead those precious worthies such a dance;
 But where's the use in talking on this plan,
 The fact is I'm almost a used up man.

But after all I won't abate a jot,
 I'll burst my boiler or this Meal Club Plot.

*Exeunt omnes, while the Moderator is
 in the act of pronouncing the benediction,
 and during a variety of original expres-
 sions and noises on the part of the major-
 ity of the company. Music, "There is no
 luck about the house." Cabs, dogs, and
 policemen in the distance.*

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EPILOGUE.

Spoken, in tolerable English, by Dr. Burns.

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So now, my friends, you've "seen the elephant,"
And got a precious dose of drivelling cant ;
And learned how nicely this old genius peels
The pelt off slippery, Presbyterian eels ;
And felt how hard it is to stem the tide
Of arrogance, of ignorance, of pride ;
How hard for Virtue, in her simple guise,
To pick her steps among the filth of lies.
But Truth's immutable and cannot bend
To answer any but one noble end ;
And though she oft repudiates the art
That sinks the head so deep into the heart,
Before her great and awful majesty
And worship always, as I worship now.
But, Peter Brown, Oh ! Mr Peter Brown,
At you how she must fret and fume and frown,
That you should once, with holy zeal half frantic,
Urge me to fly across the broad Atlantic,
To drill a set of clerical scape graces,
And look them, as you said, into their places,
And then desert me, when for all your sakes
I came out here from the "lo'ed land o' cakes" ;
Hoping to bring up under christian laws
Your hosts of Pypers, Campbells, Leasks and Shaws.
I've failed, because to me was never given
The knack of pointing short cuts out to heaven.
But where's the use of grumbling thus, in meter,
I've broken all their backs and staggered Peter,
And conscious now that I have done what's right,
I make my bow and bid you all good night.