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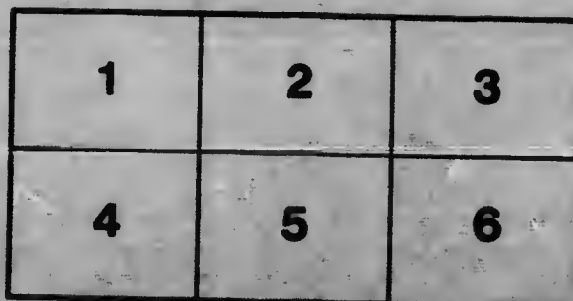
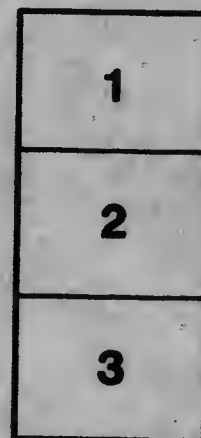
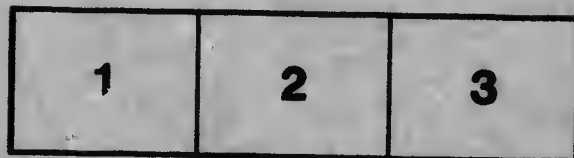
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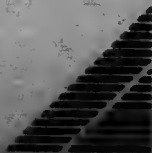
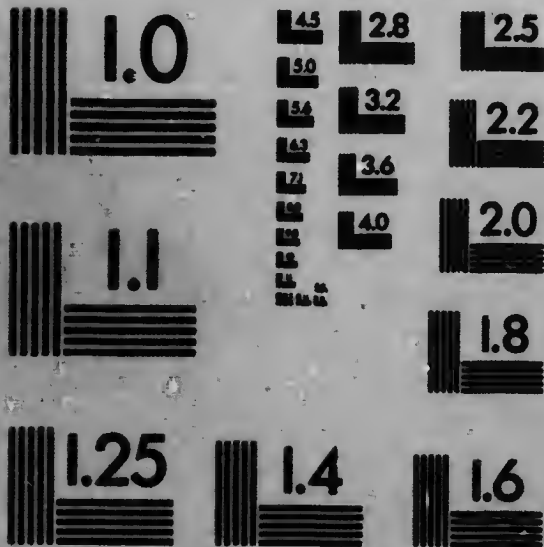
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**FRONTISPIECE.—CHURCH STREET, (Entrance to the West U. F. Church  
being half-way up, on the right hand side, looking towards the Parish Church.)**

**SACRAMENT SUNDAY**  
**AND**  
**BELLS OF KARTDALE**

By  
**J. M. HARPER**

THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY, LTD.

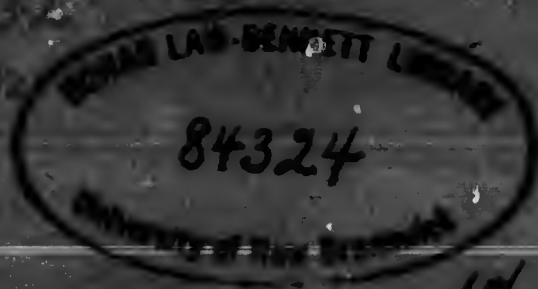
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SACRAMENT SUNDAY  
AND  
THE BELLS OF KARTDALE.

BY  
J. M. HARPER,  
The Author of "Our Jeames."

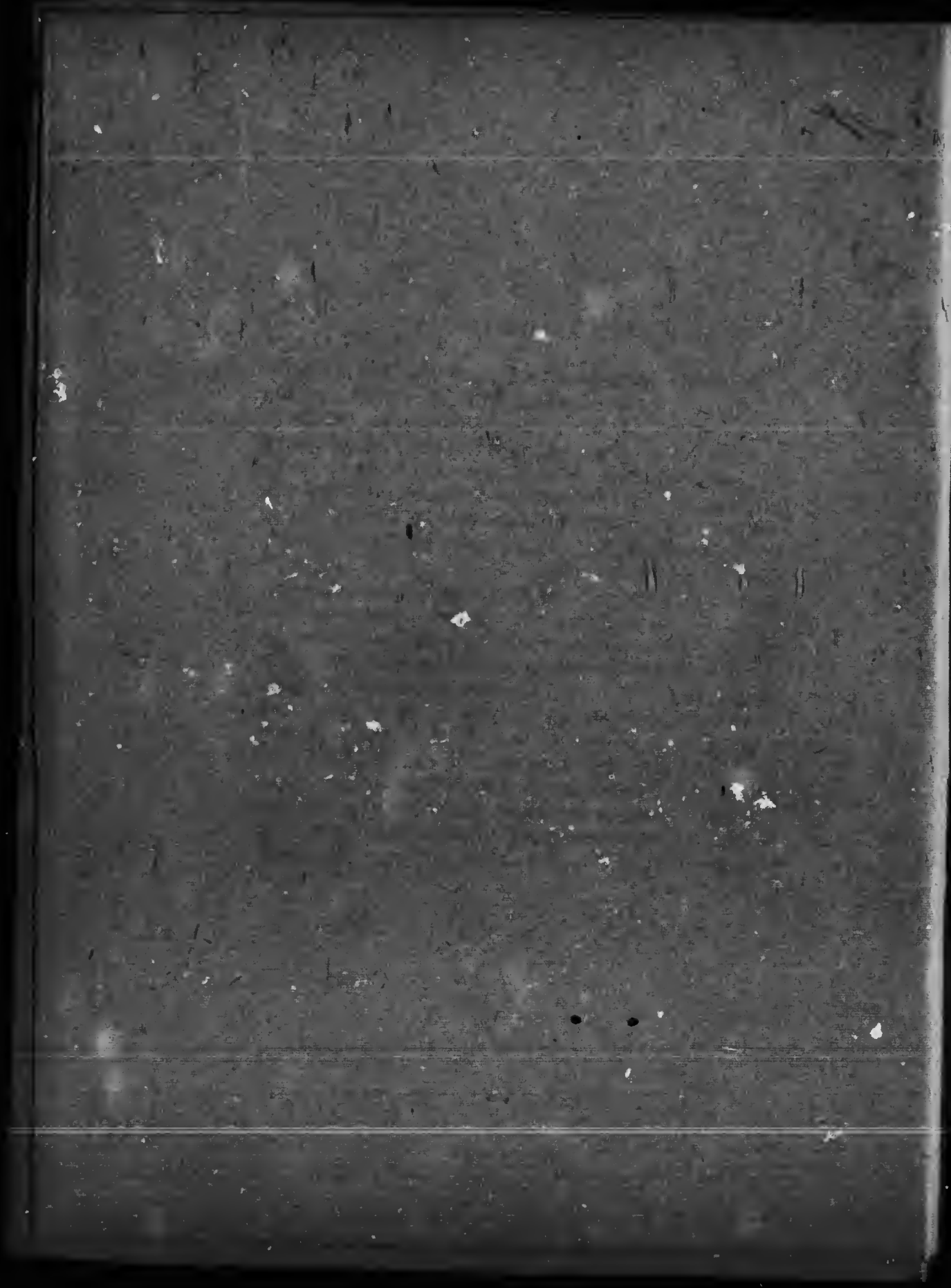
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DEDICATED  
TO  
MRS. HUGH PATON,  
MONTREAL.

My native land, a debt of song I pay—  
A debt of love that lieth on my soul,  
When memory draws the veil of bygone days,  
And olden music greets the lifting scroll,  
A tribute to thy freedom which I bring:  
The piety that scents thy air I sing:  
Thy purple hills whose silver mists unroll  
The waving gold of dawn; thy lowing plains  
And hawthorn banks and brces, where hamlet meekness  
reigns.

### PREFATORY NOTE.

In these progressive times, the building of a church is an event of every-day occurrence; yet it is not without an interest, special and engrossing, to the community or congregation which has such an undertaking in hand. The old church edifice in which the author was reared in his youth is about to give place to a more spacious structure; and in presence of the event, he may possibly be excused for venturing to illustrate in verse one of the momentous lessons he once learned within the walls of the old building about to be superseded. In preparing for the press the souvenir booklet herewith submitted to the public, his task has been a labour of love; and this in itself may condone its several imperfections. The notes are perhaps not without omissions, but in themselves they will help to recall many of the stronger lights that used to shine in the congregation of our Kartdale forefathers.





## PREFACE TO "SACRAMENT SUNDAY."

The most memorable of the church-days of the year was the Sabbath on which the observance of the Lord's Supper was solemnized. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*; and there is certainly an easily discovered evolution in the history of Sacrament Sunday, from the scenes depicted in *The Holy Fair*, and the social intercourse of the session-house of later times, to the simple solemn service with which the writer was familiar in his younger days, and which he has tried to describe in the verses to follow. The last trace of the prolonged service, known as the procession of the tables, was all but a thing of the past in the early fifties, having disappeared long before the improving architecture had done away with the square pews in the area of the church, in which the communicants selected their seats at the successive serving of the tables. The shortening of the services to the time-limit of the present day—though there are still the three diets of worship—did not detract from the solem-

nity of the occasion, possibly has purified it, if the minute records of some sessions are to be considered authentic.\*

Burns's satire, with its many manifest over-drawings, embodies the record of a ceremonial which happily has left none of its profaner attachments as a legacy to our times. Among some of the Celtic settlements in Canada the "occasion" even yet is attended with the congregating of the whole countryside. But the social intercourse indulged in during the "interval between the diets," has in it no element of the immoral of Burns's day. And the same may be said of the ceremonies of the day as it has continued to be celebrated in the Highland parishes of Scotland. Between the simple solemnity of the celebration of to-day, however, and the controversial and social license of the past, there is a well defined transition period, which has been described in Dr. Gregor's *Echo of the Olden Time*; and the reader will hardly blame the quoting of his quaint description in full.

"This was a solemn day, and great was the preparation for it in every way. For months before, the young who wished to

\* I have heard my father describe some of the session-house after-festivities of his early days, and Mr. Inglis in his "Historical Sketch," says: "There are some curious entries in connection with the communion. Various sums are paid for cheese and whiskey. After a little this becomes cheese and rum. Then they return to the whiskey, the cheese being annual till the year 1840, when this class of expenses winds up with ham and porter."

become communicants had been undergoing instruction. The Thursday before the day of communion was observed with all the strictness of the Sunday. In some parts Friday was observed. In all parts there were services on Saturday, and during the hours of service all work was suspended and all shops closed. Admission to Communion was granted by tokens, which were given to communicants on Thursday and Saturday. All appeared on Sunday in their very best attire, and usually if any new dress was to be got for the year, it was reserved for that day. By an early hour the parish was astir, for public worship began at half-past nine. All who were able to attend did so, and the aged and infirm, who were unable to walk, were conveyed in carts. The whole family could not go at once. One was left at home to look after the house, and then one returned from the first table and the one that had remained at home went to church. Long before the hour of the services the church was filled with reverent worshippers, and a solemn stillness filled the old building. A table or two, according to the size of the church, extended from end to end of it. It was covered with linen, and on it were placed the bread and wine.

"First came the ordinary services, longer, however, than usual. Then came the 'Fencing of the Tables,' a long address debarring all from Communion who were not of the Lord's people — often couched in language little calculated to soothe the

troubled mind. After the reading of the account of the institution of the Supper in I. Cor. xi., 23-29, and the 'consecration prayer,' came the delivering of the tokens and the collecting of the offering for the poor. An address of fifteen or twenty minutes' length, setting forth some doctrine bearing more particularly on the Lord's Supper, was delivered. After all this the communicants partook of the bread and wine. Then followed another address, encouraging the communicants to persevere in the good way. The communicants then left the table, and their places were taken by others. By some, however, the second table was regarded with a kind of dreadful awe, arising from some indefinable notion about Judas. Addresses were delivered at each table before and after Communion. Table after table, to the number of six, eight and thirteen, was filled and emptied. It can easily be seen that, as the tokens were not numbered for the tables, there must have been a good deal of confusion and pressing in going to the tables and retiring from them, and many an infirm woman dreaded the confusion and the press. During the whole of the service there was a constant going out and in of worshippers. When all had communicated, the minister again ascended the pulpit and after a long address concluded the services by prayer and praise. "Those who left the church betook themselves for refreshment, either to a friend's house in the neighborhood, or, in some

parishes, to the manse, where broth was served up, or to the tent that had been pitched not far from the church, or to a barn close at hand that had been opened for the sale of such refreshment as small beer, bread and cheese. Some retired to a quiet corner and partook of what they carried from home.

"In some parishes a second service was begun by one of those who had assisted at the tables immediately after that of the minister of the parish had come to a close. It lasted from an hour to an hour and a half, or even longer. In other parishes, there was an interval between the services, which was devoted to the partaking of refreshment by those who had not already done so. The minister, with his assistants, and usually the elders, dined together. The shades of the summer evening, for the Lord's Supper was dispensed in summer—were falling as the worshippers returned to their homes.

"On Monday there was public worship, and, as on Saturday, business and work of all kinds were suspended during the hours of worship. On this day there was usually a party at the manse, consisting of the ministers who had assisted, their wives, and other members of their families. It was called 'The Muckle Munanday,' and report has it that at times there was toddy in excess; but *nihil nisi bonum de mortuis.*"





## SACRAMENT SUNDAY.

In lowland vale, the dearest far to me,  
Where nature hums as in a mead of flowers,  
I hear the sweet-lipped chimes arouse the lea,  
And wake its slow response to Sabbath hours.  
Within, the drowsy echoes find retreat :  
Without, the murmurings of springtide meet,  
Where cloistered brook sings in its nearer  
    bowers,  
Till seems it, as if nature would begin  
An anthem in my being, ushering Easter in.

Of Sabbath morns, the precious of the year,  
Thy calm subdueth meek the landscape's  
face,  
And from the dews of prayer distils a tear,  
To scent the heart, a chamber fit for grace !  
Where leads its course the soul oft wisteth not,  
When faith turns down the bridle-path of  
doubt,  
That winds about so oft a hapless maze ;  
Yet, ere thy paschal chimes have died away,  
Truth's highway broadens as it finds the sheen  
of day.

On wing of dawn new light illumines the soul,  
And wrestles with the carnal creeping in,  
While conscience reads, alarmed, the memory-  
scroll  
Of motives sabled by the breath of sin.  
Alas, how strength is weakness in the strife,  
We find within the narrowness of life !  
How can the soul be shriven amid the din ?  
Not till it seeks its foster-strength in love,  
Not till it finds, through faith, a wisdom from  
above.



The sombre homestead, cowering in its nest,  
One day in seven, unheedeth labour's call,  
But waits the clarion strains from spire  
addressed,  
To break the gossamer bonds of dreamland's  
thrall.  
Yet, ere the dew hath lost its lingering drops,  
The smoke comes winding from the chimney  
tops,  
To signal me within the boundary wall—  
Or others warn the homeward path to take,  
To greet the claims of duty that are now awake.  
Such respite-rest to all discretion owes,  
And stint of toil enhances Sunday fare ;  
As round the frugal board the family shows  
A cheerful meekness void of secular care.  
From worldly themes the converse turns away,  
Though thoughts are busy with approaching  
day—  
With friends and neighbours who will soon  
repair,  
A wistful throng, to celebrate the hour  
A Saviour's pains, from sleep of death, arose to  
power.

And, thanks returned, the simple record's read  
 How once the Son of Man atoned for man,  
 More wondrous still, how rose He from the  
 dead,  
 That hopes immortal, mortal love might fan.  
 And from the family altar prayers ascend,  
 That conscience, finding peace in faith, would  
 end  
 The day in peace, as only conscience can,—  
 And that the elect would find communion sweet,  
 Around the table where their privilege 'tis to  
 meet.

The poor have little need for sumptuar' laws,  
 To bridle pride or love for dress impair,  
 Yet, ben the house, the young folk seek their  
 braws,  
 That seldom ken as yet a week-day wear.  
 If there's distress that thrift hath never borne,  
 How doubly poor's the thrift on Sunday morn,  
 That hath no second better garb to air  
 In God's own house : and so both old and  
 young  
 Adorn themselves, as best they may, to join the  
 throng.

The hour draws near, at last the bells ring out,  
And echo answers from the solemn streets,  
As pass the worshippers with mien devout,  
To hear the story that their heart repeats:  
To worship God, nay more, with Him to feast,  
The emblems of His body's passion taste;  
And with the chimes the hum of life retreats  
Across the glebe, beyond the grass-hid  
mounds,  
Where saintship emblems rest within the church's  
bounds.

Within the sacred courts the snow-white lines,  
A space reserved, mark where the faithful  
meet ;  
Then cometh pause, when once the bell resigns  
Its claim to call. Each solemn wales a seat.  
The pastor and his friend from parish near,  
With measured tread, in central aisle appear  
As regents of the feast. The elders seek  
retreat  
Within the pulpit's shade ; till " Let us sing,"  
In presence of the throne of God, the faithful  
bring.

The sermon o'er, appropriate for the day,  
The warrant read,—a law for good and ill,  
What joy it is, a guest prepared, to stay!  
What judgment 'tis, if unrepentant still!  
Then silence seeks anew to sift the heart :  
Its subtle rhythm, far beyond all art  
Of anthem-power, hath in it music's thrill :  
Is man the Holy Place, where finds he grace,  
Within its waking awe, his destiny to trace ?  
A blessing craved, as first the feast was blessed,  
The patriarch-elders pass the emblems  
round,—  
The broken bread, the token of unrest,  
The wine, the token of redemption found.  
The frailties of the flesh each sad reviews,  
The covenant-pledges broken each renews,  
Still seeking good within,—a higher  
ground :  
What is't to find ? Can man e'er reach the  
goal ?  
Is it to do or be that purifies the soul ?

Faith courage takes, assurance comes of faith,  
And, prayer-becalmed, the pastor's friend  
draws near,  
To tell how love can conquer sin and death,  
And sanctify the soul through faith-girt  
fear.  
'Betray it not, nor yet thyself betray,'  
The preacher saith, 'Avoid the worldling's  
way ;  
With guidance from the truth thy path is  
clear :  
Though narrow is its course, it leadeth straight,  
Where peace and happiness the pilgrim's end  
await.'

The youthful of the flock have wondering seen  
The mystery of the feast. They know in  
part ;  
For who is wise to know what all may mean ?  
Who can attain true purity of heart ?  
'Tis theirs to join in praise with pure-eyed  
mirth,  
Receive the blessing, and discern the worth  
Of righteous dealing ; theirs to learn the art  
From piety matured,—God's flock in sooth,  
Though timorous as yet, to watch the ways of  
truth.

And then at length along the waking aisles,  
Solemnity apace, all wend their way,—  
The younger first in haste for out-door wiles,  
The older soon to bid them mind the day.  
Friend greeteth friend in sober words and  
kind,  
A converse fitting for the day they find ;  
While some, with miles to go, yet fain to  
stay,  
To hear at eve the helper's eloquence,  
Have instant pressing welcome to their neigh-  
bour's spence.

In time dispersed, home duties them await,  
The interval delayed, thrift urgeth haste ;  
Some seek the byres, some pass afield the gate,  
To seek report of flocks or straying beast :  
The housewife and her handmaids have their  
cares,  
As each her portion of the meal prepares,  
The auld man, thinking less to-day of waste  
Than plenty for his guests, with couthie cheer  
Invites a sitting down to Scotia's wholesome  
fare.

Nor of the day do they for long forget,  
As round the table all have ta'en their  
place :  
The tribulations that the saints beset,  
The judgments fallen on men for lack of  
grace,  
The doctrines of the sectaries, false and true,  
The watchwords of the churches, old and  
new,  
Reforms of eld, both orthodox and base,  
The seniors sore discuss ; while still the  
young,  
In admiration of the lore, restrain their tongue.

Yet even they to purpose converse hold,  
Belyve outside the steading on the green,  
Of pastor-prophets, virtued pure as gold,  
Of prowess for the faith in battle seen.  
Of sect-craft, and the ties of church and state  
They hesitate to talk, but fond relate  
The tales of church-romance ; for well I  
ween  
The record of the martyrs they have known,  
Since e'er their pride awoke, to prize the land  
their own.

And then, from far and near, as sinks the sun,  
The country-side assembles, keen to hear  
The helpmate preacher. Service elsewhere  
done,  
The sympathies of sect may disappear.  
The venerated walls enclose a throng  
Who lift their voices in the sacred song,  
"All people that on earth." How stirring,  
clear  
The grand old chorus is when thus enchoired !  
How from a thousand hearts the words ring out  
inspired !

Nor is there need to linger o'er the scene,  
No need to tell what words the preacher  
found  
To stir his hearers' hearts. The tears  
between  
The joys aroused, to tell were empty sound,  
Compared with what was felt. And yet  
renewed,  
Such scenes reveal the mystery of the good  
In God and us : by them is ever crowned  
The glory of the human that's divine :  
Through them the good and true becometh  
thine and mine.



Yes, thine and mine, my friend ; and who  
shall dare

With ruthless hand from us such memories  
steal ?

Who from the past its fringe of sweetness  
tear,

As narrowness its giddy joys reveal ?

Our lives are God's, not ours, to make or mar ;

Our fealty's His, in country near or far ;

Our homes are His, within His common-  
weal ;

And lingering o'er the scenes of bygone time

Makes, more and more, both here and there,  
our lives sublime.



### NOTES TO "SACRAMENT SUNDAY."

"In lowland vale."—The Clyde receives at Renfrew the waters of the Cart flowing in a single channel, the junction of its two branches, the White Cart and the Black Cart, occurring a short distance to the west of that count<sup>y</sup> town. The former tributary rises in the hills of Strathavon, not far from the heath on which was fought the battle of Drumclog, and flows through the town of Paisley, having as a sub-tributary the little Levern, which drains the farms of Neilston and Barrhead. The latter tributary, the Black Cart, has its origin in Lochwinnoch Loch, traversing the policies of Castlesemple and the fields of Howwood, before it reaches Cartside or supplies waterpower to the factories of Johnstone. It is this tributary stream which runs as a thread through the "lowland vale" referred to in the poem, and adds so much to its beauty.

"Cloistered brook."—About half-way between Johnstone and Renfrew, the Black Cart receives the waters of the Gryffe,

which rises near Misty Law, a height overlooking the battle field of Largs, and the Firth of Clyde. This stream, famous for its trouting pools and gentle rapids, provides innumerable phases of natural beauty as it winds its way through the plantings of Kilmalcolm, Bridge of Weir and Crosslie, and across the open farms of the parishes that lie north and west from the burgh. Near the parish school of Quarrelton, the Linn Burn used to attract the landscape painter. With the Wee Plantin' on its right, the Johnstone Castle woods behind, and a pool at the base of the Linn proper providing a water supply to the Rope Walk, it was known to the school boys by the name of the "Baggie Burn," as it ran in its tuneful course over the chalybeate stained chucky-stanes, to join the waters of the canal. This same brook or a neighbour of its, that runs behind the Windy Hall farm, used to afford excellent sport to the angler who was fortunate enough to get a permit from the laird or a friendly greeting from the gamekeeper. The Cart itself is free ground for the follower of the gentle art, and its beauty spots are known to be many and charming.

"Ushering Easter In."—Here Sacrament Sunday is designated by a term distinctively English. The fast day of springtime corresponded in some respects to Good Friday as commemorated on the other side of the Cheviots, being, however, in no way identified with it as a special church celebration.

The neglect, into which the preparatory services of the Friday preceding the Sacrament Sunday of the Established and Free Churches had fallen, led to these fast days becoming more or less of a holiday, and at last cosmopolitanism had its way in providing a substitute.

"How can the soul be shriven?"—The activities of life, like the thorns in the sower's way, often prevent the possibilities of a man's instinctive integrity from having their fullest development. The shriving of the soul is here only spoken of as the every day striving that begets the right tendency towards the higher morality.

"The sombre homestead."—The farm-houses in the neighbourhood of Johnstone have specific names attached to them, though the practice in other sections of Scotland of dropping the farmer's own name and giving him the name of his farm is not known in the district. Many of these rural residences have picturesque settings and cannot all be classed under the term "sombre." Among others, the following may be appropriately mentioned in this brochure, their tenants having had connection with the Burgher Kirk; namely, the *Broomcard*, once occupied by the Gilmours, whose pew was in the gallery facing the pulpit; *Linclive*, still held by the Kerrs, sons of Mr. William Kerr, the elder, elsewhere mentioned; and *Meiklebogue*, tenanted by a nephew of Mr. William Crawford, another of the elders referred to on another page.

These names suggest many others of the "nestling homesteads" of the locality, such as, *Miller Eadie's Farm*, *Nether Johnstone*, *Laigh Cartside*, *Windy Hall*, and *Sandholes*. The manor-houses are referred to in a note on the "Bells of Kartdale."

"Such respite-rest."—The Sabbath duties of attending church and Sunday-school and Bible-class were not always void of irksomeness to the younger generation in the Scottish home, yet they involved a sound moral and religious training which was seldom lost in after years. "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work," is a precept, moreover, less acted upon, if more scientifically understood, to-day than it was during the first half of the last century.

"Sunday fare."—The Sunday meals, generally two in number, with a light luncheon during the interval of public worship, were mostly of a more relishable character than the week-day courses, a condition of things fittingly illustrated by the familiar expression "a long lie and a tea-breakfast." A special form of family worship not infrequently introduced and ended Sacramento Sunday in the household.

"The elect."—The subject that disturbed, as much as any other, the polemics of the period herein specially referred to was the doctrine of election, but the expression, as used in the text, it is needless to say, has no signification beyond the simple connotation of the membership of the congregation.

"The elders seek retreat."—Two pews

differing in some aspects of ornamentation from the ordinary pew, were reserved for the elders, on either side of the pulpit, though it was in front of the preacher's box that the constituting of the session was wont to be solemnized. In the olden times there was no communion table proper, the top of the cupboard used for the keeping of the odds and ends of Sunday-school work, forming a convenient place for the ranging of the emblems in view of the whole congregation.

"The token of unrest."—The active prejudices of the bigoted have always worked, and still work, havoc with the reputation of the reformer. The unrest of the Pharisee, in his national religious pride, prepared the way for the hatreds seen around Calvary, and the breaking of the body of Him who died there for sins other than His own. Is it not a pity that the lesson of love becomes so often a dead letter, when a church or congregation becomes divided by factional strivings and personal estrangements!

"Out-door wiles."—In this expression, there comes to mind the repressing influence of the old Scottish training. There was nothing without for the younger to hasten towards, save the greensward of the church grounds and the enticements of nature by the street or highway. But these were too often classified as the "wiles" of week-day life. The walk to and from church had to be looked upon as a duty and not as a pleasuring amid the lurings of the

roadside; while a walk out into the country on Sunday afternoon was looked upon by the "straighter-laced sectaries" as little short of sacrilege.

"The helpmate preacher."—The custom of always having some neighbour minister to help at the sacramental season, is one of the legacies which have come down from Burns's day. The congregation has, therefore, an opportunity of knowing, if not comparing, the gifts of those who comprise the Presbytery, or who have even charges beyond. The sermon in the evening was usually looked upon as a test deliverance, and seldom missed attracting a large audience, or receiving a thorough sifting afterwards; and whenever there was a large audience, the precentor had usually the good sense to select "Old Hundred," as the tune which everybody could sing. The announcing of the psalm tunes to be sung was effected by putting up two slips of cardboard, one on each side of the pulpit, with the name of the selection printed on each. Mr. Inglis says that it was in 1841, that the proposal was made in a congregational meeting of the Burgher Kirk, to have the names of the psalm-tunes printed in this way, and I have been told that my father had something to do with the perpetuation of the plan.



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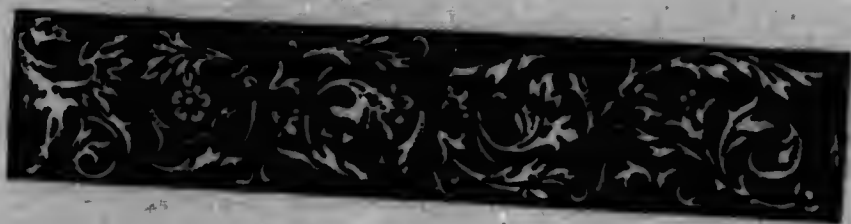
**"The belfry-home of the Bells of Kartdale."**



## PREFATORY NOTE TO THE BELLS OF KARTDALE.

Many years ago the lieges of Kartdale, while discussing the ownership of the bell which hangs in the steeple of the parish church, were to be found indulging in a warmth of expression not unusual in disputations over local affairs. In this instance there were two well defined parties,—the one claiming, from the facts of loan and purchase of the earlier occupants of the steeple, that the present bell is the property of the town; the other claiming that its ownership is vested in the trustees of the church. The strength of the storm having now long since spent itself, leaving no vestige of rueful recrimination in its wake, the author ventures to issue in convenient form the verses which had for their harmless intention the crystallizing of the event as a pleasant reminiscence.





## THE BELLS OF KARTDALE.

O life, whose dreams kaleidoscopic charm,  
Within, without, in weird or winsome form,  
No easy task it is to chart thy rays,  
Howe'er they sheen their trend on memory's  
maze,

Howe'er they gild the tale of humankind,  
Howe'er, like fillet silk, they crown the mind,  
While seeking limit in a world beyond  
Within the depths that faith alone can sound !

'Twas in the gloaming of a springtide day,  
With sunset's golden locks befringed with grey,  
Beyond the upland waves of Kartdale's vale,  
Beyond the isles that echo ocean's wail,  
I sought the poet's path whose height commands  
The threading streets within the burgh's lands,

To spend an hour with nature in repose,  
Or weave a silken thought in rhyme or prose.

While yet within the woods the shadows fell,  
To grieve the glory of the day's farewell,  
The moon all radiant at the sun's retreat  
Climbed up majestic towards her zenith-seat ;—  
The child of day, matured a midnight queen,  
Effulgent as a lover's go-between.  
The giddy stars, like courtiers unrestrained,  
Danced on the floor of heaven chaotic-stained,  
As if they thought their ecstasy alone  
Made light enough to lustre midnight's throne.

Within the valley, town and hamlet sleep  
While yet the changeful hours bethink to creep  
Into another day, to stir the hum of life ;  
No longer hear we din of factory strife,  
Of spinning mule or whizzing engine wheel :  
No longer sense of sight or smell-reveal  
Ought but the wakeful spirit of night apart  
To seek the mystery-solvents of the heart.

Nor changed the scene, though fashioned life  
may change :  
The beauty-lines, matured, perchance, still range  
Within, beyond the vale. Suspense still broods  
Near by, beyond the limits of the woods

And cultured glebe. Within the landscape's  
trend

The curving holms of Kartdale's streams still  
send

Their tuneful tribute to the mother stream.  
Whose commerce swells an ever running dream.

The circling heights as far as Misty Law  
Horizon give to spreading field and shaw,  
And stealing through some pool, all silver-  
shrined,

By plain and slope the streamlets ever wind,  
Curmurring o'er the shingle in their haste  
To join the mad-cap leap of some dam-breast.  
Beyond, a mile or twain, the moonlight finds  
A thread to guide it where the highway winds,  
To halo old St. Barchan in his sleep,—  
Amid the woodland shadows, catching peep  
Of Milliken's demesne,—to gild the vane  
Of Houstoun's church,—to silver Crosslie's glen,  
To glimmer round the nooks of Linwood's mill  
That steals the music of the river's rill.

Near mantling shades of green stands  
Merchiston,  
Whose name's a fame the greater Napier won,  
As Clippen's manor looks from out its nest  
Of woodland warmth. Beyond the miller's  
farm,

The Craigends woods bespeak their summer's  
 charm,  
 Where brambles bloom among the hawthorns  
 sweet,  
 To scent the groves where gentle lovers meet.  
 And, but a look, the white faced castle peeps  
 Upon the open where the river sleeps.

And as I sat me down to muse awhile,  
 The monody of nature seemed to fill  
 My soul with lights begot of bygone times,  
 Poetic-strained, perchance, with guiling rhymes.

A century agone, agrarian bloom  
 Held virgin sway, where men now find a home  
 In thousands; for the mead-lands turmoil fills,  
 As routine runs around the droning mills,  
 Were long the freedom-scope of lowing kine,  
 Where sifting solitude delayed to twine  
 Its unkempt fragrance; where browsed the  
 ewes,  
 As frisked their lambkins in the morning dews;  
 Where lurked the maukins in their heath-cots  
 free,  
 Where pairtricks shelter found in every lea,—  
 All cheered to hear the laiverock's solo raised  
 To nature's God whom virgin nature praised.



And as there came a psalm of those asleep  
Beneath the grave-grass yonder, rank and  
    deep :  
The summer breeze of thoughts awake took  
    flight  
Before the ghost-thought of a generation's  
    blight.  
The deepening day-dream fashioned in my soul  
A phantasy beyond the will's control,—  
The thought within, the cooling air without,  
An equipoise in soul and body wrought ;  
For all seemed well to me, as all seemed real,  
Unvisioned as the echoes dared reveal  
The dance of mirth—as bell I heard ring out  
With pompous breath and rolling lusty shout :  
“ With a brave-hearted roll my tongue dares to  
    toll  
And dirl a dread of the past ;  
With the present still here, I shall ring out a  
    cheer  
That no memory-cloud shall o'ercast ;  
Neither grumble nor groan, neither malice nor  
    moan  
Shall hinder my cheer-ringing mirth ;  
In the morn of my pride all care I'll deride,  
As I roll out the joy of my birth!

" Let other bells weep generations asleep,  
 As for me I shall ever ring joy ;  
 As I throb in my steeple, I'll stir up the people  
 Full moments of mirth to employ.  
 So, hurrah! as I swing, as I joyously ring  
 The burghers their lives to fulfil,  
 Let me banish all fear as their spirits I cheer  
 With tones that all honest hearts thrill!"

Thus tolled the bell ; but while such boast it made,

Behold ! near by, within the hedgerow's shade,  
 I saw a form attired in cone-shaped hood  
 And cloak mildewed with age, ghost-like intrude  
 Upon the scene. I knew not what to think ;  
 'Twas some beldame of eld. I thought to  
 shrink

Beyond her gaze, while yet her rusty tongue  
 In lowland accents thus these words forth  
 flung :—

"Ay, ay, my men', your craw is crouse  
 Frae tongue that waggles unco loose,  
 Awaukin' din to fricht the deevil,  
 Or some town's foe that's been unceevil ;  
 Ye surely think ye're nae sma' beer  
 To put yoursel' in sic a steer :

I weel-a-wat ye're throuter-witted,  
 Your ilka tone is self-conceited ;  
 Ye've lost your head owre Chaipel creeds,  
 Owre patronage and a' sic weeds  
 O' sacerdotal growth and pride  
 That honest folk may weel deride.  
 Ye think your health and strength will last,  
 Because you're fresh frae moulders' cast,  
 And feel nae rust nor crust o' time,  
 Nor ocht unsound about your brim ;  
 Ye maybe think your powerfu' frien's  
 Will aye uphaud ye wi' their means,  
 And e'er admire your pridefu' peals  
 To praise you best o' lowland bells.  
 But, tak' my word, puir bubbly-jock,  
 Your craw may change into a croak,  
 For, sure as death, ye'll crack your pate,  
 Unless your style become sedate ;  
 Indeed, I'd no be sair astonished  
 Gin twa-three years should see you banished."

And scarce had ceased this prelude to a storm.  
 When from the ditch uprose a twin-like form—  
 Her garb less ancient, though with rust  
   o'er cast,  
 Her gait unsteady, and her look aghast—  
 Her *tout ensemble* mark of better days,  
 Ere toil perchance plebeianized her grace.

Though shuddering sore, I nathless sat near by,  
To hear the nature of this ghost's reply.

“ Guid e'en, auld grannie, neebour mine,  
I needna speer what gars ye whine,  
Or glower sae angry frae your mutch  
As if the steeple were some witch,—  
As if ye'd grip yon gommeril's throat,  
And chirt frae him his dying note ;  
For, truth to tell, his giddy bouncing  
Would set auld Job himsel' a-flouncing.  
But ne'er ye fash your thumb, guidwife,  
He's but a menseless nyaffin' cuif,—  
A trashtrie-trifler fit o' win'  
That kens nae glory save in din.  
For us, our day is past, 'tis true,  
For lang's the time since we were new ;  
But then experience is nae vice,  
Gin sense it brings as virtue's price ;  
And if auld age has cracked us baith,  
Or forced us else to don ghost's graith,  
Our record's guid and weel worth hearing  
By a' that hae for guid a caring ;  
While as for boastin' Tam up yonder,  
He'll nocht be but a nine days' wonder.”

And now the riddle read itself to me,  
Though how it was, 'twas not for me to see ;  
Till then I never knew that bells had spirits,  
That met at e'en to tell each other's merits.  
Yet there they were, weird objects of surprise,  
Two beldames crooning right before my eyes ;  
And, though beset with palpitating fear,  
To watch their converse still I lingered near.

## FIRST BELLIAME.

"Atweel, my lass, ye're richt for once,  
Why should we bother wi' yon dunce ?  
The swaggering numskull's blellum-talk  
Ere lang may coup him frae his bauk—  
At least they say a storm's a-blawing  
To stop his crap frae week-day crawling :—  
The provost has been heard to swear,  
Since some hae thocht his keep owre dear,  
He'll no gie mair than seven-pound-ten,  
Though they should melt him owre again."

## SECOND BELDAME.

"And yet, perchance, he lang may skreigh,  
Wi' patrons proud and siller-skeigh,  
Wha think the Chaipel has the richt  
To hire him out baith day and nicht,  
Uphaudiñ' warrant for their acts  
In what they deem historic facts."

## FIRST BELDAME.

"They needna fash, for weel we ken  
 Their haivers spring frae pride o' men,  
 That senseless skelp, through thick and thin,  
 Some selfish perverse end to win.  
 My origin's no hard to trace  
 Frae records maist as auld's the place—  
 Frae fond tradition's weel-conned lore,  
 As true as writ and maybe more ;  
 Nae shame to tell't, when I was born,  
 The weaving trade was nae man's scorn,  
 And though our laddies drove the shuttle  
 They neither lacked in feck nor fettle ;  
 And sae when shone the bonny day  
 On which my tongue began to play  
 The weavers wi' their lasses braw,  
 Made holiday in every raw,  
 To greet wi' joy my welcome song,  
 Reverberating owre the throng,  
 For hadna ilk his penny payed  
 To hear me hailing a' Kartside ?"

## SECOND BELDAME.

"And sae wi' me,—guid haud their snash :  
 The memory o' my birth is fresh  
 And green in ilka auld man's thocht,  
 As if yestreen had seen me bocht

Wi' goupenu's o' bawbees raised  
By talent that had Scotland dazed—  
By Frazer, o' immortal fame,  
Whase kin the town may proudly claim."

## FIRST BELDAME.

"And yet these Chaipel folk declare  
That baith o' us were in their care,  
And haud big Tam at their disposal  
To glorify his mad carousal,  
Sequestering what's the town's, not their's,  
While playing wi' the provost's fears.  
The time may change, but they're the same,  
Aye keen for dignity and fame—  
A privilege they gleg 'ill seek,  
By pressing claims, however weak,  
Surprised that folk should doubt their word,  
Or deem their proud demands absurd ;  
For, ye maun ken, e'en in my day,  
Their logic was maist aye astray.  
When sair attacked, they'd flouncing fret—  
For mony a thrashing did they get,  
Frae neebourin' theologians' taws,  
That sent them hirplin' heads and thraws,—  
Though, danger past, at once they'd blow  
Their trumpets in the face o' foe,  
To fortify themsel's anew  
Wi' pridefu' notions ocht but true."

## SECOND BELDAME.

“ Hush, hush, auld wife, it's hardly fair  
 To scarify your frien's sae sair ;  
 Keep mind they're sanctly kirk-goin' people  
 Whase honest pride's to boast a steeple.”

## FIRST BELDAME.

“ The steeple's theirs, as is the bell,  
 That not at a', as I can tell :  
 'Twas built to ward me safe frae ill,  
 Wi' shillings earned by weaver's skill,  
 By cotton-spinners and their peers  
 Wha thocht to nip auld time's arrears,  
 And keep the toun in even swing,  
 Whene'er was heard my cheerfu' ring.  
 But gie an inch, and thochtless folk  
 Will hae an ell, and even croak  
 To hae it a', sic is their greed—  
 A bell, a steeple, or a creed ;  
 Sic impudence, upon my soul,  
 Is hard for honest folk to thole.”

## SECOND BELDAME.

“ Now bide ye there, auld luckyben,  
 Their fauts and foibles weel I ken ;  
 But ne'er forget ye they're our ain,  
 And dinna gie your tongue sic rein.”



Since human nature gangs to kirk,  
Within it guid and ill maun lurk.  
About oursel's they're maybe wrang,  
'Me and the town' was aye my sang ;  
But don't ye think they may compare  
Wi' a' denomination-ware,  
Whase trimmings weaklings aft uphaud  
To ca' them narrow-frilled or broad."

## FIRST BELDAME.

" I hear your rant, and ken your aim,  
Ye're ane o' them that kuittle fame  
By sowther-flyting, skelpin' a'  
As het-and-cauld ye canny blaw.  
Cosmopolites ye ca' yoursel's  
Whate'er ye be, or men or bells.  
Sic-sawdust puddings mak' ane boke:  
Ye think this life's a weasoned joke :  
Opinionless and lukewarm, wairsh,  
Ye're but a brew frae barren marsh,  
Your licht's a will-o'-wisp to fools  
Wha think their days a game at bools.  
In aulden times men bravely focht—  
For conscience's sake, by faith upbrocht—  
Wi' richt guid-will, whate'er ther fate,  
They truth upheld in kirk and state,

And scouted a' sweet scented phrase,  
 The bad to sanctify or praise.  
 Our weavers, void o' a' pretence  
 To deep book-lear, ne'er lacked o' sense ;  
 Their day's dargue done, they'd argufy,  
 And men and measures fairly try,  
 Maintaining richt wi' steadfast will,  
 And trouncing what they thocht was ill,  
 Till elder's hours rung out by me  
 Would send them hame sweet rest to pree.  
 Oh, ye may laugh ! 'Tis truth I tell,  
 Though cracked I be, jist like yoursel' ;  
 Folk then were upright, sound and brave,  
 Nor cared a rap for lordling knave ;  
 Ilk was a laird in richt his ain,  
 Nor boo'd nor beck'd to factor's swain,  
 Unless respect he weel deserved  
 As ane that ne'er frae duty swerved."

#### SECOND BELDAME.

"Auld crone, I'm fear't your memory's gane,  
 And yet though cracked, ye're no alane ;  
 For donnarts like to rooze the past  
 To gar the present stand aghast  
 At sin and Satan in their revels,  
 Amang the living sawing evils.

Your tale has neither truth nor grace,  
Since human nature ye displace  
By something that's no half-sae true,  
Because I gied your grunt a grue.  
Maybe my judgment's sair alee,  
Yet men are men, however free  
May seem the age in which they lived,  
Howe'er our hearts hae been deceived.  
Your weaver lads, I'll lay my muff,  
Could boast themsel's nae better stuff  
Than treads our streets frae day to day,  
To ply dame industry for pay—  
To gang to kirk and say their prayers,  
To court their sweethearts at the fairs,  
To seek in life its sweetest blessings—  
Fair fortune's smiles and fate's caressings.  
The dram shops then were not sae plenty,  
Yet folk gat fou' and unco canty ;  
Sharp-witted lairds hard bargains drove,  
The miser grasped his treasure-trove,  
And a' the wheels o' busy life  
Ran whirring in their selfish strife.  
And as wi' men, sae 'tis wi' sects,  
Their aim to selfish ends directs ;  
Aggrandisement's a venial faut  
When not wi' harm to ithers fraught :  
'Tis but the loosing o' the reins  
To ultimate our honest pains,

Though whiles the speed at which it goes  
 Blinds reason to our neebour's toes.  
 The Chaipel folk, 'tis very plain,  
 Ca' Tam and steeple saith their ain—"

FIRST BELDAME.

"Just haud your whist and stop your clatter,  
 I see ye're cracked as mad's a hatter ;  
 'Tis weel I understand your drift  
 Mysterious-dark as midnight's shift ;  
 By jewkery-pawkery's nomenclature  
 Ye mean to find in human nature  
 Excuse for foul ambition's wiles,  
 E'en though its native nest it files.  
 Let probity in pawnshops rot,  
 The bell is their's since it they've got,  
 And they may keep it gin they like,  
 In spite o' liege or provost's pique,  
 That's what ye'll claim and surely chime  
 Gin I should only gie you time."

SECOND BELDAME.

"Auld harridan, foul thief of truth,  
 Sic words were never in my mouth.  
 But sae it's aye wi' ancient laggarts,  
 Ye're nocht but silly menseless braggarts :

Ye havenae brains to understaun',  
And yet your very sark ye'd pawn,  
Forbye your word, to gart appear  
As if ye were lang-sighted seer."

## FIRST BELDAME.

"Ha : Ha : you drab, wha's angry noo ?  
Mayhap ye've gi'en my grunt a grue.  
Ye wise folk canna bear defeat,  
But burn your temper wi' its heat ;  
Tam yonder's daft, but ye are hazy,  
Philosophy hath made you crazy :"

No more I heard beyond a dreadful *whush*,  
As if the ghosts did then their anger push  
To close attack. An eerie moment passed,  
And then I shuddering rose, downcast  
With fears, and shivering with the midnight  
cold,  
Determined ne'er again to be so bold  
As wander near the haunts of spirit bells  
That show the weakness human hate reveals.



### NOTES TO "THE BELLS OF KARTDALE."

"The post's path."—There were many such in and around the neighbourhood of Johnstone,—so called from their solitariness, as well as on account of the view to be had from them of the whole valley of the Cart and beyond. On the brow of the Snodgrass property there stood, and perhaps still stands, a quaint-looking summer-house, small and painted white, that always seemed to me, when a boy, to be keeping watch of all that was going on in the town, and possibly it was not far from this that the fracas of the "spirit-bells" took place.

"Beyond the isles."—On a clear day, in the limits of the western horizon, are always to be seen the Paps of Jura, and I have heard some say that near the Wa's Hill beyond Howwood there can be identified, with the aid of an ordinary field-glass, portions of all three kingdoms.

"Town and hamlet sleep."—From the highest point of view the villages to be seen are Kilbarchan, Howwood, Houstoun, El-

derslie and Linwood, with glimpses of Cartside, Crosslie and Inkerman.

"The mother stream."—The Clyde is one of the busiest water-ways in the world, and from the windows of many of the tenements in the town itself, the smoke of the steamers passing up and down can be traced along the base of the Kilpatrick Hills, past Lord Blantyre's monument and Dumbuck, towards the expanding Firth, with the mighty Ben Lomond and the Arrochar summits in the far away distance. The whole landscape is unequalled of its kind, having for its counterpart on a smaller scale, perhaps, the beautiful plain of the St. Charles, north of Quebec.

"As far as Misty Law."—The highlands of Renfrewshire culminate in the northern end of the Ayrshire range, of which Misty Law and the Hill of Stake are the highest points. The former is over 1,650 feet high and the latter fifty feet higher. The scenery of the neighbourhood is very impressive, so much so that a writer has called it "the Vale of Tempe" of the county. The view from the summit is said to extend over twelve counties, not omitting the widening compass of the Firth of Clyde, and its many "saut water" retreats. The famous battle of Largs was fought on one of its lower seaboard slopes in 1263, between Alexander III. of Scotland and Haco of Norway, the latter being defeated.

"St. Barchan in his sleep."—Kilbarchan, which is not over two miles from Johnstone,



had "a local habitation and name" long before there was even the semblance of a village around the "Brig o' Johnstone." It was erected into a barony-burgh as early as 1710, even before it received its first trade impetus, in 1739, from the establishing of a linen factory, including industries in the weaving of lawns and cambric stuffs. Johnstone is said to have had only ten inhabitants, when Kilbrachan was a village of two hundred people, though a hundred years after, the population of the latter was double that of the former and to-day is over five times as large. The community on and around the Steeple Brae is one full of interest to the student of human nature. Its picturesque quaintness as a village, and its by no means unintellectual influences have made it more than once a halting place for the antiquarian and the poet. The parish of Kilbrachan was once one of the most extensive in the west of Scotland, covering an area of over eighteen miles, and providing ample limits, in later times, for the offset parishes of Linwood and the Bridge of Weir. As Mr. Inglis in the centenary pamphlet has shown, it is in the early history of Kilbrachan that there is to be found the origin of the Burgher Kirk of Johnstone. In the year 1739, an unpopular settlement at Kilbrachan drove out a large number of people who joined the Seceders at Kilmalcolm. This led to the formation of a new congregation of Seceders with Kilbrachan for a centre, and the building of

the Burntshields Church and manse a short distance out of the village. Finally, in 1791, it was decreed that the Burntshields Congregation should divide itself into three parts, each to be a separate congregation, one to continue at Burntshields, the second to be established at Lochwinnoch, and the third at Johnstone, which by this time had grown to be a place of nearly fifteen hundred people. Those who would wish to establish further social relationship between the two places should read Robert Sempill's humorous ballad on Habbie Simpson and the Laird of Johnstone. The keeping of St. Lillian's Day, with its arches of evergreens and floral displays, was, and probably still is, an annual celebration in Kilbarchan that used to surpass in attractiveness the decorations of its more populous rival during the mid-summer fair holidays.

"Milliken's demeane."—Milliken House is one of the oldest of the manor houses in the neighbourhood of Johnstone, having been built in 1829 by Sir William Napier, who held the estate as an entail from his ancestor, Major Milliken, the purchaser of the property in 1733 from the Houstoun family. The estate was originally called Johnstone,—a name subsequently transferred, for family reasons, to the Houstoun property, and afterwards applied to the village that sprang up on the south-eastern side of the Cart, not far from the bridge that has spanned the river from very early times. Johnstone Castle thus gave its name

to the village, and not the village, its name, to the estate, though the latter was originally called Easter Cochran before it came to be known as the Johnstone estate.

"Who's name's a fame," etc.—Sir William Napier had two sons, Robert and John, and when the cotton spinning was at the height of its prosperity, the latter built the manor house of Merchiston, on an outlying portion of his brother's property. The site was well chosen, commanding as it does a fine view of the town and intervening country. The Napiers were direct descendants of John Napier of Merchiston near Edinburgh, the distinguished mathematician and inventor of logarithms. *Blackstoun* estate, which includes a large part of the lands on which Linwood is built, possesses a spacious manor house, originally owned by another branch of the Napier family.

"The vane of *Houstoun's* church." — *Houstoun* had its origin as a village about the time Johnstone sprang into its primal activity. There were originally two main streets in the place, one on either side of the Burn, lined with several substantial two-story buildings, one of which belonged to John Adams, one of the elders of the Burgher Kirk. While the schools of Johnstone were yet only "the nondescript ventures of the past" the *Houstoun* school had a wide-spread reputation, and to it were attracted many of the boys and girls of Johnstone. One of these lately told me that he remembers the time when over fifty

pupils used to traverse the Houstoun road, going to and from school. This naturally made Houstoun a kind of suburb of Johnstone in early times, or as the Houstoun folk would say, *vice versa*, and gave many of us more than ordinary interest in its surroundings. There were three churches in Houstoun, and the vane or spire referred to here must have been the one attached to the old Roman Catholic chapel.

"Crosslie's glen."—Crosslie was once famous for its mill and its toll-gate, but all that remains of the more striking landmarks of the past is the glen through which the Gryffe still sings its continuous song.

"The nooks of Linwood's mill."—The pleasant walk by the banks of the Mill o' Cart ends about a mile further on, near the old bridge of Linwood, built in 1762. The water power of the stream was the origin of the large cotton mill, established here about the time the cotton mills of Johnstone were springing into being, just as the mill was the origin of the village. The Bridge of Linwood is remembered by many still living as the scene of a 12th of July disturbance or pitched battle which ended in the loss of several lives; but the most of us prefer to hold it rather as a memory of the beautiful in nature, the centre of one of Kartdale's picturesque circlets of woodland and river scenery.

"As Clippens manor looks."—The Clippens property and the long-continued litigation connected with its transmission,

from the original owner of the country residence built upon it, to his innumerably doubtful heirs, was the occasion of many a warm discussion among the townsfolk, and the origin of many an anecdote over the expectations of those who had a claim, as they said, upon the estate.

"The Craigend's woods."—On the little peninsula where the waters of the Locher join those of the Gryffe there once stood the old Craigends manor, and the minor stream still runs past the door of the new Craigends mansion, built by Mr. Alexander Cunningham, the wealthy iron-master and founder of the firm of Merry and Cunningham. No more beautiful spot could well have been selected for a rural retreat, and in the days when Mr. Cunningham was inclined to open his grounds to the populace, large throngs from Johnstone and the surrounding country were sure to take advantage of his general and generous invitations. Mr. Brownlow North, the eloquent evangelist, was once a guest of the master of Craigends, and preached to thousands under the tents specially erected for the occasion within the "policies," and the writer has many other memories of the place which would hardly bear repeating here. The Cunninghams of Craigends trace themselves back to the first Earl of Glencairn, who granted the property to one of his younger sons as early as the fifteenth century. The romance of the career of the builder of the "New Craigends," from a

period of his having little to live upon, to a consummation of millionaire luxury, is one that is variously told by those who knew him personally; and I have listened to parts of its record more than once from Mr. William Kirkwood of Stanley Muir, and from Mr. Joseph Lang of Crosslie, who had the honour of counting themselves among his personal friends from early days.

In connection with Craigends, reference may be made to Barrochan Cross, the favourite meeting place of the Renfrewshire Hunt, and to Barrochan House, a stately old mansion whose manorial territory is adjacent to the Cunningham property. The former is supposed to have been set up to mark the site of some battle-field, since relics of human remains have been found near it. The manor house continues to sustain the reputation bestowed upon it by the centuries for its hospitalities.

"The white-faced castle peeps."—Johnstone Castle stands as the crowning glory of the manorial residences of the district. Its clean-looking calcimined rough-cast exterior and its castellated square and round towers readily justify the term "castle" as part of its name. A more striking example of *chateau* architecture it would be hard to find anywhere. The estate of Johnstone Castle was originally known as Easter Cochran,—a name which still lingers in the Cochranfield of the present day, whose charming villas and picturesquely situated grist mill and railway station make

"Jenny's knowe a kentspeckle spot." The school boys of the parish school had many stolen moments within the "policies" of the Castle. If they could only escape the eagle eye of Mr. John Salmon, the factor, or the handle of Jamie Patrick's axe, they were safe enough to dig for ground-nuts, to temporize a swing on some tree-top, or to wade in pursuit of the minnows in the Linn Burn. The Laird before my time must have been a man of ready enterprise, with his canal projects and coal mines, and cotton-mill improvements. No less than three of the cotton mills in the town he continued to manage under his own direction, bequeathing them as well-paying properties to his sons Ludovic and William, who in turn succeeded to the estate. The fortunes of the family during the lairdships of these gentlemen claim no place here. The advancement on the Johnstone estate has been all but phenomenal since the day the old laird refused a site for the building of the Burgher Kirk, or wrung the neck of his favourite hawk for sitting on its roof. If he did not outlive his antipathy against the seceders, he was not an unfaithful servant in many other respects, and a bit of a monument, commemorating his fifty years' activity, would not be out of place on the square which still bears his name.

Cartside House may be mentioned here, since it is situated near the mill which belonged to the Houstouns, and is on the lands of the Johnstone Castle estate. It is

of a striking style of architecture, and is situated not far from the old Bell-lands that once provided Johnstone, through the generosity of Mr. Houstoun, with a claimant occupant for its steeple, that "wasnae cracked."

"The Chaipel folk."—It must not be supposed that the writer even "came near" taking sides against the authorities of the parish church, when they were in the throes of their trouble about the bell. Johnstone Chapel was the name applied to the church edifice at the head of Church Street. It was erected in 1793 as a chapel-of-ease, in the Paisley Abbey Parish, its spire not being attached until the year 1823. During the Rev. William Gaff's incumbency, the *quoad sacra* became a parish under its own endowments, and consequently the term "Chaipel folk" is now a term of the past. Possessing the largest auditorium of any building in the town, it was not infrequently used for secular purposes of general interest, a necessity obviated when the Town Hall, with its capacity of seating seven hundred people, was erected in 1868.

"The weaving trade was nae man's scorn."—The decline of the business of weaving in Johnstone began when the new industry of cotton-spinning was introduced, just as in later years cotton-spinning has given way to the industries of the thread-works and the machine shops. At the beginning of the last century the weavers were earning high wages, and comprised



the well-to-do people of the town. In the early fifties the trade had all but disappeared, the few holding on to it being hardly able to make ends meet.

"Cotton-spinners and their peers."—In 1839, there were in Johnstone no less than fifteen cotton-mills, not including those at Linwood, Elderslie and the Thorn. Now there is not one, though the excellent water-power of the Cart is, I am told, by no means idle. The workmen attached to these factories were nearly all in receipt of a generous wage, and in cases where two or three of a family were engaged and where thrift prevailed, the household economies were seldom in a very comfortless condition. In a word, the journeyman cotton-spinner always belonged to the respectable middle-class of the town, taking rank with the machinist and retail merchant.

"The provost has been heard to swear."—An appeal having been made to the Town Council to bear the expense, in whole or in part, connected with the ringing of the bell, at certain hours of the day, the subsidy was fixed at seven pounds ten shillings a year. The proposed amount, small as it may seem, would have been considered a munificent supplement to the limited salary paid to the venerable bell-ringer of my time, whose duties were manifold and efficiently performed.

"By talent that had Scotland dazed."—The Frazer family had reached the zenith of its fame in the early fifties of the last

century. Their success as exponents of Scottish minstrelsy extended to the new world, and the head of the family, Mr. John Frazer, of Chartist fame, realized for himself a competency from the entertainments, which were attended by crowded assemblies, wherever they happened to be given. One of these entertainments was given in the parish church in behalf of purchasing a new bell for the steeple, when the bell of the time had met with the misfortune of its predecessors.

**“Outside the steading on the green.”**



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## THE BURGHER KIRK AND ITS FOLK.

The old schoolmaster of Brighton, in his *Chronicles of Kartdale*, gives the following description of that district: "Although more than a hundred years have elapsed since Kartdale first started on its prosperous career as a manufacturing centre, it is even yet at times looked upon by some of its sister parishes as a kind of a new place. As everybody knows who has studied the gazeteer of Scotland, the town has had a very rapid growth, much more rapid, it is said, than any other town of its size from the Cheviots to John o' Groat's House; and although the industries which first gave its commercial activities an impulse—the weaving and cotton-spinning trades—have now all but died out, others have taken their place, and at the present writing the burgh of Kartdale continues to be one of the most thriving towns in the west. The valley in which it is situated is watered by a stream, which provides many of the factories with a never-falling power, and which drains an outside broadening plain that

extends to the bank of the parent river. On account of the level character of the site on which the town is built, the streets have a regular appearance, radiating at right angles from the Main Street, which formed in early days the king's highway, and which, is now, as its name implies, the principal thoroughfare. A local artist has published a series of sketches of the principal buildings of the town, among which, of course, take rank as the most interesting, the seven churches. It is needless to say that these sketches have a special interest to those who have not seen the place for years, and when the news was carried to the writer, who has been away from the old scenes for more than a quarter of a century now, that a new minister had been inducted to the charge of one of the churches the artist has so skilfully depicted, there came welling up in his memory the personality of this one and of that one who would have been present at the installation ceremonies, had death or absence from Kartdale not prevented them."

A little more matter of fact is the description which the Rev. James Inglis, late incumbent of one of the above-mentioned churches, gives when he says that, in 1850, though the place had over seven thousand inhabitants, there were neither magistrates in the town nor direct municipal supervision, the only police protection being in the hands of the county. As he further asserts, the streets were ill-kept, and the water supply and means of lighting very inferior. His

notes on the changes which led to the adoption of the Burgh Act are, however, likely to be supplemented, if not revised, when the true history of that movement comes to be written in full. The "hot-headed orators," to whom he refers as giving opposition, do doubt include such men as John Frazer, William Johnston, Robert Harper, and others, prominent, if misguided, in their public pleadings from time to time for the welfare of the town.

"The stronger lights."—The congregations mentioned in the "Chronicles" have each a history of its own, but considering the purpose of this souvenir booklet special reference can only be made to one of them. The Burgher Kirk had its origin in the translation of its first minister, the Rev. John Lindsay, from the Secession Church at the Brencell (Burntshields), near Kilmarchan. This occurred in 1791. His successor, the Rev. John Clapperton, whose death occurred in 1849, when the writer was but four years old, was incumbent of the charge for forty-two years, having been inducted on the 14th of April, 1807. What I know of him are mere memories received second-hand from my father and others. From the notes collected by Mr. Inglis, the congregation seems to have greatly increased during the years of his incumbency, the number of communicants on the roll in 1838 being over four hundred and fifty. One that knew him says: "I remember him as a stalwart-looking gentleman of medium

height, grave in his manner, and one who might have sat for the picture of the preacher as portrayed by the poet Cowper. A man of marked ability and integrity, he was a vallant defender of what he believed to be sound doctrine. I remember how in his time a wave of infidelity passed through the town and how he tried to counteract it by preaching a course of monthly Sunday night discourses from the text 'The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.' These discourses awakened a deep interest. The old edifice was often crowded while they were being delivered, the young men of the town, for whom they had been specially written, attending in large numbers. Mr. Clapperton was also much sought after as a lecturer."

Any mention of Mr. Clapperton's family of sons and daughters would naturally include the Loudons who attended the Burgher Kirk in my time. They were the nephews of Mr. Hugh Loudon, who was reputed to be the wealthiest man of his day in Johnstone.

Among some of the men prominent in the church during Mr. Clapperton's ministry may be mentioned Mr. Robert Montgomery, the mill-owner, who had his home in the cottage near the "Big Mill." Mr. Robert Fyfe, another of the cotton-lairds of the town, was one of the minister's staunchest supporters in his defence of the truth, as he gave evidence of, in his pointed reply to young Alexander McLachlan, when the



youthful poet was airing his doctrinal or anti-doctrinal views one evening in the Assembly Rooms. There was also Mr. Hugh Aitken, the elder, who was one of the earliest superintendents of the Sunday-school, and whose son was a teacher for many years in Bridgetown, Glasgow. Speaking of schoolmasters, mention has to be made of Mr. Archie McFarlane, who kept a school in one of an old row of houses near the bridge opposite the Flax Mill, the school being connected directly or indirectly with the Old Mill, as a scholastic adjunct. Then there was Mr. Peter Robinson who sat with his family to the right of the pulpit in a pew opposite the large window on that side. One of his sons was prominent in the singing classes of the church and took part in the concerts of the time,—being a popular singer of the "Auld Scotch Sangs." His elder brother in his early life went out to India, taking charge of a cotton-mill in Calcutta, where he was for many years. It was during a visit there that the "sweet singer" of the family lost his life in an accident. On his return, the mill-manager became a partner with Mr. Robert Montgomery, the writer's grand-uncle. Leaving Johnstone for America he finally settled in Brooklyn, New York, where he carried on a large engineering business and where he died at a ripe old age, only a few years ago. A neighbour of his in Brooklyn was Mr. James Morton, formerly a baker in Paisley, and one always deeply interested, through

his family connections, in Burgher Kirk affairs.

Mr. Inglis, in speaking of the primitive way in which the church accounts were sometimes kept in the olden times, tells us how he once heard of a treasurer who tried to simplify matters by keeping two bags, one for moneys received and the other for receipts and payments, with the effect, it is needless to say, of seldom escaping a deficit at the end of the year. But a correspondent has sent me the following which will indicate how the finances were managed even in Mr. Clapperton's day. "When the treasury happened to be at a lower ebb than usual, and when it was deemed necessary to raise money to keep the congregation's head above water, the treasurer was in the habit of drawing out a list of the better-to-do members of the congregation, and, setting opposite each name what he estimated to be a justly proportionate assessment for the meeting of the emergency, would afterwards call upon each in turn for the payment of the amount, which it seems was seldom refused." This was surely the earliest forerunner of the envelope system which prevails in so many of the churches of America, though there is little of the voluntary system about either plan.

"You remember," continues my correspondent, "that at the east and west doors there were placed certain drawers under lock-and-key. I never saw them opened, but being curious to know what they had

been used for, my father informed me that at one period of the church's history, the treasurer was always expected to make a bid at the beginning of the year for the year's collections, which were emptied into these drawers every Sunday by the plate-keepers, without counting of any kind. Subsequently the treasurer, whose bid was seldom if ever refused, would come with his duplicate key and carry off the contents—a curious way of doing things, surely, though it was generally believed that he was never anything in pocket by the end of the year, but often a serious loser."

An anecdote is extant showing the relationship between one of these "chancy" treasurers and Mr. Clapperton, when it came to the question of making payment of the minister's stipend. There was never any regular day fixed for meeting the minister's salary, and on one occasion, Mr. Clapperton, in money straits for the moment, applied to the treasurer for payment of the arrears, only to be told that there were gas bills, and coal bills, and every other kind of pressing claims to be met, with barely enough in the exchequer to meet them. "But, my dear sir, you know that I must live," said the minister, "I dinna ken about that," said the nonchalant treasurer, "but the debts maun surely be paid, whatever may happen."

Of the later "stronger lights," of whom the writer has some personal recollection, may be mentioned Mr. James Hatrick, the

precentor, who was appointed to the office as early as 1836, having thus been a contemporary of Mr. Clapperton, with Daniel Munro and John McMillan as his predecessors and Captain James McDougall, now of New York, and James M. Rankine as his immediate successors. The week-day singing class was an institution of very early origin, with special practisings for sacramental occasions; and many still recall with pleasure James Hatrick's faithful exertions in the session-house of a Wednesday evening with those who were to uphold the credit of the congregation for its good singing. One of the members of the congregation who used to spend the interval of Communion Sabbath in my father's house, taking dinner with us, I have heard denouncing in unmeasured terms the proposal to "organize a choir or a "band," as she called it. "James Hatrick is good enough for me, with his clear, sweet tenor voice." And it is needless to say that Miss Margaret Glenn, of Kilbarchan, with the ways of those of the old school in her every prejudice, had, for long, the majority of the congregation in favour of her plea.

Outside the sacramental occasions, the church concerts, and the annual soirees, I have still a vivid recollection of at least three memorable events, namely: the induction of Mr. Clapperton's successor, the Rev. James Inglis, the introduction of a new heating apparatus, and the renovation of the pulpit surroundings. The induction

took place on the 16th of April, 1850, amid much ceremony and the "laying on of hands." A platform was raised in front of the pulpit and its old acorn-topped sounding board, reaching out as near to the "breast o' the laff" as would enable the people in the area below to see what was going on above. The pulpit was occupied by the Rev. Mr. Melkie, of Inverary, and my friend of later times, the Rev. Mr. Alison, of Kilbarchan, the one addressing the people and the other the new incumbent. In the evening I had my first experience of a congregational soiree, with Mr. Inglis presiding. The church was crowded, and one of the most striking features of the entertainment was the choral singing, with Mr. Hatrick as leader. If I remember correctly, it was the first time I ever heard him sing his favourite solo, "A wee bird cam' to oor ha' door," his excellent rendering of the song giving an after emphasis to Miss Glenn's verdict, when I happened to hear her deliver it. Next to the minister, the precentor filled the public eye of the congregation, and when one knows how it was through Mr. Hatrick's skill and industry that the Burgher Kirk came to be famous in the locality for its congregational singing, it is easy to understand how the popularity of the efficient officer lasted for nearly forty years.

On one occasion, at a sacramental celebration too, there was given an illustration of the "precentor abroad," which is amusing enough now to remember, but which was

rather awkward for those immediately concerned at the time. Mr. Hatrick had, as usual on such days, withdrawn from his "wee pulpit" to take his place at the sacramental table near by; and his substitute, (what a nervous honour it was in those days to take the precentor's place), did not fail in his duty, while the paraphrase was being read by the "helpmate preacher" of the day, but put up the cards announcing the tune, with a coolness that forboded no mishap. But when it came to the raising of the tune the unusualness of the occasion fairly choked up the throat of the amateur leader of psalmody, and though he nervously kept rapping his knee with the tuning-fork and running it to his ear, alas, he could not get the tune to go. The reverend helper, turning and seeing the name of the tune regularly announced on the cards, led off in a masterly style, very much to the relief of the whole congregation, and, as may be certain, of the would-be precentor, too.

It would be hazardous to refer at this early day to the history of the choir finally organized by Mr. Hatrick's successors. As has been said, the reputation of the Burgher Kirk for its singing has been fully sustained in later years. But church choirs are church choirs wherever one finds them, and it is not difficult to understand why there should have been a little more friction perhaps in the management of a choir than in the conducting of a singing class. On one occasion, it is said, and only on one,

such friction culminated in, something like open rebellion. The annual soiree had been announced to be held in the Public Hall, though the rehearsals were conducted in the church school-room. The last of these had to take place in the hall, and when the members of the choir proceeded to place themselves on the platform, they were informed that there was to be no pick-and-choose in the matter of seats, but that every one was to take the place indicated on tickets, of which each received one. This was too much for the democratic tendencies of a body wherein each singer was a force on his or her own account, and on the way home some of the "hot-headed" left the tickets they had received in fragments on the door-step of the manse, as a protest against all interference with a choir's prerogatives, though it was only indefinitely known whence the mandate had been issued.

Mr. Inglis in his historical notes has spoken quite freely of his predecessors; but it is perhaps a little too soon after his demise to publish the full memorabilia of his own incumbency. I was quite young when he was busy with his largest book, "The Bible Text Encyclopedia," but old enough to be called to the manse to read the proof of the sheets with him. I remember also a disturbing sermon he once preached from the text, "The labourer is worthy of his hire," in which he contrasted what his own financial position would have been, had he continued with his brothers in the publishing

business, with what it was as minister of the Burgher Kirk. The comparison caused quite a commotion in the congregation, the various criticisms being teasingly repeated in the hearing of my father, who for many years was treasurer of the church. As facts go to show, there was reason enough for this burst of out-spokenness, for the minister's stipend at the time was only one hundred pounds, though his predecessor had as much as one hundred and fifty. Before Mr. Inglis retired, it should be said, however, the salary was increased to two hundred and sixty pounds.

Mr. Inglis seldom missed taking his summer holiday, and on his return he had always an account to give to his people of his travels, which at times extended as far as Wales or the Highlands and even Norway. Indeed his sermons did not miss having about them, for some time after he came back, a flavour of the experiences he had been able to pick up during these excursions. He was not a man to travel with his eyes shut; and I remember him saying from the pulpit one day that to keep the physical and mental eye fully open during the week days when one was travelling, the spiritual eye should always be refreshed on the Sunday by some form of religious exercises, wherever one might be. "The one day in seven should never be forgotten at home or abroad," he has been further heard to declare, "and the man who, with a month's holidays on hand, keeps up his sight-seeing



on Sunday and Saturday and the other days as well, will have his experiences pall upon him before he knows where he is. Abstinence gives an additional relish to the most palatable pleasures of life." On these excursions he was often far from any regular place of worship, and he was always modestly careful to tell how he measured out for himself the rest that is due to the body, while his soul was seeking its share of peace in the sanctified recreation of the Sabbath. Some of his experiences were not without their amusing phases, as, for example, when he once found himself with his brother in a Norwegian village where not a word of English was spoken, and where the demands of appetite were all but ever-present.

"Can we have something to eat, my good woman?" said he, as he approached the door of the inn.

But the good woman of the village inn could only stare at the tourists and then smile an ominous smile by way of reply.

"We would like to have some supper and stay over night with you," he continued, though with very much the same effect; and so at last he had to fall back upon the "science of signs" of which good King James once was fain to be patron. Pushing his way into the hall he at length, after sundry ejaculations and gesticulations, succeeded in securing the necessary rooms; and then after a hasty toilet he and his companion proceeded to the dining-room, where their linguistic troubles began anew.

"What will we have, James?" asked the brother, seating himself near the end of the table, where he would be ready to pour out the tea, if he only could get the maid to bring it to him.

"It is not what we are going to have, but what we are able to ask for," said Mr. Inglis, and turning to the maid he again dipped deep into the intricacies of the science of signs to find therein some of the more dignified symbols for what constituted a Norwegian supper.

The tea and bread-and-butter were comparatively easy to represent, but when it came to the question of two boiled eggs for each, the resources of the science of signs had to be taxed to their severest strain.

At last the problem was solved by the minister holding up his fingers, two and two, on each hand, and uttering in the ear of the smiling attendant, "Tchook, tchook, tchook!" with successful result.

Mr. Inglis was essentially a public man, and when there was electioneering to be done in the district, he was never afraid to be near the hustings with a question or two to put to the candidates. He had two passions, the furthering of Sunday-schools and open-air preaching. The introduction of a new hymn for the Sunday-school made his life uneasy until it was properly sung by the children, while Houstoun Square often resounded with his fervency in bringing the non-churchgoers to think of their ways. His conscientiousness of action and general

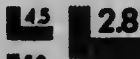
courtesy, however, always formed a safeguard against any continuous unpopularity among those who were indignant enough at times at his impetuosity to oppose him. On one occasion only, in my recollection, did he seem to forget his equanimity, and that was when, in the heat of a contest with the managers, he, one Sunday morning, threw off his gown in the pulpit as a protest, in presence of the whole congregation, against the incautious system of heat-circulation invented and persevered in by the latter. As a wag afterwards thus pawkily reported the occurrence, "the minister had aye had the caution to shield his bare paw wi' his velvet skull-cap, when he preached in the open air, but for ance, at least, I've heard him preach all but in his shirt-sleeves."

The heating of the church was a vexed question from the moment of its inception. Up to the time of Mr. Inglis's becoming minister, and indeed for a year or two after, the freezing-out process prevailed in the pews, the people depending upon their winter outside clothing for keeping them warm while attending service. The first protest against the penance of freezing in kirk was the introduction of a foot-warmer in the minister's pew. And after the "tittle-tattle" over the gentle manner of the protest had spent itself, the managers turned their attention, as if no such hint had ever been given, to the making of things more comfortable. As the funds were too low to



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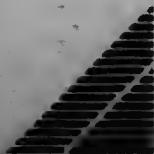
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meet even the reasonable charges of Johnstone plumbers, the first apparatus made use of was primitive to a degree, and not a little unscientific in the manner of its structure. The old red-hot stove of the session-house, for I can never think of its being other than red-hot from its chronic condition in winter—was encased in a brick chamber on its original standing place, and put to the severe function of heating a whole church, when its limit for years had been a room twenty-four by twelve or thereabout. With a cold air duct connecting the brick chamber with the area of the church, and with a hot-air funnel, whose staring black mouth ever yawned overhead near the pew known as the "cock-laft," the home-made appliance gave, as might have been expected, and as Willie Rodger, the elder, somewhat uncannily remarked, "a temperature abune, wi' nane below, and coom eneuch on the ceiling forby."

Mr. Rodger was only a baker, however, and what could such as he know about mechanics! Nevertheless his witticism, in its remote effects, brought about a change, with a brand-new furnace in the "ben of the session-house" with its hot air shaft directed from below the "breast o' the laft," like some fiery mortar's mouth, straight at the minister in the pulpit. The plan, while being matured into actual fact, taxed the minister's patience to the point of parliamentary remonstrance; but when the heat came pouring out on him for a few Sundays,

the situation became more than flesh and blood could stand. Hence the incident of the gown in the pulpit; and hence, perhaps, one or two of the references in his historical sketch not altogether complimentary to the wisdom of elders in general and managers in particular.

The mention of this "glacial period" of church economics recalls earlier times which I have heard spoken of by the very old people of my day, when there was a seeming penance in many of the unwritten canons of even Presbyterianism. When a hearer, young or old, felt the temptation of drowsiness approaching, a standing attitude was considered to be the proper one to assume until the influence had passed away. The young maidens, bedecked in hood and mantle, or something better, were naturally more inclined to overdo than neglect the canon; and, one day when a simple-minded sleepy weaver, forgetting for an instant where he was, but with the habit of standing up under such circumstances upon him, stretched out his arms and yawned aloud, the elders and managers were silently glad at the *contre-temps* and prudently made it an excuse for doing away with the custom altogether.

The hood and mantle covered many a deficiency of dress in these days, and the story is told of a young country lass who, being sent to church for the first time under the security of her mistress's head-gear and outer garment, was bidden do just as she

saw others do and "no to be owre blate." On entering with the throng she saw the men taking off their hats and overcoats, it being a mild day, and at once throwing off her hood and mantle sat throughout the service in the picturesque kitchen garb of the period, much to the amusement of even Mr. Clapperton himself.

I remember, even yet, the drowsiness that often came upon us as a temptation during service, which even the peppermints that Mr. James Houstoun and his nephew used to distribute clandestinely from the seat behind ours, could not keep at arm's length. My father, it may here be said, had a silent if not painful way of arousing one, to which the old custom of standing up would have been gladly accepted as a pleasant substitute.

The renovation which led to the removal of the old pulpit, and the introduction of "crimson and gold in the hole in the wa'" as John Aitken, the barber, is said to have called the new arrangements, brought a rich harvest to the boys who assisted at the general tidying up. The floor of the seats in the gallery was an uncanny place on which to drop anything, be it bawbee or sixpence, sour-drop or nippy lozenger. This arose from the openness of the first floor, which generally consisted only of the breadth of one board to stand upon; and hence when the front pew of the gallery came to be swept and garnished with the inner floor plank raised, the accumulations



of the "accidentals" exposed fell a delicious prey to the boys. From the debris they were successful in digging out all manner of curios, the losings of half a century.

Speaking of church-work, Mr. Inglis, on one occasion, was earnestly pleading for Christian co-operation on the part of all, as he elaborated the text, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God." A maiden, listening intently to the exposition, made up her mind that she would do some kind of work for the church as soon as Monday morning came round, and the direction that her decision eventually took was that she would wash out the family pew with her own hands. Securing, therefore, the door-key of the back entrance to the church that very night she confronted her self-imposed penance at an unusually early hour on the following morning, armed with broom and pail and scrubbing-brush. As she walked along, with no one astir at the early hour she had chosen for her operations, she began to feel that perhaps it would have been better, possibly more seemly,—more in keeping with true maidenly modesty, had she taken somebody with her; and when she at last entered the church there was such a solemn silence pervading the pulpit and the pews, that she felt sure she was making some mistake or other in daring to face her own conscience in such a lonesome place. Subduing her feelings, however, she proceeded to sweep out the pew, though the noise of her activi-

ties seemed to fill the whole auditorium with the echoes of a hundred brooms, if not of something worse. Battling with the many nooks and corners, her mind at length went from dust and spiders, moths and wood-worms, to the proverbial, if somewhat mythical, church-mouse. Was there ever such a thing as a church-mouse; that is, a real live church-mouse? "Eh! what is that?" and the poor lassie was up on the pew seat in a moment with her heart in her mouth and her lower garments well in hand, in order no doubt to discuss the question with proper deliberation. Of course operations came to a stand-still at once as far as the cleaning of the pew was concerned; though, alas! the operations of the girl's mind were just at their beginning, as the memories, which are said to come to a drowning person, rushed into her poor frightened soul. Dear me, what was going to happen to her in such a position? There was not a creature within hearing to help her. But was there really any danger? A mouse! Who was afraid of a mouse? But just at that moment the broom fell from the uneasy angle at which she had left it when she had hastily mounted the seat. This made matters worse and worse. The place seemed full of falling brooms or chuckling brownies. And surely there must be somebody moving about downstairs! Listen to that! Didn't the door move? Why, there it is again! "My goodness! How am I going to get out of this? And there's the

**“A vantage-hook i' the breast o' the laff.”**





pail and the scrubbing-brush! how am I going to reach them?" And by this time she had mounted the book-board of the pew behind, looking all around the empty pews and feeling the chill of the place running through every bone in her body, as she was accustomed to say afterwards when describing her experiences. At last, her feelings getting fairly the mastery over her, she uttered a suppressed scream and running along the passages in the most direct line towards the door she had entered by, she made for home as if a hundred evil spirits were after her. Nor, you may be sure, did she venture to tell how she had fared among the spirits of the Burgher Kirk until she had attained to riper years, when she was able to withstand the sneering reflections of those who never dream that there is a philosophy in such experiences. Let those who laugh at a woman's hysteria think how often she can face a danger which the bravest of men would shrink from.

On one occasion, shortly after the induction of Mr. Inglis, a well-known citizen of "the baser sort" made his appearance at one of the services, and being somewhat intoxicated, forgot himself so far as to give audible tokens of his approval of the manner of the new minister, while the Scriptures were being read and commented upon. Mr. Inglis had the courage to stop, and, addressing the new-comer, told him directly that it was the right thing for him to do, to come to church; and as long as he kept quiet he

could remain, but if he persisted in talking, he would have to be expelled. "There's nae fears o' that; Mr. Inglis," said the half-crazy fellow; "for there's nae a soul in the Burgher Kirk could dae it." But he suddenly changed his tune when on looking round he saw Mr. William Malloch and Mr. William Crawford standing on either side of him. "Ay, ay, that's sae!" was all that he said as he walked meekly out without assistance, to be found when "the kirk was scaled," sleeping the sleep of the drunkard on the church green near by.

As has been said, Mr. Inglis was enthusiastic in the care he spent on his Sunday-school, the superintendency being generally entrusted to one of his elders. There was no Sunday-school so well attended as that of the Burgher Kirk, though he himself modestly states, in giving the gradual growth in figures, that the other Sunday-schools in the town increased in a similar manner. During the troubles over the inception of the Burgh Act the outer recriminations found their way for a moment into the inner circle of the institution over which Mr. Inglis presided *facile princeps*. One of the more prominent of the teachers in the school was Mr. John Malloch, of the Messrs. Brown, Malloch and Co. He had taken an active part in the inception movement, and so far did he allow his feelings to carry him, that he forbade my father, who was in the employ of his firm at the time, to take any part in the opposition movement. My

father was not a man to be forbidden the exercise of his rights of citizenship by any one, and at once resigning his position, took the public into his confidence through the press. Mr. Malloch tried to defend himself at the meeting of the Sunday-school teachers, not without Mr. Inglis's after sympathy; and there was not a little indignation created among the teachers at the minister countenancing a defence, which amounted to nothing less than a condemnation of one of his own elders, with no chance of reply.

The Sunday-school was also forced to take sides in sympathy against Mr. Inglis, when young William Stewart, a lad in Mr. Rodger's class, was sent to prison for having been with the mob the night of the Burgh Riot. The police seized three lads that evening, and the authorities being predisposed to make an example of some one, they were all sent to Glasgow to await their trial. Mr. Inglis undertook to advise the young men to plead guilty, on the plea that their punishment would be less severe under such circumstances than otherwise. Two of the young men absolutely refused to enter any such plea, but William Stewart, unfortunately for himself, gave way. As things turned out, Stewart alone was sent to jail, where his tendency to consumption was determined by the confinement, and from which he was liberated only to die.

Mr. Inglis says in his historical sketch that when he first introduced hymns into

his Sunday-school, he had to be his own precentor; and I have not forgotten the difficulty he had in getting the scholars to sing with any taste the tune of "Flow gently, sweet Afton," to one of the hymns he proposed to introduce. The practice of attaching secular tunes to spiritual songs has never been a success then or now; and only those who were too young to know the divorced tune from "Old Hundred" or any other sacred tune, sympathized with the innovation. Latterly, what was a blessing to the Sunday-school, namely the minister's enthusiasm, became unduly irksome to the recognized leader of the psalmody, and not a little friction at times would arise when preparations for the singing were being made for a concert or soiree. The antipathy to the hymn tunes was by no means confined to the parent, whom he himself speaks of as having an objection to standing during the singing. A kindred prejudice, it may be said, had to be overcome when the harmonium paved the way for the organ; and possibly the spirit of enterprise, which had courage enough to burrow its way through such a prejudice, has had not a little to do with the full fruition of a much more difficult undertaking in the building of a new Burghes Kirk, under the incumbency of Mr. Westwood.

In further referring to the "stronger lights" of the congregation next to the minister, it is only in keeping with good taste that no direct mention be made here



of the willing workers who still survive. All that need be done is to supply some of the many omissions which Mr. Inglis made when he composed his historical sketch. With the "Big Bible" weekly in my hand, which, my contemporaries were ever ready jeeringly to declare, "wasna a Bible ava, but only a box to haud the collection in," I would have had in me but an indifferent spirit of enquiry not to know who my predecessor collection-carrier was.\* My forerunner in office was none other than young James McDougall, now of New York, his father, Mr. James McDougall, manager of Napier's Mill, having been treasurer before my father was chosen for the position. And I may safely say that under no two treasurers were the books more tidily kept. When I was a lad Mr. McDougall was one of the most prominent townsmen of the time, a prominence which prevented him from escaping the satire of the author of the *Temple of Fame*, that once fell upon the big-wigs of the town. He was modest and retiring in his manner, sensitive to a degree, never in my recollection taking part in any of the more frictional events of the church. For many years before he died, he was a patient sufferer from palsy. Though in the employ of Sir William Napier, he was one

\* I have been told that this imitation Bible is still in existence, being preserved as an heir-loom, with the first hand-bell ever used in the Sunday-school by my father when he was superintendent.

of Sir William's personal friends. In his earlier years he had been an overseer of one of the departments of the Cartside mill, when he had his residence in what are known as the Bell-lands. An incident connected with the removal of the bell that used to hang in the belfry of that building, is quaint enough, and in keeping, too, to be here repeated: The Johnstone people had more than once, as has been recorded elsewhere, to mourn over the fate that befel their bell in the steeple. On two occasions the bellman had to bear "the brunt" for cracking the bell; and at last Mr. William Houstoun, the Laird's brother and *alter ego*, was appealed to, to secure for the town the services of a bell made of better stuff than the two that had been so unfortunate in their powers of endurance. Mr. Houstoun, knowing how the Cartside bell had withstood the wear-and-tear of forty years or more, concluded that it might possibly last as long again in the Johnstone steeple, and gave the manager orders that it should be placed, as a loan or gift, in the vacant place, at the estate's expense. I have been told by an eye witness of the regret there was in Cartside that such an old friend of the neighbourhood should thus be removed from its place, and that some of the women folk, particularly old Mrs. Murdoch, who had lived nearly all her life time under its belfry, and from whose husband, John Murdoch, the old schoolmaster of Brighton had his initials, were to be seen watching, with

tears in their eyes, the cart conveying the bell as far as the Spinners' Raw, where the bend in the highway hid it from view. Poor Mrs. Murdoch is said to have been seen burying her face in her apron, sobbing as if she had lost a near and dear friend.

In connection with this bell, it may be said that it shared the fate of its predecessors, being cracked as they had been; and then it was found that the bellman was not to blame after all. It was declared that the bells had been placed too high up in the steeple, and had been broken by the reaction of their own reverberations in the narrow chamber in which they were hung; and this scientific fact having been established by experts, the successors of the old Cartside bell found a belfry home in a lower chamber of the church tower.

Speaking of the Johnstone bellman in connection with the name of the Laird, there must be kept in view the fact that the bellman of the steeple's necessities was a very much more important personage in the town than the bellman who was only the town-crier. There is an anecdote of one of the most primitive of the latter officials which may bear repeating here, though some may find a difficulty in establishing the connection. The Laird had been troubled with trespassers on the grounds of the manor, and, determined to put a stop to everything of the kind, gave verbal orders to the bell-man or town-crier, to inform the lieges to that effect. The bell-

man of the period happened to be a Highlander, whose English was none of the best, and the Laird must have been surprised to hear how the faithful public servant carried out his orders, by using the most forcible language in his gift; for this is how he is reported to have addressed his fellow-townsmen on the occasion: "Come a' ye splitter folks and splatter folks and a' ye round about country vagabonds! If ever ye be caught on the good Laird's ground pu'ing peats and cutting heather, ye'll be kilt and murdered, hanged and drooned and brooned: ye'll then be thrown owre the lang Brig o' Johnstone, and if ever ye come back again, a faur waur death will be for ye."

Mr. William Finlayson, the founder of the Johnstone Flax Mills under the firm of Finlayson, Bousfield & Co., was indirectly connected with the congregation. I remember him only as a venerable old gentleman who had retired from active life shortly after the burning of the Little Flax Mill. His son Charles was for a time a teacher in the Sunday-school, while his son James, the ex-member of parliament, has always taken a sympathetic interest in the welfare of the congregation. The destruction of the above-mentioned mill, with its incidental loss of life, formed for years a central date in the memory of my contemporaries, the event being emphasized in my own mind by the many forensic references made to it in the services of the Sabbath succeeding its

lamentable occurrence and on other occasions. The heroic conduct of some of a company of circus people who happened to have a performance on at the time in the town, was favourably commented on everywhere, and even the Burgher Kirk folk had no very severe word to say of the calling they followed, while the event was fresh in their minds; though they were by no means inclined to encourage the younger people to attend their performances to any greater extent than before.

The Finlaysons happened once to have among their workmen an overseer who was sufficiently well up in mesmerism to give public seances in the town. His fame having extended as far as Greenock, he was invited by some of the people of that place to give one of his entertainments there. Of course to draw a good house it was suggested that the lecturer should be heralded with some letter appendages to his name in addition to the prefix of Professor. Happening to meet old Mr. Finlayson he casually mentioned the matter to him, asking his advice, and stating that he would not be absent for more than a day. Leave of absence was at once acquiesced in, and at the same time the suggestion was readily given that the budding lecturer should put after his name the capital letters F. M. W. "And what would these letters mean, Mr. Finlayson, may I ask?" said the mesmerist, pleased to accept any solution of his difficulty. "Why, what can they mean but

what they truthfully stand for, namely, Flax Mill Worker," answered the venerable humorist, though he was not a little surprised afterwards to be told that the amateur mesmerist had actually used the suggested letters in the announcement of his first appearance in Sugaropolis.

Mr. William Malloch, of Mount Pleasant, the father of a large family of boys, who were all well-known to the Burgher Kirk folk, took an active interest in church matters during Mr. Clapperton's day. His daughter was for years a Sunday-school teacher during Mr. Inglis's time, as was also his son, John, afterwards senior manager of the mills at Johnstone and Elderslie. The latter was for many years an elder of the church, and his personality is still fresh in the memory of its members, from the active part he took in the late settlement of a minister and in the later movements in behalf of the congregation and its continuing prosperity. From the time of the inception of the Burgh Act, he continued, up to the time of his death, one of Johnstone's most prominent public men in matters religious and political.

Mr. William Crawford, schoolmaster of Crosslie and Linwood, was an elder of the church at the time of Mr. Inglis's induction; a man of intellectual parts and strong religious tendencies, who was seldom, if ever, absent on Sunday, rain or shine, and who was always to be seen in his seat near the pulpit on Sacrament Sunday. The shock

which his somewhat sudden death gave to the congregation is among the more enduring of my earlier recollections. He is to be distinguished from Mr. William Crawford, the auctioneer, who was also connected with the Burgher Kirk,—a man of ready wit and strong personality, who was known to the whole countryside. The former was brother to Mr. George Crawford, of Banktop, who, with his family, used to occupy the front seat in the gallery to the left of the pulpit. Mr. William Crawford, the elder, it seems, kept a diary, and it may not be out of place to give here an extract, to illustrate his religious tendencies as well as the interest he took in the church and its affairs:

"April 21st, 1860. Mr. Inglis was introduced this day by Dr. Brown. The Doctor preached from John x., The Good Shepherd, etc. The fold is the new covenant. The sheep are safe there. Mr. Inglis preached from Col. I., 21 and 22. (1.) We are alienated from God by nature. (2.) Christians are reconciled to God by the death of Christ, (3.) The consequences of this reconciliation are,—Christians are made holy and unblamable and irreproachable in God's sight through Christ."

And the entry ends with this confession and prayer:—

"Had more attention than on some Sabbaths. Still wandering thoughts. Oh, may I be made holy and unblamable in his sight. May God bless our young minister, and make him the means of bringing many sinners to Christ. May God be glorified in all."

During the period between Mr. Clapperton's demise and Mr. Inglis's induction Mr.

Crawford frequently conducted the services from the pulpit, with due appreciation from the people, and as a boy I used to wonder why he never put on the bands and gown as the most of the candidates did when they occupied the pulpit.

Mr. William Paton, of the Quarrelton Rope-Walk, and afterwards of the well-known Johnstone Mills, was an adherent of the church from the time he went to Johnstone to the day of his death. His personality was well known to me, as it was to all the boys who had to pass his factory on their way to school; and a more industrious man than he, or one who had more early difficulties to overcome, was not to be found in the parish. He originally came from Kilbirnie to Paisley and finally started business in Johnstone. Becoming wealthy in his later years, he did not forget in his benefactions his adopted town or the church wherein his children were baptized.

An anecdote connected with his earlier experiences illustrates the humour of his ways, even when working hard to make ends meet; for a man of rare humour he was. Pressed with business cares, he was one day keeping them at arm's length, as can nearly always best be done by hard work. He was up at the wheel house at the very end of the "walk," when his son, who was his clerk, came up to him with an account in his hand, asking if it was to be paid.

"I have no time just now to look into the



matter," said Mr. Paton, keeping at the work he had in hand. "Tell the man to call next week."

"But," said the son, "its the poor rates."

"Oh," said the father, "the poor rates, is it? Well, go back, and pay the account at once, for we will all be there at the end of the week."

Mr. Peter Buchanan is referred to in a sentence by Mr. Ingils, as one who served the managers as clerk without fee or salary. Mr. Buchanan was perhaps the most popular member the church ever knew, and I remember well the excitement there was, while a presentation of a gold watch and chain was being arranged for him. A genial man he was with old and young, and always ready to extend a helping hand to rich and poor. He was at first head of the wareroom of the Old Mill, and afterwards was appointed business manager in the Cartside Mill, a position which he held for many years.

The discipline of the olden time was peremptory and unquestioned, very different from what it is in some places now-a-days; and one Sunday morning an illustration of the direct method was given in the Burgher Kirk, that was not without its effect upon the congregation. Mr. Buchanan had the reputation of being neither over-strict nor indulgent as a parent, and, as may readily be conceived, his usual urbanity added not a little to the piquancy of the incident here narrated. It had been an unwritten law,

as long as I remember, that when lads had been through a fever to the loss of their hair, they were to be allowed to sit in public places with their caps on. Young Peter Buchanan, a lad of excellent parts,—one of the “lesser lights” of the congregation at the time I write of, but who, alas! was removed by death before reaching the fuller manhood, had been for some time, it seems, in a fever, though not of a deadly kind, about the condition of his youthful locks. They were not to his satisfaction. And having learned that a new crop would possibly be an improvement on the old, he arose one Saturday night, when all the family were in bed, and applied the scissors with his own hand, until not a hair was left to tell the tale of the disaster. Next morning when he appeared for breakfast there was laughter enough and jibing, too, among the smaller fry of the family, and stern indignation on the part of the parents, especially of the father. When church time came, Peter, junior, marched with the family to church and took his place at the head of the Buchanan pew in the “briest o’ the laft,” with his “glengarry” unremoved from his head, as he thought it was his privilege to have. As it chanced, the father had to go round to the session-house before service, and the son was safe in his prerogative for the moment; though the younger folks and some of the older ones, too, marvelled not a little at what could have happened to young Peter Buchanan, since

they had not heard of his being "through the fever," or anything of that kind. But when the father came to take his place at the end of the pew the *denouement* was instant and effective. With a pantomimic action that cannot be described,—a touch of the head with his finger, a treble wave of his hand, and a frown upon his face,—the order was given to the visible amusement of the congregation; and when the "poor bare pow" of the blushing lad was exposed, so strange-looking was his appearance that the solemnity of the place hardly restrained a titter.

The excuse for publishing such an anecdote as the foregoing, so personal in its character, as some will no doubt say, may be found in the fact that the writer had his first introduction before the public in company with young Mr. Buchanan. There was to be a soiree, and a number of the younger fry of the congregation were to appear on the platform to assist in the rendering of "Sound the Loud Timbrel" and one or two other pieces of a like character. The musical drill we had to undergo was nothing to the "dress rehearsal" before the hour arrived for taking our places. From the sheer stubbornness of nature my poor locks, so unlike Samson's curls, would not retain their proper alignment, no matter how much my sister scolded me with her eyes, nor how often I kept running my fingers through them, and when I returned home I am afraid I was scolded more on nature's account than for any deficiency in

the musical part I had to play, on this my debut before the public. Indeed I felt inclined for the moment as if I would like to try Peter Buchanan's way out of the difficulty.

Mr. John Adam was an elder, whose home was in Houstoun, where he kept a country inn. He was an honest simple-minded man who was seldom absent from service, and always present, with his neighbour, Mr. Crawford, at Sacrament time. It was often a wonder with outsiders that the Burgher Kirk folk, straight-laced in many respects, could have a dealer in strong drink as one of their elders; but to know John Adams was to know his essential fitness for the eldership in these times when whiskey drinking had not fallen completely under the ban. It may be as well to state here, perhaps for the first time publicly, that Mr. Adams willed a sum of money for the use of the Sunday-school, though after the manner of his usual liberality, nobody was "to ken onything about it or whom it cam frae."

Mr. Robert Harper was an elder of the church from the time my memory can go back, and during my early years up to manhood, there was no activity connected with the church's work in which he had not to take a part direct or indirect. His uncle, Mr. Robert Montgomery, after whom he was named, and from whom he received his education, had been a prominent member of the church in Mr. Clapperton's day, as

has already been said; and I can remember yet the day when my brother was baptized as Robert Montgomery, how the uncle's connection with the church was brought to the minds of the older members in the christening of his grand-nephew. For obvious reasons the writer has to refrain from saying more here of one whose duty done was the duty of a well-directed life. His brother, Mr. William Harper, was also a member of the Burghes Kirk, with a warm heart for all its interests, as others have testified. The following extract, taken from the *Johnstone Gleaner*, of which Mr. Robert Harper was founder and editor, shows the appreciation he had for his minister, Mr. Inglis:—"It is impossible to speak too highly of Mr. Inglis's ministerial work. His sermons are as fresh and as interesting to-day as ever they were. The esteem and popularity in which he is held by the congregation are attested by the fact that on the third of December, 1872, they presented him with a purse containing one hundred sovereigns, and on the completion of his semi-jubilee they again presented him with a casket containing two hundred and ten sovereigns."

Mr. William Rodger, who has already been mentioned incidentally, was one who reached the eldership more from his striking honesty of purpose than from any marked religiosity of manner. His criticisms were always direct, without even the feeblest attempt at periphrase or finesse of

speech, and no man could raise a laugh more readily with his drollery. Notwithstanding his abruptness of manner, he had a popularity of his own, in church and out of church. He was a believer in the practicabilities, and when he became afraid that his theology might prove too unattractive to the young fellows of his class in Sunday-school, he would supplement his efforts in their behalf by starting to teach them to play the flute on a week day. Mr. Rodger, as has been said, was a baker by trade, and, leaving Johnstone for Paisley, succeeded eventually in acquiring sufficient capital to start a number of bakeries in Glasgow. He was something of a traveller, and no man could entertain better than he could by telling of the places he had visited in remote parts. If space permitted, many an anecdote could be here inserted connected with the experiences of Willie Rodger, as he was familiarly called. Two of them only may bear narrating here: Mr. Rodger was a pronounced teetotlar, his opinions on the whiskey traffic being public property. One night he was present at a wedding party in Laigh Cartside, at which the after ceremony of a "circuit of wine" was no exception. When the wine came Mr. Rodgers's way, he was seen to take his glass with the rest of them, and when he was pressed to explain his seeming inconsistency, for there was no escape from the "back speiring" in such a company, he quietly remarked, "Ne'er ye fash aboot what is only a seemin'."

for I aye look upon a thing o' this kind as mair or less o' a sacramental occasion."

The story of the man who put the sovereign in the plate at the church door by mistake has a different ending when repeated in the light of Mr. Rodger's treatment of a lad who once dropped his all into the plate in the shape of half-a-crown, instead of a penny. "Did I put that in the plate, Mr. Rodger?" asked the lad somewhat pale at the mistake he had made. "I think ye did," was the immediate answer. "And may I take it out again?" asked the boy. "I think ye may, if ye have made a mistake in putting it in," said the kind-hearted elder; "I mind the time weel eneuch when the puttin' o' a half-crown in the plate instead o' a penny would hae been a sair misfortune to me also, sae please yoursel', my man, this time; for I dinna think God 'ill be angry at either o' us for bein' honest wi' Him as weel as wi' oursel's."

Mr. James Smith was another of the elders, whose personality was known to nearly every household in the town,—a man of pleasant mien and kindly spirit. For years he was the gas-collector, his residence being in William Street. A correspondent has given me the following as an illustration of the simplicity, if not the diffidence, of his ways: "I remember how one cold winter's evening many years ago, a handful of people had assembled in the Session-house to attend the prayer meeting. So cold was it, that the gas pipes had become

frozen, and for light there was nothing but the glare from the coals in the open fireplace and two candles on the mantelpiece. In the absence of the minister, Mr. Smith conducted the service. He opened the meeting by reading the whole of the seventy-second psalm, and then asked us to join in singing it, without specifying the number of verses to be sung, or making any sign of calling a halt when ten or a dozen of them had been sung. I was leading the singing that night, and I shall never forget the puzzled expression on the faces of the late comers, when we waded through the whole of the psalm with no instrument to help us in sustaining the pitch. I had to stop once or twice to get the key-note, but Mr. Smith gave no sign at the halting places until the whole had been accomplished."

Mr. William Kerr, of Linclive farm, near Linwood, was one of the oldest of the elders at the centenary celebration of the church, and has only lately been withdrawn to enjoy his reward at a ripe old age. I remember the occasion of his being chosen to the eldership. As one who knew him well has told me: "He was one of the most loveable of Christian men I ever knew,—a confirmed optimist. If a bad harvest excited growling among his neighbours against the clerk of the weather, he was always sure to refer to the good harvests of previous years. His last days on earth were, in their record, a fitting illustration, in the



words of Addison, of how a Christian should die."

Mr. John Caldwell was still another of the elders who took a prominent part at the prayer-meetings and had a class in the Sunday-school for years. He was at first one of the under-managers in the Old Mill, but afterwards started business for himself in Houstoun Square. Another of the elders who had a position in the Old Mill was Mr. Hugh Reid, a man of unassuming presence and acknowledged integrity; and with him may be mentioned Mr. William Hill, who came from Kilbarchan, Mr. James Paterson and Mr. Allan Rankin, all men of principle and God-fearing action. I have looked carefully through the names of the present workers as they are to be found classified in the centenary pamphlet, to assist my memory in recalling some of those who have passed away, and if I have made omissions of any who ought to have been mentioned in these personal notes, I crave pardon of those who would have liked to have had them mentioned. I have been assisted in the collecting of material for these paragraphs by Mr. Alex. McDougall, of Montreal, Captain McDougall, of New York, and Mrs. Thomas Stewart, of Chicago, while I have been given permission to make use of the illustrations in the memorial volume of the late Mr. David Paton, whose brother, Major James Paton, has kindly provided me with photographs of the church in its exterior and interior.

