

THE

“LIFE”

OR

THE ETRICK SHEPHERD
ANATOMIZED;

IN A SERIES OF STRICTURES ON THE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JAMES HOGG,

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST VOLUME OF THE
“ALTRIVE TALES.”

BY

(James Brown)

AN OLD DISSECTOR.

Touchstone. Hast any philosophy in thee, Shep.
Corin. No, truly.
Touchstone. Then thou art damn'd.

As You Like it, Act iii. Scene 2.

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HOGG'S
"LIFE" AND "TALES."

The circumstances under which this publication has been ushered into the world are at once curious in themselves, and characteristic of the different personages who figure in connection with the author and his adventures. The plan of publishing a series of Tales by the Ettrick Shepherd, under some such clap-trap title as that actually assumed, would seem to have been originally suggested by Mr Blackwood, manifestly with the view of benefiting the author alone, as several of the tales were already his own property; and the Shepherd, on his part, appears to have expected that Mr Blackwood would give effect to his own suggestion by becoming publisher of the great work. But, for reasons not explained, though easy to be guessed, Mr Blackwood declined, or at least delayed, to fulfil the ex-

See Blackwood's Magazine

pections of his pastoral friend. The Shepherd naturally waxed wroth at this procrastination, took the copy or manuscript out of Ebony's hand, and, finding nobody amongst the trade here a whit more "reasonable" than his old friend, patron, and supporter, he bled him off to London as fast as sails could convey him, thinking, doubtless, that in a new scene he might perchance excite some sensation. The adventure succeeded beyond any thing that even the "inherent vanity" of the Shepherd could have anticipated. He arrived in the Great Babel of the South, where every *lusus nature* is welcome, just in the very nick of time, when the Tories wanted something, no matter what, to serve as a pretext for getting up tavern dinners, spouting conservative speeches, jollifying over "loyal and appropriate toasts," and singing songs in praise of all men and of all things that have earned a pre-eminent title to the detestation of mankind. Hogg suited their purpose to a hair, and his advent was accordingly hailed with acclamations. The man who, he says, never told him a word of truth but by chance,—in other words, who made him a continual butt for railery and derision, cramming him with all manner of nonsense and absurdity, and literally laughing in the face of the poor gudgeon as he swallowed it,—now took him by the hand, doubtless sniggering in his sleeve at the idea of *such* a protégé. The practical joke in the London Tavern followed; and Hogg found himself seated, for the first time

in his life, among some tip-top Tory aristocrats, who but-tered the poor creature's vanity inch-thick, as a pretext for lauding themselves, their party, and their principles; whilst the knowing ones, who had got up the farce, relishing the fun more than the politics, laughed outright both at their own "lion," and at the titled noodles on whom they had palmed him off for such. Then came newspaper puffs, most of them concocted in the same spirit of lurking derision, together with anecdotes of the newly-imported prodigy, sayings uttered or supposed to have been uttered by him in his own elegant vernacular, and engraved portraits as like the man himself as his real talents are to his own estimation of them. As John Bull is the biggest gudgeon in Europe, the bait caught; a junior publishing house in London, about a year old, swallowed it; and here, accordingly, is the grand *Tale*-piece, number first, intended, doubtless, to rival the Waverley Novels and the works of Byron, and modestly published at a price *one fifth* more than that of these standard and classical works.

This short explanation will serve to show the world under what auspices, and favoured by what circumstances, Hogg has been enabled to effect the resurrection of matter previously dead and forgotten. The volume recently published consists of two parts; first, "Memoir of the Author;" and, secondly, three "Tales," entitled,

respectively, "Adventures of Captain John Loecky," "The Pongos," or Ourang-outangs, and "Marion's Jock." These may be very briefly disposed of. The first is a tissue of the wildest exaggeration and extravagance, apparently imagined in a calenture of the brain, and destitute alike of interest or aim. The second, in its ineffable grossness, thinly veiled under a clumsy attempt at hoax, absolutely defies all description. And the third is a production stamped with that coarse and libidinous vulgarity in which the Shepherd revels as in his native element. Hogg's Tales, in short, if not intended, are at least calculated only for "the *swinish* multitude." Yet, strange to say, they are dedicated, in a long, rambling piece of metrical doggerel, to a lady of high rank and illustrious family,—the Right Honourable Lady Anne Scott of Buccleuch,—who probably first became apprized of the liberty taken with her "proud Caledonian name," when the Shepherd's rhyming sycophancy appeared in print, and whose pure and high-bred mind must revolt from the loathsome and indecent disclosures with which this volume abounds. We say thus much from a feeling of justice towards Lady Anne Scott, who never could have knowingly given the sanction of her approbation to such a production as this; and we feel confident that her noble friends and relatives will see the propriety of formally disclaiming, in her behalf, the liberty which has been so unceremoniously taken with her name.

So much then for the "Tales." We now dismiss them altogether from view, in order to come at once to the "Memoir of the Author," which we propose to dissect and anatomize as thoroughly as if it had been doomed to undergo that operation by a sentence of the High Court of Justiciary. The life of "Maister Jamnis Hougge," though not of the slightest value or interest to any mortal creature except "the author," has been oftener written and printed than that of any individual, however illustrious, for the last hundred years. He admits, indeed, that "this *important* Memoir is now brought forth for the *fourth* time;" and he might have safely added for the *sixth* or *seventh* time, if he had included the publications made by others at his instigation; not to mention the frequently reiterated threat of a more extended Memoir kept *in retentis* for some future occasion. Now, as it is about thirty years since the Shepherd first came before the public in the capacity of author, this is at the rate of a memoir for every five years of his literary life; yet even this quinquennial advertisement of the man and his concerns, with all the accessory stimulants and appliances of slander and fiction, has, it seems, failed to answer the purposes intended by it; and in order to support incommensurate pretensions, and eternal self-glorification, some new clap-trap expedients must ever and anon be resorted to. To one of these, as we have shown, we are indebted for the volume before us, including the precious memoir, "now brought

forth for the fourth time ;" and truth compels us to say that, in all our experience, we never knew an instance of a *life* which has been so often *revised*, and yet remains so ill *corrected*. The examination which we intend to bestow upon it is an honour which it contains nothing to deserve or repay. But, from various causes, it has acquired a present and factitious notoriety ; and, even independently of this consideration, it is eminently desirable to preserve the literature of the country, if possible, uncontaminated by the impurities and impostures which have of late years disgraced and degraded it.

1. Mr Hogg commences his Memoir with this declaration : " I must again apprize you, that, whenever I have occasion to speak of myself and my performances, I find it impossible to divest myself of an *inherent vanity* ; but, making allowances for that, I will lay before you the outlines of my life, with the circumstances that gave rise to my juvenile pieces, and my own opinion of them, *as faithfully*

As if you were the minister of heaven,

Sent down to search the secret sins of men."

And again, at page 58, he says, " I pledge myself, that in this short sketch of my literary life, as well as in the more extended memoir, should that ever appear, *to relate nothing but the DOWNRIGHT TRUTH.*"

Now, without stopping to notice the "inherent vanity" which is here candidly avowed, and of which some instances at once ludicrous and amusing will be given by and bye, we shall at once put to the test the Shepherd's repeated and solemn declaration "to relate nothing but the *downright truth.*" In *this* edition of his *life* we find, for the first time, the following interpolation :—" I was born on the 25th of January 1772," p. 3. The 25th of January happens to be the birth-day of Robert Burns ; and this *imaginary* coincidence, ominous, it seems, of high poetical honours, was proclaimed, for the first time, at the farcical festival in the London Tavern, where Hogg officiated as the "swinish" marvel of the night. But the records of a certain kirk-session in the south have since been examined, and from these it appears that, if the Shepherd has wrote his annals true, that wonderful feeder of sheep must have been christened some six weeks or so *before he was born !* This, however, is not all, nor even the best of the joke. For we shall prove by authority to which *he* cannot possibly object, namely, that of Hogg himself, that the statement given by him in the London Tavern, and the interpolated entry here made in support of it, are both and each entirely fictitious. At page 120, he unwittingly informs us that he is "*five months and ten days* younger than Sir Walter Scott." But Sir Walter was born in the month of MAY 1771 ; and consequently Hogg, by his own showing, must have been born in OCTOBER the same year, or *three months*

anterior to the birth-day invented in the London Tavern, and afterwards interpolated into this edition of his life! As he says of Lockhart, he has here told the truth for once, and certainly when *he did not intend it*. He afterwards informs us, page 16, that "the first time he ever heard of Burns was in 1794," when "a half daft man, named John Scott," repeated to him Tam O'Shanter, and "told him it was *made* by one Robert Burns, the sweetest poet that ever was born; but that he (Burns) was now dead, and his place would never be supplied." Nor did the "half-daft man's" communication stop here. "He told me all about him (Burns)," says Hogg, "how he was born on the 25th of January, bred a ploughman, how many beautiful songs and poems he had composed, and that he had died last harvest, on the 21st of August." The "half-daft man" must have been nearly as slipshod authority as the Shepherd himself has since proved; for "the 21st of August" happens to have been nearly as many weeks *after the death of Burns* as Hogg's birth was *after the day of his baptism*. However, he goes on: "This formed a new epoch in my life. Every day I pondered on the genius and fate of Burns. I wept, and always thought with myself—*what is to hinder me from succeeding to Burns?* I TOO WAS BORN ON THE 25TH OF JANUARY"—(the devil you was!) "However," he adds, "I resolved to be a poet, and to follow in the steps of Burns." This is only to be equalled by what follows: "I told my friend, the Rev. James Ni-

col, that I had an *inward consciousness* that *I should yet live to be compared to Burns*; and though I might never equal him in some things, *I thought I might excel him in others*." What a pity that the whole of this magnificent fabric of apparent castle-building should rest on no more solid foundation than an *ex post facto* fiction, imagined for the first time only a few months ago! The reader, however, may take this as specimen first of "*the downright truth*," according to Hogg.

2. Hogg favours us with some particulars of his early life; but these are, for the most part, of a nature too gross to admit of either quotation or description. At page 6, he says, "*It will scarcely be believed* that at so early an age (eight) I should have been an admirer of the other sex." Any thing will be believed of him, except what he says of himself. Byron informs us that he loved Mary Duff at the age of seven; and the Shepherd, who, ludicrous as it may appear, aspires to resemble, if not to rival, the immortal Childe, could not do less than discover that he "admired the other sex" at eight. Again, "there is one circumstance which has led some to imagine that my abilities as a servant had not been *exquisite*; namely, that when I was fifteen years of age I had served a dozen masters." We have never thought Hogg's "abilities," in *any* capacity, "exquisite," except as a sworn relator of "the downright truth;" but we confess that the fact

which he here mentions, *if it be a fact*, would go far to convince us that his talents as a servant were very accurately appreciated. He affirms, indeed, that he does not remember of ever having served a master who refused giving him a *verbal* recommendation to the next (nobody, it seems, would indorse him *in writing*) for his inoffensive behaviour; and he adds, that "this character has, *in some degree*, attended him ever since, and has certainly been of utility to him." Yet he very justly attaches but little importance to a character negative, and otherwise somewhat doubtful; for, "though Solomon avers (says he) that 'a good name is rather to be chosen than riches, *I declare that I have never been so much benefited by mine, but that I WOULD HAVE CHOSEN THE LATTER BY MANY DREES*," p. 8. We have no doubt whatever that Hogg has here related the "downright truth."

3. One of the Shepherd's first literary productions was "The Mountain Bard," a tissue of vulgar doggerel, published by subscription; his next, "that celebrated work, *Hogg on Sheep*," for which, he says, the late Mr Constable gave him eighty-six pounds; while the united produce of both amounted to "nearly three hundred pounds." So large a sum appears to have turned the poor man's head; he "went perfectly mad;" took a pasture farm "at exactly one half more than it was worth;" found himself "involved in business far above his capital;" run fairly

aground in the course of a year; and then decamped, leaving his creditors to "take" what they could get, which, we believe, was *nothing at all*. The honest people of the Forest do not seem to have much relished Hogg's moonlight escapade; for, on his return, some time afterwards, when he thought the affair had blown over, he found himself shunned or cut by every creature that ever knew him. "I found the countenances of all my friends altered; and even those whom I had loved and trusted most *disowned me, and told me so to my face*; but I laughed at and despised these persons, resolving to show them, by and by, that they were in the wrong. Having *appeared* as a poet and a speculative farmer besides [he might also have said "*disappeared*," too, as a fugitive insolvent], no one would employ me as a shepherd. I even applied to some of my old masters, but *they refused me*; and for a whole winter I found myself without employment, and without money, in my native country; therefore, in February 1810, in utter desperation, I took my plaid about my shoulders, and marched away to Edinburgh, *determined, since no better could be, to push my fortune as a literary man*." P. 29. Such is the literary or rather poetical origin of this pastoral songster. No one can read the account of it here given without at once acknowledging the justice of Hogg's discriminating observation above quoted as to the value of "a good name" compared with "riches,"

and the little benefit that he either has derived, or is ever likely to derive, from his own reputation.

4. Being fairly established in Edinburgh, Hogg next produced "The Forest Minstrel," which Mr Constable generously published for him at a dead loss. He then projected "a weekly literary paper," which he also offered to Mr Constable; but Archy, who was a rare wag in his day, "laughed at him (Hogg) exceedingly;" and Mr John Ballantyne, although he "was rather more civil," "got off by subscribing for so many copies, and giving him credit for ten pounds worth of paper;" while "David Brown would have nothing to do with it, unless some gentleman, whom he named, should contribute." This, it must be confessed, was rather disheartening: but "at length I found *an honest man*, James Robertson, a bookseller in Nicolson Street, whom I had never before seen or heard of, who undertook it at once on my own terms; and, on the 1st of September 1810" (we love to be particular) number one of "The Spy" made its appearance. Now for a sample of Hogg's gratitude. The "honest man" whom he had "found" in his distress, and who kindly put him in the way of escaping literal starvation for a time, is thus described by him a couple of pages farther on:—"My publisher, James Robertson, was a kind-hearted, confused body, who loved a joke and a dram. He sent for me every day about one o'clock, to consult about

the publication; and then we uniformly went down to a dark house in the Cowgate, where we drank whisky and ate rolls with a number of printers, the dirtiest and leanest looking men I had ever seen." P. 33. Hogg talks of the regularity of his habits prior to this acquaintance, and affects much virtuous indignation at the dram-drinking, roll-eating propensities of "his publisher," although he at the same time confesses that "he was beginning to relish" a "*meridian*" and a roll as well as the poor bibliopole.

However, "on some pretence or other," says he, "I resolved to cut all connection with Robertson; and, sorely against his will, gave the printing to the Messrs Aikman, then proprietors of the Star newspaper, showing them the *list of subscribers*, of which they took their chance, and promised me half profits. At the conclusion of the year, instead of granting me any profits, they complained of being minus, and charged me with the half of the loss. This I refused to pay, *unless they could give me an account of all the numbers published*, on the sale of which there should have been a profit. *This they could not do*; so I received nothing, and paid as little." P. 34. Now, to enable the reader to judge for himself of Hogg's talent for relating "the downright truth," we shall here insert an excerpt from a statement with which we have been favoured respecting this matter, by Mr Andrew Aikman, formerly a partner of the firm of A. and J. Aikman, proprietors of the Star newspaper. This statement, which is holograph of

Mr Aikman, subscribed by him, and dated the 2d of May 1832, is as follows :—

After some introductory remarks, and quoting Hogg's words above cited, Mr Aikman proceeds : " Mr Hogg, in the above, has given the truth, *but not all the truth*. It shall now be stated. When Mr Hogg first applied to A. and J. Aikman, he brought Mr Griever, and another gentleman whose name is now forgotten, with him, and produced his list of subscribers, booksellers and others, which appeared sufficiently respectable to induce them to undertake the publication on the terms he states, with this additional provision, that as they were to be at all the outlay, so they were to receive *all* the subscriptions; and when the work was finished, then accounts were to be balanced, and the profits divided. But Mr Hogg has not fairly stated this matter : he has not said that he gave to them a list of subscribers, *principally booksellers*, who, with the exception of Mr John Ballantyne, were *merely agents*, and who had the work, according to the technical phrase, *on sale and return*; and from Glasgow, Greenock, &c., they were out of pocket by carriages, *from the most of the numbers being returned to them*; and when Mr Ballantyne was applied to, whose name was put down for *fifty* copies, he refused to pay or return the copies, Mr Hogg being much more than the amount in his debt.

" Another part of Mr Hogg's unfair dealing was this :— He knew that immediately after the publication of the 4th number (which, it was reported, was a *sketch* of his own life up to the time of his coming to Edinburgh—and a more *shameful and indecent paper was never laid so barefacedly before the public*, but which, however, had been cancelled) the subscribers had decreased amazingly. This, however, he kept *secret* from A. and J. Aikman till after they were so engaged that they could not draw back : they, therefore, went on and finished the work ; but it was not till that period that they knew of the extent of the loss to which they had subjected themselves. It is said above, that A. and J. Aikman were to be the *sole receivers* of the subscriptions ; but it unfortunately turned out that Mr Hogg acted with *as little faith* in this as in other parts of his engagement ; for, on application to many of the subscribers, *it was found he [Hogg] HAD RECEIVED THE MONEY* ; and even his friend Mr ———'s subscription is not paid to this day.

" With respect to their not rendering an exact account of their concern in the transaction, *that is utterly false* ; they rendered this at the time when Mr Hogg was proposing to make a composition with his creditors ; and for his share of the loss they were to receive *ten shillings* in the pound, which, however, has never been forthcoming ; so that A. and J. Aikman, with the exception of about

eighteen pounds, which they collected during the course of the publication, *lost every thing else.*

“It may just be mentioned in conclusion, that, happening to meet casually with Mr. Hogg in Argyle Square a good many months ago, I [Mr. A. Aikman] taxed him with what he had said of A. and J. Aikman in his first edition, when *he denied all recollection of it, and said he never INTENDED to have advanced anything to the detriment of our characters.* How he has allowed himself to reprint the same I know not; but it either shows the height of malice or the extreme of folly. I was much pressed at the time he published his first edition to contradict his statement; but I really cared little about the slanders of a man who could allow his name to make such a conspicuous figure in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ.*”

(Signed) “ANDREW AIKMAN.”

Here, then, we have another decisive specimen of Hogg's peculiar method of relating “the downright truth.” Mr Aikman has done himself honour by his explicit and manly statement; and no one who reads the foregoing extract from the Shepherd's “Memoir,” relative to the Messrs Aikman, can doubt that, however blistering the exposure which it makes of that unhappy man and his dealings, it has been repeatedly provoked, and is, beyond all dispute,

richly merited. What follows will show the noted relater of “the downright truth” in a different light.

5. We have already seen how zealously and effectually Mr John Grieve befriended Hogg in the matter of the “Spy.” Of the extent of the Shepherd's obligations to that gentleman some idea—and only *some*—may be formed from the following statement contained in pages 36 and 37 of the present “Memoir:”—“All this while there was *no man* who entered into my views and supported them, *save* Mr John Grieve, whose affection neither *in-prudence* nor *misfortune* could once shake. *Evil speakers had no effect on him.* We had been acquainted from our youth; and he had formed his judgment of me as a man and a poet; and from that nothing could ever make him abate one item. Mr Grieve's opinion of me was far too partial, for it amounted to this, that he never conceived any effort in poetry above my reach if I would set my mind to it; but my carelessness and indifference he constantly regretted and deprecated. During the first six months that I resided in Edinburgh, I lived with him, and his partner Mr Scott, who, on a longer acquaintance, became as firmly attached to me as Mr Grieve, and I believe as much so as to any other man alive. We three have had many happy evenings together; we indeed were seldom separate when it was possible to meet. *They suffered me to want for nothing, either in money or clothes; and*

I did not even need to ask these. MR GRIEVE WAS ALWAYS THE FIRST TO NOTICE MY WANTS, AND PREVENT THEM. In short, they would not suffer me to be obliged to any one but themselves for the value of a farthing; and *without this sure support I could never have fought my way in Edinburgh.* I was fairly starved into it; and, *if it had not been for Messrs Grievie and Scott,* would, in a very short time, have been starved out of it again."

Yet this amiable and accomplished individual, whom to know is to esteem, "whose affection neither *misfortune* nor *imprudence* could shake," on whom "evil speakers had no effect," and whose conduct towards Hogg, as related by the Shepherd himself, is an honour to human nature, did become estranged from the object of his bounty, owing to the "selfishness" and "ingratitude" of that unhappy man himself. This is proved by the following extract of a letter from Mr Grievie, dated Caerabank, 4th September 1823, and addressed to a gentleman whom Hogg had shortly before slandered in the grossest manner in the edition of this "Memoir" prefixed to Oliver and Boyd's reprint of the "Mountain Bard:"

"As to Hogg, I do not know well what to say. You know well the situation I am in with respect to him. *Although he has acted in a most SELFISH and UNGRATEFUL way to me,* I find my heart recoils at the idea of becoming informer, and leaguing against him, *whatever cause he*

may have given me. I hope you will enter into my feelings, and see the good reason I have to remain neutral in the present instance. I am persuaded, had you thought a little on the position I would be placed in by such interference as you hint at, that you never would ask it. I wish you, however, to be sensible that I am not influenced by any respect for Mr Hogg's character, or want of it for yours. On the contrary, *for the former I entertain unmingled CONDEMNATION,* and for the latter, &c. &c. &c. Farther, I think you are right in vindicating your character. *For the gratification of his CONTEMPTIBLE VANITY, he has attempted to rob you of your good name, which, to a commercial man, is every thing."*

It could have been no slight cause which compelled Mr Grievie to express himself thus; but when the extract which is here given from his letter sees the light, Hogg's power of slandering any man will be for ever at an end. At page 98 of this "Memoir" he says, "I never knew either man or woman who has been so *uniformly happy* as I have been; which has been partly owing to a good constitution, and partly *from* the conviction that a *heavenly gift,* conferring the powers of *immortal song,* was inherent in my soul." We fear much that there are "gifts" inherent in the Shepherd's soul which are any thing but "heavenly." But if, in revising for the press the above quoted statement of his eternal obligations to Mr Grievie,

and remembering the quality of the return he had made to an affection seldom experienced except in the morning of life, the sting of ingratitude did not pierce his heart, and for a moment disturb the boasted "uniformity" of his happiness, then he must be lost indeed. As one specimen of the contradictions into which he is continually falling, we may notice here what he says of the late Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch. "Blessed," prays the devout Shepherd, "be the memory of my two noble and ONLY benefactors!" P. 96. "Only benefactors!" was not John Grieve, who fed, and clothed, and supported him, his benefactor? And has he not ostentatiously admitted the fact which here, by implication, he denies?

6. We shall produce another example to show that Hogg's "downright truth" and his "upright gratitude" are, as nearly as possible, upon a level. We allude to what he says of Mr George Goldie. This gentleman, formerly a bookseller in Princes Street, Edinburgh, was an early friend of Hogg, and the publisher of two (not *four*) editions of the "Queen's Wake;" but, during the general depression of business which took place about the year 1816, Mr Goldie, with others of his brethren, had the misfortune to become insolvent; and shortly afterwards he left Scotland. When Hogg produced the former edition of this "Memoir," under the auspices of Messrs Oliver and Boyd, he attempted to draw upon public sympathy by a forged tale of distress,

arising from the alleged total loss of the price of an edition of the Queen's Wake, occasioned, as he more than insinuated, by the fraudulent bankruptcy of his former friend and publisher. At the time when he published this cruel aspersion, the Shepherd thought himself safe, being under a delusive impression that Mr Goldie filled a patriot's grave in South America. But "long-absent Harold re-appeared at last?" So far from his having crossed the Atlantic, as Hogg had heard or imagined, Mr Goldie was all the while engaged in commercial affairs in England; and happening about this time (1823) to return to Edinburgh, he read, amongst other gross and scandalous mis-statements from the pen of his former friend, the following most offensive passage:—

"Mr Goldie had little capital, and less interest among the trade; nevertheless, he did all for my work that lay in his power, and sold two editions of it *in a short time* [no great proof of want of interest, it should seem]. About that period a general failure took place among the secondary class of booksellers, and it was reported that Goldie was so much involved with some of the houses that it was impossible he could escape destruction. A *third* edition of my poem was wanted, and, without more ado, I went and offered it to Mr Constable. *We closed a bargain at once, and the book was sent to Mr Ballantyne to print.* But *after a part was thrown off* [that is, of the third edition,

which, as we shall presently show, never existed at all, except in the imagination of this metre-ballad monger], Goldie got notice of the transaction, and was neither to hold nor bind, pretending that he had been exceedingly illused. He waited on Mr Constable one hour, and corresponded with him the next, till he induced him to give up the bargain. It was in vain that I remonstrated, affirming that the work was my own, and I would give it to whom I pleased. I had no one to take my part [innocent soul!] and I was browbeat out of it; Goldie alleging that I had no reason to complain, as he now entered into Mr Constable's terms, and had run all the risk of the former editions. I durst not say that he was going to break, and never pay me; so I was obliged to suffer the edition to be printed off in Goldie's name. This was exceedingly ill done of him—nothing could be more cruel—and I was grieved that he did so, for I had a good opinion of him. The edition had not been lodged in his premises a week before he stopped payment; and yet, in that time, he had contrived to sell or give away more than one half of the copies; and thus all the little money that I had gained, which I was so proud of, and on which I depended for my subsistence, and the payment of some old farming debts, vanished from my grasp at once." Pp. 46, 47.

Indignant at the base insinuations and groundless assertions contained in this and other similar passages, Mr

Goldie printed a reply, in the shape of a "Letter to a Friend in London," in which he triumphantly overthrew many of Hogg's statements, and, in particular, showed that no "third edition" was, at this date, either called for, or produced in his premises, beyond the reprint of some title-pages of the second edition; that the assertion, that "he had contrived to sell or give away more than one half of the copies," was an utter fabrication; and that Hogg, instead of being a loser, was actually a gainer by Mr Goldie's failure, to the extent of between L.60 and L.70, "over and above what he would have received had Mr Goldie been able to meet all his engagements in the regular way." (Goldie's Letter, p. 8.) Yet, notwithstanding this exposé, which annoyed the Shepherd so much at the time that, when goaded by Mr Boyd on the subject, he threatened "to take out the law on Goldie," the unhappy man has the audacity, or we should rather say the folly (for any thing implying real boldness is foreign to his nature), to retain the above paragraph in the present edition of his "Memoir;" although Mr Goldie's statement as to the pecuniary part of the transaction is now fairly admitted.

"I applied," he says, "to Mr Samuel Aitken, who was the head trustee, with fear and trembling; for I judged of him as a severe and strict man, who I knew would do justice to me, but I expected nothing farther.

When I waited on him, he looked at me with his grey stiff eye. 'It is all over with me here,' thought I. I never was more mistaken in my life; for no sooner had I started my case than Samuel entered into my interests with his whole heart, and said, that provided he could save the creditors from losing any thing, which he was bound to do, he saw no right they had to make any thing by my edition. He then and there consigned over to me the whole of the remaining copies, 490 in number, charging me only with the expenses of printing; &c. These, to my agreeable astonishment, amounted only to two shillings and tenpence halfpenny per volume. The work sold at twelve shillings, so that a good *reversion* appeared to be *mine*. Mr. Blackwood sold the copies for me on commission, and ultimately paid me MORE THAN DOUBLE of what I was to have received from Goldie!!! For this I was indebted to the consideration and kindness of the trustees." Pp. 47, 48. The statute admits of only *one* trustee upon the same bankrupt estate in Scotland, so that Mr. Aitken could not be the *principal* trustee, and, in point of fact, was not trustee at all upon Mr. Goldie's estate; nor has he any recollection whatever of Hogg's applying to him upon the subject. But be this as it may, the Shepherd *now* admits that he realized "*more than double* of what he was to have received from Goldie;" and thus flatly contradicts the statement contained in his former edition, where he averred broadly that he had lost every thing. Here, then, we

have another specimen of his inimitable talent for relating "the downright truth." Let the reader now mark the following statement by this veritable autobiographer:—

"The Queen's Wake being now consigned to Messrs Murray and Blackwood, I fairly left it to its fate; and they published a *fourth* edition, which was in fact *not* a new edition, but only the remainder of Goldie's *third*; so that I gained an edition in the eyes of the world, although not in the weight of my purse, to which this edition in reality made no *addition*." Pp. 50, 51. How could it? It was merely the *shadow of a shade*. The *third* edition, as Goldie showed in his *Letter*, was only the remnant of the *second*; and Hogg here informs us that the *fourth* was "only the remainder of Goldie's *third*," which, again (as we have just said), was only the remainder of Goldie's *second*! From all this it must be evident that Hogg multiplies editions of *facts* as well as editions of *books*; and that Archbishop Tillotson was in the right when he remarked that persons of the Munchausen school ought to be gifted with good memories.

As Hogg has said so much to the disparagement of poor Goldie, than whom a more kind-hearted fellow never breathed, we shall take leave to remind the Shepherd of one or two circumstances which he has remembered to forget. And, *first*, he has altogether omitted to state

what we know to be fact, and can very easily prove, that in the day of his need, when pursued by the beaks of the law, and in imminent danger of a jail, owing to the exasperation of his creditors, and also, we believe, to diligences raised on decrees of a certain description, Goldie's hospitable domicile afforded him both food and shelter. Secondly, he has also omitted to state, that on the 25th of May 1817, at least two years subsequent to the transactions on which he grounds a charge of fraud against his benefactor, he addressed to Mr Goldie a letter, in which he says, "I will give you the character of as LIBERAL, HONOURABLE, and FAIR, a dealer as ever I had connection with!" And, lastly, he has, in like manner, omitted to state, that when the offensive passages in his "Memoir" were, immediately after publication, challenged as false by a mutual friend, he replied, "I am sorry I should have said any thing against Goldie; but I understood he was dead in South America, and would never more be heard of, and consequently any thing I said could not hurt him!" Mr Goldie had this story from Mr John Grieve, who is the mutual friend above alluded to, and whose honour and veracity are above all question. (Goldie's Letter, p. 3.) On this truly characteristic avowal, Mr Goldie observes in continuation:—

"His covardice suggested that it was safer to utter calumnies against a dead man than to insult the feelings of a living one; and in the belief that I was fairly disposed of, he thought it no harm to load my memory with infamy,

and to inflict an eternal wound upon the feelings of my surviving relations, who may have been supposed incapable of rescuing my name from so foul a stain." (*Letter, ibid.*) These reminiscences, we trust, will serve to refresh the Shepherd's memory, in regard to some important circumstances of his life, and enable him, in his next and enlarged edition of it, to give, merely by way of variety, a small portion of "the downright truth."

7. As Mr Blackwood's name has been mentioned in connection with Hogg's affairs, we may as well take the present opportunity of exhibiting to the world another instance of *poetico-porcine* gratitude. That this gentleman must have been of frequent and essential service to Hogg, and that throughout no brief period, there can be no doubt whatever; and even the man himself has the grace more than once to acknowledge it. Let the reader now mark how he proceeds to repay the obligation:—

"I have had many dealings with that gentleman, and have been often obliged to him, and yet I think he has been as much obliged to me, perhaps a good deal more, and I really believe in my heart that he is as much disposed to be friendly to me as to any man; but there is another principle, that circumscribes that feeling in all men, and into very narrow limits in some. It is always painful [very painful! as we have seen] to part with one who has been

a *benefactor* even on a small scale; but there are some things that no independent heart can bear. The great fault of Blackwood is, that he regards no man's temper or disposition; but *the more* he can provoke an author by *insolence* and *contempt*, he likes the better. Besides, he will never once confess that he is in the wrong, else any thing might be forgiven; no, no, the thing is impossible that he can ever be wrong! The poor author is not only always in the wrong, but, 'Oh, he is *the most insufferable beast!*'

"What has been the consequence? He has driven all his original correspondents from him that first gave Maga her zest, save one, who, though still his friend, can but seldom write for him, being now otherwise occupied, and another, who is indeed worth his weight in gold to him; but who, though invaluable, and I am sure much attached, yet has been a thousand times at the point of boiling off like a flash of lightning. I know it well, and Ebony, for his own sake, had better take care of this last remaining stem of a goodly bush, *for he may depend on it that he has only an eel by the tail.*

"For my part, after twenty years of feelings hardly suppressed, *he has driven me beyond the bounds of human patience.* That Magazine of his, which *once its rise principally to myself*, has often put words and sentiments into my mouth of which *I have been greatly ashamed*, and which

have given much pain to my family and relations; and many of those *after a solemn written promise that such freedoms should never be repeated.* I have been often urged to restrain and humble him by legal measures, as an incorrigible offender deserves. I know I have it in my power, and if he dares me to the task, I WANT BUT A HAIR TO MAKE A TETHER OF."

It is surprising how murder will sometimes out. For no one who has read the preceding observations will have any difficulty whatever in believing Hogg when he says, "*I want but a hair to make a tether of.*" He is, indeed, a great adept in "tether-making;" and as he is probably cognisant of more secrets connected with the management of Blackwood's Magazine than it may be altogether convenient or agreeable that he should be possessed of, it would not very greatly surprise us if Mr Blackwood declined accepting the challenge here given him of "daring the Shepherd to the task," for which he so naively proclaims his peculiar aptitude. There is one reflection, however, which, now that Hogg has turned upon and threatened to devour him, cannot, we should suppose, be very agreeable to Mr Blackwood; and that is that he should have ministered to this man's causeless and wanton malignity, by lending him the pages of his Magazine, and the benefit of its extensive and varied circulation, in order the more effectually to traduce and defame individuals

who had been guilty of no offence whatever towards the men of the Magazine, and who, in regard to the "tether-maker," had only committed the folly of doing him some acts of kindness. We purposely keep this allusion general, because we have no wish to rake into the ashes of the past, and because we know Mr Blackwood to be in reality a very different person indeed from what he is here represented by the trembling dastard who erst accompanied him, in the capacity of gillie, in his doughty onslaught upon Mr John Douglas.

Taking the last paragraph of the above extract, however, in connection with a report lately circulated by the newspapers, to the effect that Hogg had withdrawn his name from Blackwood's Magazine, on account of the *displeasure it gave his friends*, we cannot help wondering who those remarkable persons are that have at length opened his eyes to a fact which all his *old* friends, and indeed all the world but himself, long saw and felt. Is this "tether-making" simpleton only now for the first time aware, that, during the last fifteen years, he has held undisputed the honourable office of clown among Blackwood's contributors; that he has served as a regular butt for their buffoonery, and has been at once a laughing-stock to them and to the public? And did he not meet all the previous remonstrances of his friends, either with absolute anger, or with some such characteristic declaration as this: "I dinna care what

they say o' me, as lang as they allow that am a man o' genius;" that is, as long as they admitted him as their clown to their punch parties, and, with imperturbable gravity in one eye, compared him to Burns, while, with derision in the other, they tipped the wink to their associates. The poor shallow creature gloats over the fun which these arch rogues made with the Glasgow Odonist, and the manner in which the public were hoaxed by them respecting this extractor of teeth, without ever once seeing that he was by far the grosser dupe of the two, and for a much longer period. But who and what are the *new* friends that have at length unsealed his eyes, and enabled him to find out how great an idiot he has been, and how long his late associates have been making game of him? We could mention one gentleman who, at his own table, and under his own roof, ventured to remonstrate with him seriously on the matter, and to tell him that it was the common regret of all his real friends that he permitted such gross liberties to be taken with his name; a remonstrance which incensed the Shepherd greatly, and drew from him a reply so indignant, that his guest rose to leave his house, although the hour was late, and the place far in the wilds, and was only prevented from doing so by Hogg having the grace to pacify him by making an apology. It is true, therefore, that he "was often urged to restrain" the license of his associates, as degrading to his character, supposing him to care any thing at all about it; but it is equally

true that he turned a deaf ear to this salutary advice, and even resented it as a sort of injury to his vanity, which seemed to feed on the notoriety monthly given to his name as Blackwood's buffoon.

8. Another instance of the Shepherd's gratitude may be found in what he says of Longman and Company. That highly respectable house had kindly advanced him money on the manuscript of two of his "perilous" novels; and, in point of fact, they published two more works of his; but they refused to have any thing to do with "Queen Hyde," because, at the time when it was offered them, no balance-sheet had been produced of sales of the others. Hogg, to use his own classical phraseology, "was neither to hold nor bind;" and here, accordingly, he launches out into invectives against the partners of that house, as if they were a parcel of swindlers, fit only to be transported. His fury, however, will do no harm to anybody but himself. The honour and punctuality of the house of Longman and Company have long been proverbial; and, for our own share, we would desire no better evidence of the justice and fairness of their dealings than merely to learn the simple fact that they had been impeached by the Ettrick Shepherd. The plain English of the whole matter just amounts to this: as Hogg never asked an account, and they tendered none, none can be produced with a balance in his favour; and either the

stock remains on hand, or has been sold off as waste paper to clear their warehouse. We happen to know, however, that the copies of the "Memoir," as originally printed, contained insinuations against one of the individual partners, of so gross a kind, that Hogg, or his publishers, were compelled to cancel the offensive matter; a circumstance which occasioned a fortnight's delay in the shipment of the copies for Scotland. In the next edition, however, we shall probably be favoured with a different theory to account for the delay in question, and informed that, during this "awful pause," the whole kingdom was on the very tiptoe of expectation for the truly wonderful volume before us.

9. But we have had more than enough of the alleged roguery of booksellers, and shall now give the reader a specimen or two of Hogg's *bulls*. The man *must* have Irish blood in his veins; though how he came by it is more than we can pretend to say. The first part of his "Memoir" consists of a letter to Sir Walter Scott, dated Mitchell-Slack, November 1806; but a few pages on, in the same letter, we find a paragraph beginning thus: "I REMEMBER *in the year* 1812, the year *before* the publication of the *Queen's Wake*," &c. How the dickens "Mr Shepherd" came to "remember" in 1806 what took place in 1812, is more than any "saint, sage, or sophist," with whom we have the honour to be acquainted has yet been able to unriddle

to us. It is pretty considerably impossible, we take it, that Hogg should remember the publication of the *Queen's Wake* six years before the publication actually took place. Again, at page 88, we meet with the following modest announcement:—"In the end, I am sure I produced two volumes of Jacobite Relics, such as no man in Scotland or England could have produced but myself." Now, this, we believe, is "the downright truth." "I assert it, and can prove it," says Hogg; "for, besides the songs and histories of events and persons, I collected all the original airs over a whole kingdom, many of them among a people whose language I did not understand; and that work [thus collected] I dedicated to the Highland Society of London in a poetical epistle." P. 88. The whole story is as "poetical" as the "epistle" dedicatory. Only fancy such a pretty particular piece of a south-country clown as Hogg collecting "songs," "histories of events and persons," and "airs," amongst a people whose language he confesses he did not understand, and, in fact, knew as much of as he did of Sanscrit, Zend, or Teloogoo; and then dedicating the fruits of his labours in this promising vineyard to the Highland Society of London! We think the metropolitan Celts might have driven their hogs to a better market. At all events "Mr Shepherd" might well say that "no man in Scotland or England but himself" could have produced such a piece of nonsense and absurdity as that to which we have just directed the attention of the reader.

Lastly, Hogg describes a certain gentleman to whom he alludes as "now a reformed character," and, on that account, mercifully intimates an intention to "spare him for the present." This is doubtless very magnanimous on the part of "Mr Shepherd," and shows "that the bugbear reform," which, it seems, frightened Mr Blackwood from his propriety, is after all rather a favourite with Hogg. The misfortune is, however, that the gentleman here described as "now a reformed character," and on that account entitled to the tether-maker's mercy "*for the present*," HAS BEEN TWELVE YEARS IN HIS GRAVE! So much for bulls and blunders.

10. Were we to attempt to illustrate that vanity which the swineherd has confessed to be "inherent" in him, we should be obliged to quote the whole of his "Memoir." Talking of Lord Byron, he says, with a self-complacency altogether inimitable,—"*Peace be to his Manes! He was a great man: and I do not think that any one on earth appreciated his gigantic genius so highly as I did!!!*" P. 66. Hogg may rely upon it that he is more nearly related to Bacon than to Byron. However, speaking of Lord Byron's letters to him, he says, "they were all extremely kind, save one, which was rather a satirical, bitter letter. *I had been quizzing him* [only imagine Hogg "quizzing" Byron!] on his approaching marriage, and assuring him that he was going to get himself into a confounded scrape. I

wished she might prove both a mill and a bank to him; but I much doubted *they* (what *they*?) would not be such as he was calculating on. *I think he felt that I was using too much freedom with him*" P. 66. How could the noble Childe *feel* otherwise, if he was compelled to read such sheer brutalities as are here set down? We may just observe, however, that Hogg's correspondence with the illustrious or eminent persons to whose intimacy he makes pretensions, was, in every instance, the result of overtures upon overtures from himself. Nobody appears to have sought the knowledge of the swineherd: the swineherd, however, forced himself upon every body of any note, whom he could reach through the medium of the post-office. Such, at least, was the case in regard to Wilson, Southey, and Byron. The *last*, indeed, seems from the very beginning to have fathomed the Shepherd to his lowest depth, as we learn by the derision he pours upon the epistle with which Hogg opened the correspondence; a letter which seems, from Byron's notice of it, to have presented a true picture of the "inherent" meanness and vulgarity of the man's nature, and which, accordingly, furnishes Byron with ample materials for turning both the writer and his production into ridicule. Hogg talks to his Lordship of "*tying* a bill," as if it were so many pounds Dutch or avoirdupois [many of "Mr Shepherd's" bills, indeed, appear to have been *heavy* enough; for although several of them at least are now of consider-

able antiquity, no one has as yet been able to *lift* them]; and, even if there had been nothing more, the despicable pun which the poor creature perpetrated on the name of Miss Milbanke was sufficient to stamp him as a wretched clown, unworthy of the smallest consideration, except as a butt for ridicule or derision.

11. A word or two respecting the Forum, of which we happen to know somewhat. Hogg says, "I was appointed secretary, with a salary of *twenty* pounds a-year, which was *never paid*, though *I gave away hundreds in charity*," p. 37. Hogg's salary was *fifteen*, not *twenty* pounds, and the *receipts* for that sum are in the hands of Mr John Christison, lately house-governor of George Heriot's Hospital, who was treasurer to the Forum. So much for the alleged *non-payment* of his salary. He says "he gave away *hundreds* in charity." The fact is, he never gave away one penny sterling, and never was intrusted with the disposal of a farthing of the funds of the Forum. "It is true (says Mr Goldie, in his printed *Letter*, p. 12) that he *once* applied, agreeably to the prescribed rules of the society, for a sum of L.10, which he alleged was for the use of some poor family that had come under his notice [in Portobello, we believe]; but such was the *distrust* of his *coadjutors*, that this was refused, *unless another party accompanied Mr Hogg in giving away the money*. Mr Hogg *privately* declined this, and so the *matter ended*." Mr Goldie

adds, "I appeal for the truth of what I now say to the Reverend J. Geddes, Paisley, the Reverend Mr Brand, Dunfermline, Mr John M'Diarmid, Dumfries, and many more who know all the circumstances accurately." (*Letter, ibid.*)

Of his own grotesque, and by his associates well-remembered, exhibitions in the Forum, where, as elsewhere, he held the honourable office of clown or merryandrew, and hebdomadally appeared in that character for a salary of fifteen pounds a year, "Mr Shepherd" writes with his usual self-complacency:—"I spoke every night, and sometimes twice the same night; and though I sometimes incurred pointed disapprobation, was in general *a prodigious favourite*," p. 38. An account somewhat differing from this, and, we must say from personal recollection, approaching much nearer to "the downright truth," appeared several years ago in Blackwood's Magazine, and was then very generally ascribed to the pen of Professor Wilson.

"The truth is, that Hogg never could speak at all in the Forum. He used to read ribald rhymes about marriage and other absurdities, off whitybrown paper, stuck up in a niche, with a fartling candle on each side of him, which he used to snuff, in great trepidation, with his finger and thumb instantly applied to his cooling mouth, in the midst of the most pathetic passages, cheered by shouts of

derisive applause that started Dugald M'Glashan and his cadies beneath the shadow of the Tron Church. He has no more command of language than a Highlander had of breeches before the Forty-five; and his chief figure of speech consisted in a twist of his mouth, which might certainly at times be called eloquent. He had recourse to this view of the subject whenever he found himself fairly planted; so that a deaf spectator of the debate would have supposed him stuck up in a hole in the wall to make ugly faces, and would have called for a horse-collar. Was that a situation in which 'the smallest deviation from good taste would have drawn down disapproval?'"

12. One specimen more of Hogg, in his capacity of historian. On the appearance of the "Queen's Wake," when, he says, "he was like a man between life and death, waiting for the sentence of the jury," he happened one day, while "sauntering up the plainstones of the High Street," to meet "his countryman Mr William Dunlop, wine and spirit merchant," who came over from the Cross arm-in-arm with another gentleman, and, by the Shepherd's account, accosted him in the following manner—"(*I remember his salutation word for word*," says Hogg; "and, *singular* as it was, it made a strong impression; for I knew that Mr Dunlop had a great deal of rough common sense." P. 43):—"Ye useless poetical devil that ye're! said he, 'what hae ye been doing a' this time?—' What doing, Willie! what do you mean?—"

'D—n your stupid head, ye hae been pestering us wi' fourpenny papers an' daft shilly-shally sangs, an' bletherin' an' speakin' i' the Forum, an' yet had stuf in ye to produce a thing like this!'—'Ay, Willie,' said I; 'have you seen my new beuk?'—'Ay, faith, that I have, man; and it has lickit me out o' a night's sleep. Ye hae hit the right nail on the head now. Yon's the very thing, Sir!'—'I'm very glad to hear you say sae, Willie; but what do you ken about poems?'—'Never ye mind how I ken; I gie you my word for it, yon's the thing that will do. If ye hadna made a fool o' yoursel' afore, man, you wad hae sold better than ever a book sold. Od, wha wad hae thought there was as muckle in that sheep's head o' yours?—d—d stupid poetical deevil that ye're! And with that he went away, laughing and miscalling me over his shoulder.'

"This" supposed "address," which, Hogg says, "gave him a little confidence," wears such an appearance of absolute blackguardism, that it is hard to believe it possible that it could have been uttered by any person having the least pretensions to respectability of character; and, even if any thing like what is here told had ever happened, no man who had any regard to propriety himself, or who valued that quality in others, would have defiled his pages with this detestable and revolting slang. But the truth is, that the whole "salutation," which Hogg swears he "remembers word for word," is an utter fabrication.

"I have had the pleasure," says Mr Goldie, in a note to his printed *Letter*, p. 6, "of conversing with Mr Dunlop upon this subject since the *Letter* was printed. He assures me that the abominable story I have alluded to is TOTALLY FALSE, and that *not one word of it was ever spoken!*"

13. Of Mr Lockhart, Hogg represents himself as saying on one occasion to the Director-General of the Fine Arts (as he was styled) Mr David Bridges: "Haud your tongue, Davie, for ye ken naething about it. Could you believe it, man, that that callant never tauld me the truth a' his days but *aince*, an' that was merely by chance, an' without the least intention on his part?" If the Shepherd may be in aught believed, "these *blunt accusations* diverted Lockhart greatly, and only encouraged him to farther tricks," p. 142. The "accusation" was "blunt" enough, doubtless; and Mr Lockhart would probably have insisted on his rights as a gentleman had any body else taken a similar freedom with him; but Hogg, in the capacity of "fool" to this gentleman and his associates, seems to have been a privileged person, and at perfect liberty to say whatever he liked. The anecdote of the six blackamores waiting at Mr Lockhart's table seems to be akin to the old story of the three crows, and, if examined, would in all likelihood, be found to decrease in a similar proportion. The following, however, is admirable:—"The thing that most endeared Lockhart to me at that early period was some humorous poetry which he published ano-

onymously in Blackwood's Magazine, and which I still regard as the best of the same description in the kingdom. He at length married, *on the same day* with myself, into the house of my great friend and patron, and thenceforward *I regarded him as belonging to the same family with me*; I a stepson, and he a legitimate younger brother." P. 114. From what is said here, it might be inferred that Hogg had "married into the house of his great friend," as well as Mr Lockhart, and that this planetary conjunction had taken place "*on the same day*," one Miss Scott exchanging her "proud Caledonian name" for that of Hogg, while another, more fortunate in nomenclature, became Mrs Lockhart. We learn elsewhere, however, that the lady who united her fortunes with those of the Shepherd, and became his "partner" for life, was a Miss Philips; while Mr Lockhart married the eldest daughter of Sir Walter Scott. And with respect to the assertion that these two eminent persons entered the holy state of matrimony "on the same day," we find, on reference to the file of a newspaper, that Hogg was married on the 28th of April 1820, and Mr Lockhart on the 29th; this being the nearest approximation to "the downright truth," in relation to any alleged matter of fact, which we have met with in this most veracious "Memoir."

14. A word now of Hogg's truly "great friend." The Shepherd had caught up an idea—not a bad one!—of getting a piece of bread, by begging a poem from each of

his poetically-gifted contemporaries; and, to a certain extent, he succeeded in this novel species of mendicacy; vanity inducing some, and charity others, to contribute to his projected collection. But, nevertheless, the scheme misgave, and, as usual, he consoles himself by reflecting on his own supereminent powers. "I fancied," says he—and what will not the Ettrick Shepherd fancy?—"that I could write a better poem than any that had been sent or would be sent to me, and this so completely in the style of each poet, that it should not be known but for his own production." P. 67. This consolatory "fancy" is indulged in by Hogg, after narrating that Sir Walter Scott refused, for reasons not difficult to be guessed, to aid him by a contribution to what may be called the Beggar's Budget. On this occasion, after admitting that he had never in all his life before asked Sir Walter any thing which had been refused, Hogg proceeds thus:—"It was in vain that I represented that I *had done* as much for him, and would do *ten times more* if he required it. He remained firm in his denial, which I thought very hard; so I left him in high dudgeon, sent him *a very abusive letter*, and would not speak to him again for many a day. I could not even endure to see him at a distance, I felt so degraded by the refusal; and I was at that time more disgusted with all mankind than I had ever been before or have ever been since." P. 67. The sequel of this story is as honourable to Sir Walter as it is degrading to Hogg. The latter, by his own account, had literally drank himself into a brain fever, and

lay at the point of death. Sir Walter heard he was ill, and, forgetting every thing in generous pity for his situation, called on Messrs Grieve and Scott to inquire after the disciple of the *Right and Wrong Club*, requested that he might want for nothing that money could procure, and, in short, acted the part of the good Samaritan to this wretched and forlorn man. Hogg, by his own account, "had renounced Sir Walter's friendship, and told him that he held both it and his literary talents in contempt" (p. 85); an extravagance of folly and impudence, which can scarcely be believed of him on so very questionable authority as his own. However, on his convalescence, a sort of intercourse was re-commenced; and, propitiated by the recollection of this circumstance, he immediately sets about giving us a new version, or rather theory, of Sir Walter's conduct respecting the "Poetic Mirror." "I know him too well to have the least suspicion that there could be any selfish or unfriendly feeling in the determination that he adopted, and I can account for it in no other way, than by supposing that he thought it mean in me to attempt either to acquire gain, or a name, by the efforts of other men; and that it was much more honourable, to use a proverb of his own, 'that every herring should hang by its own head.'" P. 86. This, we have little doubt, is pretty near the mark. Finally, he says, "There are not above five people in the world who, I think, know Sir Walter better, or understand his character better, than I do; and if I outline him, which is likely, as I am five months and ten days younger

[an admission, as we have shown at the outset, decisive as to the fable of Hogg having been born on the same day with Burns, viz. 25th January 1772], I shall draw a mental portrait of him, the likeness of which to the original shall not be disputed." P. 120. A "mental portrait" of Sir Walter Scott drawn by James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd! Why, the man is no more qualified to delineate the intellectual character of the illustrious giant of modern literature than he is able to build a bridge of goats over the Hellespont, or to accompany Mary Lee in her excursions to the moon, a planet which seems to be so much loved by the Shepherds and Shepherdesses of Ettrick.

15. In conclusion, it is but fair to give an instance where Hogg lets out the truth "by chance." Happening, as he says, to be on a visit at Mr Wordsworth's, an *arcus borealis* of unusual brilliancy had appeared, and the party went out to view it. Miss Wordsworth took Hogg's arm, for want of a better, and when they reached the open space in front of Mount Ryedale, "expressed some fears that the splendid stranger might prove ominous;" upon which Hogg, as he tells us, blundered out the following remark, thinking that he was saying a good thing:—"Hout, me'm! it is neither mair nor less than joost a treumpthal arch raised in honour of the meeting of the poets." Wordsworth overheard him, "gave a grunt," and turning on his heel, said to De Quincey, "Poets? poets? What does the fellow mean? Where

are they?" P. 129: And echo answered, "Where are they?"

We have now done. There are twenty other things to which we might have adverted with equal effect, adducing proofs equally conclusive against the statements published by this intrepid relater of "the downright truth;" but the specimens which have already been given will probably be held as sufficient for enabling the public to form their own opinion of a man who, by the joint effects of impudence, accident, folly, and humbug, has been raised far above his proper sphere, and put in a condition to play the "fantastic tricks" which have exposed him to this severe but merited castigation. It will also show of what stuff Tory idols are sometimes made; and cannot fail, we should think, to be read with peculiar satisfaction by such men as Sir George Murray, Sir John Malcolm, and others who, in an evil hour, were led to sanction, with their presence and countenance, the obscene orgies in the London tavern. Lastly, *poete Kenon*, we say to *Hoggy*, in the words of *Bacon*, "What is more heavy than evil fame deserved?" Or, likewise, who can see worse days than he that, yet living, doth follow at the funerals of his own reputation?"

THE END.