

And the whirlwind blew fierce from the vast mountain's side,
 Red lightening stream'd fast from the skies;
 The boat disappear'd in the wild raging tide
 Where they sunk never more to arise!

The bat and the owl in his battlements breed;
 Extinct is his name and his power;
 In his halls the green briar and fostering weed,
 Tell Heaven's just vengeance is sure.

M. M. shall have a place. Seduction is rather a hackneyed and precarious subject, but the simplicity of her narration commands respect.

Agrippa is a strange fellow; but neither good enough for an example, nor pointed enough for a satire.

1810

The Spy.

No. 18

Saturday, December 29.

Principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est.

HOR.

YESTERDAY as I was sitting by the fire in Smith's Reading-Room, looking at the Report of the King's Physicians, a tall gentleman, who sat on the other side of the chimney, took up one of the Numbers of *The Spy*, and turning over the leaves, looked at it in the most careless and disdainful manner. A sentence, or expression, however, happening to attract his attention, after turning back to the beginning, he began to read with apparent earnestness. In a few seconds, he began to smile, and shortly after burst into laughter. I watched his emotions with the utmost attention, although I still pretended to be reading on the Newspaper, but I could not discover what Number it was that he had. He continued the perusal for about ten minutes, then laying himself back in his chair, he laid the one leg over the other, and fixing his eyes upon the cornice of the room—"Aye!" said he, "that is such a story as I never read." "What is it, Sir, if you please?" said I. "A confounded lie I dare swear," returned he, giving the paper to a gentleman who sat at the window, and who held out his hand for it. "Have you read the Spy's remarks upon the Edinburgh stage?" said he, turning to me; I said I had perused them slightly. "Fool as he is," said he, "I think he displays a considerable degree of humour and discrimination in these; he should write oftener on that subject." "I fear," said I, "he will find few precedents for this species of writing, among the respectable part of the British essays." "No matter for that," returned he, "it is certainly very proper that a paper of amusement should occasionally, nay frequently, treat of the literary amusements, and popular topics of the day; and the stage being the principal one at this season, if he would write more about it, he would find a greater number of readers, depend upon it."—"There is nothing I so much desire as a great number of readers," said I to myself, "I'll write about the stage every week these six months."

"Besides," continued he, "the Edinburgh populace stand greatly in need of some one to direct their taste a little with regard to theatrical works and performers. Not that I think *The Spy* the fittest man in the world for that purpose; for indeed I think him an arrant fool." "It shows how little sense *you* have," thought I.—"But don't you

frequently observe, Sir, that they are most taken with the greatest trash, and the most absurd buffoonery on the parts of the performers? and likewise, that unless an actor has previously gained some applause from our southern neighbours, he need not expect to gain any here? Nay, so jealous are they of being imposed upon, that they will not suffer a young candidate to have a fair trial, but are sure to put him out of countenance by their hissing ere he begin to speak. This is often a most vexatious circumstance; and visibly hurts the feelings of the genteel part of the audience, and all who wish to judge without prejudice.

"The best thing that Mr Siddons could do, would be to exchange half a dozen of his company each month, for as many of those employed by his relations in London. His would be more admired there, as they have frequently been before, and the London performers would be more admired here, although they did not so well deserve it."

The old gentleman at the window now interrupted him—"What, Sir?" said he, "would you insinuate, that the people of this metropolis neither have any just taste of their own, nor yet the least dependence upon it?"

"It is my opinion, Sir," returned the other, "that the populace of this city, who commonly take the lead in such matters, are endowed by nature with warm feelings, and strong natural powers of discernment; but their taste seems to be unformed, and somewhat eccentric. You must have observed, that a real good sentiment, or brilliant stroke of wit or humour, never escapes them; but that, on the other hand, they are as apt to applaud the most consummate nonsense."

"You seem, Sir, to have formed a very improper conception of this matter;" (said the old gentleman at the window,) "and to ascribe the discernment of a few individuals, as well as the depraved taste of another part of the community, to the whole indiscriminately; whereas, it is evident, that in an audience, where there are upwards of a thousand people, there must of course be many men of learning, who are possessed of abilities sufficient to enable them to discern both that which is excellent in the piece itself, and in the performance of it; and these parts they applaud, the neutrals joining them. On the other hand, in every populous city, there is a number of depraved and licentious young men, and, God knows, we have an adequate proportion of them here. When such mix with an audience, how can the enlightened part of it possibly prevent their burst of applause, on the representation of such parts as are congenial to

their natures? Believe me, Sir, you will often hear the loudest plaudits of approbation, at that for which one half of the company are blushing."

The tall gentleman said not another word, but instantly left the room; and the other taking his seat, beside me, at the fire, said, "I'll bet a guinea that I have been speaking all this while to the Spy himself."—"I am fully convinced of it," said I.—"I am certain of it" said he, "not only from his manner of talking about the work, but also from his meagre, starved appearance."—I turned my small legs and lean hands to one side, that he might not discover the truth; while he continued thus:

"If I had known him sooner, I could have given him some hints that would have been of service to him. He may go on writing about the stage, which seems to be a favourite topic with him, but that is not the way by which he will gain either the greatest number of readers, or the most respectable ones. Besides, in such a work as *The Spy*, I would suppose, that the value of the whole as a book, should be a matter of higher concern, than that of its currency as a weekly paper at present, which must of course be local, as it does not pay duty, and consequently cannot be sent post-free. Of what moment, then, can it prove to the reader a few years hence, though he should find the merits or defects of a few inconsiderable stage-players ever so ably discussed?"—"That man speaks sense," said I to myself, "I'll never write another word about the stage while I live." He went on, "The Spy's business should be, to note the literary taste, the genius and manners of the various classes of people throughout the kingdom, and, as much as possible, to blend instruction with amusement. Every moral virtue which he would inculcate, should be conveyed in some pleasant or interesting story, or illustrated by the relation of some coincident anecdote, or reference. By these means a proper sense of duty, or decorum, can sometimes be more effectually conveyed to the mind, than by the most elaborate declamations. He should laugh at our foibles; reprehend our vices; and, occasionally lead us to view their fatal consequences, by narratives of misery and woe.

"In particular, he should endeavour to point out the dangerous tendency of that growing laxity of principle, with regard to the duties of religion, and the respect due from every Christian to the Sabbath day; which is now so openly profaned in every corner and part of this city, from the pavilion to the lowest haunt of depraved humanity. What would our early reformers have said, had they witnessed the scenes which weekly recur amongst us? and why do

the great of this flourishing city, set us an example in this respect, so little worthy of imitation? When we see those in the most conspicuous stations, setting this holy day entirely apart for pleasure; assembling in splendid parties, and indulging themselves in feasting, mirth, and unrestrained gaiety; can we wonder that the practice should gradually descend to the low tippling house, and porter cellar? No, it must. Every vice, and every folly descends, by imperceptible degrees, from the highest rank to the lowest; each copying the manners of that next above it; and as they descend, are stripped gradually of every vestige of decorum, until they triumph in their leathsome nakedness. When I have occasion to walk along any of our most public streets at a late hour, on the evening of the Sabbath day, and hear the licentious mirth ascending from the low sinks of vice; the horrid oaths and imprecations which interlard the language of Sodom, spoken loudly at every entry; I tremble for our fate as a nation! and often look around me, to see if no visible judgment is descending on their audacious heads. But there is no one offence more heinous in the sight of Heaven than this, nor one that tends more effectually to eradicate from the heart every spark of love and gratitude so justly due from a dependant creature towards his creator and benefactor; and extinguish the idea of an over-ruling providence in the human soul, as well as all the sweet consolations which the truly religious only enjoy.

"It has brought the avowed vengeance of Heaven on many nations, and few abandoned wretches have ever been brought to the scaffold to make atonement to the laws of their country for their offences, who have not dated their profligacy and consequent misery from it in particular.

"If you have ever been residing in any of the mountainous districts of Scotland, that are remote from the town, and the public roads, you must have witnessed the holy solemnity with which the Sabbath is there observed?" "Yes," said I, "often have I been a sharer in these scenes of calm and peaceful devotion, where every voice and every heart is love, and the pleasures which a review of them raise in my mind are the most exquisite and refined of any that recollection can now furnish me with. As you seem to be well acquainted with the city manners, Sir, if you would be so kind as to write me a true description of a Sabbath-day in town, I have a young friend who will give me a description of one in the country, and I will publish them both in *The Spy* together, which will be extremely interesting, and the striking contrast may be conducive in opening the eyes of my readers—" "Your readers!" said he, raising himself

half a foot higher in the seat—"You will publish them! will you? What!" said he, "are *you* the Spy?" I was miserably taken in by this blunder, and did not know which way to look. "No, Sir, I'm not the Spy," said I,—"but—I wish you a good day, Sir." The old gentleman was cocking his eyes, and looking first over one shoulder, and then over the other, as if suspicious of a *Spy* in every corner of the room; and as I went out, I overheard him swearing to himself, that no man was sure of a word he said; for there were more Spys than one.

I went home, repeating to myself the old adage, "It is impossible to please every body." Since I began to publish the *Spy*, I am certain I have conversed with an hundred people about the best manner of conducting it, some who knew me, and some who did not; and I think there has never been three of them who proposed the same thing, or the same subjects: so as I find it is impossible to please every body, I will in future endeavour only to please myself; which I am convinced every writer must first do, before he can please others.

Such as have feelings, and modes of thinking, congenial with mine, will be pleased; and when I hear others complaining of me, I will draw my chair a little closer to the fire, rub my hands, and repeat my old and true adage, "It is impossible to please every body."—"This," says an anonymous writer, "is the consoling reflection which softens a thousand disappointments. It is an expressed, if not a tacit incantation on ourselves, meaning that we have attempted what is impossible, and that it is no discredit to have failed where none have succeeded. The glory of the attempt is considered as something to boast of, although it may be questioned whether it be a compensation for the disappointment. Men often attempt what is impossible, with full assurance, from the experience of others, that it is so, yet with a degree of confidence in success, which, however common, is not very consistent. The truth is, self-love, or self-conceit, inclines us to think that there is something in *our* case that may form an exception. Every adventurer in the lottery is convinced, that one only can carry off the great prize, but every adventurer takes the liberty to think, that that one must be himself. That time is precious, and death certain, are convictions of a similar kind, yet how few think that their own time flies, and their own death approaches?"

"It is impossible to please every body," is the consolation of the statesman, when his popularity is on the wane—of the politician, whose schemes have been rejected—of the divine, who sends away half of his congregation in ill-humour, and whose next effort is made

to empty pews—of the tradesman, whose customers have deserted him—and of the author, whose works are read by few. Indeed, the latter class of men are exposed to many more disappointments than the others: they are liable to be rejected by the ignorant, who cannot understand—by the wealthy, who will not read—by the critics, who are pleased with finding faults—and by the churl, who is determined not to be pleased at all.

"It is necessary, therefore, to possess a higher consolation, than is derived from the vain reflection, that we cannot perform that which is impossible; and such consolation it is in the power of any man to possess. The due performance of our duty may fall short of the expectations of *some*; but if it be according to our best abilities and judgment, it cannot fail to give satisfaction to all whom to please is an object of consequence. It is impossible that our conduct, thus regulated, can forfeit the good opinion of any man of reflection. It may excite envy, provoke to jealousy, and even incur the malignity of revenge; but it must nevertheless be the theme of approbation. If we adhere to our duty, unambitious of applause, and unmoved by censure, we inevitably attract the one, and disappoint the other. Censure, in this case, if rightly understood, is really applause, for who would entertain the vain hope of pleasing both the good and the bad? *Laudari a laudato viro*, to be praised by them whom all men praise, is a merit of a very superior kind. Of the rest of mankind we ought to take no account, or at least not to think so highly of their approbation, as to court it by sinister means—by concessions which are degrading; or compliances which are unmanly and wicked.

"In performance of certain of the duties of life, some men have fallen into an error, which, although not very common, is to be mentioned, that it may in every possible case be avoided. They are so much pleased with the bare performance of that duty, as to think themselves above all the common modes of civility and gentleness; and that, if their morals are secure, they may dispense with manners. Such men do you a favour as if they intended to knock you down; and pay a debt in the way of business, as if their intention was to commit a robbery. Urbanity, however, is itself a duty; it enters as a very powerful and pleasing ingredient in the composition of philanthropy; and I know of no precept or example in sacred or profane history which can justify the neglect of it. If it proceeds from the temper, it is too often incurable, or very difficult to cure; but a good man will notwithstanding try what can be done, or he will endeavor to compensate by those extraordinary exertions of active benevolence, which we are always ready to take in exchange for polite

professions and affected kindness. Mildness of address, affability, gentleness of manners, or, in a word, all that we understand by good breeding, or politeness, are perfectly consistent with piety and virtue; and where they serve to smooth the surface of life, and remove asperities; where they serve to attract men to the imitation of better qualities, of which they are but the ornaments; who would not wish to cultivate them? It is certainly impossible to please every body, but no man is displeased because he is treated with civility; and no man, I may venture to affirm, was ever in love with rudeness and harsh manners.

"To conclude, may we not argue, that to please all men is not more an impossibility than an absurdity? May we not say, in the energetic language of Johnson, 'It would be impossible if endeavored, and it would be foolish if it were possible?' Our pursuits are bounded in a certain degree. It may be our lawful interest and our harmless desire to please a certain number, but beyond them neither our interest nor our pleasures can lie; and it must be repeated, that every effort which we make, is inconsistent with our duty, which takes from our virtue, impairs justice, or vitiates truth, however successful such an effort may be; is a meanness of which we cannot fail to be ashamed, and an acquisition which we cannot long keep. The writer who flatters his readers, smooths over their follies, and encourages their vices, may please some; and among these, may be the persons whom it is his interest to please; but he has departed from the manly dignity of genius, and has incurred the imputation of prostitution. The tradesman who, fearful of the loss of business, behaves with equal civility and equal gratitude to the poorest as well as to the richest of his friends, has done his utmost to give universal satisfaction. But when he cringes only to the rich, and violates truth to all, he ought to remember that servility is followed by contempt, and that a lie may be detected."

STORY OF THE GHOST OF LOCHMABEN,

BY JOHN MILLER.

THERE lately lived a man in the ancient royal burgh of Lochmaben, whose wife being long unhealthy, became at last so debilitated, as to be confined for the most part to her bed. The man regarded her but very little, but staid almost constantly with another woman who lived in the same house.—His wife was miserable, and would still have been more so, had not a neighbour taken compassion upon

her, and attended her as much as lay in her power.—Well, to make a long tale short, one morning the poor unhealthy woman was found drowned in a loch adjoining the town; and as all the burghers believed that she had *put herself down*, they refused her Christian burial; and putting the body into a white deal coffin, they carried it out to the fields, and buried it deep betwixt two lairds' lands. About a week after this, the woman who had befriended the deceased, was sitting making a few porridge on the fire, about nine o'clock in the morning, and chancing to look over her shoulder, who was there standing, but the very identical woman that had lately died and been buried in the fields! The woman was not in the least terrified, as there was nothing horrible or disgusting in the whole appearance of the ghost, (for so it certainly was,) but, on the contrary, looked to her with the greatest mildness and serenity in its countenance; and it being high forenoon, she instantly spoke to it—"Heaven preserve us all!" said she, naming her, "are you there? I thought you had been dead?" "So I am," said she, "my poor frail body is dead, and lying rotting in a dishonourable grave, nevertheless I am still existing, and will be for evermore; and as you had a real friendship for me, and have suffered so severely both in your body and mind on account of what hath happened, I am permitted thus to visit you, in order to assure you, that I did not put an end to my own life: it was my husband that did it, who felled me with a bottle, and then carried my body out in the dark, and threw it into the loch. How could any reasonable creature suppose that I had drowned myself, who have not been able to walk so far these two years? Farewell: depend upon the truth of this. Be comforted and stedfast, and you and I shall meet again, not far hence, in a better world than this." The ghost was standing all this while just within the door, and on saying this, went out, still keeping its face to the woman, and smiling with the utmost benignity. The woman followed instantly, but saw no more of it; and the same day, being perfectly convinced that the whole she had heard from the apparition was certainly true, she went and acquainted the magistrates with every circumstance of it, but they only laughed at her; and desired her, for her own sake, never to mention it again, else she would be accounted mad. The woman still, however, persisted in maintaining it to be certain truth, and offered to take an oath before them that it was so, but was still disregarded. The news, however, spread through the town like fire. The people clamoured, and blamed their magistrates, and insisted on a scrutiny; so that, on the third day after the intelligence had been received from the ghost, and the tenth after her death, the magistrates,

surgeons, and ministers, with a great multitude, went out to the fields, raised and examined the body; and, wonderful to relate, found, that the skull on the back part of the head was actually broken in by a stroke, which had occasioned her death, and which had not before been observed. The body was removed to the church-yard—the man was secured, and lodged in jail—and the people of Annandale were struck with wonder and astonishment. He was tried at Dumfries before the circuit court. The woman swore to every circumstance communicated to her by the ghost; but the prisoner's counsel insisted on the ghost's personal appearance, and verbal accusation; but this witness not having been summoned to appear, and another man, said to be a principal one, being likewise missing, he was remanded back to prison until the autumn circuit. The man who was said to be a principal witness then appearing, stated to the court:—that happening to pass the prisoner's door betwixt one and two o'clock in the morning of the day that the deceased was found in the loch, he heard a noise as of somebody coming out: that he *darned* near the door to see who it was, and saw a man come out bearing something upon his back in a sack; that he once had a thought of following him, but was struck with a kind of terror, and hasted home. On being questioned, said, *he thought* at the time, the man who came out bearing the sack was the prisoner, but the night was dark, and he durst not swear that it was he; nor did he know what it was he carried on his back. On being asked why he did not divulge this sooner? he said, he was that night engaged in an affair of which he was ashamed, and would not have divulged it for the world; but that next day on hearing what had happened, he had no doubt, in his own mind, but that the prisoner had murdered his wife.

All this, however, would not do: presumption was very strong against the prisoner, but there being no certain proof, he was by a plurality of voices acquitted, and dismissed from the bar. But though acquitted in the eye of the law, he was not so in the eyes of his neighbours, who all looked upon him as the murderer of his wife. And one night, after his return home, the mob assembled at his house; pulled him and his paramour from their den, and made them *ride the stang* through all the streets of the town, and then threw them into the loch, and gave them a hearty ducking; and letting them know that they meant at times to repeat the experiment, the delinquents made a moon-light flitting, and escaped into Cumberland.

THE NIGHT GALE.—MARCH 4.

I love to breathe thy gale, O Night,
As o'er the flowery shrubs it skims;
And all their dewy fragrance light,
Bears on its wild ambrosial wings.

Beneath the azure vaulted skies,
Where star on star unnumber'd glows;
That silent viewless spirit flies,
And far its balmy odours throws.

Or when in whispers sweetly wild,
It wanders thro' the lofty trees;
It seems some soothing seraph mild,
That comes the care-worn heart to ease.

And in its fleet and pathless way,
Each bending stem unconscious heaves,
And breaks the young moon's pallid ray,
That trembles on the trembling leaves.

I love thy sighing gale, O Night,
It stills my pensive soul to rest;
As softly in its airy flight,
It fans the form by sorrow prest.

1811

The Spy.

No. 19

Saturday, January 5.

Hoc est vivere bis vita posse priore fuit.

MARTIAL.

A GOOD new year to you gentle reader, and many happy returns of the season. May thy reflections on the times that are past be sweet and consoling to thy heart; may futurity present her fairest prospects to thy mind's eye; and may all thy intended schemes and pursuits be dictated and governed by prudence, candour, and benevolence.

Before this paper reaches your hand, the days set apart by ancient custom for festivity and mirth will have expired; and, like the fleeting years which have already gone over your head, will have left nothing more substantial on the mind, than the shadows of an airy dream. Reflection will again have resumed her calm and regulating sway in your bosom, either to pierce it with the stings of remorse, or cheer it by the exhilarating balm of self-approbation. That these reflections may be directed to objects which concern your peace and happiness, is the Spy's warmest wish; and to that desirable end he dedicates this day's paper.

The conclusion of a year presents itself, as one of those occasions, on which it is almost impossible to resist some intrusions of a thoughtful mind. It is by years we estimate the length of human life; which is not very great, experience tells us, that it is hardly possible we shall live to double it. But we may hope there is yet time to amend what has been done amiss, and to render the evening of life correspondent to the bright morning when our day commenced.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts; or that evil makes deeper impression than good, it is certain, that few can review the time past without heaviness of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly—many opportunities lost by negligence. The shades of the dead rise up before him, and he laments the companions of his youth—the partners of his amusements—the assistants of his labours, whom the hand of fate hath snatched away. It is said of Themistocles, that when an offer was made to him of teaching him the art of memory, he answered, that he would rather wish for toms of forgetfulness. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of misery, which he was unable to suppress; and would gladly

reprinted in his *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical, partly in the Scottish Dialect* (Edinburgh, 1816), pp. 52–55. Further information about James Alkman is given in the Notes on Contributors.

174(a) Roam'st thou [...] **presence there!** the 1816 printing of the poem has a note (pp. 249–50) against this last stanza recalling the experience of the explorer Mungo Park (1771–1806), related in his much-read *Travels* of 1799. Park was five hundred miles from the coast of Africa and almost exhausted when the sight of 'a singularly elegant species of moss, in fructification' brought home to him the idea that none of God's works is beyond His care, and that he would not be deserted any more than the plant had been.

THE SPY, No. 17 (Saturday, 22 December 1810)

Metropolitan's Letter to the Spy on the State of Literature and Literary men in London

Author: John Black–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies. Further information about Black is given in the Notes on Contributors.

Motto from Alexander Pope's translation of Homer's *Odyssey*, 19. 90.

176(a) the lives of Johnson and Goldsmith Samuel Johnson (1709–1784), after he had gone to London in 1737 to try to make his living as a professional author, was employed in correcting the reports of the debates in Parliament for the *Gentleman's Magazine* and in translating for booksellers. Oliver Goldsmith (1728–74) worked in London as a hack writer for various magazines and booksellers from about 1757, until his reputation was firmly established by *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766).

176(b) Tonson Jacob Tonson (1656?–1736) was the publisher of works by Dryden, who accused him of meanness and sharp practice in connection with the translation of Virgil. Tonson is supposed to have had to borrow the £20 purchase money for the first play of Dryden's he published in 1679, but to have died worth £40,000.

177(a) Rousseau used to say see Book IX of *The Confessions*.

177(c) Dr. Johnson Johnson's opinion is expressed in several places—see, for example, No. 11 of the *Letter* or the lives of Milton and of Gray in *The Lives of the Poets*.

177(d) his wife's funeral *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia* (1759) was written to pay for the expenses of his mother's last illness and her debts.

177(d) a melancholy mirth Johnson's comment on Milton's *L'Allegro* is to be found in the life of Milton in *The Lives of the Poets*.

178(a) as he himself says the French philosopher Voltaire, Francois Marie Arouet (1694–1778), was a notorious hypochondriac. He lived at Ferney, near the Swiss border, from 1753 onwards.

178(b) Cicero, [...] **engaged in business** Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC) was the foremost Roman orator of his day, and consul from 64–63 BC, living in the thick of the political events of the day, as well as being a prolific letter-writer and the author of works on rhetoric, political science, and philosophy.

178(b–c) Franklin the origin of this anecdote about Benjamin Franklin (1706–90) has not been discovered. From his *Autobiography*, which was only published as part of his grandson's edition of his works in 1817–18, it would appear to be an exaggeration at least: Franklin was intended by his father for the church, and later opened a subscription library in Philadelphia, both of which details suggest he had no reason to conceal his bookish tendencies. In one place, however, he says that in order to secure his character as a tradesman in Philadelphia he was careful 'not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid all *appearances* of the contrary [...] a book, indeed, sometimes debauched me from my work, but that was seldom, snug, and gave no scandal—see *Autobiography*, ed. by Max Farrand (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1949), p. 82.

Amusing Story of Two Highlanders

Author: James Hogg–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies. It was reprinted in his *Winter Evening Tales*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1820), 4, 194–97.

Maria, A Highland Legend

Author: James Gray–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies.

183(d) sound of the pibroch a theme and set of variations played on the bagpipe.

183(d) the Kelpie a water demon, usually in the form of a horse, which is said to haunt rivers and fords, and lure the unwary to death.

THE SPY, No. 18 (Saturday, 29 December 1810)

A Dialogue in the Reading Room

Author: James Hogg–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies. This essay refers back to No. 218 of the *Spectator* where, sitting in a coffee-house in Aldgate, the Spectator hears himself described by men unknown to him as extravagant and unfit for any of the uses of life. Similarly, in No. 2 of the *Mirror* the writer hears himself described by one person as an advocate for Methodism and by another as an adherent of the doctrines of David Hume.

Motto from Horace's *Epistles*, 1.1735, meaning 'To have found favour with the great is not the meanness of glories!'

185(a) Smith's Reading-Room James Taylor Smith advertised his Royal Exchange reading-room and commercial chamber in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* for 15 December 1810. It was under the management of four directors, with the Earl of Fingal as President: papers could be read at home for three guineas per annum, and writing-paper and stationery were sold.

185(a) Report of the King's Physicians by the end of October 1810 the mental health of George III was so poor that he was incapable of acting as monarch. The newspapers carried almost daily statements on the state of his health by his physicians, as the question of a regency became an urgent matter. An Act of Parliament appointing the Prince of Wales, the future George IV, regent was passed in February 1811.

185(c) the Spy's remarks upon the Edinburgh stage? in No. 13 of *The Spy*.

185(c) the respectable part of the British essayists Hogg's comment on a particular event of the day was more typical of a newspaper or magazine than of an essay-periodical like those of Addison, Johnson, or Mackenzie.

186(b) those employed by his relations in London Henry Siddons's uncle, John Philip Kemble (1757–1823) was the manager of the Covent Garden theatre in London.

187(a) my small legs and lean hands Hogg is of course reworking a periodical convention to fit *The Spy's* theme of the unknown author and his hardships in an indifferent society: he was himself even exceptionally strongly made and athletic.

187(b) the value of the whole as a book the essay-periodical was not a particularly lucrative form until the separate papers appeared in volume form as a collection of essays. Robert D. Mayo points out that this was so much the case that some papers were undertaken only with an eye to the collected edition. Cumberland's *Observations* of 1785, for example, was first published in book form without ever having appeared as a periodical—see *The English Novel in the Marginalia 1740–1815* (Evanston and London: Northwestern University Press and Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 75.

187(b) pay duty, [...] **post-free** newspapers were subject to a tax (originally of a halfpence a sheet but by the end of the Napoleonic Wars fourpence a sheet) but it was the custom to allow them to be sent through the post without charge—see A. R. B. Haldane, *Three Centuries of Scottish Post: An Historical Survey to 1836*

(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971), p. 164. *The Spy* would not be classed as a newspaper, and would not be required to pay tax.

188(b) *the language of Sodom* Sodom, meaning burring, was one of the cities of the plain destroyed by fire by God for its wickedness in Genesis 19.24–28.

188(d) *description of a Sabbath-day in town* see 'Satirical Directions to every Class in Edinburgh, in what manner to keep the Sabbath' in No. 31 of *The Spy*.

189(c) *an anonymous writer* this writer has not been identified.

190(c) *Laudari a laudato vivo* the source of this quotation has not been identified.

191(b) *in the energetic language of Johnson* the source of this quotation has not been identified.

Story of the Ghost of Lochmaben, by John Miller

Author: James Hogg–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies. It was reprinted in his *Winter Evening Tales*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1820), II, 223–31.

193(b) *darned* concealed himself, or went into hiding.

193(d) *ride the stang* a man who ill-treated his wife was made to sit on a pole and paraded around for his neighbours to jeer at. It would be something like the skimmery ride depicted in Chapter 39 of Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, but with the actual people instead of their effigies.

The Night Gale

Author: Miss Lockhart Gillespie–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies. Nothing is known about this contributor.

THE SPY, No. 19 (Saturday, 5 January 1811)

New Year Paper

Author: James Hogg–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies, the last two adding 'mostly'. The paper was reprinted as Hogg's under the title of 'The True Art of Reviewing' in *Newcastle Magazine*, 6 (January 1827), 3–7. A letter to the *Newcastle Magazine*, 7 (November 1828), 499–500 asserted that the article was a plagiarism from essays by Dr. Johnson in Nos. 8, 29, and 71 of the *Rambler* and also from an unspecified paper in the *Miller*.

Motto from Martial's *Epigrams*, 10.23.7–8, meaning 'To be able to enjoy one's private life is to live twice'. Apart from its obvious reference to retrospection this motto may also be a jocular allusion to the plagiarism of the paper that follows.

195(d)–196(a) *Whether it be that life has more vexations [...] the art of forgetfulness* this passage is substantially taken from No. 44 of the *Miller*.

195(d) *It is said of Themistocles* this reference has not been found.

196(a–b) *But regret is really useful [...] formed a second time* this passage is substantially taken from No. 72 of the *Miller*.

197(c–d) *Many divines have already [...] delaying reformation* from No. 71 of the *Rambler*.

197(d) *The sentiment of Seneca* the source of this quotation, meaning 'What is never said enough, is never said too much', has not been identified.

198(a) *As he that lives longest [...] the whole is little* this passage is substantially taken from No. 71 of the *Rambler*.

199(c) *"in whose hands [...] whithersoever he pleases;"* perhaps a recollection of Provverbs 21.1.

199(d) *"look [...] appointed it,"* perhaps a recollection of Micah 6.9.

200(a–d) *Evil is uncertain [...] counteract our own purpose* the passage is substantially taken from No. 29 of the *Rambler*.

201(a–d) *He will find wide chasms [...] followers of good or evil* the passage is

substantially taken from No. 8 of the *Rambler*.

202(a–b) *Futurity is the proper abode [...]* pitfall covered with flowers the passage is substantially taken from No. 8 of the *Rambler*.

The Cloze of the Year

Author: James Hogg–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies. The poem refers to the poor mental health of George III from October 1810, and the proceedings at the end of the year to declare the Prince of Wales (subsequently George IV) regent. Europe is presumably 'prostrate' before the emperor Napoleon I of France, whose rule as one of 'the appointed scourges' is contrasted with the peaceful virtues of the sick British king.

THE SPY, No. 20 (Saturday, 12 January 1811)

On the Folly of Playing at Cards

Author: Unknown—the NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies suppose this anonymous paper to be Scott's, though it is not characteristic of his style and in his *Anecdotes*, p. 19, Hogg states that Scott's only contribution to *The Spy* was a letter enclosing two poems by John Leyden.

Motto from Horace's *Epistles*, 2.1.158–59, meaning 'A dreadful poison has driven our elegance.'

204(a) *short observations by one of your correspondents* see 'Norman's Letter to the Spy' in No. 15 of *The Spy*, pp. 156, 157.

204(b) *threehalfpenny loo* in this card game a player who fails to take a trick or breaks any of the laws of the game is obliged to pay a 'loo' or fine of three-halfpence to the pool.

204(b) *Volumes have been published* the best-known is probably Edmund Heyl's *A Short Treatise on the Game of Whist*, first published in 1742.

205(c) *the Shepherd in the fance of the Village Lawyer* see William Macready, *The Village Lawyer, A Farce*, third edition (London, 1795). She replace the Shepherd is really killing sheep for the butcher, to gain money for his master Smart's son Charles. When Smart detects him he pretends to be a straggleton, and says he killed it to prevent it dying of the rot (Act I, scene 2), explaining 'it's a Way I learnt of our Doctor in the Parish, he cures most of his Patients the same Way'.

206(d) *A celebrated modern writer* the quotation is from No. 10 of Samuel Johnson's *Rambler*.

207(c) *one half of their excellence only* neither Thomas Percy in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* nor Scott in *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* printed tunes to the ballads they gave. Hogg's mother, Margaret Laidlaw, complained to Scott that the ballads were meant for singing and not for reading—see *Memoirs*, p. 62.

208(b) *O! tempora, O! mores* from Cicero's *Speech against Catiline*, meaning 'What times! What customs!'

208(c) *The Cloud of Witnesses* a popular book containing accounts of prominent Scottish Covenanters who had suffered persecution under the rule of Charles II and James II, entitled *A Cloud of Witnesses for the Royal Persecutors of Jesus Christ, or The Last Speeches and Testimonies of those who have suffered for the Truth in Scotland, since the Year 1680*. The copy I have seen was published in Edinburgh in 1714.

King Edward's Dream

Author: James Hogg–NLS, St Andrews, and Guelph marked copies. The poem later became the fifteenth bard's song in Hogg's *The Queen's Wake* (1813). A monument to mark the place of Edward I's death on 7 July 1307 was built in 1803 near the village of Burgh-by-Sands in Cumbria.