

THE  
*WITTY*  
AND  
ENTERTAINING  
*EXPLOITS*

OF  
*George Buchanan,*

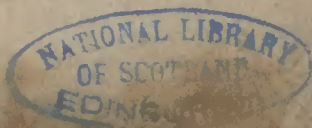
COMMONLY CALLED

The King's Fool.

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IN SIX PARTS COMPLETE.  
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*Stirling:*

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THE

*Witty and Entertaining*

**EXPLOITS**

OF

**GEORGE BUCHANNAN.**

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**M**R GEORGE BUCHANNAN was a Scotsman born, and though of mean parentage, made great progress in learning. As for his understanding and ready wit, he excelled all men then alive in that age, that ever proposed questions to him. He was servant or teacher to King James VI. as his private counsellor, but publicly he acted as fool.

It happened one day that a young airy nobleman went into the King's garden, to pull a flower for a

young lady he fancied. George followed at a distance; so when the young man found a flower to his pleasure, he would not pull it, but to find it again without further searching, he covered it with his hat and went away for his sweetheart. No sooner was he gone, but up goes George, lifts the hat, pulls the flower, then eases himself on the spot, and covers it with the hat again, and away he goes. Soon after the young gentleman returned, leading his sweetheart to pull the flower below the hat; but as soon as he lifted the hat, and saw what was below it, he looked like a fool; and the lady flying in a passion, sets off, and would never countenance him any more. The young gentleman being sadly vexed at this affront given him by George, sent him a challenge to fight him, appointing day and place where they were to meet. Being to fight on horseback, George gets an old stiff horse, and for harnessing covers him about with blown bladders, with small stones in each, without either sword or spear; away to the field he goes, where the duel was appointed. So, when George saw his enemy coming against him, all in glittering armor, armed with sword and spear, he made up to him with all the speed his horse could carry him; when the small stones made such a rattling noise, that the gentleman's fine gelding would not stand the battle, but ran away and threw his master to the ground, which caused all the spectators to laugh and say the gentleman was more fool than George. The gentleman being still more enraged at this second affront, he would fight with George on foot; but his friends persuaded him that it would be no honor for him to fight and kill the King's fool, and far less to be killed by the fool; so they were advised both to agree. But the gentlemen would try another exploit with George, for to have it said he was still the cleverest man, *viz.* To hold him a jumping-bout publicly, the next day thereafter. With

all my heart, says George, and we will end in and about where we began: they not knowing his meaning in this, The place and hour being set where they were to meet next morning, George in the night time caused a deep pit to be made, and the earth of it carried away; then filled it up with dung from a privy, and covered it over with green turf, that it might not be known by the other ground. So, according to promise, they both met in the morning against the appointed time. Now George being the oldest man, and by them counted the greatest fool, the young spark permitted him to jump first, which he, according to order did; and jumped within a foot of the place where the ground was falsified. The young man seeing this made his performance with great airs, and all his might, so that he jumped a foot over George, and up to his oxter in clean dung: whereat the whole multitude of spectators cried out with loud huzzas and laughter. Now, says George, I told you we would end in and about where we began, and that is in clean dirt

On a time after this, the king and his court were going into the country, and they would have George to ride before them in the fool's dress; whereunto he seemed unwilling, but it was the king's pleasure. So George was mounted upon an old horse, with the heels hanging down, and a palmer coat, patched over with pictures of divers kinds. George rode before them in this posture, which caused great laughter and diversion, until they came to an inn, where they alighted to dine; and in the time they were at dinner, George went into the stables, and with a knife cut all their horses chasts, not sore, but so as they might bleed. Now, as soon as dinner was over, and they mounted their horses again, George riding before them as a



sual, in his palmer coat and old boots, they began to make their game of him; then George turning about suddenly clapped his hands with a loud laughter, the King asked him what made him laugh so? Laugh, says George, how can I but laugh when horses cannot hold their peace? O my sovereign, says he, don't you see how your horses have rent their chafsts laughing at my old boots! Then every man looking at his horses chafsts, they were all in a rage against George. The King caused George to dismount directly, and charged him never to let him see his face on English ground. Now, George knowing that nothing could reconcile the King at this time, he came away to Scotland, and caused make him a pair of great boots, and put a quantity of Scotch earth in each of them, and away he goes for London, to see the King once more. He hearing the King and his court were to pass through a country village, George places himself in an old window, and sets up his bare a--e to the King and his court as they passed. The King being greatly amazed to see such an unusual honor done to him, was curious to know the performer: So he called unto him, desiring him to come down; and finding it to be George, Sir, says the King, did I not charge you never to let me see your face again? True, my sovereign, says George, for which cause I let you see my arse. But, says the King, you was never to come on English ground again. Neither I did, says George, pulling off his boots before the King, behold, my sovereign, its all Scotch earth I stand upon. The King and his court being greatly diverted with this merry joke, George was again admitted to the King's favor.

After this, there arose a debate betwixt the King and the Queen about votes in Parliament; as the King

had two votes, the Queen would have one, and would needs be a Parliamenter, or no peace without preferment. This matter was committed to George by the King. So it was agreed in Parliament that the Queen should be admitted for a day. Accordingly she came, and was received with all the honor and congratulations that was due and becoming her high station: but before any matter of consequence was brought to the board, George seated himself hard by the Queen's seat: all being silent, he rose up very quickly, lifted one of his legs, and let a loud fart, which set the whole house a-laughing; whereat, the Queen was greatly offended, and said, Go, take the rogue and hang him. To which, George answered, A fine Parliamenter indeed! to hang a man for a sinless infirmity, and that's a fart. The Queen enrag'd at the affront put on her first appearance in Parliament, went off in a passion, and would never countenance them more. But yet, to be revenged on George, she would never give the King rest till he delivered George into her hands, that he might be punished at her pleasure; which the King accordingly commanded to be done, knowing that George would rescue himself by some intrigue or other. No sooner was he delivered into her hands, but she and her maids of honor pronounced his doom, which was as follows: "As he had affronted the Queen among so great an equipage, who ought to be honored in chief above all women in the nation, that he should be *stoned to death* by the hands of women. Now, the time being come that he was to die, according to their appointment, he was taken into a park, where a great number of women was waiting for him, with their aprons full of stones, to fall upon him, and put him to death, according to the Queen's appointment,

## HIS SPEECH TO HIS EXECUTIONERS.

- ‘ Here’s a female band with bags of stones,
- ‘ To kill a man for rumple groans :
- ‘ I’m clean of rapine, blood, and thefts,
- ‘ Could I convert my farts to rifts ?
- ‘ Since I the first for farting die,
- ‘ Close up the place from whence they fly.
- ‘ To commit my crime, I think, ye’ll scarce,
- ‘ If once ye do cork up your arse.
- ‘ And now since women stones do carry,
- ‘ Men need not in this world tarry.
- ‘ Judge if such women be chaste complete,
- ‘ With forty stones between their feet :
- ‘ But since ’tis so ye will come on,
- ‘ The greatest whore throw the first stone.’

When he ended with these words, ‘ The greatest whore throw the first stone,’ every one put it to another to cast the first stone ; but knowing they would attain the character of a whore for so doing, they all refused till the dying hour was past, and then he took a protest against them, and by that means gained his life. After this he was admitted to the Queen’s favor and presence, and attended the court as formerly.

About this time, the French King, in order to pick a quarrel with the court of Britain, sent a letter to the King, desiring it to be read before the Parliament ; and the writing was as follows : ‘ Will I come?—Will I come?—Will I come?’—This letter being read before the King and his courtiers, they all concluded that the French King designed to invade England : Therefore, they ordered an answer to be wrote, upbraiding him with the breach of peace, and putting him in mind of the last treaty. The answer being

read over before the King and his nobles they all agreed that it should be sent off: But, George smiling and shaking his head, said,

Many men, many minds;  
Who knows what he designs?

They then asked George what he thought the French King meant by such a letter? To which he answered I suppose he wants an invitation to come over and dine with you, and then return in a friendly manner, but you are going to charge him with a breach of peace, before he has given any signal of offence:--- His letter is indeed dark and mystical, but send him an answer according to his question. Now, George being ordered to write the answer, it was as follows: 'And ye come---And ye come---And ye come.' This being sent to the French King, he admired it beyond expression, saying, It was more valiant and daring than he expected. So the enmity he intended was extinguished and turned into love.

It happened once that a malignant party in Scotland sent up a great spokesman to the King and Parliament, for the seducing of the church: George hearing of his coming went away and met him on the bridge and the salutation that he gave him was, the cutting off his head, and throwing it over the bridge! He then run to the King with all his might, and fell down before him, pleading most heartily for a pardon, or without it he was a dead man. The King most seriously asked him what he had done now? To which he answered, He had only thrown the Scots bishop's hat over the bridge; which made the king to laugh, to hear him ask pardon for such a small fault. But he had no sooner got the pardon sealed by the King,



than he said, Indeed, my Sovereign, I threw his hat over the bridge, but his head was in it. Geordy, Geordy, says the king, thou wilt never give over till thou be hanged.

A nobleman in England agreed with the King, how to put a trick upon George, to try his manly courage in sending him to a certain place for a bag of money. On his way home through St. James' park, they caused a sturdy fellow attack him on the way, and take the money from him. The fellow being armed with sword and pistol, came up briskly and attacked George with these words, You, sir, deliver what money you have, or you are a dead man. To which, George answered, Sir, I have some, indeed, but 'tis not my own, and therefore do not like to part with it; nevertheless being determined as you seem to be, to exchange blows for it, pray do me the favor to fire your pistol through the flap of my coat, that the owners may see I have been in danger of my life before I parted with it: which he accordingly did. No sooner had he fired the pistol, than George whips out his hanger from below his coat, and with one stroke cut off the fellow's right hand, wherein he held the sword, so that both sword and hand fell to the ground: but George lifted his hand and carried it to the King. No sooner did he come before them, but they asked him, saying, Well, George, did you see any body to trouble you by the way? None, said he, but one fellow, who was going to take the money from me; but I made him giev me his hand he would not do the like again. You did? says the fellow's master. Yes, I did, says George. let work bear witness, throwing down the fellow's hand on the table before them all.

Now, this last exploit of George's caused many of the English to hate him; and among the rest, a young nobleman fell a joking with George, saying, he would be as famous a champion for Scotland as Sir William Wallace was. Aye, aye, says George, Wallace was a brave man in his time. True, indeed, says the young nobleman, but when he came to London, we did him all manner of justice, and, for honor of the Scots, we have his effigy in our shit-houses to this very day. And do you not know the reason of that, says George. No, I don't, says he. Well, I'll tell you, says George: He was such a terror to Englishmen, when he was alive, that the sight of his picture yet makes them beshit themselves. The English took this answer as a great affront, and forthwith caused Wallace's picture to be taken out of all their shit-houses.

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## PART II.

**G**EORGE happened one time to be in company with a bishop, and so they began to education, wherein he blanked the bishop so remarkably, that the bishop himself owned he was worsted — Then one of the company addressed George with these words: Thou Scot should not have left thy country. For what reason, says George. Because thou hast carried all the wisdom that is in it hither with thee. No, no, says George, the shepherds in Scotland will dispute with any bishop in London, and exceed them very far in education. The bishops took this as an affront, and several noblemen affirmed it to be as the Scot had said: Beats were laid on each side, and three

of the bishops were chosen and sent away to Scotland, to dispute it with the shepherds, accompanied with several officers, who were to bear witness of what they should hear pass between them. Now, George knowing which way they went, immediately took another road, and was in Scotland before them. He then made acquaintance with a shepherd on the border, whose pasture lay by the road side where the bishops were to pass; and there he mounted himself in a shepherd's dress: and when he saw the bishops appear, he conveyed his flock to the road-side, and fell a-chanting at a Latin ballad. When the bishops came up to George, one of them asked him, in French, what o'clock it was? To which he answered, in Hebrew, It is directly about the time of the day it was yesterday at this time. Another asked him, in Greek, What countryman he was? To which he answered, in Flemish, If you knew that, you would be as wise as myself. A third asked him in Dutch, Where was you educate? To which he answered in Gaelic, Herding my sheep between this and Lochaber. This they desired him to explain in English, which he immediately did. Now, says one of them we need proceed no farther. What, says George, are you butchers? I'll sell you a few sheep, To this they made no answer, but went away shamefully, saying, they believed the Scots had been through all the nations in the world for their education or the devil had taught them. Now when George had ended this dispute with the bishops, he stripped off his shepherd's dress, and up through England he goes, with all the haste imaginable, so that he arrived at the place from whence they set out, three days before the judges, and went every day asking if they were come, so that he might not be suspected. As soon as they arrived, all that were concerned in the dispute and many more, came crowding in to hear what news from the Scottish shepherds, and

to know what was done. No sooner had the three gentlemen declared what had past between the bishops and the shepherds, whom they found on the Scots border, but the old bishop made answer, And think you, said he, that a shepherd could answer these questions? It has been none else but the devil, for the Scots ministers themselves could not do it, they are but ignorant of such matters, a parcel of beardless boys. Then George thought it was time to take speech in hand. Well, my Lord Bishop, says George, you call them a parcel of ignorant beardless boys--- You have a great long beard, yourself and if grace was measured by beards, you bishops and the goats, would have it all, and that will be quite averse to Scripture. What says the bishop, are you a Scot? Yes, says George, I am a Scot. Well, says the bishop, and what is the difference between a Scot and a sot? Nothing at present, says George but the breadth of the table: there being a table betwixt the bishop and George. So the bishop went off in a high passion while the whole multitude were like to split their jaws with laughter.

About this time there was an act of Parliamen for the benefit of murderers, that any person who committed murder, if they forfeited five hundred merks, which went under the name of **KIN-BOOT**, because so much of this fine went to the murdered person's nearest relations, as the price of blood, the murderer got a remit. Now, George knowing this to be contrary to Moses' laws, was grieved very much to see so many pardons sealed with the King's hand for murder, almost one every week, it being so usual for the King to subscribe them, that he would not read them, nor enquire what they were; for which cause George writes a wright to the crown, and sent it to the King



to be subscribed, which he actually did, and never looking what it was, returned it to George. No sooner had he received it, but he goes to the King, and told him it was not time for him to be sitting there: whereat the King greatly amazed, started up; then George, in a great haste set himself down in the King's chair, forthwith, declaring himself to be king, saying, You who was king must be my fool, for I am now the wisest man. The king was greatly offended at this, until George shewed him the seal and subscription.--- But from that day forth, the king knew what he subscribed.

The next pardon that came to be sealed by the king, was to a gentleman who had killed two men before, and had gotten pardons for them by money. This being the third, the king was very silent in looking over it; George standing by, asked what he was going to seal now? To which he answered, it is a remit for a man who has killed three men at sundry times, I gave him two remits before. O! says George, he has killed but one man. And who killed the other two? says the king. You did, says George; for if you had given him justice when he killed the first, he had killed no more. When the king heard these words, he threw down the pen, and declared that such an act to save a murderer should be null ever after by him.

One time George having no money, he goes away and gets a pick and spade, and then falls a-digging at a corner of the king's palace: which the king perceiving from his window, calls out what was he wanting there? Are you going to undermine my house and make it fall? No, my sovereign, said George; but it

is verily reported that there is plenty of money about this house, and where can it be? says George, I cannot find it; for it is not within the house to do me service; then surely it must be below it. O George, says the king, that is a crave after the new fashion; what money you want I'll order it for you. Then, my sovereign, says George, I'll dig no more.

One time George being in the country, he arrived at an inn, where he alighted to refresh himself and his horse. The innkeeper charged him double price for every thing he called for. George never grumbled at this but gave him all his demands, and away he goes on his journey. At the inn where he quartered next night, he was used after the same manner, if not worse. Having little farther to go, he returned next day, and came to the same inn where he had been two nights before. So, when he alighted, the boy asked him what he would give his horse? What you will, says he. The master of the inn came into his room before supper, and asked what he would have for supper. What you will, landlord, says he. After supper, and a hearty bowl to put all down, he went to bed. On the morrow he rose very early, and called for the boy to make ready his horse in all haste, for he intended to mount and go directly. Soon after, he went into the stable where the boy was, calling for his horse, when he mounted with all the speed he could, and gave the boy a piece of money, saying, Here, my boy, this is for taking care of my horse; I have paid for all I call'd for in the house:---and off he goes. About mid-day he alighted again at an inn to refresh himself and his horse, and there he chanced to be in company with his other landlord, who used him so badly; Sir, says George, I believe I was in your house two nights ago. O yes, sir, says he, I

mind of you pretty well. And where was you last night. Last night! says George, I was in one of the inns, and the civilest landlord I ever had in my life; they brought all things to me that I stood in need of, without calling for them; and when I came off this morning, they charged me nothing, and I paid nothing but sixpence to the boy for dressing my horse. Blood and wounds! said the old fellow, then I'll go there this night—Ay, do, says George, and mind this, when they ask you what you will have for yourself and your horse, answer, What you will, sir. George smiled within himself to think how he had got the one extortioner to take amends of the other.—So this innkeeper set off on his journey, and rode so late that night, that he might reach the cheap inn, that most of the people were gone to bed before he arrived. As soon as he dismounted from his horse, the boy enquired at him What shall I give to your horse, master? To which he answered, What you will, boy,—The boy hearing this ran away up stairs (leaving him and his horse standing at the door) to his master's room, crying, master, master, What you will is come again!!—O the rogue! cries he, where is he?—I'll cane him—I'll what you will him by and by!—And to him he runs with his cane, licks and kicks him until he was hardly able to mount his horse again, and would give him no entertainment there; which caused him to ride a whole winter night, after he had got his bones all beat and bruised. So the one pursued the other as a murderer; and his defence was, That he was a cheat, and a scorner of his house:—until the truth was found out.

## PART III.

AFTER this, George being in Cornwall about business, where he chanced to run short of money and not knowing how to make his way to London without it, being acquainted with none in that country, but knowing his landlord to be loyal to government, and a great favorite of the king his master, he takes a piece of brick, and brays it into small powder, mixed with a little chalk, so that it might seem in color like arsenic, which is strong poison; then tying it up in two papers, writing on the one '*Strong poison for the King*' and on the other '*Slow poison for the Queen*.' Out he goes on purpose, and leaves the parcels on the table, where he knew they would be looking at them. the landlord perceived the directions. So in comes George in a great haste, and calls out, O landlord, did you see two small parcels I have lost, I know not what to do, for it was my main business to take them to London. O you murdering rogue! cries the landlord, I will have you hang'd for what you intend. George hearing this, made off, but the landlord calling for assistance, he was apprehended, made prisoner of state, and conductud to London by a troop of horse, where the people knowing him told the guard who he was, they hearing this slipt away shamefully one by one George thanking them for their good company and safe convey.

George one day easing himself at the corner of a hedge, was espied by an English squire, who began



to mock him, asking him, Why he did not keckle like the hens? But, George, whose wit was always ready, told him, he was afraid to keckle lest he would come and snatch up the egg.—Which rebuff made the squire walk off as mute as a fish.

George was met one day by three bishops, who paid him the following compliments. Says the first, Good-day, father Abraham.—the second, Good-day, father Isaac.—the third, Good-day father Jacob. To which he replied, I am neither father Abraham, father Isaac, nor father Jacob: but I am Saul the son Kish, sent out to seek my father's asses, and lo! I have found three of them. Which answer convinced the bishops that they had mistaken their man.

There was a bell at Dalkeith, which the Popish clergy made use of to extort confession from the ignorant people, in the following manner: They told the persons whom they suspected guilty, the bell would rive at the touch of a guilty person; but if not guilty it would not. By these means they generally frightened the ignorant into confession: for if the bell would rive the person was then to be condemned to death. But they managed the matter so, that the bell was never brought to trial, till George did as follows: he was imprisoned for saying, That the Pope was fallible himself; and could not pardon the sins of others. George owned he said so, but would refer to the bell whether he was guilty or not. The priests, tho' unwilling, were obliged to comply.—George touched the bell, repeating as before, The Pope is fallible, and cannot pardon sin: moreover added, The Pope and the Popish clergy are imposters: and

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and thereupon touched the bell, referring to it for the truth; but the bell not rending, the priests were disgraced as impostors. George was honorably acquitted; and the bell was laid aside.

A young gentleman that would be witty on the scripture, eating some cheese full of mites, one night, at a tavern:—Now, said he, I have done as much as Samson, for I have slain my thousands and ten thousands. Yes, replied George, who happened to be in his company, and with the same weapon too, the jaw-bone of an ass.—Which set the whole company a-laughing, to see the young gentleman beat with his own weapon.

George being in company where three bishops were present at dinner, they knowing George to be a great scholar, and comical withal, they put upon him to say the grace, which he did as follows:

Here are three brethren of the coat,  
 Who for thy blessings thank thee not,  
 Curse them Lord, and bless them not. Amen.

Fall on, gentlemen, the cause is good. This grace made the bishops look on one another like fools, while George laughed heartily at the confusion they were in.

#### PART IV.

A candlemaker having had some candles stolen, was telling it in a company where George was present, who bade him be of good cheer, for, says he, in a short time they will all come to light.

George being sent to Paris about some business, went from thence to Versailles to see the French king's court; and being known there by several of the courtiers, who had been at the English court, one of them took occasion to tell the French king, that George was one of the wittiest men in England; upon which, the French king desired to see him; which he did, but George, it seems, was out of humor, or seemingly so, and spoke but little to the purpose, so that the French king told the nobleman who commended him for such wit, that he looked upon him as a very dull fellow; but the nobleman assured the king, that whatever he thought of him, George was a very witty and ingenious man: whereupon, the king was resolved to make further trial of him, and took him into a large hall where there were a great number of fine pictures, and among the rest he shewed him the picture of Christ on the cross, and asked him if he knew whom that was? but George made himself very ignorant, and answered no. Why, said the king, I will tell you, if you do not know:—This is the picture of our Saviour on the cross, and that on the right hand is the pope's and that on the left is my own. Whereupon George replied, I humbly thank your majesty for the information, for tho' I have often heard that our Saviour was crucified between two thieves, yet I never knew who they were before.

George being one day travelling to London, and the weather being very cold and rainy, he alighted at an inn to refresh and warm himself; but the fire being surrounded with people he could scarcely see it: George finding this to be the case, calls to the hostler, and orders him to give his horse, at the door, half a peck of oysters: You mean oats, Sir: No, no, says George, it is oysters, and base is that horse that

will not eat oysters. The people at the fire hearing this, started up and ran to the door to see the horse eating oysters: the moment they left their seats, George took the opportunity to plant himself before the fire, with a table and cloth aside him. In a little they came back again one by one, saying, This horse will not eat oysters: Well, well, says George, he is too full or too saucy; so you may bring them in and I will eat them myself.

One time after this, George being in company about twenty miles from London, and on his way homeward, a fine gilded coach came up after him, and being informed that it belonged to the bishop of Canterbury, and was going to London for his Lordship, George addresses himself to the coachman to have a passage with him in the coach to London. So he bargained with the coachman for two dollars to carry him to the Bell-Inn on London bridge; the one he gave him in hand as he entered the coach, and he was to give him the other as soon as he saw him come out of the coach-door: So away the coachman drives to London, in all haste, in which time George wrote the following lines:

Here sits the bishop of Canterbury,  
 Who at the schools disdain'd to tarry.  
 Far better skill'd in games than preaching;  
 And yet he lives by others teaching.  
 Blind leaders of the blind indeed  
 'Tis blind and lame that chariots need,  
 Six brutes with eyes this brute doth carry,  
 I mean the bishop of Canterbury.  
 My feet being lame I gave a dollar  
 To be drove in state, like you a scholar;



For which I do myself abhor,  
Shame caus'd me make another door.

These lines George battered on the inside of the coach, and when he came within a mile of London he took a knife and cut a great hole in the backside of the coach, through which he came out; and to make his promise good to the coachman, that he was to give him the other dollar as soon as ever he saw him come out of the coach-door. The poor coachman drove on till he came to the aforeaid inn, where he alighted and opened the door to let out his passenger; but seeing the coach empty, and a great hole in the backside of it, he cried, I believe I have had the devil in the coach, and he has taken away the backside of it with him. The people of the inn came flocking about to see what was done; and then perceived the lines on the inside of the coach, which the bishop came and read himself, they all concluded it to be done by George, but could make nothing of it; for the bishop said, to pursue might well make it worse, but no better.

George went into the mint one day, when they were melting gold. One of them asked George if he would have his hat full of gold? George readily accepted, but it burnt the bottom out of his hat as they knew it would, and for that bout they foiled George. However, George to be even with them bought a fine large hat, and caused a plate of copper to be put betwixt the hat and the lining; and returning next day, they jestingly asked him if he would have another hat full of gold? he said he would: they gave it red hot, and George now laughed at them in his turn, telling them, That his new hat was a good one and stood fire better than the old one. And so he carried it

off honestly: and being prosecuted to return it, he excused himself, telling the judge that he took nothing but what was given him. And therefore he was honorably acquitted, and the other heartily laughed at.

A Scotsman being reduced to poverty, made his complaint to George to put him in a way to get money; George told him if he would follow his directions he would try it. There was an old miser a usurer and money-changer hard by, George told the fellow to pretend an errand to the miser, and when he came to the table where the heaps of money lay, to thrust his hand among the gold, but to lift none, and to run off. This the poor fellow did, and was chased by the miser and his servants, who ran after him into the street, crying Stop the thief! The poor fellow was was stopt. (as George had desired him to let them catch him) George appeared in the mob, and went along with him, who was carried before a judge, where he was searched and nothing being found upon him, he was acquitted, and the miser fined in a large sum for accusing him. Afterwards, George desired him to go to the same place, and thrust in both his hands, and lift up as much as he could, and run off. This he did, but the miser told him he was not such a fool as to follow him, for he knew he designed to play the fool to have him fined again. By these means the poor fellow was enriched and afterwards lived honestly.

George being at dinner one day, where the broth was exceeding hot, burnt his mouth, at the same time letting a loud fart. It is very good for you, says George, that you made your escape, for I should have burnt you alive had you staid.

A young curate with more pertness than wit of learning being asked in company how he came to take it into his head to enter into the ministry of the church? Because, said he, the Lord hath need of me. That may be, replied George, who was present, for I have often read that the Lord had once need of an ass.

Two drunken fellows fell a-beating one another on the streets of London, which caused a great croud of people throng together to see what it was; a taylor being at work in a garret, about three or four storeys high, and hearing a noise in the street, looked over the window, but could not well see them: so he began to stretch himself, making a long neck, until he fell down out of the window, and alighted upon an old man who was walking on the street; the poor taylor was more afraid than hurt, but the man he fell on died directly. His son caused the taylor to be apprehended, and tried for the murder of his father. The jury could not bring it in as wilful murder, neither could they altogether free the taylor: so the jury gave it over to the judges, and the judges to the king. The king asked George's advice in the matter. Why, says George, I will give you my opinion in a minute: you must cause the taylor to stand on the street in the same place where the old gentleman was when he was killed by the taylor, and then let the old gentleman's son the taylor's adversary, go up to the window from whence the taylor fell, and jump down and so kill the taylor as he did his father; for I can make no more of it: you see it was a great mercy for the taylor that he had the old gentleman beneath him, else he had been killed on the spot, and that it was the old gentleman's lot or misfortune to die there. The taylor's adversary

hearing this sentence past, he would not venture to jump over the window, and so the tailor got clear off.

After this, George being sent with the British ambassador into Italy, by the way of Paris; as they were viewing the beautiful statutes and large buildings in that spacious city, the King and many of his nobles in company, as they were walking through the King's garden, among the images of the saints, they came to the image of the virgin Mary, who stood in a melancholy posture with the babe in her arms. One of the noblemen says to the British ambassador, Do not you think but she looks angry? O yes, says George, she sees Englishmen and Frenchmen in friendship and unity one with another. No, no, says the French King, she loves nothing better than the reconciliation of enemies, peace and unity is her delight. Then George gets in below the statue, and looks up, O! says George, I know what is the matter now, somebody has driven a great nail in her a—e; I see the head of it sticking out, it would vex any person living besides a piece of wood. At this the King was greatly enraged against George, for calling her a piece of wood: and nothing would satisfy the King, unless George would fall down and worship the virgin Mary, and crave mercy from her for the blasphemous reproaches wherewith he had reproached her. Then George cries out O may it please your majesty to omit it at this time, I dare not look her in the face, she frowns on me with such an angry countenance, this dutiful command of yours must be delayed until I return from Italy, and then I shall fulfil your demand, in paying all dutiful respect and worship unto her, according to what she is. So here the ambassador stood bound for George, that he would perform this



piece of worship at his return, according to the king's pleasure.

Now, during their stay in Italy, they chanced to be in a nobleman's house where they kept but few servants, because of a spirit that haunted the house for the space of two hundred years before that time, so that no servant could work any kind of labour in or about the house for it, except cooks; for what they vulgarly called a brownie, it did all itself and would suffer no fellow-labourer to work along with it. On the next morning George got up pretty early, and called for water to wash himself, then directly comes the brownie, with a bason of water in one hand and a clean clout in the other. George perceiving him have such a pale ghostly countenance, and not to be an earthly creature, said, Of what nation art thou? To which he answered in Gaelic, A countryman of your's, Sir. The ambassador smiled and joked George, telling him, it was a devil, and how could it be a countryman of his? O, says George, I will shew you the contrary of that; for the devil dare not stay in my country. George having washed himself, it came again to take away the bason and the towel; then says George, And how long is it since you left your own country? About two hundred and fifty years ago, replied the brownie. Then certainly, says he, thou art a devil and not an earthly creature. To which it answered:

I am what I am, and a christian too.

Then I am what I am to conjure you, says George.

—He taking a handful of water and throwing it upon the old wither'd face of it, and repeated the form of the words of baptism in Gaelic, thus, If thou be a christian thou art old enough to be baptized. No

sooner had he done this, but it went off weeping and crying, O! let never a rogue put trust in his countryman after me. Now, says George, I told you the devil dares not stay in my country, nor yet look a scotsman in the face in his own. What, says the Italian lord, do you imagine this to be the devil's own country? It appeas so, says George, for he is the oldest residenter in it, I know: but my Lord, said he, and please your grace I think clergymen are very scant in this country, when you have kept the devil so long for a chaplain. The nobleman gave no answer to this; but expressed his sorrow to be very great for the loss of his brownie.

The ambassador having done his business in Italy, they returned homeward; and on their way the ambassador began to question George, how he thought to escape Paris without committing idolatry? No, no, says George, I never did worship any image nor never shall; but I shall make them worship the worst in my guts. No sooner were they arrived at Paris but George leaves the ambassador, and goes directly to the Virgin Mary, and jumps in over the rail to the holy ground, (as they termed it) whereon she stood, where few durst go but priests and friars; and there he loosed his breeches, and made such groaning easing himself, that he was heard by the priests and friars who were walking near by, and they perceiving this heinous abomination, ran upon him like a pack of hounds, and carried him before the cardinals and father confessors, where he was allowed to speak for himself, which he did as follows: "May it please your most excellent worships to hear my reasons before you pronounce sentence against me. It was my misfortune to be passing through this city some months ago with the British ambassador on our way to Italy, and one day, while we were walking in the King's gar-

den, in presence of the King and many of his nobles, who can bear witness of the same: I being ignorant of your traditions and rites of religion, foolishly offended, reproaching the virgin Mary to her face; and ever since she has plagued me with boundness in my belly, that I have voided nothing but clean haugh: so now on my return, I went and implored her to open my fundament, and she has done so; and I being overjoyed with the miraculous healing, in getting a passage in her presence, left it as a memorial of the miracle, in that place." When they heard this, they all with one consent lifted up their hands and blessed the virgin Mary, for the wonderful miracle she had done; and ordered George to go about his business, and declare unto all what was done unto him by the holy Virgin, for the confirmation of their religion. So all the devoted Romans came to view his dung, and worship over it, the King himself kneeled down and worshiped, bowing his body over it in the presence of many people: and he also caused a holy day to be observed throughout his dominions, for the miraculous cure.

## PART V.

**T**HREE merchant pedlars (as they professed to be) came with a pack of goods to put a trick upon a widow woman that kept an inn on the highway-side: after they had drunk very heartily, they desired the woman to lay up the pack securely, and charged her strictly before witnesses to deliver it to none of them, unless they came altogether for it again. In about three weeks after, two of them returned, and desired the woman to give them the pack, telling her that the other man was gone to such a fair with another pack, where they were all to meet; and that they were fellow-travellers, conjunct in trade, and they had all a

right to the pack alike: whereupon, the poor simple woman not dreading any harm, gave them the pack. So, in a few days thereafter, the other man comes and demands the pack; the honest woman told him plainly that the other two men had been there before, and had got it away; then he began to demonstrate to the woman what great danger she was in, and forthwith raised a process against her by law, to defend which it cost the poor woman a vast sum of money, as the plea continued more than two years; and a great court being one day to sit to decide the process, which would undoubtedly have been done in favor of the pursuer, the proof being so clear, and the woman herself not denying what the bargain was, when she got the pack to keep.

The poor woman being in great straits, and her purse being empty her attorney told her plainly, as her money was done he could no longer defend her. The woman once more plucked up her heart, and went to London to employ a new attorney to speak for her; but for want of gold none would undertake it. George being in a house where he heard the poor woman making a mournful complaint to one of her attorneys, who gave her no comfort nor satisfaction; for when she told him she had no money to spend, or give in defence of it, the attorney went away and would hear no more of the woman's grievous complaint, which made George laugh very heartily, while the poor woman sat weeping like one distracted. Poor woman, says George, you need not think that man will speak a word for you, unless you had bro't a purse of gold to loose his tongue: but as I have got a scheme of the matter, you may go home, and rest yourself contented until the time come, and then my life for your's, that I shall send you an attorney that that will do your business for nothing.



He gave the woman more courage than any she had spoken to in London: for every one told her that all the attorneys in the world could not free her. So accordingly at the day appointed, George dressed himself like an attorney, with his gown, and every thing as he had really been so.

The court being assembled and the process read over, expences and value of the pack having amounted to above seven hundred pounds, was ordered to be put in decreet against the poor widow, which every one was bemoaning, but could give her no relief. Now George kept himself silent, hearing them all with great patience, until the very nick of time, when he thought proper to address himself to the judges as follows:

“ My Lords, Judges, and Gentlemen of this honorable court and company, I have come from London, gratis, out of pure pity to speak a word or two in favor of this poor woman, who hath exhausted all her means in defence of a false accusation against her; and now when her money is gone her speakers are dumb, and I saw none to plead the cause of this poor widow: Now when sentence is upon the tapis to be pronounced against her, I earnestly desire this court to modify and drop the expences altogether, it is enough when the poor woman has the pack to pay; for you all know the woman was no way enriched by it when the other two got it away.”

Then the pursuer's attorney made answer, as follows:

“ Sir, I would have thought that you who have come from London, and profess to be a doctor of law,

should know better things: know ye not that he who gains the plea gains his expences as well as the sum, be what it will." Yes, it must be so, and shall be so! said the judges. "This is all I want," says George: the whole court a-laughing, thinking he was a fool, and become an adversary to the poor woman. "Give over sport, gentlemen," says George, "I have not done yet."

"My Lords, you will hear me in this: if the poor woman made a bargain with this merchant and other two who were with him, for to keep that pack safely, and to deliver it to none of them, until they were all three present; now, let that man who is here at present go and seek the other two, and they shall have their pack safe enough: but she will keep by her first bargain. So I refer to you, Judges and Gentlemen, if this poor woman be not in the right?" This made the Judges look on one another: and the whole court with one voice declared the woman to be in the right, and ordered the pursuer to go and seek his two companions: "No, no," says George, "the poor woman must have her expences, or surty for it." Then the judges caused the pursuer to be arrested at the bar, until the woman got satisfaction for all her trouble and expences. So George returned to London unknown, but for an advocate, whose fame went through all England; which caused many who had law-suits, to search through London for him, but none could ever find him who gained the widow's law-plea.

## PART VI.

**A**FTER this, an English 'squire who professed to be better versed in poetry than George, laid a wager with another gentleman, five guineas against one,

that George would not metre the first words that he would say to him in the morning, when newly awaked out of his sleep; so the gentleman went the night before and told George the story, and bade him be on his guard for in the morning they would certainly come, and that very early. At midnight, if they will, says George, I will order my servant to let them in.

So the English 'squire sat up all night conferring with his friends, whether to put a high verse to him, or mean simple words; thinking that George would be sitting up all night meditating on an answer: so they all agreed, that mean and simple words he would not be thinking on, and have no answer provided for such. So away they came in the morning very early, with several gentlemen in company to hear the diversion. George's servant opened the door, according to his master's orders. The 'squire entered the room first and awaked George out of his sleep, then said,

Rise up you madman and put on your clothes,

[To which George answered]

O thou hast lost thy wad man, for I am none of those,

The 'squire confessed he was fairly beat, and would match with him no more. Then another gentlemen would hold five guineas, that he would give him a word or line which he could not metre at the first answer, and to answer it directly as soon as he was done speaking: but George ordered him first to table the money, and then to proceed, which he did in all haste, and said as follows:

My belly rumbled, and then I farted.

(George gripping the money, answered),

A fool and his money is soon parted.

Then they all cried out he was fairly beaten, and what George had said was really true: but he would never lay any more wagers concerning poetry.

George being now far advanced in years, and being weary of the great fatigue and folly of the court fashions, a short time before his death, he had a great desire to go and visit his native country, and the place of his nativity: therefore he petitioned the King for leave to do so, which was granted. So he set out for Scotland, and went to the parish of Buchannan, in the west, where he visited all his relations and friends. But George staying longer from court than the time allowed, the King sent him several messages to return, to which he return'd no answer. At last the King sent him a letter, threatening, that if he did not appear before him in the space of twenty days, he would send his Lyon Heralds for him: to which George returned the following answer:

My honour'd Liege, and sovereign King,  
 Of your boasting great I dread nothing:  
 On your feud and favour I'll fairly venture,  
 Or that day I'll be where few Kings enter.

And he also gave him many good admonitions and directions concerning the government of his kingdom, and the well-being of his soul. which drew tears from the King's eyes when he read it.

FINIS.