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THE KIRK,

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THE POETS, AND THE CRITICS.

BY AN

AULD WEST KIRK "BELIEVER."

*— and more —*

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ABERDEEN:

ALEX. SIMPSON, QUEEN STREET.

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THE KIRK,  
*THE POETS, AND THE CRITICS.*



PITY 'tis that burning Church and Steeple;  
Is such expense and sorrow to the people;  
As but for this, how much must we admire  
Th' effect on genius of the grievous fire.  
For (as enkindled by the embers glow

A burning inspiration seemed to flow)  
For months the press has teemed, as ne'er before,  
With Archeologic and Poetic lore;  
From the first thrill which, in ecstatic frenzy,  
Seized on the sanguine soul of Souter Menzie,  
And made him fling upon the excited hour  
His haverel trash, "The Temple and the Tower,"  
Down to the lines which in Drydenic tones,  
And some sharp satire, give the "Gallery's Groans."

Nicoll! to thee alone the praise belongs,  
 Who sang'st our "loved and lost ones," "Song of Songs;"  
 Only thy "Ichabod" gives ample vent  
 To the sad thoughts which in our hearts were pent.  
 Others in rills have made our sorrows glide,  
 But thou hast poured them in a full spring-tide.  
 While the smart author of the clever "Scald"  
 Has written a "Mystery," forced, inept, and bald,  
 Which, without loss, may perish any day  
 In flames—quenched quickly in the Milky-way,  
 Where his poor "Cherub," in his mystic blethers,  
 Had to fly up to cool his singèd feathers.

So much then for the poets—we propose  
 To trace our way back to the realms of prose,  
 Where day by day, and week succeeding week  
 'Twas the great tug of war with Greek to Greek.  
 And first to stir the epistolary rage  
 A shy, retiring Artist, throws the gage;  
 Speaks of James Gibbs and his lugubrious pile  
 In strains that make the most judicious smile,  
 While those less fettered by Demeanour's laws  
 Cannot help bursting into loud guffaws,  
 As the young "Diffident" in worship doats  
 On what would ne'er engage the "public's" thoughts,  
 Clasps to his heart the clumsy "astragals,"



And "delicately turnèd"—falderals.

"Nought of its kind there is benorth the Tweed"—

"That may be true," the auld wife said, "indeed,

"But then, ye see, the *kind's* nae verra gweed."

Of course the very learned F. S. A.

Backs every word the Artist has to say ;

Sticks to each *stick* within the dusty walls,

And on his knees before the "Samplers" falls ;

Rumages records, turns o'er dusty tomes

Where moths and spiders long have had their homes ;

Thinks of a sacrilegious touch with dread

On the boxed *fore-breists*, or the "tester-bed."

But all his efforts "uneffectual fall,"

To prove Gibbs' plans had galleries at all.

Yet we his labours fain would recompence

For the last bantling witty, "Common Sense."

Then comes a very pretty mill, I guess,

Between the Miller and the classic "S."

The Miller was considered deep and smart—

A patron of and connoisseur in Art,

Who thought—"I've but to write and sign my name,

And men will bow to my research and fame!"

But "S." in this respect was learned too,

Had studied deeper than the Miller knew ;

Authorities were bandied thick and fast,  
 And "S." came off victorious at last.

Now—quite rejecting compromise or shams—  
 Forward their comes the Scriv'ner of the Trams ;  
 Against the galleries he his axe doth dash  
 And down they go to "everlasting smash ;"  
 And yet he does not indicate how far  
 He would drive on with his destructive car,  
 But, like too many in this contest drear,  
 Quick to demolish, but O ! slow to rear.  
 For other writers here I can't find room,  
 Who'd cart the fabric to the first "free toom,"  
 And let all old associations slide  
 'Mong broken bottles to the muddy tide.

No ! old, grand, sombre House of Praise and Prayer  
 I with my fathers long have worshipped there ;  
 Long may'st thou stand substantial, solemn, vast,  
 Filled with the echoes of the historic past !  
 Though a "Believer" I may long have been  
 And heard the Word, but scarce the Preacher seen,  
 I need not "groan" and make a *phrasy* fuss,  
 The blessing given of old still comes to us,  
 Which the old Doubter's *sight* did not receive—  
 "Blessed are they, who, seeing not, believe !"

Prank not for me the Church in gaudy trim,  
Nor yet its light make too "religious-dim,"  
But let me long round its "embowèd roof,"  
And solid pillars, truly "massy proof,"  
Hear gentle words, the soul to cheer and calm,  
The earnest pleading—the exulting psalm ;  
Heedless of all the Archeologic lore  
Which "R." may furnish from his musty store,  
And quite regardless whether he can show  
If Gibbs did plan the galleries or no.











