

mair nor a' the rest, has borne the brunt o' Robert's fearsome waggery. Did ye ken him in Cromarty, say ye?"

"He was parish schoolmaster there," said the gentleman, "for twelve years; and for six of these I attended his school. I cannot help respecting him; but no one ever loved him. Never, surely, was there a man at once so unequivocally honest and so thoroughly unamiable."

"You must have found him a rigid disciplinarian," I said.

"He was the most so," he replied, "from the days of Dionysius at least, that ever taught a school. I remember there was a poor fisher-boy among us, named Skinner, who, as is customary in Scottish schools, as you must know, blew the horn for gathering the scholars, and kept the catalogue and the key; and who, in return, was educated by the master, and received some little gratuity from the scholars besides. On one occasion the key dropped out of his pocket; and when the school-time came, the irascible dominie had to burst open the door with his foot. He raged at the boy with a fury so insane, and beat him so unmercifully, that the other boys, gathering heart in the extremity of the case, had to rise *en masse* and tear him out of his hands. But the curious part of the story is yet to come. Skinner has been a fisherman for the last twelve years; but never has he been seen disengaged for a moment, from that time to this, without mechanically thrusting his hand into the key-pocket.

Our companion furnished us with two or three other anecdotes of Mr. R——. He told us of a lady who was so overcome by sudden terror on unexpectedly seeing him, many years after she had quitted his school, in one of the pulpits of the south, that she fainted away; and of another of his scholars, named M'Glashan, a robust, daring fellow of six feet, who, when returning to Cromarty from