

brief but interesting history of the district. The older tablets, gray and shaggy with the mosses and lichens of three centuries, bear, in their uncouth semblances of the unwieldy battle-axe and double-handed sword of ancient warfare, the meet and appropriate symbols of the earlier time. But the more modern testify to the introduction of a humanizing influence. They speak of a life after death, in the "holy texts" described by the poet; or certify in a quiet humility of style which almost vouches for their truth, that the sleepers below were "honest men of blameless character, and who feared God." There is one tombstone, however, more remarkable than all the others. It lies beside the church-door, and testifies, in an antique description, that it covers the remains of the "GREAT. AN.OF.GOD.AND.FAITHFUL.MINISTER.OF.JESUS.CHRIST.," who had endured persecution for the truth in the dark days of Charles and his brother. He had outlived the tyranny of the Stuarts; and though worn by years and sufferings, had returned to his parish on the Revolution, to end his course as it had begun. He saw, ere his death, the law of patronage abolished, and the popular right virtually secured; and fearing lest his people might be led to abuse the important privilege conferred upon them, and calculating aright on the abiding influence of his own character among them, he gave charge on his death-bed to dig his grave in the threshold of the church, that they might regard him as a sentinel placed at the door, and that his tombstone might speak to them as they passed out and in. The inscription, which, after the lapse of nearly a century and a half, is still perfectly legible, concludes with the following remarkable words:—"THIS.STONE.SHALL.BEAR.WITNESS.AGAINST.THE.PARISHIONERS-OF.KILTEARN.IF.THEY.BRING.ANE.UNGODLY.MINISTER.IN.HERE." Could the imagination of a poet have originated a more striking conception in connection with a church deserted by all its better people, and whose minister fattens on his hire, useless and contented?

"I entered the church, for the clergyman had just gone in. There were from eight to ten persons scattered over the pews below, and seven in the galleries above; and these, as there were no more '*Peter Clarks*' or '*Michael Tods*'* in the parish, composed the entire congregation. I wrapped myself up in my plaid, and sat down; and the service went on in the usual course; but it sounded in my ears like a miserable mockery. The precentor sung almost alone; and ere the clergyman had reached the middle of his discourse, which he read in an unimpassioned, monotonous tone, nearly one half his skeleton congregation had fallen asleep; and the drowsy, listless expression of the others showed that, for every good purpose, they might have been asleep too. And Sabbath after Sabbath has this unfortunate man gone the same tiresome round, and with exactly the same effect for the last twenty-three years;—at no time regarded by the better clergymen of the district as really their brother,—on no occasion recognized by the parish as virtually its minister;—with a dreary vacancy and a few indifferent hearts inside his church, and the stone of the

* Peter Clark and Michael Tod were the only individuals who, in a population of three thousand souls, attached their signatures to the *call* of the obnoxious presentee, Mr. Young, in the famous Auchterarder case.