

Andrew, the wratch, has been makin' a totum wi' his faither's a'e razor; an' the puir man's trying to shave himsel' yonder, an' girnan like a sheep's head on the tangs."

"O the wratch! the ill-deedie wratch!" said John, stalking into the room in a towering passion, his face covered with suds and scratches, — "I might as weel shave mysel' wi' a mussel shillet. Rob Ferguson, man, is that you?"

"Wearie warld, John," said the poet, "for a' oor philosophy."

"Philosophy! — it's but a snare, Rab, — just vanity an' vexation o' speerit, as Solomon says. An' isna it clear heterodox besides? Ye study an' study till your brains gang about like a whirligig; an' then, like bairns in a boat that see the land sailin', ye think it's the solid yearth that's turnin' roun'. An' this ye ca' philosophy; as if David hadna tauld us that the warld sits coshly on the waters, an' canna be moved."

"Hoot, John," rejoined my companion; "it's no me, but Jamie Brown, that differs wi' you on thae matters. I'm a Hoggonian, ye ken. The auld Jews were, doubtless, gran' Christians; an' wherefore no gude philosophers too? But it was cruel o' you to unkennel me this mornin' afore six, an' I up sae lang at my studies the nicht afore."

"Ah, Rob, Rob!" said John, — "studying in *Tam Dun's* kirk. Ye'll be a minister, like a' the lave."

"Mindin' fast, John," rejoined the poet. "I was in your kirk on Sabbath last, hearing worthy Mr. Corkindale. Whatever else he may hae to fear, he's in nae danger a' *'thinking his ain thoughts,'* honest man."

"In oor kirk!" said John; "ye're dune, then, wi' precentin' in yer ain; an' troth, nae wonder. What could