

CHAPTER IV.

Johnny Gibb's Political Education.

THE reader who has followed me thus far has, I hope, obtained a sort of general notion of Johnny Gibb's character; but, while the worthy farmer of Gushetneuk is jogging leisurely home from Macduff in the cart all alone, leaving his charge to enjoy their eight-days' bathing till he should return again for them, I may be allowed to indicate a little further the stamp of man that Johnny was.

In point of worldly circumstances the goodman of Gushetneuk, by dint of honest industry and the possession of a reasonably-conditioned old tack, had come long ago to be very comfortable. He had the repute, indeed, of being rich; but to what figure his wealth really reached nobody could exactly say, or even very definitely guess, because he and his goodwife belonged to that worthy and unsophisticated order of people, now becoming rare, I fear, with whom increase of wealth brings no change either in tastes or habits of life. Johnny's table was not, in any noticeable degree, more sumptuously furnished than it had been thirty years before, when he began life on little beyond the mere lawbour o' his han's. He still duly every morning sat down by the little back table on the kitchen deece, whereof I have already spoken, and having put aside his bonnet and said grace, took up his