

of Smiddyward had been wont to meet and discuss the subject, and to read, for mutual edification, all the Radical opinions they could find in print in the serial literature of the time. Johnny became a casual hearer, and, by and by, a not inapt pupil. And thus, when the Bill had passed and a contested election had come, Johnny went down to the polling place at the "Broch," and threw up his blue bonnet among the excited burghal crowd, who had rigged out the toon's drummer to head their scattered procession and beat for victory. He stoutly shouted "Bruce for ever! Gordon never!" and, in place of accepting, like the other newly-enfranchised tenants in the lan', the directions of his laird, Sir Simon Frissal of Glensnicker, to vote for Captain Gordon, he resented the hint given, and at the polling place reminded Sir Simon, in very plain terms, that they two stood now, politically, on an equality.

"Step forward, John," said the rather pompous laird, when they met at the front of the polling-table. Sir Simon was inclined to hang on and see whether his presence would not overawe his refractory tenant even at the eleventh hour.

"Savin yer presence, sir," said Johnny, "I wud rather gi'e you the prefairence."

"Step forward," said the laird, severely.

"Weel, weel, sir," was the reply,— "to please you. We're a' voters alike noo, ye ken, Sir Seemon—ay, ay, we're a' alike noo. Fa is't, said ye?—Sir Mykaeal Breece!" shouted Johnny, in the ears of his astonished neighbours, and under the nose of his frowning laird. Then Johnny clapt on his bonnet, and strode away out unconcernedly.

Johnny Gibb's political opinions undoubtedly damaged his ecclesiastical prospects. The eldership in the parish, apart from Jonathan Tawse, the schoolmaster, had got worn