

was the brother-in-law of Peter Birse of Clinkstyle, hereafter to be introduced), and Teuchitsmyre. They were all men of reputable substance, and gifted with the minimum of liability to do or say anything original or remarkable.

As was fully to be anticipated, several expectant elders (and their wives) were highly exasperated at being passed over, and canvassed the gifts of the newly-ordained with some asperity. Johnny Gibb said nothing, though his unexpected exclusion caused more talk in the parish than even Mr. Sleekaboot altogether liked. And thus it came about, by and by, that, in quarters in amicable affinity with the manse, the confidentially-whispered averment was freely circulated that the unhappy tenant of Gushetneuk, greatly to the distress of his excellent pastor, had been found to be a good way from soun' on various fundamental points of doctrine ; indeed, a man of violent and somewhat dangerous opinions generally.