

**NUGAE ECCLESIASTICAE:
FRAGMENTS, DRAMATIC AND
LYRICAL, FROM THE UNPUBLISHED
PAPERS OF THE LATE MOSES
PEERIE, D.D. (GLASGUEN.)**

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Nugae Ecclesiasticae: Fragments, Dramatic and Lyrical, from the Unpublished Papers of the Late Moses Peerie, D.D. (Glasguen.) by Jabez Gilead

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JABEZ GILEAD

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PEERIE, D.D. (GLASGUEN.)**

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NUGÆ ECCLESIASTICÆ

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Fragments,

DRAMATIC AND LYRICAL,

FROM THE UNPUBLISHED PAPERS

OF THE LATE

MOSES PEERIE, D.D. (GLASGUEN.)

MINISTER OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF
BENVENAGERS AND GLENSTODGIE.

EDITED BY

JABEZ GILEAD.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

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FRAGMENTS: DRAMATIC AND LYRICAL.

IN writing these few words of preface, I discharge a duty imposed on me by the last wishes of a dear friend; and I do it readily, because of the love I bore him. Moses Peerie was one of those men whom their friends feel to have been greater and better than the world suspected; a man of a large, liberal, sympathetic nature—encumbered, though not absolutely restrained or hidden, by a silent and reserved manner. Those who were really intimate with him—and of the few I was one—could not but love and honour him for his good heart, his strong clear head, his quaint and lambent humour. That humour, satirical, yet never malicious, played round his conversation, illumined his correspondence—sometimes even irradiated his sermons.

“I know I have said and written some amusing things,” he once observed to me, during an illness;

"but the big world, if they were repeated, would never recognise them, for humour must deal with what is round it; and it is a small world that has been round me all my days. I think people—British people at least,"—he continued, "are getting what I may call metropolitanly provincial. They either take, or pretend to take, no interest in anything that does not hail from 'town,' as they call it, meaning London, as if there was no other town in creation. They are losing their taste for the picturesque life and ways of the country, the towns, the provinces, and are enveloping all in the rather vulgar mantle of that great Cockney province of London." "Yet," said I, "many in Scotland, dear friend, have laughed over some of your verses, and many more would do so, I believe, if you published them; for we still, in Scotland, preserve some at least of our national interest, and indulge in our local jokes." He made no reply at the time; but, in arranging his papers after his death, I lighted on a little packet with the following note enclosed: "I leave these papers to my dear and trusted friend, Jabez Gilead, of The Balms, with this direction—that he shall cause to be published, in a small volume, and at a reasonable price, the pieces therein contained. The verses entitled 'Portraits in Pitch' I do not wish him to publish. He may, if he pleases, give a few, but only a few, specimens of their substance and style, by way of prelude to the others." In execution of this

desire I have arranged the present volume, prefixing to the several pieces such notes, in elucidation of their scope and aim, as seemed advisable.

I have felt a difficulty in interpreting my friend's words about the 'Portraits in Pitch'; and, upon the whole, have concluded that I perhaps carried out his intention best, by embodying the following piece, with its accompanying extracts, in this preface. In doing so, I may premise that by the title 'Portraits in Pitch,' Dr Peerie meant a series of etchings of ecclesiastical characters and incidents, which I believe he threw off from time to time, as the fancy struck him. I rather think that in this he sometimes engaged, in a waggish way, the aid of one or two of his friends, or embodied scraps contributed by their pens. I infer this from the fact that, appended to a few of the little stanzas which compose the work, I find what appear to me to be the initials of these gentlemen—as, for instance, "A. K.," "H. S.," "G. S. B." Those without any initials I take to be his own; and in fact I have good reason to believe that the whole underwent his revision, so that parts contributed by others were yet welded into a poetic unity by the final touches of one controlling hand. Scottish readers—and for these this volume is specially prepared—will have little trouble in identifying the originals of most of the pictures; though—in case of giving any cause of offence—I do not insert their names with the careless and good-natured freedom which always