

**TALES OF MY LANDLORD,
COLLECTED AND
ARRANGED. IN THREE
VOLUMES: - VOL. I**

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Tales of My Landlord, Collected and Arranged. In Three Volumes: - Vol. I by Walter Scott & Jedediah Cleishbotham

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WALTER SCOTT & JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM

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^{ae} Scott, Sir Walter
TALES OF MY LANDLORD,

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM,

SCHOOLMASTER AND PARISH-CLERK OF SANDERCLEUGH.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Jonny Groats',
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it,
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent it.

BURNS.

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—
IN THREE VOLUMES:—VOL. I.
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1820.

a. n. c.

TO
HIS LOVING COUNTRYMEN,

WHETHER THEY ARE DENOMINATED

MEN OF THE SOUTH,

GENTLEMEN OF THE NORTH,

PEOPLE OF THE WEST,

OR

FOLK OF FIFE;

THESE TALES,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF ANCIENT SCOTISH MANNERS,

AND

OF THE TRADITIONS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICTS,

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR FRIEND AND LIEGE FELLOW-SUBJECT,

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM.

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TALES OF MY LANDLORD;

COLLECTED AND REPORTED

BY JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM,

SCHOOLMASTER AND PARISH-CLERK OF GANDERCLEUGH.

INTRODUCTION.

As I may, without vanity, presume that the name and official description prefixed to this Proem will secure it, from the sedate and reflecting part of mankind, to whom only I would be understood to address myself, such attention as is due to the sedulous instructor of youth, and the careful performer of my Sabbath duties, I will forbear to hold up a candle to the day-light, or to point out to the judicious those recommendations of my labours which they must necessarily anticipate from the perusal of the title-page. Nevertheless, I am not unaware, that, as Envy always dogs Merit at the heels, there may be those who will whisper, that albeit my learning and good principles cannot (lauded be the Heavens) be denied by any one, yet that my situation at Gandercleugh hath been more favourable to my acquisi-

tions in learning than to the enlargement of my views of the ways and works of the present generation. To the which objection, if, peradventure, any such shall be started, my answer shall be threefold:

First, Gandercleugh is, as it were, the central part,—the navel (*si fas sit dicere*) of this our native realm of Scotland: so that men, from every corner thereof, when travelling on their concernments of business, either towards our metropolis of law, by which I mean Edinburgh, or towards our metropolis and mart of gain, whereby I insinuate Glasgow, are frequently led to make Gandercleugh their abiding stage and place of rest for the night. And it must be acknowledged by the most sceptical, that I, who have sat in the leathern arm-chair, on the left-hand side of the fire, in the common room of the Wallace Inn, winter and summer, for every evening in my life, during forty years by-past, (the Christian Sabbaths only excepted) must have seen more of the manners and customs of various tribes and people than if I had sought them out by my own painful travel and bodily labour. Even so doth the tollman at the well-frequented turnpike on the Wellbraehead, sitting at his ease in his own dwelling, gather more receipt of custom, than if, moving forth upon the road, he were to require a contribution from each person whom he chanced to meet in his journey, when, according to the vulgar adage, he might possibly be greeted with more kicks than half-pence.

But, secondly, supposing it again urged that Ithacus, the most wise of the Greeks, acquired his renown, as the Roman poet hath assured us,

by visiting states and men, I reply to the Zoilus who shall adhere to this objection, that, *de facto*, I have seen states and men also; for I have visited the famous cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the former twice, and the latter three times, in the course of my earthly pilgrimage. And, moreover, I had the honour to sit in the General Assembly, (meaning, as an auditor in the galleries thereof) and have heard as much goodly speaking on the law of patronage, as, with the fructification thereof in mine own understanding, hath made me be considered as an oracle upon that doctrine ever since my safe and happy return to Gandercleugh.

Again—and, thirdly, If it be nevertheless pretended that my information and knowledge of mankind, however extensive, and however painfully acquired, by constant domestic inquiry, and by foreign travel, is, natheless, incompetent to the task of recording the pleasant narratives of my Landlord, I will let these critics know, to their own eternal shame and confusion, as well as to the abashment and discomfiture of all who shall rashly take up a song against me, that I am not the writer, redacter, or compiler of the Tales of my Landlord; nor am I, in one single iota, answerable for their contents, more or less. And now, ye generation of critics, who raise yourselves up as if it were brazen serpents, to hiss with your tongues, and to smite with your stings, bow yourselves down to your native dust, and acknowledge that yours have been the thoughts of ignorance, and the words of vain foolishness. Lo! ye are caught in your own snare, and your own pit hath yawned for you. Turn, then, aside from

the task that is too heavy for you; destroy not your teeth by gnawing a file; waste not your strength by spurning against a castle-wall; nor spend your breath in contending in swiftness with a fleet steed; and let those weigh the Tales of my Landlord who shall bring with them the scales of candour cleansed from the rust of prejudice by the hands of intelligent modesty. For these alone they were compiled, as will appear from a brief narrative which my zeal for truth compelled me to make supplementary to the present Proem.

It is well known that my Landlord was a pleasing and a facetious man, acceptable unto all the parish of Gandercleugh, excepting only the Laird, the Exciseman, and those for whom he refused to draw liquor upon trust. Their causes of dislike I will touch separately, adding my own refutation thereof.

His honour, the Laird, accused our Landlord, deceased, of having encouraged, in various times and places, the destruction of hares, rabbits, fowls, black and gray partridges, moor-pouts, and other birds, and quadrupeds, in unlawful seasons, and contrary to the laws of this realm, which have secured, in their wisdom, the slaughter of such animals for the great of the earth, whom I have remarked to take an uncommon (though, to me, an unintelligible) pleasure therein. Now, in humble deference to his honour, and in defence of my friend deceased, I reply to this charge, that howsoever the form of such animals might appear to be similar to those so protected by the law, yet it was a mere *deceptio visus*; for what resembled hares were, in fact, *hill-kids*, and those partaking