

CHAPTER 6

Idiosyncratic Speech.

At the conclusion of his very perceptive article entitled 'Scott and the Creation of Dialogue in Scots', Dr Tulloch has written,

The point that a study like this reinforces is that there is not just one kind of Scots used uniformly throughout the Waverley novels, but a number of varieties of Scots carefully created for each individual character and each individual linguistic situation. 1

Scott's creative use of Scots dialogue is seen at its best in examples of idiosyncratic speech, where the characters, inspired by ideas and subjects close to their hearts, and untrammelled by any notions of self-consciousness, indulge in unrestrained flows of rhetoric. Although Scott's speeches lack the artificiality of many of those devised by Dickens, he uses the same basic method to create unique dialogue, a technique described by G.L.Brook,

Dickens took a lot of trouble to individualize the speech of his characters, and for many of them he devised what have been called 'special languages'. Each of these special languages may well be described as an idiolect, the term used to describe the speech-habits of an individual, in contrast with a dialect, which describes the speech-habits of a group. 2

To individualize the speech of *his* characters, Scott uses a common base of Scots vernacular into which he incorporates historical quotations, literary borrowings, Biblical language, religious cant, proverbs and well-known Scots phrases, the habitual phrase, legal jargon and items of occupational speech. The effect of this is to enhance the base language rather than to distort it as Dickens does, particularly in the cases of Mrs Gamp and Sam Weller.

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1. G.Tulloch, in Bold, *op.cit.*, p.165.

2. G.L.Brook, The Language of Dickens, London, 1969, p.138.

In Waverley, with a wealth of Scots legal terminology at his command, Scott has no difficulty in putting words into the mouth of Duncan Macwheeble, 'laron-bailie and doer' to the Baron of Bradwardine, whom he describes in the following passage,

In such a character, the Scottish author has permitted himself to introduce a strain of the roguery supposed to be incidental to the inferior classes of the law, - maybe no unnatural ingredient. The Baillie is mean, sordid, a trickster and a coward, redeemed only from our dislike and contempt by the ludicrous qualities of his character, by a considerable degree of shrewdness, and by the species of almost instinctive attachment to his master and his family which seem to overbalance in quality the natural selfishness of his disposition. 3

It must be agreed that the conversational style which Scott devised for the bailie perfectly supports this character. So self-effacing and obsequious does he appear, that at the banquet at Tully-Veolan he makes no contribution whatever to the conversation, and in keeping with his cautious, prudent behaviour, he disappears before the drinking begins (W 88).

On his next appearance, the occasion of the 'lifting' of the milch-cows, the bailie appears as 'greatly too busy and too important' to speak to Waverley, or indeed openly to anyone (W 128-132). His advice and opinions are transmitted by reported speech. At first, perhaps on account of the English visitor, he uses formal English with the addition of one Scots phrase,

...informing the Baron, in a melancholy voice, that though the people would certainly obey his honour's orders, yet there was no chance of their following the gear to any guid purpose, in respect there were only his honour's body servants who had swords and pistols, and the depredators were twelve Highlanders, completely armed after the manner of their country. (W 131)

The term *gear*, which was used in O.Sc. from 1375 for 'apparatus' or 'tackle', came to mean personal possessions before 1500, and to

refer to live-stock from 1584.⁴ Apart from the Scots flavour of 'following the gear to ony guid purpose', the rest of the bailie's speech appears to have been rendered in perfect English, but there is one exception in the word *depredators*. In Scottish law the term *depredation* has a precise meaning for a particular offence. Whereas in English the word is used synonymously with spoliation, ravaging, or plundering, in Scots, *depredation*, which derives from Lat. *depraedatio*, refers specifically to,

"the offence of driving away numbers of cattle or other bestial, by the masterful force of armed persons. This crime, although now almost unknown in this country, was at one time very prevalent. The punishment was capital." (Sc. 1890 Bell *Dict. Law Scot.* 317). 5

The bailie's next reported opinion contains the Scots law term *theft-boot*, or 'larcency', which originates from O.N. *þýft*,⁶ as well as the uniquely Scots term for an astute person, - a *canny hand* (W 132). His final reported speech on the matter, being in the manner of Scott rather than that of Macwheeble, effectively distances him from a situation in which the reader rightly suspects him to be very much involved,

The bailie ... observed that it was now past noon, and that the caterans had been seen in the pass of Ballybrough soon after sunrise; so that before the allied forces could assemble, they and their prey would be far beyond the reach of the most active pursuit, and sheltered in those pathless deserts where it was neither advisable to follow, nor indeed possible to trace them. (W 133)

Having artfully achieved his purpose, - namely that there shall be no pursuit of the thieves, the bailie is quite ready to speak at length to Edward. As Scott comments 'This honest gentleman's conversation was so formed upon his professional practice that Davie Gellatley once said his discourse was like a "charge of horning."' This implies a long and tedious charge being read to a

4. SND, GEAR.

5. SND, DEPRADATION.

6. SND, HORN.

debtor from *letters of horning*, issued in the name of the King, and full of law terms, at the conclusion of which the debtor was declared a rebel and three blasts were blown on a horn.⁷ It may be seen that the bailie's lengthy legal address to Edward is, indeed, not unlike this,

He assured our hero that "from the maist ancient times of record, the lawless thieves, limmers, and broken men of the Highlands had been in fellowship together by reason of their surnames, for the committing of divers thefts, reifs, and herships upon the honest men of the Low Country, when they not only intromitted with their whole goods and gear, corn, cattle, horse, nolt, sheep, outsticht and insight plenishing, at their wicked pleasure, but moreover made prisoners, ransomed them, or concussed them into giving borrows [pledges] to enter into captivity again, - all which was directly prohibited in divers parts of the Statute Book, both by the act one thousand five hundred and sixty-seven, and various others; the whilk statutes, with all that had followed and might follow thereupon, were shamefully broken and vilipended by the said sornars, limmers, and broken men, associated into fellowships, for the aforesaid purposes of theft, stouthreef, fire-raising, murther, *raptus mulierum*, or forcible abduction of women, and such like as aforesaid."

(W 137)

In this particular exposition he gives Edward (and the reader) a lesson in Scots history, and an insight into Scots economics, and a dissertation on Scots law as well, taken by heart from the Statute Book. Two Biblical phrases, 'at their wicked pleasure', and 'shamefully broken' are thrown in for good measure, with the Latin *raptus mulierum* for classic effect, while the whole ends with the business-like flourish of 'such like as aforesaid'. The *sornars*, *limmers*, and *broken men* that fall so trippingly from the tongue of the bailie were well-known figures on the Scottish scene. *Sornar* derives from the verb *sorn*, which in turn derives from O.Sc. *sorryn* or *sorren*, night's lodging or the hospitality demanded of vassals by their superiors in Ireland and Scotland. A *sornar* came to mean a masterful beggar or a begging vagrant from around 1449.⁸ *Limmer*, a word of obscure origin, is found with the

7. *The Antiquary*, pp.512-514. Oldbuck gives a learned discourse on the subject.

8. *SND*, SORN.

meaning of rogue, or thief, from 1438. The term *broken man* was in use mainly in the Highland and Border districts, especially in the the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Men who had been outlawed, or men who had no laird and no land fell into this category, and the second type became more numerous as the clans began to crumble. *Broken men*, from necessity, banded together and became cattle-lifters; the first written reference is 1521.⁹

Vilipend, which looks as though it should be a legal term, is, in fact, not. Often spelled *wallipend*, (and other variations), in Scots, *vilipend* is an English verb meaning to abuse.¹⁰ *Concuss*, on the other hand, has nothing to do with physical assault, but is a verb which means 'to force by means of threats'.

Once he has turned his attention to addressing Edward, it is clear that the bailie is doing his best to impress the English visitor with his expertise by an uninterrupted flow of legal jargon, which includes such terms as *rieþ* 'armed robbery', and *stouthrieþ* or *stouthereþþ* 'robbery with violence', deriving from O.E. *rēaþ*; *borrows* 'pledges', from O.E. *borzian*; and *hership* 'plundering, devastation, and especially forcible cattle-lifting', from O.Sc. *here* 'a predatory army', with possible roots in O.E. *here*, 'an army', or O.N. *herja* or O.E. *herzan* 'to harry'.¹¹ He makes use too of the verb *intromit*, found in Scots law from 1444, which means 'to handle or deal with funds or property, especially of another person living or dead, with or without legal authority', and which derives from Lat. *intromittere*.¹²

This speech is characteristic of the bailie's conversation; he moves, it may be observed, into legal mode whenever possible, and on this occasion is eager to impress the English gentleman with the mystique of his profession. Macwheeble can 'get to his English' if so desired, as may be seen from his reply to Colonel Talbot at Tully-Veolan, 'On the conscience of an honest man, Colonel, I read as short as is consistent with style' (W 640), but his usual speech is broad Scots, which grows even broader in

9. SND. BROKEN MEN.

10. SND, VILIPEND.

11. SND, STOUTHREIF.

12. SND, INTROMIT.

times of emotion. His mind, particularly at Edinburgh, is much on money, and Scott employs a number of significantly Scots terms in the bailie's attempts to channel finances in the right direction. These include *wadset*, used in Scots since 1394 as a verb, and since 1439 as a noun meaning a security, or, as Macwheeble uses it, a deed of mortgage (W 389).¹³ He refers to *siller* (W 389), as money in general has been called in Scotland since 1424,¹⁴ to *gowd* (W 390), to a *boddle* and a *plack* (W 391), both small Scots coins of very low value. He also manages to make clever use of the Scots proverb 'Of a' sorrows a fu' sorrow is the best' (W 390).

Moved to tears by 'kindly and just feelings' at the prospect of the possible death of the Baron, and the passing of Tully-Veolan from his 'master's child to Inch-Grabbit', the bailie, sobbing, delivers a diatribe which is truly diverting, because Scott designed it in the form and language of a last will and testament (W 391). It contains therefore an interesting and very Scottish description of the Baron's possessions,

"a' the bonnie baronie o' Bradwardine and Tully-Veolan, with the fortalice and manor-place thereof...tofts,crofts, mosses, muirs, outfield, infield, buildings, orchards, dovecotes, with the right of net and coble in the water and loch of Veolan, teinds, parsonage and vicarage, annexis, connexis, rights of pasturage, fuel, feal, and divot, parts, pendicles, and pertinents whatsoever ... lying within the parish of Bradwardine, and the shire of Perth." (W 391)

Despite his less praiseworthy qualities of deviousness, selfishness, and lack of courage, the bailie is genuinely attached to the Baron and Rose. Edward is able to see this, and also to appreciate his astute and wily nature. In short he is 'convinced that he might trust this man, as he could make it his interest to be faithful' (W 591). For this reason, at the conclusion of the novel, Edward confides his intention of marrying Rose to the bailie. It is characteristic of him, in the midst of his joy for

13. SND, WADSET.

14. SND, SILLER.

Rose, and the sudden superiority of his position, that the bailie's caution prevails and he prepares to make a 'sma' minute to prevent parties from resiling' (W 592). So elevated is he at the thought of 'Lady Waverley! ten thousand a year, the least penny!' that he is ready to accept the proposal himself on behalf of Rose and her father (W 593-594).

Macwheeble's speech abounds in such a proliferation of Scots legal terms that it is not possible to explain them all in full. Other examples, apart from those already cited, include *caution* 'security' (W 593), *decree* 'judgement or sentence' (W 594, 642), *disponed* 'assigned legally' (W 639), *extract* 'to make an official copy of a court decision' (W 594), *factory* 'the jurisdiction of a factor' (W 392), *panelled* 'brought to trial' (W 594), *resile* 'to retract' (W 592), and *warandice* 'guarantee' (W 593). He is almost as prolific in his use of proverbial expressions as he is in his fondness for legal formulas, and he contrives to incorporate all the following wise sayings and telling phrases into his speeches, 'a bonny begunk' (W 641), 'an auld sang' (W 640), 'and sae's seen o't' (W 599), 'a' tarr'd wi' ae stick' (W 594), 'I played at bogle about the bush wi' them' (W 641), 'it's a' ane to Duncan MacWheeble' (W 594), 'it's ill speaking of halters' (W 642), 'let that flee stick in the wa' (W 642), 'light come, light gane' (W 594), 'Of a' sorrows a fu' sorrow is the best' (W 390), 'there's baith law and gospel for it' (W 599), and 'wha cookit the parritch?' (W 641). Scott sees to it that this proverbial knowledge, which Macwheeble uses in his conversation to produce an air of sagacity, is just sufficiently overdone to make him sound slightly ridiculous. His comic qualities notwithstanding, the bailie plays a critical role in the plot of the novel, and Scott permits an acknowledgement of this importance at the conclusion of Waverley. In his characteristic broad vernacular, full of Scotticisms and legalisms, the bailie makes a speech in which his satisfaction at the Baron's repossession of Tully-Veolan is outweighed by the realization of the importance of the part, which he, Duncan Macwheeble, has played in it,

"But wha cookit the parritch for him?" exclaimed the bailie; "I wad like to ken that, - wha but your Honour's to command, Duncan Macwheeble? His Honour young Mr. Wauverley put it a' into my hand frae the beginning, - frae the first calling o' the summons, as I may say. I circumvented them; I played at bogle about the bush wi' them; I cajoled them; and if I havena gien Inch-Grabbit and Jamie Howie a bonny begunk, they ken themselves. Him a writer! I didna gae slap-dash to them wi' our young bra' bridegroom to ga: them haud up the market, - na, na; I scared them wi' our wild tenantry and the Mac-Ivors, that are but ill-settled yet, till they durstna on ony errand whatsoever gang ower the door-stane after gloaming, for fear John Heatherblutter, or some siccan dare-the-deil, should tak a ba'f at them; then, on the other hand, I beflumm'd them wi' Colonel Talbot, - wad they offer to keep up the price again' the duke's friend? did they na ken wha was master?" (W 641)

Scott allows him his moment of triumph and exultation over Inch-Grabbit and his bailie, Jamie Howie, because he has rightfully earned it.

In the distinctive language of Gifted Gilfillan, Scott has introduced an element of satire, not because Gilfillan is a Cameronian, but because he is a 'genuine and undoubting' religious fanatic. The coldly contemptuous English in which he replies to Major Melville, is characterized by archaisms, 'yea', 'athirst', 'spake'; by Biblical allusions, 'Even thus are the children of this world wiser in their generation than the children of light'; by sanctimonious phrases and religious cant, 'hungered and were athirst', 'refreshed by the Word', 'the precious Mr. Jabesh Rentowel', 'the outpouring of the afternoon exhortation' (W 330).

The major's offer of refreshment for Gilfillan's men in the house of Cairnvreckan is sternly repulsed with these words,

"It was not of creature-comforts I spake, howbeit, I thank you; but the people remained waiting upon the precious Mr. Jabesh Rentowel for the outpouring of the afternoon exhortation." (W 330)

It is probably purely coincidental, (Scott being a defender of Claverhouse), that this remark echoes the well-known query of Lord Cardross's chaplain to the fleeing Royalist leader after his

defeat at the Battle of Drumclog on 1 June 1679, 'Wilt not tarry for afternoon sermon?' 16

Once away from Major Melville, Gilfillan drops his English and when he lapses into his native Scots, his harangue grows more vituperative. With one abrupt, scornful demand he denigrates the Presbyterian clergyman, Mr Morton, using the often derogatory 'carle' - 'Can ye say wha the carle was wi' the black coat and the mousted head that was wi' the Laird of Cairnvreckan?' (W 333). 'Presbyterian!' he snorts, on learning who he is, and resumes his sectarian discourse with renewed zeal, hurling one objurgatory simile after the other on the evening air, and denouncing any Presbyterian as 'a wretched Erastian', 'an obscured Prelatist', 'a favourer of the black Indulgence', 'a dumb dog that canna bark'. The first three epithets were common in Covenanting parlance, the fourth Scott has borrowed from Ebenezer Erskine, who, as retiring Moderator of the Synod of Stirling in 1732, urged that no minister be ordained in the future unless he showed 'personal acquaintance with the power of godliness', closing his sermon with these words,

"It is a heavy charge laid by God against some, that they are dumb dogs who cannot bark, but prefer their own carnal ease unto the safety of the Church." 17

Using a laboured Biblical allusion Gilfillan then bemoans the decline of the Kirk of Scotland from the 'goodly structure' of 1642 (the year of the drawing up of the Solemn League and Covenant), lamenting 'wha wad hae thought the carved work of the sanctuary would hae been sae soon cut down!' (W 334). This leads to a ranting condemnation of the corruption of ministers and congregations,

"And now is it wonderful, when for lack of exercise anent the call to the service of the altar and the duty of the day, ministers fall into sinful compliances with patronage and indemnities and oaths and bonds, and other corruptions, - is it wonderful, I say, that you, sir, and other sic-like unhappy persons, should labour to build up your auld Babel of iniquity, as in the bluidy persecuting, saint-killing times?" (W 334)

16. T. Ratcliffe Barnett, The Makers of the Kirk, Edinburgh, 1915, p. 209.

17. *ibid.*, p. 251.

'The persecuting, saint-killing times' is a reference to the period of persecution of the Covenanters by the parliament of Charles II, when most of the brutalities were committed by the Earl of Middleton, Claverhouse, Sir Thomas Dalziel of Binns, Sir James Turner, Sir James Ballantine, and Sir Robert Grierson of Lagg.¹⁸

Gilfillan's next outburst is founded on the concept of the Roman Catholic Church as a 'muckle harlot', seated with all her alluring ensnarements upon the seven hills of Rome, an image immortalized by John Knox (1505-1572) in one of his encounters with Mary, Queen of Scots, when he assured her that her church could not be considered as the 'true bride of Christ'.¹⁹ The Cameronian concentrates firmly on the idea of external trappings as a hindrance to true worship, comparing them to the 'cast-off garments' of Popery. Although he fears they are as 'deaf as adders' on the matter, he warns all Presbyterians, members of the Church of England, and indeed everyone except the Hill-folk, as the Cameronians were called, against Popish practices,

"I trow, gin ye werena blinded wi' the graces and favours, and services and enjoyments, and employments and inheritances, of this wicked world, I could prove to you, by the Scripture, in what a filthy rag ye put your trust, and that your surplices, and your copes and vestments, are but cast-off garments of the muckle harlot, that sitteth upon seven hills and drinketh of the cup of abomination. But I trow ye are as deaf as adders upon that side of the head, -ay, ye are deceived with her enchantments, and ye traffic with her merchandise, and ye are drunk with the cup of her fornication!" (W 334)

At the period of which Scott was writing in Waverley, the Cameronians (followers of Richard Cameron, the Lion of the Covenant), who had been leaderless, reformed their ranks and established the 'Reformed Presbytery'.²⁰ So his introduction of Gilfillan is timely, although Mr Morton's description of the sect could have been more accurate (W 322). Scott's depiction of the abhorrence of any kind of show, or 'Popery' as they called it, in

18. Ratcliffe Barnett, op.cit., pp.141-147.

19. ibid., p.90.

20. Pryde, op.cit., p. 100.

their religion, is, of course, quite authentic. It pervaded most forms of Presbyterianism, and was not restricted to vestments. As late as 1906, Sir Archibald Geikie wrote on this topic,

The horror of anything savouring of what is thought to be popery shows itself sometimes in determined opposition to even the most innocent and useful changes. Sir Lauder Brunton has told me that in a Roxburghshire parish with which he is well acquainted, the church being excessively cold in winter, a proposal was mooted to introduce a stove for the purpose of heating it. This innovation, however, met with a strong resistance, especially from one member of the congregation, who said that a stove had a pipe like an organ, and he would have nothing savouring of popery in the Kirk of Scotland. 21

Scott created Gilfillan to enliven his tale, and to illustrate a particular facet of Scottish religious history. A product of his time and situation, Gilfillan has three speech registers, and his outstanding feature is his eloquence. His natural speech, in pronunciation and syntax, is that of a Scots farmer (W 336); when he needs English, he can 'get to it', and although Bible-based and tinged with archaisms, it is delivered with sufficient aplomb to discomfit Major Melville. His third speech is the Biblical language of the evangelist, honed to suit the doctrine of his sect, and although it is scattered with Scots idioms, -'gree sae weel', 'sic-like', 'gin ye werena', 'upon that side of the head' (W 334), 'a plack in his purse' (W 335), Gilfillan's command of rhetoric ensures that his message loses none of its power.

A very minor character, Jamie Jinker, the horse-couper, is a type with whom Scott was quite familiar. He has given him a language very appropriate to his occupation, the kind of horsey talk used by horse-dealers and trainers everywhere. Scott describes it as 'broad Scots of the most vulgar description' (W 359), and Jinker's opening remark to Edward, 'Ow, ay, sir! a bra' night' (W 359) is certainly broad enough. His Scots is more archaic and countrified than the bailie's or Gilfillan's, and includes the rustic phrases 'them as has horses till keep'

(W 360), and 'I selled her till him' (W 361). *Till* is a word of O.N. origin, and in the above context had a long survival in the north of Scotland. Jinker speaks of 'aits' and 'corn-mongers', and of the high price of horse-feed. He talks of the appurtenances of his trade, 'halters', martingales', 'curbs' and 'tethers', and his conversation abounds in the phrases of a man whose whole world revolves around horses, - 'hack and manger', 'sae short a tether' (W 361), 'naigs', and 'srankers', and 'through-ganging things' (W 361). When the 'through-ganging thing' that he had 'selled till' Balmawhapple bolts in the wake of the English causing its rider's demise, Lieutenant Jinker's concern is for the reputation of his mare, and he delivers his opinion of the matter in characteristic style,

"He had tauld the laird a thousand times," he said, "that it was a burning shame to put a martingale upon the puir thing, when he would needs ride her wi' a curb of half a yard lang; and that he could na but bring himsell (not to say her) to some mischief, by flinging her down, or otherwise; whereas, if he had had a wee bit rinnin ring on the snaffle, she wad ha' rein'd as cannily as a cadger's pownie." (W 434)

Jinker adds colour to the novel with his racy talk, and in addition, Scott was able, through him, to make yet another comment on the nature of the Prince's army. The reader learns that he thinks the cause 'a fule's errand' (W 360), and the strictly economic reason for his presence in Balmawhapple's troop becomes obvious in his blunt words to Edward,

"Ye maun ken, the laird there bought a' thir beasts frae me to munt his troop, and agreed to pay for them according to the necessities and prices of the time. But then he hadna the ready penny, and I hae been advised his bond will not be worth a boddle against the estate, and then I had a' my dealers to settle wi' at Martinmas; and so as he very kindly offered me this commission, and as the auld *Fifteen* [Judges of the Supreme Court] wad never help me to my siller for sending out naigs against the government, why, conscience! sir, I thought my best chance for payment was just to gae out mysell." (W 360-361)

In The Antiquary, Edie Ochiltree uses by far the richest Scots vernacular of any character in the three novels. Others have their own distinctive speech-habits according to their rank and occupation, but old Edie, as Oldbuck tells Lovel, 'has gone the vole'²² (A 48), and in the course of his varied life he has accumulated a wealth of idioms from many sources. By his own admission, as a knockabout youth, or 'hallenshaker loon' as he puts it (A 44), he has been involved in smuggling, he has been a 'craigsman', he has odd-jobbed about Scotland, and as an old *Forty-twa*²³ man, he has soldiered in Germany and America before becoming a Blue-gown. Since then, as Oldbuck explains to Lord Glenallan, he has become an institution around Fairport,

"Then he is to a certain extent, the oracle of the district through which he travels, - their genealogist, their newsman, their master of the revels, their doctor at a pinch, or their divine." (A 484)

During his chequered career he acquired a firm Christian faith and developed a homely philosophy, both of which are reflected in his conversation. Several passages of Edie's speech have already been cited, and his eloquence is obvious; he is not easily intimidated, and whatever the situation, he is never at a loss for words.

Scott has distinguished Edie's diction by a variety of linguistic characteristics and literary devices. In keeping with his age and position, he has countless archaic and homely Scots idioms at his command, and his talk is enlivened by examples such as *a bit blythe gae-down* 'a spree' (A 44), *culd and forfairn* 'old and worn-out' (A 270), *aye gleg* 'always alert' (A 334), *bits o' weans* 'toddlers' (A 270), *crown o' the causey* 'top of the road' (A 273), *gat a gliff* 'got a fright' (A 362), *hail and fere* 'healthy and sound' (A 361), *hear till him* 'listen to him' (A 339), *I'll win at ye* 'I'll manage to get to you' (A 91), *I'se be upsides wi' him ae day* 'I'll get the better of him one day' (A 286), *siccan a ca'-thro'* 'such a to-do' (A 328), *snell and dure* 'fast and hard' (A 287), *to flit in peace* 'to die in peace' (A 379), *wi' Wallace's straiks* 'with strong blows' (A 338), and *ye'll no hinder* 'there's no stopping' (A 328).

22. A deal at cards that craws all the tricks.

23. The Black Watch, originally the 42nd Highland Regiment of Foot.

He has, too, an extensive repertoire of quaint exclamations and interjections, including *ou* (A 44), *ohon* (A 265, 271), *hech sirs* (A 582), *hout* (A 317, 338), and *hout fie* (A 324), but the reader soon learns that his favourite expletive is *Odd*, an aphetic form of the name of God, which he uses at least on nine occasions - (A 273, 286, 313, 337, 339, 359, 499, 512, 577). He also makes extensive use of *deil*, a contracted form of devil, in the following contexts, *deil haet* 'not a particle, nothing at all' (A 579), *deil ony of them* 'none of them' (A 273), *deil a bit on my side o' the wall* 'not as far as I'm concerned' (A 75), *deil be in my feet* (A 94), *the deil's in you Monkbarns* (A 577), and *Deil!* 'used for emphasis' (A 581).

Scott uses the very simple, but effective linguistic device of the repeated phrase to further individualize Edie's speech. This not only occurs with short units such as 'Awa, awa' (A 267), 'Gang hame, gang hame' (A 265), 'ye'se hear, ye'se hear' (A 262), 'Ye dinna ken, ye dinna ken' (A 545), 'dinna swear, dinna swear' (A 338), but also with longer constructions like 'If your honour wad permit me, if your honour wad but permit me' (A 379), 'Saw onybody e'er the like o' that? Saw ony creature living e'er the like o' that?' (A 285), and 'That would be difficult for me, that would e'en be difficult' (A 382).

Kindliness and astuteness, Edie's chief qualities, are emphasized by Scott through his conversation. Describing himself as 'an auld grey sinner who had seen the error of his ways', Edie, like Scott himself, is motivated by a practical Christianity which manifests itself in numerous acts of kindness. In fact, except for the imposter, Dousterswivel, he shows Christian concern for everyone from Sir Arthur down to little Davie Mailsetter, and despite his frequent flytings with Oldbuck, true goodwill exists between them. Edie's fund of scriptural references is equalled by his store of Scots proverbs, and he uses both as a source of comfort and edification. In incidental but sincere fashion he continually acknowledges God's goodness, - 'It's God's grace' (A 93), 'His name be praised' (A 91), 'Lordsake Sir Arthur, haud your tongue and be thankful to God' (A 99). He warns Lovel not to 'speak of Heaven in that impatient gate' (A 263); he implores Hector and Lovel 'Are ye come here amongst the most lovely works of God to break His

laws?' (A 264); and after Lovel has shot Hector in the duel, he sustains him with these words,

"I canna see but a man may have excuse for killing his ain mortal foe, that comes armed to the fair field to kill him. I dinna say it's right, - God forbid, - or that it isna sinfu' to take away the breath of man, whilk is in his nostrils; but I say it is a sin to be forgiven if it's repented of. Sinfu' men are we a'; but if ye wad believe an auld grey sinner that has seen the evil o' his ways, there is as much promise atween the twa boards o' the Testament as wad save the warst o' us, could we but think sae." (A 272)

He offers words of comfort to old Elspeth Mucklebackit, saying,

"Ye're auld, cummer, and sae am I mysell; but we maun abide HIS will, - we'll no be forgotten in His good time."
(A 362)

and when the *poinder* is about to arrive at Knockwinnock House, Edie offers Isabella practical help and uplifting words,

"But dinna be cast down; there's a heaven ower your head here as weel as in that fearful night atween the Ballyburghness and the Halket-head. D'ye think He, wha rebuked the waters, canna protect you against the wrath of men, though they be armed with human authority?" (A 545)

Edie's use of proverbs adds to the pithiness of his language, and reinforces the reader's impression of his astuteness. An examination of his speech reveals the following examples,

A green Yule makes a fat kirkyard. (A 315)

Bowls may a' row right yet. (A 273)

Human nature's a wilfu' and wilyard thing. (A 333)

I sought nane, and got nane like Michael Scott's man. (A 501)

It wad hae been butter in the black dog's hause. (A 502)

Keep a thing seven year and ye'll aye find a use for't. (A 288)

Let death spare the green corn and take the ripe. (A 94)

Mony a wise man sits in a fule's seat, and mony a fule in a wise man's, especially in families of distinction. (A 569)

Out o' sight, out o' mind is a true proverb. (A 492)

Pride goeth before destruction. (A 386)

Sticking disna gang by strength, but by the guiding o' the gully.
(A 286)

They that hide ken best where to find. (A 286)

What's doomed, is doomed. (A 267)

When the night's darkest, the dawn's nearest. (A 546)

Where they clip there needs nae kame. (A 545)

Ye're gude seekers but ill finders. (A 317)

The other aspect of Edie's personality, - his droll humour, is very obvious in passages of his conversation with Oldbuck. After the exposure of Dousterswivel, for example, when Oldbuck determines to burn his mining equipment, Edie replies,

"Hech, sirs! guide us a'! to burn the engines? That's a great waste. Had ye na better try to get back part o' your hundred pounds wi' the sale o' the materials?" he continued, with a tone of affected condolence.

"Not a farthing," said the Antiquary, peevishly, taking a turn from him, and making a step or two away. Then returning, half-smiling at his own pettishness, he said, "Get thee into the house, Edie, and remember my counsel: never speak to me about a mine, or to my nephew Hector about a *phoca*, - that is a sealgh, as you call it."

"I maun be gangin my ways back to Fairport," said the wanderer; "I want to see what they're saying there about the invasion, - but I'll mind what your honour says, no to speak to you about a sealgh, or to the captain about the hundred pounds that you gied to Douster -"

"Confound thee! I desired thee not to mention that to me."

"Dear me!" said Edie, with affected surprise. "Weel, I thought there was naething but what your honour could hae studden in the way o' agreeable conversation, unless it was about the Praetorian yonder, or the bodle that the packman sauld to ye for an guld coin." (A 582-583)

So droll and *canny* is Edie, that, although he calls the Refectory the 'Refractory' (A 274), and renders the Auluria as 'Howlowlaria' (A 500), the reader is not sure whether the very apt and amusing liberties that he takes with Dousterswivel's name are due to mispronunciation or to mischief. He refers to the German variously as 'Dunkerswivel' (A 321), 'Dusterdeevil' (A 324), 'Dustandsnível' (A 327), 'Dousterdeevil' (A 330), 'Dousterdivel' (A 333), 'Dousterdeevil' (A 336), 'Dustanshovél' (A 336), 'Dusterdeevil' (A 339), 'Dustersnível' (A 390), 'Dustansnível' (A 502), and 'Doustercivil' (A 579).

It would be remiss to leave Edie without mentioning the extraordinary imagery he is capable of using. Two examples, each inspired by a ruin, are particularly striking. The first concerns wallflowers and other plants growing on the ruined walls of St Ruth's, a natural phenomenon which Edie transforms into a parable,

"They smell sweetest by night-time, thae flowers, and they're maist aye seen about ruined buildings ... I am thinking that they'll be like mony folk's gude gifts, that often seem maist gracious in adversity, - or maybe it's a parable to teach us no to slight them that are in the darkness of sin and the decay of tribulation, since God sends odours to refresh the mirkest hour, and flowers and pleasant bushes to clothe the ruined buildings." (A 275-276)

In the second, Edie likens the decay of old Elspeth Mucklebackit's mind to a ruined castle, using vivid similes,

"I wad say, .. that auld Elspeth's like some of the ancient ruined strengths and castles that ane sees amang the hills. There are mony parts of her mind that appear, as I may say, laid waste and decayed, but then there's parts that look the steever, and the stronger, and the grander, because they are rising just like the fragments amang the ruins o' the rest. She's an awful woman." (A 379-380)

Miss Griselda Oldbuck, confined to the house and domestic matters, conforms precisely to the ladies described by Ramsay,

This class of ladies whom I refer to generally lived in provincial towns, never dreamt of going from home, and many of them had never been in London, or had even crossed the Tweed. But as Lord Cockburn's experience goes back further than mine, ... I will quote his animated description on page 57 of his *Memorials*, "There was a singular race of old Scotch ladies. They were a delightful set - strong-headed, warm-hearted, and high-spirited - merry even in solitude; very resolute; indifferent about the modes and habits of the modern world, and adhering to their own ways, so as to stand out like primitive rocks above ordinary society. Thus prominent qualities of sense, humour, affection, and spirit, were embodied in curious outsides, for they all dressed, and spoke, and did exactly as they chose. Their language, like their habits entirely Scotch, but without any other vulgarity than what perfect naturalness is sometimes mistaken for." 24

Griselda's life and conversation revolve about her kin, her kitchen and her kirk (in the person of Mr Blattergowl). She is devoted to her irascible brother, confiding to Miss Rebecca Blattergowl that 'Monkbarns's bark is muckle waur than his bite' (A 296). Much of her speech is applied to remonstrating with him in the interests of maintaining a peaceful household, but she has an independent spirit after the manner of the ladies described by Cockburn and Ramsay, which completely rejects any idea of obsequiousness, and this is obvious in her very first words, addressed to Lovel,

"My brother...has a humorous way of expressing himself, sir,- nobody thinks anything of what Monkbarns says; so I beg you will not be so confused for the matter of his nonsense. But you must have had a warm walk beneath this broiling sun: would you take onything, - a glass of balm wine?" (A 66)

Her next remark successfully establishes her ease with Sir Arthur, her equality with Oldbuck, and her role as hostess,

"Oh, fy, fy, brother! Sir Arthur, did you ever hear the like? He must have everything his ain way, or he will invent such stories. -But there goes Jenny to ring the old bell to tell us that the dinner is ready." (A 66)

In later conversations, Griselda's Scots predominates and it is characterized by a variety of domestic terms. Although a more genteel lady than Mistress Baby Yellowley in The Pirate, she plays much the same part in relation to the household and her brother. The reader learns much about the housekeeping arrangements of a middle-class establishment from Miss Oldbuck, as she talks on about 'balm wine' (A 66), 'a glass o' sherry in her water-gruel' (A 107), 'the chicken-pie, the port' reduced to 'a wheen banes, and scarce a drap o' the wine' (A 107), reproving Oldbuck for 'making a wark' or fuss, 'as if there was nae mair neat in the house' (A 108). The beds, the linen, the heating, the ventilation all come under her care, and she reminds her brother that 'the beds haena been sleepit in, nor the rooms aired' (A 109), and advises him 'ye should rather fit up the matted room' (A 132) for visitors, because 'the Green Room disna

vent weel in a high winn" (A 131). She announces that 'Mr Lovel's bed's ready, brother, - clean sheets, weel aired, a spunk of fire in the chimney' (A 111), reminding him 'Jenny's just warming your bed, Monkbarns, and you maun e'en wait till she's done (A 113).

Miss Griselda's language is in contrast to that used by the rest of her family, who habitually use good English. This makes her very heavy use of colloquialisms all the more striking; the examples she uses include *dinna speak that gate* 'don't talk like that' (A 71), *an' mony a sair hoast was amang them* 'and many of them had a bad cough' (A 71), *weel I wot* 'well I know' (A 71), *amang a' the steery* 'amid all the uproar' (A 106), *blodded ower the craig* 'thrown over the cliff' (A 107), *sair droubit* 'badly drenched' (A 107), *sae glum and glunch* 'so sullen and sulky' (A 107), *lang syne* 'long ago' (A 109), *a hantle siller* 'a lot of money' (A 112), *a doited snuffy body* 'a foolish, touchy person' (A 112), *ne'er-be-licket* 'not a trace' (A 113), *glass-breakers* 'hard drinkers' (A 113), and *it gars my flesh aye creep* 'it always makes my flesh creep' (A 114). The full force of her vernacular speech is best appreciated in a passage, -a good example being her attack on Oldbuck for the poor bargain that he made with Maggie Mucklebackit,

"Guide us, Monkbarns, are things no dear eneugh already, but ye maun be raising the very fish on us, by giving that randy, Luckie Mucklebackit, just what she likes to ask?"

"Why, Grizel," said the sage, somewhat abashed at this unexpected attack, "I thought I made a very fair bargain."

"A fair bargain! when ye gied the limmer a full half o' what she seekit! In ye will be a wife-carle, and buy fish at your ain hands, ye suld never bid muckle mair than a quarter. And the impudent quean had the assurance to come up and seek a dram. But, I trow, Jenny and I sorted her!"

(A 177)

Of particular interest is the term *wife-carle*, which might well make Oldbuck feel more embarrassment, as it means 'a man who occupies himself with women's affairs or duties'.²⁵ Of course, many of the idioms which Griselda uses are common to other speakers, but her speech is distinguished by its domestic vocabulary, by old-fashioned phrases, and by her frequent use of the shortened negative, -of *binna*

25. SND, WIFE-CARLE.

(A 131), *dinna* (A 71), *hae ra* (A 109), *maunna* (A 395), *wadna* (A 107) and *winna* (A 106). She speaks with a vigour and pithiness and turn of phrase that is not unlike the speech of Edie Ochiltree. This is understandable, in the light of what Henry Graham has written in regard to Lady Grisell Baillie (1665-1746),

Even high borr ladies of those days did not keep aloof from the common affairs of the common people; they spoke the broad Scots tongue themselves, and the work of byre and barn, the wooings of servant and ploughman, were of lively interest to them in their parlour and drawing room, and did not seem unworthy of their verse. 26

Although Miss Oldbuck lives at a later time, her retiring life admits little change of fashion in either dress (A 64) or speech, and Scott has been carefully correct in the creation of her language.

Gentle old Jacob Caxor is an 'old-fashioned barber who dresses the only three wigs in the parish, which in defiance of taxes and times, are still subjected to the operation of powdering and frizzling' (A 50). As sole preserver of a dying art, he is impressed with the importance of his position in Fairport, and this, combined with a nostalgia for past times when he was much in demand, continually dominates his thoughts and colours his conversation. This is so much an accepted fact, that, when Olbuck wants a message delivered with speed, he asks Caxon to go 'as fast as if the town-council were met, and waiting for the provost, and the provost was waiting for his new-powdered wig' (A 53). This elicits the following criticism of contemporary life from Caxon,

"Ah, sir... thae days hae lang gane by. Deil a wig has a provost of Fairport worn sin' auld Provost Jervie's time, - and he had a quean of a servant-lass that dressed it hersell, wi' a doup o' a candle and a drudging-box. But I hae seen the day, Monkbarns, when the town-council of Fairport wad hae as soon wanted their town-clerk, or their gill of brandy ower-head after the haddies, as they wad hae wanted ilk ane a weel-favoured, sonsy, decent periwig on his pow. Hegh, sirs! nae wonder the commons will be discontent and rise against the law, when they see magistrates and

bailies and deacons and the provost himsell wi' heads as bald and as bare as ane o' my blocks!' (A 54).

Even on the night of the storm, at the height of the rescue, wigs are predominant in Caxon's mind. Hanging on with all his frail strength to Oldbuck, who, with 'hat and wig secured by a handkerchief under his chin', is leaning recklessly out over the cliff, he begs,

"Haud a care, haud a care, Monkbarns, - God's sake, haud a care! Sir Arthur's drowned already, and an ye fa' over the cleugh too, there will be but ae wig left in the parish, and that's the minister's." (A 96-97)

In his next admonition to Oldbuck, although 'wig' is not mentioned, it is obvious that it is still uppermost in his thoughts, 'Your honour will be killed wi' the hoast; ye'll no' get out o' your night-cowl this fortnight, - and that will suit us unco ill' (A 100). Well aware that fashions are changed, he is unable to refrain from offering to dress Lovel's hair for him,

"I doubt ye'll no be wanting me to tie your hair, for [with a gentle sigh] a' the young gentlemen wear crops now; but I hae the curling-tangs here to gie it a bit turn ower the brow, if ye like, before ye gang down to the leddies." (A 128)

When, in the kitchen, he bemoans Lovel's lack of 'tied and pouthered' hair (A 129), the modern Miss Jenny Rintherout sets him right,

"Hout awa, ye auld gowk, ... would ye creesh his bonny brown hair wi' your nasty ulyie, and then moust it like the auld minister's wig? ... ye wad spoil the maist natural and beautifaest head o' hair in a' Fairport, baith burgh and county." (A 129)

So preoccupied with his craft is Caxon, that he uses its imagery quite unseasonably, - 'a veshell's embayed afore I could sharp a razor' (A 476), and a 'veshell that rins ashore wi' us flees asunder like the powther when I shake the pluff, - and it's as ill to gather ony o't again' (A 476).

Caxon introduces vocabulary associated with his occupation, including *bob-wig* and *buzz-wig* (A 208), *periwig* (A 143), *creesh* 'to oil or grease' (A 129), *creps* 'short haircuts' (A 128), *curling-tangs* (A 128), *pluff* '"The instrument used for throwing out hair-powder"' (Sc. 1825 Jamieson), a powder puff (Ork. 1966)', *pouther* 'powder' (A 476), *pow* 'the crown of the head' (A 54), and *ulyie* 'oil' (A 144). Through Caxon's chatter Scott reminds the reader of the fashions of by-gone times. The prospect of a servant lass 'dressing' her master's wig with candle-wax and her flour dredge is odd enough, but the custom of wearing hats atop wigs (A 96, 208), is diverting in modern times. Perhaps the most amusing aspect of the situation is the presence of Oldbuck, Sir Arthur, and Mr Blattergowl at the picnic, all surmounted by Caxon's handiwork, and thus making his presence, as he feels, indispensable, 'just to be in the way in case they wanted a touch before the gentlemen sat down to dinner' (A 208).

In *The Pirate*, Scott has created a special kind of language for Triptolemus Yellowley. 'A Saunt Andrews student', Triptolemus's speech deviates from good formal English with Latin flourishes to the broad Scots of his home and childhood that he uses in moments of excitement, dejection or relaxation. Baby berates him continually, Norna scorns him as 'a scrdid slave' (P 76), Basil Mertoun labels him 'a pedantic, fantastic, visionary dreamer' (P 104), and Magnus Troil loftily dismisses his progressive plans (P 221), but Scott ensures that his concept of Triptolemus as 'an honest good-natured fellow at bottom' (P 67) prevails, and, as the novel progresses, it becomes evident that he is by no means as foolish as it may first be thought. Ever conscious of the importance of his position as factor to the Lord Chamberlain of Orkney and Shetland, he seizes every opportunity to press the need for agricultural reform, often beginning in English, and, as his enthusiasm grows, moving into Scots, heavily loaded with farming idioms. 'Triptolemus had at least the zeal, if not the knowledge, of a whole agricultural society in his own person' (P 170), and his spirits are not dampened by the initial opposition to his schemes. He demands of Mordaunt on the way to Burgh-westra,

27. SND, PLUFF.

"Am I not here in point of trust, and in point of power? and shall a Fowd, by which barbarous appellative this Magnus Troil still calls himself, presume to measure judgment and weigh reasons with me, who represent the full dignity of the Chamberlain of the islands of Orkney and Zetland?"

(P 171-172)

However, on Mordaunt warning him that Magnus might have objections to his 'purposed reformation', and Baby pointing out that it suited the people to 'grind their ain nievefu' of meal' (P 172), Triptolemus expresses himself in the vernacular,

"Dinna tell me of gowpen and knaveship! better pay the half of the grist to the miller, to have the rest grund in a Christian manner, than put good grain into a bairn's whirligig. ... it canna grind a bickerfu' of meal in a quarter of an hour..." (P 173)

Scott is able to introduce a variety of agricultural terms while Triptolemus discusses his plans for progress. The wretched little Shetland mills, not much larger than bee-hives, elicit such words as *mill-eye* 'the aperture through which the meal is emptied', and *forpit*, which is a reduced form of *fourt pairt*, and indicates a fourth part of a peck.²⁸ He calls the mill 'just one degree better' than a *hand-quern*, a primitive type of implement for grinding grain; it has no *trindle* or wheel, (from O.E. *tryndlian*); it has no cog, - it has no *happer* 'bin', and whatever it manages slowly and painfully to produce would be 'mair like a mash for a horse than a meltith for man's use' (P 173). The Shetland ponies he denounces as 'cursed abortions', and desires 'cussers from Lanarkshire' and 'brood mares from Ayrshire' (P 174) as replacements. But the 'bit thing ye ca' a pleugh' (P 228) is the object of his greatest disgust, and brings yearnings for the *soc* and *heel* and *sole-clout* of a 'real steady Scottish pleugh' (P 229). The single-stilted plough of Shetland was a primitive implement, and deserving of criticism. The Scots plough that Triptolemus advocates was, as Fenton records, not unknown in that region.²⁹ It is a measure of the opposition that

28. SND, FORPIT.

29. Fenton, op.cit., p.297.

Triptolemus meets to learn that when Sir John Mitchell introduced a Scots plough with trained oxen in the late 1700's, 'during the night people came and broke the plough, and hurt the oxen'.³⁰

Triptolemus's general conversation abounds in allusions to the farm, some proverbial, including,

As the old cock crows, the young cock learns. (P 278)

For all the Carse of Gowrie. (P 473)³¹

Go as if you were stepping on new-laid eggs. (P 65)

I came of that grain that takes a sair wind to shake it. (P 462)

I hope he will thrive on them as a cow on wet clover. (P 148, 473)

I judged it best to make ae yoking of it and stop the pleugh. (P 467)

She has drawn the girth over tight, but the saddle sits the better for it. (P 70)

So long as stock and crop goes as it should. (P 328)

The carles and cart-avers make it all, and the carles and cart-avers eat it all. (P 55, 550)

You have gotten your wits into the barn-yard again. (P 471)

He uses these references in such a quaintly appropriate manner, that his capacity for shrewdness and dry humour is enhanced. His reply to Minna, for example, when she advocates rebellion against Scotland in order to 'return to Denmark, our parent country' is apt and timely,

"As the old cock crows, the young cock learns - hen I should say, mistress, and I crave your pardon if I say anything amiss in either gender. But it is a happy country where the father declares against the king's customs, and the daughter against the king's crown! and, in my judgment it can end in naething but trees and tows." (P 278)

When Minna talks loftily to him about fairy treasure, telling him that 'the youngest child in Orkney' would have known better, Triptolemus, in his old-fashioned way, effectually silences her,

"Your humble servant to command, Mistress Minnie," said Triptolemus; "I thank ye for the hint, - and I am blithe that you have gotten your wits - I beg pardon, I meant your health into the barn-yard again. For the treasure, I neither

30. Fenton, op.cit., p.297.

31. An area of rich fertility.

used nor abused it.- they that live in the house with my sister Baby wad find it hard to do either! - and as for speaking of it, whilk they say muckle offends them whom we in Scotland call Good Neighbours, and you call Drows, the face of the auld Norse kings on the coins themselves might have spoken as much about it as ever I did." (P 471)

In the same dry manner, he sets Brenda right about the merry music she heard on the beach,

"Ye heard a fiddle, Mistress Brenda, and maybe ye think there can be nae cearth, miss, where that is skirling. But then it was Maister Claud Halcro's fiddle, whilk, I am apt to think, wad skirl at his father's deathbed, or at his ain, sae lang as his fingers could pinch the thairm." (P 469-470)

His reply to Cleveland, who threatens anyone who dares to disagree with Minna, is undaunted; he reduces 'Captain Cleveland' and Mistress Minna Troil, daughter of 'the Udaller of Zetland' to 'lad' and 'lass', and dismisses the entire population of the Northern Isles as being as uncivilized as their farming implements, 31

"Ay, ay, it helps the matter much to speak truths, whilk are as unwelcome to a proud stomach as wet clover to a cow's, in a land where lads are ready to draw the whittle if a lassie but looks awry. But what manners are to be expected in a country where folk call a pleugh-sock a markal?" (P 279)

When Cleveland, with what passes for overweening condescension, says 'I hope my manners are not among those abuses which you come hither to reform; any experiment on them may be dangerous', Triptolemus replies dryly, 'As well as difficult' (P 279). In arriving at the conclusion that the behaviour of this new acquaintance is almost beyond redemption, Triptolemus displays a shrewdness of perception, and in making the inference as he does he shows no lack of courage.

There are other occasions when Triptolemus shows his courage by speaking out. At the whale hunt, although he is overcome by public opinion, he is brave enough to voice the statute of 'the wain and

31. Fenton, op.cit., pp.304-307, for Terminology and Construction .

six owsen' (P 261), and when this incurs Magnus's wrath, undaunted, he still declares, ' *Suum cuique tribuito*, I will stand for my lord's right and my own' (P 261). When used by the folk of Kirkwall as a hostage for the pirates, Triptolemus in perfect terror for his life, manages to speak stoutly to the villain, Goffe, and so impresses him with a flood of occupational speech describing the impoverished lot of the farmer, that the pirate agrees to set him loose,

"Captain, I have no money -seldom can improvers have. We turn pasture to tillage, and barley into aits, and heather into greensward, and the poor *yarphe*, as the benighted creatures here call their peat-bogs, into baitle grass-land; but we seldom make any thing of it that comes back to our ain pouch. The carles and cart-avers make it all, and the carles and cart-avers eat it all, and the deil clink down with it!" (P 550)

The phrase concerning the 'carles and cart-avers', that is, the workers and the work-horses, is a favourite of Triptolemus; he uses it before leaving Scotland (P 55), and as Scott then commented, it was 'a conclusion which might sum up the year book of many a gentleman farmer'.

Triptolemus is impatient with the many superstitions of the Shetlanders and Orcadians, which both he and Baby regard as little more than an excuse for laziness,

"When you want a day's wark out of them - they have stepped ower the tangs, or they have met an uncanny body, or they have turned about the boat against the sun, and then there's nought to be done that day." (P 71)

"...perhaps they have come out of bed with the wrong foot foremost, or they have seen an owl, or a rabbit has crossed their path, or they have dreamed of a roasted horse - in short, nothing is to be done." (P 463)

Ridiculous as some of these habits appear, they are no stranger than some of the observances witnessed by Scott,³² who wrote of 'the

32. Lockhart, op.cit., pp.262-263

prejudices of laziness and superstition' experienced by Mr Mowat's Scots ploughman,³³ while Jessie Saxby, the well-known authority on Shetland folk-lore corroborates the prevalence of two of them.³⁴

Scott has given Triptolemus a language with many special characteristics, some of which contribute to his comic aspect; while this is entertaining, his chief role is to reflect the impressions gained by the author himself on his northern visit. Unsure himself of the best method of implementing necessary changes in this little-known region of fisher-farmers, Scott did realize that progress could not be effected quickly. Triptolemus comes to this conclusion too, saying 'I had better have set myself to improve the cairn on Clochnaben' (P 462); and he sums the situation up succinctly and with resignation when Cleveland inquires after his bees (which have been suffocated), and his apple orchard (which has been scalded), 'Thrive! they thrive like every thing else in this country, and that is the backward way. ... But what avails grieving?' (P 543-544). As Marinell Ash writes,

... Yellowley begins as a fierce and impetuous improver and ends with most of his ideals intact, but with a much more realistic understanding of his chances of introducing change into the distant and alien world.³⁴

Bryce Snailsfoot, the pedlar in The Pirate, is one of Scott's few unlikeable characters; like Iago, Bryce is 'all things to all men'. Motivated solely by personal greed, he seeks to ingratiate himself with everyone, declaring 'I will quarrel with no man' (P 288). Greedy as a chaffer-whale, his philosophy is founded on the notion that Providence drowns men in order that he might profit from the sale of their belongings. The language that Scott devises for him is entirely in keeping with this distorted view of life, and is a mix of perverted Biblical references, terms related to his trade, wily and obsequious overtures, and insincere expressions of goodness and piety.

His Biblical allusions and misquotations range from the profane

33. Lockhart, op.cit., p.262.

34. Saxby, op.cit., p.191.

35. M.Ash, 'So much that was new to us: Scott and Shetland', in B.Crawford (ed.), Essays in Shetland History, Lerwick, 1984, p.199.

to the ridiculous, and include,

"I desire no man's life for my private advantage, and am just grateful for the blessing of God and Providence on my sma' trade." (P 92)

"Help me to get ane or twa of these kists ashore before any body else comes, and we shall share, like good Christians, what God sends us and be thankful." (P 113)

"If you dare lay a finger on me, that am taking the lawful spoil of the Egyptians, I will give ye a lesson ye shall remember from this day to Yule." (P 116)

"Grace to you to wear the garment, and to me to guide the siller; and protect us from earthly vanities, and earthly covetousness, and send you the white linen raiment."
(P 144)

"That's what I call walking by the word 'Go unto those that buy and sell; there's muckle profit in that text.'
(P 145)

His sales patter covers the extent and desirability of the goods in his seal-skin pack, drawing attention to items such as 'a bonny owerlay' (P 145), 'braw seal-skin, saft as doe-leather' (P 144), 'warldly braws - hose, waistcoats or sic like - I hae pieces frae Flanders' (P 141), a waistcoat 'purple wi' a gowd binding, and bonnily broidered' (P 141). He warns Mordaunt to be careful with such expensive and delicate goods, 'Ye handle it as if it were a bale of coarse wadmaal', and 'ye'll fray it to bits' (P 143). He offers wily enticements to buy, stating his willingness to *coup* and to *trock* 'barter and bargain' (P 143). To effect a sale he frames artful and beguiling proposals to 'bring the price within your purse-mouth' (P 143), to let it 'lay ower till ye're buying something for the house' (P 145), and to 'let it lie ower till Martinmas, or e'en to Candlemas' (P 143). He protests to Swertha, 'Ye sall hae the fixing of the price yoursell' (P 145), and to Mordaunt 'I wad be content to swap the garment', followed quickly by 'Sall I put ye in my book for it?' (P 143). Bryce reinforces his sales talk with wily and obsequious observations,

'I maun deal friendly wi' you, as a kend friend and customer.' (P 141)

'Ye wadna like to look waur than the Captain - that wadna be setting!

(P 143)

'Forbid that I should hurry any body, far mair a freend that has paid me siller afore now.' (P 143)

'That will be but could thanks for the bonny owerlay that I hae brought ye a' the way frae Lerwick.' (P 145)

His feigned virtue urges him to express distaste for any form of dancing, and to set himself up as an arbiter of social morality. Thus he is found making statements such as these,

'Dinna swear, sir, dinna swear, sir. I will endure no swearing in my presence. ' (P 116)

'If he hadna made use of profane oaths, which made my very flesh grew.' (P 116)

'You...the lightest foot at sic frolics (Heaven send you better praise in his ain gude time!).' (P 142)

'I am no free in conscience to look upon thae flinging fancies.'
(P 140)

'I am an old man and maun unburden my conscience.' (P 140)

'Folk should mind that life is made but of rotten yarn.' (P 140)

'I am decent in the warld.' (P 143)

The vulgar volubility of the pedlar cloaks a timorous spirit, which he identifies as his conscience, telling Mordaunt that 'she' could 'never speak above her breath, when there is aught of a fray going forward' (P 287). His alarm, then, at being confronted by an angry Cleveland while in possession of his stolen garments, is considerable, and brings forth a spate of servile declarations and obsecrations, - 'Wat have been my cheeks for you', 'the worthy Captain Cleveland that we were all sae grieved about, returned to relieve our hearts again' (P 500), 'noble Captain' (P 502), 'There was your honour missing that was loved by great and small' (P 502), 'Ou dear, Captain, what wad ye hae had twa poor folk to do?' (P 505).

Bryce's glib fluency can be best appreciated in this speech to Cleveland in which he seeks to mollify him, and to gain time for help to arrive, the pirate having just offered to crop the ears out of his head, and to make him 'eat them on the spot' (P 503).

"He, he, he!...That were a pleasant jest! you are pleased to be witty. But to say naething of Burgh-Westra, there is the carle at Jarlshof, he that was the auld Mertoun, Mordaunt's father, whom men thought as fast-bound to the place he dwelt in as the Sumburgh-head itsell, naething maun

serve him but he is lost as weel as the lave about whom I have spoken. And there's Magnus Troil (wi' favour be he named) taking horse; and there's pleasant Maister Claud Halcro taking boat, whilk he steers worst of any man in Zetland, his head running on rambling rhymes; and the Factor body is on the star - the Scots Factor, - him that's aye speaking of dikes and delving, and such unprofitable wark, which has naething of merchandise in it, and he is on the lang trot, too; so that ye might say, upon a manner, the tae half of the mainland of Zetland is lost, and the other is running to and fro seeking it - awfu' times!" (P 503-504)

Scott needed a mischief-maker to put Mordaunt out of favour with Magnus Troil, and Bryce Snailsfoot not only fulfils this role, - he exceeds it. The reader judges him by what he says, and through his language he emerges as a much nastier character than a mere trouble-maker. It seems, in fact, that Scott's revulsion to the Shetland custom of denying help to a drowning man is directed at him, making him, in a literary sense, a scapegoat for the community.

Although he is not a consistent Scots speaker, mention must also be made of the idiosyncratic speech of the Baron of Bradwardine. Despite his eccentricities, the Baron is a man of great integrity, and one of the few persons to join the Prince's cause from motives of honour and loyalty alone. A product of ancient birth, of Jacobite politics, of a legal education, and of a military career that led to involvement in foreign campaigns, he makes a striking impression at at his first appearance in the novel,

He was a tall, thin, athletic figure, old, indeed, and gray-haired, but with every muscle rendered as tough as whip-cord by constant exercise. He was dressed carelessly, and more like a Frenchman than an Englishman of the period, while from his hard features and perpendicular rigidity of stature, he bore some resemblance to a Swiss officer of the the guards who had resided some time at Paris, and caught the *costume*, but not the ease or manner, of its inhabitants.

(W 76-77)

It is important to consider this initial description of the Baron in assessing his speech habits, because Scott goes on to say that his 'language and habits were as heterogeneous as his external appearance' (W 77).

It soon becomes apparent, from his conversations with Edward, that it is the Baron's custom to indisperse his passages of English

with foreign phrases, which are predominantly Latin, but occasionally French. These phrases, selected from classical sources (particularly Titus Livius), are habitually concerned with legal or military matters, for which his mind appears to have a decided aptitude, and on many occasions they are more humorous than appropriate. This is why Scott warns his readers in advance that the Baron's 'learning was more diffuse than accurate, and that he was rather a reader than a grammarian' (W 46). However, as has been explained in Chapter 5, his family has held its lands by feudal tenure from the time of David the First, and the Baron's lineage is ancient and impeccable. In keeping with his position, the tone of his speech is polite, dignified, formal and soldierly, and lent a tinge of archaism by his frequent use of 'ye'.

Many a reader may well wonder why a Scots baron does not use some Scots diction, but none is forthcoming. In his cups the Baron becomes even more Continental, singing 'French *chansons à boire*', and spouting 'pieces of Latin' (W 89), finally haranguing Balmawhapple in perfect English with Latin embellishments (W 92). Indeed, apart from employing the Scottish legal terms of 'spulzie', 'sornars' (W 130), and 'reivers' (W 131), when his cows are stolen, it is not until he arrives at Edinburgh that the Baron shows any tendency to use the vernacular. It then comes as a surprise to hear him conclude his conversation with Edward and Fergus (which he had commenced with a long dissertation on Edward's position, full of legal and military terms in Latin), with this acceptance of an invitation to dine,

"And wha the deil doubt's it," quoth the Baron, laughing, "when ye bring only the cookery, and the gude toun must furnish the materials? Weel, I have some business in the toun too;; but I'll join you at three, if the vivers can tarry so long." (W 384)

His advice to his groom after the Battle of Preston is another surprise. He hands Berwick, his charger into his care, addressing him thus,

"I seldom ban, sir," said he to the man; "but if you play any of your hound s-foot tricks, and leave puir Berwick before he's sorted to rin after spuulzie, deil be wi' me if I do not give your craig a thrav." (W 435-436)

It is now obvious that the Baron has two speech registers, and that in his present position as a commander of Scottish troops, he has moved his language into the register of his men. He reverts to his pedantic mode when he is in a dilemma about his hereditary right to remove the Prince's footwear - a subject very dear to his heart. In this aristocratic predicament the Latin flourishes in the Baron's speech reach heights previously untouched, while in rapport with his company - Glennaquoich, Maccombich, Inveraughlin et al. - he uses such Scotticisms as 'ain', 'mickle', 'frae', 'wrang', 'doubt na', and 'twa' (W 436-440).

When, after disbandment, Edward finds the good old soldier hiding on his own lands as a fugitive, he is speaking Scots in common with old Janet and his surroundings, but still quoting with dignity from the classics (W 579). Emotion thickens his Scots, drawing forth such phrases as 'bruckle state' 'warld's gear' (W 601), 'deal na rashly', 'we maun tak heed o' that', 'auld hurley-house', 'riggs belanging to it' (W 602), and leading him to describe himself as 'a landless laird wi' a tocherless daughter' (W 602). On the visit to the restored Tully-Veolan, the sight of Davie Gellatley, and Bran and Buscar, leads the Baron to exclaim that 'the gratitude o' thae dumb brutes and of that puir innocent brings the tears into my auld een' (W 636), but he quickly subdues his feelings, and cautions Rose that they 'must not permit them to be a life-rent burden' upon Colonel Talbot. When, 'with an air of gallantry half appertaining to the stiff Scottish laird, and half to the officer in the French service' (W 643), he escorts Lady Emily in to dinner, the reader is led to conclude that the effectiveness of his unique idiolect is the deciding factor in Scott's successful portrayal of the Baron of Bradwardine as an eccentric, lovable, sterling character.

His ability to write convincing, entertaining Scots dialogue is universally acknowledged, and generally considered to be a product of Scott's birth and environment, coupled with a good ear. But to create the quality of idiosyncratic speech used by Bailie Macwheeble, Gifted Gilfillan, Jamie Jinker, Elie Ochiltree, Miss Griselda Oldbuck, Jacob Caxon, Triptolemus Yellowley, Bryce Snailsfoot, and the Baron of Bradwardine would seem to require more than a natural expertise and interest in language. It indicates research of a most careful nature, and a painstaking accumulation of regional and occupational vocabulary from many sources.

CHAPTER 7

Proverbs.

In the previous chapter a number of proverbs and proverbial expressions have been identified in the idiolects of Bailie Macwheeble, Triptolemus Yellowley and Edie Ochiltree. In The Antiquary, The Pirate, and Waverley, as in his other Scots novels, Scott has included a wealth of proverbial material. While no claim is made that the collection is by any means exhaustive, some eighty of the more significant items have been listed in Appendix Part I. They are usually to be found in the conversations of the older characters, reflecting on the one hand, the general belief that, as the understanding of life embodied in these sayings was the product of long years of personal experience and keen observation, such pearls of wisdom did not drop readily from the lips of the young and untried.¹ On the other hand, there was an additional reason for the predominant use of these sayings by the older folk, regretfully phrased by Dean Ramsay, writing somewhat later than Scott,

Indeed, proverbs are literally, in many instances, become *reminiscences*. They now seem to belong to that older generation whom we recollect, and who used them in conversation freely and constantly. To strengthen an argument, or illustrate a remark by a proverb, was then a common practice in conversation. Their use, however, is now considered vulgar, and their formal application is almost prohibited by the rules of polite society. 2

Scott, too, was painfully conscious that, by his time, these '*guid auld lays, that shine wi' waled sense*',³ reputed character-builders of the Scottish nation, were falling into disuse, and he was anxious to preserve as many examples of this unique speech form as possible. That his generous use of the proverb in dialogue is a valid representation of the conversation of earlier times is further corroborated by James Kelly, who, in prefacing his collection of upwards of 3,000 Scottish proverbs in 1721, wrote,

1. Fergus Mac-Ivor is a notable exception to this custom, and his case receives further attention.
2. Ramsay, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.
3. Allan Ramsay, 1800, quoted *ibid.*, p.121.

The Scots are wonderfully given to this way of speaking, and as the consequence of that abound with proverbs, many of which are very expressive, quick, and home to the purpose; and indeed, this humour prevails universally over the whole nation, especially among the better sort of the commonality, none of whom will discourse with you any considerable time, but he will affirm every assertion and observation with a Scottish proverb.

4

In general, Scots proverbs testify to fortitude and a resolute cheerfulness in the face of adversity. Although a harsh environment and a cold religion have had their effects, the Scot is not naturally miserable, and many of the sayings that Scott has chosen to use are laced with a dry humour, and expressive of the sound common-sense and practical philosophy seen in the following examples,

Every why has its wherefore. (W 360)

If you will put your plough into new land, you must look to have it hank on a stone now and then. (P 462)

Ilka land has its ain lauch. (A 352)

Let everyone roose the ford as he finds it. (P 271)

Listen to the wind upon the hill till the waters abate. (W 523)

Pride will hae a fa . (A 182)

Sticking disna gang by strength, but by the guiding o' the gully. (A 286)

Some of Scott's characters display a marked facility for adapting certain proverbs to fit their own particular circumstances. Thus the expansive Jamie Jinker uses the well-known 'Every why has its wherefore' (W 360), to explain his own small presence in the Prince's army; Magnus Troil, slyly choosing a proverb couched in farming terms, 'If you will put your plough into new land, you must look to have it hank on a stone now and then' (P 462), (a saying commonly used to indicate the hazards of any new enterprise), quotes it to the discomfort of Triptolemus, knowing full well that the Factor's 'plough' has done nought but 'hank upon stones' ever since his arrival in Shetland; and when young Jenny Rintherout terminates her argument with Maggie Mucklebackit with 'Aweel, aweel, Maggie, ilka land has its ain lauch' (A 352), she is cleverly using a formula familiar enough in situations where folk agree to disagree. But while Jenny's tone is no

doubt conciliatory (Maggie is, after all the mother of her beloved Steenie, and she has no real desire to fall out with her), this quick-witted damsel is drily emphasizing, by the very nature of the proverb she has chosen, that in her opinion, although the land-folk and the fisher-folk of Fairport live cheek-by-jowl, the outlandish customs of the latter set them poles apart from polite society.

Alliteration is a commonly used device in Scots proverbs, and appears in various forms in some of those that Scott has quoted. Commenting upon the new-fangled implements introduced into Shetland by Triptolemus, Magnus Troil declares, 'Ferlies make fools fain' (P 39). Old Swertha, astounded by Basil Mertoun's vigorous and uncharacteristic activity in the wake of Mordaunt's disappearance, is moved to announce 'Fools are aye fleet and fain' (P 394), to which Niel Ronaldson rejoins 'Fey folk run fast.' While these are very obvious examples, there are many others, but nowhere is alliteration used more vividly than when Edie Ochiltree, asserting to Lovel that might can be overcome by skill and cunning, utters a saying resonant with grim battle-humour, 'Sticking disna gang by strength, but by the guiding o' the gully' (A 286).

Repetition, too, is a common feature in proverbial expressions, and the reader finds examples such as these,

There's nae fule like an auld fule. (W 563)

Of all sorrows a full sorrow is the best. (W 390)

The mair cost, the mair honour. (P 172)

What's doomed, is doomed. (A 267)

Opposite ideas are often balanced as a means of lending emphasis to the central notion in the manner of the following sayings,

Light come, light gane. (W 594)

Young saints, auld deils. (W 386)

Ye're gude seekers, but ill finders. (A 317)

As the old cock crows, the young cock learns. (P 278)

The foibles and frailties of human nature are predominant themes in Scottish proverbs. Scott made use of this type to preserve long-held national ideas and principles, and to illuminate the perceptions of mankind with which he had invested particular characters. Wilfulness, a term which covers a multitude of sins, including perversity,

frowardness and avarice, claims continual attention. Waiting in storm and darkness to keep a tryst with Dousterswivel, Edie Ochiltree marvels at the power exerted by avarice over one so naturally timorous as the 'adept', concluding his soliloquy with 'Eh sirs, but human nature's a wilful and wilyard thing!' (A 333). Oldbuck, after a petty but heated quarrel with Sir Arthur, apologizes to him, confessing them both to be 'two testy old fools' (A 76), but when his friend remains obdurate, Oldbuck declares him to be the more 'testy', unbending, and 'wilful' of the pair simply by using the well-known saying, 'A-well, a-well, a wilful man must have his way' (A 78). Fergus Mac-Ivor makes use of a pointed and succinct folk-saying when Edward Waverley announces his intention of hastening to Edinburgh to clear his name. After fruitlessly arguing the dangers and futility of such a course of action the urbane Fergus says shortly, 'Wilful will do't' (W 269). Wilful behaviour is the subject of a curious proverb in The Antiquary when the officer obliged to *poind* Sir Arthur's estate is faced with obstruction from a bristling Hector. His statement, 'I take all who stand here to witness that I showed him my blazon and explained my character' ends with the ominous words 'He that will to Cupar maun to Cupar' (A 551). The origins of this statement were obscure by the time that Dean Ramsay wrote, and as he said, even in his day it was no longer known to which Cupar it referred.⁵ What is quite clear, however, is that no good befell whoever initially went there (evidently defying sensible advice), and henceforth the expression has been used as a warning against wilful, obstinate behaviour.

The Cupar example demonstrates the difficulty of determining the origin of a proverb. Certain significant sayings delivered by notable figures or connected with important events sometimes became widespread. Hence the retention, over a broad area, of, for example, 'There is an end of an auld sang', words spoken at the signing of the Act of Union by the Scottish Chancellor, and adapted by Bailie Macwheeble to mark the restoration of the Bradwardine family estate (W 640). The Battle of Sheriffmuir is obviously responsible for the saying, used on occasions of not too deep regret, 'There was mair *tint* [lost] at Sheriff-Muir', which was quoted with feeling by Evan Dhu Maccombich on the death of the Laird of Balmawhapple (W 434). Most proverbs, however, had humbler beginnings, and their origins have been lost in antiquity. Otta F. Swire records an amusing account of the way in which a local saying

5. Ramsay, *op.cit.*, p.138. See also AE.J.G.MacKay, Fife & Kinross, Edinburgh, 1895, pp.267-268. MacKay seems sure that it is Cupar in Fife.

took root and flourished in the Inner Hebrides. Fearful lest the rising tide prevent the visiting congregation from Ulva walking home over the sands from Gometra church, the beadle was heard to whisper to the Reverend John MacLean in mid-sermon, 'Get on Mr. John, the channel's filling', and this became a common saying in that area whenever speed was required.⁶ There is little doubt that this was the way in which most proverbs began, and generally speaking, the pithier the remark, and the wider its audience, the greater was its chance of survival.

The Devil, with whom the Scots have long been on terms of uneasy familiarity, figures as prominently in their proverbs as he does in their folklore, and references to him are contained in many an unique turn of phrase. 'Deil be in my feet then', says Edie Ochiltree to Lovel, stoutly refusing to remain in the shelter of the ledge, and indicating that the devil would be in possession of his feet if he did, 'if ye gang, I'll gang too' (A 94). When reminded by Magnus Troil that he had come to Shetland to improve it, Triptolemus Yellowley claims similar Satanic interference with his members. 'And the deil was in my feet when I did so', he declares bitterly, 'I had better have set myself to improve the cairn on Clochnaben' (P 462). His sister, Baby, aghast at the supernatural aspect of Norna's fortune-telling, remarks with asperity, 'Gude news are welcome to some folks, if they came frae the deil himsell' (P 330). Mordaunt Mertoun, hurt and bewildered at the usurpation of his place at Burgh-Westra by Cleveland, utters a short imprecation 'The devil take him!' to which Bryce Snailsfoot replies, 'A' in gude time, hurry no man's cattle - the devil will hae his due' (P 141). Jamie Jinker the horse-couper voices a more colourful version of the same imprecation, 'Deil burst them' (W 360), directed against all greedy farmers and corn-mongers. Even Dhu quotes the well-known warning against stinginess with liquor, 'The deil take them wha have the least pint stoup' (W 159). At Kirkwall, the Town Clerk assures Cleveland that he advised the Provost to turn a blind eye to the pirates if possible, saying, 'I tauld the Provost, just to do as the collier did when he met the devil, - and that is, to have naething to say to them, if they have naething to say to us' (P 537). Evan Dhu and Fergus Mac-Ivor both use a proverb that alludes to Conan, 'the Mischief of the Feinn', who went down to Hell and exchanged blows with the Devil. When asked by his landlady if he would have to fight Sir John Cope and his dragoons, Evan replies, 'Claw for claw, as Conan said to Satan, Mrs Flockhart, and the deevil tak the shortest nails' (W 387).

6. Otta F. Swire, The Inner Hebrides and Their Legends, Great Britain, 1964, p. 127.

When Flora, retaliating to a remark from her brother, exposes his obsession with all things Scottish to Edward, Fergus responds, 'Well pronounced, Flora, - blow for blow, as Conan said to the devil' (W 198).

Knowing full well the arresting and unforgettable effect of distinctive proverbs, particularly those of a singularly appropriate, or a peculiar nature, Scott made studied use of curious local wise sayings to reproduce the uncanny, 'different' atmosphere of Shetland in The Pirate. The abhorrent, but firmly held conviction that it was wrong to save a drowning man forms the subject of a number of Shetland proverbs. Basil Mertoun's housekeeper, Swertha, and the Ranzelman, Niel Ronaldson are in perfect agreement about the right course of action, and they voice their opinions in traditional terms, she declaring, 'It is best to let saut water take its gate, luck never came of crossing it' (P 160), and he concurring, 'They are wise folks that let wave and withy haud their ain' (P 161), and adding, 'Luck never came of a half-drowned man, or a half-hanged ane either' (P 161). The ancient belief of the islanders with regard to the spoils of shipwreck is best expressed in the proverb articulated by Bryce Snailsfoot 'But doubtless one man's loss is another's gain' (P 92), and the common folk are unanimous in their desire to get a fair share of what he calls 'the lawful spoil of the Egyptians' (P 116). On land, however, their attitude is of honesty and open-handed hospitality, as Mordaunt explains to Cleveland. Making use of an ancient proverb which has appeared in varying forms in different regions ever since the legendary 'Peace of Frothi', he tells the pirate that 'A child might travel with a purse of gold from Sumburgh Head to the Scaw of Unst, and no soul would injure him' (P 133).

Since proverbs reveal much of the philosophy and opinions of a region and its people, Scott has made extensive use of them in Waverley to introduce Edward, and the reader, to the Highland way of thought. From Donald Bean Lean Edward learns that an apology for lack of provender or liquor may be couched in the terms 'Where there are no bushes there can be no nuts' (W 155). From the crone who bathes his feet on his arrival at Glennaquoich he becomes aware that a grudging office may be accompanied by the formula, 'Our fathers' herds did not feed so near together that I should do you this service' (W 183). However, in the Highlands as elsewhere, financial reward leads to a reversal of attitude, voiced in the proverbial blessing, 'May the open hand be filled the fullest' (W 183). At the ensuing feast, as well as hearing

a characteristic clan proverb pronounced by the bereaved Ballenkeiroch, 'While there is a green leaf in the forest, there will be fraud in a Comyne' (W 186), Edward witnesses the drinking of many a proverbial Gaelic toast, including 'To him that will not turn his back on friend or foe', 'To him that never forsook a comrade', 'To him that never bought or sold justice', and 'Hospitality to the exile, and broken bones to the tyrant' (W 189), all obligingly translated for him by Fergus. The old Highland wise man, to whose home Edward is carried to recuperate after his hunting mishap, knowing too well that Fergus has gone to meet the Prince, (and supposing that Edward also knows), replies to his question with the rhyming proverb,

"What sent the messengers to hell,
Was asking what they knew full well." (W 228)

In a footnote, Scott supplies the information that this corresponds to the Lowland saying, 'Mony are spears the gate they ken fu' weel' (W 228). In his description of the household of Tomanrait, Scott includes a proverb which is frequently on the lips of the older members whenever their venerable master is criticized by youthful hot-bloods for his non-involvement in the political machinations of the day. Knowing the inevitability of the accompanying costs, and hurts, and reprisals of such participation, the elders sagely counsel peace, maintaining, 'When the wind is still, the shower falls soft' (W 227).

In contrast to the various examples of the older folk, it is Fergus Mac-Ivor, Vich Ian Vohr himself, youthful and despotic chief of his small clan, steeped in the traditions of his race despite his Continental education, who passes on many samples of proverbial Highland wisdom to Edward and the reader. It must be observed, however, that in contrast to the spontaneous use of proverbs by the older characters, in almost all cases Fergus consciously and pointedly quotes them. With an air of disparagement he tells the Baron of Bradwardine, who has witnessed one of his looting clansmen bearing away 'a pier-glass on his back', 'Ay, he would have told you, if you had questioned him, 'A ganging foot is aye getting' (W 383), and when the Baron is in a dilemma about removing the Prince's footwear, Fergus, out of sheer devilry, reminds him, 'Why, you know, Baron, the proverb tells us, 'It's ill taking the breeks off a Highlandman;' and the boots are here in the same predicament' (W 439). Concerning his own foster-brother,

Evan Dhu, Fergus tells Flora, in Edward's company, 'You know it is one of their wise sayings that a kinsman is part of a man's body, but a foster-brother is a piece of his heart' (W 215), poignant words, the truth of which Edward will see proved in the tragic scene at Stirling Castle. There are other proverbs quoted by Fergus which reveal that underneath his suave and assured demeanour racial pride is mingled with shame and frustration at the present state of the Clan Mac-Ivor. There is an inkling of this when he laughingly reminds Flora, 'You know our proverb, -'When the hand of the chief ceases to bestow, the breath of the bard is frozen in utterance' (W 198). It is not that Fergus objects to the ancient custom of rewarding his bard, but rather that he has just been obliged to give Mac-Murrough 'the last silver cup in the castle' (W 197). His chagrin at the degeneration of his followers, and indeed of the country in general, is obvious when he assures Edward that the present-day maxim is 'Better an old woman with a purse in her hand, than three men with belted brands' (W 186). Finally and significantly, Fergus's last use of an ancient proverb is to declare that it has outlived its usefulness. On the eve of Clifton, when he is convinced that their cause is doomed, he warns Edward that the retribution exacted by the English will be fearful, and that it will be futile for the Highlanders to rely upon their proverbial strategy of retreating to their mountain fastnesses 'to listen to the wind upon the hill until the waters abate' (W 523).

By introducing proverbs into the dialogue of his Scots speakers, Scott was able to produce some splendid effects. Dr Tulloch pointed out that the interpolation of proverbs into his text afforded Scott a twofold advantage, commenting, 'few things can give such a sense of overhearing real conversation ... while they also allow the painless introduction of dialect words.'⁷ However, Scott employed proverbs to even greater effect, using them to add local colour, particularly in the Highland and Shetland locations, and to enhance the peculiarities of individual characters. By inserting certain sorts of proverbs into it, he has made the Bailie's dialogue comic, the Factor's astute, and Edie Ochiltree's sagacious; and by introducing selected proverbs into the speech of Fergus Mac-Ivor in a skilfully contrived manner, he has made a most successful contribution to his portrayal of him as a tragic figure trapped between two worlds.

7. G. Tulloch, in Bold, op.cit., p.145.

Scott does not confine his use of proverbs to dialogue alone, sometimes inserting one into his narrative to illustrate or emphasize a point, as he does with 'The clartier the cosier' in his description of the Mucklebackits' kitchen (A 348), and with 'There goes reason to roasting of eggs' in connection with Davie Gellatley's performance (W 574). He appears to have had his favourites, among them (according to Ramsay),⁸ 'Gie our ain sea-guts to our ain sea-maws', a saying common among the fisher-folk, but used in The Antiquary by the wily Mrs. Mailsetter (A 186), and 'The deil gaed ower Jock Wabster' expressing the notion that 'all hell has broken loose', and used by Edie Ochiltree as a colourful indication of the behaviour of Lady Glenallan when she became aware of the marriage of her son to Eveline Neville (A 385). There is a suspicion that Scott may have altered or improved some proverbs, just as he had no qualms about altering or completing mottoes to suit his chapters, but that is inconsequential in view of the amount of proverbial wisdom that he preserved. Only those examples contained in Waverley, The Antiquary, and The Pirate are taken into consideration here, and the total number in all his novels must be enormous. This is fortunate, for proverbs seem to be out of fashion in the world of today, while smart sayings and trendy jargon which have no real relevance to the worthwhile principles of life abound.

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8. Ramsay, op.cit., pp. 129-130.