

Transcription from Academy (London) November 17th 1894.

PLAGIARISM AND COVENANTING MIRACLES.

Glasgow: Nov. 12, 1894.

Mr. S. R. Crockett, in his letter in the ACADEMY of November 10, writes: "Mr. Wallace, or some one else, has told the universe three times that I am a plagiarist." I have not told the universe three times, or even once, that Mr. Crockett is a plagiarist. The charge was made in the *Glasgow Herald*, but I did not make that charge. I did not make any such charge in the *Literary World*. I did not make any such charge in the ACADEMY. What I did was to mention the fact that such a charge had been made in Scotland, and to suggest that Mr. Crockett should deal with it. He has acted on my suggestion, and so has justified it. Whether his treatment of the accusation of plagiarism be accounted adequate by the critics who made it, or by the reading public, is no concern of mine.

If Mr. Crockett is under the impression that I have had anything to do, directly or indirectly, with the bringing of an accusation of plagiarism against him, I have to assure him that he is utterly mistaken. In return for this assurance, I must ask Mr. Crockett at once to unsay these words—

"This kind of thing is always going on, and I do not think that Mr. Hardy took any further notice of his Mr. William Wallace. And in this, having said my say, I propose to follow his example."

Whatever be the "kind of thing" that is "always going on," I have neither art nor part in it. Mr. Crockett must first catch his Mr. William Wallace treating him as some one seems to have treated Mr. Hardy, before he follows that gentleman's example. He must see that, in the light of my assurance, and of my general criticism of his works, his words, written no doubt under a false impression, resolve themselves into a meaningless impertinence.

I gather from Mr. Lang's courteous letter that he can supply information calculated to prove that the Covenanters claimed the power to work miracles. I shall be delighted to see such information. Mr. Lang's authority on the field of knowledge of which Covenanting hagiology is but a corner is beyond dispute. At the same time, I hope my use of "the Covenanters" will not be misunderstood. I spoke of "the Covenanters"—the general character of my allusion to them shows this—precisely as many folk in Scotland do, as the habit of speaking of "the Reformers," as representative, responsible men, fighting for what they rightly or wrongly regarded as the cause of sacred freedom. It would be as unjust to identify "the Covenanters" with all the madness of the rabble of Cameronianism as to identify "the Reformers" with all the excesses of the Knoxite mobs. If Mr. Lang can prove that any man in the position of the Rev. Alexander Renfield

in *Mad Sir Uchtred of the Hills*, a trained Protestant theologian and in the possession of his wits, ever exercised the power—the eminently useful power—of converting an antagonist into a Nebuchadnezzar or of performing an equivalent miracle, it will be my duty to cry *peccavi*—perhaps even to sit upon the stool of repentance in Penicuik Free Church.

WILLIAM WALLACE.