



BIBLIOTECA



A 5018

823
S.

TALES OF MY LANDLORD,

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM,

SCHOOLMASTER AND PARISH CLERK OF GANDERLEUGH.

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

Ahora bien, e iso il Cura: trae-me, senhor hosped, aqueos libros, que los quiero ver. Que me place, respondi el; y entrando en su aposento, sacó de una maletilla vieja cerrada con una cadenilla, y abriéndola, halló en ella tres libros grandes y unos papeles de muy buena letra escritos de mano.—DON QUIXOTE, Parte I. Capitulo 32.

It is mighty well, said the priest: pray, landlord, bring me those books, for I have a mind to see them. With all my heart, answered the host; and going to his chamber, he brought out a little old clokebag, with a padlock and chain to it, and opening it, he took out three large volumes, and some manuscript papers written in a fine character.—JARVIS'S Translation.

THE HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN.

INTRODUCTION—(1829.)

The author has stated, in the preface to the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, 1827, that he received from an anonymous correspondent an account of the incident upon which the following story is founded. He is now at liberty to say, that the information was conveyed to him by a late amiable and ingenious lady, whose wit and power of remarking and judging of character still survive in the memory of her friends. Her maiden name was Miss Helen Lawson, of Girthhead, and she was wife of Thomas Goldie, Esq., of Craigmuie, Commissary of Dumfries.

Her communication was in these words:

"I had taken for summer lodgings a cottage near the old Abbey of Lincluden. It had formerly been inhabited by a lady who had pleasure in embellishing cottages, which she found perhaps homely and even poor enough; mine, therefore, possessed many marks of taste and elegance unusual in this species of habitation in Scotland, where a cottage is literally what its name declares.

"From my cottage door I had a partial view of the old Abbey before mentioned; some of the highest arches were seen over, and some through, the trees scattered along a lane which led down to

the ruin, and the strange fantastic shapes of almost all those old ashes accorded wonderfully well with the building they at once shaded and ornamented.

"The Abbey itself from my door was almost on a level with the cottage; but on coming to the end of the land, it was discovered to be situated on a high perpendicular bank, at the foot of which run the clear waters of the Cluden, where they hasten to join the sweeping Nith.

'Whose distant roaring swells and fo's.'

As my kitchen and parlor were not very far distant, I one day went in to purchase some chickens from a person I heard offering them for sale. It was a little, rather stout-looking woman, who seemed to be between seventy and eighty years of age; she was almost covered with a tartan plaid, and her cap had over it a black silk hood, tied under the chin, a piece of dress still much in use among elderly women of that rank of life in Scotland; her eyes were dark, and remarkably lively and intelligent; I entered into conversation with her, and began by asking how she maintained herself, &c.

"She said that in winter she footed stock-

ings, that is, knit feet to country-people's stockings, which bears about the same relation to stocking-knitting that cobbling does to shoe-making, and is of course both less profitable and less dignified; she likewise taught a few children to read, and in summer she whiles reared a few chickens.

"I said I could venture to guess from her face that she had never been married. She laughed heartily at this, and said, 'I maun hae the queerest face that ever was seen, that ye could guess that. Now, do tell me, madam, how ye cam to think sae?' I told her it was from her cheerful disengaged countenance. She said, 'Mem, have ye na far mair reason to be happy than me, wi' a gude husband and a fine family o' bairns, and plenty o' every thing? for me, I'm the puirist o' a' puir bodies, and can hardly contrive to keep mysell alive in a' the wee bits o' ways I hae tell't ye.' After some more conversation, during which I was more and more pleased with the old woman's sensible conversation, and the *naïveté* of her remarks, she rose to go away, when I asked her name. Her countenance suddenly clouded, and she said gravely, rather coloring, 'My name is Helen Walker; but your husband kens weel about me.'

"In the evening I related how much I had been pleased, and inquired what was extraordinary in the history of the poor woman. Mr. — said, there were perhaps few more remarkable people than Helen Walker. She had been left an orphan, with the charge of a sister considerably younger than herself, and who was educated and maintained by her exertions. Attached to her by so many ties, therefore, it will not be easy to conceive her feelings, when she found that this only sister must be tried by the laws of her country for child-murder, and upon being called as principal witness against her. The counsel for the prisoner told Helen, that if she could declare that her sister had made any preparation, however slight, or had given her any intimation on the subject, that such a statement would save her sister's life, as she was the principal witness against her. Helen said, 'It is impossible for me to swear to a falsehood; and whatever may be the consequence, I will give my oath according to my conscience.'

"The trial came on, and the sister was found guilty and condemned; but, in Scotland, six weeks must elapse between the sentence and the execution, and Helen Walker availed herself of it. The very day of her sister's condemnation, she got a petition drawn, stating the peculiar circumstances of the case, and that very night set out on foot to London.

"Without introduction or recommendation, with her simple (perhaps ill-expressed) petition, drawn up by some inferior clerk of the court, she presented herself, in her tartan plaid and country attire, to the late Duke of Argyle, who immediately procured the pardon she petitioned for, and Helen returned with it on foot, just in time to save her sister.

"I was so strongly interested by this narrative, that I determined immediately to prosecute my acquaintance with Helen Walker; but as I was to leave the country next day, I was obliged to defer it till my return in Spring, when the first walk I took was to Helen Walker's cottage.

"She had died a short time before. My regret was extreme, and I endeavored to obtain some account of Helen from an old woman who inhabited the other end of her cottage. I inquired if Helen ever spoke of her past history, her journey to London, &c., 'Na,' the old woman said, 'Helen was a wily body, and whene'er ony o' the neebors asked any thing about it, she aye turned the conversation.'

"In short, every answer I received only tended to increase my regret, and raise my opinion of Helen Walker, who could unite so much prudence with so much heroic virtue."

This narrative was enclosed in the following letter to the author, without date or signature:—

"SIR,—The occurrence just related happened to me twenty-six years ago. Helen Walker lies buried in the churchyard of Irongray, about six miles from Dumfries. I once proposed that a small monument should have been erected to commemorate so remarkable a character, but I now prefer leaving it to you to perpetuate her memory in a more durable manner."

The reader is now able to judge how far the author has improved upon, or fallen short of, the pleasing and interesting sketch of high principle and steady affection displayed by Helen Walker, the prototype of the fictitious Jeanie Deans. Mrs. Goldie was unfortunately dead before the author had given his name to these volumes, so he lost all opportunity of thanking that lady for her highly valuable communication. But her daughter, Miss Goldie, obliged him with the following additional information:—

"Mrs. Goldie endeavored to collect further particulars of Helen Walker, particularly concerning her journey to London, but found this nearly impossible; as the natural dignity of her character, and a high sense of family respectability, made her so indissolubly connect her sister's disgrace with her own exertions, that none of her neighbors durst ever question her upon the subject. One old woman, a distant relation of Helen's, and who is still living, says she worked an harvest with her, but that she never ventured to ask her about her sister's trial, or her journey to London; 'Helen,' she added, 'was a lofty body, and used a high style o' language.' The same old woman says, that every year Helen received a cheese from her sister, who lived at Whitehaven, and that she always sent a liberal portion of it to herself, or to her father's family. This fact, though trivial in itself, strongly marks the affection subsisting between the two sisters, and the complete conviction on the mind of the criminal, that her sister had acted solely from high prin-

iple, not from any want of feeling, which another small but characteristic trait will further illustrate. A gentleman, a relation of Mrs. Goldie's, who happened to be travelling in the North of England, on coming to a small inn, was shown into the parlor by a female servant, who, after cautiously shutting the door, said, 'Sir, I'm Nelly Walker's sister.' Thus practically showing that she considered her sister as better known by her high conduct, than even herself by a different kind of celebrity.

"Mrs. Goldie was extremely anxious to have a tombstone and an inscription upon it, erected in Irongray churchyard; and if Sir Walter Scott will condescend to write the last, a little subscription could be easily raised in the immediate neigh-

borhood, and Mrs. Goldie's wish be thus fulfilled."

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the request of Miss Goldie will be most willingly complied with, and without the necessity of any tax on the public. Nor is there much occasion to repeat how much the author conceives himself obliged to his unknown correspondent, who thus supplied him with a theme affording such a pleasing view of the moral dignity of virtue, though unaided by birth, beauty, or talent. If the picture has suffered in the execution, it is from the failure of the author's powers to present in detail the same simple and striking portrait, exhibited in Mrs. Goldie's letter.

ABBOTSFORD, April 1 1830.

POSTSCRIPT.

ALTHOUGH it would be impossible to add much to Mrs. Goldie's picturesque and most interesting account of Helen Walker, the prototype of the imaginary Jeanie Deans, the Editor may be pardoned for introducing two or three anecdotes respecting that excellent person, which he has collected from a volume entitled, "Sketches from Nature, by John M'Diarmid," a gentleman who conducts an able provincial paper in the town of Dumfries.

Helen was the daughter of a small farmer in a place called Dalwhairn, in the parish of Irongray; where, after the death of her father, she continued, with the unassuming piety of a Scottish peasant, to support her mother by her own unremitting labor and privations; a case so common, that even yet, I am proud to say, few of my countrywomen would shrink from the duty.

Helen Walker was held among her equals *pensy*, that is, proud or conceited; but the facts brought to prove this accusation seem only to evince a strength of character superior to those around her. Thus it was remarked, that when it thundered, she went with her work and her Bible to the front of the cottage, alleging that the Almighty could smite in the city as well as in the field.

Mr. M'Diarmid mentions more particularly the misfortune of her sister, which he supposes to have taken place previous to 1736. Helen Walker, declining every proposal of saving her relation's life at the expense of truth, borrowed a sum of money sufficient for her journey, walked the whole distance to London barefoot, and made her way to John Duke of Argyle. She was heard to say, that, by the Almighty strength, she had been enabled to meet the Duke at the most critical moment, which, if lost, would have caused the inevitable forfeiture of her sister's life.

Isabella, or Tibby Walker, saved from the fate which impended over her, was married by the person who had wronged her (named Waugh), and lived happily for great part of a century, uniformly acknowledging the extraordinary affection to which she owed her preservation.

Helen Walker died about the end of the year 1791, and her remains are interred in the churchyard of her native parish of Irongray, in a romantic cemetery on the banks of the Cairn. That a character so distinguished for her undaunted love of virtue, lived and died in poverty, if not want, serves only to show us how insignificant, in the sight of Heaven, are our principal objects of ambition upon earth.

TO THE BEST OF PATRONS,
A PLEASSED AND INDULGENT READER,
JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM
WISHES HEALTH, AND INCREASE, AND CONTENTMENT

COURTEOUS READER,

IF ingratitude comprehendeth every vice, surely so foul a stain worst of all besemeth him whose life has been devoted to instructing youth in virtue and in humane letters. Therefore have I chosen, in this prolegomenon, to unload my burden of thanks at thy feet, for the favor with which thou hast kindly entertained the Tales of my Landlord. Certes, if thou hast chuckled over their facetious and festive descriptions, or hadst thy mind filled with pleasure at the strange and pleasant turns of fortune which they record, verily, I have also simpered when I beheld a second story with attics, that has arisen on the basis of my small domicile at Gandercleugh, the walls having been aforehand pronounced by Deacon Barrow to be capable of enduring such an elevation. Nor has it been without delectation, that I have ended a new coat (snuff-brown, and with metal buttons), having all nether garments corresponding thereto. We do therefore lie, in respect to each other, under a reciprocation of benefits, whereof those received by me being the most solid (in respect that a new house and a new coat are better than a new tale and an old song), it is meet that my gratitude should be expressed with the louder voice and more preponderating vehemence. And how should it be so expressed?—Certainly not in words only, but in act and deed. It is with this sole purpose, and disclaiming all intention of purchasing that pendicle or poffle of land called the Carlinescroft, lying adjacent to my garden, and measuring seven acres, three roods, and four perches, that I have committed to the eyes of those who thought well of the former tomes, these four additional volumes of the Tales of my Landlord. Not the less, if Peter Prayfort be minded to sell the said poffle, it is at his own choice to say so; and, peradventure, he may meet with a purchaser: unless (gentle reader) the pleasing pourtraictures of Peter Pattieson, now given unto thee in particular, and unto the public in general, shall have lost their favor in thine eyes, whereof I am no way distrustful. And so much confidence do I repose in thy continued favor, that, should thy lawful occasions call thee to the town of Gandercleugh, a place frequented by most at one time or other in their lives, I will enrich thine eyes with a sight of those precious manuscripts whence thou hast derived so much

delectation, thy nose with a snuff from my mull, and thy palate with a dram from my bottle of strong waters, called by the learned of Gandercleugh, the Dominic's Dribble o' Drink.

It is there, O highly esteemed and beloved reader, thou wilt be able to bear testimony, through the medium of thine own senses, against the children of vanity, who have sought to identify thy friend and servant with I know not what inditer of vain fables; who hath cumbered the world with his devices, but shrunken from the responsibility thereof. Truly, this hath been well termed a generation hard of faith: since what can a man do to assert his property in a printed tome, saving to put his name in the title-page thereof, with his description, or designation, as the lawyers term it, and place of abode? Of a surety I would have such sceptics consider how they themselves would brook to have their works ascribed to others, their names and professions imputed as forgeries, and their very existence brought into question; even although, peradventure, it may be it is of little consequence to any but themselves, not only whether they are living or dead, but even whether they ever lived or no. Yet have my maligners carried their uncharitable censures still farther.

These cavillers have not only doubted mine identity, although thus plainly proved, but they have impeached my veracity and the authenticity of my historical narratives! Verily, I can only say in answer, that I have been cautelous in quoting mine authorities. It is true, indeed, that if I had hearkened with only one ear, I might have rehearsed my tale with more acceptance from those who love to hear but half the truth. It is, it may hap, not altogether to the discredit of our kindly nation of Scotland, that we are apt to take an interest, warm, yea partial, in the deeds and sentiments of our forefathers. He whom his adversaries describe as a perjured Prelatist, is desirous that his predecessors should be held moderate in their power, and just in their execution of its privileges, when, truly, the unimpassioned peruser of the annals of those times shall deem them sanguinary, violent, and tyrannical. Again the representatives of the suffering Nonconformists desire that their ancestors, the Cameronians, shall be represented not simply as honest enthusiasts, oppressed for conscience-sake, but persons

of fine breeding, and valiant heroes. Truly, the historian cannot gratify these predilections. He must needs describe the cavaliers as proud and high-spirited, cruel, remorseless, and vindictive; the suffering party as honorably tenacious of their opinions under persecution: their own tempers being, however, sullen, fierce, and rude; their opinions absurd and extravagant; and their whole course of conduct that of persons whom hellebore would better have suited than prosecutions unto death for high-treason. Natheless, while such and so preposterous were the opinions on either side, there were, it cannot be doubted, men of virtue and worth on both, to entitle either party to claim merit from its martyrs. It has been demanded of me, Jedediah Cleishbotham, by what right I am entitled to constitute myself an impartial judge of their discrepancies of opinions, seeing (as it is stated) that I must necessarily have descended from one or other of the contending parties, and be, of course, wedded for better or for worse, according to the reasonable practice of Scotland, to its dogmata, or opinions, and bound, as it were, by the tie matrimonial, or to speak without metaphor, *ex jure sanguinis*, to maintain them in preference to all others.

But, nothing denying the rationality of the rule, which calls on all now living to rule their political and religious opinions by those of their great grandfathers, and inevitable as seems the one or the other horn of the dilemma betwixt which my adversaries conceive they have pinned me to the wall, I yet spy some means of refuge, and claim a privilege to write and speak of both parties with impartiality. For, O ye powers of logic! when the Prelatists and Presbyterians of old times went together by the ears in this unlucky country, my ancestor (venerated be his memory!) was one of the people called Quakers, and suffered severe handling from either side, even to the extenuation of his purse and the incarceration of his person.

Craving thy pardon, gentle Reader, for these few words concerning me and mine, I rest, as above expressed,

Thy sure and obligated friend.*

J. C.

GANDERCLEUGH, this 1st of April, 1818.

* It is an old proverb, that "many a true word is spoken in jest." The existence of Walter Scott, third son of Sir William Scott of Harden, is instructed, as it is called, by a charter under the great seal, Domingo Willielmo Scott de Harden Militi, et Waltero Scott suo filio legitimo tertio genito, terrarum de Robertson.* The magnificent old gentleman left all his four sons considerable estates, and settled those of Ellrig and Raeburn, together with valuable possessions around Lessenden, upon Walter, his third son, who is ancestor of the Scotts of Raeburn, and of the Author of Waverley. He appears to have become a convert to the doctrine of the Quakers, or Friends, and a great assessor of their peculiar tenets. This was probably at the time when George Fox, the celebrated apostle of the sect, made an expedition into the south of Scotland about 1657, on which occasion he boasts, that "as he first set his horse's feet upon Scottish ground, he felt the seed of grace to sparkle about him like innumerable sparks of fire." Upon the same occasion,

* See Douglas's Baronage, page 215.

probably, Sir Gideon Scott of Highchester, second son of Sir William, immediate elder brother of Walter, and ancestor of the author's friend and kinsman, the present representative of the family of Harden, also embraced the tenets of Quakerism. This last convert, Gideon, entered into a controversy with the Rev. James Kirkton, author of the Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland, which is noticed by my ingenious friend Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, in his valuable and curious edition of that work, 4to, 1817. Sir William Scott, eldest of the brothers, remained, amid the defection of his two younger brethren, an orthodox member of the Presbyterian Church, and used such means for reclaiming Walter of Raeburn from his heresy, as savored far more of persuasion than persecution. In this he was assisted by MacDougal of Makerston, brother to Isabella MacDougal, the wife of the said Walter, and who, like her husband, had conformed to the Quaker tenets.

The interest possessed by Sir William Scott and Makerston was powerful enough to procure the two following acts of the Privy Council of Scotland, directed against Walter of Raeburn as an heretic and convert to Quakerism, appointing him to be imprisoned first in Edinburgh jail, and then in that of Jedburgh; and his children to be taken by force from the society and direction of their parents, and educated at a distance from them, besides the assignment of a sum for their maintenance, sufficient in those times to be burdensome to a moderate Scottish estate.

* Apud Edin., vigesimo Junii 1655.

"The Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council having received information that Scott of Raeburn, and Isobel Mackdougall, his wife, being infected with the error of Quakerism, doe endeavour to breed and traine up William, Walter, and Isobel Scotts, their children, in the same profession, doe therefore give order and command to Sir William Scott of Harden, the said Raeburn's brother, to separat and take away the saids children from the custody and society of the saids parents, and to cause educate and bring them up in his owne house, or any other convenient place, and ordaines letters to be direct at the said Sir William's instance against Raeburn, for a maintenance to the saids children, and that the said Sir Wm. give an account of his diligence with all conveniency."

"Edinburgh, 5th July, 1656.

"Anent a petition presented be Sir Wm. Scott of Harden, for himself and in name and behalf of the three children of Walter Scott of Raeburn, his brother, showing that the Lords of Council, by an act of the 22d day of Junii, 1655, did grant power and warrant to the petitioner, to separat and take away Raeburn's children, from his family and education, and to breed them in some convenient place, where they might be free from all infection in their younger years, from the principals of Quakerism, and, for maintenance of the saids children, did ordain letters to be direct against Raeburn; and, seeing the Petitioner, in obedience to the said order, did take away the saids children, being two' sonnes and a daughter, and after some paines taken upon them in his owne family, hes sent them to the city of Glasgow, to be bred at schooles, and there to be principled with the knowledge of the true religion, and that it is necessary the Council determine what shall be the maintenance for which Raeburn's three children may be charged, as likewise that Raeburn himself, being now in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, where he dayley converses with all the Quakers who are prisoners there, and others who daily resort to them, whereby he is hardened in his pernicious opinions and principles, without all hope of recovery, unless he be separat from such pernicious company, humbly therefore, desyring that the Council might determine upon the somme of money to be payed be Raeburn, for the education of his children, to the petitioner, who will be countable therefor; and that, in order to his conversion, the place of his imprisonment may be changed. The Lords of his Maj. Privy Council having at length heard and considered the foresaid petition, doe modifie the somme of two thousand pounds Scots, to be payed yearly at the terme of Whitsunday be the said Walter Scott of Raeburn, furth of his estate to the petitioner, for the entertainment and education of the said children, beginning the first termes payment thereof at Whitsunday last for the half year preceding, and so furth year-

ly, at the said terme of Whitsunday in tym coming till furder orders; and ordaines the said Walter Scott of Raeburn to be transported from the tolbooth of Edinburgh to the prison of Jedburgh, where his friends and others may have occasion to convert him. And to the effect he may be secured from the practice of other Quakers, the said Lords doe hereby discharge the magistrates of Jedburgh to suffer any persons suspect of these principles to have access to him; and in case any contraveen, that they secure ther persons till they be therfore punisht; and ordaines letters to be direct heirupon in form, as effairs."

Both the sons, thus harshly separated from their father, proved good scholars. The eldest, William, who carried on the line of Raeburn, was, like his father, a deep Orientalist; the younger, Walter, became a good classical scholar, a great friend and correspondent of the celebrated Dr. Pitsairn, and a Jacobite so distinguished for zeal, that he made a vow never to shave his beard till the restoration of the exiled family. This last Walter Scott was the author's great-grandfather.

There is yet another link betwixt the author and the simple-minded and excellent Society of Friends, though a proselyte of much more importance than Walter Scott of Raeburn. The celebrated John Swinton of Swinton, ninth baron in descent of that ancient and once powerful family, was, with Sir William Lockhart of Lee, the person whom Cromwell chiefly trusted in the management of the Scottish affairs during his usurpation. After the Restoration, Swinton was devoted as a victim to the new order of things, and was brought down in the same vessel which conveyed the Marquis of Argyll to Edinburgh, where that nobleman was tried and executed. Swinton was destined to the same fate. He had assumed the habit and entered into the Society of the Quakers, and appeared as one of their number before the Parliament of Scotland. He renounced all legal defence though several pleas were open to him, and answered, in con-

formity to the principles of his sect, that at the time these crimes were imputed to him, he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity; but that God Almighty having since called him to the light, he saw and acknowledged these errors, and did not refuse to pay the forfeit of them, even though, in the judgment of the Parliament, it should extend to life itself.

Respect to fallen greatness, and to the patience and calm resignation with which a man once in high power expressed himself under such a change of fortune, found Swinton friends family connections, and some interested considerations of Middleton the Commissioner, joined to procure his safety, and he was dismissed, but after a long imprisonment, and much dilapidation of his estates. It is said, that Swinton's admonitions, while confined in the Castle of Edinburgh, had a considerable share in converting to the tenets of the Friends Colonel David Barclay, then lying there in the garrison. This was the father of Robert Barclay, author of the celebrated apology for the Quakers. It may be observed among the inconsistencies of human nature, that Kirkton, Wodrow, and other Presbyterian authors, who have detailed the sufferings of their own sect for non-conformity with the established church, censure the government of the time for not exerting the civil power against the peaceful enthusiasts we have treated of, and some express particular chagrin at the escape of Swinton. Whatever might be his motives for assuming the tenets of the Friends, the old man retained them faithfully till the close of his life.

Jean Swinton, grand-daughter of Sir John Swinton, son of Judge Swinton, as the Quaker was usually termed, was mother of Anne Rutherford, the author's mother.

And thus, as in the play of the Anti-Jacobin, the ghost of the author's grandmother having arisen to speak the Epilogue it is full time to conclude, lest the reader should remonstrate that his desire to know the Author of Waverley never included a wish to be acquainted with his whole ancestry.

THE HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN.

CHAPTER I.

BEING INTRODUCTORY.

So down thy hill, romantic Ashbourn, glides
The Derby dilly, carrying six insides.

FRERE.

THE times have changed in nothing more (we follow as we were wont the manuscript of Peter Pattieson) than in the rapid conveyance of intelligence and communication betwixt one part of Scotland and another. It is not above twenty or thirty years, according to the evidence of many credible witnesses now alive, since a little miserable horse-cart, performing with difficulty a journey of thirty miles *per diem*, carried our mails from the capital of Scotland to its extremity. Nor was Scotland much more deficient in these accommodations than our rich sister had been about eighty years before. Fielding, in his Tom Jones, and Farquhar, in a little farce called the Stage-Coach, have ridiculed the slowness of these vehicles of public accommodation. According to the latter authority, the highest bribe could only induce the coachman to promise to anticipate by half an hour the usual time of his arrival at the Bull and Mouth.

But in both countries these ancient, slow, and sure modes of conveyance are now alike unknown; mail-coach races against mail-coach, and high-flyer against high-flyer, through the most remote districts of Britain. And in our village alone, three post-coaches, and four coaches with men armed, and in scarlet cassocks, thunder through the streets each day, and rival in brilliancy and noise the invention of the celebrated tyrant:—

*Zemens, qui nimbo et non imitabile fulmen,
Ere et cornipedum puleu, simularat, equorum.*

Now and then, to complete the resemblance, and to correct the presumption of the venturesome charioteers, it does happen that the career of these dashing rivals of Salmoncus meets with as undesirable and violent a termination as that of their prototype. It is on such occasions that the Insides and Outsides, to use the appropriate vehicular phrases, have reason to rue the exchange of the slow and safe motion of the ancient Fly-coaches, which, compared with the chariots of Mr. Palmer, so ill deserve the name. The ancient vehicle used to settle quietly down, like a ship scuttled and left to sink by the gradual influx of the waters, while the modern is smashed to pieces with the velocity of the same vessel hurled against

breakers, or rather with the fury of a bomb bursting at the conclusion of its career through the air. The late ingenious Mr. Pennant, whose humor it was to set his face in stern opposition to these speedy conveyances, had collected, I have heard, a formidable list of such casualties, which, joined to the imposition of inn-keepers, whose charges the passengers had no time to dispute, the sauciness of the coachman, and the uncontrolled and despotic authority of the tyrant called the guard, held forth a picture of horror, to which murder, theft, fraud, and peculation, lent all their dark coloring. But that which gratifies the impatience of the human disposition will be practised in the teeth of danger, and in defiance of admonition; and, in despite of the Cambrian antiquary, mail-coaches not only roll their thunders round the base of Penman-Maur and Cader-Edris, but

Frighted Skiddaw hears afar
The rattling of the unscythed car.

And perhaps the echoes of Ben-Nevis may soon be awakened by the bangle, not of a warlike chieftain, but of the guard of a mail-coach.

It was a fine summer day, and our little school had obtained a half holiday, by the intercession of a good-humored visitor.* I expected by the coach a new number of an interesting periodical publication, and walked forward on the highway to meet it, with the impatience which Cowper has described as actuating the resident in the country, when longing for intelligence from the mart of news:—

—“The grand debate,
The popular harangue,—the tart reply,—
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh,—I long to know them all;—
I burn to set the imprison'd wranglers free,
And give them voice and utterance again.”

It was with such feelings that I eyed the approach of the new coach, lately established on our road, and known by the name of the Somerset, which, to say truth, possesses some interest for me, even when it conveys no such important information. The distant tremulous sound of its wheels was heard just as I gained the summit of the gentle ascent, called the Goslin-brae, from which you command an extensive view down the valley of the river Gander. The public road, which comes up the side of that stream, and crosses it at a bridge about a quarter of a mile

* His honor Gilbert Goslinn of Gandercleugh; for I love to be press'd in matters of importance.—J. C.