

POETRY.



From the Providence Patriot,
PRINTING OFFICE MELODIES.
THE PRESSMAN.

Pull up, my boys, turn quick the rounce,
And let the work begin;
The world is pressing on without,
And we must press within—
And we who guide the public mind,
Have influence far and wide,
And all our deeds are good although
The devil's at our side.

Let fly the frisket now my boys!
Who are more proud than we—
While wait the anxious crowd without,
The force of power to see;
So pull away—none are so great
As they who run the car:
And who have dignity like those
Who practice at the bar?

And you who twirl the roller there
Be quick, you inky man;
Old time is rolling on himself,
So beat him if you can;
Be careful of the light and shade,
Nor let the sheet grow pale;
Be careful of the monkey looks
Of every head and tail.

Though high in office is our stand,
And pious is our case,
We would not cast a slur on those,
Who fill a lower space;
The gaping world is fed by us,
Who retail knowledge here;
By feeding that, we feed ourselves,
Nor deem our fare too dear.

Pull up, my boys, turn quick the rounce,
And thus the chase we'll join;
We have deposits in the bank,
Our drawers are full of coin,
And who should more genteelly cut
A figure or a dash?
Yet sometimes we who press so much,
Ourselves are pressed for cash.

From the Saturday Courier.

ESQ. GABLE'S MARRIAGE CEREMONY.
You bromish now, you goot man dare
Vot stant upon de floor,
To hab dish voman for your wife,
And lub her ebmore,
To feed her vill wid sourceront,
Peens, buttermilk, and cheese;
And in all things to lend your aid
Dat vill promote her ease.

Yes, and you voman standin dare
Do bledge your vord, dish tay,
Dat you vill take vor your husband
Dis man, ant him opey;
Dat you vill ped and poard wit him;
Wash, iron, and meat his cloas;
Laugh when he smiles, weep when he
sighs;
Druss share his choys and voes.

Veil, den, I now, vidin dese valls,
Vot joy and not vit krief,
Dre-ounce you bote to be von mint,
Von same, von man, von beef;
I pooblish, now, dese sacred bants,
Dese matrimonial ties,
Before mine vife, Got, Kate ant Poll,
Ant all dese gazing eyes,

Ant, as de sacred scripture say,
Vot Got unites togedder
Let no man dare assunder put,
Let no man dare tem sever,
Ant von britekroom dare, here you stop,
I'll not let go your collar
Before you answer me dis ting,
Dat ish—Vare ish mine dollar?

The Mysterious Stranger,
OR THE BRAVO OF BANFF.
Chapter I.—The Robber's Thumb.

We are about to enter a terra incognita. Does any one remember hearing or seeing a little, odd, un-English, un-Scottish monosyllable, spelling itself BANFF? An affirmative answer, we suspect, will only be given by young ladies, or young gentlemen, fresh from their geography—who may call to mind, if they have particular good memories, that Banff is the capital town of a county of the same name in Scotland. Farther than this not one in a million of our fair readers can go.—Not a single association is called up by the sound. The "sleeping images of things" in the mind sleep on. It is not a word to conjure with. Try as you may, it will only resolve itself at least into its component letters; and you shall have nothing more for your pains than B, a, n, double f.

There is no less strange than it is true; for Banff, in addition to its being one of the most beautifully situated towns on the northern coasts of Scotland—which is pretty nearly the same as saying, on the face of the whole earth—is surrounded by all the charms which, like those of women, attract the spoilers of fashion, to desecrate and devour the very temple wherein they worship. Its chalybeate springs resemble, while they surpass, those of Torbridge Wells; its walks, rides, and drives are unrivalled in the kingdom; the mighty magnificent sea breaks open its cliffs, or gambols on its golden

sands; and the romantic Deveron plunges into the waste of waters by its side.

Banff, although cheerful and light-some in its aspect, has yet a solitary look. It seems to stand apart, with a kind of *prishly* decorum, from the rest of the world; and this character attaches even to the inhabitants themselves. They consist in great part of that class which used formerly to be designated by the now obsolete term of "genteel people." Of this portion of the society some are wealthy and some are small annuitants; but in a place where the necessities, and many of the luxuries of life, are singularly cheap, all are independent. The stain of traffic is rarely to be seen in the escutcheon of Banff gentility. The residents have laid down their ledgers and taken to the journals; or they are honorable pensioners on their country; or families of small inherited fortune; or invalids who come to drink at the Hygeian springs, and brighten their pale cheeks with the breezes of the sea.

Owing to the circumscribed nature of the society, the Banffians are all well known to each other. Yet, in this instance, familiarity does not breed contempt—but quite the reverse.—Their social intercourse is carried on with a certain punctilio, which spreads an air of fashion over the whole community. They are strict inquirers into clans and families, and allow grudgingly his lawful place to Mummion.—They are in fact a sort of exclusives in their way; and, in their inter-communication, bear some resemblance to a dress party.

At the same time, however, when we take up the history of this community, Banff was feighted from its propriety by a series of daring robberies committed in the town and neighborhood. The business commenced at Duff House, the elegant seat of Lord Fife; and, whether produced or not by the natural love of imitation which seems to govern mankind in matters of murder and marriage, a succession of similar exploits spread consternation through the district.—Some people imagined that a gang of first rate cracksmen had condescended to come all the way from London, the grand emporium of thievery; but no stranger of any distinction in appearance was seen in the neighborhood, and the suspicion fell to the ground. That the robberies were committed by strangers, there could be no doubt; for it was observed, in some cases, that the best protected part of the house was chosen for attack. Force appeared occasionally to have been used; but in general entrance was effected either by an unfastened window, or some other means that did not involve the necessity of making too much noise.—Noise, indeed, was usually heard; but never till the deed was accomplished. Then there was a grating of shoes, a stamping of feet, and a clapping of feet, and a clapping of doors; as if the adventures, flushed with success, and certain of escape, cared no longer for concealment. Such tokens of defiance, indeed, were the best means that could have been used to cover their retreat; for when the stillness of midnight was broken by sounds like these, the stoutest men sometimes lay quaking in bed or were seized bodily by their wives, and kept prisoners of peace till all was over.

It was surprising, however, to see how bold the Banffians were in the day time. Curser both loud and deep were vented against these mysterious bravos, whom no man had as yet seen.—The most bloody-minded measures were talked of. All the pistols in Banff were cleaned, primed and loaded; swords and dirks sharpened; and one gentleman even proposed the formation of an armed constabulary force, and daily exercise on the Battery Green in all the manoeuvres of war. But these belligerent plans were successfully opposed by the half-pay officers, who remarked that regular military operations could be of no use in dark chambers and narrow staircases; and at length an air of ridicule was thrown over the war party by the conduct of one of their leaders, who, on hearing some suspicious sounds at night ran from his own solitary room into that of his sister's, exclaiming valiantly, "Haud me, or I'll fecht!"

As yet, we have said, the robbers had never been seen; but at length the fullness of time arrived when they were both seen and felt, and when blood flowed in the struggle. The circumstance of their choosing the house of Major Lovat for the object of attack proved, if proof were wanting, that they were indeed strangers in the district. The major, whose name is well known in the wars of the Peninsula, was a man of unquestioned courage, and withal of a fierce, hot, and sudden temper. He was besides in the commission of the peace, and so active in his justiceship, that to him were owing almost all the great crimes that had been committed in the county since

the peace. The major did not appear to share in the general excitement at this particular juncture. He could not be persuaded to take any measure of scrutiny which he had not been accustomed to; and even his man servant, Franks, a fine looking fellow, of well-known bravery, although an Englishman, as the Banffians said—was not withdrawn from an out house, where he had slept for some time in consequence of an overflow of visitors, who had now taken leave.

If major Lovat was not so fierce as usual in manner, he was not less watchful. He lay with the door of his room ajar, and every now and then got up to listen. Sometimes he stood during the stillest part of the night at his chamber window, which commanded the back entrance to the house, and sometimes descended the staircase in his slippers, to ascertain that all was right below. These precautions, however, were taken by stealth; and his daughter and the maids murmured as loud as they durst at his supposed negligence, which they attributed to military pride.

One dark and stormy night—a night that seemed to have been contrived on purpose for the prowling robber—Major Lovat was as usual on the watch. He was confined, however, by the Babel of sublime or dismal sounds; in which the howling of the wind, the groaning of trees, and the roaring of the waves breaking on the Bar, mingled in a strange wild chorus. To ascertain what was without the house, was impossible; yet he could not divest himself of a sort of superstitious impression, that he had heard something which did not belong to the proper noises of the house. He could derive no assistance from his eyes, for the night was pitch-dark; but as he endeavored to pierce through the gloom below, while he stood at his window, a multitude of moving forms seemed to throng around the door.

Although aware that these must have been the effects of fancy, he yet determined to descend stealthily, and listen at the door. Wrapped in his night gown, and armed with a drawn sword, the major groped his way almost to the bottom of the stairs, and then stopped short, threw back the folds of his gown, raised his sword, and bent forward in the attitude of springing, as he heard suddenly the well-known din which attended the departure of the plunderers. A distant door was shut with a force that shook the house, confused whispers rushed along the corridor, and heavy steps tramped and grated upon the floor. The din approached. Major Lovat bitterly regretted that he had not at once sprung forward, secured the back door, and thus made prisoners of the whole party. He knew that in a dark house a child might scare a whole band of robbers; and at any rate, if assistance was necessary, a single shout from the window would soon awake his servant Franks. It was now too late, however; for a door communicating with the range of apartments on the opposite side of the hall flew open, and a human figure, treading heavily, as if in wantonness, rushed towards the door.

Major Lovat gained the spot in a single bound; and, aware that in the twofold darkness of the recess the enemy would become invisible, whirled his sword at random round his head. The robber did not enter within its sweep. He turned suddenly aside at the entrance of the recess which formed the porch, and vaulting like a harlequin up on a lofty window-seat, disappeared before the enraged major could strike at him more than a singular blow. Whether this blow took effect or not, it was impossible for the present to ascertain. The gallant veteran stepped noiselessly and instantaneously back into the porch; and, grinding his teeth till he foamed at the mouth, waited the approach of the next.

He waited in vain; for the rest of the gang having no doubt heard the clang of the weapon, found another way out. The morning soon after broke, and the kitchen-wench, crawling gappingly to her early avocations, no sooner beheld the spectre-like figure of her master guarding the domains with a drawn sword, than she uttered a scream that brought down Miss Lovat and the maids in their night gear.

After ascertaining—which he did with infinite mortification—that the whole party had escaped, the major proceeded to examine the window and the circumjacent premises; the folding casement had been dexterously slipped from its hinges, with the fracture of only a single pane; and on the sill our veteran detected, with a growl of satisfaction—blood. This, however, might have been no more than the effects of the broken glass, and it was necessary to inquire into the state of affairs on the outside. On the pavement below the window, a much greater quantity of blood was visible. It not meander along the stone in a narrow stream like that which flows from a common cat; but lay here and there

in broad and thick splashes. This was proof that an artery had been severed; and the major followed the track like a slot-hound, till it was completely lost in a jungle behind the paling. He was about to call Franks, and beat the bush from end to end, in hopes the wounded man might have fallen from the loss of blood; when a scream from Miss Lovat brought the anxious father to her side.

She was standing beside a pond at a little distance from the path, and gazing with horror and alarm at some minute object on the brink. It was a man's thumb. The daring villain, in the midst of the pain and danger of the wound, had had the presence of mind to throw away the severed member, lest at some future time it might appear as a witness against him, attempting, no doubt, to bury it in the pond, although he missed his purpose in the dark. The major stooped upon his quarry like a hawk; but presently, shaking his head—

"Get in with you lasses," said he, "and a truce with your squeeling and skirting for one morning.—This is not the lad to lie down for the loss of a thumb; he is safe by this time I'll warrant you; and, by my honor, I should not be sorry for it, if we had only his arm or leg here. But a thumb!—a poor indemnification for a night's watching, and may be as much as a year's pay in kind. Well, well—half a loaf is better than no bread," as Franks says; and the major, not at all so disconcerted as he appeared, carefully rinsed the thumb in the pond, and carried it triumphantly to the house.

It would not be easy to describe the state of agitation into which the people of Banff were thrown, when the news of this circumstance ran, while it was yet early morning, like wildfire through the town. The thumb was first magnified to a hand—an arm—a leg—a whole body; and then multiplied by fifteen or sixteen, till the inhabitants, flocking to the scene of action, expected to find Major Lovat's back court strewn with the slain. Some of the families whose houses stood alone, talked of removing into town, and many serving lasses actually left their situations, and sought shelter in their parent wynds and closes. Even Franks, Major Lovat's man, made his appearance in the parlor, greatcoated, booted, gloved, and evidently prepared for a journey.

"I am come to take leave of your honor," said he, with the abruptness which in an English servant is called insolence.

"The — you are!—and without warning?"

"You know, sir, you make it a rule to give me warning at least ten times a day, and that is quite sufficient for my purpose."

"The English of all this is, that you are afraid—I say you are afraid, you rascal—afraid," spluttered the major, red dening with anger.

"I am neither a rascal nor a coward," replied Franks; "but I would rather take a soldier's pay and die by fair fighting, than run the risk every night of being murdered in bed for ten times the money. I have no notion of it, I assure you. It is not my trade. Till such time as you can contrive to have a proper police in your country, you need not expect an Englishman to live with you." By the time the fellow had finished his harangue he contrived to be just at the door; for the major was occasionally apt to take the executive department of his justiceship into his own hands. Had the man been less impudent, he would most probably have been bribed to stay, by a handsome addition to his salary; for, being a smart, ready fellow, he had become almost necessary to his master. The only point in his character, indeed, that was at all objectionable, was an over devotion—if such a thing be possible—to the fair sex. The serving lasses far and near were pulling caps, or rather *rugging* *muches* for him; and since his arrival, an unusual number of accidents had happened both to their reputations and persons.

The major, however, was at this time so much absorbed in the contemplation of his gain, that he had no time to be moan his loss, or reflect either on the good or bad qualities of Franks. The thumb lay on a towel on a table before him, and the room during the entire day was crowded by visitors, who had come to inspect it, and inquire into the real history of the capture.

The thumb was not an ill-shaped one. It had certainly not been a hard working thumb; but on the contrary was fair and smooth, and the nail well shaped, somewhat long, and carefully pared. It was, in short, rather a gentlemanly thumb, and only distinguished from other thumbs of the class by the scar of an old wound. When the visitors had all retired—which they took care to do before the shades of evening had fallen, the major wrapped the relic in cotton, impregnated with brandy, spices, and perfumes; and in spite of Miss Lovat's entreaties, placed it on the mantel-piece as a trophy and an ornament. From hence it was taken for many a day after to be shown again and again, to the admiring visitors; and for some time the all-absorbing topic of conversation was the Robber's Thumb.

(To be continued.)

Diving for a Wife.

"The pilgrims having completed their preparations, and all being in readiness, Selim departed from Scio, with the consolation of having attempted to do as much good as possible.—It is not my fault that I did not succeed," said he. A day or two after they were becalmed close to the little island of Nizari, which is famous for having the best divers in all the Archipelago. Nor is this wonderful, since, when a rich man intends marrying his daughter, he appoints a day for all the young men of the island to repair to the sea-side, and there in the presence and that of his daughter, to dive for her. He who goes deepest and remains under water the longest wins the prize.

"It happened that a trial of this kind was going on at the moment the vessel was becalmed close to the shore, and seeing a great crowd collected, the passengers, with the exception of the Turkish lady, who refused to be guilty of such an indecorum, all went ashore to witness the ceremony.

"Upwards of a hundred line looking young men were collected, and the trial commenced in the presence of a crowd of spectators. The prize was a charming girl, who sat at some distance, with eyes modestly averted.—It was said that she ardently wished success to a youth who was present, and who excelled all his competitors in the beauty of his face, as well as the symmetry of his person. The lots had been cast to decide the order in which each of the candidates was to dive, and the turn of the handsome young man was the last.

"A little bag was tied round the neck of the diver, the depth of the water correctly measured in different places, and it was astonishing to see the time they remained under water, as well as the vast depth whence they brought up pearl-oysters. All had now done their best, when the handsome youth advanced to essay his fortune. It was observed that the robe which enveloped the bosom of the young virgin rose and fell with more than usual rapidity, as the young man plunged into the sea at a spot where as yet no one had reached the bottom.

As the period of his immersion lengthened beyond all others, shouts of victory resounded from the spectators, and the bosom of the young prize damsel increased in its throbbings, like the waves of the sea when the tempest is rising. A few moments more, and the shouts gradually subsided into low murmurs, while the crowd eagerly advanced to the verge of the ocean, and seemed agitated by a painful anxiety to see him rise. A few moments more, and a hollow moan announced increasing and almost hopeless anxiety. The prize damsel appeared agitated by the most violent emotions, and at the length voices exclaimed, "it is time for him to return."

"He will never return!" exclaimed the distracted maid, rushing towards the beach, and beseeching the other young men to dive to his rescue, if it was not yet too late. They obeyed, but it was some time ere they reappeared, during which the maiden wrung her hands, and exclaimed in piteous despair. At length, after a lapse of a few moments, one of the young men appeared bearing the body of the handsome youth without sense or motion to the shore. Various means were taken for his restoration, during which the distracted girl remained fixed as a statue, with her hands clasped and her eyes raised as if beseeching the interference of Heaven. In a little while the limbs of the youth became stiff, his muscles rigid and inflexible, and it was declared that he was stone dead, beyond all hope.

"No one was so ungenerous as to claim the victory, or demand the prize from the deceased diver, and the poor girl was led home in silent despair by her father and nearest relatives."

INFANCY.—What is more beautiful than an infant? Look at its spotless brow—at its soft and ruddy lips, which have never uttered an unholly word—and its blue laughing eye, as it lays on the breast of its fond mother.—Look, it has stretched out its white hand, and is playfully twisting her hair around its tiny fingers. Ay, let me look at an infant! It is innocence endowed with life; the very counterpart of holiness. It requires nothing but the pleasant look of its mother, and her warm kiss upon its lily cheek, to make it happy. You may talk to it of sorrow, of misery, of death, but your words are unmeaning. It has never felt the chills of disappointment—it has never withered beneath the pang of affliction, and its guileless heart knows nothing of the emptiness, the hollow professions, and cold heartedness of the world; and would to God that the cup may be broken ere it be lifted to its lips.

On an average.—"How deep is the snow, Mrs. Dumps?" "About 4 inches deep, in spots, on an average, M'am."