

The Raleigh Minerva.

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Miscellaneous.

TALES OF MY LANDLORD.—Although not of the elevated cast of some of his former productions, the continuation of the stories under the foregoing title, adds to the high reputation of the Author.—I select this week, as an evidence of the exquisite perception manifested, throughout all the writer's works, of human nature, the following scene before the mayor's court—as we would call it in this country.—It must be understood, that Ratcliffe, the person examined, is a convict, who, when the prison was forced by the mob of Edinburgh, refused to make his escape—and that he is examined in the presence of a gentleman who was present at the breaking of the goal and was subsequently arrested as one of the guilty.

It was a large room, partially and imperfectly lighted—but by chance, or the skill of the architect, who might happen to remember the advantage which might occasionally be derived from such an arrangement, one window was so placed as to throw a strong light at the foot of the table at which prisoners were usually posted for examination, while the upper end, where the examiners sat, was thrown into shadow. Butler's eyes were instantly fixed on the person whose examination was at present proceeding, in the idea that he might recognize some one of the conspirators of the former night. But though the features of this man were sufficiently marked and striking, he could not recollect that ever he had seen them before.

The complexion of this person was dark, and his age somewhat advanced. His own hair, combed smooth down, and cut very short. It was jet black, slightly curled by nature, and already mottled with gray. The skin of his face expressed rather leanness than vice, more a disposition to sharpness, cunning, and reguery than the traces of stormy and indulgent passions. His sharp, quick black eyes, acute features, ready sardonic smile, promptitude, and effrontery gave him altogether what is called among the vulgar a knowing look, which generally implies a tendency to knavery. At a fair or market, you could not for a moment have doubted that he was a horse-jockey, intimate with all the tricks of his trade; yet had you met him on a moor, you would not have apprehended any violence from him. His dress was also that of a horse-dewer—a close buttoned jockey-coat, or wrap-rascal, as it was then termed, with huge metal buttons, coarse blue upper stockings, call-d boot-hose, because supplying the place of boots, and a slouched hat. He wanted a loaded whip under his arm, and a spur upon one heel, to complete the dress of the character he seemed to represent.

"Your name is James Ratcliffe?" said the magistrate.
"Ay—always wi' your honour's leave."
"That is to say, you could find me another name, if I did not like that one?"
"Twenty to pick and chus: upon, always with your honour's leave," resumed the respondent.

"But James Ratcliffe is your present name?—what is your trade?"
"I canna just say, distinctly, that I have what ye wad ca' precesely a trade."
"But," repeated the magistrate, "what are your means of living—your occupation?"
"Hout tout—your honour, wi' your leave, kens that as weel as I do," replied the examined.

"No matter. I want to hear you describe it," said the examinant.
"Me describe?—and to your honour?—far be it from Jemmie Ratcliffe," responded the prisoner.

"Come, sir, no trifling—I insist on an answer."
"Weel, sir," replied the declarant, "I maun make a clean breast, for ye see (wi' your leave) I am looking for favour.—Describe my occupation, quo' ye?—troth it will be ill to do that, in a feasible way, in a place like this—but what is't again that the aught command says?"
"Thou shalt not steal," answered the magistrate.

"Are ye sure o' that?—Troth, then, my occupation, and that command, are sair at odds: for I read it, thou shalt steal, and that makes an unco difference, tho' there's but a wee bit word left out."
"To cut the matter short, Ratcliffe, you have been a most notorious thief," said the examinant.

"I believe Highlands and Lowlands ken that, sir, forbye England and Holland," replied Ratcliffe, with the greatest composure and effrontery.

"And what d'ye think the end o' your calling will be?" said the magistrate.

"I could have gien a brave guess yesterday—but I dinna ken sae weel the day," answered the prisoner.

"And what would you have said would have been your end, had you been asked the question yesterday?"

"Just the gallows," replied Ratcliffe, with the same composure.

"You are a daring rascal, sir, (said the magistrate) and how dare you hope times are amended with you to-day?"

"Dear your honour," answered Ratcliffe, "there's muckle difference between lying in prison under sentence of death, and staying out of ane's proper accord, when it would have cost a man naething to get up and rin a wa—what was to hinder me from stepping out quietly, when the rabble walked awa' wi' Jack Porteous yestreen?—and does your honour really think I staid on purpose to be hanged?"

"I do not know what you may have proposed to yourself; but I know," said the magistrate, "what the law proposes for you, and that is to hang you next Wednesday eight days."

"Na, na, your honour, said Ratcliffe firmly, "craving your honour's pardon, I'll ne'er believe that till I see it.—I have kenn'd the Law this mony a year, and mony a thrawart job I hae had wi' her first and last; but the auld laud is no sae ill as that comes to—I aye found her bark waur than her bite."

"And if you do not expect the gallows, to which you are condemned, (for the fourth time to my knowledge) may I beg the favor to know," said the magistrate, "wae it is that you do expect in consideration of your not having taken your flight with the rest of the jail-birds, which I will admit was a line of conduct little to have been expected?"

"I would never have thought for a moment of staying in the auld gousy toom house, (answered Ratcliffe) but the use and won't had just gien me a fancy to the place, and I'm just expecting a bit post in't."

"A post!" exclaimed the magistrate; "a whipping post, I suppose?"
"Na, na, sir, I had na' thoughts o' a whipping-post. After having been four times downed to hang by the neck till I was dead, I think I am far beyond being whauppt."

"Then, in Heaven's name, what did you expect?"

"Just the post of under turokey, for I understand there's a vacancy, (said the prisoner) I wadna think of asking the lockman's place over his head; it wadna suit me sae weel as ither folk, for I never could pit a beast out o' the way, much less deal wi' a man."

"That's something in your favor," said the magistrate, making exactly the inference to which Ratcliffe was desirous to lead him, though he mantled his art with an affectation of oddity. "But, (continued the magistrate) how do you think you can be trusted with a charge in the prison, when you have broken at your own hand half the jails in Scotland?"

"Wi' your honour's leave," said Ratcliffe, "if I kenn'd sae weel how to win out myself, it's like I wad be a' the better a hand to keep ither folks in. I think they wad ken their business weel that held me in when I wanted to be out, or wan out when I wanted to haud them in."

The remark seemed to strike the magistrate, but he made no further immediate remark, only desired Ratcliffe to be removed.

When this daring, and yet sly free-booter was out of hearing, the magistrate asked the city-clerk, "what he thought of the fellow's assurance?"

"It's no for me to say, sir," replied the clerk; but if James Ratcliffe be inclined to turn to good, there is not a man e'er came within the ports of the burgh could be of sae muckle use to the good town, in the thief and lock-up line of business. I'll speak to Mr. Sharpit-law about him."

"Haw-maw," so called from the small quantity of meal (Scottish, lock) which he was entitled to take out of every boll exposed to market in the city. In Edinburgh the duty has been very long commuted; but in Dumfries the finisher of the law still exercises, or did lately exercise, his privilege, the quantity taken being regulated by a small iron ladle, which he uses as the measure of his perquisite. The expression lock for a small quantity of any readily divisible dry substance, as corn, meal, fax, or the like, is still preserved, not only popularly, but in a legal description, as the lock and gowpen, or small quantity and handful, payable in the thirlage cases, as in town multure.

Extract o the life of John Philpot Curran, by Mr. Phillips. "One morning I was playing at marbles in the village ball alley, with a light heart, and a lighter pocket. The gibe and the jest and the plunder went gaily round; those who won laughed, and those who lost cheated; when suddenly there appeared among us a stranger of a very venerable and very cheerful aspect; his intrusion was not the least restraint upon our merry little assemblage; on the contrary, he seemed pleased, and even delighted; he was a benevolent creature, and the days of infancy (after all, the happiest we ever see) perhaps rose upon his memory. God

bless him! I see his fine form at the distance of half a century just as he stood before me, in the little ball alley, in the day's of my childhood! His name was Boyse: he was the rector of I. mar at; to me he took a particular fancy; was winning and full of waggery, thinking of every thing that was eccentric, and by no means a miser of my eccentricities; every one was welcome to share them, and I had plenty to spare after having freighted the company. Some sweet meats easily bribed me home with him. I learned from poor Boyse my alphabet and my grammar and the rudiments of the classics; he taught me all he could and then sent me to the school at Middleton—in short he made a man of me. I recollect it was about five and thirty year afterwards, when I had gone to some business at the bar, and when I had a seat in parliament and a good house in Ely Place, on my return one day from court, I found an old gentleman seated alone in the drawing room, his feet familiarly placed on each side of the Italian marble chimney piece, and his whole air bespeaking the consciousness of one quite at home. He turned round—it was my friend of the ball alley! I rushed instinctively into his arms. I could not help bursting into tears.—Words cannot describe the scene which followed. "You are right, sir;—you are right; the chimney is yours—the pictures are yours—the house is yours—you gave me all I have—my friend,—my father!—He dined with me; and in the evening I caught the tear glistening in his fine blue eye when he saw his poor little Jackey, the creature of his bounty, rising in the house of commons to reply to a Right Hon. Poor Boyse! he is now gone; and no suitor had a larger deposit of practical benevolence in the Court above. This is his wine—let us drink his memory." Such is a very faint and very humble imitation of the manner in which Mr. Curran used to relate this most interesting era in his history; and I never heard him recur to it without weeping. In this place, however, it may be as well to remark that neither his wit nor his eloquence can receive any thing like justice from the most gifted narrator. It would be quite as easy to paint the waving of a wand, the spell consisting in the very magic of the movement; and with the charm of manner can be conveyed in words, the reader must fancy in vain the almost supernatural effect of CURRAN.

vengeful were the infidel to the last, they fired grape and partridge shot from the deck, and small arms out of the tops into the men of war as they were going down, which did a deal of mischief amongst the Portuguese. Both the ships were severely shattered—one had several shots between wind and water, which made her very leaky, and her sails and rigging almost cut to pieces—the other had her foremast and bowsprit carried away, with part of her starboard bow, and a large shot went 15 inches in her mainmast. It is thought the pirates had expended all their cannon balls, as in the later part of the engagement they fired from their great guns, marling spikes, ring bolts, rusty nails, bits of iron, and lead cut into square pieces."

SINGULAR SERMON
Delivered at Frankfort, by JAMES SIMPSON, a beloved Minister of the Society of Friends, a few months before his decease.
"What I am now going to relate is but a simple story, and it is probable one of you may have heard me tell it before; but it has taken such possession of my mind, that I thought I would just drop it for consideration. When I was a young man, there lived in our neighbourhood a Presbyterian, who was universally reported to be a very liberal man, and uncommonly upright in his dealings. When he had any of the produce of his farm to dispose of, he made it an invariable rule to give good measure, over good, rather more than could be required of him. One of his friends, observing his frequently doing so, questioned him why he did it—told him he gave too much, and said it could not be to his own advantage. Now my friends, mark the answer of this Presbyterian.—God Almighty has permitted me but one journey through the world, and when gone I cannot return to rectify mistakes. Think of this, friends—but one journey through the world; the hours that are past are gone forever, and the actions in those hours can never be recalled.—I do not throw it out as a charge, nor mean to imply that any of you are dishonest, but the words of this good Presbyterian have often impressed my mind, and I think in an instructive manner. But one journey—we are allowed but one journey through the world; therefore let none of us say, "My tongue is my own, I'll talk what I please—My time is my own, I'll do where I please; I can go to meetings, or, if the world calls me, I'll stay at home—it's all my own." Now this won't do, friends. It is as impossible for us to live as we list, and then come here to worship, as it is for a candle to burn without oil. It is utterly impossible. And I was thinking what a dull composition man is. He is a compound of bank notes, dollars, cents, and newspapers, and bringing as it were the world on his back, he comes here to perform worship, or at least have it appear so. Now friends, I just drop it before we part for your consideration, let each one try himself, and see how it is with his own soul!"

Authenticity of Ossian's Poems.—The following, says a London paper, has been transmitted on the most respectable authority:—A curious and interesting paper (by Hugh Campbell, Esq. author of the Wanderer of Ayrshire, Birth of Bruce, &c) on the Battlegrounds of Fingal, in Ulster, has been read before the society of Scottish Antiquarians, and generally approved of by that respectable body of literati. This scrutinizing traveller went to Ulster, and there commenced a curious inquiry on the subject; and in the county of Antrim soon discovered, by the proximity to the highlands of Scotland, and the analogy of names, &c. used in the poems of Ossian, that he was in the desired neighborhood. The caves, hills, stones, &c. of an ancient warfare and magnificence, in and round the ancient city of Connor, induced him to believe that he had discovered the Synnor of the ancients, where was the palace of the Irish kings of the race of Connor, of Morven, to whose assistance Fingal so frequently went when his kinsman was threatened by the princes of the Belge. In this opinion Mr. C. was soon confirmed by the discovery of the places mentioned in the poems as being in its immediate neighborhood; and ultimately by the remains of the palace itself, which has been in ruins since the city was stormed by Edward Bruce, in 1316. The discoveries made, and the convincing tenor of the elaborate paper on the subject, are sufficient to convince the most incredulous, even Dr. Johnson himself, were he in life, that Fingal fought and Ossian sung!

BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.

It was sometime ago mentioned, that some of the army of occupation had been employed themselves in searching reliques on the field on which the famous battle of Agincourt was fought on the 25th of October, in the year 1425.—We are very happy to find that their labours have been crowned with success far beyond their expectation, and the number of gold pieces already found amounts to upwards of sixty. One of these which is in possession of his grace the duke of Gordon, is in the highest state of preservation. On one side are the arms of France, with the following inscription; *Kirkus Dei Gratia Francorum rex, and on the reverse. P C vincit, P C regit, P C Imperat. P C*—meaning per Cruces or Crucem—the gentleman engaged in this research discovered the spot where the nobles who fell on that day, were buried; and, besides the coin above mentioned, various other reliques have been got; many fragments of iron and among them several arrow heads, one of them in the most perfect state of preservation, two lance heads, one six, the other eight inches long, and a spur. Several rings have also been found, some of gold, and from their diminutive size are supposed to have been pledged given to the knights by their fair dames, on departing to the wars. One ring is enamelled, and on the outside bears, in old characters the words *pleine amitie*, and inside a flower like a rose, with *belle* after it, possibly intended as an enigma, for the lady's name *Rosabelle*. One brass ring was found filled with clay and a finger-bone sticking in it; the wearer did not expect it to remain there for upwards of 400 years. Buckles and other insignia of the fray, have likewise been collected.—The gentlemen previous to their beginning their researches, secured the right by purchase, else it is shrewdly suspected their operations would have been impeded long since by the French government.

OBSTINATE CONELICT.

The following article, (says a late Liverpool paper) dated Fero, June 12, was received by the last Lisbon mail;—"An Algerine corsair, full of men, was lately sunk off Cape St. Vincents; by two Portuguese men of war, after a most desperate and bloody conflict of nine glasses, wherein vast numbers were killed on both sides. The rover maintained the action with great firmness, and such undaunted resolution, that at one time it was doubtful whether she would not have beat them both off, notwithstanding the superior odds against her. The Portuguese behaved manfully, and offered to give quarters, provided they would strike, which generous and humane offer the pirates did, with horrid imprecations, disdainfully refuse; and so re-

Religious.

FAYETTEVILLE, OCTOBER 8.
Religious Intelligence.—On Thursday the 1st inst. the Synod of North Carolina met in this place; and continued their sessions until Saturday evening. At the opening of the Synod, the Rev. John Robinson preached a very animating and interesting sermon, from *Matthew xvi. 3. But can ye not discern the signs of the times?* Divine service was regularly performed, in the forenoon, in the afternoon, and at night, from Thursday forenoon until Monday night, except in an instance or two in the early part of the meeting, in which the inclemency of the weather prevented the attendance of the people. During this interval, several interesting and impressive discourses