

Stockwell Street and its Characteristics.

BEEFSTEAK OR TINKLER'S CLUB.

AMONG the many streets and wynds of Glasgow, there is perhaps none that held at one time a more prominent place in the regards of the citizens than the "Stockwall-gait," or what is now better known as Stockwell-street. Situated, as it was for a long period, on the western boundary of the City, and forming, as it did, the leading thoroughfare to the only bridge that for many centuries spanned the Clyde at Glasgow, it necessarily partook of any little bustle and importance which might belong to what were long designated the "High streets" of the town. But while the "Stockwall-gait" certainly could boast of this peculiarity, from being the connecting link which united the more populous part of the City with the open country lying on the left bank of the river, and with the unbuilt portions of the now populous suburb on the south of the Clyde, still the mansions which lined its eastern and western sides long continued in the category of villas; in other words, the houses were surrounded with trees and gardens, and to some were attached large spaces of open ground, with summer-houses, wherein the proprietors occasionally disported themselves, with their children, when the business of the day was over.

Although the Stockwell must, for a considerable period, have been regarded as a sort of suburban or rural street, it was, at the same time, long famed for the purity, the quality, and the abundance of its spring water; for we find, so early as the year 1638, according to the Burgh Records, that one of the public wells was removed from the "Hie-street" and carried to the "Stockwall;" and that "the head of ane wall at the Croce" was carried therefrom to decorate the "new one in the Stockwall-gait." And in the course of about five and twenty years thereafter, by another

minute of the Town Council, we find "the Deacon Conveinar and others of the Counsell dwelling in Stockwall-gait," are called "to adopt and sie to the commoun well there, that it be not wronged, as is reported, by washing thereat or otherways."* The water was no doubt too valuable for domestic uses to be wasted on washing clothes, seeing that what was wanted for this purpose might always be had in abundance from the Clyde.

From the architecture of one or two of the old houses which still grace this now common and modern-built street, as well as from a recollection of many others, with even more striking features, which have been removed during the last thirty years, it is obvious that at one time the Stockwell must have been rather a fashionable locality, while its better tenements must have long afforded shelter to some of the more opulent class of the inhabitants. Although this must have been particularly the case during the latter years of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, still it did not altogether lose its character for gentility till many years after the beginning of the present century. In the days when old M'Ure penned his quaint history,† we find, for example, that no fewer than three of the mansions situated in this street belonged to the then Bailies, while one was owned by the Provost of the Burgh; that one was in possession of Matthew Craufurd of Balshagry, and another of John Graham of Dougalston, while three others were in the hands of Daniel Campbell of Sauchfield, William Buchanan of Bankel, and Matthew Brown, one of the under-clerks of Council and Session. There were likewise in this street or its immediate neighbourhood, two of those "great and costly buildings for the use of the managers, partners, and proprietors of" those joint-stock works, which at that time characterised the commerce and manufactures of Glasgow. We allude, in the first place, to the South Sugar-house, which was placed on the west side of the street, and consisted of "a large court, high and low apartments, cellary, store-

* Burgh Records, 21st August, 1663.

† In 1736.

houses, and boiling-houses, with distilling apartments, pleasant gardens, and all conveniences whatsoever;" and, second, to the Ropework, which was situated also a little to the west of the same street, and which consisted of "two stately lodgings belonging to the proprietors, good store-houses, spinning-houses, garden, and boiling-houses, and the old green for spinning large cables, tarr'd, and white ropes, with a pleasant garden." In the days, too, of the ancient Clerk of the Seisins of Glasgow, the narrow thoroughfare from Stockwell to Bridgegate, now known by the degraded title of the "Goosedubs," still retained the appellation of "Aird's wynd," from being close to the residence of a Provost of that name, who had been frequently raised to the chief chair of the Magistracy, and who had, during his long official career, done much permanent good to the community.*

During the course of years which succeeded the period in which M'Ure lived and wrote, the "Stockwall-gait" continued to be accounted a most desirable town residence; and, from our own reminiscences, we can state, that not a few of the leading merchants and notabilities of the City, connected with the present century, were either born or bred in this locality. It was in one of the stately lodgings of the Rope-work, that Alexander Oswald of Shieldhall was wont to pass many of his most active days, for his own benefit and that of the community; and that his son, James Oswald of Auchencruive, frequently resided, during the troublous period which preceded the passing of the statute under which he became the Represen-

* Provost Aird died about the year 1735, fourteen years after the erection of the Ram's-horn Kirk, which was built when he was last Provost. In those days, the Provost and brethren in the Council were wont to assemble at the house of Neps Denny, at the head of the Saltmarket, who kept one of the most comfortable hostleries of which Glasgow could at that time boast. At one of the meetings after the Provost's decease, it was proposed that an epitaph should be composed by one of the members of the Club; but whether it was that the Magistrates of those

days were less poetical than their successors, or that the task could not easily be assimilated with the ordinary duties of a civic functionary, it was found necessary to call in the assistance of the buxom landlady. Perfectly familiar with her subject, and under no fear of severe criticism, Neps produced the following lines:—

"Here lies Provost John Aird,
He was neither a great merchant nor a great laird;
At biggin o' kirks he had richt guid skill,
He was five times Lord Provost and twice Dean o' Gil'!

a house situated in Provost Aird's Wynd, now better known by the less aristocratical name of "Goosedubs," where Anne M'Vicar, the celebrated authoress of the "Letters from the Mountains," came into this breathing world, and where she resided for two or three years before her father accompanied his regiment to America.* It was at a later period of Stock-

Ance mair to hear the wild bird's sang,
To wander birks and braes amang,
Wi' friends and fav'rites left sae lang
At the back o' Bennochie.

How many a day in blyth spring time,
How many a day in summer's prime,
I've saunterin' wi'd awa the time,
On the heights o' Bennochie.

Ah! fortune's flowers wi' thorns grow rife,
An' wealth is won wi' toil an' strife;
Ae day gie me o' youthful life,
At the back o' Bennochie.

Ah! Mary, there on ilka nicht,
When baith our hearts were young an' licht,
We've wandered by the clear moonlicht,
We spent baith fond an' free.

Ance mair, ance mair, whar Gadie rins,
Whar Gadie rins, whar Gadie rins,
O nicht I dee whar Gadie rins,
At the back o' Bennochie.

Möcht ich des wilden Vogels Sang,
Und lang verscholl'nen Freundschaft's Klang
Noch hören das Waldthal entlang,
Weit über Bennochie.

Oft in der frohen Frühlingszeit,
Oft in der Sommer's Heiterkeit,
Ging ich ganz sorglos und erfreut
Hoch auf dem Bennochie.

An Dornen sind die Rosen reich,
Erwirbt man Geld durch Kummer bleich,
'Nen Tag gieb nür voll Jugendstreich,
Weit über Bennochie.

Mit Jugendherzen leicht und frey,
Des hellen Mondschein's Lichte bey,
An jedem Abend, mancherley
Da schwatzten wir Marie.

Noch einmal wo der Gadie rinnt,
Der Gadie rinnt, der Gadie rinnt,
O, lass mich ruh'n wo Gadie rinnt
Weit über Bennochie.

* Anne M'Vicar, better known as Mrs Grant of Laggan, was born in 1755, and left Glasgow for America when only three years of age. There she resided and received the elements of her education. It is stated that she was indebted to a sergeant of a Scottish regiment for the only lessons in penmanship which she ever obtained; who, observing her love of books, presented her with a copy of Blind Harry's "Wallace," the perusal of which excited in her bosom a lasting admiration of the heroism of Wallace and his compatriots, and a glowing enthusiasm for Scotland which, as she herself expressed it, ever after remained with her as a principle of life. Mrs Grant's father returned to Scotland with his wife and daughter in 1763, and was soon

after appointed Barrackmaster of Fort Augustus. It was in this Highland garrison that the daughter became acquainted with Mr Grant, who was chaplain to the Fort, and who, on becoming minister of Laggan, married Miss M'Vicar in 1779. In the manse of Laggan she studied the customs and the tongue of the people among whom she resided, and soon became well versed in both. There, too, she pursued literature as a pleasure and a pastime, and first wrote a volume of poems which were published in 1803, and thereafter her well-known "Letters from the Mountains," which appeared in 1806, which went through several editions, and soon won for her great popularity. Her husband having died in 1801, she for some time took charge

well history, that the late Dr William Taylor, jun., occupied one of the flats of the tall tenement on the west side of the street, and whence he hebdomadally sallied forth to repeat his *stereotyped* prayer, and to preach his elegantly composed sermons in St Enoch's Church, before the then most fashionable congregation in the City.* It was likewise in the same tenement that the accomplished artist, John Graham, was born, and passed his boyish days, and where he experienced the first artistic impulses which ultimately led to the production of some of the best portraits of living worth and lamented beauty which modern art has embalmed, and to such captivating pictures as his "Rebecca," "Love Letter," and "Beggar Girls."†

of a small farm in the neighborhood of Laggan, and in 1803 she removed to the vicinity of Stirling where, with the assistance of many kind friends, she was enabled to provide for her rather numerous family. In 1810 she left Stirling for Edinburgh, where she resided till her death, which took place in 1838. While in Edinburgh she lost all her children by death except her youngest son. In addition to the works mentioned, she published in 1808 "Memoirs of an American Lady," and in 1811, "Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders." In 1814 she put to press a poem entitled "Eighteen Hundred and Thirteen," and the following year she published her "Popular Models and Impressive Warnings for the Sons and Daughters of Industry." In 1825, through the influence of Sir Walter Scott, Lord Jeffrey, and others, Mrs Grant obtained a pension of £100 a year, which, with some liberal bequests left her by deceased friends, and the emoluments derived from her literary works, rendered the latter years of her life easy and independent. Unlike many who devote themselves to literature, she lived till she had attained her 84th year, and continued from early life the intimate friend of one of the oldest and most amiable ladies of Glasgow, Mrs Smith of Jordanhill, who died in 1855, being then in her hundredth year. With this lady Mrs Grant kept up a constant epistolary correspondence.

* This clergyman received the appellation of the *late* Dr Taylor, from the circumstance of the service in St Enoch's Church beginning a quarter of an hour after all the other Churches in the City. He was the first minister of St Enoch's, having been admitted on 14th October, 1782. He had been previously ordained at Baldernock, 24th April, 1777.

† Mr Graham, or as now known by the appellation of John Graham Gilbert, from property acquired through his wife, showed in early life a very strong predilection for art; and although at first opposed by his father in its prosecution as a profession, nothing could control the bent of his genius. After painting some very respectable portraits of his father's friends in Glasgow, he went to London and studied at the Royal Academy, where he soon rendered himself remarkable. Thence he proceeded to Italy, and after making himself acquainted with the works of the great masters, and there imbibing somewhat of the style and taste of the mighty colorists of the Venetian and Balognese schools, he returned to his native country, residing for some years in Edinburgh, and latterly in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. In examining many of Mr Graham's graceful and finely-coloured portraits which have placed him among the first artists of the day, we cannot fail to observe that the distinguished painter has drunk deep of the inspir-

It was here that the *Monkland* Murrays and the Bibliopole Smiths lived and were educated, and that Dr Angus opened his first academy. And it was in a house on the east side of Stockwell-street, where a more notable individual than all—Major-General Sir Thomas Monroe, if not cradled, was at least brought up and passed his boyhood,—a man than whom, to use the words of George Canning, “Europe never produced a more accomplished statesman, nor India, so fertile in heroes, a more skilful soldier.”*

While Stockwell-street could thus boast of many excellent and comfortable mansions, which altered circumstances have now either swept away or sadly metamorphosed, it also partook of the mixed character of the

ation which breathes from the canvas of these deathless creations which Titian, Tintoretto, and the Caracci have left as legacies to the world; while, on fancy pictures such as “Rebecca” and the “Love Letter” one looks, from their truth, simplicity, and sweetness, and above all from their harmonious colouring, with the same pleasure that is felt in a literary *penicilling* by Goldsmith or Washington Irving. With respect to the latter pictorial effort of Mr Graham, we can only say, that when it first appeared, it caught every eye and captivated every heart. Especially addressing itself to the female beholder, it spoke of something which every woman hopes for or remembers. To the old it recalled the greenest spot on memory’s waste,—to the young the sunniest moment of hope’s gay dream—of that moment when love is looked for which purity can alone inspire, and perfect purity alone can reward!

* Sir Thomas Monroe was born in Glasgow on the 26th May, 1761. He was the son of Mr Alexander Monroe, an eminent merchant, his mother being the sister of Dr William Stark, the celebrated anatomist. After going through the English and Grammar Schools, he entered the University of his native City, where he remained for three years. He at first pursued merchandise, and soon after went to India in 1779. He returned to Britain in 1807, when he revisited Glasgow. In

1814 he married a daughter of Mr Campbell of Craigie, and then returned to Madras. Having greatly distinguished himself in the Mahratta war, he returned, on its favourable conclusion in 1819, to England: but here he was not long permitted to remain, Mr Cauning having appointed him Governor of Madras, an office on which he entered in 1820, and held till the spring of 1827, when, on a tour through the provinces, he was seized with cholera and carried off in a few hours. In an article in *Chambers’s Journal* of 1851, we find the following anecdote of this celebrated son of the Stockwell:—“When visiting Glasgow, Sir Thomas Monroe paid a visit to an old schoolfellow, a worthy candlemaker of the name of Harvie, who had a shop in Stockwell-street. ‘Well, Mr Harvie,’ said Sir Thomas, on entering the shop, ‘do you remember me?’ Harvie gazed for some time at the tall gnant figure before him, striving to recall his features. At last he said, ‘Are ye Millie Monroe?’ ‘I am just Millie Monroe,’ said the other; and the quondam schoolfellows had a long chat about the days o’ langsyne. Sir Thomas was represented by his school companion as having been a hero of a hundred *stone* fights or battles of any other kind; in short, the bully of his class, in which, from his proficiency in *millin*g, he received the above nickname.”

thoroughfares belonging to small towns. In the immediate vicinity of a good house and garden, for example, there was occasionally found the thatched abode of the humblest of the citizens. Of these, there was one of a most picturesque form, near the south end of the street, and which, from its striking outline, became the delight of every street limner. Its upper outshot flats, double outside staircases, and crow-stepped chimney-stalk—its front, variegated with many-coloured sign-boards—its irregular roof, covered with thatch—and its stair, peopled with tricky and playful chimney-sweeps (although erased from the street full thirty years ago), still linger in our recollection; while the first fresh bunches of new grass, piled at the threshold of the small tavern, where the best ale “under the sun” was sold, attracted a host of country people, who happily tended to eke out the charms of one of the best street sketches which it is our good fortune still to possess. In the vacant foreground, too, of this small but well-frequented hostelry, at that period kept by one Andrew Purdon, might be seen a couple of cows brought out to be milked, and around which were ever congregated the children belonging to the street and neighbourhood, attended by their maids, waiting to get their *tinnies* filled with warm milk from the cow. There was another group of picturesque thatched houses, which could not fail also to attract attention, although their fronts retreated from the street, as if ashamed of their position in such a locality. These were situated on the east side of the thoroughfare, nearly opposite Jackson-street. In the open space in front of these were piled up, on one side, the empty casks and barrels of a cooper, who occupied one of the thatched dwellings; while on the other, was nightly placed the carts of a well-known personage, yeoman James Neilson, who, in the summer season, became the favourite waggoner for transporting families from the City to the sea-coast, during the dilatory days of the Gourock fly-boats, and long before steamboats had been dreamed of. During the day, this vacant space was occupied by the well-frequented stand of a tidy little old woman, who, dealing in “yellow-man” and “glassy,” was vastly admired by all juveniles in the locality, especially by those who could manage

occasionally to extract a copper from their indulgent parents, for the purpose of investment.

For a very long period the "Stockwall-gait" was also remarkable for the countrified aspect and costume of many of those who frequented it. This arose from the circumstance of the only cattle-market connected with the City being held in this street—at one time near the old shambles, where East Clyde-street now runs, and, at a later period, in the open space or green in front of West Clyde-street. It was the place, too, where the Glasgow Fair was long held, and where the mighty yearly mart for bestial and horses, now happily transferred to the eastern extremity of the City, was opened, on the two great days of that time-honoured festival.* Till the establishment of the Cattle-market in Graham-square, the Stockwell, which was then the chief entrance to the City from the south, was consequently interrupted on the Wednesday of the annual Fair with an endless barrier of restive horses and neighing stallions; while, on the Friday, it for ages displayed, amid the lowing of bulls and bestial, the coarse courting of country cubs, and the unsophisticated merry-making of whisky-inspired ploughmen and laughing cherry-cheeked dairy-maids. Nature, in fact, as is customary now-a-days, has long eschewed the West-end, and is now only to be found in all its pristine purity and rude hilarity in the East!

The Stockwell was at that time, likewise, the rendezvous of all country servants open for hire, as well as for those of the City, who were usually "arled" at the *Brig-end*, and particularly of all persons who accounted the Fair a season of fun and frolic. The freaks of Punch and Judy, and the elegances of "ground and lofty tumbling," were then displayed at the north end of the Old Bridge, or in the houses and closes at the south end of the street; and although, in the earlier annals of Glasgow Fair, one would have looked in vain for those wonderful "beast and beastesses from bottomless bay in the Vest Indies," or for the standard finale to every

* The Fair of Glasgow was established by royal charter in the reign of William the Lion, in 1190.

circus establishment of "the tailor riding to Brentford," which, in these modern days, are annually met with during this uproarious week in front of the Court-houses at the foot of the Saltmarket,—and although, also, one might have looked vainly, in former times, for some hundred square yards of painted canvass, illustrative of some of the most striking objects of natural history, with an orchestra in front that would not shame the music of Mozart or Beethoven,—still the Fair, when held at the foot of Stockwell-street, could always boast of at least a dozen painted *Jezebels*, who, in front of the several booths, outraged Terpsichore as much in their movements as the Dutch concert of hurdie-gurdies and fiddles, which guided their *heavy* fantastic toes, set defiance both to time and tune! To be sure, there were then, as now, both giants and giantesses, fat boys and still fatter girls, learned pigs and unlettered dwarfs; there were also swings to raise the spirits of already too light-headed maidens, and round-about to sicken children, at the small cost of a halfpenny; while their patrons, be it remembered, partook far more of a rural than of an urban character. During the long period of this yearly carnival, as well as those of Whitsun-Monday and Martinmas Wednesday, being held at the foot of Stockwell-street, there were far more of the characteristics of a country fair to be seen than are now to be met with, on similar occasions, elsewhere in this overgrown City. At that time, one might have easily fancied himself at the "Tryst of Falkirk," or the "Moss of Balloch;" but now-a-days, this summer festival appears to be chiefly got up for the entertainment of the budding beauties of our spinning and weaving factories, and for their admiring swains of the engineering-shop or print-work; while the ancient amusements of "cups and balls," "ground and lofty tumbling," and "the horse of knowledge" have been exchanged for dramatic entertainments, illustrative of the feats of Jack Sheppard, and such like exciting characters, or for extensive wax-works, boasting of a "chamber of horrors" equal to any that Madame Tussaud ever exhibited in Baker-street!*

* In the *Literary Reporter*, edited and printed by John Graham, in 1823, there is a long descriptive poem, under the title of "Humours of Glasgow Fair," from the then *youthful* pen

In the minds of those citizens who belong to the last century, the Stockwell cannot fail also to be associated with the numerous stone battles which ever and anon took place between the northern citizens and southern Gorbaliolians, near to the ancient bridge which so long formed the only connecting link between the two banks of the Clyde. The usual source or ostensible object of combat, between these rival partisans, was for the possession of an island, which then lay in the channel of the river, between the Old and Jamaica-street Bridges, and on which Bailie Craig of the Waterport used to pile his timber. Although, to the younger portion of the community, it must almost appear apocryphal, yet true it is, that, for many long years, did full-grown men, attended by hosts of energetic boys, here regularly assemble to do battle against each other, and frequently to the great bodily injury of both sets of combatants. At length, the death of a boy, arising from one of the stone *bickers*, not only put a stop to these dangerous encounters at the foot of Stockwell-street, but to the numerous other stone conflicts that were occasionally indulged in throughout different parts of the City.*

Since the commencement of the present century, to which period, in particular, we would now recall thy memory, kind reader, touching the state and peculiarities of Stockwell-street, it may be stated that perhaps a more striking change has taken place in this locality than is to be found

of my friend Mr Gabriel Neil. The following are two stanzas from this long and clever rhyming production:—

Hear, hear! what a discordant din
 WT trumpets, cymbals, drums!
 The warnin' cry o' "Just begin,"
 From every showman comes:
 "Haste, tumble in—no time lose—
 Fun ridin' upon fun—
 See an' believe, without excuse—
 Such feats were never done

Before this day."

"There's Punch, an' cockalorum tricks—
 Ingenious machinery—
 Dwarfs—giants, measurin' seven feet six—
 The wild beasts' menagerie—
 The manly-lookin', o'er-grown child,
 A wonder o' the age,
 For strikin' features, visage mild,
 The boast o' history's page

In any day."

* These stone battles, which continued even for some time after the establishment of the Police, were at one time of frequent occurrence, and were, moreover, rarely interfered with by the Civic authorities; and when the Magistrates did appear, they generally arrived just to be too late to prevent mischief. The bump of *combativeness* seems to have been, like that of *destructiveness*, marked characteristics of Glasgow crania—impelling to constant fights between the occupants of one quarter of the town and those of another, between the College students and the more unlettered citizens, and between the boys attending the Grammar-School and those belonging to Wilson's Charity.

in any other street at the same time existing in the City. The Old Bridge, which was built by Bishop Rae in 1345, at first of only twelve, and thereafter of twenty-four feet in breadth, and which, for nearly six centuries, was the only communication between the north and south banks of the Clyde, has been lately swept away, to make room for a granite structure of sixty feet in width. A part of the old wall which formerly connected itself with the Waterport, then exhibited its jagged sides on the space now occupied by "Park's land." Various picturesque thatched houses, in addition to those already alluded to, lined the street, leaving no trace behind them, save what the limner may have preserved; while many of the crow-stepped and Flemish-gabled tenements, which really ornamented this locality, are either wholly removed or sadly disfigured. The street, too, has lost almost all its rustic characteristics—its gardens, its trees, its country fairs, and its country carriers; everything rural has passed away, save perhaps the Wednesday assembly at its northern extremity, where, in spite of Magisterial and Police interference, the contractors for stones, bricks, and pavement, still meet in knots with City masons, builders, and other customers, and exhibit, in their manner of transacting business out of doors or in the adjoining tipping-shops and taverns, a not unfaithful picture of Stockwell frequenters of bygone days. While this locality, however, forty or fifty years ago, was characterised, during the greater part of the year, by quietness and respectability, it cannot be denied that, on Whitsun-Monday in particular, it was occasionally the scene of tumult and riot. On that evening, all the loose boys and elder blackguardism of the town were attracted thither, to play tricks on what were designated the country "Jocks and Jennies" who had assembled during the day for country hire. Frequently, on such occasions, have we ourselves seen the mob take possession of the street, and particularly of the avenue leading to the bridge, and thereafter put to the rout both Magistracy and Police; while every man with a decent coat or a good hat was certain of being assailed with a dead cat or some equally filthy missile. We shall never forget the scene in which the honest good-

hearted Bailie Waddell, accompanied by the then gigantic Master of Police, Mr Mitchell, vainly attempted, by "soft sawdor" speeches, to check the increasing disturbing elements of a most uproarious multitude, and who only received for their kind counsels a shower of stones and mud; and although aided by all the police force which they had at their command—which, Heaven knows! was small enough—were thankful to sound a retreat, and to take refuge in a shop, where they might remain in safety till relieved by a party of soldiers ordered from the Guard-house.

Among the various other matters which, for a long period, gave a peculiar character to Stockwell-street as a great thoroughfare, there was one which made a deep impression on our boyish mind, and that was the singularly striking funereal *cortege* proceeding, ever and anon, from the old Town's Hospital in Clyde-street towards the Cathedral burying-ground. At one time, the inmates of this pauper and lunatic establishment were buried in the ground immediately behind the Hospital itself, but this practice having been at length wisely given up, it became necessary to carry the mortal remains of the poor and the idiotical to some more fitting necropolis. On these occasions, a small trunk-like hearse, drawn by one sorry steed, and *driven* by an old half crack-brained Jehu, donned in a long black cloak, with hat bedecked with a larger than usual sized flag of mourning, was the adopted transport of the pauper corpse from the Hospital to the grave-yard. Slowly it moved along, attracting little or no notice from the bystanders, and followed by ten or a dozen old broken-down and decrepit black-cloaked individuals, whose countenances bespoke satisfaction in getting out of their comparative prison once more into the busy world rather than sorrow for the loss of their pauper brother. That this was the ruling sentiment of those who followed the mendicant bier, was abundantly apparent from the straggling and careless manner in which they walked and stared about them, lagging, too often, hundreds of paces behind the solitary hearse. It was, in fact, a funeral in form but without feeling—a perambulating picture of the sad destiny of penury—a

touching stanza on the neglect that awaits the last moments of mendicancy and madness!

It was also no unusual thing, about this period, to see three or four grey-coated, hatless, close-cropped idiots, who occupied the back cells of the Hospital, or what was vulgarly termed "the Shells," wheeling along Stockwell-street barrowfuls of stones, for the purpose of being broken into white sand, then much used for kitchen floors. These poor unfortunates, although their convulsionary movements frequently attracted the ridicule and hooting of idle boys, carelessly continued to pursue their apparently to them pleasant vocation, which certainly for a time relieved them from Hospital surveillance, and from the insane ravings of their more lunatic associates.

Perhaps among the most remarkable oddities daily to be met with in Stockwell-street, about the close of the last and the beginning of the present century, was the tall, thin, gaunt figure of Mr Robert Dreghorn of Ruchill, better known throughout the City by the appellation of *Bob Dragon*. This gentleman, who possessed considerable fortune, resided in a large house with two wings, fronting West Clyde-street, and immediately contiguous to that of Mr Craig of the Waterport; in which, at one time, he maintained a rather hospitable table, surrounded often by a circle of fashionable friends. Whether the peculiar idiosyncrasy for which he was remarkable sprung from the felt ugliness of his countenance, which was not only deeply pitted by the small-pox, but exhibited also a large nose turned awry, with eyes that looked askance, it is useless to conjecture; but certain it is, that the strong bent of his mind seemed to be towards the fair sex, and especially towards such servant girls as were guildless of shoes or stockings. As he paced up Stockwell-street, in his single-breasted grey coat and large buttons, with stick under his arm, and whistling as he went, Bob was no sooner espied than he became "the observed of all observers," especially of the female drudges who might be resting near their water *stoups*, or carrying a basket in the wake of their mistress going to market; while his proximity to the objects of his *marked* attention,

never failed to excite either a titter or a tremor. Bob was likewise the particular bugbear of all boys on the street, having a strong propensity to lay his cane across the shoulders of any one who might be busy playing at *butts*, or who might cross his path with a sarcastic smile. His name, too, was frequently made use of by mothers to frighten their peevish and noisy children into quietude, which they must have done more as deeming him the embodiment of ugliness than as thinking him the representative of any wicked peculiarity. The fact is, he was a person of rather a kindly disposition, although his outward man certainly bespoke a different nature. It was about the year 1806, that this daily perambulator from the Waterport to the Cross, was missed one morning from the *pavé*. The rumour soon arose that he had died by his own hand, and so it soon turned out to be, for well do we remember, though very young at the time, with what curious feeling the funeral cortege was regarded by the populace, arising, no doubt, from the circumstances of his death.*

* The house in which Mr Dreghorn so long lived and died was ere long considered to be haunted by his ghost. The particular form in which this appeared, was said to be in a likeness of "Bob," who was seen at midnight, to the terror of the inmates, stalking through the different apartments, with a plate in his hand begging for money. So strongly did this superstition prevail, that, for many subsequent years, the house remained empty and forsaken. It, however, at last found a tenant, who, in a short time suddenly died of apoplexy, which confirmed the popular opinion of there being something about the house "not canny" or unlucky. It again found another tenant in Mr George Provand, a colour-maker, who occupied, for the preparation of his materials, the west wing, and the house itself as a dwelling. All seemed to go on smoothly, till vague rumours began to spread abroad that this new tenant was not one of the right sort. Little boys and girls had been seen about the premises, said to have been decoyed within doors, and blood drawn from them to manufacture red paint. So monstrous an opinion had many believers,

particularly among the lower Irish, who resided near that quarter. The consequence was that, under a popular excitement, some thirty years ago, a desperate riot connected therewith took place on a Sunday forenoon, which ended in the house being completely gutted, and several persons severely injured. The proprietor was affirmed to have shipped himself immediately to the West Indies, and was lost sight of. His talents, as a literary man, were of a respectable order. To him we are indebted for an elegant English translation of the "Franciscan Friar," by George Buchanan, printed at Glasgow in 1809; and it is understood that he contributed many able notices to the edition of the Abbé Raynal's "History of the East and West Indies," and to other publications. This mansion, which at one time was one of the most handsome in the City, is now converted into an old furniture warehouse; and the elegant rooms, full of the beautiful plaster-work which was so characteristic of the first-class houses built during the early part of the last century, is fast being mutilated, and will soon be utterly destroyed. When lately ascending the wide

If Stockwell-street, in the days that are past, was not a little remarkable on account of what we have already hinted, it was at the same time peculiarly celebrated for its convivial Clubs. We have already described the famous Meridian Club, which so long carried on its noontide orgies in this locality; and we would now introduce thee, indulgent reader, to another famous fraternity, who regularly assembled in the same street, but under a different roof, at the more becoming hour of four, to discuss a beefsteak, done to a turn by the ex-Kitchener of the "Black Bull;" and, while washing down the savoury morsel with libations of rum and water, vulgarly called "glory," to sound the praises of the fearless "Pilot who weathered the storm," and to pour forth anathemas against the French and General Bonaparte. This Club, at first designated the STOCKWELL BEEFSTEAK, was latterly better known by the title of the TINKLER'S CLUB, particularly when the brotherhood changed the hour of meeting from four to six o'clock, and when the steak was exchanged for a "Welsh rabbit" or "Glasgow magistrate."* By the *Tinkler* title, the fraternity was longer known than by its first, which may be attributed to the circumstance of its chief and never-failing load-star being an extensive dealer in ironmongery and smith-work. Around this clever but caustic individual some of the more notable characters in the City were ever found circling, and that, too, even long after the time when the Club marched out, with all their honours, from Stockwell to their new rendezvous in the Trongate.†

staircase, with its handsome mahogany railing, I could not help imagining the feelings that its first possessor, Mr Allan Dreghorn, who at one time possessed the only chariot in Glasgow, would have experienced, if he could only have foreseen the "base uses" to which his aristocratic domicile was destined to be turned!

* The common West country appellation for the best fresh or salted herrings that can be got. The name arose from the practice of all persons bringing up this delicious and cheap fish to the Broomielaw, being obliged to send a specimen of their boat-loads to the

Bailie of the River for his approval. The consequence of this was, that the samples presented to the *Skate* Bailie, as he was sometimes called, were always the largest that could be selected, and which ultimately ended in giving to all picked herrings the designation of "Glasgow magistrates."

† The gentleman above alluded to was Mr Wilson, of the firm of Messrs Wilson & Liddell, and brother of the well-known and amiable Mr Charles Wilson, surgeon, who so long resided in one of the fine old mansions in Stockwell-street.

At the time when this brotherhood first met as a Beefsteak Club, in Bryce Davidson's, to try the capabilities of his gridiron and the quality of his liquor, the bloody consequences of the French Revolution had produced such a horror against *popular* rule, in the minds of the comfortable and wealthy in Glasgow, that, among the majority, the most common sentiment of liberality was sure to subject the individual who had the courage to offer it, to the opprobrious epithet of *democrat* or of *traitor*. The members of the Beefsteak were all, from their outrageous loyalty, even in those days of political *espionage*, beyond the least suspicion. The poison of the times instigated them collectively to a love of Toryism and tyranny, but their own milk of human kindness prevented them individually from practising either to the letter.

Among the many standing rules of this brotherhood, there was one of prominent importance;—it was that each member might drink or not as it suited him, but it was never known that any one availed himself of the latter alternative. In fact, to have done so in such a society, one would certainly have been liable to be taxed with disloyalty, for not a day or an evening passed during which the patriotic toasts of “the King” and “may the Devil take the democrats” were not given from the chair, and expected to be drunk in a bumper. It would have done the then Premier's heart good, to have seen the sarcastic leer with which the latter sentiment was always repeated by each member, and to have heard the loud roar of harmonious “hip, hip, hips” which followed it. A passing glimpse at the Bacchanalian faces which encircled the Beefsteak board, might have soothed Mr Pitt's fears as to the spread of revolutionary principles in Glasgow, and induced him to toss the *Blackneb* portraits, which he had got, of some of our scandalised citizens, from his portfolio, into the fire. How, candid reader! think you, the “Pilot”—who, to save his country from the whirlpool of civil commotion, had steered us into the troubles of a foreign war—would have gazed in admiration at the patriotism of the president of the Stockwell Beefsteak and Tinkler's Club, on the occasion of a copper-nosed member who, after finishing his hot-

and-hot slice, with due accompaniment of raw onion, and swallowing a bumper of Scottish mountain dew, thoughtlessly followed it with a brimmer of brandy? "Good God!" exclaimed the witty and sarcastic chairman, seizing hold of two very long cross-headed sticks, which he always bore about with him for support and protection, "What are you about, sir? Why do you disgrace yourself and the Club by such unpatriotic conduct, as to put, as you have now done, a fiddling Frenchman above a sturdy Highlander?" The astonished member, whose eye still glistened with the tear which the powerful Cognac had called forth, stared silently around, as if in search of something to wipe away the fearful blot thrown upon his hitherto unblemished patriotism, and seizing a bottle of real Ferintosh, filled a bumper and tossed it into his stomach. The chairman stared at the pantomime which the member performed; while the copper-nosed brother sprang upon his legs, and placing his left hand upon his breast, and holding his right firmly clenched above his head, exclaimed, "Brand me not with being a democrat, sir, for now I've got the Frenchman between two fires!"
