

VI.—THE BAILIE.

“**A** INCE a Bailie, aye a Bailie,” is a saying which goes some way to prove the estimation in which that civic dignitary is held. Even the term “Provost” seems to be less significant than the appellation “Bailie,” and as for “Councillor”—the word is comparatively unknown. The municipal board has long been a coveted place, and in every burgh there are familiar illustrations of the self-important residenter and the intermeddling adopted child, who have attempted to thrust themselves before and upon “an enlightened and intelligent electorate.” The choice of the man often proves the dishonesty of the phrase. Notwithstanding, the civic fathers are an important body in the estimation of the public and themselves. Under the term “Bailie” we have included the various municipal officials, and if our anecdotes of civic life are true in the main, our purposes in introducing the municipality into our illustrations of Scottish character may not have been altogether defeated.

One of the first duties of the Bailie is to sit in judgment on petty misdemeanants.

A boy was summoned in Edinburgh to give evidence against his father, who was charged with a breach of the peace. “Come, now, my little man,”

said the Magistrate to him, "you are too young to take the oath, but speak the truth, and let us hear all you know about this affair." "Weel, sir," said the youth settling down to business, "dae ye ken George IV. Brig?" "Fine that, laddie." "Weel, ye gang along it, and when ye turn the corner ye gang up the High Street." "'Deed, ye dae, laddie; you're a clever ane." "Weel, ye gang on till ye come to a pump." "Yes, yes; I ken it fine." "Weel, ye can gang an' pump it, for you'll no' pump me."

A boy, apprenticed to a shoemaker, was brought before Bailie K—— (a gentleman noted alike for a high sense of dignity and for his charitable disposition), and let off with an admonition. His honour, observing the lad's trousers to be much worn and tattered, requested him to call at his residence in the evening, when he would be furnished with a better pair. "You're sair needin' them, puir mannie," feelingly remarked the Magistrate, surveying the lad behind while departing with his bundle. "Ay," innocently replied the proud youth, "I've been a gude while sittin' on the bench noo—like yoursel', sir!"

"Dae ye ken the nature o' an oath, my wee mannie?" said a Lanarkshire Bailie to a juvenile witness in an assault case. "Ay, fine," was the youngster's sententious reply. "Weel," said the Magistrate, "can you tell me what it is?" "It's what my faither says when he misses his lick an'

hits his haun' wi' the hammer," replied the boy. There are oaths and oaths.

Jock Robb, a well-known worthy in the town to which he belonged, was on one occasion taken before the Bailie charged with creating a disturbance while in a state of intoxication. When asked to plead guilty or not guilty, he opened his eyes in innocent astonishment, and inquired, "Hoo am I to ken, your worship, till I hear the evidence? I was blin' fu' at the time."

One Monday morning an old woman (the solitary prisoner) was brought before the presiding Bailie. "As I'm the only ane, your lordship might let me aff," she slyly pleaded. "Na, Tibby," said the Bailie severely, "that will I no'; just because there's only you, I'll gi'e ye'd as het an' strang as I'm allowed by staitoot to dae. I've been nearer gettin' a pair o' white gloves than ony Magistrate that ever sat in this court, an' wad ha'e ha'en them bit for you gettin' fou' an' fechtin', ye auld limmer. Fourteen days without the option o' a fine."

A poor man made his appearance at the bar of the Gorbals Police Court, Glasgow, charged with being drunk and disorderly on the street, and after a patient hearing, the presiding Bailie, who seems to have possessed little of that firmness and dignity required for the magisterial office, ordered him to pay a fine of fifteen shillings. "Fifteen shillings!" vociferated the man, with more points of admiration in his tone than we can spare room for—"fifteen

shillings!! Bailie, you're surely no' in earnest? Bless ye, when will I win fifteen shillings to gi'e ye?" "Well," said the Bailie, yielding, "I'll make it half-a-guinea, and not a farthing less!" "Half-a-guinea, Bailie; if ye fine me in half-a-guinea, what's to come o' my puir wife and weans for a month to come? we maun juist starve, there's nae ither way o't," said the offender—"we maun starve or beg." "Well," said the relenting Bailie, "I'll make it seven and sixpence, and not a farthing less!" "Seven and sixpence!" said the still unsatisfied offender, "that's just the half o' my week's wages, and there's no' a grain o' meal in the house, nor a bit o' coal to make it ready wi', even though there were. Oh! Bailie think what a sum seven and sixpence is to a working man!" "Well, well," said the good-natured Magistrate, "I'll make it five shillings, and not a farthing less: though ye were the king on the throne I'll not make it less!" "Weel, weel, Bailie, Mary and me and the weans maun just submit," said the culprit, affecting to weep; at the same time saying, as if to himself, yet so loud that the Bailie could hear him, "Blessed is he that wisely doth the poor man's case consider." The Bailie could not stand the silent appeal of tears, nor the apt quotation he had made. "Well, well," again said the Bailie, "I'll make it half-a-crown, and, though ye were my ain brither, I couldna make it less!"

A Highland policeman thus described his grievance

against a "drunk and disorderly" whom he had run in. Addressing the Bailie, he said, "Your mighty lord judge, ta panel last nicht was as fou' as ta piper, an' fouer, whatsoever. She said to her, 'Whaur's her brose?' an' she says, 'She'll get nane the noo.' Then she yokit tue an' hittit her, an' kickit her, an' scartit her, an' sweerd at her just like ta muckle wild savage. Then, hur lordship, she wantit to kiss her, an' axed her ta' tak' ta wee drappie oot o' ta gill pottle. A' ta time she ca'd her Jean, an' when she lockit her up, an' she cam' to, she tell't her that she pe fery sorry, moreover, as she thocht a' ta time she was at hame hittin' ta wife!"

A culprit was brought to the police office in Glasgow charged with a serious assault on a gentleman on the Paisley Road. After the charge was read by the public prosecutor, the judge proceded to pronounce sentence, "Weel, sir, for this wicked and malicious crime which you have committed we will fine you in half-a-guinea." "But," said the agent for the defence, "the crime has not yet been proven." "Weel, weel," coolly announced the Magistrate, "then, just make it five shillings."

"This is a most tragical event which has happened," said an individual to Bailie —, of a royal burgh. "Bless me!" exclaimed the functionary, "what is it?" Why, your neighbour, W—

G—, has committed suicide. "Wha on?" anxiously inquired the Bailie.

Some time ago, a young man was charged in the Glasgow Police Court with stealing a herring barrel from a person in Stockwell Street. After the charge had been proved, the principal accuser thus addressed the Magistrate, "'Deed, sir, Bailie, the man at the bar is a great rogue; the stealin' o' the barrel is naething to some o' his tricks. He stole my signbrod last week, and what does your honour think he did wi't?" "That would be hard for me to say," said the Magistrate. "Weel, sir," replied the witness, "I'll tell ye. He brought it into my ain shop, wi' my ain name on't, and offered to sell me't, as he said he thought it would be o' mair use to me than onybody else."

Various are the excuses which are put forward by prisoners, and the following story shows how the ludicrousness of a situation was happily seized upon and turned to advantage. A wire-fencer charged with trespass on a farm was reproached by the Magistrate with thoughtlessness in not closing the gates after him, which he said was the least he could have done if he would trespass. "Weel, noo, Bailie," replied the offender, in a confidential tone, "I would like to ken hoo ye would manage to steek a yett after ye³ if ye had a heavy fencin' machine roun' your neck, a bag wi' twa stane o' staples in ae han', and a three stane piercer in the ither, a saw an' a hammer under the left oxter, and a heavy

stab mell under the richt. Man alive, I had to lowsen the bar o' the yett wi' my teeth, an' it was beyont the pooers o' man to steek it in the same way, unless a body's neck was made o' gutty perka, and could streetch oot fully three yards to the bar on the other side; an' if I was to lay doon my tools, hoo on the face o' the earth was I ever to get them up again?" He was dismissed with an admonition.

In a case which came before a Forfar Bailie, a glaring instance of the ignorance of court procedure was given. The charge was one of assault, and after some evidence had been led, the Bailie proceeded to administer justice. After pointing out the heinous nature of the charge, he pronounced judgment—twenty-one days, or seven-and-sixpence. At this juncture the agent for the accused arose and said, "Your honour, there is still another witness." "Oh, there is," said the Bailie; "weel, bring him in." The witness was accordingly produced, and the agent proceeded to examine him. "You were present on the occasion of this assault?" queried the lawyer. "I was," answered the witness. "What," said the Bailie in surprise, "you were there too! What the devil was you doing there? Seven-and-sixpence, or twenty-one days to you as weel."

A Magistrate in a mining district in the west was continually having cases of poaching and wife-beating brought before him. The wife-beaters he generally let off with a caution, but the poachers he

punished with the utmost rigour of the law. One day a miner was placed in the dock charged with all but killing his wife. The facts were graphically described to the dispenser of justice, and they must have sunk deep into his judicial mind. "Man," he said, addressing the prisoner severely, with just a tinge of sympathy in his voice, "ye ocht to think little o' yersel', letting your temper get the better o' ye sae faur as to strike the woman in siccan a manner. I'll fine ye half-a-crown as a warning, an' if ye come before me again I'll treat ye as if ye were a common poacher."

A very human tie binds judge and culprit in some cases. The latter begins with "My Lord," then descends to "Your Honour," by-and-by comes to "Sir," and finally, yielding to a vivid remembrance of the past and the parish school, exclaims, "Jock MacOmish, ye're no' gaun to send me to jail, wha lickit ye at the schule." The Bailie's heart is touched, but he yields with self-respect and discrimination. "Prisoner at the bar, your observations are untimely and unseemly, and ye canna distinguish between a Magistrate in his private and his public capacity; but the evidence is no' juist conclusive, ye may go this time, but see ye dinna appear here again."

A worthy Bailie went to Jedburgh games with a congenial spirit, and both got very drunk. The Magistrate got safely home; but his companion getting into a dispute with a neighbour, a fight en-

sued, and he was locked up. Next morning he came before the Bailie, his boon companion of the previous night. "Well, Robert," said the Magistrate, "are you guilty?" "Weel, Bailie, the fact is, I was the waur of drink." "That makes it a' the waur," said the Magistrate, severely; "I fine ye 5s., or three days." Then, seeing the prisoner was about to speak, and fearing inconvenient revelations, he added in a low voice, "I'll pay the half mysel'!"

An old pensioner of the 42nd, and a good judge of "Glenlivet," was brought before a bailie on a charge of over-indulgence in his favourite beverage. It was not by any means his first offence, and he trotted out his usual plea that he was one of the last survivors of the battle of Waterloo. To this the Bailie replied, "Weel, Sandy, I'll let ye aff this time; but mind ye—and it's as sure as death—if ye come here again, I'll clap ye in jile, though ye were the last survivor o' the battle o' Bannockburn!"

A woman was giving evidence in an assault case, and, on being asked by the Magistrate to tell what she saw, she said, "Weel, my lord, the row juist began wi' a laich collie-shangie an' a heich tutt-mutt; an' afore you cud ha'e said 'Murdie Main' they were a' i' the mussel-midden throttlin' ane anither."

At a Police Court in one of the towns in the north a witness showed some signs of levity while being examined, and was promptly cautioned by the presiding Magistrate to address the Court in a becoming manner, else he would be committed for con-

tempt. "Wha's the Coort?" said the witness, with an air of disdain. "I'm the Court," replied the Magistrate, with some dignity. "Deil o' that ye are," said the witness. "Ye're juist Jamie T——, the tattie merchant."

After an election many of the Town Councils open their first meeting with some show of religious ceremonial, and within the archives of an ancient burgh may be found a prayer to be read by the town clerk on such an occasion, the most solemn and searching petition of which is, "O God, who has said unto us, 'Ye are gods,' grant us grace that we die not like men nor fall like one of the princes." It was in this place that a citizen, by trade a baker, being much overcome by his elevation to the dignity of Bailie, became alarmed at the congratulations of his friends and spoke in deprecation. "Nae doot it's an awful poseetion, but say nae mair for ony sake; I'm only human after a', juist a man like yoursel's."

The Provost occasionally sits in judgment, and a learned weaver, in stating his case before the Provost of a certain burgh, having had occasion to speak of a party who was dead, repeatedly described him as defunct. Irritated by the reiteration of a word which he did not understand, the Provost exclaimed, "What's the use o' talkin' sae muckle about this chield you ca' the defunct? Canna ye bring the man here and let him speak for himsel'?" "The defunct's dead, my lord," replied the weaver. "Oh

weel, in that case juist gang on," gravely observed the worthy Provost.

A Perth man and a Newburgh man were disputing about the merits of their respective burghs. After reciting many other advantages the Perth man clinched his argument with, "Ah, but oor Provost gangs about wi' a chain." "Does he?" drily responded the other, "Aweel, we lat oors gang about lowse."

Selected from the common class, the Bailie was frequently none too well educated, and occasionally betrayed his ignorance, to the amusement of his listeners.

A Dumfries Bailie was one day visiting some friends in Edinburgh, and they kindly showed him all the sights of the beautiful city. When they took him to the Antiquarian Museum, the Bailie was much interested with the old armour and relics. "I see you are fond of antiquities, Bailie," remarked his friend. "Na, I dinna care for thae foreign dishes, but I'm rale fond o' herrin' an' tatties," replied the Bailie, unctuously.

A Bailie in a town in the south, conceiving that the word *clause* was in the plural number, always talked of a *claw* in the Act of Parliament.

A warm discussion arose at a meeting of the Town Council of Leslie, but at last there were signs of the matter being arranged, and with a view to carrying this out, one of the Councillors got up and remarked, "I am glad that this matter is now to be

amicably settled, and that we are all to be friends again; and I hope the day is not far distant when we shall see the lamb lying down with the lion and smoking the pipe of peace!"

At a meeting of the Town Council of a certain district, one of the subjects for consideration was the improvement of the cemetery. One of the members proposed that the cemetery grounds should be consecrated. A farmer, misunderstanding the word "consecrated," seconded the proposition, as follows—"Gentlemen, I have very great pleasure in seconding the proposition, because I have my backyard concreted, and it does wear well."

A Stirling Town Councillor, on making a motion for the erection of street urinals, said he thought no one could object to spending a few pounds on such useful things as "catacombs."

At a meeting of the Glasgow Improvements Commissioners, a question came under discussion as to the expenses incurred by the Magistrates in the unsuccessful application to Parliament in 1825. A Commissioner, celebrated for "extreme economy," rose and inquired whether these were not "the expenses of obtaining the Act that was lost?"

An Edinburgh Town Councillor, who liked to air his knowledge of ancient history at the municipal board, once amused his colleagues by informing them that "the sword of Damikocles" was hanging above his head, and it was an Edinburgh Provost



who recommended "The Leg End of Montrose" as one of the most delightful of the Waverley novels.

A Provost of Glasgow who might have thanked God, like Coleridge, that he had never learned French, would have been wise if, like Coleridge, he had made no attempt to speak it. This civic dignitary, when he visited Paris, was much pleased with the appearance of the gardens, squares, and fountains, and often heard the expression used, "What a fine effect that *jet d'eau* gives. On his return he was loud in his praise of Paris, and wished as far as possible to Parisianise Glasgow. On one occasion he referred to St. Enoch Square, and exclaimed, "Grand square, grand square; it needs naething to mak' it perfect but a jackdaw in the middle o't."

During a municipal meeting one of the Councillors gave it as his opinion that the death rate for the current quarter would prove an exceptionally high one. "High!" exclaimed another speaker, who had but recently received an ominous paper from the rate collector. "High death rate! I ken naething about your death rate, but if it's ony higher than the water rate it's a crusher!"

A Glasgow Councillor, on being promoted to bailiedom, gave a grand supper, at which his health was drunk in connection with his new dignity. In the course of his reply he said, "I canna but say I'm kind o' entitled to the honour, for I've gone through a' the various stages o' degradation to reach it."

A Bailie in a certain burgh came to grief, like the Provost of the earlier story, in attempting to use language beyond his comprehension. The rector of the academy, whom he encountered on the street, in passing said, "A delicious day, Bailie; the sun just now is about the meridian." To the next acquaintance he met, the Bailie remarked, "A malicious day; the sun eenoo is about the Mediterranean."

A public building was in the course of erection in one of the western towns, and in front of it a bust of the Bruce was being carved. A well-known Bailie halted opposite the sculptor one day and called out, "I say, sculptor, d'ye no' think ye ha'e that beard inclining a wee thing to the left?" "Man, Bailie," said the sculptor, "d'ye no' see the win's blawin' up the street the noo?"

An acquaintance of Bailie M'G—— of D—— made a grievous complaint to him one day of the hard times, and impossibility of scraping together a livelihood in this wretched country. The Bailie's own experience ran directly counter to these dolorous croakings, for his industry had realised a handsome competence; but he knew too much of the world to attempt proving to the complainer that his ill success might be partly his own fault. He contented himself with remarking that it was surely possible for a tradesman to draw together a tolerable business. "Not in this country," his friend repeated. "Weel, then," said the Bailie, "what say ye to emigration? I have heard that some push their way geyan weel at Hobart Town or the Cape."

"Yes," replied his desponding townsman, "that might be the case aince in a day, but if there is business there, mair folk are there than can get a share o't." "Weel, it may be true what ye say," rejoined the Bailie, whose policy it was never to contradict any man directly, "but ye might gang further—ye might gang up into the interior." "There's naebody there," said the inveterate grumbler, "but kangaroos." The worthy Magistrate was somewhat nettled at this pertinacious hopelessness, and concluding that kangaroos were a tribe of native savages among whom a careful pedlar might make good bargains, he replied hastily, "Weel-a-weel, and isna a kangaroo's siller as guid as anither man's?"

One of the Bailies, while visiting the jail of Lanark, found the prisoners at the time to consist of a poacher, who chose to reside there in preference to paying a fine, and a wild Irishman for fire-raising, who was either mad or pretended to be so. The first visited was the poacher. "Well Jock," said the Magistrate, "I hope ye ha'e naething to complain o' your treatment here?" "Naething but the noise that Irishman makes," said the culprit. "I havena slept for the last twa nights, and I maun just tell ye, Bailie, that if ye dinna fin' means to keep him quiet, I'll stay nae longer in!"

An Admiral, on his return from a cruise, met an old acquaintance, who said, after the usual salutations had passed, "They telled me, Admiral, that ye

had got married?" The Admiral, hoping for a compliment, replied, "Why, Bailie, I'm getting on, I'm not so young as I was, you see, and none of the girls will have me;" on which the Bailie, with perfect good faith and simplicity, replied, "'Deed, Admiral, I wasna evenin' ye to a lassie, but there's mony a fine, respeckit, *half-worn* wumman wud be glad to tak' ye."

The Bailie's wife, like the Bailie himself, enjoyed the honour of the bench.

"I'm a hauntle easier in ma mind noo," said one woman to another, as they stood chatting at the door-step one summer evening, "since oor Jeems has been eleckit a Bailie." "An' hoo's that?" asked the neighbour, with pardonable curiosity. "Because I was aye feared Jeems micht fa' into the water if he got fu', but since he was made a Magistrate, a policeman aye brings him hame."

A wife of another Bailie, overtaken by a heavy shower of rain, took refuge in a draper's shop, and proceeded to make a few purchases. "You seem to be very quiet to-day," she said to the newly-engaged shopman. "Gracious, madam!" was the reply, "just look at the weather; what respectable body would venture out in a day like this!"

In a Lanarkshire town a meeting was called to consider the advisability of erecting a bridge over a small burn which flowed across a footpath in the immediate vicinity of the town, the burn having been previously crossed by means of stepping stones.

The Provost, who presided over the meeting, warmly advocated the erection of a bridge in an eloquent speech, and was in the middle of his peroration when a local worthy, who was something of a "character," got up and interrupted, "Hoot, toot, Provost! you're fair haiverin', man! Wha wad gang an' put a brig ower siccan a wee bit burnie as yon? Losh, man, I could cross it wi' a staunin' jump!" "Order, order," exclaimed the chairman angrily; "you are clearly out of order." "I ken I'm oot o' order," replied the interrupter, amid the laughter of the audience; "but if I was in order I could jump as faur again!"

Provost Ferguson and his satellites were frequently at dinner in the Commercial Hotel, Cupar-Fife, and Mr. David Methven, a jolly old fellow, was occasionally asked to be beside them. The party was at dinner one day while St. Catherine Street was being formed, and they were talking about how grand it would be, when the frail old innkeeper remarked, "I doot I'll be awa' ere that time, but I'se warrant I'll tak' a look doon upon its glory." "Ah, Dauvid," said the Provost, "dinna be rash; ye'll maybe ha'e to look up!"

An English gentleman, driving through a village in the north, was almost upset in his machine by a heap of dry wood and decayed branches which a poor-looking old man was accumulating on the roadway. The stranger cried in no very civil terms to the old man to clear the road and let his horse past, to

which not the slightest notice was taken. "You old dog!" shouted the gentleman, "I will have you brought up before the Provost, and put into prison for your disregard of the laws of the road." "Ye'll bring me afore the Provost, will ye? Muckle guid that'll dae ye," replied the woodcutter. "Man, I'm the Provost mysel'."

"What news frae Perth, Saunders?" asked an old wife of her neighbour, who had just returned from a visit to the Fair City. "Nae news, Elspet; but the *bodies* of Perth are a' unco glad that Bailie Wright is on to be Provost." "What is he, this Bailie Wright, that they're a' sae weel pleased wi'?" "Oh, he's a brewer, and a great friend o' the people." "Ay," rejoined Elspet, "a brewer, and a friend o' the people too; our Jamie Mackie that's dead near thirty years syne, was a brewer and ane o' the friends o' the people; and if Provost Wright be as gude to the folk o' Perth as Jamie Mackie was to the folk o' Coupar Angus, they'll ha'e nae reason to rue their choice." "What friendly thing did Jamie Mackie do for the folk o' Coupar, Elspet?" "Peace be wi' him, honest man," was Elspet's reply, "*he selt his ale for a penny, when ither folk took three baubees for't!!!*"

A Glasgow Town Councillor and a Parish Councillor had an awkward experience when visiting a lunatic asylum. To placate a patient they allowed him to show them over the institution. When they were in a room admiring the lookout some one closed

the self-locking door, with the result that the three were imprisoned. The Councillors knocked and shouted in vain. "If I were you I would be quiet," suggested the patient. Still the Councillors kept up the racket, and the situation soon lost the ludicrous side. With perspiration running down their cheeks they took to kicking at the door. "If I were you I would be quiet," again suggested the patient. "But we're no' daft," retorted the Councillors. "That's what I said masel' when I was brocht in." Half-an-hour elapsed before the Councillors were released. The patient all the time was quite composed.

A northern newspaper published, some years ago, the following excerpt from the records of the burgh of Elgin, as peculiarly applicable to the times and circumstances, and recommended it to the serious consideration of the municipal electors previous to the election of councillors at the ensuing election :—

Counsall Chamber, Sept. 27, 1635.

The qlk day it was conclouit and ordainit yt ilk year in tyme coming, from persons of Counsall, at least *ane* or *twa* of them should be *changit*, and *wyis* persons put in their rowmis !

Glasgow, according to some, is the greatest municipality on earth. Once, history says, a civic dignitary of Saint Mungo died and went to his place, and there he lifted up his eyes, and, looking round, said, "Really, this is charming; this is very credit-

able to the greatest municipality on earth. I didn't think Heaven was so like Glasgow." Then some one came forward and said to him, "Man, ye're haiverin'; this is no' Heaven, this is the other place."

Associated with the Bailie there are two officials differing widely in their calling, but alike enjoying a place in anecdote and story. These are the town clerk and the town crier.

The old Town Clerk of Colinsburgh, in Fife, had a very pawky way in describing how he liked to drink. "Weel," said he, "I like a bit gentle dew i' the mornin', a skurroch i' the forenoon, a smart shower after dinner, and a Lammas spate at nicht!"

Jamie Ritchie, who flourished as piper to the Corporation of Peebles at the beginning of the present century, was told by his wife one day that the flood in the Tweed had carried away their family cow—the fruit of Jamie's laborious earnings. "Weel, weel," said he, with philosophic calmness, "deil may care after a'; it cam' wi' the wind, lat it gang wi' the water."

There are many stories connected with the bellman in his official capacity. The town-crier of Fort-William proclaimed the following notice on one occasion—"A telegram has been received from the Ben Nevis Observatory, stating that the eclipse of the moon, which was to take place at 8.15 p.m. to-night, has been postponed, because of the unsettled state of the weather."

A crier who was requisitioned to do service for the Duke of Argyll is remembered in the following :—
 Ta hoy! Te tither ta hoy!! Ta hoy three times!!! An' ta hoy—Wheesht!!! By command of Her Majesty, King George, an' her Grace te Duke o' Argyll :—If anybody is found fishing aboon te loch, or below te loch, afore te loch, or ahint te loch, in te loch, or on te loch, aroon' te loch, or about te loch, she's to be persecutit wiss three terrible persecutions : first, she's to be burnt, syne she's to be drownt, an' then she's to be hangit—an' if ever she comes back she's to be persecutit wiss a far waur death. God save te King an' Her Grace te Duke o' Argyll!”

In the early Reform days the Forfar Radicals dispatched the bellman to announce a meeting for next evening. The parish minister, before whose door the crier was making the proclamation, was a violent partisan of the Government. Running out he exclaimed, “Stop, John; who bade ye cry that?” “Deed, sir” answered John, “I'll juist cry what I'm paid for, an' ne'er spier wha gi'es me the paper.” The minister, seeing no good was to be done in this way, snatched the paper from John and ran off. “Hoots,” cried the sarcastic bellman, “ye needna rin sae fast. Though *ye* canna tell your story wantin' your paper, dae ye think *I* canna dae it wantin' mine?”

In past times “the Laird” was a man of great importance, as the following proclamation made by



James Ferguson, the Langholm town-crier, will show. "O yes, an' that's ae time; O yes, an' that's twa times; O yes, an' that's a third an' last time:— All manner of person or persons whatsoever, let 'em draw near, an' I shall let 'em ken that there is a fair to be held at the muckle toon of Langholm for the space o' aucht days, wherein ony hustrin' custrin land-louper, horse-couper, or gang-the-gate swinger, breedin' ony hurdam, durdam, rabblement, babblement, or squabblement, he shall ha'e his lugs tackit to the muckle trone, wi' a nail o' twa-a-penny, until he doon on his hob-shanks, an' pray nine times God bless the King, and thrice the muckle Laird of Relton, payin' a groat to me, Jamie Ferguson, bailey o' the aforesaid manor. So you've heard my proclamation, an' I'll noo gang hame to my dinner."

In one of the stormy days that distinguished a late summer, a lady lost her boa in keeping the rebellious folds of her drapery in a state of subordination. This graceful neck-ornament was lost at Pollokshaws, and the town-crier of that place was instructed to advertise it through the burgh. He ran off at double quick time, and having given the first "tal-ling," a thought suddenly struck him that the advertisement was incomplete, and turning back he enquired, "would it no be as weel to say what the callant's claes were like?"

John Gunn, the bellman of Stanley, was a man of genuine humour and ready wit, and his pawky, pithy sayings were current coin in the village.

“Jock’s” trousers were sadly worn at the knees, and one day he was met by a stranger, who asked the reason. The answer was unlooked for. “Weel, man, gin ye were as aften on your knees as me, ye wad be a better man the day.”

Sometimes the duties of crier were discharged by a woman. Meg Dalrymple was the town crier of D——, a small village in Perthshire, and her public announcements were unique in their way. After enlightening the village as to a special sale of “finnan haddies and kipper herrin’,” she would add bitterly, “An’, as there’s a gey when ‘fishy’ folk about the place i’ the noo, Wully Pringle should mak’ a grand day o’t.” After intimating a football match she would continue in the following strain—“Megsty me! isn’t it awfu’ to think that folk’ll pey to see a when callants kickin’ the buits aff their feet, or maybe breakin’ yin anither’s shin banes, for ocht I ken!” She had a great aversion to the Free Kirk minister, as her last public proclamation clearly demonstrates:—“Oyis! oyis! oyis! on Sabbath next a sermon will be preached by the Rev. Joseph Downley (a nesty upsettin’ puggy o’ a craitur). A collection will be ta’en, as the kirk’s a new ane. To get it, ye gang doon the brae, across the brig, turn to your left, and that’s the kirk—an’ the Lord guard an’ guide ye when ye get there!”

In dealing with the town crier, it may not be inappropriate to give thought for a moment to his official friend—the town guard.

One of the old Town Guard of Edinburgh (a Highlander, as many of that body were) having fallen asleep while on duty, was sentenced to be drummed out of the corps with his coat turned. As the procession, with the disgraced guardsman, passed along the High Street, the drum beating the customary march on such occasions, a woman in the crowd cried out, "Oh puir man, I am wae to see him." "No sae puir, madam," exclaimed the haughty Celt, tossing his head, and assuming a consequential air, which contrasted ludicrously with his degraded condition, "no sae puir, madam, I ha'e twenty pound in the bank."

Donald Macalpine rose from the ranks to be a sergeant in the Paisley Town Guard; and no epauletted official in his Majesty's service strutted the pavement with more consequence than did Donald in his blue coat with crimson collar. He was a very careful person, and contrived, one way or other, to become possessed of a tolerably well-furnished house, and a cow, the crowning point of his ambition: for Donald could never stomach the blue water-milk supplied from the dairies. Mrs. Macalpine was a very infirm person, and had, for many years preceding her decease, been confined to bed. None of the family survived her. This event was the beginning of a series of misfortunes to the poor sergeant. His house was soon after burned to the ground; and scarcely had his spirits mastered this calamity, when, what he set his heart most on, his poor cow,

fell a victim to inflammation. This last event nearly paralysed the conservator of the peace. A friend called on Donald to sympathise with him in his bereavement and losses, but Donald refused to be comforted. "Oh, yes," replied he, to the various arguments employed by his friend to induce submission to what had been allotted to him, "I'll got plenty o' house to stay in, and plenty o' wife too, if I'll socht her;—that's all very well—but wha will gi'e me eight pounds to buy another cow?"

A Burgh Officer who did duty at Culross was something of a character. He was known as "Whangle," and the civic officials' liberality supplied him with a uniform of a rather distinctive type. On one occasion, when a company of soldiers were in the ancient burgh, "Whangle" was the object of much attention. One of the worthy defenders of liberty at length addressed the official with, "Hulloa, sir! What corps do you belong to?" "Ou," said "Whangle," as he eyed his uniform proudly, "I'm in a corps by masel'."

