

Now and then, to complete the resemblance, and to correct the presumption of the venturous charioteers, it does happen that the career of these dashing rivals of Salmoneus meets with as undesirable and violent a termination as that of their prototype. It is on such occasions that the 'insides' and 'outsides,' to use the appropriate vehicular phrases, have reason to rue the exchange of the slow and safe motion of the ancient fly-coaches, which, compared with the chariots of Mr. Palmer, so ill deserve the name. The ancient vehicle used to settle quietly down, like a ship scuttled and left to sink by the gradual influx of the waters, while the modern is smashed to pieces with the velocity of the same vessel hurled against breakers, or rather with the fury of a bomb bursting at the conclusion of its career through the air. The late ingenious Mr. Pennant, whose humour it was to set his face in stern opposition to these speedy conveyances, had collected, I have heard, a formidable list of such casualties, which, joined to the imposition of innkeepers, whose charges the passengers had no time to dispute, the sauciness of the coachman, and the uncontrolled and despotic authority of the tyrant called the guard, held forth a picture of horror, to which murder, theft, fraud, and peculation lent all their dark colouring. But that which gratifies the impatience of the human disposition will be practised in the teeth of danger, and in defiance of admonition; and, in despite of the Cambrian antiquary, mail-coaches not only roll their thunders round the base of Penmen-Maur and Cader-Edris, but

Frighted Skiddaw hears afar
The rattling of the unscythed car.

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

It was a fine summer day, and our little school had obtained a half holyday, by the intercession of a good-humoured visitor.¹ I expected by the coach a new number of an interesting periodical publication, and walked forward on the highway to meet it, with the impatience which Cowper has described as actuating the resident in the country when longing for intelligence from the mart of news:

¹ His honour Gilbert Gossinn of Gandercleugh, for I love to be precise in matters of importance. — J. C.