

condescend to accept from his Gracious Majesty the donation of a shilling! How it chanced that the invincible McCraw had never himself attained even the rank of a sergeant, was a question which I never thought of asking!

When I reached the street, the first thing which arrested my attention was a portable ark, or house, on four gigantic wheels and drawn by horses. A coal-black Sambo with a flaming red turban, and long glass drops in his ears, officiated as charioteer, whilst two starved looking boys perched upon the top of the vehicle, like pyets in a mist, drummed and blew away, as if their existence depended upon the amount of sound which they engendered!

Behind the peripatetic mansion (again I owe a word to Mr. Paumy) rode the most outré and extraordinary apparition I had ever beheld, Lady Sourocks and Beau Balderston not even excepted. He was a wee, shrunken, shrivelled up-like Brounie of a creature, sporting an abortive cocked hat, for all the world like the stopper of a vinegar cruet, and a wig, the curls whereof hung down his back like hanks of carded wool, reaching almost to the tail of his gaunt grey mare! His nose was the very model of the beak of the ancient grey parrot brought home from Barbadoes by Captain Peppercup, and his chin had such a brotherly affection for its upper brother, that it seemed unwilling to be far apart from it! Indeed I verily believe that a sixpence would have found a secure place of refuge between the two! The muzzle of this incomprehensible phenomenon was as blue as that which ancient historians unanimously attribute to the Pagan polygamist who committed homicide on so many of his over curious spouses; and his cheeks were stringently drawn in at the sides as if he had masticated nothing but alum, from the era of his nativity! To make a long story short, he was the very essence and incarnation of ugliness, resembling more the effigy of the monkey, as the same is exhibited and set forth in the "*The Hundred Animals*," than one of the Lords of the creation!

Multiform and erudite were the conjectures which were hazarded touching the personality and history of this wonder-creating personage. Thomas Treddles the poetical weaver opined

that it was his namesake *Thomas the Rhymer*, awakened from his long slumber, and come to restore a king to the deserted Palace of Holyrood House. The Town Clerk, who was ever on the look out for suspicious characters, had a strong notion that the unknown was George Washington the notorious American rebel arrived to melt down if possible the crown of George III, and coin Republican eagles of the same! Whilst David Driddles the club-footed beadle, and Minister's man, who, by virtue of his office, was presumed to know something of Church history, offered to wager his half years' salary that it was neither more nor less than the Wandering Jew, come to take up his abode for a brief period in our loyal town! This latter conjecture, I may mention, gained a host of adherents, particularly amongst the ancient matrons and spinsters with whom David had long borne the reputation of an oracle!

Ingenious as were the foregoing theories, they all proved to be erroneous, and an end was speedily put to the anxiety of the lieges, which, in a few minutes, had reached an almost intolerable degree of sharpness. The vehicle having drawn up opposite to the principal Inn, which then was the Clayslap Arms, the new-come party adjourned forthwith into the same, and, after a brief interval, the black-amoor made his appearance at the bow window on the first flat. Waving his hand for silence, as majestically as the Indian Emperor in the shoemaker's procession of St. Crispin, the grim-looking herald made proclamation to the congregated multitude, that the great and illustrious natural philosopher, Monsheer Nong-tong-paw, had visited Dreeddaily, on his road to the Court of Japan, and condescendingly purposed to exhibit his supernatural skill in the Town Hall on that evening, whilst his steeds were recruiting themselves after their travels. Before retiring, the sable spokesman added that the entry or admission was necessarily taxed at one shilling per head, in order to prevent over pressure. Still as the object of the Magi was not to make money, (which, indeed, he could coin at pleasure out of slates and withered leaves,) but the diffusion of knowledge,—candles, oat-meal, bacon, and such like viands, would be received in lieu of the currency of the realm! Having thus said his say, the Ethiopian retired into