

His head was covered with a hat of the most fashionable shape. His hair was thickly powdered and gathered up behind in a *queue*. His coat, his vest, his breeches, were of silken velvet, and the colour thereof was the kingly purple—moreover, the knees of the last mentioned article were fastened with silver buckles, which shone as stars as the sun fell upon them. His stockings were of silk, white as the driven snow; and partly covering these, he wore a pair of boots of the kind called Hessian. In his left hand, as I have said, he carried an umbrella, and in his right he bore a silver mounted cane*. The people gazed with wonder as the stranger paced slowly along the footpath, as he approached the door, the sexton lifted his hat, bowed, and walking before him, conducted him to the squire's pew. The gentleman sat down; he placed his umbrella between his knees, his cane by his side, and from his pocket he drew out a silver snuff-box, and a bible in two volumes bound in crimson coloured morocco. As the congregation began to assemble, some looked at the stranger in the squire's seat with wonder. All thought his face was familiar to them. On the countenances of some there was a smile, and from divers parts of the church there issued sounds like the tittering of suppressed laughter. Amongst those who gazed on him were the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson—their cheeks alternately became red, pale, hot and cold. Their eyes were in a dream, and poor Sarah's head fell as though she had fainted away upon the shoulder of her brother Paul. Peter looked at Jacob, and Rebecca hung her head. But the squire and his family entered. They reached the pew,—he bowed to the stranger,—gazed,—started,—frowned,—ushered his family rudely past him, and beckoned for the gentleman to leave the pew. In the purple-robed stranger he recognized his field labourer, Andrew Donaldson! Andrew however, kept his seat, and looked haughty and unmoved. But the service began—the preacher looked often to the pew of the squire, and at length he too seemed to make the discovery, for he paused for a full half minute in the middle of his sermon, gazed at the purple coat, and all the congregation gazed with him, and breaking from his subject, he commenced a lecture against the wickedness of pride and vanity.

* To some this picture may appear exaggerated, but many readers of these Tales will recognise in it a faithful portraiture of the original.

The service being concluded, the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson proceeded home with as many eyes fixed upon them upon their father's purple coat. They were confounded and unhappy beyond the power of words to picture their feelings. They communicated to their mother all that they had seen. She, good soul, was more distressed than even they were, and she sat down and wept for "her poor Andrew." He came, and Paul, Peter and Jacob were about to inquire in quest of him, and they now thought in earnest of a straight-waistcoat, when John Bell's waiter of the King's Head entered and presenting Mr. Donaldson's compliments requested them to come and dine with him. His wife, sons and daughters were petrified!

"Poor man!" said Mrs. Donaldson, "tears forbade her to say more.

"O! my father! my poor father!" cried Sarah.

"He does not seem to be poor," answered the waiter.

"What in the world can have put that in your head?" said Jacob.

"We must try to soothe and humiliate him," added Paul.

The whole family, therefore, though ashamed to be seen in the village, went to the King's Head together. They were ushered into a room in the midst of which stood a table, drew, with divers trunks or boxes around it. His wife screamed as she beheld the transformation, and clasping her hands together, she cried—"Oh Andrew!"

"Catherine," said he, "ye must understand that ye are a lady now, and ye must not call me Andrew, but Mister Donaldson."

"A leddy!" exclaimed she in a tone mingled fear and astonishment, "O! what does the man mean! Bairns! bairns! can none o' ye bring your father to reason?"

"It is you that require to be brought to reason Mrs. Donaldson," said he, "but since I see that ye are all upon the rack, I will put you at your wits' end. I am sensible, baith you and your neighbours have all considered me in the light of a miser, neither you nor they knew my motive in saving. It has ever been my desire to become the richest, the greatest, and the most respectable man in the parish. But that you may think that I have pinched myself and wasted nothing on the back, I will tell you I never could become out of the rags of nine shillings a week. Yet night and day I hoped, prayed, and believed it would be accomplished, and it is accomplished! yes, I repeat it is accomplished!"