

HOW BAILIE BOWSTER BURKED THE BURGLAR.

A DUMBARTON STORY.

It was well known in the good town of Dumbarton that Bailie Bowster had treasured up a fair store of this world's goods. At the time when our hero flourished the great glass-works of the Dixons were in full blast, and many a pound sterling the bailie drew from that concern of gigantic cones and furnaces. As a rule, people who are fond, like him, of "a wee drap whisky," contrive to make their expenditure exceed their income; but if all bibbers born since the discovery of the distillation of the familiar spirit had been as prudent as Bailie Bowster, Sir Wilfred Lawson would have no occasion to carry on his now necessary crusade. It was, however, on the death of Aunt Abigail that the bailie's fortune went up with a bound, as, besides a handsome legacy, that venerated relative left him all her silver plate, with the recommendation that he should keep it as a heirloom.

With all the town talking, therefore, of the bailie's legacy, as Dumbarton only can talk, was it strange that a certain gentleman of the crowd from Glasgow should take it into his head to pay a visit to the bailie's domicile, situated at the Cross corner, and that not by the front door, but by a back window? It was one dark night, after a festive meeting of that historical association the Salmon Club, where he had greatly distinguished himself as an orator, and as a *bon vivant* generally, after exercising his good stout limbs in a walk from Balloch Hotel (for he made it a point not to sleep away from home unnecessarily), that the bailie had donned his red nightcap, and crept in beside the lady of his affections. He had been perhaps a couple of hours asleep, and dreaming of Water of Leven salmon, when that lady gave him a very unceremonious dig in the ribs with her honest round elbow. Mrs. Bowster was large and fat, a most excellent woman, with the temper of an angel; but probably under the circumstances she was to be excused punching him with that fair, soft, round elbow, considering he had been at a dinner of the Salmon Club that evening.

"Archie!" she whispered loudly.

No answer.

"Archie! Archie!"

"Hum-m-m-n."

"Archie! Archie! Archie!"

"Hurr! hurr! hum-n-n-n."

Whether the bailie was unconsciously ejaculating "Hear, hear" to the able speech of an honourable member of the club, still ringing in his ears, will never now be known.

Mrs. Bowster, however, lost no more time. Like her spouse, she was prompt, and, for a woman, fearless. She jumped out of bed, made her way to the kitchen dresser (for they slept in the kitchen, good reader), got hold of—(I grieve to have to say it, but truth compels me)—the dish-cloth, soaked it in a stoup of cold water, returned to her husband's side, clapped the dish-cloth on his face, and jumped into bed with the elasticity of a squirrel.

"Archie! I say Archie!" she continued, in the same loud whisper, "there's somebody wantin' in by the back window."

Without a word, the bailie arose from the nuptial couch, and proceeding to the principal back apartment, listened. There was some one on a ladder at the window, that was evident; the shadow of a man was faintly to be descried on the blind, stealthily moving outside. He was plainly endeavouring to open the window. A black patch suddenly appeared on one particular pane. The bailie had heard of pitch-plasters for breaking in glass without noise. Instantly he retreated to the kitchen.

"The rape, Kersty, the rape?"

Most women would have inquired what rope was wanted, moreover who, why, and wherefore, was at the window, screaming probably an accompaniment. Mrs. Bowster did nothing of the kind; she simply reached forward, put her hand under the bed, and drew out the clothes basket containing articles appertaining to the bleaching green. Bailie Bowster seized the clothes rope and also a rolling pin. Hastening back to the breach he was in time to see the robber insert his hand and undo the fastening. He waited close by fumbling with the rope. The window was gently raised; a head and shoulders came slowly in. The moment the bailie had a clear view thereof he clapped a scientific noose over the head and pulled it tight like a flash of lightning. Of course the man's first thought was retreat; and the bailie, nothing loth, helped him with a sounding tap from the rolling pin on the organ of self-esteem. The robber began to swear vehemently, still retreating down the ladder, the bailie carefully giving him rope as he went. When he got down a few steps more his captor tightened the rope and popped his head out of the window—

"What were ye wantin' the nicht, freen?" enquired the bailie, in exactly the same tone he would have used to a customer.

"The devil!" was the short and epigrammatic reply.

"He doesna bide here," responded the questioner, in exactly the same tone as before, "but ca' canny a meenute." (The thief was vigorously trying to get rid of the rope.) "Ca' canny a meenute an' we'll send for him."

At the same moment, as the man redoubled his efforts to release himself, the bailie took hold of the ladder and swinging it backward and for-

ward forced the man to seize it with both hands so as to save himself from falling.

"Kersty! Kersty!"

"I'm comin'," cried that obedient wife, hastening to the room. She had in the meantime wisely slipped on some apparel.

"Kersty, gang an' ca' Captain Mactavish, an' tell him to tak' the poker or a guid stout stick, an' gang down to the garden."

Meantime there was active manœuvring on the part of the burglar to get rid of the rope, and on the part of Bailie Bowster to oblige him to retain it. The thief was reckless, and struggled furiously; the bailie determined, holding on firmly by both the rope and the ladder.

"Ca' canny, daud ye, ca' canny," cried the bailie's iron voice, "as the steward said to the sick passenger when he ran for the slop basin."

The burglar, believing his amateur hangman to be good-natured from his presumed joking, ceased his efforts to escape and began a parley.

"Ye might let me gang," he said, "I didna mean to do ye ony harm."

"I daursay: it's a siller we want, as the prodigal son said to his ould father."

"Dinna hang me: I'm maist chokit. Slack the rope a bit, or you'll hang me," gasped the burglar.

"Aye, it wad be a pity to do that, as the poultry-man said to his peacock."

However, the bailie slackened the rope slightly.

"But," he added, "ye manna deny me the pleasure o' trying ye, as the schule laddie said to the apple dumplin'."

"Just come doon an' tak me: I'm hauf deed wi' chokin'."

"If ye'd only bide," chuckled the bailie, "as the bird-catcher said to the fellee when he hadna a cage to put it in."

Probably Bailie Bowster meant that rather wild bird the fieldfare, but he continued—

"A fine sicht for sair een to see ye scuddin' like the win' up the Vennel, and roon' the Common; an' me, a bailie o' the Royal Burgh of Dumbarton, in shirt an' nightcap scourin' ahint ye. Wad it no'?"

At this moment there was the noise of some one apparently approaching. The burglar grasped the rope with redoubled energy, uttered a fresh volley of imprecations, and struggled reckless of consequences. Suddenly the rope broke, and the man began to descend; the bailie flung the ladder from him with sudden energy; down came thief, ladder and all. But it was the soft soil of a garden, and he was quickly on his feet again.

"Fat a natur too you mean?" interposed another voice, with a marked Highland accent. "fat a natur too you mean swearin' up a latter in ta middle of ta nicht! Haf you no fear of Cot before your eyes?"

Captain Mactavish was thoroughly serious in thus rebuking the elevated profanity of the midnight robber; but he at once took measures to inspire him with a fear of man, for he no sooner regained his feet than the stout skipper knocked him down again with his stick.

"Haud him there, captain, haud him there till I win doon, an' we'll oter him roon' to the Tabuith."

"Take your time, Paille, take your time: Tuncaun Mactavish would hold him if he was a sot!" This was true Highland deliberation.

The captain and the bailie duly lodged the midnight robber in safe custody at the Tollbooth of Dumbarton. The trial afterwards was not particularly interesting.—*Herald*.

AN IRISH ROMANCE.

When I arrived at Kilmurrey, one of those storms which comes from the Atlantic, and in an instant envelops these islands in a cloud of wind-driven mist, made me seek refuge in a cabin. It was a crowded, busy peasant's home, and as I sat by the fire—the warmest seat being given me with the invariable hospitality of these people—I found abundant material for observation and reflection. Whatever cleanliness was possible in a family of eight occupying one huge room along with two pigs was carefully maintained; at least, the mother and children were neatly and comfortably attired, the hearth well swept, and the pigs were confined to the limits assigned to them. An old woman was carding wool, a child rocking the cradle, and the mother spinning at a large wheel, the chickens, also driven in by the rain, one by one hopped up a ladder to their roosts among the rafters, from which they watched over their ruffled feathers, the busy family, and the blazing hearth with so much approval and satisfaction that I am sure, if chickens be susceptible to emotion, these were very tender ones indeed. A dog sneaked in, and seeing a stranger, went out into the rain again. The dogs, which are not numerous on the island, are of the most miserable and condemned aspect, and seem to feel their ignoble ancestry, as they invariably jumped over a wall or ran into some obscurity on the approach of a stranger. While drying my dripping garments, I saw for the first time, seated in a corner, as if to screen himself from observation, the figure of a young man clad in white flannels, the costume of the island. His face was thin and sad, and of the same color as the garments he wore, and he gazed at the fire with such a dejected and hopeless expression as led me to infer that he was the fatal victim of some terrible disease—consumption, perhaps—and was feebly waiting through the long hours of the day and night the death he knew to be so sure and near. I spoke to him, striving in my pity to appear unconscious of perceiving his misery. Without answering, he rose abrupt-

ly and left the cabin. The looks of concern and inquietude in the faces about me told me of some unusual sorrow, which the mother, leaving her spinning wheel, explained to me in a low voice. She told me that the young man, her eldest son, poor Owey, as she called him, had until a month before been the most healthy and cheerful member of the family; ready and prompt at work, and the life of the household, when a letter came from America to a neighboring family inclosing money to pay the passage thither of their eldest daughter. It appears that the young man long entertained a secret passion for this girl, and when he heard that he probably would never see her again, he declared his love to her, and besought her to remain. So far from being unmindful of his affection, she avowed her willingness to marry him at once, if he would accompany her to America immediately afterward. This was impossible; his own family were unable to assist him, and the few people who possess money on the island would not lend it without security. The practical damsel saw on the other side of the Atlantic every prospect of improving her material condition, and doubted not that husbands were as plentiful there as elsewhere; while if she remained, she knew the drudgery and hopeless slavery that were the lot of all around her would be hers also. Therefore she told her suitor if he could not accompany her she would not listen to his suit. When the young man found his upbraids useless, he gave way to despair, and had not worked or spoken since his cruel sentence had been pronounced. Every day he grew thinner and more wan, and he did not partake of sufficient food to support life. All the solicitude and the tenderness of his mother had not succeeded in arousing within him his former self, and with tears running down her cheeks she told me she thought he had lost his reason forever.

Some weeks previously the school-master had written for them to a priest, a distant relative of the family, who lived in Connemara; but they had received no reply, and she supposed he had neither help nor counsel to give. I pondered for a long while, as I sat by the fire, upon what often proves to be the unfortunate sincerity of men, and I could not refrain from deploring the no less frequent levity of my own sex. In passing through the village a week afterward I stopped to say good-day to these kind people, when I found the house a scene of bustle and confusion. My ere-while love-sick swain was, when I entered, making himself a pair of pampooties; and as he bade me good-day over a dangerously starched collar, his face glowed with health and energy. The now cheerful and happy mother informed me that since my last visit they had received a letter from the priest in Connemara, inclosing his blessing for her son, and the money to pay his passage to America. She had been very busy knitting him stockings, and making him a fine white flannel suit to be married in, and which thereafter he would not again wear till his arrival at New York, so that he would make a decent appearance in the New World, as became the relative of a priest. He was to be married to the object of his choice the next day, and they were to start immediately afterward upon their long voyage. As I left, the damsel, whose month's delay to prepare her outfit had given such a fortunate respite to her lover, thrust her head in the door, and called upon Owey to be sure and wear the blue stockings she had knitted him to the chapel on the morrow; and then, with her little *retroussé* nose turned up to the sky, ran blushing away.—*J. L. CLOND, in Harper's Magazine.*

AMATEUR THEATRICALS.

HOW THEY PLAY "ROMEO AND JULIET" IN SAN JOSE.

San Jose is very prolific in amateur theatricals, and although we don't quite believe the story that they have gotten so now down there that they have to dispose of the tickets for those entertainments by the aid of pistols and masks, on dark nights, we can easily credit that when the travelling agents of an Eastern drug-house volunteered to pay the hall-rent for one of their entertainments, the other night, they gladly accepted the offer. All he stipulated for in return, the agent said, was a chance to use the stage accessories, should the opportunity present, with some advertising references to the house he represented. The play was "Romeo and Juliet;" and on the evening of the performance the company was somewhat disgusted to find that the agent had caused the programmes to be printed in such a manner as to have the name of each character followed by an urgent appeal to the public to buy or try at least one box or bottle of some indispensable preparation, thus:

Juliet, Mrs. Alvira Giggles'

(The love-lorn Juliet would have been even more beautiful if she had used Botts' Complexion Powders.)

Romeo, Mr. C. Jumper.

(The impetuous lover wouldn't have had to wear a yellow wig if he had used eight or ten bottles of Botts' Hair Helper.)

Tybalt, Mr. Hays Grainger.

(Not even the enormous pads worn by amateurs now-a-days will keep out rheumatism unless care is taken to rub in Botts' Skin Scalper.)

But they managed to choke down their indignation until the balcony scene. As that inter-

esting episode was well under way, the deeply-interested audience was surprised at beholding an unusual movement on the part of the moon. Juliet had just attracted attention to it by the line—

"Swear not by the moon"

When that luminary turned solemnly around and displayed on its nether side the legend, in large, black letters: "Try Botts' Liver Pills! Oh! try 'em."

The rest of this all too sad story is soon told. Juliet burst into tears, and Romeo swore like a pirate walking the plank. The audience had their money returned at the door, and the show broke up. The agent, however, paid the expenses agreed upon like a little man. He said that he was sorry the entertainment hadn't been a success somehow, but he thought he had gotten the requisite amount of advertising. He was satisfied.

VARIETIES.

From a trial relative to the telephone. Learned and solemn judge: "Would you mind showing us the practical working of this marvelous instrument?" "Certainly, your ludship. Would your ludship speak into this telephone, which is, I believe, connected with the office of the company?" His ludship, rather hard up for something to say, amid a breathless silence: "Hullo, who are you?" Pause of two seconds; intense excitement. Innocent but facetious clerk at the other end: "If it comes to that, who the deuce are you?" Tableau!

THE ONE MECHANIC BURIED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.—Notwithstanding England's enormous indebtedness to her mechanics, but on mechanical workingmen has ever been honoured with a burial in Westminster Abbey; and that was Graham, the clock-maker. Graham made exact astronomy possible by his great improvements in time pieces. He invented the dead-beat escapement and the gridiron compensating pendulum, and he was the first to make clocks that would run for many days without winding. Graham was also a maker of great quadrants and instruments of that sort. His funeral was attended by all the members of the Royal Society.—*Scientific American.*

A COMPLIMENT TO THE LADIES OF CANADA.—The celebrated war correspondent and lecturer, Mr. Archibald Forbes, expresses his opinion of the ladies of Canada as follows: "When I was in Canada before I only carried with me the hozy idea that all Canadian ladies were beautiful. The belief, or rather tradition, has lasted me for twenty years, and I return now, having seen the ladies of the habitable globe, and having acquired a considerable amount of cynicism in consequence of finding a large amount of female beauty turn out like the apples of Sodom, only to be confirmed, in a general sense, in the belief of my early days. The ladies of Canada have a brightness and sprightliness which the fairer air of the country seems to engraft upon the old stock at home. The ladies form a more regular portion of the audiences of this country than at home, which is extremely gratifying to any lecturer whose tastes are at all æsthetic."

NOT TO BE TEMPTED.—Dramatis personæ—a good young man; three evil-minded gamblers, a clergyman, with his wife and daughter, travelling for bronchitis. Scene—a Pullman car on the overland trip to California; gamblers playing poker, young man reading his "Traveller's Guide," preacher looking on.

First Gambler—Young man, will you join us in a friendly game of cards?

Young man—Thank you; I never play cards.

Second Gambler—Young man, will you take a nip? (Passes him the flask.)

Young Man—Thank you; I never drink.

Third Gambler—Young man will you have a weed? (Extending him his cigar-case.)

Young Man—Thank you; I never smoke.

Clergyman—Young man, I have watched your conduct with great pleasure. I have seen you refuse to gamble, drink, and smoke. I should be glad if you would go into the next car and allow me to introduce you to my daughter.

Young Man—Thank you; I never marry.

OUR CHESS COLUMN.

Solutions to Problems sent in by correspondents will be duly acknowledged.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. W. S., Montreal.—Papers to hand. Thanks.

Student, Montreal.—Correct solution received of Problem No. 309.

R. C., Hamilton, O.—Postal and report received. The latter will be noticed in our Column next week.

E. D. W., Sherbrooke, P.Q.—Correct solution received of Problem No. 314.

L. G. G., Quebec.—Your solution of Problem No. 315 is correct. The key move leaves Black an extensive choice of moves but there is no escape. Send post card next time. They are handy for reference.

We have just received the Prospectus issued by the Managing Committee of the Canadian Chess Association, from which we gather the following particulars: The annual meeting of the Association will take place at Ottawa, on Tuesday, February 22nd, 1881, at four p.m. The Tournament, open to all residents of the Dominion, on payment of an entrance fee of one dollar, will begin as soon as the organization of the meeting, and the settlement of the preliminaries have been effected. The first prize will be a silver cup, given by the President, T. Ledroit, Esq., of Quebec, and it is proposed to give four other prizes, in the proportion of \$20, \$15, \$10, and \$5, according to the amount at the disposal of the Association. It is desired that clubs and individuals should at once renew their annual subscriptions. Clubs are ex-