

and two or three ancient damsels of quality run to seed, who then vegetated in our territory, I think I have nearly exhausted the muster roll of his intimates.

To the last specified class, he attached himself in an especial degree, with all the adhesiveness of a hungry lawyer to his solitary client,—and to none more so than the Dowager Lady Sourocks, aunt to Lord Clay-slap.

She was just such another anti-diluvian curiosity as the Bean himself, seeming as if formed by Nature to be his marrow. As the old song hath it :

“ A Lock is made for ilka’ Jenny,  
So none need hg alone ! ”

On her head was constructed a perfect mountain of borrowed hair, plastered and stiffened up with hog’s-lard, and such like combustibles, surmounted by a cap adorned with pearls and stones of price. She had a hoop (or *girr*, as the juvenile lieges of Dleepdaily used to style it,) hung around her waist like the wheel of a cart, which swelled out her gown to the dimensions of the Cross-well;—and her shoes were garnished with red heels, at least six inches high. Her jointure was respectable, but she was too saving of the same to keep a chaise, and, consequently, seldom stirred out of doors, except in the best of weather. At such seasons she might be espied picking her steps along the “*croon o’ the causeway*,” a huge Chinese fan in her hand (though the mercury would be at the freezing point)—and an apopleptic-like cur-dog in her lap, which she petted, and cuddled, and hugged, as if it had been a Christian being!

As I said before, Bean Benjamin attached himself to her Ladyship in an extra-especial manner. On the Sundays he was generally in waiting at the stair leading to the *Laird’s lair*, to conduct her to her seat;—and regularly twice a year he drove her to the Ayr races in Hosea Napkin’s Shandridan, which convenience was always trusted six weeks before hand for the occasion.

From these and similar indications a rumour was hatched that more unlikely things had come to pass than that the couple should make a joint adventure of their common stock in the great business of matrimony. It is true that they had been billing and cooing

for the better part of ten years without the Minister once getting in his word. On the other hand, however, it was to be kept in mind that they belonged to a school as formal and precise as the cut of their garments, and did things, courtship included, with greater deliberation than the hair-brained, *glaiiket* tribe of modern times. The main difficulty which the gossips of the Burgh made to the matter was, that the lass was not overly weel-faur’ed,—but as daft Will, the town fool, remarked,—“*If her beard was lang, sae was her purse, which covered a multitude o’ sins!*”

Having thus introduced the illustrious couple to your acquaintance, I will, under favour, leave them to the prosecution of their leisurely and methodical wooing, and turn for a season to other matters necessary to the development of this strange but most veritable history.

It was on a gloomy winter morning, about eight of the clock, that the community of Dleepdaily were startled from their propriety by the sudden row-de-dowing of a bass drum, and the shrill blast of a wind-broken, cracked trumpet!

As there were rumours of bloody wars at this conjuncture—the first French revolution just then being in the act of chipping the shell—the untimely and unlooked for concert created no small consternation and dismay. All the sashed windows in the neighbourhood were thrown open on the sudden, and many a luckless spider was sorely inconvenienced and discomposed by the hasty dislodgement of certain hats and Kilmarnock night-caps which filled up the vacancies of absent *lozans*. I, myself, being then a youngster in the third year of my apprenticeship, and naturally headstrong and regardless of danger, threw down the horn spoon with which I was cleansing the interior of the porridge-pot, and rushed to the door without waiting to perform the ceremony of putting on my small-clothes. At this period I had no slight touch of the “*scarlet fever*,”—a soldier’s life was invested by my imagination with charms exceeding those of royalty itself;—and I thought that perchance the martial music which rendered vocal the Main Street of Dleepdaily, indicated Corporal McCraw, and his ribband-decked recruiting party come with the benevolent intention of making Generals of all who would