

I'm treated like an outlan' body an' a fule. Though, without me, they nicht gang and beg, there is nae mair respect paid to me, than if I were a pair o' auld buuchels flung into a corner. Fifteen years syne I couldna believe it o' Tibby, though onybody had sworn it to me. I firmly believe that a guid wife is the greatest blessin' that can be conferred upon a man upon this earth. I can imagine it by the treasure that my faither had in my mither, for, though the best may hae words atween them occasionally, and I'm no saying that they hadna, yet they were just like passing showers to mak' the kisses o' the sun upon the earth mair sweet after them. Her whole study was to please him and to mak him comfortable. She was never happy but when he was happy; an' he was! just the same wi' her. I've heard him say, that she was worth untold gold. But, O Robin! If I think that a guid wife is the greatest blessin' a man can enjoy, weel do I ken that a scoldin', domineerin' wife is his greatest curse. It's a terrible thing to be snooled in your ain house—naebody can form an idea o't but they wha experience it.

"Ye remember when I first got acquainted wi' Tibby, she was doing the bondage-work up at Riselaw. I first saw her coming out o' Eccles kirk ae day, and I really thoct that I had never seen a better-laured or a more gallant-looking lass. Her cheeks were red and white like a half-ripe strawberry, or rather, I should say, like a cherry; and she seemed as modest and meek as a lamb. It wasna very lang until I drew up; and though she didna gie me ony great encouragement at first, yet, in a week or twa, after the ice was fairly broken, she became remarkably ceevil, and gied me her oxter on a Sunday. We used to saunter about the loanings, no saying meikle, but unco happy; and I was aye restless when I was out o' her sight. Ye may guess that the shoemaker was nae loser by it during the six months that I ran four times a week, wet or dry, between Birgham and Riselaw. But the term-time was drawing nigh, and I put the important question, and pressed her to name the day. She hung her head, and she no seemed to ken weel what to say; for she was sae mim and sae gentle then, that ye wad hae said—"outter wadna melt in her mouth." And when I pressed her mair urgently—

"I'll just leave it to yersel', Peter," says she.

"I thoct my heart wad louped out at my mouth. I believe there never was a man sae

beside himsel' wi' joy in this world afore. I fairly danced again, and cut as many antics as merry-andrew. 'O Tibby,' says I,

"I'm ower happy now!—Oh, haud my head! This gift o' joy is like to be my dead."

"I hope no Peter," said she; "I wad rather hae ye to live than dee for me."

"I thought she was as sensible as she was bonny, and better natured than baith.

"Weel, I got the house set up, the wedding-day cam, and everything passed ower as agreeably as onybody could desire. I thoct Tibby turnin' bonnier and bonnier for the first five or six days after the wedding, everything was 'hinny,' and 'my love' and 'Tibby dear,' or 'Peter dear.' But matters didna stand lang at this. It was on a Saturday night, I mind', just afore I wad gaun to drap work, that three or four acquaintances cam into the shop to wush me joy, and they insisted that I should payd for the wedding.' Ye ken I never was behin hand; and I agreed that I wad just fling a my coat and step up wi' them to Orange Lane. So, I gaed into the house and took down my market coat, which was hingin behind the bed; and after that I gaed to the kist to tak out a shilling or twa; for, up to that time, Tibby had not usurped the office of Chancellor o' the Exchequer. I did it as cannily as I could; but she had suspected something, and heard the jinkin' o' the siller."

"What are ye doing, Patie?" says she. "Wher are ye gaun?"

"I had never heard her voice hae sound afore, save the first time I drew up to her, when it was rather sharp than agreeable.

"Ou, my dear," says I. "I'm just gaun to Orange Lane for a wee while."

"To Orange Lane!" says she—"what the name o' fortune's gaun to tak ye there?"

"O hinny," says I, "it's just a neebor or twa that's draped in to wush us; and, ye ken, we canna but be neebor-like."

"Ay! the sorrow joy them!" says she, "and neebor too!—an' how meikle will it cost ye?"

"Hoot, Tibby," says I, for I was quite astonished at her, "ye no understand this woman."

"No understand them!" says she; "I wad to guidness that ye wad understand them though! If that's the way ye intend to m. the siller floc, it's time there were someb to tak' care o't."

"I had put the selver in my pocket, an'