

clergyman was about to join the hands of the parties, I drew off the glove of the bride a second or two before the bridesmaid performed a similar operation on the hand of the bridegroom. I heard the whisper of the crooked old woman, and saw that the eyes of the other women were upon me. I felt that I had committed another omen, and almost resolved to renounce wearing "blacks" for the future. The ceremony, however, was concluded; we returned from the manse, and every thing was forgotten, save mirth and music, till the hour arrived for tea.

The bride's mother had boasted of her "daughter's double set o' real china" during the afternoon; and the female part of the company evidently felt anxious to examine the costly crockery. A young woman was entering with a tray and the tea equipage—another, similarly laden, followed behind her. The sneer of the door caught the handle of the tray, and down went china, waiting-maid, and all! The fall startled her companion; their feet became entangled; both embraced the floor, and the china from both trays lay scattered around them in a thousand shapes and sizes! This was an omen with a vengeance! I could not avoid stealing a look at the sleeve of my black coat. The bearded old woman seemed inspired. She declared the luck of the house was *broken*! Of the double set of real china, not a cup was left, not an old saucer. The bridegroom bore the misfortune as a man; and, gently drawing the head of his young partner towards him, said—

"Never mind them, hinny—let them gang --we'll get mair."

The bride, poor thing, shed a tear; but the miller threw his arm round her neck, stole a kiss, and she blushed and smiled.

It was evident, however, that every one of the company regarded this as a real omen. The mill loft was prepared for the joyous dance; but scarce had the fantastic toes (some of them were not light ones) begun to move through the mazy rounds, when the loft-floor broke down beneath the bounding feet of the happy miller; for, unfortunately, he considered not that his goodly body was heavier than his spirits. It was omen upon omen—the work of breaking had begun; the "luck" of the young couple was departed.

Three days after the wedding, one of the miller's carts was got in readiness to carry home the bride's mother. On crossing the

unlucky burn to which we have already alluded, the horse stumbled, fell, and broke its knee, and had to be taken back, and another put in its place.

"Mair breakings!" exclaimed the now almost heart-broken old woman. "Oh, dear sake! how will a' this end for my pair bairn!"

I remained with my new found relatives about a week; and while there, the miller sent his boy for payment of an account of thirty pounds, he having to make up money to pay a corn-factor at the Haddington market, on the following day. In the evening the boy returned.

"Weel callant, inquired the millers, "hae ye gotten the siller?"

"No," replied the youth.

"Mercy me!" exclaimed my cousin, hastily, "hae ye no gotten the siller? Wha' did ye see, or what did they say?"

"I saw the wife," returned the boy; "an' she said: 'Siller! laddie, what's brought ye here for siller: I dare say your maister's daft! Do ye no ken we're broken! I'm sure a' body kens that we broke yesterday!'"

"The mischief break them!" exclaimed the miller, rising and walking hurriedly across the room; "this is breaking in earnest."

I may not here particularize the breakings that followed. One misfortune succeeded another, till the miller broke also. All that he had was put under the hammer, and he wandered forth with his young wife, a broken man.

Some years afterwards, I met with him in a different part of the country. He had the management of extensive flour mills. He was again doing well, and had money in his master's hands. At last there seemed to be an end of the breakings. We were sitting together, when a third person entered with a slow and timid step and rueful countenance.

"Willie," said he, with the tone of a speaking sepulchre, "hae ye heard the news?"

"What news, now?" inquired the miller, seriously.

"The maister's broken!" rejoined the other,

"An' my fifty pounds?" responded my cousin, in a voice of horror.

"Are broken wi' him," returned the stranger. "Oh, gude gracious!" cried the young wife, wringing her hands, "I'm sure I wish I were out o' this world! will ever thir breakings be done! what tempted my mother to buy me the cheena?"