

BANNISTER THE COMEDIAN—Bannister was a wit himself as well as the instrument of the wit of others. Some of those recollections still remain. In giving them here, it must be remembered how much is necessarily lost in losing the look, the tone, and the moment. One day, as he was walking with the celebrated Suett, a fellow on the top of a coach cried out, "Hope you 're well, Master Dickey Gossip." Suett, not prepared for the acquaintanceship, said, peevishly, "What an impudent ruffian!"—"He seems one of the profession, however," observed Bannister. "Don't you see he is upon the Stage?"

A shoemaker in Piccadilly, determined to astonish the world, had put up a motto, from Euripides, over his window. Bannister happened to be passing with, I believe, Porson. "That is Greek," said Bannister.—"What! are you acquainted with Greek," asked the Professor, with a laugh.—"I know it by sight," was the happy reply.

On the night of Mrs. Siddons's retirement from the stage, she withdrew, much affected with the sympathy of the audience; but as the curtain fell, one of those sounds followed, from some enemy of the great actress, which penetrates the ear amid a thousand plaudits, and for its susceptibility to which George Colman said the stage was originally called a *Histrionic* profession. Siddons caught the tone, and turning startled to Bannister, asked, "Can that be a hiss?"—"No," said Bannister, "it is a hys-teric."

The irritability of Matthews was proverbial. He was generous in giving his personal assistance to his brother actors; but it required dexterity, and the fortunate moment, to escape at times an angry reply. An actor once pressed him to play for his benefit at Drury-lane. "What could I do?" said Matthews, recounting the circumstances to Bannister. "The blockhead knew I was to play at the English Opera-house on the same night; I could not split myself."—"I don't say that," observed Bannister, "but the poor fellow's idea probably arose from his seeing you, as I have done, play in two pieces on the same night."

Spurzheim was lecturing on phrenology. "What is to be conceived the organ of drunkenness?" said the professor. "The barrel organ," interrupted Bannister.

A farce, from the French, was performed, under the title of "Fire and Water." "I predict its fate," said Bannister.—"What fate?" whispered the anxious author at his side.—"What fate?" said Bannister. "Why, what can fire and water produce but a hiss."—*Blackwood's Mag.*

A SOUTH CAMBRIAN WEDDING.—"Saturday is fixed as the day of marriage, and Friday is allotted to bring home the furniture of the woman; generally an oak chest, a feather bed, clothes, and crockery. The man provides a bedstead, table, dresser, and chairs. The evening is employed in receiving the presents of money, cheese, and butter, at the man's house, from his friends; and at the woman's house from her friends: this is called *purse and girdle*—an ancient British custom. All the presents are set down on paper, and when demanded, they are to be returned. On Saturday, the friends of the man come on horseback to his house, to the number of fifty or a hundred, eating and drinking at his cost, making their presents, and repaying those made at their weddings. Ten or twenty of the best mounted then accompany the bridegroom to the house of his intended, to demand her of her friends, who, with the lady, appear as uncomplaining as possible; and much Welsh poetry is employed by way of argument, one party being within the house, and the other without, abusing each other heartily, in language something more honourable than 'choice Italian.' Formal orations are delivered by some of the out-door party, and replied to by others, appointed to conduct this nuptial negotiation. At length the father appears, admitting and welcoming his guests; they alight, take refreshment and proceed to church. The girl mounts behind her father, mother, or friend, upon the swiftest horse they can procure, and gallops off, with her intended husband, and all the wedding guests, riding after in full chase.

Over the hills and far away.

go these bride-hunters, till the girl or her steed grow weary, and she suffers herself to be quietly conducted to the church and married. All the party then return to the married couple's house, eating at free cost, but finding their own liquor. Many of my Welsh friends tell me they have often joined the wedding troop, and that the chase is a most animated and amusing scene,—the bride leading the cavalcade of merry equestrians in any direction, and the whole party scouring the country like mad-folks." *South Wales by Roscoe.*

GREAT MEN.—At Hainton, there died in 1816, Samuel Suggs, aged fifty-two; and his body, with a single coffin, weighed fifty stone.

In 1754, died, Mr. Jacob Powell, of Stebbing in Essex. His body was above five yards in circumference, and weighed five hundred and sixty pounds: requiring sixteen men to bear him to his grave.

In 1775, Mr. Spooner, of Skillington, near Tamworth, weighed, a short time before his death, forty-five and nine pounds and measured four feet three inches across the shoulders.

Keyser mentions a young man in Lincoln, who ate eighteen

pounds of beef daily, and died in 1724, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, weighing five hundred and thirty pounds.

A baker in Pye Corner weighed thirty-four stone, and would frequently eat a small shoulder of mutton, baked in his oven, and weighing five pounds; he, however, persisted for one year to live upon water-gruel and brown bread, by which he lost two hundred pounds of his bulk.

Mr. Collett, master of the Eversham Academy, weighed upwards of twenty-six stone. When twelve years old; he was nearly as large as at the time of his death. At two years of age, he required two nurses to lift him in and out of bed; one of whom in a fit of anger, he felled to the floor with a blow of his hand.

At Trenaw, in Cornwall, there was a man, known by the name of Grant Chillcot, who weighed four hundred and sixty pounds; one of his stockings could contain six gallons of wheat.—*Dr. Miligan's Curiosities of Medical Experience.*

A TOWING WHALE.—On Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 17., a fisherman of the name of Forward, of Ramsgate, went out to fish in his punt, and while at anchor, about half a mile from the Pier head, his punt was suddenly raised up by an enormous fish, which by some means got the cable athwart his fin, and raising the anchor from the ground, carried the boat and the astounded fisherman away with him. As the punt was only thirteen feet long, the poor man, although he had got his knife ready for cutting the cable, was fearful of doing so lest the boat might go down head-foremost. After being towed at the rate of twenty-five miles per hour for some distance, the animal fortunately disengaged himself from the cable and rose to the surface, when Forward, to his great surprise, found out that the fish was a monstrous whale, of at least sixty feet long, with his back covered with barnacles and other shell fish. Ludicrous as the above statement may appear, it is nevertheless true, *a la lettre.* The affrighted man returned safe into port with his punt, and became an object of great interest from the miraculous escape which he had experienced.

AN INSTANCE OF REVENGE, AT STRENOZ.—When we marched in hieré, about 100 prisoners were marched past us, all in uniform, except one immense big scoundrel-looking fellow, who was discovered to be a Guerilla. A crowd gathered round him, and a Lancer drew his sword, and, to my horror, cut him down. Thinking there was going to be a general massacre, I rushed into the centre trying to defend the wretch; when bayonets innumerable were shoved into him. I stood over him while struggling in agony; and the Lancer who struck him first, called out, 'I saw him murder my father and brother.' I walked off instantly and took my officers with me (who were all round with swords drawn,) saying, loud enough for the Portuguese to hear—"That he deserved his fate." It appeared that this wretch, a few days before, had cut the throats of six Constitutional officers, and that he was the leader in the murder of the 130 prisoners. A mob when excited is dreadful. Before he was dead, the women were stamping on his hands, and they put a lighted cigar into his mouth."—*Col. Shaw.*

MORAL NEGATION.—Three Paisley weavers, whose wives were quartered at Gourock for the season, were anxious to get across to Dunoon one Sabbath morning; deeming it a profanation, however, to employ an oared-boat for that purpose, they employed a friend to negotiate with the captain of the Rothesay Mail-steamer, "to cast out a bit o' his tow, and tak' them wi' him, as he was gaun down that way at ony rate."—"But what's the difference, pray," asked the negotiator, "between being rowed over with oars, and by the paddles of the steamer?"—"Difference! there's a handle difference between rowing by the power o' man, who maun answer for what he does, and a water-wheel pa'ing us; in ither words, gip ye wad hae us to be mair pointedly particular, a steam engine's no a moral being, it's no an accountable awgent!"—*Laird of Logan.*

HONOUR AMONG THIEVES.—In Spain there may be truly enough said to be "Honour even among thieves," the Spanish robbers generally giving their victim a certificate of his having been plundered, which effectually protects him from any further molestation.

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G. N. RUSSELL.

March, 3.

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Halifax, Dec. 23, 1837.

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Jan. 27.

(3m.)

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