

NOTICES CONCERNING THE SCOTTISH GYPSIES.

“ Hast thou not noted on the bye-way side,
 Where aged saughs lean o'er the lazy tide,
 A vagrant crew, far strangled through the glade,
 With trifles busied, or in slumber laid;
 Their children lolling round them on the grass,
 Or pestering with their sports the patient ass?
 —The wrinkled beldame there you may espy,
 And ripe young maiden with the glossy eye,
 Men in their prime, and striplings dark and dun,—
 Scathed by the storm and freckled with the sun:
 Their swarthy hue and mantle's flowing fold,
 Bespeak the remnant of a race of old:
 Strange are their annals!—list, and mark them well—
 For thou hast much to hear and I to tell.”

HOGG.

THAT an Asiatic people should have resided four hundred years in the heart of Europe, subject to its civilized polity and commingled with its varied population, and yet have retained almost unaltered their distinct oriental character, customs, and language,—is a phenomenon so singular as only to be equalled, perhaps, by the unaccountable indifference with which, till very lately, this remarkable fact appears to have been regarded. Men of letters, while eagerly investigating the customs of Otaheite or Kamschatka, and losing their tempers in endless disputes about Gothic and Celtic antiquities, have witnessed with apathy and contempt the striking spectacle of a *Gypsy camp*,—pitched, perhaps, amidst the mouldering entrenchments of their favourite Picts and Romans. The rest of the community, familiar from infancy with the general character and appearance of these vagrant hordes, have probably never regarded them with any deeper interest than what springs from the recollected terrors of a nursery tale, or the finer associations of poetical and picturesque description. It may, indeed, be reckoned as one of the many remarkable circumstances in the history of this singular race, that the best and almost the only accounts of them that have hitherto appeared in this country, are to be found in works of fiction. Disregarded by philosophers and literati,—the strange, picturesque, and sometimes terrific features of the gypsy character, have afforded to our poets and novelists a favourite subject for delineation; and they have executed the task so well, that we have little more to ask of the historian, than merely to extend the canvass, and to affix the stamp of authenticity to the striking representations which they

have furnished. In presenting to the public the following desultory notices, we are very far from any thoughts of aspiring to this grave office—nor indeed is it our province. Our duty is rather to collect and store up (if we may so express it,) the *raw materials* of literature—to gather into our repository scattered facts, hints, and observations,—which more elaborate and learned authors may afterwards work up into the dignified tissue of history or science. With this idea, and with the hope of affording to general readers something both of information and amusement on a subject so curious and so indistinctly known, we have collected some particulars respecting the Gypsies in Scotland, both from public records and popular tradition; and, in order to render the picture more complete, we shall introduce these by a rapid view of their earlier history—reserving to a future occasion our observations on their present state, and on the mysterious subject of their national language and origin.

That this wandering people attracted considerable attention on their first arrival in Christendom in the beginning of the fifteenth century, is sufficiently evident, both from the notices of contemporary authors, and from the various edicts respecting them still existing in the archives of every state in Europe. Their first appearance and pretensions were indeed somewhat imposing. They entered Hungary and Bohemia from the east, travelling in numerous hordes, under leaders who assumed the titles of *Kings, Dukes, Counts, or Lords of Lesser Egypt*, and they gave themselves out for *Christian Pilgrims*, who had been expelled from that country by the Saracens for their adherence to the true religion. However doubt-

ful may now appear their claims to this sacred character, they had the address to pass themselves on some of the principal sovereigns of Europe, and, as German historians relate, even on the Pope himself, for real pilgrims; and obtained, under the seals of these potentates, various privileges and passports, empowering them to travel through all christian countries under their patronage, for the space of seven years.—Having once gained this footing, however, the Egyptian pilgrims were at no great loss in finding pretences for prolonging their stay; and though it was soon discovered that their manners and conduct corresponded but little to the sanctity of their first pretensions, yet so strong was the delusion respecting them, and so dexterous were they in the arts of imposition, that they seem to have been either legally protected or silently endured by most of the European governments for the greater part of a century.*

When their true character became at length fully understood, and they were found to be in reality a race of profligate and thievish impostors,—who from their numbers and audacity had now become a grievous and intolerable nuisance to the various countries that they had inundated,—severe measures were adopted by different states to expel them from their territories. Decrees of expulsion were issued against them by Spain in 1492, by the German empire in 1500, and by France in 1561 and 1612. Whether it was owing, however, to the inefficient systems of police at that time in use, or, that the common people among whom they were mingled favoured their evasion of the public edicts, it is certain, that notwithstanding many long and bloody persecutions, no country that had once admitted “these unknown and uninvited guests,” has ever again been able to get rid of them. When rigorously prosecuted by any government on account of their crimes and depredations, they generally withdrew for a time to the remote parts of the country, or crossed the frontiers to a neighbouring jurisdiction—only to return to their accustomed haunts and habits as soon as the storm passed over. Though their numbers may perhaps have since

been somewhat diminished in particular states by the progress of civilization, it seems to be generally allowed that their distinctive character and modes of life have nowhere undergone any material alteration. In Germany, Hungary, Poland,—in Italy, Spain, France, and England, this singular people, by whatever appellation they may be distinguished,—*Cingari, Zigeuners, Tziganyis, Bohemiens, Gitanos, or Gypsies*,—still remain uncombined with the various nations among whom they are dispersed,—and still continue the same dark, deceitful, and disorderly race as when their wandering hordes first emigrated from Egypt or from India. They are still every where characterized by the same strolling and pilfering propensities,—the same peculiarity of aspect,—and the same pretensions to fortune-telling and ‘warlockry.’**

The estimate of their present numbers, by the best informed continental writers on the subject, is almost incredible.—“Independently,” says Grellmann, “of the multitudes of gypsies in Egypt and some parts of Asia, could we obtain an exact estimate of them in the countries of Europe, the immense number would probably greatly exceed what we have any idea of. At a moderate calculation, and without being extravagant, they might be reckoned at between seven and eight hundred thousand.”

The gypsies do not appear to have found their way to this Island till about 100 years after they were first known in Europe. Henry VIII. and his immediate successors, by several severe enactments, and by re-exporting numbers of them at the public expense, endeavoured to expel from their dominions “this outlandish people calling themselves Egupeians,”—but apparently with little better success than their brother sovereigns in other countries; for in the reign of Elizabeth the number of them in England is stated to have exceeded 10,000, and they afterwards became still more numerous. If they made any pretension to the character of pilgrims, on their arrival among our southern neighbours, it is evident at least that neither Henry nor

* Grellmann.—See also Hume on Crim. Law of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 314.—Mackenzie's Obs. on Stat. p. 333.

* Grellmann.

Elizabeth were deceived by their impostures. Both these monarchs, indeed, (particularly the former), were too much accustomed to use religion, as well as law, for a cloak to cover their own violent and criminal conduct, to be easily imposed upon by the like artifices in others. We find them accordingly using very little ceremony with the 'Egyptian pilgrims,' who, in several of their statutes, are described by such designations as the following:—'Sturdy roags,' 'rascalls, vacabonds,' 'masterless men, ydle, vagraunte, loyteringe, lewde, and yll-disposed persons, going aboute using subtiltie and unlawful games or plaie,'—'such as faynt themselves to have knowledge in physiognomye, palmestrie, or other abused sciences'—'tellers of destinies, deaths, or fortunes, and such lyke fantastickal imaginatiouns.'—

In king Edward's journal we find them mentioned along with other 'masterless men.' The following association of persons seems curious:—'June 22, 1549. There was a privy search made through Suffolk for all vagabonds, gypsies, conspirators, prophesiers, all players, and such like.*

A more distinct account of the English gypsies, on their first arrival, is to be found in a work quoted by Mr Hoyland, which was published in the year 1612, to detect and expose the art of juggling and legerdemain. "This kind of people," says the author, "about a hundred years ago, beganne to gather on head, at the first heere, about the southerne parts. And this, as I am informed, and can gather, was their beginning: Certain Egyptians banished their country, (belike not for their good conditions,) arrived heere in England, who for quaint tricks and devices not known heere at that time among us, were esteemed and had in great admiration; insomuch, that many of our English *loyterers* joined with them, and in time learned their crafty cozening." "The speach which they used was the right Egyptian speach, with whom our Englishmen conversing, at last learned their language. These people, continuing about the country, and practising their cozening art, purchased themselves great credit among the country people, and got much by pal-

mistry and telling of fortunes; insomuch, they pitifully cozened poor country girls both of money, silver, spoons, and the best of their apparele, or any goods they could make." "They had a leader of the name of *Giles Hather*, who was termed their king; and a woman of the name of *Calot* was called queen. These riding through the country on horseback, and in strange attire, had a prettie traine after them." After mentioning some of the laws passed against them, this writer adds:—"But what numbers were executed on these statutes you would wonder; yet, notwithstanding, all would not prevail, but they wandered as before uppe and downe, and meeting once in a yeare at a place appointed; sometimes at the *Peake's Hole* in Derbyshire, and other whiles by *Retbroak* at *Blackheath*."*

It is probable that the gypsies entered Scotland about the same period in which they are stated by these accounts to have first pitched their tents in the sister kingdom. The earliest notice of them, however, that we have been able to discover in our national records, is contained in the celebrated writ of Privy Seal, passed in the 28th year of James V. (1540), in favour of "*Johnne Faw, Lord and Erle of Litill Egipt*." A complete copy of this document, which has been carefully collated with the original record in the Register House, will be found in another department of our Magazine. This writ was renewed by the Earl of Arran as Regent of Scotland in 1553, nearly in the same words.† It appears from these very curious edicts, that John Faw, under the character of '*Lord and Erle of Litill Egipt*,' had formerly obtained letters under the Great Seal, enjoining all magistrates, &c. to support his authority "in executioun of justice vpon his cumpany and folkis, conforme to the laws of *Egipt*, and in punissing of all thaim that rebellis aganis him." He complains that certain of his followers had, nevertheless, revolted from his jurisdiction, robbed and left him, and were supported in their contumacious rebellion by some of the king's lieges;—"Sua that he (the said Johnne, thair lord and maister) on na wyse can apprehend nor get thame, to have thame

* Appendix to Burnet's Hist. of Reformation, vol. ii.

* Hoyland's Historical Survey.
† Registrum Secreti Sigilli, vol. xxv. fol. 62.

hame agane within thair awin cuntre," "howbeit he has biddin and remanit of lang tyme vpon thame, and is bundin and oblist to bring hame with him all thame of his company that ar on live, and ane testimoniaie of thame that ar deid;"—the non-fulfilment of which obligation, he pretends, will subject him to "*hevy dampnage and skaith, and grete perell of tynsell (loss) of his heretage.*"—The names of these rebellious Egyptians are exactly the same in both edicts, and having been given in to the Scottish government by the chieftain himself, may be supposed to be *correctly reported*. We shall be glad if any of our learned readers can help us to trace their etymology.

It affords a striking evidence of the address of these audacious vagrants, and of the ignorance of the times, to find two of our sovereigns imposed upon by this gypsey chieftain's story, about his 'band' and 'heretage.' This was at least 120 years after the first arrival of these hordes in Europe.—We hear no more of the return of Earl John and his company to 'thair awin cuntre.'

In the following year (1554), "Andro Faw, *capitane of the Egiptianis,*" and twelve of his gang, specified by name, obtained a remission for "the slauchter of Niniane Smail, comittit within the toune of Lyntoune, in the moneth of March last bypast, vpon suddantie."*

The gypsies appear to have kept their quarters in the country without further molestation for the next twenty-five years; and their enormities, as well as their numbers, it would seem, had greatly increased during the long political and religious struggles that occupied the greater part of Mary's disastrous reign. At length, in 1579, the government found it necessary to adopt the most rigorous methods to repress the innumerable swarm of strolling vagabonds of every description, who had overspread the kingdom. A new statute was enacted by parliament, "For pwnishment of the strang and ydle beggaris, and relief of the puir and impotent." In the comprehensive provisions of this act, we find *bards, minstrels, and vagabond scholars*, (*lachrymabile dictu!*) conjoined in ignominious fellowship with the Egyptian

jugglers. The following passages, prescribing the mode of punishment, and specifying some of the various sorts of vagrants against whom it is denounced, are particularly curious:—"That sic as makis thame selffis fuilis, and ar *bairdts*, or vtheris sielike yrnarris about, being apprehendit, salbe put in the kingis ward and yrnis, sa lang as they haue ony guidis of thair awin to leif on; and fra they haue not quhair-upoun to leif of their awin, that thair earis be nailit to the trone, or to ane vther trie, and thair earis cuttit of, and banist the cuntrie; and gif thairefter that they be found agane that they be hangit."—"And that it may be knawin quhat maner of personis ar meant to be strang and idle beggaris, and vagaboundis, and worthie of the pwnishment before specifit, it is declairit, that all ydle personis ganging about in ony cuntrie of this realme, vsing subtilt, crafty, and vnlauchfull playis, as *juglarie, fast and lowis*, and sic vthers; *the idle people calling thame selffis Egiptianis*, or ony vtheris that fenzieis thame selffis to have *knowledge of prophetic, charmeing, or vtheris abusit scienees*, quhairby they persuaid the people that they can tell their weardis deathis, and fortunes, and sic vther fantasticall imaginationes;"—"and all *menstrallis, sangstaris, and taitellaris*, not avouit in speciall service be sum of the lordis of parliament, or greit barronis, or be the heid burrowis and cities, for thair commoun *menstrallis*;"—"all *vagabund scholaris* of the vniuersities of Sanctandros, Glasgow, and Abirdene, not licencit be the rector and deane of facultie to ask almous," &c. &c.*

This statute was repeatedly renewed, and strengthened with additional clauses, during the twenty-five years ensuing, "anent the counterfait Egiptianis;"†—all which, however, proved so utterly ineffectual in restraining the crimes and depredations of these banditti, that in 1603, the Lords of Privy Council judged it expedient to issue a decree and proclamation, banishing the whole race out of Scotland for ever, under the severest penalties. This edict is not extant, (that part of the record which contained it being lost), but it was ratified and enforced in 1609,

* Acta Parl. vol. iii. p. 139.

†. Acta Parl. vol. iii. p. 576. vol. iv. pp. 140, 232.

by an act of parliament to the same effect—"Commanding the vagaboundis, sornaris, and commoun thieffis, commounlie callit Egyptianis, to pas furth of this realme, and nevir to retorne within the samyn, vnder the paine of death,"—and declaring it lawfull to all his Majesty's subjects, to apprehend and execute any of them that might be found in the country after a certain day, "as notorious and condemned thieffis—*by ane assyse only to be tried that they are callit, knawin, repute, and haldin Egyptianis.*"*

It appears, that not only the lower classes, but also many persons of note, either out of compassion, or from less reputable motives, still continued, after the promulgation of this law, and in spite of repeated reprehensions from the Privy Council, to afford shelter and protection to the proscribed Egyptians. In February 1615, we find a remission under the Privy Seal, granted to William Auchterlony of Cayrnie, for *resetting*† of John Faw and his followers. On the 4th July 1616, the Sheriff of Forfar is severely reprimanded for delaying to execute some gypsies who had been taken within his jurisdiction, and for troubling the Council with petitions in their behalf.‡ In November following, appears a "proclamatoun aganis Egyptianis and their ressettaris;§--in December 1619, we find another proclamation against 'resetters' of them;||—in April 1620 another proclamation of the same kind;¶—and in July 1620, a commission against 'resetters,' all with

* Acta Parl. vol. iv. p. 440.

† The nature of this crime, in Scotch Law, is fully explained in the following extract from the original, which also appears curious in other respects: The pardon is granted—"pro receptione, supportatione, et detentione supra terra suas de Balmadie, et infra eius habitationis domum, aliaq. edificia eiusdem, *Joannis Fall, Ethiopis, lie Egyptian, eiusq. vxoris, puerorum, servorum, et associatorum; Neenon pro ministrando ipsis cibum, potum, pecunias, hospicium, aliaq. necessaria, quocunq. tempore vel occasione preterita, contra acta nostri Parlamenti vel Secreti Concilii, vel contra quocunq. leges, alia acta, aut constitutiones huius nostri regni Scotiae in contrarium facta.*"—Regist. Secreti Sigilli, vol. lxxxiii, fol. 291.

‡ Regist. Secreti Concilii, Jul. 4. 1616.

§ Ibid. Nov. 9. 1616.

|| Ibid. Dec. 21. 1619.

¶ Ibid. Apr. 19. 1620.

very severe penalties.* The nature of these acts will be better understood from the following extract from that of 4th July 1616, which also very well explains the way in which the gypsies contrived to maintain their footing in the country, in defiance of all the efforts of the legislature to extirpate them.--"Itis of treuthe, that the theivis and lymmaris foirsaidis, haueing for some shorte space after the said act of parliament (1609),.....*dispersit thame selffis in certune darne and obscure places of the cuntrey,*..... they wer not knawne to wander abroad in trouppis and companies, according to thair accustomed maner; yitt shortlie thairefter, finding that the said act of parliament wes neglectit, and that no inquirie nor.....wes maid for thame, thay begane to tak new breth and courage, and vnite thame selffis in infamous companies and societies vnder.....commanderis, and continuallie sensyne hes remanit within the cuntreie, committing alsweill oppin and avowed reiffis in all partis murtheris, as pleine stouthe and pykarie, quair thay may not be maisterit; and thay do shamefullie and meschantlie abuse the simple and ignorant people, by telling of fortunes, and vsing of charmes, and a number of jugling trikis and falsettis, vnworthie to be hard of in a cuntreie subject to religioun, law, and justice; and thay ar encourageit to remane within the cuntreie, and to continue in thair theivish and jugling trickes and falsettis, not onlie throw default of the executioun of the said act of parliament, bot whilk is worse, that gritt numberis of his Majesty's subjects, of whom some outwardlie pretendis to be famous and vnspotted gentilmcn, hes gevin and gevis oppen and avowed protectioun, resett, supplie, and maintenance vpon thair ground and landis, to the saidis vagaboundis, sornaris, and condampned theivis and lymmaris, and sufferis thame to remane dayis, ulkis, and monethis togidder thairvpoun, without controlement and with connivence and oversicht," &c.—"So thay do leave a foull, infamous, and ignominious spott vpon thame, thair houses, and posteritie, that thay ar patronis to thievis and lymmaris," &c. &c.

There is still, however, sufficient evi-

* Ibid. Jul. 6. 1620.

dence on record, of the summary root-and-branch justice that was frequently executed upon this unhappy race, in terms of the above statute. The following may serve for specimens:—In July 1611, four Faas were sentenced to be hanged—as *Egyptians*. They pleaded a special licence from the Privy Council, to abide within the country;—but they were held (from failure of their surety,) to have infringed the terms of their protection, and were executed accordingly.—In July 1616, two Faas and a Baillie were capitally convicted on the same principle.—In January 1624, Captain John Faa and seven of his gang (five of whom were Faas,) were doomed to death on the statute—and hanged.—A few days after, Helen Faa, relict of the captain, Lucretia Faa, and other women, to the number of eleven, were in like manner convicted, and condemned to be drowned.*—A similar case occurs in 1636.† This we have inserted at length in another department of our present Number, as a fair specimen of these sanguinary proceedings. In later times, the statute began to be interpreted with a more merciful spirit towards these wretched outcasts, and they were hanged only when convicted (as happened, however, pretty frequently,) of theft, murder, and other violent offences against public order.

Instead of carrying forward, in this manner, our own desultory sketch, we shall place at once before our readers, the accurate and striking account given of the Scottish gypsies, by a celebrated anonymous author of the present day, and by the distinguished person whose authority he has quoted. Considering how very unnecessary, and how difficult it would be to convey the same information in other words—and allowing due attention to the convenience of those who may not have the book at hand to refer to—we do not apprehend that any apology is necessary for availing ourselves of the following passage from the well-known pages of Guy Mannering.

“It is well known,” says the author, “that the gypsies were, at an early period, acknowledged as a separate and independent race by one of the Scottish monarchs; and that they were less favourably distinguished by a subse-

quent law which rendered the character of gypsey equal, in the judicial balance, to that of common and habitual thief, and prescribed his punishment accordingly. Notwithstanding the severity of this and other statutes, the fraternity prospered amid the distresses of the country, and received large accessions from among those whom famine, oppression, or the sword of war, had deprived of the ordinary means of subsistence. They lost, in a great measure, by this intermixture, the national character of Egyptians, and became a mingled race, having all the idleness and predatory habits of their eastern ancestors, with a ferocity which they probably borrowed from the men of the north who joined their society. They travelled in different bands, and had rules among themselves, by which each tribe was confined to its own district. The slightest invasion of the precincts which had been assigned to another tribe, produced desperate skirmishes, in which there was often much bloodshed.

“The patriotic Fletcher of Saltoun drew a picture of these banditti about a century ago, which my readers will peruse with astonishment.

‘There are, at this day, in Scotland (besides a great many poor families, very meanly provided for by the church boxes, with others who, by living upon bad food, fall into various diseases) two hundred thousand people begging from door to door. These are not only no way advantageous, but a very grievous burden to so poor a country. And though the number of them be perhaps double to what it was formerly, by reason of this present great distress, yet in all times there have been about one hundred thousand of these vagabonds, who have lived without any regard or subjection either to the laws of the land, or even those of God and nature; * * * * * No magistrate could ever discover, or be informed, which way one in a hundred of these wretches died, or that ever they were baptized. Many murders have been discovered among them; and they are not only a most unspcakable oppression to poor tenants (who, if they give not bread, or some kind of provision, to perhaps forty such villains in one day, are sure to be insulted by them), but they rob many poor people who live in houses distant from any neighbour-

* Hume on Crim. Law, vol. ii. p. 339.

† Regist. Secreti Concilii, Nov. 10. 1636.

hood. In years of plenty, many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other the like public occasions, they are to be seen, both man and woman, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together.

“Notwithstanding the deplorable picture presented in this extract, and which Fletcher himself, though the energetic and eloquent friend of freedom, saw no better mode of correcting than by introducing a system of domestic slavery, the progress of time, and increase both of the means of life and of the power of the laws, gradually reduced this dreadful evil within more narrow bounds. The tribes of gypsies, jockies, or cairds,—for by all these denominations such banditti were known,—became few in number, and many were entirely rooted out. Still, however, enough remained to give occasional alarm and constant vexation. Some rude handicrafts were entirely resigned to these itinerants; particularly the art of trencher-making, of manufacturing horn-spoons, and the whole mystery of the tinker. To these they added a petty trade in the coarser sorts of earthen-ware. Such were their ostensible means of livelihood. Each tribe had usually some fixed place of rendezvous, which they occasionally occupied and considered as their standing camp, and in the vicinity of which they generally abstained from depredation. They had even talents and accomplishments, which made them occasionally useful and entertaining. Many cultivated music with success; and the favourite fiddler or piper of a district was often to be found in a gypsy town. They understood all out-of-door sports, especially otter-hunting, fishing, or finding game. In winter, the women told fortunes, the men showed tricks of legerdemain; and these accomplishments often helped away a weary or a stormy evening in the circle of the “farmer’s ha’.” The wildness of their character, and the indomitable pride with which they despised all regular labour, commanded a certain awe, which was not diminished by the consideration, that these strollers were a vindictive race, and were restrained by no check, either of fear or conscience, from taking desperate vengeance upon those who had

offended them. These tribes were in short the *Parias* of Scotland, living like wild Indians among European settlers, and, like them, judged of rather by their own customs, habits, and opinions, than as if they had been members of the civilized part of the community. Some hordes of them yet remain, chiefly in such situations as afford a ready escape either into a waste country, or into another jurisdiction. Nor are the features of their character much softened. Their numbers, however, are so greatly diminished, that, instead of one hundred thousand, as calculated by Fletcher, it would now perhaps be impossible to collect above five hundred throughout all Scotland.”

Having, in the preceding pages, endeavoured to give our readers a general outline of what may be termed the *public annals* of our Scottish Gypsies, we now proceed to detail some of those more *private and personal anecdotes*, concerning them, with which we have been furnished chiefly from local traditions, or the observation of intelligent individuals. These we shall relate without much regard to arrangement, and, for the present, without any further remarks of our own than may be requisite merely for connecting or explaining them. It may be proper generally to mention, that though we deem it unnecessary to quote our authorities *by name* in every particular case, or for every little anecdote, yet we can very confidently pledge ourselves, in every instance, for the personal credibility of our informers.

The intrigue of the celebrated Johnnie Faa with the Earl of Cassilis’ lady, rests on ballad and popular authority. Tradition points out an old tower in Maybole, as the place where the frail countess was confined. The portrait shown as hers in the Abbey of Holyroodhouse, however, is not genuine.—Of this affair of gypsy galantry, Mr Finlay, in his notes to the old ballad of the Gypsie Laddie, gives the following account, as the result of his inquiries regarding the truth of the traditionary stories on the subject:—“The Earl of Cassilis had married a nobleman’s daughter contrary to her wishes, she having been previously engaged to another; but the persuasion and importunity of her friends at last brought her to consent. Sir

John Faw of Dunbar, her former lover, seizing the opportunity of the earl's absence on a foreign embassy, disguised himself and a number of his retainers as gypsies, and carried off the lady, 'nothing loth.' The earl having returned opportunely at the time of the commission of the act, and nowise inclined to participate in his consort's ideas on the subject, collected his vassals, and pursued the lady and her paramour to the borders of England; where, having overtaken them, a battle ensued, in which Faw and his followers were all killed, or taken prisoners, excepting one,

———— the meanest of them all,
Who lives to weep, and sing their fall.

It is by this survivor that the ballad is supposed to have been written. The earl, on bringing back the fair fugitive, banished her *a mensa et thoro*, and, it is said, confined her for life in a tower at the village of Maybole, in Ayrshire, built for the purpose; and that nothing might remain about this tower unappropriated to its original destination, eight heads carved in stone, below one of the turrets, are said to be the effigies of so many of the gypsies. The lady herself, as well as the survivor of Faw's followers, contributed to perpetuate the remembrance of the transaction; for if he wrote a song about it, she wrought it in tapestry; and this piece of workmanship is still preserved at Culzean Castle. It remains to be mentioned, that the ford, by which the lady and her lover crossed the river Doon from a wood near Cassilis House, is still denominated the Gypsie steps.*

Mr Finlay is of opinion that there are no good grounds for identifying the hero of this adventure with Johnnie Faa, who was king or captain of the gypsies about the year 1590, and he supposes that the whole story may have been the invention of some feudal or political rival, to injure the character, and hurt the feelings of an opponent. As Mr F. however, has not brought forward any authority to support this opinion, we are inclined still to adhere to the popular tradition, which, on the present occasion, is very uniform and consistent. We do not know any thing about the Sir John Faw of Dunbar, whom he supposes to have

been the disguised knight, but we know for certain, that the present gypsy family of Faa in Yetholm have been long accustomed to boast of their descent from the same stock with a very respectable family of the name of Faw, or Fall, in East Lothian, which we believe is now extinct.

The transformation of Johnnie Faa into a knight and gentleman, is not the only occasion on which the disguise of a gypsy is supposed to have been assumed for the purpose of intrigue. The old song of '*Clout the Caudron*' is founded upon such a metamorphosis, as may be seen from the words in Allan Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany*; but an older copy preserves the name of the disguised lover:—

"Yestreen I was a gentleman,
This night I am a tinkler;
Gae tell the lady o' this house,
Come down to Sir John Sinclair."

Notwithstanding the severe laws frequently enacted by the Scottish legislature against this vagrant race, and, as we have seen, often rigorously enforced, they still continued grievously to molest the country about the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. They traversed the whole mountainous districts of the south, particularly Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, and Tweeddale, and committed great and daring depredations. A gang of them once broke into the House of Pennycuick, while the greater part of the family were at church. Sir John Clerke, the proprietor, barricaded himself in his own apartment, where he sustained a sort of siege—firing from the windows upon the robbers, who fired in return. By an odd accident, one of them, while they strayed through the house in quest of plate and other portable articles, began to ascend the stair of a very narrow turret. When he had got to some height, his foot slipped; and to save himself, in falling, the gypsy caught hold of what was rather an ominous means of assistance—a rope, namely, which hung conveniently for the purpose. It proved to be the bell-rope, and the fellow's weight, in falling, set the alarm-bell a-ringing, and startled the congregation who were assembled in the parish church. They instantly came to rescue the laird, and succeeded, it is said, in apprehending some of the gypsies, who were executed. There is a written account of

* Finlay's *Scottish Ballads*, vol. i. p. 39.

this daring assault kept in the records of the family.

Tweeddale was very much infested by these banditti, as appears from Dr Pennycuik's history of that county, who mentions the numerous executions to which their depredations gave occasion. He also gives the following account of a bloody skirmish which was fought between two clans of gypsies near his own house of Romanno. "Upon the 1st of October 1677, there happened at Romanno, in the very spot where now the dovecoat is built, a memorable polymachy betwixt two clans of gypsies, the *Fawes* and *Shawes*, who had come from Haddingtoun fair, and were going to Harestains to meet with two other clans of those rogues, the *Baillies* and *Brouns*, with a resolution to fight them; they fell out at Romanno amongst themselves, about divideing the spoyl they had got at Haddingtoun, and fought it manfully; of the *Fawes* were four brethren and a brother's son; of the *Shawes*, the father with three sons, with several women on both sides: Old Sandie Faw, a bold and proper fellow, with his wife, then with child, were both kill'd dead upon the place, and his brother George very dangerously wounded. February 1678, old Robin Shaw the gipsie, with his three sons, were hang'd at the Grass-mercat for the above-mentioned murder committed at Romanno, and John Faw was hang'd the Wednesday following for another murder. Sir Archibald Primrose was justice-general at the time, and Sir George M'Kenzie king's advocat.*" Dr Pennycuik built a dove-cote upon the spot where this affray took place, which he adorned with the following inscription:

"A. D. 1683.

The field of Gipsie blood which here you see,
A shelter for the harmless Dove shall be."

Such skirmishes among the gypsies are still common, and were formerly still more so. There was a story current in Teviotdale,—but we cannot give place and date,—that a gang of them came to a solitary farmhouse, and, as is usual, took possession of some waste out-house. The family went to church on Sunday, and expecting no harm from their visitors,

left only one female to look after the house. She was presently alarmed by the noise of shouts, oaths, blows, and all the tumult of a gypsy battle. It seems another clan had arrived, and the earlier settlers instantly gave them battle. The poor woman shut the door, and remained in the house in great apprehension, until the door being suddenly forced open, one of the combatants rushed into the apartment, and she perceived with horror that his left hand had been struck off. Without speaking to or looking at her, he thrust the bloody stump, with desperate resolution, against the glowing bars of the grate; and having stanch'd the blood by actual cautery, seized a knife, used for killing sheep, which lay on the shelf, and rushed out again to join the combat.—All was over before the family returned from church, and both gangs had decamped, carrying probably their dead and wounded along with them: for the place where they fought was absolutely soaked with blood, and exhibited, among other reliques of the fray, the amputated hand of the wretch whose desperate conduct the maid-servant had witnessed.

The village of Denholm upon Teviot was, in former times, partly occupied by gypsies. The late Dr John Leyden, who was a native of that parish, used to mention a skirmish which he had witnessed there between two clans, where the more desperate champions fought with clubs, having harrow teeth driven transversely through the end of them.

About ten years ago, one John Young, a tinker chief, punished with instant death a brother tinker of inferior consequence who intruded on his *walk*. This happened in Aberdeenshire, and was remarked at the time chiefly from the strength and agility with which Young, constantly and closely pursued, and frequently in view, maintained a flight of nearly thirty miles. As he was chased by the Highlanders on foot, and by the late General Gordon of Cairnfield and others on horseback, the affair much resembled a fox chase. The pursuers were most of them gamekeepers; and that active race of men were so much exhausted, that they were lying by the springs lapping water with their tongues like dogs. It is scarce necessary to add, that the laws of the country were executed on Young without regard to the consid-

* Pennycuik's Description of Tweeddale,—*Edit. Edin.* 1715, p. 14.

eration that he was only enforcing the gypsy subordination.

The crimes that were committed among this hapless race were often atrocious. Incest and murder were frequent among them. In our recollection, an individual was tried for a theft of considerable magnitude, and acquitted, owing to the absence of one witness, a girl belonging to the gang, who had spoken freely out at the recognition. This young woman was afterwards found in a well near Cornhill, with her head downwards, and there was little doubt that she had been murdered by her companions.

We extract the following anecdotes from an interesting communication on this subject, with which we have been favoured by Mr Hogg, author of 'The Queen's Wake.'—"It was in the month of May that a gang of gypsies came up Ettrick;—one party of them lodged at a farm-house called Scob-Cleugh, and the rest went forward to Cossarhill, another farm about a mile farther on. Among the latter was one who played on the pipes and violin, delighting all that heard him; and the gang, principally on his account, were very civilly treated. Next day the two parties again joined, and proceeded westward in a body. There were about thirty souls in all, and they had five horses. On a sloping grassy spot, which I know very well, on the farm of Brockhoprig, they halted to rest. Here the hapless musician quarrelled with another of the tribe, about a girl, who, I think, was sister to the latter. Weapons were instantly drawn, and the piper losing courage, or knowing that he was not a match for his antagonist, fled,—the other pursuing close at his heels. For a full mile and a half they continued to strain most violently,—the one running for life, and the other thirsting for blood,—until they came again to Cossarhill, the place they had left. The family were all gone out, either to the sheep or the peats, save one servant girl, who was baking bread at the kitchen table, when the piper rushed breathless into the house. She screamed, and asked what was the matter? He answered, "Nae skaith to you—nae skaith to you—for God in heaven's sake hide me!"—With that he essayed to hide himself behind a salt barrel that stood in a corner—but his ruthless pursuer instantly entering, his panting betrayed him. The ruf-

fian pulled him out by the hair, dragged him into the middle of the floor, and ran him through the body with his dirk. The piper never asked for mercy, but cursed the other as long as he had breath. The girl was struck motionless with horror, but the murderer told her never to heed or regard it, for no ill should happen to her. It was this woman's daughter, Isabel Scott, who told me the story, which she had often heard related with all the minute particulars. If she had been still alive, I think she would have been bordering upon ninety years of age;—her mother, when this happened, was a young unmarried woman—fit, it seems, to be a kitchen-maid in a farm-house,—so that this must have taken place about 100 years ago.—By the time the breath was well out of the unfortunate musician, some more of the gang arrived, bringing with them a horse, on which they carried back the body, and buried it on the spot where they first quarrelled. His grave is marked by one stone at the head, and another at the foot, which the gypsies themselves placed; and it is still looked upon by the rustics, as a dangerous place for a walking ghost to this day. There was no cognizance taken of the affair, that any of the old people ever heard of—but God forbid that every amorous minstrel should be so sharply taken to task in these days!

"There is a similar story, of later date, of a murder committed at Lowrie's-den, on Soutra Hill, by one gypsy on another: but I do not remember the particulars farther, than that it was before many witnesses;—that they fought for a considerable time most furiously with their fists, till at last one getting the other down, drew a knife, and stabbed him to the heart—when he pulled the weapon out, the blood sprung to the ceiling, where it remained as long as that house stood;—and that though there were many of the gang present, none of them offered to separate the combatants, or made any observation on the issue, farther than one saying—"Gude faith, ye hae done for him now, Rob!" The story bears, that the assassin fled, but was pursued by some travellers who came up at the time, and after a hot chace, was taken, and afterwards hanged."

The travellers here mentioned, we happen to know, were the late Mr

Walter Scott, writer to the signet, then a very young man, and Mr Fairbairn, long afterwards innkeeper at Blackshields, who chanced to pass about the time this murder was committed, and being shocked at the indifference with which the bystanders seemed to regard what had passed, pursued, and with the assistance of a neighbouring blacksmith, who joined in the chase, succeeded in apprehending the murderer, whose name, it is believed, was Robert Keith. The blacksmith judged it prudent, however, to emigrate soon after to another part of the country, in order to escape the threatened vengeance of the murderer's clan.

"In my parents' early years," continues Mr Hogg, "the Faas and the Bailleys used to traverse the country in bodies of from twenty to thirty in number, among whom were many stout, handsome, and athletic men. They generally cleared the waters and burns of fish, the farmers' out-houses of poultry and eggs, and the *lums* of all superfluous and moveable stuff, such as hams, &c. that hung there for the purpose of *reisting*. It was likewise well known, that they never scrupled killing a lamb or a wether occasionally; but they always managed matters so dexterously, that no one could ever ascertain from whom these were taken. The gypsies were otherwise civil, full of humour and merriment, and the country people did not dislike them. They fought desperately with one another, but were seldom the aggressors in any dispute or quarrel with others.—Old Will of Phaup, a well-known character at the head of Ettrick, was wont to shelter them for many years;—they asked nothing but house-room and grass for their horses; and though they sometimes remained for several days, he could have left every chest and press about the house open, with the certainty that nothing would be missing; for he said, 'he aye ken'd fu' weel that the tod wad keep his ain hole clean.' But times altered sadly with honest Will—which happened as follows:—The gypsies (or *tinklers*, as they then began to be called) were lodged at a place called Potburn, and the farmer either having bad grass about his house, or not choosing to have it eaten up, had made the gypsies turn their horses over the water to Phaup ground. One morning about break of day, Will found the stoutest man of the gang,

Ellick Kennedy, feeding six horses on the Coomb-loan, the best piece of grass on the farm, and which he was carefully *haining* for winter fodder. A desperate combat ensued—but there was no man a match for Will—he threshed the tinkler to his heart's content, cut the girthing and sunk off the horses, and hunted them out of the country. A warfare of five years duration ensued between Will and the gypsies. They nearly ruined him; and at the end of that period he was glad to make up matters with his old friends, and shelter them as formerly. He said, 'He could maistly hae hauden his ain wi' them, an' it hadna been for their *warlockry*, but the deil-be-licket he could keep fra their kenning—they ance fand out his purse, though he had gart Meg dibble't into the kail-yard.'—Lochmaben is now one of their great resorts—being nearly stocked with them. The redoubted Rachel Bailley, noted for her high honour, is viewed as the queen of the tribe."

A woman of the name of Rachel Bailley, (but not the same person, we believe, that our correspondent alludes to) a few years ago, in Selkirkshire, afforded a remarkable evidence of the force of her gypsy habits and propensities. This woman, having been guilty of repeated acts of theft, was condemned by Mr W. Scott, sheriff of that county, to imprisonment in the bridewell there, on hard labour, for six months. She became so excessively wearied of the confinement, to which she had not been accustomed, and so impatient of the labour of spinning, although she span well, that she attempted suicide, by opening her veins with the point of a pair of scissors. In compassion for her state of mind, she was set at liberty by the magistrate; but she had not travelled farther than Yair Bridge-end, being about four miles from Selkirk, when she thought proper to steal a watch from a cottage, and being taken with it in her possession, was restored to her place of confinement just about four hours after she had been dismissed from it. She was afterwards banished the county.

The unabashed hardihood of the gypsies in the face of suspicion, or even of open conviction, is not less characteristic than the facility with which they commit crimes, or their address in concealing them. A gypsy of note, still alive (an acquaintance of ours), was, about twenty years ago, tried for a

theft of a considerable sum of money at a Dalkeith market. The proof seemed to the judge fully sufficient, but the jury being of a different opinion, brought in the verdict *Not Proven*; on which occasion, the presiding judge, when he dismissed the prisoner from the bar, informed him, in his own characteristic language, "That he had rubbit shouthers wi' the gallows that morning;" and warned him not again to appear there with a similar body of proof against him, as it seemed scarce possible he should meet with another jury who would construe it as favourably. Upon the same occasion, the prisoner's counsel, a gentleman now deceased, thought it proper also to say something to his client on the risk he had run, and the necessity of future propriety of conduct; to which the gypsey replied, to the great entertainment of all around, "That he was *proven an innocent man*, and that naebody had any right to use siccan language to him."

We have much satisfaction in being enabled to relate the following characteristic anecdotes, in the words of another correspondent of the highest respectability:—

"A gang, of the name of Winters, long inhabited the wastes of Northumberland, and committed many crimes; among others, a murder upon a poor woman, with singular atrocity, for which one of them was hung in chains, near Tone-pitt, in Reedsdale. His mortal reliques having decayed, the lord of the manor has replaced them by a wooden effigy, and still maintains the gibbet. The remnant of this gang came to Scotland about fifteen years ago, and assumed the Roxburghshire name of Winterip, as they found their own something odious. They settled at a cottage within about four miles of Earlston, and became great plagues to the country, until they were secured, after a tight battle, tried before the circuit court at Jedburgh, and banished back to their native country of England. The dalesmen of Reedwater shewed great reluctance to receive these returned emigrants. After the Sunday service at a little chapel near Otterbourne, one of the squires rose, and, addressing the congregation, told them they would be accounted no longer Reedsdale men, but Reedsdale women, if they permitted this marked and atrocious family to enter their district. The people answered, that they would not permit them to come that

way; and the proscribed family, hearing of the unanimous resolution to oppose their passage, went more southerly by the heads of Tyne, and I never heard more of them, but have little doubt they are all hanged.

"Will Allan, mentioned by the Reedwater Minstrel,* I did not know, but was well acquainted with his son, Jamie, a most excellent piper, and at one time in the household of the Northumberland family; but being an utterly unprincipled vagabond, he wearied the benevolence of all his protectors, who were numerous and powerful, and saved him from the gallows more than once. Upon one occasion, being closely pursued, when surprised in some villany, he dropped from the top of a very high wall, not without receiving a severe cut upon the fingers with a hanger from one of his pursuers, who came up at the moment he hung suspended for descent. Allan exclaimed, with minstrel pride, 'Ye hae spoiled the best pipe hand in Britain.' Latterly, he became an absolute mendicant, and I saw him refused quarters at the house of my uncle, Mr — at — (himself a most excellent Border piper.) I begged hard to have him let in, but my uncle was inexorable, alleging his depredations on former occasions. He died, I believe, in jail, at Morpeth.

"My father remembered old Jean Gordon of Yetholm, who had great sway among her tribe. She was quite a Meg Merrilies, and possessed the savage virtue of fidelity in the same perfection. Having been often hospitably received at the farm-house of

* "A stalwart Tinkler wight was he,
An' weel could mend a pot or pan,
An' deftly Wull could *throw a flec*,
An' neatly weave the willow wan';

"An' sweetly wild were Allan's strains,
An' mony a jig an' reel he blew,
Wi' merry lilt he charm'd the swains,
Wi' barbed spear the otter slew," &c.

Lay of the Reedwater Minstrel.—
Newcastle, 1809.

In a note upon a preceding passage of the same poem, the author (whose name was George Rokesby) says—

"Here was the rendezvous of the vagrant train of *Faas, tinklers, &c.* The celebrated Wull Allan frequently sojourned here, in the progress of his fishing and otter-hunting expeditions; and here often resounded the *drones* of his no less celebrated son, Jamie Allan, the Northumberland piper."

Lochside, near Yetholm, she had carefully abstained from committing any depredations on the farmer's property. But her sons (nine in number) had not, it seems, the same delicacy, and stole a brood-sow from their kind entertainer. Jean was so much mortified at this ungrateful conduct, and so much ashamed at it, that she absented herself from Lochside for several years. At length, in consequence of some temporary pecuniary necessity, the Goodman of Lochside was obliged to go to Newcastle to get some money to pay his rent. Returning through the mountains of Cheviot, he was benighted, and lost his way. A light, glimmering through the window of a large waste barn, which had survived the farm-house to which it had once belonged, guided him to a place of shelter; and when he knocked at the door, it was opened by Jean Gordon. Her very remarkable figure, for she was nearly six feet high, and her equally remarkable features and dress, rendered it impossible to mistake her for a moment; and to meet with such a character in so solitary a place, and probably at no great distance from her clan, was a terrible surprise to the poor man, whose rent (to lose which would have been ruin to him) was about his person. Jean set up a loud shout of joyful recognition—'Eh, sirs! the winsome gudeman of Lochside! Light down, light down; for ye manna gang farther the night, and a friend's house sae near.' The farmer was obliged to dismount, and accept of the gypsy's offer of supper and a bed. There was plenty of meat in the barn, however it might be come by, and preparations were going on for a plentiful supper, which the farmer, to the great increase of his anxiety, observed, was calculated for ten or twelve guests, of the same description no doubt with his landlady. Jean left him in no doubt on the subject. She brought up the story of the stolen sow, and noticed how much pain and vexation it had given her. Like other philosophers, she remarked that the world grows worse daily; and, like other parents, that the bairns got out of her guiding, and neglected the old gypsy regulations, which commanded them to respect, in their depredations, the property of their benefactors. The end of all this was, an inquiry what money the farmer had about him,

and an urgent request, that he would make her his purse-keeper, as the bairns, so she called her sons, would be soon home. The poor farmer made a virtue of necessity, told his story, and surrendered his gold into Jane's custody. She made him put a few shillings in his pocket, observing it would excite suspicion should he be found travelling altogether penniless. This arrangement being made, the farmer lay down on a sort of *shake-down*, as the Scotch call it, upon some straw, but, as will easily be believed, slept not. About midnight the gang returned with various articles of plunder, and talked over their exploits in language which made the farmer tremble. They were not long in discovering their guest, and demanded of Jane whom she had got there? "E'en the winsome gudeman of Lochside, poor body," replied Jane: "he's been at Newcastle seeking for siller to pay his rent, honest man, but deil-be-licket he's been able to gather in, and sae he's gaun e'en hame wi' a toom purse and a sair heart." "That may be, Jane," replied one of the banditti; "but we maun ripe his pouches a bit, and see if it be true or no." Jean set up her throat in exclamations against this breach of hospitality, but without producing any change of their determination. The farmer soon heard their stifled whispers and light steps by his bedside, and understood they were rummaging his clothes. When they found the money which the providence of Jean Gordon had made him retain, they held a consultation if they should take it or no, but the smallness of the booty, and the vehemence of Jean's remonstrances, determined them in the negative. They caroused and went to rest. So soon as day dawned, Jean roused her guest, produced his horse, which she had accommodated behind the *hallan*, and guided him for some miles till he was on the high road to Lochside. She then restored his whole property, nor could his earnest intreaties prevail on her to accept so much as a single guinea.

"I have heard the old people at Jedburgh say, that all Jean's son's were condemned to die there on the same day. It is said the jury were equally divided; but that a friend to justice, who had slept during the whole discussion, waked suddenly, and gave his vote for condemnation, in the emphat-

ic words, " *Hang them a'.*" Jean was present, and only said, "The Lord help the innocent in a day like this!" Her own death was accompanied with circumstances of brutal outrage, of which poor Jean was in many respects wholly undeserving. Jean had among other demerits, or merits, as you may choose to rank it, that of being a staunch Jacobite. She chanced to be at Carlisle upon a fair or market day, soon after the year 1746, where she gave vent to her political partiality, to the great offence of the rabble of that city. Being zealous in their loyalty when there was no danger, in proportion to the tameness with which they had surrendered to the Highlanders in 1745, they inflicted upon poor Jean Gordon no slighter penalty than that of ducking her to death in the Eden. It was an operation of some time, for Jean was a stout woman, and, struggling with her murderers, often got her head above water; and while she had voice left, continued to exclaim at such intervals, " *Charlie yet! Charlie yet!*"—When a child, and among the scenes which she frequented, I have often heard these stories, and cried piteously for poor Jean Gordon.

"Before quitting the border gypsies, I may mention, that my grandfather riding over Charterhouse-moor, then a very extensive common, fell suddenly among a large band of them, who were carousing in a hollow of the moor, surrounded by bushes. They instantly seized on his horse's bridle, with many shouts of welcome, exclaiming (for he was well known to most of them) that they had often dined at his expense, and he must now stay and share their good cheer. My ancestor was a little alarmed, for, like the gude-man of Lochside, he had more money about his person than he cared to venture with into such society. However, being naturally a bold lively man, he entered into the humour of the thing, and sate down to the feast, which consisted of all the varieties of game, poultry, pigs, and so forth, that could be collected by a wide and indiscriminate system of plunder. The feast was a very merry one, but my relative got a hint from some of the older gypsies to retire just when—

'The mirth and fun grew fast and furious,' and mounting his horse accordingly, he took a French leave of his entertainers, but without experiencing the least breach of hospitality. I believe

Jean Gordon was at this festival.—To the admirers of good eating, gypsy cookery seems to have little to recommend it. I can assure you, however, that the cook of a nobleman of high distinction, a person who never reads even a novel without an eye to the enlargement of the culinary science, has added to the *Almanach des Gourmands*, a certain *Potage a la Meg Merrilies de Dorncleugh*, consisting of game and poultry of all kinds, stewed with vegetables into a soup, which rivals in savour and richness the gallant messes of Comacho's wedding; and which the Baron of Bradwardine would certainly have reckoned among the *Epuke lautiores*.

"The principal settlements of the gypsies, in my time, have been the two villages of Easter and Wester Gordon, and what is called Kirk-Yetholm.

Making good the proverb odd,
Near the church and far from God.

A list of their surnames would be very desirable. The following are among the principal clans: Faas, Bailleys, Gordons, Shaws, Browns, Keiths, Kennedies, Ruthvens, Youngs, Taits, Douglasses, Blythes, Allans, Montgomeries."

Many of the preceding stories were familiar to us in our schoolboy days, and we well remember the peculiar feelings of curiosity and apprehension with which we sometimes encountered the formidable bands of this roaming people, in our rambles among the Border hills, or when fishing for perch in the picturesque little lake at Lochside. The late Madge Gordon was at that time accounted the queen of the Yetholm clans. She was, we believe, a granddaughter of the celebrated Jean Gordon, and was said to have much resembled her in appearance. The following account of her is extracted from the letter of a friend, who for many years enjoyed frequent and favourable opportunities of observing the characteristic peculiarities of the Yetholm tribes.—"Madge Gordon was descended from the Faas by the mother's side, and was married to a Young. She was rather a remarkable personage—of a very commanding presence and high stature, being nearly six feet high. She had a large aquiline nose—penetrating eyes, even in her old age—bushy hair that hung around her shoulders from beneath a gypsy bonnet of straw—a short cloak of a

peculiar fashion, and a long staff nearly as tall as herself. I remember her well;—every week she paid my father a visit for her *almous*, when I was a little boy, and I looked upon Madge with no common degree of awe and terror. When she spoke vehemently (for she had many complaints) she used to strike her staff upon the floor, and throw herself into an attitude which it was impossible to regard with indifference. She used to say that she could bring from the remotest parts of the island, friends to revenge her quarrel, while she sat motionless in her cottage; and she frequently boasted that there was a time when she was of considerable importance, for there were at her wedding fifty saddled asses, and unsaddled asses without number. If Jean Gordon was the prototype of the *character* of Meg Merrilies, I imagine Madge must have sat to the unknown author as the representative of her *person*.

“I have ever understood,” says the same correspondent, speaking of the Yetholm gypsies, “that they are extremely superstitious—carefully noticing the formation of the clouds, the flight of particular birds, and the *soughing* of the winds, before attempting any enterprise. They have been known for several successive days to turn back with their loaded carts, asses, and children, upon meeting with persons whom they considered of unlucky aspect; nor do they ever proceed upon their summer peregrinations without some propitious omen of their fortunate return. They also burn the clothes of their dead, not so much from any apprehension of infection being communicated by them, as the conviction that the very circumstance of wearing them would shorten the days of the living. They likewise carefully watch the corpse by night and day till the time of interment, and conceive that ‘the deil tinkles at the lykewake’ of those who felt in their *dead thraw* the agonies and terrors of remorse.—I am rather uncertain about the nature of their separate language. They certainly do frequently converse in such a way as completely to conceal their meaning from other people; but it seems doubtful whether the jargon they use, on such occasions, be not a mere slang invented for very obvious purposes. I recollect of having heard them conversing in

this manner—and whether it was an imaginary resemblance I know not—but the first time I listened to *Hindhustanee* spoken fluently, it reminded me of the colloquies of the Yetholm gypsies.”

On the subject of the gypsy language, our readers will remark a curious coincidence between the observation just quoted, and the first of the following anecdotes, which we are enabled to state upon the authority and in the words of Mr Walter Scott—a gentleman to whose distinguished assistance and advice we have been on the present occasion very peculiarly indebted, and who has not only furnished us with many interesting particulars himself, but has also obligingly directed us to other sources of curious information:—

“Whether the Yetholm gypsies have a separate language or not, I imagine might be ascertained, though those vagrants always reckon this among their *arcana majora*. A lady who had been in India addressed some gypsies in the *Hindhustanee* language, from the received opinion that it is similar to their own. They did not apparently understand her, but were extremely incensed at what they conceived a mockery; so it is probable the sound of the language had an affinity to that of their own.

“Of the Highland gypsies I had the following account from a person of observation, and highly worthy of credit. There are many settled in Kintyre, who travel through the highlands and lowlands annually. They frequently take their route through the passes of Loch Katrine, where they are often to be met with. They certainly speak among themselves a language totally distinct from either Gaelic or Lowland Scotch. A family having settled near my informer for a few days, he wormed some of the words out of a boy of about twelve years old, who communicated them with the utmost reluctance, saying, his grandfather would kill him if he knew of his teaching any one their speech. One of the sentences my informer remembered—it sounded like no language I ever heard, and I am certain it has no affinity with any branch of the Gothic or Celtic dialects. I omitted to write the words down, but they signified, ‘I will stick my knife into you, you black son of a devil’—a gypsy-like exclamation. My

informer believed that many crimes and even murders were committed among them, which escaped the cognizance of the ordinary police; the seclusion of their habits, and the solitary paths which they chose, as well as the insignificance of their persons, withdrawing them from the ordinary inspection and attention of the magistrate.

“The Scottish lowland gypsies have not in general so atrocious a character, but are always poachers, robbers of hen-roosts, black-fishers, stealers of wood, &c. and in that respect inconvenient neighbours. A gang of them, Faas and Baillies, lately fought a skirmish with the Duke of Buccleuch’s people and some officers of mine, in which a fish-spear was driven into the thigh of one of the game-keepers.

“A lady of rank, who has resided some time in India, lately informed me, that the gypsies are to be found there in the same way as in England, and practise the same arts of posture-making and tumbling, fortune-telling, stealing, and so forth. The Indian gypsies are called Nuts, or Bazeegurs, and are believed by many to be the remains of an original race, prior even to the Hindhus, and who have never adopted the worship of Bramah. They are entirely different from the Parias, who are Hindhus that have lost *caste*, and so become degraded.

There is a very curious essay concerning the *Nuts* in the seventh volume of the Asiatic Researches, which contains some interesting observations on the origin and language of the European gypsies. But we have been tempted to extend this article already far beyond the limits we propose usually to allot to any subject in the course of a single Number; and though we have still many curious particulars to detail, we find these must necessarily be delayed till our next appearance. We cannot, however, quit this subject for the present without noticing with particular approbation a little work lately published by Mr Hoyland of Sheffield, entitled, “A Historical Survey of the Customs, Habits, and present State of the Gypsies; designed to develope the origin of this singular people, and to promote the amelioration of their condition.”—The author has industriously collected the substance of what previous historians or

travellers have related of them, from their first appearance in Europe down to our own times. He has also taken great pains to procure information respecting their present state in Britain—by sending circular queries to the chief provincial magistrates, and by personally visiting several of their encampments—for the purpose of setting on foot some plan for their improvement and civilization. Mr Hoyland, we understand, is a member of the respectable society of Friends or Quakers—whose disinterested and unwearied exertions in the cause of injured humanity are above all praise. It is enough to say of the present object, that it is not unworthy of that Christian philanthropy which accomplished the abolition of the slave trade. We shall account ourselves peculiarly happy, should our humble endeavours in any degree tend to promote Mr H.’s benevolent purpose, by attracting public attention to this degraded race of outcasts—the *Parias* of Europe—thousands of whom still exist in Britain, in a state of barbarism and wretchedness scarcely equalled by that of their brethren in India.—From such of our readers as may have had opportunities of observing the manners, or investigating the origin and peculiar dialect of this singular people, we respectfully invite communications. Even solitary or seemingly trivial notices on such a subject ought not to be neglected: though singly unimportant, they may lead collectively to valuable results. But we need not multiply observations on this point—since our idea is already so well expressed in the following extract from the same valuable communication which we last quoted.—“I have always considered,” says Mr Scott, “as a very curious phenomenon in Society, the existence of those wandering tribes, having nearly the same manners and habits in all the nations of Europe, and mingling everywhere with civil society without ever becoming amalgamated with it. It has been hitherto found difficult to trace their origin, perhaps because there is not a sufficient number of facts to go upon. I have not spared you such as I have heard or observed, though many are trivial: if others who have better opportunities would do the same, some general conclusions might result from the whole.”

(To be continued.)

Which youth and passion ruffle may no more!
 How different all our views, our hopes, and fears,
 From those we knew on that auspicious day
 We took the name we bear—the greatest name
 The world e'er listed.—Kingdoms may decay,
 And Empires totter, change succeed to change,
 But here no changé presents—uncoped with still
 Stands our immortal Shakespeare—he whose birth
 This day we celebrate.—O! be this day
 For ever sacred to his memory—
 And long may we, my Brethren, though divided
 To the four winds of heaven, meet again,
 Happy and free, on this returning day.
 And when the spare and silvery locks of age
 Wave o'er the wrinkled brow and faded eye,
 Memento of a change that is to be;
 May we survey this day and all behind
 Without regret, and to the future look
 With calm composure and unshaken hope.
No 5, Devon-Street, May 1817.

NOTICES CONCERNING THE SCOTTISH
 GYPSIES.

(Continued from page 58.)

“ON Yeta's banks the vagrant gypsies place
 Their turf-built cots; a sun-burnt swarthy
 race!
 From Nubian realms their tawny line they
 bring,
 And their brown chieftain vaunts the name
 of king:
 With loitering steps from town to town they
 pass,
 Their lazy dames rocked on the panniered
 ass,
 From pilfered roots, or nauseous carrion, fed,
 By hedge-rows green they strew the leafy
 bed,
 While scarce the cloak of tawdry red conceals
 The fine-turned limbs, which every breeze
 reveals:
 Their bright black eyes thro' silken lashes
 shine,
 Around their necks their raven tresses twine;
 But chilling damps, and dews of night, im-
 pair
 Its soft sleek gloss, and tan the bosom bare.
 Adroit the lines of palmistry to trace,
 Or read the damscl's wishes in her face,
 Her hoarded silver store they charm away,
 A pleasing debt, for promised wealth to pay.
 But, in the lonely barn, from towns re-
 mote,
 The pipe and bladder opes its screaming
 throat,
 To aid the revels of the noisy rout,
 Who wanton dance, or push the cups about:

Then for their paramours the maddening
 brawl,
 Shrill, fierce, and frantic, echoes round the
 hall.
 No glimmering light to rage supplies a mark,
 Save the red firebrand, hissing through the
 dark;
 And oft the beams of morn, the peasants say,
 The blood-stained turf, and new-formed
 graves, display.
 Fell race, unworthy of the Scotian name!
 Your brutal deeds your barbarous line pro-
 claim;
 With dreadful Gallas linked in kindred
 bands,
 The locust brood of Ethiopia's sands,
 Whose frantic shouts the thunder blue defy,
 And launch their arrows at the glowing sky.
 In barbarous pomp, they glut the inhuman
 feast
 With dismal viands man abhors to taste;
 And grimly smile, when red the goblets
 shine,
 When mantles red the shell—but not with
 wine!” LEYDEN.

THE village of Kirk-Yetholm, in Roxburghshire, has long been remarkable as a favourite haunt of the Scottish Gypsies; and it still continues, in the present day, to be their most important settlement, and the head-quarters of their principal clans. The original causes of this preference may be readily traced to its local situation, which afforded peculiar facilities for the indulgence of their roaming and predatory habits, and for the evasion of legal restraints and penalties. Though remote from the principal public roads, they obtained, from this station, a ready access to the neighbouring districts of both kingdoms, by various wild and unfrequented by-paths, little known since the days of the border forays, except to themselves and a few cattle-drovers. The hills and waters, also, teemed with game and fish, and the upland farms and hamlets required a constant supply of tinkering, crockery, and horn spoons, and abounded with good cheer,—while magistrates and constables, and country-towns, were few and far between.—All these were advantages of no trivial nature to the vagrant community, and they seem, accordingly, to have been neither overlooked nor left unimproved by the colonists of Kirk-Yetholm.

The village itself lies quite embosomed among the Cheviot hills, and besides its claims to celebrity as the modern metropolis of the “Lordis of Littil Egypt,” it is not undeserving of some notice, also, on account of the

simple and sequestered beauty of its scenery. It hangs upon the lower declivity of a steep rocky hill, called Stairroch, on the southern bank of the Bowmont, or as Leyden, in the elegant poem above quoted, has named it—the *Yeta*. This is a fine trouting stream, which issues, a few miles above, from the west side of Cheviot; and after winding through a narrow pastoral valley, unsheltered with wood, but bounded everywhere by smooth steep hills of the most beautiful verdure, flows down between the two villages of *Kirk* and *Town Yetholm*. The Bowmont is here joined by a large brook from the bottom of a picturesque recess among the neighbouring hills, which pours into it the superfluous waters of the little lake of *Loch-Tower* or *Lochside*. A short way below this it enters England, and afterwards falls into the *Till* near *Flodden Field*.

Between the two villages is stretched a broad and level *haugh*, which the Bowmont occasionally overflows. At *Fasten's Even* this always forms the theatre for the toughest foot-ball match now played in the south of Scotland. *Town-Yetholm* lies rather low, and exhibits nothing remarkable either in the character of its inhabitants or its internal appearance; but a small conical hill, whose rocky summit retains the vestiges of some ancient entrenchments, rises between it and *Loch-Tower*, and presents a very pleasing view on approaching from the north. It is cultivated on all sides quite to the top,—and the small village-tenants, by whom it is chiefly occupied, have parcelled out its sloping declivities into *parks*, or little enclosures, of almost Chinese variety,—each of which annually exhibits, on a small scale, the diversified operations and variegated vegetation of Scottish husbandry.

The aspect of the opposite village, to which the gypsy population is entirely confined, is of a different character:—a mill and a church-yard rising from the brink of the water—the church itself low and covered with thatch—beyond which appear the straggled houses of the village, built in the old Scottish style, many of them with their gable-ends, backs, or corners, turned to the street or *town-gate*—and still farther up, the *Tinkler-Row*, with its low, unequal, straw-covered roofs, and chimneys bound with rushes and hay-ropes—men and

women loitering at their doors, or lazily busied among their carts and panniers—and ragged children scrambling on the *midden-steeds* (which rise before every cottage) in intimate and equal fellowship with pigs, poultry, dogs, and *cuddies*.

This description, though brief and general, may perhaps appear to some readers more minute than the occasion requires; but some little indulgence, we trust, will be allowed,—if not on account of our own early partialities,—at least for the sake of the now-classical scenery of gypsy heroism—the native haunts of *Jean Gordon*, alias *Meg Merrilies*.

The general aspect of the surrounding country, however, cannot be said to bear any striking analogy to the more dark and savage features of the gypsy character. Though the mountains of Cheviot can never fail to awaken in the breast of a Scotsman a thousand elevating emotions, there is little in their natural scenery that deserves the epithets of terrible or sublime. It is wild, indeed, but without ruggedness—and interesting rather than picturesque. Its chief characteristic is pastoral simplicity—with something of that homely and affecting *bareness* peculiar to Scottish landscape:—like the Border scenery in general, the green banks of Bowmont seem more calculated to soothe the fancy and soften the heart, than to exasperate the passions by exciting the imagination. To sources very different from the influences of external nature must be traced the strange peculiarities of these wild and wayward tribes. In the same Arcadian vallies, reside at the present moment a peasantry distinguished for superior intelligence, morality, and delicacy of feeling—whose moss-trooping ancestors, little more than a hundred years ago, were nevertheless sufficiently familiar with 'stouthe reif and pykarie,' with feudal rancour and bloody revenge—but the *moral causes*, which have happily changed the Border reivers into a religious and industrious people, have scarcely yet begun to dawn upon the despised and degraded Gypsies.

Tradition affords no intelligence respecting the time when the first Gypsy colony fixed their residence at *Kirk-Yetholm*. The clan of *Faas* are generally supposed to have established

themselves there at a very remote period; and the pretensions of the present chieftain of that name to un-mixed nobility of blood, as the lineal descendant of the renowned 'Erle Johnne,' are probably as well founded, at least if not so splendidly illustrated, as the proud genealogy of the famous Prince de Paz, which certain northern heralds, it is said, had lately the merit of tracing up to the ancient royal blood of Scotland!

The tribe of Youngs are next to the Faas in honour and antiquity. They have preserved the following tradition respecting their first settlement in Yetholm:—At a siege of the city of Namur (date unknown) the laird of Kirk-Yetholm, of the ancient family of Bennets of Grubet and Marlfield, in attempting to mount a breach at the head of his company, was struck to the ground, and all his followers killed or put to flight, except a gypsey, the ancestor of the Youngs, who resolutely defended his master till he recovered his feet, and then springing past him upon the rampart, seized a flag, which he put into his leader's hand. The besieged were struck with panic—the assailants rushed again to the breach—Namur was taken—and Captain Bennet had the glory of the capture. On returning to Scotland, the laird, out of gratitude to his faithful follower, settled him and his family (who had formerly been wandering tinkers and heckle-makers) in Kirk-Yetholm, and conferred upon them and the Faas a feu of their cottages for the space of nineteen times nineteen years—which they still hold from the Marquis of Twceddale, the present proprietor of the estate. The other families now resident in this village (as we shall afterwards see) are of more recent introduction. They seem to have gradually retreated to this as their last strong hold, on being successively extirpated from their other haunts and fastnesses upon the borders.

We mentioned in our last Number, that Mr Hoyland, in the prosecution of his meritorious design for ameliorating the condition of this unfortunate race, had addressed a circular to the chief provincial magistrates, with a list of queries respecting their present state, &c. These, being transmitted to the sheriffs of the different Scottish counties, produced replies, several of which Mr Hoyland has published. Of

these notices by far the most interesting are, a short report of Mr Walter Scott, sheriff of Selkirkshire, and an account of the Yetholm Gypsies by Bailie Smith of Kelso—which we shall extract in full; for though they relate, in some points, to particulars already detailed, they are altogether too graphical and curious to be subjected to any abridgement.—Mr Scott writes as follows:—

“A set of people possessing the same erratic habits, and practising the trade of tinkers, are well known in the borders; and have often fallen under the cognizance of the law. They are often called Gypsies, and pass through the county annually in small bands, with their carts and asses. The men are tinkers, poachers, and thieves upon a small scale. They also sell crockery, deal in old rags, in eggs, in salt, in tobacco, and such trifles; and manufacture horn into spoons. I believe most of those who come through Selkirkshire, reside, during winter, in the villages of Horncliff and Spittal, in Northumberland, and in that of Kirk-Yetholm, Roxburghshire.

“Mr Smith, the respectable Bailie* of Kelso, can give the most complete information concerning those who reside at Kirk-Yetholm. Formerly, I believe, they were much more desperate in their conduct than at present. But some of the most atrocious families have been extirpated; I allude particularly to the *Winters*, a Northumberland clan, who, I fancy, are all buried by this time.

“Mr Riddell, Justice of Peace for Roxburghshire, with my assistance and concurrence, cleared this county of the last of them, about eight or nine years ago. They were thorough desperadoes, of the worst class of vagabonds. Those who now travel through this county give offence chiefly by poaching and small thefts. They are divided into clans, the principal names being Faa, Baillie, Young, Ruthven, and Gordon.

“All of them are perfectly ignorant of religion, and few of their children receive any education. They marry and cohabit amongst each other, and are held in a sort of horror by the common people.

* “Bailie is a magisterial designation in Scotland, agreeing in rank with that of Alderman in England.”

“ I do not conceive them to be the proper Oriental Egyptian race, at least they are much intermingled with our own national outlaws and vagabonds. They are said to keep up a communication with each other throughout Scotland, and to have some internal government and regulation as to the districts which each family travels.

“ I cannot help again referring to Mr Smith of Kelso, a gentleman who can give the most accurate information respecting the habits of those itinerants, as their winter-quarters of Yetholm are upon an estate of which he has long had the management.”

In consequence of this reference, Mr Hoyland applied to Bailie Smith, and was furnished by that gentleman with an interesting report, dated November 1815, from which he has given the following extracts :—

“ A considerable time having elapsed since I had an opportunity or occasion to attend to the situation of the colony of gypsies in our neighbourhood, I was obliged to delay my answer to your inquiries, until I could obtain more information respecting their present numbers.

“ The great bar to the benevolent intentions of improving their situation will be, the impossibility to convince them that there either is, or can be, a mode of life preferable, or even equal, to their own.

“ A strong spirit of independence, or what they would distinguish by the name of liberty, runs through the whole tribe. It is no doubt a very licentious liberty, but entirely to their taste. Some kind of honour, peculiar to themselves, seems to prevail in their community. They reckon it a disgrace to steal near their homes, or even at a distance, if detected. I must always except that petty theft of feeding their shelties and asses on the farmer's grass and corn, which they will do, whether at home or abroad.

“ When avowedly trusted, even in money transactions, they never deceived me, nor forfeited their promise. I am sorry to say, however, that when checked in their licentious appropriations, &c. they are much addicted both to threaten and to execute revenge.

“ Having so far premised with respect to their general conduct and character, I shall proceed to answer, as far as I am able, the four queries sub-

joined to the circular which you sent me, and then subjoin, in notes, some instances of their conduct in particular cases, which may perhaps elucidate their general disposition and character.”

“ Query 1st. *What number of gypsies are in the county?*

“ A. I know of none except the colony of Yetholm, and one family who lately removed from that place to Kelso. Yetholm consists of two towns, or large villages, called *Town-Yetholm* and *Kirk-Yetholm*. The first is on the estate of Mr Wauchope of Niddry; the latter on that of the Marquis of Tweeddale. The number of the gypsey colony at present in Kirk-Yetholm amounts to at least 109 men, women, and children; and perhaps two or three may have escaped notice. They marry early in life, in general have many children, and their number seems to be increasing.”

“ Query 2d. *In what do the men and women mostly employ themselves?*

“ B. I have known the colony between forty and fifty years. At my first remembrance of them, they were called the *Tinklers* (Tinkers) of Yetholm, from the males being chiefly then employed in mending pots and other culinary utensils, especially in their peregrinations through the hilly and less populous parts of the country.

“ Sometimes they were called *Hornners*, from their occupation in making and selling horn spoons, called *cutties*. Now their common appellation is *Muggers*, or, what pleases them better, *Potters*. They purchase, at a cheap rate, the cast or faulty articles at the different manufactories of earthenware, which they carry for sale all over the country; consisting of groups of six, ten, and sometimes twelve or fourteen persons, male and female, young and old, provided with a horse and cart to transport the pottery, besides shelties and asses to carry the youngest of the children, and such baggage as they find necessary.

“ In the country, they sleep in barns and byres, or other out-houses; and when they cannot find that accommodation, they take the canvas covering from the pottery cart, and squat below it like a covey of partridges in the snow.

“ A few of the colony also employ themselves occasionally in making besoms, foot-basses, &c. from heath,

broom, and bent, and sell them at Kelso, and the neighbouring towns. After all, their employment can be considered little better than an apology for idleness and vagrancy.

“ They are in general great adepts in hunting, shooting, and fishing; in which last they use the net and spear, as well as the rod; and often supply themselves with a hearty meal by their dexterity. They have no notion of being limited in their field sports, either to time, place, or mode of destruction.

“ I do not see that the women are any otherwise employed, than attending the young children, and assisting to sell the pottery, when carried through the country.”

“ Query 3d. *Have they any settled abode in winter, and where?* ”

“ C. Their residence, with the exception of a single family, who some years ago came to Kelso, is at Kirk-Yetholm, and chiefly confined to one row of houses, or street of that town, which goes by the name of Tinkler-Row. Most of them have leases of their possessions, granted for a term of nineteen times nineteen years, for payment of a small sum yearly; something of the nature of a quit-rent. There is no tradition in the neighbourhood concerning the time when the gypsies first took up their residence at that place, nor whence they came.

“ Most of their leases, I believe, were granted by the family of the Bennets of Grubet; the last of whom was Sir David Bennet, who died about sixty years ago. The late Mr Nisbet of Dirleton then succeeded to the estate, comprehending the baronies of Kirk-Yetholm and Grubet. He died about the year 1783; and not long after, the property was acquired by the late Lord Tweeddale's trustees.

“ During the latter part of the life of the late Mr Nisbet, he was less frequently at his estate in Roxburghshire than formerly. He was a great favourite of the gypsies, and was in use to call them his body guards, and often gave them money, &c.

“ On the other hand, both the late and present Mr Wauchope were of opinion, that the example of these people had a bad effect upon the morals and industry of the neighbourhood; and seeing no prospect of their removal, and as little of their reformation, considered it as a duty to the

public, to prevent the evil increasing, and never would consent to any of the colony taking up their residence in Town-Yetholm.

“ They mostly remain at home during winter; but as soon as the weather becomes tolerably mild in spring, most of them, men, women, and children, set out on their peregrinations over the country, and live in a state of vagrancy, until again driven into their habitations by the approach of winter.

“ Seeming to pride themselves as a separate tribe, they very seldom intermarry out of the colony; and in rare instances where that happens, the gypsey, whether male or female, by influence and example, always induces the stranger husband or wife to adopt the manners of the colony, so that no improvement is ever obtained in that way. The progeny of such alliances have almost universally the tawny complexion and fine black eyes of the gypsey parent, whether father or mother.

“ So strongly remarkable is the gypsey cast of countenance, that even a description of them to a stranger, who has had no opportunity of formerly seeing them, will enable him to know them wherever he meets with them. Some individuals, but very rarely, separate from the colony altogether; and when they do so early in life, and go to a distance, such as to London, or even Edinburgh, their acquaintances in the country get favourable accounts of them. A few betake themselves to regular and constant employments at home, but soon tire, and return to their old way of life.

“ When any of them, especially a leader or man of influence, dies, they have full meetings, not only of the colony, but of the gypsies from a distance; and those meetings, or *lylce wakes*, are by no means conducted with sobriety or decency.”

“ Query 4th. *Are any of their children taught to read, and what proportion of them? With any anecdotes respecting their customs and conduct.* ”

“ D. Education being obtained at a cheap rate, the gypsies in general give their male children as good a one as is bestowed on those of the labouring people and farm servants in the neighbourhood; such as reading, writing, and the first principles of arithmetic. They all apply to the clergy-

man of the parish for baptism to their children; and a strong superstitious notion universally prevails with them, that it is unlucky to have an unchristened child long in the house. Only a very few ever attend divine service, and those as seldom as they can, just to prevent being refused as sponsors at their children's baptism.

"They are in general active and lively, particularly when engaged in field sports, or in such temporary pursuits as are agreeable to their habits and dispositions; but are destitute of the perseverance necessary for a settled occupation, or even for finishing what a moderate degree of continued labour would enable them to accomplish in a few weeks."

Notes by Mr SMITH, intended to elucidate his Answers to the Queries A and B, on their licentious liberty.

"I remember that about forty-five years ago, being then apprentice to a writer, who was in use to receive the rents as well as the small duties of Kirk-Yetholm, he sent me there with a list of names, and a statement of what was due; recommending me to apply to the landlord of the public-house, in the village, for any information or assistance which I might need.

"After waiting a long time, and receiving payment from most of the feuars, or rentallers, I observed to him that none of the persons of the names of Faa, Young, Blythe, Bailley, &c. who stood at the bottom of the list for small sums, had come to meet me, according to the notice given by the baron officer, and proposed sending to inform them that they were detaining me, and to request their immediate attendance.

"The landlord, with a grave face, inquired whether my master had desired me to ask money from those men. I said, not particularly; but they stood on the list. 'So I see,' said the landlord; 'but had your master been here himself, he had not dared to ask money from them, either as rent or feu duty.—He knows that it is as good as if it were in his pocket. They will pay when their own time comes; but do not like to pay at a set time with the rest of the barony, and still less to be craved.'

"I accordingly returned without their money, and reported progress. I

found that the landlord was right: my master said with a smile, that it was unnecessary to send to them, after the previous notice from the baron officer; it was enough if I had received the money, if offered.—Their rent and feu duty was brought to the office in a few weeks. I need scarcely add, those persons all belonged to the tribe.

"Another instance of their licentious independent spirit occurs to me. The family of Niddry always gave a decent annual remuneration to a baron bailie, for the purpose of keeping good order within their barony of Town-Yetholm. The person whom I remember first in possession of that office, was an old man called Doctor Walker, from his being also the village surgeon; and from him I had the following anecdote:—

"Between Yetholm and the border farms in Northumberland, there were formerly, as in most border situations, some uncultivated lands, called the *Plea Lands*, or *Debateable Lands*, the pasturage of which was generally eaten up by the sorners and vagabonds on both sides of the marches.

"Many years ago, Lord Tankerville and some other of the English borderers made their request to Sir David Bennet, and the late Mr Wauchope of Niddry, that they would accompany them at a *riding* of the *Plea Lands*, who readily complied with their request. They were induced to this, as they understood that the gypsies had taken offence, on the supposition that they might be circumscribed in the pasture for their shelties and asses, which they had held a long time, partly by stealth, and partly by violence.

"Both threats and entreaties were employed to keep them away; and at last Sir David obtained a promise from some of the heads of the gang, that none of them should show their faces on the occasion.

"They however got upon the hills at a little distance, whence they could see every thing that passed. At first they were very quiet. But when they saw the English Court Book spread out on a cushion before the clerk, and apparently taken in a line of direction interfering with what they considered to be their privileged ground, it was with great difficulty that the most moderate of them could restrain the rest from running down and taking ven-

geance, even in sight of their own lord of the manor.

"They only abstained for a short time; and no sooner had Sir David and the other gentlemen taken leave of each other in the most polite and friendly manner, as border chiefs are wont to do since border feuds ceased, and had departed to a sufficient distance, than the clan, armed with bludgeons, pitchforks, and such other hostile weapons as they could find, rushed down in a body; and before the chiefs on either side had reached their home, there was neither English tenant, horse, cow, nor sheep, left upon the premises.

"*Notes on Answers C and D. Peculiar cast of gypsy features, everywhere distinguishable, &c.*

"When first I knew any thing about the colony, old Will Faa was king or leader, and had held the sovereignty for many years.

"Meeting at Kelso with Mr Walter Scott, whose discriminating habits and just observation I had occasion to know from his youth, and at the same time seeing one of my Yetholm friends in the horse market, I merely said to Mr Scott, "Try to get before that man with the long drab coat, look at him on your return, and tell me whether you ever saw him, and what you think of him." He was so good as to indulge me; and rejoining me, said, without hesitation, "I never saw the man that I know of; but he is one of the gypsies of Yetholm, that you told me of several years ago." I need scarcely say that he was perfectly correct.

The descendants of Faa now take the name of *Fall*, from the Messrs Falls of Dunbar, who, they pride themselves in saying, are of the same stock and lineage. When old Will Faa was upwards of eighty years of age, he called on me at Kelso, in his way to Edinburgh, telling me that he was going to see the laird, the late Mr Nisbet of Dirleton, as he understood that he was very unwell; and himself being now old, and not so stout as he had been, he wished to see him once more before he died.

"The old man set out by the nearest road, which was by no means his common practice. Next market-day, some of the farmers informed me that they had been in Edinburgh, and had

seen Will Faa upon the Bridge, (the South Bridge was not then built); that he was tossing about his old brown hat, and huzzaing with great vociferation, that he had seen the laird before he died. Indeed Will himself had no time to lose; for, having set his face homewards by the way of the sea coast, to vary his route, as is the general custom of the gang, he only got the length of Coldingham, when he was taken ill, and died.

"His death being notified to his friends at Yetholm, they and their acquaintance at Berwick-Spittal, Horn-cliff, &c. met to pay the last honours to their old leader. His obsequies were continued three successive days and nights, and afterwards repeated at Yetholm, whither he was brought for interment. I cannot say that the funeral rites were celebrated with decency and sobriety, for that was by no means the case. This happened in the year 1783 or 1784, and the late Mr Nisbet did not long survive."

We have occupied so much of our space with Mr Smith's interesting and accurate details, that we can only find room at present for a limited portion of our remaining original materials, and must restrict ourselves to a few additional traits.—Of the *kingly* demeanour and personal achievements of old Will Faa, many curious particulars are related. He never forgot his high descent from the 'Lords of Little Egypt.' He also claimed kindred with the Messrs Falls of Dunbar, with whom he affected to maintain some sort of family intercourse; and he is said to have paid them a regular visit once a-year. On solemn occasions he assumed, in his way, all the stately deportment of sovereignty. He had twenty-four children, and at each of their christenings he appeared dressed in his original wedding-robos. These christenings were celebrated with no small parade. Twelve young handmaidens were always present as part of the family retinue, and for the purpose of waiting on the numerous guests who assembled to witness the ceremony, or to partake of the subsequent festivities. Besides Will's gypsy associates, several of the neighbouring farmers and lairds, with whom he was on terms of friendly intercourse (among others, the Murrays of Cherrytrees), used to attend these christenings.—In

virtue of his high magisterial office, Will exercised the functions of *country keeper* (as it was called), or restorer of stolen property; which he was able often to do, when it suited his own inclination or interest, very effectually, through his extensive influence among the neighbouring tribes, and his absolute dominion over his own.

Upon the death of old Will, a sort of civil war broke out among the Yetholm clans:—an usurper thrust himself into the office of the deceased, but was dispossessed, after a battle, by the loyal subjects who adhered to the legitimate heir. This bold rebel was the leader of an inferior tribe, and the immediate successor of another doughty chief, usually known by the appropriate title of the *Earl of Hell*. He is alluded to at page 54, being the same individual, who, on the occasion there mentioned, “had rubbit shouthers wi’ the gallows.”

Among the many traditionary gypsy anecdotes which we used formerly to hear related, was the following very characteristic one of Jean Gordon. We avoided mentioning it in a more appropriate place last Number, having forgot some of the names which serve to authenticate it, and which we are now enabled to supply through the kindness of a correspondent. It happened that Jean’s husband, Geordie Faa, was murdered at one of their clan-meetings by Rob Johnstone, another gypsy, who stabbed him with a *graip*, a sort of large three-pronged fork used about farm offices. Johnstone was instantly apprehended and committed to Jedburgh jail; out of which, however, he soon contrived to break, and got clear off the country. But it was easier to escape from the grasp of justice than to elude gypsy vengeance: Jean Gordon traced the murderer like a blood-hound—followed him to Holland—and from thence to Ireland, where she got him seized and brought back to Jedburgh; and she at length obtained a full reward for her toils, by enjoying the gratification of seeing him hanged on the Gallow-hill. Some time afterward, Jean being up at Sourhope, a sheep-farm on Bowmont Water, the goodman there said to her, “Weel, Jean, ye hae got Rob Johnstone hanged at last, and out o’ the way.”—“Aye, gudeman!” replied Jean, lifting up her apron by the

two corners, “and a’ that fu’ o’ gowd has nae done’t.”—Jean’s “apron-fu’ o’ gowd,” may perhaps remind some of our readers of Meg Merrilies’ peck of jewels—and the whole transaction indeed forcibly recalls the powerful picture of that stern and intrepid heroine.

Two curious documents, relating to the early history of the gypsies in Scotland, which we had overlooked in our former researches, have been pointed out to us by a learned friend.—The first is a letter from King James the Fourth to the King of Denmark, dated 1506, in favour of *Anthony Gawino, Earl of Little Egypt*, and his followers;—which serves to ascertain pretty exactly what we formerly wanted—the date of the first arrival of the race in this country. His majesty specifies, that this miserable train had visited Scotland by command of the pope, *being upon a pilgrimage*; that they had conducted themselves properly, and now wished to go to Denmark: He therefore solicits the extension of his royal uncle’s munificence toward them; adding, at the same time, that these wandering Egyptians must be better known to him, because the kingdom of Denmark was nearer to Egypt!—This epistle is mentioned in a short but comprehensive account of the gypsies, in the tenth volume of the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*.

The other article is an Act of the Lords of Council, dated at Stirling, June 6, 1541, and refers to the dispute, formerly mentioned, between Johnne Faw and his rebellious subjects, who it appears had now mutually agreed “*to passe hame, and to have the samyn decydit before the Duke of Egipt*.” It is evident, that both the chieftain and his followers had greatly declined in credit with the Scottish government since the preceding year:—He is no longer complimented with his high title; the letters and privileges formerly granted had been revoked; and the Lords of Council proceed forthwith (for certain cogent reasons) to pass sentence of banishment upon the whole race, at thirty days warning, and under the pain of death.

Copies of both these papers will be found in our *Antiquarian Repository*.

(To be continued.)

bullets. They agreed, that in case the enemy got over their dykes, they should retire to the house, and if they should find themselves overpower'd there, to burn it, and bury themselves in the ashes.

In this action 15 men were killed, besides the officers named, and 30 wounded.

The account of the enemies loss is uncertain, but they are said to be above 300 slain, amongst whom were some persons of note.

That handful of unexperienced men was wonderfully animated to a stedfast resistance against a multitude of obstinate furies. But they gave the glory to God, and praised him, and sung psalms, after they had fitted themselves for a new assault.

Amongst many who shewed extraordinary courage, some young gentlemen deserve a special testimony and remembrance, —as William Sandilands above named, James Pringle of Hultrie, William Stirling of Mallachen, James Johnstoun, a reformed lieutenant, and others.

Diverse officers besides those above specified, viz. another Captain John Campbell, Captain Harries, Lieutenant Henry Stuart, Lieutenant Charles Dalryel, Lieutenant Oliphant, Lieutenant Thomas Haddo, Ensign William Hamilton, and most of all the officers, behaved very worthily at their several posts throughout the whole action, and deserve well to be recorded as men of worth and valour. And the whole souldiers did every thing with such undaunted courage, and so little concern, in all the dangers and deaths which surrounded them and stared them in their faces, that they deserve to be recommended as examples of valour to this and after ages, and to have some marks of honour fixt upon them. And it is expected his Majesty will be graciously pleased to take notice both of officers and souldiers.

Upon the Saturday immediately after these actions, the young Laird of Bellachan came in to Dunkeld to treat for the benefit of his Majesties indemnitie for all those of Athole; and he declared that Lord James Murray was willing to accept thereof.

But Major General M'Kay (who by his gallant and wise conduct prevented the conjunction of ill-affected people with the rebels, and baffled all their designs upon the low countries) is now in the Highlands with a brave army. And with the blessing of God, will shortly give a good account of them all, and put an end to the troubles of this kingdom.

Edinburgh, printed according to Order, 1689.

NOTICES CONCERNING THE SCOTTISH GYPSIES.

(Concluded from page 161.)

WHEN we printed the second section of our Gypsy Notices, we proposed

to bring the Article to a close in the succeeding Number, after bringing down more completely the account of the Kirk-Yetholm community to the present time; with the addition of such other anecdotes and observations as we had collected respecting their more general history; and perhaps with some further remarks upon their separate language and supposed origin. The attention required by more pressing subjects, however, has hitherto prevented us from reverting to this; and it is, unfortunately, only in our power now to execute the least difficult, if not the least important, part of our original plan—namely, to present to the public the remainder of the miscellaneous anecdotes, with which we have been furnished from various sources, respecting this curious people. We begin with some extracts from the Records of the Court of Justiciary, and other judicial documents relating to trials of Gypsies.

In May 1714, William Walker, Patrick Faa, Mabill Stirling, Mary Faa, Jean Ross, Elspeth Lindsay, Joseph Wallace, John Phennick, Jean Yorkstown, Mary Robertson, Janet Wilson, and Janet Stewart, were indicted at Jedburgh, as guilty of wilful fire raising, and of being notorious Egyptians, thieves, vagabonds, sorners, masterful beggars, and oppressors, at least holden in repute to be such.

It appeared from the proof, that a gang of gypsies had burnt the house of Greenhead in Roxburgh. One witness swore, that—

“The deponent being in a barn at Hairstones, on a morning, Janet Stewart, pannel, came into it, and prayed God's malison to light upon them who had put her to that trouble; and being asked who it was, she said it was Sir William Kerr of Greenhead, who had put *her bairn* in prison,—and depones, that the same night after Janet Stewart uttered the words aforesaid, Sir William Kerr's house of Bridgend was burnt.”

Another witness swears, that—

“The night after Sir William Kerr's house was burnt, about five o'clock, Patrick Faa, pannel, looked over the prison window, and asked if it were true that Sir William Kerr's house was burnt, and the deponent answering that it was but too true, Patrick Faa said, that the rest of the justices of peace would have set him at liberty, but Sir William would not consent; and that, if he had been at liberty, it would not have happened, for he would have cleansed the

country of these Egyptians and vagabonds that were going about."

The sentence upon Janet Stewart was; that she should be scourged through Jedburgh, and afterwards stand a quarter of an hour at the Cross, with her left ear nailed to a post.

P. Faa, Mary Faa, Stirling, Lindsay, Ross, Robertson, Phennick, and Yorkstown, were sentenced to be transported to the Queen's American plantations for life. Patrick was, in addition, sentenced to be whipped through the town, and to stand half an hour at the cross with his left ear nailed to a post, and then to have both his ears 'cutted off.' Phennick was 'banished furth of Scotland;' and Walker, Wallace, and Wilson, were acquitted.

About the same time, three men and two women, all gypsies, were sentenced to be hanged at Edinburgh.

In a precognition, taken in March 1725, by Sir James Stewart of Coltness, and Captain Lockhart of Kirkton, two of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for Lanarkshire, "anent the murther of William Baillie, brazier, commonly called Gypsie," the following evidence is adduced:—

"John Meikle, wright, declares, that upon the twelvth of November last, he being in the house of Thomas Riddle, in Newarthill, with some others, the deceased William Baillie, James Cairns, and David Pinkerton, were in ane other rounge drinking, where, after some high words, and a confused noise and squabble, the saids three persons above nam'd went all out, and the declarant knowing them to be three of those idle sorners that pass in the country under the name of gypsies, in hopes they were gone off, rose and went to the door to take the air; where, to his surprise, he saw William Baillie standing, and Cairns and Pinkerton on horseback, with drawn swords in their hands, who both rushed upon the said William Baillie, and struck him with their swords; whereupon the said William Baillie fell down, crying out he was gone. Upon which, Cairns and Pinkerton rode off: that the declarant helped to carry the said William Baillie into the house, where, upon search, he was found to have a great cut, or wound, in his head, and a wound in his body, just below the slot of his breast; and declares he, the said William Baillie, died some time after."

"Thomas Riddle, tenant and change-keeper in Newarthill, &c.; declares, that the deceased William Baillie, James Cairns, and David Pinkerton, all idle sorners, that are knowen in the country by the name of gypsies, came to the declarant's house about sun-setting, where, after some stay, and talking a jar-

gon the declarant did not well understand, they fell a-squabbling, when the declarant was in ane other room with some other company; upon the noise of which, the declarant ran in to them, where he found the said James Cairns lying above the said William Baillie, whose nose the said James Cairns had bitten with his teeth till it bled; upon which the declarant and his wife threatened to raise the town upon them, and get a constable to carrie them to prison; but Cairns and Pinkerton called for their horses, William Baillie saying he would not go with them. Declares, that after the said Cairns and Pinkerton had got their horses, and mounted, they ordered the declarant to bring a chopen of ale to the door to them, where William Baillie was standing talking to them: that when the declarant had filled about the ale and left them, thinking they were going off, the declarant's wife went to the door, where Cairns struck at her with a drawn sword, to fright her in; upon which she ran in; and thereupon the declarant went to the door, where he found the said William Baillie lying with the wounds upon him, mentioned in John Meikle's declaration."

"Thomas Brownlee declares, that upon the fourth of November last, being St Leonard's fair in Lanark, the said declarant, with several others, coming from Lanark fair towards Carlouk, at Cartland on the high road, David Pinkerton and James Cairns came riding straight upon the declarant and his company, upon which the declarant went off the way. They calling to hold off the way; the declarant said, The way is broad enough, hold off, folk: upon which James Cairns turned back the breadeth of one house, and then, having a drawn sword or shable in his hand (with blood upon it), came straight upon the declarant and cutt him upon the head, to the effusion of his blood, without any provocation. This was done about half ane hour before sunset," &c.

"John Lightbody in Belstaintown, &c. declares, conform to the said Thomas Brownlee, with this variation, that James Cairns said—Know ye whom yow speak to? James Cairns will not be quarreled upon the road,—which he said, when none quarreled him further than to say, Ride off, folk."

Another witness declares,

"That he had frequently seen Maxwell and Cairns in Bowridgemilne Kilne, with several others in company with them commonly called gypsies and sorners, who took hens and peats at pleasure—also declares, that they had horses alongst with them, and the declarant was obliged to give them straw, for fear they had drawn his stacks or done other mischief to him," &c.

Another witness states, that the said "Maxwell, tinker, sornor, and Egyptian," with his gang, frequently took possession, without any leave asked or

given, of his out-houses; and that, "to prevent abuse in the country, he allowed them to take his peats," &c.—It is mentioned by another person examined, that the same gang, passing by his house to Watstounhead kiln, sent in some of their number to him, asking for straw for their horses, "which he refused, until they said they would draw his stacks; upon which he gave them some *bottles* to prevent further danger."

John Ketter in Murdiston Walkmilk declared—

"That upon the said fourth of November last, as he was coming from St Leonard's fair, David Pinkerton and James Cairns came riding up to the declarant, and said to him, Yield your purse; but afterwards they said it would do them little good, because he had said to them he had but a crown. But Cairns' wife said the declarant was a damned villain—he had gold; and ordered to take it from him; but Cairns said, if the declarant would go to Carlouk, and give them a pynt and a gill, *they would pardon him*. And accordingly they came to Carlouk, to the house of James Walker there, where the declarant paid some ale; and as he was going away, Pinkerton beat him for not giving them brandie."

John Whytefoord in Cartland, declared—

"That he saw Maxwell's son, called the Merchant, have a wallate, and as he thought, some ware in it, which he valued at twenty pound Scots, amongst which he had a short pistoll; and farder, that he saw James Whytefoord, constable, at the command of Captain Lockhart, Justice of Peace, take a naked bagnet off the wall head of the house wherein they were lodged, which Maxwell younger, the merchant, called his father's; and that his father rolled the pans with it:—and farder declares, that he saw them boyling flesh in poats while they were in the said house."

After the examination of the foregoing witnesses, and a number of other persons who had been cited by order of the Justices of the Peace for Lanarkshire, "to compare before them to give their declarations, what they know of these idle vagabonds, commonly called gypsies,"—a report follows from the said Court, enumerating the grievances suffered by the lieges from the oppressions and disorders of these audacious vagrants, and ordering the laws to be strictly enforced against them. It is particularly mentioned in this report, that a gypsey "of the name of Johnstoun, who, about *nine years bypast*, was guilty of a most horrid murder," but had escaped from justice, had

lately returned from abroad, and was then roaming about the country. This document bears the date of March 11, 1725.

On referring to the Justiciary records, we find that in 1727, 'Robert Johnstoun, sone to John Johnstoun, gypsey, sturdy beggar, and vagabond, at that time prisoner in the tolbooth of Jedburgh, was indieted at the instance of his Majesty's Advocate, and at the instance of *Marjory Young*, relict of the deceased *Alexander Faa*, hecklemaker in Home, for the murder of the said Faa. In the evidence brought forward upon the trial, we find the following curious account of this savage transaction:

"John Henderson, feuar in Huntley-wood, depones, that time and place libelled, Robert Johnston, pannel, and his father, came to Huntley-wood and possessed themselves of a cot-house belonging to the deponent; and that a little after, Alex. Fall, the defunct, came up to the door of the said house, and desired they would make open the door: that the door was standing a jarr, and the deponent saw Robert Johnston, pannel, in the inside of the door, and a fork in his hand,—and saw him push over the door head at the said Alexander Fall,—and saw the grains of the fork strike Alexander Fall in the breast, and Alexander Fall coming back from the door staggering came to a midding, and there he fell down and died immediately; and depones, that the distance of the midding from the house where he received the wound is about a penny-stone cast; and when Alexander Fall retyred from the house, he said to the rest, Retyre for your lives, for I have gott my death: Depones, he saw Robert Johnston, pannel, come out of the cott-house with the fork in his hand, and pass by Alexander Fall and the deponent; heard the pannell say, *he had sticked the dog, and he would stick the whelps too*; whereupon the pannell run after the defunct's sone with the fork in his hand, into the house of George Carter: Depones, in a little while after the pannell had gone into George Carter's house, the deponent saw him running down a balk and a meadow; and in two hours after, saw him on horseback riding away without his stockings or shoes, coat or cape."

Another witness swears, that—

"She heard Johnston say, "Where are the *whelps* that I may kill them too?"—that the prisoner followed Alexander Fall's son into George Carter's house, and the deponent went thither after him, out of fear he should have done some harm to George Carter's wife or children; there saw the pannel, with the said fork, search beneath a bed for Alexander Fall's sone, who had hidden himself beyond the cradle; and then

there being a cry given that Alexander Fall was dead, the pannel went away."

Johnston was sentenced to be hanged on 13th June 1727, but he escaped from prison. He was afterwards retaken; and in August 1728, the High Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh ordered his sentence to be put in execution.

Upon comparing these statements with the traditional account of the murder of *Geordie Faa* by *Rob Johnstone*, given in our Second Number, page 161, the latter appears to be inaccurate in several points, and particularly in mentioning Jean Gordon as the wife of the murdered Faa. Johnston, it would seem, had contrived to elude the pursuit of justice for more than ten years, and after being taken and condemned, had again escaped from prison. If the story of Jean Gordon's having pursued a murderer beyond seas, and traced him from one country to another till he was finally secured, be at all connected with the case of Johnston, she may perhaps have been the mother of *Sandie Faa*, the person murdered. Her husband rather seems to have been *Patrick Faa*, mentioned at page 615. But as these bloody transactions appear to have been very frequent among this savage race in former times, it is not improbable that two stories may have been blended together in the popular tradition.

A few years after this, our heroine, Jean, appears to have been reduced to rather distressed circumstances; for in May 1732, we find that a petition was presented to the Circuit Court at Jedburgh, by *Jean Gordon*, commonly called the *Dutchess*, then prisoner in the tolbooth of Edinburgh; in which she states, that she is "now become an old and infirm woman, having been long in prison." She concludes with requesting to be allowed "to take voluntary banishment upon herself, to depart from Scotland never to return thereto."—We have little doubt that *The Dutchess* is no other than our old acquaintance, though we were not formerly acquainted with her title. It was probably during one of these periods of 'voluntary banishment,' that poor Jean encountered the Goodman of Lochside on the south side of the Border.

About a twelvemonth before the date of Jean Gordon's petition, we find that John Faa, William Faa, John

Faa, *alias* Falla, *alias* Williamson, William Miller, Christian Stewart, Margaret Young, and Elizabeth *alias* Elspeth Anderson, were indicted at Jedburgh for the crimes of theft, and as habit and repute vagabonds or vagrant persons, sturdy beggars, sorners, and gypsies. They all received sentence of death, except Miller, who was transported for life.*

A correspondent, who has very obligingly furnished us with several curious communications on the present subject, mentions, that in the combat at Lowrie's Den, described by Mr Hogg in a former Number, the wife of one of the parties assisted her husband by holding down his opponent till he despatched him by repeated stabs with a small knife. This virago, thinking the murderer was not making quick enough work, called out to him, "*Strike laigh! Strike laigh!*"

The same correspondent has lately sent us the following anecdote of Billy Marshall, derived, as he informs us, from 'Black Matthew Marshall,' grandson of the said chieftain:—"Marshall's gang had long held possession of a large cove or cavern in the high grounds of Cairnmuir, in Galloway, where they usually deposited their plunder and sometimes resided, secure from the officers of the law, as no one durst venture to molest the tribe in that retired subterraneous situation. It happened that two Highland pipers, strangers to the country, were travelling that way; and falling in by chance with this cove, they entered it, to

* While printing this sheet, the following notices have been transmitted to us from England:—

"Simson, Arington, Fetherstone, Fenwicke, and Lanckaster, were hanged, being Egyptians."—8 Aug. 1592.

St Nicholas Par. Register, Durham.

"Francis Heron, king of y^e Faws, buried 13 Jan. 1756."

Jarrow Register, Co. Durham.

A late communication from another gentleman in the North of England, enables us to correct a slight inaccuracy in our First Number, respecting the death of Jamie Allan the famous Northumbrian piper, who it appears did not die, as we supposed, in Morpeth jail; but after being condemned at the Durham assizes, in August 1803, for horse-stealing, was reprieved, and received his Majesty's pardon in 1804; and "on the 28th August 1806 died, and was buried in the parish church of St Nicholas, in the city of Durham."

shelter themselves from the weather, and resolved to rest there during the night. They found pretty good quarters, but observed some very suspicious furniture in the cove, which indicated the profession and character of its absent inhabitants. They had not remained long, till they were alarmed by the voices of a numerous band advancing to its entrance. The pipers expected nothing but death from the ruthless gypsies. One of them, however, being a man of some presence of mind, called to his neighbour instantly to 'fill his bags' (doing the same himself), and to strike up a pibroch with all his might and main. Both pipes accordingly at once commenced a most tremendous onset, the cove with all its echoes, pealing back the 'Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,' or such like. At this very unexpected and terrific reception,—the yelling of the bagpipes, issuing from the bowels of the earth, just at the moment the gypsies entered the cove,—Billy Marshall, with all his band, precipitately fled in the greatest consternation, and from that night never again would go near their favourite haunt, believing that the blast they had heard proceeded from the devil or some of his agents. The pipers next morning prosecuted their journey in safety, carrying with them the *spolia optima* of the redoubted Billy and the clan Marshall."

The following anecdote of another noted leader is communicated by an individual, who had frequently heard it related by the reverend person chiefly concerned:—

"The late Mr Leck, minister of Yetholm, happened to be riding home one evening from a visit over in Northumberland, when, finding himself like to be benighted, for the sake of a near cut, he struck into a wild solitary track, or drove-road, across the fells, by a place called *The Staw*. In one of the derne places through which this path led him, there stood an old deserted shepherd's house, which, of course, was reputed to be haunted. The minister, though little apt to be alarmed by such reports, was however somewhat startled, on observing, as he approached close to the cottage, a 'grim visage' staring out past a *window-claith*, or sort of curtain, which had been fastened up to supply the place of a door,—and also several 'dusky figures' skulking among the bourtreebushes that had once sheltered the

shepherd's garden. Without leaving him any time for speculation, however, the knight of the curtain bolted forth upon him, and seizing his horse by the bridle, demanded his money. Mr Leck, though it was now dusk, at once recognized the gruff voice and the great black burly head of his next door neighbour, *Gleid-neckit Will*, the gypsy chief.—"Dear me, *William*," said the minister in his usual quiet manner, "can this be you? Ye're surely no serious wi' me?—Ye wadna sae far wrang your character for a good neighbour for the bit trifle I hae to gie, *William*?"—"Lord saif us, Mr Leck!" said Will, quitting the rein, and lifting his hat with great respect, "whae wad hae thought o' meeting *you* out owre here-away?—Ye needna gripe for ony siller to me—I wadna touch a plack o' your gear, nor a hair o' your head, for a' the gowd o' Tivdale.—I ken ye'll no do *us* an ill turn for this mistak—and I'll e'en see ye safe through the *erie Staw*—it's no reckoned a very *canny bit* mair ways nor ane; but I wat weel ye'll no be feared for the *dead*, and I'll tak care o' the *living*."—Will accordingly gave his reverend friend a safe convoy through the haunted pass, and, notwithstanding this ugly mistake, continued ever after an inoffensive and obliging neighbour to the minister,—who, on his part, observed a prudent and inviolable secrecy on the subject of this rencounter during the life-time of *Gleid-neckit Will*."

The following story contains perhaps nothing very remarkable in itself, or characteristic of the gypsy race; but it seems worthy of being inserted, from other considerations:—Tam Gordon, the late captain of the Spittal gypsies, and a very notorious and desperate character, had been in the habit of stealing sheep from the flocks of Mr Abram Logan, farmer at Lammerton, in the east of Berwickshire. Numbers having successively disappeared, Mr Logan and the shepherd sat up one night to watch for the thief; and about midnight, Tam and his son-in-law, Ananias Faa, coming for their accustomed prey, the farmer and his servant sprung up and seized them. Abram Logan, a stout active man, had grappled with the elder gypsey, while the shepherd secured the other;—the ruffian instantly drew a large knife, used for killing sheep, and made repeated attempts to stab him; but

being closely grasped by the farmer, he was unable to thrust the weapon home, and it only struck against his ribs. With some difficulty the thieves were both secured. They were tried for the crime before the High Court of Justiciary in Edinburgh,—convicted, and condemned to be hanged,—but afterwards, to the great surprise and disappointment of their Berwickshire neighbours, obtained a pardon—a piece of unmerited and ill-bestowed clemency, for which it was generally understood they were indebted to the interest of a noble northern family of their own name. We recollect hearing a sort of ballad upon Tam's exploits, and his deliverance from the gallows through the intercession of a celebrated duchess, but do not recollect any of the words. Tam died only a few years ago, at a very advanced age.

The following observations respecting the continental gypsies are communicated by a distinguished writer, who, on a former occasion, enriched our Miscellany with much interesting and valuable information respecting this wild and wayward race:—

“The gypsies every where pretend to skill in fortune-telling and sorcery; but in Germany they are supposed to have some particular spells for stopping the progress of conflagration. I have somewhere a German ballad on this subject, which, if I find, I will translate for you. Seven gypsies are unjustly doomed to death; the town takes fire; and the magistrates are obliged to release them, that they may arrest the flames by their incantations. Our Scottish gypsies are more celebrated for raising fire wilfully, than for extinguishing it. This is their most frequent mode of vengeance when offended; and being a crime at once easily executed and difficult of detection, the apprehension of it makes the country people glad to keep on fair terms with them.

“They are greatly averse to employment of a regular kind, but, when forced to serve, make good soldiers. On the Continent, I believe, they are received into no service but that of Prussia, which, according to the rules of Frederic, still enrolls *bon gré mal gré*, whatever can carry a musket. But they detest the occupation. A friend was passing a Prussian sentinel on his post at Paris last year. The gentleman, as is usual abroad, was

smoking as he walked; and it is a point of etiquette, that, in passing a sentinel, you take the pipe from your mouth. But as my friend was about to comply with this uniform custom, the sentinel said, to his no small surprise, “*Rauchen sie, immer fort: verdamt sey der Preussische dienst*”—“Smoke away, sir: d—n the Prussian service.” My friend looked at him with surprise, and the marked gypsy features at once shewed who he was, and why dissatisfied with the service, the duties of which he seemed to take pleasure in neglecting.

“In Hungary the gypsies are very numerous, and travel in great bands, like Arabs, gaily dressed in red and green, and often well armed and mounted. A friend of mine met a troop of them last year in this gallant guise, and was not a little astonished at their splendour. But their courage in actual battle is always held in low esteem. I cannot refer to the book, but I have somewhere read, that a pass or fort was defended by some of them, during a whole night, with such bravery and skill, that the Austrians, who were the assailants, supposed it to be held by regular troops, and were about to abandon their enterprise. But when day dawned, and shewed the quality of the defenders, the attack was immediately renewed, and the place carried with great ease; as if the courage of the gypsies had only lasted till their character was made known.”

Neither our limits nor our leisure allow of farther observation: nor is it of much importance. We trust we have succeeded in giving our readers more information and livelier entertainment by the mode we have adopted, than we could have conveyed in any other shape on the same subject. Nothing, indeed, like regularity in the arrangement of our materials has been practicable; and they have been generally given to the public very much in the form and order in which we obtained them. Such a plan, no doubt, would require a summary to its conclusion, to bind together the loose materials, and draw general deductions from the crowd of unconnected facts and observations. This task, however, we must for the present leave to our readers themselves; the subject is far from being exhausted, but it must necessarily, for the present, be brought to a hasty close.