

drove the cattle to a place of safety, and watched them till their owners came to recover them.

Padrig Mac-an-Ts'agairt did not utter his threats without the fullest intention of carrying them into effect. In the latter end of the following spring, he visited Strathspey with a strong party, and waylaid the Mugach, as he and his sons were returning from working at a small patch of land he had on the brow of a hill, about half a mile above his house. Mac-an-Ts'agairt and his party concealed themselves in a thick covert of underwood, through which they knew the Mugach and his sons must pass; but seeing their intended victims well armed, the cowardly assassins lay still in their hiding-place, and allowed them to pass, with the intention of taking a more favourable opportunity for their purpose. That very night they surprised and murdered two of the sons, who, being married, lived in separate houses, at some distance from their father's; and having thus executed so much of their diabolical purpose, they surrounded the Mugach's cottage.

No sooner was his dwelling attacked, than the brave Mugach immediately guessing who the assailants were, made the best arrangements for defence that time and circumstances permitted. The door was the first point attempted; but it was strong, and he and his four sons placed themselves behind it, determined to do bloody execution the moment it should be forced. Whilst thus engaged, the Mugach was startled by a noise above the rafters, and, looking up, he perceived in the obscurity, the figure of a man half through a hole in the wattled roof. Eager to despatch his foe as he entered, he sprang upon a table, plunged his sword into his body, and down fell—his stepson! whom he had ever loved and cherished as one of his own children. The youth had been cutting his way through the roof, with the intention of attacking Padrig from above, and so creating a diversion in favour of those who were defending the door. The brave young man lived no longer than to say, with a faint voice, 'Dear father, I fear you have killed me!' For a moment the Mugach stood petrified with horror and grief, but rage soon usurped the place of both. 'Let me open the door!' he cried, 'and revenge his death, by drenching my sword in the blood of the villain!' His sons clung around him, to prevent what they conceived to be madness, and a strong struggle ensued between desperate bravery and filial duty, whilst the Murdoch's wife stood gazing on the corpse of her first-born son, in an agony of contending passions, being ignorant, from all she had witnessed, but that the young man's death had been willfully wrought by her husband. 'Hast thou forgotten our former days?' cried the wily Padrig, who saw the whole scene through a crevice in the door; 'how often hast thou undone thy door to me, and wilt thou not open it now, to give me way to punish him who has, but this moment, so foully slain thy beloved son?' Ancient recollections, and present affliction, conspired to twist her to his purpose. The struggle and altercation between the Mugach and his sons still continued. A frenzy seized on the unhappy woman. She flew to the door and undid the bolt, and Padrig and his assassins rushed in. The infuriated Mugach no sooner beheld his enemy enter, than he sprang at him like a tiger, grasped him by the throat, and dashed him to the ground. Already was his vigorous sword arm drawn back, and his broad claymore was about to find a passage to the traitor's heart, when his faithless wife, coming behind him, threw over it a large canvass winnowing sheet, and, before he could extricate the blade from the numerous folds, Padrig's weapon was reeking in the best heart's blood of the bravest Highlander that Strathspey could boast of. His four sons who had witnessed their mother's treachery, were paralyzed. The unfortunate woman herself, too, stood stupefied and appalled. But she was quickly recalled to her senses by the active clash of the swords of Padrig and his men. 'Oh, my sons! my sons!' she cried, 'spare my boys!' But the tempter needed her services no longer—she had done his work. She was spurned to the ground and trampled under foot by those who soon strewed the bloody floor around her with the lifeless corpses of her brave sons.

Exulting in the full success of this expedition of vengeance, Padrig beheaded the bodies, and piled the heads in a heap on an oblong hill that runs parallel to the road on the east side of Carr Bridge, from which it is called *Tom-nan-Cean*, the Hill of Heads. Scarcely was he beyond the reach of danger, than his butchery was known at the Castle Grant, and Sir Ludovick immediately offered a great reward for his apprehension; but Padrig, who had anticipated some such thing, fled to Ireland, where he remained for seven years. But the restlessness of the murderer is well known, and Padrig felt it in all its horrors. Leaving his Irish retreat he returned to Lochabar. By a strange accident, a certain Mungo Grant of Muebrach, having had his cattle and horses carried away by some thieves from that quarter, pursued them hot on foot, recovered them, and was on his way returning with them, when, to his astonishment, he met Padrig, quite alone, in a narrow pass, on the borders of his native country. Mungo instantly seized and made a prisoner of him. But his progress with his beasts was tedious, and as he was entering Strathspey at *Lag-na-caillich*, about a mile to the westward of Aviemore, he espied twelve desperate men, who, taking advantage of his slow march, had crossed the hills to gain the pass before him, for the purpose of rescuing Padrig. But Mungo was not to be daunted. Seeing them occupying the road in his front, he grasped his prisoner with one hand, and brandishing his dirk with the other, he advanced in the midst of his people and animals, swearing potently, at the first motion at an attempt at rescue by any one of them, should be the signal for his dirk to drink the life's blood of Padrig. They were so intimidated by his boldness, that they allowed him to pass without assault, and left their friend to his fate. Padrig was forthwith carried to Castle Grant. But the remembrance of the murder had been by this time much obliterated, and the events little less strange, and the laird, unwilling

to be troubled with the matter, ordered Mungo and his prisoner away.

Disappointed and mortified, Mungo and his party were returning with their fellow captive, discussing as they went, what they had best do with him. 'A fine reward we have had for all our trouble,' said one. 'The laird may catch the next thief her nainssel for Donald!' said another. 'Let's turn him loose!' said a third. 'Ay, ay,' said a fourth, 'what for wud we be plaguing oursel more wi him?' 'Yes, yes, brave, generous men,' said Padrig, roused by a sudden hope of life from the moody dream of the gallows tree, in which he had been plunged, whilst he was courting his mournful muse to compose his own lament, that he might die with an effect striking, as all the events of his life had been. 'Yes brave men, free me from these bonds, it is unworthy of Strathspey men—it is unworthy of Grants to triumph over a fallen foe. Those whom I killed were no clansmen of thine, but recreant Camerons who betrayed a Cameron. Let me go free, and that reward of which you have been disappointed shall be quadrupled for sparing my life.' Such words as these, operating on minds so much prepared to receive them favourably, had well nigh worked their purpose. But 'No,' said Muckrach sternly, 'it shall never be said that a murderer escaped from my hands. Besides, it was just so that he fairly spake the Mugach's false wife. But did he spare her sons on that account? If ye let him go my men, the fate of the Mugachs may be ours; for what bravery can stand against treachery and assassination?' This opened an entirely new view of the question to Padrig's rude guards, and the result of the conference was, that they resolved to take him to Inverness, and to deliver him up to the sheriff.

As they were pursuing their way up the south side of the river Dulnan, the hill of *Tom-nan-Cean* appeared on that opposite to them. At sight of it, the whole circumstances of Padrig's atrocious deed came fresh into their minds. It seemed to cry on them for justice, and, with one impulse, they shouted out, 'Let him die on the spot where he did the bloody act!' Without a moment's farther delay, they resolved to execute their new resolution. But on their way across the plain, they happened to observe a large fir tree, with a thick horizontal branch growing at right angles from the trunk, and of a sufficient height from the ground to suit their purpose; and doubting if they might find so convenient a gallows where they were going, they at once determined that here Padrig should finish his mortal career. The neighbouring birch thicket supplied them with materials for making a withe, and, while they were twisting it, Padrig burst forth in a flood of Gaelic verse, which his mind had been accumulating by the way. His song, and the twig rope that was to terminate his existence, were spun out and finished at the same moment, and he was instantly elevated to a height equally beyond his ambition and his hopes.—*Sir T. Lauder Dick's Account of the Moray Floods.*

FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.
LIFE.

It seemeth but the other day—

The other day that I was born—
And childhood came, life's ruddy morn
Soon pass'd away.

It seemeth but the other day,
Came Schoolboy cares, of verb and noun,—
And idle sport, stern master's frown—
They pass'd away.

It seemeth but a day, an hour,
Since youth was mine, all fresh and young,
With nerve, and heart, and forward tongue—
Full pert the flower.

It seemeth but a day, since I,
Scarce tamed before, to beauty knelt,
And sighed and swore, and madly felt
Love's agony.

It seemeth scarce a day e'en now,
With firmer step I walk'd, the man,
And proudly spoke; and thought, and plan
Shook from my brow.

How like a thief of night to-day
Upon that yesterday stole in—
On that again life's shades begin
In twilight gray.

To-morrow—is it in our grasp?—
This night may death shut up our age,
And close our book of pilgrimage
With iron clasp.

Life is but the soul's infant state,
Where ripens its eternal seed
For bitter dole or heavenly need
Regenerate.

Death—Death is conquered, and the grave
The summoned dead to life shall yield—
When angels reap thy harvest field,
Lord, who shall save?

Redeem thou; Thine was the strife,
The victory—with thy Grace renew
The inner man—set in my view
Eternal Life.

That infant child, and youth, and man,
Baptized, and cleansed, from stain of Sin,
By Faith in Thee, I come within
Thy Mercy's plan.

FROM THE NEW YORK STAR.
NEWSPAPERS.

'Don't believe the newspapers,' is a common cant word with some politicians who do not admire the truth. 'Don't read my speech in the newspapers,' says an M. C. 'unless I myself report it.' 'Take what you see in the papers,' says another simpering member of the Common Council, 'with many grains of allowance.' And why so? What is a newspaper, its uses, appliances, appurtenances, and character, that it should thus be jibed and jeered at? What is a newspaper? It is an *olla podrida*—an iminium gatherum—a multum in parvo—an imperium in imperio—the mirror held up to nature—the very form and pressure of the times—the breathing image and type of this bustling, restless world—a map and picture of human life—the text-book of mortality, and record of human thoughts and feelings, and of every accident, ill, event, or circumstance, that 'flesh is heir to,' from the hopeless infant in the cradle to the powerful despot on his throne—from the humble obscurity of the cottage to the 'cloud-capt towers and gorgeous palaces'—from the peaceful abodes of rural life to the 'pomp and circumstance of glorious war'—the mitred bishop—the plumed helmet—the pale-faced victim of poverty and disease—the pampered glutton;—from the ghastly group of living spectres immured in dungeons, to the husbandman that breathes the air of heaven, and, when his daily task is done, slumbers sweetly on his pillow—the haggard politician that 'murders sleep' over his midnight lamp, scheming out plans to delude the multitude, and to clutch the glittering diadem of 'vaulting ambition that overleaps itself'—the hardy huntsman, scorning the world's favors, and fearlessly roaming through the trackless forest, or clambering the highest crag of the precipice—the miserable felon in his cell, clanking his chains to beguile away the long agonizing hours that are to make up the measure of his guilty life—the lover, wooing at his mistress' feet—the murderer, plunging his poniard in the blood of unprotected innocence—from the student cloistered in the depths of solitude, revelling upon the cobweb-fancies of his own ideal world, to 'the sea-boy on the high and giddy mast,' bounding cheerily over the mountain wave, thoughtless of danger or care! All these, the numberless multitudes of minor actors, are the *dramatist personæ* that successfully move through the shifting scenes of the *tableau vivant* of which the columns of a newspaper are the theatre. And what an incongruous and heterogeneous aggregation of discordant materials make up the ingredients of its composition—of contrasting and wondrous accidents—marvellous tales—mysterious enunciations—verbose discussions—metaphysical disquisitions—sportive essays—'stern alarms'—and dreadful accidents—bombastic panegyrics, jests, anecdotes, deaths, marriages, conundrums, enigmas, puns, poetry, acrostics, and advertisements, of every shade, color, and form, 'from grave to gay, from lively to severe'—the rainbow, chameleon, nor kaleidoscope, are more diversified, nor Pandora's box more prolific in its contents, nor the lumber-room of the most erudite brain of the kingdoms more cluttered up with the *disjecta membra*, the 'shreds and patches' of all things on, within, above, or upon earth—from the æriel ascension of Mr. Durant to the last downward plunge of cataract-leaping Patch—from the chase of the sea-serpent and grisly bear to the capture of Black Hawk and the horned frog—from the Siamese twins to the twins of Latona—from the gold mines of Georgia to the gold vaults of the Bank—from Colonel Crockett whipping his weight in wild cats to Major Downing bastinating the British at Madawaska—from Mr. Taney of the Treasury to Mr. Zany of the Primer—from Alabama squatters to psalm-singing Puritans—from Carolina crackers to wooden nutmeg venders—from advertising bachelors to crim. con. elopements—from slander-poisoned paragraphs to pistol-shooting duelists—from Cincinnati pork to Brussels lace—from the Yankee doodle of the menagerie to the *Dalla Gioja* of the opera—from logic to physic—from the Five Points to the Magdalen Society—from A. T. Burgundy to the Newmarket races—from Don Miguel to Queen Isabella—from the Jim Crow of Mr. Rice to the gymnastics of Mr. Fuller—from the collar press to the press on the money market—from Kendall coal to Amos Kendall—from the 'Great Magician' to the Cabinet of the Kitchen—nullification and consolidation—rail-roads and steam-boats—bursting boilers and broken axle-trees—icebergs and orange trees—Indian corn and indigo—cotton bags and cholera—all mingled up together in agreeable confusion upon the miniature picture which the industrious journalists spreads out for the daily repast of his readers! And is this a concern for an honorable M. C. to turn up his nose at? Pooh!