

FUN UPON FUN;

OR,

LEPER,

THE TAILOR.

IN TWO PARTS.



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THE MERRY TRICKS
OF
LEPER, THE TAILOR.

LEPER'S father lived in a village about six miles from Glasgow, and died when he was but very young ; he left a widow and three children, two daughters and a son ; Leper being the youngest, was greatly idolized by his mother, who was a good soft-natured woman, very industrious, and followed the bleaching of cloth.

As Leper grew up he grew a very mischievous boy, playing many tricks in the neighbourhood, such as tying cats to dogs' tails, breaking hens' legs, stopping people's lums, or chimney-tops ; so that his poor mother was sadly vexed with complaints against him.

To get him kept from mischief, she prevailed with a tailor to take him as an apprentice ; he settled and was very peaceable for some time, until he got as much of his trade on his finger ends as he might pass

for a journeyman, and then he was indifferent whether he stayed with his master or not; his mistress gave him but very little meat when he wrought at home, so he liked best to be in other houses, where he got meat and diversion.

Leper being resolved on revenge against his mistress for her thin kail, no kitchen, and little bread; for though flesh was boiled in the pot, none was for poor Leper and his master, but a little bit on Sundays, and all the bones were kept and put in the pot to make the broth through the week. Leper perceived, always when she took off the pot, she turned her back and took out the flesh, and set it on a shelf in her own bed-room; one night, after work, he steals out a pan, cuts a piece of flesh out of a dead horse, and then goes to a lime kiln, and boils it; next day, his master being from home, his landlady and he being in the house, after she had set the pot as usual, and taken out her bit of good beef, he goes out for some time and then comes in, saying, 'the minister's lass is wishing to see you, to go directly and speak to her mistress.' Off she goes in all haste; Leper runs and takes away her bit of good meat, and lays down his horse flesh; and knowing

she would return in a passion, and sit down with a soss in her cushioned chair, as she used, he takes a large pin and staps it straight through the cushion, with its head on the chair, and the point upwards. So in she comes in a rage, and down she sits with all her weight on the pin point ; and she roars out 'murder! murder!' for she was sticket ; the neighbours came running in, and Leper went out with his bit of good beef, leaving the wives to doctor his landlady as they pleased ; he still denied the doing of it, and his master believed it might happen accidentally, but the houdie was very oft to be had before it was got hale again ; and his landlady by eating of the horse beef took such a loathing at flesh, that Leper and his master got all the beef ever after, and his landlady turned one of the kindest mistresses a prentice could wish for.

There was a neighbour wife on whom Leper used to play tricks sometimes, for which she came and complained to his master and had him severely beaten several times. Leper resolved to be revenged on her, so one night he came to the back of the house (no one being in but herself), and took up a big stone and runs along the

ough wall with all his strength, which roared like thunder in the inside of the house, and frightened the wife so that she thought the house was tumbling down about her ears, and she ran out and sat down at a distance looking every minute when the house would fall down, till her husband came home and persuaded her to go in, to whom she told the above story; 'hout tout, daft tapie,' said he, 'the house will stand these hundred years.' Leper knowing they were both in, comes and plays the same trick over again, which also frightened the good man so much that he cried out, 'run, Maggy, run, for my heart plays pitty patty.' And they would not lodge in the house any more, till the masons convinced them of its sufficiency.

There was another neighbour who had a snarling cur dog, which bit Leper's leg. Leper resolved to be revenged on the dog, and so one night he catches the dog, and carries him to the kirk, where the rope of the bell hung on the outside, so with his quarter he tied the dog's fore foot to the rope, and left him hanging; the dog struggling to get free set the bell a ringing, which alarmed the village, every one cried out 'wonderful, fire! wonderful, fire! the devil is ringing the bell.' When they saw the black collie

hanging at the rope, I trow it set the minister and all the people to their prayers : but Leper fearing he would be detected by his garter, came to the minister's side, and asked the reverend gentleman what was the matter ; 'indeed, my bairn,' said he, 'tis the deil ringing the kirk bell ;' says Leper 'I'll go and see him, for I never saw the devil ;' the minister cried stop the mad laddie, but Leper ran and loosed the dog, crying 'it's such a man's dog which had the rope in its teeth ; they all cried out, 'the deil's i' the cur, the deil's i' the dog,' then took up stones and felled poor collie, and the devil got the blame of making the dog ring the bell. This spread Leper's fame, for being one of the wisest and most courageous tailors that was in all the kingdom ; and many shaking their heads, said 'it was a pity he was a tailor, but a captain or a general of an army, as the devil could not fear him.'

After this, a farmer in the neighbourhood hearing the fame of Leper, how he had frightened the deil frae being a bellman, sent for him to an alehouse, and drank with him very heartily, and told him he was sadly borne down by a spirit of jealousy against his wife ; and a suspicion of her being too free with a servant lad he had before ; and

if he would keep it a secret and learn him to find it out, he would give his mother a load of meal, to which Leper agreed ; so he gave the poor supposed cuckold instructions how to behave. So home he goes and feigns himself very sick, and every day worse and worse, taking death to him ; blesses his three small children, and charges his wife not to marry until his children could do something for themselves ; this hypocritical woman takes a crying, 'Aha ! marry,' she would never marry ! 'no, no, there should never a man lie by my side, or kiss my lips after thee, my ain dear lamb, Johnny.' Then he acts the dead man as well as he possibly could, the neighbours were called in, and he's fairly o'erseen, as the old saying is, before good neighbours. The sorrowful widow made sad lament, wrung her hands and tore her hair. The reverent women about began to dress the corpse, asked her for a shirt. 'Ay, ay,' said she, 'he has twa new linen sarks, and there is an auld ane in the bottom o' the kist, that naebody can wear ; ony thing's good enough for the grave ;' 'well,' said they, 'we must have some linen for a winding sheet ;' 'aweel,' quo' she 'I ha'e twa cut o' linen i' the kist neuk, but there's a

pair o' auld linen sheets, hol'd i' the middle, may do well enough, I had need to be careful, I'm a poor widow the day, wi' three sma' bairns.'

Well, the corpse is dressed and laid on the tap of the big chest, while neighbours sat by her condoling her misfortune, and how the funeral raisins were to be provided. Said one, 'the coffin must need be seen about first.' 'Ay, ay, he has some new deals in the barn; he bought them to make a bed o'; but we'll no break them, there's the auld barn door, and the caff kist will do well enough, ony thing's gude enough to gang to the grave wi'; but O,' quo' she, 'send for Sandy, my honest auld servant, and he'll see everything right done; I'll tell him where he'll get siller to do anything wi'; he's the lad that will not see me wrang'd. Then Sandy comes wrying his face, and rubbing his eyes. 'O, Sandy, there's a sad alteration here,' and ba-a, she cries like a bitten calf, 'O sirs, will ye gang a' butt the house till I tell ye what to do.' Butt they went, and there she fell a-kissing of Sandy, and said, 'now, my dear, the auld chattering ghaist is awa and we'll get our will o' ither; be as haining of everything as ye can, for thou kens it's a' thy ain;' but the corpse'

sister and some other people coming in, ben they came to see the corpse, lift up the cloth off his face, and seeing him all in a pour of sweat, said, 'heigh, he's a bonny corp, and a lively like colour.' When he could no longer contain himself to carry on the joke, up he got among them. A deal of people ran for it, and his wife cried out 'O, my dear, do you ken me?' 'Ay, you base jade, better than ever I did.' Jumps on the floor, gets his staff and runs after Sandy, and catches him in the fields, a little from the house, and gave him the most unmerciful belabouring that man ever got; so that poor Sandy went home with a skin full of terror, and a sorting of sore bones, took a sore fever, and died a few days after; so he got quit of his cuckold, and Leper's mother got her load of meal.

Leper's mother was a careful industrious wife, but as the bye-word is, 'a working mother makes a dally daughter,' and so it happened here, for she had two glaikit sluts of daughters that would do nothing but lie in their bed in the morning, till, as the saying is, 'the sun was like to burn a hole in their backsides.' The old woman, who was bleaching some cloth, was very early at

work in the mornings, and Leper's patience being worn out with the laziness of his two sisters, he resolved to play a trick on them for their reformation, so he goes and gets a mortcloth, and spread it on the bed above them, and sends the dead bell through the town, inviting the people next day, at four o'clock afternoon, to the burial of his two sisters, for they had died suddenly. This brought all the neighbouring wives in, who one after another lifted up the mortcloth, and said, with a sigh, 'they've gone to their rest; a sudden call indeed!' Their aunt hearing of this sudden news, came running in all haste, and coming where the jades' mither was at work, and was ignorant of the story, she cries out 'Fye upon ye, woman, fye upon ye!' 'What's the matter, sister,' says she, 'what's the matter?' 'I think you might let your wark stand for a'e day, when your daughters are baith lying corpses.' 'My bairns corpse! I am certain they went to bed hale and fair last night.' 'But, I tell you,' said the other, 'the dead bell has been thro' warning the folks to the burial;' then the mother cries out, 'O the villian! O the villian, that he did not send me word.' So they both ran, and the mother as soon as she entered the house, flies to the bed, cry-

ing, 'O, my bairns, my dear bairns;' on which the sluts rose up in a consternation, to the great surprise of the beholders, and the great mortification of the girls, who thought shame to set their noses out of doors, and to the great diversion of the whole town.





PART II.

LEPER'S landlady became very harsh to his master, and very often abused him exceedingly sore with her tongue and hands, and always called upon him for more money, and to have all the money in her keeping, which Leper was sorry for. It so happened on a day that the tailor had got a hearty drubbing, both with tongue and tongs, that he pouched his thimble and was going to make a queen of her. When she saw that she cried out, 'O! will you leave a poor tender dying woman.' But Leper knowing the cause of her ill nature better than his master did, advised him to take her on a fine day, like a mile out of town and give her a walk, and he would stay at home and study a remedy for her disorder. Away they both go; but as she was also complain-

ing for want of health, and that she was very weak, she cried out frequently, 'O! 'tis a crying sin to take a woman in my condition out o'er a door.' During their absence, Leper goes and searches the bed, and finds a bottle of rare whisky, of which he takes a hearty pull, then makes up the difference with dirty water; gets a halfpenny worth of snuff, and puts it in also, shakes all together, and so sets it in its place again. Home they came, and she was exceedingly distressed as a woman could be, and cried out, it was a horrid thing to take her out of the house. The tailor seeing her so bad, thought she would have died, ran as fast as he could for a dram, but she in her hypocrisy pretended she could not take it, and called on him to help her to bed, into which he lays her. She was not well gone when she fell to her bottle, taking two or three hearty gluts; then she roars out, 'Murder, I'm poisoned, I'm poisoned.' Bocking and purging began, and the neighbours were called in; she lays her blood upon poor Leper, and tells how such an honest woman brought her a'e bottle as another was done, and the murdering loon had stolen it and put in a bottle of poison instead of it. Leper took to his heels, but

was pursued and carried before a Justice of the Peace, where he told all he had done, which made the Justice laugh heartily at the joke; and the tailor's wife was well purged from her feigned sickness, laziness, and cursed ill nature; for always when she began to curl her nose, for the future, the tailor had no more to say, but 'Maggy, mind the bottle.'

Leper was working with a master-tailor in Glasgow, who hungered his men; and one morning, just when breakfast was set on the table, in comes a gentleman to try on a suit a clothes. The master being obliged to rise, desired the lads to say the grace themselves. Every one refused it, and put it to his neighbour, till Leper undertook it, and said with an audible voice, that the stranger gentleman might overhear him, as follows:—'Och, hoch! we are a parcel of poor beastly bodies, and we are as beastly minded, if we do not work we get nothing to eat; yet, we are always eating and always fretting; singing and half-starving is like to be our fortune; scartings and scrapings are the most of our mouthfuls, We would fain thank Thee, for our benefactors are not worthy the acknowledging; hey. Amen.' The gentleman laughed till

his sides were like to burst, and gave Leper half-a-crown to drink.

Leper was not long done with his apprenticeship till he set up for himself, and got a journeyman and an apprentice, was coming into very good business, and had he restrained his roguish tricks, he might have done very well. He and his lads being employed to work in a farmer's house where the housewife was a great miser, and snivelled through her nose greatly when she spoke. In the morning when she went to make the potage, she made a fashion of washing the pot, which to appearance seemed to him to have been among the first that had been made; then sets it before the fire till she went to the well, in which time Leper looking into it, sees two great holes stopped with clouts, he takes up his goose, and holds it as high as his head, then lets it drop into the pot, which knocked out the bottom of it. Presently in comes the wife with the water, and pours it into the pot, which set the fireside all in a dam, for still as she poured in, it ran out: the wife being short-sighted, or what they call sand blind, looks into the pot, holds up both her hands and cries, 'Losh, preserve me, sirs, for the strip atween the twa holes is broken.' Says

Leper, 'the pot was old enough ; but do you not ken that tailor's potage is heavier than other men's.' 'Indeed, lad, I believe it, but they say ye're a warlock ; it's Wednesday to me indeed, my pot might ha'e served me this fifty year, a sae wad it e'en.'

This sport diverted Leper and his lads through the day, and after supper, knowing he was to get some dirty bed, as the cows and the people lived all in one apartment, he choose rather to go home ; and knowing the moon was to rise a little after midnight, he sat by the fire, told them many a fine story to drive away the time, and bade the wife make the bed to see how it might be. To save candle she made it in the dark, just on the floor behind where they sat, shaking down two bottles of straw. A calf which chanced to be lying on that place, and which the wife did not notice, was covered with the straw, and the bed clothes spread over it. The most of the family being in bed, the wife told them to go to bed also, but Leper knowing of the calf, said, 'Ill make my bed come to me,' on which the wife began to pray for herself and all that was in the house ; so up he gets his ellwand, and gives a stroke on the bed which caused the brute to rise, and not seeing where to go, it

ll a crying and turned round, which set the whole house a-roaring out murder in their own tongue. The goodwife ran to bed above the goodman, and the whole family lay out, not knowing what it was; but Leper and his two lads whipt off the blankets, and the brute ran in among the rest unperceived; then Leper lighted a candle, and all of them got out of bed, paid Leper for his work, and more if he pleased, and begged him to go away, and take the devil with him. So home he went, but never was employed by that wife any more.

Leper had a peal of the best customers both in town and country; so one time he had occasion to go to the Parish of Inchinan, to make a wedding suit for a gentleman. After they were finished, he desired drink money for his lads, which the gentleman refused. Leper resolved to be even with him, so he goes to the hay loft where the groom slept, and takes his stockings, breeches, and jacket, sewed them together, and stuffs them full of hay; makes a head, puts a rope about the neck, and hangs it on a tree, opposite to the laird's window; then he goes to the laird and tells him that his groom had hanged himself, and that if he would open his window he would see him hanging;

the laird was struck with astonishment, and knew not what to do; Leper advises him to bury him privately. The laird said he had not a servant he could trust, so begged Leper to do it. Leper refuses, till the laird promises him a load of meal; then Leper pulls out all the hay out of the groom's clothes; goes and gets his load of meal, and sends it to Glasgow; then goes to the groom, and says 'Thy master is wanting thee.' So the lad in all haste runs to see what his master wanted. The laird no sooner saw him open the door than he cried out, 'Avoid thee, Satan; avoid thee, Satan!' The lad says, 'What's the matter?' 'Did you not hang yourself this morning?' 'Lord forbid!' said the lad. The laird says, 'If thou be an earthly creature, take that tankard and drink; which he did. Then says he to his master, 'Leper called me up, and said you wanted me in all haste. 'Ho, ho,' said the laird, 'I find out the story now; if I had Leper, I would run my sword through him.' But Leper before that was gone to Glasgow with his meal.

Leper was in use to give his lads their Sunday's supper, which obliged him to stay from the kirk in the afternoon, he having neither wife nor servant maid; so one Sun-

day afternoon, as he was cooking his pot, John Mucklecheek, and James Puff-and-blaw, two civileers, having more zeal than knowledge, came upon him, and said, 'What's the matter, sir, you go not to the kirk?' Leper replied, 'I'm reading my book and cooking my pot, which I think is a work of necessity.' Then says the one to the other, 'Don't answer that graceless fellow; we'll make him appear before his betters.' So they took the kail pot, and puts a staff through the bools, and bears it to the clerk's chamber. Leper, who was never at a loss for invention, goes to the Principal of the College's house, no body being at home but a lass roasting a leg of mutton. Leper says, 'My dear, will you go and bring me a drink of ale, and I'll turn the spit till you come back.' The lass was no sooner gone than he runs away with the leg of mutton, which served his lads and him for supper. When the principal came home, he was neither to haud nor to bind, he was so angry; so on Monday he goes and makes a complaint to the Lord Provost, who sends two officers for Leper who came immediately. My Lord asked him how he dared to take away the Principal's mutton. Leper replied, 'How dared your civileers

to take away my kail pot? I'm sure there is less sin in making a pot full of kail, than roasting a leg of mutton; law makers should not be law breakers, so I demand justice on the civileers.' The Provost asked him what justice he would have, Says he, 'make then carry the pot back again; and to the Principal, a leg of mutton will not make him and me fall out.' So they were forced to carry the pot back again. Leper caused the boys to huzza after them to their disgrace.

There was a barber who always plagued Leper, and called him 'prick-the-louse.' Leper resolved to be even with him, so he goes and buys three sheep heads, and sends for the barber, and told him that there were three fine Southland gentlemen just come to his house, which much wanted to be shaved, and he assured him he would receive sixpence for each of them. This good news made the shaver send for a dram. Leper was still praising them for quiet good natured gentlemen. So Leper takes him to the bed where the sheep heads lay covered, and desired him to awaken them for they would not be angry, or say an ill word to him. The barber lifts the covering and sees the sheep heads, runs out

cursing and swearing, and Leper crying after him, 'Sheep head barber.'

The barber resolved to be revenged on Leper, so when he was shaving Mess John, he tells him that Leper was the drunkenest fellow in the parish. So Mess John warns him to the session. Leper comes and says, 'What do you want with me, Sir?' 'Come away, Leper,' says Mess John, 'I hear a bad report of you.' 'Me Sir, I am sure they were not my friends that told you that.' 'Indeed, I am informed you are a drunkard.' 'I a drunkard; you have not a soberer man in your parish. Stop, Sir, I will tell you now I lead my life:—In the morning, I take a choppin of ale and a bit of bread, that I call my morning; for breakfast, I generally take a herring, and a choppin of ale, for I cannot sup brose like my lads; the herring makes me dry, so at eleven hours I take a pint, and sometimes three choppins; at supper, I take a bit of bread and cheese and a pint, and so go to bed.' Mess John says, 'It's excessive drinking; I allow you one half of it for a quarter of a year.' Says Leper, 'I'll try it, Sir, and come back and tell you.' At the end of the quarter he draws out his account, and goes to Mess John, who was sitting with his elders in the

Session-house, and says 'Sir, I have a demand on you.' 'On me, Sir.' 'Yes, on you, Sir, don't you remember you allowed me so much drink for a quarter of a year, and I want the money.' 'Am I to pay your reckoning, Sir.' 'You allowed it, and if you wont pay it, I'll take you before the Provost.' The elders advised him to pay it or he would be affronted; so Leper got the money. When he was at the door, he says, 'Sir, will you stand another quarter?' 'Get away,' says Mess John, 'and don't trouble me.' Leper says, 'I am sure you may, for I am always twopence to your penny.'

THE END.

ANECDOTES.

INCONVENIENCE OF A PETITION.

A reverend gentleman, when visiting his parishioners, was in one house first saluted with the growling of a dog, and afterwards by the cheering voice of a female. Cursing the dog for his ill-breeding, he advanced and enquired for the master of the house. 'What do you want wi' that?' said the

female. 'We are wishing to see him,' said the reverend gentleman, 'will ye be so good as bring him to us?' 'I'll gang nae sic an errand,' said she; 'ye may gang doon to the market yersel', an' ye'll see him there; they're thrang killin' the day. But what are ye wantin' wi' Pate, if a body nicht speir.' 'This is the minister,' said the elder who accompanied him, 'he is wishing to have some conversation with Peter, and to put up a petition.' 'A petition! a petition!' exclaimed the matron, 'ye'll put up nae petition here; the house is wee eneugh already, an' wha do ye think's gaun to be fashed wi' masons and wrights, an' a' they clanjamfray about their house? Faith no—the devil a petition will be putten up in this house as lang's am in't; we're gaun to flit at Whitsunday, so ye may come then an' put up as mony petitions as ye like.'

DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.

Henry, Duke of Buccleuch was greatly beloved by his numerous tenantry. One of his small tenants, Jamie Howie by name, had a son about four years of age, who having heard much of the great Duke of Buccleuch, was very anxious to see him.

Honest Jamie, in a few days, was honoured with a visit from the Duke; when Jamie doffing his bonnet, and making a reverential bow, says, 'O, my lord! ye maunna be angry wi' me, but it's God's truth, my lord, there's a daft wee callant o' mine that canna rest, nor let others rest, nicht nor day; he has ta'en in his head sic a notion o' seeing what like ye are; gudesake, my lord, I dinna think he has ony yedea ye are a man at a', but some far awa, outlandish, ower-sea creature.' The Duke, mightily tickled with this fancy, desired Jamie to bring the youngster into his presence forthwith. Out comes the juvenile inquisitor, with his finger in his mouth, and cautiously reconnoitres the personage before him. At last quoth the urchin, 'Can ye soom?' 'No, my little fellow,' replied his grace. 'I canna soom.' 'Can ye flee?' 'No, I canna flee.' 'Weel, man, for as muckle's ye're, I wadna gie ane o' my father's dukes for ye, for they can baith soom an' flee.'