

THE
COALMAN'S COURTSHIP

TO THE

Creel-Wife's Daughter.

IN THREE PARTS.

I. CONTAINING a very curious dialogue between the Carter and his Mother, who instructs him in the real art of courtship.

I. Sawny's visit to his sweet-heart, and what passed betwixt them. With an account of the house where Sawny got drunk, and of the terrible misfortunes he met with in consequence.

II. Description of his second Visit to his intended bride—and who Sawny was in danger of losing his Sweet-heart.— How her mother got all parties pleased again; with an account of the wedding of this happy—couple the whole abounding with the most laughable occurrences.

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THE
YOUNG COALMAN'S COURTSHIP
TO A
CREEL-WIFE'S DOUGHTER.

—·X·—

ALL you that's curious of courtship, give attention to this History of Mary and her son Sawny, a young Coalman, who lived in the country, a few miles from Edinburgh.

Mary his mither, was a gay hearted wife, had mair wantonness nor wealth, was twelve years a married wife, nine years a widow, and was very chaste in her behaviour, wi' her ain tale, for want o' charging, for a' this time of her widowhood, there was never a man got a kiss of her lips, or laid a foul hand on her hind quarters.

Sawney her son, was a stout young raw loun, full faced, wi' flabby cheeks, gade always with his bosom bare, some times had ae gartan, a lingle or ras, rape was good enough for Sawny; 1

ery belly was a' sun burnt, and brown
 ke a piper's bag, or the head of an old
 rum; and yet he was a ruddy lown in
 the face, and his beard began to sprout
 ut like herrin banes. He took thick
 rose to his breakfast, and baps and ale
 through the day, and when the coals
 old dear, when the wind was cauld,
 ought an oven farl and twa Dunbar-
 eathers or a Glasgow Magistate which
 sh-wives ca' a weslin-herrin.

His mither, auld Mary, plagued him
 y in the morning, got up when the
 hens keckled, ringed the ribs, blew her
 notter-box, primed her nose, kindled
 her tobacco-pipe, and at every puff,
 reathed out fretting against her hard
 fortune, and lanely single life. O but a
 widow be a poor name, but I live in a
 wilderness in this lang lonen, mony a
 man gangs by my door, but few looks
 into poor auld Mary. hoch hey, will I ne-
 ver win out o' this weary'd life! Wa'
 sawny man, wa' Sawny man, wilt thou
 na rise the day; the sun's up, and a' the
 libours round about; Willie and Charlie
 s to the hill an hour syne, and half gate
 name again. Wilt thou rise and gie the
 beasts a bite; thon minds na them I
 wat them.

Grump, grump co' Sawny, they g
their supper an hour after I got min
Shute to dead come o'er them, an' the
get a bit frae me till they work for't.

Sawny. But O mither I been drea
ing that I was married, an' in the be
aboon the bride, I wonder gin it b
true; ode I never got sic fun, wha
wilt be; think ye? How auld am
mither? Do you think I can man
hissy yet? Fegs am a mind to try, bu
the four saucy hissies 'll no hae me,
ken weel aneugh.

Mither. Hae you lad: ay mony
hungry heart wad be blythe o' ye; bu
there was never a sca'd Jocky but ther
was a scabbit Jenny till him yet: dinna
be feared lad.

Sawny. A hech, mither, I'se no b
lordly, an I sud tak a beggar wife a
the hi'-road, but I'il tell you somethin
it'm ay thinking on, but ye mauna tel
the nibours, for the chiels wad ay bang
me wi't.

Mither. Wad I tell o' thee, I wa
tell o' mysell as soon.

Sawny. Do you mind, mither, tha
day I gaed to the Pans, I came in by
auld Matty's, your kintywoman's the
Fife-wife, it cam out o' the town ye

came frae, the wife that says, "Be-go-laddie," I gaed there, and she wasna in, and her daughter kent me; she was unco kind, and made me fat, fat brose out o' the lee-side o' her kail pat, there was baith beef and paunches in't; ode they smell'd like ony haggis, and shin'd a' like the gold-laced waist-coat, figs I suppet till I was like to rive o' them, and had a rift o' them the morna' day: when I came out she spier'd for you mither, and I said ye was gaily. And she looked to me and leugh ay, and gripet my shake-bane, and said, I wad be a sturdy fallow yet.—— I looked ay at her, and thought I lik'd her, and thinks on'taysinsyne, she leugh and bade me seek out a coal-driver for her, for she didna like to carry a fish creel.

Mither. Forsooth Sawny, I'll gie my twa lugs for a lavrock's egg, if she binna in love with thee, and that will be a bargain.

Sawny. An' upon my word, mither, she's a sturdy kimmer, weel worth the sneaking after; she has a dimple in every cheek, and ane on her chin, twa legs like twa posts, and haunches like

a sodger lady's hoop, they hobble when
sheshakes, and her paps play nidity nod
when she gangs, I ken by her keeking
she has a conceit o' me.

Mither. But Sawny man, an thou see
her mither Matty in the town, and Be-
go laddie as ye ca' her, gi'e her a dram,
she lik'st weel; spout ye a mutchin o'
molash in her cheek, ye'll get her mind
and speed the better.

Sawny. But mither, how sud I do
when I gang to court her, will I kiss
her, and cantittle her, and fling her o'er
as the chields doesthe hizzies among the
hay. I seen them gang o'er ither, and
o'er ither, and when they grip them by
the wame, they' cry like a maukin when
the dogs is worrying them.

Mither. Hout awa, daft dog that thou
is, that's no the gate, thou maun gang
in wi' braw gude manners, and some-
thing manfu'; put on a Sunday's face
and sigh as ye were a saint; sit down
beside her as ye were a Mess John; keek
ay till her now and then with a stolen
look, and haud your mouth as mim, and
grave as a May-paddock, or a whore at
a christning; crack weel of our wealth
and hide our poverty.

Sawny. Ay but mither, there's some other way in courting nor that, or the lasses would never couple so close to them.

Mither. Ay but Sawny man, there is a time for every thing and that too: when you sit whare naebody see you, you may tak her head in your oxster, like a creesh pig, dad nebs with her now and than, but be sure and keep a close mouth when ye kiss her, clap her cheeks, and straik her paps, but for your drowning, gang nae farther down, but fouk that's married can put their hand to ony part they like.

Sawny. Aha, but mither, I dinna ken the first word of courting, the lassie'll no ken what I'm come about.

Mither. Ay will she lad, wink and keek weel till her, she'll hae a guess; get a quiet word o' her at the door; an gin it be dark, gie her a wee bit kiss when ye've told your errand; and gin they gie you cheese and bread, or ony meat, ca'd good whether it be sae or no; and for my blessing, be mensfu' wi' your mouth, and dinna eat o'er muckle, for I seen you sup as mony milk-brose as wad a sair'd twa men to carry on a barrow.

Sawny. A but mither, ye're lying now, or it was na a' at ance than, but an' they set meat before me, and I be hungry, a deil claw the cloungest, an' I be na upsides wi't for that same, A faith, mither, folks maun hae meat an' they sud ne'er get wives, there's some of them no worth the cursing gin a body were na letting an' oath whether or no; a hear ye that now, when ye pit me to it, and gar me speak; ay by my suth I wad rather hae a pit good powny and a pound of cheese, or I were bound to bablafter my hissie's buttocks I see yet.

Mither. Wa' Sawny man, you are a fool and that's a fact; and every ane wad be as easy about women as thou is, the world wad be a wilderness in a wee time; there wad be naeboddy to inhabit the earth but brute beats, cats, and dogs wad be worrying ither, and every thing wad be in confusion. Gae to the courting ye dog, if ye are, and either do something or naething ava.

PART II,

UP gat Sawny in 'the' morning, and swallowed over his sodden meat slag by slag; and aff he goes to the

coals and courting, tilting and singing like a lavrock in a May-morning, "O to be married if this be the way." The colliers all wondered to see him sae weel busket, with a pair of wally side auld fashioned breeks of his father's, and a lang gravat like a minister, or Bailie Duff at a burial, clean face and hands, and no less than a gun-sleeved men sark on him, which made his cheeks, to shine like a sherney weight, and the colliers swore he was as biaw as a horse gaun to a cow's dredgey.

But Sawny cam aff with his coals whistling, and whipping up the poor east, even as outrageous as ony ram at riding time; weel might ony body see there was a storm in Sawny's nose, right whare it like, for no sooner had he sell'd his coals, than he left his horse to come hame wi' a nibour callan, and made keeking up the Cowgate, and thro' the closes, seeking auid Be-go his good-fither to be, then in thro' the fish-market, whare he bought a lang hering and twa baps, a pair of suter's auld soon greased black and made new, to make his feet feasible like, as he kend the lass would look at them, for his mis-er tell'd him, the woman looked ay to

the men's legs or they married them
and the weel-legged louns made best aff

So Sawny cam swaggering through a
the shell wives, but she wasna there
but coming down the town beneath the
guard, meets auld be-go just in the teeth
and cries, Hey laddie, my dow, how'
your mither, honest Mary? I thank you
co' Sawny, she's meat heal, and ay, wom
king some; how's a' at hame? is Kat
and the laddie weel.

Mat. Fu' weel my dow: you're a brav
soncy dog grown, a wally fa' me gin
kend ye.

Come come quo' Sawny, an I'll gi
you a nossuck to heat your wame, it'
a cauld day and ye are my mither'
kintrywoman.

Na fair fa' you Sawny, I'll no refus'
a dram is better the day nor a clap on
the arse with a cauld shule, sae follow
me my dow.

So awa' she took me, quo' Sawny
down a lang stair, to ane of the how
houses beneath the yird, where it wa
asmirkasin a coal-heugh, and they had
great fire; Sweet be wi' me, co' Sawny
for it miuds me o' the il part! and
great pot like a little cauldron
seething broth, and roasting flesh.

the wife drew them out as fast as she could into cogs and caps, for there came in a wheen souter-like fellows wi' black thumbs and creeshy aprons, that cuttied them up in a wee time, but they never fash'd wi' us nor we wi' them; we first got a gill and then a het pint; a vow said I Matty, is nae Kate gaun to get a man yet?

A man laddie, wha wad hae her, a great lazy useless jade, she can do naething but work at husband jobs, card and spin, wash ladies' rooms, and scour gentleman's bonny things, she cannatak a creel on her back, and apply to merchandizing as I do to win a man's bread.

Sawny. I think some of the fishers an her may gree about it.

Mat. A fisher laddie, hech the fishers has a better look out wi' them, the fishers wad rather hae a pickle good baits to their hooks, and twa three bladders to their lines, than put up with such as her, a stinking prideful jade, altho' I bore her ay scraping and prining keeps her face ay as a Flander's baby, and nae less than ribbons and rings, and her shoou made of red clouts; and deil

stick pride, when our auld goodam ran barefoot, and our gutchers gaid with bare hips. Gie her a man, ill thiet stap a gouk in her arse first, that it may cry cuckoo whene'er she speaks o't; she can do naething but scour ladies' pissets, and keep clean the tirlie whirlies that hang aboon the fire; heth she's o'er gently brought up to be a poor man's penny-worth.

Heh how, co' Sawny, and it's een a great pity, for she's a weel-far'd lusty hissy, I had a great kindness for her.

Mat. Weel I wat she's no lingle tail'd she may be a caff-bed to a good fallow; but an thou had seen me at her age; I was a sturdy kimmer; there was nae ane about a' the Hyne or Dubby-side, could lay curpen to a creel wi' me; the fient a fallow in a' Fife but I wad a laid him on the braid o' his back, and a' his gear upmost, I was a chicken to chatter wi' indeed laddie; I had a pair of cheeks like a packman's arse, and a flank like an ox.

Sawny. Nae doubt co' Sawny, but ye had a pair o' beefy buttocks, for your cheeks hing like leather-bags to this very day. But I'll tell you what am gaun to say to ye, do ye think that

your Kate wad tak me, an I wad come to court her.

Mat. Tak you laddie ; tak you ; a faith she'll tak you, for she wad a tane a poor button thing of a half blind taylor, wartna me, a poor blier'd scabbit like creature it was, I seen the day I wad a carried it in my pouch. Wode I'se warrant her jump at you like a fish at a flee ; wode I sae tak you, an she winnatak you, I'se tak you mysell ; but her and I cust out the day about her cockups and black caps, gard me say so muckle ill o' her, but she's my soncy dautie for a' that, weel a wat, she's a weel-natured lassie, if she turn an ill-natured wife I canna tell.

Sawny. A weel then I'll venture on her as she is, for my mither's pleased, and ye're pleased, and I'm pleased, and if she be pleased wode am sure to get her, an the taylor has nze bridled her, or tane a trying trotty o' her.

Mat. But Sawny man, I'll tell you what we'll do, I'll hame and broach her the night on't, and come ye the morn, we'll make it fude fast in a wee time, so thou's get mair tocher than a Craufond Gamon to Gamon, she has baith blankets and sheets, a covering

and twa cods, a caff bed and bowster, an hear'st thou my laddie, I hae a bit auld hogger and something in't, thou's get it when I die; but by my suth, it will be the last thing I will part wi': I kenna what I my need yet, It's an auld wife that kens her ain weird.

On this they paid their spout and parted: but when Sawny came out he stoited, and staggered as a sturdy stot, molash was chief commander, for he thought every body had twa heads, and four een, and mair noses than they need- ed,; being sometime in the dark house, thought it was the morning of a new day. A hech, said he, whan was I awa' night frae my mither afore? she'll think I am put in the guard, tane wi' the deil or the doctors, or ance married, and working at the wanton wark of wean's getting.

Mat. Hout, daft laddie, the soup drink's in your head, this day and yesterday is a' ae day, ye'll be hame in braw time yet.

Sawny. A weel a weel then, good day to you good mither, ye maun gar Kate tak me, or thief tak you a' thegither, I'll hame and tell the length it, s come, an it come nae farther, it maun e'en stick there.

Off he goes, steering about like a ship against the wind, as if he would make holes in the wa's and windows, with his elbows, he looked as fierce as a lion; with a red face like a trumpeter, and his nose was like a bublic-jock's neb, as blue as a blawirt, but or he ran half way, his head turned heavier than his heels, and mony a filthy fa' he got, thro' thick and thin he plashed, till hame he gets at last grunting and graping by the wa's, that auld Mary his mither thought it was their neighbour's sow, he was sae be-daubed wi' dirt, gets him to bed, he was in a boiling barrel-fever, and poor Mary grat wi' grief.

Sawny. Hech hey, co' Sawny, but courting be a curst wark, and costly and marriage be as mortifying an murdering the deil may be married for me.

Mither. Wa Sawny man, what's come o'er thee now? Thou's gotten skaith; some auld wife has bewitched thee, or the deil has dung thee o'er in some dirty maiden, my bairn's elf-shot; whare has thou been or what has thou seen; thy een reels like a wild-cat, and the sweat is hailing o'er thy nose, thou's

witcht; thou's witcht; O man, what will I do.

Sawny. Bock, bock, co' Sawny. but it coudna win up for bubbles and herrin banes, O co' Sawny, put me in my bed, for my days will sune be dune, a curse on your courting wark; for it's killed me, and wives are but wicked things, I ken by the same.

Mither. O dole, dole, my bairn has gotten poison, for the smell o't is like to poison me.

Sawny. Gin herrin and het ale be poison, there'll no be mony left alive. Bock, co' Sawny, the bed's filled.

Mith. My bairn, thou was ay a cleanly bairn until now, thou's surely lost thy senses, when thou files where thou lies as the brute beasts does, thou never did the like o' this before, since thou left cakyng o' the cradle,

PART III,

POOR Sawny had terrible night o't wi' a sair head, and a sick heart, his een stood in his head, his wame caddled like ony mill-trows, and a' his puddings croaked like a when paddocks in a pool, his mither rocket and wrang her hands, crying, Wae be to the wife that brew'd it, for I hae lost

a weel foster'd bairn, wi' their stinking
stnff, a meikle deil ding the doup out
of their cauldron, my curse come upon
them and their whisky-pots. I'ts burnt
him it's burnt him alive; ay ay, my
bairn he's gone.

But about the break of day, his wind
broke like the bursting of a bladder
O happy deliverance, cried Mary his
mither, tho' dirt bodes luck, and foul
farts files the blankets, I wish ne'er war
be amang us. The next thing that did
Sawny good, was three mutchkins of
milk made in thin brose, and a fine pic-
kle pepper in them, yet he had a sough-
ing in his lugs like a saw-mill, and every
thing ran round about with him a'
that day. Yet his mither got him out
of the bed on o' the meikle chair, a
pair of blankets about his shoulders, a
cod at his back, and a hot brick at his
soles, to gar him true he was na weel,
and there he sat like a lying-in wife
cracking like a Hollander, and ate twa
dead herrin and cufe; telling a' the
outsaudins about his bridal, and whan it
was to be; for he had gotten every bodys
consent but the bride's about it.

Mither. But Sawny man, that's the
main thing, ye maun hae that too.

Sawny. Na, na, mither, am the only thing mysel, she's but a member, the men maun ay be foremost, gang what way it will, I'se be the uppermost.

Mither. But Sawny man, what way is thou gaun to do, will you mak a penny wedding, or twa three gude nibours, a peck o' meal baken with a cheese, and a barrel of ale, will that do?

Sawny. Na, na, mither, I'll tak a cheaper gate nor ony of them, I'll gar half-a-crown and a half a-mutchkin, or a rake of coals do it a', then a body has nae mair a' do but piss and go to bed syne.

Mither. Na, na, my maun Sawny, I've mony, mony a time heard thy honest father say, that never a ane would do weel that cap strided the kirk or cucked the minister.

Sawny. Ah tell na me mither, of the ministers; they're ay for their ain hands as weel as ither fouks, an if a poor beggar body had a bit wean to christen, a deil a dob it they'll feike him o't.

Mither. Hute awa man, there's nae body has weans, but what has siller to pay the christning of them; or if they be that poor, they sud get rae weans an they wadna be fash'd syne.

Sawny. Ha, ha, mither, the poor

fouks are like the lice ; ay when they meet they marry and maks mae o' them. And I think the ministers might christen their bits o' weans for naething, the water is no sae scant ; they're weel paid for their preaching, they might very weel baith marry and christen a' the poor fouks to the bargain by the way of mags.

Mither. Ay ay, my man Sawny, marriage is a sweet thing for young folk and the bed undefiled.

Sawny. What the vengeance mither, do ye think that a body is to file the bed every night, an they do it ance.

Mither. Na, na, that's no what I mean, it's happiness that fouks has that's married, besides the weary lonesome life it I hae, lying tumbling and gaunting in a bed my lane ; O sirs, but a man in a bed be a useful body an it were but to claw ane's back, as for a body's fore side they can claw't themsel.

Sawny. A mither, mither, ye hae fun a string again, I think ye might a wanted a' your days when ye fasted sae lang ; ye hae plenty of baith milk and meal, snuff and tobacco, but ye smell at the crack of the whip, I kend my mither wad ride yet, for I seed

her sit wagging her fit this lang time.

Mither. A dear Sawny man, an thou were ance fairly aff the fodder, I'll be cossen into a hole of a house by mysel where I'll just lie and break my heart, and weary mysel to dead, but an I could get a bit honest weaver, a cobbler, or some auld taylor by the tail, I wad tickle to him yet, let the kintry clash as they please about it.

Sawny. A weel, a weel then, mither, tak your ain flight; there's nae fools to an auld fool, for the morn I'se be either aff or on wi' the hissy I've on hand.

So on the morn Sawny got on his clean claise, his hair caim'd and greas'd with butter, and his face as clean as the cat had licked it, away he goessing—

I will buy a pund a woo,

I will wash and make a plaidy,

I'm gain over the moor to woo,

Carline is your daughter ready.

Now poor Sawny although he sang, was as pale as a ghost from the grave, his face was entirely white like a wee bleached dish clout, he looked just as he had been eaten and spued again, but at length he came to the bride's door, and in he goes with a brattle cry—

ing, how is a' here the day; and what is become o' thymither lassie? O Saunders, said the bride, she is away to the town, what cam of you yesterday? she waited on you the whole day; ye gart her lose a day's trade lad, and she is away this morning cursing like a Heathen, and swearing be-gc that ye had gien her the begank.

Sawny. O dole woman I took a sudden blast in the hame gawn, and was never sae near dead in my life.

And wha think you was in company with Kate the bride, but the wee button of a taylor, who sat and sewed on a table, cocking like a turd on a trencher, but when he kend wha was come, he leaped down on the floor, cust a dash of pride like a little bit prince, he bobet about, and so out he goes with the tear in his ee, and his tail between his feet like a half-worried colly dog.

Sawny. Now Katty do you ken what I'm come about.

Kate. O yes, my mither told me but I'm no ready yet, having two gowns to spin, and things to mak.

Sawny. Tute, things to mak, ye hae as mony things as ye'll need woman, canna ye spin gowns in our ain house,

wi' me, as right as here wi' an auld girning mither.

Kate. But dear Saunders, ye must gie a body some time to think upon't, 'twad be ill-fard to rush together at the first.

Sawny. And do you think I hae naething a-do but come here every other day hoiting after you, it'll no do, I maun either be aff wi' you, or on wi' you; either tell me or tak me, for I ken o' ither twa, and some of you I will hae, for as I am a sinner, my mither is gaun to be married too, an' she can get a bit man o' ony shape or trade.

Kate. Indeed then, Saunders, since you're in sic a haste, ye maun een tak them that's readiest, for am no ready yet.

Sawny. A dear woman, whan your mither and my mither's pleased, and am willing to venture on ye, what a sorrow ails ye?

Kate. Na, na, I'll think on't twa or three days; it's o'er lang a term to fee without a thought.

Sawny. Wode I think ye're a cumstrarie piece of stuff, it's true enough your mither said o' ye, that ye're not for a poor man.

Kate. And what mair said she of me?

Sawny. Wode she said, ye could do

naething but scoure wash-mugs, and gentlemen's bonny things, but hissiés it is bred amang gentle houses, minds me of my mither's cat, but ye're far costlier to keep, for she wastes neither saep nor water, but spits in her lufe, and washes ay at her face, and whins o' you can do nae ither thing;—and up he gets.

Kate. O Saunders but ye be short, will ye no stay till my mither comes hame.

Sawny. I staid lang aneugh for ony thing I'll be the better; and am nae sae short as your tottom of a taylor, that I could stap in my shoe.

Hame he goes in a passion, and to his bed he ran, crying, O death, death! I thought the jade wad a jumped at me. No comfort nor happiness mair for poor me. O mither, gar mak my kist, and bake my burial bread, for I'll die this night or soon the morn. But early next morning in comes auld Be-go his good-mither, who had left her daughter in tears, for the slighting of Sawny; and hauls him and his mither away to get a dinner of dead fish, whare a' was agreed upon and the wedding to be on Wednesday: no bridal fouks but the twa mithers and themselves twa.

So according to appointment, they met at Edinburgh, where Sawny got the Cheap Priest, who gave them twa three words and twa-three lines, took their penny and a good drink, wished them joy and gaed his wa's. Now said auld Be-go, if that be your minister, he's but a drunken b—h, mony a ane drinks up a', but he leaves naething, he's got that penny for devil haet, ye might hae cracket lufes on't, and been as weel if no better, I have seen some honest men say mair owre their brose nor what he said a' thegither, but an ye be pleased, I am pleased, a bout in the bed ends a', and maks firm wark, sae here's to you, and joy into the bargain, it's ended now, weel I wat.

FINIS.