

THE

COMICAL TRICKS

THE

OF

LOTHIAN TOM:

WITH A SELECTION OF

ANECDOTES.



FALKIRK

PRINTED FOR THE BOOKSELLERS.

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THIS Thomas Black, vulgarly called Lothian Tom, because he was of that county, was born about four miles from Edinburgh; his father being a wealthy farmer, gave him good education, which he was very awkward in receiving, being a very wild mischievous boy.

When he was about ten years of age, he was almost killed by the stroke of a horse's foot, which his father had who had a trick of kicking at every person that came behind him. But when Tom got heal of the dreadful wound, whereof many thought he would have died, to be even with the horse, he gets a clog, or piece of tree, which was full of wooden pins, such a thing as the shoemakers use to soften their leather on, and with a rope he tied it to the couple-bank in the stable directly opposite to the horse's tale, then gets

on the bank, and gives it a swing, so that the pikes in the end of it, came with full drive against the horses backside, which made him fling, and the more he flung and struck at it, it rebounded back, and struck him again; the battle lasted with great fury for a long time, which was good fun for Tom, until his father hearing some noise in the stable, came to know the matter, and was surprised to see the poor animal tanning his own hide, with his legs all cut and bloody! he cut the rope and the battle was ended; but the poor horse would never afterwards kick at any thing that came behind him.

It happened one day that Tom went a fishing, and brought home a few small fish, which his grandmother's cat snapt up in the dark. So Tom to have justice of the cat for so doing, catches her, and put her into a little tub, or cog, then sets her adrift in a small mill-dam, ordering her to go a fishing for herself; then set two or three dogs upon her, and a most terrible sea fight ensued, as ever was seen on fresh water; for if any of the dogs, when attempting to board her, set up their noses, bawdrins came flying to that place, to repulse them with her claws; then the vessel was like to be upset by the weight of herself, so she had to flee to the other, and finding the same there from thence to the middle, where she sat mewling always turn-

ing herself about, combing their noses with her foot. The old woman being informed of the dangerous situation of her dearly beloved cat, came running with a long poll to beat off the dogs and haul her ashore. What now, says Tom, if you be going to take part with my enemies, you shall have part of their reward; then gives the old woman such a push that she tumbled into the dam over head and ears, beside her beloved cat, and would undoubtedly have perished in the water had not one of the people who was there looking at the diversion, come to her relief.

After this Tom was sent to school to keep his hand out of an ill turn; and having an old canker'd, crab-witted fellow for his dominie, they were always at variance; for if Tom had got his whips, which he often deserved, he was sure to be revenged upon his master again for it. So Tom perceived his master had a close-stool in a little closet within the school, where he went and eased himself when need was: Tom gets a penny-worth of gun-powder, and sprinkled it on the ground directly before the seat, and lays a little of it along in a train to the fireside; then perceiving when his master went into it, and as he was loosing down his breeches sets fire to the train, which blew it all about his master's backside, which scorched him terribly, besides the fright, for which Tom

was severely whipt. Yet, in a little after, he began to study revenge on his master.

So, it happened one day as Tom was in the master's house, his wife was stooping into a big meal barrel, to bring out some meal; then he takes her by the feet, and cou's her up into the banel, with her head down and her bare backside uppermost; then runs into the school, crying O master, master! the de'il's looking out o' your meal stand; wi' a fat face and a black ill-far'd mouth; yon's just Auld Nick if he be living. So the master ran out with all speed he could, for to see what it was; and found it to be his own wife speechless, and almost smothered to death; but as she could not tell who did it, Tom got clear off: yet he was not satisfied without some more revenge on the old fellow: and knowing his master had a fashion, when he was going to whip the boys if they would not loose their breeches willingly, he drew his knife and cut them thro' the waistband behind: so Tom goes to a butcher, and gets a raw pudding, and fills it with blood and water, and puts it within the waistband of his breeches, then goes to the school next day, and as his master was sitting with his back to the fire, Tom lights a piece of paper, and sets his wig in a low, which burnt for some time unperceived, until the flames came fizzing abou his ears; he first put out the

flames by tramping on the wig, and being informed that Tom did it, flies to him in a rage, ordering him to loose his breeches, but Tom told him he was never so mad — Then he drew his knife, whips poor Tom over his knee, and with a great struggle cuts the waistband of his breeches; but thro' pudding and all, so that the blood gushed out, and Tom cried out Murder! Murder! Murder! and down he fell.

The poor Dominie ran out of the school crying and wringing his hands. Word flew about that he was sticked by the Dominie, whice made the people come running from several parts of the country round about to see how it was: but upon searching him, they found the empty pudding, which discovered all the fraud. Then two men had to get horses and ride after the poor Dominie, who had by this time got two or three miles away; and when he saw them riding after him crying to stop and come back again, he ran the faster until he could run no more, but fell down on the road, and prayed them to let him go, for, if he was taken back, he was sure to be hanged; and would not be persuaded that Tom was alive, until they forced him back, and he saw him. But he would be Tom's teacher no longer; so Tom's father had to seek another master for him.

PART II.

There was a young woman, servant to Tom's father, whom Tom had offended by some of his tricks, and she, to be up with Tom again, one night spread a handful of short nettles in his bed, between the sheets, which stung his legs and thighs so much, that he was obliged to quit his bed for some part of the night, for such he resolved to be revenged whenever a proper opportunity offered. It happened in a few days after, that she was invited to a wedding, where the dancing and diversions induced her to stay all night, and on coming home in the morning, she fell a-washing some clothes; but being fatigued with her night's diversion and for want of rest, fell fast asleep with her hands extended in the tub, and standing on her feet, with her belly leaning on the tub; Tom perceiving this, slips her petticoat and smokes over her head, facing the highway; several people passing by, while she continued in this posture, some of them were diverted with the sight, and others were ashamed at it; but a poor cadger had the misfortune to be coming that way at the time, and his horse taking fright at this unusual sight threw off his creels, and broke the poor man's eggs all to smash; which so enraged him that he

lashed her buttocks with his whip, in such an unmerciful manner, that with the smart and shame together, she had not the least inclination to sleep for the remaining part of the day.

Tom being grown up to years and age of man, thought himself wiser and slyer than his father: and there were several things about the house which he liked better than to work; so he turned to be a dealer amongst brutes, a cowper of horses and cows, &c., and even wet ware, amongst the brewers and brandy shops, until he cowped himself to the toom halter, and then his parents would supply him no more. He knew his grandmother had plenty of money, but she would give him none; but the old woman had a good black cow of her own, which Tom went to the fields one evening and catches, and takes her to an old waste house which stood at a distance from any other, and there he kept her two or three days, giving her meat and drink at night when it was dark, and made the old woman believe some body had stolen the cow for their winter's mart which was grief enough to the old woman, for the loss of her cow. However she employs Tom to go to a fair that was near by, and buy her another; she gives him three pounds which Tom accepts of very thankfully, and promises to buy her one as like the other as

possibly he could get; then takes a piece of chalk, and brays it as small as meal, and steeps it in a little water, and therewith rubs over the cow's face and back, which made her baith brucket and rigget. So Tom in the morning takes the cow to a public house within a little of the fair, and left her till the fair was over, and then drives her home before him; and as soon as they came home, the cow began to rout as she used to do, which made the old woman to rejoice, thinking it was her own cow, but when she saw her white, sighed and said, *Alas!* thou'lt never be like the kindly brute my Black Lady, and yet ye rout as like her as ony ever I did hear. But says Tom to himself; 'tis a mercy you know not what she says, or all would be wrong yet. So in two or three days the old woman put forth her braw rigget cow in the morning with the rest of her neighbours' cattle, but it came on a sore day of heavy rain, which washed away all the white from her face and back; so the old woman's Black Lady came home at night, and her rigget cow went away with the shower, and was never heard of. But Tom's father having some suspicion, and looking narrowly into the cow's face, found some of the chalk not washed away and then he gave poor Tom a hearty beating, and sent him away to seek his fortune with a skin full of sore bones.

PART III.

Tom being now turned to his own shifts, considered with himself how to raise a little more money; and so gets a string as near as he could guess to be the length of his mother, and to Edinburgh he goes, to a wright who was acquainted with his father and mother. The wright asked him how he did; he answered him, very soberly, he had lost a good dutiful mother last night, and there's a measure for the coffin. Tom went out and staid for some time, and then comes in again, and tells the wright he did not know what to do, for his father had ordered him to get money from such a man, whom he named, and he that day was gone out of town.—The wright asked him how much he wanted? To which he answered a guinea and a half. Then Tom gave him strict orders to be out next day against eleven o'clock with the coffin, and he should get his money altogether. So Tom set off to an ale-house with the money, and lived well while it lasted. Next morning the wright and his two lads went out with the coffin; and as they were going into the house they met Tom's mother, who asked the master how he did, and where he was going with that fine coffin? not knowing well what to say,

being surprised to see her alive, at last he told her, that her son brought in the measure the day before, and had got a guinea and a half from him, with which he said he was to buy some necessaries for the funeral. O the rogue! said she, has he play'd me that? So the wright got his lent money, and so much for his trouble, and had to take back his coffin with him again.

Tom being short of money, began to think how he could raise a fresh supply; so he went to the port among the shearers, and there he hired about thirty of them, and agreed to give them a whole week's shearing at ten-pence a-day which was two-pence higher than any had got that year; this made the poor shearers think he was a very honest generous and genteel master, as ever they met with; for he took them all into an ale-house, and gave them a hearty breakfast. Now says Tom, when there is so many of you together, and perhaps from very different parts, and being unacquainted with one another, I do not know but there may be some of you honest men and some of you rogues; and as you are all to lie in one barn together, any of you who has got money, you will be surest to give it to me, and I'll mark it down in my book, with your names, and what I receive from each of you, and you shall have it all again on Saturday night when you

receive your wages. O! very well good-
 man, there's mine, take mine said every one
 faster than another. Some gave him five,
 six, seven, and eight shillings, even all that
 they had earn'd through the harvest, which
 amounted to near seven pounds sterling.
 So Tom having got all their money, he goes
 on with them till about three miles out of
 town, and coming to a field of standing corn,
 though somewhat green, yet convenient for his
 purpose, as it lay at some distance from any
 house; so he made them begin work there,
 telling them he was going to order dinner
 for them, and send his own servants to join
 them. Then he sets off with all the speed
 he could, but takes another road into the
 town lest they should follow and catch him.
 Now when the people to whom the corn be-
 longed, saw such a baad in their field they
 could not understand the meaning of it: so
 the farmer whose corn it was, went of crying
 always as he ran to them, to stop; but they
 would not, until they began to strike at them
 and they at him, he being in a great passion,
 as the corn was not fully ripe; at last, by
 force of argument, and other people coming
 up to them the poor shearers were convinced
 they had got the bit, which caused them to
 go away sore lamenting their misfortune.
 Two or three days thereafter, as Tom was
 going down Canongate in Edinburgh, he

meets one of the shearers, who knew and kept fast by him, demanding back his money, and also satisfaction for the rest. Whisht, whisht, says Tom, and you'll get yours and something else beside. So Tom takes him into the jail, and calls for a bottle of ale and a dram, then takes the jailor aside, as if he had been going to borrow some money from him; and says to the jailor, this man is a great thief, I and other two have been in search of him these three days, and the other two men have the warrant with them; so if you keep this roguo here till I run and bring them you shall have a guinea in reward. Yes, says the jailor, go, and I'll secure the roguo for you. So Tom got off, leaving the poor innocent fellow & the jailor struggling together, and then sets out for England directly.

PART IV.

Tom having now left his own native country, went into the county of Northumberland, where he hired himself to an old miser of a farmer, where he continued for several years, performing his duty in his service very well, though sometimes playing tricks on those about him; but his master had a naughty custom, he would allow

them no candle at night, to see with when at supper. So Tom one night sets himself next his master, and as they were all about to fall on, Tom puts his spoon into the heart of the dish, where the crowdy was hottest, and claps a spoonful into his master's mouth. A pox on you for a rogue, cried his master, for my mouth is all burnt. A pox on you for a master, says Tom, for you keep a house as dark as Purgatory, for I was going to my mouth with the soup, and missed the way, it being so dark, don't think master, that I am such a big fool as to feed you while I have a mouth of my own. So from that night that Tom burnt his master's mouth with the hot crowdy, they always got a candle to show them light at supper, for his master would feed no more in the dark while Tom was present.

There was a servant girl in the house, who always when she made the beds neglected to make Tom's, and would have him do it himself. Well then, says Tom, I have harder work to do, and I shall do that too. So next day when Tom was at the plough, he saw his master coming from the house towards him, he left the horses and the plough standing in the field, and goes away towards his master. Who cried, what is wrong? or is there any thing broke with you? No, no, says Tom, but I am going home to

make my bed, it has not been made these two weeks, and now it is about the time the maid makes all the rest, so I'll go and make mine too. No, no, says his master, go to your plough, and I'll cause it to be made every night. Then, says Tom, I'll plough two or three furrows more in the time, so Tom gained his end.

One day a butcher came and bought a fine fat calf from Tom's master, and Tom laid it on the horse's neck, before the butcher: when he was gone, Now, says Tom, what will you hold master, but I'll steal the calf from the butcher before he goes two miles off? Says his master, I'll hold a guinea you don't. Done, says Tom. Into the house he goes, and takes a good shoe of his master's and runs another way across a field, till he got before the butcher, near the corner of a hedge, where there was an open and turning of the way; here Tom places himself behind the hedge, and throws the shoe into the middle of the highway; so, when the butcher came up riding, with his calf before him, Hey, said he to himself, there's a good shoe! if I knew how to get on my calf again, I would light for it, but what signifies one shoe without its neighbour? So on he rides and lets it lie. Tom then slips out and takes up the shoe, and runs across the fields until he got before the butcher, at

another open of the hedge, about half a mile distant, and throws out the shoe again on the middle of the road; then up comes the butcher, and seeing it, says to himself; now I shall have a pair of good shoes for the lifting; and down he comes, lays the calf on the ground, and tying his horse to the hedge, runs back thinking to get the other shoe, in which time, Tom whips up the calf and shoe, and home he comes demanding his wager, which his master could not refuse, being so fairly won. The poor butcher not finding the shoe, came back to his horse, and missing the calf, knew not what to do; but thinking it had broke the rope from about its feet, and had run into the fields, the butcher spent the day in search of it, amongst the hedges and ditches, and returned to Tom's master's at night intending to go in search again for it next day: and gave them a tedious relation how he came to loose it by a cursed pair of shoes, which he believed the devil had dropped in his way, and taken the calf and shoes along with him; but he was thankful he had left his old horse to carry him home. Next morning Tom set to work, and makes a fine white face on the calf with chalk and water: then brings it out and sells it to the butcher; which was good diversion to his master and other servants, to see the butcher buy his own calf

again. No sooner was he gone with it, but Tom says, now master, what will you hold but I'll steal it from him again ere he goes two miles off? No, no, says his master, I'll hold no more bets with you; but I'll give you a shilling if you do it. Done, says Tom, it shall cost you no more; and away he runs through the fields, until he came before the butcher, hard by the place where he stole the calf from him the day before; and there he lies down behind the hedge, and as the butcher came past, he put his hand on his mouth and cries baw, baw like a calf. The butcher hearing this, swears to himself that there was the calf he had lost the day before, down he comes, and throws the calf on the ground, gets thro' the hedge in all haste, thinking he had no more to do but to take it up; but as he came in at one part of the hedge, Tom jumped out at another, and gets the calf on his back; then goes over the hedge on the other side, and thro' the fields he came safely home, with the calf on his back, while the poor butcher spent his time and labour in vain, running from hedge to hedge, and hole to hole, seeking the calf. So the butcher returning to his horse again, and finding his other calf gone, he concluded that it was done by some invisible spirit, about that spot of ground; and so went home lamenting the loss of his calf. When Tom

got home he washed the white face off the stolen calf, and his master sent the butcher word to come and buy another calf, which he accordingly did in a few days after, and Tom sold him the same calf a third time, and then told him the whole affair as it was acted, giving him his money again. So the butcher got fun for his trouble.

PART V.

There was an old rich blind woman, who lived hard by, that had a young girl, her only daughter, who fell deep in love with Tom, and he fell as deep in love with the money, but not with the maid. The old woman gave Tom many presents, and mounted him like a gentleman; but he used every method to put off the marriage, pretended he still wanted something, which the old woman gave the money to purchase for him, until he had got about thirty pounds of her money and then she would delay the marriage no longer. Tom then took the old woman and girl aside, and made the following apology: Madam, said he, I am very willing to wed with my dear Polly, for she appears as an angel in my eyes, but I am sorry, very sorry to acquaint you, that I am not a fit match for her. What, child, says

the old woman, there is not a fitter match in the whole world for my Polly, I did not think your country could afford such a clever youth as what I hear of you to be, you shall neither want gold nor silver, nor a good horse to ride upon, and when I die, you shall have my all.

O but, says Tom, Madam, that's not the thing, the stop is this: When I was in Scotland, I got a stroke from a horse's foot, on the bottom of the belly, which has quite disabled me below, that I cannot perform a husband's duty in bed. Then the old woman clapt her hands and fell a crying, O! if it had been any impediment but that, but that, but that woful' that! which gold and silver cannot purchase, and yet the poorest people that is common beggars have plenty of it.

The old wife and her daughter sat crying and wringing their hands, and Tom stood and wept, lest he should get no more money. O, said Polly, mother, I'll wed him nevertheless, I love him so dearly! No you foolish girl, said her mother, would you marry a man and die a maid? You don't know the end of your creation; it is the enjoyment of a man in bed that makes women to marry, which is a pleasure like Paradise, and if you wed this man you will live and die, and never feel it. Hoo, Hoo, says Tom, if I had got money I needed not been this way till now.

money you fool, said the old woman, there's not such a thing to be got for money in all England. Ay, says Tom, there's a doctor in Newcastle, will make me as able as any other man for ten guineas. Ten guineas, said she, I'll give him fifty guineas if he will, but here is twelve, and go to him directly, and see what he can do, and then come again and wed my child; or she and I will both die for thy sake. Tom having now got twelve guineas more of their money, got all things ready, and early next morning set out for Newcastle, but instead of going there he came to old Scotland, and left Polly and her mother to think upon him. In about two weeks thereafter, when he was not like to return, nor so much as any word from him, the old woman and Polly got a horse, and came to Newcastle in search of him, went thro' all the doctors' shops, asking if there came a young man there, about two weeks ago, with a broken —— to mend? Some laughed at her, others were like to kick her out of doors, so they had to return without getting any further intelligence of him.

Now after Tom's return to Scotland, he got a wife, and took a little farm near Dalkeith, and became a very douse man, for many years, following his old business, the coupling horses and cows, and feeding veals

for the slaughter, and the like. He went one day to a fair and bought a fine cow from an old woman; but Tom judged from the lowness of the price, that the cow had certainly some very great faults. Tom gives the wife the other hearty bicker of ale, then says he gudewife the money is yours and the cow is mine, you maun tell me ony wee faults it has, Indeed, says the goodwife, she has na fault but ane, and if she wanted it, I wad never a parted wi' her. And what's that gudewife, said he. Indeed said she, the filthy daft beast sucks ay hersel'. But says Tom if that be all, I'll soon cure her of that. O! can you do't, said she, if I had kent what wad don't I wadna sold her. A-well, says Tom, I'll tell you what to do, tak' the price I gave you just now, and tie it hard and fast in your napkin, and give it to me, through beneath the cow's wame, and I'll give you the napkin agan o'er the cow's back, and I'll lay my life for it, that she'll never suck hersel, in my aught. I wat well said she I'se do that, an' there should be witchcraft in't. So Tom got it thro' below the cow's wame, he takes out his money, and gave the wife her napkin over the cow's back, as he promised, saying, Now, wife, you have your cow and I my money, and she will never suck herself in my aught, as I told you. O dole! dole!

cried the wife, is that your cure? you've cheated me, you've cheated me. Tom being very scarce of money one time when he had his rent to pay, and tho' he was well acquainted with the butchers in Edinburgh, and tried several of them, yet none of them would lend him as much, he was known to be such a noted sharper. So Tom contrived a clever trick, to give them all the bite in general, who thus refused him; in he comes next day, (for they had all heard of the fine calf he was feeding,) and tells one of the butcher's who dealt with him that he was going to sell the calf he had at home. Well said the butcher, and what will you have for it? Just thirty five shillings, says Tom, No, says the butcher, but by what I hear of it I'll give you thirty, Na, says Tom you must remember, that it is not the price of it, but you may give me twenty shillings just now and send out your lad to-morrow, and we'll perhaps agree about it. Thus Tom went through ten of them in one day, and got twenty shillings from each of them, and kept his speech against the law, for whatever they offered him for his calf he told them to remember, that was not to be the price of it, but give me twenty shillings just now and send out your lad, to-morrow and perhaps we will agree, was all that passed. So Tom went home with his ten pounds

and paid his rent. Early next morning the fleshers came to Tom's house for the calf, and every one called for his calf, but Tom had only one to serve them all. Now, says Tom, whoever will give most, and speediest shall have it, I will put it to a roup. What, said one of them, my master bought it yesterday. Then, said Tom, you would be a great fool to buy it to-day, for it is fashious to lead and heavy to carry.

ANECDOTES.

MARCH OF INTELLECT.

Two country carters, passing the entrance to the Arcade, Argyll street, Glasgow, observed painted on the wall, "No Dogs to enter here." "No dogs to enter here!" exclaimed one of them, "I'm sure there's nae use for that there." "What way, Jock, ye're may be wrang, I'se warran ye gentle folk's dogs 'ill ken't brawley, for there's schools, noo, whar they learn the dumb baith to read and speak.

HOW TO READ A SIGN-BOARD.

A Highland Drover passing through a certain twon, noticed a Sign-board above an entry, with the following inscription :

Green Teas, Raw Sugars, Marmalades, Jellies, Capped Biscuits, and all sorts of Confectionary Goods, sold down this entry.

He read it as follows :

Green Trees, Raw Sodgers, Mermaids, Jades, Scabbed Bitches, and all sorts of Confusionary Goods, sold down this entry.

ADDITION.

A farmer's son, who had been some time at the university, coming home to visit his father and mother ; and being one night with the old folks at supper, on a couple of fowls he told them, that by the rules of logic and arithmetic, he could prove these two fowls to be three. — “ Weel, let us hear,” said the old man ; “ Why this,” said the scholar, “ is one, and this,” continued he, “ is two, two and one you know make three.” — “ Since ye hae made it out sae weel,” answered the old man, “ your mother shall hae the first fowl, I'll hae the second, and the third you may keep to yoursell.”