

THE DEFIANCE.

Wednesday last was the anniversary of the birthday of the Defiance, and, as usual, the proprietors and their *employees* had made great preparations for celebrating that event. The Defiance is one of the best; if not decidedly the best conducted coach in the kingdom. Its praises have been sounded on the Continent and in America, and its excellencies have been the subject of remark in publications of all sorts. For seventeen years the Defiance has run regularly, and has always maintained its high character. Nor is the ground it covers of limited extent. Its main line is from Edinburgh to Aberdeen, a distance of 115 miles, but it has a "grand branch" to Glasgow of 70 or 80 miles, and a "continuation" to Inverness of 100 more. So that altogether it accommodates not far short of three hundred miles of traffic. The Defiance is indebted for its great, and, be it remembered, early, superiority, to its projector and principal supporter, Captain Barclay Allardyce of Ury. This gentleman felt the want of good conveyances in the north. He adopted means for supplying the deficiency; and his success was complete. The coach which he established soon obtained from Lord Panmure—a nobleman well able to judge—the complimentary motto of "Speed, Safety, and Comfort." "Punctuality" might be added, for there are few of our Union Street friends who will not agree that they would not be far out of time were they to regulate their watches by the arrival of the Defiance.

To cover this extent of road, six coaches run daily, and on anniversaries, there is, of course, a great competition among the guards of the coaches, and the strappers at the stages, as to who can send out their vehicle, or their team most gaily adorned. The season of the year is favourable for the display of flowers, and certainly they are not spared, either on coach or horses. The palm of merit on Wednesday last was decidedly carried off by the coaches between Edinburgh and Aberdeen; but when they met at Dundee, there was some difficulty in settling the respective claims of the two.

On anniversaries, the proprietors of the Defiance entertain a few friends, and as many of their servants as can be spared, at dinner. This year, the party came off at Dundee, and was ably presided over by W. Ramsay, Esq. of Barnton, in lieu of Captain Barclay, "the father of the coach," who, having been rather unwell, did not feel disposed to risk the arduous duties of the chair. Captain Ainsworth acted as croupier, and did good service with his Irish fun. A jovial and pleasant evening was spent, tinged a little with a feeling of melancholy at the openly-expressed anticipation of a speedy close to the existence of the Defiance, in consequence of the progress of Railways. It was interesting even then, however, to hear Captain Barclay expatiate on the excellence of "this truly British mode of travelling," the high character of the "swell dragsmen" (coachmen) and "smart shooters" (guards), of the delight of handling the ribbons behind a goodly team, of the satisfaction of a sensible companion on the "bench" (the coach box). And when we recollect the impetus that was given to travelling in Scotland by his successful efforts in establishing the Defiance, we are not surprised that he should feel proud of his *bairn*, and endeavour, as often as he has occasion to travel, to have her under his own guidance.

Comfortable, speedy, and cheap as railway travelling is, there will be many who, like us, will regret the loss of such handsome "turns out" as the Defiance. Everything connected with this coach is in the first style. The horses have all breeding—many of them are thorough-bred; the harness mostly silver mounted, seems always new; the coaches are handsome and comfortable; the coachmen know their business, and do it; the guards are active, attentive, and civil, and down even to the cut of their red coats (renewed on anniversaries), the pattern of their button, the shape of their hats, and the texture of their gaiters, there is a neatness and a uniformity which betoken the presence of a presiding good taste. Even the Captain himself, when he mounts the bench on an anniversary, must don his red coat, and exchange his old hat for a "Barnton tile."

Much that we have said in praise of the Defiance is, we are happy to say, equally applicable to other coaches in the district; but it was the Defiance, under Captain Barclay's guidance, and aided occasionally by such patrons as Lord Panmure and Mr Ramsay, that took the lead in introducing such essential improvements on the lumbering, lazy, dirty, disagreeable conveyances that existed twenty years ago.

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