

assembled. Bowes, who acted as master of the ceremonies, arranged what gentleman should take what lady. He said: "Dinner is ordered to be on the table at 8:10, but I bet you the Queen will not be here till 20 or 25 minutes after. She always thinks she can dress in 10 minutes, but she takes about double the time." True enough, it was nearly 8:25 before she appeared. She shook hands with the ladies, bowed to the gentlemen, and proceeded to the *salle-à-manger*. The greatest delicacy we had was some very nice oat-cake. There was a highland piper standing behind her Majesty's chair, but he did not play, as at "state dinners." We had likewise some Edinburgh ale. —*Life of Lord Melbourne.*

LATE FOR DINNER. —By the bye, there was rather an amusing scene in the Queen's closet. I had an audience that her Majesty might prick a Sheriff for the County of Lancaster, which she did in proper style with the bodkin I put into her hand. I then took her pleasure about some Duchy hirings and withdrew, forgetting to make her sign the parchment roll. I obtained a second audience and explained the mistake. While she was signing Prince Albert said to me: "Pray, my Lord, when did the ceremony of pricking begin?" *Campbell*: "In ancient times, Sir, when sovereigns did not know how to write their names." *Queen*, (as she returned me the roll with her signature:) "But we now show that we have been to school." Mary and Lou and I dined at the Palace on Saturday. On our arrival, a little before 8, we were shown into the picture gallery, where the company