

# AULD ROBIN GRAY.

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## The Original Story.

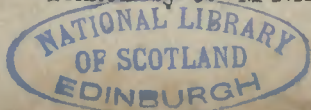
Jamie hadna been awa a twelvemonth and a day  
When my father brak his arm, and our cow was stown away  
My mither she fell sick, and my Jamie at the sea,  
When Auld Robin Gray cam a courting me.  
My father couldna work, and my mither couldna spin;  
I toiled day and night, but their bread I couldna win:  
Auld Rob maintained them baith, and, wi' tears in his ee,  
Said, Jeanie, for their' sakes, O marry me!

*Ballad.*



NEWTON-STEWART:

Printed by J. M'NAIRN.



AND  
ROBIN GRAY.



The Original Story.

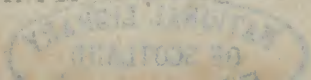
James had been sick a twelvemonth, and a day  
 He had not labor took his part, and our cow was stown away  
 My mother she fell sick, and my James at the sea.  
 When Lord Robin Gray came courting me  
 My father couldn't work, and my mother couldn't spin;  
 I toiled day and night, but their bread I couldn't win.  
 And Rob maintained them both, and my cows in his care,  
 Till James for their sake, O mine, me!

William



NEWTON-STEWART:

Printed by J. M'NAUL.



was a't' pedicled from heaven to woman.  
The affairs of auld Walter Grahame had  
been long hanging, and were now come to  
a poor pass. It would, indeed, be difficult pre-  
sently to point out the cause, but the bride  
and grooms, collected by the grandfather, Willie  
of the strong back (so called from his being  
limping at putting the stone), had begun to  
dwindle to the day of his son Alexander, who  
succeeded him in the farm of Bow-a-bare;  
and so great was the confusion to which things  
had been allowed to run, that Walter, the  
youngest of the name, and Jeanie's father, might  
be said to have fallen to a fruitless inheritance  
and to have been left wrestling in a sea of

troubles.  
Being the head of a family, and come to  
that time of life when musing about the  
world has a better pleasure in it, Walter struggled hard to better  
his lot. He was ———— and lay down  
late drove his ain cart to the market —

**JEANIE GRAHAME** was one of the blithest,  
bonniest lasses to be seen in the ancient king-  
dom of Fife, from the Leven Loch to the Bay  
of St. Andrews; at least she was (speaking  
of her as I first saw her) happy as a summer  
mavis, and bright as a June rose. What she  
afterwards saw and underwent was enough to  
have wasted and withered a' the beauty that

was e'er bequeathed from heaven to woman.

The affairs of auld Walter Grahame had been lang backgoing, and were now come to a poor pass. It would, indeed, be difficult preceesely to point out the cause; but the guid's and garc, collected by the grandfather, Wattie o' the strong back (so called from his being famous at putting the stane,) had begun to dwindle in the days of his son Alexander, who succeeded him in the farm of Rowan-brae; and so great was the confusion to which things had been allowed to run, that Walter, the second o' the name, and Jeanie's father, might be said so have fallen to a fruitless inheritance and to have been left warstling in a sea of troubles.

Being the head of a family, and come to that time of life when moving about the world has muckle mair of incumbrance than pleasure in't, Walter struggled hard to better his lot. He was up early, and lay down late, drove his ain cart to the market,—toiled in the fields,—hedged and ditched,—and submitted to every drudgery along with the maist menial o' his warkmen. All, however, wadna do. It seemed as if the bow of Providence was bent against him,—that he was a doomed man, and that nothing was destined to thrive in his unfortunate hands.

His wife and he had foregathered in their



better days, and if it may be said he bore up  
 wi' a strong fortitude, it maun be confessed,  
 that tho she tholed ill the depravations to which  
 their straitened means compelled them. When  
 a high speerited careless young lassie, she had  
 married for love (as the saying is), against the  
 will o' her relations, that were a' wealthy and  
 well to do in the world; and, when she could  
 afford to keep up her degree, and brush by  
 them in a gown of French silk, to the full as  
 guid as their ain, every thing was weel cneuch.  
 It was otherwise, however, when year by year  
 obleeged her to dispense with some wee bit  
 article o' accustomed finery, and a back-going  
 fortune cstranged faces that had often smiled  
 around her mair plentiful table. True it is,  
 that with the changes o' life so we change;  
 and that with the turns o' fortune we are oure  
 apt to turn. Her temper began to sour; she  
 took to liking an ill tale against her neighbour,  
 and, as the family purse began to grow lighter,  
 so in proportion did her wounded pride begin  
 to show itself. Wad she petition her friends  
 for help? Na—na—that wad have been as  
 much as owning she had been in error, and  
 they in the right. Sooner wad she perish of  
 cauld and hunger; or be forced away into  
 stranger districts, to beg, from door to door,  
 a crust of bread, and a drink o' water, from  
 the hands of the charitable.

Oh, but Jeanie Grahame, the dochter, was a dear, sweet bonny lassie! I was half in love wi' her mysell; and that is muckle for a douce married man to confess. Her behaviour to her parents, during all the time of their back-bing and misfortunes, was most pattern like, a sight to see as guid as a sermon to hear.— She was the very heart and soul o' their hows-hold, and seemed to shed a glint of true pleasure oure the hame of honest poverty. Educated to the best o' the means that even the most prosperous days allowed them, she submitted to every accumulating little want without a murmur. Still she was the same, innocent, contented, cheerfu' lassie; still she was the light o' her father's ee, the pride o' her mother's heart. With them beside her, she seemed to fear nae evil, and to despise every hardship: her duty seemed aboon a'. She soothed all their misfortunes,—checked all their vain repinings,—cheered them with the smiles o' her sweet face,—and seemed aye that, to a strauger, had nae cause for tears in this world; but, for a' that, she sometimes grat to hersell in secret.

Auld Robin Gray, the Laird of Stancykes I mind him weil. He was a tall, lour-shouthered carle, a guid way up in his sixties at the time; wi' strong, hard-set features, and a brown, three-storey wig. His face was remarkable for naething but his rough, bushey

ee-bree, that, grizzled wi' 60 years, lookit like  
 snawy archers thrown oüre a pair o' grey  
 sparkling een; Mony and mony a time, when  
 a' callant, passing that road, have I seen him  
 standing at the bit parapet wa' before his  
 house, with his hands in his pepper-and-salt  
 coat pöckets; his staff aneath his oxter, and  
 his blue bonnet on his pow, looking at a' the  
 folks passing on the road frae Wamyss to  
 Dysart, or glinting his ee our his braid fields  
 surrounded wi' fine auld trees, where the cows  
 stood chewing their cud o' fatness, and his  
 whistling ploughlads turned up the mools wi'  
 the glittering share; proud nae doubt a' the  
 time to ken himsell the laird o' sic a rich in-  
 heritance. Except for his keen hawk's ee, ane  
 could scarcely have fand him out; however,  
 there are surer ways of discovering a man's  
 heart, than from the cut of his coat, or his  
 bodily looks; and where was the neighbour  
 that ever had occasion to lend him a guid  
 word, or the beggar that e'er departed frae  
 his gate muttering a blessing.

The lang and the short of the story is, that  
 auld Robin was a doure, hardhearted, selfish  
 man,—the king of misers; scraping and scrap-  
 ing frae a' corners from day to day, and from  
 year to year; screwing what he could by all  
 lawful shifts out o' ithers; and denying him-  
 sell amaist the necessaries of life. In the early  
 pairt of his youth, he had married a cousin of

his ain, a doechter of the Laird of Lowth; who after living wi' him six or seven miserable years, took farewell o' this world it is to be houpit for a better, the latter pairt o' her life having been waur than purgatory,—a dull, broken-hearted creature, that left him the father of an only son and heir.

In the course of years and nature, the son, Jamie, grew up a bonny black-haired laddie, fu' of the milk of human kindness, funey and frolicsome; and seemingly determined to make up, in the eyes o' the world, for the sourness of his father's disposition, by the sweetness of his ain. In all games and exercises he was the foremost: and no a lass in the parishes of Dysart or Kirkaldy wad have serupled to have set her cap at him.

Mony a grin and mony a bitter word did the laird gie; yet the outbreakings of youth were borne by the gruff auld earle better than could have been expectit. Whether, however as he grew aulder, the father's temper grew mair fractious, or his affection to his callant grew mair cauld, was hard to discover; and it became visible to all, from the usage he underwent, and the drudgeries to which he was made to yield, that the matter wad soon be past endurance of a proud-hearted, free-spirited lad—and so it happened; for, in a fit of resentment and sorrow, he betook himself to a vessel setting sail frae Leith to the West Indies; leaving to the doure, gruff, auld miser, and to his housekeeper sand-blind



Nancy, to mak a kirk and a mill of the pleasureless domicile and property of Stane-dyes.

On the night before Jamie set off there was a grievous parting between him and Jeanie Grahame. They seemed made for ane anither; and if, as some suppose, Nature formed human creatures in pairs, these were the twa that it meant to meet. From the years in which the heart first opens to love, they had loved each ither like brother and sister; but with feelings still more warmly kindled, and more deeply rooted. Neither had ever been in love before—it was first love full to the overflowing wi' passion and power—to which a' the ither loves of life (if man can really and truly love twice) are but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Sair, sair, did Jeanie greet, and beg o' him no to gang away; lang did she hing upon his neck while her burning tears drappit down on his hands; but na—his purpose was fixed,—fixed by an oath, as if he had been an auld Mede or Persian; so after explaining to her the absurdity of his remaining at a hame where he could never better himsell; and of his submitting to a state of miserable and slavish dependence, he said he was only a-boot trying to push his ain way in the world, and to get into a situation that would not render their coming together a thing, as it now was, altogether hopeless. “No—no” he said, “Jeanie,” taking a farewell kiss from

her lips, “you maunna cry,—it cannt be otherwise. It were cruel to you, as weel as mysell to stay where I now am. I must—must leave you Jeanie, and mind this, if I get on in the world you will see me soon, if not try to forget what has passed; and, my dear, Jeanie, mind that I leave you a free creature, as free in promise as God’s daylight,—as free as before I saw ye:—and, when I am far away oure the sea, and forgotten, refuse not a guid offer for the sake of the foolish, silly thoughtless memory o’ what has passed betwixt us. So may be, when I come hame—if ever it be my fortune to come hame, a crazy weather-beaten, broken down, auld man, I may see ye surrounded wi’ yere bonny bairns, and yere proud goodman—No, hang me, I would be sooner shot thro’ the head, like a dog, than see the man that daured, in my hearing, to ca’ Jeanie Grahame his wife!!”

When the auld miser fand that his son had taen his will in his ain hands, and had decampit, he had a grievous contention wi’ the bitterness and blackness of his ain speerit, and he vowed that, only son as he was of his, he wad cut him wi’ a shilling; come what liket of the guids, gear, and chattles, he lamentit he could na carry to the grave with him. Naething wad make him relax in his purpose, his determination was fixed as the whunstane rock; and the friends that were sae forward as to presume offering a word o’ advice, fand that they were only rivetting the nail

of hatred more firmly in the laird's bosom.

Considering the ties o' nature, ane wad have thocht, that the course of time must have blunted his wrath, and reconceeled him to Jamie; but far otherwise. His speerit had got a bend that could na be straightened; so, instead of relenting, every day appeared to mak him mair inveterately cruel. Twa simmers had passed oure, when the laird received a letter from his son; in which Jamie lamented the step he had taken, and the way they had pairted, hoping that, when he saw him again, as he shortly expectit to do, a' the past wad be forgotten.

The auld neerdoweel had scarcely patience to read the letter thro', ere he tore it into a thousaud tatters, and stampit them below his feet. "Come hame when ye like, my man," cried the unnatural father, in the bitterness of his doure rage, "come hame when ye like, ye'se never mair be son of mine. ye have brewed the cup o' wilful disobedience, and ye maun drink it to the dregs; deevil cares hoo bitter the dregs may be. Forgie ye! faith lad, ye little ken me. I'm no the willow wand to be bowed to your purpose. Do ye hear that?" added he, tapping sand-blind Nancy, his housekeeper, on the shouther, an auld withered looking witchwife, that deserved a tar-barrel on the top o' Lommond hill, far better than mony that suffered there: do ye hear that? Our bonny son Jamie is thinking of paying us a veesit soon. Do ye hear



what I'm saying?"

"Nonsense, laird, nonsense. Jamie coming hame!" answered clottie's dochter, wi' a grin that showed her blackened stumps. "Ou, ay, he'll be coming to marry his bit bonny sweetheart, oure by, Wattie Grahame's dochter, ye understand, laird."

This was setting fire to tinder. The laird lookit first black and then blue; glowred in Nancy's withered face for a minute without speakin, like a man lost within himsell, then gieing his head a shake, and screwing his mouth up to a whistle, like a man that has, after muckle trouble, seen his way thro' a puzzle, he clappit his bonnet on his pow, and away down the road to Rowan-brae.

At Walter's every thing was looking dowie and mair dowie, gloomier and gloomier.—The cattle, ane after anither, had been sold to pay the landlord his rent. The barn yard was threshed out and empty. Sheriff-offishers frae Edinburgh were seen like wild cats in the gloming, prowling about his bounds wi' docketted accounts in their side pockets, threatning poinding and horning; while to crown a', Walter himsell, by a tumble frae his cart shaft in the dark, had gotten his arm broken. It was a hame o' cauld-rife poverty and wretchedness, Misfortune after misfortune showering down upon them, had at length soured Walter's heart, and broken down his speerit. His wife, wha could have tholed her puir fate better had she been



among strangers, began to sink under a pride so mortally wounded, and she grew every day mair crabbit and ill-tempered, as she harpit oure the thocht o' their afflictions affording a cause of crowing to her neglectful reflectins. The warst of a', however, was, that there were neither o' them sae young as they once were; the snaws of auld age had begun to gather round their brows; and they hadna the warm hopes of youth, to see bright days amidst years to come. Jeanie, puir thing, bore up wonderfully, and tho' doing every thing for the best, she took hard words, and crabbit looks, without a murmur; exerted hersell frae morning till night in managing the howshold concerns; and lookit like a stray sunbeam let into a dwelling of darkness.

Ane might naturally ask,—had she nae consolation which helpit her to oppose this brave speerit to the storin? had she nae secret help? nae kind letter? nae blithe tidings? Nane—nane; frae the night of the pairting she had heard not a syllable from or about him. She kent from his own lips that he was aff to the West Indies, and she heard from ithers that the West Indies is the European's grave!

Auld Robin, the laird, saw the desolation of his neighbour's dwelling, and he laid his schemes accordingly. He blue and braggit of his siller;—tell't Wattie that he understood a' his difficulties;—that he had nae objections to lend him a helping hand;—and that to crown all, he wad make Jeanie his wife, and the leddy of Stanedykes.

Walter's countenance brightened up. It was like a torch-light suddenly let in on folk that have a lang time been sitting in darkness. But an hour afore he had thocht his case desperate, and now!—yet he could scarcely credit his

ears. Sooner wad he have expectit a shower of Gold frae the gloomy November clouds than help frae the hand of the laird of Stanedykes. But, tho' blinded like many a man by a flash of lightning, even then, when he thocht o' his daughter, the young, the bonny, the dutiful,—of sacrificing her in this gate,—it was enough to stagger him, and make his flesh creep. It was, however, the only star he saw in his night of black darkness; and the laird stuck to him.

“Now ye've gien me your hand,” said Robin, rising to gang awa, “ye've gien me your hand, that ye'll do your utmost wi' my bonny Jeanie. I've mair, Walter, than either you or her ken about, but the day she takes me she'll be mistress o't a'. She'll hae nathing to do ava, but sit, and sew, and churm like a lintie, and tak her pleasure wi' a ponie to ride on when she likes the open air; and as mony maidens to wait on her,—if she likes attendance,—as ony lord's ledly frae Earlsferry Abbey to Culzean Castle.—When ye bring me oure word that she's consentit (she's your daughter, ye ken, Walter, my guide fren; and Scripture tells ye, ye can mak her do what ye like), bring oure a' yere bills and bonds to me, and I'll pit my name on the back o'them. Then ye ken,” he added, snapping his fingers “the'll be worth twenty siller shillings to the pound; and as guide as the bank o' Scotland. But mind ye, I canna wait; and, if I hear nae her consent the morn I maun een look anither way.”

It is hard to say, when he thocht of Jeanie in her teens, and the laird wi' ae foot in the grave, whether pleasure or grief was uppermost in Walter's heart; but at night, when they were sitting oure their cheerless ingle, he took an opportunity of breaking the subject to his daughter. “It's true, Jeanie, my dear,” he said, giving her a kind clap on the shouther, “it's true we canna get every thing we like in this weary world. Ye're mither and me there married

like fools, for love, and lippent to guid fortune for the ple-nishing. Ye see what we have been able to mak o't! No, that I wad yet change her for ony ane, na—na, guidwife, hooever, I'm no speaking aboot that at present. Ye see, Jeanie my dear, the state to which we are reduced;—every thing gaur back wi' us—empty barns, and horseless stables,—naething but cauld poverty,—and me, wi' my broken arm, every day in the fear o' being thrown into the jail. I wush my dear Jeanie, ye could help us."

"Me! how can I help ye," said Jeanie, dighting away the tears, that had started in her een, wi' the corner of her apron, as she stoppit her spinning-wheel. "Ay faither, if it lay in my power, if it lay between me and the end of the world, to help ye, I would na weary o' the way."

"Deed, Jeanie, it is in your ain power—and ye maun tak him. Ye wad nae doubt like a young man if he offered: but mak hay, my dear, when the sun shines; and when ance ye'r the leddy of Stanedykes, ye may snirk in your sleeve at them a'."

"Stanedykes!—but, faither," askit Jeanie, innocently "hoo can ye ca' Jamie Gray an auld man? or, tho' I were to get him, hoo could either I, or ony ither body, be leddy o' Stanedykes when the auld laird is living?"

"Young Jamie?" quo' Walter, gieng a laugh, na, na, Jass, that were a kettle of fish to fry. Wha kens about that scape grace? I se warrant he's married abroad; or may be wha kens, dead and buried long ago. It's the laird himsell I'm speaking aboot."

"The laird his faither!!" cried Jeanie, while her heart flaffed as if it would hae loupit thro her stays. "Never speak in that way. Do ye think the laird wad marry me, that might be his grandchild; and she gaed a wild laugh that sounded hardly canny."

"Take ye, Jeanie!" said Walter, kindly patting her

cheek, that had momentarily grown pale as the driven snaf, "ay, and be glad to get ye.—Oh, Jeanie," he said, rising hurriedly frae his seat, and pacing about the floor in a distractit-like way, "think on the state we are in; look at me,—look at your puir mither,—we are beggared out o' house and ha',—and, in a few days, may not have a mouth-<sup>f</sup> u' to eat, or a roof to cover us."

"Jeanie, my bairn," said her mother, leaning her hand on her shoulther, hear what your faither says, it is God's truth. Ye've ay done your duty: come what will, I'll ay say that o' ye. But what signifies a', what matters by ganes, if when a word o' your mouth could lift us out o' this mire of meesery and wretchedness, ye keep your teeth, close, and determine to act the part of an undutiful dochter?"

Jeanie's heart swelled to her mouth: and while she sat wi' her hands claspit before her, and the tears running like beds of boiling water down her cheeks, her voice died within her, and she couldna utter ae word. Her mind seemed to have fairly gien way; and when, in a while her recollection began to come back, she started, as out of a fearfu' sleep, and in a broken, half-screaming way, cried out, "It would ruin me here and hereafter—no—no—no—I daur not, cannot do it.—Oh, I wish—I wish—I wish I was dead and buried!!!" With this she drappit from her chair on the floor, and gaed away in a dwam, second only in soundnes to the awfu sleep of death.

Next morning, however, she was up betimes, and gaun about the wee affairs of the house (indeed there was now little or naething for her to look after); but her pale cheek and sunken ee, told what she had suffered, and was suffering. She seemed to shudder within herself at the bare idea of the struggle which she kent must again be renewed, as the beating goat is said to shudder when driven into



the den of the hungry wild beast.

So great, however, was the effect of the terrible conflict of yestreen, and such an impression had it made on the minds of baith father and mother, that, when they regarded the agoneezed countenance of Jeanie, they hesitated to put the thing to the test, though they kent that in the course of a few hours, the battle must either be lost or won for ever. Breakfast passed without scarcely being tasted, while Jeanie glanced with a fearfu' ee on them baith as daunting her, and hinging about her, they yet feared and kept aloof frae the momentous subject. The dark cloud, she perceived, had not yet passed over their heads. Hour after hour glided away. In the courte o' the forenoon, Wattie hurriedly shut the auld family Bible, which he had set down, as if to pore over: and, putting on his hat, dawnered away out like a tapsy auld man amang the fields without kenning where his path lay.

Jeanie at last sat down to her spinning-wheel as usual, tho' she crooned not away at either of her favourite tunes, "Cowden Knows," or, "The Flowers of the Forest" and her mother, putting on her spectacles, opened the book her father had shut. Neither seemed inclined to converse; and, save the humming of Jeanie's wheel, and now and then the mewing of the kitten, that wandered about among the empty dishes in search of its accustomed milk, the hail house was silent. It didna, however, lang remain so. Walter came hurrying in with visible perplexity in his features; and throwing his hat into a corner, sank down into a chair by the window. Jeanie turned

and looked him i' the face, but, in the anxiety there painted, saw enouch to prevent the looking a second time.—The shadow of desolation came ower her speerit.

"Jeanie, my dear bairn," cried Walter, rising up behind her, and patting her tenderly on the back, "Oh! Jeanie, have mercy on us,—speak the word afore it be too late. Could ye bear to see the father that brought ye into the world, and the mither that bore ye—could ye bear to see your father and me begging our bread frae door to door, lying on the straw of a poor house? we thocht na—thocht na to have come to that—and you have it in your power to put every thing right. Say but the word; every thing depends on you,—our comfort, nay, even our very existence. We'll lie down on our knees before ye on the morrow,—the parents that gaed ye being will throw themselves at your feet. ye surely canna spurn them awa wi' disdain! Ye cana shut your heart to our prayers! Ye canna think there is a hereafter—and see us starving here!"

This was past human tholing. "What maun I do—what maun I do?" said Jeanie, eagerly, "tell me what I maun do?"

"Ye maun just say, my dear lassie, that ye'll marry Baird Gray. That's a' Jeanie we want ye to say; and that's na muckle."—And, as Walter spoke these words, his voice trembled with anxiety and earnestness. Where could Jeanie look for council? She lookit in her mither's face—and her mither's een seemed to say, "Oh! Jeanie do it, or my heart will break." Jeanie's heart was all broken!

"To be sure, to be sure," she said, putting her hand within her mother's, "I'll do whatever ye want me.— Ony thing, ony thing."

At this very moment Robin Gray, whose coming oüre the fields Walter had seen him before hurrying in, tapped at the door, carrying in his hand a pair o' fat ducks, his first present o' courtship to a famishing family.

It wad be needless here, and a wast baith of time and paper, to gang thro' wi' all the circumstantilities that took place before the wadding, which caused a titter of astonishment and jeering laughter along the haill shore of Fire. But married they were, to the no small consternation of sand-blind Nancy, the vetran housekeeper, wha heesitated about gieing up the keys; till, at last, forced to believe her ain een, she concluded that the laird had grown donnard, and lost his right senses. Scarcely, less thunderstruck were Walter Grahame and his wife, when they fand what a few days had brought ferth; but the accepted bills, the stockit pantry, and the calls of money, that scarce a week agoe passed their door, like the Levite on the opposite side, assured them that all wasna a dream.

Jeanie saw her father and mother once more raised frae misery to comfort, and felt hersell the ledly of Stanedykes. Of guidis and gear she had enouch, and to spare. Some, of course, wad take it for granted she was happy; that, however, is another question.

It was in the thoughtfu' month of September, when the yellowing leaves, the heavy clouds, and the shorten-

ing days, remind man of the fate that sooner or later awaits him; and, it might be, some five or six weeks from the date of puir Jeanie's marriage, that ae gloaming, as she was sitting at the far end o' the garden behind the house, under the burtree-bush, thinking, maybe mournfully o' the days that were gone, a man dressed in a Sailors jacket burst suddenly thro' the hedge, and stood before her!

They gazed on each other for some time without speaking. His een were rivetted upon her, and pierced thro' Jeanie's soul; yet she couldna turn her head away. What, oh heaven and earth! maun she have felt, when she saw wha stood before her—when she saw her ain Jamie Gray looking into her heart—when she thocht of what had passed atween them, and when she thocht on what she now was—his father's wife!

He spokè not a word; but, with a smile of deevilish contempt, slowly rising up his finger opposite her face, he gave a long hiss of the bitterest scorn, turned on his heel, and departed.

Jeanie was carried to bed in a raging fever; and the laird, who had heard of his son's arrival, imputed it at ance, in the jaundiè of his jealousy, to the right cause. With the wild fury of a madmen, he taxed her with having broken thro the vow she had sae lately sworn to afore the minister. All the wicked passions of his wicked heart were roused up like serpents frae their dens. He stampit and swore about his son in the whirlwind of his unnatural hatred: he shook his head oure the deeing Jeanie, telling her that she, like the rest, was but born to deceive



him; and cursed the day that ever gave birth to such a unfortunate miserable wretch as himsell.

An awful night of tempestuous horror frowned over, and next morning Jeanie was out o' mind and delerious. She muttered and raved constantly about Jamie, asking why he had been sae lang, lang o' coming! What place of the West Indies they had buried him in!—and to take away the man in the sailor's clase that was ay standing afore her. Force was at last used to confine her to her bed; and auld sand-blind Nancy, standing wi' her hands in her sides in the middle of the floor, casting a leer first on the bed where lay the distracted and dying bride, and then on the laird, that was pacing up and down the room, wi' his hands behind his back, mumbled wi' hellish rejoicing, between her teeth, “What think ye now, maister o' yer bonny bit wife?”

Her strength at last totally exhausted, Jeanie fell asleep late in the afternoon; and the laird bidding somebody leave the room, darkened the windows, and sat down to doze in the leather elbow chair by the bedside, where the sick-nurse had been sitting. Scarcely had he closed his een when he fand something desperately squeezing him. He started forrit, and lookit up. It was Jeanie's hand that held a grup of his coat sleeve, so forcibly that he felt her finger nails piercing the flesh o' his withered arm.—Scarcely could the hand be drawn away, tho' the spark of life had fled for ever!

Jamie was never seen in Fife after. Some say that he

was shot in a sea-fight off the Nore, and others that he was the stranger that throw himself oore the pier of Leith, The truth is that naebody ever heard mair about him.

Auld Laird Gray spun out ten years after Jeanie's judgment-like departure; but he never could be said from that time, to be properly in his right mind, losing his faculties, one after anither, and growing, wi' the frailties of age, a kind o' second bairn, or rather natural. However, let the truth ay be spoken, he had his beef-tea, or chicken-soup, regularly every day; and his swelled legs carefully wrappit up in the finest Welch flannel, were laid on a stool wi' a silk cushion, by the dutifu' hands of sand-blind Nancy.

Jeanie's gravestone is in the southermost corner of the kirkyard of Dysart; but the reading is now scarcely legible, from the effects of the rain and sea winds on a soft stane. On the top o't there's the figure of a wee angel, blawing a trumpet; but sae defaced as not to be able to scare away the sea-gulls that come up frae the shore, sail round and round about it, and at last light upon't wi' a scream, as if it was the grave of some auld sailor of their acquaintance they had come up, on purpose to pay a visit to.

It may very readily be supposed that this is the story on which, the very beautiful Scottish ballad of Auld Robin Gray is founded; though with a fine discrimination, Lady Mary Lindsay, leaving out the unpleasant parts of the narrative, has felicitously converted it from a tale of guilt and suffering to one of unmingled tenderness and beauty.

The circumstance throughout, even as connected with the ballad, bear too evidently the impress of truth to be the mere mental imaginings of any sentimental poet or poetess; and though, like the ancient legend of Gil Morrice, on which Home has founded his exquisite national tragedy, or the pathetic tale of Girolamo and Sylvestra, from which Barry Cornwall drew the finest of his dramatic scenes, "The Broken Heart,"—these circumstances now only appeal to our feelings in the lines to which the singing of Miss Stephens has added a more deserved celebrity; yet we see life, real life, and actual occurrence, in every stanza, most visibly and distinctly.

We believe there is no existing record of the time at which the ballad was composed; but from the authoress having died within the last year, though at a very advanced age, we may with certainty assign it to a date considerably posterior to the prose record, whose language

in many places exhibits the idiomatic Scotch simplicity of the latter portion of the seventeenth century. In other parts, the hand of some impertinent transcriber, who has used the liberty of interlarding the narrative with his own less Doric, though more modern expressions, is but too perceptible to escape censure.

FINIS.