

THE

HEIR OF LINNE,

AN OLD BALLAD.

The Heir of Linne seems not to have been
a Lord of Parliament, but a LAIRD,
whose title went with the estate.

Explanation of some of the obsolete words
which occur in the Ballad.

'Fay,' faith—'God's-pennie,' earnest mo-
ney—'Lolealls,'—spendthrifts—'Red-
de,' testament, advice, counsel; or dy-
ing words—'Rude,' cross—
'Wend,' go—'Wud,' angry.



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THE HEIR OF LINNE.

DRAW near and listen, gentlemen,
to sing a song I will begin,
About a Lord in fair Scotland,
who was the thistleless Heir of Linne.

His father was a right good Lord,
his mother was of high degree;
But they, alas! were dead, him frae,
and he lov'd keeping companie.

To spend the day wi' merry cheer,
to drink and revel every night,
To cards and dice from even to morn,
it was, I ween, his heart's delight.

To ride, to run, to rant, to roar,
to always spend and never spare;
I wot, an't were the king himself,
of gold and fee he might be bare.

Sae fares the thistleless Lord of Linne,
till all his gold is gone and spent;
And he maun sell his lands sae broad,
his house, and lands, and all his rent.

His father had a keen steward
John o' the Scales was called he!
But John's become a gentleman,
And John has got baith gold and fee.

Says, ' Welcome, welcome, Lord of Linne;
' let nought disturb thy merry cheer;
' If thou wilt sell thy lands sae broad,
, good store of gold, I give the here.'

‘ My gold is gone, my money’s spent;
 ‘ my lands now take them unto thee;
 ‘ Give me the gold good John o’ th’ Scales,
 ‘ and thine for aye my lands shall be.’

Then John did to him record draw,
 and John gave him a god’s-peannie,
 For every pound that John agreed,
 the land, I’m sure, was well worth three.

John told the gold upon the board,
 He was right glad his lands to win:
 ‘ The land is mine, the gold is thine,
 ‘ and now I’ll be the Lord o’ Linc.’

Thus he bath sold his lands sae broad,
 baith hill and holt, and muir and fen
 All but a poor and lonesome lodge,
 that stood far aff into a glen.

For sae he to his father hight—
 ‘ My son, when I am gane,’ said he,
 ‘ Then thou wilt spend thy land sae broad
 ‘ and thou wilt spend thy gold so free:

‘ But swear me now upon the rude,
 ‘ that lonesome lodge thoult never spend:
 ‘ When all the world doth frown on thee,
 ‘ thou there shalt find a faithful friend.’

The Heir of Linne is full of gold;
 ‘ Come, come with me, my friends,’ said
 ‘ Let’s drink, and rant, and merry make, (he
 ‘ and he that spares, ne’er have may he.

They ranted, drank, and merry made,
 till all his gold it waxed thin;
 And then his friends they sunk away,
 and left the thriftless Heir of Linne.

He hadna a penny left in's purse,
 never a penny left but three;
 The tane was brass, the tither lead,
 the third was of the white monie.

Now well-a-day,' said the Heir of Linne,
 'now well-a-day, and woe is me;
 'For when I was the Lord of Linne,
 'I never wanted gold or see;
 'But mony a trusty friend have I,
 'and why should I feel dole or care?
 'I'll borrow of them all by turns,
 'sae need I not be ever bare.'

But ane, I wot, was not at hame:
 the next had paid his gold away;
 Another call'd him thriftless loon,
 and sharply bad him wend his way.

'Now well-a-day,' said the Heir of Linne,
 'now well a day and woe is me;
 'For when I had my lands sae broad,
 'on me they liv'd right merrilie.
 'To beg my bread from door to door,
 'I'm sure, 'twould be a burning shame;
 'To rob and steal would be a sin;
 'to work my limbs I cannot frame.'

'Now I'll away to lonesome lodge,
 'for there my father bad me wend,
 'When all the world should frown on me,
 'I there should find a trusty friend.'

Away then hied the Heir of Linne,
 o'er hill and holt and muir and fen,
 Till he came to the lonesome lodge;
 that stood so low into a glen.

He looked up, he looked down,
 in hope some comfort for to win;
 But bare and lothly were the walls,
 'Here's sorry cheer' quo' the Heir of
 Linne.

The little window, dim and dark,
 was hung with ivy, brier and yew;
 Nae simmer sun here ever shone,
 nae halefome breeze here ever blew.

Nae chair, nae table could he spy,
 nae cheerfule hearth, nae welcome bed,
 Nought but a rope wi' rinning noose,
 that hanging hang up o'er his head.

And o'er it in broad letters
 these words were wrote so plain to see:—
*Ab! graceless wretch, hast spent thine all
 and brought thyself to denurie?*

*All this my boding mind misgave,
 I therefore left this trusty friend;
 Let it now shield thy foul disgrace,
 and all thy shame and sorrows end.*

Exceeding vext wi' this rebuke,
 exceeding vext was the Heir of Linne,
 His heart I wot was near to burst
 with guilt and sorrow, shame and sin.

Never a word spake the Heir of Linne,
 never a word but these spake he:
 'This a is trusty friend indeed,
 'and is right welcome unto me.'

Then round his neck the cord he drew,
 and sprung aloft with his bodie;

When, low ! the ceiling burst in twain,
and to the ground came tumbling he.

Astonished lay the Heir of Linne,
nor knew if he were live or dead :
At length he look't & saw a bill,
and in't a key of gold so red.

He took the bill, and look't on it,
and strait good comfort there found he :
It told him of a certain hole,
into the wall, where stood chests three.

Two were full of beaten gold,
the third was full of white monie,
And over them, in broad letters /
these words were wrote so plain to see :

' Once more, my son, I set thee clear ;
' amend thy life and follies past ;
' For without thou amend thy life,
that rope must be thy end at last'
' Let it be so,' said the Heir of Linne,
' let it be so, if I don't mend ;
' For here I now will make a vow,
' this redde shall guide me to the end.'

Away then went the Heir of Linne,
away went he with merry cheer ;
I trow he neither stint nor staid,
'till John o' th' Scales house he came near.

When he came to John o' the Scales,
up at the speer then looked he :
There sat three Lords at the boards end,
werr drinking of the wine so free.

And then bespake the Heir of Linne,
to John o' th' Scales then louted he ;

‘ I pray thee now, good John o’ th’ Scales,
 ‘ one forty pence for to lend me.’

‘ Away, away, thou thriftless loon,
 ‘ away, away, this may not be ;
 ‘ For Christ’s curse on my head,’ he said,
 ‘ if ever I trust the one pennie.’

Again bespake the heir of Linne,
 to John o’ th’ Scales wife then spake he ;
 ‘ Madam some alms on me bestow,
 ‘ I pray for sweet saint charity.’

‘ Away, away, thou thriftless loon,
 I swear thou’lt get no alms of me ;
 ‘ Should we hang any losealls here,
 ‘ the first we would begin with thee.’

O then bespake a good fellow,
 ‘ who sat at John o’ th’ Scales board,
 Said, ‘ turn again thou Heir of Linne ;
 ‘ sometime thou was a right good Lord ;

‘ Some time a good fellow thou’st been,
 ‘ and sparedst not thy gold and fee ;
 ‘ Therefore I’ll lend the forty-pence,
 ‘ and other fofty if need be :

‘ And aye. I pray the John o’ th’ Scales,
 ‘ let him sit in thy companie ;
 ‘ For well I wot thou hast his land,
 ‘ and a good bargain it was to thee.’

Up to him spake John o’ th’ Scales,
 all wad, he answer’d him again :
 ‘ Now Christ’s curse on my head,’
 ‘ but I did lose by that bargain.

‘ Here I do proffer thee all Linne,
 ‘ before these Lords so fair and free ;

'Thou'it get it cheaper back again,
 ' a hundred merks than it cost me.'
 ' I take you witness, Lords,' he said;
 ' with that he gave a god's-pennie :
 ' Now by my fay ' said the Heir of Linne,
 ' and here, good John, is thy manie.'

Then he pull'd forth three bags of gold,
 and laid them down upon the board;
 All woe begone was John o' th' Scales,
 so vext he could not say a word.

He told him foath the good red gold,
 he told it fo th with little din:

" The gold is thine, the land is mine,
 " now I'm again the Lord of Linne."

Says, ' have thou here, thou good fellow;
 ' the forty pence thou lent to me;

' Now I'm again the Lord of Linne,
 ' and forty pounds I will give thee.'

' Now well-a-day,' said Joan o' th' Scales;
 ' now well-a-day ! and woe's my life !

' Yesterday I was Lady of Linne,
 ' now I'm but John o' th' Scales wife.'

' Now fare thee well' said the Heir of Linne
 ' farewell, good John o' th' Scales,' said
 he,

' When next I want to sell my land,
 ' good John o' th' Scales I'll come to
 thee.'

FINIS.