

SCOUNDREL WILL'S

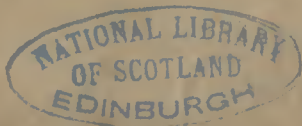
ADVICE TO HIS SONS,

AND

THE SONS' REPLY.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mein,
As to be hated needs but to be seen."—POPE.

LOCHMABEN :—1847.





SCOUNDREL WILL'S ADVICE TO HIS SONS.

SCENE—*A Farmer's Spence, not many miles from the famous
Town of Lochmaben.*

~~~~~  
" My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."

SOLOMON.

~~~~~

1.

Sit down, my sons, and hear your father;
I for your sakes have called you hither,
Before auld age begins to wither
 This frame of mine,
And I my business, altogether,
 To you resign.

2.

I care not though my neighbours clash
About the way I've made my cash,
And view me as a dirty trash,
 And wish me ill,
And call me an unfeeling hash,
 And scoundrel Will.

3.

I let them talk. Without their aid
A little money I have made;
And if to what may now be said
 Ye'll a' take heed,
In any line, I'm not afraid,
 But ye'll succeed.

4

4.

A score of years are more than run
Since I, with only one pound one,
In business for myself begun
My lot to try,
And found this world required a man
Stern, deep, and sly.

5.

A man as subtle as auld Nick,
Prepar'd to meet or play a trick ;
Who would at nothing stand or stick,
But boldly strive,
By every means, through thin and thick,
His point to drive.

6.

So ticklish now is every trade,
No business-man well can evade
Telling at times what may be said
To be a lie ;
And none to cheat are now afraid,
'Tis do or die.

7.

Men might be honest long ago,
And justice like a stream might flow ;
But times are altered so much so,
That I may say,
An honest man is not below
The sun this day.

8.

Truth, honour, justice, and so forth,
Have long been banish'd from the earth ;
Had I been honest since my birth,
I had not been
The man I am, nor ever worth
A penny preen.

9.

Ye know yourselves as well as I,
I work twa farms, and sell and buy
All kinds of victual, horse, and kye,
And d——n the skin,
However selfish, shrewd, or sly,
Could tak' me in.

10.

I early in my life began
 The busiess world to weigh and sean,
 And many a wary, cunning man
 I had to cheat,
 By some ingenious shift or plan,
 My bills to meet.

11.

In years when grain was raw and light,
 So fozy it would scarcely dight,
 I look'd around me, left and right,
 As sharp 's a razor,
 Till I got some unskillful wight
 To buy by measure.

12.

When want of straw was nae drawback,
 But in the ear I saw a lack,
 I some way always had the nack
 Of coaxing fools
 To buy in slump, so much the stack,
 Grain, straw, and hools.

13.

When markets seemed upon the fall,
 I on a wealthy sot would call,
 Along with friends who could enthrall
 Wi' drink the cuif,
 And swear next day he bought my all,
 And they were proof.

14.

Mind, few with me can haud or draw,
 Brow-beat, hoodwink, contend, or thraw ;
 Or if they do, away to law
 At once I travel ;
 For there, with lies, and tricks, and jaw,
 I'll beat the devil.

15.

I know a little lawyers' lore ;
 And, as I hinted at before,
 In any pinch I have a core,
 All cut and dry,
 To swear, on every point and score,
 The greatest lie.

16.

Without compunction, dread, or fright,
 They swear for me that wrong is right ;
 While I, in turn, to them, as might
 Be well expected,
 Stand bound to swear that black is white,
 As I'm directed.

17.

'Tis said, and I believe it too,
 That oaths are awful if untrue ;
 But, mighty Jove ! what can we do,
 In these sad times ?
 Sins of the very blackest hue
 Are common crimes.

18.

Besides; I'm told, by those who know it,
 When we to cheat are driven to it,
 The cause that drives us on to do it
 Should bear the blame ;
 Nature and common sense allow it,
 In Justice' name.

19.

At all times for a weighty purse
 A boundless love be sure to nurse ;
 For honour never mind a curse,
 Adopt a rule,
 To pay no more than law can force,
 Be 't fair or foul.

20.

Pick all ye can from simple snools ;
 Keep mind, that all the golden rules
 Poor silly pedants teach in schools
 Are unavailing,
 Or only acted on by fools,
 Not men of dealing.

21.

The course with tradesmen to pursue,
 When their accounts they hand to you,
 Condemn their jobs, seem furious too
 At their amounts,
 Till large per centages ye sew
 From their accounts.

28.

Let flaunting beauty ne'er hoodwink
 Your understandings, learn to think
 Beauty skin-deep but lasts a blink,
 A thing ideal ;
 Whereas, the solid sterling elink
 Is something real.

29.

They must be void of sense or thought
 Who marry women having nought ;—
 Wives, and wives friends, have often brought
 Men to the door ;
 They are, at least, a d—d down-draught
 If they be poor.

30.

Who—g is bad, I'll not deny ;
 Yet wh—s may do to put you bye,
 Till each of you has fixed an eye
 Upon a lass,
 Blessed with the charms the wise envy—
 The charms of brass.

31.

Now, to conclude :—I recommend
 Strict piety ; at least, pretend ;
 And constantly the kirk attend
 On Sabbath day ;
 And morn and night at your fire-end
 Sing psalms and pray.

32.

Suppose you swindle, lie, and cheat,
 And praetice every low deceit,
 At making cash you will be beat
 In many ways,
 If you at church desert your seat
 On Sabbath days.

33.

'Tis much your interest here to pass
 Among the douse religious class ;
 The kirk-attender always has
 A most prodigious
 Advantage o'er the stupid ass
 Who's not religious.

34.

Belong, at least, to some profession,
And try to get among the session ;
If guilty then of some transgression
Ye cannot hide,
You have at least a congregation
All on your side.

35.

In this, my sons, I've done to you
What prudence prompted me to do ;
But as the lads are waiting now
Our reading time ;
The Word of God let us fall to,--
Let's chaunt a hymn.

THE REPLY OF THE SONS TO THEIR FATHER.

~~~~~  
" An honest man, though ne'er so poor,  
Is chief o' men for a' that."—BURNS.  
~~~~~

1.

DEAR father, we have heard your story,
And as your head is getting hoary,
To differ from you we are sorry;
And yet we need,
Seeing that in your sins you glory,
Constrained by greed.

2.

Honour to parents is their due,
When they perform what they should do ;
But the harangue we've heard from you
Diseloses base
Dishonest bye-roads to pursue,
Dark crooked ways.

3.

We will not take you for our guide,
Nor in your wicked schemes confide ;
Our mother, too, is on our side,
Whose hope and trust is,
We shall by honesty abide,
Truth, law, and justice.

10.

How can ye stand before a court,
 And there with truth and justice sport ;
 If any misereants can resort
 To what you tell ;
 There cannot be a blacker sort
 Of fiends in h—ll.

11.

The loopy thimble-rigging squad,
 Whom law condemns, are not so bad
 As you, the paragons of fraud,
 Who mankind gnaw,
 And strut about, well fed and clad,
 Defying law.

12.

With robbers on the Queen's highway,
 Men may get something like fair play ;
 They may retreat, or keep at bay,
 In self-defence ;
 But with you rascals, where have they
 The smallest chance ?

13.

There's simple Symon down the gate,
 You dragg'd him to the court of late ;
 A cow you swore he sold you at
 Half-price when fou ;
 Though all a lie, yet what of that ?
 You got the cow.

14.

A baker once to court you brought
 For wheat returned, you said was bought.
 Sample and stock compared, he thought
 Did not agree ;
 Though he was right, yet that was nought,
 You won the plea.

15.

With grief and pain, the truth to state,
 You wronged the man, though he was beat ;
 He had, for sending back the wheat,
 Occasion ample ;
 Yet ye maintained he was the cheat,
 And changed the sample.

16.

Had ye no pity, no regret,
 No sympathy for widow Kate?
 The man who took her whole estate,
 The wheel she span at,
 Must surely have a breast of slate,
 A heart of granite.

17.

Ye sent your mandates o'er the knowe,
 And roup'd her out, both stick and stow;
 She got from you a new-calved cow
 She could not pay;
 And really little wonder how,
 It died next day.

18.

Ye saw, and likewise had been told,
 It had the murrain e'er 'twas sold;
 And yet the beast ye did uphold
 In health uncommon,
 And palmed it on, the silly old
 Poor widow woman.

19.

Your servants you have hungered, too;
 And when at terms their fees were due,
 Their petty faults you would review
 In grim array,
 And from their little earnings screw
 One-half away.

20.

If some who served you chose to state
 What they about you could relate,
 The world your deeds would execrate
 By pen and tongue,
 And honest men, without regret,
 Could see you hung.

21.

We overheard you lately say,
 When starting to the town with hay,
 "Lads, when ye weigh it by the way,
 'Tram griths keep on."
 This made some forty, by foul play,
 Weigh fifty stone.

14

22.

Horses ye bought that would not tame,
Crib-biters, reesters, blind, and lame,
And sold them under some false name
At far-off fairs,
Telling your victims that ye came
From Girn-the-Hares.

23.

Why wish our souls to cash confined,
The object of a grov'ling mind ?
And why to politics be blind ?
We have good cause
To learn, as well as all mankind,
Our rights and laws.

24.

We have a firm determination,
To know the business of the nation,
Its government and legislation,
Top, branch, and root ;
Without this much of information
A man's a brute.

25.

Nought seemingly can you unfold
But money make and money hold,
By means that ne'er before were told,
Though used, forsooth,
By you, that has exchanged for gold,
Honour and truth.

26.

Still, money we do not despise,
Nor yet above its value prize ;
If ever in this world we rise
To have a mailing,
It will not be by tricks and lies,
And double-dealing.

27.

Who to believe could e'er be given,
That any parent under heaven,
Would tell his sons, by av'rice driven,
Than marry poor,
Unto chéred lasses, they were even
Better to wh—re !

28.

You speak to us as we were boors,
 Rude Hottentots, or savage Moors,
 That could be led to go with wh—res
 Than marry women,
 Who don't possess that god of yours,
 Or, rather, demon.

29.

To marry those we are inclined,
 Who have to mental virtues joined
 Hearts faithful, complaisant, and kind,
 And faces bonnie,
 In spite of your low grov'ling mind
 And devil—money.

30.

No other subject we will start,
 But come to the concluding part,
 Where you, with deep design and art,
 Have recommended,
 Though not religious at the heart,
 We should pretend it.

31.

To kirk on Sunday we will go,
 As long as conscience dictates so ;
 But whether we attend or no',
 'Tis something odd,
 If mankind should have ought to do
 'Twixt us and God.

32.

So far as our experience can,
 The laws of God and nature sean ;
 Virtue, we think, should make the man,
 And not professions,
 Whether he gets the praise or ban
 Of kirks or sessions.

33.

If our transactions everywhere
 Are unimpeachable and fair,
 If none we willingly ensnare,
 By word or deed,
 What right has any man to eare
 About our creed ?

34.

From man that charity we want,
 Which we to them as freely grant :
 Deep in all hearts we would implant
 That toleration,
 Like light and heat which God has sent
 O'er all creation.

35.

Now, one remark, and we conclude :—
 We trust and hope yet to be prond,
 To learn this lecture did you good,
 And ye began,
 To be what ye ne'er understood—
 An honest man.

Ready for the Press, and shortly will be Published, *The Last Speech and Dying Words of Scoundrel Will*, who died by the hands of the common executioner, on the scaffold of public opinion, 17th September, 1847.

Also, His Epitaph.

Finis.