A COLLECTION
OF
SCOTS PROVERBS.

By Allan Ramsay,
Author of the Gentle Shepherd, &c.

STERLING: Printed by M. Randall.
SCOTS PROVERBS.

Begun turn is half ended
blate cat mak's a proud mouse
blythe heart mak's a proud look
bonny bride is soon buskit
burd in hand's worth twa in the bush
borrow'd len should gae laughing hame
black hen lays a white egg
cock's ay crouse on his ain midden-head
cram'd kyte mak's a crazy carcase
daft nurse mak's a wise wean
deak maiden mak's a dirty wise
drink is shorter than a tale
dry summer ne'er made a dear peck
dumb man wins nac law
fool may win money, but it taks a wise man
to keep it
gude turn deserves anither
hour's oauld will suck out seven year's heat
man may lead a horse to the water, but
twenty winna gar him drink.
man's meat's anither man's poison
swallow mak's nae simmer.
Ae hour in the morning's worth twa in the afternoon
A hadding mare should be weel girded
A fool and his money is soon parted
A fool may gie a wise man counsel
A friend in court's worth a penny in purse
A friend in need's a friend indeed
Aft counting keeps friends lang thegither
After a storm comes a calm
A foul man and a hungry man ay mak haste hame
A fou purse never lacks friends
A fou wame maks a stiff back
A gaun fit's ay getting
A gien horse should na be look'd i' the mouth
A gude beginning has ay a gude ending
A gude cow may hae an ill cauf
A gude tongue's a sate weapon
A gude ingle makes a roomy fireside
A gude word's as soon said as an ill
A gude tale is no the waur o' bein twice tauld
A green Yule maks a fat kirk-yard
A greedy e’c never gat a good pennyworth.
A hantle cry murder and are ay uppermost
A houndless hunter and a gunless gunner see
routh o’ game
A hungry man’s ay angry
Ale-sellers should na be tale-tellers
A liar should hae a good memory
A light purse makes a heavy heart
A’s no gowd that glitters
A’ the truth should na be tauld
A’ that’s said in the kitchen should na be tald
in the ha’.
A’ cats are grey in the dark
A’s no tine that’s in hazard
A’s fish that comes in the net
A’ Stewarts are no sib to the king
A’s weel that ends weel
A thing are gude untried
A man’s ay crous’ on his ain cause.
A man may spit on his loof and do little
A man canabear a’ his kin on his back
A man at five many be a fool at fifteen
A man is weel or wae as he thinks himself wa
A mouthfu’o’ meat may be a townfu’ o’ shame
A muffled cat was ne’er a good hunter
An auld mason makes a good barrowman
An auld poke is ay skailing
An auld dog bites sicker
An ill shearer never gat a gude heuk,
An ill lesson is soon learned
An ill wife and a new lighted candle should hae
their heads haddendown.
An ill servant never proved a good master
An ounce o' motherwit is worth a pound o' clergy
Ane may lo'e the kirk weel enough, and no be aye riding on the rigging o't.
A new besom soops clean.
April showers bring May flowers.
A pound of care winna pay an ounce of debt.
A ragged colt may prove a good gelding.
A rowin stawe gathers nae fog.
A Soois mist will weet an Englishman to the skin.
As long lives the merry man as the sad.
As long as ye serve the tod ye maun bear up his tail.
As the sow fills the draff sours.
As the auld cock crows the young cock learns.
As weel be hang'd for a wedder as a lamb.
As ye do yourself ye judge your neebors:
As ye mak your bed sae ye maun lie down.
A safe conscience makes a sound sleep.
A short story stands long.
A fillerless man gangs fast thro' the market.
A finking master makes a rising man.
A sorrowful heart's aye dry.
As ye brew weel ye'll drink the better.
A spur in the head's worth twa in the heel.
At open doors dogs gae ben.
A tale-teller is waur than a thief.
A tarrowing bairn was never fat.
A tale never tines in the telling.
A thread will tye an honest man better than a rape will a knave.
A soocherless dame sits lang at hame.
A twapenny cat may look at King.
A wee bush is better than nae bield.
A wee thing fleys cowards.
Auld men are twice bairns.
Auld sparrows are ill to tame.
A yeld sow was never good to gryces.
Bare gentry, braggin beggars
Be lang sick that ye may be soon hale
Beggars should na be chusers
Be guess, as the blind man fell'd the dog
Better a bit in the morning than fast a' day
Better a finger aff than a' wagging
Better a toom house than an ill tenant
Better auld debts than auld sairs
Better sma fish than nae fish
Better be envied than pitied
Better be alane than in ill company
Better be idle than ill employed
Better be kind than cumbersome
Better buy than borrow
Better day the better deed
Better flatter a fool than fight him
Better find iron than tine siller
Better gie the slight than tak it
Better hand by a hair than draw wi a tether
Better he'in at the breird than at the bottom
Better kiss a knave than cast out wi' him
Better keep the deil without the door, than drive him out o' the house
Better keep weel than mak weel
Better late thrive than never do well
Better live in hope than die in despair
Better my bairns seek frae me than me beg frae them
Better ne'er begun than ne'er ended.
Better rue sit than rue flit
Better the end of a feast than the beginning of a fray
Better to haud than draw
Better twa skaiths than ae sorrow
Better wait on the cook than the doctor
Better wear shoon than sheets
Aetwen the deil and the deep sea
Bid a man to the roast and stick him wi' the spit.
Birds of a feather flock thegither
Birth's gude but breeding's better
Biting and scarting is Scotch fouk's wooing
Blind men should na be judges o' colors
Bourd na'wi' Bawty lest he bite ye
Burnt bairns dread the fire
Broken bread maks hale bairns
Butter and burn trouts ar kittle meat for maidens
By a thief faae the gollows and he'll cut your throat.
Cadgers are ay fond o ereeels.
Cast a bane in the house rigging 'twill sa on its feet.
Cast a bane in the deil's teeth.
-Cauld cools the love that kindles o'er het
Come unca'd fit unsair'd
Charity begins at home
Confess and be hang'd
Corn him well he'll work the better
Confess'd fault is half amends
Cut your cloak according to your claith
Crooked callin, quoth the cripple till his wife
Count again is not forbidden
Count like Jews and gree like brethren

D

Damming and laving is good sure fishing
Daughters and dead fish are nae keepin ware
Dawted bairns dow bear little
Day-light will peep thro' a sma'hole
Death defies the docter
Delays are dangerous
Dirt bodes luck
Dinna gut your fish till ye get them
Death and marriage break term day
Draff's gude enough for swine
Dows and dominics leave ay a foul house
Double charges rive cannons
Dumnie winna lie
Drink and drouth come na ay thegither

E

Early master soon knave
Eat your fill, but pouch none
Eild and poortith's sair to thole
Either win the horse or lose the saddle
E'ening red and morning grey, is a taiken of a bonny day
E'ening oats are good morning fother
Eneugh's as good's a feast
Every ane creeshes the fat sow's arse
Every thing has an end, an a pudding has twa
Every craw thinks his ain bird whitest
Every dog has his day

F

Fair exchange is nae robbery
Fancy kills and fancy cures
Far away fowls hae ay fair feathers
Fat painches bode lean pows
Fiddlers' dogs and flesh flies come to feasts unca'd
Fine feathers mak fine birds.
Fire an water are gude servants, but bod masters.
First come first sair'd.
Flaes and a ginning wife are waukrife bedfellows.
Fools should na hae chappin'-sticks.
Fools mak feast and wife fouk eat them;
The wise mak jests, and fools repeat them.
For fashion's sake, as dogs gang to market.
Foul water slockens fire.
Fresh fish and poor friends grow soon ill far'd.
Fumblers are ay fond o' weans.

G

Gie you an inch ye'll tak an ell.
Glasses and lasses are bruckle ware.
Gie the deil his due
God help rich fouk the poor can beg.
God send you mair wit and me mair sile.
Gut nae fish till ye get them.

H

Hae will gar a deaf man hear.
Hame is hame if it were ne'er sae hamely.
Hang a thief when he's young and he'll no steal when he's auld.
He brings a stick to break his ain head.
He fells twa dogs wi' ae stane.
He had his finger in the pye.
He has a bee in his bannet lug.
He has nae as muckle sense as a cow can hau'd in her faulded nieve.
He has need of a lang spoon that sups wi' the deil.
He has a slid grip that has an eel by the tail.
He kens na a B by a bull's foot.
He'll soon be a beggar that canna say Nay.
He lo'ed mutton weel that lick'd where the ewe lay.
He may weel swim that has head hadden up.
He never lies but when the hollin's green.
He needs maun rin that the deil drives.
He's wise that kens when he's weel, and can hau'd himsel' sae.
He's an Aberdeen's man, takes his word agai'n.
He's like a flea in a blanket.
He's a wise bairn that kens his his ain father.
He's unca fou in his ain house that canna pick a bane in his neibour's.
He's a proud horse that winna bear his ain provender.
He's like a singit cat, better than he's likely.
He's a worthless gudeman that's no missed
He stumbles at a strae an loups o'er a wonlyne
He speaks like a prent-book
He that aught the cow gangs nearest her tail
He that buys land buys stanes; and he that
buys beef buys banes
He that buys nuts buys shells, and he that buys
gude ale buys naething else
He that canna mak sport should mar nane
He that comes unca'd sits unsair'd
He that deals in dirt has ay foul fingers
He that's fear'd for a fart will ne'er bide thun-
der
He that gies a wad gies naething
He that has a guid cramp may thole some
thistles
He that has nae siller in his purse should hae
silk on his tongue
He that hides is the best at seeking
He that has muckle ay gets mair.
He that hews aboon his head may get a speal in
his e'e
He that's ill to himsel will be good to naebody
He that laughs at his ain joke spills the sport
o't
He that wad eat the kernel maun crack the nut
He wad gang a mile to flit a sow
He wad rake hell for a bodle
His bark is waur than his bite
Hungry dogs are blythe o' bursten puddings

I hae anither tow on my rock
I hae a gude gun, but it's in the castle
I hae seen mair than I hae eaten or ye wadna be there
I'd ne'er keep a dog and bark mysel
I'm o'er auld a cat to draw a strae before
I ne'er sat on your coat tail
I ne'er loed meat that craw'd in my cradin
I wad be scant o' clath to sole my hose wi a docken
I wadna fother ye for yere muck
I wadna mak fish o' ane and flesh o' anither
I wish you redier meat than a running hare
I wadna be deav'd wi your kecklin for a' your eggs

If and AND spoil mony a good charter
If a man's gaun down the brae ilk ane gies him a jundy
If it be a faut it's nae feirly
If it wona sell it winna sour
If the devil be laird ye'll be tenant
If wishes were horses beggars wad ride
If ye hae little gear guide it the better
If ye sell your purse to your wife gei her your breeks to the bargain
If ye win at whoring ye'll tine at naething
I'll bairns get broken paws
I'll bairns are best heard at hame
I'll doers are ay ill dreaders
I'll getting hot water frae aneath cauld ice
I'll herds msk fat foxes
I'll hearing makes wrang rehearsing
I'll news are all o'er true
I'll payers are ay good creavers
I'll won gear winna enrich the third heir
It cam' wi' the wind let it gae wi' the water
It's an ill cause that the lawyers think shame o'
It's an ill pack that's no worth the custom
It's a mean mouse that has but ae hole
It's a nasty bird files its ain nest
It's stinking praise comes out o' anes ain mouth
It's a sin to lie on the devil
It's a shame to eat the cow and worry on the tail
It's an ill wind that blows naebody gude
It's a sorry hen that mayna greet
It's dear cost honey that's licket aff a thorn
It's fair in the ha' whan beards wag a
It's gude sleeping in a hale skin
It's gude to be sib to siller
It's gude to hae twa strings to your bow
It's hard to sit in Rome, and strive wi the Pope
It's hard for a greedy ee to hae a leal heart
It's ill to bring out o' the flesh what's bred in
the bane
It's ill getting breeks aff a highlandman
It's ill taking corn frae geese
It's ill makin a silken purse o' a sow's lug, or a
toutin horn o a tod's tail
Kittle shooting at corbies and clergy
Kittle to waken sleepin dogs
Lang or the deil be found dead at a dike side
Lang or like to die fill the kirk yard
Needless to bid a wran rin
Needless to pour water on a drown'd mouse
Nae sin to tak a gude price but in geeing
Ill measure
No tint that a friend gets
Nae laughing to girk in a woody
Past joking when the head's ad
It's weel that our faults are no written on our face
Its lang or four bare legs gather hot in the bed
It maun be true that a fouk say
It will be a fether out o' your wing
It sets a sow weel to wear a saddle
It was ne'er for naething that the gled whistled
It will be a fire when it burns, quo' the tod
when he shit on the ice

K

Keep your ain fish guts to your ain sea maws
Keep your breath ro cool your crowdie
Kindness will creep where it canna gang
King's cauff is worth ither fouk's corn
Kindle a candle at baith ends it will soon be done
Kythe in your ain colors that fouk may ken you

L

Laith to bed and laith to rise
Lang fasting hains nae meat
Lang-tongued wives gae lang wi' bairn
Langest at fire soon finds cauld
Laws costly, tak a pint and gree
Law makkers should na be law-breakers.
Laugh at leisure ye may greet e'er night
Learn young, learn fair
Let na the plugh stand to kill a mouse
Let a' trades live, quoth the wife when she
burnt her besom
Let him haud the bairn that aught the bairn
Let him cool in the skin he het in
Let ilka sheep hang by its ain shank
Let the horns gang wi the hide
Let the morn come and the meat wi't
Like draws to like, as an auld horse to a feal
dike
Like Scotsman, ay wise ahint the hand
Lik hens, ye rin ay to the tap o' the heap
Like the cat, fain fish wad ye eat, but ye're
laith to wait your feet
Lippen to me, but look to yoursel
Little kind, less cared for
Little said's soon mended
Little wit i' the heads maks muckle treavel te
   to the feet
Little may an auld nag do that manna higher
Little dogs hae lang tails
Live upon love, as lawrocks do on leeks
Loud on the loan was ne'er a gude miik cow
Love and light winna hide
Maidens should be mild and meek,
Quick to hear and slow to speak,
Muckle noise and little woo, quo the devil when he clippit the sow
Maidens' tochers an' ministers' stipends are ay less than ca'd
Mair by luck than gude guiding
Mair haste the waur speed, quo the taylor to the lang thread
Mak the best o a bad bargain
Mak your hay when the sun shines
Meally mou'd maids stand lang at the mill
Muckle may fa between the cup and the lip,
Mills and wives are ay wanting
Money is welcome in a dirten clout
Money excuses pishes the bed
Mony cooks ne'er made gude kail

Nae fool like an auld fool
Nae man thrives unless his wife lets him
Naething's to be done in haste but gripping o' flaes
Jane but fools an knaves lay wagers
Nae sooner up than her head's in the amry
Jane can play the fool sae weel as a wise man
Necessity has nae law
Je'er draw your durk when a dunt will do
Je'er find faut wi my shoon unless ye pay the cobler
Je'er let on, but laugh in your sleeve
Je'er marry a widow unless her first man was hang'd
Je'er quart certainty for hope
Je'er seek a wife till ye ken what to do wi' her
Jeer strive against the stream
Nineteen naesays o' a maiden is half a grant.
O, P, & Q.
O'er muckle o' ae thing is gude for naething
O' twa ills choose the least
Out o' debt, out o' danger
Pay him in his ain coin
Pennyless souls may pine in purgatory
Possession is eleven points in the law
Poor fouks are soon pish'd out
Poets and Printers hae liberty to lie
Put a coward to his mettle, and he'll fight the deil
Quick returns mak rich

R

Raise nae mair deels than ye're able to lay
Rather spoil your joke than take your friend
Raw dads make fat lads
Raw leather raxes
Right wrangs nae man
Rome was nae bigget in ae day

S

Sair cravers are aye ill payers
Satan reproving sin
Set a stout heart to a stay brae
Shame's past the shade o' your hair
Sharp stomachs mak short graces
Slaw at meat, slaw at wark
Speak when you're spoken to
Speak o' the deil and he'll appear
Standing dubs gather dirt
Stowa dints are sweetest
Strike the iron as lang's its het.

T

That winna be a mote in your marriage
The better day the better deed
The cure may be waur than the disease
The deil's bairns hae deil's luck
The first fuss of a haggis is ay the bauldest
The King's errand may come in the cadger's gate
The longer we live, we see themae ferlies
The mair ye greet ye'll pish the less
The longer ye tramp on a turd, it turns ay the braider
The master's ee maks the horse fat
The smith's mare and the souter's wife are ay warst shod
The thiefer like the better sodger
The thing that's in your wame's no in your testament
The worth o' a thing is best kend by the want of it
There's nane sae blind as them that winna see
There's life in a mussel as lang as it cheeps
They are like thy gryces, if ye kittle their wame they fa' on their backs
They that get a word o' soon rising may lie a day
Three can keep a secret if twa be swa
True blue will never stain.
Wae's the wife that wants the tongue, but
weel's the man that has her
Weans maun creep e'er they gang.
We canna baith sup and blaw
Welcome's the best dish in the kitchen
What's gotten o'er the deil's back, will gang
awa under his belly
When ae door steeks, anither opens
When the tod preaches, tak tent o' the lambs
When the wame's fu the banes wad be at rest

Ends