



BURNS

The image shows a highly decorative book cover, likely made of dark brown leather or cloth. The cover is adorned with intricate gold-tooled patterns. A central rectangular panel, also gold-tooled, features the name "BURNS" in a large, bold, serif font. This panel is framed by multiple decorative borders: a top border with a repeating floral motif, a middle border with a dotted pattern, and a bottom border with a repeating floral motif. The background of the cover is filled with a complex, symmetrical design of interlocking lines and floral motifs, creating a rich, textured appearance.



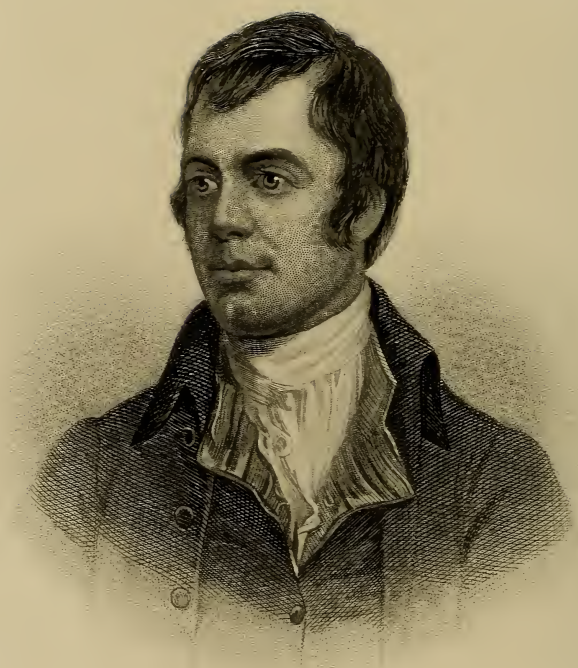
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Robert Burns

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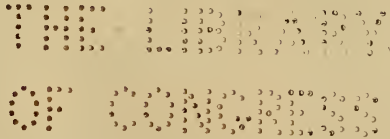


THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
ROBERT BURNS.

REPRINTED FROM THE BEST EDITIONS.

With Explanatory Glossary, Notes, Memoir, &c.

PORTRAIT AND ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATIONS.



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PREFACE TO THE FIRST, OR KILMARNOCK,
EDITION.

(JULY, 1786.)

THE following trifles are not the production of the Poet, who, with all the advantages of learned art, and, perhaps, amid the elegancies and idleness of upper life, looks down for a rural theme, with an eye to Theocritus or Virgil. To the Author of this, these, and other celebrated names, their countrymen are, at least in their original language, "a fountain shut up, and a book sealed." Unacquainted with the necessary requisites for commencing poet by rule, he sings the sentiments and manners he felt and saw in himself and his rustic compeers around him, in his and their native language. Though a rhymers from his earliest years, at least from the earliest impulse of the softer passions, it was not till very lately that the applause, perhaps the partiality, of friendship, awakened his vanity so far as to make him think anything of his worth showing: and none of the following works were composed with a view to the press. To amuse himself with the little creations of his own fancy, amid the toil and fatigue of a laborious life; to transcribe the various feelings—the loves, the griefs, the hopes, the fears—in his own breast; to find some kind of counterpoise to the struggles of a world, always an alien scene, a task uncouth to the poetical mind—these were his motives for courting the Muses, and in these he found Poetry to be its own reward.

Now that he appears in the public character of an Author, he does it with fear and trembling. So dear is fame to the rhyming tribe, that even he, an obscure, nameless Bard, shrinks aghast at the thought of being branded as—an impertinent blockhead, obtruding his nonsense on the world; and, because he can make shift to jingle a few doggerel Scottish rhymes together, looking upon himself as a poet, of no small consequence, forsooth!

It is an observation of that celebrated poet, Shenstone, whose divine *Elegies* do honour to our language, our nation, and our species, that "Humility has depressed many a genius to a hermit, but never raised one to fame!" If any critic catches at the word Genius, the author tells him, once for all, that he certainly looks upon him-elf as possessed of some poetic abilities, otherwise his publishing, in the manner he has done, would be a manœuvre below the worst character which he hopes, his worst enemy will ever give him. But to the genius of a Ramsay, or the glorious dawnings of the poor unfortunate Fergusson, he, with equal unaffected sincerity, declares that, even in his highest pulse of vanity, he has not the most distant pretensions. These two justly admired Scottish poets he has often had in his eye in the following pieces; but rather with a view to kindle at their flame than for servile imitation.

To his Subscribers the Author returns his most sincere thanks. Not the mercenary bow over a counter, but the heart throbbing gratitude of the Bard, conscious how much he owes to benevolence and friendship for gratifying him, if he deserves it, in that dearest wish of every poetic bosom—to be distinguished. He begs his readers, particularly the learned and the polite, who may honour him with a perusal, that they will make every allowance for education and circumstances of life; but if, after a fair, candid, and impartial criticism, he shall stand convicted of dulness and nonsense, let him be done by as he would in that case do by others—let him be condemned, without mercy, to contempt and oblivion.



DEDICATION TO THE SECOND, OR EDINBURGH
EDITION OF THE POEMS OF BURNS.

TO THE NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CALEDONIAN
HUNT.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—

A SCOTTISH BARD, proud of the name, and whose highest ambition is to sing in his Country's service—where shall he so properly look for patronage as to the illustrious names of his native land; those who bear the honours and inherit the virtues of their ancestors? The Poetic Genius of my Country found me, as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha—at the PLOUGH; and threw her inspiring mantle over me. She bade me sing the loves, the joys, the rural scenes and rural pleasures of my native soil, in my native tongue: I tuned my wild, artless notes as she inspired. She whispered me to come to this ancient Metropolis of Caledonia, and lay my Songs under your honoured protection: I now obey her dictates.

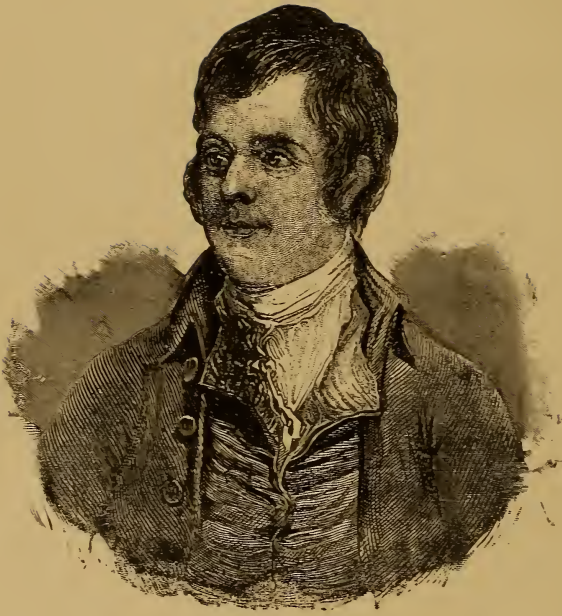
Though much indebted to your goodness, I do not approach you, my Lords and Gentlemen, in the usual style of dedication, to thank you for past favours: that path is so hackneyed by prostituted learning, that honest Rusticity is ashamed of it. Nor do I present this Address with the venal soul of a servile author, looking for a continuation of those favours: I was bred to the plough, and am independent. I come to claim the common Scottish name with you, my illustrious Countrymen; and to tell the world that I glory in the title. I come to congratulate my country, that the blood of her ancient heroes still runs uncontaminated; and that from your courage, knowledge, and public spirit, she may expect protection, wealth, and liberty. In the last place, I come to proffer my warmest wishes to the Great Fountain of Honour, the Monarch of the Universe, for your welfare and happiness.

When you go forth to waken the Echoes, in the ancient and favourite amusement of your forefathers, may Pleasure ever be of your party: and may Social Joy await your return! When harassed in courts or camps with the jostlings of bad men and bad measures, may the honest consciousness of injured Worth attend your return to your native seats; and may Domestic Happiness, with a smiling welcome, meet you at your gates! May Corruption shrink at your kindling indignant glance; and may tyranny in the Ruler, and licentiousness in the People, equally find you an inexorable foe!

I have the honour to be,
With the sincerest gratitude, and highest respect,
My Lords and Gentlemen,
Your most devoted, humble Servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

Edinburgh, April 4, 1787.



Robert Burns - Poet -



Memoir of Robert Burns.

On the 25th of January, 1759—in a clay cottage near the bridge of Doon, Ayrshire—was born Robert Burns, the great Poet of Scotland. There is a tradition that his father, riding in haste to fetch the doctor, met on the river-brink a wandering mendicant, who entreated his aid to help her across the swollen stream. The good-natured Scotsman complied; and the same woman, it is said, seeking hospitality in his own cottage, uttered a prophecy over the newly-born babe, which was afterwards well fulfilled. There is some confirmation of this apocryphal legend in Burns's song of "Robin," in which he dates the circumstance of the gipsy's prophecy from the day of his own birth,—

"Our monarch's hindmost year but one

(*i.e.* George II. died in 1760, Robin was born 1759,)

Was five-and-twenty days begun,

(*i.e.* January 25.)

'Twas then a blast o' Janwar' win'
Blew handsel in on Robin." (p. 269.)

The state of the weather, also, agrees with the date of his birth, for it was in the midst of winter storms that the gifted, but ill-fated genius saw the light. Gilbert Burns, Robert's brother, tells Dr. Currie the following incident of the Poet's babyhood: "When my father," he says, "built his clay bigging, he put in two stone jambs, as they are called, and a lintel carrying up a chimney in his clay gable. The consequence was, that as the gable subsided, the jambs, remaining firm, threw it off its centre; and one very stormy morning, when my brother was nine or ten days old, a little before daylight, a part of the gable fell out, and the rest appeared so shattered, that my mother, with the young Poet, had to be carried through the storm to a neighbour's house, where they remained a week till their own dwelling was adjusted."



The father of Robert Burns was William Burness (thus he spelt his name), and was born in Kincardineshire. He was brought up on the estate of Dunnottar, belonging to the Keiths (Earls Marischal), who forfeited it by adhering to the cause of the Stuarts, in 1716. The Burness family shared the misfortunes of their chief, and William and a younger son, Robert, left their paternal home to seek their fortunes in Edinburgh and England. "I have often," says Gilbert Burns, "heard my father describe the anguish of mind he felt when they parted on the top of a hill on the confines of their native place, each going off his several way in search of new adventures, and scarcely knowing whither he went. My father undertook to act as a gardener, and shaped his course to Edinburgh, where he wrought hard, when he could get work, passing through a variety of difficulties. Still, however, he endeavoured to spare something for the support of his aged parents; and I recollect hearing him mention his having sent a bank-note for this purpose, when money of that kind was so scarce in Kincardineshire, that they scarcely knew how to employ it when it arrived."

William Burness moved from Edinburgh westward into the county of Ayr, where he engaged himself as a gardener to the Laird of Fairlie, with whom he lived two years; he then changed his service for that of Crawford of Doonside. At length, being desirous of marrying and settling, he took a perpetual lease of seven acres of land from Dr. Campbell, a physician in Ayr, with the view of commencing as nurseryman and public gardener. Here he built with his own hands a clay bigging, or cottage, to which he brought his wife, Agnes Brown, the daughter of a Carrick farmer; and here Burns was born.

The Poet has given a brief account of his life, up to the period when his fame first dawned, in a letter to Dr. Moore, the author of the well-known novel "Zeluco." We insert it as an interesting (it is assuredly the most authentic) record of his childhood and youth:—

"I have not the most distant pretensions," says Burns, in this epistle, "to assume that character which the pye-coated guardians of escutcheons call a gentleman. When at Edinburgh last winter, I got acquainted in the Herald's Office, and looking through that granary of honours, I found there almost every name in the kingdom; but for me,—

" 'My ancient but ignoble blood
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the Flood.'

Gules, purple, argent, &c., quite disowned me.

"My father was of the north of Scotland, the son of a farmer, and was thrown by early misfortunes on the world at large,¹

¹ In the original letter to Dr. Moore, our Poet described his ancestors as "renting lands of the noble Keiths of Marischal, and as having had



where, after many years' wanderings and sojournings, he picked up a pretty large quantity of observation and experience, to which I am indebted for most of my little pretensions to wisdom. I have met with few who understood men, their manners, and their ways, equal to him; but stubborn ungainly integrity, and headlong ungovernable irascibility, are disqualifying circumstances; consequently I was born a very poor man's son. For the first six or seven years of my life my father was gardener to a worthy gentleman of small estate, in the neighbourhood of Ayr. Had he continued in that station, I must have marched off to be one of the little underlings about a farmhouse; but it was his dearest wish and prayer to have it in his power to keep his children under his own eye till they could discern between good and evil; so, with the assistance of his generous master, my father ventured on a small farm on his estate. At those years I was by no means a favourite with anybody. I was a good deal noted for a retentive memory, a stubborn, sturdy something in my disposition, and an enthusiastic idiot piety. I say *idiot* piety, because I was then but a child. Though it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings, I made an excellent English scholar, and by the time I was ten or eleven years of age, I was a critic in substantives, verbs, and particles. In my infant and boyish days, too, I owed much to an old woman¹ who resided in the family, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and superstition. She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the country of tales and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraipts, giants, enchanted towers, dragons, and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of poetry, but had so strong an effect on my imagination, that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a sharp look-out in suspicious places; and though

the honour of sharing their fate." "I do not," continues he, "use the word *honour* with any reference to political principles: *loyal* and *disloyal* I take to be merely relative terms, in that ancient and formidable court, known in this country by the name of Club-law, where the right is always with the strongest. But those who dare welcome ruin, and shake hands with infamy, for what they sincerely believe to be the cause of their God, or their king, are, as Mark Antony says, in Shakspeare, of Brutus and Cassius, 'honourable men.' I mention this circumstance, because it threw my father on the world at large." This paragraph was omitted by Dr. Currie, at the desire of Gilbert Burns, who thought the Poet was mistaken, but subsequent information renders it probable that Robert was better informed on the subject than his brother.

¹ The name of this old woman was Betty Davidson; she was the widow of a cousin of Mrs Burns, and dependent on her son. His wife treated her unkindly, and good William Burness, from compassion, had her to stay for a few months at a time in his house. He little thought how greatly the imagination of his little son would be stirred and awakened by the poor dependant.



nobody can be more sceptical than I am in such matters, yet it often takes an effort of philosophy to shake off these idle terrors. The earliest composition that I recollect taking pleasure in, was 'The Vision of Mirza,' and a hymn of Addison's, beginning 'How are thy servants blest, O Lord!' I particularly remember one half-stanza, which was music to my boyish ear,—

“ ‘For though on dreadful whirls we hung
High on the broken wave’ —

I met with these pieces in 'Mason's English Collection,' one of my school-books. The first two books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleasure than any two books I ever read since, were 'The Life of Hannibal,' and 'The History of Sir William Wallace.' Hannibal gave my young ideas such a turn, that I used to strut in raptures up and down after the recruiting drum and bagpipe, and wish myself tall enough to be a soldier; while the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my veins, which will boil along there till the floodgates of life shut in eternal rest.

"Polemical divinity about this time was putting the country half-mad; and I, ambitious of shining in conversation parties on Sundays, between sermons, at funerals, &c., used, a few years afterwards, to puzzle Calvinism with so much heat and indiscretion, that I raised a hue-and-cry of heresy against me, which has not ceased to this hour.

"My vicinity to Ayr was of some advantage to me. My social disposition, when not checked by some modifications of spirited pride, was, like our catechism definition of infinitude, 'without bounds or limits.' I formed several connections with other youngsters who possessed superior advantages—the youngling actors, who were busy in the rehearsal of parts in which they were shortly to appear on the stage of life, where, alas! I was destined to drudge behind the scenes. It is not commonly at this green age that our young gentry have a just sense of the immense distance between them and their ragged playfellows. It takes a few dashes into the world to give the young great man that proper, decent, unnoticing disregard for the poor insignificant stupid devils, the mechanics and peasantry around him, who were perhaps born in the same village. My young superiors never insulted the cloutery appearance of my ploughboy carcase, the two extremes of which were often exposed to all the inclemencies of all the seasons. They would give me stray volumes of books: among them, even then, I could pick up some observations; and one, whose heart I am sure not even the 'Munny Begum' scenes have tainted, helped me to a little French. Parting with these my young friends and benefactors, as they occasionally went off for the East or West Indies, was often to me a sore affliction, but I was soon called to more serious evils.



My father's generous master died; the farm proved a ruinous bargain; and, to clench the misfortune, we fell into the hands of a factor, who sat for the picture I have drawn of one in my 'Tale of Twa Dogs.' My father was advanced in life when he married; I was the eldest of seven children; and he, worn out by early hardships, was unfit for labour. My father's spirit was soon irritated, but not easily broken. There was a freedom in his lease in two years more; and, to weather these two years, we retrenched our expenses. We lived very poorly: I was a dexterous ploughman for my age, and the next eldest to me was a brother (Gilbert), who could drive the plough very well, and help me to thrash the corn. A novel writer might perhaps have viewed these scenes with some satisfaction; but so did not I. My indignation yet boils at the recollection of the insolent threatening letters, which used to set us all in tears.

"This kind of life—the cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing moil of a galley-slave—brought me to my sixteenth year, a little before which period I first committed the sin of rhyme. You know our country custom of coupling a man and a woman together as partners in the labours of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn my partner was a bewitching creature, a year younger than myself. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language; but you know the Scottish idiom—she was a bonnie, sweet, sonsie lass. In short, she, altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me in that delicious passion, which, in spite of acid disappointment, gin-horse prudence, and bookworm philosophy, I hold to be the first of human joys, our dearest blessing here below! How she caught the contagion I cannot tell: you medical people talk much of infection from breathing the same air, the touch, &c., but I never expressly said I loved her. Indeed I did not know myself why I liked so much to loiter behind with her when returning in the evening from our labours; why the tones of her voice made my heart-strings thrill like an Æolian harp; and particularly why my pulse beat such a furious rattan when I looked and fingered over her little hand to pick out the cruel nettle-stings and thistles. Among her other love-inspiring qualities, she sang sweetly; and it was her favourite reel to which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme. I was not so presumptuous as to imagine that I could make verses like printed ones, composed by men who had Greek and Latin; but my girl sang a song, which was said to be composed by a small country laird's son, on one of his father's maids, with whom he was in love; and I saw no reason why I might not rhyme as well as he; for, excepting that he could smear sheep, and cast peats, his father living in the moorlands, he had no more scholar-craft than myself.

"Thus with me began love and poetry, which at times have been my only, and, till within the last twelve months, have been my highest enjoyment. My father struggled on till he reached



the freedom in his lease, when he entered on a larger farm, about ten miles farther in the country. The nature of the bargain he made was such as to throw a little ready-money into his hands at the commencement of his lease, otherwise the affair would have been impracticable. For four years we lived comfortably here, but a difference commencing between him and his landlord as to terms, after three years tossing and whirling in the vortex of litigation, my father was just saved from the horrors of a jail by a consumption, which, after two years' promises, kindly stepped in, and carried him away to 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.'

"It is during the time that we lived on this farm that my little story is most eventful. I was, at the beginning of this period, perhaps the most ungainly, awkward boy in the parish—no *solitaire* was less acquainted with the ways of the world. What I knew of ancient story was gathered from Salmon's and Guthrie's geographical grammars; and the ideas I had formed of modern manners, of literature and criticism, I got from the *Spectator*. These, with 'Pope's Works,' some plays of Shakspeare, 'Tull and Dickson on Agriculture,' 'The Pantheon,' 'Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding,' 'Stackhouse's History of the Bible,' 'Justice's British Gardener's Directory,' 'Boyle's Lectures,' 'Allan Ramsay's Works,' 'Taylor's Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin,' 'A Select Collection of English Songs,' and 'Hervey's Meditations,' had formed the whole of my reading. The collection of songs was my *vade mecum*. I pored over them driving my cart, or walking to labour, song by song, verse by verse; carefully noting the true, tender, or sublime from affectation and fustian. I am convinced I owe to this practice much of my critic craft, such as it is.

"In my seventeenth year, to give my manners a brush, I went to a country dancing-school. My father had an unaccountable antipathy against these meetings; and my going was, what to this moment I repent, in opposition to his wishes. My father, as I said before, was subject to strong passions: from that instance of disobedience in me he took a sort of dislike to me, which I believe was one cause of the dissipation which marked my succeeding years. I say dissipation, comparatively with the strictness, and sobriety, and regularity of presbyterian country life; for, though the will-o'-wisp meteors of thoughtless whim were almost the sole lights of my path, yet early ingrained piety and virtue kept me for several years afterwards within the line of innocence. The great misfortune of my life was to want an aim. I had felt early some stirrings of ambition, but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops round the walls of his cave. I saw my father's situation entailed on me perpetual labour. The only two openings by which I could enter the temple of Fortune were the gate of niggardly economy, or the path of little chicaning bargain-making. The first is so contracted an



aperture, I never could squeeze myself into it; the last I always hated—there was contamination in the very entrance! Thus abandoned of aim or view in life, with a strong appetite for sociability, as well from native hilarity as from a pride of observation and remark; a constitutional melancholy or hypochondriasm that made me fly solitude; add to these incentives to social life my reputation for bookish knowledge, a certain wild logical talent, and a strength of thought, something like the rudiments of good sense; and it will not seem surprising that I was generally a welcome guest where I visited, or any great wonder that, always where two or three met together, there was I among them. But far beyond all other impulses of my heart was *un penchant à l'adorable moitié du genre humain*. My heart was completely tinder, and was eternally lighted up by some goddess or other; and, as in every other warfare in this world, my fortune was various, sometimes I was received with favour, and sometimes I was mortified with a repulse. At the plough, scythe, or reap-hook I feared no competitor, and thus I set absolute want at defiance; and as I never cared further for my labours than while I was in actual exercise, I spent the evenings in the way after my own heart. A country lad seldom carries on a love-adventure without an assisting confidant. I possessed a curiosity, zeal, and intrepid dexterity that recommended me as a proper second on these occasions; and I dare say I felt as much pleasure in being in the secret of half the loves of the parish of Tarbolton as ever did statesman in knowing the intrigues of half the courts of Europe. The very goose-feather in my hand seems to know instinctively the well-worn path of my imagination, the favourite theme of my song; and is with difficulty restrained from giving you a couple of paragraphs on the love-adventures of my compeers, the humble inmates of the farm-house and cottage; but the grave sons of science, ambition, or avarice baptize these things by the name of Follies. To the sons and daughters of labour and poverty they are matters of the most serious nature; to them the ardent hope, the stolen interview, the tender farewell, are the greatest and most delicious parts of their enjoyments.

“Another circumstance in my life, which made some alteration in my mind and manners, was, that I spent my nineteenth summer on a smuggling coast, a good distance from home. at a noted school, to learn mensuration, surveying, dialling, &c., in which I made a pretty good progress. But I made a greater progress in the knowledge of mankind. The contraband trade was at that time very successful, and it sometimes happened to me to fall in with those who carried it on. Scenes of swaggering riot and roaring dissipation were till this time new to me; but I was no enemy to social life. Here, though I learnt to fill my glass, and to mix without fear in a drunken squabble, yet I went on with a high hand with my geometrix, till the sun entered Virgo.



a month which is always a carnival in my bosom; when a charming *filette*, who lived next door to the school, overset my trigonometry, and set me off at a tangent from the sphere of my studies. I, however, struggled on with my sines and co-sines for a few days more; but, stepping into the garden one charming noon, to take the sun's altitude, there I met my angel¹—

“ ‘Like Proserpine, gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower.’

“It was in vain to think of doing any more good at school. The remaining week I staid I did nothing but craze the faculties of my soul about her, or steal out to meet her; and the last two nights of my stay in the country, had sleep been a mortal sin, the image of this modest and innocent girl had kept me guiltless.

“I returned home very considerably improved. My reading was enlarged with the very important addition of Thomson's and Shenstone's works; I had seen human nature in a new phasis; and I engaged several of my schoolfellows to keep up a literary correspondence with me. This improved me in composition. I had met with a collection of letters by the wits of Queen Anne's reign, and I pored over them most devoutly. I kept copies of any of my own letters that pleased me; and a comparison between them and the composition of most of my correspondents flattered my vanity. I carried this whim so far that, though I had not three farthings' worth of business in the world, yet almost every post brought me as many letters as if I had been a broad-plodding son of day-book and ledger.

“My life flowed on much in the same course till my twenty-third year. *Vive l'amour' et vive la bagatelle!* were my sole principles of action. The addition of two more authors to my library gave me great pleasure; Sterne and M'Kenzie—'Tristram Shandy' and 'The Man of Feeling'—were my bosom favourites. Poesy was still a darling walk for my mind; but it was only indulged in according to the humour of the hour. I had usually half a dozen or more pieces on hand; I took up one or other as it suited the momentary tone of the mind, and dismissed the work as it bordered on fatigue. My passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils, till they got vent in rhyme; and then the conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet! None of the rhymes of those days are in print, except 'Winter; a Dirge,' the eldest of my printed pieces; 'The Death of Poor Maillie,' 'John Barleycorn,' and Songs first, second, and third. Song second was the ebullition of that passion which ended the forementioned school-business.

“My twenty-third year was to me an important era. Partly through whim, and partly that I wished to set about doing some-

¹ Peggie Thomson.



thing in life, I joined a flax-dresser in a neighbouring town (Irwin), to learn his trade. This was an unlucky affair, and, to finish the whole, as we were giving a welcome carousal to the new year, the shop took fire, and burnt to ashes; and I was left, like a true poet, not worth a sixpence.

"I was obliged to give up this scheme: the clouds of misfortune were gathering thick round my father's head; and, what was worst of all, he was visibly far gone in a consumption; and, to crown my distresses, a *belle fille* whom I adored, and who had pledged her soul to meet me in the field of matrimony, jilted me, with peculiar circumstances of mortification. The finishing evil that brought up the rear of this infernal file, was my constitutional melancholy being increased to such a degree, that for three months I was in a state of mind scarcely to be envied by the hopeless wretches who have got their mittins—Depart from me ye accursed!

"From this adventure I learned something of a town life; but the principal thing which gave my mind a turn was a friendship I formed with a young fellow,¹ a very noble character, but a hapless son of misfortune. He was the son of a simple mechanic; but a great man in the neighbourhood taking him under his patronage, gave him a genteel education, with a view of bettering his situation in life. The patron dying just as he was ready to launch out into the world, the poor fellow in despair went to sea; where, after a variety of good and ill fortune, a little before I was acquainted with him, he had been set on shore by an American privateer, on the wild coast of Connaught, stripped of everything. I cannot quit this poor fellow's story without adding, that he is at this time master of a large West-Indiaman belonging to the Thames.

"His mind was fraught with independence, magnanimity and every manly virtue. I loved and admired him to a degree of enthusiasm, and of course strove to imitate him. In some measure I succeeded. I had pride before, but he taught it to flow in proper channels. His knowledge of the world was vastly superior to mine, and I was all attention to learn. He was the only man I ever saw who was a greater fool than myself, where woman was the presiding star; but he spoke of illicit love with the levity of a sailor, which hitherto I had regarded with horror. Here his friendship did me a mischief, and the consequence was, that soon after I resumed the plough I wrote the 'Poet's Welcome.'² My reading only increased, while in this town, by two stray volumes of 'Pamela,' and one of 'Ferdinand, Count Fathom,' which gave me some idea of novels. Rhyme, except some religious pieces that were in print, I had given up; but meeting with Fergusson's Scottish Poems, I strung anew my

¹ Richard Brown.

² "The Poet's Welcome to his Illegitimate Child," p. 159.



wildly sounding lyre with emulating vigour. When my father died, his all went among the hell-hounds that prowl in the kennel of justice, but we made a shift to collect a little money in the family amongst us, with which, to keep us together, my brother and I took a neighbouring farm. My brother wanted my hair-brained imagination, as well as my social and amorous madness; but in good sense, and every sober qualification, he was far my superior.

"I entered on this farm with a full resolution, 'Come, go to, I will be wise!' I read farming books, I calculated crops, I attended markets, and, in short, in spite of the devil, and the world, and the flesh, I believe I should have been a wise man; but the first year, from unfortunately buying bad seed, the second, from a late harvest, we lost half our crops. This upset all my wisdom, and I returned like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.'

"I now began to be known in the neighbourhood as a maker of rhymes. The first of my poetic offspring that saw the light was a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two reverend Calvinists, both of them *dramatis personae* in my 'Holy Fair.' I had a notion myself that the piece had some merit; but, to prevent the worst, I gave a copy of it to a friend who was very fond of such things, and told him that I could not guess who was the author of it, but that I thought it pretty clever. With a certain description of the clergy, as well as laity, it met with a roar of applause. 'Holy Willie's Prayer' next made its appearance, and alarmed the kirk-session so much, that they held several meetings to look over their spiritual artillery, if haply any of it might be pointed against profane rhymers. Unluckily for me, my wanderings led me on another side, within point-blank shot of their heaviest metal. This is the unfortunate story that gave rise to my printed poem, 'The Lament.' This was a most melancholy affair, which I cannot yet bear to reflect on, and had very nearly given me one or two of the principal qualifications for a place among those who have lost the chart, and mistaken the reckoning of rationality. I gave up my part of the farm to my brother—in truth it was only nominally mine, and made what little preparation was in my power for Jamaica. But before leaving my native country for ever, I resolved to publish my poems. I weighed my productions as impartially as was in my power; I thought they had merit; and it was a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow, even though it should never reach my ears—a poor negro driver, or perhaps a

¹ At the time that our Poet took the resolution of becoming *wise*, he procured a little book of blank paper, with the purpose (expressed on the first page) of making farming memoranda upon it. These farming memoranda are curious enough; many of them have been written with a pencil, and are now obliterated, or at least illegible.



victim to that inhospitable clime, and gone to the world of spirits ! I can truly say that, *pauvre inconnu* as I then was, I had pretty nearly as high an idea of myself and of my works as I have at this moment, when the public has decided in their favour. It ever was my opinion, that the mistakes and blunders, both in a rational and religious point of view, of which we see thousands daily guilty, are owing to their ignorance of themselves. To know myself had been all along my constant study. I weighed myself alone ; I balanced myself with others ; I watched every means of information, to see how much ground I occupied as a man and as a poet. I studied assiduously Nature's design in my formation—where the lights and shades in my character were intended. I was pretty confident my poems would meet with some applause ; but, at the worst, the roar of the Atlantic would deafen the voice of censure, and the novelty of West Indian scenes make me forget neglect. I threw off six hundred copies, of which I had got subscriptions for about three hundred and fifty. My vanity was highly gratified by the reception I met with from the public, and besides I pocketed—all expenses deducted—nearly twenty pounds. This sum came very seasonably, as I was thinking of indenting myself, for want of money, to procure my passage. As soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price of wafting me to the torrid zone, I took a steerage passage in the first ship that was to sail from the Clyde, for—

“ ‘Hungry ruin had me in the wind.’ ”

“I had been for some days skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail, as some ill-advised people had uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels. I had taken the last farewell of my few friends ; my chest was on the road to Greenock ; I had composed the last song I should ever measure in Caledonia—‘The gloomy night is gathering fast’—when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine overthrew all my schemes, by opening new prospects to my poetic ambition. The Doctor belonged to a set of critics for whose applause I had not dared to hope. His opinion that I should meet with encouragement in Edinburgh for a second edition fired me so much, that away I posted for that city, without a single acquaintance, or a single letter of introduction. The baneful star that had so long shed its blasting influence in my zenith, for once made a revolution to the nadir, and a kind Providence placed me under the patronage of one of the noblest of men, the Earl of Glencairn. *Oublie moi, grand Dieu, si jamais je t'oublie !*

“I need relate no further. At Edinburgh I was in a new world. I mingled among many classes of men, but all of them new to me, and I was all attention to catch the characters, and the manners living, as they rise. Whether I have profited, time will show.”



The Poet has omitted from his autobiography an episode to which we are indebted for one of the finest of his lyrics.

Burns was, as he describes in his letter; in circumstances of great misery. He had been forsaken by Jean Armour, at the bidding of her parents, and, in consequence of their mutual sin and folly, he was about to become an exile from his beloved Scotland. One ray of light came to brighten the gloom of that moment.

There dwelt a dairymaid at Coilsfield, a modest, gentle, Highland maiden, with sweet blue eyes, and warm kind heart, of whose love for himself the Poet had doubtless some suspicion, though she was far superior in modesty and intelligence to the women he had hitherto known.

Her character must have commanded his respect as well as love, for he long cherished her memory. She lived in the service of his friend Gavin Hamilton, but her parentage was Highland. She came from the neighbourhood of Dunoon, on the Firth of Clyde. Her father was a sailor in a revenue cutter, stationed off Campbelton, in Kintyre, where the family resided. At one period she had been dairymaid, afterwards she was nurse, at Coilsfield.

Mary consented to become the wife of Burns, and agreed to give up her place and return home at once and arrange matters for their marriage. Before her departure the lovers met, on the second Sunday in May, in a lonely spot on the banks of the Ayr. Mr. Cromek tells us that their adieux were solemn as well as tender. "The lovers stood on each side of a small purling brook; they laved their hands in the limpid stream, and, holding a Bible between them, pronounced their vows to each other." They then exchanged Bibles. In the blank leaf of the one which Burns gave to his betrothed he wrote, "And ye shall not swear by My name falsely. I am the Lord.—Levit. xix. 12. Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths."—Matt. v. 33.¹

Mary returned to her parents, but it appears probable, both from the following circumstances and the expressed opinions of her father after her death, that a union with Burns was not considered desirable for her; it was therefore deferred, and, after spending the summer with her family, Mary took another place (her service to begin at Martinmas) in the family of Colonel M'Ivor, of Glasgow. Her father was about to take her brother Robert to Greenock, to apprentice him to a cousin, Peter Macpherson, who was a ship-carpenter in that town. Mary accompanied them ostensibly on her road to her new place at Glasgow, secretly, it is imagined, to bid a last farewell to Burns before he sailed for the West Indies. But the boy Robert caught a fever, and Mary, who tenderly nursed him through it, drooped as he

¹ This Bible has been preserved, and is placed now in Mary's monument.



recovered, and died in a few days. Peter Macpherson had bought a new burying-place just at that time, and poor Highland Mary was the first interred in it. Her death was a great misfortune to Burns, and bitterly felt by him. He mourned his loss long afterwards in the exquisite lyric entitled "To Mary, in Heaven."

Within a month of Burns's arrival in Edinburgh he was in the midst of the first society both for rank and talent. Jane, Duchess of Gordon, then the leader of fashion in the Scotch metropolis, appreciated his poetry, and eagerly patronized him. Lord Monboddo, Dr. Robertson, Dr. Blair, Dr. Gregory, Dr. Adam Ferguson, Mackenzie, the novelist, and Mr. Fraser Tytler all extended to the rustic Poet the warmest and most generous encouragement. He was not spoiled by this universal homage. Nothing could be more manly and dignified than the manner in which he received the praises and attentions of fair ladies and learned divines. No thought of forsaking his original calling appears to have entered his mind. He returned gladly to the home and friends of his youth. He received £500 for the Edinburgh edition of his poems, and was thus enabled, soon after, to take a farm called Ellisland, on the banks of the Nith, and also to lend his brother Gilbert £180 to enable him to support the family on that of Mossiel.

He was no sooner possessed of a house of his own than he made the only reparation he could to Jean Armour. He privately married her the latter end of April, 1788, and the next month took her to his new dwelling-place. But misfortune dogged the Poet's steps. The farm proved a ruinous speculation. Burns was finally compelled to give it up, and remove into the town of Dumfries, where he remained till his death. He supported his family on his income as an exciseman—£50 per annum—the only appointment, under Government, which his friends had been able to procure him. Debt and difficulties gathered round his path, and an accidental circumstance, which occurred in the January of 1796, brought physical suffering also on the sad struggling years of the great Scottish Poet. He had sat late one evening at the Globe Tavern, and on his return home, overcome by drowsiness, and, alas! slightly intoxicated, he sank down on the snow, and slept for some hours in the open air. A severe cold, from the effects of which he never recovered, followed. Change of air and sea-bathing were tried for the restoration of his health in vain. On the 18th of July he became unable to stand. His mind sank into delirium, unless when roused by conversation; the fever increased rapidly, and on the fourth day "the sufferings of this great but ill-fated genius terminated, and a life was closed in which virtue and passion had been at perpetual variance."—Dr. Currie's "Life of Burns."

He was buried with military honours by the gentlemen volunteers of Dumfries.

Burns was nearly five feet ten inches in height; his face was



well-formed, his eyes large, dark, and full of expression. Time has drawn a merciful veil over the failings of the sorely tried man, and has crowned the Poet with a fame which will endure as long as Scotland exists. The details of his troubled life are given fully and well in the late Mr. Robert Chambers's "Life and Works of Burns." Only a brief space could be allowed in this volume for a biographical notice ; but the poems themselves contain the history of his mind and heart more fully than any other pen could ever tell it ; and to them we refer the reader for the true life of Burns.









THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
ROBERT BURNS.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

[Inscribed to R. AIKEN, Esq.]

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short but simple annals of the poor.

GRAY.

My loved, my honoured, much respected friend !
No mercenary bard his homage pays ;
With honest pride I scorn each selfish end :
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise :
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene ;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways ;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been ;
Ah! though his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween

November chill blows loud wi' angry sigh ;¹
The shortening winter-day is near a close ;
The miry beasts retreating frae the plough ;
The blackening trains o' craws to their repose :
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly toil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend.
And weary, o'er the moor his course does hameward bend.

¹ Moan.



At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an agèd tree ;
The expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher ¹ through²
To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle,² blinking bonnily,
His clean hearthstane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lispin infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

Belyve ³ the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun',
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie ⁴ rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town :
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps, to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

Wi' joy unfeigned brothers and sisters meet,
An' each for other's weelfare kindly spiers : ⁵
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet ;
Each tells the uncoss ⁶ that he sees or hears :
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years ;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle an' her shears,
Gars ⁷ auld claes look amaist as weel's the new ;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their masters' an' their mistresses' command,
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey ;
An' mind their labours wi' an eydent ⁸ hand,
An' ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk or play :
" An' O ! be sure to fear the Lord alway !
An' mind your duty duly, morn an' night !
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might :
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright. ⁹

But hark ! a rap comes gently to the door ;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam' o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.

¹ Stagger.

⁴ Careful.

⁷ Makes.

² Fire, or fireplace.

⁶ Enquires.

⁸ Diligent.

³ By and by.

⁵ News.



The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxious care, inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins¹ is afraid to speak:
Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild, worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben,²
A strappan youth; he tak's the mother's eye;
Blithe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleugh's, and kye:³
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy.
But blate⁴ and laithfu',⁵ scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave;
Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.⁶

O happy love! where love like this is found!
O heartfelt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare—
"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart—
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch,⁷ chief o' Scotia's food:
The soupe their only Hawkie⁸ does afford,
That 'yont the hallan⁹ snugly chows her cood:¹⁰
The dame brings forth in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hained¹¹ kebbuck,¹² fell,
An' aft he's prest, an' aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wife, garrulous, will tell,
How 'twas a towmond¹³ auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.¹⁴

¹ Half.

³ Cows.

⁶ Rest.

⁹ Wall.

¹² Cheese.

² Into the spence, or parlour.

⁴ Bashful.

⁷ Porridge.

¹⁰ Chews her cud.

¹³ Twelvemonth.

⁵ Sheepish.

⁸ A white-faced cow.

¹¹ Saved.

¹⁴ Flax was in flower



The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They round the ingle form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride:
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets ¹ wearing thin an' bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glida,
He wales ² a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps "Dundee's" wild warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive "Martyrs," worthy of the name:
Or noble "Elgin" beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or, Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his head:
How his first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand;
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's
command.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"³
That thus they all shall meet in future days:

¹ Grey locks.

² Pope's "Windsor Forest."

³ Choosea.





THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

5

There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear ;
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart !
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole ;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul ;
And in his book of life the inmates poor enrol.

Then homeward all take off their several way ;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest :
The parent pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
That He who stills the raven's clamorous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,
Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide ;
But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad :
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God :"¹
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind ;
What is a lordling's pomp ! a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined !

O Scotia ! my dear, my native soil !
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent !
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content !
And, O ! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From Luxury's contagion, weak and vile !
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved Isle.

O Thou ! who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart ;

¹ Pope's "Essay on Man."



THE TWA DOGS.

Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God, peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O never, never, Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot baro,
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

THE TWA DOGS.

A TALE.

[Of this poem Gilbert Burns says:—"The 'Tale of Twa Dogs' was composed after the resolution of publishing was nearly taken. Robert had a dog, which he called Luath, that was a great favourite. The dog had been killed by the wanton cruelty of some person the night before my father's death. Robert said to me that he should like to confer such immortality as he could bestow on his old friend Luath, and that he had a great mind to introduce something into the book, under the title of 'Stanzas to the Memory of a Quadruped Friend;' but this plan was given up for the tale as it now stands."]

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle,
That bears the name o' Auld King Coil,¹
Upon a bonnie day in June,
When wearing through the afternoon,
Twa dogs that were na thrang² at hame,
Forgathered ance upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Cæsar,
Was keepit for his Honour's pleasure:
His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,
Shewed he was nane o' Scotland's dogs;
But whalpit³ some place far abroad,
Where sailors gang to fish for cod.⁴

His locked, lettered, braw brass collar
Shewed him the gentleman and scholar:
But though he was o' high degree,
The fient a pride, nae pride had he;
But wad hae spent an hour caressin'
Even with a tinkler-gipsy's messin'.⁵

¹ Kyle, or Coil, is the centre district of Ayrshire; so called from Coilus, King of the Picts.

² Busy.

³ Whelped.

⁴ Newfoundland.

⁵ Cur.



THE TWA DOGS.

7

At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,
Nae tawted ¹ tyke, though e'er sae duddie,
But he wad stant as glad to see him,
And stroan't on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

The tither was a ploughman's collie,³
A rhyming, ranting, raving billie,⁴
Wha for his friend an' comrade had him,
And in his freaks had Luath ca'd him,
After some dog in Highland sang,⁵
Was made lang syne—Lord knows how lang.

He was a gash ⁶ an faithful tyke,
As ever lap a sheugh ⁷ or dyke.
His honest, sonsie, baws'nt ⁸ face,
Aye gat him friends in ilka place.
His breasc was white, his towzie ⁹ back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black;
His gawcie ¹⁰ tail, wi' upward curl,
Hung o'er his hurdies ¹¹ wi' a swirl.

Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither,
An' unco pack an' thick thegither;
Wi' social nose whyles snuffed and snowkit; ¹²
Whyles mice an' moudieworts they howkit; ¹³
Whyles scoured awa in lang excursion,
An' worryed ither in diversion;
Until wi' daffin weary grown,
Upon a knowe they sat them down,
And there began a lang digression
About the lords o' the creation.

CÆSAR.

I've aften wondered, honest Luath,
What sort o' life poor dogs like you have;
An' when the gentry's life I saw,
What way poor bodies lived ava.¹⁴

Our Laird gets in his rackèd rents,
His coals, his kain, and a' his stents: ¹⁵
He rises when he likes himsel';
His flunkies answer at the bell;

¹ Dog with matted hair.

³ Country dog.

⁵ Cuchullin's dog in Ossian's "Fingal."

⁷ A sluice.

¹⁰ Large.

¹³ Digged.

⁸ White-striped.

¹¹ Loins.

¹⁴ At all.

⁶ Ragged.

⁴ Young fellow.

⁹ Wise.

¹² Rough.

¹⁵ Scented.

¹⁵ Dues.



He ca's his coach, he ca's his horse;
He draws a bonnie silken purse
As lang's my tail, whare, through the steeks,¹
The yellow-lettered Geordie keeks.²

Frae morn to e'en it's nought but toiling
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling;
An' though the gentry first are stechin,³
Yet even the ha' folk fill their pechan⁴
Wi' sauce, ragoûts, and sic like trashtrie,
That's little short o' downright wastrie.
Our Whipper-in, wee blastit wonner,⁵
Poor worthless elf, it eats a dinner
Better than ony tenant man
His honour has in a' the lan':
An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch in,
I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH.

Trowth, Cæsar, whyles they're fash't enough;
A cotter howkin⁶ in a sheugh,
Wi' dirty stanes biggin⁷ a dyke,
Baring a quarry, and sic like,
Himsel', a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytrie⁸ o' wee duddie weans,⁹
An' nought but his han'-darg,¹⁰ to keep
Them right and tight in thack an' rape.¹¹

An' when they meet wi' sair disasters,
Like loss o' health, or want o' masters,
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,
An' they maun starve o' cauld and hunger;
But, how it comes, I never kened it,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented;
An' burdly¹² chieils, an' clever hizzies,
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CÆSAR.

But then to see how ye're negleckit,
How huffed, and cuffed, and disrespeckit!
Lord, man! our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle;
They gang as saucy by poor folk,
As I wad by a stinking brock.¹³

¹ Stitches.⁴ Stomach.⁷ Building.¹⁰ Work.¹³ Badger.² Peeps.⁵ Wonder.⁸ Number.¹¹ Necessaries.³ Cramming.⁶ Digging.⁹ Ragged children.¹² Stout.



THE TWA DOGS.

9

I've noticed, on our Laird's court-day,
An' mony a time my heart's been wae,
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maunt thole ¹ a factor's snash; ²
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear,
He'll apprehend them, poind ³ their gear;
While they maun stan', wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble!
I see how folk live that hae riches;
But surely poor folk maun be wretches

LUATH.

They're nae sae wretched's ane wad think;
Though constantly on poortith's ⁴ brink:
They're sae accustomed with the sight,
The view o't gies them little fright.

Then chance an' fortune are sae guided,
They're aye in less or mair provided;
An' though fatigued wi' close employment,
A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.

The dearest comfort o' their lives,
Their grushie ⁵ weans an' faithfu' wives;
The prattling things are just their pride,
That sweetens a' their fireside.

An' whyles twalpennie-worth o' nappy ⁶
Can mak' the bodies unco happy;
They lay aside their private cares,
To mind the Kirk and State affairs:
They'll talk o' patronage and priests,
Wi' kindling fury in their breasts,
Or tell what new taxation's comin',
An' ferlie ⁷ at the folk in Lon'on.

As bleak-faced Hallowmass ⁸ returns,
They get the jovial, ranting kirns, ⁹
When rural life, o' every station,
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
Forgets there's Care upo' the earth.

¹ Bear.

⁴ Poverty.

⁷ Wonder contemptuously.

⁹ Harvest-homes.

² Abuse.

⁵ Thriving.

³ Seize their goods.

⁶ Ale.

⁸ October 31.



That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty winds;
The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,¹
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam;
The luntin² pipe, an' sneeshin mill,³
Are handed round wi' right guid will;
The cantie⁴ auld folks crackin crouse,⁵
The young anes rantin' through the house,—
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barkit wi' them.

Still it's owre true that ye hae said,
Sic game is now owre aften played.
There's monie a creditable stock
O' decent, honest, fawsont⁶ fo'k,
Are riven out baith root and branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha' thinks to knit himsel' the faster
In favour wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins,⁷ thrang a-parliamentin',
For Britain's guid his saul indentin'.

CÆSAR.

Haith, lad, ye little ken about it:
For Britain's guid!—guid faith, I doubt it!
Say rather, gaun, as Premiers lead him,
An' saying aye or no's they bid him:
At operas an' plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading,
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,
To Hague or Calais takes a waft,
To make a tour, and tak' a whirl,
To learn *bon ton* an' see the worl'.

There, at Vienna or Versailles,
He rives his father's auld entails!
Or by Madrid he takes the rout,
To thrum guitars, and fecht wi' nowt;
Or down Italian vista startles,
Wh-re-hunting amang groves o' myrtles;
Then houses drumly⁸ German water,
To mak' himsel' look fair and fatter,
An' clear the consequential sorrows,
Love-gifts of Carnival signoras.
For Britain's guid!—for her destruction!
Wi' dissipation, feud, an' faction.

¹ Froth.
⁴ Cheerful.
⁷ Perhaps.

² Smoking.
⁵ Gossip merrily.
⁸ Muddy.

³ Snuff-box.
⁶ Seemly.



THE TWA DOGS.

11

LUATH.

Hech, man! dear sirs! is that the gate
They waste sae mony a braw estate?
Are we sae foughten an' harassed
For gear to gang that gate at last?

O would they stay aback frae courts,
An' please themselves wi' country sports,
It wad for every ane be better,
The Laird, the Tenant, an' the Cotter!
For thae frank, rantin' ramblin' billies,
Fient haet o' them's ill-hearted fellows;
Except for breaking o'er their timmer,¹
Or speaking lightly o' their limmer,²
Or shootin' o' a hare or moor-cock,
The ne'er a bit they're ill to poor folk.

But will ye tell me, Master Cæsar,
Sure great folk's life 's a life o' pleasure!
Nae cauld or hunger e'er can steer³ them,
The vera thought o't needna fear them.

CÆSAR.

Lord, man, were ye but whyles whare I am,
The gentles ye wad ne'er envy 'em.

It's true, they need na starve or sweat,
Through winter's cauld, or simmer's heat;
They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,⁴
An' fill auld age with grips an' granes:
But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges and schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak' enow themsels to vex them;
An' aye the less they hae to sturt⁴ them,
In like proportion less will hurt them;
A country fellow at the pleugh,
His acres tilled, he's right enough;
A country girl at her wheel,
Her dizzens⁵ done, she's unco weel:
But Gentlemen, an' Ladies warst,
Wi' ev'ndown want o' wark are curst.
They loiter, lounging, lank, an' lazy;
Though deil haet hails them, yet uneasy;
Their days insipid, dull an' tasteless:
Their nights unquiet, lang an' restless;

¹ Timber.

⁴ Vex.

² Light of love.

⁵ Dozens, *i.e.*, task.

³ Molest, harm.

An' e'en their sports, their balls, an' races,
 Their galloping through public places.
 There's sic parade, sic pomp, an' art,
 The joy can scarcely reach the heart.
 The men cast out in party matches,
 Then sowther ¹ a' in deep debauches:
 Ae night they 're mad wi' drink an' wh-ring,
 Niest day their life is past enduring
 The ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
 As great and gracious a' as sisters;
 But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
 They 're a' run deils an' jads thegither.
 Whyles o'er the wee bit cup an' platie,
 They sip the scandal potion pretty;
 Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leuks
 Pore owre the devil's pictured beuks;²
 Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
 An' cheat like onie unhang'd blackguard.

There's some exception, man an' woman;
 But this is Gentry's life in common.

By this, the sun was out o' sight,
 An' darker gloaming brought the night:
 The bum-clock³ hummed wi' lazy drone;
 The kye stood rowtin⁴ i' the loan;⁵
 When up they gat, and shook their lugs,
 Rejoiced they were na men but dogs;
 An' each took aff his several way,
 Resolved to meet some ither day.

SCOTCH DRINK.

Gie him strong drink, until he wink,
 That's sinking in despair;
 An' liquor guid to fire his bluid,
 That's prest wi' grief an' care;
 There let him bouse, an' deep carouse,
 Wi' bumpers flowing o'er,
 Till he forgets his loves or debts,
 An' minds his griefs no more.

SOLOMON'S PROVERBS, xxxi. 6, 7.

LET other Poets raise a fracas
 'Bout vines, an' wines, an' drunken Bacchus,

¹ Solder.

² Cards.

³ The humming-beetle that flies about in the summer twilight.

⁴ Lowing.

⁵ Milking-place.



SCOTCH DRINK.

13

An' crabbit names an' stories wrack¹ us,
An' grate our lug,
I sing the juice Scots bear can mak' us,
In glass or jug.

O thou, my Muse! guid auld Scotch Drink;
Whether through wimpling worms thou jink,²
Or, richly brown, ream³ o'er the brink,
In glorious faem,
Inspire me, till I lisp and wink,
To sing thy name!

Let husky Wheat the haughs⁴ adorn,
An' Aits⁵ set up their awnie⁶ horn,
An' Pease and Beans at e'en or morn,
Perfume the plain,
Leeze me⁷ on thee, John Barleycorn,
Thou king o' grain!

On thee aft Scotland chows her cood,
In souple scones, the wale⁸ o' food;
Or tumblin' in the boiling flood
Wi' kail an' beef;
But when thou pours thy strong heart's blood,
There thou shines chief.

Food fills the wame,⁹ an' keeps us livin';
Though life's a gift no worth receivin',
When heavy dragged wi' pine an' grievin';
But oiled by thee,
The wheels o' life gae down-hill, scievin',¹⁰
Wi' rattlin' glee.

Thou clears the head o' doited¹¹ Lear;
Thou cheers the heart o' drooping Care;
Thou strings the nerves o' Labour sair,
At's weary toil;
Thou even brightens dark Despair
Wi' gloomy smile.

Aft, clad in massy silver weed,¹²
Wi' Gentles thou erects thy head;
Yet humbly kind in time o' need,
The poor man's wine,
His wee drap parritch, or his bread,
Thou kitchens fine.

¹ Bother.

⁴ Valleys.

⁷ I am proud of thee.

¹⁰ Swiftly.

² Turn, or wind

⁵ Oats.

⁸ Best.

¹¹ Bewildered.

³ Froth.

⁶ Bearded.

⁹ Stomach.

¹² Tankard.



SCOTCH DRINK.

Thou art the life o' public haunts;
But thee, what were our fairs and rants?¹
Even godly meetings o' the saunts,¹
By thee inspired,
When gaping they besiege the tents,
Are doubly fired.

That merry night we get the corn in,
O sweetly then thou reams the horn in!
Or reeking on a New-year mornin'
In cog² or bicker,
An' just a wee drap sp'itual burn in,
An' gusty sucker!³

When Vulcan gies his bellows breath,
An' ploughman gather wi' their graith,⁴
O rare! to see thee fizz an' freath
I' th' lugget caup!⁵
Then Burnewin⁶ comes on like death
At every chaup.

Nae mercy, then, for airn or steel;
The brawnie, bainie, ploughman chiel,
Brings hard owrehip, wi' sturdy wheel,
The strong forehammer,
Till block an' studdie ring and reel
Wi' dinsome clamour.

When skirlin' weanies⁷ see the light,
Thou mak's the gossips clatter bright,
How fumblin' cuifs⁸ their dearies slight;
Wae worth the name!
Nae howdie⁹ gets a social night,
Or plack¹⁰ frae them.

When neebors anger at a plea,
An' just as wud¹¹ as wud can be,
How easy can the barley-bree
Cement the quarrel!
It's aye the cheapest lawyer's fee,
To taste the barrel.

¹ Out-door communions. See "Holy Fair." ² A wooden dish.

³ A taste of sugar.

⁴ Wooden cup with handles.

⁵ Burnewin—burn-the-wind—the blacksmith—an appropriate title.

⁶ Screaming weanies. ⁷ Awkward fools. ⁸ Midwife.

⁹ An old Scotch coin, the third part of a Scotch penny, twelve of which made an English penny.

¹⁰ Mad.

¹¹ Mad.



SCOTCH DRINK.

15

Alake! that e'er my Muse has reason
To wyte¹ her countrymen wi' treason!
But monie daily weet their weason²
 Wi' liquors nice,
An' hardly, in a winter's season,
 E'er spier³ her price.

Wae worth that brandy, burning trash!
Fell source o' monie a pain an' brash!⁴
Twins⁵ monie a poor, doylt, drunken hash,⁶
 O' half his days;
An' sends, beside, auld Scotland's cash
 To her warst faes.

Ye Scots, wha wish auld Scotland well!
Ye chief, to you my tale I tell,
Poor plackless⁷ devils like mysel'!
 It sets you ill,
Wi' bitter, dearthfu' wines to mell,⁸
 Or foreign gill.

May gravels round his blather wrench,
An' gouts torment him inch by inch,
Wha twists his gruntle⁹ wi' a glunch¹⁰
 O' sour disdain,
Out owre a glass of whisky punch
 Wi' honest men.

O Whisky! soul o' plays an' pranks!
Accept a Bardie's humble thanks!
When wanting thee, what tuneless cranks
 Are my poor verses!
Thou comes—they rattle i' their ranks
 At ither's a—s!

Thee, Ferintosh!¹¹ O sadly lost!
Scotland, lament frae coast to coast!
Now colic grips, an' barkin hoast,
 May kill us a';
For loyal Forbes' chartered boast
 Is ta'en awa'!

¹ Accuse, or blame.

⁴ Illness.

⁷ Penniless.

¹⁰ Grin.

² Weasand.

⁵ Deprives.

⁸ Meddle.

³ Ask, enquire.

⁶ Clown.

⁹ Phiz.

¹¹ A cant term for whisky distilled at Mr. Forbes's barony of that name. Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, was permitted by the Government to distil whisky free of expense; this permission had been revoked at the period of Burns writing this poem.



THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST

Thae curst horse-leeches o' th' Excise,
 Wha mak' the Whisky Stells their prize!
 Hand up thy han', Deil! ance, twice, thrice!
 There, seize the blinkers!
 An' bake them up in brunstane pies,
 For poor d—ned drinkers.

Fortune! if thou'll but gie me still
 Hale breeks,¹ a scone, an' Whisky gill,
 An' rowth² o' rhyme to rave at will,
 Tak' a' the rest,
 An' deal't about as thy blind skill
 Directs thee best.

THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST CRY AND PRAYER TO
 THE SCOTCH REPRESENTATIVES IN THE
 HOUSE OF COMMONS.³

Dearest of distillation! last and best!
 How art thou lost!

PARODY ON MILTON.

YE Irish Lords, ye Knights an' Squireæ,
 Wha represent our brughs an' shires,
 An' doucely manage our affairs
 In parliament,
 To you a simple Poet's prayers
 Are humbly sent.

Alas! my roupet Muse is hearse!⁴
 Your Honour's heart wi' grief 'twad pierce,
 To see her sittin' on her a—
 Low i' the dust,
 An' scricchin' out prosaic verse,
 An' like to brust!

Tell them wha hae the chief direction,
 Scotland an' me's in great affliction,
 E'er sin' they laid that curst restriction
 On aquavitæ;
 An' rouse them up to strong conviction,
 An' move their pity.

¹ Breeches.

² Plenty.

³ This was written before the Act anent the Scotch Distilleries, of session 1786, for which Scotland and the Author return their most grateful thanks.

⁴ My muse is hoarse with cold in the throat.



CRY AND PRAYER.

17

Stand forth, an' tell yon Premier Youth,¹
The honest, open, naked truth:
Tell him o' mine an' Scotland's drouth,²
His servants humble:
The muckle devil blaw ye south,
If ye disseemble!

Does ony great man glunch³ an' gloom?
Speak out, an' never fash your thumb!
Let posts an' pensions sink or s'om⁴
Wi' them wha grant'em:
If honestly they canna come,
Far better want'em.

In gathering votes you were na slack;
Now stand as tightly by your tack;
Ne'er claw your lug,⁵ an' fidge⁶ your back,
An' hum an' haw;
But raise your arm, an' tell your crack⁷
Before them a'.

Paint Scotland greeting⁸ owre her thrissle;⁹
Her mutchkin-stoup as toom's a whistle;¹⁰
An' d—mned Excisemen in a bussle,
Seizin' a stell,¹¹
Triumphant crushin't like a mussel
Or lampit shell.

Then on the tither hand present her,
A blackguard Smuggler right behind her,
An' cheek-for-chow,¹² a chuffie¹³ Vintner,
Colleaguin' join,
Picking her pouch as bare as winter
Of a' kind coin.

Is there, that bears the name o' Scot,
But feels his heart's bluid rising hot,
To see his poor auld Mither's pot
Thus dung in staves,
An' plundered o' her hindmost groat
By gallows knaves?

Alas! I'm but a nameless wight,
Trode i' the mire clean out o' sight!

¹ William Pitt.

² Thirst.

³ Frown.

⁴ Swim.

⁵ Ear.

⁶ Shrug.

⁷ Story.

⁸ Mourning.

⁹ Thistle.

¹⁰ Her pint mug as empty as a whistle.

¹¹ Still.

¹² Check-by-jowl.

¹³ Fat-faced.



But could I like Montgom'ries fight,
Or gab like Boswell,
There's some sark-necks I wad draw tight,
An' tie some hose well.

God bless your Honours! can ye see't
The kind, auld, cantie Carlin¹ greet,
An' no get warmly to your feet,
An' gar them hear it,
An' tell them wi' a patriot heat,
Ye winna bear it!

Some o' you nicely ken the laws,
To round the period an' pause,
An' wi' rhetoric clause on clause
To mak' harangues;
Then echo through Saint Stephen's wa's
Auld Scotland's wrang's.

Dempster,² a true-blue Scot, I'se warran';
Thee, aith³-detesting, chaste Kilkerran,
An' that glib-gabbet⁴ Highland Baron,
The Laird o' Graham;⁵
An' ane, a chap that's
damned auldfarran,⁶
Dundas his name.

Erskine, a spunkie⁷ Norland billie;
True Campbells, Frederick an' Ilay;
An' Livingstone, the bauld Sir Willie!
An' monie ithers,
Whom auld Demosthenes or Tully
Might own for brithers.

Thee, Sodger Hugh, my watchman stented,⁸
If bardies e'er are represented;
I ken if that your sword were wanted,
Ye'd lend your hand:
But when there's ought to say anent it,
Ye're at a stand.⁹

¹ Cantie Carlin greet—the cheerful old dame (*i.e.*, Scotland) grieve.

² George Dempster, Esq., of Dunnichen, Forfarshire.

³ Oath.

⁴ Ready-tongued.

⁵ Sir Adam Ferguson, afterwards Duke of Montrose.

⁶ Sagacious.

⁷ Spirited.

⁸ Vanguard Hugh Montgomery, Esq., was member for the Poet's county, Ayrshire.

⁹ Mr. Montgomery was a bad speaker.



CRY AND PRAYER.

19

Arouse, my boys! exert your mettle,
To get auld Scotland back her kettle;
Or faith! I'll wad¹ my new plough-pettle,²
Ye'll see't, or lang,
She'll teach you, wi' a reekin' whittle,³
Anither sang.

This while she's been in crankous⁴ mood,
Her lost Militia fired her bluid;
(Deil na they never mair do guid,
Played her that pliskie!⁵)
An' now she's like to rin red-wud⁶
About her whisky.

An' Lord, if ance they pit her till't,
Her tartan petticoat she'll kilt,
An' durk an' pistol at her belt,
She'll tak' the streets,
An' rin her whittle to the hilt
I' th' first she meets!

For God sake, sirs! then speak her fair,
An' straik⁷ her cannie wi' the hair,
An' to the muckle House repair
Wi' instant speed,
An' strive, wi' a' your wit and lear⁸
To get remead.

Yon ill-tongued tinkler, Charlie Fox,
May taunt you wi' his jeers an' mocks;
But gie him't het, my hearty cocks!
E'en cove the caddie!⁹
And send him to his dicing-box
An' sportin' lady.

Tell yon guid bluid o' auld Boconnock's¹⁰
I'll be his debt twa mashlum bonnocks,¹¹
An' drink his health in auld Nanse Tinnock's,¹²
Nine times a week,
If he some scheme, like tea an' winnocks,¹³
Wad kindly seek.

¹ Bet.

⁴ Ill-tempered.

⁷ Stroke.

¹⁰ Pitt, grandson of Robert Pitt, of Boconnock, in Cornwall.

¹¹ Scotch cakes of various grain.

¹² A worthy old hostess of the Author's in Mauchline, where he sometimes studied politics over a glass of guid auld Scotch drink.—BURNS.

¹³ Wind

² Plough-staff.

⁵ Trick.

⁸ Learning.

³ Knife.

⁶ Mad.

⁹ Young cad.



20 THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST CRY AND PRAYER.

Could he some commutation broach,
I'll pledge my aith in guid braid Scotch,
He need na fear their foul reproach,
Nor erudition.
Yon mixtie-maxtie¹ queer hotch-potch,
The Coalition.

Auld Scotland has a raucle² tongue
She's just a devil wi' a rung;³
An' if she promise auld or young
To tak' their part,
Though by the neck she should be strung,
She'll no desert.

An' now, ye chosen Five-and-Forty,⁴
May still your Mither's heart support ye;
Then, though a Minister grow dory,⁵
An' kick your place,
Ye'll snap your fingers, poor an' hearty,
Before his face.

God bless your Honours a' your days,
Wi' sowps o' kail⁶ and brats o' claise,⁷
In spite o' a' the thievish kaes⁸
That haunt St. Jamie's!
Your humble Poet sings an' prays
While Rab his name is.

POSTSCRIPT.

LET half-starved slaves in warmer skies,
See future wines rich clust'ring rise;
Their lot auld Scotland ne'er envies,
But blithe and frisky,
She eyes her freeborn, martial boys
Tak' aff their whisky.

What though their Phœbus kinder warms,
While fragrance blooms and beauty charms!
When wretches range, in famished swarms,
The scented groves,
Or hounded forth, dishonour arms
In hungry droves.

¹ Confusedly mixed.

² Fearless.

³ Cudgel.

⁴ The Scotch M.P.'s.

⁵ Sulky.

⁶ Spoonfuls of mutton broth.

⁷ Rags of clothes.

⁸ Jackdaws.



DYING WORDS OF POOR MAILIE.

21

Their gun's a burden on their shouther;
They downa bide the stink o' powther;
Their bauldest thought's a hank'ring swither¹

To stan' or rin,
Till skelp—a shot—they're aff, a' trowther,²
To save their skin.

But bring a Scotsman frae his hill,
Clap in his cheek a Highland gill,
Say, Such is royal George's will,
An' there's the foe,
He has nae thought but how to kill
Twa at a blow.

Nae cauld, faint-hearted doubtings tease him;
Death comes, wi' fearless eye he sees him;
Wi' bluidy hand a welcome gies him;
An' when he fa's,
His latest draught o' breathin' lea'es him
In faint huzzas.

Sages their solemn een may steek,³
An' raise a philosophic reek,⁴
An' physically causes seek,
In clime and season;
But tell me Whisky's name in Greek,
I'll tell the reason.

Scotland, my auld, respected Mither!
Though whiles ye moistify your lether,
Till whare ye sit, on craps o' heather,
Ye tine⁵ your dam;
(Freedom and Whisky gang thegither!)
Tak' aff your dram!

**THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR
MAILIE,**

THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE.⁶

An unco mournfu' Tale.

As Mailie an' her lambs thegither,
Were ae day nibbling on the tether,
Upon her cloot⁷ she coost⁸ a hitch,⁹
An' owre she warsled¹⁰ in the ditch:

¹ Uncertainty.

² Pell-mell.

³ Eyes may shut.

⁴ Smoke.

⁵ Lose.

⁶ Ewe.

⁷ Hoof.

⁸ Cast.

⁹ Loop.

¹⁰ Wrestled.



There, groaning, dying, she did lie,
When Hughoc¹ he cam' doytin² by.

Wi' glowrin een, an' lifted han's,
Poor Hughoc like a statue stan's;
He saw her days were near-hand ended,
But, waes my heart! he could na mend it!
He gapèd wide, but naething spak!
At length poor Mailie silence brak.

“O thou, whase lamentable face
Appears to mourn my woefu' case!
My dying words attentive hear,
An' bear them to my Master dear.

“Tell him, if e'er again he keep
As muckle gear as buy a sheep,
Oh, bid him never tie them mair
Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair!
But ca' them out to park or hill,
An' let them wander at their will;
So may his flock increase, an' grow
To scores o' lambs an' packs o' woo'!

“Tell him, he was a master kin',
An' aye was guid to me and mine;
An' now my dying charge I gi'e him,
My helpless lambs I trust them wi' him.

“Oh, bid him save their harmless lives
Frae dogs, an' tods,³ an' butchers' knives!
But gi'e them guid cow-milk their fill,
Till they be fit to fend themsel';
An' tent⁴ them duly e'en an' morn,
Wi' teats⁵ o' hay, an' rips⁶ o' corn.

“An' may they never learn the gaets⁷
Of ither vile, wanrestfu'⁸ pets!
To slink through slaps,⁹ an' reave,¹⁰ an' steal
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail.
So may they, like their great forbears,
For monie a year come through the sheers:
So wives will gi'e them bits o' bread,
An' bairns greet for them when they're dead.

¹ A neighbour heid callan.—BURNS.

² Foxes.

³ Handfuls.

⁴ A hole in a hedge.

⁵ Take care.

⁶ Habits.

⁷ Rove.

⁸ Walking stupidly

⁹ Small quantities.

¹⁰ Restless.



POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY.

23

* My poor toop-lamb, my son an' heir,
Oh, bid him breed him up wi' care!
An' if he live to be a beast,
To pit some havins' in his breast!
An' warn him, what I winna name,
To stay content wi' yowes at hame;
An' no to rin an' wear his cloots,
Like ither menseless,² graceless brutes.

" An' neist, my yowie, silly thing,
Gude keep thee frae a tether string!
Oh, may thou ne'er forgather up
Wi' ony blastit, moorland toop;
But aye keep mind to moop³ an' mell
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel'!

" And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath,
I lea'e my blessin' wi' you baith:
An' when you think upo' your mither,
Mind to be kin' to ane anither.

" Now, honest Hughoc, dinna fail
To tell my master a' my tale;
An' bid him burn this cursèd tether,
An', for thy pains, thou'se get my blether."⁴

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
And closed her een amang the dead.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY.

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose;
Our bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remead;
The last sad cape-stane of his woes:
Poor Mailie's dead!

It's no the loss o' warl's gear,
That could sae bitter draw the tear,
Or mak' our bardie, dowie,⁵ wear
The mourning weed:
He's lost a friend and neebor dear
In Mailie dead.

Through a' the toun⁶ she trotted by him;
A lang half-mile she could descry him;

¹ Good sense.

² Senseless.

³ Nibble.

⁴ Bladder.

⁵ Worn with grief.

⁶ The farm.



24 PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi' speed ;
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er came nigh him
Than Mailie dead.

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
An' could behave hersel' wi' mense ;¹
I'll say't, she never brak a fence
Through thievish greed.
Our bardie, lanely, keeps the spence²
Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the howe,³
Her living image, in her yowe,
Comes bleating to him, owre the knowe,⁴
For bits o' bread ;
An' down the briny pearls rowe
For Mailie dead.

She was nae get o' moorland tips,⁵
Wi' tawted ket,⁶ an' hairy hips :
For her forbears were brought in ships
Frae yont the Tweed ;
A bonnier fleesh ne'er crossed the clips
Than Mailie dead.

Wae worth the man wha first did shape
That vile wanchancie⁷ thing—a rape !
It mak's guid fellows grin an' gape,⁸
Wi' chokin' dread ;
An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape
For Mailie dead.

Oh, a' ye bards on bonnie Doon !
An' wha on Ayr your chanter's tune !
Come, join the melancholious croon
O' Robin's reed !
His heart will never get aboon
His Mailie dead.

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

O THOU unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope and fear !
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps I must appear !

¹ Good manners.

² Shuts himself up in the parlour.

³ Dell.

⁴ Knoll.

⁵ Rams.

⁶ Matted fleece.

⁷ Unlucky.

⁸ Grin and gasp.



STANZAS ON THE SAME OCCASION.

25

If I have wandered in those paths
Of life I ought to shun;
As something loudly in my breast
Remonstrates I have done;

Thou know'st that Thou hast formèd me
With passions wild and strong;
And list'ning to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
Do thou, All Good! for such Thou art,
In shades of darkness hide.

Where with intention I have erred,
No other plea I have,
But, Thou art good; and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

STANZAS ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Why am I loth to leave this earthly scene?
Have I so found it full of pleasing charms?
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between:
Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms;
Is it departing pangs my soul alarms?
Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode?
For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms;
I tremble to approach an angry God,
And justly smart beneath his sin-avenging rod.

Fain would I say, "Forgive my foul offence!"
Fain promise never more to disobey;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair Virtue's way;
Again in folly's path might go astray;
Again exalt the brute and sink the man;
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly Mercy's plan?
Who sin so oft have mourned, yet to temptation ran?

O Thou, great Governor of all below!
If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the tumult of the raging sea;
With that controlling power assist e'en me,
Those headlong furious passions to confine;
For all unfit I feel my powers to be,
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line;
Oh, aid me with thy help, Omnipotence Divine!



Lying at a Reverend Friend's house one night, the Author left the following

VERSES

in the room where he slept.

O THOU dread Power, who reign'st above!
I know Thou wilt me hear;
When for this scene of peace and love
I make my prayer sincere.

The hoary sire—the mortal stroke,
Long, long, be pleased to spare!
To bless his little filial flock,
And show what good men are.

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
With tender hopes and fears,
Oh, bless her with a mother's joys,
But spare a mother's tears!

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
In manhood's dawning blush;
Bless him, Thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish!

The beauteous, seraph sister-band,
With earnest tears I pray,
Thou know'st the snares on ev'ry hand—
Guide thou their steps alway!

When, soon or late, they reach that coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May they rejoice, no wand'rer lost,
A family in heaven!

THE FIRST PSALM.

THE man, in life wherever placed,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wicked's way,
Nor learns their guilty lore!

Nor from the seat of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God.

That man shall flourish like the trees
Which by the streamlets grow;
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.



FIRST SIX VERSES OF NINETIETH PSALM. 27

But he whose blossom buds in guilt
Shall to the ground be cast,
And, like the rootless stubble, tossed
Before the sweeping blast.

For why? that God the good adore
Hath given them peace and rest,
But hath decreed that wicked men
Shall ne'er be truly blest.

**THE FIRST SIX VERSES OF THE NINETIETH
PSALM.**

O THOU, the first, the greatest Friend
Of all the human race!
Whose strong right hand has ever been
Their stay and dwelling-place!

Before the mountains heaved their heads
Beneath Thy forming hand,
Before this ponderous globe itself
Arose at Thy command;

That Power which raised and still upholds
This universal frame,
From countless, unbeginning time
Was ever still the same.

Those mighty periods of years
Which seem to us so vast,
Appear no more before Thy sight
Than yesterday that's past.

Thou giv'st the word: Thy creature, man,
Is to existence brought:
Again Thou say'st, "Ye sons of men,
Return ye into nought!"

Thou layest them, with all their cares,
In everlasting sleep;
As with a flood Thou tak'st them off
With overwhelming sweep.

They flourish like the morning flower,
In beauty's pride arrayed;
But long ere night, cut down it lies,
All withered and decayed.

TO A MOUSE.¹

WEE, sleekit, cowrin', tim'rous beastie,
 Oh, what a panic's in thy breastie!
 Thou needna start awa' sae hasty,
 Wi' bick'ring brattle!²
 I wad be laith to rin and chase thee,
 Wi' murd'ring pattle!³

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
 Has broken nature's social union,
 And justifies that ill opinion
 Which mak's thee startle
 At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
 And fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
 What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
 A daimen icker in a thrave⁴
 'S a sma' request:
 I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
 And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
 It's silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
 And naething now to big⁵ a new ane
 O' foggage green!
 And bleak December's winds ensuin',
 Baith snell⁶ and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
 And weary winter comin' fast,
 And cozie here, beneath the blast
 Thou thought to dwell,
 Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
 Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble
 Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!

¹ A farm servant was driving the plough which Burns held, when a mouse ran before them. The man would have killed it, but was restrained by his master. The circumstance originated this poem.

² Hurrying run.

³ The plough-spade.

⁴ An ear of corn in twenty-four sheaves—that is in a thrave.

⁵ Build.

⁶ Bitter.



HALLOWEEN.

29

Now thou's turned out for a' thy trouble,
But house or hauld,¹
To thole² the winter's sleety dribble,
And cranreuch³ cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane⁴
In proving foresight may be vain!
The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley,⁵
And lea'e us nought but grief and pain
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
And forward, though I canna see,
I guess and fear.

HALLOWEEN.⁶

The following poem will, by many readers, be well enough understood; but for the sake of those who are unacquainted with the manners and traditions of the country where the scene is cast, notes are added, to give some account of the principal charms and spells of that night, so big with prophecy to the peasantry in the west of Scotland. The passion of prying into futurity makes a striking part of the history of human nature in its rude state, in all ages and nations; and it may be some entertainment to a philosophic mind, if any such should honour the Author with the perusal, to see the remains of it among the more unenlightened in our own.—BURNS.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
The simple pleasures of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.

GOLDSMITH.

UPON that night, when fairies light,
On Cassilis Downans⁷ dance,
Or owre the lays, in splendid blaze,
On sprightly coursers prance;

¹ Without house or home.

² Bear.

³ Hoar-frost.

⁴ Not alone.

⁵ Wrong.

⁶ Halloween is thought to be a night when witches, devils, and other mischief-making beings are all abroad on their baneful midnight errands; particularly those aerial people, the Fairies, are said on that night to hold a grand anniversary.—BURNS.

⁷ Certain little romantic, rocky, green hills, in the neighbourhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassilis.—BURNS.



Or for Colean the route is ta'en,
Beneath the moon's pale beams ;
There up the cove¹ to stray and rove
Among the rocks and streams
To sport that night.

Among the bonnie winding banks
Where Doon rins, wimplin² clear,
Where Bruce³ ance ruled the martial ranks,
An' shook the Carrick spear,
Some merry, friendly, countra folks
Together did convene,
To burn their nits,⁴ an' pou their stocks,⁵
An' haud their Halloween
Fu' blithe that night.

The lasses feat,⁶ an' cleanly neat,
Mair brow than when they're fine ;
Their faces blithe, fu' sweetly kythe,⁷
Hearts leal, an' warm, an' kin':
The lads sae trig, wi' wooer babs,⁸
Weel knotted on their garten,
Some unco blate, an' some wi' gabs,
Gar lasses' hearts gang startin'
Whiles fast at night.

Then, first and foremost, through the kail,
Their stocks⁹ maun a' be sought ance ;
They steek their een, and graip¹⁰ an' wale,¹¹
For muckle anes and straught anes.

¹ A noted cavern near Colean House, called "The Cove of Colean," which, as Cassilis Downans, is famed in country story for being a favourite haunt of fairies.—BURNS.

² Meandering.

³ The famous family of that name, the ancestors of Robert, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls of Carrick.—BURNS.

⁴ Nuts.

⁵ Plants of kail.

⁶ Spruce.

⁷ Shown.

⁸ Garters knotted with loops.

⁹ The first ceremony of Halloween is pulling each a stock, or plant of kail. They must go out, hand in hand, with eyes shut, and pull the first they meet with. Its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic of the size and shape of the grand object of all their spells—the husband or wife. If any yird, or earth, stick to the root, that is tocher, or fortune; and the state of the custoc, that is, the heart of the stem, is indicative of the natural temper and disposition. Lastly, the stems, or, to give them their ordinary appellation, the runts, are placed somewhere above the head of the door; and the Christian names of the people whom chance brings into the house are, according to the priority of placing the runts, the names in question.—BURNS.

¹⁰ Grope.

¹¹ Choose.



Poor hav'rel ¹ Will fell aff the drift,
An' wandered through the bow-kail, ²
An' pow't, ³ for want o' better shift,
A runt ⁴ was like a sow-tail,
Sae bow't ⁵ that night.

Then, straight or crooked, yird ⁶ or nane,
They roar an' cry a' throu'ther; ⁷
The vera wee things, todlin, rin
Wi' stocks out-owre their shouter;
An' gif the custoc's ⁸ sweet or sour,
Wi' joctelegs ⁹ they taste them;
Syne cozily, aboon the door,
Wi' cannie care they've placed them
To lie that night.

The lasses staw ¹⁰ frae 'mang them a'
To pou their stalks o' corn; ¹¹
But Rab slips out, an' jinks ¹² about,
Behint the muckle thorn:
He grippet Nelly hard an' fast;
Loud skirlèd a' the lasses;
But her tap-pickle maist was lost,
When kiutlin ¹³ in the fause-house
Wi' him that night.

The auld guidwife's weel-hoordet nits ¹⁴
Are round an' round divided,
And monie lads' and lasses' fates
Are there that night decided:
Some kindle, couthie ¹⁵ side by side,
An' burn thegither trimly;
Some start awa' wi' saucy pride,
And jump out-owre the chimlie
Fu' high that night.

¹ Half-witted.

⁴ Cabbage stem.

⁷ In confusion.

¹⁰ Stole.

¹¹ They go to the barn-yard and pull each, at three several times, a stalk of oats. If the third stalk wants the top-pickle, that is, the grain at the top of the stalk, the party in question will come to the marriage-bed anything but a maid.—BURNS.

¹² Dodges.

¹⁴ When the corn is in a doubtful state, by being too green, or wet, the stack-builder, by means of old timber, &c., makes a large apartment in his stack, with an opening in the side which is fairest exposed to the wind: this he calls a fause-house.—BURNS.

¹⁵ Burning the nuts is a famous charm. They name the lad and lass to each particular nut, as they lay them in the fire, and accordingly as they burn quietly together, or start from beside one another, the course and issue of the courtship will be.—BURNS. ¹⁶ Lovingly.

² Cabbage.

³ Crooked.

⁸ The cabbage heart.

⁵ Pulled.

⁶ Earth.

⁹ Knives.



Jean slips in twa wi' tentie¹ e'e;
Wha 'twas, she wadna tell;
But this is Jock, an' this is me,
She says in to hersel':
He bleezed owre her, and she owre him,
As they wad never mair part;
Till fuff! he started up the lum,²
An' Jean had e'en a sair heart
To see't that night.

Poor Willie, wi' his bow-kail runt,
Was brunt wi' primsie Mallie;
An' Mallie, nae doubt, took the drunt,³
To be compared to Willie:
Mall's nit lap out wi' pridefu' fling,
An' her ain fit it brunt it;
While Willie lap, and swoor by jing,
'Twas just the way he wanted
To be that night.

Nell had the fause-house in her min',
She pits hersel' an' Rob in;
In loving bleeze they sweetly join,
Till white in ase⁴ they're sobbin':
Nell's heart was dancin' at the view,
She whispered Rob to leuk for 't:
Rob, stowlins,⁵ prie'd⁶ her bonnie mou,⁷
Fu' cozie in the neuk for 't,
Unseen that night.

But Merran sat behint their backs,
Her thoughts on Andrew Bell;
She lea's them gashing at their cracks,
And slips out by hersel':
She through the yard the nearest tak's,
An' to the kiln she goes then,
An' darklins grapit for the bauks,⁸
And in the blue-clue⁹ throws then,
Right fear't that night.

¹ Cautious.

⁴ Ashes.

⁷ Mouth.

⁹ Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions: Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and, darkling, throw into the pot a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one; and, towards the latter end, something will hold the thread: demand, Wha hands? *i.e.*, who holds? An answer will be returned from the kiln-pot, by naming the Christian and surname of your future spouse.—BURNS.

² Chimney.

⁵ By stealth.

³ Pet.

⁶ Tasted.

⁸ Beams.



HALLOWEEN.

33

An' ay she win't, an' ay she swat,
I wat she made nae jaukin';¹
Till something held within the pat,
Guid Lord! but she was quakin'!
But whether 'twas the De'il himsel',
Or whether 'twas a bauk-en',
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
She did na wait on talkin'
To spier ² that night.

Wee Jennie to her Graunie says,
"Will ye go wi' me, graunie?
I'll eat the apple ³ at the glass
I gat frae uncle Johnnie."
She fuff't ⁴ her pipe wi' sic a lunt,⁵
In wrath she was sae vap'rin',
She notic't na, an aizle ⁶ brunt
Her braw new worsset apron
Out through that night.

"Ye little skelpie-limmer's face!
How daur you try sic sportin',
As seek the foul Thief ony place,
For him to spae ⁷ your fortune!
Nae doubt but ye may get a sight!
Great cause ye hae to fear it;
For monie a ane has gotten a fright,
An' lived an' died deleeret
On sic a night.

"Ae hairst ⁸ afore the Sherra-moor,⁹
I mind't as weel's yestreen,
I was a gilpey ¹⁰ then, I'm sure
I was na past fifteen:
The simmer had been cauld an' wat,
An' stuff was unco green;
An' ay a ranting kirn ¹¹ we gat,
An' just on Halloween
It fell that night.

¹ Delaying.

² Inquire.
³ Take a candle, and go alone to a looking-glass; eat an apple before it, and some traditions say, you should comb your hair all the time; the face of your conjugal companion to be will be seen in the glass, as it peeping over your shoulder.

⁴ Blew.

⁵ Column of smoke.

⁶ Hot cinder.

⁷ Tell.

⁸ One harvest.

⁹ The battle of Sheriff Moor.

¹⁰ A romp.

¹¹ Harvest supper.



“Our stibble-rig¹ was Rab M’Garen,
A clever, sturdy fallow;
He’s sin’ gat Eppie Sim wi’ wean,
That lived in Achmacalla;
He gat hemp-seed,² I mind it weel,
An’ he made unco light o’t;
But monie a day was by himsel’,
He was sae sairly frighted
That vera night.”

Then up gat fetchtin’ Jamie Fleck,
An’ he swore by his conscience,
That he could saw hemp-seed a peck;
For it was a’ but nonsense:
The auld guidman raught³ down the pock,
An’ out a handfu’ gied him;
Syne bade him slip frae ’mang the folk,
Sometime when na ane see’d him,
An’ try’t that night.

He marches through among the stacks,
Though he was something sturtin,⁴
The graip⁵ he for a harrow tak’s,
And hauls at his curpin:⁶
An’ every now an’ then he says,
“Hemp-seed I saw thee;
An’ her that is to be my lass,
Come after me an’ draw thee,
As fast this night.”

He whistled up Lord Lenox’ March,
To keep his courage cheery;
Although his hair began to arch,
He was sae fleiy’d⁷ an eerie:

¹ Head reaper.

² Steal out, unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp-seed, harrowing it with anything you can conveniently draw after you. Repeat now and then, “Hemp-seed I saw thee; hemp-seed I maw thee; and him (or her) that is to be my true love, come after me and pou thee.” Look over your left shoulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp. Some traditions say, “Come after me, and shaw thee,” that is, show thyself; in which case it simply appears. Others omit the harrowing, and say, “Come after me, and harrow thee.”

—BURNS.

³ Reached.

⁴ Frightened, or timid.

⁵ Dung-fork.

⁶ Drags it behind him.

⁷ Frightened.



Till presently he hears a squeak,
An' then a grane an' grundle ;
• He by his shouther gae a keek,
An' tumbled wi' a wintle¹
Out-owre that night.

He roared a horrid murder-shout,
In dreadfu' desperation !
An' young an' auld came rinnin out,
An' hear the sad narration :
He swoor 'twas hilchin² Jean M'Craw,
Or crauchie³ Merran Humphrie,
Till stop ! she trotted through them a' ;
An' w was it but Grumphie⁴
Asteer⁵ that night !

Meg fain wad to the barn gaen,
To win three wechts⁶ o' naething ;⁷
But for to meet the deil her lane,
She pat but little faith in :
She gies the herd a pickle nits,⁸
An' twa red-cheekit apples,
To watch, while for the barn she sets,
In hopes to see Tam Kipples
That vera night.

She turns the key wi' cannie thraw,⁹
An' owre the threshold ventures ;
But first on Sawnie gies a ca',
Syne bauldly in she enters ;
A ratton¹⁰ rattled up the wa',
An' she cried, Lord preserve her !
An' ran through midden-hole an' a'
An' prayed wi' zeal an' fervour,
Fu' fast that night.

¹ Stagger.

² Halting.

³ Crooked back.

⁴ The pig.

⁵ Abroad.

⁶ Corn baskets.

⁷ This charm **must** likewise be performed unperceived, and alone. You go to the barn, and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible ; for there is danger that the being about to appear may shut the doors, and do you some mischief. Then take that instrument used in winnowing the corn, which, in our country dialect, we call a " wecht ;" and go through all the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times ; and the third time an apparition will pass through the barn in at the windy door and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance or retinue, marking the employment or station in life.—BURNS.

⁸ Few nuts.

⁹ Gentle twist.

¹⁰ A rat



They hoy't¹ out Will, wi' sair advice;
They hecht² him some fine braw ane;
It chanced the stack he faddomed thrice,³
Was timmer propt for thraving;
He tak's a swirlie⁴ auld moss-oak,
For some black, grousome carlin;⁵
An' loot a winze,⁶ an' drew a stroke,
Till skin in blypes⁷ came haurlin
Aff's nieves⁸ that night.

A wanton widow Leezie was,
As canty as a kittlin;
But och! that night, among the shaws,
She got a fearfu' settlin!
She through the whins,⁹ an' by the cairn,
An' owre the hill gaed scievin,
Whare three lairds' lands met at a burn,¹⁰
To dip her left sark-sleeve in,
Was bent that night.

Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
As through the glen it wimpl't;
Whyles round a rocky scar¹¹ it strays,
Whyles in a wiel¹² it dimpl't;
Whyles glittered to the nightly rays,
Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle;
Whyles cookit¹³ underneath the braes,
Below the spreading hazel,
Unseen that night.

Among the branchens,¹⁴ on the brae,
Between her an' the moon,
The deil, or else an outler quey,¹⁵
Gat up an' gae a croon;¹⁶

Urged.

² Promised.

³ Take an opportunity of going, unnoticed, to a bear-stack, and fathom it three times round. The last fathom of the last time you will catch in your arms the appearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow.—BURNS.

⁴ Knotty.

⁵ Hideous old woman.

⁶ Swore an oath.

⁷ Shreds.

⁸ Hands.

⁹ Gorse.

¹⁰ You go out, one or more, for this is a social spell to a south-running spring or rivulet, where "three lairds' lands meet," and dip your left shirt-sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake; and, some time near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and burn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it.—BURNS.

¹¹ Cliff.

¹² Eddy.

¹³ Appeared and vanished.

¹⁴ Fern.

¹⁵ Unhoused heifer.

¹⁶ Moan.



MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

37

Poor Leezie's heart maist lap the hool;¹
Near lav'rock heignt she jumpit,
But mist a fit, an' in the pool
Out-owre the lugs she plumpit,
Wi' a plunge that night.

In order, on the clean hearth-stane,
The luggies three² are ranged,
And every time great care is ta'en
To see them duly changed;
Auld uncle John, wha wedlock's joys
Sin' Mar's year³ did desire,
Because he gat the toom⁴-dish thrice,
He heaved them on the fire
In wrath that night.

Wi' merry sangs, an' friendly cracks,
I wat they did na weary;
An' unco tales, an' funnie jokes,
Their sports were cheap an' cheery;
Till buttered so'ns,⁵ wi' fragrant lunt,⁶
Set a' their gabs⁷ a-steerin';
Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt,⁸
They parted aff careerin'
Fu' blithe that night

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN

A DIRGE.

WHEN chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One evening, as I wandered forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spied a man, whose aged step
Seemed weary, worn with care;
His face was furrowed o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

¹ Burst its case.

² Take three dishes; put clean water in one, foul water in another, leave the third empty: blindfold a person, and lead him to the hearth where the dishes are ranged; he (or she) dips the left hand; if by chance in the clean water, the future husband or wife will come to the bar or matrimony a maid; if in the foul, a widow; if in the empty dish, it foretells, with equal certainty, no marriage at all. It is repeated three times, and every time the arrangement of the dishes is altered.—BURNS.

³ 1815.

⁴ Empty.

⁵ Sowens, with butter instead of milk to them, is always the Halloween supper.—BURNS.

⁶ Smoke.

⁷ Mouths.

⁸ Spirituous liquor.



“Young stranger, whither wanderest thou ?”

Began the reverend sage ;
“Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure’s rage ?
Or, haply, pressed with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth, with me, to mourn
The miseries of man !

“The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labour to support
A haughty lordling’s pride ;
I’ve seen yon weary winter sun
Twice forty times return ;
And every time has added proofs
That man was made to mourn.

“O man ! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time !
Misspending all thy precious hours,
Thy glorious youthful prime !
Alternate follies take the sway,
Licentious passions burn ;
Which tenfold force gives Nature’s law,
That man was made to mourn.

“Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood’s active might ;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right :
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn,
Then age and want—oh, ill-matched pair !—
Show man was made to mourn.

“A few seem favourites of fate,
In Pleasure’s lap caressed ;
Yet, think not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly blest.
But, oh ! what crowds in every land,
Are wretched and forlorn !
Through weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn.

“Many and sharp the num’rous ills
Inwoven with our frame ;
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame !





And man, whose heaven-erected face
The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn !

“ See yonder poor, o'erlaboured wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil ;
And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

“ If I 'm designed yon lordling's slave
By Nature's law designed,
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind ?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn ?
Or why has man the will and power
To make his fellow mourn ?

“ Yet let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast ;
This partial view of humankind
Is surely not the best !
The poor, oppressèd, honest man,
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn.

“ O Death ! the poor man's dearest friend—
The kindest and the best !
Welcome the hour my agèd limbs
Are laid with thee at rest !
The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn ;
But, oh ! a blest relief to those
That weary-laden mourn ! ”





ADDRESS TO THE DE'IL.

O Prince ! O Chief of many thrond Powers,
That led th' embattled Seraphim to war.

MILTON.

O THOU ! whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Cootie,
Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,
Closed under hatches,
Spairges² about the brunstane cootie,³
To scaud poor wretches !

Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
An' let poor damnèd bodies be ;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a de'il,
To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
An' hear us squeel !

Great is thy power, an' great thy fame ;⁴
Far ken'd and noted is thy name ;
An' though yon lowin heugh's⁵ thy hame,
Thou travels far ;
An' faith ! thou's neither lag nor lame,
Nor blate⁶ nor scaur.⁷

Whyles, ranging like a roarin' lion,
For prey a' holes an' corners tryin' ;
Whyles on the strong-winged tempest flyin',
Tirlin' the kirks ;⁸
Whyles in the human bosom pryin',
Unseen thou lurks.

¹ It was, I think, in the winter of 1784, as we were going with carts for coals for the family fire (and I could yet point out the particular spot), that Robert first repeated to me the "Address to the De'il." The curious idea of such an address was suggested to him by running over in his mind the many ludicrous accounts and representations we have from various quarters of this august personage.—GILBERT BURNS.

² Splashing violently.

³ Brimston-dish.

⁴ This verse ran originally thus:—

Lang syne in Eden's happy scene,
When strappin' Adam's days were green,
And Eve was like my bonnie Jean,
My dearest part,
A dancin', sweet, young, handsome quean,
Wi' guileless heart.

⁵ Flaming abyss.

⁶ Sheepish.

⁷ Fearful, or scared.

⁸ Unroofing the churches.

I've heard my reverend Graunie say,
 In lanely glens ye like to stray;
 Or where auld ruined castles, gray,
 Nod to the moon,
 Ye fright the nightly wanderer's way,
 Wi' eldritch croon.¹

When twilight did my Graunie summon,
 To say her prayers, douce, honest woman!
 Aft yont the dyke she's heard you bummin,
 Wi' eerie drone;
 Or, rustlin', through the boortries² comin',
 Wi' heavy groan.

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,
 The stars shot down wi' sklentim³ light,
 Wi' you, mysel', I gat a fright,
 Ayont⁴ the lough!
 Ye, like a rash-bush⁵ stood in sight,
 Wi' waving sugh.

The cudgel in my nieve⁶ did shake,
 Each bristled hair stood like a stake,
 When wi' an eldritch stour,⁷ quaick—quaick—
 Amang the springs
 Away ye squattered,⁸ like a drake,
 On whistling wings.

Let Warlocks grim, an' withered hags,
 Tell how wi' you on ragweed nags,
 They skim the muirs, an' dizzy crags,
 Wi' wicked speed;
 And in kirkyards renew their leagues
 Owre howkit⁹ dead.

Thence countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
 May plunge an' plunge the kirk¹⁰ in vain;
 For, oh! the yellow treasure's ta'en
 By witching skill;
 An' dawtit twal-pint Hawkie's¹¹ gaen
 As yell's the Bill.¹²

¹ Ghostly groan.² Elder-bushes.³ Slanting.⁴ Beyond.⁵ Rush-bush.⁶ Fist.⁷ Hollow, supernatural.⁸ Fluttered.⁹ Disinterred dead bodies.¹⁰ Churn.¹¹ Petted twelve-pint Hawkie—*i.e.*, the favourite cow.¹² Milkless as the bull.



ADDRESS TO THE DE'IL.

Thence mystic knots mak' great abuse,
On young guidman, fond, keen, an' crouse;¹
When the best wark-lume i' the house,
 By cantrip² wit,
Is instant made no worth a louse,
 Just at the bit.

When throwes³ dissolve the snawy hoord,
An' float the jingling icy-boord,
Then water-kelpies haunt the foord
 By your direction,
An' 'nighted trav'lers are allured
 To their destruction.

An' aft your moss-traversing Spunkies⁴
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is:
The bleezing, curst, mischievous monkeys
 Delude his eyes,
Till in some miry slough he sunk is,
 Ne'er mair to rise.

When Masons' mystic word an' grip,
In storms an' tempests raise you up,
Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,
 Or, strange to tell!
The youngest Brother ye wad whip
 Aff' straught to hell!

Lang syne, in Eden's bonnie yard,
When youthfu' lovers first were paired,
An' all the soul of love they shared,
 The raptured hour,
Sweet on the fragrant, flowery swaird,
 In shady bower:

Then you, ye auld, snick-drawing⁵ dog;
Ye came to Paradise *incog.*,
An' played on man a cursèd brogue,⁶
 (Black be your fa'!)
An' gied the infant warld a shog,⁷
 'Maist ruined a'.

D'ye mind that day, when in a bizz,⁸
Wi' reekit duds,⁹ an' reestit gizz,¹⁰
Ye did present your smoutie phiz
 'Mang better fo'k,
An' sklentèd¹¹ on the man of Uz
 Your spitefu' joke?

¹ Courageous.² Magic.³ Thaws.⁴ Wills-o'-the-Wisp.⁵ Latch breaking.⁶ Trick.⁷ Shake.⁸ Hurry.⁹ Smoky clothes.¹⁰ Singed hair.¹¹ Darted.



THE VISION.

43

An' how ye gat him i' your thrall,
An' brak him out o' house an' hail,
While scabs an' blotches did him gall,
Wi' bitter claw,
An' lowsed his ill-tongued, wicked Scawl,¹
Was warst ava?

But a' your doings to rehearse,
Your wily snares an' fechtin' fierce,
Sin' that day Michael² did you pierce,
Down to this time,
Wad ding a Lallan³ tongue, or Erse,
In prose or rhyme.

An' now, auld Cloots, I ken ye're thinkin',
A certain Bardie's rantin', drinkin';
Some luckless hour will send him linkin'
To your black pit;
But, faith! he'll turn a corner jinkin',⁴
An' cheat you yet.

But, fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben!
Oh, wad ye tak' a thought an' men!⁵
Ye aiblins⁶ might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake—
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
Ev'n for your sake!

THE VISION.

DUAN FIRST.⁷

THE sun had closed the winter day,
The Curlers⁸ quat their roaring play,
An' hungered maukin⁹ ta'en her way
To kail-yards green,
While faithless snaws ilk step betray
Whare she has been

¹ Scold (his wife).

² Vide MILTON, Book vi.

³ Lowland.

⁴ Dodging.

⁵ Mend.

⁶ Perhaps.

⁷ Duan, a term of Ossian's for the different divisions of a digressive poem. See his "Cath-Loda," Vol. ii. of M'Pherson's translation.—BURNS.

⁸ Curling is a game played with stones on the ice; curlers, the players at it.

⁹ ▲ hare.



The thresher's weary flingin-tree
The lee-lang day had tired me;
And whan the day had closed his e'e,
Far i' the west,
Ben i' the spence,¹ right pensivelie,
I gaed to rest.

There, lanely, by the ingle-cheek,²
I sat and eyed the spewing reek,
That filled, wi' hoast-provoking smeek,
The auld clay biggin';³
An' heard the restless rattons squeak
About the riggin'.

All in this mottie, misty clime,
I backward mused on wasted time,
How I had spent my youthfu' prime,
An' done nae-thing,
But stringin' blethers⁴ up in rhyme,
For fools to sing.

Had I to guid advice but harkit,
I might, by this, hae led a market,
Or strutted in a bank an' clarkit
My cash-account:
While here, half-mad, half-fed, half-sarkit,⁵
Is a' th' amount.

I started, muttering, blockhead! *coof!*⁶
And heaved on high my waukit loof,⁷
To swear by a' yon starry roof,
Or some rash aith,
That I, henceforth, would be rhyme-proof
Till my last breath—

When click! the string the snick⁸ did draw;
And, jee! the door gaed to the wa';
An' by my ingle-lowe⁹ I saw,
Now bleezin bright,
A tight, outlandish hizzie, braw,
Come full in sight.

Ye need na doubt, I held my whisht;¹⁰
The infant aith, half-formed, was crusht;
I glowred as eerie's I'd been dusht¹¹
In some wild glen;
When sweet, like modest worth, she blush
And steppèd ben.

¹ Parlour.

⁴ Nonsense.

⁶ Ninny.

⁹ Firelight.

² Chimney-corner.

⁵ Clothed—sark is a shirt.

⁷ Hard palm.

¹⁰ Silence.

³ House.

⁸ Latch.

¹¹ Pushed by an ox.



THE VISION.

45

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly boughs
Were twisted, gracefu', round her brows;
I took her for some Scottish Muse,
By that same token;
An' come to stop those reckless vows,
Wou'd soon been broken.

A "hair-brained, sentimental trace,"
Was strongly markèd in her face;
A wildly witty, rustic grace
Shone full upon her;
Her eye, ev'n turled on empty space,
Beamed keen with Honour.

Down flowed her robe, a tartan sheen,
Till half a leg was scrimply seen;
And such a leg! my bonnie Jean
Could only peer it;
Sae straught, sae taper, tight, and clean,
Nane else came near it.

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
My gazing wonder chiefly drew;
Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling, threw
A lustre grand;
And seemed, to my astonished view,
A well-known land.

Here, rivers in the sea were lost;
There, mountains to the skies were tost:
Here, tumbling billows marked the coast
With surging foam;
There, distant shone Art's lofty boast,
The lordly dome.

Here, Doon poured down his far-fetched floods;
There, well-fed Irwine stately thuds:¹
Auld hermit Ayr staw² through his woods,
On to the shore;
And many a lesser torrent scuds,
With seeming roar.

Low, in a sandy valley spread,
An ancient borough³ reared her head;
Still, as in Scottish story read,
She boasts a race,
To every nobler virtue bred,
And polished grace.

¹ Sounds,

² Stole.

³ Ayr.



By stately tower or palace fair,
Or ruins pendent in the air,
Bold stems of heroes, here and there,
I could discern;
Some seemed to muse, some seemed to dare,
With feature stern.

My heart did glowing transport feel,
To see a race¹ heroic wheel,
And brandish round the deep-dyed steel
In sturdy blows;
While back-recoiling seem to reel
Their suthron foes.

HIS COUNTRY'S SAVIOUR,² mark him well!
Bcld Richardton's³ heroic swell;
The chief on Sark,⁴ who glorious fell,
In high command;
And he whom ruthless fates expel
His native land.

There, where a sceptred Pictish shade⁵
Stalked round his ashes lowly laid,
I marked a martial race, pourtrayed
In colours strong;
Bold, soldier-featured, undismayed
They strode along.

Through many a wild romantic grove,⁶
Near many a hermit-fancied cove,
(Fit haunts for friendship or for love,)
In musing mood,
An agèd Judge, I saw him rove,
Dispensing good.

¹ The Wallaces.—BURNS.

² William Wallace.—BURNS.

³ Adam Wallace, of Richardton, cousin to the immortal preserver of Scottish independence.—BURNS.

⁴ Wallace, Laird of Craigie, who was second in command, under Douglas, Earl of Ormond, at the famous battle on the banks of Sark, fought anno 1448. That glorious victory was principally owing to the judicious conduct and intrepid valour of the gallant Laird of Craigie, who died of his wounds after the action.—BURNS.

⁵ Coilus, king of the Picts, from whom the district of Kyle is said to take its name, lies buried, as tradition says, near the family seat of the Montgomeries of Coils-field, where his burial-place is still shown.—BURNS.

⁶ Barskimming, the seat of the late Lord Justice Clerk.



THE VISION.

47

With deep-struck reverential awe,
 The learnèd sire and son¹ I saw,
 To Nature's God and Nature's law
 They gave their lore,
 This, all its source and end to draw,
 That, to adore.

Brydone's brave ward² I well could spy,
 Beneath old Scotia's smiling eye;
 Who called on Fame, low standing by,
 To hand him on,
 Where many a patriot-name on high,
 And hero shone.

DUAN SECOND.

With musing deep, astonished stare,
 I viewed the heavenly seeming fair;
 A whispering throb did witness bear,
 Of kindred sweet.
 When with an elder sister's air
 She did me greet.

"All hail my own inspirèd bard!
 In me thy native Muse regard!
 Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
 Thus poorly low!
 I come to give thee such reward
 As we bestow.

"Know, the great genius of this land
 Has many a light, aërial band,
 Who, all beneath his high command,
 Harmoniously,
 As arts or arms they understand,
 Their labours ply.

"They Scotia's race among them share;
 Some fire the soldier on to dare;
 Some rouse the patriot up to bare
 Corruption's heart:
 Some teach the bard, a darling care,
 The tuneful art.

¹ Dr. Stewart and his son (the celebrated Dugald Stewart); they lived at Catrine.

² Col. Fullarton.



- “ ‘Mong swelling floods of reeking gore,
They, ardent, kindling spirits pour;
Or, ‘mid the venal senate’s roar,
 They sightless stand,
To mend the honest patriot-lore,
 And grace the hand.
- “ And when the bard, or hoary sage,
Charm or instruct the future age,
They bind the wild poetic rage
 In energy,
Or point the inconclusive page
 Full on the eye.
- “ Hence Fullarton, the brave and young;
Hence Dempster’s zeal-inspired tongue;
Hence sweet harmonious Beattie sung
 His ‘Minstrel Lays;’
Or tore, with noble ardour stung,
 The sceptic’s bays.
- “ To lower orders are assigned
The humbler ranks of Humankind,
The rustic bard, the lab’ring hind,
 The artisan;
All choose, as various they’re inclined,
 The various man.
- “ When yellow waves the heavy grain,
The threat’ning storm some strongly rein;
Some teach to meliorate the plain,
 With tillage skill;
And some instruct the shepherd train,
 Blithe o’er the hill.
- “ Some hint the lover’s harmless wile;
Some grace the maiden’s artless smile;
Some soothe the lab’rer’s weary toil,
 For humble gains,
And make his cottage-scenes beguile
 His cares and pains.
- “ Some, bounded to a district space,
Explore at large man’s infant race,
To mark the embryotic trace
 Of rustic bard;
And careful note each opening grace,
 A guide and guard.



THE VISION.

49

- “Of these am I—Coila my name;
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling power:
I marked thy embryo tuneful flame,
Thy natal hour.
- “With future hope I oft would gaze
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely carolled, chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes,
Fired at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.
- “I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or when the North his fleecy store
Drove through the sky,
I saw grim Nature’s visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.
- “Or when the deep green-mantled earth
Warm cherished every floweret’s birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In every grove,
I saw thee eye the general mirth
With boundless love.
- “When ripened fields, and azure skies,
Called forth the reaper’s rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their evening joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom’s swelling rise
In pensive walk.
- “When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
Th’ adorèd Name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To sooth thy flame.
- “I saw thy pulse’s maddening play,
Wild send thee Pleasure’s devious way,
Misled by Fancy’s meteor ray,
By Passion driven;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from Heaven.



“I taught thy manners-painting strains,
The loves, the ways, of simple swains,
Till now, o'er all my wide domains
Thy fame extends;
And some, the pride of Coila's plains,
Become thy friends.

“Thou canst not learn, nor can I show,
To paint with Thomson's landscape glow;
Or wake the bosom-melting throe
With Shenstone's art;
Or pour, with Gray, the moving flow
Warm on the heart.

“Yet all beneath th' unrivalled rose,
The lowly daisy sweetly blows:
Though large the forest's monarch throws
His army shade,
Yet green the juicy hawthorn grows
Adown the glade.

“Then never murmur or repine;
Strive in thy humble sphere to shine;
And trust me, not Potosi's mine,
Nor kings' regard,
Can give a bliss o'ermatching thine,
A rustic Bard.

“To give my counsels all in one—
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan;
Preserve the Dignity of Man,
With soul erect;
And trust, the Universal Plan
Will all protect.

“And wear thou this”—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head:
The polished leaves, and berries red,
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.





A WINTER NIGHT.

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm !
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your looped and windowed raggedness, defend **you**
From seasons such as these ?—SHAKSPEARE.

WHEN biting Boreas, fell and doure,¹
Sharp shivers through the leafless bower ;
When Phœbus gi'es a short-lived glower
Far south the lift,²
Dim darkening through the flaky shower,
Or whirling drift :

Ae night the storm the steeples rocked,
Poor labour sweet in sleep was locked,
While burns, wi' snawy wreaths up-choked,
Wild-eddying swirl,
Or through the mining outlet bocked,³
Down headlong hurl.

List'ning, the doors an' winnocks⁴ rattle,
I thought me on the ourie⁵ cattle,
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle⁶
O' winter war,
And through the drift, deep-lairing sprattle,⁷
Beneath a scar.⁸

Ilk happing⁹ bird, wee, helpless thing,
That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee ?
Whare wilt thou cower thy chittering wing,
An' close thy e'e ?

Ev'n you on murdering errands toiled,
Lone from your savage homes exiled,
The blood-stained roost, and sheep-cote spoiled,
My heart forgets,
While pitiless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats.

Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign,
Dark muffled, viewed the dreary plain ;

¹ Stern.

⁴ Windows.

⁷ Wading, scramble.

³ Sky.

⁵ Shivering.

⁸ Cliff.

³ Gushed.

⁶ Hurry.

⁹ Hopping.



Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
 Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintive strain,
 Slow, solemn, stole :—

“ Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust !
 And freeze, thou bitter biting frost !
 Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
 More hard unkindness, unrelenting,
 Vengeful malice unrepenting,

Than heaven-illumined Man on brother Man bestows !

 See stern Oppression's iron grip,
 Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
 Sending, like bloodhounds from the slip,
Woe, want, and murder o'er a land !
 Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
 Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,

How pampered Luxury, Flattery by her side,
 The parasite empoisoning her ear,
 With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud property, extended wide ;
 And eyes the simple rustic hind,
 Whose toil upholds the glittering show,
 A creature of another kind,
 Some coarser substance, unrefined,

Placed for her lordly use thus far, thus vile, below.

 Where, where is Love's fond, tender throe,
 With lordly Honour's lofty brow,
 The powers you proudly own ?
Is there, beneath Love's noble name,
 Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
 To bless himself alone ?

 Mark maiden innocence a prey
 To love-pretending snares ;

 This boasted honour turns away,
 Shunning soft Pity's rising sway,

Regardless of the tears, and unavailing prayers !

 Perhaps, this hour, in Misery's squalid nest,
 She strains your infant to her joyless breast,

And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking blast ;

 Oh, ye, who, sunk in beds of down,
 Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
 Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
 Whom friends and fortune quite disown !

 Ill-satisfied keen Nature's clam'rous call,
 Stretched on his straw he lays himself to sleep,
 While, through the ragged roof and chinky wall,
 Chill o'er his slumbers piles the drift heap !



Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
Where Guilt and poor Misfortune pine !
Guilt, erring man, relenting view !
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch, already crushèd low
By cruel fortune's undeservèd blow ?
Affliction's sons are brothers in distress,
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss !"

I heard nae mair, for Chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snaw,
And hailed the morning with a cheer,
A cottage-rousing craw.

But deep this truth impressed my mind—
Through all His works abroad,
The heart, benevolent and kind,
The most resembles God.

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING
SALUTATION TO HIS AULD MARE MAGGIE,

ON GIVING HER THE ACCUSTOMED RIP OF CORN TO HANSEL IN
THE NEW YEAR.

A GUID New Year I wish thee, Maggie !
Hae, there's a rip¹ to thy auld baggie :
Though thou's howe-backit now and knaggie,²
I've seen the day
Thou could hae gaen like ony staggie
Out-owre the lay.³

Though now thou's dowie,⁴ stiff, an' crazy,
An' thy auld hide's as white's a daisy,
I've seen thee dappl't, sleek, and glaizie,
A bonny grey :
He should been tight that daur't to raize thee
Ance in a day.

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,
A filly buirdly, steeve, an' swank,⁵
An' set weel down a shapely shank
As e'er tread yird ;⁶
An' could hae flown out-owre a stank⁷
Like onie bird.

¹ A handful of corn in the stalks. ² Sunk in the back and sharp-boned

³ Lea.

⁴ Spiritless.

⁵ Strong, active, and stately.

⁶ Earth.

⁷ Ditch or morass



It's now some nine-an'-twenty year
Sin' thou was my guid father's meere;
He gied me thee, o' tocher¹ clear,
 An' fifty mark;
Though it was sma', 'twas weel-won gear,
 An' thou was stark.²

When first I gaed to woo my Jenny,
Ye then was trottin' wi' your minnie:³
Though ye was trickie, slee, an' funnie,
 Ye ne'er was donsie;⁴
But hamely, tawie, quiet, an' cannie,
 An' unco sonsie.⁵

That day ye pranced wi' muckle pride,
When ye bure hame my bonnie bide:
An' sweet an' gracefu' she did ride,
 Wi' maiden air!
Kyle Stewart I could braggèd⁶ wide,
 For sic a pair.

Though now ye dow but hoyte⁷ and hobble,
An' wintle⁸ like a saumont coble,⁹
That day ye was a jinker¹⁰ noble,
 For heels an' win'!
An' ran them till they a' did wauble,¹¹
 Far, far behin'.

When thou an' I were young and skeigh,¹²
An' stable meals at fairs were dreigh,¹³
How thou wad prance, an' snore, an' skreigh,
 An' tak' the road!
Town's bodies ran, an' stood abeigh,¹⁴
 An' ca't thee mad.

When thou was corn't, an' I was mellow,
We took the road ay like a swallow:
At brooses¹⁵ thou had ne'er a fellow
 For pith and speed;
But every tail thou pay't them hollow,
 Whare'er thou gaed.

¹ Without payment—tocher is a dower.

³ Mother.

⁶ Challenged.

⁹ A salmon boat.

¹² Mettlesome.

¹⁵ Wedding races

⁴ Mischievous.

⁷ Limp.

¹⁰ Runner.

¹³ Tedious.

² Strong.

⁵ Engaging.

⁸ Twist.

¹¹ Stagger.

¹⁴ By, aside





NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION.

55

The sma', droop-rumpl't,¹ hunter cattle,
Might aiblins² waur't thee for a brattle;³
But sax Scotch miles thou try't their mettle,
An' gar't them whaizle:⁴
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle⁵
O' saugh⁶ or hazel.

Thou was a noble fittie-lan',⁷
As e'er in tyg or tow was drawn!
Aft thee an' I, in aught hours gaun,
On guid March weather,
Hae turned sax rood beside our han',
For days thegither.

Thou never braindg't,⁸ an' fecht,⁹ an' fliskit,¹⁰
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whiskit,
An' spread abreed thy well-filled briskit,
Wi' pith and power,
Till spritty knowes¹¹ wad rair't¹² and risket,¹³
An' slypet owre.¹⁴

When frosts lay lang, an' snaws were deep,
An' threatened labour back to keep,
I gied thy cog¹⁵ a wee bit heap
Aboon the timmer;¹⁶
I ken'd my Maggie wad na sleep
For that, or simmer.

In cart or car thou never reestit;
The stevest¹⁷ brae thou wad hae fac't it;
Thou never lap, an' sten't, an' breastit,¹⁸
Then stood to blaw;
But just thy step a wee thing hastit,
Thou snoov't¹⁹ awa'.

My pleugh is now thy bairn-time a';²⁰
Four gallant brutes as e'er did draw;
Forbye sax mae, I've sell't awa,
That thou hast nurst:
They drew me threiteen pund an' twa,
The vera warst.

¹ Sloping-backed.

³ Worse thee in a short race.

⁵ A switch.

⁷ The near horse of the hindmost pair at the plough.

⁸ Plunged forward. ⁹ Pulled by fits.

¹¹ Hillocks with rough-rooted plants in them.

¹³ Make a noise like the tearing of roots.

¹⁵ Wooden measure.

¹⁸ Leaped, reared, or started forward.

¹⁹ Went smoothly and constantly.

²⁰ My plough-team are all thy children.

² Perhaps.

⁴ Wheeze.

⁶ Willow.

¹⁰ Fretted.

¹² Rent.

¹⁴ Slip over.

¹⁷ Steepest.



TO A LOUSE.

Monie a sair daurk¹ we twa hae wrought,
An' wi' the weary warl' fought!
An' monie an anxious day I thought
 We wad be beat!
Yet here to crazy age we're brought,
 Wi' something yet.

And think na, my auld, trusty servan',
Than now perhaps thou's less deservin',
An' thy auld days may end in starvin',
 For my last fow,²
A heapit stimpert,³ I'll reserve ane
 Laid by for you.

We've worn to crazy years thegither;
We'll toyte⁴ about wi' ane anither;
Wi' tentie care I'll fit thy tether
 To some hained rig,⁵
Whare ye may nobly rax⁶ your leather,
 Wi' sma' fatigue.

TO A LOUSE.

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT CHURCH

HA! whare ye gaun, ye crowlin' ferlie!⁷
Your impudence protects you sairly:
I canna say but ye strunt⁸ rarely
 Owre gauze and lace;
Though faith, I fear ye dine but sparely
 On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin', blastit wonner,
Detested, shunned by saunt an' sinner,
How dare ye set your fit upon her,
 Sae fine a lady!
Gae somewhere else and seek your dinner
 On some poor body.

Swith,⁹ in some beggar's haffet¹⁰ squattle;¹¹
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle¹²
Wi' ither kindred jumpin' cattle,
 In shoals and nations;
Whare horn or bane ne'er dare unsettle
 Your thick plantations.

¹ Day's work.² Bushel.³ Eighth part of a bushel.⁴ Move.⁵ Spare rig.⁶ Stretch.⁷ Wonder.⁸ Strut.⁹ Get away.¹⁰ Temple.¹¹ Sprawl.¹² Scramble.

THE INVENTORY.

57

Now haud ye there, ye're out o' sight,
 Below the fatt'rils,¹ snag an' tight;
 Na, faith ye yet! ye'll r.o be right
 Till ye've got on it,
 The vera tapmost, towering height
 O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth! right bauld ye set your nose out,
 As plump and grey as onie grozet;²
 Oh, for some rank, mercurial rozet,³
 Or fell, red smeddum,⁴
 I'd gie ye sic a hearty dose o't,
 Wad dress your droddum!

I wad na been surprised to spy
 You on an auld wife's flainen toy,⁵
 Or aiblins some bit duddie⁶ boy,
 On's wyliecoat;⁷
 But Miss's fine Lunardie⁸—fie!
 How dare ye do't!

Oh, Jenny, dinna toss your head,
 An' set your beauties a' abroad!
 Ye little ken what cursèd speed
 The blastie's⁹ makin'!
 Thae winks and finger-ends, I dread,
 Are notice takin'!

Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
 To see oursel's as others see us!
 It wad frae monie a blunder free us
 And foolish notion:
 What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
 And e'en Devotion!

THE INVENTORY.

IN ANSWER TO A MANDATE BY THE SURVEYOR OF TAXES, REQUIRING A RETURN FOR THE ASSESSED TAXES.

SIR,¹⁰ as your mandate did request,
 I send you here a faithfu' list
 O' guid's and gear, and a' my graith,
 To which I'm clear to gie my aith.

¹ Ribbon ends.

⁴ Powder.

⁷ Flannel waistcoat.

⁸ The fashionable bonnet, so named after Lunardi, the aeronaut, who was celebrated in 1785.

⁹ The withered dwarf.

¹⁰ This return was made to Mr. Aiken, the friend to whom "The Cotter's Saturday Night" was inscribed.

² Gooseberry.

⁵ Flannel cap.

³ Rosin.

⁶ Dirty.



Imprimis, then, for carriage cattle,
I hae four brutes o' gallant mettle,
As ever drew afore a pettle.¹
My han'-afore's² a guid auld has-been,
And wight and wilfu' a' his days' been.
My han'-ahin's³ a weel-gaun filly,
That aft has borne me hame frae Killie,⁴
And your auld burro' mony a time,
In days when riding was nae crime—
But ance, when in my wooing pride,
I, like a blockhead boost⁵ to ride,
The wilfu' creature sae I pat to,
(Lord, pardon a' my sins, and that too!)
I played my fillie sic a shavie,⁶
She's a' bedevil'd wi' the spavie.
My furr-ahin's⁷ a worthy beast,
As e'er in tug or tow was traced.
The fourth's a Highland Donald hastie,
A damned red-wud Kilburnie blastie!
Forbye a cowte,⁸ o' cowte's the wale,⁹
As ever ran afore a tail;
If he be spared to be a beast,
He'll draw me fifteen pun' at least.
Wheel-carriages I hae but few,
Three carts, and twa are feckly¹⁰ new;
An auld wheelbarrow, mair for token
Ae leg and baith the trams are broken;
I made a poker o' the spin'le,
And my auld mither brunt the trin'le.
For men, I've three mischievous boys,
Run-deils for rantin' and for noise;
A gaudsman ane, a thrasher t'other;
Wee Davoc hands the nowte in fother.¹¹
I rule them, as I ought, discreetly,
And aften labour them completely;
And aye on Sundays duly, nightly,
I on the question targe¹² them tightly,
Till, faith, wee Davoc's turned sae gleg,¹³
Though scarcely langer than my leg,
He'll screed you aff Effectual Calling
As fast as ony in the dwelling.

¹ A plough-spade.

² The foremost horse on the left hand in the plough.—BURNS.

³ The hindmost horse on the left hand in the plough.—BURNS.

⁴ Kilmarnock.

⁵ Must needs.

⁶ A trick.

⁷ The hindmost horse on the right hand in the plough.—BURNS.

⁸ A colt.

⁹ Best.

¹⁰ Nearly.

¹¹ Plough-driver.

¹² Task.

¹³ So sharp.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

59

I've nane in female servan' station,
 (Lord, keep me aye frae a' temptation!)
 I hae nae wife, and that my bliss is,
 And ye hae laid nae tax on misses;
 And then, if kirk folks dinna touch me,
 I ken the devils darena touch me.
 Wi' weans I'm mair than weel contented,
 Heaven sent me ane mair than I wanted,
 My sonsie,¹ smirking, dear-bought Bess,
 She stares the daddy in her face,
 Enough of ought you like but grace;
 But her, my bonnie sweet wee lady,
 I've paid enough for her already,
 And gin ye tax her or her mither,
 B' the Lord! ye'se get them a' thegither.

And now, remember, Mr. Aiken,
 Nae kind of license out I'm takin';
 Frae this time forth I do declare,
 I'se ne'er ride horse nor hizzie mair;
 Through dirt and dub for life I'll paidle,
 Ere I sae dear pay for a saddle;
 My travel a' on foot I'll shank it,
 I've sturdy bearers, Gude be thankit!
 The kirk and you may tak' you that,
 It puts but little in your pat;
 Sae dinna put me in your buke,
 Nor for my ten white shillings luke.

This list wi' my ain hand I've wrote it,
 The day and date as under noted;
 Then know all ye whom it concerns,
Subscripsi huic, ROBERT BURNS.

Mossgiel, February 22, 1786.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL, 1786.

WEE, modest, crimson-tippèd flower,
 Thou's met me in an evil hour;
 For I maun crush amang the stoure²
 Thy slender stem;
 To spare thee now is past my power,
 Thou bonnie gem.

¹ Comely.

² Dust.



Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet!
 Wi' spreckled breast,
When upward-springing, blithe, to greet
 The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth,
Yet cheerfully thou glinted¹ forth
 Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth
 Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou beneath the random bield²
 O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie³ stibble-field,
 Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
 In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
 And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betrayed,
 And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
 Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskilful he to note the card
 Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
 And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
 To mis'ry's brink,
Till wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
 He, ruined, sink!

¹ Peeped.² Shelter.³ Barren.



TO RUIN.

61

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom!

TO RUIN.

ALL hail! inexorable lord!
At whose destruction-breathing word
The mightiest empires fall!
Thy cruel, woe-delighted train,
The ministers of grief and pain,
A sullen welcome, all!
With stern-resolved, despairing eye,
I see each aimed dart;
For one has cut my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart.
Then lowering and pouring,
The storm no more I dread;
Though thickening, and blackening,
Round my devoted head.

And thou grim power, by life abhorred,
While life a pleasure can afford,
Oh, hear a wretch's prayer!
No more I shrink appalled, afraid;
I court, I beg thy friendly aid,
To close this scene of care!
When shall my soul, in silent peace,
Resign life's joyless day;
My weary heart its throbbing cease,
Cold mould'ring in the clay?
No fear more, no tear more,
To stain my lifeless face;
Enclaspèd, and graspèd
Within thy cold embrace!

TO MISS LOGAN,

WITH BEATTIE'S POEMS, AS A NEW YEAR'S GIFT, JAN. 1, 1787.

AGAIN the silent wheels of time
Their annual round have driven,
And you, though scarce in maiden prime,
Are so much nearer heaven.

*THE LAMENT.*

No gifts have I from Indian coasts
The infant year to hail ;
I send you more than India boasts
In Edwin's simple tale.

Our sex with guile and faithless love
Is charged, perhaps too true ;
But may, dear maid, each lover prove
An Edwin still to you !

THE LAMENT.

OCCASIONED BY THE UNFORTUNATE ISSUE OF A FRIEND'S AMOUR.

[The Lament was composed on that unfortunate passage of his matrimonial history which I have mentioned in my letter to Mrs. Dunlop, after the first distraction of his feelings had a little subsided.—GILBERT BURNS.]

Alas ! how oft does Goodness wound itself,
And sweet affection prove the spring of woe !—HOME.

O THOU pale orb, that silent shines,
While care-untroubled mortals sleep !
Thou seest a wretch that inly pines,
And wanders here to wail and weep !
With woe I nightly vigils keep,
Beneath thy wan unwarining beam ;
And mourn, in lamentation deep,
How life and love are all a dream.

I joyless view thy rays adorn
The faintly markèd distant hill :
I joyless view thy trembling horn
Reflected in the gurgling rill,
My fondly fluttering heart, be still !
Thou busy power, Remembrance, cease !
Ah ! must the agonizing thrill
For ever bar returning peace !

No idly feigned peetic pains,
My sad, love-lorn lamentings claim ;
No shepherd's pipe—Arcadian strains ;
No fabled tortures, quaint and tame ;
The plighted faith ; the mutual flame ;
The oft attested Powers above ;
The promised father's tender name ;
These were the pledges of my love !

Encircled in her clasping arms,
 How have the raptured moments flown!
 How have I wished for fortune's charms,
 For her dear sake, and hers alone!
 And must I think it! is she gone,
 My secret heart's exulting boast?
 And does she heedless hear my groan?
 And is she ever, ever lost?

Oh! can she bear so base a heart,
 So lost to honour, lost to truth,
 As from the fondest lover part,
 The plighted husband of her youth?
 Alas! life's path may be unsmooth!
 Her way may lie through rough distress!
 Then, who her pangs and pains will soothe,
 Her sorrows share, and make them less?

Ye wingèd hours that o'er us past,
 Enraptured more, the more enjoyed,
 Your dear remembrance in my breast,
 My fondly treasured thoughts employed.
 That breast, how dreary now, and void,
 For her too scanty once of room!
 Ev'n every ray of hope destroyed,
 And not a wish to gild the gloom!

The morn that warns th' approaching day,
 Awakes me up to toil and woe:
 I see the hours in long array,
 That I must suffer, lingering, slow.
 Full many a pang, and many a throe,
 Keen recollection's direful train,
 Must wring my soul, ere Phoebus, low,
 Shall kiss the distant, western main.

And when my nightly couch I try,
 Sore harassed out with care and grief,
 My toil-beat nerves, and tear-worn eye,
 Keep watchings with the nightly thief:
 Or, if I slumber, Fancy, chief,
 Reigns haggard-wild, in sore affright:
 Ev'n day, all bitter, brings relief
 From such a horror-breathing night.

Oh, thou bright queen, who o'er th' expanse
 Now highest reign'st, with boundless sway!
 Oft has thy silent marking glance
 Observed us, fondly wandering, stray!



ON A SCOTCH BARD.

The time, unheeded, sped away,
While Love's luxurious pulse beat high,
Beneath thy silver gleaming ray,
To mark the mutual kindling eye.

Oh, scenes in strong remembrance set!
Scenes, never, never to return!
Scenes, if in stupor I forget,
Again I feel, again I burn!
From every joy and pleasure torn,
Life's weary vale I'll wander through;
And hopeless, comfortless, I'll mourn
A faithless woman's broken vow.

ON A SCOTCH BARD,

GONE TO THE WEST INDIES.

A' ye wha live by soups o' drink,
A' ye wha live by crambo-clink,¹
A' ye wha live and never think,
Come mourn wi' me!
Our billie's² gien us a' a jink,³
An' owre the sea.

Lament him a' ye rantin' core,⁴
Wha dearly like a random splore,⁵
Nae mair he'll join the merry roar
In social key;
For now he's ta'en anither shore,
An' owre the sea.

The bonnie lasses weel may wiss⁶ him,
And in their dear petitions place him:
The widows, wives, an' a' may bless him,
Wi' tearfu' e'e;
For weel I wat they'll sairly miss him
That's owre the sea.

O Fortune, they hae room to grumble!
Hadst thou ta'en aff some drowsy bumble,
Wha can do nought but fyke and fumble,
'Twad been nae plea;
But he was gleg⁷ as ony wumble,
That's owre the sea.

¹ Rhymes.⁴ Party.⁷ Sharp.² Brother.⁵ Frolic.³ The go by.⁶ Wish for.



ON A SCOTCH BARD.

65

Auld, cantie Kyle¹ may weepers wear,
An' stain them wi' the saut, saut tear;
'Twill mak' her poor auld heart, I fear,
 In finders² flee;
He was her laureate monie a year,
 That's owre the sea.

He saw misfortune's cauld nor'-west
Lang mustering up a bitter blast;
A jillet³ brak his heart at last,
 Ill may she be!
So, took a berth afore the mast,
 And owre the sea.

To tremble under Fortune's cummock,⁴
On scarce a bellyfu' o' drummock,⁵
Wi' his proud, independent stomach
 Could ill agree;
So, row't⁶ his hurdies in a hammock,
 And owre the sea.

He ne'er was gi'en to great misguiding,
Yet coin his pouches wad na bide in;
Wi' him it ne'er was under hiding;
 He dealt it free:
The Muse was a' that he took pride in,
 That's owre the sea.

Jamaica bodies use him weel,
An' hap⁷ him in a cozie biel:⁸
Ye'll find him aye a dainty chiel,
 And fou o' glee;
He wad'na wranged the vera de'il,
 That's owre the sea.

Fareweel, my rhyme-composing billie!
Your native soil was right ill-willie;
But may ye flourish like a lily,
 Now bonnilie!
I'll toast ye in my hind'most gillie,⁹
 Though owre the sea.

¹ Ayrshire.

⁴ Wand.

⁵ Rolled himself.

⁹ Diminutive of a gill.

² Shreds.

⁵ Raw meal and water mixed.

⁷ Cover him.

³ A jilt.

⁸ Shelter.



THE FAREWELL TO THE BROTHERS OF ST.
JAMES'S LODGE, TARBOLTON.

Tune—"Good night, and joy be wi' you a'!"

ADIEU! a heart-warm, fond adieu!
Dear brothers of the mystic tie!
Ye favoured, ye enlightened few,
Companions of my social joy!
Though I to foreign lands must hie,
Pursuing Fortune's slidd'ry ba',
With melting heart, and brimful eye,
I'll mind you still, though far awa'.

Oft have I met your social band,
And spent the cheerful, festive night;
Oft honoured with supreme command,
Presided o'er the sons of light:
And by that hieroglyphic bright,
Which none but craftsmen ever saw!
Strong mem'ry on my heart shall write
Those happy scenes when far awa'.

May freedom, harmony, and love,
Unite you in the grand design,
Beneath th' Omniscent Eye above,
The glorious Architect divine!
That you may keep th' unerring line,
Still rising by the plummet's law,
Till order bright completely shine,
Shall be my prayer when far awa'.

And you¹ farewell! whose merits claim,
Justly, that highest badge to wear!
Heaven bless your honoured, noble name,
To Masonry and Scotia dear!
A last request permit me here,
When yearly ye assemble a',
One round, I ask it with a tear,
To him, the Bard that's far awa'.

¹ Sir John Whiteford, the grand master.

THE FAREWELL.¹

“The valiant in himself, what can he suffer ?
 Or what does he regard his single woes ?
 But when, alas ! he multiplies himself,
 To dearer selves, to the loved, tender fair,
 To those whose bliss, whose being hang upon him,
 To helpless children ! then, oh, then he feels
 The point of misery festering in his heart,
 And weakly weeps his fortune like a coward.
 Such, such am I ! undone !”

• THOMSON'S *Edward and Eleanor*.

FAREWELL old Scotia's bleak domains,
 Far dearer than the torrid plains
 Where rich ananas blow !
 Farewell a mother's blessing dear !
 A brother's sigh ! a sister's tear !
 My Jean's ² heart-rending throe !
 Farewell, my Bess !³ though thou 'rt bereft
 Of my parental care !
 A faithful brother I have left,
 My part in him thou 'lt share !
 Adieu too, to you too,
 My Smith, my bosom frien' ;
 When kindly you mind me,
 Oh, then befriend my Jean !

What bursting anguish tears my heart !
 From thee, my Jeanie, must I part !
 Thou, weeping, answerest, “ No !”
 Alas ! misfortune stares my face,
 And points to ruin and disgrace,
 I for thy sake must go !
 Thee, Hamilton and Aiken dear,
 A grateful, warm adieu !
 I, with a much indebted tear,
 Shall still remember you !
 All hail then, the gale then,
 Wafts me from thee, dear shore !
 It rustles and whistles—
 I'll never see thee more !

Written when the Poet designed to leave Scotland for the West Indies,
² Jean Armour. ³ His illegitimate child.



FAREWELL TO AYRSHIRE.

SCENES of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Scenes that former thoughts renew,
Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Now a sad and last adieu !

Bonny Doon, sae sweet and gloamin',
Fare thee weel before I gang !
Bonny Doon, whare early roaming,
First I weaved the rustic sang !

Bowers, adieu, whare Love, decoying,
First intralled this heart o' mine,
There the saftest sweets enjoying—
Sweets that Mem'ry ne'er shall tyne !

Friends, so near my bosom ever,
Ye hae rendered moments dear ;
But, alas ! when forced to sever,
Then the stroke, oh, how severe !

Friends, that parting tear reserve it,
Though 'tis doubly dear to me !
Could I think I did deserve it,
How much happier would I be !

Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Scenes that former thoughts renew,
Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Now a sad and last adieu !

LINES WRITTEN ON A BANK-NOTE.

[The bank-note on the back of which these characteristic lines were written, is of the Bank of Scotland, and dated so far back as March 1, 1780.]

WAE worth thy power, thou cursèd leaf !
Fell source o' a' my woe and grief !
For lack o' thee I've lost my lass !
For lack o' thee I scrimp my glass !
I see the children of affliction
Unaided, through thy cursèd restriction.
I've seen th' oppressor's cruel smile,
Amid his hapless victim's spoil,
And, for thy potence vainly wished
To crush the villain in the dust.
For lack o' thee, I leave this much-loved shore,
Never, perhaps, to greet auld Scotland more !

VERSES TO AN OLD SWEETHEART AFTER HER
MARRIAGE.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A COPY OF HIS POEMS PRESENTED
TO THE LADY.

ONCE fondly loved, and still remembered dear!
Sweet early object of my youthful vows!
Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,—
Friendship! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

And when you read the simple, artless rhymes,
One friendly sigh for him—he asks no more—
Who distant burns in flaming torrid climes,
Or haply lies beneath th' Atlantic's roar.

VERSES WRITTEN UNDER VIOLENT GRIEF.

[The following lines, which first appeared in the *Sun* newspaper, April, 1823, appear to have been originally written on a leaf of a copy of his poems presented to a friend.]

ACCEPT the gift a friend sincere
Wad on thy worth be pressin';
Remembrance oft may start a tear,
But oh! that tenderness forbear,
Though 'twad my sorrows lessen.

My morning raise sae clear and fair,
I thought sair storms wad never
Bedew the scene; but grief and care
In wildest fury hae made bare
My peace, my hope for ever!

You think I'm glad; oh, I pay weel
For a' the joy I borrow,
In solitude—then, then I feel
I canna to myself conceal
My deeply ranklin' sorrow.

Farewell! within thy bosom free
A sigh may whiles awaken;
A tear may wet thy laughin' e'e,
For Scotia's son—ance gay like thee,
Now hopeless, comfortless, forsaken!



DESPONDENCY.

AN ODE.

OPPRESSED with grief, oppressed with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I sit me down and sigh:
O life! thou art a galling load,
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I!
Dim backward as I cast my view,
What sickening scenes appear!
What sorrows yet may pierce me through,
Too justly I may fear!
Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom;
My woes here shall close ne'er,
But with the closing tomb!

Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!
Even when the wished end's denied,
Yet while the busy means are plyed,
They bring their own reward:
Whilst I, a hope-abandoned wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet every sad returning night
And joyless morn the same;
You, bustling and justling,
Forget each grief and pain;
I, listless, yet restless,
Find every prospect vain.

How blest the Solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
Within the humble cell,
The cavern wild with tangling roots,
Sits o'er his newly-gathered fruits,
Beside his crystal well!
Or, haply, to his evening thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought,
A faint collected dream;
While praising, and raising
His thoughts to heaven on high,
As wandering, meandering,
He views the solemn sky.



DESPONDENCY.

Oppressed with grief, oppressed with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I sit me down and sigh. — D. 70.

Than I, no lonely hermit placed
 Where never human footstep traced,
 Less fit to play the part,
 The lucky moment to improve,
 And just to stop, and just to move,
 With self-respecting art :
 But ah ! those pleasures, loves, and joys,
 Which I too keenly taste,
 The Solitary can despise,
 Can want, and yet be blest !
 He needs not, he heeds not,
 Or human love or hate,
 Whilst I here must cry here,
 At perfidy ingrate !

Oh ! enviable, early days,
 When dancing, thoughtless, Pleasure's maza-
 To care, to guilt unknown !
 How ill exchanged for riper times,
 To feel the follies, or the crimes,
 Of others, or my own !
 Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport,
 Like linnets in the bush,
 Ye little know the ills ye court,
 When manhood is your wish ;
 The losses, the crosses,
 That active man engage !
 The fears all, the tears all,
 Of dim-declining age !

 WINTER.

A DIRGE.

THE wintry west extends his blast,
 And hail and rain does blow ;
 Or, the stormy north sends driving forth
 The blinding sleet and snaw :
 While, tumbling brown, the burn comes down,
 And roars frae bank to brae ;
 And bird and beast in covert rest,
 And pass the heartless day.
 "The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,"¹
 The joyless winter day,
 Let others fear, to me more dear
 Than all the pride of May :

¹ Dr. Young.



THE BRIGS OF AYR.

The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join ;
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine!

Thou Power Supreme, whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here, firm, I rest, they must be best,
Because they are Thy Will!
Then all I want (O, do Thou grant
This one request of mine!)
Since to enjoy Thou dost deny,
Assist me to resign!

THE BRIGS OF AYR.

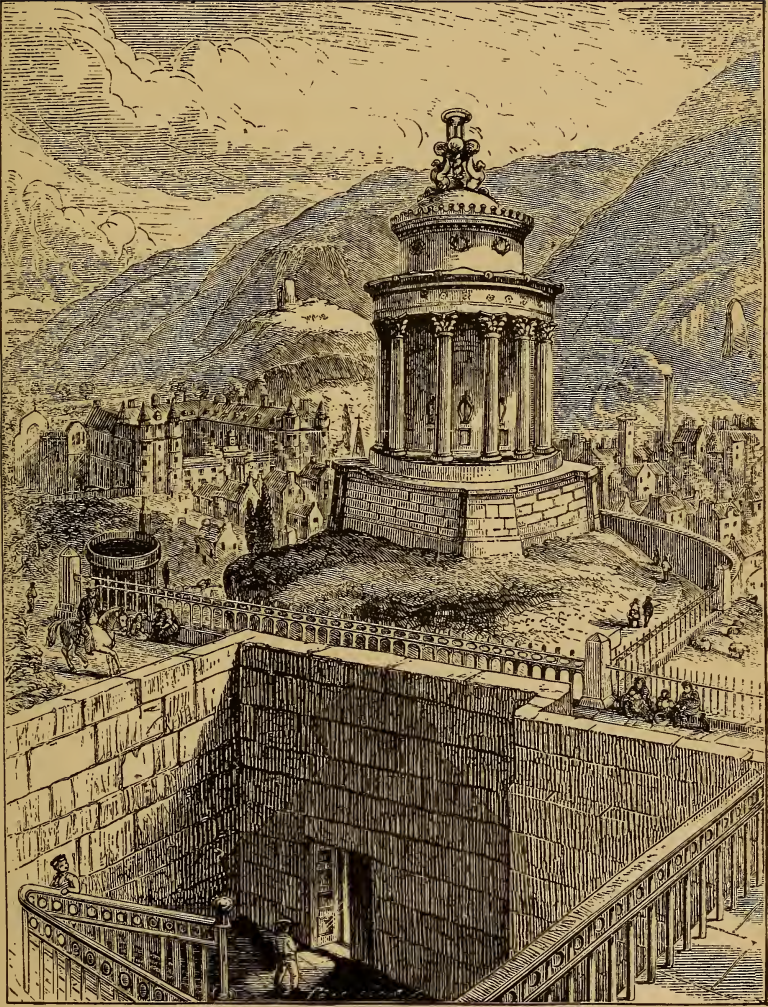
[Inscribed to JOHN BALLANTYNE, Esq., Ayr.]

THE simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from every bough;
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn-bush;
The soaring lark, the perching redbreast shrill,
Or deep-toned plovers, grey, wild-whistling o'er the hill;
Shall he, nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early Poverty to hardship steeled,
And trained to arms in stern Misfortune's field,
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes?
Or labour hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?
No! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the Bard,
Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward.
Still, if some patron's generous care he trace,
Skilled in the secret, to bestow with grace;
When Ballantyne befriends his humble name,
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells,
The God-like bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter hap,¹
And thack² and rape secure the toil-won crap;

¹ Covering.

² Thatch.





Potato-bings¹ are snuggèd up fra skaith²
Of coming Winter's biting, frosty breath;
The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumbered buds and flowers, delicious spoils,
Sealed up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doomed by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o' devils smooored³ wi' brimstone reek:
The thundering guns are heard on every side,
The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide;
The feathered field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart, but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flower in field or meadow springs:
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except perhaps the Robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree:
The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noontide blaze,
While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays.
'Twas in that season, when a simple Bard,
Unknown and poor—simplicity's reward—
Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
By whim inspired, or haply prest with care;
He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
And down by Simpson's⁴ wheeled the left about:
(Whether impelled by all-directing Fate,
To witness what I after shall narrate;
Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
He wandered out he knew not where nor why)
The drowsy Dungeon-clock⁵ had numbered two,
And Wallace Tower⁶ had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swoln Firth, with sullen sounding roar,
Through the still night dashed hoarse along the shore:
All else was hushed as Nature's closèd e'e;
The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree;
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently crusting o'er the glittering stream.

When lo! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
The clanging sigh of whistling wings is heard;
Two dusky forms dart through the midnight air,
Swift as the Gos⁶ drives on the wheeling hare;
Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers:

¹ Heaps.

² Harm.

³ Smothered.

⁴ A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end.

⁵ The two steeples.

⁶ The gos-hawk, or falcon.



Our warlock Rhymer instantly descried
The sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside.
(That bards are second-sighted is nae joke.
And ken the lingo of the spiritual folk;
Fays, spunkies, kelpies, a', they can explain them,
And ev'n the very de'ils they brawly ken them.)
Auld Brig appeared of ancient Pictish race,
The very wrinkles Gothic in his face:
He seemed as he wi' Time had warstled lang,
Yet toughly doure, he bade an unco bang.¹
New Brig was buskit in a braw new coat,
That he at Lon'on, frae ane Adams, got;
In 's hand five taper staves as smooth's a bead,
With virls² and whirlygigums at the head.
The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
Spying the time-worn flaws in every arch;
It chanced his new-come neebor took his e'e,
And e'en a vexed and angry heart had he!
Wi' thieveless³ sneer to see his modish mien,
He, down the water, gies him this guideen:—

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na, 'frien, ye 'll think ye 're nae sheepshank,⁴
Ance ye were streekit⁵ o'er frae bank to bank!
But gin ye be a brig as auld as me—
Though faith that day I doubt ye 'll never see;
There 'll be, if that date come, I 'll wad a boddle,⁶
Some fewer whigmeleeries in your noddle.

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal, ye but show your little mense,
Just much about it wi' your scanty sense;
Will your poor, narrow footpath of a street,
Where twa wheelbarrows tremble when they meet,
Your ruined, formless bulk, o' stane an' lime,
Compare wi' bonnie brigs o' modern time?
There's men o' taste would tak' the Ducat stream,⁸
Though they should caste the very sark and swim,
Ere they would grate their feelings wi' the view
Of sic an ugly, Gothic hulk as you.

AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk!⁹ puffed up wi' windy pride;
This mony a year I 've stood the flood and tide;

¹ Toughly obdurate, he bore a mighty blow.

² A ring round a column.

⁴ No worthless thing.

⁷ Manners.

⁹ Fool.

³ Spiteful.

⁶ Bet a doit.

⁵ Stretched.

⁸ A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig.



THE BRIGS OF AYR.

75

And though wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn,
I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn!
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform ye better.
When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains,
Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal' draws his feeble source,
Aroused by blustering winds an' spotting thowes,
In mony a torrent down his sna-broo rowes;
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,²
Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate;
And from Glenbuck,³ down to the Ratton-key,⁴
Auld Ayr is just one lengthened, tumbling sea;
Then down ye'll hurl, de'il nor ye never rise!
And dash the gumlie jaups⁵ up to the pouring skies,
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
That Architecture's noble art is lost!

NEW BRIG.

Fine architecture, trowth, I needs must say't o't!
The Lord be thankit that we've tint⁶ the gate o't!
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,
Hanging with threatening jut, like precipices;
O'er-arching, mouldy gloom-inspiring coves,
Supporting roofs fantastic, stony groves:
Windows and doors, in nameless sculpture drest,
With order, symmetry, or taste unblest;
Forms like some bedlam statuary's dream,
The crazed creations of misguided whim;
Forms might be worshipped on the bended knee,
And still the second dread command be free,
Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea.
Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
Of any mason, reptile, bird, or beast;
Fit only for a doited monkish race,
Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace,
Or cuifs⁷ of latter times, wha held the notion
That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion;
Fancies that our guid brugh denies protection,—
And soon may they expire, unblest with resurrection!

¹ The banks of Garpal Water—one of the few places in the west of Scotland where those fancy-scaring beings, known by the name of ghaists, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.—Burns.

² Flood.

³ The source of the River Ayr.

⁴ A small landing-place above the large quay.

⁵ Muddy spray.

⁶ Lost.

⁷ Fools.



AULD BRIG

O ye, my dear-remembered, ancient yealings,¹
Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings!
Ye worthy Proveses, an' mony a Bailie,
Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil aye;
Ye dainty Deacons, an' ye douce Conveeners,
To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners;
Ye godly councils wha hae blest this town;
Ye godly brethren of the sacred gown,
Wha meekly gie your hurdies to the smiters;
And (what would now be strange) ye godly writers:
A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo,²
Were ye but here, what would ye say or do!
How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
To see each melancholy alteration;
And agonizing, curse the time and place
When ye begat the base, degen'rate race!
Nae langer reverend men, their country's glory,
In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain braid story!
Nae langer thrifty citizens, and douce,
Meet owre a pint, or in the Council-house;
But staumrel,³ corky-headed, graceless gentry,
The herryment and ruin of the country;
Men, three parts made by tailors and by barbers,
Wha waste your weel-hained gear on d——d new brigs and
harbours!

NEW BRIG.

Now haud you there! for faith ye've said enough,
And muckle mair than ye can mak' to through:
As for your priesthood, I shall say but little,
Corbies and clergy are a shot right kittle:
But, under favour o' your langer beard,
Abuse o' magistrates might weel be spared:
To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr, wag-wits nae mair can hae a handle
To mouth "a citizen," a term o' scandal:
Nae mair the council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit;
Men wha grew wise prigg'in' owre hops an' raisins,
Or gathered liberal views in bonds and seisins.
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shored them with a glimmer of his lamp,
And would to Common-sense, for once betrayed them,
Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

Contemporaries.

² Above the water.³ Half-witted.



What farther clishmaclaver¹ might been said,
What bloody wars, if sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell; but all before their sight
A fairy train appeared, in order bright:
Adown the glittering stream they featly danced;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanced:
They footed o'er the watery glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling bards heroic ditties sung,
Oh, had M'Lauchlan,² thairm³-inspiring sage,
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When through his dear Strathspeys they bore with High-
land rage;
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptured joys or bleeding cares;
How would his Highland lug been nobler fired,
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch inspired!
No guess could tell what instrument appeared,
But all the soul of Music's self was heard;
Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody poured moving on the heart.

The Genius of the Stream in front appears,
A venerable chief advanced in years;
His hoary head with water-lilies crowned,
His manly leg with garter tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet Female Beauty hand in hand with Spring;
Then, crowned with flowery hay, came Rural Joy,
And Summer, with his fervid beaming eye:
All-cheering Plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow Autumn wreathed with nodding corn;
Then Winter's time-bleached locks did hoary show,
By Hospitality with cloudless brow.
Next followed Courage⁴ with his martial stride,
From where the Feal⁵ wild woody coverts hide;
Benevolence, with mild benignant air,
A female form,⁶ came from the towers of Stair:

¹ Nonsense, idle gossip.

² A well-known performer of Scottish music on the violin.

³ Fiddle-string. ⁴ Capt. Hugh Montgomery, of Coils-field.

⁵ A tributary stream of the Ayr.

⁶ The Poet alludes here to Mrs. Stewart, of Stair. Stair was then in her possession. She afterwards removed to Afton Lodge, on the banks of the Afton, a stream which he afterwards celebrated in a song entitled "Afton Water."



Learning and Worth¹ in equal measures trode
From simple Catrine, their long-loved abode :
Last, white-robed Peace, crowned with a hazel wreath,
To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
The broken iron instruments of death ;
At sight of whom our sprites forgat their kindling wrath.

LINES ON MEETING WITH LORD DAER.

THIS wot ye all whom it concerns,
I, Rhymer Robin, alias Burns,
October twenty-third,
A ne'er-to-be-forgotten day !
Sae far I sprachled² up the brae,
I dinned wi' a lord.

I've been at drucken writers' feasts,
Nay, been bitch fou 'mang godly priests ;
(Wi' reverence be it spoken !)
I've even joined the honoured jorum
When mighty squireships o' the quorum
Their hydra drouth did sloken.

But wi' a lord!—stand out, my shin :
A lord—a peer—an earl's son !—
Up higher yet, my bonnet !
And sic a lord !—lang Scotch ells twa,
Our peerage he o'erlooks them a',
As I look o'er my sonnet.

But, oh ! for Hogarth's magic power !
To show Sir Bardie's willyart glower,³
And how he stared and stammered !
When goavan,⁴ as if led wi' branks,⁵
And stumpin' on his ploughman shanks,
He in the parlour hammered.

To meet good Stewart little pain is,
Or Scotia's sacred Demosthenes ;
Thinks I, they are but men !
But Burns, my lord—guid God ! I doited !⁶
My knees on ane anither knoited,⁷
As faultering I gaed ben !⁸

¹ Professor Dugald Stewart.

² Bewildered stare.

⁶ Became stupefied.

⁴ Moving stupidly.

⁷ Knocked.

² Clambered.

⁵ Bridle.

⁸ Into the room.



ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

79

I sidling sheltered in a nook,
And at his lordship steal't a look,
 Like some portentous omen ;
Except good sense and social glee,
And (what surprised me) modesty,
 I markèd nought uncommon.

I watched the symptoms o' the great,
The gentle pride, the lordly state,
 The arrogant assuming ;
The fient a pride, nae pride had he,
Nor sauce, nor state, that I could see,
 Mair than an honest ploughman.

Then from his lordship I shall learn
Henceforth to meet with unconcern
 One rank as weel's another ;
Nae honest, worthy man need care,
To meet wi' noble, youthful Daer,
 For he but meets a brother.



ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

EDINA ! Scotia's darling seat !
All hail thy palaces and towers,
Whare once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sovereign powers !
From marking wildly-scattered flowers,
As on the banks of Ayr I strayed,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honoured shade.

Here wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labour plies ;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise !
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod ;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

Thy sons, Edina ! social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail ;
Their views enlarged, their liberal mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale ;
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,
Or modest Merit's silent claim ;
And never may their sources fail !
And never envy blot their name !



ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptured thrill of joy!
Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
Heaven's beauties on my fancy shine;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own His work indeed divine.

There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar;
Like some bold veteran, grey in arms,
And marked with many a seamy scar:
The ponderous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock,
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repelled th' invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome,
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Famed heroes! had their royal home:
Alas, how changed the times to come!
Their royal name low in the dust!
Their hapless race wild wandering roam!
Though rigid law cries out, 'Twas just.

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Through hostile ranks and ruined gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore:
Even I who sing in rustic lore,
Haply, my sires have left their shed,
And faced grim Danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where your fathers led!

Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and towers,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sovereign powers!
From marking wildly-scattered flowers,
As on the banks of Ayr I strayed,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honoured shade.



TO THE MEMORY OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD
STUART.

FALSE flatterer, Hope, away!
Nor think to lure us as in days of yore;
We solemnize this sorrowing natal day
To prove our loyal truth; we can no more;
And owning Heaven's mysterious sway,
Submissive low adore.

Ye honoured mighty dead!
Who nobly perished in the glorious cause,
Your king, your country, and her laws!
From great Dundee, who smiling Victory led,
And fell a martyr in her arms¹
(What breast of northern ice but warms?)
To bold Balmerino's undying name,
Whose soul of fire, lighted at heaven's high fame,
Deserves the proudest wreath departed heroes claim.

Nor unavenged your fate shall be,
It only lags the fatal hour;
Your blood shall with incessant cry
Awake at last th' unsparring power;
As from the cliff, with thundering course,
The snowy ruin smokes along,
With doubling speed and gathering force,
Till deep it crashing whelms the cottage in the vale!

So vengeance

TO A HAGGIS.²

FAIR fa' your honest, sonsie³ face,
Great chieftain o' the puddin' race!
Aboon them a' ye tak' your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy of a grace
As lang's my arm.

¹ At the battle of Killiecrankie.

² The Haggis is a dish peculiar to Scotland. It is made of minced offal of mutton, meal, suet, and seasoning, tied tightly up in a sheep's stomach and boiled in it.

³ Jolly.

⁴ Small intestines.



TO A HAGGIS.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin ' wad help to mend a mill
 In time o' need,
While through your pores the dews distil
 Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic Labour dight,²
An' cut you up wi' ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
 Like onie ditch ;
And then, oh, what a glorious sight,
 Warm-reekin', rich !

Then horn for horn they stretch an' strive,
De'il tak' the hindmost ! on they drive,
Till a' their weel swalled kytes³ belyve⁴
 Are bent like drums :
Then auld guidman, maist like to ryve,⁵
 Bethankit hums.

Is there that o'er his French ragoût,
Or olio that wad staw a sow,
Or fricassée wad mak' her spew
 Wi' perfect sconner,⁶
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
 On sic a dinner ?

Poor devil ! see him owre his trash,
As feckless⁷ as a withered rash,⁸
His spindle-shank a guid whip-lash,
 His nieve⁹ a nit ;
Through bloody flood or field to dash,
 Oh, how unfit !

But mark the rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve¹⁰ a blade,
 He'll mak' it whistle ;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,¹¹
 Like taps o' thistle.¹²

Ye Powers, wha mak' mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,

¹ Skewer.⁴ By and by.⁷ Pithless.¹⁰ Large fist.² Wipe.⁵ Burst.⁸ Rush.¹¹ Cut off.³ Stomachs.⁶ Loathing.⁹ Fist.¹² Tops of thistles.



PROLOGUE.

83

Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware¹
That jaups in luggies;²
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer,
Gi'e her a Haggis!

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODS³ ON HIS BENEFIT NIGHT, MONDAY,
APRIL 16, 1787.

WHEN by a generous public's kind acclaim,
That dearest meed is granted—honest fame:
When here your favour is the actor's lot,
Nor even the man in private life forgot;
What breast so dead to heavenly virtue's glow,
But heaves impassioned with the grateful throe?
Poor is the task to please a barbarous throng,
It needs no Siddons' powers in Southern's song;
But here an ancient nation famed afar
For genius, learning high, as great in war—
Hail, Caledonia! name for ever dear!
Before whose sons I'm honoured to appear!
Where every science—every nobler art—
That can inform the mind, or mend the heart,
Is known; as grateful nations oft have found,
Far as the rude barbarian marks the bound.
Philosophy, no idle pedant dream,
Here holds her search by heaven-taught Reason's beam;
Here History paints with elegance and force,
The tide of Empires' fluctuating course;
Here Douglas forms wild Shakespear into plan,
And Harley⁴ rouses all the god in man,
When well-formed taste and sparkling wit unite
With manly lore, or female beauty bright,
(Beauty, where faultless symmetry and grace,
Can only charm us in the second place.)
Witness, my heart, how oft with panting fear,
As on this night, I've met these judges here!
But still the hope Experience taught to live,
Equal to judge—you're candid to forgive.
No hundred-headed Riot here we meet,
With decency and law beneath his feet;
Nor Insolence assumes fair Freedom's name:
Like Caledonians, you applaud or blame.

¹ Thin stuff.

² That splashes in bowls.

³ A favourite actor in Edinburgh.

⁴ Henry Mackenzie, author of "The Man of Feeling."



O Thou dread Power! whose empire-giving hand
Has oft been stretched to shield the honoured land,
Strong may she glow with all her ancient fire!
May every son be worthy of his sire;
Firm may she rise with generous disdain
At Tyranny's, or direr Pleasure's, chain;
Still self-dependent in her native shore,
Bold may she brave grim Danger's loudest roar,
Till Fate the curtain drops on worlds to be no more!

NATURE'S LAW.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

"Great Nature spoke—observant man obeyed."—POPE.

LET other heroes boast their scars,
The marks of sturt and strife;
And other poets sing of wars,
The plagues of human life:
Shame fa' the fun, wi' sword and gun,
To slap mankind like lumber!
I sing his name and nobler fame,
Wha multiplies our number.

Great Nature spoke, with air benign,
"Go on, ye human race!
This lower world I you resign:
Be fruitful and increase.
The liquid fire of strong desire,
I've poured it in each bosom;
Here, in this hand, does mankind stand,
And there is beauty's blossom!"

The hero of these artless strains,
A lowly bard was he,
Who sang his rhymes in Coila's plains,
With mickle mirth and glee;
Kind Nature's care had given his share
Large of the flaming current;
And all devout, he never sought
To stem the sacred torrent.

He felt the powerful high behest
Thrill, vital, through and through;
And sought a correspondent breast
To give obedience due:
Propitious Powers screened the young flowers
From mildews of abortion!
And lo! the Bard, a great reward,
Has got a double portion!



VERSES ON THE DEATH OF J. M'LEOD. 85

Auld cantie Coil may count the day,
As annual it returns,
The third of Libra's equal sway,
That gave another Burns,
With future rhymes and other times,
To emulate his sire;
To sing auld Coil in nobler style,
With more poetic fire.

Ye powers of peace, and peaceful song,
Look down with gracious eyes;
And bless auld Coila, large and long,
With multiplying joys:
Lang may she stand to prop the land,
The flower of ancient nations;
And Burnses spring, her fame to sing,
To endless generations!

VERSES

ON READING IN A NEWSPAPER THE DEATH OF JOHN M'LEOD, ESQ.,
BROTHER TO A YOUNG LADY, A PARTICULAR FRIEND OF THE
AUTHOR'S.

SAD thy tale, thou idle page,
And rueful thy alarms:
Death tears the brother of her love
From Isabella's arms.

Sweetly deckt with pearly dew
The morning rose may blow;
But cold successive noontide blasts
May lay its beauties low.

Fair on Isabella's morn
The sun propitious smiled;
But, long ere noon, succeeding clouds
Succeeding hopes beguiled.

Fate oft tears the bosom chords
That nature finest strung;
So Isabella's heart was formed,
And so that heart was wrung.

Were it in the Poet's power,
Strong as he shares the grief
That pierces Isabella's heart,
To give that heart relief!



86 *ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR J. H. BLAIR.*

Dread Omnipotence alone
Can heal the wound He gave;
Can point the brimful grief-worn eyes
To scenes beyond the grave.

Virtue's blossoms there shall blow,
And fear no withering blast;
There Isabella's spotless worth
Shall happy be at last.

*ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES HUNTER
BLAIR.¹*

▲ PARTNER IN THE EMINENT BANKING HOUSE OF SIR WILLIAM
FORBES AND CO., OF EDINBURGH.

THE lamp of day, with ill-presaging glare,
Dim, cloudy, sank beneath the western wave;
Th' inconstant blast howled through the darkening air,
And hollow whistled in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wandered by each cliff and dell,
Once the loved haunts of Scotia's royal train;²
Or mused where limpid streams, once hallowed, well,
Or mouldering ruins mark the sacred fane.

Th' increasing blast roared round the beetling rocks,
The clouds, swift-winged, flew o'er the starry sky,
The groaning trees untimely shed their locks,
And shooting meteors caught the startled eye.

The paly moon rose in the livid east,
And 'mong the cliffs disclosed a stately form,
In weeds of woe, that frantic beat her breast,
And mixed her wailings with the raving storm.

Wild to my heart the filial pulses glow;
'Twas Caledonia's trophied shield I viewed:
Her form majestic drooped in pensive woe,
The lightning of her eye in tears imbued.

Reversed that spear, redoubtable in war,
Reclined that banner, erst in fields unfurled,
That like a deathful meteor gleamed afar,
And braved the mighty monarchs of the world.

¹ A banker of Edinburgh.

² The King's park at Holyrood House.



TO MISS FERRIER.

87

- “My patriot son fills an untimely grave !”
With accents wild and lifted arms she cried ;
“Low lies the hand that oft was stretched to save,
Low lies the heart that swelled with honest pride.
- “A weeping country joins a widow’s tear ;
The helpless poor mix with the orphan’s cry ;
The drooping Arts surround their patron’s bier,
And grateful Science heaves the heartfelt sigh !
- “I saw my sons resume their ancient fire ;
I saw fair Freedom’s blossoms richly blow :
But ah ! how hope is born but to expire !
Relentless Fate has laid their guardian low.
- “My patriot falls,—but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name ?
No ; every Muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.
- “And I will join a mother’s tender cares,
Through future times to make his virtues last ;
That distant years may boast of other Blairs !”—
She said, and vanished with the sleeping blast.

TO MISS FERRIER,¹

ENCLOSING THE ELEGY ON SIR J. H. BLAIR.

NAE heathen name shall I prefix
Frae Pindus or Parnassus ;
Auld Reekie dings² them a’ to sticks,
For rhyme-inspiring lasses.

Jove’s tunefu’ dochters three times three
Made Homer deep their debtor ;
But, gi’en the body half an e’e,
Nine Ferriers wad done better !

Last day my mind was in a bog,
Down George’s Street I stotied ;³
A creeping, cauld, prosaic fog
My very senses doited.⁴

¹ This lady was the author of the “Inheritance, Marriage, and Des tiny.”

² Beats.

³ Tottered.

⁴ Stupefied.



88 *LINES WRITTEN OVER A CHIMNEY-PIECE.*

Do what I dought¹ to set her free,
My saul lay in the mire;
Ye turned a neuk²—I saw your e'e—
She took the wing like fire!
The mournfu' sang I here enclose,
In gratitude I send you;
And wish and pray, in rhyme sincere,
A' guid things may attend you.

LINES

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE
PARLOUR OF THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.

ADMIRING Nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace;
O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
The abodes of coveyed grouse and timid sheep,
My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
Till famed Breadalbane opens to my view,—
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
The woods, wild-scattered, clothe their ample sides;
The outstretching lake, embosomed 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills:
The Tay, meandering sweet in infant pride,
The palace, rising on its verdant side;
The lawns, wood-fringed in Nature's native taste;
The hillocks, dropt in Nature's careless haste;
The arches, striding o'er the new-born stream;
The village, glittering in the noontide beam—

Poetic ardours in my bosom swell,
Lone wandering by the hermit's mossy cell:
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods!
The incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods.

Here Poesy might wake her heaven-taught lyre,
And look through Nature with creative fire;
Here, to the wrongs of Fate half reconciled,
Misfortune's lightened steps might wander wild;
And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter, rankling wounds;
Here heart-struck Grief might heavenward stretch her
scan,
And injured Worth forget and pardon man.

¹ Would.

² Corner.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER,¹

TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

MY LORD, I know your noble ear
 Woe ne'er assails in vain;
 Emboldened thus, I beg you'll hear
 Your humble slave complain,
 How saucy Phœbus' scorching beams,
 In flaming summer pride,
 Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
 And drink my crystal tide.

The lightly jumping glowering trouts,
 That through my waters play,
 If, in their random, wanton spouts,
 They near the margin stray;
 If, hapless chance! they linger lang,
 I'm scorching up to shallow,
 They're left the whitening stanes amang,
 In gasping death to wallow.

Last day I grat wi' spite and teen,
 As Poet Burns came by,
 That, to a bard I should be seen
 Wi' half my channel dry:
 A panegyric rhyme, I ween,
 Ev'n as I was he shored² me;
 But had I in my glory been,
 He, kneeling, wad adored me.

Here, foaming down the shelvy rocks,
 In twisting strength I rin;
 There, high my boiling torrent smokes,
 Wild-roaring o'er a linn:
 Enjoying large each spring and well
 As nature gave them me,
 I am, although I say 't mysel',
 Worth gaun a mile to see.

Would then my noble master please
 To grant my highest wishes,
 He'll shade my banks wi' towering trees,
 And bonnie spreading bushes;

¹ Bruar Falls, in Athole, are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs.

² Assured.

*THE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER.*

Delighted doubly then, my Lord,
You'll wander on my banks,
And listen mony a grateful bird
Return you tuneful thanks.

The sober laverock,¹ warbling wild,
Shall to the skies aspire;
The gowdspink,² music's gayest child,
Shall sweetly join the choir:
The blackbird strong, the lintwhite³ clear,
The mavis⁴ mild and mellow;
The rcbin pensive autumn cheer,
In all her locks of yellow.

This, too, a covert shall ensure,
To shield them from the storm;
And coward maukin⁵ sleep secure,
Low in her grassy form:
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
To weave his crown of flowers;
Or find a sheltering safe retreat,
From prone descending showers.

And here, by sweet endearing stealth,
Shall meet the loving pair,
Despising worlds with all their wealth
As empty, idle care:
The flowers shall vie in all their charms
The hour of heaven to grace,
And birks extend their fragrant arms
To screen the dear embrace.

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoking, dewy lawn,
And misty mountain grey:
Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
Mild-chequering through the trees,
Rave to my darkly-dashing stream,
Hoarse-swelling on the breeze.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-bending in the pool,
Their shadows' watery bed!

¹ Lark.⁴ Thrush.² Goldfinch.⁵ The hare.³ Linnet.



WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL.

91

Let fragrant birks in woodbines drest,
My craggy cliffs adorn;
And, for the little songsters' nest,
The close embow'ring thorn.

So may old Scotia's darling hope,
Your little angel band,
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
Their honoured native land!
So may through Albion's farthest ken,
To social flowing glasses,
The grace be—"Athole's honest men,
And Athole's bonnie lasses!"

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL,

STANDING BY THE FALL OF FYERS, NEAR LOCH-NESS.

AMONG the heathy hills and ragged woods
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods;
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, through a shapeless breach, his stream resounds.
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep-recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear, astonished, rends.
Dim-seen, through rising mists, and ceaseless showers,
The hoary cavern, wide-surrounding, lowers.
Still through the gap the struggling river toils,
And still below, the horrid cauldron boils—

ON SCARING SOME WATERFOWL IN LOCH-TURIT,

A WILD SCENE AMID THE HILLS OF OUGHTERTYRE.

WHY, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your watery haunt forsake?
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly?
Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties?
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free:
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton lave;
Or, beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billow's shock.



Conscious, blushing for our race,
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace.
Man, your proud usurping foe,
Would be lord of all below:
Plumes himself in Freedom's pride,
Tyrant stern to all beside.

The eagle, from the clifty brow,
Marking you his prey below,
In his breast no pity dwells,
Strong necessity compels.
But man, to whom alone is given
A ray direct from pitying Heaven,
Glories in his heart humane—
And creatures for his pleasure slain.

In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wand'ring swains,
Where the mossy riv'let strays;
Far from human haunts and ways;
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.

Or, if man's superior might,
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his powers you scorn;
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave.

CASTLE-GORDON.

[These lines were written after Burns's brief visit to Gordon Castle. The Poet enclosed them to James Hoy, librarian to the Duke of Gordon. The Duchess guessed them to be by Dr. Beattie, and on learning they were by Burns, regretted that they were not in the Scottish language.]

STREAMS that glide in Orient plains,
Never bound by winter's chains!
Glowing here on golden sands,
There commixed with foulest stains
From tyranny's empurpled bands:
These, their richly gleaming waves,
I leave to tyrants and their slaves;
Give me the stream that sweetly laves
The banks by Castle-Gordon.



TO MISS CRUIKSHANKS.

93

Spicy forests, ever gay,
Shading from the burning ray
Hapless wretches sold to toil,
Or the ruthless native's way,
Bent on slaughter, blood, and spoil;
Woods that ever verdant wave,
I leave the tyrant and the slave;
Give me the groves that lofty brave
The storms by Castle-Gordon.

Wildly here, without control,
Nature reigns and rules the whole;
In that sober, pensive mood,
Dearest to the feeling soul,
She plants the forest, pours the flood:
Life's poor day I 'll musing rave,
And find at night a sheltering cave,
Where waters flow and wild woods wave,
By bonny Castle-Gordon.

TO MISS CRUIKSHANKS,

A VERY YOUNG LADY.

Written on the blank leaf of a book presented to her by the Author.

BEAUTEOUS rose-bud, young and gay,
Blooming on thy early May,
Never may'st thou, lovely flower,
Chilly shrink in sleety shower!
Never Boreas' hoary path,
Never Eurus' poisonous breath,
Never baleful stellar lights,
Taint thee with untimely blights!
Never, never reptile thief
Riot on thy virgin leaf!
Nor even Sol too fiercely view
Thy bosom blushing still with dew!
May'st thou long, sweet crimson gem,
Richly deck thy native stem;
Till some evening, sober, calm,
Dropping dews, and breathing balm,
While all around the woodland rings,
And every bird thy requiem sings;
Thou, amid the dirgeful sound,
Shed thy dying honours round,
And resign to parent earth
The loveliest form she e'er gave birth.



POETICAL ADDRESS TO MR. WILLIAM TYTLER!

WITH A PRESENT OF THE BARD'S PICTURE.

REVERED defender of beauteous Stuart,²
Of Stuart, a name once respected,—
A name which to love was the mark of a true heart,
But now 'tis despised and neglected.

Though something like moisture conglobes in my eye,
Let no one misdeem me disloyal;
A poor friendless wanderer may well claim a sigh,
Still more, if that wanderer were royal.

My fathers that name have revered on a throne;
My fathers have fallen to right it;
Those fathers would spurn their degenerate son,
That name should he scoffingly slight it.

Still in prayers for King George I most heartily join,
The Queen, and the rest of the gentry;
Be they wise, be they foolish, is nothing of mine—
Their title's avowed by my country.

But why of this epocha make such a fuss,
That gave us the Hanover stem;
If bringing them over was lucky for us,
I'm sure 'twas as lucky for them.

But, loyalty, truce! we're on dangerous ground,
Who knows how the fashions may alter?
The doctrine to-day that is loyalty sound,
To-morrow may bring us a halter.

I send you a trifle, a head of a bard,
A trifle scarce worthy your care:
But accept it, good sir, as a mark of regard,
Sincere as a saint's dying prayer.

Now life's chilly evening dim shades on your eye,
And ushers the long dreary night;
But you, like the star that athwart gilds the sky,
Your course to the latest is bright.

²Tytler was grandfather to Patrick Fraser Tytler, the historian,
Queen of Scots.



ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT DUNDAS, ESQ.,
OF ARNISTON,

LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF SESSION, DIED, 1787.

LONE on the bleaky hills the straying flocks
Shun the fierce storms among the sheltering rocks;
Down foam the rivulets, red with dashing rains!
The gathering floods burst o'er the distant plains;
Beneath the blast the leafless forests groan;
The hollow caves return a sullen moan.

Ye hills, ye plains, ye forests, and ye caves,
Ye howling winds, and wintry swelling waves!
Unheard, unseen, by human ear or eye,
Sad to your sympathetic scenes I fly;
Where, to the whistling blast and waters' roar
Pale Scotia's recent wound I may deplore.
Oh, heavy loss, thy country ill could bear!
A loss these evil days can ne'er repair!
Justice, the high vicegerent of her God,
Her doubtful balance eyed, and swayed her rod;
She heard the tidings of the fatal blow,
And sunk, abandoned to the wildest woe.

Wrongs, injuries, from many a darksome den,
Now gay in hope explore the paths of men;
See, from his cavern, grim Oppression rise,
And throw on Poverty his cruel eyes:
Keen on the helpless victim see him fly,
And stifle, dark, the feebly-bursting cry.

Mark ruffian Violence, distained with crimes,
Rousing elate in these degenerate times;
View unsuspecting Innocence a prey,
As guileful Fraud points out the erring way:
While subtle Litigation's pliant tongue
The life-blood equal sucks of Right and Wrong;
Hark! injured Want recounts th' unlistened tale,
And much-wronged Misery pours th' unpitied wail.

Ye dark waste hills, and brown unsightly plains,
To you I sing my grief-inspired strains:
Ye tempests, rage! ye turbid torrents, roll!
Ye suit the joyless tenor of my soul.
Life's social haunts and pleasures I resign,
Be nameless wilds and lonely wanderings mine,
To mourn the woes my country must endure,
That wound degenerate ages cannot cure.

WRITTEN IN FRIARS-CARSE HERMITAGE, ON
NITH-SIDE.

FIRST VERSION.

Thou whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these counsels on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night, in darkness lost;
Hope not sunshine every hour,
Fear not clouds will always lower.

As youth and love, with sprightly dance,
Beneath thy morning star advance,
Pleasure with her siren air
May delude the thoughtless pair;
Let prudence bless enjoyment's cup,
Then raptured sip, and sip it up.

As thy day grows warm and high,
Life's meridan flaming nigh,
Dost thou spurn the humble vale?
Life's proud summits wouldst thou scale?
Check thy climbing step, elate,
Evils lurk in felon wait:
Dangers, eagle-pinioned, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold,
While cheerful peace, with linnets song,
Chants the lowly dells among.

As the shades of evening close,
Beck'ning thee to long repose!
As life itself becomes disease,
Seek the chimney-neuk of ease.
There ruminatè with sober thought,
On all thou 'st seen, and heard, and wrought;
And teach the sportive youngers round,
Saws of experience, sage and sound.
Say, Man's true, genuine estimate,
The grand criterion of his fate,
Is not, Art thou high or low?
Did thy fortune ebb or flow?
Did many talents gild thy span?
Or frugal nature grudge thee one?



WRITTEN IN FRIARS - CARSE HERMITAGE. 97

Tell them, and press it on their mind,
As thou thyself must shortly find,
The smile or frown of awful Heaven,
To virtue or to vice is given.
Say, to be just, and kind, and wise,
There solid self-enjoyment lies;
That foolish, selfish, faithless ways,
Lead to the wretched, vile, and base.

Thus resigned and quiet, creep
To the bed of lasting sleep;
Sleep, whence thou shalt ne'er awake,
Night, where dawn shall never break,
Till future life, future no more,
To light and joy the good restore,
To light and joy unknown before.

Stranger, go! Heaven be thy guide!
Quod the beadsman of Nith-side.

SECOND VERSION.

Glenriddel Hermitage, June 28, 1788. From the MS.

THOU whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these maxims on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night, in darkness lost;
Hope not sunshine every hour,
Fear not clouds will always lour,
Happiness is but a name,
Make content and ease thy aim.
Ambition is a meteor-gleam,
Fame, an idle, restless dream:
Peace, the tenderest flower of spring;
Pleasures, insects on the wing;
Those that sip the dew alone,
Make the butterflies thy own;
Those that would the bloom devour,
Crush the locusts, save the flower.
For the future be prepared,
Guard, wherever thou canst guard;
But thy utmost duly done.
Welcome what thou canst not shun.
Follies past give thou to air,
Make their consequence thy care:
Keep the name of Man in mind,
And dishonour not thy kind.



TO CLARINDA.

Reverence, with lowly heart,
Him whose wondrous work thou art;
Keep His goodness still in view,
Thy Trust, and thy Example too.

Stranger, go! Heaven be thy guide!
Quod the beadsman of Nithe-side.

TO CLARINDA.¹

CLARINDA, mistress of my soul,
The measured time is run!
The wretch beneath the dreary Pole,
So marks his latest sun.

To what dark cave of frozen night
Shall poor Sylvander hie?
Deprived of thee, his life and light,
The sun of all his joy!

We part—but, by these precious drops
That fill thy lovely eyes!
No other light shall guide my steps
Till thy bright beams arise.

She, the fair sun of all her sex,
Has blest my glorious day;
And shall a glimmering planet fix
My worship to its ray?

TO CLARINDA.

WITH A PRESENT OF A PAIR OF DRINKING-GLASSES.

FAIR empress of the Poet's soul,
And queen of poetesses;
Clarinda, take this little boon,
This humble pair of glasses.

And fill them high with generous juice,
As generous as your mind;
And pledge me in the generous toast—
"The whole of humankind!"

¹ "Clarinda" was the poetical appellation of Mrs. M'Lehose, whom he met in Edinburgh at the period of the publication of his poems.



TO CLARINDA.

99

“To those who love us!”—second fill;
But not to those whom we love;
Lest we love those who love not us!
A third—“To thee and me, love!”

Long may we live! long may we love!
And long may we be happy!
And may we never want a glass
Well charged with generous nappy!

TO CLARINDA.

BEFORE I saw Clarinda's face
My heart was blithe and gay,
Free as the wind, or feathered race
That hop from spray to spray.

But now dejected I appear,
Clarinda proves unkind;
I, sighing, drop the silent tear,
But no relief can find.

In plaintive notes my tale rehearses
When I the fair have found;
On every tree appear my verses
That to her praise resound.

But she, ungrateful, shuns my sight,
My faithful love disdains,
My vows and tears her scorn excite—
Another happy reigns.

Ah, though my looks betray
I envy your success;
Yet love to friendship shall give way,
I cannot wish it less.

TO CLARINDA.

“I BURN, I burn, as when through ripened corn,
By driving winds, the crackling flames are borne!”
Now maddening, wild, I curse that fatal night;
Now bless the hour which charmed my guilty sight.
In vain the laws their feeble force oppose;
Chained at his feet they groan, Love's vanquished foes;

*MRS. FERGUSSON'S LAMENT.*

In vain Religion meets my shrinking eye;
I dare not combat—but I turn and fly:
Conscience in vain upbraids the unhallowed fire;
Love grasps its scorpions—stified they expire;
Reason drops headlong from his sacred throne,
Your dear idea reigns, and reigns alone:
Each thought intoxicated homage yields,
And riots wanton in forbidden fields!

By all on high, adoring mortals know!
By all the conscious villain fears below!
By your dear self!—the last great oath I swear—
Nor life nor soul was ever half so dear!

*MRS. FERGUSSON OF CRAIGDARROCH'S LAMENT
FOR THE DEATH OF HER SON.*

FATE gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierced my darling's heart;
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart.
By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonoured laid;
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravished young;
So I, for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live-day long.
Death, oft I've feared thy fatal blow,
Now, fond, I bare my breast;
Oh, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest!

ELEGY ON THE YEAR 1788.

A SKETCH.

FOR lords or kings I dinna mourn,
E'en let them die—for that they're born!
But, oh! prodigious to reflec'!
A towmont,¹ sirs, is gane to wreck!

¹ Twelvemonth.



ELEGY ON THE YEAR 1788.

101

O Eighty-eight, in thy sma' space
What dire events hae taken place!
Of what enjoyments thou hast reft us!
In what a pickle thou hast left us!

The Spanish empire's tint¹ a head,
And my auld toothless Bawtie's² dead;
The tulzie's³ sair 'tween Pitt and Fox,
And our guidwife's wee birdie cocks;
The tane is game, a bluidy devil,
But to the hen-birds unco civil;
The tither's something dour o' treadin',
But better stuff ne'er clawed a midden.⁴

Ye ministers, come mount the pu'pit,
And cry till ye be hoarse and roopit,
For Eighty-eight he wished you weel,
And gied you a' baith gear⁵ and meal;
E'en mony a plack, and mony a peck,
Ye ken yoursel's, for little feck!⁶

Ye bonny lasses, dight⁷ your een,
For some o' you ha'e tint a frien';
In Eighty-eight, ye ken, was ta'en
What ye 'll ne'er hae to gie again.

Observe the very nowte⁸ and sheep,
How dowf and dowie⁹ now they creep;
Nay, even the yirth itsel' does cry,
For Embrugh wells are grutten¹⁰ dry.

O Eighty-nine, thou 's but a bairn,
And no owre auld, I hope, to learn!
Thou beardless boy, I pray tak' care,
Thou now hast got thy daddy's chair;
Nae handcuffed, muzzled, half-shackled Regent,
But, like himsel', a full, free agent,
Be sure ye follow out the plan
Nae waur than he did, honest man!
As muckle better as you can.

Jan. 1, 1789.

¹ Lost.

⁴ Dungheap.

⁷ Wipe.

⁹ Pithless and low-spirited.

² His dog.

⁵ Goods.

³ Fight.

⁶ Work.

⁸ Cattle.

¹⁰ Wept.



TO CAPTAIN RIDDEL, OF GLENRIDDEL.

EXTEMPORE LINES ON RETURNING A NEWSPAPER CONTAINING
CRITICISMS ON THE POET'S WORKS.

YOUR news and review, sir, I've read through and through, sir,
With little admiring or blaming;
The papers are barren of home news or foreign,
No murders or rapes worth the naming.

Our friends, the reviewers, those chippers and hewers,
Are judges of mortar and stone, sir;
But of meet or unmeet, in a fabric complete,
I boldly pronounce they are none, sir.

My goose-quill too rude is to tell all your goodness
Bestowed on your servant, the Poet;
Would to God I had one like a beam of the sun,
And then all the world, sir, should know it!

Ellisland, Monday Evening.

TO JOHN TAYLOR.

WITH Pegasus upon a day,
Apollo weary flying,
Through frosty hills the journey lay,
On foot the way was plying.

Poor slipshod giddy Pegasus
Was but a sorry walker;
To Vulcan then Apollo goes,
To get a frosty caulker.¹

Obliging Vulcan fell to work,
Threw by his coat and bonnet,
And did Sol's business in a crack:
Sol paid him with a sonnet.

Ye Vulcan's sons of Wanlockhead,
Pity my sad disaster;
My Pegasus is poorly shod—
I'll pay you like my master.

ROBERT BURNS.

Ramage's, 3 o'clock.

¹ A nail put into a shoe to prevent the foot from slipping in frost weather.

SKETCH.

[Inscribed to the Right Hon. C. J. Fox.]

How wisdom and folly meet, mix, and unite;
 How virtue and vice blend their black and their white;
 How genius, the illustrious father of fiction,
 Confounds rule and law, reconciles contradiction—
 I sing: if these mortals, the critics, should bustle,
 I care not, not I—let the critics go whistle!

But now for a patron, whose name and whose glory
 At once may illustrate and honour my story.

Thou first of our orators, first of our wits;
 Yet whose parts and acquirements seem mere lucky hits;
 With knowledge so vast, and with judgment so strong,
 No man with the half of 'em e'er went far wrong;
 With passions so potent, and fancies so bright,
 No man with the half of 'em e'er went quite right;
 A sorry, poor misbegot son of the Muses,
 For using thy name offers fifty excuses.

Good Lord, what is man? for as simple he looks,
 Do but try to develop his hooks and his crooks;
 With his depths and his shallows, his good and his evil;
 All in all he's a problem must puzzle the devil.

On his one ruling passion Sir Pope hugely labours,
 That, like the old Hebrew walking-switch, eats up its
 neighbours;

Mankind are his show-box—a friend, would you know him?
 Pull the string, ruling passion the picture will show him.
 What pity, in rearing so beauteous a system,
 One trifling particular truth should have missed him;
 For, spite of his fine theoretic positions,
 Mankind is a science defies definitions.

Some sort all our qualities each to its tribe,
 And think human nature they truly describe;
 Have you found this, or t'other? there's more in the wind.
 As by one drunken fellow his comrades you'll find.
 But such is the flaw, or the depth of the plan,
 In the make of that wonderful creature called Man,
 No two virtues, whatever relation they claim,
 Nor even two different shades of the same,
 Though like as was ever twin brother to brother,
 Possessing the one shall imply you've the other.

But truce with abstraction, and truce with a Muse,
 Whose rhymes you'll perhaps, sir, ne'er deign to peruse:



Will you leave your justings, your jars, and your quarrels,
Contending with Billy for proud-nodding laurels?
My much-honoured patron, believe your poor Poet,
Your courage much more than your prudence you show it,
In vain with Squire Billy for laurels you struggle,
He'll have them by fair trade, if not, he will smuggle;
Not cabinets even of kings would conceal 'em,
He'd up the back stairs, and, by God, he would steal 'em!
Then feats like Squire Billy's you ne'er can achieve 'em,
It is not outdo him, the task is out-thieve him!

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE LIMP BY ME,

WHICH A FELLOW HAD JUST SHOT AT.

INHUMAN man! curse on thy barb'rous art,
And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye:
May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,
Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart!

Go live, poor wanderer of the wood and field,
The bitter little that of life remains:
No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains
To thee shall home, or food, or pastime yield.

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest—
No more of rest, but now thy dying bed!
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.

Of't as by winding Nith I, musing, wait
The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless fate.

DELIA.

AN ODE.

"To the *Star* Newspaper.

"MR. PRINTER,—If the productions of a simple ploughman can merit a place in the same paper with the other favourites of the Muses who illuminate the *Star* with the lustre of genius, your insertion of the enclosed trifle will be succeeded by future communications from yours, &c.,

"ROBERT BURNS.

"Ellisland, near Dumfries, May 18, 1789."

FAIR the face of orient day,
Fair the tints of opening rose;
But fairer still my Delia dawns,
More lovely far her beauty blows.





ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE.

105

Sweet the lark's wild-warbled lay,
Sweet the tinkling rill to hear ;
But, Delia, more delightful still,
Steal thine accents on mine ear.

The flower-enamoured busy bee
The rosy banquet loves to sip ;
Sweet the streamlet's limpid lapse
To the sun-browned Arab's lip.

But, Delia, on thy balmy lips
Let me, no vagrant insect, rove !
Oh, let me steal one liquid kiss !
For, oh ! my soul is parched with love !

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE.

WRITTEN WHEN THE AUTHOR WAS GRIEVOUSLY TORMENTED BY THAT
DISORDER.

My curse upon thy venom'd stang,
That shoots my tortured gums along ;
And through my lugs gi'es mony a twang,
Wi' gnawing vengeance ;
Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,
Like racking engines !

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,
Rheumatics gnaw, or cholick squeezes ;
Our neighbours' sympathy may ease us,
Wi' pitying moan ;
But thee—thou hell o' a' diseases,
Aye mocks our groan !

A down my beard the slavers trickle !
I kick the wee stools o'er the mickle,
As round the fire the giglets keckle,¹
To see me loup ;²
While, raving mad, I wish a heckle³
Were in their doup.

Of a' the numerous human dools,⁴
Ill hairsts,⁵ daft bargains, cutty-stools,
Or worthy friends raked i' the mools,⁶
Sad sight to see !
The tricks o' knaves, or fash o' fools,
Thou bear'st the gree.⁷

¹ The mirthful children laugh.

² Hemp-frame.

³ Mould.

⁴ Grievances.

⁵ Thou art decidedly victor.

⁶ Jump.

⁷ Harvests.



106 ON CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINATIONS.

Where'er that place be priests ca' hell,
 Whence a' the tones o' misery yell,
 And rankèd plagues their numbers tell,
 In dreadfu' raw,
 Thou, Toothache, surely bear'st the bell
 Amang them a'!

O thou grim mischief-making chiel,
 That gars the notes of discord squeel,
 Till daft mankind aft dance a reel
 In gore a shoe-thick,
 Gie a' the faes o' Scotland's weal
 A towmond's¹ toothache!

ON CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINATIONS
THROUGH SCOTLAND,

COLLECTING THE ANTIQUITIES OF THAT KINGDOM.

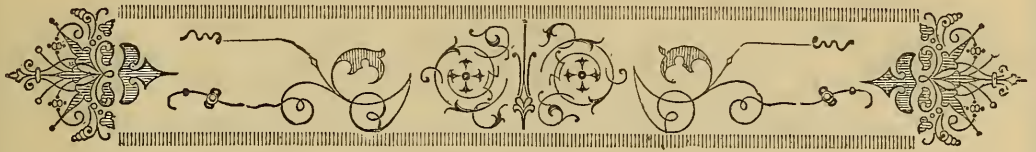
HEAR, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,
 Frae Maidenkirk² to Johnny Groat's;
 If there's a hole in a' your coats,
 I rede you tent³ it:
 A chiel's amang you, taking notes,
 And, faith, he'll prent it.

If in your bounds ye chance to light
 Upon a fine, fat, fodge⁴ wight,
 O' stature short, but genius bright,
 That's he, mark weel
 And wow! he has an unco slight
 O' cauk and keel.⁵

By some auld, houlet-haunted biggin',⁶
 Or kirk deserted by its riggin',
 It's ten to ane ye'll find him snug in
 Some eldritch⁷ part,
 Wi' de'ils, they say, Lord save 's! colleaguin',
 At some black art.

Ilk ghaist that haunts auld ha' or cham'er,
 Ye gipsy gang that deal in glamour,
 And you deep read in hell's black grammar,
 Warlocks and witches
 Ye'll quake at his conjuring hammer,
 Ye midnight bitches.

¹ A year's.
² Kirkmaiden, Wigtonshire, the most southerly parish in Scotland.
³ Look to it. ⁴ Plump.
⁵ Chalk and pencil : he is a good artist.
⁶ *Vide* his Antiquities of Scotland. ⁷ Unholy, magic.



ON CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINATIONS. 107

It's tauld he was a sodger bred,
And ane wad rather fa'n than fled;
But now he's quat¹ the spurtle blade,²
And dogskin wallet,
And ta'en the—Antiquarian trade,
I think they call it.

He has a fouth³ o' auld nick-nackets:
Rusty airn caps and jinglin' jackets,
Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets,
A towmont⁴ guid;
And parritch-pats, and auld saut-backets,
Before the Flood.

Of Eve's first fire he has a cinder;
Auld Tubulcain's fire-shool and fender;
That which distinguishèd the gender
O' Balaam's ass;
A broom-stick o' the witch of Endor,
Weel shod wi' brass.

Forbye, he'll shape you aff, fu' gleg,⁵
The cut of Adam's philabeg:
The knife that nicket Abel's craig
He'll prove you fully,
It was a faulding jocteleg,⁶
Or lang-kail gully.

But wad ye see him in his glee,
For meikle glee and fun has he,
Then set him down, and twa or three
Guid fellows wi' him;
And port, O port! shine thou a wee,
And then ye'll see him!

Now, by the powers o' verse and prose!
Thou art a dainty chiel, O Grose!
Whae'er o' thee shall ill suppose,
They sair misca' thee;
I'd take the rascal by the nose,
Wad say, Shame fa' thee!

¹ Quitted
² Plenty.
³ Knife.

⁴ A stick used in making oatmeal porridge.
⁵ Year.
⁶ Sharp.



LINES WRITTEN IN A WRAPPER,

ENCLOSING A LETTER TO CAPTAIN GROSE.

KEN ye ought o' Captain Grose?
Igo and ago,
If he's amang his friends or foes?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he south, or is he north?
Igo and ago,
Or drownèd in the river Forth?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he slain by Highlan' bodies?
Igo and ago,
And eaten like a wether-haggis?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he to Abram's bosom gane?
Igo and ago,
Or haudin' Sarah by the wame?
Iram, coram, dago.

Where'er he be, tae Lord be near him!
Igo and ago,
As for the de'il, he daurna steer him!
Iram, coram, dago.

But please transmit th' enclosed letter,
Igo and ago,
Which will oblige your humble debtor,
Iram, coram, dago.

So may ye hae auld stanes in store,
Igo and ago,
The very stanes that Adam bore,
Iram, coram, dago.

So may ye get in glad possession,
Igo and ago,
The coins o' Satan's coronation!
Iram, coram, dago.



SKETCH—NEW YEAR'S DAY, [1790.]

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

THIS day, Time winds the exhausted chain,
To run the twelvemonth's length again :
I see the old, bald-pated fellow,
With ardent eyes, complexion fallow,
Adjust the unimpaired machine,
To wheel the equal dull routine.

The absent lover, minor heir,
In vain assail him with their prayer ;
Deaf, as my friend, he sees them press,
Nor makes the hour one moment less.
Will you (the Major's¹ with the hounds,
The happy tenants share his rounds ;
Coila's fair Rachel's² care to day,
And blooming Keith's³ engaged with Gray)
From housewife cares a minute borrow—
That grandchild's cap will do to-morrow—
And join with me a-moralizing,
This day's propitious to be wise in.

First, what did yesternight deliver ?
" Another year is gone for ever !"
And what is this day's strong suggestion ?
" The passing moment's all we rest on !"
Rest on—for what ? what do we here ?
Or why regard the passing year ?
Will Time, amused with proverb'd lore,
Add to our date one minute more ?
A few days may—a few years must—
Repose us in the silent dust ;
Then is 't wise to damp our bliss ?
Yes—all such reasonings are amiss !
The voice of Nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies :
That on this frail, uncertain state,
Hang matters of eternal weight :
That future life, in worlds unknown,
Must take its hue from this alone ;
Whether as heavenly glory bright,
Or dark as Misery's woeful night.

¹ Major, afterwards General, Andrew Dunlop, Mrs. Dunlop's second son.

² Miss Rachel Dunlop. ³ Miss Keith Dunlop, the youngest daughter



Since, then, my honoured first of friends,
On this poor being all depends,
Let us the important Now employ,
And live as those who never die.

Though you, with days and honours crowned,
Witness that filial circle round,
(A sight life's sorrows to repulse,
A sight pale Envy to convulse,
Others now claim your chief regard;
Yourself, you wait your bright reward.

PROLOGUE,

Spoken at the Theatre, Dumfries, on New Year's Day
Evening, [1790.]

No song nor dance I bring from you great city
That queens it o'er our taste—the more's the pity:
Though, by the by, abroad why will you roam?
Good sense and taste are natives here at home:
But not for panegyric I appear,
I come to wish you all a good new year!
Old Father Time deposes me here before ye,
Not for to preach, but tell his simple story.
The sage grave ancient coughed, and bade me say,
"You're one year older this important day."
If wiser, too—he hinted some suggestion,
But 'twould be rude, you know, to ask the question;
And with a would-be roguish leer and wink,
He bade me on you press this one word—"Think!"

Ye sprightly youths, quite flushed with hope and spirit,
Who think to storm the world by dint of merit,
To you the dotard has a deal to say,
In his sly, dry, sententious, proverb way!
He bids you mind, amid your thoughtless rattle,
That the first blow is ever half the battle;
That though some by the skirt may try to snatch him,
Yet by the forelock is the hold to catch him;
That whether doing, suffering, or forbearing,
You may do miracles by persevering.

Last, though not least, in love, ye faithful fair,
Angelic forms, high Heaven's peculiar care!
To you old Bald-pate smooths his wrinkled brow,
And humbly begs you'll mind the important Now!
To crown your happiness he asks your leave,
And offers bliss to give and to receive.



PROLOGUE—MR. SUTHERLAND'S BENEFIT. 111

For our sincere, though haply weak, endeavours,
With grateful pride we own your many favours;
And howsoe'er our tongues may ill reveal it,
Believe our glowing bosoms truly feel it.

PROLOGUE,

FOR MR. SUTHERLAND'S BENEFIT NIGHT, DUMFRIES.

[This prologue was accompanied with the following letter to Mr. Sutherland, the manager of the Dumfries Theatre:—

“Monday Morning.

“I was much disappointed in wanting your most agreeable company yesterday. However, I heartily pray for good weather next Sunday; and whatever aerial being has the guidance of the elements, he may take any other half-dozen of Sundays he pleases, and clothe them with—

“Vapours, and clouds, and storms,
Until he terrify himself
At combustion of his own raising.

I shall see you on Wednesday forenoon. In the greatest hurry,—R. B.”]

WHAT needs this din about the town o' Lon'on,
How this new play and that new sang is comin' ?
Why is outlandish stuff sae meikle¹ courted ?
Does nonsense mend, like whisky, when imported ?
Is there nae poet, burning keen for fame,
Will try to gi'e us sangs and plays at hame ?
For comedy abroad he needna toil,
A fool and knave are plants of every soil;
Nor need he hunt as far as Rome and Greece
To gather matter for a serious piece;
There's themes enow in Caledonian story,
Would show the tragic muse in a' her glory.

Is there no daring bard will rise and tell
How glorious Wallace stood, how hapless fell ?
Where are the Muses fled that could produce
A drama worthy o' the name o' Bruce ?
How here, even here, he first unsheathed the sword
'Gainst mighty England and her guilty lord;
And after mony a bloody, deathless doing,
Wrenched his dear country from the jaws of ruin ?
Oh, for a Shakespeare or an Otway scene
To draw the lovely, hapless Scottish queen !
Vain all the omnipotence of female charms
'Gainst headlong, ruthless, mad Rebellion's arma.

¹ Much.



She fell, but fell with spirit truly Roman,
To glut the vengeance of a rival woman:
A woman—though the phrase may seem uncivil—
As able and as cruel as the devil!
One Douglas lives in Home's immortal page,
But Douglases were heroes every age:
And though your fathers, prodigal of life,
A Douglas followed to the martial strife,
Perhaps, if bowls row right, and Right succeeds,
Ye yet may follow where a Douglas leads!

As ye hae generous done, if a' the land
Would take the Muses' servants by the hand;
Not only hear, but patronize, befriend them,
And where ye justly can commend, commend them;
And aiblins when they winna stand the test,
Wink hard, and say the folks hae done their best!
Would a' the land do this, then I'll be caution
Ye'll soon hae poets of the Scottish nation,
Will gar Fame blaw until her trumpet crack,
And warsle ' Time, and lay him on his back!
For us and for our stage should only spier,²
"Wha's aught thae chieks mak's a' this bustle here?"
My best leg foremost, I'll set up my brow,
We have the honour to belong to you!
We're your ain bairns, e'en guide us as ye like,
But, like good mithers, shore³ before ye strike.
And gratefu' still I hope ye'll ever find us,
For a' the patronage and meikle kindness
We've got frae a' professions, sets, and ranks;
God help us! we're but poor—ye'se get but thanks.

TO THE OWL.

SAD bird of night, what sorrows call thee forth,
To vent thy plaints thus in the midnight hour?
Is it some blast that gathers in the north,
Threatening to nip the verdure of thy bower?
Is it, sad owl, that Autumn strips the shade,
And leaves thee here, unsheltered and forlorn?
Or fear that Winter will thy nest invade?
Or friendless melancholy bids thee mourn?
Shut out, lone bird, from all the feathered train,
To tell thy sorrows to the unheeding gloom;
No friend to pity when thou dost complain,
Grief all thy thought, and solitude thy home.

¹ Wrestle.² Ask.³ Threaten.



AN EVENING VIEW OF LINCLUDEN ABBEY. 113

Sing on, sad mourner! I will bless thy strain,
And pleased in sorrow listen to thy song;
Sing on, sad mourner! to the night complain,
While the lone echo wafts thy notes along.

Is beauty less, when down the glowing cheek
Sad, piteous tears, in native sorrows fall?
Less kind the heart when anguish bids it break?
Less happy he who lists to pity's call?

Ah, no, sad Owl! nor is thy voice less sweet,
That sadness tunes it, and that grief is there;
That Spring's gay notes, unskilled, thou canst repeat;
That sorrow bids thee to the gloom repair.

Nor that the treble songsters of the day
Are quite estranged, sad bird of night! from thee;
Nor that the thrush deserts the evening spray,
When darkness calls thee from thy reverie.

From some old tower, thy melancholy dome,
While the grey walls, and desert solitudes,
Return each note, responsive to the gloom
Of ivied coverts and surrounding woods.

There hooting, I will list more pleased to thee
Than ever lover to the nightingale;
Or drooping wretch, oppressed with misery,
Lending his ear to some condoling tale.

—◆—
VERSES

ON AN EVENING VIEW OF THE RUINS OF LINCLUDEN ABBEY.¹

YE holy walls, that, still sublime,
Resist the crumbling touch of time;
How strongly still your form displays
The piety of ancient days!
As through your ruins, hoar and grey—
Ruins yet beauteous in decay—
The silvery moonbeams trembling fly:
The forms of ages long gone by
Crowd thick on Fancy's wondering eye,
And wake the soul to musings high.
Even now, as lost in thought profound,
I view the solemn scene around,

¹ These beautiful ruins are on the banks of the river Cluden, near Dumfries. The Abbey was founded in the time of Malcolm IV., King of Scotland, by one of the Lords of Galloway.

And, pensive, gaze with wistful eyes,
 The past returns, the present flies;
 Again the dome, in pristine pride,
 Lifts high its roof and arches wide,
 That, knit with curious tracery,
 Each Gothic ornament display.
 The high-arched windows, painted fair,
 Show many a saint and martyr there.
 As on their slender forms I gaze,
 Methinks they brighten to a blaze!
 With noiseless step and taper bright,
 What are yon forms that meet my sight?
 Slowly they move, while every eye
 Is heavenward raised in ecstasy.
 'Tis the fair, spotless, vestal train,
 That seek in prayer the midnight fane.
 And, hark! what more than mortal sound
 Of music breathes the pile around?
 'Tis the soft-chanted choral song,
 Whose tones the echoing aisles prolong;
 Till, thence returned, they softly stray
 O'er Cluden's wave, with fond delay;
 Now on the rising gale swell high,
 And now in fainting murmurs die;
 The boatmen on Nith's gentle stream,
 That glistens in the pale moonbeam,
 Suspend their dashing oars to hear
 The holy anthem, loud and clear;
 Each worldly thought a while forbear,
 And mutter forth a half-formed prayer.
 But, as I gaze, the vision fails,
 Like frost-work touched by southern gales;
 The altar sinks, the tapers fade,
 And all the splendid scene's decayed.
 In window fair the painted pane
 No longer glows with holy stain,
 But through the broken glass the gale
 Blows chilly from the misty vale;
 The bird of eve flits sullen by,
 Her home these aisles and arches high!
 The choral hymn, that erst so clear
 Broke softly sweet on Fancy's ear,
 Is drowned amid the mournful scream
 That breaks the magic of my dream!
 Roused by the sound, I start and see
 The ruined sad reality!

VERSES TO MY BED.

THOU Bed, in which I first began
 To be that various creature—**Man!**
 And when again the fates decree
 The place where I must cease to be ;
 When sickness comes, to whom I fly,
 To soothe my pain, or close mine eye,
 When cares surround me where I weep,
 Or lose them all in balmy sleep ;
 When sore with labour, whom I court,
 And to thy downy breast resort ;
 Where, too, ecstatic joys I find,
 When deigns my Delia to be kind—
 And full of love, in all her charms,
 Thou giv'st the fair one to my arms.
 The centre thou, where grief and pain,
 Disease and rest, alternate reign.
 Oh, since within thy little space
 So many various scenes take place ;
 Lessons as useful shalt thou teach,
 As sages dictate—churchmen preach ;
 And man, convinced by thee alone,
 This great important truth shall own :—
 That thin partitions do divide
 The bounds where good and ill reside ;
 That nought is perfect here below ;
 But bliss still bord'ring upon woe.

ELEGY ON PEG NICHOLSON,

A BAY MARE OF MR. W. NICOL'S.

PEG NICHOLSON was a good bay mare
 As ever trode on airn ;¹
 But now she's floating down the Nith,
 And past the mouth o' Cairn.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
 And rode through thick and thin ;
 But now she's floating down the Nith,
 And wanting e'en the skin.

¹ Iron.



116 TO A GENTLEMAN WHO SENT A NEWSPAPER.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And ance she bore a priest;
But now she's floating down the Nith,
For Solway fish a feast.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And the priest he rode her sair;
And much oppressed and bruised she was,
As priest-rid cattle are.



LINES

WRITTEN TO A GENTLEMAN WHO HAD SENT HIM A NEWSPAPER,
AND OFFERED TO CONTINUE IT FREE OF EXPENSE.

KIND Sir, I've read your paper through,
And, faith, to me 'twas really new!
How guessed ye, sir, what maist I wanted?
This mony a day I've graned and gaunted¹
To ken what French mischief was brewin',
Or what the Drumlie Dutch were doin';
That vile doup-skelper, Emperor Joseph,
If Venus yet had got his nose off;
Or how the collieshangie² works
Atween the Russians and the Turks;
Or if the Swede, before he halt,
Would play anither Charles the Twalt:
If Denmark, anybody sp'ak o't;
Or Poland, wha had now the tack³ o't;
How cut-throat Prussian blades where hingin';
How libbet Italy was singin';
If Spaniards, Portuguese, or Swiss
Were sayin' or takin' aught amiss;
Or how our merry lads at hame,
In Britain's court, kept up the game;
How royal George, the Lord leuk o'er him!
Was managing St. Stephen's quorum;
If sleekit⁴ Chatham Will was livin',
Or glaikit⁵ Charlie got his nieve in;
How Daddie Burke the plea was cookin',
If Warren Hastings' neck was yeukin';⁶
How cesses, stents, and fees were razed,
Or if bare a——s yet were taxed;

¹ Groaned and yawned.

² Quarrel.

³ Lease.

⁴ Sly.

⁵ Thoughtless.

⁶ Itching.



ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON. 117

The news o' princes, dukes, and earls,
Pimps, sharpers, bawds, and opera girls;
If that daft buckie, Geordie Wales,
Was threshin' still at hizzies' tails;
Or if he was grown oughtlins donser,¹
And no a perfect kintra cooser.
A' this and mair I never heard of;
And but for you I might despaired of.
So, gratefu', back your news I send you,
And pray, a' guid things may attend you!

Ellisland, Monday Morning, 1790.

ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON,

A GENTLEMAN WHO HELD THE PATENT FOR HIS HONOURS
IMMEDIATELY FROM ALMIGHTY GOD.

[Captain Henderson was a retired soldier, of agreeable manners and upright character, who had a lodging in Carrubber's Close, Edinburgh, and mingled with the best society of the city: he dined regularly at Fortune's Tavern, and was a member of the Capillaire Club, which was composed of all who inclined to the witty and the joyous.—BURNS.]

“Should the poor be flattered?”—SHAKESPEARE.

But now his radiant course is run,
For Matthew's course was bright;
His soul was like the glorious sun,
A matchless, heavenly light!

O DEATH! thou tyrant fell and bloody!
The meikle devil wi' a woodie²
Haur!³ thee hame to his black smiddie,
O'er hurcheon⁴ hides,
And like stock-fish come o'er his studdie
Wi' thy auld sides!

He's gane! he's gane! he's frae us torn!
The ae best fellow e'er was born!
Thee, Matthew, Nature's sel, shall mourn
By wood and wild,
Where, haply, Pity strays forlorn,
Frae man exiled!

Ye hills! near neibors o' the starns,⁵
That proudly cock your creasting cairns!

¹ At all more sober.

² Halter.

³ Drag.

⁴ Blacksmith's shop.

⁵ Urchin, or hedgehog.

⁶ Stars.



118 *ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON.*

Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing years,¹
Where Echo slumbers !
Come, join, ye Nature's sturdiest bairns,
My wailing numbers !

Mourn, ilka grove the cushat kens !
Ye hazelly shaws and briery dens !
Ye burnies, wimplin' down your glens,
Wi' toddlin' din,
Or foaming strang, wi' hasty stens,²
Frae lin to lin !

Mourn, little harebells o'er the lea ;
Ye stately foxgloves fair to see ;
Ye woodbines, hanging bonnilie
In scented bowers ;
Ye roses on your thorny tree,
The first o' flowers.

At dawn, when every grassy blade
Droops with a diamond at his head,
At even, when beans their fragrance shed,
I' the rustling gale,
Ye maukins whiddin' ³ through the glade,
Come, join my wail.

Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood ;
Ye grouse that crap the heather bud ;
Ye curlews calling through a clud ;⁴
Ye whistling plover ;
And mourn, ye whirring pairick⁵ brood !
He's gane for ever.

Mourn, sooty coots, and speckled teals ;
Ye fisher herons, watching eels ;
Ye duck and drake, wi' airy wheels
Circling the lake ;
Ye bitterns, till the quagmire reels,
Rair for his sake.

Mourn, clam'ring craiks,⁶ at close o' day,
'Mang fields o' flowering clover gay ;
And when ye wing your annual way
Frae our cauld shore,
Tell thae far worlds wha lies in clay,
Wham we deplore.

¹ Eagles.
♦ Cloud.

² Bounds.
³ Partridge.

⁵ Hares running.
⁶ Landrails.



ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON. 119

Ye houlets,¹ frae your ivy bower,
In some auld tree or eldritch tower,
What time the moon, wi' silent glower,
Sets up her horn,
Wail through the dreary midnight hour
Till waukrife morn!

O rivers, forests, hills, and plains!
Oft have ye heard my canty strains:
But now, what else for me remains
But tales of woe?
And frae my een the drapping rains
Maun ever flow.

Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year!
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep² a tear:
Thou, Simmer, while each corny spear
Shoots up its head,
Thy gay, green, flowery tresses shear
For him that's dead!

Thou, Autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,
In grief thy sallow mantle tear!
Thou, Winter, hurling through the air
The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world declare
The worth we've lost!

Mourn him, thou Sun, great source of light!
Mourn, empress of the silent night!
And you, ye twinkling starnies bright,
My Matthew mourn!
For through your orbs he's ta'en his flight,
Ne'er to return.

O Henderson! the man—the brother!
And art thou gone, and gone for ever?
And hast thou crossed that unknown river,
Life's dreary bound?
Like thee, where shall I find another
The world around!

Go to your sculptured tombs, ye great,
In a' the tinsel trash o' state!
But by thy honest turf I'll wait,
Thou man of worth!
And weep the ae best fellow's fate
E'er lay in earth.

¹ Owls.

² Catch.



THE EPITAPH.

STOP, passenger!—my story's brief,
And truth I shall relate, man;
I tell nae common tale o' grief—
For Matthew was a great man.

If thou uncommon merit hast,
Yet spurned at Fortune's door, man,
A look of pity hither cast—
For Matthew was a poor man.

If thou a noble sodger art,
That passest by this grave, man,
There moulders here a gallant heart—
For Matthew was a brave man.

If thou on men, their works and ways,
Canst throw uncommon light, man,
Here lies wha weel had won thy praise—
For Matthew was a bright man.

If thou at friendship's sacred ca'
Wad life itself resign, man,
The sympathetic tear maun fa'—
For Matthew was a kin' man!

If thou art staunch without a stain,
Like the unchanging blue, man,
This was a kinsman o' thy ain—
For Matthew was a true man.

If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire,
And ne'er guid wine did fear, man,
This was thy billie, dam, and sire—
For Matthew was a queer man.

If ony whiggish whingin' sot,
To blame poor Matthew dare, man,
May dool and sorrow be his lot!—
For Matthew was a rare man.





TAM O' SHANTER.

A TALE.¹

"Of Brownie and of Bogilie full is this Buke."

GAWIN DOUGLAS.

WHEN chapman billies² leave the street,
And drouthy³ neebors neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak' the gate;⁴
While we sit bousing at the nappy,⁵
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps,⁶ and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter,
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses.)

¹ Gilbert Burns gives the following account of the origin of this poem, the most popular of the Poet's works:—"When my father feued his little property near Alloway Kirk, the wall of the churchyard had gone to ruin, and cattle had free liberty of pasture in it. My father and two or three neighbours joined in an application to the town council of Ayr, who were superiors of the adjoining land, for liberty to rebuild it, and raised by subscription a sum for enclosing this ancient cemetery with a wall: hence he came to consider it as his burial-place, and we learned that reverence for it people generally have for the burial-place of their ancestors. My brother was living in Ellisland, when Captain Grose, on his peregrinations through Scotland, stayed some time at Carse House, in the neighbourhood, with Captain Robert Riddel, of Glenriddel, a particular friend of my brother's. The antiquary and the Poet were 'unco pack and thick thegither.' Robert requested of Captain Grose, when he should come to Ayrshire, that he would make a drawing of Alloway Kirk, as it was the burial-place of his father, where he himself had a sort of claim to lay down his bones when they should be no longer serviceable to him; and added, by way of encouragement, that it was the scene of many a good story of witches and apparitions, of which he knew the Captain was very fond. The Captain agreed to the request, provided the Poet would furnish a witch-story, to be printed along with it. 'Tam o' Shanter' was produced on this occasion, and was first published in 'Grose's Antiquities of Scotland.'"

² Fellows.³ Thirsty.⁴ Road.⁵ Ale.⁶ Gates or openings through a hedge.



O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,¹
A blethering,² blustering, drunken blellum,³
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou was nae sober;
That ilka melder,⁴ wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That every naig was ca'd a shoe on,⁵
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the Lord's house, ev'n on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean⁶ till Monday.
She prophesied that, late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drowned in Doon;
Or caught wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars⁷ me greet,
To think how many counsels sweet,
How many lengthened sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale: Ae market-night,
Tam had got planted unco right;
Fast by an ingle,⁸ bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats,⁹ that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter¹⁰ Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy¹¹ crony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter;
And aye the ale was growing better:
The landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' favours, secret, sweet, and precious:
The Souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair¹² and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

¹ Good-for-nothing fellow.

² Nonsensical.

³ Chattering fellow.

⁴ Grain sent to the mill to be ground; *i.e.*, that every time he carried the corn to the mill he sat to drink with the miller.

⁵ Nag that required shoeing.

⁶ Jean Kennedy, a public-house keeper at Kirkoswald. The village where the parish church stands is called Kirkton, or Kirk (Church) town, in Scotland.

⁷ Makes me weep.

⁸ Fire.

⁹ Foaming ale.

¹⁰ Shoemaker.

¹¹ Thirsty.

¹² Roar.



Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drowned himself among the nappy;
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes winged their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed!
Or like the snow-fall in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.

Nae man can tether time or tide;
The hour approaches Tam mann ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the keystone,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he tak's the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.
The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattlin' showers rose on the blast:
The speedy gleams the darkness swallowed;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellowed;
That night, a child might understand,
The de'il had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his grey mare, Meg,
(A better never lifted leg,)
Tam skelpit¹ on through dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles² catch him unawares;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets³ nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smooed;⁴
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;
And through the whins, and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murdered bairn;

¹ Rode carelessly.

² Ghosts, bogies.

³ Owls.

⁴ Was smothered.



And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hanged hersel'.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars through the woods!
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll;
When, glimmering through the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seemed in a bleeze;
Through ilka bore' the beams were glancing;
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring, bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst mak' us scorn!
Wi' tippenny² we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquabae we'll face the devil!
The swats³ sae reamed⁴ in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he cared na de'ils a boddle.⁵
But Maggie stood right sair astonished,
Till, by the heel and hand admonished,
She ventured forward on the light;
And, wow! Tam saw an unco sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cottillion brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
At winnock-bunker⁶ in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
A towzie tyke,⁷ black, grim, and large,
To gi'e them music was his charge:
He screwed the pipes and gart them skirl,⁸
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl!⁹
Coffins stood round, like open presses,
That shawed the dead in their last dresses;
And by some devilish cantrip¹⁰ slight,
Each in its cauld hand held a light,
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns;¹¹
Twa span-lang, wee unchristened bairns;
A thief new-cuttet frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab¹² did gape:
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red-rusted;
Five scimitars wi' murder crusted;

¹ Crevice, or hole.

⁴ Frothed, mounted.

⁷ Shaggy dog.

¹⁰ Spell.

² Twopenny ale.

⁵ A small old coin.

⁸ Made them scream.

¹¹ Irons.

³ Drink.

⁶ Window-seat.

⁹ Shake.

¹² Mouth.



TAM O' SHANTER.

125

A garter, which a babe had strangled ;
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,
The grey hairs yet stack to the heft ;
Wi' mair o' horrible and awfu',
Which ev'n to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowred,¹ amazed and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious :
The piper loud and louder blew ;
The dancers quick and quicker flew ;
They reeled, they set, they crossed, they cleekit,²
Till ilka carlin³ swat and reekit,⁴
And coost⁵ her duddies⁶ to the wark,
And linket⁷ at it in her sark !⁸

Now Tam, O Tam ! had they been queans
A' plump and strapping, in their teens ;
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,⁹
Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen ;¹⁰
Thir breeks¹¹ o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,
For ane blink o' the bonnie burdies !

But withered beldams old and droll,
Rigwoodie¹² hags wad spean¹³ a foal,
Lowping and flinging on a crummock,¹⁴
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

But Tam kenned what was what fu' brawlie :
"There was ae winsome wench and walie,"¹⁵
That night inlisted in the core,
(Lang after kenned on Carrick shore !
For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perished mony a bonnie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,¹⁶
And kept the country-side in fear,
Her cutty sark,¹⁷ o' Paisley harn,¹⁸
That while a lassie she had worn,

¹ Stared.

³ Old hag.

⁶ Clothes.

⁹ Greasy flannel.

¹⁰ Manufacturers' term for linen woven in a reed of 1700 divisions.

¹¹ Breeches.

¹⁴ A crutch—a stick with a crook.

¹⁵ Quoted from Allan Ramsay.

¹⁶ Barley.

² Caught hold of each other.

⁴ Reeked with heat.

⁷ Tripped.

⁵ Cast off.

⁸ Chemise.

¹² Gallows-worthy.

¹³ Wean.

¹⁷ Short shift or shirt.

¹⁸ Very coarse linen.



In longitude though sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.¹
Ah! little kenned thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft² for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches,
Wad ever graced a dance of witches!

But here my muse her wing maun cour;³
Sic flights are far beyond her power:
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was and strang,
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitched,
And thought his very een enriched;
Even Satan glowred, and fidget fu' fain,
And hotched and blew wi' might and main;
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tim tints⁴ his reason a'thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"⁵
And in an instant all was dark:
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,⁵
When plundering herds assail their byke;⁶
As open pussie's mortal foes
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch⁷ screech and hollow.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin'¹!
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin'!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane⁸ of the brig;
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross.
But ere the key-stan she could make,
The fiend a tail she had to shake!

¹ Proud.

² Bought.

³ Cover—sink.

⁴ Loses.

⁵ Fuss.

⁶ Hive.

⁷ Unearthly.

⁸ It is a well-known fact, that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with bogies, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back.—BURNS.



Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
* * * * *
And at his elbow, Souter Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony. — p. 122.



ON THE BIRTH OF A POSTHUMOUS CHILD. 127

For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle—
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain grey tail :
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump !

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, take heed :
Whene'er to drink you are inclined,
Or cutty sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys o'er dear,
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

ON THE BIRTH OF A POSTHUMOUS CHILD,²

BORN UNDER PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF FAMILY DISTRESS.

SWEET Floweret, pledge o' meikle love,
And ward o' mony a prayer,
What heart o' stane wad thou na move,
Sae helpless, sweet, and fair !

November birples³ o'er the lea,
Chill on thy lovely form ;
And gane, alas ! the sheltering tree
Should shield thee frae the storm.

May He who gives the rain to pour,
And wings the blast to blaw,
Protect thee frae the driving shower,
The bitter frost and snaw !

May He, the Friend of woe and want,
Who heals life's various stounds,⁴
Protect and guard the mother plant,
And heal her cruel wounds !

But late she flourished, rooted fast,
Fair on the summer morn ;
Now feebly bends she in the blast,
Unsheltered and forlorn :

¹ Effort.

² Creeps.

³ The grandchild of the Poet's friend, Mrs. Dunlop.

⁴ Pangs.

*ELEGY ON MISS BURNET.*

Blest be thy bloom, thou lovely gem,
Unscathed by ruffian hand!
And from thee many a parent stem
Arise to deck our land!

ELEGY ON MISS BURNET, OF MONBODDO.¹

LIFE ne'er exulted in so rich a prize
As Burnet, lovely from her native skies;
Nor envious Death so triumphed in a blow,
As that which laid th' accomplished Burnet low.

Thy form and mind, sweet maid, can I forget?
In richest ore the brightest jewel set!
In thee, high Heaven above was truest shown,
As by His noblest work the Godhead best is known.

In vain ye flaunt in summer's pride, ye groves;
Thou crystal streamlet with thy flowery shore;
Ye woodland choir that chant your idle loves,
Ye cease to charm—Eliza is no more!

Ye heathy wastes, immixed with reedy fens;
Ye mossy streams, with sedge and rushes stored;
Ye rugged cliffs, o'erhanging dreary glens,
To you I fly, ye with my soul accord.

Princes, whose cumbrous pride was all their worth,
Shall venal lays their pompous exit hail?
And thou, sweet excellence! forsake our earth,
And not a Muse in honest grief bewail?

We saw thee shine in youth and beauty's pride,
And virtue's light, that beams beyond the spheres;
But, like the sun eclipsed at morning tide,
Thou left'st us darkling in a world of tears.

The parent's heart that nestled fond in thee,
That heart how sunk, a prey to grief and care!
So deckt the woodbine sweet yon agèd tree;
So from it ravished, leaves it bleak and bare.

¹ The daughter of Lord Monboddo.

LAMENT OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, ON THE
APPROACH OF SPRING.

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets o' daisies white
Out o'er the grassy lea :
Now Phœbus cheers the crystal streams,
And glads the azure skies ;
But nought can glad the wearied wight
That fast in durance lies.

Now lav'rocks wake the merry morn,
Aloft on dewy wing ;
The merle, in his noontide bower,
Makes woodland echoes ring ;
The mavis mild, wi' many a note,
Sings drowsy day to rest :
In love and freedom they rejoice,
Wi' care nor thrall opprest.

Now blooms the lily by the bank,
The primrose down the brae ;
The hawthorn's budding in the glen,
And milk-white is the slae :
The meanest hind in fair Scotland
May rove their sweets amang ;
But I, the Queen of a' Scotland,
Maun lie in prison strang.

I was the Queen o' bonnie France,
Where happy I ha'e been ;
Fu' lightly raise I in the morn,
As blithe lay down at e'en :
And I'm the sovereign of Scotland,
And mony a traitor there :
Yet here I lie in foreign bands,
And never-ending care.

But as for thee, thou false woman,
My sister and my fae,
Grim vengeance yet shall whet a sword
That through thy soul shall gae :
The weeping blood in woman's breast
Was never known to thee ;
Nor th' balm that draps on wounds of woe
Frae woman's pitying e'e.



130 *LAMENT FOR JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN.*

My son! my son! may kinder stars
Upon thy fortune shine;
And may those pleasures gild thy reign
That ne'er wad blink on mine!
God keep thee frae thy mother's faes,
Or turn their hearts to thee:
And where thou meet'st thy mother's friend
Remember him for me!

O! soon, to me, may summer suns
Nae mair light up the morn!
Nae mair, to me, the autumn winds
Wave o'er the yellow corn!
And in the narrow house o' death
Let winter round me rave;
And the next flowers that deck the spring
Bloom on my peaceful grave!

LAMENT FOR JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

THE wind blew hollow frae the hills,
By fits the sun's departing beam
Looked on the fading yellow woods
That waded o'er Lugar's winding stream:
Beneath a craigy steep, a bard,
Laden with years and meikle pain,
In loud lament bewailed his lord,
Whom death had all untimely ta'en.

He leaned him to an ancient aik,
Whose trunk was mould'ring down with years;
His locks were bleached white wi' time,
His hoary cheek was wet wi' tears!
And as he touched his trembling harp,
And as he tuned his doleful sang,
The winds, lamenting through their caves,
To echo bore the notes along.

Ye scattered birds that faintly sing,
The reliques of the vernal quire!
Ye woods that shed on a' the winds
The honours of the aged year!
A few short months, and glad and gay,
Again ye'll charm the ear and e'e;
But nocht in all revolving time
Can gladness bring again to me.



LAMENT FOR JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN. 131

“ I am a bending, agèd tree,
That long has stood the wind and rain;
But now has come a cruel blast,
And my last hald of earth is gane:
Nae leaf o’ mine shall greet the spring,
Nae simmer sun exalt my bloom;
But I maun lie before the storm,
And ithers plant them in my room.

“ I’ve seen sae mony changefu’ years,
On earth I am a stranger grown;
I wander in the ways of men,
Alike unknowing and unknown:
Unheard, unpitied, unrelieved,
I bear alane my lade o’ care,
For silent, low, on beds of dust,
Lie a’ that would my sorrows share.

“ And last, (the sum of a’ my griefs!)
My noble master lies in clay;
The flower among our barons bold,
- His country’s pride, his country’s stay:
In weary being now I pine,
For a’ the life of life is dead,
And hope has left my agèd ken,
On forward wing for ever fled.

“ Awake thy last sad voice, my harp!
The voice of woe and wild despair!
Awake, resound thy latest lay,
Then sleep in silence evermair!
And thou, my last, best, only friend,
That fillest an untimely tomb,
Accept this tribute from the Bard
Thou brought from fortune’s mirkest gloom.

“ In poverty’s low barren vale,
Thick mists, obscure, involved me round
Though oft I turned the wistful eye,
Nae ray of fame was to be found:
Thou found’st me, like the morning sun
That melts the fogs in limpid air,
The friendless Bard and rustic song,
Became alike thy fostering care.

“ Oh, why has worth so short a date?
While villains ripen grey with time!
Must thou, the noble, generous, great,
Fall in bold manhood’s hardy prime!



TO SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD.

Why did I live to see that day?
A day to me so full of woe!
Oh, had I met the mortal shaft
Which laid my benefactor low!

“The bridegroom may forget the bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
But I’ll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a’ that thou hast done for me!”

LINES

SENT TO SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD, OF WHITEFOORD, BART., WITH
THE FOREGOING POEM.

THOU, who thy honour as thy God rever’st,
Who, save thy mind’s reproach, nought earthly fear’st,
To thee this votive offering I impart,
The tearful tribute of a broken heart.
The friend thou valuedst, I the patron loved;
His worth, his honour, all the world approved;
We’ll mourn till we, too, go as he has gone,
And tread the dreary path to that dark world unknown.

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON,

ON CROWNING HIS BUST AT EDNAM, ROXBURGHSHIRE, WITH BAYS

WHILE virgin Spring, by Eden’s flood,
Unfolds her tender mantle green,
Or pranks the sod in frolic mood,
Or tunes Eolian strains between:

While Summer, with a matron grace,
Retreats to Dryburgh’s cooling shade,
Yet oft, delighted, stops to trace
The progress of the spiky blade:

While Autumn, benefactor kind,
By Tweed erects his agèd head,
And sees, with self-approving mind,
Each creature on his bounty fed:



While maniac Winter rages o'er
The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or sweeping, wild, a waste of snows:

So long, sweet Poet of the year,
Shall bloom that wreath thou well hast won:
While Scotia, with exulting tear,
Proclaims that Thomson was her son.

VERSES

TO JOHN MAXWELL, OF TERRAUGHTY, ON HIS BIRTHDAY.¹

HEALTH to the Maxwells' veteran chief!
Health, aye unsoured by care or grief:
Inspired, I turned Fate's sybil leaf
This natal morn;
I see thy life is stuff o' prief,²
Scarce quite half worn.

This day thou metes threescore eleven,
And I can tell that bounteous Heaven
(The second sight, ye ken is given
To ilka³ poet)
On thee a tack o' seven times seven
Will yet bestow it.

If envious buckies⁴ view wi' sorrow
Thy lengthened days on this blest morrow,
May Desolation's lang-teethed harrow,
Nine miles an hour,
Rake them, like Sodom and Gomorrah,
In brunstane stoure!⁵

But for thy friends, and they are mony,
Baith honest men and lasses bonny,
May couthie⁶ Fortune, kind and canny,
In social glee,
Wi' mornings blithe and evenings funny,
Bless them and thee!

¹ Mr. Maxwell was grandson's grandson to Lord Herries, the faithful and devoted adherent of Mary, Queen of Scots. On his knees Lord Herries entreated the unhappy Queen to prosecute Bothwell for the murder of Darnley. He afterwards fought for her at the battle of Langside.

² Proof.

³ Every.

⁴ Bucks.

⁵ Dust.

⁶ Loving.



ON SENSIBILITY.

Fareweel, auld birkie!¹ Lord be near ye,
And then the de'il he daurna steer ye:
Your friends aye love, your faes aye fear ye;
For me, shame fa' me,
If neist my heart I dinna wear ye,
While Burns they ca' me!

ON SENSIBILITY.

SENSIBILITY, how charming,
Thou, my friend, canst truly tell;
But distress with horrors arming,
Thou hast also known too well!

Fairest flower, behold the lily,
Blooming in the sunny ray:
Let the blast sweep o'er the valley,
See it prostrate on the clay.

Hear the woodlark charm the forest,
Telling o'er his little joys:
Hapless bird! a prey the surest,
To each pirate of the skies.

Dearly bought the hidden treasure,
Finer feelings can bestow;
Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure,
Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.

AN OCCASIONAL ADDRESS SPOKEN BY MISS FONTENELLE ON HER
BENEFIT NIGHT.

WHILE Europe's eye is fixed on mighty things,
The fate of empires and the fall of kings;
While quacks of state must each produce his plan,
And even children lisp the Rights of Man;
Amid this mighty fuss, just let me mention,
The Rights of Woman merit some attention.

First, in the sexes' intermixed connexion,
One sacred Right of Woman is Protection.
The tender flower that lifts its head, elate,
Helpless, must fall before the blasts of fate,
Sunk on the earth, defaced its lovely form,
Unless your shelter ward th' impending storm.

¹ Jolly old fellow.



ON SEEING MISS FONTENELLE.

135

Our second Right—but needless here—is Caution;
To keep that right inviolate's the fashion,
Each man of sense has it so full before him,
He'd died before he'd wrong it—'tis decorum.
There was, indeed, in far less polished days,
A time when rough rude man had naughty ways;
Would swagger, swear, get drunk, kick up a riot,
Nay, even thus, invade a lady's quiet.
Now, thank our stars! these Gothic times are fled;
Now, well-bred men—and you are all well-bred—
Most justly think (and we are much the gainers)
Such conduct neither spirit, wit, nor manners.¹

For Right the third, our last, our best, our dearest,
That right to fluttering female hearts the nearest,
Which even the Rights of Kings in low prostration
Most humbly own—'tis dear, dear Admiration!
In that blest sphere alone we live and move;
There taste that life of life—immortal Love.
Smiles, glances, sighs, tears, fits, flirtations, airs,
'Gainst such an host what flinty savage dares—
When awful Beauty joins with all her charms,
Who is so rash as rise in rebel arms?

But truce with kings, and truce with constitutions,
With bloody armaments and revolutions;
Let Majesty your first attention summon,
Ah! ça ira! THE MAJESTY OF WOMAN!



ON SEEING MISS FONTENELLE IN A FAVOURITE
CHARACTER.

SWEET naïveté of feature,
Simple, wild, enchanting elf,
Not to thee, but thanks to Nature,
Thou art acting but thyself

Wert thou awkward, stiff, affected,
Spurning nature, torturing art;
Loves and graces all rejected,
Then indeed thou 'dst act a part.

¹ Ironical allusion to the saturnalia of the Caledonian Hunt.



TO A YOUNG LADY (MISS JESSIE LEWARS,
DUMFRIES),

WITH BOOK WHICH THE BARD PRESENTED TO HER.

THINE be the volumes, Jessie fair,
And with them take the Poet's prayer;
That Fate may in her fairest page,
With every kindest, best presage,
Of future bliss enrol thy name:
With native worth, and spotless fame,
And wakeful caution still aware
Of ill—but chief, man's felon snare;
All blameless joys on earth we find,
And all the treasures of the mind—
These be thy guardian and reward;
So prays thy faithful friend, the Bard.

SONNET,

WRITTEN ON THE 25TH JANUARY, 1793, THE BIRTHDAY OF THE
AUTHOR, ON HEARING A THRUSH SING IN A MORNING WALK.

SING on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough,
Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain;
See aged Winter, 'mid his surly reign,
At thy blithe carol clears his furrowed brow.

So in lone Poverty's dominion drear,
Sits meek Content, with light unanxious heart,
Welcomes the rapid moments, bids them part,
Nor asks if they bring ought to hope or fear.

I thank thee, Author of this opening day!
Thou whose bright sun now gilds yon orient skies!
Riches denied, Thy boon was purer joys,
What wealth could never give nor take away!

Yet come, thou child of poverty and care!
The mite high Heaven bestowed, that mite with thee
I'll share.



SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RIDDEL, ESQ., OF GLENRIDDEL.

No more, ye warblers of the wood, no more!
Nor pour your descant, grating, on my soul:
Thou young-eyed Spring, gay in thy verdant stole—
More welcome were to me grim Winter's wildest roar.

How can ye charm, ye flowers, with all your dyes?
Ye blow upon the sod that wraps my friend!
How can I to the tuneful strain attend?
That strain flows round the untimely tomb where Riddel
lies!

Yes, pour, ye warblers, pour the notes of woe!
And soothe the Virtues weeping o'er his bier:
The Man of Worth, who has not left his peer,
Is in his narrow house, for ever darkly low.

Thee, Spring, again with joy shall others greet,
Me, mem'ry of my loss will only meet.

ON PASTORAL POETRY.

HAIL, Poesie! thou nymph reserved!
In chase o' thee, what crowds hae swerved
Frae common sense, or sunk enerved
'Mang heaps o' clavers!¹
And och! o'er aft thy joes² ha'e starved,
Mid a' thy favours!

Say, Lassie, why thy train amang,
While loud the trump's heroic clang,
And sock or buskin skelp alang
To death or marriage;
Scarce ane has tried the shepherd-sang,
But wi' miscarriage?

In Homer's craft Jock Milton thrives;
Æschylus' pen Will Shakespeare drives;
Wee Pope, the knurlin,³ till him rives
Horatian fame;
In thy sweet sang, Barbauld, survives
Ev'n Sappho's flame.

¹ Nonsense.² Lovers.³ Dwarf.



But thee, Theocritus, wha matches?
They're no herd's ballats, Maro's catches;
Squire Pope but busks his skinklin¹ patches
O' heathen tatters:
I pass by hunders, nameless wretches,
That ape their betters.

In this braw age o' wit and lear,
Will nane the Shepherd's whistle mair
Blaw sweetly in its native air
And rural grace;
And, wi' the far-famed Grecian, share
A rival place?

Yes! there is ane; a Scottish callan!
There's ane: come forrit, honest Allan!²
Thou need na jouk³ behint the hallan,⁴
A chiel sae clever;
The teeth o' Time may gnaw Tantallan,
But thou's for ever.

Thou paints auld Nature to the nines,⁵
In thy sweet Caledonian lines;
Nae gowden stream through myrtles twines,
Where Philomel,
While nightly breezes sweep the vines,
Her griefs will tell!

In gowany⁶ glens thy burnie strays,
Where bonnie lasses bleach their claes:
Or trots by hazelly shaws and braes,
Wi' hawthorns gray,
Where blackbirds join the shepherd's lays
At close o' day.

Thy rural loves are Nature's sel';
Nae bombast spates⁷ o' nonsense swell;
Nae snap conceits, but that sweet spell
O' witchin' love,
That charm that can the strongest quell,
The sternest move.

¹ Small.

² Allan Ramsay, author of the "Gentle Shepherd."

³ Hide.

⁴ A partition-wall in a cottage, or a seat of turf outside it.

⁵ Exactly.

⁶ Daisied.

⁷ Bursta.



POEM ON LIFE.

ADDRESSED TO COLONEL DE PEYSTER, DUMFRIES, 1796.

My honoured Colonel, deep I feel
Your interest in the Poet's weal;
Ah! now sma' heart hae I to speel
The steep Parnassus,
Surrounded thus by bolus pill
And potion glasses.

Oh, what a canty world were it,
Would pain and care, and sickness spare it;
And fortune favour worth and merit
As they deserve!
(And aye a rowth, roast beef and claret;
Syne wha wad starve?)

Dame Life, though fiction out may trick her,
And in paste gems and frippery deck her;
Oh! flickering, feeble, and unsicker
I've found her still,
Aye wavering, like the willow-wicker,
'Tween good and ill.

Then that cursed carmagnole, auld Satan,
Watches, like baudrans by a rattan,
Our sinfu' saul to get a claut on
Wi' felon ire;
Syne, whip! his tail ye'll ne'er cast saut on,
He's off like fire.

Ah, Nick! ah, Nick! it is na fair,
First showing us the tempting ware,
Bright wines and bonnie lasses rare,
To put us daft;
Syne weave, unseen, thy spider snare
O' hell's damned waft.

Poor man, the fly, aft bizzes by,
And aft as chance he comes thee nigh,
Thy auld damned elbow yeuks wi' joy
And hellish pleasure;
Already in thy fancy's eye,
Thy sicker treasure.

Soon heels o'er gowdie! in he gangs,
And like a sheep-head on a tangs,



Thy girning laugh enjoys his pangs
 And murdering wrestle,
As dangling in the wind he hangs
 A gibbet's tassel.

But lest you think I am uncivil,
To plague you with this draunting drivel,
Abjuring a' intentions evil,
 I quat my pen:
The Lord preserve us frae the devil!
 Amen! amen!

A VISION.¹

As I stood by yon roofless tower,
 Where the wa'-flower scents the dewy air,
Where the howlet mourns in her ivy bower,
 And tells the midnight moon her care.

The winds were laid, the air was still,
 The stars they shot along the sky;
The fox was howling on the hill,
 And the distant echoing glens reply.

The stream, adown its hazelly path,
 Was rushing by the ruined wa's,
Hasting to join the sweeping Nith,
 Whase distant roaring swells and fa's.

The cauld blue north was streaming forth
 Her lights, wi' hissing eerie din,
Athort the lift they start and shift,
 Like fortune's favours, tint as win.²

³ By heedless chance I turned mine eyes,
 And by the moonbeam, shook to see
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise,
 Attired as minstrels wont to be.

Had I a statue been o' stane,
 His darin' look had daunted me;
And on his bonnet graved was plain,
 The sacred posie—Libertie!

¹ This is the second poem suggested by the ruins of Lincluden Abbey.

² Lost as soon as won.

³ Variation: Now looking over firth and fauld,
 Her horn the pale-faced Scynthia reared;
When, lo, in form of minstrel auld,
 A stern and stalwart ghaist appeared.



TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.

141

And frae his harp sic strains did flow,
Might roused the slumbering dead to hear;
But oh, it was a tale of woe,
As ever met a Briton's ear!

He sang wi' joy the former day,
He weeping wailed his latter times,
But what he said it was nae play,
I winna ventur't in my rhymes.¹

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.²

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."—POPE.

HAS auld Kilmarnock seen the de'il?
Or great Mackinlay³ thravn⁴ his heel?
Or Robinson⁵ again grown weel,

To preach and read?

"Na, waur than a'!" cries ilka chiel,
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Kilmarnock lang may grunt and grane,
And sigh, and sob, and greet⁶ her lane,

¹ This poem, an imperfect copy of which was printed in "Johnson's Museum," is here given from the Poet's MS. with his last corrections. The scenery so finely described is taken from nature. The Poet is supposed to be musing by night on the banks of the river Cluden, or Clouden, and by the ruins of Lincluden Abbey, founded in the twelfth century, in the reign of Malcolm IV., of whose present situation the reader may find some account in Pennant's "Tour in Scotland," or Grose's Antiquities of that division of the island. Such a time and such a place are well fitted for holding converse with aërial beings. Though this poem has a political bias, yet it may be presumed that no reader of taste, whatever his opinions may be, would forgive its being omitted. Our Poet's prudence suppressed the song of "Libertie," perhaps fortunately for his reputation. It may be questioned whether, even in the resources of his genius, a strain of poetry could have been found worthy of the grandeur and solemnity of this preparation.—CURRIE.

² When this worthy old sportsman went out last muirfowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, "the last of his fields;" and expressed an ardent wish to die and be buried in the muirs. On this hint the Author composed his elegy and epitaph.—BURNS.

³ A certain preacher, a great favourite with the million. Vide "The Ordination," stanza ii.—BURNS.

⁴ Twisted.

⁵ Another preacher, an equal favourite with the few, who was at that time ailing. For him, see also "The Ordination," stanza ix.—BURNS.

⁶ Cry alone.



TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.

And cleed¹ her bairns, man, wife, and wean,
In mourning weed;
To Death she's dearly paid the kane²—
Tam Samson's dead!

The brethren o' the mystic level
May hing their head in waefu' bevel,
While by their nose the tears will revel
Like ony bead;
Death's gi'en the lodge an unco devel³—
Tam Samson's dead!

When Winter muffles up his cloak,
And binds the mire up like a rock;
When to the lochs the curlers flock
Wi' glesome speed,
Wha will they station at the cock?—
Tam Samson's dead!

He was the king o' a' the core,
To guard, or draw, or wick a bore;
Or up the rink like Jehu roar
In time o' need;
But now he lags on Death's hog-score—
Tam Samson's dead!

Now safe the stately salmon sail,
And trouts be-dropped wi' crimson hail,
And eels weel kened for souple tail,
And geds⁴ for greed,
Since dark in Death's fish-creel we wail
Tam Samson dead!

Rejoice, ye birring paitricks⁵ a';
Ye cootie⁶ moorcocks, crouselly⁷ craw;
Ye mawkins,⁸ cock your fud fu' braw,
Withouten dread;
Your mortal fae is now awa'—
Tam Samson's dead!

That waefu' morn be ever mourned
Saw him in shootin' graith⁹ adorned,
While pointers round impatient burned,
Frae couples freed;
But, och! he gaed and ne'er returned!
Tam Samson's dead!

¹ Clothe.

⁴ Pikes.

⁷ Gleeftully.

² Rent paid in kind.

⁵ Whirring partridges.

⁸ Hares.

³ Blow.

⁶ Feather-legged.

⁹ Dress.



TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.

143

In vain auld age his body batters;
In vain the gout his ankles fetters;
In vain the burns came down like waters,
 An acre braid!
Now every auld wife, greetin', clatters,
 Tam Samson's dead!

Owre mony a weary hag¹ he limpit,
And aye the tither shot he thumpit,²
Till coward Death behind him jumpit,
 Wi' deadly feide;³
Now he proclaims, wi' tout⁴ o' trumpet,
 Tam Samson's dead!

When at his heart he felt the dagger,
He reeled his wonted bottle-swagger,
But yet he drew the mortal trigger
 Wi' weel-aimed heed;
"Lord, five!" he cried, and owre did stagger—
 Tam Samson's dead!

Ilk hoary hunter mourned a brither;
Ilk sportsman youth bemoaned a father:
Yon auld gray stane, amang the heather,
 Marks out his head,
Whare Burns has wrote, in rhyming blether,⁵
 Tam Samson's dead!

There low he lies in lasting rest;
Perhaps upon his mouldering breast
Some spitefu' moorfowl bigs her nest,
 To hatch and breed;
Alas! nae mair he'll them molest!
 Tam Samson's dead!

When August winds the heather wave,
And sportsmen wander by yon grave,
Three volleys let his memory crave
 O' pouter and lead,
Till Echo answer, frae her cave,—
 Tam Samson's dead!

Heaven rest his saul, whare'er he be!
Is the wish o' mony mae than me;
He had twa fauts, or maybe three,
 Yet what remead?
Ae social honest man want we—
 Tam Samson's dead?

¹ A scar or gulf in mosses and moors.

³ Fend.

⁴ Sound.

² Thumped.

⁵ Nonsense.



144 ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CHILD.

EPITAPH.¹

TAM SAMSON'S weel-worn clay here lies,
Ye canting zealots, spare him!
If honest worth in heaven rise,
Ye'll mend or ye win near him.

When Tam Samson was old, he heard that Burns had made a poem on him. He sent at once for the Poet, and made him repeat it to him. When it was finished he exclaimed, "I'm no dead yet, Robin, I'm worth ten dead fowk. Wherefore should ye say that I am dead?" Burns withdrew to a window, and in a minute or two returned with the following lines:—

PER CONTRA.

Go, Fame, and canter like a filly,
Through a' the streets and neuks o' Killie,²
Tell every social, honest billie
To cease his grievin',
For yet, unskaited by Death's gleg gullie,³
Tam Samson's leevin'!

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CHILD.⁴

OH, sweet be thy sleep in the land of the grave,
My dear little angel, for ever;
For ever—oh, no! let not man be a slave,
His hopes from existence to sever.

Though cold be the clay where thou pillow'st thy head,
In the dark silent mansions of sorrow,
The spring shall return to thy low narrow bed,
Like the beam of the day-star to-morrow.

The flower-stem shall bloom like thy sweet seraph form,
Ere the Spoiler had nipt thee in blossom;
When thou shrunk from the scowl of the loud winter storm,
And nestled thee close to that bosom.

Oh, still I behold thee, all lovely in death,
Reclined on the lap of thy mother,
When the tear trickled bright, when the short stifled breath,
Told how dear ye were aye to each other.

¹ Tam Samson survived Burns. The Epitaph is inscribed on his tombstone in Kilmarnock churchyard.

² Killie is a phrase the country folks sometimes use for the name of a certain town in the west. The town was Kilmarnock.—BURNS.

³ Sharp knife.

⁴ These lines were written on the death of a little daughter of the Poet's. She died suddenly while he was absent from home.



REMORSE.

My child, thou art gone to the home of thy rest,
Where suffering no longer can harm ye,
Where the songs of the good, where the hymns of the
blest,
Through an endless existence shall charm thee.

While he, thy fond parent, must sighing sojourn
Through the dire desert regions of sorrow,
O'er the hope and misfortune of being to mourn,
And sigh for his life's latest morrow.

REMORSE.

[Taken from a collection of MSS. which Burns placed in the hands of his friend, Mrs. Riddel.]

Of all the numerous ills that hurt our peace,
That press the soul, or wring the mind with anguish,
Beyond comparison the worst are those
That to our folly or our guilt we owe.
In every other circumstance, the mind
Has this to say—"It was no deed of mine;"
But when to all the evil of misfortune
This sting is added—"Blame thy foolish self!"
Or worsen far; the pangs of keen remorse;
The torturing, gnawing consciousness of guilt—
Of guilt, perhaps, where we've involvèd others;
The young, the innocent, who fondly loved us,
Nay, more, that very love their cause of ruin!
O burning hell! in all thy store of torments
There's not a keener lash!
Lives there a man so firm, who, while his heart
Feels all the bitter horrors of his crime,
Can reason down its agonizing throbs,
And, after proper purpose of amendment,
Can firmly force his jarring thoughts to peace?
O happy, happy, enviable man!
O glorious magnanimity of soul!



LIBERTY.

A FRAGMENT.

[Sent to Mrs. Dunlop in a letter. Burns says of it: "I am just going to trouble your critical patience with the first sketch of a stanza I have been framing as I passed along the road. The subject is Liberty. You know, my honoured friend, how dear the theme is to me. I design it as an irregular ode for General Washington's birthday. After having mentioned the degeneracy of other kingdoms, I come to Scotland thus:—"]

THEE, Caledonia, thy wild heaths among,
Thee, famed for martial deed and sacred song,
To thee I turn with swimming eyes;
Where is that soul of freedom fled?
Immingle with the mighty dead,
Beneath the hallowed turf where Wallace lies!
Hear it not, Wallace, in thy bed of death!
Ye babbling winds, in silence sweep;
Disturb not ye the hero's sleep,
Nor give the coward secret breath.

Is this the power in freedom's war
That wont to bid the battle rage?
Behold that eye which shot immortal hate,
Crushing the despot's proudest bearing:
That arm which, nerved with thundering fate,
Braved usurpation's boldest daring!
One quenched in darkness, like the sinking star,
And one the palsied arm of tottering, powerless age.

BRUCE.

A FRAGMENT.

His royal visage seamed with many a scar,
That Caledonian reared his martial form,
Who led the tyrant-quelling war,
Where Bannockburn's ensanguined flood
Swelled with mingling hostile blood,
Soon Edward's myriads struck with deep dismay,
And Scotia's troop of brothers win their way.
(Oh, glorious deed to bay a tyrant's band!
Oh, heavenly joy to free our native land!)
While high their mighty chief poured on the doubling
storm.





VERSES

TO MISS GRAHAM, OF FINTRY, WITH A PRESENT OF SONGS.

Written by the Poet on the blank side of the title-page of a copy of Thomson's "Select Scottish Songs."

HERE, where the Scottish Muse immortal lives,
In sacred strains and tuneful numbers joined,
Accept the gift, though humble he who gives;
Rich is the tribute of the grateful mind.

So may no ruffian-feeling in thy breast
Discordant jar thy bosom-chords among!
But Peace attune thy gentle soul to rest,
Or Love, ecstatic, wake his seraph song!

Or Pity's notes, in luxury of tears,
As modest Want the tale of woe reveals;
While conscious Virtue all the strain endears,
And heaven-born Piety her sanction seals.

VERSES

INTENDED TO BE WRITTEN BELOW A NOBLE EARL'S PICTURE.¹

WHOSE is that noble, dauntless brow?
And whose that eye of fire?
And whose that generous, princely mien
E'en rooted foes admire?

Stranger, to justly show that brow,
And mark that eye of fire,
Would take His hand, whose vernal tints
His other works admire.

Bright as a cloudless summer sun,
With stately port he moves;
His guardian seraph eyes with awe
The noble ward he loves.

Among the illustrious Scottish sons
That chief thou may'st discern;
Mark Scotia's fond returning eye—
It dwells upon Glencairn!

¹ "The enclosed stanzas," said the Poet, in a letter to his patron, the Earl of Glencairn, "I intended to write below a picture or profile of your lordship, could I have been so happy as to procure one with anything of a likeness."



LINES

SENT TO A GENTLEMAN¹ WHOM HE HAD OFFENDED.

THE friend whom wild from wisdom's way
The fumes of wine infuriate send,
(Not moony madness more astray,
Who but deplores that hapless friend?

Mine was th' insensate frenzied part;
Ah! why should I such scenes outlive!
Scenes so abhorrent to my heart!
'Tis thine to pity and forgive.

VERSES

ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WOODS NEAR DRUMLANRIG.

As on the banks o' wandering Nith
Ae smiling summer morn I strayed,
And traced its bonny howes and haughs
Where linties sang and lambkins played
I sat me down upon a craig,
And drank my fill o' fancy's dream,
When, from the eddyng deep below,
Uprose the genius of the stream.

Dark, like the frowning rock, his brow,
And troubled like his wintry wave,
And deep as sighs² the boding wind
Amang his eaves, the sigh he gave—
"And came ye here, my son," he cried,
"To wander in my birken shade?
To muse some favourite Scottish theme,
Or sing some favourite Scottish maid?

"There was a time, it's nae lang syne,⁴
Ye might ha'e seen me in my pride,
When a' my banks sae bravely saw
Their woody pictures in my tide;
When hanging beech and spreading elm
Shaded my stream sae clear and cool;
And stately oaks their twisted arms
Threw broad and dark across the pool;

¹ Mr. Riddel, at whose table Burns, after drinking too much, had spoken insultingly of royalty, the army, &c. &c. This apology was accepted by his kind host.

² The Duke of Queensbury cut down these woods to enrich his daughter, the Countess of Yarmouth, by their sale.

³ Sighs.

⁴ Since.



TO CHLORIS.

149

“When glinting through the trees appeared
The wee white cot aboon the mill,
And peacefu’ rose its ingle reek,¹
That slowly curled up the hill.
But now the cot is bare and cauld,
Its branchy shelter’s lost and gane—
And scarce a stinted birk is left
To shiver in the blast its lane.”

“Alas!” said I, “what ruefu’ chance
Has twined² ye o’ your stately trees?
Has laid your rocky bosom bare?
Has stripped the cleeding³ o’ your braes?
Was it the bitter eastern blast,
That scatters blight in early spring?
Or was’t the wil’-fire scorched their boughs,
Or canker-worm wi’ secret sting?”

“Nae eastlin’ blast,” the sprite replied;
“It blew na here sae fierce and fell;
And on my dry and halesome banks
Nae canker-worms get leave to dwell:
Man! cruel Man!” the genius sighed,
As through the cliffs he sank him down—
“The worm that gnawed my bonny trees,
That reptile wears a ducal crown!”

TO CHLORIS.^a

“Tis Friendship’s pledge, my young, fair friend,
Nor thou the gift refuse,
Nor with unwilling ear attend
The moralizing Muse.

Since thou, in all thy youth and charms,
Must bid the world adieu,
(A world ’gainst peace in constant arms,
To join the friendly few.

Since thy gay morn of life o’ercast,
Chill came the tempest’s lower;
(And ne’er misfortune’s eastern blast
Did nip a fairer flower.)

¹ The smoke of its fire.

² Reft.

³ Clothing.

^a Jean Lorimer, of Craigieburn Wood, near Moffat. She married a Mr. Whelpdale, but was separated from him, and was residing at Dumfries when Burns met her.



Since life's gay scenes must charm no more,
Still much is left behind ;
Still nobler wealth hast thou in store—
The comforts of the mind !

Thine is the self-approving glow,
On conscious honour's part :
And, dearest gift of heaven below,
Thine, friendship's truest heart.

The joys refined of sense and taste,
With every Muse to rove :
And doubly were the Poet blest,
Those joys could he improve.

THE VOWELS.

A TALE.

'Twas where the birch and sounding thong are plied,
The noisy domicile of pedant pride ;
Where Ignorance her darkening vapour throws,
And Cruelty directs the thickening blows ;
Upon a time, Sir Abece the great,
In all his pedagogic powers elate,
His awful chair of state resolves to mount,
And call the trembling Vowels to account.

First entered A, a grave, broad, solemn wight,
But, ah ! deformed, dishonest to the sight !
His twisted head looked backward on his way,
And flagrant from the scourge, he grunted Ai !

Reluctant E stalked in ; with piteous race
The jostling tears ran down his honest face !
That name, that well-worn name, and all his own,
Pale he surrenders at the tyrant's throne ;
The Pedant stifles keen the Roman sound
Not all his mongrel diphthongs can compound ;
And next, the title following close behind,
He to the nameless, ghastly wretch assigned.

The cobwebbed Gothic dome resounded, Y !
In sullen vengeance, I disdained reply :
The Pedant swung his felon cudgel round,
And knocked the groaning vowel to the ground !



THE HERMIT.

151

In rueful apprehension entered O,
The wailing minstrel of despairing woe;
Th' Inquisitor of Spain the most expert,
Might there have learnt new mysteries of his art:
So grim, deformed with horrors, entering U,
His dearest friend and brother scarcely knew!

As trembling U stood staring all aghast,
The Pedant in his left hand clutched him fast,
In helpless infants' tears he dipped his right,
Baptized him Eu, and kicked him from his sight.

THE HERMIT.¹

WRITTEN ON A MARBLE SIDEBOARD IN THE HERMITAGE BELONG-
ING TO THE DUKE OF ATHOLE, IN THE WOOD OF ABERFELDY.

WHOE'ER thou art these lines now reading,
Think not, though from the world receding,
I joy my lonely days to lead in
This desert drear;
That fell remorse, a conscience bleeding,
Hath led me here.

No thought of guilt my bosom sours;
Free-willed I fled from courtly bowers;
For well I saw in halls and towers
That lust and pride,
The arch-fiend's dearest, darkest powers,
In state preside.

I saw mankind with vice incrustèd;
I saw that Honour's sword was rusted;
That few for aught but folly lusted;
That he was still deceived who trusted
To love or friend;
And hither came, with men disgusted,
My life to end.

In this lone cave, in garments lowly,
Alike a foe to noisy folly
And brow-bent gloomy melancholy,
I wear away
My life, and in my office holy
Consume the day.

¹ First published in Hogg and Motherwell's edition, but considered doubtful.



TO MR. MITCHELL.

This rock my shield, when storms are blowing;
The limpid streamlet yonder flowing
Supplying drink, the earth bestowing
 My simple food;
But few enjoy the calm I know in
 This desert wood.

Content and comfort bless me more in
This grot than e'er I felt before in
A palace—and with thoughts still soaring
 To God on high,
Each night and morn, with voice imploring,
 This wish I sigh,—

“Let me, O Lord! from life retire,
Unknown each guilty worldly fire,
Remorse's throb, or loose desire;
 And when I die,
Let me in this belief expire—
 To God I fly

Stranger, if full of youth and riot,
And yet no grief has marred thy quiet,
Thou haply throw'st a scornful eye at
 The hermit's prayer;
But if thou hast good cause to sigh at
 Thy fault or care;

If thou hast known false love's vexation,
Or hast been exiled from thy nation,
Or guilt affrights thy contemplation,
 And makes thee pine,
Oh! how must thou lament thy station,
 And envy mine!

POEM

ADDRESSED TO MR. MITCHELL, COLLECTOR OF EXCISE,
DUMFRIES, 1796.

FRIEND of the Poet, tried and leal,
Wha, wanting thee, might beg or steal;
Alake, alake! the meikle de'il
 Wi' a' his witches
Are at it, skelpin, jig and reel,
 In my poor pouches.



TO A KISS.

153

I modestly fu' fain wad hint it,
That one pound one, I sairly want it:
If wi' the hizzie down ye sent it,
 It would be kind;
And while my heart wi' life-blood duntea
 I'd bear 't in mind.

So may the auld year gang out moaning
To see the new come laden, groaning,
Wi' double plenty o'er the loanin',
 To thee and thine;
Domestic peace and comforts crowning
 The hale design.

POSTSCRIPT.

Ye've heard this while how I've been licket,
And by fell death was nearly nicket:
Grim loun! he gat me by the fecket,
 And sair me sheuk;
But by guid luck I lap a wicket,
 And turned a neuk.

But by that health, I've got a share o't
And by that life, I'm promised mair o't,
My hale and weel I'll take a care o't
 A tentier way:
Then farewell, folly, hide and hair o't,
 For ance and aye!

TO A KISS.

HUMID seal of soft affections,
Tenderest pledge of future bliss,
Dearest tie of young connexions,
 Love's first snowdrop, virgin kiss!

Speaking silence, dumb confession,
Passion's birth, and infant's play,
Dove-like fondness, chaste concession,
 Glowing dawn of brighter day!

Sorrowing joy, adieu's last action,
When lingering lips no more must join,
What words can ever speak affection
 So thrilling and sincere as thine!



ADDRESS,

SPOKEN BY MISS FONTENELLE ON HER BENEFIT NIGHT, DEC. 4,
1795, AT THE THEATRE, DUMFRIES

STILL anxious to secure your partial favour,
And not less anxious, sure, this night, than ever,
A Prologue, Epilogue, or some such matter,
'Twould vamp my bill, said I, if nothing better;
So, sought a Poet, roosted near the skies,
Told him I came to feast my curious eyes;
Said, nothing like his works was ever printed;
And last, my prologue business slyly hinted.
"Ma'am, let me tell you," quoth my man of rhymes,
"I know your bent—these are no laughing times:
Can you—but Miss, I own I have my fears—
Dissolve in pause—and sentimental tears—
With laden sighs, and solemn-rounded sentence,
Rouse from his sluggish slumbers fell Repentance;
Paint Vengeance as he takes his horrid stand,
Waving on high the desolating brand,
Calling the storms to bear him o'er a guilty land?"

I could no more—askance the creature eyeing,
"D'ye think," said I, "this face was made for crying?
I'll laugh, that's poz—nay more, the world shall know it;
And so, your servant, gloomy Master Poet!"

Firm as my creed, sirs, 'tis my fixed belief,
That Misery's another word for Grief;
I also think—so may I be a bride!
That so much laughter, so much life enjoyed.

Thou man of crazy care and ceaseless sigh,
Still under bleak Misfortune's blasting eye;
Doomed to that sorest task of man alive—
To make three guineas do the work of five:
Laugh in Misfortune's face—the beldam witch!
Say, you'll be merry, though you can't be rich.

Thou other man of care, the wretch in love,
Who long with jiltish arts and airs hast strove;
Who, as the boughs all temptingly project,
Measur'st in desperate thought—a rope—thy neck—
Or, where the beetling cliff o'erhangs the deep,
Peerest to meditate the healing leap:



THE TOAST.

155

Would'st thou be cured, thou silly, moping elf?
Laugh at her follies—laugh e'en at thyself:
Learn to despise those frowns now so terrific,
And love a kinder—that's your grand specific.

To sum up all, be merry, I advise;
And as we're merry, may we still be wise.



THE TOAST.¹

INSTEAD of a song, boys, I'll give you a toast—
Here's the memory of those on the twelfth that we lost!—
That we lost, did I say? nay, by heaven, that we found;
For their fame it shall last while the world goes round.

The next in succession, I'll give you—The King!
Whoe'er would betray him, on high may he swing!
And here's the grand fabric, Our Free Constitution,
As built on the base of the great Revolution;
And longer with politics not to be crammed,
Be Anarchy cursed, and be Tyranny damned;
And who would to Liberty e'er prove disloyal,
May his son be a hangman, and he his first trial!

¹ This toast was given by Burns at a public dinner held on the anniversary of Rodney's Victory, April 12, 1782.



Juvenile Poems.

TRAGIC FRAGMENT.¹

ALL devil as I am, a damnèd wretch,
A hardened, stubborn, unrepenting villain,
Still my heart melts at human wretchedness;
And with sincere, though unavailing sighs,
I view the helpless children of distress.
With tears indignant I behold the oppressor
Rejoicing in the honest man's destruction,
Whose unsubmitting heart was all his crime.
Even you, ye helpless crew, I pity you;
Ye, whom the seeming good think sin to pity;
Ye poor, despised, abandoned vagabonds,
Whom vice, as usual, has turned o'er to ruin.
Oh, but for kind, though ill-requited friends,
I had been driven forth like you, forlorn,
The most detested, worthless wretch among you!
O injured God! Thy goodness has endowed me
With talents passing most of my compeers,
Which I in just proportion have abused,
As far surpassing other common villains
As Thou in natural parts hadst given me more.

¹ This fragment is one of the first poems written by Burns. He says of it himself, in one of his MSS., "In my early years nothing less would serve me than courting the tragic Muse. I was, I think, about eighteen or nineteen when I sketched the outlines of a tragedy, forsooth; but the bursting of a cloud of family misfortunes, which had for some time threatened us, prevented my further progress. In those days I never wrote down anything; so, except a speech or two, the whole has escaped my memory. The above, which I most distinctly remember, was an exclamation from a great character—great in occasional instances of generosity, and daring at times in villainies. He is supposed to meet with a child of misery, and exclaims to himself, as in the words of the fragment."

THE TARBOLTON LASSES.

If ye gae up to yon hill-tap,
Ye'll see there bonny Peggy;
She kens her faither is a laird,
And she forsooth's a leddy.

There Sophy tight, a lassie bright,
Besides a handsome fortune,
Wha canna win her in a night,
Has little art in courting.

Gae down by Faile, and taste the ale,
And tak' a look o' Mysie;
She's dour² and din, a de'il within,
But aiblins³ she may please ye.

If she be shy, her sister try,
Ye'll maybe fancy Jenny;
If ye'll dispense wi' want o' sense—
She kens hersel' she's bonny.

As ye gae up by yon hill-side,
Speer⁴ in for bonny Bessy;
She'll gi'e ye a beck,⁵ and bid ye licht,
And handsomely address ye.

There's few sae bonnie, nane sae guid
In a' King George' dominion;
If ye should doubt the truth o' this—
It's Bessie's ain opinion.

THE RONALDS.

In Tarbolton, ye ken, there are proper young men,
And proper young lasses and a', man;
But ken ye the Ronalds, that live in the Bennals?
They carry the gree⁶ frae them a', man.

Their father's a laird, and weel he can spare't,
Braid money to tocher⁷ them a', man,
To proper young men, he'll clink in the han'
Gowd guineas a hunder or twa, man.

¹ This is one of the Poet's juvenile poems; the young maidens immortalized in it were near neighbours of the Burns family.

² Obstinate.

³ Perhaps.

⁴ Ask, or call.

⁵ Bow.

⁶ Palm.

⁷ Portion.



There's ane they ca' Jean, I'll warrant ye've seen
As bonny a lass or as braw, man;
But for sense and guid taste she'll vie wi' the best,
And a conduct that beautifies a', man.

The charms o' the min', the langer they shine,
The mair admiration they draw, man;
While peaches and cherries, and roses and lilies,
They fade and they wither awa', man.

If ye be for Miss Jean, tak' this frae a frien',
A hint o' a rival or twa, man,
The Laird o' Blackbyre wad gang through the fire,
If that wad entice her awa', man.

The Laird o' Braehead has been on his speed,
For mair than a towmond¹ or twa, man;
The Laird o' the Ford will straught on a board,²
If he canna get her at a', man.

Then Anna comes in, the pride o' her kin,
The boast of our bachelors a', man;
Sae sonsy³ and sweet, sae fully complete,
She steals our affections awa', man.

If I should detail the pick and the wale⁴
O' lasses that live here awa', man,
The fault wad be mine, if they didna shine
The sweetest and best o' them a', man.

I lo'e her mysel', but darena weel tell,
My poverty keeps me in awe, man,
For making o' rhymes, and working at times,
Does little or naething at a', man.

Yet I wadna choose to let her refuse,
Nor hae't in her power to say nay, man;
For though I be poor, unnoticed, obscure,
My stomach's as proud as them a', man.

Though I canna ride in weel-booted pride,
And flee o'er the hills like a craw, man,
I can haud up my head with the best o' the breed,
Though fluttering ever so braw, man.

My coat and my vest, they are Scotch o' the best,
O' pairs o' guid breeks I ha'e twa, man,
And stockings and pumps to put on my stumps,
And ne'er a wrang steek in them a', man.

¹ Twelvemonth.

³ Comely.

² Be stretched on a board.

⁴ Choice.



A WELCOME TO HIS ILLEGITIMATE CHILD. 159

My sarks¹ they are few, but five o' them new,
Twa' hundred,² as white as the snaw, man,
A ten-shilling hat, a Holland cravat;
There are no mony poets sae braw, man.

I never had frien's weel stockit in means,
To leave me a hundred or twa, man;
Nae weel-tochered³ aunts, to wait on their drants,⁴
And wish them in hell for it a', man.

I never was cannie⁵ for hoarding o' money,
Or claughtin 't⁶ together at a', man,
I've little to spend, and naething to lend,
But deevel a shilling I awe,⁷ man.

THE POET'S WELCOME TO HIS ILLEGITIMATE CHILD.*

Thou's welcome, wean!⁸ mischanter⁹ fa' me,
If ought of thee, or of thy mammy,
Shall ever danton me, or awe me,
My sweet wee lady,
Or if I blush when thou shalt ca' me
Tit-ta, or daddy.

Wee image of my bonny Betty,
I fatherly will kiss and daut¹⁰ thee,
As dear and near my heart I set thee
Wi' as guid will,
As a' the priests had seen me get thee
That's out of hell.

What though they ca' me fornicator,
And tease my name in kintra clatter:¹¹
The mair they talk I'm kenned the better,
E'en let them clash!¹²
An auld wife's tongue's a feckless¹³ matter
To gi'e ane fash.¹⁴

¹ Shirts.

⁴ Humours.

⁷ Owe.

¹⁰ Fondle.

¹³ Very small.

² A kind of cloth.

⁵ Careful.

⁸ Child.

¹¹ Country talk.

¹⁴ Trouble.

³ Dowered.

⁶ Gathering greedily.

⁹ Misfortune.

¹² Gossip.

* The subject of these verses was the Poet's illegitimate daughter, who, in "The Inventory," he styles his

"Sonsie, smirking, dear-bought Bess."

She grew up, was married, and had a family. Her death was thus



A PRAYER.

Sweet fruit o' mony a merry dint,
My funny toil is now a' tint,
Sin' thou came to the warld asklent,¹
Which fools may scoff at;
In my last plack thy part's be in 't—
The better half o't.

And if thou be what I wad ha'e thee,
And tak' the counsel I shall gi'e thee,
A lovin' father I'll be to thee,
If thou be spared:
Through a' thy childish years I'll e'e thee,
And think 't weel wared.

Guid grant that thou may aye inherit
Thy mither's person, grace, and merit,
An' thy poor worthless daddy's spirit,
Without his failin's,
'Twill please me mair to hear and see 't,
Than stockit mailens.²

A PRAYER,

UNDER THE PRESSURE OF VIOLENT ANGUISH.

O THOU great Being! what Thou art
Surpasses me to know;
Yet sure I am, that known to Thee
Are all Thy works below.

Thy creature here before Thee stands,
All wretched and distrest;
Yet sure those ills that wring my soul
Obey Thy high behest.

Sure Thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath!
Oh, free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death!

But if I must afflicted be,
To suit some wise design;
Then man my soul with firm resolves,
To bear and not repine!

announced in the *Scots Magazine*, December 8, 1817:—"Died, Elizabeth Burns, wife of Mr. John Bishop, overseer at Polkemmet, near Whitburn. She was the daughter of the celebrated Robert Burns, and the subject of some of his most beautiful lines."

¹ Irregularly.

² Stocked farms.



THOUGH FICKLE FORTUNE HAS DECEIVED ME.

THOUGH fickle Fortune has deceived me,
She promised fair and performed but ill;
Of mistress, friends, and wealth bereaved me,
Yet I bear a heart shall support me still.

I'll act with prudence as far's I'm able,
But, if success I must never find,
Then come misfortune, I bid thee welcome,
I'll meet thee with an undaunted mind.

[The above was written extempore, under the pressure of a heavy train of misfortunes, which, indeed, threatened to undo me altogether. It was just at the close of that dreadful period mentioned already (in *Common-place Book*, March, 1784), and, though the weather has brightened up a little with me since, yet there has always been a tempest brewing round me in the grim sky of futurity, which I pretty plainly see will, some time or other, perhaps ere long, overwhelm me, and drive me into some doleful dell, to pine in solitary, squalid wretchedness.—BUANS.]



Epistles.

EPISTLE TO DAVIE,

A BROTHER POET.

Davie Sillar, a native of Tarbolton, was originally a schoolmaster, and afterward magistrate at Irvine, and had published a volume of poems in the Scottish dialect.

January, 1785.

WHILE winds frae aff Ben Lomond blaw,
And bar the doors wi' driving snaw,
And hing² us owre the ingle,³
I set me down to pass the time,
And spin a verse or twa o' rhyme,
In hamely westlin' jingle.
While frosty winds blaw in the drift,
Ben to the chimla lug,⁴
I grudge a wee the great folks' gift,
That live sae bien an' snug :

¹ This epistle is very interesting, as having suggested the first idea of publication to Burns. "It was, I think," says Gilbert Burns, "in the summer of 1784, when, in the interval of harder labour, Robert and I were weeding in the garden, that he repeated to me the principal part of this epistle. I believe the first idea of Robert's becoming an author was started on this occasion. I was much pleased with the epistle, and said to him I was of opinion it would bear being printed, and that it would be well received by people of taste; that I thought it at least equal, if not superior, to many of Allan Ramsay's epistles, and that the merit of these, and much other Scottish poetry, seemed to consist principally in the knack of the expression; but here there was a strain of interesting sentiment, and the Scotticism of the language scarcely seemed affected, but appeared to be the natural language of the Poet; that, besides, there was certainly one novelty in a poet pointing out the consolations that were in store for him when he should go a-begging. Robert seemed well pleased with my criticism."

² Hang.

³ Fire.

⁴ Chimney-corner.



TO DAVIE.

163

I tent ¹ less, and want less,
Their roomy fireside;
But hanker and canker,
To see their cursèd pride.

It's hardly in a body's power
To keep, at times, frae being sour,
To see how things are shared;
How best o' chiefls are whiles in want,
While coofs ² on countless thousands rant,
And ken na how to wair't: ³
But, Davie, lad, ne'er fash your head,
Though we ha'e little gear,
We're fit to win our daily bread,
As lang's we're hale and fier: ⁴
"Mair spier na, no fear na," ⁵
Auld age ne'er mind a feg,
The last o't, the warst o't,
Is only for to beg.

To lie in kilns and barns at e'en,
When banes are crazed, and bluid is thin,
Is, doubtless, great distress;
Yet then content could make us blest;
E'en then, sometimes we'd snatch a taste
Of truest happiness.
The honest heart that's free frae a'
Intended fraud or guile,
However fortune kick the ba',
Has aye some cause to smile,
And mind still, you'll find still,
A comfort this nae sma';
Nae mair then, we'll care then,
Nae farther can we fa'.

What though, like commoners of air,
We wander out, we know not where,
But either house or hall?
Yet Nature's charms, the hills and woods,
The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
Are free alike to all.
In days when daisies deck the ground,
And blackbirds whistle clear,
With honest joy our hearts will bound
To see the coming year:

¹ Heed.

⁴ Sound.

² Fools.

⁵ Ramsay. "Don't ask more, no fear have.

³ Spend it.



On braes when we please, then,
We'll sit an' sowth¹ a tune;
Syne rhyme till't,² we'll time till't,
And sing 't when we hae done.

It's no in titles nor in rank ;
It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest ;
It's no in making muckle mair ;
It's no in books ; it's no in lear,³
To make us truly blest :
If happiness ha'e not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest :
Nae treasures, nor pleasures,
Could make us happy lang ;
The heart aye's the part aye,
That makes us right or wrang.

Think ye, that sic as you and I,
Wha drudge and drive through wet an' dry,
Wi' never-ceasing toil ;
Think ye, are we less blest than they,
Wha scarcely tent⁴ us in their way,
As hardly worth their while ?
Alas ! how aft in haughty mood,
God's creatures they oppress !
Or else, neglecting a' that's guid,
They riot in excess !
Baith careless, and fearless
Of either heaven or hell !
Esteeming, and deeming
It's a' an idle tale !

Then let us cheerfu' acquiesce ;
Nor make our scanty pleasures less,
By pining at our state ;
And, even should misfortunes come,
I, here wha sit, hae met wi' some,
An's thankfu' for them yet.
They gi'e the wit of age to youth ;
They let us ken oursel' ;
They make us see the naked truth,
The real guid and ill.
Though losses, and crosses,
Be lessons right severe,
There's wit there, ye'll get there,
Ye'll find nae other where.

¹ Whistle.² We'll rhyme to it.³ Learning.⁴ Heed.



But tent me,¹ Davie, ace o' hearts!
(To say aught less wad wrang the cartes,
And flattery I detest,
This life has joys for you and I;
And joys that riches ne'er could buy;
And joys the very best.
There's a' the pleasures o' the heart,
The lover an' the frien';
Ye ha'e your Meg,² your dearest part,
And I my darling Jean!
It warms me, it charms me,
To mention but her name;
It heats me, it beets me,
And sets me a' on flame!

O all ye Powers who rule above!
O Thou, whose very self art love!
Thou know'st my words sincere!
The life-blood streaming through my heart,
Or my more dear immortal part,
Is not more fondly dear!
When heart-corroding care and grief
Deprive my soul of rest,
Her dear idea brings relief
And solace to my breast.
Thou Being, All-seeing,
Oh, hear my fervent prayer;
Still take her, and make her
Thy most peculiar care!

All hail, ye tender feelings dear!
The smile of love, the friendly tear,
The sympathetic glow;
Long since, this world's thorny ways
Had numbered out my weary days,
Had it not been for you!
Fate still has blest me with a friend
In every care and ill;
And oft a more endearing band,
A tie more tender still.
It lightens, it brightens
The tenebrific scene,
To meet with, and greet with
My Davie or my Jean.

¹ To "tent" is to take heed.

² Margaret Orr. She did not marry Sillar.



SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE.

Oh, how that name inspires my style!
 The words come skelpin' ¹ rank and file,
 Amaist before I ken!
 The ready measure rins as fine,
 As Phœbus and the famous Nine
 Were glowrin' owre my pen.
 My spaviet ² Pegasus will limp,
 Till ance he's fairly het;
 And then he'll hilch, ³ and stilt, ⁴ and jimp,
 An' rin an' unco fit;
 But lest then, the beast then
 Should rue this hasty ride,
 I'll 'light now, and dight now
 His sweaty wizened hide.

SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE,

A BROTHER POET.⁶

AULD NEIBOR,

I'm three times doubly o'er your debtor,
 For your auld farrant ⁷ friendly letter;
 Though I maun say't, I doubt ye flatter,
 Ye speak sae fair,
 For my puir, silly, rhymin' clatter
 Some less maun sair. ⁸

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle;
 Lang may your elbuck jink ⁹ and diddle,
 To cheer you through the weary widdle
 O' war'ly cares,
 Till bairns' bairns kindly cuddle
 Your auld grey hairs.

But, Davie, lad, I'm rede ¹⁰ ye're glaikit, ¹¹
 I'm tauld the Muse ye ha'e negleckit;
 An' gif it's sae, ye sud be licket
 Until ye fyke; ¹²
 Sic hauns as you sud ne'er be falket, ¹³
 Be hain't ¹⁴ wha like.

¹ Running.² Spavined.³ Hobble.⁴ Halt.⁵ Wipe.⁶ This epistle is prefixed to the poems of David Sillar, which published in Kilmarnock, in the year 1789.⁷ Sensible, sagacious.⁸ Serve.⁹ Elbow jerk.¹⁰ Told.¹¹ Idle, foolish.¹² V^unce.¹³ Unknown.¹⁴ Spared.



TO J. LAPRAIK.

167

For me, I 'm on Parnassus' brink,
Rivin'¹ the words to gar² them clink;
Whyles daez't wi' love, whyles daez't wi' drink,
 Wi' jads or masons;
An' whyles, but aye owre late, I think,
 Braw sober lessons.

Of a' the thoughtless sons o' man,
Commen' me to the bardie clan;
Except it be some idle plan
 O' rhymin' clink,
The devil haet, that I sud ban³
 They ever think.

Nae thought, nae view, nae scheme o' livin',
Nae cares to gi'e us joy or grievin';
But just the pouchie put the nieve⁴ in,
 An' while ought's there,
Then hiltie, skiltie, we gae scievin',⁵
 An' fash⁶ nae mair.

Leeze me on rhyme! its aye a treasure,
My chief, amaist my only pleasure,
At hame, a-fiel', at wark or leisure,
 The Muse, poor hizzie!
Though rough an' raploch⁷ be her measure,
 She's seldom lazy.

Haud to the Muse, my dainty Davie:
The warl' may play you mony a shavie;⁸
But for the Muse, she'll never leave ye,
 Though e'er sae pair,
Na, even though limpin' wi' the spavie
 Frae door to door.

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK,⁹

AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD.

April 1, 1785.

WHILE briers an' woodbines budding green,
An' pairicks¹⁰ scraichin¹¹ loud at e'en,

¹ Twisting.

⁴ Hand.

⁷ Coarse.

⁹ Lapraik was a poet. His beautiful song, "When I upon thy bosom lean," is well known.

¹⁰ Partridges.

² Make.

⁵ Merrily.

³ Swear.

⁶ Trouble.

⁸ Trick.

¹¹ Screaming.



An' morning poussie¹ whidden² seen,
Inspire my muse,
This freedom in an unknown frien'
I pray excuse.

On Fasten-e'en we had a rockin',³
To ca' the crack⁴ and weave our stockin';
And there was muckle fun an' jokin',
Ye need na doubt;
At length we had a hearty yokin'⁵
At sang about.

There was ae sang amang the rest,
Aboon tnen a' it pleased me best,
That some kind husband had address
To some sweet wife:
It thirled the heart-strings through the breast,
A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought describes sae weel,
What generous, manly bosoms feel;
Thought I, "Can this be Pope, or Steele,
Or Beattie's wark?"
They tald me 'twas an odd kind chiel
About Muirkirk.

It pat me fidgin fain⁶ to hear't,
And sae about him there I spier't,⁷
Then a' that kent him round declared
He had ingine,⁸
That nane excelled it, few came near't,
It was sae fine.

That set him to a pint of ale,
An' either douce⁹ or merry tale,
Or rhymes an' sangs he'd made himsel',
Or witty catches,
'Tween Inverness and Teviotdale
He had few matches.

Then up I gat, an' swear an aith,
Though I should pawn my pleugh and graith,¹⁰
Or die a cadger pownie's death,
At some dyke back,
A pint an' gill I'd gi'e them baith
To hear your crack.

¹ Pussy—a hare.

³ Meeting of women to spin with the rock or distaff.

⁴ Gossip.

⁶ Fidgetingly desirous.

⁸ Genius.

² Running.

⁵ Bout.

⁷ Inquired.

¹⁰ Tackle.

⁹ Grave.



But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
Amast as soon as I could spell,
I to the crambo-jingle fell,
 Though rude an' rough,
Yet crooning to a body's sel',
 Does weel enough.

I am na poet, in a sense,
But just a rhymmer, like, by chance,
An' ha'e to learning nae pretence,
 Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,
 I jingle at her.

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
And say, "How can you e'er propose,
You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
 To mak' a sang?"
But, by your leave, my learnèd foes,
 Ye're may be wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your schools,
Your Latin names for horns an' stools;
If honest Nature made you fools,
 What sairs your grammars?
Ye'd better ta'en up spades and shoofs,
 Or knappin¹-hammers.

A set o' dull, conceited hashes,²
Confuse their brains in college classes!
They gang in stirks,³ and come out asses,
 Plain truth to speak;
An' syne they think to climb Parnassus
 By dint o' Greek!

Gi'e me a spark o' Nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;
Then though I drudge through dub an' mire
 At pleugh or cart,
My Muse, though hamely in attire,
 May touch the heart.

Oh, for a spunk o' Allan's⁴ glee,
Or Fergusson's, the bauld and slee,
Or bright Lapraik's, my friend to be,
 If I can hit it!
That would be lear enough for me,
 If I could get it.

¹ Stone-breaking.

² Year-old cattle (bullock).

³ Blockheads.

⁴ Allan Ramsay.



Now, sir, if ye ha'e friends enow,
 Though real friends, I b'lieve, are few,
 Yet, if your catalogue be fou,
 I se no insist,
 But gif ye want ae friend that's true,
 I'm on your list.

I winna blaw about mysel';
 As ill I like my fau'ts to tell;
 But friends, an' folk that wish me well,
 They sometimes roose ¹ me;
 Though I maun own, as monie still
 As far abuse me.

There's ae wee faut they whyles lay to me,—
 I like the lasses—Gude forgi'e me!
 For monie a plack ² they wheedle frae me,
 At dance or fair;
 May be some ither thing they gi'e me,
 They weel can spare.

But Mauchline race, or Mauchline fair,
 I should be proud to meet you there;
 We'se gi'e a night's discharge to care
 If we forgather,
 An' ha'e a swap o' rhyming ware
 Wi' ane anither.

The four-gill chap, ³ we'se gar ⁴ him clatter,
 An' kirsens ⁵ him wi' reekin' water;
 Syne we'll sit down an' tak' our whitter, ⁶
 To cheer our heart;
 An' faith, we'se be acquainted better
 Before we part.

There's naething like the honest nappy! ⁷
 Whar'll ⁸ ye e'er see men sae happy,
 Or women sonsie, saft, and sappy, ⁹
 'Tween morn and morn,
 As them wha like to taste the drappy ¹⁰
 In glass or horn?

I've seen me dais't ¹¹ upon a time,
 I scarce could wink, or see a styme; ¹²

¹ Praise.² Small Scottish coin.³ Stoup.⁴ Make.⁵ Christen.⁶ Hearty draught of liquor.⁷ Ale.⁸ Where will.⁹ Comely.¹⁰ Small drop.¹¹ Dazed.¹² In the least.



SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.

171

Just ae half-mutchkin does me prime,
Aught less is little,
Then back I rattle on the rhyme,
As gleg's a whittle!¹

Awa' ye selfish war'ly race,
Wha think that havins, sense, and grace,
E'en love and friendship, should give place
To catch-the-plack!²
I dinna³ like to see your face,
Nor hear you crack.⁴

But ye whom social pleasure charms,
Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms,
Who hold your being on the terms,
"Each aid the others,"
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
My friends, my brothers!

But, to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the grissle;
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fistle,
Who am, most fervent,
While I can either sing or whistle,
Your friend and servant.

SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.

April 21, 1735.

WHILE new-ca'd kye⁶ rout⁷ at the stake,
An' pownies reek in pleugh or braik,
This hour on e'enin's edge I take,
To own I'm debtor
To honest-hearted, auld Lapraik,
For his kind letter.

Forjesket⁸ sair, with weary legs,
Rattlin' the corn out owre the rigs,
Or dealin' through amang the naigs,
Their ten hours' bite,
My awkward Muse sair pleads and begs
I would na write.

¹ As keen as a knife.

⁴ Talk.

⁷ Low.

² Money.

³ Bnstle.

⁸ Jaded.

⁵ Do not.

⁶ Cows.



SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK:

The tapetless ¹ ramfeezled ² hizzie,
She's saft at best, and something lazy,
Quo' she, "Ye ken, we've been sae busy
 This month an' mair,
That trowth my head is grown right dizzie,
 An' something sair."

Her dowff ³ excuses pat me mad;
"Conscience," says I, "ye thowless ⁴ jad!
I'll write, an' that a hearty blaud,
 This vera night;
So dinna ye affront your trade,
 But rhyme it right.

Shall bauld Lapraik, the king o' hearts,
Though mankind were a pack o' cartes,
Roose ⁵ you sae weel for your deserts,
 In terms sae friendly,
Yet ye'll neglect to shaw your parts,
 An' thank him kindly?"

Sae I gat paper in a blink,
An' down gaed stumpie in the ink:
Quoth I, "Before I sleep a wink,
 I vow I'll close it;
An' if ye winna mak' it ink,
 By Jove I'll prose it!"

Sae I've begun to scrawl—but whether
In rhyme or prose, or baith thegither,
Or some hotch-potch, that's rightly neither,
 Let time mak' proof;
But I shall scribble down some blether ⁶
 Just clean aff-loof. ⁷

My worthy friend, ne'er grudge an' carp,
Though fortune use you hard an' sharp;
Come, kittle ⁸ up your moorland harp
 Wi' gleesome touch!
Ne'er mind how Fortune waft an' warp:
 She's but a bitch.

She's gi'en me monie a jirt an' fleg, ⁹
Sin' I could striddle owre a rig;
But, by the Lord, though I should beg
 Wi' lyart pow, ¹⁰
I'll laugh, an' sing, an' shake my leg,
 As lang's I dow! ¹¹

¹ Headless.

⁴ Lazy.

⁷ Unpremeditated.

¹⁰ Grey hair.

² Fatigued.

⁵ Praise.

⁸ Tickle.

¹¹ Can.

³ Silly.

⁶ Nonsense.

⁹ Kick.



SECOND EPISTLE TO LAPRAIK.

173

Now comes the sax an' twentieth simmer,
I've seen the bud upo' the timmer
Still persecuted by the limmer

Frae year to year;
But yet, despite the kittle kimmer,¹
I, Rob, am here.

Do ye envy the city gent,
Behint a kist² to lie and sklent,³
Or purse-proud, big wi' cent. per cent.
And muckle wame,
In some bit brugh to represent
A bailie's name?

Or is't the paughty,⁴ feudal Thane,
Wi' ruffled sark and glancing cane,
Wha thinks himsel' nae sheep-shank bane,
But lordly stalks,
While caps and bonnets aff are ta'en,
As by he walks?

"O Thou wha gi'es us each guid gift!
Gi'e me o' wit an' sense a lift,
Then turn me, if Thou please, adrift
Through Scotland wide;
Wi' cits nor lairds I wadna shift,
In a' their pride!"

Were this the charter of our state,
"On pain o' hell be rich an' great,"
Damnation then would be our fate,
Beyond remead;
But, thanks to Heaven! that's no the gate
We learn our creed.

For thus the royal mandate ran,
When first the human race began,
"The social, friendly, honest man,
Whate'er he be,
'Tis he fulfils great Nature's plan,
An' none but he!"

O mandate glorious and divine!
The ragged followers of the Nine,
Poor, thoughtless devils! yet may shine
In glorious light,
While sordid sons of Mammon's line
Are dark as night.

¹ Skittish damsel.

² Counter.

³ Deceive.

⁴ Haughty.



TO WILLIAM SIMPSON.

Though here they scrape, an' squeeze, an' growl,
Their worthless nievefu'¹ of a soul
May in some future carcase howl
 The forest's fright;
Or in some day-detesting owl
 May shun the light.

Then may Lapraik and Burns arise,
To reach their native, kindred skies,
And sing their pleasures, hopes, an' joys,
 In some mild sphere,
Still closer knit in friendship's ties,
 Each passing year!

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON,² OCHILTREE.

May, 1785.

I GAT your letter, winsome Willie;
Wi' gratefu' heart I thank you brawlie;
Though I maun say't, I wad be silly,
 An' unco vain,
Should I believe, my coaxin' billie,³
 Your flatterin' strain.

But I'se believe ye kindly meant it,
I sud be laith to think ye hinted
Ironic satire, sidelins sklentet⁴
 On my poor Musie;
Though in sic phrasin' terms ye've penned it,
 I scarce excuse ye.

My senses wad be in a creel,⁵
Should I but dare a hope to speel⁶
Wi' Allan, or wi' Gilbertfiel',
 The braes o' fame;
Or Fergusson, the writer-chiel,
 A deathless name.

(O Fergusson! thy glorious parts
Ill suited law's dry, musty arts!

¹ Handful.

² William Simpson was schoolmaster of the parish of Ochiltree, and afterwards of New Cummoche. He was a tolerably good poet, and a very intelligent, clever man.

³ Brother.

⁵ To be crazed; creel is, literally, a basket.

⁴ Cast sidelong.

⁶ Climb.



TO WILLIAM SIMPSON.

175

My curse upon your whunstane¹ hearts,
Ye Enbrugh gentry!
The tithe o' what ye waste at cartes
Wad stowed his pantry¹)

Yet when a tale comes i' my head,
Or lasses gi'e my heart a screed,²
As whyles they're like to be my deed,
(Oh, sad disease!)
I kittle³ up my rustic reed;
It gi'es me ease.

Auld Coila now may fidge fu' fain,
She's gotten poets o' her ain,
Chiels wha their chanters winna hain,⁴
But tune their lays,
Till echoés a' resound again
Her weel-sung praise.

Nae poet thought her worth his while,
To set her name in measured style;
She lay like some unkenne'd-of isle
Beside New Holland,⁵
Or whare wild meeting oceans boil
Besouth Magellan.

Ramsay an' famous Fergusson
Gied Forth an' Tay a lift aboon;
Yarrow an' Tweed, to monie a tune,
Owre Scotland rings,⁶
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, an' Doon,
Naebody sings.

Th' Illissus, Tiber, Thames, an' Seine,
Glide sweet in monie a tunefu' line;
But, Willie, set your fit⁵ to mine,
An' cock your crest,
We'll gar⁶ our streams and burnies shine
Up wi' the best.

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' fells,
Her moors red-brown wi' heather-bells,
Her banks an' braes, her dens an' dells,
Where glorious Wallace
Aft bure the gree,⁷ as story tells,
Frae southron billies.⁸

¹ Whinstone.

² A rent.

³ Tickle.

⁴ Spare.

⁵ Foot.

⁶ Make.

⁷ Bore the palm—was victorious over.

⁸ Fellow.



At Wallace' name what Scottish blood
But boils up in a spring-tide flood!
Oft have our fearless fathers strode
 By Wallace' side,
Still pressing onward, red-wat shod,¹
 Or glorious dyed.

Oh, sweet are Coila's haughs² an' woods,
When lintwhites³ chant amang the buds,
And jinkin⁴ hares, in amorous whids,
 Their loves enjoy,
While through the braes the cushat croods
 With wailfu' cry!

E'en winter bleak has charms to me,
When winds rave through the naked tree;
Or frosts on hills of Ochiltree.
 Are hoary grey;
Or blinding drifts wild-furious flee,
 Darkening the day!

O Nature! a' thy shows an' forms,
To feeling, pensive hearts ha'e charms!
Whether the summer kindly warms
 Wi' life an' light,
Or winter howls in gusty storms
 The lang, dark night!

The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,
Till by himsel' he learned to wander,
Adown some trotting burn's meander,
 An' no think lang;
Oh, sweet to stray an' pensive ponder
 A heartfelt sang!

The warly race may drudge an' drive,
Hog-shouther, jundie,⁵ stretch, and strive,
Let me fair Nature's face describe,
 And I, wi' pleasure,
Shall let the busy, grumbling hive
 Bum⁶ owre their treasure.

Fareweel, "my rhyme-composing brither!"
We've been owre lang unkenned to ither:
Now let us lay our heads thegither,
 In love fraternal:
May Envy wallop in a tether,
 Black fiend, infernal!

¹ Over shoes in blood.

⁴ Dodging.

² Valleys.

⁵ Jostle.

³ Linnets.

⁶ Hum.



While highlandmen hate tolls and taxes;
While moorlan' herds like guid fat braxies;¹
While terra firma, on her axis
 Diurnal turns,
Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
 In ROBERT BURNS.

.

POSTSCRIPT.

My memory's no worth a preen;²
I had amaist forgotten clean,
Ye bade me write you what they mean
 By this new light,
'Bout which our herds sae aft ha'e been
 Maist like to fight.

In days when mankind were but callans³
At grammar, logic, an' sic talents,
They took nae pains their speech to balance,
 Or rules to gi'e,
But spak' their thoughts in plain, braid Lallans,⁴
 Like you or me.

In thae auld times, they thought the moon,
Just like a sark,⁵ or pair o' shoon,⁶
Wore by degrees, till her last roon,⁷
 Gaed past their viewin',
And shortly after she was done,
 They gat a new one.

This past for certain undisputed;
It ne'er cam' i' their heads to doubt it,
Till chiefls gat up an' wad confute it,
 An' ca'd it wrang;
An' muckle din there was about it,
 Baith loud and lang.

Some herds, well learned upo' the beuk,
Wad threap⁸ auld folk the thing misteuk;
For 'twas the auld moon turned a neuk;
 An' out o' sight,
An' backlins comin', to the leuk,
 She grew mair bright.

¹ Sheep which died of disease, and were the herdsmen's perquisites

² Pin.

³ Children.

⁴ Lowland words.

⁵ Shirt.

⁶ Shoes.

⁷ Shred.

⁸ Argue.



This was denied, it was affirmed;
The herds an' hissels¹ were alarmed;
The reverend grey-beards raved an' stormed,
That beardless laddies
Should think they better were informed
Than their auld daddies

Frae less to mair it gaed to sticks;
Frae words an' aiths to clours an' nicks;²
An' monie a fallow gat his licks
Wi' hearty crunt;³
An' some, to learn them for their tricks,
Were hanged and brunt,

This game was played in monie lands,
And auld-light caddies⁴ bure sic hands,
That faith, the youngsters took the sands
Wi' nimble shanks,
The lairds forbade, by strict commands,
Sic bluidy pranks.

But new-light herds gat sic a cowe,⁵
Folk thought them ruined stick-an-stowe,
Till now amaist on every knowe
Ye'll find ane placed;
An' some their new-light fair avow
Just quite barefaced.

Nae doubt the auld-light flocks are bleatin';
Their zealous herds are vexed an' sweatin';
Mysel', I've even seen them greetin'⁶
Wi' girmin'⁷ spite,
To hear the moon sa sadly lied on
By word an' write.

But shortly they will cowe the louns!
Some auld-light herds in neebor towns
Are mind't, in things they ca' balloons,
To tak' a fight,
An' stay a month among the moons,
An' see them right.

Guid observation they will gi'e them;
An' when the auld moon's gaun to lea'e them,
The hindmost shaird, they'll fetch it wi' them,
Just i' their pouch,
An' when the new-light billies⁸ see them,
I think they'll crouch!

¹ Flocks.

⁴ Fellows.

⁷ Grinning.

² Blows and cuts.

⁵ Fright.

⁸ Fellows.

³ Dint.

⁶ Crying.



Sae, ye observe that a' this clatter
Is naething but a "moonshine matter;"
But though dull prose-folk Latin splatter
 In logic tulzie,¹
I hope we bardies ken some better
 Than mind sic brulzie.²

EPISTLE TO J. RANKINE,

ENCLOSING SOME POEMS.

O ROUGH, rude, ready-witted Rankine,
The wale³ o' cocks for fun and drinkin'!
There's mony godly folks are thinkin'
 Your dreams 'an' tricks
Will send you, Korah-like, a-sinkin'
 Straught to auld Nick's.

Ye ha'e sae monie cracks an' cants,⁵
And in your wicked, drucken rants,
Ye mak' a devil o' the saunts,
 Au' fill them fou;⁶
And then their failings, flaws, an' wants
 Are a' seen through.

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it!
That holy robe, oh, dinna tear it!
Spare 't for their sakes wha aften wear it,
 The lads in black!
But your curst wit, when it comes near it,
 Rives 't aff their back.

Think, wicked sinner, wha ye're skaithing;⁷
It's just the blue-gown badge an' claitthing⁸
O' saunts: tak' that, ye lea'e them, naething
 To ken them by,
Frae ony unregenerate heathen
 Like you or I.

¹ Quarrelling.² Broils.³ Chief.⁴ A certain humorous dream of his was then making a noise in the country-side.⁵ Stories and tricks.⁶ Make them tipsy.⁷ Injuring.⁸ An allusion to the dress of the privileged beggars, or gaberlunzie men, who wore a blue dress.



I've sent you here some rhyming wares,
A' that I bargained for an' mair;
Sae when ye ha'e an hour to spare,
I will expect
Yon sang,¹ ye'll sen 't wi' cannie care,
And no neglect.

Though, faith, sma' heart ha'e I to sing!
My Muse dow² scarcely spread her wing;
I've played mysel a bonnie spring,
An' danced my fill;
I'd better gaen an' saired³ the King
At Bunker's Hill.

'Twas ae night lately in my fun,
I gaed a roving wi' the gun,
An' brought a paitrick⁴ to the grun,⁵
A bonnie hen,
And, as the twilight was begun,
Thought nane wad ken.

The poor wee thing was little hurt;
I straitkit⁶ it a wee for sport,
Ne'er thinkin' they wad fash me for 't;
But, de'il ma care!
Somebody tells the poacher court
The hale affair.

Some auld used hands had ta'en a note,
That sic a hen had got a shot;
I was suspected for the plot;
I scorned to lie;
So gat the whistle o' my groat,
An' pay't the fee.

But, by my gun, o' guns the wale,
An' by my powther an' my hail,
An' by my hen, an' by her tail,
I vow an' swear!
The game shall pay o'er moor an' dale
For this niest year.

As soon 's the clockin' time is by,
An' the wee pouts begun to cry,
Lord, I'se ha'e sportin' by-an'-by
For my gowd guinea:
Though I should herd the buckskin kye⁸
For 't, in Virginia.

¹ A song he had promised to the Author.

³ Served.

⁶ Stroked.

⁴ Partridge.

⁷ Best.

² Dare.

⁵ Ground.

⁸ Cattle.



THIRD EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK. 181

Trowth, they had muckle for to blame!
'Twas neither broken wing nor limb,
But twa-three draps about the wame,
Scarce through the feathers;
An' baith a yellow George to claim,
And thole¹ their blethers!²

It pits me aye as mad's a hare;
So I can rhyme nor write nae mair;
But pennyworths again is fair,
When time's expedient:
Meanwhile I am, respected Sir,
Yours most obedient.

THIRD EPISTLE TO JOHN LAPRAIK.

Sept. 13, 1785.

GUID speed an' furdur to you, Johnny,
Guid health, hale han's, an' weather bonny;
Now when ye're nickan³ down fu' canny
The staff o' bread,
May ye ne'er want a stoup o' bran'y
To clear your head.

May Boreas never thresh your rigs,
Nor kick your rickles aff their legs,
Sendin' the stuff o'er muirs an' hagg⁴
Like drivin' wrack;
But may the tapmast grain that wags
Come to the sack.

I'm bizzie too, an' skelpin'⁵ at it,
But bitter, daudin'⁶ showers ha'e wat it,
Sae my auld stumpie pen I gat it,
Wi' muckle wark,
An' took my jocteleg⁷ an' whatt it,
Like ony clark.

It's now twa month that I'm your debtor,
For your braw, nameless, dateless letter,
Abusin' me for harsh ill nature
On holy men,
While de'il a hair yoursel' ye're better,
But mair profane.

¹ Suffer.

⁴ Morasses.

⁷ A knife.

² Nonsense.

⁵ Making haste.

³ Cutting.

⁶ Wind-driven.



But let the kirk-folk ring their bells,
 Let's sing about our noble sel's;
 We'll cry nae jads frae heathen hills¹
 To help or roose us,
 But browster wives² an' whisky-stills,
 They are the Muses.

Your friendship, sir, I winna quat it,
 An', if ye mak' objections at it,
 Then han' in nieve³ some day we'll knot it,
 An' witness take,
 An' when wi' usquabae we've wat it
 It winna break.

But if the beast and branks⁴ be spared
 Till kye be gaun⁵ without the herd,
 An' a' the vittel in the yard,
 An' theeakit⁶ right,
 I mean your ingle-side to guard
 Ae winter night.

Then muse-inspirin' aqua-vitæ
 Shall make us baith sae blythe an' witty,
 Till ye forget ye're auld an' gatty,⁷
 An' be as canty
 As ye were nine year less than thretty,
 Sweet ane an' twenty!

But stooks are cowpet⁸ wi' the blast,
 An' now the sinn keeks⁹ in the west,
 Then I maun rin amang the rest
 An' quat my chanter;
 Sae I subscribe myself, in haste,
 Yours, RAB THE RANTER.

—

EPÍSTLE TO THE REV. JOHN M'MATH,

ONE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CLERGY WHO PREACHED AGAINST THE
 "AULD-LIGHT" DOCTRINES.

Accompanied by a copy of "Holy Willie's Prayer."

Sept. 17, 1785.

WHILE at the stook the shearers cower,
 To shun the bitter blaudin'¹⁰ shower,

¹ The Muses on Mount Parnassus.

³ Fist.

⁶ Thatched.

⁹ Sun blinks.

⁴ Bridles.

⁷ Feeble.

¹⁰ Pelting.

² Ale-house wives.

⁵ Going.

⁸ Tumbled over.



Or in gulravage rinnin' scower¹
To pass the time,
To you I dedicate the hour
In idle rhyme.

My Music, tired wi' mony a sonnet
On gown, an' ban', an' douse black bonnet,
Is grown right eerie² now she's done it,
Lest they should blame her,
An' rouse their holy thunder on it
And anathem her.

I own 'twas rash, an' rather hardy,
That I, a simple, country bardie,
Should meddle wi' a pack sae sturdy,
Wha, if they ken me,
Can easy, wi' a single wordie,
Lowse hell upon me.

But I gae mad at their grmaces,
Their sighin', cantin', grace-proud faces,
Their three-mile prayers, an' hauf-mile graces,
Their raxin'³ conscience,
Whase greed, revenge, and pride disgraces
Waur nor their nonsense.

There's Gawn,⁴ misca't waur than a beast,
Wha has mair honour in his breast
Than mony scores as guid's the priest
Wha sae abus't him.
An' may a bard no crack his jest
What way they've use't him?

See him, the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word an' deed,
An' shall his fame an' honour bleed
By worthless skellums,⁵
An' not a Muse erect her head
To cowe the bellums?⁶

O Pope, had I thy satire's darts,
To gie the rascals their deserts!
I'd rip their rotten, hollow hearts,
An' tell aloud
Their jugglin' hocus-pocus arts
To cheat the crowd.

¹ Run riotously.

⁴ Gavin Hamilton, Esq.

² Timid.

⁵ Wretches.

³ Elastic.

⁶ Fellows.



God knows I'm no the thing I should be,
Nor am I even the thing I could be,
But twenty times, I rather would be
 An atheist clean,
Than under gospel colours hid be
 Just for a screen.

An honest man may like a glass,
An honest man may like a lass,
But mean revenge, an' malice fause
 He'll still disdain,
An' then cry zeal for gospel laws,
 Like some we ken.

They take religion in their mouth;
They talk o' mercy, grace, an' truth,
For what?—to gie their malice skouth¹
 On some puir wight,
An' hunt him down, o'er right an' ruth,
 To ruin straight.

All hail, Religion! maid divine!
Pardon a muse sae mean as mine,
Who, in her rough, imperfect line
 Thus daurs to name thee;
To stigmatize false friends of thine
 Can ne'er defame thee.

Though blotch't an foul wi' mony a stain,
An' far unworthy of thy train,
With trembling voice I tune my strain
 To join with those
Who boldly daur thy cause maintain
 In spite o' foes:

In spite o' crowds, in spite o' mobs,
In spite o' undermining jobs,
In spite o' dark banditti stabs
 At worth an' merit,
By scoundrels, even wi' holy robes,
 But hellish spirit.

O Ayr! my dear, my native ground,
Within thy presbyterial bound,
A candid liberal band is found
 Of public teachers,
As men, as Christians too, renowned,
 An' manly preachers.

¹ Scope.



Sir, in that circle you are named;¹
Sir, in that circle you are famed;
An' some, by whom your doctrine's blamed,
 (Which g'ies you honour,)
Even, sir, by them your heart's esteemed,
 An' winning manner.

Pardon this freedom I have ta'en,
An' if impertinent I've been,
Impute it not, good sir, in ane
 Whase heart ne'er wranged ye,
But to his utmost would befriend
 Ought that belanged t'ye.

EPISTLE TO JOHN GOUDIE, KILMARNOCK.

ON THE PUBLICATION OF HIS ESSAYS.²

O GOUDIE! terror of the Whigs,³
Dread of black coats and reverend wigs,
Sour Bigotry, on her last legs,
 Girnin',⁴ looks back,
Wishin' the ten Egyptian plagues
 Wad seize you quick.

Poor gapin', glowrin' Superstition,
Waes me! she's in a sad condition;
Fie! bring Black Jock,⁵ her state physician,
 To see her water:
Alas! there's ground o' great suspicion
 She'll ne'er get better.

Auld Orthodoxy lang did grapple,
But now she's got an unco ripple;⁶

¹ Mr. M'Math preached against the severe Calvinistic doctrines called the "Auld Light."

² Mr. John Goldie, or Goudie, a tradesman in Kilmarnock, had published a series of essays relating to the authority of the Holy Scriptures. It was the publication of the second edition of this work in 1785 which called forth this epistle from Burns.

³ The "Auld Church" portion of the Kirk of Scotland, known still to the religious world as high Calvinists. They held the terrible doctrine of a particular election by God of some to be saved and others to be for ever lost; a superstition in an irrevocable destiny somewhat resembling that of the heathen Greeks of old. The "New Light" believers had more rational and worthier views of the Divine justice and goodness.

⁴ Grinning.

⁵ A Presbyterian clergyman, the Rev. J. Russell.

⁶ Pain in back.



Haste, gi'e her name up i' the chapel,
Nigh unto death ;
See, how she fetches at the thrapple,¹
An' gasps for breath !

Enthusiasm's past redemption,
Gaen in a galloping consumption ;
Not a' the quacks, wi' a' their gumption,
Will ever mend her.
Her feeble pulse gi'es strong presumption
Death soon will end her.

'Tis you and Taylor² are the chief
Wha are to blame for this mischief,
But gin the Lord's ain folks gat leave,
A toom³ tar-barrel,
An' twa red peats wad send relief,
An' end the quarrel.

EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.,⁴

RECOMMENDING A BOY.

Mosgaville, May 3, 1736.

I HOLD it, Sir, my bounden duty
To warn you how that Master Tootie,
Alias, Laird M'Gaun,⁵
Was here to hire yon lad away
'Bout whom ye spak' the tither day,
And wad ha'e done 't aff han' ;
But lest he learn the callan⁶ tricks,
As, faith, I muckle doubt him,
Like scrapin' out auld Crummie's⁷ nicks,
And tellin' lies about them :
As lieve then, I'd have then,
Your clerkship he should sair,
If sae be, ye may be
Not fitted other where.

¹ Throat.² Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, author of "The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin," &c.³ Empty.⁴ Mr. Hamilton was a solicitor at Mauchline. He was much opposed to the "Auld Light," or high Calvinistic principles of the Scottish Kirk of that day.⁵ Tootie was a cheating cattle dealer, who was in the habit of cutting the nicks or markings from the horns of cattle, to disguise their age, and obtain a higher price for them.⁶ Boy.⁷ The cow.



INVITATION TO MR. JOHN KENNEDY. 187

Although I say't, he's gleg¹ enough,
And 'bout a house that's rude and rough,

The boy might learn to swear;
But then wi' you he'll be sae taught,
And get sic fair example straught,
I haena ony fear.

Ye'll catechise him every quirk,
And shore² him weel wi' hell;
And gar³ him follow to the kirk—
Aye when ye gang yoursel'.

If ye then, maun be then
Frae hame this comin' Friday;
Then please, sir, to lea'e, sir,
The orders wi' your lady.

My word of honour I ha'e gi'en,
In Paisley John's that night at e'en,
To meet the world's worm;⁴

To try to get the twa to gree,
And name the airles and the fee,
In legal mode and form:

I ken he weel a sneck can draw,⁵
When simple bodies let him;

And if a devil be at a',
In faith he's sure to get him.

To phrase you, and praise you,
Ye ken your laureate scorns:
The prayer still you share still,
Of grateful Minstrel BURNS.

POETICAL INVITATION TO MR. JOHN KENNEDY,

ACCOMPANIED BY A COPY OF "THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT."

Now Kennedy, if foot or horse
E'er bring you in by Mauchline Corse,⁶
Lord, man, there's lasses there wad force
A hermit's fancy;
And down the gate, in faith they're worse,
And mair unchancy.

But, as I'm sayin', please step to Dow's,
And taste sic gear as Johnnie brews,
Till some bit callant⁷ bring me news
That you are there!

And if we dinna haud a bouze
I'se ne'er drink mair.

¹ Sharp.

² Threaten.

³ Make.

⁴ Money-seeker. or grub.

⁵ Can take advantage.

⁶ Cross.

⁷ Boy.



It's no I like to sit and swallow,
Then like a swine to puke and wallow;
But gi'e me just a true good fellow,
Wi' right ingine,¹
And spunkie,² ance to make us mellow,
And then we'll shine.

Now, if ye're ane o' world's folk,
Wha rate the wearer by the cloak,
And sklent³ on poverty their joke,
Wi' bitter sneer,
Wi' you no friendship will I troke⁴
Nor cheap nor dear.

But if, as I'm informèd weel,
Ye hate, as ill's the very de'il,
The flinty heart that canna feel—
Come, sir, here's ta'e you!
Hae, there's my haum, I wish ye weel,
And guid be wi' you.

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.⁵

May —, 1786.

I LANG ha'e thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Though it should serve nae other end
Than just a kind memento;
But how the subject theme may gang,
Let time and chance determine;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

Ye'll try the world soon, my lad,
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye'll find mankind an unco squad,
And muckle they may grieve ye:
For care and trouble set your thought,
E'en when your end's attained;
And a' your views may come to nought,
Where every nerve is strained.

¹ Genius.

² Spirit.

³ Throw.

⁴ Exchange.

⁵ Andrew Aiken, the son of the Poet's friend, Robert Aiken, to whom Burns inscribed "The Cotter's Saturday Night." Young Aiken rose to distinction in after years.



TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

189

I'll no say men are villains a';
The real, hardened wicked,
Wha ha'e nae check but human law,
Are to a few restricted:
But och, mankind are unco weak,
An' little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted!

Yet they wha fa' in fortune's strife,
Their fate we should na censure,
For still th' important end of life
They equally may answer;
A man may ha'e an honest heart,
Though poortith¹ hourly stare him;
A man may tak' a neebor's part,
Yet nae ha'e cash to spare him.

Aye free, aff han' your story tell,
When wi' a bosom crony;
But still keep something to yoursel'²
Ye scarcely tell to ony.
Conceal yoursel' as weel's ye can
Fra critical dissection;
But keek² through every other man,
Wi' sharpened, sly inspection.

The sacred lowe³ o' weel-placed love,
Luxuriantly indulge it;
But never tempt th' illicit rove,
Though naething should divulge it:
I wave the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard of concealing:
But och! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling!

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her;
And gather gear by every wile
That's justified by honour;
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Nor for a train attendant;
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent.

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip
To hand the wretch in order;
But where ye feel your honour grip,
Let that aye be your border;

¹ Poverty.

² Peep.

³ Flame.

Its slightest touches, instant pause—
 Debar a' side pretences;
 And resolutely keep its laws,
 Uncaring consequences.

The Great Creator to revere,
 Must sure become the creature;
 But still the preaching cant forbear,
 And e'en the rigid feature:
 Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,
 Be complaisance extended;
 An atheist's laugh 's a poor exchange
 For Deity offended!

When ranting round in pleasure's ring,
 Religion may be blinded;
 Or if she gi'e a random sting,
 It may be little minded;
 But when on life we're tempest-driven,
 A conscience but a canker—
 A correspondence fixed wi' Heaven
 Is sure a noble anchor!

Adieu, dear amiable youth!
 Your heart can ne'er be wanting:
 May Prudence, Fortitude, and Truth,
 Erect your brow undaunting!
 In ploughman phrase, "God send you speed,"
 Still daily to grow wiser!
 And may you better reckon the rede,¹
 Than ever did th' adviser!

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH.²

"Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul!
 Sweet'ner of life, and solder of society!
 I owe thee much!"—BLAIR.

DEAR Smith, the sleest, paukie³ thief,
 That e'er attempted stealth or rief,
 Ye surely ha'e some warlock-breef
 Owre human hearts;
 For ne'er a bosom yet was prief⁴
 Against your arts.

¹ Advice.

² James Smith was a merchant at Mauchline, and an early friend of Burns.

³ Cunning.

⁴ Proof.



TO JAMES SMITH.

191

For me, I swear by sun an' moon,
And every star that blinks aboon,
Ye've cost me twenty pair of shoon
Just gaun to see you;
And every ither pair that's done,
Mair ta'en I'm wi' you.

That auld capricious carlin, Nature,
To mak' amends for scrimpit stature,
She's turned you aff, a human creature
On her first plan;
And in her freaks, on every feature
She's wrote, "The Man."

Just now I've ta'en the fit o' rhyme,
My barmie noddle's working prime,
My fancy yerkit up sublime
Wi' hasty summon:
Ha'e ye a leisure moment's time
To hear what's comin' P

Some rhyme a neibor's name to lash;
Some rhyme (vain thought!) for needfu' cash;
Some rhyme to court the countra clash,
An' raise a din;
For me, an aim I never fash;
I rhyme for fun.

The star that rules my luckless lot,
Has fated me the russet coat,
An' damned my fortune to the groat;
But in requit,
Has blest me wi' a random shot
O' countra wit.

This while my notion's ta'en a sklent,
To try my fate in guid black prent;
But still, the mair I'm that way bent,
Something cries "Hoolie!
I rede you, honest man, tak' tent!"²
Ye'll shaw your folly.

"There's ither poets much your better,
Far seen in Greek, deep men o' letters,
Ha'e thought they had ensured their debtors,
A' future ages;
Now moths deform in shapeless tatters
Their unknown pages."

¹ Slant.

² Care.



Then fareweel hopes o' laurel-boughs,
To garland my poetic brows!
Henceforth I'll rove where busy ploughs
 Are whistling thrang,
An' teach the lanely heights an' howes
 My rustic sang.

I'll wander on, with tentless¹ heed
How never-halting moments speed,
Till fate shall snap the brittle thread;
 Then, all unknown,
I'll lay me with th' inglorious dead,
 Forgot and gone!

But why o' death begin a tale?
Just now we're living, sound and hale,
Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
 Heave care owre side!
And large, before enjoyment's gale,
 Let's tak' the tide.

This life, sae far 's I understand,
Is a' enchanted fairy-land,
Where pleasure is the magic wand
 That, wielded right,
Mak's hours like minutes, hand in hand,
 Dance by fu' light.

The magic wand, then, let us wield;
For, ance that five-an'-forty's spee'd,
See crazy, weary, joyless eild,
 Wi' wrinkled face,
Comes hostin', hirplin', owre the field,
 Wi' creepin' pace.

When ance life's day draws near the gloamin',
Then fareweel vacant, careless roamin';
An' fareweel cheerfu' tankards foamin',
 An' social noise;
An' fareweel, dear deluding woman,
 The joy of joys!

O Life! how pleasant is thy morning,
Young Fancy's rays the hills adorning!
Cold-passing Caution's lesson scorning,
 We frisk away,
Like schoolboys, at th' expected warning,
 To joy and play.

¹ Careless.



We wander there, we wander here,
We eye the rose upon the brier,
Unmindful that the thorn is near,
 Among the leaves;
And though the puny wound appear,
 Short while it grieves.

Some, lucky, find a flowery spot,
For which they never toiled nor swat;
They drink the sweet and eat the fat,
 But care or pain;
And, haply, eye the barren hut
 With high disdain.

With steady aim some Fortune chase;
Keen hope does every sinew brace;
Through fair, through foul, they urge the race,
 And seize the prey;
Then cannie, in some cozie place,
 They close the day.

And others, like your humble servan',
Poor wights! nae rules nor roads observin';
To right or left eternal swervin',
 They zig-zag on;
'Till curst with age, obscure and starvin',
 They aften groan.

Alas! what bitter toil an' straining—
But truce with peevish, poor complaining!
Is Fortune's fickle Luna waning?¹
 E'en let her gang!
Beneath what light she has remaining
 Let's sing our sang.

My pen I here fling to the door,
And kneel, "Ye Powers!" and warm implore,
"Though I should wander Terra o'er,
 In all her climes,
Grant me but this, I ask no more,
 A rowth¹ o' rhymes.

'Gi'e dreeping roasts to countra lairds,
Till icicles hing frae their beards;
Gi'e fine braw claes to fine life-guards
 And maids of honour;
And yill an' whiskey gi'e to cairds,²
 Until they sconner.³

¹ Plenty.² Tinkers.³ Loath it.



“ A title, Dempster merits it ;
A garter gi’e to Willie Pitt ;
Gi’e wealth to some be-ledgered cit,
In cent. per cent. ;
But gi’e me real, sterling wit,
And I ’m content.

“ While ye are pleased to keep me hale,
I ’ll sit down o’er my scanty meal,
Be ’t water-brose, or muslin-kail,¹
Wi’ cheerful face,
As lang ’s the Muses dinna fail
To say the grace.”

An anxious e’e I never throws
Behint my lug, or by my nose ;
I jouk ² beneath misfortune’s blows
As weel’s I may ;
Sworn foe to sorrow, care, and prose,
I rhyme away.

Oh, ye douce folk, that live by rule,
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm and cool,
Compared wi’ you—oh, fool! fool! fool!
How much unlike!
Your hearts are just a standing pool,
Your lives a dyke :

Nae hare-brained, sentimental traces,
In your unlettered, nameless faces ;
In *arioso* trills and graces
Ye never stray,
But, *gravissimo*, solemn basses
Ye hum away.

Ye are sae grave, nae doubt ye ’re wise ;
Nae ferly ³ though ye do despise
The hairum-scairum, ram-stam boys,
The rattling squad :
I see you upward cast your eyes—
Ye ken the road.

Whilst I—but I shall haud me there—
Wi’ you I ’ll scarce gang onywhere :
Then, Jamie, I shall say nae mair,
But quit my sang,
Content wi’ you to mak’ a pair,
Whare’er I gang.

¹ Broth made without meat.

³ Wonder.

² Stoop.



EPISTLE TO MR. M'ADAM, OF CRAIGENGILLAN,

ON RECEIVING AN OBLIGING LETTER FROM MR. M'ADAM.

SIR, o'er a gill I gat your card,
I trow¹ it made me proud;
"See wha tak's notice o' the bard!"
I lap² and cry fu' loud.

Now de'il-ma-care about their jaw,
The senseless, gawky³ million;
I'll cock my nose aboon them a'—
I'm roosed⁴ by Craigen-gillan!

'Twas noble, sir, 'twas like yoursel',
To grant your high protection:
A great man's smile, ye ken fu' well,
Is aye a blest infection.

Though by his banes wha in a tub⁵
Matched Macedonian Sandy!⁶
On my ain legs, through dirt and dub,
I independent stand aye.

And when those legs to guid warm kail,⁷
Wi' welcome canna bear me;
A lee dike-side,⁸ a sybow tail,⁹
And barley-scone shall cheer me.

Heaven spare you lang to kiss the breath
O' mony flowery simmers!
And bless your bonny lasses baith—
I'm tauld they're lo'esome kimmers!¹⁰

And God bless young Dunaskin's laird,
The blossom of our gentry!
And may he wear an auld man's beard,
A credit to his country!

¹ Vow.² Leaped.³ Silly.⁴ Praised.⁵ Diogenes.⁶ Alexander the Great. Sandy is the Scotch abbreviation for Alexander.⁷ Broth.⁸ A shady wall-side. ⁹ The young onion.¹⁰ Heart-enticing creatures.



EPISTLE TO MAJOR LOGAN.

HAIL, thairm¹ inspirin' rattlin' Willie!²
Though Fortune's road be rough and hilly,
To every fiddling, rhyming billie,
We never heed,
But tak' it like the unbacked filly,
Proud o' her speed.

When idly goavan³ whiles we saunter,
Yirr, Fancy barks, awa' we canter,
Up hill, down brae, till some mischanter,⁴
Some black bog-hole,
Arrests us, then the scaith and banter
We're forced to thole.⁵

Hale be your heart! hale be your fiddle!
Lang may your elbuck jink and diddle,⁶
To cheer you through the weary widdle⁷
O' this wild war!⁸
Until you on a cummock driddle⁹
A grey-haired carl.

Come wealth, come poortith,⁹ late or soon,
Heaven send your heart-strings aye in tune,
And screw your temper-pins aboon,
A fifth or mair,
The melancholious, lazy croon¹⁰
O' cankrie care!

May still your life from day to day
Nae *lente largo* in the play,
But *allegretto forte* gay
Harmonious flow:
A sweeping, kindling, bauld strathspey—
Encore! Bravo!

A blessing on the cheery gang
Wha dearly like a jig or sang,
And never think o' right and wrang
By square and rule,
But as the clegs¹¹ o' feeling stang
Are wise or fool!

¹ Fiddle-string.

² Major Logan was a first-rate violinist.

³ Walking aimlessly.

⁴ Mishap.

⁵ Bear.

⁶ Elbow dodge and jerk.

⁷ Struggle. These three lines also occur in the Second Epistle to Davie.

⁸ Until you hobble on a staff.

⁹ Poverty.

¹⁰ Drone.

¹¹ Gaddies.



My hand-waled¹ curse keep hard in chase
The harpy, hoodock,² purse-proud race,
Wha count on poortith as disgrace—
Their tuneless hearts!
May fireside discords jar a bass
To a' their parts!

But come, your hand, my careless brither—
I' the ither warl', if there 's anither—
And that there is I've little swither³
About the matter—
We cheek for chow⁴ shall jog thegither,
I'se ne'er bid better.

We've faults and failings—granted clearly,
We're frail backsliding mortals merely,
Eve's bonny squad, priests wyte⁵ them sheerly,⁶
For our grand fa';
But still—but still—I like them dearly—
God bless them a'!

Ochon! for poor Castalian drinkers,
When they fa' foul o' earthly jinkers,⁷
The witching, cursed, delicious blinkers⁸
Ha'e put me hyte,⁹
And gart me weet my waukrife winkers,¹⁰
Wi' girnin'¹¹ spite.

But by yon moon!—and that's high swearin'¹²—
And every star within my hearin'!
And by her een wha was a dear ane
I'll ne'er forget;
I hope to gi'e the jads¹² a clearin'
In fair play yet.

My loss I mourn, but not repent it,
I'll seek my pursie whare I tint¹³ it,
Ance to the Indies I were wonted,
Some cantrip¹⁴ hour,
By some sweet elf I'll yet be dinted,
Then, *Vive l'amour!*

¹ Chosen.

⁴ Jowl.

⁷ Sprightly girls.

⁸ Sleepy eyelids.

¹³ Lost.

² Money-loving.

⁵ Blame.

⁸ Pretty girls.

¹¹ Grinning.

¹⁴ Witching.

Doubt.

⁶ Sorely.

⁹ Mad.

¹⁰ Lassen.



198 TO THE GUIDWIFE OF WAUCHOPE HOUSE.

Faites mes baisemains respectueuses
To sentimental sister Susie,
And honest Lucky; no to roose¹ ye,
 Ye may be proud,
That sic a couple Fate allows ye
 To grace your blood.

Nae mair at present can I measure,
And trowth my rhymin' ware's nae treasure;
But when in Ayr, some half-hour's leisure,
 Be 't light, be 't dark,
Sir Bard will do himsel' the pleasure
 To call at Park.

ROBERT BURNS.

Mossiel, Oct. 30, 1786.

TO THE GUIDWIFE² OF WAUCHOPE HOUSE.

GUIDWIFE,

I mind it weel, in early date,
When I was beardless, young, and blate,³
 And first could thrash the barn,
Or haud a yokin' at the plough;
And though forfoughten⁴ sair enuegh,
 Yet unco proud to learn:
When first amang the yellow corn
 A man I reckoned was,
And wi' the lave⁵ ilk merry morn
 Could rank my rig and lass,
 Still shearing, and clearing,
 The tither stookèd raw,
 Wi' claivers and haivers⁶
 Wearing the day awa'.

Even then a wish, (I mind its power,)
A wish that to my latest hour
 Shall strongly heave my breast—
That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan or beuk could make,
 Or sing a sang at least.

¹ Praise.

² Mrs. Scott, of Wauchope, was a lady of great taste and talent. She was niece to Mrs. Cockburn, who wrote a version of "Flowers of the Forest."

³ Bashful.

⁴ Fatigued.

⁵ Rest.

⁶ Idle stories and gossip.



TO THE GUIDWIFE OF WAUCHOPE HOUSE. 199

The rough burr-thistle, spreading wide
Amang the bearded bear,¹
I turned the weeder clips aside,
And spared the symbol dear :
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise,
A Scot still, but blot still,
I knew nae higher praise.

But still the elements o' sang,
In formless jumble, right and wrang,
Wild floated in my brain ;
Till on that hairst² I said before,
My partner in the merry core,
She roused the forming strain :
I see her yet, the sonsie quean,³
That lighted up my jingle,
Her witching smile, her pauky een,
That gart⁴ my heart-strings tingle
I firèd, inspirèd,
At every kindling keek,⁵
But bashing, and dashing,
I fearèd aye to speak.

Health to the sex ! ilk guid chiel⁶ says,
Wi' merry dance in winter days,
And we to share in common :
The gust o' joy, the balm of woe,
The saul o' life, the heaven below,
Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye surly sumphs,⁷ who hate the name,
Be mindfu' o' your mither ;
She, honest woman, may think shame
That ye 're connected with her.
Ye 're wae⁸ men, ye 're nae men,
That slight the lovely dears ;
To shame ye, disclaim ye,
Ilk honest birkie⁹ swears.

For you, no bred to barn and byre,
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
Thanks to you for your line :
The marlèd plaid ye kindly spare
By me should gratefully be ware ;¹⁰
'Twad please me to the nine.

¹ Barley.

² Harvest.

³ Comely lass.

⁴ Made.

⁵ Glance.

⁶ Fellow.

⁷ Blockheads

⁸ Woeful.

⁹ Fellow.

¹⁰ Worn



TO WILLIAM CREECH.

I'd be mair vauntie¹ o' my hap,²
 Douce hingin'³ owre my curple,
 Than ony ermine ever lap.
 Or proud imperial purple.
 Fareweel, then, lang heal, then,
 And plenty be your fa';
 May losses and crosses
 Ne'er at your hallan⁴ ca'!

EPISTLE TO WILLIAM CREECH.⁵

WRITTEN AT SELKIRK.

AULD chuckie Reekie's⁶ sair distrest,
 Down droops her ance weel-burnisht crest,
 Nae joy her bonnie buskit nest
 Can yield ava,
 Her darling bird that she lo'es best,
 Willie's awa'!

Oh, Willie was a witty wight,
 And had o' things an unco slight;⁷
 Auld Reekie aye he keepit tight
 An' trig an' braw:
 But now they 'll busk her like a fright,
 Willie's awa'!

The stiffest o' them a' he bowed;
 The bauldest o' them a' he cowed;
 They durst nae mair than he allowed,
 That was a law:
 We've lost a birkie⁸ weel worth gowd,—
 Willie's awa'!

Now gawkies,⁹ tawpies,¹⁰ gowks, and fools,
 Frae colleges and boarding-schools,
 May s₁ rout like simmer puddock-stools¹¹
 In glen or shaw;
 He wha could brush them down to mools,¹²
 Willie's awa'!

¹ Proud.² Covering.³ Bravely hanging.⁴ Porch.⁵ The most celebrated publisher in Edinburgh. He published the works of all the best Scottish authors known at the close of the eighteenth century. He was himself a writer. He published "Edinburgh Fugitive Pieces" in 1815.⁶ Edinburgh.⁷ Knowledge.⁸ Fellow.⁹ Simpletons.¹⁰ Sluts.¹¹ Toadstools.¹² The dust.



TO WILLIAM CREECH.

201

The brethren c' the Commerce-Chaumer¹
May mourn their loss wi' doolfu' clamour;
He was a dictionar' and grammar
Amang them a';
I fear they 'll now mak' mony a stammer,
Willie's awa'!

Nae mair we see his levée door²
Philosophers and poets pour,
And toothy critics by the score,
In bloody raw!
The adjutant o' a' the core,
Willie's awa'!

Now worthy Gregory's Latin face,
Tytler's and Greenfield's modest grace;
Mackenzie, Stewart, sic a brace
As Rome ne'er saw;
They a' maun meet some ither place,
Willie's awa'!

Poor Burns—e'en Scotch drink canna quicken,
He cheeps like some bewildered chicken,
Scared frae its minnie and the cleckin'
By hoodie-craw;
Grief's gi'en his heart an unco kickin',—
Willie's awa'!

Now every sour-mou'd girnin' blemm,³
And Calvin's fock, are fit to fell him;
And self-conceited critic skellum⁴
His quill may draw;
He wha could brawlie ward their bellum,⁵
Willie's awa'!

Up wimpling, stately Tweed I've sped,
And Eden scenes on crystal Jed,
And Ettrick banks now roaring red,
While tempests blaw;
But every joy and pleasure's fled,—
Willie's awa'!

May I be slander's common speech;
A text for infamy to preach;
And lastly, streekit out to bleach
In winter snaw;
When I forget thee, Willie Creech,
Though far awa'!

At Edinburgh.

¹ Mr. Creech gave breakfasts to his authors—they were called Cree Levées.

³ Idle chatterer.

⁴ Worthless fellow.

⁵ Nonsense.



TO DR. BLACKLOCK.

May never wicked fortune touzle him!
May never wicked men bamboozle him!
Until a pow as auld's Methusalem
 He canty claw!
Then to the blessèd New Jerusalem,
 Fleet wing awa!

TO DR. BLACKLOCK.¹

Ellisland, October 21, 1789.

Wow, but your letter made me vauntie!
And are ye hale, and weel, and cantie?
I kenned it still your wee bit jauntie
 Wad bring ye to:
Lord send you aye as weel's I want ye,
 And then ye'll do.

The ill-thief blaw the Heron² south!
And never drink be near his drouth!
He tald myself, by word o' mouth,
 He'd tak' my letter;
I lippened³ to the chiel in trowth,
 And bade⁴ nae better.

But aiblins honest Master Heron
Had at the time some dainty fair one,
To ware⁵ his theologic care on,
 And holy study;
And tired o' sauls to waste his lear⁶ on,
 E'en tried the body.

But what d'ye think, my trusty fier?⁷
I'm turned a gauger⁸—Peace be here!
Parnassian queens, I fear, I fear
 Ye'll now disdain me,
And then my fifty pounds a year
 Will little gain me.

¹ A blind poet, whose encouragement induced Burns to go to Edinburgh instead of to the West Indies, and to try his fortune as a poet.

² Mr. Heron, author of a "History of Scotland," 1800.

³ Trusted.

⁴ Deserved.

⁵ Spend.

⁶ Learning.

⁷ Friend.

⁸ Exciseman.



TO DR. BLACKLOCK.

203

Ye glaike¹, glesome, dainty damies,
Wha by Castalia's wimplin' streamies,
Lowp,² sing, and lave your pretty limbies,
Ye ken, ye ken,
That strang necessity supreme is
'Mang sons o' men.

I ha'e a wife and twa wee laddies,
They maun ha'e brose and brats o' duddies;³
Ye ken yoursel's my heart right proud is,
I need na vaunt,
But I'll sned besoms⁴—thraw saugh woodies,⁵
Before they want.

Lord help me through this warld o' care!
I'm weary sick o't late and air!
Not but I ha'e a richer share
Than mony ithers;
But why should ae man better fare,
And a' men brithers?

Come, Firm Resolve, take thou the van,
Thou stalk o' carl-hemp⁶ in man!
And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan
A lady fair;
Wha does the utmost that he can,
Will whyles do mair.

But to conclude my silly rhyme,
(I'm scant o' verse, and scant o' time)
To make a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.

My compliments to sister Beckie;
And eke the same to honest Luckie,
I wat she is a dainty chuckie,
As e'er tread clay!
And gratefully, my guid auld cockie,
I'm yours for aye.

ROBERT BURNS.

¹ Foolish.

² Cut brooms.

³ Jump.

⁴ Twist willow-withes.

⁵ Rags of clothes.

⁶ The seed-bearing hemp.



LETTER TO JAMES TAIT, OF GLENCONNER.

AULD comrade dear, and brither sinner,
How's a' the folk about Glenconner?
How do ye this blae eastlin' win',
That's like to blaw a body blin' ?
For me, my faculties are frozen,
My dearest member nearly dozen'.
I've sent you here, by Johnnie Simson,
Twa sage philosophers to glimpse on !
Reid, wi' his sympathetic feeling,
An' Smith, to common sense appealing.
Philosophers have fought an' wrangled,
An' meikle Greek an' Latin mangled,
Till wi' their logic-jargon tired,
An' in the depth of science mired,
To common sense they now appeal,
What wives an' wabsters ¹ see and feel.
But, hark ye, frien' ! I charge you strictly,
Peruse them, an' return them quickly,
For now I'm grown sae cursèd douce,
I pray an' ponder butt the house ;
My shins, my lane, ² I there sit roastin',
Perusing Bunyan, Brown, an' Boston ;
Till by-an'-by, if I haud on,
I'll grunt a real gospel-groan :
Already I begin to try it,
To cast my een up like a pyet,
When by the gun she tumbles o'er,
Fluttering an' gasping in her gore :
Sae shortly you shall see me bright,
A burning an' a shining light.

My heart-warm love to guid auld Glen,
The ace an' wale ³ of honest men :
When bending down wi' auld grey hairs,
Beneath the load of years and cares,
May He who made him still support him,
An' views beyond the grave comfort him !
His worthy family, far and near,
God bless them a' wi' grace and gear !

My auld schoolfellow, preacher Willie,
The manly tar, my mason Billie,
An' Auchenbay, I wish him joy ;
If he's a parent, lass or boy,

¹ Weavers.² Alone.³ Choice.



TO R. GRAHAM.

205

May he be dad, and Meg the mither,
Just five-and-forty years thegither!
An' no forgetting wabster Charlie,
I'm tauld he offers very fairly.
An', Lord, remember singing Sannock,
Wi' hale-breeks, saxpence, an' a bannock.

An' next, my auld acquaintance, Nancy,
Since she is fitted to her fancy;
An' her kind stars ha'e airted till her
A good chiel wi' a pickle siller.
My kindest, best respects I sen' it,
To cousin Kate an' sister Janet;
Tell them, frae me, wi' chiebs be cautious,
For, faith, they 'll aiblins fin' them fashious;
To grant a heart is fairly civil,
But to grant a maidenhead 's the devil!
An' lastly, Jamie, for yoursel',
May guardian angels tak' a spell,
An' steer you seven miles south o' hell:
But first, before you see heaven's glory,
May ye get monie a merry story,
Monie a laugh, and monie a drink,
And aye eneugh o' needfu' clink.

Now fare ye weel, an' joy be wi' you!
For my sake this I beg it o' you,
Assist poor Simson a' ye can,
Ye 'll fin' him just an honest man:
Sae I conclude, and quat my chanter,
Your's, saint or sinner,—ROB THE RANTER.

FIRST EPISTLE TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ., OF
FINTRY.¹

WHEN Nature her great masterpiece designed,
And framed her last, best work, the human mind,
Her eye intent on all the mazy plan,
She formed of various parts the various man.

¹ Robert Graham, Esq., of Fintry, was one of the Commissioners of Excise, and having met the Poet at the Duke of Athol's, he became interested in his behalf, and showed him many kindnesses. In August, 1783, Burns sent Mrs. Dunlop fourteen lines of this Epistle, beginning with—

“Pity the tuneful Muses' helpless train,”

saying, “Since I am in the way of transcribing, the following lines were the production of yesterday, as I jogged through the wild hills of New



Then first she calls the useful many forth ;
Plain plodding industry, and sober worth :
Thence peasan 's, farmers, native sons of earth,
And merchandise' whole genus take their birth :
Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,
And all mechanics' many-aproned kinds.
Some other rarer sorts are wanted yet,
The lead and buoy are needful to the net ;
The *caput mortuum* of gross desires
Makes a material for mere knights and squires ;
The martial phosphorus is taught to flow :
She kneads the lumpish philosophic dough,
Then marks th' unyielding mass with grave designs,
Law, physic, politics, and deep divines :
Last, she sublims th' Aurora of the poles,
The flashing elements of female souls.

The ordered system fair before her stood,
Nature, well pleased, pronounced it very good ;
But ere she gave creating labour o'er,
Half-jest, she tried one curious labour more.
Some spumy, fiery, *ignis fatuus* matter,
Such as the slightest breath of air might scatter ;
With arch alacrity and conscious glee
(Nature may have her whim as well as we,
Her Hogarth-art perhaps she meant to show it)
She forms the thing, and christens it—a poet ;
Creature, though oft the prey of care and sorrow,
When blest to-day, unmindful of to-morrow ;
A being formed t' amuse his graver friends,
Admired and praised—and there the homage ends :

A mortal quite unfit for Fortune's strife,
Yet oft the sport of all the ills of life ;
Prone to enjoy each pleasure riches give,
Yet haply wanting wherewithal to live ;
Longing to wipe each tear, to heal each groan,
Yet frequent all unheeded in his own.

Cumnock. I intend inserting them, or something like them, in an Epistle, which I am going to write to the gentleman on whose friendship my Excise hopes depend, Mr. Graham, of Fintry, one of the worthiest and most accomplished gentlemen, not only of this country, but, I will dare to say, of this age." To Dr. Moore, Burns wrote, in January, 1789 : "I enclose you an essay of mine in a walk of poesy to me entirely new. I mean the Epistle addressed to Robert Graham, Esq., of Fintry, a gentleman of uncommon worth, to whom I lie under very great obligations. This story of the poem, like most of my poems, is connected with my own story, and to give you the one, I must give you something of the other."



But honest Nature is not quite a Turk ;
She laughed at first, then felt for her poor work,
Pitying the propless climber of mankind,
She cast about a standard tree to find ;
And, to support his helpless woodbine state,
Attached him to the generous truly great,—
A title, and the only one I claim,
To lay strong hold for help on bounteous Graham.

Pity the tuneful Muses' hapless train,
Weak, timid landsmen on life's stormy main !
Their hearts no selfish, stern, absorbent stuff,
That never gives—though humbly takes enough ;
The little Fate allows, they share as soon,
Unlike sage, proverbed Wisdom's hard-wrung boon.
The world were blest did bliss on them depend,—
Ah, that "the friendly e'er should want a friend !"
Let prudence number o'er each sturdy son,
Who life and wisdom at one race begun,
Who feel by reason and who give by rule,
(Instinct's a brute, and sentiment a fool !)
Who make poor "will do" wait upon "I should"—
We own they're prudent, but who feels they're good ?
Ye wise ones, hence ! ye hurt the social eye !
God's image rudely etched on base alloy !
But come ye who the godlike pleasure know,
Heaven's attribute distinguished—to bestow !
Whose arms of love would grasp the human race :
Come, thou who giv'st with all a courtier's grace ;
Friend of my life, true patron of my rhymes !
Prop of my dearest hopes for future times.
Why shrinks my soul, half blushing, half afraid
Backward, abashed to ask thy friendly aid ?
I know my need, I know thy giving hand,
I crave thy friendship at thy kind command ;
But there are such who court the tuneful Nine—
Heavens ! should the branded character be mine !
Whose verse in manhood's pride sublimely flows,
Yet vilest reptiles in their begging prose.
Mark, how their lofty independent spirit
Soars on the spurning wing of injured merit !
Seek not the proofs in private life to find ;
Pity the best of words should be but wind !
So to heaven's gates the lark's shrill song ascends,
But grovelling on the earth the carol ends.
In all the clam'rous cry of starving want,
They dun benevolence with shameless front ;
Oblige them, patronize their tinsel lays,
They persecute you all your future days !



Ere my poor soul such deep damnation stain,
My horny fist assume the plough again ;
The piebald jacket let me patch once more ;
On eighteen-pence a week I've lived before.
Though, thanks to Heaven, I dare even that last shift !
I trust, meantime, my boon is in thy gift :
That, placed by thee upon the wished-for height,
Where, man and nature fairer in her sight,
My Muse may imp her wing for some sublimer flight.

EPISTLE TO HUGH PARKER.¹

In this strange land, this uncouth clime,
A land unknown to prose or rhyme ;
Where words ne'er crost the Muse's heckles,²
Nor limpit in poetic shackles ;
A land that prose did never view it,
Except when drunk he stacher't through it :
Here, ambushed by the chimla³ cheek,
Hid in an atmosphere of reek,
I hear a wheel thrum i' the neuk,
I hear it—for in vain I leuk.
The red peat gleams, a fiery kernel,
Enhusked by a fog infernal :
Here, for my wonted rhyming raptures,
I sit and count my sins by chapters ;
For life and spunk like ither Christians,
I'm dwindled down to mere existence ;
Wi' nae converse but Gallowa' bodies,
Wi' nae kened face but Jenny Geddes.⁴
Jenny, my Pegasean pride !
Dowie she saunters down Nithside,
And aye a westlin' leuk she throws,
While tears hap o'er her auld brown nose !
Was it for this, wi' canny care,
Thou bure the Bard through many a shire ?
At howes⁵ or hillocks never stumbled,
And late or early never grumbled ?
Oh, had I power like inclination,
I'd heeze thee up a constellation,

¹ This epistle, dated June, 1788, was addressed to Mr. Hugh Parker, merchant, in Kilmarnock, one of the Poet's earliest friends and patrons. Mr. Parker subscribed for thirty copies of the Poet's Works, when he first brought them out at the Kilmarnock press.

² Sharp-pointed spikes used for dressing flax.

³ Chimney.

⁴ His mare.

⁵ Hollows.



To canter with the Sagitarre,
Or loup the ecliptic like a bar;
Or turn the pole like any arrow;
Or, when auld Phœbus bids good-morrow,
Down the zodiac urge the race,
And cast dirt on his godship's face;
For I could lay my bread and kail
He'd ne'er cast saut upo' my tail.—
Wi' a' this care and a' this grief,
And sma', sma' prospect of relief,
And nought but peat-reek i' my head,
How can I write what ye can read?—
Tarbolton, twenty-fourth o' June,
Ye'll find me in a better tune;
But till we meet and veet our whistle,
Tak' this excuse for nae epistle.

ROBERT BURNS.

SECOND EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ.,
OF FINTRY,

ON THE CLOSE OF THE DISPUTED ELECTION BETWEEN SIR JAMES
JOHNSTONE AND CAPTAIN MILLER, FOR THE DUMFRIES DIS-
TRICT OF BOROUGHES.

FINTRY, my stay in worldly strife,
Friend o' my Muse, friend o' my life,
Are ye as idle's I am?
Come then, wi' uncouth, kintra fleg,
O'er Pegasus I'll fling my leg,
And ye shall see me try him.

I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig¹ bears,
Wha left the all-important cares
Of princes and their darlins;
And, bent on winning borough touns,
Came shaking hands wi' wabster louns,
And kissing barefit carlins.²

Combustion through our boroughs rode,
Whistling his roaring pack abroad,
Of mad, unmuzzled lions;
As Queensberry "buff and blue" unfurled,
And Westerha'³ and Hopeton hurled
To every Whig defiance.

¹ The fourth Duke of Queensberry, of infamous memory.

² Bare-footed old women.

³ Sir James Johnstone, the Tory candidate.



TO ROBERT GRAHAM.

But cautious Queensberry left the war,
Th' unmannered dust might soil his star;
 Besides, he hated bleeding:
But left behind him heroes bright,
Heroes in Cæsarean fight,
 Or Ciceronian pleading.

O! for a throat like huge Mons-meg,¹
To muster o'er each ardent Whig
 Beneath Drumlanrig's banners;
Heroes and heroines commix,
All in the field of politics,
 To win immortal honours.

M'Murdo² and his lovely spouse,
(The enamoured laurels kiss her brows!)
 Led on the loves and graces:
She won each gaping burgess' heart,
While he, all-conquering, played his part
 Among their wives and lasses.

Craigdarroch³ led a light-armed corps;
Tropes, metaphors, and figures pour,
 Like Hecla streaming thunder:
Glenriddel,⁴ skilled in rusty coins,
Blew up each Tory's dark designs,
 And bared the treason under.

In either wing two champions fought,
Redoubted Staig,⁵ who set at nought
 The wildest savage Tory:
And Welsh,⁶ who ne'er yet flinched his ground,
High-waved his magnum-bonum round
 With Cyclopean fury.

Miller brought up th' artillery ranks,
The many-pounders of the Banks,
 Resistless desolation!
While Maxwelton, that baron bold,
'Mid Lawson's⁷ port entrenched his hold,
 And threatened worse damnation.

¹ A large old cannon in Edinburgh.

² The Chamberlain of the Duke of Queensberry at Drumlanrig.

³ Ferguson of Craigdarroch.

⁴ Captain Riddel of Glenriddel, a friend of the Poet.

⁵ Provost Staig of Dumfries.

⁶ Sheriff Welsh.

⁷ Lawson, a wine merchant in Dumfries.



TO ROBERT GRAHAM.

2

To these, what Tory hosts opposed ;
With these, what Tory warriors closed,
 Surpasses my describing :
Squadrons extended long and large,
With furious speed rushed to the charge,
 Like raging devils driving.

What verse can sing, what prose narrate,
The butcher deeds of bloody fate
 Amid this mighty tulzie !
Grim Horror grinned—pale Terror roared,
As Murther at his thrapple¹ shored,
 And Hell mixed in the brulzie !

As highland crags by thunder cleft,
When lightnings fire the stormy lift,
 Hurled down wi' crashing rattle:
As flames amang a hundred woods ;
As headlong foam a hundred floods :
 Such is the rage of battle !

The stubborn Tories dare to die ;
As soon the rooted oaks would fly
 Before th' approaching fellers :
The Whigs come on like Ocean's roar,
When all his wintry billows pour
 Against the Buchan Bulls.²

Lo ! from the shades of Death's deep night,
Departed Whigs enjoy the fight,
 And think on former daring :
The muffled murderer³ of Charles
The Magna Charta flag unfurls,
 All deadly gules its bearing.

Nor wanting ghosts of Tory fame,
Bold Scrimgeour⁴ follows gallant Grahame,
 Auld Covenanters shiver.
(Forgive, forgive, much-wronged Montrose !⁵
While death and hell engulph thy foes,
 Thou liv'st on high for ever !)

¹ Thrcat.

² A tremendous rocky recess on the Aberdeenshire coast, near Peterhead, having an opening to the sea. The sea, constantly raging in it, gives it the appearance of a pot or boiler.

³ The executioner of Charles I. was masked.

⁴ John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee.

⁵ The great Marquis of Montrose.



Still o'er the field the combat burns,
The Tories, Whigs, give way by turns;
But Fate the word has spoken;
For woman's wit and strength o' man,
Alas! can do but what they can—
The Tory ranks are broken!

O that my een were flowing burns!
My voice a lioness that mourns
Her darling cubs' undoing!
That I might greet, that I might cry,
While Tories fall, while Tories fly,
And furious Whigs pursuing!

What Whig but wails the good Sir James?
Dear to his country by the names
Friend, patron, benefactor!
Not Pulteney's wealth can Pulteney save!
And Hopeton falls, the generous brave!
And Stewart,¹ bold as Hector.

Thou, Pitt, shalt rue this overthrow;
And Thurlow growl a curse of woe:
And Melville melt in wailing!
Now Fox and Sheridan rejoice!
And Burke shall sing, "O Prince, arise!
Thy power is all prevailing."

For your poor friend, the Bard, afar
He hears, and only hears, the war,
A cool spectator purely:
So, when the storm the forest rends,
The robin in the hedge descends,
And sober chirps securely.

THIRD EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ.,
OF FINTRY.

LATE crippled of an arm, and now a leg,²
About to beg a pass for leave to beg:
Dull, listless, teased, dejected, and deprest,
(Nature is adverse to a cripple's rest;)
Will generous Graham list to his Poet's wail?
(It soothes poor misery, hearkening to her tale,
And hear him curse the light he first surveyed,
And doubly curse the luckless rhyming trade?)

¹ Stewart of Hillside.

² Burns had broken his arm by his horse falling with him.



Thou, Nature! partial Nature! I arraign;
Of thy caprice maternal I complain.
The lion and the bull thy care have found,
One shakes the forests, and one spurns the ground:
Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell,
Th' envenomed wasp, victorious, guards his cell;
Thy minions, kings defend, control, devour,
In all th' omnipotence of rule and power;
Foxes and statesmen subtle wiles ensure;
The cit and polecat stink, and are secure;
Toads with their poison, doctors with their drug,
The priest and hedgehog in their robes are snug,
Ev'n silly woman has her warlike arts,
Her tongue and eyes, her dreaded spear and darts.
But, oh! thou bitter step-mother and hard,
To thy poor, fenceless, naked child—the Bard!
A thing unteachable in worldly skill,
And half an idiot too, more helpless still;
No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun;
No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun:
No horns, but those by luckless Hymen worn,
And those, alas! not Amalthea's horn:
No nerves olfact'ry, Mammon's trusty cur,
Clad in rich Dulness' comfortable fur;—
In naked feeling, and in aching pride,
He bears the unbroken blast from every side:
Vampyre booksellers drain him to the heart,
And scorpion critics cureless venom dart.

Critics!—appalled I venture on the name,
Those cut-throat bandits in the paths of fame:
Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Monroes!
He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose.

His heart by causeless, wanton malice wrung,
By blockheads' daring into madness stung;
His well-won bays, than life itself more dear,
By miscreants torn, who ne'er one sprig must wear:
Foiled, bleeding, tortured, in th' unequal strife,
The hapless Poet flounders on through life;
'Till, fled each hope that once his bosom fired,
And fled each Muse that glorious once inspired,
Low sunk in squalid, unprotected age,
Dead, even resentment, for his injured page,
He heeds or feels no more the ruthless critic's rage.

So, by some hedge, the generous steed deceased,
For half-starved snarling curs a dainty feast,
By toil and famine worn to skin and bone,
Lies senseless of each tugging bitch's son.



Oh, Dulness! portion of the truly blest!
Calm sheltered haven of eternal rest!
Thy sons ne'er madden in the fierce extremes
Of Fortune's polar frost, or torrid beams.
If mantling high she fills the golden cup,
With sober selfish ease they sip it up:
Conscious the bounteous meed they well deserve,
They only wonder "some folks" do not starve,
The grave sage hern thus easy picks his frog,
And thinks the mallard a sad worthless dog.
When disappointment snaps the clue of hope,
And through disastrous night they darkling grope,
With deaf endurance sluggishly they bear,
And just conclude that "fools are Fortune's care."
So, heavy, passive to the tempest's shocks,
Strong on the sign-post stands the stupid ox.

Not so the idle Muses' madcap train,
Not such the workings of their moon-struck brain;
In equanimity they never dwell,
By turns in soaring heaven, or vaulted hell.

I dread thee, Fate, relentless and severe,
With all a poet's, husband's, father's fear!
Already one stronghold of hope is lost,
Glencairn, the truly noble, lies in dust;
(Fled, like the sun eclipsed as noon appears,
And left us darkling in a world of tears:)
Oh! hear my ardent, grateful, selfish prayer!—
Fintry, my other stay, long bless and spare!
Through a long life his hopes and wishes crown;
And bright in cloudless skies his sun go down!
May bliss domestic smooth his private path;
Give energy to life, and soothe his latest breath
With many a filial tear circling the bed of death!

FOURTH EPISTLE TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ.,
OF FINTRY.

I CALL no goddess to inspire my strains,
A fabled Muse may suit a bard that feigns;
Friend of my life! my ardent spirit burns,
And all the tribute of my heart returns,
For boons accorded, goodness ever new,
The gift still dearer, as the giver, you.

¹ Mr. Graham was one of the Poet's best friends. He obtained for him (all he could) an appointment in the Excise; and when Burns was accused of disloyalty, he defended him boldly and well.



Thou orb of day! thou other paler light!
And all the other sparkling stars of night;
If aught that giver from my mind efface;
If I that giver's bounty e'er disgrace,
Then roll to me along your wandering spheres,
Only to number out a villain's years!

EPISTLE FROM ESOPUS TO MARIA.¹

FROM those drear solitudes and frowsy cells,
Where infamy with sad repentance dwells;
Where turnkeys make the jealous mortal fast,
And deal from iron hands the spare repast;
Where truant 'prentices, yet young in sin,
Blush at the curious stranger peeping in;
Where strumpets, relics of the drunken roar,
Resolve to drink, nay, half to whore, no more:
Where tiny thieves, not destined yet to swing,
Beat hemp for others, riper for the string:
From these dire scenes my wretched lines I date,
To tell Maria her Esopus' fate.

"Alas! I feel I am no actor here!"
'Tis real hangmen real scourges bear!
Prepare, Maria, for a horrid tale
Will turn thy very rouge to deadly pale;
Will make thy hair, though erst from gipsy polled,
By barber woven, and by barber sold,
Though twisted smooth with Harry's nicest care,
Like hoary bristles to erect and stare.
The hero of the mimic scene, no more
I start in Hamlet, in Othello roar;
Or haughty chieftain, 'mid the din of arms,
In Highland bonnet woo Malvina's charms;
Whilst sans culottes stoop up the mountain high,
And steal from me Maria's prying eye,
Blest Highland bonnet! once my proudest dress,
Now prouder still, Maria's temples press.
I see her wave thy towering plumes afar,
And call each coxcomb to the wordy war;
I see her face the first of Ireland's sons,
And even out-Irish his Hibernian bronze;
The crafty colonel leaves the tartaned lines,
For other wars, where he a hero shines;

¹ The Esopus of this epistle was Williamson the actor, and the Maria, to whom it was addressed, was Mrs. Riddel, who was a true and generous friend to Burns.



The hopeful youth, in Scottish senate bred,
Who owns a Bushby's heart without the head;
Comes, 'mid a string of coxcombs, to display
That *veni, vidi, vici*, is his way;
The shrinking bard adown an alley skulks,
And dreads a meeting worse than Woolwich hulks;
Though there's his heresies in church and state
Might well award him Muir and Palmer's fate:
Still she, undaunted, reels and rattles on,
And dares the public like a noontide sun.
(What scandal called Maria's jaunty stagger
The ricket reeling of a crooked swagger?
Whose spleen e'en worse than Burns's venom when
He dips in gall unmixed his eager pen,—
And pours his vengeance in the burning line,
Who christened thus Maria's lyre divine;
The idiot strum of vanity bemused,
And even th' abuse of poesy abused!
Who called her verse a parish workhouse, made
For motley, foundling fancies, stolen or strayed?)

A workhouse! ha, that sound awakes my woes,
And pillows on the thorn my racked repose!
In durance vile here must I wake and weep,
And all my frowsy couch in sorrow steep!
That straw where many a rogue has lain of yore,
And vermined gipsies littered heretofore.

Why, Lonsdale, thus, thy wrath on vagrants pour,
Must earth no rascal save thyself endure?
Must thou alone in guilt immortal swell,
And make a vast monopoly of hell?
Thou know'st the virtues cannot hate thee worse,
The vices also, must they club their curse?
Or must no tiny sin to others fall,
Because thy guilt's supreme enough for all?

Maria, send me too thy griefs and cares;
In all of thee sure thy Esopus shares.
As thou at all mankind the flag unfurls,
Who on my fair one satire's vengeance hurls?
Who calls thee pert, affected, vain coquette,
A wit in folly, and a fool in wit?
Who says, that fool alone is not thy due,
And quotes thy treacheries to prove it true?
Our force united, on thy foes we'll turn,
And dare the war with all of woman born:
For who can write and speak as thou and I?
My periods that decyphering defy,
And thy still matchless tongue that conquers all reply



A DEDICATION TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

EXPECT na, Sir, in this narration,
A fleechin,¹ fetherin² dedication,
To roose³ you up, an' ca' you guid,
An' sprung o' great an' noble bluid,
Because ye're surnamed like his Grace;
Perhaps related to the race;
Then when I'm tired—and sae are ye,
Wi' mony a fulsome, sinfu' lie,
Set up a face, how I stop short,
For fear your modesty be hurt.

This may do—maun do, Sir, wi' them wha
Maun please the great folk for a wamefou;⁴
For me! sae laigh I needna bow,
For, Lord be thankit, I can plough:
And when I downa yoke a naig,
Then, Lord be thankit, I can beg;
Sae I shall say, an' that's nae flatterin',
It's just sic poet, an' sic patron.

The Poet, some guid angel help him,
Or else, I fear some ill ane skelp⁵ him,
He may do weel for a' he's done yet,
But only he's no just begun yet.

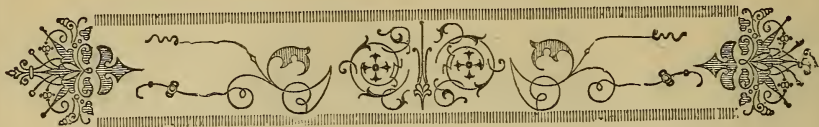
The Patron (Sir, ye maun forgi'e me,
I winna lie, come what will o' me),
On ev'ry hand it will allowed be,
He's just—nae better than he should be.

I readily and freely grant,
He downa see a poor man want;
What's no his ain he winna tak' it,
What ance he says he winna breakit;
Ought he can lend he'll no refuse't,
Till aft his guidness is abusèd;
And rascals whyles that do him wrang,
Ev'n that, he does na mind it lang:
As master, landlord, husband, father,
He does na fail his part in either.

¹ Begging.
⁴ Bellyful.

² Flattering.
⁵ Hit.

³ Praise.



But then, nae thanks to him for a' that;
Nae godly symptom ye can ca' that;
It's naething but a milder feature
Of our poor, sinfu' corrupt nature:
Ye'll get the best o' moral works
'Mang black Gentoos and Pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi,
Wha never heard of orthodoxy.
That he's the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word and deed,
It's no through terror of d-mn-tion;
It's just a carnal inclination.

Morality, thou deadly bane,
Thy tens o' thousands thou hast slain!
Vain is his hope, whose stay and trust is
In moral mercy, truth, and justice!

No—stretch a point to catch a plack;¹
Abuse a brother to his back;
Steal through a winnock² frae a wh-re,
But point the rake that tak's the door:
Be to the poor like onie whunstane,³
And haud their noses to the grunstone;⁴
Ply every art o' legal thieving;
No matter, stick to sound believing.

Learn three-mile prayers, an' half-mile graces,
Wi' weel-spread looves, an' lang wry faces;
Grunt up a solemn, lengthened groan,
And damn a' parties but your own;
I'll warrant then, ye're nae deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer.

O ye wha leave the springs of Calvin,
For gumlie dubs⁵ of your ain delvin'!
Ye sons of heresy and error,
Ye'll some day squeel in quaking terror!
When Vengeance draws the sword in wrath,
And in the fire throws the sheath;
When Ruin, with his sweeping besom,
Just frets till Heaven commission gi'es him:
{ While o'er the harp pale Mis'ry moans,
{ And strikes the ever-deep'ning tones,
{ Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans!

¹ Old Scottish coin.

² Window.

³ Whinstone.

⁴ Grindstone.

⁵ Muddy pools.



Your pardon, Sir, for this digression,
I maist forgat my dedication;
But when divinity comes cross me,
My readers still are sure to lose me.

So, Sir, ye see 'twas nae daft vapour,
But I maturely thought it proper,
When a' my works I did review,
To dedicate them, Sir, to You:
Because (ye need na tak' it ill)
I thought them something like yours.¹

Then patronize them wi' your favour,
And your petitioner shall ever—
I had amaist said, ever pray,
But that's a word I need na say:
For prayin' I ha'e little skill o't;
I'm baith dead-sweer, an' wretched ill o't;
But I'se repeat each poor man's prayer,
That kens or hears about you, Sir—

“ May ne'er Misfortune's gowling bark
Howl through the dwelling o' the Clerk!
May ne'er his generous, honest heart,
For that same generous spirit smart!
May Kennedy's far-honoured name
Lang beet' his hymeneal flame,
Till Hamiltons, at least a dizen,
Are frae their nuptial labours risen:
Five bonnie lasses round their table,
And seven braw fellows, stout and able
To serve their king and country weel,
By word, or pen, or pointed steel!
May health and peace, with mutual rays,
Shine on the evening o' his days;
Till his wee curlic John's ier-oe,²
When ebbing life nae mair shall flow,
The last, sad, mournful rites bestow!”

I will not wind a lang conclusion,
Wi' complimentary effusion:
But whilst your wishes and endeavours
Are blest with Fortune's smiles and favours,
I am, dear Sir, with zeal most fervent,
Your much indebted, humble servant.

But if (which Powers above prevent!)
That iron-hearted carl, Want,
Attended in his grim advances,
By sad mistakes, and black mischances,

¹ Add fuel to.

² Great grandchild

*TO GAVIN HAMILTON*

While hopes, and joys, and pleasures fly him,
Make you as poor a dog as I am,
Your humble servant then no more;
For who would humbly serve the poor!
But by a poor man's hopes in heaven!
While recollection's power is given,
If, in the vale of humble life,
The victim sad of Fortune's strife,
I, through the tender gushing tear,
Should recognize my master dear,
If friendless, low, we meet together,
Then, Sir, your hand—my friend and brother!



Ballads.

THE WHISTLE.

A BALLAD.

["As the authentic prose history of the Whistle is curious," says Burns, "I shall here give it. In the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland with our James the Sixth, there came over also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great prowess, and a matchless champion of Bacchus. He had a little ebony whistle, which at the commencement of the orgies he laid on the table, and whoever was last able to blow it (everybody else being disabled by the potency of the bottle) was to carry off the whistle as a trophy of victory. The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow, Warsaw, and several of the petty courts in Germany, and challenged the Scots Bacchanalians to the alternative of trying his prowess, or else of acknowledging their inferiority. After many overthrows on the part of the Scots, the Dane was encountered by Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwelton, ancestor of the present worthy baronet of that name, who, after three days' and three nights' hard contest, left the Scandinavian under the table,

And blew on the Whistle his requiem shrill.

Sir Walter, son to Sir Robert, before mentioned, afterwards lost the Whistle to Walter Riddel of Glenriddel, who had married a sister of Sir Walter's. On Friday, the 16th of October, 1790, at Friars-Carse, the Whistle was once more contended for, as related in the ballad by the present Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwelton; Robert Riddel, Esq., of Glenriddel, lineal descendant and representative of Walter Riddel, who won the Whistle, and in whose family it had continued; and Alexander Ferguson, Esq., of Craigdarroch, likewise descended of the great Sir Robert, which last gentleman carried off the hard-won honours of the field.]

I SING of a Whistle, a Whistle of worth,
I sing of a Whistle, the pride of the North,
Was brought to the court of our good Scottish king,
And long with this Whistle all Scotland shall ring.



Old Loda,¹ still rueing the arm of Fingal,
The god of the bottle sends down from his hall—
“This Whistle’s your challenge, to Scotland get o’er,
And drink them to hell, Sir! or ne’er see me more!”

Old poets have sung, and old chronicles tell,
What champions ventured, what champions fell;
The son of great Loda was conqueror still,
And blew on the Whistle his requiem shrill.

Till Robert, the lord of the Cairn and the Scaur,
Unmatched at the bottle, unconquered in war,
He drank his poor god-ship as deep as the sea,
No tide of the Baltic e’er drunker than he.

Thus Robert, victorious, the trophy has gained;
Which now in his house has for ages remained;
Till three noble chieftains, and all of his blood,
The jovial contest again have renewed.

Three joyous good fellows, with hearts clear of flaw;
Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law;
And trusty Glenriddel, so skilled in old coins;
And gallant Sir Robert, deep read in old wines.

Craigdarroch began, with a tongue smooth as oil,
Desiring Glenriddel to yield up the spoil;
Or else he would muster the heads of the clan,
And once more, in claret, try which was the man.

“By the gods of the ancients!” Glenriddel replies,
“Before I surrender so glorious a prize,
I’ll conjure the ghost of the great Rorie More,²
And bumper his horn with him twenty times o’er.”

Sir Robert, a soldier no speech would pretend,
But he ne’er turned his back on his foe—or his friend,
Said, toss down the Whistle, the prize of the field,
And, knee-deep in claret, he’d die or he’d yield.

To the board of Glenriddel our heroes repair,
So noted for drowning of sorrow and care;
But for wine and for welcome not more known to fame,
Than the sense, wit, and taste, of a sweet lovely dame.

A bard was selected to witness the fray,
And tell future ages the feats of the day;
A bard who detested all sadness and spleen,
And wished that Parnassus a vineyard had been.

¹ See Ossian’s “Caric-thura.”—BURNS.

² See Johnson’s “Tour to the Hebrides.”—BURNS.



JOHN BARLEYCORN.

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The dinner being over, the claret they ply,
And every new cork is a new spring of joy,
In the bands of old friendship and kindred so set,
And the bands grew the tighter the more they were wet.

Gay pleasure ran riot as bumpers ran o'er;
Bright Phœbus ne'er witnessed so joyous a core,
And vowed that to leave them he was quite forlorn,
Till Cynthia hinted he'd see them next morn.

Six bottles a piece had well wore out the night,
When gallant Sir Robert, to finish the fight,
Turned o'er in one bumper a bottle of red,
And swore 'twas the way that their ancestor did.

Then worthy Glenriddel, so cautious and sage,
No longer the warfare, ungodly, would wage;
A high-ruling Elder to wallow in wine!
He left the foul business to folks less divine.

The gallant Sir Robert fought hard to the end;
But who can with fate and quart bumpers contend?
Though fate said—a hero should perish in light;*
So uprose bright Phœbus—and down fell the knight

Next uprose our bard, like a prophet in drink:—
“Craigdarroch, thou'lt soar when creation shall sink!
But if thou would flourish immortal in rhyme,
Come—one bottle more—and have at the sublime!

“Thy line, that have struggled for freedom with Bruce,
Shall heroes and patriots ever produce;
So thine be the laurel, and mine be the bay;
The field thou hast won, by yon bright god of day!”

JOHN BARLEYCORN.¹

A BALLAD.

THERE were three kings into the east,
Three kings both great and high,
An' they ha'e sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

¹ This is partly composed on the plan of an old song known by the same name.



They took a plough and ploughed him down,
Put clods upon his head,
An' they ha'e sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerful spring came kindly on,
And showers began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surprised them all.

The sultry suns of summer came,
And he grew thick and strong,
His head weel armed wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober autumn entered mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bending joints and drooping head
Showed he began to fail.

His colour sickened more and more,
He faded into age;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

They 've ta'en a weapon long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
Then tied him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgelled him full sore;
They hung him up before the storm,
And turned him o'er and o'er.

They fillèd up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heavèd in John Barleycorn,
There let him sink or swim.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe,
And still, as signs of life appeared,
They tossed him to and fro.

They wasted, o'er a scorching flame,
The marrow of his bones;
But a miller used him worst of all,
For he crushed him 'tween two stones.



JOHN BARLEYCORN.

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And they ha'e ta'en his very heart's blood,
And drank it round and round;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise,
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
'Twill heighten all his joy:
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Though the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland!



Political Ballads.

THE AMERICAN WAR.

A FRAGMENT.

Tune—"Gillicrankie."

WHEN Guilford good our pilot stood,
And did our hellim thraw, man,
Ae night, at tea, began a plea,
Within America, man:
Then up they gat the maskin-pat,¹
And in the sea did jaw,² man;
An' did nae less, in full congress,
Than quite refuse our law, man.

Then through the lakes Montgomery takes,
I wat he was na slaw, man;
Down Lowrie's burn he took a turn,
And Carleton did ca', man;
But yet, what reck, he, at Quebec,
Montgomery-like did fa', man;
Wi' sword in hand, before his band,
Amang his en'mies a', man.

Poor Tammy Gage, within a cage
Was kept at Boston ha', man;
Till Willie Howe took o'er the knowe
For Philadelphia, man;
Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin
Guid Christian blood to draw, man;
But at New York, wi' knife an' fork,
Sir-loin he hackèd sma', man.

¹ Teapot.

² Jerk or throw. It is well known that the imposition by the English Commons of an excise duty on the tea imported to North America, caused the outbreak of the American war. The colonists went on board the Indiamen which brought tea to their shores, and threw their cargoes into the sea.







Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip,
Till Fraser brave did fa', man ;
Then lost his way, ae misty day,
In Saratoga shaw, man.
Cornwallis fought as lang's he dought,¹
An' did the buckskins claw, man ;
But Clinton's glaive frae rust to save,
He hung it to the wa', man.

Then Montague, an' Guilford too,
Began to fear a fa', man ;
And Sackville doure, wha stood the stoure,
The German chief to thraw, man ;
For Paddy Burke, like onie Turk,
Nae mercy had at a', man ;
An' Charlie Fox threw by the box,
An' lowsed his tinkler jaw, man.

Then Rockingham took up the game,
Till death did on him ca', man ;
When Shelburne meek held up his cheek,
Conform to gospel law, man.
Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,
They did his measures thraw, man,
For North an' Fox united stocks,
An' bore him to the wa', man.

Then clubs an' hearts were Charlie's cartes,
He swept the stakes awa', man,
Till the diamond's ace, of Indian race,
Led him a sair *faux pas*, man :
The Saxon lads, wi' loud placads,
On Chatham's boy did ca', man ;
An' Scotland drew her pipe, an' blew
"Up, Willie, waur them a', man !"

Behind the throne then Grenville's gone,
A secret word or twa, man ;
While sleet Dundas aroused the class
Be-north the Roman wa', man :
An' Chatham's wraith, in heavenly graith,
(Inspired bardies saw, man.)
Wi' kindling eyes cried, "Willie, rise !
Would ha'e feared them a', man ?"

But word an' blow, North, Fox, and Co.
Gowffed Willie like a ba', man,
Till Suthron rase, and coost their claise
Behind him in a raw, man :

¹ Could.



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An' Caledon threw by the drone,
An' did her whittle draw, man;
An' swoor fu' rude, through dirt an' blood
To make it guid in law, man.

THE LADDIES ON THE BANKS OF NITH.

Tune—"Up and waur them a'."

[This ballad commemorates an election contest for the representation of the Dumfries Burghs, which occurred in September, 1789, between the old Tory member, Sir James Johnstone, of Westerhall, and the Whig candidate, Captain Miller, of Dalswinton, Burns's landlord.]

THE laddies by the banks o' Nith
Wad trust his grace ' wi' a', Jamie,
But he'll sair² them as he saired the king,
Turn tail and rin awa', Jamie.³
Up and waur⁴ them a', Jamie,
Up and waur them a';
The Johnstons ha'e the guidin' o't,
Ye turncoat Whigs, awa'.

The day he stood his country's friend,
Or gaed her faes a claw, Jamie,
Or frae puir man a blessin' wan,
That day the duke ne'er saw, Jamie.

But wha is he, the country's boast,
Like him there is na twa, Jamie;
There's no a callant⁵ tents⁶ the kye,⁷
But kens o' Westerha', Jamie.

To end the wark here's Whistlebirck,⁸
Lang may his whistle blaw, Jamie;
And Maxwell true o' sterling blue,
And we'll be Johnstons a', Jamie.
Up and waur them a', Jamie,
Up and waur them a';
The Johnstons ha'e the guidin' o't,
Ye turncoat Whigs, awa'.

¹ The Duke of Queensberry.

² Serve.

³ The Duke deserted the cause of George III., in whose household he had a place, and voted for the right of the Prince of Wales to assume the Regency without the consent of Parliament.

⁴ Beat.

⁵ Boy.

⁶ Tends.

⁷ Cows.

⁸ Alexander Birtwhistle, merchant, of Kirkcudbright, provost of the town.

THE FIVE CARLINS.

AN ELECTION BALLAD.

Tune—"Chevy-Chace."

THERE were five carlins in the south;
 They fell upon a scheme,
 To send a lad to Lon'on town,
 To bring them tidings hame.

Not only bring them tidings hame,
 But do their errands there;
 And aiblins gowd and honour baith
 Might be that laddie's share.

There was Maggy by the banks o' Nith,³
 A dame wi' pride enugh;
 And Marjory o' the mony lochs,⁵
 A carlin auld and teugh.

And blinkin' Bess of Annandale,⁴
 That dwelt near Solway-side;
 And whiskey Jean, that took her gill
 In Galloway sae wide.⁵

And black Joan, frae Crichton-peel,⁶
 O' gipsy kith an' kin;—
 Five weightier carlins were na foun'
 The south countrie within.

To send a lad to Lon'on town,⁷
 They met upon a day;
 And mony a knight, and mony a laird,
 Their errand fain wad gae.

O mony a knight, and mony a laird,
 This errand fain wad gae;
 But nae ane could their fancy please,
 O ne'er a ane but twae.

¹ The "Five Carlins," i.e. old women, represent the towns of Dumfries, Annan, Kirkcudbright, Sanquhar, Loch-maben. It was written at the same election which the last ballad commemorates.

² Dumfries.

⁴ The small borough of Annan.

⁶ Sanquhar.

³ Loch-maben.

⁵ The borough of Kirkcudbright.

⁷ To send a member to Parliament.

THE FIVE CARLINS.

The first he was a belted knight,¹
 Bred o' a border-clan;
 And he wad gae to Lon'on town,
 Might nae man him withstan';

And he wad do their errands weel,
 And meikle he wad say;
 And ilka ane at Lon'on Court
 Wad bid to him guid-day.

Then neist cam in a sodger youth,²
 And spak' wi' modest grace,
 And he wad gae to Lon'on town,
 If sae their pleasure was.

He wadna hecht³ them courtly gifts,
 Nor meikle speech pretend;
 But he wad hecht an honest heart,
 Wad ne'er desert his friend.

Now, wham to chuse, and wham refuse,
 At strife thir carlins fell;
 For some had gentlefolks to please,
 And some wad please themsel'.

Then out spak' mim-mou'd Meg o' Nith,
 And she spak' up wi' pride,
 And she wad send the sodger youth,
 Whatever might betide.

For the auld guidman⁴ o' Lon'on Court
 She dinna care a pin;
 But she wad send a sodger youth
 To greet his eldest son.⁵

Then slow rase Marjory o' the Lochs,
 And wrinkled was her brow;
 Her ancient weed was russet grey,
 Her auld Scots bluid was true.

"The Lon'on Court set light by me—
 I set as light by them;
 And I will send the sodger lad
 To shaw that Court the same."

Then up sprang Bess of Annandale,
 And swore a deadly aith,
 Says, "I will send the border-knight,
 Spite o' you carlins baith.

¹ Sir J. Johnston.⁴ George III.² Captain Miller.⁵ The Prince of Wales.³ Promise.



THE DEAN OF FACULTY.

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“For far-aff fowls ha’e feathers fair,
And fools o’ change are fain;
But I ha’e tried this border-knight,
An’ I’ll try him yet again.”

Then whiskey Jean spak’ owre her drink,
“Ye weel ken, kimmers a’,
The auld guidman o’ Lon’on Court,
His back’s been at the wa’;

“And mony a friend that kissed his caup,¹
Is now a fremit² wight;
But it’s ne’er be said o’ whiskey Jean,—
I’ll send the border-knight.”

Says black Joan frae Crichton-peel
A carlin stoor and grim,—
“The auld guidman, an’ the young guidman,
For me may sink or swim.

“For fools will prate o’ right and wrang,
While knaves laugh in their sleeve;
But wha blows best the horn shall win,
I’ll speir nae courtier’s leave.”

Sae how this weighty plea may end
Nae mortal wight can tell:
God grant the king, and ilka man,
May look weel to himsel’!

THE DEAN OF FACULTY.³

A NEW BALLAD.

Tune—“The Dragon of Wantley.”

DIRE was the hate at old Harlaw,
That Scot to Scot did carry;
And dire the discord Langside saw,
For beauteous, hapless Mary:

¹ Cup.

² Estranged.

³ This ballad commemorates a contest for election to the Deanship of the Faculty of Advocates, between the Hon. Henry Erskine and Robert Dundas, Esq., of Arniston, Jan. 12, 1796. Mr. Dundas was elected.



But Scot with Scot ne'er met so hot,
Or were more in fury seen, Sir,
Than 'twixt Hal¹ and Bob² for the famous job
Who should be Faculty's Dean, Sir.

This Hal for genius, wit, and lore,
Among the first was numbered;
But pious Bob, 'mid learning's store,
Commandment tenth remembered.—
Yet simple Bob the victory got,
And won his heart's desire;
Which shews that heaven can boil the pot,
Though the devil — in the fire.

Squire Hal besides had, in this case,
Pretensions rather brassy,
For talents to deserve a place
Are qualifications saucy;
So, their worships of the Faculty,
Quite sick of merit's rudeness,
Chose one who should owe it all, d'ye see,
To their gratis grace and goodness.

As once on Pisgah purged was the sight
Of a son of Circumcision,
So may be, on this Pisgah height,
Bob's purblind, mental vision:
Nay, Bobby's mouth may be opened yet,
Till for eloquence you hail him,
And swear he has the Angel met
That met the Ass of Balaam.

In your heretic sins may ye live, and die,
Ye heretic eight-and-thirty!
But accept, ye sublime Majority,
My congratulations hearty.
With your honours and a certain king,
In your servants this is striking—
The more incapacity they bring,
The more they're to your liking.

¹ The Hon. Henry Erskine.

² Robert Dundas, Esq., Arniston.



POETICAL INSCRIPTION,¹

FOR AN ALTAR TO INDEPENDENCE.

THOU of an independent mind,
 With soul resolved, with soul resigned;
 Prepared Power's proudest frown to brave,
 Who wilt not be, nor have, a slave;
 Virtue alone who dost revere,
 Thy own reproach alone dost fear,
 Approach this shrine and worship here.

THE HERON ELECTION BALLADS.²

BALLAD I.

WHOM will you send to London town,
 To Parliament, and a' that?
 Or wha in a' the country round
 The best deserves to fa' that?
 For a' that, and a' that,
 Through Galloway and a' that;
 Where is the laird or belted knight
 That best deserves to fa' that?

Wha sees Kerroughtree's open yett,³
 And wha is't never saw that?
 Wha ever wi' Kerroughtree met,
 And has a doubt of a' that?
 For a' that, and a' that,
 Here's Heron yet for a' that!
 The independent patriot,
 The honest man, and a' that.

Though wit and worth in either sex,
 St. Mary's Isle can shaw that;
 Wi' dukes and lords let Selkirk mix,
 And weel does Selkirk fa' that.

¹ This inscription was written on an altar to Independence erected by Heron of Kerroughtree, in Galloway, in 1795. It was written immediately before the Heron Election Ballads.

² The Heron Ballads were written by Burns to help the canvassing of Patrick Heron, of Kerroughtree, in two elections. They were disseminated over the country as broadsheets, and were considered mere election squibs.

³ Gate.



For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
The independent commoner
Shall be the man for a' that.

But why should we to nobles jouk? ¹
And it's against the law that;
For why, a lord may be a gouk ²
Wi' ribbon, star, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
A lord may be a lousy loun
Wi' ribbon, star, and a' that.

A beardless boy comes o'er the hills
Wi' uncle's purse and a' that;
But we'll ha'e ane frae 'mang oursels,
A man we ken and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
For we're not to be bought and sold
Like naigs, and nowt, ³ and a' that.

Then let us drink the Stewartry,
Kerroughtree's laird, and a' that,
Our representative to be,
For weel he's worthy a' that,
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
A House of Commons such as he,
They would be blest that saw that.

BALLAD II.—[THE ELECTION.]

Tune—"Fy, let us a' to the Bridal"

FY, let us a' to Kirkcudbright,
For there will be bickerin' there;
For Murray's light-horse are to muster,
An' oh, how the heroes will swear!

¹ Bend.

² Fool.

³ Cattle.



THE HERON BALLADS.

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An' there will be Murray commander,
An' Gordon the battle to win;
Like brothers they 'll stand by each other,
Sae knit in alliance and kin.

An' there will be black-nebbit Johnnie,¹
The tongue o' the trump to them a';
An' he get na hell for his haddin'
The deil gets na justice ava';
An' there will be Kempleton's birkie,
A boy na sae black at the bane,
But, as for his fine nabob fortune,
We 'll e'en let the subject alane.²

An' there will be Wigton's new sheriff,
Dame Justice fu' brawlie has sped,
She's gotten the heart of a Busby,
But, Lord, what's become o' the head?
An' there will be Cardoness,³ Esquire,
Sae mighty in Cardoness' eyes;
A wight that will weather damnation—
The devil the prey will despise.

An' there will be Douglasses⁴ doughty,
New christening towns far and near;
Abjuring their democrat doings,
By kissing the — o' a peer;
An' there will be Kenmure sae generous!
Whose honour is proof to the storm;
To save them from stark reprobation,
He lent them his name to the firm.

But we winna mention Redcastle,
The body, e'en let him escape!
He'd venture the gallows for siller,
An' 'twere na the cost o' the rape.
An' where is our King's lord lieutenant,
Sae famed for his gratefu' return?
The billie is gettin' his questions,
To say in St. Stephen's the morn.

¹ John Busby, of Tinwald Downs.

² He was suspected of having made it, previous to his residence in India, by transactions at the Ayr Bank.

³ Maxwell, of Cardoness.

⁴ Douglas, of Corlingwark, had given the name of Castle Douglas to a village which rose in his neighbourhood.



THE HERON BALLADS.

An' there will be lads o' the gospel,
Muirhead ' wha's as gude as he's true;
An' there will be Buittle's apostle,²
Wha's mair o' the black than the blue;
An' there will be folk frae St. Mary's,
A house o' great merit and note,
The de'il ane but honours them highly,—
The de'il ane will gie them his vote!

An' there will be wealthy young Richard,³
Dame Fortune should hing by the neck;
For prodigal, thriftless, bestowing,
His merit had won him respect:
An' there will be rich brother nabobs,
Though nabobs, yet men of the first,
An' there will be Collieston's whiskers,
An' Quentin, o' lads not the warst.

An' there will be stamp-office Johnnie,⁴
Tak' tent how ye purchase a dram;
An' there will be gay Cassencarrie,
An' there will be gleg Colonel Tam;⁵
An' there will be trusty Kerroughtree,
Whase honour was ever his law,
If the virtues were packed in a parcel,
His worth might be sample for a'.

An' can we forget the auld Major,⁶
Wha 'll ne'er be forgot in the Greys,
Our flattery we 'll keep for some ither,
Him only it 's justice to praise.
An' there will be maiden Kilkerran,⁷
And also Barskimming's guid knight,⁸
An' there will be roarin' Birtwhistle,
Wha, luckily, roars in the right.

An' there, frae the Niddesdale border,
Will mingle the Maxwells in droves;
Tough Johnnie, staunch Geordie, an' Wylie
That griens for the fishes an' loaves;
An' there will be Logan Mac Douall,
Sculdudd'ry an' he will be there,
An' also the wild Scot o' Galloway,
Sodgerin', gunpowder Blair.

¹ Minister of Urr.

³ R. Oswald, of Auchincruive.

⁵ Col. Goldie.

⁷ Sir Adam Fergusson.

² Rev. G. Maxwell.

⁴ John Syme.

⁶ Major Heron.

⁸ Sir William Miller.



THE HERON BALLADS.

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Then hey the chaste int'rest o' Broughton,
An' hey for the blessings 'twill bring!
It may send Balmaghie to the Commons,
In Sodom 'twould make him a king;
An' hey for the sanctified Murray,
Our land wha wi' chapels has stored;
He foundered his horse amang harlots,
But gi'ed the auld naig to the Lord.

BALLAD III.—[AN EXCELLENT NEW SONG.]

Tune—"Buy broom Besoma."

WHa will buy my troggin? ¹
Fine election ware;
Broken trade o' Broughton,
A' in high repair.
Buy braw troggin,
Frae the banks o' Dee;
Wha wants troggin
Let him come to me.

There's a noble Earl's
Fame and high renown, ²
For an auld sang—
It's thought the gudes were stown. ³
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's the worth o' Broughton ⁴
In a needle's ee;
Here's a reputation
Tint ⁵ by Balmaghie. ⁶
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's an honest conscience
Might a prince adorn;
Frae the downs o' Tynwald—
Sae was never born.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

¹ Pedlar's wares.

² The Earl of Galloway.

³ Stolen.

⁴ Mr. Murray.

⁵ Lost.

⁶ Gordon, of Balmaghie.



THE HERON BALLADS.

Here's the stuff and lining,
O' Cardoness's head;
Fine for a sodger
A' the wale o' lead.¹
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's a little wadset,
Buittle's scrap o' truth,
Pawnèd in a gin-shop,
Quenching holy drouth.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's armorial bearings
Frae the manse o' Urr;
The crest, and auld crab-apple²
Rotten at the core.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here is Satan's picture,
Like a bizzard gled,³
Pouncing poor Redcastle,
Sprawlin' like a taed.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's the worth and wisdom
Collieston can boast;
By a thievish midge
They had been nearly lost.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here is Murray's fragments
O' the ten commands;
Gifted by black Jock
To get them aff his hands.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Saw ye e'er sic troggin?
If to buy ye're slack,
Hornie's⁴ turnin' chapman,—
He'll buy a' the pack.
Buy braw troggin,
Frae the banks o' Dee;
Wha wants troggin
Let him come to me.

¹ The choicest lead.

² Rev. Dr. Muirhead, minister of Urr, in Galloway.

³ Satan.

⁴ Kite.

BALLAD IV.—[JOHN BUSBY'S¹ LAMENTATION.]

Tune—"The Babes in the Wood."

"Twas in the seventeen hundred year
O' Christ, and ninety-five,
That year I was the waest man
O' ony man alive.

In March, the three-and-twentieth day,
The sun rase clear and bright;
But oh, I was a waefu' man
Ere toofa' o' the night.

Yerl² Galloway lang did rule this land
Wi' equal right and fame,
And thereto was his kinsman joined
The Murray's noble name!

Yerl Galloway lang did rule the land,
Made me the judge o' strife;
But now yerl Galloway's sceptre's broke,
And eke my hangman's knife.

"Twas by the banks o' bonny Dee,
Beside Kirkcudbright towers,
The Stewart and the Murray there
Did muster a' their powers.

The Murray on the auld grey yaud,³
Wi' winged spurs did ride,
That auld grey yaud, yea, Nid'sdale rade,
He staw⁴ upon Nidside.

An' there had been the yerl himsel',
Oh, there had been nae play;
But Garlies was to London gane,
And sae the kye⁵ might stray.

And there was Balmaghie, I ween,
In the front rank he wad shine;
But Balmaghie had better been
Drinking Madeira wine.

¹ John Busby, Esq., of Tinwald Downs.² Mare.⁴ Stole.³ Earl.⁵ Cows.



THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

Frae the Glenken came to our aid
A chief o' doughty deed,
In case that worth should wanted be,
O' Kenmore we had need.

And there sae grave Squire Cardoness
Looked on till a' was done:
Sae, in the tower o' Cardoness,
A howlet sits at noon.

And there led I the Busbys a';
My gamesome Billy Will,
And my son Maitland, wise as brave,
My footsteps followed still.

The Douglas and the Herons' name
We set nought to their score:
The Douglas and the Herons' name
Had felt our weight before.

But Douglasses o' weight had we,
A pair o' trusty lairds,
For building cot-houses sae famed,
And christening kail-yards.

And by our banners marched Muirhead,
And Buittle was na slack;
Whose haly priesthood nane can stain,
For wha can dye the black?

THE JOLLY BEGGARS.¹

A CANTATA.

RECITATIVO.

WHEN lyart² leaves bestrew the yird,³
Or wavering like the bauckie-bird,⁴
Bedim cauld Boreas' blast;

¹ This singular poem was suggested to Burns by his having accidentally dropped into a very low public-house in Mauchlin one night, accompanied by his two friends, John Richmond and John Smith. The house was the haunt of beggars, a number of whom chanced to be assembled in it at the time. The landlady was a Mrs. Gibson, called by her guests "Poosie Nancy." The jollity of the vagrants amused the Poet, and he composed "The Jolly Beggars" a few days afterwards.

² Withered-grey, of a mixed colour.

³ Earth.

⁴ Bat.



THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

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When hailstones drive wi' bitter skyte,
And infant frosts begin to bite,
In hoary cranreuch¹ drest ;
Ae night, at e'en, a merry core
O' randie, gangrel² bodies,
In Poesie Nansie's held the splore,³
To drink their orra duddies :⁴
Wi' quaffing and laughing,
They ranted and they sang ;
Wi' jumping and thumping,
The vera girdle rang.⁵

First, neist the fire, in auld red rags,
Ane sat, weel braced wi' mealy bags,
And knapsack a' in order ;
His doxy lay within his arm,
Wi' usquebae an' blankets warm—
She blinket on her sodger :
An' ay he gi'ed the tozie⁶ drab
The tither skelpin'⁷ kiss,
While she held up her greedy gab
Just like an aumos dish.⁸
Ilk smack still did crack still,
Just like a cadger's whup,
Then staggering and swaggering,
He roared this ditty up :—

AIR.

Tune—"Soldier's Joy."

I am a son of Mars, who have been in many wars,
And show my cuts and scars wherever I come ;
This here was for a wench, and that other in a trench,
When welcoming the French at the sound of the drum.
Lal de dandle, &c.

My 'prenticeship I past where my leader breathed his last,
When the bloody die was cast on the heights of Abram ;⁹
I servèd out my trade when the gallant game was played,
And the Moro¹⁰ low was laid at the sound of the drum.
Lal de dandle, &c.

¹ Hoar-frost.

³ Entertainment, frolic.

⁵ The iron plate on which oaten cakes are baked.

⁶ Drunken.

⁸ Alms-dish. A wooden bowl carried by beggars for the reception of broken victuals, oatmeal, &c.

⁹ The heights of Abram were scaled by the British in their attack on Quebec, 1759. The gallant Wolfe fell on the field of battle.

¹⁰ The Moro was a strong castle, the citadel of the Havannah, the capital of Cuba. It was taken and destroyed in 1762 by English seamen.



THE JOLLY BEGGARS

I lastly was with Curtis, among the floating batt'ries,¹
And there I left for witness an arm and a limb;
Yet let my country need me, with Elliott² to head me,
I'd clatter on my stumps at the sound of a drum.

Lal de daudle, &c.

And now though I must beg, with a wooden arm and leg,
And many a tattered rag hanging over my bum,
I'm as happy with my wallet, my bottle, and my callet,
As when I used in scarlet to follow a drum.

Lal de daudle, &c.

What though, with hoary locks, I must stand the winter
shocks,

Beneath the woods and rocks oftentimes for a home,
When the tother bag I seal, and the tother bottle tell,
I could meet a troop of hell at the sound of a drum.

Lal de daudle, &c.

RECITATIVO.

He ended and the kebars³ sheuk
Aboon the chorus' roar;
While frightened rattons⁴ backward leuk,
And seek the benmost bore.⁵

A fairy fiddler, fra the neuk,
He skirlèd out, Encore!
But up arose the martial chuck,
And laid the loud uproar.

AIR.

Tune—"Soldier Laddie."

I once was a maid, though I cannot tell when,
And still my delight is in proper young men;
Some one of a troop of dragoons was my daddie,
No wonder I'm fond of a sodger laddie.

Sing, lal de lal, &c.

The first of my loves was a swaggering blade,
To rattle the thundering drum was his trade;
His leg was so tight, and his cheek was so ruddy,
Transported I was with my sodger laddie.

Sing, lal de lal, &c.

¹ The floating batteries of the Spaniards at the siege of Gibraltar, 1782. Captain Curtis greatly distinguished himself in the work of their destruction.

² General Elliott, who gallantly defended Gibraltar in the same siege, 1782. He was created Lord Heathfield.

³ Rafters.

⁴ Rats.

⁵ Innermost hole in the wall.



THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

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But the godly old chaplain left him in the lurch;
The sword I forsook for the sake of the church;
He ventured the soul, and I risked the body—
'Twas then I proved false to my sodger laddie.
Sing, lal de lal, &c.

Full soon I grew sick of my sanctified sot,
The regiment at large for a husband I got;
From the gilded spontoon to the fife I was ready,
I askèd no more but a sodger laddie.
Sing, lal de lal, &c.

But the peace it reduced me to beg in despair,
Till I met my old boy at a Cunningham fair;
His rags regimental they fluttered so gaudy,
My heart it rejoiced at a sodger laddie.
Sing, lal de lal, &c.

And now I have lived—I know not how long,
And still I can join in a cup or a song;
But whilst with both hands I can hold the glass steady,
Here's to thee, my hero, my sodger laddie!
Sing, lal de lal, &c.

RECITATIVO.

Poor Merry Andrew in the neuk
Sat guzzling wi' a tinkler hizzie;
They mind't na wha the chorus teuk,
Between themselves they were sae busy:
At length wi' drink and courting dizzy,
He stoitered¹ up an' made a face;
Then turned, an' laid a smack on Grizzie,
Syne tuned his pipes wi' grave grimace.

AIR.

Tune—"Auld Sir Symon."

Sir Wisdom's a fool when he's fou;
Sir Knave is a fool in a session;
He's there but a 'prentice I trow,
But I am a fool by profession.

My grannie she bought me a beuk
And I held awa' to the school;
I fear I my talent misteuk,—
But what will ye ha'e of a fool?

¹ Staggered.

THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

For drink I would venture my neck;
 A hizzie's the half o' my craft;
 But what could ye other expect
 Of ane that's avowedly daft?

I ance was tiedup like a stirk,
 For civilly swearing and quaffing!
 I ance was abused in the kirk,
 For touzling a lass i' my daffin.

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport,
 Let naebody name wi' a jeer:
 There's even, I'm tauld, i' the Court
 A Tumbler ca'd the Premier.

Observed ye yon reverend lad
 Mak' faces to tickle the mob?
 He rails at our mountebank squad,—
 It's rivalship just i' the job.

And now my conclusion I'll tell,
 For, faith, I'm confoundedly dry;
 The chiel that's a fool for himsel',
 Gude Lord! he's far dafter than I.

RECITATIVO.

Then neist outspak' a raucle carlin,²
 Wha ken't fu' weel to cleek the sterling,
 For monie a pursie she had hookit,
 And had in monie a well been doukit.
 Her love had been a Highland laddie,
 But weary fa' the waefu' woodie!³
 Wi' sighs and sobs she thus began
 To wail her braw John Highlandman.

AIR.

Tune—"O an' ye were dead, gudeman."
 A Highland lad my love was born;
 The Lawland laws he held in scorn;
 But he still was faithfu' to his clan,
 My gallant braw John Highlandman.

CHORUS.

Sing, hey my braw John Highlandman!
 Sing, ho my braw John Highlandman!
 There's not a lad in a' the lan'
 Was match for my John Highlandman.

¹ Bullock. ² Stout elderly woman. ³ Rope (of the gallows).



THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

245

With his philibeg an' tartan plaid,
An' guid claymore down by his side,
The ladies' hearts he did trepan,
My gallant braw John Highlandman.
Sing, hey, &c.

We rangèd a' from Tweed to Spey,
An' lived like lords and ladies gay,
For a Lawland face he fearèd nane,
My gallant braw John Highlandman.
Sing, hey, &c.

They banished him beyond the sea,
But, ere the bud was on the tree,
Adown my cheeks the pearls ran,
Embracing my John Highlandman.
Sing, hey, &c.

But, oh! they caught him at the last,
And bound him in a dungeon fast;
My curse upon them every one!
They've hanged my braw John Highlandman.
Sing, hey, &c.

And now a widow, I must mourn
The pleasures that will ne'er return;
Nae comfort but a hearty can
When I think on John Highlandman.
Sing, hey, &c.

RECITATIVO.

A pigmy scraper, wi' his fiddle,
Wha used at trysts and fairs to driddle,¹
Her strappan limb and gancy² middle,
(He reached nae higher,)
Had holed his heartie like a riddle,
An' blawn't on fire.

Wi' hand on haunch, an' upward e'e,
He crooned his gamut, one, two, three,
Then in an *arioso* key,
The wee Apollo
Set off wi' *allegretto* glee
His giga solo

¹ Play.

² Jolly.



THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

AIR.

Tune—"Whistle o'er the lave o't."

Let me ryke ¹ up to dight ² that tear,
And go wi' me and be my dear,
And then your every care and fear
May whistle owre the lave o't.

CHORUS.

I am a fiddler to my trade,
And a' the tunes that e'er I played,
The sweetest still to wife or maid,
Was whistle owre the lave o't.

At kirns and weddings we'se be there,
And oh! sae nicely 's we will fare;
We'll bouse about till Daddy Care
Sings whistle owre the lave o't.

I am, &c.

Sae merrily the banes we'll pyke,³
And sun oursel's about the dyke,
And at our leisure, when ye like,
We'll whistle owre the lave o't.

I am, &c.

But bless me wi' your heaven o' charms,
And while I kittle⁴ hair on thairms,⁵
Hunger, cauld, and a' sic harms,
May whistle owre the lave o't.

I am, &c.

RECITATIVO.

Her charms had struck a sturdy caird⁶
As weel as poor gut-scraper;
He tak's the fiddler by the beard,
And draws a roosty rapier.

He swear by a' was swearing worth,
To speet him like a pliver,
Unless he wad from that time forth
Relinquish her for ever.

Wi' ghastly e'e, poor tweedle-dee
Upon his hunkers bended,
And prayed for grace wi' rufu' face;
And sae the quarrel ended.

¹ Reach.

⁴ Tickle.

² Wipe.

⁵ Fiddle-strings.

³ Bon's we'll pick.

⁶ Gipsy.



THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

247

But though his little heart did grieve,
When round the tinkler pressed her,
He feigned to snirtle¹ in his sleeve,
When thus the caird addressed her:—

AIR.

Tune—"Clout the caudron."

My bonny lass, I work in brass,
A tinkler is my station;
I've travelled round all Christian ground,
In this my occupation.
I've ta'en the gold, I've been enrolled
In many a noble squadron;
But vain they searched when off I marched
To go and clout the caudron.
I've ta'en the gold, &c.

Despise that shrimp, that withered imp,
Wi' a' his noise and caperin',
And tak' a share wi' those that bear
The budget and the apron.
And by that stoup, my faith and houp,
And by that dear Kilbagie,²
If e'er ye want, or meet wi' scant,
May I ne'er weet my craigie.³
An' by that stoup, &c.

RECITATIVO.

The caird prevailed—th' unblushing fair
In his embraces sunk,
Partly wi' love, o'ercome sae sair,
An' partly she was drunk.
Sir Violino, with an air
That showed a man of spunk,
Wished union between the pair,
An' made the bottle clunk
To their health that night.

But urchin Cupid shot a shaft,
That played a dame a shavie,
The fiddler raked her fore and aft,
Behint the chicken cavie.

¹ Laugh.

² A peculiar sort of whiskey, so called from Kilbagie distillery, in Clackmannanshire.

³ Wet my throat.

THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

Her lord, a wight o' Homer's craft,¹
 Though limping wi' the spavie,
 He hirpled² up, and lap like daft,
 And shored³ them Dainty Davy
 O' boot that night.

He was a care-defying blade
 As ever Bacchus listed,
 Though Fortune sair upon him laid,
 His heart she ever missed it.
 He had nae wish but—to be glad,
 Nor want but—when he thirsted;
 He hated nought but—to be sad,
 And thus the Muse suggested
 His sang that night.

AIR.

Tune—"For a' that, an' a' that."

I am a bard of no regard,
 Wi' gentle folks, an' a' that;
 But Homer-like, the glowran byke,⁴
 Frae town to town I draw that.

CHORUS.

For a' that, an' a' that,
 An' twice as muckle's a' that;
 I've lost but ane, I've twa behin',
 I've wife enough for a' that.

I never drank the Muses' stank,⁵
 Castalia's burn, an' a' that;
 But there it streams, and richly reams,
 My Helicon I ca' that.
 For a' that, &c.

Great love I bear to a' the fair,
 Their humble slave, an' a' that;
 But lordly will, I hold it still
 A mortal sin to thraw that.
 For a' that, &c.

¹ Ballad-singing. Homer is thought to be the oldest strolling minstrel on record.

² Crept.

⁴ Staring swarm (byke is a beehive).

³ Threatened.

⁵ Pool.



THE JOLLY BEGGARS.

249

In raptures sweet, this hour we meet,
Wi' mutual love, an' a' that;
But for how lang the fee may stang,
Let inclination law that.
For a' that, &c.

Their tricks and craft ha'e put me daft,
They've ta'en me in, an' a' that;
But clear your decks, and here's the sex!
I like the jades for a' that.

CHORUS.

For a' that, an' a' that,
An' twice as muckle's a' that;
My dearest bluid, to do them guid,
They're welcome till't for a' that.

RECITATIVO.

So sang the bard—and Nancie's wa's
Shook wi' a thunder of applause,
Re-echoed from each mouth;
They toomed¹ their pocks, an' pawned their duds,²
They scarcely left to co'er their fuds,
To quench their lowan drouth.³
Then owre again the jovial thrang
The poet did request,
To loose his pack an' wale a sang,
A ballad o' the best.
He, rising, rejoicing,
Between his twa Deborahs,
Looks round him, and found them
Impatient for the chorus.

AIR.

Tune—"Jolly mortals, fill your glasses."

See, the smoking bowl before us!
Mark our jovial ragged ring!
Round and round take up the chorus,
And in raptures let us sing.

CHORUS.

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

¹ Emptied their packs. ² Pawned their rags. ³ Burning thirst.

*THE JOLLY BEGGARS.*

What is title? what is treasure
What is reputation's care?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter how or where.

A fig, &c.

With the ready trick and fable,
Round we wander all the day;
And at night, in barn or stable,
Hug our doxies on the hay.

A fig, &c.

Does the train-attended carriage
Through the country lighter rove?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love?

A fig, &c.

Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes;
Let them cant about decorum
Who have characters to lose.

A fig, &c.

Here 's to budgets, bags, and wallets!
Here 's to all the wandering train!
Here 's our ragged brats and callets!
One and all cry out—Amen!

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty 's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.



Songs.

MY HANDSOME NELL.

Tune—"I am a man unmarried."

[Nelly Blair, the heroine of this song, was a servant in Ayrshire. "This composition," says Burns, "was the first of my performances, and done at an early period of my life, when my heart glowed with honest, warm simplicity, unacquainted and uncorrupted with the ways of a wicked world."]

OH, once I loved a bonnie lass,
Ay, and I love her still;
And whilst that virtue warms my breast
I'll love my handsome Nell.
Fal, lal de ral, &c.

As bonnie lasses I ha'e seen,
And mony full as braw;
But for a modest, gracefu' mien,
The like I never saw.

A bonnie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the e'e,
But without some better qualities
She's no a lass for me.

But Nelly's looks are blithe and sweet;
And, what is best of a',
Her reputation is complete,
And fair without a flaw.

She dresses aye sae clean and neat,
Baith decent and genteel;
And then there's something in her gait
Gars' ony dress look weel.

¹ Makes.



LUCKLESS FORTUNE.

A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart;
But it's Innocence and Modesty
That polishes the dart.

'Tis this in Nelly pleases me,
'Tis this enchants my soul!
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without control.



LUCKLESS FORTUNE.

OH, raging Fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low, O!
Oh, raging Fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low, O!

My stem was fair, my bud was green,
My blossom sweet did blow, O;
The dew fell fresh, the sun rose mild,
And made my branches grow, O.

But luckless Fortune's northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low, O;
But luckless Fortune's northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low, O.

I DREAMED I LAY WHERE FLOWERS WERE
SPRINGING.

[“These stanzas,” says the Poet, “which are amongst the oldest of my printed pieces, I composed when I was seventeen.”]

I DREAMED I lay where flowers were springing
Gaily in the sunny beam,
Listening to the wild birds singing
By a falling crystal stream:
Straight the sky grew black and daring;
Through the woods the whirlwinds rave;
Trees with agèd arms were warring,
O'er the swelling, drumlie wave.



O TIBBIE, I HA'E SEEN THE DAY.

253

Such was my life's deceitful morning,
Such the pleasures I enjoyed ;
But lang or noon, loud tempests storming,
A' my flowery bliss destroyed.
Though fickle Fortune has deceived me,
(She promised fair and performed but ill,)
Of mony a joy and hope bereaved me,
I bear a heart shall support me still.

O TIBBIE, I HA'E SEEN THE DAY.¹

[Composed at seventeen years of age.]

Tune—"Invercauld's Reel."

CHORUS.

O TIBBIE ! I ha'e seen the day
Ye wad na been sae shy ;
For laik o' gear ye lightly me,
But, trowth, I care na by.

Yestreen I met you on the moor,
Ye spak' na, but gaed by like stoure
Ye geek at me because I'm poor,
But fient a hair care I.

I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,
Because ye ha'e the name o' clink,
That ye can please me at a wink,
Whene'er ye like to try.

But sorrow tak' him that's sae mean,
Although his pouch o' coin were clean,
Wha follows such a saucy quean,
That looks sae proud and high.

Although a lad were e'er sae smart,
If that he want the yellow dirt,
Ye'll cast your head anither airt,
And answer him fu' dry.

But if he ha'e the name o' gear,
Ye'll fasten to him like a brier,
Though hardly he, for sense or lear,
Be better than the kye.

¹ "Tibbie" was the daughter of a portioner of Kyle—i.e. the proprietor of three acres of peat-moss—who thought herself rich enough to treat a ploughman with contempt.

MY FATHER WAS A FARMER.

But, Tibbie, lass, tak' my advice:
Your daddie's gear mak's you sae nice;
The de'il a ane wad spier your price,
Were ye as poor as I.

There lives a lass in yonder park,
I would nae gi'e her in her sark
For thee, wi' a' thy thousan' mark!
Ye need na look sae high.

MY FATHER WAS A FARMER.

Tune—"The Weaver and his shuttle, O."

My father was a farmer
Upon the Carrick border, O,
And carefully he bred me
In decency and order, O;
He bade me act a manly part,
Though I had ne'er a farthing, O,
For without an honest, manly heart,
No man was worth regarding, O.

Then out into the world
My course I did determine, O;
Though to be rich was not my wish,
Yet to be great was charming, O.
My talents they were not the worst,
Nor yet my education, O;
Resolved was I at least to try
To mend my situation, O.

In many a way, and vain essay,
I courted Fortune's favour, O;
Some cause unseen still stept between,
To frustrate each endeavour, O:
Sometimes by foes I was o'erpowered;
Sometimes by friends forsaken, O;
And when my hope was at the top,
I still was worst mistaken, O.

Then sore harassed, and tired at last,
With Fortune's vain delusion, O,
I dropt my schemes, like idle dreams,
And came to this conclusion, O:
The past was bad, and the future hid;
It's good or ill untried, O;
But the present hour was in my power,
And so I would enjoy it, O.



MY FATHER WAS A FARMER.

255

No help, nor hope, nor view had I,
Nor person to befriend me, O ;
So I must toil, and sweat, and broil,
And labour to sustain me, O.
To plough and sow, to reap and mow,
My father bred me early, O ;
For one, he said, to labour bred,
Was a match for fortune fairly, O.

Thus, all obscure, unknown and poor,
Through life I'm doomed to wander, O,
Till down my weary bones I lay,
In everlasting slumber, O.
No view nor care, but shun whate'er
Might breed me pain or sorrow, O ;
I live to-day as well 's I may,
Regardless of to-morrow, O.

But cheerful still, I am as well
As a monarch in a palace, O,
Though Fortune's frown still hunts me down
With all her wonted malice, O ;
I make indeed my daily bread,
But ne'er can make it farther, O ;
But, as daily bread is all I need,
I do not much regard her, O.

When sometimes by my labour
I earn a little money, O,
Some unforeseen misfortune
Comes gen'rally upon me, O ;
Mischance, mistake, or by neglect,
Or my good-natured folly, O :
But come what will, I've sworn it still,
I'll ne'er be melancholy, O.

All you who follow wealth and power
With unremitting ardour, O,
The more in this you look for bliss,
You leave your view the farther, O.
Had you the wealth Potosi boasts,
Or nations to adore you, O,
A cheerful honest-hearted clown
I will prefer before you, O.



**THE RIGS O' BARLEY.**

Tune—"Corn rigs are bonnie."

It was upon a Lammas night,
When corn rigs are bonnie,
Beneath the moon's unclouded light
I held awa' to Annie:
The time flew by wi' tentless heed,
'Till 'tween the late and early,
Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed
To see me through the barley.

The sky was blue, the wind was still,
The moon was shining clearly;
I set her down, wi' right good will,
Amang the rigs o' barley:
I ken't her heart was a' my ain;
I loved her most sincerely;
I kissed her owre and owre again
Amang the rigs o' barley.

I locked her in my fond embrace;
Her heart was beating rarely;
My blessings on that happy place
Amang the rigs o' barley!
But by the moon and stars so bright,
That shone that hour so clearly!
She aye shall bless that happy night
Amang the rigs o' barley.

I ha'e been blithe wi' comrades dear
I ha'e been merry drinkin';
I ha'e been joyfu' gatherin' gear;
I ha'e been happy thinkin':
But a' the pleasures e'er I saw,
Though three times doubled fairly,
That happy night was worth them a'
Amang the rigs o' barley.

CHORUS.

Corn rigs, an' barley rigs,
An' corn rigs are bonnie:
I'll ne'er forget that happy night,
Amang the rigs wi' Annie.



W. P. ...
1857

H. P. ...

MONTGOMERY'S PEGGY.¹

Tune—"Galla Water."

ALTHOUGH my bed were in yon muir,
 Among the heather, in my plaidie,
 Yet happy, happy would I be,
 Had I my dear Montgomery's Peggy.

When o'er the hill beat sturly storms,
 And winter nights were dark and rainy;
 I'd seek some dell, and in my arms
 I'd shelter dear Montgomery's Peggy.

Were I a baron, proud and high,
 And horse and servants waiting ready,
 Then a' 'twad gi'e o' joy to me,
 The sharin' wi' Montgomery's Peggy.

THE MAUCHLINE LADY.

Tune—"I had a horse and I had nae mair."

WHEN first I came to Stewart Kyle,
 My mind it was na steady;
 Where'er I gaed, where'er I rade,
 A mistress still I had aye.

But when I came roun' by Mauchline town
 Not dreading ony body,
 My heart was caught before I thought,
 And by a Mauchline lady.²

THE HIGHLAND LASSIE.³

Tune—"The deuks dang o'er my daddy!"

NAE gentle dames, though e'er sae fair,
 Shall ever be my muse's care:
 Their titles a' are empty show;
 Gi'e me my Highland Lassie, O.

¹ "This fragment is done," says Burns, "something in imitation of the manner of a noble old Scottish piece called 'M'Millan's Peggie.'"

² Jean Armour, afterwards his wife.

³ "My Highland Lassie," observes Burns, "was a warm-hearted, charming young creature, as ever blest a man with generous love. After a



PEGGY.

Within the glen sae bushy, O,
Aboon the plains sae rushy, O,
I set me down wi' right good will,
To sing my Highland Lassie, O.

Oh, were yon hills and valleys mine,
Yon palace and yon gardens fine;
The world then the love should know
I bear my Highland Lassie, O.

But fickle fortune frowns on me,
And I maun cross the raging sea;
But while my crimson currents flow,
I'll love my Highland Lassie, O.

Although through foreign climes I range,
I know her heart will never change,
For her bosom burns with honour's glow,
My faithful Highland Lassie, O.

For her I'll dare the billows' roar,
For her I'll trace the distant shore,
That Indian wealth may lustre throw
Around my Highland Lassie, O.

She has my heart, she has my hand:
By sacred truth and honour's band,
'Till the mortal stroke shall lay me low,
I'm thine, my Highland Lassie, O!

Fareweel the glen sae bushy, O!
Fareweel the plain sae rushy, O!
To other lands I now must go,
To sing my Highland Lassie, O!

PEGGY.

Tune—"I had a horse, and I had nae mair."

Now westlin' winds and slaughtering guns
Bring autumn's pleasant weather;
The moorcock springs, on whirring wings,
Among the blooming heather:

pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, we met by appointment, on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the banks of the Ayr, where we spent the day in taking a farewell, before she should embark for the West Highlands, to arrange matters among her friends for our projected change of life. At the close of autumn she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock, where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave, before I could even hear of her illness."



OH, THAT I HAD NE'ER BEEN MARRIED. 259

Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer ;
And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night,
To muse upon my charmer.

The partridge loves the fruitful fells ;
The plover loves the mountains ;
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells
The soaring hern the fountains :
Through lofty groves the cushat roves,
The path of man to shun it ;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,
The spreading thorn the linnet.

Thus every kind their pleasure find—
The savage and the tender ;
Some social join, and leagues combine ;
Some solitary wander.
Avaunt, away ! the cruel sway,
Tyrannic Man's dominion ;
The sportsman's joy, the murdering cry,
The fluttering, gory pinion !

But, Peggy dear, the evening's clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow ;
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow :
Come, let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of Nature ;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And every happy creature.

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
Till the silent moon shine clearly ;
I'll grasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I love thee dearly :
Not vernal showers to budding flowers,
Not autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer !

OH, THAT I HAD NE'ER BEEN MARRIED!

[The song is an old one ; the last verse only by Burns.

OH, that I had ne'er been married !
I wad never had nae care ;



260 THE RANTIN' DOG THE DADDIE O'T.

Now I've gotten wife and bairns,
And they cry crowdie¹ ever mair.
Ance crowdie, twice crowdie,
Three times crowdie in a day;
Gin ye crowdie ony mair,
Ye'll crowdie a' my meal away.

Waefu' want and hunger fley me,
Glowrin' by the hallan en';²
Sair I fecht them at the door,
But aye I'm eerie³ they come ben.
Ance crowdie, twice crowdie,
Three times crowdie in a day;
Gin ye crowdie ony mair,
Ye'll crowdie a' my meal away.

THE RANTIN' DOG THE DADDIE O'T.

Tune—"East nook o' Fife."

Oh, wha my baby-clouts will buy?⁴
Oh, wha will tent me when I cry?⁵
Wha will kiss me where I lie?—
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

Oh, wha will own he did the fau't?⁶
Oh, wha will buy the groanin' maut?⁷
Oh, wha will tell me how to ca't?⁸—
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

When I mount the creepie chair,⁹
Wha will sit beside me there?
Gi'e me Rob, I'll seek nae mair,—
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

Wha will crack to me my lane?¹⁰
Wha will mak' me fidgin'-fain?¹¹
Wha will kiss me o'er again?¹²—
The rantin' dog the daddie o't.

¹ A composition of oatmeal and boiled water, or sometimes made with broth.

² Seat of turf outside a cottage.

³ Frightened.

⁴ Stool of repentance.

⁵ Fidgin'-fain—fidgeting with delight, tickled with pleasure.

**MY HEART WAS ANCE AS BLITHE AND FREE**

Tune—"To the weavers gin ye go."

My heart was ance as blithe and free
As simmer days were lang,
But a bonnie westlin weaver lad
Has gart me change my sang.
 To the weavers gin ye go, fair maids,
 To the weavers gin ye go;
 I rede you right gang ne'er at night,
 To the weavers gin ye go.

My mither sent me to the town,
To warp a plaiden wab;
But the weary, weary warpin' o't
Has gart me sigh and sab.

A bonnie westlin weaver lad
Sat working at his loom;
He took my heart as wi' a net,
In every knot and thrum.

I sat beside my warpin'-wheel,
And aye I ca'd it roun';
But every shot and every knock,
My heart it ga'e a stoun.

The moon was sinking in the west
Wi' visage pale and wan,
As my bonnie westlin weaver lad
Convoyed me through the glen.

But what was said, or what was done,
Shame fa' me gin I tell;
But, oh! I fear the kintra soon
Will ken as weel's mysel'.
 To the weavers gin ye go, fair maids,
 To the weavers gin ye go;
 I rede you right gang ne'er at night,
 To the weavers gin ye go.



**GUDE'EN TO YOU, KIMMER.**

Tune—"We're a' noddin'."

GUDE'EN to you, kimmer,
And how do ye do?
Hiccup, quo kimmer,
The better that I'm fou.
We're a' noddin', nid, nid, noddin',
We're a' noddin' at our house at hame.

Kate sits i' the neuk,
Suppin' hen broo;
De'il tak' Kate,
An' she be na noddin' too!

How's a' wi' you, kimmer,
And how do ye fare?
A pint o' the best o't,
And twa pints mair.

How's a' wi' you, kimmer,
And how do ye thrive?
How mony bairns ha'e ye?
Quo' kimmer, I ha'e five.

Are they a' Johnny's?
Eh! atweel na:
Twa o' them were gotten
When Johnny was awa'.

Cats like milk,
And dogs like broo,
Lads like lasses weel,
And lasses lads too.
We're a' noddin', nid, nid, noddin',
We're a' noddin' at our house at hame.¹

¹ There is another version of the sixth verse and the chorus in a letter to Mr. Robert Ainslie, jun., dated 23rd of August, 1787, which we subjoin:—

The cats like kitchen;
The dogs like broo;
The lasses like the lads weel,
And th' auld wives too.

CHORUS.

And were a' noddin',
Nid, nid, noddin',
We're a' noddin' fou at e'en.



A FRAGMENT.

Tune—"John Anderson my Jo."

ONE night as I did wander,
When corn begins to shoot,
I sat me down to ponder,
Upon an auld tree root:
Auld Ayr ran by before me,
And bickered to the seas;
A cushat¹ crowded o'er me,
That echoed through the braes.

O WHY THE DEUCE SHOULD I REPINE?

[Written extempore, April, 1782.]

O WHY the deuce should I repine,
An' be an ill foreboder?
I'm twenty-three, and five feet nine—
I'll go and be a sodger.

I got some gear wi' meikle care,
I held it well thegither;
But now it's gane, and something mair—
I'll go and be a sodger.

ROBIN SHURE IN HAIRST.

CHORUS.

ROBIN shure in hairst,²
I shure³ wi' him;
Fient a heuk⁴ had I,
Yet I stack by him.

I gaed up to Dunse,
To warp a wab o' plaiden;
At his daddie's yett,⁵
Wha met me but Robin?

¹ Wood-pigeon or dove.² Reaped.⁴ Not a sickle.² Reaped at harvest time.⁵ Gate.

*SWEETEST MAY.*

Was na Robin bauld,
Though I was a cotter,
Played me sic a trick—
And me the ells's dochter!¹

Robin promised me
A' my winter vittle;
Fient haet² he had but three
Goose feathers and a whittle.
Robin shure, &c.

*SWEETEST MAY.*

SWEETEST May, let love inspire thee;
Take a heart which he desires thee;
As thy constant slave regard it;
For its faith and truth reward it.

Proof o' shot to birth or money,
Not the wealthy, but the bonnie;
Not high-born, but noble-minded,
In love's silken band can bind it!

*WHEN I THINK ON THE HAPPY DAYS.*

WHEN I think on the happy days
I spent wi' you, my dearie;
And now what lands between us lie,
How can I be but eerie!

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
As ye were wae and weary!
It was na sae ye glinted by
When I was wi' my dearie.

¹ Elder's daughter.

² Nothing.

MY NANNIE, O!

Tune—"My Nannie, O."

[The heroine of this song was Nannie Fleming, a servant at Calcothill, near Lochlea.]

BEHIND you hills, where Lugar¹ flows,
 'Mang moors an' mosses many, O,
 The wintry sun the day has closed,
 And I 'll awa' to Nannie, O.

The westlin' wind blows loud an' shrill;
 The night's baith mirk and rainy, O;
 But I 'll get my plaid, an' out I 'll steal,
 An' owre the hills to Nannie, O.

My Nannie's charming, sweet, an' young;
 Nae artfu' wiles to win ye, O;
 May ill befa' the flattering tongue
 That wad beguile my Nannie, O!

Her face is fair, her heart is true,
 As spotless as she's bonnie, O;
 The opening gowan,² wet wi' dew,
 Nae purer is than Nannie, O.

A country lad is my degree,
 An' few there be that ken me, O;
 But what care I how few they be?
 I'm welcome aye to Nannie, O.

My riches a's my penny-fee,
 An' I maun guide it cannie, O.
 But warl's gear ne'er troubles me,
 My thoughts are a' my Nannie, O.

Our auld guidman delights to view
 His sheep an' kye thrive bonnie, O;
 But I'm as blithe that hauds his plough,
 An' has nae care but Nannie, O.

Come weel, come woe, I care na by,
 I'll tak' what Heaven will sen' me, O;
 Nae ither care in life have I,
 But live an' love my Nannie, O.

¹ Originally Stinchar.² Daisy.



GREEN GROW THE RASHES.

[A FRAGMENT.]

CHORUS.

GREEN grow the rashes, O!
Green grow the rashes, O!
The sweetest hours that e'er I spent,
Were spent among the lasses, O!

There's nought but care on every han',
In every hour that passes, O:
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O?

The warly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them, O;
An' though at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

But gi'e me a canny hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, O;
An' warly cares, an' warly men,
May a' gae tapsalteerie, O!

For you sae douse, ye sneer at this,
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
He dearly loved the lasses, O.

Auld Nature swears the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O;
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O.



MENIE.

Tune—"Jockey's grey breeks."

AGAIN rejoicing Nature sees
Her robe assume her vernal hues,
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steeped in morning dews.



MENIE.

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CHORUS.¹

And maun I still on Menie² doat,
And bear the scorn that's in her e'e?³
For it's jet, jet black, an' it's like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be!

In vain to me the cowslips blaw;
In vain to me the violets spring;
In vain to me, in glen or shaw,
The mavis³ and the lintwhite⁴ sing.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team;
Wi' joy the tentie⁵ seedsman stalks;
But life to me's a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wauks.

The wanton coot the water skims;
Amang the reeds the ducklings cry;
The stately swan majestic swims,
And every thing is blest but I.

The shepherd steeks his faulding slap,⁶
And owre the moorlands whistles shrill;
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step
I meet him on the dewy hill.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Bliithe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on flittering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I hameward glide.

Come, Winter, with thine angry howl,
And, raging, bend the naked tree;
Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,
When Nature all is sad like me!

CHORUS.

And maun I still on Menie doat,
And bear the scorn that's in her e'e?³
For it's jet, jet black, an' it's like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be:

¹ This chorus is part of a song composed by a gentleman in Edinburgh, a particular friend of the Author's.

² Menie is the common abbreviation of Marianne.

⁴ Linnet.

⁵ Careful.

³ Thrush.

⁶ Gate.



THE BONNIE BANKS OF AYR.

[Composed when the Poet thought of leaving Scotland, and going to the West Indies.]

Tune—"Roslin Castle."

THE gloomy night is gath'ring fast,
Loud roars the wild inconstant blast;
Yon murky cloud is foul with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain;
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scattered coveys meet secure,
While here I wander, pressed with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

The Autumn mourns her ripening corn
By early Winter's ravage torn;
Across her placid azure sky
She sees the scowling tempest fly:
Chill runs my blood to hear it rave;
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonnie banks of Ayr.

'Tis not the surging billow's roar;
'Tis not that fatal deadly shore;
Though death in every shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear:
But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierced with many a wound.
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonnie banks of Ayr.

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales!
Her heathy moors and winding vales;
The scenes where wretched fancy roves,
Pursuing past unhappy loves!
Farewell, my friends! farewell, my foes!
My peace with these, my love with those:—
The bursting tears my heart declare,
Farewell the bonnie banks of Ayr!

MY JEAN.¹

[Composed at the same period.]

Tune—"The Northern Lass."

THOUGH cruel Fate should bid us part,
Far as the Pole and Line,
Her dear idea round my heart
Should tenderly entwine.
Though mountains rise, and deserts howl,
And oceans roar between;
Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
I still would love my Jean.

RANTIN' ROVIN' ROBIN.

[This song, it is said, commemorates an incident which occurred when Robert Burns was born.]

Tune—"Daintie Davie."

THERE was a lad was born in Kyle,²
But what'n a day o' what'n a style
I doubt it's hardly worth the while
To be sae nice wi' Robin.
Robin was a rovin' boy,
Rantin' rovin', rantin' rovin';
Robin was a rovin' boy,
Rantin' rovin' Robin!

Our monarch's hindmost year but ane
Was five-and-twenty days begun,
'Twas then a blast o' Janwar win'
Blew hanel in on Robin.

The gossip keekit³ in his loof;⁴
Quo' she, Wha lives will see the proof,
This waly⁵ boy will be nae coof,⁶—
I think we'll ca' him Robin.

He'll hae misfortunes great and sma',
But aye a heart aboon them a';
He'll be a credit 'till us a',
We'll a' be proud o' Robin.

¹ Jean Armour.² A district of Ayrshire.³ Looked.⁴ Palm.⁵ Goodly.⁶ Fool.

BONNIE PEGGY ALISON.

But, sure as three times three mak' nine,
 I see, by ilka score and line,
 This chap will dearly like our kin',—
 So leeze me on thee,¹ Robin!

Guid faith, quo' she, I doubt ye gar,
 The bonnie lasses lie aspar;
 But twenty fauts ye may ha'e waur,—
 So blessin's on thee, Robin!

Robin was a rovin' boy,
 Rantin' rovin', rantin' rovin';
 Robin was a rovin' boy,
 Rantin' rovin' Robin!

BONNIE PEGGY ALISON.

Tune—"Braes o' Balquhiddier."

CHORUS.

I'LL kiss thee yet, yet,
 An' I'll kiss thee o'er again;
 An' I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
 My bonnie Peggy Alison!

Ilk care and fear, when thou art near,
 I ever mair defy them, O;
 Young kings upon their hanel throne
 Are nae sae blest as I am, O;

When in my arms, wi' a' thy charms,
 I clasp my countless treasure, O,
 I seek nae mair o' Heaven to share,
 Than sic a moment's pleasure, O!

And by thy een, sae bonnie blue,
 I swear I'm thine for ever, O!
 And on thy lips I seal my vow,
 And break it shall I never, O!

I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
 An' I'll kiss thee o'er again;
 An' I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
 My bonnie Peggy Alison!

¹ Blessings on thee.

**MAUCHLINE BELLES.**

Tune—"Mauchline Belles."

O LEAVE novels, ye Mauchline belles!
Ye're safer at your spinning-wheel;
Such witching books are baited hooks
For rakish rooks—like Rob Mossgiel.

Your fine Tom Jones and Grandisons,
They make your youthful fancies reel;
They heat your veins, and fire your brains,
And then ye're prey for Rob Mossgiel.

Beware a tongue that's smoothly hung,
A heart that warmly seems to feel;
That feeling heart but acts a part—
'Tis rakish art in Rob Mossgiel.

The frank address, the soft caress,
Are worse than poisoned darts of steel;
The frank address, and politesse,
Are all finesse in Rob Mossgiel.

**THE BELLES OF MAUCHLINE.**

Tune—"Bonnie Dundee."

In Mauchline there dwells six proper young belles,
The pride o' the place and its neighbourhood a';
Their carriage and dress, a stranger would guess,
In Lon'on or Paris they'd gotten it a'.

Miss Miller is fine, Miss Markland's divine,
Miss Smith she has wit, and Miss Betty is braw;
There's beauty and fortune to get wi' Miss Morton,
But Armour's ' the jewel for me o' them a'.

¹ Jean, afterwards his wife.



HUNTING SONG.

Tune—"I rede you beware at the hunting."

THE heather was blooming, the meadows were mawn,
Our lads gaed a-hunting ae day at the dawn,
O'er moors and o'er mosses, and mony a glen,
At length they discovered a bonnie moor-hen.

I rede you beware at the hunting, young men;
I rede you beware at the hunting, young men;
Tak' some on the wing, and some as they spring,
But cannily steal on a bonnie moor-hen.

Sweet brushing the dew from the brown heather-bells,
Her colours betrayed her on yon mossy fells;
Her plumage outlusted the pride o' the spring,
And oh! as she wantonèd gay on the wing,

Auld Phoebus himsel' as he peeped o'er the hill,
In spite, at her plumage he trièd his skill;
He levelled his rays where she basked on the brae—
His rays were outshone, and but marked where she lay,

They hunted the valley, they hunted the hill,
The best of our lads, wi' the best o' their skill;
But still as the fairest she sat in their sight—
Then, whirr! she was over, a mile at a flight.
I rede you beware at the hunting, young men;
I rede you beware at the hunting, young men;
Tak' some on the wing, and some as they spring,
But cannily steal on a bonnie moor-hen.



YOUNG PEGGY.

Tune—"Last time I cam' o'er the muir."

YOUNG Peggy blooms our bonniest lass;
Her blush is like the morning,
The rosy dawn, the springing grass
With pearly gems adorning:
Her eyes outshine the radiant beams
That gild the passing shower,
And glitter o'er the crystal streams,
And cheer each fresh'ning flower.



THE CURE FOR ALL CARE.

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Her lips more than the cherries bright,
A richer dye has graced them;
They charm th' admiring gazer's sight,
And sweetly tempt to taste them;
Her smile is like the evening mild,
When feathered tribes are courting,
And little lambkins, wanton wild,
In playful bands disporting.

Were Fortune lovely Peggy's foe,
Such sweetness would relent her;
As blooming Spring unbends the brow
Of surly, savage Winter.
Detraction's eye no aim can gain,
Her winning powers to lessen;
And spiteful Envy grins in vain,
The poisoned tooth to fasten.

Ye Powers of Honour, Love, and Truth,
From every ill defend her!
Inspire the highly favoured youth
The Destinies intend her;
Still fan the sweet connubial flame,
Responsive in each bosom;
And bless the dear parental name
With many a filial blossom.

THE CURE FOR ALL CARE.

Tune—"Prepare, my dear brethren, to the tavern let's fly."

No churchman am I for to rail and to write,
No statesman nor soldier to plot or to fight,
No sly man of business contriving a snare—
For a big-bellied bottle's the whole of my care.

The peer I don't envy, I give him his bow,
I scorn not the peasant, though ever so low;
But a club of good fellows, like those that are here,
And a bottle like this, are my glory and care.

Here passes the squire on his brother—his horse;
There Centum-per-centum, the cit with his purse;
But see you the Crown, how it waves in the air?
There a big-bellied bottle still eases my care.



The wife of my bosom, alas! she did die;
For sweet consolation to church I did fly;
I found that old Solomon provèd it fair,
That a big-bellied bottle's a cure for all care.

I once was persuaded a venture to make;
A letter informed me that all was to wreck;
But the pury old landlord just waddled up stairs,
With a glorious bottle that ended my cares.

"Life's cares they are comforts" — a maxim laid down
By the bard—what d'ye call him?—that wore the black
gown;
And faith, I agree with th' old prig to a hair;
For a big-bellied bottle's a heav'n of a care.

STANZA ADDED IN A MASONIC LODGE.

Then fill up a bumper, and make it o'erflow,
And honours masonic prepare for to throw;
May every true brother of the compass and square
Have a big-bellied bottle when harassed with care!

ELIZA.²

[Written when about to emigrate to the West Indies.]

Tune—"Gilderoy."

FROM thee, Eliza, I must go,
And from my native shore;
The cruel Fates between us throw
A boundless ocean's roar:
But boundless oceans, roaring wide,
Between my love and me,
They never, never can divide
My heart and soul from thee!

Farewell, farewell, Eliza dear,
The maid that I adore!
A boding voice is in mine ear,
We part to meet no more!
The latest throb that leaves my heart,
While Death stands victor by,
That throb, Eliza, is thy part,
And thine that latest sigh!

¹ Young's "Night Thoughts."

² Elizabeth Barbour.



THE SONS OF OLD KILLIE.

[Sung by Burns in the Kilmarnock Kilwinning Lodge, 1786. The Poet possessed a fine bass voice.]

Tune—"Shawnboy."

YE sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,
To follow the noble vocation,
Your thrifty old mother has scarce such another
To sit in that honourèd station.
I've little to say, but only to pray,
As praying's the ton of your fashion :
A prayer from the Muse you well may excuse,—
'Tis seldom her favourite passion.

Ye Powers who preside o'er the wind and the tide,
Who markèd each element's border ;
Who formèd this frame with beneficent aim,
Whose sovereign statute is order !
Within this dear mansion may wayward contentiou
Or witherèd envy ne'er enter ;
May secrecy round be the mystical bound,
And brotherly love be the centre !

[The original, in the Poet's handwriting, belongs to Gabriel Neil, Glasgow, and has the following note attached to it :—"This song, wrote by Mr. Burns, was sung by him in the Kilmarnock Kilwinning Lodge, in 1786, and given by him to Mr. Parker, who was Master of the Lodge.]

KATHERINE JAFFRAY.

THERE lived a lass in yonder dale,
And down in yonder glen, O !
And Katherine Jaffray was her name,
Weel known to many men, O !

Out came the Lord of Lauderdale,
Out frae the South countrie, O !
All for to court this pretty maid,
Her bridegroom for to be, O !

He's telled her father and mother baith,
As I hear sundry say, O !
But he has na telled the lass hersel'
'Till on her wedding day, O !



Then came the Laird o' Lochington,
Out frae the English border,
All for to court this pretty maid,
All mounted in good order.

ON CESSNOCK BANKS.

Tune—"If he be a butcher neat and trim."

ON Cessnock banks there lives a lass,¹—
Could I describe her shape and mien;
The graces of her weel-fared face,
And the glancin' of her sparklin' een!

She's fresher than the morning dawn,
When rising Phœbus first is seen,
When dewdrops twinkle o'er the lawn;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een

She's stately, like yon youthful ash,
That grows the cowslip braes between,
And shoots its head above each bush;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

She's spotless as the flowering thorn,
With flowers so white and leaves so green,
When purest in the dewy morn;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

Her looks are like the sportive lamb,
When flowery May adorns the scene,
That wantons round its bleating dam;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

Her hair is like the curling mist
That shades the mountain-side at e'en,
When flower-reviving rains are past;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

Her forehead's like the showery bow,
When shining sunbeams intervene,
And gild the distant mountain's brow;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

Her voice is like the evening thrush
That sings on Cessnock banks unseen,
While his mate sits nestling in the bush;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

¹ Supposed to be the Poet's first love, Ellison Begbie.



ON CESSNOCK BANKS.

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Her lips are like the cherries ripe
That sunny walls from Boreas screen;
They tempt the taste and charm the sight;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

Her teeth are like a flock of sheep,
With fleeces newly washen clean,
That slowly mount the rising steep;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

Her breath is like the fragrant breeze
That gently stirs the blossomed bean,
When Phœbus sinks behind the seas;
An' she's twa glancin', sparklin' een.

But it's not her air, her form, her face,
Though matching Beauty's fabled queen,
But the mind that shines in every grace—
An' chiefly in her sparklin' een.



ON CESSNOCK BANKS.

[IMPROVED VERSION.]

Tune—"If he be a butcher neat and trim."

ON Cessnock banks a lassie dwells;
Could I describe her shape and mien.
Our lasses a' she far excels,—
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

She's sweeter than the morning dawn,
When rising Phœbus first is seen,
And dewdrops twinkle o'er the lawn;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

She's stately, like yon youthful ash,
That grows the cowslip braes between,
And drinks the stream with vigour fresh;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

She's spotless, like the flowering thorn,
With flowers so white and leaves so green,
When purest in the dewy morn;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her looks are like the vernal May,
When evening Phœbus shines serene,
While birds rejoice on every spray;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her hair is like the curling mist
That climbs the mountain-sides at e'en,
When flower-reviving rains are past;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her forehead's like the showery bow,
When gleaming sunbeams intervene,
And gild the distant mountain's brow;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her cheeks are like yon crimson gem,
The pride of all the flowery scene,
Just opening on its thorny stem;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her teeth are like the nightly snow,
When pale the morning rises keen,
While hid the murm'ring streamlets flow;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her lips are like yon cherries ripe,
That sunny walls from Boreas screen;
They tempt the taste and charm the sight;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her breath is like the fragrant breeze,
That gently stirs the blossomed bean,
When Phœbus sinks behind the seas;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

Her voice is like the evening thrush,
That sings on Cessnock banks unseen,
While his mate sits nestling in the bush;
An' she's twa sparkling, roguish een.

But it's not her air, her form, her face,
Though matching Beauty's fabled queen
'Tis the mind that shines in every grace,
An' chiefly in her roguish een.

MARY.¹

Tune—"Blue bonnets."

POWERS celestial! whose protection
Ever guards the virtuous fair,
While in distant climes I wander,
Let my Mary be your care;

¹ Highland Mary. Her name was Mary Campbell.



TO MARY.

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Let her form, sae fair and faultless,
Fair and faultless as your own,
Let my Mary's kindred spirit
Draw your choicest influence down.

Make the gales you waft around her
Soft and peaceful as her breast;
Breathing in the breeze that fans her,
Soothe her bosom into rest:
Guardian angels! O protect her,
When in distant lands I roam;
To realms unknown while fate exiles me,
Make her bosom still my home!

TO MARY.

Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
Across th' Atlantic's roar?

O sweet grow the lime and the orange,
And the apple on the pine;
But a' the charms o' the Indies
Can never equal thine.

I ha'e sworn by the Heavens to my Mary,
I ha'e sworn by the Heavens to be true;
And sae may the Heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand;
O plight me your faith, my Mary,
Before I leave Scotia's strand.

We ha'e plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join;
And curst be the cause that shall part us!—
The hour and the moment o' time!

¹ Mary Campbell, or Highland Mary.

**HIGHLAND MARY.¹**

Tune—"Katharine Ogie."

YE banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There Simmer first unfold her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green **birk**,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom!
As, underneath their fragrant shade,
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie:
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursel's asunder;
But O! fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod and cauld's the clay
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now those rosy lips,
I aft hae kissed so fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance,
That dwelt on me sae kindly;
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

¹ Mary Campbell : she died of malignant fever at Greenock, 1786.

THE LASS OF BALLOCHMYLE.¹

Tune—"Miss Forbes's Farewell to Banff."

'Twas even—the dewy fields were green;
On every blade the pearls hang;
The zephyrs wantoned round the bean,
And bore its fragrant sweets along;
In every glen the mavis sang,
All Nature listening seemed the while,
Except where greenwood echoes rang,
Among the braes o' Ballochmyle.

With careless step I onward strayed,
My heart rejoiced in Nature's joy,
When musing in a lonely glade,
A maiden fair I chanced to spy:
Her look was like the morning's eye,
Her air like Nature's vernal smile,
Perfection whispered, passing by,
Behold the lass o' Ballochmyle!

Fair is the morn in flowery May,
And sweet is night in autumn mild;
When roving through the garden gay,
Or wandering in the lonely wild:
But Woman, Nature's darling child!
There all her charms she does compile;
Ev'n there her other works are foiled
By the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

O! had she been a country maid,
And I the happy country swain,
Though sheltered in the lowest shed
That ever rose on Scotland's plain;
Through weary winter's wind and rain,
With joy, with rapture I would toil;
And nightly to my bosom strain
The bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle!

Then pride might climb the slippery steep,
Where fame and honours lofty shine;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine;
Give me the cot below the pine,
To tend the flocks, or till the soil,
And every day have joys divine
With the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

¹ Miss Wilhelmina Alexander, daughter of the proprietor of Ballochmyle.



BONNIE DUNDEE.

[The second verse only of this song was written by Burns.]

Tune—"Bonnie Dundee."

O, **WHARE** did ye get that hauver meal bannock?
O, silly blind body, O dinna ye see?
I gat it frae a brisk young sodger laddie,
Between Saint Johnston and bonnie Dundee.
O gin I saw the laddie that ga'e me 't!
Aft has he doudled me up on his knee;
May Heaven protect my bonnie Scots laddie,
And send him safe hame to his babie and me!

My blessin's upon thy sweet wee lippie,
My blessin's upon thy bonnie e'e bree!
Thy smiles are sae like my blythe sodger laddie,
Thou's aye be dearer and dearer to me!
But I'll big a bower on yon bonny banks,
Where Tay rins wimplin' by sae clear;
And I'll clead thee in the tartan sae fine,
And mak' thee a man like thy daddie dear.

THE JOYFUL WIDOWER.

Tune—"Maggie Lauder."

I **MARRIED** with a scolding wife
The fourteenth of November;
She made me weary of my life,
By one unruly member.

Long did I bear the heavy yoke,
And many griefs attended;
But, to my comfort be it spoke,
Now, now her life is ended.

We lived full one-and-twenty years
A man and wife together;
At length from me her course she steered,
And gone I know not whither.

Would I could guess, I do profess—
I speak, and do not flatter—
Of all the women in the world,
I never could come at her.



THERE WAS A WIFE.

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Her body is bestowèd well,
A handsome grave does hide her;
But sure her soul is not in hell—
The de'il could ne'er abide her.

I rather think she is aloft,
And imitating thunder;
For why—methinks I hear her voice
Tearing the clouds asunder.

THERE WAS A WIFE.

THERE was a wife wonned in Cockpen,
Scroggam;
She brewed guid ale for gentlemen;
Sing auld Cowl, lay you down by me,
Scroggam, my dearie, ruffum.

The gudewife's dochter fell in a fever,
Scroggam;
The priest o' the parish fell in anither;
Sing auld Cowl, lay you down by me,
Scroggam, my dearie, ruffum.

They laid the twa i' the bed thegither,
Scroggam;
That the heat o' the tane might cool the tither;
Sing auld Cowl, lay you down by me,
Scroggam, my dearie, ruffum.

[This song is inserted in the *Musical Museum*, where it is stated to have been written by Burns; consequently it is here inserted among his other songs.]

COME DOWN THE BACK STAIRS.

Tune—"Whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad."

CHORUS.

O, WHISTLE, and I'll come
To you, my lad;
O, whistle, and I'll come
To you, my lad;
Though father and mither
Should baith gae mad,
O, whistle, and I'll come
To you, my lad.

THERE 'S NEWS, LASSES, NEWS.

Come down the back stairs
 When ye come to court me;
 Come down the back stairs
 When ye come to court me;
 Come down the back stairs,
 And let naebody see,
 And come as ye were na
 Coming to me.

THERE 'S NEWS, LASSES, NEWS.

THERE 's news, lasses, news,
 Gude news I have to tell,
 There's a boat fu' o' lads
 Come to our town to sell.

CHORUS.

The wean ¹ wants a cradle,
 An' the cradle wants a cod, ²
 An' I'll no gang to my bed
 Until I get a nod.

Father, quo' she, Mither, quo' she,
 Do what you can,
 I'll no gang to my bed
 Till I get a man.

The wean, &c.

I ha'e as gude a craft rig
 As made o' yird and stane;
 And waly fa' the ley-crap,
 For I maun tilled again.
 The wean, &c.

I'M O'ER YOUNG TO MARRY YET.

Tune—"I'm o'er young to marry yet."

I AM my mammy's ae bairn,
 Wi' unco folk I weary, sir;
 And lying in a man's bed,
 I'm fleyed wad mak' me eerie, sir.
 I'm o'er young to marry yet;
 I'm o'er young to marry yet;
 I'm o'er young—'twad be a sin
 To tak' me frae my mammy yet.

¹ Babe.

² Pillow.



DAMON AND SYLVIA.

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My mammy coft ' me a new gown,
The kirk maun ha'e the gracing o't;
Were I to lie wi' you, kind sir,
I'm feared ye 'd spoil the lacing o't.

Hallowmas is come and gane,
The nights are lang in winter, sir;
An' you an' I in ae bed
In trowth I dare na venture, sir.

Fu' loud and shrill the frosty wind
Blaws through the leafless timmer, sir;
But if ye come this gate again,
I'll aulder be gin simmer, sir.
I'm o'er young to marry yet;
I'm o'er young to marry yet;
I'm o'er young—'twad be a sin
To tak' me frae my mammy yet.

DAMON AND SYLVIA.

Tune—"The tither morn, as I forlorn."

YON wandering rill that marks the hill,
And glances o'er the brae, sir,
Slides by a bower where mony a flower,
Sheds fragrance on the day, sir.

There Damon lay with Sylvia gay,
To love they thought nae crime, sir;
The wild-birds sang, the echoes rang,
While Damon's heart beat time, sir.

THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.²

Tune—"The Birks of Aberfeldy."

CHORUS.

BONNIE lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go;
Bonnie lassie, will ye go
To the birks of Aberfeldy?³

¹ Bought.

² Burns says he wrote this song while standing under the Falls of Aberfeldy, near Moness, in Perthshire, in September, 1787.

³ Aberfeldy is in Aberdeenshire.

MACPHERSON'S FAREWELL.

Now simmer blinks on flowery braes,
 And o'er the crystal streamlet plays;
 Come, let us spend the lightsome days
 In the birks of Aberfeldy.

While o'er their heads the hazels hing,
 The little birdies blithely sing,
 Or lightly flit on wanton wing
 In the birks of Aberfeldy.

The braes ascend, like lofty wa's,
 The foaming stream deep-roaring fa's,
 O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws,
 The birks of Aberfeldy.

The hoary cliffs are crowned wi' flowers,
 White o'er the linn the burnie pours,
 And rising, weets wi' misty showers
 The birks of Aberfeldy.

Let Fortune's gifts at random flee,
 They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,
 Supremely blest wi' love and thee,
 In the birks of Aberfeldy.
 Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
 Will ye go, will ye go;
 Bonnie lassie, will ye go
 To the birks of Aberfeldy?

MACPHERSON'S¹ FAREWELL.

Tune—"M'Pherson's Rant."

FAREWELL, ye dungeons dark and strong,
 The wretch's destinie!
 Macpherson's time will not be long
 On yonder gallows-tree.

¹ Macpherson was chief of a branch of the clan Chattan, and a famous freebooter. "Macpherson's Lament," says Sir Walter Scott, "was a well-known song many years before the Ayrshire Bard wrote these additional verses, which constitute its principal merit. This noted freebooter was executed at Inverness about the beginning of the last century. When he came to the fatal tree, he played the tune to which he has bequeathed his name upon a favourite violin; and, holding up the instrument, he offered it to any one of his clan who would undertake to play the tune over his body at the lyke-wake. As none answered, he dashed it to pieces on the executioner's head, and flung himself from the ladder."



THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT

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Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He played a spring, and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

Oh! what is death but parting breath?
On mony a bloody plain
I've dared his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again!

Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword!
And there's no a man in all Scotland
But I'll brave him at a word.

I've lived a life of sturt and strife;
I die by treacherie:
It burns my heart I must depart,
And not avengèd be.

Now farewell light—thou sunshine bright
And all beneath the sky!
May coward shame disdain his name,
The wretch that dares not die!
Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He played a spring and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT.

The small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning,
The murmuring streamlet winds clear through the vale;
The hawthorn trees blow in the dews of the morning,
And wild scattered cowslips bedeck the green dale:

But what can give pleasure, or what can seem fair,
While the lingering moments are numbered by care?
No flowers gaily springing, nor birds sweetly singing,
Can soothe the sad bosom of joyless despair.

The deed that I dared could it merit their malice,
A king and a father to place on his throne?
His right are these hills and his right are these valleys,
Where the wild beasts find shelter, but I can find none.

But 'tis not my sufferings thus wretched, forlorn,
My brave gallant friends, 'tis your ruin I mourn—
Your deeds proved so loyal in hot bloody trial,—
Alas! can I make you no sweeter return!

**BRAW LADS OF GALLA WATER.**

Tune—"Galla Water."

CHORUS.

Braw, braw lads of Galla Water ;
O braw lads of Galla Water !
I'll kilt my coats aboon my knee,
And follow my love through the water.

Sae fair her hair, sae brent her brow,
Sae bonny blue her een, my dearie ;
Sae white her teeth, sae sweet her mou',
The mair I kiss she 's aye my dearie.

O'er yon bank and o'er yon brae,
O'er yon moss among the heather,
I'll kilt my coats aboon my knee,
And follow my love through the water.

Down among the broom, the broom,
Down among the broom, my dearie,
The lassie lost a silken snood,
That cost her mony a blirt and bleary.

Braw, braw lads of Galla Water ;
O braw lads of Galla Water !
I'll kilt my coats aboon my knee,
And follow my love through the water.

**STAY, MY CHARMER.**

Tune—"An Gille dubh ciar dhubbh."

STAY, my charmer, can you leave me ?
Cruel, cruel to deceive me !
Well you know how much you grieve me !
Cruel charmer, can you go ?
Cruel charmer, can you go ?

By my love so ill requited ;
By the faith you fondly plighted ;
By the pangs of lovers slighted ;
Do not, do not leave me so !
Do not, do not leave me so !

STRATHALLAN'S¹ LAMENT.

THICKEST night, o'erhang my dwelling!
Howling tempests, o'er me rave!
Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
Still surround my lonely cave!

Crystal streamlets gently flowing,
Busy haunts of base mankind,
Western breezes softly blowing,
Suit not my distracted mind.

In the cause of right engagèd,
Wrongs injurious to redress,
Honour's war we strongly wagèd,
But the heavens denied success.

Farewell, fleeting, fickle treasure,
'Tween Misfortune and Folly shared!
Farewell, Peace, and farewell, Pleasure!
Farewell, flattering man's regard!

Ruin's wheel has driven o'er me;
Nor dare my fate a hope attend;
The wide world is all before me—
But a world without a friend!

MY HOGGIE.²

Tune—"What will I do gin my hoggie die!"³

WHAT will I do gin my hoggie die?
My joy, my pride, my hoggie!
My only beast, I had nae mae,
And vow but I was voggie!³

The lee-lang night we watched the fauld,
Me and my faithfu' doggie;
We heard nought but the roaring linn
Amang the braes sae scroggie;⁴

But the houlet⁵ cried frae the castle wa',
The blitter⁶ frae the boggie,
The tod⁷ replied upon the hill:
I trembled for my hoggie.

¹ James Drummond, Viscount Strathallan, who is believed to have escaped from the field of Culloden, and to have died in exile.

² A two-year-old sheep. ³ Vain of it. ⁴ Full of stunted undergrowth.

⁵ Owl.

⁶ Mire-snipe. ⁷ Fox.

HER DADDY FORBADE.

When day did daw', and cocks did *craw*,
 The morning it was foggy ;
 An unco tyke¹ lap o'er the dyke,
 And maist has killed my hoggie.

HER DADDY FORBADE.

Tune—"Jumpin' John."

HER daddie forbade, her minnie forbade ;
 Forbidden she wadna be ;
 She wadna trow't the browst she brewed²
 Wad taste sae bitterlie.
 The lang lad they ca' Jumpin' John
 Beguiled the bonnie lassie,
 The lang lad they ca' Jumpin' John
 Beguiled the bonnie lassie.

A cow and a cauf, a yowe and a hauf,
 And thretty guid shillin's and three ;
 A vera gude tocher,³ a cotter-man's dochter,⁴
 The lass with the bonnie black e'e.

UP IN THE MORNING EARLY.

CHORUS.

Up in the morning's no for me,
 Up in the morning early ;
 When a' the hills are covered wi' snaw,
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west,
 The drift is driving sairly ;
 Sae loud and shrill I hear the blast,
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
 A' day they fare but sparely ;
 And lang's the night frae e'en to morn
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Up in the morning's no for me,
 Up in the morning early ;
 When a' the hills are covered wi' snaw,
 I'm sure it's winter fairly.

¹ Dog.

³ Dowry.

² She would not believe the drink she brewed.

⁴ Daughter.

**THE YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER.¹**

Tune—"Morag."

Loud blaw the frosty breezes,
The snaw the mountains cover;
Like winter on me seizes,
Since my young Highland Rover
Far wanders nations over.
Where'er he go, where'er he stray,
May Heaven be his warden;
Return him safe to fair Strathspey
And bonnie Castle-Gordon!

The trees now naked groaning,
Shall soon wi' leaves be hinging,
The birdies dowie moaning,
Shall a' be blithely singing,
And every flower be springing.
Sae I'll rejoice the lee-lang day,
When by his mighty warden
My youth's returned to fair Strathspey
And bonnie Castle-Gordon.

HEY, THE DUSTY MILLER.

Tune—"The Dusty Miller."

HEY, the dusty miller,
And his dusty coat;
He will win a shilling,
Or he spend a groat.
Dusty was the coat,
Dusty was the colour,
Dusty was the kiss
I got frae the miller.

Hey, the dusty miller,
And his dusty sack;
Leeze me on the calling
Fills the dusty peck.
Fills the dusty peck,
Brings the dusty siller;
I wad g'e my coatie
For the dusty miller.

¹ Prince Charles Edward.



BONNIE PEG.

As I came in by our gate end,
As day was waxin' weary,
O wha came tripping down the street,
But bonnie Peg, my dearie !

Her air sae sweet, and shape complete,
Wi' nae proportion wanting,
The Queen of Love did never move
Wi' motion mair enchanting.

Wi' linkèd hands, we took the sands
Adown yon winding river ;
And, oh ! that hour and broomy bower,
Can I forget it ever ?

THERE WAS A LASS.

Tune—"Duncan Davison."

THERE was a lass, they ca'd her Meg,
And she held o'er the moors to spin ;
There was a lad that followed her,
They ca'd him Duncan Davison.
The moor was dreigh,¹ and Meg was skeigh,²
Her favour Duncan could na win ;
For wi' the rock she wad him knock,
And aye she shook the temper-pin.

As o'er the moor they lightly foor,³
A burn was clear, a glen was green,
Upon the banks they eased their shanks,
And aye she set the wheel between :
But Duncan swore a haly aith,
That Meg should be a bride the morn ;
Then Meg took up her spinnin' graith,⁴
And flang them a' out o'er the burn.

We'll big a house—a wee, wee house,
And we will live like king and queen ;
Sae blythe and merry we will be
When ye set by the wheel at e'en

¹ Tedious.
² Went.

³ Proud.
⁴ Gear.



SHELAH O'NEIL.

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A man may drink and no be drunk;
A man may fight and no be slain;
A man may kiss a bonnie lass,
And aye be welcome back again.

SHELAH O'NEIL.

WHEN first I began for to sigh and to woo her,
Of many fine things I did say a great deal,
But, above all the rest, that which pleased her the best,
Was, oh! will you marry me, Shelah O'Neil?
My point I soon carried, for straight we were married,
Then the weight of my burden I soon 'gan to feel,—
For she scolded, she fisted—O then I enlisted,
Left Ireland, and whiskey, and Shelah O'Neil.

Then tired and dull-hearted, O then I deserted,
And fled into regions far distant from home,
To Frederick's army, where none e'er could harm me,
Save Shelah herself in the shape of a bomb.
I fought every battle, where cannons did rattle,
Felt sharp shot, alas! and the sharp-pointed steel;
But, in all my wars round, thank my stars, I ne'er found
Ought so sharp as the tongue of cursed Shelah O'Neil.

THENIEL MENZIE'S BONNIE MARY.

Tune—"The Ruffian's Rant."

In coming by the brig o' Dye,
At Darlet we a blink did tarry;
As day was dawin' in the sky,
We drank a health to bonnie Mary.
Theniel Menzie's bonnie Mary,
Theniel Menzie's bonnie Mary;
Charlie Gregor tint¹ his plaidie,
Kissin' Theniel's bonnie Mary.

Her een sae bright, her brow sae white,
Her haffet² locks as brown's a berry;
And aye they dimpl't wi' a smile,
The rosy cheeks o' bonnie Mary.

¹ Lost.

² Temple.



THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.

We lap¹ and danced the lee-lang day,
Till piper lads were wae an' weary;
But Charlie gat the spring² to pay,
For kissin' Theniel's bonnie Mary.
Theniel Menzie's bonnie Mary,
Theniel Menzie's bonnie Mary;
Charlie Gregor tint his plaidie,
Kissin' Theniel's bonnie Mary.

THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.³

Tune—"Bhannerach dhon na chri."

How pleasant the banks of the clear-winding Devon,
With green-spreading bushes and flowers blooming fair!
But the bonniest flower on the banks of the Devon
Was once a sweet bud on the braes of the Ayr.
Mild be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,
In the gay rosy morn, as it bathes in the dew!
And gentle the fall of the soft vernal shower,
That steals on the evening each leaf to renew.
O spare the dear blossoms, ye orient breezes,
With chill hoary wing, as ye usher the dawn!
And far be thou distant, thou reptile that seizes
The verdure and pride of the garden and lawn!
Let Bourbon exult in his gay gilded lilies,
And England, triumphant, display her proud rose:
A fairer than either adorns the green valleys
Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

THERE'LL NEVER BE PEACE TILL JAMIE COMES
HAME.

[You must know a beautiful Jacobite air, "There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame." When political combustion ceases to be the object of princes and patriots, it then, you know, becomes the lawful prey of historians and poets.—BURNS.]

Tune—"There are few guid fellows when Willie's awa'."

By yon castle wa', at the close of the day,
I heard a man sing, though his head it was grey;
And as he was singing, the tears fast down came—
There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

¹ Jumped.

² Music.

³ This song was composed on Charlotte Hamilton, a beautiful girl, the sister of the Poet's friend, Gavin Hamilton.



YE HA'E LIEN WRANG, LASSIE.

295

The Church is in ruins, the State is in jars,
Delusions, oppressions, and murderous wars :
We dare na' weel say 't, but we ken wha's to blame—
There 'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

My seven braw sons for Jamie drew sword,
And now I greet ' round their green beds in the yird :
It brak the sweet heart o' my faithfu' auld dame—
There 'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

Now life is a burden that bows me down,
Sin' I tint³ my bairns, and he tint his crown ;
But till my last moment my words are the same—
There 'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame.

YE HA'E LIEN WRANG, LASSIE.

CHORUS.

Ye ha'e lien a' wrang, las
Ye 've lien a' wrang ;
Ye 've lien in an unco⁴ bed,
And wi' a fremit⁵ man.

Your rosy cheeks are turned sae wan,
Ye're greener than the grass, lassie !
Your coatie's shorter by a span,
Yet ne'er an inch the less, lassie.

O, lassie, ye ha'e played the fool,
And ye will feel the scorn, lassie,
For aye the brose ye sup at e'en
Ye bock⁶ them e'er the morn, lassie.

O, ance ye danced upon the knowes,⁷
And through the wood ye sang, lassie,
But in the herrying o' a bee byke,⁸
I fear ye 've got a stang, lassie.
Ye ha'e lien a' wrang, lassie,
Ye 've lien a' wrang ;
Ye 've lien in an unco bed,
And wi' a fremit man.

¹ Weep.

⁴ Strange.

⁷ Hills.

² Earth.

⁵ Stranger.

⁸ Plundering of a beehive.

³ Lost.

⁶ Vomit.

**RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING.¹**

Tune—"Macgregor of Ruara's Lament."

RAVING winds around her blowing,
Yellow leaves the woodlands strowing,
By a river hoarsely roaring,
Isabella strayed deploring:—
"Farewell hours that late did measure
Sunshine days of joy and pleasure!
Hail thou gloomy night of sorrow,
Cheerless night that knows no morrow!

"O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering;
Chilly grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell despair my fancy seizes.
Life, thou soul of every blessing,
Load to misery most distressing,
Oh, how gladly I'd resign thee,
And to dark oblivion join thee!"

WOMEN'S MINDS.

Tune—"For a' that."

THOUGH women's minds, like winter winds,
May shift and turn, and a' that,
The noblest breast adores them maist,
A consequence I draw that.

CHORUS.

For a' that, and a' that,
And twice as muckle's a' that,
The bonnie lass that I lo'e best,
She'll be my ain for a' that.

Great love I bear to all the fair,
Their humble slave, an' a' that,
But lordly will, I hold it still,
A mortal sin to thraw that.

¹ "I composed these verses," says Burns, "on Miss Isabella M'Leod, of Rasay, alluding to her feelings on the death of her sister, and the still more melancholy death of her sister's husband, the late Earl of Loudon."



HOW LANG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT. 297

But there is ane aboon the lave,¹
Has wit, and sense, and a' that;
A bonnie lass, I like her best,
And wha a crime dare ca' that?

HOW LANG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT.

To a Gaelic Air.

How lang and dreary is the night
When I am frae my dearie;
I sleepless lie frae e'en to morn,
Though I were ne'er sae weary,
I sleepless lie frae e'en to morn
Though I were ne'er sae weary.

When I think on the happy days
I spent wi' you, my dearie,
And now what lands between us lie,
How can I be but eerie?
And now what lands between us lie,
How can I be but eerie?

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
As ye were wae and weary!
It was nae sae ye glinted by
When I was wi' my dearie;
It was na sae ye glinted by
When I was wi' my dearie.

MUSING ON THE ROARING OCEAN.²

Tune—"Druimion dubh."

MUSING on the roaring ocean,
Which divides my love and me;
Wearying Heaven, in warm devotion,
For his weal where'er he be.

Hope and fear's alternate billow
Yielding late to Nature's law;
Whispering spirits round my pillow
Talk of him that's far awa'.

¹ Rest.

² Composed for Mrs. McLauchlan, whose husband was in the West Indies.



BLITHE WAS SHE.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,
Ye who never shed a tear,
Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,
Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me!
Downy sleep, the curtain draw!
Spirits kind, again attend me,
Talk of him that's far awa'!

BLITHE WAS SHE.¹

Tune—"Andrew and his cutty gun."

CHORUS.

BLITHE, blithe, and merry was she,
Blithe was she but and ben;
Blithe by the banks of Ern,
And blithe in Glenturit glen.

By Auchtertyre grows the aik;
On Yarrow banks the birken shaw;
But Phemie was a bonnier lass
Than braes o' Yarrow ever saw.

Her looks were like a flower in May,
Her smile was like a simmer sun;
She tripped by the banks of Ern,
As light's a bird upon a thorn.

Her bonnie face it was as meek
As ony lamb upon a lea;
The evening sun was ne'er sae sweet.
As was the blink o' Phemie's e'e.

The Highland hills I've wandered wide,
And o'er the Lowlands I ha'e been;
But Phemie was the blithest lass
That ever trod the dewy green.
Blithe, blithe, and merry was she,
Blithe was she but and ben;
Blithe by the banks of Ern,
And blithe in Glenturit glen.

¹ "I composed these verses," says the Poet, in his notes in the "Museum," "while I stayed at Auchtertyre with Sir William Murray." The heroine of this song was Euphemia Murray, of Lintrose, called "The Flower of Strathmore."

SONG OF DEATH¹

[Scene, a field of battle; time of the day, evening. The wounded and dying of the victorious army are supposed to join in the following song of death.]

FAREWELL thou fair day, thou green earth, and ye skies,
 Now gay with the broad setting sun;
 Farewell loves and friendships—ye dear, tender ties—
 Our race of existence is run!

Thou grim king of terrors, thou life's gloomy foe,
 Go, frighten the coward and slave;
 Go, teach them to tremble, fell tyrant! but know,
 No terrors hast thou to the brave!

Thou strik'st the poor peasant—he sinks in the dark,
 Nor saves e'en the wreck of a name;
 Thou strik'st the young hero—a glorious mark!
 He falls in the blaze of his fame!

In the field of proud honour, our swords in our hands,
 Our king and our country to save—
 While victory shines on life's last ebbing sands—
 O, who would not die with the brave!

 THE POOR AND HONEST SODGER.

Air—"The mill, mill, O!"

WHEN wild War's deadly blast was blawn,
 And gentle Peace returning,
 Wi' mony a sweet babe fatherless,
 And mony a widow mourning;
 I left the lines and tented field,
 Where lang I'd been a lodger,
 My humble knapsack a' my wealth,
 A poor and honest sodger.

¹ The circumstance that gave rise to the foregoing verses, was looking over, with a musical friend, M'Donald's collection of Highland airs. I was struck with one, an Isle of Skye tune, entitled "Oran an Aois; or, the Song of Death," to the measure of which I have adapted my stanza.
 —BURNS.



A leal light heart was in my breast,
My hand unstained wi' plunder;
And for fair Scotia, hame again
I cheery on did wander.
I thought upon the banks o' Coil,
I thought upon my Nancy,
I thought upon the witching smile
That caught my youthful fancy.

At length I reached the bonnie glen
Where early life I sported;
I passed the mill, and trysting thorn,
Where Nancy aft I courted;
Wha spied I but my ain dear maid,
Down by her mother's dwelling!
And turned me round to hide the flood
That in my een was swelling.

Wi' altered voice, quoth I, Sweet lass,
Sweet as yon hawthorn's blossom,
O! happy, happy may he be,
That's dearest to thy bosom!
My purse is light, I've far to gang,
And fain would be thy lodger;
I've served my king and country lang,—
Take pity on a sodger.

Sae wistfully she gazed on me,
And lovelier was than ever;
Quo' she, A sodger ance I lo'ed,
Forget him shall I never:
Our humble cot and hamely fare
Ye freely shall partake it;
That gallant badge, the dear cockad.,
Ye're welcome for the sake o't.

She gazed—she reddened like a rose,
Syn'e pale like ony lily;
She sank within my arms, and cried
Art thou my ain dear Willie?
By Him who made yon sun and sky—
By whom true love's regarded,
I am the man: and thus may still
True lovers be rewarded.

The wars are o'er, and I'm come hame,
And find thee still true-hearted!
Though poor in gear, we're rich in love,
And mair we'se ne'er be parted.



MEG O' THE MILL.

301

Quo' she, My grandsire left me gowe,
A mailen¹ plenished fairly;
And come, my faithfu' sodger lad,
Thou 'rt welcome to it dearly.

For gold the merchant ploughs the main,
'The farmer ploughs the manor;
But glory is the sodger's prize,
The sodger's wealth is honour.
The brave poor sodger ne'er despise,
Nor count him as a stranger;
Remember he's his country's stay,
In day and hour of danger.

MEG O' THE MILL.

Air—"O bonnie lass, will you lie in a barrack?"

O KEN ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?
An' ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?
She has gotten a coof² wi' a claute³ o' siller,
And broken the heart o' the barley miller.

The miller was strappin', the miller was ruddy
A heart like a lord, and a hue like a lady:
The laird was a widdiefu' bleerit⁴ knurl;
She's left the guid fellow and ta'en the churl.

The miller he hecht her a heart leal and loving;
The laird did address her wi' matter more moving,—
A fine pacing horse wi' a clear chainèd bridle,
A whip by her side, and a bonnie side-saddle.

O wae on the siller, it is sae prevailing!
And wae on the love that is fixed on a mailen!⁵
A tocher's nae word in a true lover's parle;⁶
But gi'e me my love, and a fig for the war!

AULD ROB MORRIS.⁷

THERE's auld Rob Morris that wons in yon glen,
He's the king o' guid fellows and wale⁸ of auld men;
He has gowd in his coffers, he has owsen and kine,
And ae bonnie lassie, his darling and mine.

¹ Farm.

² Fool.

³ Scraping.

⁴ Crooked, blear-eyed.

⁵ Farm.

⁶ Speech.

⁷ The first two lines are taken from an old ballad, the rest is wholly original.

⁸ Choice.



She's fresh as the morning, the fairest in May;
She's sweet as the evening among the new hay;
As blythe and as artless as the lambs on the lea,
And dear to my heart as the light to my e'e.

But oh! she's an heiress, auld Robin's a laird,
And my daddie has naught but a cot-house and yard;
A wooer like me maunna hope to come speed,—
The wounds I must hide that will soon be my dead.

The day comes to me, but delight brings me nane;
The night comes to me, but my rest it is gane;
I wander my lane like a night-troubled ghaist,
And I sigh as my heart it wad burst in my breast.

O, had she but been of a lower degree,
I then might ha'e hoped she wad smiled upon me!
O, how past describing had then been my bliss,
As now my distraction no words can express!



DUNCAN GRAY.

DUNCAN GRAY cam' here to woo—

Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

On blithe yule¹ night, when we were fu'²—

Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

Maggie coost² her head fu' high,

Looked asklent and unco skeigh,³

Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh;⁴

Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

Duncan fleeched,⁵ and Duncan prayed—

Ha, ha, &c.

Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig⁶—

Ha, ha, &c.

Duncan sighed baith out and in,

Grat his een baith bleart and blin',⁷

Spak' o' lowpin o'er a linn;³

Ha, ha, &c.

¹ Christmas.

² Tossed.

³ Proud.

⁴ Made poor Duncan stand at a shy distance.

⁵ Besought her.

⁶ A well-known rock in the Frith of Clyde.

⁷ Bleared and blind.

⁸ Jumping o'er a precipice.



WEARY FA' YOU, DUNCAN GRAY.

303

Time and chance are but a tide—

Ha, ha, &c.

Slighted love is sair to bide—

Ha, ha, &c.

Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,

For a haughty hizzie die?

She may gae to—France for me!

Ha, ha, &c.

How it comes let doctors tell—

Ha, ha, &c.

Meg grew sick, as he grew well—

Ha, ha, &c.

Something in her bosom wrings,

For relief a sigh she brings;

And O, her een, they spak' sic things!

Ha, ha, &c.

Duncan was a lad o' grace—

Ha, ha, &c.

Maggie's was a piteous case—

Ha, ha, &c.

Duncan could na be her death,

Swelling pity smooed¹ his wrath;

Now they're crouse and canty² baith.

Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

WEARY FA' YOU, DUNCAN GRAY.

Tune—"Duncan Gray."

WEARY fa' you, Duncan Gray—

Ha, ha, the girdin'³ o't!

Wae gae by you, Duncan Gray—

Ha, ha, the girdin' o't!

When a' the lave⁴ gae to their play,

Then I maun sit the lee-lang day,

And jog the cradle wi' my tae,

And a' for the girdin' o't.

Bonnie was the Lammas moon -

Ha, ha, the girdin' o't!

Glowrin' a' the hills aboon—

Ha, ha, the girdin' o't!

¹ Smothered.

⁴ Rest.

³ Cheerful and merry.

³ Binding.



THE PLOUGHMAN.

The girdin' brak, the beast cam' down,
I tint my curch¹ and baith my shoon;
Ah! Duncan, ye're an unco loon—
Wae on the bad girdin' o't!

But, Duncan, gin ye'll keep your aith,—
Ha, ha, the girdin' o't!
I'se bless you wi' my hindmost breath—
Ha, ha, the girdin' o't!
Duncan, gin ye'll keep your aith—
The beast again can bear us baith,
And auld Mess John will mend the skaith,²
And clout³ the bad girdin' o't.

THE PLOUGHMAN.

Tune—"Up wi' the ploughman."

THE ploughman he's a bonnie lad,
His mind is ever true, jo;
His garters knit below his knee,
His bonnet it is blue, jo.
Then up wi' my ploughman lad,
And hey my merry ploughman!
Of a' the trades that I do ken,
Commend me to the ploughman.

My ploughman he comes hame at e'en,
He's aften wat and weary:
Cast off the wat, put on the dry,
And gae to bed, my dearie!

I will wash my ploughman's hose,
And I will dress his o'erly;⁴
I will mak' my ploughman's bed,
And cheer him late and early.

I ha'e been east, I ha'e been west,
I ha'e been at Saint Johnston;
The bonniest sight that e'er I saw
Was the ploughman laddie dancin'.

Snaw-white stockin's on his legs,
And siller buckles glancin';
A guid blue bonnet on his head—
And O, but he was handsome!

¹ Lost my cap.

² Harm.

³ Mend.

⁴ Cravat.



LANDLADY, COUNT THE LAWIN.

305

Commend me to the barn-yard,
And the corn-mou, man;
I never gat my coggie¹ fou
Till I met wi' the ploughman.
Then up wi' my ploughman lad,
And hey my merry ploughman!
Of a' the trades that I do ken,
Commend me to the ploughman.

LANDLADY, COUNT THE LAWIN.

[The first two verses only are by Burns.]

Tune—"Hey tutti, taiti."

LANDLADY, count the lawin,
The day is near the dawin;
Ye're a' blind drunk, boys,
And I'm but jolly fou.²
Hey tutti, taiti,
How tutti, taiti—
Wha's fou now?

Cog an' ye were aye fou,
Cog an' ye were aye fou,
I wad sit and sing to you,
If ye were aye fou.

Weel may ye a' be!
Ill may we never see!
God bless the king, boys,
And the companie!
Hey tutti, taiti,
How tutti, taiti—
Wha's fou now?

TO DAUNTON ME.

Tune—"To daunton me."

THE blude-red rose at Yule may blaw,
The simmer lilies bloom in snaw,
The frost may freeze the deepest sea;
But an auld man shall never daunton³ me.

To daunton me, and me sae young,
Wi' his fause heart and flattering tongue,
That is the thing you ne'er shall see;
For an auld man shall never daunton me.

¹ Wooden dish.

² Full.

³ Daunt.

*COME, BOAT ME O'ER TO CHARLIE.*

For a' his meal and a' his maut,
For a' his fresh beef and his saut,
For a' his gold and white monie,
An auld man shall never daunton me.

His gear may buy him kye and yowes,
His gear may buy him glens and knowes;
But me he shall not buy nor fee,
For an auld man shall never daunton me.

He hirples¹ twa-fauld as he dow,²
Wi' his toothless gab³ and his auld beld pow,⁴
And the rain dreeps down frae his red bleered e'e—
That auld man shall never daunton me.

To daunton me, and me sae young,
Wi' his fause heart and flattering tongue,
That is the thing you ne'er shall see;
For an auld man shall never daunton me.

COME, BOAT ME O'ER TO CHARLIE.⁵

Tune—"O'er the water to Charlie."

COME boat me o'er, come row me o'er,
Come boat me o'er to Charlie;
I'll gi'e John Ross another bawbee,⁶
To boat me o'er to Charlie.

We'll o'er the water and o'er the sea,
We'll o'er the water to Charlie;
Come weal, come woe, we'll gather and go,
And live or die wi' Charlie.

I lo'e weel my Charlie's name,
Though some there be abhor him;
But O, to see auld Nick gaun hame,
And Charlie's faes before him!

I swear and vow by moon and stars,
And sun that shines so early,
If I had twenty thousand lives,
I'd die as aft for Charlie.

We'll o'er the water and o'er the sea,
We'll o'er the water to Charlie;
Come weal, come woe, we'll gather and go,
And live or die wi' Charlie.

¹ Limps.

⁴ Bali head.

² Can.

⁶ Prince Charles Edward.

³ Mouth.

⁶ Halfpenny⁷



A ROSEBUD BY MY EARLY WALK.

[Composed in honour of little Jean Cruikshanks, whom he had already honoured with a poem.]

Tune—"The Rosebud."

A ROSEBUD by my early walk,
Adown a corn-enclosèd bawk,
Sae gently bent its thorny stalk,
All on a dewy morning.
Ere twice the shades o' dawn are fled,
In a' its crimson glory spread,
And drooping rich the dewy head,
It scents the early morning.

Within the bush, her covert nest,
A little linnet fondly prest;
The dew sat chilly on her breast
Sae early in the morning.
She soon shall see her tender brood,
The pride, the pleasure o' the wood,
Amang the fresh green leaves bedewed,
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jeany fair!
On trembling string, or vocal air,
Shall sweetly pay the tender care
That tends thy early morning.
So thou, sweet rosebud, young and gay,
Shalt beauteous blaze upon the day,
And bless the parent's evening ray
That watched thy early morning.

RATTLIN', ROARIN' WILLIE.¹

Tune—"Rattlin', roarin' Willie."

O RATTLIN', roarin' Willie,
O, he held to the fair,
An' for to sell his fiddle,
An' buy some other ware;

¹ "The hero of this chant," says Burns, "was one of the worthiest fellows in the world—William Dunbar, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh, and Colonel of the Crochallan corps, a club of wits, who took that title at the time of raising the Fencible regiments."



308 BRAVING ANGRY WINTER'S STORMS.

But parting wi' his fiddle,
The saut tear blin't his e'e;
And rattlin', roarin' Willie,
Ye're welcome hame to me!

O Willie, come sell your fiddle,
O sell your fiddle sae fine;
O Willie, come sell your fiddle,
And buy a pint o' wine!
If I should sell my fiddle,
The warl' would think I was mad;
For mony a rantin' day
My fiddle and I ha'e had.

As I cam' by Crochallan,
I cannily keekit ben—
Rattlin', roarin' Willie
Was sitting at yon board en';
Sitting at yon board en',
And amang guid companie;
Rattlin', roarin' Willie,
Ye're welcome hame to me!

BRAVING ANGRY WINTER'E STORMS.¹

Tune—"Neil Gow's Lamentation for Abercairny."

WHERE, braving angry winter's storms,
The lofty Ochels rise,
Far in their shade my Peggy's charms
First blest my wondering eyes;
As one who by some savage stream
A lonely gem surveys,
Astonished, doubly marks its beam
With art's most polished blaze.

Blest be the wild sequestered shade,
And blest the day and hour,
Where Peggy's charms I first surveyed,
When first I felt their power!
The tyrant Death, with grim control,
May seize my fleeting breath;
But tearing Peggy from my soul
Must be a stronger death.

¹ The heroine of this song was Margaret Chalmers.





MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING.

SHE is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The warl's wrack we share o't,
The warstle and the care o't;
Wi' her I'll blithely bear it,
And think my lot divine.

BONNIE LESLEY.¹

O, SAW ye bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For Nature made her what she is,
And never made anither!

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee:
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The De'il he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee."

¹ I have just been looking over the "Collier's Bonnie Dochter;" and if the following rhapsody, which I composed the other day on a charming Ayrshire girl, Miss Lesley Baillie, as she passed through this place to England, will suit your taste better than the "Collier Lassie," fall on and welcome —BURNS.

TIBBIE DUNBAR.

The Powers aboon will tent ¹ thee;
 Misfortune sha' na steer ² thee;
 Thou 'rt, like themselves, sae lovely
 That ill they 'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
 Return to Caledonie!
 That we may brag we ha'e a lass
 There's nane again sae bonnie.

TIBBIE DUNBAR.

Tune—"Johnny M'Gill."

O, wilt thou go wi' me,
 Sweet Tibbie Dunbar?
 O, wilt thou go wi' me,
 Sweet Tibbie Dunbar?
 Wilt thou ride on a horse,
 Or be drawn in a car,
 Or walk by my side,
 O sweet Tibbie Dunbar?

I care na thy daddie,
 His lands and his money,
 I care na thy kin
 Sae high and sae lordly;
 But say thou wilt ha'e me
 For better for waur—
 And come in thy coatie,
 Sweet Tibbie Dunbar!

MY HARRY WAS A GALLANT GAY.³

Tune—"Highlander's Lament."

My Harry was a gallant gay,
 Fu' stately strode he on the plain;
 But now he's banished far away,
 I'll never see him back again.

O, for him back again!
 O, for him back again!
 I wad gi'e a' Knockhaspie's land
 For Highland Harry back again.

¹ Take care of

² Hurt.

³ "The oldest title," says Burns, "I ever heard to this air was 'The Highland Watch's Farewell to Ireland.' The chorus I picked up from an old woman in Dumblane; the rest of the song is mine."



THE TAILOR.

311

When a' the lave ¹ gae to their bed,
I wander dowie ² up the glen;
I set me down and greet my fill,
And aye I wish him back again.
O, were some villains hangit high,
And ilka body had their ain!
Then I might see the joyfu' sight,
My Highland Harry back again.
O, for him back again!
O, for him back again!
I wad gi'e a' Knockhaspie's land
For Highland Harry back again

THE TAILOR.³

Tune—"The tailor fell through the bed, thimbles an' a'."¹

THE tailor fell through the bed, thimbles an' a'
The tailor fell through the bed, thimbles an' a',
The blankets were thin, and the sheets they were sma'—
The tailor fell through the bed, thimbles an' a'.

The sleepy bit lassie she dreaded nae ill;
The sleepy bit lassie she dreaded nae ill;
The weather was cauld, and the lassie lay still,
She thought that a tailor could do her nae ill.

Gi'e me the groat again, canny young man;
Gi'e me the groat again, canny young man;
The day it is short, and the night it is lang,—
The dearest siller that ever I wan!

There's somebody weary wi' lying her lane;
There's somebody weary wi' lying her lane;
There's some that are dowie, I traw wad be fain
To see the bit tailor come skippin' again.

BONNIE JEAN.⁴

Tune—"Bonnie Jean."

THERE was a lass, and she was fair,
At kirk and market to be seen;
When a' the fairest maids were met,
The fairest maid was bonnie Jean.

¹ Rest of the inmates of the house.

² Sadly.

³ The second and fourth verses only of this song are by Burns.

⁴ Miss Jean McMurdo, of Drumlanrig.



And aye she wrought her mammie's wark,
And aye she sang sae merrilie;
The blithest bird upon the bush
Had ne'er a lighter heart than she.

But hawks will rob the tender joys
That bless the little lintwhite's nest;
And frost will blight the fairest flowers,
And love will break the soundest rest.

Young Robie was the brawest lad,
The flower and pride of a' the glen;
And he had owsen, sheep, and kye,
And wanton naigies nine or ten.

He gaed wi' Jeanie to the tryste,
He danced wi' Jeanie on the down;
And lang ere witless Jeanie wist,
Her heart was tint, her peace was stown.

As in the bosom o' the stream
The moonbeam dwells at dewy e'en;
So trembling, pure, was tender love
Within the breast o' bonnie Jean.¹

And now she works her mammie's wark,
And aye she sighs wi' care and pain;
Yet wist na what her ail might be,
Or what wad mak' her weel again.

But did na Jeanie's heart loup light,
And did na joy blink in her e'e,
As Robie tauld a tale o' love
Ae e'enin' on the lily lea?

The sun was sinking in the west,
The birds sang sweet in ilka grove;
His cheek to hers he fondly prest,
And whispered thus his tale o' love:—

Oh, Jeanie fair, I lo'e thee dear;
Oh, canst thou think to fancy me?
Or wilt thou leave thy mammie's cot,
And learn to tent the farms wi' me?

At barn or byre thou shalt na drudge,
Or naething else to trouble thee;
But stray among the heather-bells,
And tent the waving corn wi' me.

¹ In the original MS. Burns asks Mr. Thomson if this stanza is not original.



SIMMER'S A PLEASANT TIME.

313

Now what could artless Jeanie do?
She had nae will to say him na:
At length she blushed a sweet consent,
And love was aye between them twa.

SIMMER'S A PLEASANT TIME.¹

Tune—"Aye waukin o'."

SIMMER's a pleasant time;
Flowers of every colour;
The water rins o'er the heugh,
And I long for my true lover.

Aye waukin O,
Waukin still and wearie;
Sleep I can get nane
For thinking on my dearie.

When I sleep I dream,
When I wauk I'm eerie;
Sleep I can get nane
For thinking on my dearie.

Lanely night comes on,
A' the lave are sleepin';
I think on my bonnie lad,
And I bleer my een with greetin'.

Aye waukin O,
Waukin still and wearie;
Sleep I can get nane
For thinking on my dearie.

BEWARE O' BONNIE ANN.

Tune—"Ye gallants bright."

YE gallants bright, I rede ye right,
Beware o' bonnie Ann;
Her comely face sae fu' o' grace,
Your heart she will trepan.
Her een sae bright, like stars by night,
Her skin is like the swan;
Sae jimply laced her genty waist,
That sweetly ye might span.

¹ The first verse is by Burns; the remainder had only the benefit of his revision.



314 *WHEN ROSY MAY COMES IN WI' FLOWERS.*

Youth, grace, and love attendant move,
And pleasure leads the van :
In a' their charms, and conquering arms,
They wait on bonnie Ann.
The captive bands may chain the hands,
But love enslaves the man ;
Ye gallants braw, I rede you a',
Beware o' bonnie Ann !

[The heroine of this song was Ann Masterton, daughter of Allan Masterton, one of the Poet's friends, and author of the air of "Strathallan's Lament."]

WHEN ROSY MAY COMES IN WI' FLOWERS.

Tune—"The gardener wi' his paille."

WHEN rosy May comes in wi' flowers,
To deck her gay green-spreading bowers,
Then busy, busy are his hours—
The gardener wi' his paille.
The crystal waters gently fa' ;
The merry birds are lovers a' ;
The scented breezes round him blaw—
The gardener wi' his paille.

When purple morning starts the hare
To steal upon her early fare,
Then through the dews he maun repair—
The gardener wi' his paille.
When day, expiring in the west,
The curtain draws of Nature's rest,
He flies to her arms he lo'es the best—
The gardener wi' his paille.

BLOOMING NELLY.

Tune—"On a bank of flowers."

ON a bank of flowers, in a summer day,
For summer lightly drest,
The youthful blooming Nelly lay,
With love and sleep opprest ;
When Willie, wandering through the wood,
Who for her favour oft had sued,
He gazed, he wished, he feared, he blushed,
And trembled where he stood.



THE DAY RETURNS.

315

Her closèd eyes, like weapons sheathed,
Were sealed in soft repose;
Her lips, still as she fragrant breathed,
It richer dyed the rose.
The springing lilies sweetly prest,
Wild—wanton, kissed her rival breast;
He gazed, he wished, he feared, he blushed—
His bosom ill at rest.

Her robes, light waving in the breeze,
Her tender limbs embrace!
Her lovely form, her native ease,
All harmony and grace!
Tumultuous tides his pulses roll,
A faltering, ardent kiss he stole;
He gazed, he wished, he feared, he blushed,
And sighed his very soul.

As flies the partridge from the brake,
On fear-inspired wings,
So Nelly, starting, half-awake,
Away affrighted springs;
But Willie followed—as he should,
He overtook her in the wood;
He vowed, he prayed, he found the maid
Forgiving all and good.

THE DAY RETURNS.¹

Tune—"Seventh of November."

THE day returns, my bosom burns—
The blissful day we twa did meet;
Though winter wild in tempest toiled,
Ne'er summer sun was half sae sweet.
Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
And crosses o'er the sultry line;
Than kingly robes, than crowns and globes,
Heaven gave me more—it made thee mine!

While day and night can bring delight,
Or nature aught of pleasure give,
While joys above my mind can move,
For thee, and thee alone I live!
When that grim foe of life below
Comes in between to make us part,
The iron hand that breaks our band
It breaks my bliss—it breaks my heart.

¹ Written in honour of the anniversary of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Riddel, of Friars-Carse.

**MY LOVE SHE'S BUT A LASSIE YET.**

Tune—"Lady Badinscoth's Reel."

My love she's but a lassie yet,
My love she's but a lassie yet;
We'll let her stand a year or twa,
She'll no be half sae saucy yet.
I rue the day I sought her, O,
I rue the day I sought her, O;
Wha gets her need na say she's wooed,
But he may say he's bought her, O!

Come, draw a drap o' the best o't yet,
Come, draw a drap o' the best o't yet;
Gae seek for pleasure where ye will,
But here I never missed it yet.
We're a' dry wi' drinking o't,
We're a' dry wi' drinking o't;
The minister kissed the fiddler's wife,
An' could na preach for thinkin' o't.

JAMIE, COME, TRY ME.

Tune—"Jamie, come, try me."

CHORUS.

JAMIE, come, try me,
Jamie, come, try me,
If thou would win my love,
Jamie, come, try me.

If thou should ask my love,
Could I deny thee?
If thou would win my love,
Jamie, come, try me.

If thou should kiss me, love,
Who could espy thee?
If thou wad be my love,
Jamie, come, try me.

Jamie, come, try me,
Jamie, come, try me;
If thou would win my love
Jamie, come, try me.



MY BONNIE MARY.

Tune—"Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine."

Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,
An' fill it in a silver tassie,
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonnie lassie.
The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith;
Fu' loud the wind blows frae the ferry;
The ship lies by the Berwick-law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are rankèd ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody;
But it's not the roar o' sea or shore
Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.



THE LAZY MIST.

Tune—"Here's a health to my true love."

THE lazy mist hangs from the brow of the hill,
Concealing the course of the dark winding rill;
How languid the scenes, late so sprightly, appear,
As autumn to winter resigns the pale year!
The forests are leafless, the meadows are brown,
And all the gay foppery of summer is flown:
Apart let me wander, apart let me muse,
How quick time is flying, how keen fate pursues!

How long I have lived—but how much lived in vain!
How little of life's scanty span may remain!
What aspects old Time, in his progress, has worn!
What ties cruel Fate in my bosom has torn!
How foolish, or worse, till our summit is gained!
And downward, how weakened, how darkened, how
pained!
This life's not worth having, with all it can give:
For something beyond it poor man sure must live.



THE CAPTAIN'S LADY.

Tune—"O, mount and go."

CHORUS.

O, MOUNT and go,
Mount and make you ready
O, mount and go,
And be the Captain's lady.

When the drums do beat,
And the cannons rattle,
Thou shalt sit in state,
And see thy love in battle.

When the vanquished foe
Sues for peace and quiet,
To the shades we'll go,
And in love enjoy it.
O, mount and go,
Mount and make you ready;
O, mount and go,
And be the Captain's lady.

WEE WILLIE GRAY.¹

WEE Willie Gray, and his leather wallet;
Peel a willow-wand to be him boots and jacket:
The rose upon the brier will be him trowse and doublet,
The rose upon the brier will be him trowse and doublet.

Wee Willie Gray, and his leather wallet;
Twice a lily flower will be him sark and cravat.
Feathers of a fie wad feather up his bonnet,
Feathers of a fie wad feather up his bonnet.

O, GUID ALE COMES.

CHORUS.

O, GUID ale comes, and guid ale goes,
Guid ale gars² me sell my hose,
Sell my hose, and pawn my shoon;
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.

¹ Written in imitation and to the tune of a nursery song.² Makes.



OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW. 319

I had sax owsen in a pleugh,
They drew a' weel enuegh,
I selled them a' just ane by ane;
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.

Guid ale hauds me bare and busy,
Gars me moop wi' the servant hizzie,
Stand i' the stool¹ when I ha'e done;
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.
O guid ale comes, and guid ale goes,
Guid ale gars me sell my hose,
Sell my hose, and pawn my shoon;
Guid ale keeps my heart aboon.

OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.

Tune — "Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey."

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw,
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There wild woods grow, and rivers row
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.²

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair;
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

Upon the banks o' flowing Clyde
The lasses busk them braw;
But when their best they ha'e put on,
My Jeannie dings them a':
In hamely weeds she far exceeds
The fairest o' the town;
Baith sage and gay confess it sae,
Though dressed in russet gown.

¹ Stool of repentance.

² Jean Armour.



WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T.

The gamesome lamb, that sucks its dam,
Mair harmless canna be;
She has nae faut (if sic ye ca't),
Except her love for me.
The sparkling dew, o' clearest hue,
Is like her shining een;
In shape and air nane can compare
Wi' my sweet lovely Jean.

O, blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Among the leafy trees,
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows among the knowes
Hae passed atween us twa!
How fond to meet, how wae to part,
That night she gaed awa!
The Powers aboon can only ken,
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me
As my sweet lovely Jean!

WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T.

Tune—"Whistle o'er the lave o't."

FIRST when Maggy was my care,
Heaven, I thought, was in her air;
Now we're married—spier nae mair—
Whistle o'er the lave o't.
Meg was meek, and Meg was mild,
Bonnie Meg was Nature's child;
Wiser men than me's beguiled—
Whistle o'er the lave o't.

How we live, my Meg and me,
How we love, and how we 'gree,
I care na by how few may see;
Whistle o'er the lave o't.
Wha I wish were maggots' meat,
Dished up in her winding-sheet,
I could write—but Meg maun see't—
Whistle o'er the lave o't.

**O, CAN YE LABOUR LEA?**

O, CAN ye labour lea, young man,
An' can ye labour lea?
Gae back the gate ye cam' again,
Ye'se never scorn me.

I feed a man at Martinmas,
Wi' airt-pennies three;
An' a' the fau't I fan' wi' him,
He couldna labour lea,

The stibble rig is easy ploughed,
The fallow land is free;
But wha wad keep the handless coof
That couldna labour lea?

O, WERE I ON PARNASSUS' HILL¹

Tune—"My love is lost to me."

O, WERE I on Parnassus' hill!
Or had of Helicon my fill;
That I might catch poetic skill
To sing how dear I love thee!
But Nith maun be my Muse's well,
My Muse maun be thy bonnie sel';
On Corsincon I'll glower and spell,
And write how dear I love thee.

Then come, sweet Muse, inspire my lay!
For a' the lee-lang simmer's day
I couldna sing, I couldna say
How much, how dear I love thee.
I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sae jimp, thy limbs sae clean,
Thy tempting lips, thy roguish een—
By heaven and earth I love thee!

By night, by day, a-field, at hame,
The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame;
And aye I muse and sing thy name—
I only live to love thee.
Though I were doomed to wander on,
Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
Till my last weary sand was run;
Till then—and then I'd love thee!

¹ Mrs. Burns was welcomed to her husband's home in this song.

**O, WERE MY LOVE YON LILAC FAIR-**

Tune—"Hughie Crahan."

O, WERE my love yon lilac fair,
Wi' purple blossoms to the spring,
And I a bird to shelter there,
When wearied on my little wing;

How I wad mourn, when it was torn
By autumn wild, and winter rude!
But I wad sing, on wanton wing,
When youthfu' May its bloom renewed.

O, gin my love were yon red rose,
That grows upon the castle wa',
And I mysel' a drap o' dew,
Into her bonnie breast to fa';

O, there, beyond expression blest,
I'd feast on beauty a' the night;
Sealed on her silk-saft faulds to rest,
Till fley'd awa' by Phoebus' light!

THERE'S A YOUTH IN THIS CITY.

Tune—"Neil Gow's Lament."

THERE'S a youth in this city,
It were a great pity
That he frae our lasses should wander awa';
For he's bonnie and braw,
Weel favoured witha',
And his hair has a natural buckle an' a'.
His coat is the hue
Of his bonnet sae blue:
His fecket is white as the new-driven snaw;
His hose they are blae,
And his shoon like the slae,
And his clear siller buckles they dazzle us a'.

For beauty and fortune
The laddie's been courtin';
Weel-featured, weel-tochered, weel-mounted, and braw;
But chiefly the siller,
That gars him gang till her,
The penny's the jewel that beautifies a'.



MY HEART 'S IN THE HIGHLANDS. 323

There's Meg wi' the mailen
That fain wad a haen him;
And Susie, whose daddy was laird o' the ha';
There's lang-tochered Nancy
Maist fetters his fancy—
But the laddie's dear sel' he lo'es dearest of a'.

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS.

Tune—"Faihte na Miosg."

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.
Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North!
The birthplace of valour, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow!
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below!
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods!
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods!
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

BLITHE HA'E I BEEN ON YON HILL.

Tune—"Liggeram Cosh."

BLITHE ha'e I been on yon hill,
As the lambs before me;
Careless ilka thought and free,
As the breeze flew o'er me;
Now nae longer sport and play,
Mirth or sang can please me;
Lesley is sae fair and coy,
Care and anguish seize me.

Heavy, heavy is the task,
Hopeless love declaring:
Trembling, I dow nocht but glower,
Sighing, dumb, despairing!

*COME, LET ME TAKE THEE.*

If she winna ease the thraws
In my bosom swelling,
Underneath the grass-green sod
Soon maun be my dwelling.

COME, LET ME TAKE THEE.

Air—"Cauld Kail."

COME, let me take thee to my breast,
And pledge we ne'er shall sunder;
And I shall spurn as vilest dust
The world's wealth and grandeur:
And do I hear my Jeanie own
That equal transports move her?
I ask for dearest life alone
That I may live to love her.

Thus in my arms, wi' a' thy charms,
I clasp my countless treasure;
I'll seek nae mair o' heaven to share
Than sic a moment's pleasure:
And by thy een, sae bonnie blue,
I swear I'm thine for ever!
And on thy lips I seal my vow,
And break it shall I never,

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.¹

Tune—"John Anderson, my jo."

JOHN ANDERSON, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent;
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:

¹ Love.



OUR THRISSELS FLOURISHED FRESH AND FAIR. 325

Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go;
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

OUR THRISSELS' FLOURISHED FRESH AND FAIR

Tune—"Awa', Whigs, awa'!"

OUR thrissles flourished fresh and fair,
And bonnie bloomed our roses;
BUT Whigs cam' like a frost in June,
And withered a' our posies.

CHORUS.

Awa', Whigs, awa'!
Awa', Whigs, awa'!
Ye're but a pack o' traitor louns,
Ye'll do nae guid at a'.

Our ancient crown's fa'n in the dust—
De'il blin' them wi' the stoure o't!
And write their names in his black beuk
Wha gae the Whigs the power o't!

Our sad decay in Church and State
Surpasses my describing;
The Whigs cam' o'er us for a curse,
And we ha'e done wi' thriving.

Grim Vengeance lang has ta'en a nap,
But we may see him wauken;
Gude help the day when royal heads
Are hunted like a maukin!

Awa', Whigs, awa'!
Awa', Whigs, awa'!
Ye're but a pack o' traitor louns,
Ye'll do nae gude at a'.

BROSE AND BUTTER.

O, gi'e my love brose, brose,
Gi'e my love brose and butter;
For nane in Carrick or Kyle
Can please a lassie better.

Thistles.



326 O, MERRY HA'E I BEEN TEETHIN' A HECKLE.

The laverock lo'es the grass,
The muirhen lo'es the heather;
But gi'e me a brow moonlight,
And me and my love together.

O, MERRY HA'E I BEEN TEETHIN' A HECKLE.

Tune—Lord Breadalbane's March."

O, MERRY ha'e I been teethin' a heckle,¹
And merry ha'e I been shapin' a spoon;
And merry ha'e I been cloutin' a keetle,
And kissin' my Katie when a' was done.
O, a' the lang day I ca' at my hammer,
An' a' the lang day I whistle and sing;
A' the lang night I cuddle my kimmer,
An' a' the lang night am as happy's a king.

Bitter in dool I lickit my winnins,
O' marrying Bess, to gi'e her a slave:
Blest be the hour she cooled in her linnens,
And blithe be the bird that sings on her grave!
Come to my arms, my Katie, my Katie,
An' come to my arms and kiss me again!
Drunken or sober, here's to thee, Katie!
And blest be the day I did it again.

THE BRAES O' BALLOCHMYLE.²

Tune—"Braes o' Ballochmyle."

THE Catrine woods were yellow seen,
The flowers decayed on Catrine lea,
Nae laverock sang on hillock green,
But nature sickened on the e'e.
Through faded groves Maria sang,
Hersel' in beauty's bloom the while,
And aye the wild-wood echoes rang,
Fareweel the braes o' Ballochmyle!

Mending the steel prongs of the flax-dressing machine, called a "heckle."

² Maria Whitefoord, eldest daughter of Sir John Whitefoord, afterwards Mrs. Cranston, was the heroine of this song.



LAMENT.

327

Low in your wintry beds, ye flowers,
Again ye'll flourish fresh and fair;
Ye birdies dumb, in withering bowers,
Again ye'll charm the vocal air.
But here, alas! for me nae mair
Shall birdie charm or floweret smile;
Fareweel the bonnie banks of Ayr!
Fareweel, fareweel, sweet Ballochmyle!

LAMENT.

WRITTEN AT A TIME WHEN THE POET WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE
SCOTLAND.¹

Tune—"The Banks of the Devon."

O'ER the mist-shrouded cliffs of their lone mountain straying,
Where the wild winds of winter incessantly rave,
What woes wring my heart while intently surveying
The storm's gloomy path on the breast of the wave!

Ye foam-crested billows, allow me to wail,
Ere ye toss me afar from my loved native shore;
Where the flower which bloomed sweetest in Coila's green
vale,

The pride of my bosom, my Mary's no more!

No more by the banks of the streamlet we'll wander,
And smile at the moon's rippled face in the wave;
No more shall my arms cling with fondness around her,
For the dewdrops of morning fall cold on her grave.

No more shall the soft thrill of love warm my breast;
I haste with the storm to a far-distant shore;
Where, unknown, unlamented, my ashes shall rest,
And joy shall revisit my bosom no more.

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.²

Tune—"Death of Captain Cook."

THOU lingering star, with lessening ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.

¹ Originally published in the *Dunfries Journal*; but authorship
doubtful.

² Mary Campbell, or Highland Mary.



O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget?
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where, by the winding Ayr, we met,
To live one day of parting love?
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace—
Ah, little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined am'rous round the raptured scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray—
Till too, too soon the glowing west,
Proclaimed the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

EVAN BANKS.

Tune—"Savourna Delish."

SLOW spreads the gloom my soul desires;
The sun from India's shore retires:
To Evan Banks, with temperate ray,
Home of my youth, he leads the day.

Oh, banks to me for ever dear!
Oh, stream whose murmurs still I hear!
All, all my hopes of bliss reside
Where Evan mingles with the Clyde.



EPPIE ADAIR.

329

And she, in simple beauty drest,
Whose image lives within my breast:
Who, trembling, heard my parting sigh,
And long pursued me with her eye.
Does she, with heart unchanged as mine,
Oft in the vocal bowers recline?
Or, where yon grot o'erhangs the tide,
Muse while the Evan seeks the Clyde?
Ye lofty banks that Evan bound!
Ye lavish woods that wave around,
And o'er the stream your shadows throw,
Which sweetly winds so far below;
What secret charm to mem'ry brings
All that on Evan's border springs!
Sweet banks! ye bloom by Mary's side:
Blest stream! she views thee haste to Clyde.
Can all the wealth of India's coast
Atone for years in absence lost?
Return, ye moments of delight;
With richer treasures bless my sight!
Swift from this desert let me part,
And fly to meet a kindred heart!
Nor more may aught my steps divide
From that dear stream which flows to Clyde.

EPPIE ADAIR.

Tune—"My Eppie."

An' oh, my Eppie!
My jewel, my Eppie!
Wha wadna be happy
Wi' Eppie Adair?
By love, and by beauty,
By law and by duty,
I swear to be true to
My Eppie Adair!
An' oh, my Eppie!
My jewel, my Eppie!
Wha wadna be happy
Wi' Eppie Adair?
A' pleasure exile me,
Dishonour defile me,
If e'er I beguile thee,
My Eppie Adair!



THE BATTLE OF SHERIFF-MUIR.

[BETWEEN THE DUKE OF ARGYLL AND THE EARL OF MAR.]

Tune—"Cameronian Rant."

"Oh, CAM' ye here the fight to shun,
Or herd the sheep wi' me, man?
Or were ye at the Sherra-muir,
And did the battle see, man?"
I saw the battle sair and tough,
And reekin'-red ran mony a sheug'
My heart, for fear, gaed sough for sough,
To hear the thuds,² and see the cluds³
O' clans frae woods, in tartan duds,⁴
Wha glaumed⁵ at kingdoms three, man.

The red-coat lads, wi' black cockauds,
To meet them were na slaw, man;
They rushed and pushed, and blude outgushed,
And mony a bouk⁶ did fa', man:
The great Argyll led on his files,
I wat they glanced for twenty miles:
They hacked and hashed, while broadswords clashed,
And through they dashed, and hewed and smashed,
'Till fey⁷ men died awa', man.

But had ye seen the philibegs,
And skyrin tartan trews,⁸ man;
When in the teeth they dared our Whigs
And covenant true blues, man;
In lines extended lang and large,
When bayonets o'erpowered the targe,
And thousands hastened to the charge,
Wi' Highland wrath they frae the sheath
Drew blades o' death, 'till, ou⁹ o' breath,
They fled like frightened doos,⁹ man.

"Oh, how de'il, Tam, can that be true?
The chase gaed frae the north, man;
I saw mysel' they did pursue
The horsemen back to Forth, man;
And at Dunblane, in my ain sight,

¹ Ditch.⁴ Clothes.⁷ Fated to die.² Noise of blows.⁵ Grasped at.⁸ Trousers.³ Clouds.⁶ Body.⁹ Doves



YOUNG JOCKEY.

331

They took the brig¹ wi' a' their might,
And straught to Stirling winged their flight
But, cursèd lot! the gates were shut;
And mony a huntit, poor red-coat
For fear amaisht did swarf,² man!"

My sister Kate cam' up the gate
Wi' crowdie³ unto me, man;
She swore she saw some rebels run
Frae Perth unto Dundee, man:
Their left-hand general had nae skill,
The Angus lads had nae good will
That day their neebors' blude to spill;
For fear by foes that they should lose
Their cogs o' brose, they scared at blows,
And hameward fast did flee, man.

They've lost some gallant gentlemen
Among the Highland clans, man;
I fear my Lord Panmure is slain.
Or in his en'mies' hands, man:
Now, wad ye sing this double fight,
Some fell for wrang, and some for right;
And mony bade the warld guid-night;
Say pell, and mell, wi' muskets' knell,
How Tories fell, and Whigs to hell
Flew off in frighted bands, man.

YOUNG JOCKEY.

Tune—"Young Jockey."

YOUNG Jockey was the blithest lad
In a' our town or here awa':
Fu' blithe he whistled at the gaud,⁴
Fu' lightly danced he in the ha'.
He roosed⁵ my een, sae bonnie blue,
He roosed my waist, sae genty sma',
And aye my heart came to my mou'
When ne'er a body heard or saw.

My Jockey toils upon the plain,
Through wind and weet, through frost and snaw;
And o'er the lea I leuk fu' fain,
When Jockey's owsen⁶ hameward ca'.

¹ Bridge.
⁴ Plough.

² Swoon.
⁵ Praised.

³ Oatmeal porridga.
⁶ Oxen.



332 O, WILLIE BREWED A PECK O' MAUT.

An' aye the night comes round again,
When in his arms he tak's me a',
An' aye he vows he'll be my ain,
As lang's he has a breath to draw.

O, WILLIE BREWED A PECK O' MAUT.

Tune—"Willie brewed a peck o' maut."

O, WILLIE¹ brewed a peck o' maut,
And Rob² and Allan³ cam' to see;
Three blither hearts, that lee lang night,
Ye wad na find in Christendie.

CHORUS.

We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e;
The cock may craw, the day may daw',
And ay we'll taste the barley bree.

Here are we met, three merry boys,
Three merry boys, I trow, are we;
And mony a night we've merry been,
And mony mae we hope to be!

It is the moon—I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie;
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
But, by my sooth, she'll wait a wee!

Wha first shall rise to gang awa',
A cuckold, coward loon is he!
Wha last beside his chair shall fa',
He is the king amang us three!
We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e;
The cock may craw, the day may daw',
And ay we'll taste the barley bree.

THE BATTLE OF KILLIECRANKIE.

Tune—"Killiecrankie."

WHARE ha'e ye been sae braw, lad?
Whare ha'e ye been sae bankie, O?
O, whare ha'e ye been sae braw, lad?
Cam' ye by Killiecrankie, O?

¹ William Nicol.

² Burns.

³ Allan Masterton, who composed the air.



THE BLUE-EYED LASS.

333

An' ye had been whare I ha'e been,
Ye wad na been sae cantie, O ;
An' ye had seen what I ha'e seen,
On the braes o' Killiecrankie, O.
I fought at land, I fought at sea ;
At hame I fought my auntie, O ;
But I met the Devil an' Dundee ¹
On the braes o' Killiecrankie, O.
The bauld Pitcur fell in a furr,
An' Clavers got a clankie, O ;
Or I had fed an Athole gled
On the braes o' Killiecrankie, O.

THE BLUE-EYED LASS.²

Air—"The Blue-eyed Lass."

I GAED a waefu' gate yestreen,
A gate, I fear, I dearly rue ;
I gat my death frae twa sweet een,
Twa lovely een o' bonnie blue.
'Twas not her golden ringlets bright ;
Her lips, like roses, wet wi' dew ;
Her heaving bosom, lily-white—
It was her een sae bonnie blue.
She talked, she smiled, my heart she wyled ;
She charmed my soul—I wist na how ;
And aye the stound, the deadly wound,
Came frae her een sae bonnie blue.
But spare to speak, and spare to speed ;
She'll aiblins listen to my vow :
Should she refuse, I'll lay my dead
To her twa een so bonnie blue.

THE BANKS OF NITH.

Tune—"Robie donna Gorach."

THE Thames flows proudly to the sea,
Where royal cities stately stand ;
But sweeter flows the Nith, to me,
Where Cummins ance had high command :

¹ The gallant Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, who fell at the battle of Killiecrankie. With him perished the cause of the Stuarts. He fell just as he had gained the victory.

² Jean Jeffery, one of the daughters of the minister of Lochmaben.



When shall I see that honoured land,
That winding stream I love so dear!
Must wayward Fortune's adverse hand
For ever, ever keep me here?

How lovely, Nith, thy fruitful vales,
Where spreading hawthorns gaily bloom!
How sweetly wind thy sloping dales,
Where lambkins wanton through the broom!
Though wandering now must be my doom,
Far from thy bonnie banks and braes,
May there my latest hours consume,
Amang the friends of early days!

TAM GLEN.

Tune—"Tam Glen."

My heart is a-breaking dear Tittie!
Some counsel unto me come len';
To anger them a' is a pity,
But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?

I'm thinking wi' sic a brow fallow,
In poortith¹ I might mak' a fen';²
What care I in riches to wallow,
If I maun marry Tam Glen?

There's Lowrie, the laird o' Drumeller,
"Guid day to you, brute!" he comes ben;³
He brags and he blaws o' his siller,—
But when will he dance like Tam Glen?

My minnie⁴ does constantly deave⁵ me,
And bids me beware o' young men;
They flatter, she says, to deceive me,—
But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen?

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him,
He'll gi'e me guid hunder marks ten;
But if it's ordained I maun take him,
O wha will I get but Tam Glen?

Yestreen at the Valentine's dealing
My heart to my mou' gied a sten;⁶
For thrice I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written—Tam Glen.

¹ Poverty.

⁴ Mother.

² Shift.

⁶ Deafen.

³ Into the parlour.

⁵ Leap.



FRAE THE FRIENDS AND LAND I LOVE. 335

The last Halloween I lay waukin¹
My droukit sark-sleeve,² as ye ken;
His likeness cam' up the house staukin,
And the very grey breeks o' Tam Glen!

Come, counsel, dear Tittie! don't tarry—
I'll gi'e you my bonnie black hen,
Gif ye will advise me to marry
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.



FRAE THE FRIENDS AND LAND I LOVE.

Air—"Carron Side."

FRAE the friends and land I love,
Driven by Fortune's felly spite,
Frae my best beloved I rove,
Never mair to taste delight;
Never mair maun hope to find,
Ease frae toil, relief frae care:
When remembrance wracks the min¹,
Pleasures but unveil despair.

Brightest climes shall mirk appear,
Desert ilka blooming shore,
Till the Fates, nae mair severe,
Friendship, love, and peace restore;
Till Revenge, wi' laurelled head,
Bring our banished hame again;
And ilka loyal bonnie lad
Cross the seas an win his ain.



SWEET CLOSES THE EVENING.³

Tune—"Craigie-burn-wood."

SWEET closes the evening on Craigie-burn-wood,
And blithely awakens the morrow;
But the pride of the spring in the Craigie-burn-wood
Can yield to me nothing but sorrow.

¹ Watching.

² Wet shift-sleeve.

³ This song was composed in honour of Jean Lorimer, the "Chloris" of the poems.



COME, REDE ME, DAME.

CHORUS.

Beyond thee, dearie, beyond thee, dearie,
And oh, to be lying beyond thee!
Oh, sweetly, soundly, weel may he sleep
That's laid in the bed beyond thee!

I see the spreading leaves and flowers,
I hear the wild birds singing;
But pleasure they ha'e nane for me
While care my heart is wringing.

I canna tell, I mauna tell,
I darena for your anger
But secret love will break my heart
If I conceal it langer.

I see thee gracefu', straight, and tall,
I see thee sweet and bonnie;
But oh, what will my torments be
If thou refuse thy Johnnie!

To see thee in anither's arms,
In love to lie and languish,
'T'wad be my dead, that will be seen,
My heart wad burst wi' anguish.

But, Jeanie, say thou wilt be mine,
Say, thou lo'es nane before me;
And a' my days o' life to come
I'll gratefully adore thee.

Beyond thee, dearie, beyond thee, dearie,
And oh, to be lying beyond thee!
Oh, sweetly, soundly, weel may he sleep
That's laid in the bed beyond thee!

COME, REDE ME, DAME.

COME, rede¹ me, dame, come, tell me, dame,
And none can tell mair truly,
What colour maun the man be of
To love a woman duly?

The carlin² cew baith up and down,
And leugh, and answered ready,—
I learned a song in Annandale,
A dark man for my lady.

¹ Advise.

² Old woman.



COCK UP YOUR BEAVER.

337

But for a country quean like thee,
Young lass, I tell thee fairly,
That wi' the white I've made a shift,
And brown will do fu' rarely.

There's mickle love in raven locks,
The flaxen ne'er grows youden;¹
There's kiss and hause² me in the brown,
And glory in the gowden.



COCK UP YOUR BEAVER.

Tune—"Cock up your beaver."

WHEN first my brave Johnnie lad
Came to this town,
He had a blue bonnet
That wanted the crown;
But now he has gotten
A hat and a feather,—
Hey, brave Johnnie lad,
Cock up your beaver!

Cock up your beaver,
And cock it fu' sprush,
We'll over the border
And gi'e them a brush;
There's somebody there
We'll teach better behaviour,—
Hey, brave Johnnie lad,
Cock up your beaver!



MY TOCHER'S THE JEWEL.

Tune—"My tocher's the jewel."

O MEIKLE thinks my luvè o' my beauty,
And meikle thinks my luvè o' my kin;
But little thinks my luvè I ken brawlie
My tocher's³ the jewel has charms for him.
It's a' for the apple he'll nourish the tree;
It's a' for the hiney⁴ he'll cherish the bee;
My laddie's sae meikle in luvè wi' the siller,
He canna ha'e luvè to spare for me.

¹ Grey.

² Hug.

³ Dowry.

⁴ Honey.



GUIDWIFE, COUNT THE LAWIN.

Your proffer o' luv'e's an airt-penny,¹
My tocher's the bargain ye wad buy;
But an ye be crafty, I am cunnin',
Sae ye wi' anither your fortune maun try.
Ye're like to the timmer o' yon rotten wood,
Ye're like to the bark o' yon rotten tree,
Ye'll slip frae me like a knotless thread,
And ye'll crack your credit wi' mae nor me.

GUIDWIFE, COUNT THE LAWIN.

Tune—"Guidwife, count the lawin."

GANE is the day, and mirk's the night,
But we'll ne'er stray for fau't o' light,
For ale and brandy's stars and moon,
And blude-red wine's the rising sun.

Then, guidwife, count the lawin,
The lawin, the lawin,
Then, guidwife, count the lawin,
And bring a coggie mair!

There's wealth and ease for gentlemen,
And simple-folk maun fecht and fen';
But here we're a' in ae accord,
For ilka man that's drunk's a lord.

My coggie is a haly pool
That heals the wounds o' care and dool;
And pleasure is a wanton trout,
An' ye drink but deep ye'll find him out.

Then, guidwife, count the lawin,
The lawin, the lawin;
Then, guidwife, count the lawin,
And bring a coggie mair!

THE BONNIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWAY.

Tune—"Owre the hills and far awa'."

O how can I be blithe and glad,
Or how can I gang brisk and braw,
When the bonnie lad that I lo'e best
Is o'er the hills and far awa'?
When the bonnie lad that I lo'e best
Is o'er the hills and far awa'?

¹A silver penny, given as hiring-money.



I DO CONFESS THOU ART SAE FAIR. 339

It's no the frosty winter wind,
It's no the driving drift and snaw;
But aye the tear comes in my e'e,
To think on him that's far awa';
But aye the tear comes in my e'e,
To think on him that's far awa'.

My father pat me frae his door,
My friends they ha'e disowned me a',
But I ha'e ane will tak' my part,
The bonnie lad that's far awa';
But I ha'e ane will tak' my part,—
The bonnie lad that's far awa'.

A pair o' gloves he bought for me,
And silken snoods¹ he ga'e me twa;
And I will wear them for his sake,
The bonnie lad that's far awa';
And I will wear them for his sake,—
The bonnie lad that's far awa'.

O, weary winter soon will pass,
And spring will clead the birken-shaw;
And my young babie will be born,
And he'll be hame that's far awa';
And my young babie will be born,
And he'll be hame that's far awa'.

I DO CONFESS THOU ART SAE FAIR.

Tune—"I do confess thou art sae fair."

I do confess thou art sae fair,
I wad been o'er the lugs in luve,
Had I na found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak thy heart could muve.
I do confess thee sweet, but find
Thou art sae thriftless o' thy sweets,
Thy favours are the silly wind,
That kisses ilka thing it meets.

See yonder rosebud, rich in dew,
Amang its native briers sae coy;
How sune it tines² its scent and hue
When pu'd and worn a common toy!
Sic fate, ere lang, shall thee betide,
Though thou may gaily bloom awhile;
Yet sune thou shalt be thrown aside
Like ony common weed and vile.

¹ Ribbons for binding the hair.

² Loses.



YON WILD MOSSY MOUNTAINS.

Tune—"Yon wild mossy mountains."

YON wild mossy mountains sae lofty and wide,
That nurse in their bosom the youth o' the Clyde,
Where the grouse lead their coveys through the heather to
 feed,
And the shepherd tents his flock as he pipes on his reed.
Where the grouse lead their coveys through the heather to
 feed,
And the shepherd tents his flock as he pipes on his reed.

Not Gowrie's rich valleys, nor Perth's sunny shores,
To me ha'e the charms o' yon wild mossy moors,
For there, by a lanely, sequestered clear stream,
Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream.
For there, by a lanely, sequestered clear stream,
Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream.

Amang thae wild mountains shall still be my path,
Ilk stream foaming down its ain green narrow strath;
For there; wi' my lassie, the day-lang I rove,
While o'er us, unheeded, flee the swift hours o' love.
For there, wi' my lassie, the day-lang I rove,
While o'er us, unheeded, flee the swift hours o' love.

She is not the fairest, although she is fair;
O' nice education but sma' is her share;
Her parentage humble as humble can be;
But I lo'e the dear lassie because she lo'es me.
Her parentage humble as humble can be,
But I lo'e the dear lassie because she lo'es me.

To beauty what man but maun yield him a prize,
In her armour of glances, and blushes, and sighs?
And when wit and refinement ha'e polished her darts,
They dazzle our een as they flee to our hearts.
And when wit and refinement ha'e polished her darts,
They dazzle our een as they flee to our hearts.

But kindness, sweet kindness, in the fond sparkling e'e,
Has lustre outshining the diamond to me;
And the heart-beating love, as I'm clasped in her arms,
O, these are my lassie's all-conquering charms!
And the heart-beating love, as I'm clasped in her arms,
O, these are my lassie's all-conquering charms!



IT IS NA, JEAN, THY BONNIE FACE.

Tune—"The Maid's Complaint."

It is na, Jean, thy bonnie face,
Nor shape, that I admire,
Although thy beauty and thy grace
Might weel awake desire.
Something, in ilka part o' thee,
To praise, to love I find;
But, dear as is thy form to me,
Still dearer is thy mind.

Nae mair ungenerous wish I ha'e,
Nor stronger in my breast,
Than if I canna mak' thee sae,
At least to see thee blest.
Content am I, if Heaven shall give
But happiness to thee:
And as wi' thee I'd wish to live,
For thee I'd bear to die.

O SAW YE MY DEARIE?

Tune—"Eppie M'Nab."

O, saw ye my dearie, my Eppie M'Nab?
O, saw ye my dearie, my Eppie M'Nab?
She's down in the yard, she's kissin' the laird,
She winna come hame to her ain Jock Rab.
O, come thy ways to me, my Eppie M'Nab!
O, come thy ways to me, my Eppie M'Nab!
Whate'er thou hast done, be it late, be it soon,
Thou's welcome again to thy ain Jock Rab.

What says she, my dearie, my Eppie M'Nab?
What says she, my dearie, my Eppie M'Nab?
She lets thee to wit that she has thee forgot,
And for ever disowns thee, her ain Jock Rab.
O, had I ne'er seen thee, my Eppie M'Nab!
O, had I ne'er seen thee, my Eppie M'Nab!
As light as the air, as fause as thou's fair,
Thou's broken the heart o' thy ain Jock Rab.



WHA IS THAT AT MY BOWER DOOR?

Tune—"Lass, an' I come near thee."

WHA is that at my bower door?—
O, wha is it but Findlay?
Then gae yere gate, ye'se nae be here!—
Indeed maun I, quo' Findlay.
What mak' ye sae like a thief?—
O, come and see, quo' Findlay;
Before the morn ye'll work mischief—
Indeed will I, quo' Findlay.

Gif I rise and let you in?—
Let me in, quo' Findlay;
Ye'll keep me waukin wi' your din—
Indeed will I, quo' Findlay.
In my bower if ye should stay?—
Let me stay, quo' Findlay;
I fear ye'll bide till break o' day,—
Indeed will I, quo' Findlay.

Here this night if ye remain,—
I'll remain, quo' Findlay.
I dread ye'll ken the gate again,—
Indeed will I, quo' Findlay.
What may pass within this bower,—
Let it pass, quo' Findlay.
Ye maun conceal till your last hour,—
Indeed will I, quo' Findlay.

WHAT CAN A YOUNG LASSIE DO?

Tune—"What can a young lassie do wi' an auld man¹?"

WHAT can a young lassie, what shall a young lassie,
What can a young lassie do wi' an auld man?
Bad luck on the pennie that tempted my minnie¹
To sell her poor Jenny for siller an' lan'!
Bad luck on the pennie, &c.

He's always compleenin' frae mornin' to e'enin',
He hosts² and he hirples³ the weary day lang;
He's doyl't⁴ and he's dozin,⁵ his bluid it is frozen,—
O, dreary's the night wi' a crazy auld man!
He's doyl't and he's dozin', &c.

¹ Mother.
⁴ Crazed.

² Coughs.
⁵ Benumbed.

³ Limp.



THE BONNIE WEE THING.

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He hums and he hankers, he frets and he cankers;
I never can please him, do a' that I can;
He's peevish and jealous of a' the young fellows:
O, dool¹ on the day I met wi' an auld man!
He's peevish and jealous, &c.

My auld auntie Katie upon me tak's pity,
I'll do my endeavour to follow her plan!
I'll cross him, and wrack him, until I heartbreak him,
And then his auld brass will buy me a new pan.
I'll cross him, and wrack him, &c.

THE BONNIE WEE THING.²

Tune—"Bonnie wee thing."

BONNIE wee thing, cannie wee thing,
Lovely wee thing, wert thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine.³
Wishfully I look and languish,
In that bonnie face o' thine;
And my heart it stounds wi' anguish,
Lest my wee thing be na mine.
Wit, and grace, and love, and beauty,
In ae constellation shine;
To adore thee is my duty,
Goddess o' this soul o' mine!
Bonnie wee thing, cannie wee thing,
Lovely wee thing, wert thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine!

THE TITHER MORN

To a Highland air.

THE tither morn,
When I forlorn,
Aneath an aik sat moaning,
I did na trow
I'd see my jo
Beside me, gain the gloaming.

¹ Woe.

² "Composed," says the Poet, "on my little idol, the charming, lovely Daviea."

³ Lose.

Æ FOND KISS.

But he sae trig
Lap o'er the rig,
And dawt'ingly did cheer me,
When I, what reck,
Did least expec'
To see my lad sae near me.

His bonnet he,
A thought ajee,
Cocked sprush when first he clasped me:
And I, I wat,
Wi' fainness grat,
While in his grips he pressed me.
De'il tak' the war!
I late and air
Hae wished since Jock departed;
But now as glad
I'm wi' my lad
As short syne broken-hearted.

Fu' aft at e'en
Wi' dancing keen,
When a' were blithe and merry,
I cared na by,
Sae sad was I
In absence o' my dearie.
But, praise be blest,
My mind's at rest,
I'm happy wi' my Johnny;
At kirk and fair,
I'se aye be there,
And be as canty's ony.

—♦—

Æ FOND KISS.¹

Tune—"Rory Doll's Port."

Æ fond kiss, and then we sever;
Æ fareweel, and then, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

¹The heroine of this song was Clarinda.



LOVELY DAVIES.

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I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae farewell, alas! for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

LOVELY DAVIES.¹

Tune—"Miss Muir."

O how shall I, unskilfu', try
The poet's occupation,
The tunefu' powers, in happy hours,
That whispers inspiration?
Even they maun dare an effort mair
Than aught they ever gave us,
Or they rehearse, in equal verse,
The charms o' lovely Davies.
Each eye it cheers, when she appears,
Like Phœbus in the morning,
When past the shower, and every flower
The garden is adorning.
As the wretch looks o'er Siberia's shore,
When winter-bound the wave is;
Sae droops our heart when we maun part
Frae charming, lovely Davies.
Her smile's a gift, frae 'boon the lift,
That mak's us mair than princes;
A sceptred hand, a king's command,
Is in her darting glances:
The man in arms 'gainst female charms
Even he her willing slave is;
He hugs his chain, and owns the reign
Of conquering, lovely Davies.

¹ The heroine of "The Bonnie Wee Thing."



THE WEARY PUND O' TOW.

My muse to dream of such a theme,
Her feeble powers surrender ;
The eagle's gaze alone surveys
The sun's meridian splendour :
I wad in vain essay the strain,—
The deed too daring brave is ;
I'll drap the lyre, and mute admire
The charms o' lovely Davies.

THE WEARY PUND O' TOW.

Tune—"The weary pund o' tow."

I BOUGHT my wife a stane o' lint¹
As gude as e'er did grow ;
And a' that she has made o' that
Is ae poor pund o' tow.²

CHORUS.

The weary pund, the weary pund,
The weary pund o' tow ;
I think my wife will end her life
Before she spin her tow.

There sat a bottle in a bole,
Beyont the ingle low,³
And aye she took the tither souk,⁴
To drouk⁵ the stowrie⁶ tow.

Quoth I, For shame, ye dirty dame,
Gae spin your tap o' tow !
She took the rock, and wi' a knock
She brak' it o'er my pow.

At last her feet—I sang to see't—
Gaed foremost o'er the knowe ;⁷
And or I wad anither jad,
I'll wallop in a tow.⁸

The weary pund, the weary pund,
The weary pund o' tow !
I think my wife will end her life
Before she spin her tow.

¹ Flax.

³ Flame of the fire.

⁶ Dusty.

² Flax prepared for use.

⁴ Swig.

⁷ Hillock.

⁵ Wet.

⁸ Swing in a rope.



BANKS OF CREE.

HERE is the glen, and here the bower,
All underneath the birchen shade;
The village bell has told the hour,—
O, what can stay my lovely maid?

'Tis not Maria's whispering call;
'Tis but the balmy-breathing gale,
Mixt with some warbler's dying fall,
The dewy star of eve to hail.

It is Maria's voice I hear!
So calls the woodlark in the grove,
His little faithful mate to cheer,
At once 'tis music—and 'tis love.

And art thou come! and art thou true!
O, welcome dear to love and me!
And let us all our vows renew,
Along the flowery banks of Cree.

BEHOLD THE HOUR.

Tune—"Oran-gaol."

BEHOLD the hour, the boat arrive;
Thou goest, thou darling of my heart
Severed from thee can I survive?
But Fate has willed, and we must part.
I'll often greet this surging swell,
Yon distant isle will often hail:
"E'en here I took the last farewell;
There latest marked her vanished sail."

Along the solitary shore,
While fitting sea-fowl round me cry,
Across the rolling, dashing roar,
I'll westward turn my wistful eye:
Happy, thou Indian grove, I'll say,
Where now my Nancy's path may be!
While through thy sweets she loves to stray,
O, tell me, does she muse on me?



LOGAN BRAES.

Tune—"Logan Water."

LOGAN, sweetly didst thou glide,
That day I was my Willie's bride;
And years sinsyne ha'e o'er us run,
Like Logan to the simmer sun.
But now thy flowery banks appear
Like drumlie winter, dark and drear,
While my dear lad maun face his faes,
Far, far frae me and Logan braes.

Again the merry month o' May
Has made our hills and valleys gay;
The birds rejoice in leafy bowers,
The bees hum round the breathing flowers:
Blithe Morning lifts his rosy eye,
And Evening's tears are tears of joy:
My soul, delightless, a' surveys,
While Willie's far frae Logan braes.

Within yon milk-white hawthorn bush,
Amang her nestlings sits the thrush;
Her faithfu' mate will share her toil,
Or wi' his song her cares beguile:
But I wi' my sweet nurslings here,
Nae mate to help, nae mate to cheer,
Pass widowed nights and joyless days
While Willie's far frae Logan braes.

O, wae upon you, men o' state,
That brethren rouse to deadly hate!
As ye make mony a fond heart mourn,
Sae may it on your heads return!
How can your flinty hearts enjoy
The widow's tears, the orphan's cry?
But soon may peace bring happy days,
And Willie hame to Logan braes!

O, POORTITH CAULD AND RESTLESS LOVE!¹

Tune—"I had a horse."

O, POORTITH² cauld and restless love!
Ye wreck my peace between ye;
Yet poortith a' I could forgive,
An' 'twere na for my Jeanie.

The heroine of this beautiful song was Jean Lorimer, of Remmis Hall,
in Kirkmahoe.

² Poverty.



GALLA WATER.

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O, why should Fate sic pleasure have
Life's dearest bands untwining?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on Fortune's shining?

This world's wealth when I think on
Its pride, and a' the lave o't;
Fie, fie on silly coward man,
That he should be the slave o't.
O, why, &c.

Her een sae bonnie blue betray
How she repays my passion;
But prudence is her o'erword aye,
She talks of rank and fashion.
O, why, &c.

O, wha can prudence think upon,
And sic a lassie by him?
O, wha can prudence think upon,
And sae in love as I am?
O, why, &c.

How blest the humble cotter's fate!
He woos his simple dearie;
The sillie bogles,¹ wealth and state,
Can never make them eerie.²
O, why should Fate sic pleasure have
Life's dearest bands untwining?
Or why so sweet a flower as love
Depend on Fortune's shining?

GALLA WATER.

THERE's braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,
That wander through the blooming heather;
But Yarrow braes, nor Ettric shaws,
Can match the lads o' Galla Water.

But there is ane, a secret ane,
Aboon them a' I lo'e him better;
And I'll be his, and he'll be mine,
The bonnie lad o' Galla Water.

Although his daddie was nae laird,
And though I ha'e nae meickle tocher;³
Yet, rich in kindest, truest love,
We'll tent our flocks by Galla Water.

¹ Hobgoblins.

² Frightened.

³ Much dowry.



LORD GREGORY.

It ne'er was wealth, it ne'er was wealth,
That coft¹ contentment, peace, or pleasure;
The bands and bliss o' mutual love,
O, that's the chiefest world's treasure!

LORD GREGORY.

O, MIRK, mirk is this midnight hour,
And loud the tempest's roar;
A waefu' wanderer seeks thy tower,
Lord Gregory, ope' thy door.

An exile frae her father's ha',
And a' for loving thee;
At least some pity on me shaw,
If love it may na be.

Lord Gregory, mind'st thou not the grove
By bonnie Irwine side,
Where first I owned that virgin-love
I lang, lang had denied?

How often didst thou pledge and vow
Thou wad for aye be mine;
And my fond heart, itsel' sae true,
It ne'er mistrusted thine.

Hard is thy heart, Lord Gregory,
And flinty is thy breast:
Thou dart of heaven that flashest by,
O, wilt thou give me rest!

Ye mustering thunders from above,
Your willing victim see!
But spare and pardon my fause love,
His wrangs to heaven and me!

MARY MORISON.²

Tune—"Bide ye yet."

O MARY, at thy window be,
It is the wished, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That makes the miser's treasure poor!

¹ Brought.

² The song prefixed is one of my juvenile works.—BURNS.



WANDERING WILLIE.

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How blithely wad I bide the stoure,¹
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure—
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed through the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing—
I sat, but neither heard nor saw.
Though this was fair, and that was braw,
And you the toast of a' the town,
I sighed, and said amang them a',
"Ye are na Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wilt na gi'e,
At least be pity to me show;
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

WANDERING WILLIE.

HERE awa', there awa', wandering Willie,
Now tired with wandering, haud awa' hame;
Come to my bosom, my ae only dearie,
And tell me thou bring'st me my Willie the same.

Loud blew the cauld winter winds at our parting;
It was nae the blast brought the tear in my e'e:
Now welcome the simmer, and welcome my Willie,
The simmer to Nature, my Willie to me.

Ye hurricanes, rest in the cave o' your slumbers!
O, how your wild horrors a lover alarms!
Awaken, ye breezes, row gently, ye billows,
And waft my dear laddie ance mair to my arms!

But if he's forgotten his faithfulest Nanie,
O, still flow between us, thou wide roaring main!
May I never see it, may I never trow it,
But dying believe that my Willie's my ain!

¹ Dust.



OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, O!

[WITH ALTERATIONS.]

Tune—"Open the door to me, O!"

O, OPEN the door, some pity to show,
O, open the door to me, O!
Though thou hast been false, I'll ever prove true,
O, open the door to me, O!

Cauld is the blast upon my pale cheek,
But caulder thy love for me, O!
The frost that freezes the life at my heart
Is nought to my pains frae thee, O!

The wan moon is setting behind the white wave,
And time is setting with me, O!
False friends, false love, farewell! for mair
I'll ne'er trouble them nor thee, O!

She has opened the door, she has opened it wide;
She sees his pale corse on the plain, O!
My true love! she cried, and sank down by his side,
Never to rise again, O!

YOUNG JESSIE.¹

Tune—"Bonnie Dundee."

TRUE-HEARTED was he, the sad swain o' the Yarrow,
And fair are the maids on the banks o' the Ayr,
But by the sweet side of the Nith's winding river
Are lovers as faithful, and maidens as fair;
To equal young Jessie seek Scotland all over;
To equal young Jessie you seek it in vain;
Grace, beauty, and elegance fetter her lover,
And maidenly modesty fixes the chain.

O, fresh is the rose in the gay dewy morning,
And sweet is the lily at evening close;
But in the fair presence o' lovely young Jessie,
Unseen is the lily, unheeded the rose.
Love sits in her smile, a wizard ensnaring,
Enthroned in her een he delivers his law:
And still to her charms she alone is a stranger!
Her modest demeanour's the jewel of a'.

¹ Jessie Staig, daughter of Provost Staig, of Dumfries.

**I HA'E A WIFE O' MY AIN.**

Tune—"Naebody."

I HA'E a wife o' my ain—
I'll partake wi' naebody;
I'll tak' cuckold frae nane,
I'll gi'e cuckold to naebody.
I ha'e a penny to spend,
There—thanks to naebody;
I ha'e naething to lend—
I'll borrow frae naebody.
I am naebody's lord—
I'll be slave to naebody;
I ha'e a guid braid sword,
I'll tak' dunts frae naebody;
I'll be merry and free,
I'll be sad for naebody;
If naebody care for me,
I'll care for naebody.

O, FOR ANE-AND-TWENTY, TAM!

Tune—"The Moudiewort."

CHORUS.

AN' O, for ane-and-twenty, Tam!
An' hey, sweet ane-and-twenty, Tam!
I'll learn my kin a rattlin' sang,
An I saw ane-and-twenty, Tam.
They snool¹ me sair, and haud me down,
And gar me look like bluntie,² Tam;
But three short years will soon wheel roun'—
And then comes ane-and-twenty, Tam.
A glieb o' lan', a claut o' gear,
Was left me by my auntie, Tam;
At kith or kin I need nae spier,³
An I saw ane-and-twenty, Tam.
They'll ha'e me wed a wealthy coof,⁴
Though I mysel' ha'e plenty, Tam;
But hear'st thou, laddie—there's my loof⁵—
I'm thine at ane-and-twenty, Tam.

¹ Snub.
⁴ Fool.

² Miserable.

³ Ask.
⁵ Hand.
▲ ▲

O, KENMURE'S ON AND AWA'.

An' O, for ane-and-twenty, Tam;
 An' hey, sweet ane-and-twenty, Tam
 I'll learn my kin a rattlin' sang,
 An I saw ane-and-twenty, Tam.

O, KENMURE'S ON AND AWA'.¹

Tune—"O, Kenmure's on and awa', Willie."

O, KENMURE's on and awa', Willie!
 O, Kenmure's on and awa'!
 And Kenmure's lord's the bravest lord
 That ever Galloway saw.

Success to Kenmure's band, Willie!
 Success to Kenmure's band!
 There's no a heart that fears a Whig
 That rides by Kenmure's hand.

Here's Kenmure's health in wine, Willie!
 Here's Kenmure's health in wine!
 There ne'er was a coward o' Kenmure's blude,
 Nor yet o' Gordon's line.

O, Kenmure's lads are men, Willie!
 O, Kenmure's lads are men!
 Their hearts and swords are metal true—
 And that their faes shall ken.

They'll live or die wi' fame, Willie!
 They'll live or die wi' fame:
 But soon, wi' sounding victory,
 May Kenmure's lord come hame!

Here's him that's far awa', Willie!
 Here's him that's far awa'!
 And here's the flower that I lo'e best—
 The rose that's like the snaw!

MY COLLIER LADDIE.

Tune—"The Collier Laddie."

O, WHERE live ye, my bonnie lass?
 An' tell me what they ca' ye?

¹ This song refers to the gallant Viscount Kenmure, who fought for Prince Charles Edward in 1715, and perished on the scaffold.



NITHSDALE'S WELCOME HAME.

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My name, she says, is Mistress Jean,
And I follow the Collier Laddie—
My name, she says, is Mistress Jean,
And I follow the Collier Laddie.

O, see you not yon hills and dales
The sun shines on sae brawlie?
They a' are mine, and they shall be thine,
Gin ye leave your Collier Laddie—
They a' are mine, they shall be thine,
Gin ye'll leave your Collier Laddie.

And ye shall gang in gay attire,
Weel buskit up sae gaudy;
And ane to wait at every hand,
Gin ye'll leave your Collier Laddie
And ane to wait at every hand,
Gin ye'll leave your Collier Laddie.

Though ye had a' the sun shines on,
And the earth conceals sae lowly;
I wad turn my back on you and it a',
And embrace my Collier Laddie—
I wad turn my back on you and it a',
And embrace my Collier Laddie.

I can win my five pennies a day,
And spend 't at night fu' brawlie;
And mak' my bed in the Collier's neuk,
And lie down wi' my Collier Laddie—
And mak' my bed in the Collier's neuk,
And lie down wi' my Collier Laddie.

Luve for luve is the bargain for me,
Though the wee cot-house should haud me;
And the warld before me to win my bread,
And fair fa' my Collier Laddie—
And the warld before me to win my bread,
And fair fa' my Collier Laddie!

NITHSDALE'S WELCOME HAME.

THE noble Maxwells and the powers
Are coming o'er the border,
And they'll gae big¹ Terreagle's towers,
An' set them a' in order.
And they declare Terreagle's fair;
For their abode they choose it:
There's no a heart in a' the land
But's lighter at the news o't.

¹ Build.



AS I WAS A-WAND'RING.

Though stars in skies may disappear,
And angry tempests gather;
The happy hour may soon be near
That brings us pleasant weather:
The weary night o' care and grief
May ha'e a joyfu' morrow;
So dawning day has brought relief—
Farewell our night o' sorrow!

AS I WAS A-WAND'RING.

Tune—"Rinn M'èudial mo Mhealladh,"—a Gaelic air.

As I was a-wand'ring a midsummer e'enin',
The pipers and youngsters were makin' their game;
Amang them I spied my faithless fause lover,
Which bled a' the wound o' my dolour again.
Weel, since he has left me, may pleasure gae wi' him!
I may be distressed, but I winna complain;
I'll flatter my fancy I may git anither,—
My heart it shall never be broken for ane.

I couldna get sleeping till dawin for greetin';
The tears trickled down like the hail and the rain:
Had I na got greetin',¹ my heart wad a broken,
For, oh! luvè forsaken's a tormenting pain!
Although he has left me for greed o' the siller,
I dinna envy him the gains he can win;
I rather wad bear a' the lade o' my sorrow,
Than ever ha'e acted sae faithless to him.
Weel, since he has left me, may pleasure gae wi' him,
I may be distressed, but I winna complain;
I'll flatter my fancy I may git anither,—
My heart it shall never be broken for ane.

BESS AND HER SPINNING-WHEEL.

Tune—"The sweet lass that lo'es me."

O, LEEZE me² on my spinning-wheel,
And leeze me on my rock and reel;
Fra tap to tae that cleeds me bien,³
And haps me fiel⁴ and warm at e'en!

¹ Weeping. ² O bless my spinning-wheel, "I love my spinning-wheel."

³ Clads me well.

⁴ Wraps me soft.



THE POSIE.

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I'll set me down and sing and spin,
While laigh ¹ descends the simmer sun,
Blest wi' content, and milk and meal—
O, leeze me on my spinning-wheel!

On ilka hand the burnies trot,
And meet below my theekit ² cot;
The scented birk and hawthorn white
Across the pool their arms unite,
Alike to screen the birdie's nest
And little fishes caller rest:
The sun blinks kindly in the biel', ³
Where blithe I turn my spinning-wheel.

On lofty aiks the cushats wail,
And echo cons the doolfu' tale;
The lintwhites ⁴ in the hazel braes,
Delighted, rival ither's lays:
The craik ⁵ among the clover hay,
The paitrick ⁶ whirrin' o'er the ley,
The swallow jinkin' ⁷ round my shiel', ⁸
Amuse me at my spinning-wheel.

Wi' sma' to sell, and less to buy,
Aboon distress, below envy,
O, wha wad leave this humble state
For a' the pride of a' the great?
Amid their flaring, idle toys,
Amid their cumbrous, dinsome joys,
Can they the peace and pleasure feel
Of Bessy at her spinning-wheel?

THE POSIE.

O, LUVE will venture in where it daur na weel be seen,
O, luve will venture in where wisdom ance has been;
But I will down yon river rove, among the wood sae green,
And a' to pu' a posie to my ain dear May.

The primrose I will pu', the firstling o' the year,
And I will pu' the pink, the emblem o' my dear,
For she's the pink o' womankind, and blooms without a peer;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

¹ Low.

² Thatched.

³ Nook.

⁴ Linnets.

⁵ Corn-rail.

⁶ Partridge.

⁷ Dodging.

⁸ Shed.



I'll pu' the budding rose, when Phœbus peeps in view,
For it's like a baumy kiss o' her sweet bonnie mou';
The hyacinth's for constancy, wi' its unchanging blue,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The lily it is pure, and the lily it is fair,
And in her lovely bosom I'll place the lily there;
The daisy's for simplicity and unaffected air,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The hawthorn I will pu', wi' its locks o' siller grey,
Where, like an agèd man, it stands at break o' day;
But the songster's nest within the bush I winna take away;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The woodbine I will pu' when the e'ening star is near,
And the diamond-drops o' dew shall be her een sae clear;
The violet's for modesty, which weel she fa's to wear,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I'll tie the posie round wi' the silken band o' luvè,
And I'll place it in her breast, and I'll swear by a' above,
That to my latest draught o' life the band shall ne'er remove;
And this will be a posie to my ain dear May.

COUNTRY LASSIE.

In simmer, when the hay was mawn,
And corn waved green in ilka field,
While claver blooms white o'er the lea,
And roses blaw in ilka bield;¹
Blithe Bessie, in the milking shiel,²
Says, I'll be wed, come o't what will:
Out spak' a dame, in wrinkled eild,
O' guid advisement comes nae ill.

It's ye ha'e wooers mony ane,
And, lassie, ye're but young, ye ken;
Then wait a wee, and cannie wale,³
A routhie butt, a routhie ben.⁴
There's Johnnie o' the Buskie-glen,
Fu' is his barn, fu' is his byre;
Tak' this frae me, my bonnie hen,
It's plenty beets⁵ the luvèr's fire.

¹ Nook.

² Shed.

³ Wisely choose.

⁴ A plentiful back and front to the house.

⁵ Feeds.



FAIR ELIZA.

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For Johnnie o' the Buskie-glen,
I dinna care a single flie;
He lo'es sae weel his craps and kye,
He has nae luve to spare for me:
But blithe's the blink o' Robie's e'e,
And weel I wat he lo'es me dear;
Ae blink o' him I wad nae gi'e
For Buskie-glen and a' his gear.

O, thoughtless lassie, life's a faught;¹
The canniest gate,² the strife is sair;
But aye fu' han't is fechtin best,
A hungry care's an unco care:
But some will spend, and some will spare,
An' wilfu' folk maun ha'e their will;
Syne as ye brew, my maiden fair,
Keep mind that ye maun drink the yill.³

O, gear will buy me rigs o' land,
And gear will buy me sheep and kye;
But the tender heart o' leesome⁴ luve,
The gowd and siller canna buy.
We may be poor—Robie and I;
Light is the burden luve lays on;
Content and luve bring peace and joy,—
What mair ha'e queens upon a throne?

FAIR ELIZA.

[A GAELIC AIR.]

TURN again, thou fair Eliza,
Ae kind blink before we part,
Rew⁶ on thy despairing lover!
Canst thou break his faithfu' heart?
Turn again, thou fair Eliza;
If to love thy heart denies,
For pity hide the cruel sentence
Under friendship's kind disguise!
Thee, dear maid, ha'e I offended?
The offence is loving thee:
Canst thou wreck his peace for ever,
Wha for thine would gladly die?

¹ Strife.

⁴ Gladsome.

² Best road.

⁶ Take pity.

³ Ale.

*YE JACOBITES BY NAME.*

While the life beats in my bosom,
Thou shalt mix in ilka throe:
Turn again, thou lovely maiden,
Ae sweet smile on me bestow.

Not the bee upon the blossom,
In the pride o' sinny noon;
Not the little sporting fairy,
All beneath the simmer moon;
Not the poet in the moment
Fancy lightens on his e'e,
Kens the pleasure, feels the rapture
That thy presence gi'es to me.


YE JACOBITES BY NAME.

Tune—"Ye Jacobites by name."

YE Jacobites by name, give an ear, give an ear;
Ye Jacobites by name, give an ear;
Ye Jacobites by name,
Your fautes I will proclaim,
Your doctrines I maun blame—
You shall hear.

What is right, and what is wrang, by the law, by the law;
What is right, and what is wrang, by the law?
What is right, and what is wrang?
A short sword, and a lang,
A weak arm, and a strang
For to draw.

What makes heroic strife famed afar, famed afar?
What makes heroic strife famed afar?
What makes heroic strife?
To whet th' assassin's knife,
Or hunt a parent's life
Wi' bludie war.

Then let your schemes alone in the state, in the state;
Then let your schemes alone in the state;
Then let your schemes alone,
Adore the rising sun,
And leave a man undone
To his fate.

THE BANKS OF DOON.¹

[FIRST VERSION.]

YE flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care?

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird,
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause luvè was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Oft ha'e I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love;
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose
Frae off its thorny tree;
And my fause luvè staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

THE BANKS O' DOON.

[SECOND VERSION.]

Tune—"Caledonian Hunt's Delight."

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care?
Thou'll break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flowering thorn;
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed—never to return!

¹ The heroine of this song was Miss Kennedy, of Dalgarrock. She died of a broken heart for McDouall of Logan.



SIC A WIFE AS WILLIE HAD.

Oft ha'e I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its luv,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause lover stole my rose,
But, ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

SIC A WIFE AS WILLIE HAD.

Tune—"The eight men of Moidart."

WILLIE Wastle dwalt on Tweed,
The spot they ca'd it Linkum-doddie;
Willie was a wabster¹ guid,
Could stown a clue wi' ony body:
He had a wife was dour and din,²
O Tinkler Maidgie was her mither;
Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad na gi'e a button for her.

She has an e'e—she has but ane,
The cat has twa the very colour;
Five rusty teeth, forbye a stump,
A clapper-tongue wad deave³ a miller;
A whiskin' beard about her mou',
Her nose and chin they threaten ither—
Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad nae gi'e a button for her.

She's bow-houghed,⁴ she's hem-shinned;
Ae limpin' leg, a hand-breed shorter;
She's twisted right, she's twisted left,
To balance fair in ilka quarter:
She has a hump upon her breast,
The twin o' that upon her shouther—
Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad na gi'e a button for her.

Auld Baudrans⁵ by the ingle sits,
An' wi' her loof⁶ her face a-washin';
But Willie's wife is nae sae trig,
She dights her grunzie wi' a hushion;⁷

¹ Weaver.

² Sullen and sallow.

³ Deafen.

⁴ Knead.

⁵ The cat.

⁶ Paw.

⁷ She wipes her mouth with an old stocking.



LADY MARY ANN.

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Her walie nieves¹ like midden-creels; ²
Her face wad fyle³ the Logan-Water:
Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad na gi'e a button for her.

LADY MARY ANN.

Tune—"Craigston's growing."

O, LADY MARY ANN
Looks o'er the castle wa',
She saw three bonny boys
Playing at the ba';
The youngest he was
The flower among them a'—
My bonnie laddie's young,
But he's growin' yet.

O father, O father!
An' ye think it fit,
We'll send him a year
To the college yet:
We'll sew a green ribbon
Round about his hat,
And that will let them ken
He's to marry yet.

Lady Mary Ann
Was a flower i' the dew,
Sweet was its smell,
And bonnie was its hue;
And the langer it blossomed
The sweeter it grew;
For the lily in the bud
Will be bonnier yet.

Young Charlie Cochrane
Was the sprout of an aik;
Bonnie and bloomin'
And straught was its make:
The sun took delight
To shine for its sake,
And it will be the brag
O' the forest yet.

¹ Great fists.

² Baskets for dirt.

³ Dirty, defile.



364 *FAREWHEEL TO A' OUR SCOTTISH FAME.*

The simmer is gane
When the leaves they were green,
And the days are awa'
That we ha'e seen;
But far better days
I trust will come again,
For my bonnie laddie's young,
But he's growin' yet.

FAREWHEEL TO A' OUR SCOTTISH FAME.¹

Tune—"Such a parcel of rogues in a nation."

FAREWHEEL to a' our Scottish fame!
Fareweel our ancient glory!
Fareweel ev'n to the Scottish name,
Sae famed in martial story!
Now Sark rins o'er the Solway sands,
And Tweed rins to the ocean,
To mark where England's province stands—
Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!

What force or guile could not subdue
Through many warlike ages,
Is wrought now by a coward few,
For hireling traitors' wages.
The English steel we could disdain,
Secure in valour's station;
But English gold has been our bane—
Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!

O, would or I had seen the day
That treason thus could sell us,
My auld grey head had lien in clay
Wi' Bruce and loyal Wallace!
But pith and power, till my last hour,
I'll mak' this declaration:
We're bought and sold for English gold—
Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!

¹ This song alludes to the Union with England, long unpopular amongst the Scottish peasantry.

GLOOMY DECEMBER.¹

ANCE mair I hail thee, thou gloomy December!
Ance mair I hail thee wi' sorrow and care;
Sad was the parting thou makes me remember,
Parting wi' Nancy, oh, ne'er to meet mair!
Fond lovers' parting is sweet painful pleasure,
Hope beaming mild on the soft parting hour;
But the dire feeling, oh, farewell for ever!
Is anguish unmingled and agony pure.

Wild as the winter now tearing the forest,
Till the last leaf o' the summer is flown;
Such is the tempest has shaken my bosom,
Since my last hope and last comfort is gone.
Still as I hail thee, thou gloomy December,
Still shall I hail thee wi' sorrow and care;
For sad was the parting thou makes me remember,—
Parting wi' Nancy, oh, ne'er to meet mair!

WILT THOU BE MY DEARIE?²

WILT thou be my dearie?
When sorrow wrings thy gentle heart,
O, wilt thou let me cheer thee?
By the treasure of my soul,
And that's the love I bear thee!
I swear and vow, that only thou
Shalt ever be my dearie;
Only thou, I swear and vow,
Shalt ever be my learie.

Lassie, say thou lo'es me;
Or if thou wilt na be my ain,
Say na thou 'lt refuse me:
If it winna, canna be,
Thou for thine may choose me,
Let me, lassie, quickly die,
Trusting that thou lo'es me;
Lassie, let me quickly die,
Trusting that thou lo'es me.

¹ Written for "Clarinda."

² Composed in honour of Janet Miller, of Dalswinton.



SHE'S FAIR AND FAUSE.

SHE'S fair and fause that causes my awart,—
I lo'ed her meikle and lang;
She's broken her vow, she's broken my heart,
And I may e'en gae hang.
A coof cam' in wi' rowth¹ o' gear,
And I ha'e tint my dearest dear;
But woman is but warld's gear,
Sae let the bonnie lass gang.
Whae'er ye be that woman love,
To this be never blind,
Nae ferlie 'tis though fickle she prove,
A woman has't by kind:
O woman lovely, woman fair!
Vn angel form's faun to thy share;
'Twad been o'er meikle to gien thee mair—
I mean an angel mind.

AFTON WATER.²

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,—
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.
Thou stock-dove, whose echo resounds through the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing thy screaming forbear,—
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.
How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
Far-marked with the courses of clear-winding rills!
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.
How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow;
There oft as mild evening weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.
Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;³
How wanton thy waters her snawy feet lave,
As gath'ring sweet flowerets she stems thy clear wave.

¹ Plenty.

² A small tributary of the Nith, Ayrshire.

³ Afton Water is the stream on which stands Afton Lodge, to which Mrs. Stewart removed from Stair. Afton Lodge was Mrs. Stewart's property from her father. The song was presented to her in return for her notice—the first Burns ever received from any person in her rank of life.—CURRIE.



BONNIE BELL.

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Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,—
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

BONNIE BELL.

THE smiling Spring comes in rejoicing,
And surly Winter grimly flies;
Now crystal clear are the falling waters,
And bonnie blue are the sunny skies;
Fresh o'er the mountains breaks forth the morning,
The evening gilds the ocean's swell;
All creatures joy in the sun's returning,
And I rejoice in my bonnie Bell.

The flowery Spring leads sunny Summer,
And yellow Autumn presses near,
Then in his turn comes gloomy Winter,
Till smiling Spring again appear.
Thus seasons dancing, life advancing,
Old Time and Nature their changes tell,
But never ranging, still unchanging,
I adore my bonnie Bell.

THE GALLANT WEAVER.

WHERE Cart rins rowin' to the sea,
By mony a flower and spreading tree,
There lives a lad, the lad for me,
He is a gallant weaver.

O, I had woovers aught or nine;
They gied me rings and ribbons fine;
And I was feared my heart would tine,
And I gied it to the weaver.

My daddie signed my tocher-band,
To gi'e the lad that has the land;
But to my heart I'll add my hand,
And gi'e it to the weaver.

While birds rejoice in leafy bowers;
While bees delight in opening flowers;
While corn grows green in simmer showers,
I'll love my gallant weaver.¹

¹ In some editions "sailor" is substituted for "weaver."



JEANIE'S BOSOM.

Tune—"Louis, what reek I by thee?"

Louis, what reek I by thee,
Or Geordie on his ocean?
Dyvor,¹ beggar louns to me,
I reign in Jeanie's bosom.

Let her crown my love her law,
And in her breast enthrone me;
Kings and nations, swith awa'!
Reif randies,² I disown ye!

FOR THE SAKE OF SOMEBODY.

My heart is sair, I dare na tell,
My heart is sair for somebody;
I could wake a winter night
For the sake o' somebody.
Oh-hon! for somebody!
Oh-hey! for somebody!
I could range the world around,
For the sake o' somebody.

Ye Powers, that smile on virtuous love,
O, sweetly smile on somebody!
Frae ilka danger keep him free,
And send me safe my somebody.
Oh-hon! for somebody!
Oh-hey! for somebody!
I wad do—what wad I not,
For the sake o' somebody?

THE LOVELY LASS OF INVERNESS.

THE lovely lass o' Inverness,
Nae joy nor pleasure can she see;
For e'en and morn she cries, alas!
And aye the saut tear blin's her e'e:
Drumossie moor, Drumossie day,
A waefu' day it was to me!
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear and brethren three.

¹ Bankrupt² Sturdy beggars.



THE MIRK NIGHT O' DECEMBER

369

Their winding-sheet the bluidy clay,
Their graves are growing green to see;
And by them lies the dearest lad
That ever blest a woman's e'e!
Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord!
A bluidy man I trow thou be;
For mony a heart thou hast made sair,
That ne'er did wrong to thine or thee.

THE MIRK NIGHT O' DECEMBER.

O MAY, thy morn was ne'er so sweet
As the mirk night o' December;
For sparkling was the rosy wine,
And private was the chamber;
And dear was she I dare na name,
But I will aye remember.
And dear, &c.

And here's to them that, like oursel',
Can push about the jorum;
And here's to them that wish us weel—
May a' that's guid watch o'er them!
And here's to them we dare na tell,
The dearest o' the quorum.
And here's to, &c.

O, WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOWN?¹

O, WAT ye wha's in yon town
Ye see the e'enin' sun upon?
The fairest dame's in yon town
That e'enin' sun is shining on.

Now haply down yon gay green shaw,
She wanders by yon spreading tree:
How blest ye flowers that round her blaw,
Ye catch the glances o' her e'e!

How blest ye birds that round her sing,
And welcome in the blooming year;
And doubly welcome be the spring,
The season to my Lucy dear.

¹ The heroine of this song was Lucy Johnstone, of Hilton, afterwards Mrs. Oswald.



370 *JOCKEY'S TA'EN THE PARTING KISS.*

The sun blinks blithe on yon town,
And on yon bonnie braes of Ayr;
But my delight in yon town,
And dearest bliss is Lucy fair.
Without my love, not a' the charms
O' Paradise could yield me joy;
But gi'e me Lucy in my arms,
And welcome Lapland's dreary sky.
My cave wad be a lover's bower,
Though raging winter rent the air;
And she a lovely little flower,
That I wad tent and shelter there.
O, sweet is she in yon town
Yon sinkin' sun's gane down upon;
A fairer than's in yon town
His setting beam ne'er shone upon.
If angry Fate is sworn my foe,
And suffering I am doomed to bear;
I careless quit aught else below,
But spare me, spare me Lucy dear.
For while life's dearest blood is warm,
Ae thought frae her shall ne'er depart;
And she—as fairest is her form,
She has the truest, kindest heart.

JOCKEY'S TA'EN THE PARTING KISS.

Tune—"Bonnie lassie, tak' a man."

JOCKEY's ta'en the parting kiss,
O'er the mountains he is gane;
And with him is a' my bliss,
Nought but griefs with me remain.
Spare my luv, ye winds that blaw,
Plashy sleet and beating rain!
Spare my luv, thou feathery snaw,
Drifting o'er the frozen plain!
When the shades of evening creep
O'er the day's fair, gladsome e'e,
Sound and safely may he sleep,
Sweetly blithe his waukening be!
He will think on her he loves,
Fondly he'll repeat her name;
For where'er he distant roves,
Jockey's heart is still at hame.



LADY ONLIE.

Tune—"Ruffian's Rant."

A' THE lads o' Thornie-bank,
When they gae to the shore o' Bucky,
They'll step in an' tak' a pint
Wi' Lady Onlie, honest Lucky.
Lady Onlie, honest Lucky,
Brews guid ale at shore o' Bucky;
I wish her sale for her guid ale,
The best on a' the shore o' Bucky.

Her house sae bien, her curch sae clean,
I wat she is a dainty chucky;
And cheerlie blinks the ingle-gleed
Of Lady Onlie, honest Lucky!
Lady Onlie, honest Lucky,
Brews guid ale at shore o' Bucky;
I wish her sale for her guid ale,
The best on a' the shore o' Bucky.

THE CARLES OF DYSART.

[A FISHERMAN'S SONG.]

Tune—"Hey ca' through."

UP wi' the carles o' Dysart,
And the lads o' Buckhaven,
And the kimmers o' Largo,
And the lasses o' Leven.
Hey, ca' through, ca' through,
For we ha'e mickle ado;
Hey, ca' through, ca' through,
For we ha'e mickle ado.

We ha'e tales to tell,
And we ha'e sangs to sing;
We ha'e pennies to spend,
And we ha'e pints to bring.

We'll live a' our days,
And them that come behin',
Let them do the like,
And spend the gear they win.
Hey, ca' through, ca' through,
For we ha'e mickle ado;
Hey, ca' through, ca' through,
For we ha'e mickle ado.



THE DEUKS DANG O'ER MY DADDIE, O!

Tune—"The deuks dang o'er my daddie."

THE bairns gat out wi' an unco shout,
The deuks¹ dang² o'er my daddie, O!
The fient ma care, quo' the feirie³ auld wife,
He was but a paidlin'⁴ body, O!
He paidles out, an' he paidles in,
An' he paidles late an' early, O!
Thae seven lang years I ha'e lien by his side,
An' he is but a fusionless carlie, O!

O, hand your tongue, my feirie auld wife,
O, hand your tongue now, Nansie, O!
I've seen the day, and sae ha'e ye,
Ye wadna been sae donsie,⁵ O!
I've seen the day ye buttered my brose,
And cuddled me late and early. O!
But downa do's⁶ come o'er me now,—
And, oh, I feel it sairly, O!

THE DE'IL'S AWA' WI' TH' EXCISEMAN.

Tune—"The de'il cam' fiddling through the town."

THE de'il cam' fiddling through the town,
And danced awa' wi' th' Exciseman,
And ilka wife cries—"Auld Mahoun,
I wish you luck o' the prize, man!"

The de'il's awa', the de'il's awa',
The de'il's awa' wi' th' Exciseman;
He's danced awa', he's danced awa',
He's danced awa' wi' th' Exciseman!

We'll mak' our maut, we'll brew our drink,
We'll dance, and sing, and rejoice, man;
And mony braw thanks to the meikle black de'il
That danced awa' wi' th' Exciseman.

There's threesome reels, there's foursome reels,
There's hornpipes and strathspeys, man;
But the ae best dance e'er cam' to the land
Was—the de'il's awa' wi' th' Exciseman.

¹ Ducks.⁴ Wandering.² Knocked.⁵ Pettish.³ Sturdy.⁶ Old age.



DAINTY DAVIE.

373

The de'il's awa', the de'il's awa',
The de'il's awa' wi' th' Exciseman;
He's danced awa', he's danced awa',
He's danced awa' wi' th' Exciseman!

DAINTY DAVIE.¹

Now rosy May comes in wi' flowers,
To deck her gay green spreading bowers;
And now comes in my happy hours,
To wander wi' my Davie.

CHORUS.

Meet me on the warlock knowe,
Dainty Davie, dainty Davie;
There I'll spend the day wi' you,
My ain dear dainty Davie.

The crystal waters round us fa',
The merry birds are lovers a',
The scented breezes round us blaw,
A wandering wi' my Davie.
Meet me, &c.

When purple morning starts the hare,
To steal upon her early fare,
Then through the dews I will repair.
To meet my faithfu' Davie.
Meet me, &c.

When day, expiring in the west,
The curtain draws o' Nature's rest,
I flee to his arms I lo'e best,
And that's my ain dear Davie.

Meet me on the warlock knowe,
Bonnie Davie, dainty Davie;
There I'll spend the day wi' you,
My ain dear dainty Davie.

¹ "Daintie Davie" is the title of an old Scotch song, from which Burns has taken nothing but the title and the measure.—CURRIE.



BY ALLAN STREAM.

By Allan stream I chanced to rove,
While Phœbus sank beyond Benleddi;¹
The winds were whispering through the grove,
The yellow corn was waving ready:
I listened to a lover's sang,
And thought on youthfu' pleasures mony;
And aye the wild-wood echoes rang—
O, dearly do I love thee, Annie!

O, happy be the woodbine bower!
Nae nightly bogle make it eerie;
Nor ever sorrow stain the hour,
The place and time I met my dearie!
Her head upon my throbbing breast,
She, sinking, said, "I'm thine for ever!"
While mony a kiss the seal imprest,
The sacred vow, we ne'er should sever.

The haunt o' Spring's the primrose brae,
The Simmer joys the flocks to follow;
How cheery through her shortening day
Is Autumn in her weeds o' yellow!
But can they melt the glowing heart,
Or chain the soul in speechless pleasure,
Or through each nerve the rapture dart,
Like meeting her, our bosom's treasure?

PHILLIS THE FAIR.

Tune—"Robin Adair."

WHILE larks, with little wing,
Fanned the pure air,
Tasting the breathing spring,
Forth I did fare;
Gay the sun's golden eye
Peeped o'er the mountains high;
Such thy morn! did I cry,
Phillis the fair.

In each bird's careless song,
Glad did I share;
While yon wild flowers among,
Chance led me there:

¹ A mountain west of Strathallan, 3,009 feet high.—BURNA.



HAD I A CAVE.

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Sweet to the opening day,
Rosebuds bent the dewy spray;
Such thy bloom! did I say,
 Phillis the fair.

Down in a shady walk,
 Doves cooing were;
I marked the cruel hawk
 Caught in a snare;
So kind may Fortune be—
Such make his destiny—
He who would injure thee,
 Phillis the fair.

HAD I A CAVE.

Tune—"Robin Adair."

HAD I a cave on some wild distant shore,
Where the winds howl to the waves' dashing roar;
There would I weep my woes,
There seek my lost repose,
Till grief my eyes should close,
 Ne'er to wake more.

Falsest of womankind, canst thou declare,
All thy fond-plighted vows—fleeing as air?
To thy new lover hie,
Laugh o'er thy perjury,
Then in thy bosom try
 What peace is there!

THOU HAST LEFT ME EVER.

Tune—"Fee him, father."

THOU hast left me ever, Jamie, thou hast left me ever,
Thou hast left me ever, Jamie, thou hast left me ever;
Aften hast thou vowed that death only should us sever,
Now thou 'st left thy lass for aye—I maun see thee never,
 Jamie,

 I'll see thee never.

Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie, thou hast me forsaken,
Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie, thou hast me forsaken;
Thou canst love another jo while my heart is breaking:
Soon my weary een I'll close, never mair to waken, Jamie,
 Ne'er mair to waken.



AULD LANG SYNE.

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min' ?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne ?

CHORUS.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We 'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne ?

We twa ha'e run about the braes,
And pu't the gowans fine ;
But we've wandered mony a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

We twa ha'e paidl't i' the burn,
Frae mornin' sun till dine ;
But seas between us braid ha'e roared
Sin auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And here's a hand, my trustie fiere,¹
And gie's a hand o' thine ;
And we'll tak' a right guid willie-waught,²
For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stoup,
And surely I'll be mine ;
And we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

BANNOCKBURN.

[ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY.]

SCOTS, wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled !
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led !
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to glorious victorie !

¹ Friend.

² Draught.



Scots. wha ha'e.—p. 376.



MY SPOUSE NANCY.

377

Now 's the day, and now 's the hour;
See the front o' battle lower!
See approach proud Edward's power—
Edward! chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Traitor! coward! turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or free-man fa',
Caledonian! on wi' me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall—they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Forward! let us do, or die!

MY SPOUSE NANCY.

Tune—"To Janet."

HUSBAND, husband, cease your strife,
Nor longer idly rave, sir;
Though I am your wedded wife,
Yet I am not your slave, sir.

"One of two must still obey,
Nancy, Nancy;
Is it man, or woman, say,
My spouse Nancy?"

If 'tis still the lordly word,
Service and obedience;
I'll desert my sovereign lord,
And so good-bye, allegiance!

"Sad will I be, so bereft,
Nancy, Nancy,
Yet I'll try to make a shift,
My spouse Nancy."



FAIR JENNY.

My poor heart then break it must,
My last hour I'm near it:
When you lay me in the dust,
Think, think how you will bear it.

‘I will hope and trust in heaven,
Nancy, Nancy;
Strength to bear it will be given,
My spouse Nancy.”

Well, sir, from the silent dead
Still I'll try to daunt you;
Ever round your midnight bed
Horrid sprites shall haunt you.

“I'll wed another like my dear
Nancy, Nancy;
Then all hell will fly for fear—
My spouse Nancy.”

FAIR JENNY.

Tune—“Saw ye my father.”

WHERE are the joys I have met in the morning,
That danced to the lark's early song?
Where is the peace that awaited my wandering
At evening the wild woods among?

No more a-winding the course of yon river,
And marking sweet flowerets so fair;
No more I trace the light footsteps of pleasure,
But sorrow and sad sighing care.

Is it that summer's forsaken our valleys,
And grim surly winter is near?

No, no, the bees humming round the gay roses
Proclaim it the pride of the year.

Fain would I hide what I fear to discover,
Yet long, long too well have I known,
All that has caused this wreck in my bosom,
Is Jenny, fair Jenny alone.

Time cannot aid me—my griefs are immortal—
Nor hope dare a comfort bestow:
Come, then, enamoured and fond of my anguish,
Enjoyment I'll seek in my woe.

LOVELY POLLY STEWART.

Tune—"Ye're welcome, Charlie Stuart."

O LOVELY Polly Stewart!
 O charming Polly Stewart!
 There's ne'er a flower that blooms in May
 That's half sae fair as thou art.
 The flower it blows, it fades and fa's,
 And art can ne'er renew it;
 But worth and truth eternal youth
 Will gi'e to Polly Stewart.

May he whose arms shall fauld thy charms,
 Possess a leal and true heart;
 To him be given to ken the heaven
 He grasps in Polly Stewart.

O lovely Polly Stewart!
 O charming Polly Stewart!
 There's ne'er a flower that blooms in May
 That's half sae sweet as thou art

THE HIGHLAND LADDIE.

Tune—"If thou'lt play me fair play."

THE bonniest lad that e'er I saw,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
 Wore a plaid, and was fu' braw,
 Bonnie Highland laddie.
 On his head a bonnet blue,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,
 His loyal heart was firm and true,
 Bonnie Highland laddie.

Trumpets sound and cannons roar,
 Bonnie lassie, Lawland lassie;
 And a' the hills wi' echoes roar,
 Bonnie Lawland lassie.
 Glory, honour, now invite,
 Bonnie lassie, Lawland lassie,
 For freedom and my king to fight,
 Bonnie Lawland lassie.

The sun a backward course snall take,
 Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie!
 Ere aught thy manly courage shake,
 Bonnie Highland laddie.

*ANNA, THY CHARMS.*

Go! for yoursel' procure renown,
Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie;
And for your lawful king his crown,
Bonnie Highland laddie!

ANNA, THY CHARMS.

Tune—"Bonnie Mary."

ANNA, thy charms my bosom fire,
And 'press my soul with care;
But, ah! how bootless to admire,
When fated to despair!
Yet in thy presence, lovely fair,
To hope may be forgiven;
For sure 'twere impious to despair,
So much in sight of Heaven.

CASSILLIS BANKS.

Tune unknown.

Now bank an' brae are claided in green,
An' scattered cowslips sweetly spring;
By Girvan's fairy-haunted stream
The birdies flit on wanton wing.
To Cassillis' banks, when e'ning fa's,
There wi' my Mary let me flee,
There catch her ilka glance of love,
The bonnie blink o' Mary's e'e!

The chield wha boasts o' world's walth,
Is often laird o' meikle care;
But Mary she is a' mine ain—
Ah! Fortune canna gi'e me mair!
Then let me range by Cassillis' banks,
Wi' her, the lassie dear to me,
And catch her ilka glance o' love,
The bonnie blink o' Mary's e'e!



THE AULD MAN.

Tune—"The winter of life."

But lately seen in gladsome green,
The woods rejoice the day,
Through gentle showers the laughing flowers
In double pride were gay :
But now our joys are fled
On winter blasts awa' !
Yet maiden May, in rich array,
Again shall bring them a'.

But my white pow, nae kindly thowe
Shall melt the snaws of age ;
My trunk of eild, but buss or bield,
Sinks in time's wintry rage.
O, age has weary days,
And nights o' sleepless pain !
Thou golden time o' youthfu' prime,
Why com'st thou not again ?

O PHILLY !

Tune—"The sow's tail."

HE.

O PHILLY ! happy be that day,
When, roving through the gathered hay,
My youthfu' heart was stown away,
And by thy charms, my Philly !

SHE.

O Willy ! aye I bless the grove
Where first I owned my maiden love,
Whilst thou didst pledge the Powers above
To be my ain dear Willy.

HE.

As songsters of the early year
Are ilka day mair sweet to hear,
So ilka day to me mair dear
And charming is my Philly.



O PHILLY!

SHE.

As on the brier the budding rose
Still richer breathes and fairer blows,
So in my tender bosom grows
The love I bear my Willy.

HE.

The milder sun and bluer sky,
That crown my harvest cares wi' joy,
Were ne'er sae welcome to my eye
As is a sight o' Philly.

SHE.

The little swallow's wanton wing,
Though wafting o'er the flowery spring,
Did ne'er to me sic tidings bring,
As meeting o' my Willy.

HE.

The bee that through the sunny hour
Sips nectar in the opening flower,
Compared wi' my delight, is poor,
Upon the lips o' Philly.

SHE.

The woodbine in the dewy weat,
When evening shades in silence meet,
Is nocht sae fragrant or sae sweet
As is a kiss o' Willy.

HE.

Let Fortune's wheel at random rin,
And fools may tine, and knaves may win;
My thoughts are a' bound up in ane,
And that's my ain dear Philly.

SHE.

What's a' the joys that gowd can gi'e!
I care nae wealth a single fie;
The lad I love's the lad for me,
And that's my ain dear Willy.



CONTENTED WI' LITTLE.

Tune—"Lumps o' pudding."

CONTENTED wi' little, and cantie wi' mair,
 Whene'er I forgather wi' sorrow and care,
 I gi'e them a skelp, as they're creeping along,
 Wi' a cog o' guid swats, and an auld Scottish sang.

I whyles claw the elbow o' troublesome thought;
 But man is a sodger, and life is a faught:
 My mirth and guid humour are coin in my pouch,
 And my Freedom's my lairdship nae monarch dare touch.

A towmond¹ o' trouble, should that be my fa',
 A night o' guid fellowship sowthers² it a':
 When at the blithe end o' our journey at last,
 Wha the de'il ever thinks o' the road he has past?

Blind Chance, let her snapper³ and stoyte on her way;
 Be't to me, be't frae me, e'en let the jade gae:
 Come ease, or come travail; come pleasure, or pain,
 My warst word is—"Welcome, and welcome again!"

CANST THOU LEAVE ME THUS, MY KATIE?

Tune—"Roy's wife."

CHORUS.

CANST thou leave me thus, my Katie?
 Canst thou leave me thus, my Katie?
 Well thou know'st my aching heart,
 And canst thou leave me thus for pity?

Is this thy plighted fond regard,
 Thus cruelly to part, my Katie?
 Is this thy faithful swain's reward—
 An aching, broken heart, my Katie?
 Canst thou, &c.

Farewell! and ne'er such sorrows tear
 That fickle heart of thine, my Katie!
 Thou may'st find those will love thee dear—
 But not a love like mine, my Katie.
 Canst thou, &c.

¹ Twelvemonth.² Makes up for it.³ Stumble.

CHLORIS.¹

My Chloris, mark how green the groves,
The primrose banks how fair;
The balmy gales awake the flowers,
And wave thy flaxen hair.

The laverock² shuns the palace gay,
And o'er the cottage sings;
For nature smiles as sweet, I ween,
To shepherds as to kings.

Let minstrels sweep the skilfu' string
In lordly lighted ha';
The shepherd stops his simple reed,
Blithe, in the birken shaw.

The princely revel may survey
Our rustic dance wi' scorn;
But are their hearts as light as ours
Beneath the milk-white thorn?

The shepherd, in the flowery glen,
In shepherd's phrase will woo;
The courtier tells a finer tale,
But is his heart as true?

These wild-wood flowers I've pu'd, to deck
That spotless breast o' thine:
The courtier's gems may witness love—
But 'tis na love like mine.

HAD I THE WYTE SHE BADE ME.

Tune—"Had I the wyte she bade me."

HAD I the wyte,³ had I the wyte,
Had I the wyte she bade me;
She watched me by the hie-gate side,
And up the loan she shawed me;
And when I wadna venture in,
A coward loon she ca'd me;
Had Kirk and State been in the gate,
I lighted when she bade me.

¹ Jean Lorimer.

² Lark.

Blame.



COMING THROUGH THE RYE.

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Sae craftily she took me ben,
And bade me make nae clatter;
"For our ramgunshoch, glum guidman
Is o'er ayont the water."
Whae'er shall say I wanted grace
When I did kiss and dawte her,
Let him be planted in my place,
Syne say I was a fautor.

Could I for shame, could I for shame,
Could I for shame refused her?
And wadna manhood been to blame
Had I unkindly used her?
He clawed her wi' the ripplin'-kame,
And blae and bluidy bruised her:
When sic a husband was frae hame,
What wife but wad excused her?

I dighted aye her een sae blue,
And banned the cruel randy;
And weel I wat her willing mou'
Was e'en like sugar-candy.
At gloaming-shot it was, I trow,
I lighted on the Monday;
But I cam' through the Tysday's dew,
To wanton Willie's brandy.

COMING THROUGH THE RYE.

Tune—"Coming through the rye."

COMING through the rye, poor body,
Coming through the rye,
She draiglet a' her petticoatie
Coming through the rye.
O, Jenny's a' wat, poor body;
Jenny's seldom dry;
She draiglet a' her petticoatie
Coming through the rye.

Gin a body meet a body
Coming through the rye,
Gin a body kiss a body—
Need a body cry?

Gin a body meet a body
Coming through the glen,
Gin a body kiss a body—
Need the warld ken?

*THE WINTER IT IS PAST*

O, Jenny's a' wat, poor body;
Jenny's seldom dry;
She draiglet a' her petticoatie
Coming through the rye.

THE WINTER IT IS PAST.¹

The winter it is past, and the summer's come at last,
And the little birds sing on every tree;
Now everything is glad, while I am very sad,
Since my true love is parted from me.

The rose upon the brier, by the waters running clear,
May have charms for the linnet or the bee;
Their little loves are blest, and their little hearts at rest,
But my true love is parted from me.

My love is like the sun—in the firmament does run,
For ever is constant and true;
But his is like the moon, that wanders up and down,
And is every month changing anew.

All you that are in love, and cannot it remove,
I pity the pains you endure;
For experience makes me know that your hearts are full o' woe,
A woe that no mortal can cure.

YOUNG JAMIE, PRIDE OF A' THE PLAIN.

Tune—"The carlin o' the glen."

Young Jamie, pride of a' the plain,
Sae gallant and sae gay a swain;
Through a' our lasses he did rove,
And reigned, resistless, king of love:
But now, wi' sighs and starting tears,
He strays among the woods and briers;
Or in the glens and rocky caves,
His sad complaining dowie raves.

I wha sae late did range and rove,
And changed with every moon my love,
I little thought the time was near,
Repentance I should buy sae dear:
The slighted maids my torments see,
And laugh at a' the pangs I dree;
While she, my cruel, scornfu' Fair,
Forbids me e'er to see her mair!

¹ It is doubtful whether this song was written by Burns.



OUT OVER THE FORTH.

Tune—"Charlie Gordon's welcome hame."

OUT over the Forth I look to the north,
But what is the north and its Highlands to me?
The south nor the east gi'e ease to my breast,
The far foreign land, or the wild-rolling sea.

But I look to the west, when I gae to rest,
That happy my dreams and my slumbers may be
For far in the west lives he I lo'e best,
The lad that is dear to my babie and me.

THE LOVER'S MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS
MISTRESS.¹

Tune—"De'il tak' the wars."

SLEEP'ST thou, or wak'st thou, fairest creature?

Rosy morn now lifts its eye,
Numbering ilka bud which Nature
Waters wi' the tears o' joy :

Now through the leafy woods,
And by the reeking floods,
Wild Nature's tenants freely, gladly stray ;

The lintwhite in his bower
Chants o'er the breathing flower ;
The laverock to the sky
Ascends wi' sangs o' joy,

While the sun and thou arise to bless the day.

Phœbus, gilding the brow o' morning,
Banishes ilk darksome shade,
Nature gladdening and adorning ;
Such to me my lovely maid.

When absent frae my fair,
The murky shades o' care
With starless gloom o'ercast my sullen sky ;

But when, in beauty's light,
She meets my ravished sight,
When through my very heart
Her beaming glories dart—

'Tis then I wake to life, to light, and joy.

¹ Chloris, *i. e.*, Jean Lorimer (Mrs. Whelpdale).



THE LASS OF ECCLEFECHAN.

Tune—"Jacky Latin."

GAT ye me, O, gat ye me,
O, gat ye me wi' naething?
Rock and reel, and spinnin'-wheel,
A mickle quarter basin.
Bye attour¹ my gutcher² has
A high house and a laigh ane,
A' forbye my bonnie sel',
The lass of Ecclefechan.

O, haud your tongue, now, Luckie Laing,
O, haud your tongue and jauner;³
I held the gate till you I met,
Syne I began to wander;
I tint⁴ my whistle and my sang,
I tint my peace and pleasure;
But your green graff,⁵ now, Luckie Laing,
Wad airt⁶ me to my treasure.

THE COOPER O' CUDDIE.

Tune—"Bob at the Bowster."

THE Cooper o' Cuddie cam' here awa';
He ca'd the girs⁷ out owre us a'—
And our guidwife has gotten a ca'
That angered the silly guidman, O.
We'll hide the cooper behind the door,
Behind the door, behind the door,
We'll hide the cooper behind the door,
And cover him under a mawn,⁸ O.

He sought them out, he sought them in,
Wi' de'il ha'e her! and de'il ha'e him!
But the body he was sae doited and blin',⁹
He wist na where he was gaun, O.

They coopered at e'en, they coopered at morn,
Till our guidman has gotten the scorn;
On ilka brow she's planted a horn,
And swears that there they shall stan', O.

¹ Besides.⁴ Lost.⁷ Hoops.² Grandfather.⁵ Grave.⁸ Basket.³ Grumbling.⁶ Direct.⁹ Stupid and blind.



AH, CHLORIS.

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We'll hide the cooper behind the door,
Behind the door, behind the door;
We'll hide the cooper behind the door,
And cover him under a mawn, O.

AH, CHLORIS.

Tune—"Major Graham."

AH, Chloris! since it may na be
That thou of love wilt hear;
If from the lover thou maun flee,
Yet let the friend be dear.

Although I love my Chloris mair
Than ever tongue could tell,
My passion I will ne'er declare,—
I'll say, I wish thee well.

Though a' my daily care thou art,
And a' my nightly dream,
I'll hide the struggle in my heart,
And say it is esteem.

THE CARDIN' O' T.

Tune—"Salt fish and dumplings."

I cort¹ a stane o' haslock woo,²
To make a coat to Johnny o' t;
For Johnny is my only jo,
I lo'e him best of ony yet.
The cardin' o' t, the spinnin' o' t,
The warpin' o' t, the winnin' o' t.
When ilka ell cost me a groat,
The tailor staw³ the limin' o' t.

For though his locks be lyart grey,
And though his brow be held aboon,
Yet I ha'e seen him on a day
The prido of a' the parishen.
The cardin' o' t, the spinnin' o' t,
The warpin' o' t, the winnin' o' t;
When ilka ell cost me a groat,
The tailor staw the limin' o' t.

¹ Bought. ² Wool from a sheep's throat—the finest wool. ³ Stole.

**THE LASS THAT MADE THE BED TO ME.¹**

Tune—"The lass that made the bed to me."

WHEN Januar' wind was blawin' cauld,
As to the North I took my way,
The mirksome night did me enfauld,
I knew na where to lodge till day.

By my good luck a maid I met,
Just in the middle o' my care;
And kindly she did me invite
To walk into a chamber fair.

I bowed fu' low unto this maid,
And thanked her for her courtesy;
I bowed fu' low unto this maid,
And bade her mak' a bed for me.

She made the bed baith large and wide,
Wi' twa white hands she spread it down,
She put the cup to her rosy lips,
And drank, "Young man, now sleep ye soun'.²"

She snatched the candle in her hand,
And frae my chamber went wi' speed;
But I called her quickly back again
To lay some mair below my head.

A cod² she laid below my head,
And servèd me wi' due respect;
And, to salute her wi' a kiss,
I put my arms about her neck.

"Haud off your hands, young man," she says,
"And dinna sae uncivil be;
Gif ye ha'e onie love for me,
O, wrang na my virginitie!"

Her hair was like the links o' gowd,
Her teeth were like the ivorie;
Her cheeks like lilies dipt in wine,
The lass that made the bed to me.

Her bosom was the driven snaw,
Twa drifted heaps sae fair to see;
Her limbs the polished marble stane,
The lass that made the bed to me.

¹ "The bonnie lass that made the bed to me" was composed on an amour of Charles II., when skulking in the North, about Aberdeen, in the time of the Usurpation.—BURNS.

² Pillow.



SAE FAR AWA'.

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I kissed her owre and owre again,
And aye she wist na what to say;
I laid her between me and the wa'—
The lassie thought na lang till day.

Upon the morrow, when we rase,¹
I thanked her for her courtesy;
But aye she blushed, and aye she sighed,
And said, "Alas! ye've ruined me."

I clasped her waist, and kissed her syne,
While the tear stood twinkling in her e'e;
I said, "My lassie, dinna cry,
For ye aye shall mak' the bed to me."

She took her mither's holland sheets,
And made them a' in sarks² to me:
Blithe and merry may she be,
The lass that made the bed to me!

The bonnie lass made the bed to me,
The braw lass made the bed to me;
I'll ne'er forget, till the day I die,
The lass that made the bed to me!

SAE FAR AWA'.

Tune—"Dalkeith Maiden Bridge."

O, SAD and heavy should I part,
But for her sake sae far awa';
Unknowing what my way may thwart,
My native land sae far awa'.
Thou that of a' things Maker art,
That formed this Fair sae far awa',
Gi'e body strength, then I'll ne'er start
At this my way sae far awa'.

How true is love to pure desert,
So love to her, sae far awa':
And nocht can heal my bosom's smart,
While, oh! she is sae far awa'.
Nane other love, nane other dart,
I feel but hers, sae far awa';
But fairer never touched a heart
Than hers, the Fair sae far awa'.

¹ Rose.

² Shirts.

I'LL AYE CA' IN BY YON TOWN.¹

Tune—"I'll gae nae mair to yon town."

I'll aye ca' in by yon town,
And by yon garden green, again;
I'll aye ca' in by yon town,
And see my bonnie Jean again.
There's nane sall ken, there's nane sall guess,
What brings me back the gate again;
But she my fairest faithfu' lass,
And stowlins² we sall meet again.

She'll wander by the aiken tree,
When trystin'-time draws near again;
And when her lovely form I see,
O haith, she's doubly dear again!
I'll aye ca' in by yon town,
And by yon garden green, again;
I'll aye ca' in by yon town,
And see my bonnie Jean again.

LET NOT WOMAN E'ER COMPLAIN.

Tune—"Duncan Gray."

LET not woman e'er complain
Of inconstancy in love;
Let not woman e'er complain
Fickle man is apt to rove.

Look abroad through Nature's range,—
Nature's mighty law is change:
Ladies, would it not be strange
Man should, then, a monster prove?

Mark the winds, and mark the skies
Ocean's ebb, and ocean's flow:
Sun and moon but set to rise,
Round and round the seasons go.

Why, then, ask of silly man
To oppose great Nature's plan?
We'll be constant while we can,—
You can be no more, you know.

¹ Jean Armour (Mrs. Burns) was the heroine of this song.

² By stealth.



SAW YE MY PHELY?

(QUASI DICAT PHILLIS.)

Tune—"When she came ben she bobbit."

O, saw ye my dear, my Phely?
O, saw ye my dear, my Phely?
She's down i' the grove, she's wi' a new love,
She winna come hame to her Willy.

What says she, my dearest, my Phely?
What says she, my dearest, my Phely?
She lets thee to wot that she has thee forgot,
And for ever disowns thee her Willy.

O, had I ne'er seen thee, my Phely!
O, had I ne'er seen thee, my Phely!
As light as the air, and fause as thou's fair,
Thou's broken the heart o' thy Willy.

ON THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY.

Tune—"O'er the hills," &c.

How can my poor heart be glad,
When absent from my sailor lad?
How can I the thought forego,
He's on the seas to meet the foe?
Let me wander, let me rove,
Still my heart is with my love;
Nightly dreams and thoughts by day
Are with him that's far away.

CHORUS.

On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
Nightly dreams and thoughts by day
Are aye with him that's far away.

When in summer's noon I faint,
As weary flocks around me pant,
Haply in this scorching sun
My sailor's thundering at his gun:
Bullets, spare my only joy!
Bullets, spare my darling boy!
Fate, do with me what you may,
Spare but him that's far away!



394 SHE SAYS SHE LO'ES ME BEST OF A'

At the starless midnight hour,
When winter rules with boundless power;
As the storms the forest tear,
And thunders rend the howling air,
Listening to the doubling roar,
Surging on the rocky shore,
All I can—I weep and pray,
For his weal that's far away.

Peace, thy olive wand extend,
And bid wild War his ravage end;
Man with brother man to meet,
And as a brother kindly greet:
Then may Heaven with prosperous gales
Fill my sailor's welcome sails;
To my arms their charge convey,
My dear lad that's far away.
Over the seas, &c.

SEE SAYS SHE LO'ES ME BEST OF A'

Tune—"Onagh's Waterfall."

Sae flaxen were her ringlets,
Her eyebrows, of a darker hue,
Bewitchingly o'er-arching
Twa laughing een o' bonnie blue.
Her smiling sae wyling,
Wad make a wretch forget his woe;
What pleasure, what treasure,
Unto these rosy lips to grow!
Such was my Chloris' bonnie face,
When first her bonnie face I saw,
And aye my Chloris' dearest charm,
She says she lo'es me best of a'.

Like harmony her motion;
Her pretty ankle is a spy
Betraying fair proportion,
Wad make a saint forget the sky.
Sae warming, sae charming,
Her faultless form and gracefu' air;
Ilka feature—and Nature
Declared that she could do no mair:
Hers are the willing chains o' love,
By conquering beauty's sovereign law;
And aye my Chloris' dearest charm,
She says she lo'es me best of a'.

¹ The heroine of this song was the beautiful Jean Lorimer.



TO THEE, LOVED NITH.

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Let others love the city,
And gaudy show at sunny noon;
Gi'e me the lonely valley,
The dewy eve, and rising moon
Fair beaming, and streaming,
Her silver light the boughs amang;
While falling, recalling,
The am'rous thrush concludes his sang:
There, dearest Chloris, wilt thou rove
By wimpling burn and leafy shaw,
And hear my vows o' truth and love,
And say thou lo'es me best of a'.

TO THEE, LOVED NITH.

Tune unknown.

To thee, loved Nith, thy gladsome plains,
Where late wi' careless thought I ranged,
Though prest wi' care and sunk in woe,
To thee I bring a heart unchanged.
I love thee, Nith, thy banks and braes,
Though memory there my bosom tear;
For there he roved that brake my heart,
Yet to that heart, ah, still how dear!

BANNOCKS O' BARLEY.

Tune—"The Killog e."

BANNOCKS o' bear¹ meal,
Bannocks o' barley;
Here 's to the Highlandman's
Bannocks o' barley!
Wha in a brulzie²
Will first cry a parley?
Never the lads wi'
The bannocks o' barley!

Bannocks o' bear meal,
Bannocks o' barley;
Here 's to the Highlandman's
Bannocks o' barley!

¹ Barley.

² Fight, broil.

HEE BALOU.

Wha in his wae-days
 Were loyal to Charlie?
 Wha but the lads wi'
 The bannocks o' barley?

HEE BALOU.

Tune—"The Highland Balou."

HEE balou!¹ my sweet wee Donald,
 Picture o' the great Clanronald;
 Brawlie kens our wanton chief
 Wha got my young Highland thief.

Leeze me on² thy bonnie craigie!³
 An' thou live, thou'll steal a naigie:
 Travel the country through and through,
 And bring hame a Carlisle cow.

Through the Lawlands, o'er the border,
 Weel, my babie, may thou furdur!
 Herry the louns o' the laigh countrie,
 Syne⁴ to the Highlands hame to me.

WAE IS MY HEART.

Tune—"Wae is my heart."

WAE is my heart, and the tear's in my e'e;
 Lang, lang, joy's been a stranger to me:
 Forsaken and friendless, my burden I bear,
 And the sweet voice o' pity ne'er sounds in my ear.

Love, thou hast pleasures, and deep ha'e I loved:
 Love, thou hast sorrows, and sair ha'e I proved;
 But this bruised heart that now bleeds in my breast,
 I can feel by its throbbings will soon be at rest.

O, if I were where happy I ha'e been,
 Down by yon stream and yon bonnie castle-green;
 Fer there he is wandering, and musing on me,
 Wha wad soon dry the tear frae his Phillis's e'e.

¹ Husbaby.
³ Throat.

² Blessings on.
⁴ Then.

TERA'S HIS HEALTH IN WATER.

Tune—"The Job of Journeywork."

ALTHOUGH my back be at the wa',
 And though he be the fautor;¹
 Although my back be at the wa',
 Yet, here 's his health in water!
 O! wae gae by his wanton sides,
 Sae brawlie 's he could flatter;
 Till for his sake I 'm slighted sair,
 And dree² the kintra³ clatter.
 But though my back be at the wa',
 And though he be the fautor;
 But though my back be at the wa',
 Yet, here 's his health in water!

MY PEGGY'S FACE.⁴

Tune—"My Peggy's face."

MY Peggy's face, my Peggy's form,
 The frost of hermit age might warm;
 My Peggy's worth, my Peggy's mind,
 Might charm the first of humankind.
 I love my Peggy's angel air,
 Her face so truly, heavenly fair,
 Her native grace, so void of art,
 But I adore my Peggy's heart.

The lily's hue, the rose's dye,
 The kindling lustre of an eye;
 Who but owns their magic sway!
 Who but knows they all decay!
 The tender thrill, the pitying tear,
 The generous purpose, nobly dear,
 The gentle look, that rage disarms—
 These are all immortal charms.

¹ Guilty person.

² Bear.

³ Country.

⁴ The heroine of this song was Margaret Chalmers.

**THE CHARMING MONTH OF MAY.**

[Altered from an old English song.]

It was the charming month of May,
When all the flowers were fresh and **gay**,
One morning, by the break of day,
The youthful, charming Chloe,
From peaceful slumber she arose,
Girt on her mantle and her hose,
And o'er the flowery mead she goes,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

CHORUS.

Lovely was she by the dawn,
Youthful Chloe, charming Chloe,
Tripping o'er the pearly lawn,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

The feathered people you might see
Perched all around on every tree,
In notes of sweetest melody,
They hail the charming Chloe;
Till, painting gay the eastern skies,
The glorious sun began to rise,
Out-rivalled by the radiant eyes
Of youthful, charming Chloe.
Lovely was she, &c.

LASSIE WI' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS.

Tune—"Rothemurche's Rant."

CHORUS.

LASSIE wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonnie lassie, artless lassie!
Wilt thou wi' me tent¹ the flocks?
Wilt thou be my dearie, O?

Now Nature cleeds the flowery lea,
And a' is young and sweet like thee;
O, wilt thou share its joys wi' me,
And say thou 'lt be my dearie, O?
Lassie wi', &c.

¹ Tend.



MY LADY'S GOWN, THERE'S GAIRS UPON 'T. 399

And when the welcome simmer shower
Has cheered ilk drooping little flower,
We'll to the breathing woodbine bower
At sultry noon, my dearie, O.
Lassie wi', &c.

When Cynthia lights, wi' silver ray,
The weary shearer's hameward way;
Through yellow waving fields we'll stray,
And talk o' love, my dearie, O.
Lassie wi', &c.

And when the howling wintry blast
Disturbs my lassie's midnight rest,
Enclaspèd to my faithful breast,
I'll comfort thee, my dearie, O.
Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonnie lassie, artless lassie!
Wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks?
Wilt thou be my dearie, O?



MY LADY'S GOWN, THERE'S GAIRS UPON 'T

Tune—"Gregg's Pipes."

CHORUS.

My lady's gown, there's gairs' upon 't,
And gowden flowers sae rare upon 't;
But Jenny's jimps² and jirkinet³
My lord thinks meikle mair upon 't.

My lord a-hunting he has gane,
But hounds or hawks wi' him are nane:
By Colin's cottage lies his game,
If Colin's Jenny be at hame.

My lady's white, my lady's red,
And kith and kin o' Cassilis' blude;
But her ten-pund lands o' tocher⁴ guid
Were a' the charms his lordship lo'ed.

Out o'er yon muir, out o'er yon moss,
Whare gor-cocks through the heather pass,
There wons auld Colin's bonnie lass,
A lily in a wilderness.

Trimming.

² Stays.

³ Boddice.

⁴ Dowry



400 *AMANG THE TREES, WHERE HUMMING BEES.*

Sae sweetly move her genty limbs,
Like music-notes o' lovers' hymns:
The diamond dew in her een sae blue,
Where laughing love sae wanton swims.

My lady's dink,¹ my lady's drest,
The flower and fancy o' the west;
But the lassie that a man lo'es best,
O, that's the lass to mak' him blest.
My lady's gown, there's gairs upon 't,
And gowden flowers sae rare upon 't;
But Jenny's jumps and jirkinet
My lord thinks meikle mair upon 't.

AMANG THE TREES, WHERE HUMMING BEES.

Tune—"The King of France, he rode a race."

AMANG the trees, where humming bees
At buds and flowers were hinging, O,
Auld Caledon drew out her drone,
And to her pipe was singing, O;
'Twas pibroch, sang, strathspey, or reels,
She dirl'd them aff fu' clearly, O,
When there cam' a yell o' foreign squeels,
That dang her tapsalteerie,² O.

Their capon craws and queer ha, ha's,
They made our lugs³ grow eerie,⁴ O;
The hungry bike⁵ did scrape and pike,⁶
'Till we were wae and weary, O;
But a royal ghaist,⁷ wha ance was cased
A prisoner aughteen year awa,
He fired a fiddler in the North
That dang them tapsalteerie, O.

THE GOWDEN⁸ LOCKS OF ANNA.

Tune—"Banks of Banna."

YESTREEN I had a pint o' wine,
A place where body saw na';
Yestreen lay on this breast o' mine
The gowden locks of Anna.

¹ Neat.

⁴ Weary.

⁷ Ghost.

² Knocked her topsy-turvy.

⁵ Band.

⁸ Golden.

³ Bagg.

⁶ Pick.



O, WAT YE WHAT MY MINNIE DID? 401

The hungry Jew in wilderness,
Rejoicing o'er his manna,
Was naething to my hinny liss
Upon the lips of Anna.

Ye monarchs tak' the east and west,
Frae Indus to Savannah!
Gi'e me within my straining grasp
The melting form of Anna.
There I'll despise imperial charms,
An empress or sultana,
While dying raptures, in her arms,
I give and take with Anna!

Awa', thou flaunting god o' day!
Awa', thou pale Diana!
Ilk star gae hide thy twinkling ray,
When I'm to meet my Anna.
Come, in thy raven plumage, Night!
Sun, moon, and stars withdrawn a';
And bring an angel pen to write
My transports wi' my Anna!

POSTSCRIPT.

The Kirk and State may join, and tell
To do such things I maunna;
The Kirk and State may gae to hell,
And I'll gae to my Anna.
She is the sunshine o' my e'e,—
To live but ' her I canna;
Had I on earth but wishes three,
The first should be my Anna.

O, WAT YE WHAT MY MINNIE DID?

O, wat ye what my Minnie did,
My Minnie did, my Minnie did—
O, wat ye what my Minnie did
On Tysday 'teen to me, jo?
She laid me in a saft bed,
A saft bed, a saft bed,
She laid me in a saft bed,
And bade gude'en to me, jo.

¹ Without.

MY NANNIE'S AWA'.

An' wat ye what the parson did,
 The parson did, the parson did—
 An' wat ye what the parson did,
 A' for a penny fee, jo?
 He loosed on me a lang man,
 A mickle man, a strang man,
 He loosed on me a lang man,
 That might ha'e worried me, jo.

An' I was but a young thing,
 A young thing, a young thing—
 An' I was but a young thing,
 Wi' nane to pity me, jo.
 I wat the kirk was in the wyte,¹
 In the wyte, in the wyte,
 To pit a young thing in a fright,
 An' loose a man on me, jo.

MY NANNIE'S AWA'.²

Tune—"There'll never be peace," &c.

Now in her green mantle blithe Nature arrays,
 And listens the lambkins that bleat o'er the braes,
 While birds warble welcome in ilka green shaw;
 But to me it's delightless—my Nannie's awa'.

The snawdrap and primrose our woodlands adorn,
 And violets bathe in the weat o' the morn;
 They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
 They mind me o' Nannie—and Nannie's awa'.

Thou laverock that springs frae the dew's o' the lawn,
 The shepherd to warn o' the grey-breaking dawn,
 And thou mellow mavis that hails the night fa',
 Give over for pity—my Nannie's awa'.

Come, Autumn, sae pensive, in yellow and grey,
 And soothe me wi' tidings o' Nature's decay:
 The dark, dreary winter, and wild-driving snaw
 Alane can delight me—now Nannie's awa'.

¹ Wrong.

² Clarinda (Mrs. M'Lehose) was the Nannie of this ballad.

**THE LAST BRAW BRIDAL.**

A FRAGMENT.

THE last braw bridal that I was at,
'Twas on a Hallowmas day,
And there was routh o' drink and fun,
And mickle mirth and play.
The bells they rang, and the carlins sang,
And the dames danced in the ha':
The bride went to bed wi' the silly bridegroom
In the midst o' her kimmers a'.

**HERE'S TO THY HEALTH, MY BONNIE LASS.**

Tune—"Laggan Burn."

HERE's to thy health, my bonnie lass!
Guid night, and joy be wi' thee!
I'll come nae mair to thy bower-door,
To tell thee that I lo'e thee.
O, dinna think, my pretty pink,
But I can live without thee;
I vow and swear, I dinna care
How lang ye look about ye.

Thou'rt aye sae free informing me
Thou hast nae mind to marry;
I'll be as free informing thee
Nae time ha'e I to tarry.
I ken thy friends try ilka means
Frae wedlock to delay thee;
Depending on some higher chance—
But Fortune may betray thee.

I ken they scorn my low estate,
But that does never grieve me;
But I'm as free as any he,—
Sma' siller will relieve me.
I'll count my health my greatest wealth,
Sae long as I'll enjoy it;
I'll fear nae scant, I'll bode nae want,
As lang's I get employment.

THE FAREWELL.

But far-off fowls ha'e feathers fair,
 And aye until ye try them ;
 Though they seem fair, still have a care,
 They may prove waur than I am.
 But at twal at night, when the moon shines bright,
 My dear, I'll come and see thee ;
 For the man that lo'es his mistress weel,
 Nae travel makes him weary.

THE FAREWELL.

Tune—"It was a' for our rightfu' king."

It was a' for our rightfu' king
 We left fair Scotland's strand ;
 It was a' for our rightfu' king
 We e'er saw Irish land, my dear,
 We e'er saw Irish land.

Now a' is done that men can do,
 And a' is done in vain ;
 My love and native land farewell !
 For I maun cross the main, my dear,
 For I maun cross the main.

He turned him right, and round about,
 Upon the Irish shore ;
 And ga'e his bridle-reins a shake,
 With adieu for evermore, my dear !
 With adieu for evermore !

The sodger frae the wars returns,
 The sailor frae the main ;
 But I ha'e parted frae my love,
 Never to meet again, my dear,
 Never to meet again.

When day is gane and night is come,
 And a' folk bound to sleep,
 I'll think on him that's far awa'
 The lee-lang night, and weep, my dear,
 The lee-lang night, and weep.



O, STEER HER UP.

Tune—"O, steer her up and haud her gaun."

O, STEER her up and haud her gaun
Her mither's at the mill, jo;
An' gin she winna tak' a man,
E'en let her tak' her will, jo;
First shore her wi' a kindly kiss,
And ca' anither gill, jo;
And gin she tak' the thing amiss,
E'en let her flyte² her fill, jo.

O, steer her up, and be na blate,
An' gin she tak' it ill, jo,
Then lea'e the lassie till her fate,
And the time nae langer spill, jo:
Ne'er break your heart for ae rebute,³
But think upon it still, jo;
That gin the lassie winna do 't,
Ye 'll fin' anither will, jo.

O, AYE MY WIFE SHE DANG ME.

Tune—"My wife she dang me."

O, AYE my wife she dang⁴ me,
An' aft my wife did bang me;
If ye gi'e a woman a' her will,
Gude faith! she'll soon o'er-gang ye.
On peace and rest my mind was bent,
And fool I was I married;
But never honest man's intent
As cursedly miscarried.

Some sairie comfort still at last,
When a' their days are done, man;
My pains o' hell on earth are past—
I'm sure o' bliss aboon, man.
O, aye my wife she dang me,
And aft my wife did bang me;
If ye gi'e a woman a' her will,
Gude faith! she'll soon o'er-gang ye.

¹ Going.² Scold.³ Rebuff.⁴ Struck.

**O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST!¹**

Tune—"The Lass o' Livingston."

O, WERT thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,²
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield³ should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae bleak and bare, sae bleak and bare,
The desert were a paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there:
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

O, WHA IS SHE THAT LO'ES ME!

Tune—"Morag."

O, WHA is she that lo'es me,
And has my heart a-keeping?
O, sweet is she that lo'es me,
As dews o' simmer weeping,
In tears the rosebuds steeping!

CHORUS.

O, that's the lassie o' my heart,
My lassie ever dearer;
O, that's the queen of womankind,
And ne'er a ane to peer her.

¹ Burns composed this exquisite song for Jessie Lewars, the sister of his brother-gauger, Lewars. Mendelssohn has set it to a wonderfully beautiful air.

² Blast.

³ Shelter.



O, LAY THY LOOF IN MINE, LASS.

407

If thou shalt meet a lassie,
In grace and beauty charming,
That e'en thy chosen lassie,
Erewhile thy breast sae warming,
Had ne'er sic powers alarming;
O, that 's, &c.

If thou hadst heard her talking,
And thy attentions plighted,
That ilka body talking
But her by thee is slighted,
And thou art all delighted;
O, that 's, &c.

If thou hast met this fair one;
When frae her thou hast parted,
If every other fair one
But her thou hast deserted,
And thou art broken-hearted;
O, that 's the lassie o' my heart,
My lassie ever dearer;
O, that 's the queen o' womankind,
And ne'er a ane to peer her.

O, LAY THY LOOF IN MINE, LASS.

Tune—"Cordwainer's March."

O, LAY thy loof¹ in mine, lass,
In mine, lass, in mine, lass,
And swear on thy white hand, lass,
That thou wilt be my ain.
A slave to Love's unbounded sway,
He aft has wrought me meikle wae;
But now he is my deadly fae,
Unless thou be my ain.

There's monie a lass has broke my rest
That for a blink I ha'e lo'ed best;
But thou art queen within my breast,
For ever to remain.
O, lay thy loof in mine, lass,
In mine, lass, in mine, lass;
And swear on thy white hand, lass,
That thou wilt be my ain.

¹ Palm.



THE FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE.

Tune—"Killiecrankie."

O, WHA will to Saint Stephen's House,
To do our errands there, man ?
O, wha will to Saint Stephen's House,
O' th' merry lads of Ayr, man ?
Or will we send a man o' law ?
Or will we send a sodger ?
Or him wha led o'er Scotland a'
The meikle Ursa-Major ?²

Come, will ye court a noble lord,
Or buy a score o' lairds, man ?
For worth and honour pawn their word,
Their vote shall be Glencaird's, man.
Ane g'ies them coin, ane g'ies them wine,
Anither g'ies them clatter ;
Annbank, wha guessed the ladies' taste,
He g'ies a fête champêtre.

When Love and Beauty heard the news
The gay green-woods amang, man,
Where, gathering flowers and busking bowers,
They heard the blackbird's sang, man ;
A vow, they sealed it with a kiss,
Sir Politics to fetter,
As theirs alone, the patent bliss,
To hold a fête champêtre.

Then mounted Mirth, on gleesome wing ;
O'er hill and dale she flew, man ;
Ilk wimpling burn, ilk crystal spring,
Ilk glen and shaw she knew, man :

¹ The occasion of this ballad was as follows :—When Mr. Cuninghame, of Enterkin, came to his estate, two mansion houses on it, Enterkin and Annbank, were both in a ruinous state. Wishing to introduce himself with some *éclat* to the county, he got temporary erections made on the banks of Ayr, tastefully decorated with shrubs and flowers, for a supper and ball, to which most of the respectable families in the county were invited. It was a novelty in the county, and attracted much notice. A dissolution of Parliament was soon expected, and this festivity was thought to be an introduction to a canvass for representing the county. Several other candidates were spoken of, particularly Sir John Whitefoord, then residing at Cloncaird, commonly pronounced Glencaird, and Mr. Boswell, the well-known biographer of Dr. Johnson. The political views of this festive assemblage, which are alluded to in the ballad, if they ever existed, were, however, laid aside, as Mr. C. did not canvass the county
—GILBERT BURNS.

² Dr. Johnson.



HERE'S A HEALTH TO THEM THAT'S AWA'. 409

She summoned every social sprite
That sports by wood or water,
On the bonny banks of Ayr to meet,
And keep this fête champêtre.

Cauld Boreas, wi' his boisterous crew,
Were bound to stakes like kye, man;
And Cynthia's car, o' silver fu',
Clamb up the starry sky, man:
Reflected beams dwell in the streams,
Or down the current shatter;
The western breeze steals through the trees
To view this fête champêtre.

How many a robe sae gaily floats!
What sparkling jewels glance, man,
To Harmony's enchanting notes,
As moves the mazy dance, man!
The echoing wood, the winding flood,
Like Paradise did glitter,
When angels met, at Adam's yett,
To hold their fête champêtre.

When Politics came there, to mix
And make his ether-stane, man!
He circled round the magic ground,
But entrance found he nane, man:
He blushed for shame, he quat his name,
Forswore it every letter,
Wi' humble prayer to join and share
This festive fête champêtre.



HERE'S A HEALTH TO THEM THAT'S AWA'

Tune—"Here's a health to them that's awa'!"

HERE'S a health to them that's awa'!
Here's a health to them that's awa'!
And wha winna wish guid luck to our cause,
May never guid luck be their fa'!
It's guid to be merry and wise,
It's guid to be honest and true,
It's guid to support Caledonia's cause,
And bide by the buff and the blue.



THE DUMFRIES VOLUNTEERS.

Here's a health to them that's awa'!
Here's a health to them that's awa'!
Here's a health to Charlie¹ the chief of the clan,
Although that his band be but sma'!
May Liberty meet wi' success!
May Prudence protect her frae evil!
May tyrants and tyranny tine in the mist,
And wander their way to the devil!

Here's a health to them that's awa'!
Here's a health to them that's awa'!
Here's a health to Tammie² the Norland laddie,
That lives at the lug o' the law!
Here's freedom to him that wad read!
Here's freedom to him that wad write!
There's nane ever feared that the truth should be heard
But they wham the truth wad indite.

Here's a health to them that's awa'!
Here's a health to them that's awa'!
Here's Chieftain M'Leod,³ a chieftain worth gowd,
Though bred amang mountains o' snaw!
Here's a health to them that's awa'!
Here's a health to them that's awa'!
And wha winna wish guid luck to our cause,
May never guid luck be their fa'!

THE DUMFRIES VOLUNTEERS.

Tune—"Push about the jorum."

Does haughty Gaul invasion threat?
Then let the louns beware, sir!
There's wooden walls upon our seas,
And volunteers on shore, sir.
The Nith shall rin to Corsincon,⁴
The Criffe⁵ sink in Solway,
Ere we permit a foreign foe
On British ground to rally!
We'll ne'er permit a foreign foe
On British ground to rally.

¹ Fox.

² Thomas Erskine.

³ M'Leod, chief of that clan.

⁴ Written when the French threatened to invade Britain.

⁵ If it did, it would run backwards.

⁶ A high green mountain.



THE WINTER OF LIFE.

411

O, let us not, like snarling curs,
In wrangling be divided;
Till, slap! come in an unco loun,
And wi' a rung¹ decide it.
Be Britain still to Britain true,
Amang oursel's united;
For never but by British hands
Maun British wrangs be righted!
For never, &c.

The kettle o' the Kirk and State,
Perhaps a clout may fail in 't;
But de'il a foreign tinkler loun
Shall ever ca' a nail in 't.
Our fathers' bluid the kettle bought;
And wha wad dare to spoil it,
By heavens! the sacrilegious dog
Shall fuel be to boil it!
By heavens, &c.

The wretch that wad a tyrant own,
And the wretch, his true-sworn brother,
Wha would set the mob aboon the throne,
May they be damned together!
Wha will not sing "God save the King!"
Shall hang as high 's the steeple;
But while we sing "God save the King!"
We'll ne'er forget the People.
But while we sing, &c.



THE WINTER OF LIFE.

Tune—"Gil Morice."

But lately seen in gladsome green,
The woods rejoiced the day;
Through gentle showers the laughing flowers
In double pride were gay;
But now our joys are fled
On winter blasts awa';
Yet maiden May, in rich array,
Again shall bring them a'.

¹ Cudgel.

But my white pow,¹ nae kindly thowe²
 Shall melt the snaws of age;
 My trunk of eild,³ but ⁴ buss⁵ or bield,⁶
 Sinks in Time's wintry rage.
 O, age has weary days,
 And nights o' sleepless pain!
 Thou golden time o' youthfu' prime,
 Why com'st thou not again?

TO MARY.

Tune—"Could aught of song."

COULD aught of song declare my pains,
 Could artful numbers move thee,
 The Muse should tell, in laboured strain,
 O Mary, how I love thee!
 They who but feign a wounded heart
 May teach the lyre to languish;
 But what avails the pride of art
 When wastes the soul with anguish?

Then let the sudden bursting sigh
 The heart-felt pang discover;
 And in the keen, yet tender eye,
 O, read th' imploring lover.
 For well I know thy gentle mind
 Disdains art's gay disguising;
 Beyond what fancy e'er refined,
 The voice of Nature prizing.

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW'S LAMENT.

OH, I am come to the low countrie,
 Och-on, och-on, och-rie!
 Without a penny in my purse
 To buy a meal to me.

It was na sae in the Highland hills,
 Och-on, och-on, och-rie!
 Nae woman in the country wide
 Sae happy was as me.

¹ Head.
⁴ Without.

² Thaw.
⁵ Bush.

³ Age.
⁶ Shelter.



WELCOME TO GENERAL DUMOURIER. 413

For then I had a score o' kye,
Och-on, och-on, och-rie!
Feeding on yon hills so high,
And giving milk to me.
And there I had threescore o' yowes,
Och-on, och-on, och-rie!
Skipping on yon bonnie knowes,
And casting woo' to me.
I was the happiest of a' the clan,—
Sair, sair may I repine;
For Donald was the brawest man,
And Donald he was mine.
Till Charlie Stuart cam' at last,
Sae far to set us free;
My Donald's arm was wanted then
For Scotland and for me.
Their waefu' fate what need I tell?
Right to the wrang did yield:
My Donald and his country fell
Upon Culloden-field.
Och-on, O Donald, O!
Och-on, och-on, och-rie!
Nae woman in the warld wide
Sae wretched now as me.

WELCOME TO GENERAL DUMOURIER.

[A parody on "Robin Adair."]

You're welcome to despots, Dumourier;
You're welcome to despots, Dumourier.
How does Dampiere do?
Ay, and Bournonville too?
Why did they not come along with you, Dumourier?
I will fight France with you, Dumourier;
I will fight France with you, Dumourier;
I will fight France with you,
I will take my chance with you;
By my soul, I'll dance a dance with you, Dumourier!
Then let us fight about, Dumourier;
Then let us fight about, Dumourier;
Then let us fight about,
Till freedom's spark is out,
Then we'll be damned, no doubt, Dumourier.



CALEDONIA.

Tune—"Caledonian Hunt's delight."

THERE was once a day, but old Time then was young,
That brave Caledonia, the chief of her line,
From some of your northern deities sprung,
(Who knows not that brave Caledonia's divine?)
From Tweed to the Orcadès was her domain,
To hunt, or to pasture, or do what she would:
Her heavenly relations there fixed her reign,
And pledged her their godheads to warrant it good.

A lambkin in peace, but a lion in war,
The pride of her kindred, the heroine grew;
Her grandsire, old Odin, triumphantly swore—
"Who'er shall provoke thee, th' encounter shall rue!"
With tillage or pasture at times she would sport,
To feed her fair flocks by her green rustling corn;
But chiefly the woods were her fav'rite resort,
Her darling amusement the hounds and the horn.

Long quiet she reigned; till thitherward steers
A flight of bold eagles from Adria's strand;¹
Repeated, successive, for many long years
They darkened the air and they plundered the land
Their pounces were murder, and terror their cry,
They'd conquered and ruined a world beside:
She took to her hills, and her arrows let fly,
The daring invaders they fled or they died.

The fell harpy-raven took wing from the north,
The scourge of the seas, and the dread of the shore;²
The wild Scandinavian boar issued forth
To wanton in carnage and wallow in gore:³
O'er countries and kingdoms their fury prevailed;
No arts could appease them, no arms could repel;
But brave Caledonia in vain they assailed,
As Largs well can witness, and Loncartie tell.⁴

The Cameleon-savage disturbed her repose,
With tumult, disquiet, rebellion, and strife;
Provoked beyond bearing, at last she arose,
And robbed him at once of his hopes and his life:⁵

¹ The Romans.² The Saxons.³ The Danes.⁴ Two famous battles, in which the Danes, or Norwegians, were defeated⁵ The Picts.



IS THERE, FOR HONEST POVERTY. 415

The Anglian lion, the terror of France,
Oft prowling, ensanguined the Tweed's silver flood;
But, taught by the bright Caledonian lance,
He learned to fear in his own native wood.

Thus bold, independent, unconquered, and free,
Her bright course of glory for ever shall run:
For brave Caledonia immortal must be;
I'll prove it from Euclid as clear as the sun:—
Rectangle-triangle the figure we'll choose;
The upright is Chance, and old Time is the base;
But brave Caledonia's the hypothenuse;
Then ergo, she'll match them, and match them always.¹

IS THERE, FOR HONEST POVERTY.

Tune—"For a' that and a' that."

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that;
The coward-slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toil's obscure, and a' that;
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, and a' that;
Gi'e fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie,² ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof³ for a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that:
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

¹ This singular figure of poetry, taken from the mathematics, refers to the famous proposition of Pythagoras, the 47th of Euclid. In a right-angled triangle, the square of the hypothenuse is always equal to the squares of the two other sides.

² Spirited fellow

³ Fool.



416 O LASSIE, ART THOU SLEEPING YET?

A prince can mak' a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man 's aboon his might—
Guid faith he mauna fa' ¹ that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense and pride o' worth
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, ² and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
It 's coming yet, for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

O LASSIE, ART THOU SLEEPING YET?

Tune—"Let me in this ae night."

O LASSIE, art thou sleeping yet?
Or art thou wakin', I would wit?
For love has bound me hand and foot,
And I would fain be in, jo.

CHORUS.

O, let me in this ae night,
This ae, ae, ae night,
For pity's sake this ae night;
O, rise and let me in, jo.

Thou hear'st the winter wind and weet,
Nae star blinks through the driving sleet;
Tak' pity on my weary feet,
And shield me frae the rain, jo.
O, let me in, &c.

The bitter blast that round me blaws,
Unheeded howls, unheeded fa's;
The cauldness o' thy heart 's the cause
Of a' my grief and pain, jo.
O, let me in, &c.

¹ Try.

² Palm.



HER ANSWER.

O, TELL na me o' wind and rain!
Upbraid na me wi' cauld disdain!
Gae back the gate ye cam' again,
I winna let you in, jo.

CHORUS.

I tell you now this ae night,
This ae, ae, ae night,
And ance for a' this ae night,
I winna let you in, jo.

The snellest¹ blast, at mirkest hours,
That round the pathless wanderer pours,
Is nocht to what poor she endures
That's trusted faithless man, jo.
I tell you now, &c.

The sweetest flower that decked the mead,
Now trodden like the vilest weed:
Let simple maid the lesson read,
The weird may be her ain, jo.
I tell you now, &c.

The bird that charmed his summer-day,
Is now the cruel fowler's prey:
Let witless, trusting woman say
How aft her fate's the same, jo.
I tell you now, &c.

BONNIE PEG-A-RAMSAY.

Tune—"Cauld is the e'enin' blast."

CAULD is the e'enin' blast
O' Boreas o'er the pool,
And dawin' it is dreary
When birks are bare at Yule.

O, cauld blaws the e'enin' blast
When bitter bites the frost,
And in the mirk and dreary drift
The hills and glens are lost.

¹ Sharpest.

*THERE WAS A BONNIE LASS.*

Ne'er sae murky blew the night
That drifted o'er the hill,
But bonnie Peg-a-Ramsay
Gat grist to her mill.

THERE WAS A BONNIE LASS.

[AN UNFINISHED SKETCH.]

There was a bonnie lass,
And a bonnie, bonnie lass,
And she lo'ed her bonnie laddie dear;
Till war's loud alarms
Tore her laddie frae her arms,
Wi' mony a sigh and a tear.

Over sea, over shore,
Where the cannons loudly roar,
He still was a stranger to fear;
And nocht could him quail,
Or his bosom assail,
But the bonnie lass he lo'ed sae dear.

O, MALLY'S MEEK, MALLY'S SWEET.

As I was walking up the street,
A barefit maid I chanced to meet;
But O, the road was very hard
For that fair maiden's tender feet.
O, Mally's meek, Mally's sweet,
Mally's modest and discreet,
Mally's rare, Mally's fair,
Mally's every way complete.

It were mair meet that those fine feet
Were weel laced up in silken shoon,
And 'twere more fit that she should sit
Within yon chariot gilt aboon.

Her yellow hair, beyond compare,
Comes trinkling down her swan-white neck;
And her two eyes, like stars in skies,
Would keep a sinking ship frae wreck.
O, Mally's meek, Mally's sweet,
Mally's modest and discreet,
Mally's rare, Mally's fair,
Mally's every way complete.



ADDRESS TO THE WOODLARK.

Tune—"Where'll bonnie Ann lie?" or "Loch-Eroch side."

O, STAY, sweet warbling woodlark, stay,
Nor quit me for the trembling spray;
A hapless lover courts thy lay,
Thy soothing, fond complaining.

Again, again that tender part,
That I may catch thy melting art;
For surely that wad touch her heart
Wha kills me wi' disdainin'.

Say, was thy little mate unkind,
And heard thee as the careless wind?
O, nocht but love and sorrow joined,
Sic notes o' woe could wauken.

Thou tells o' never-ending care,
O' speechless grief, and dark despair;
For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair!
Or my poor heart is broken!



ON CHLORIS BEING ILL.

Tune—"Aye wakin', O."

CHORUS.

LONG, long the night,
Heavy comes the morrow,
While my soul's delight
Is on her bed of sorrow.

Can I cease to care?
Can I cease to languish,
While my darling fair
Is on the couch of anguish?
Long, &c.

Every hope is fled,
Every fear is terror;
Slumber ev'n I dread,
Every dream is horror.
Long, &c.



420 *THEIR GROVES O' SWEET MYRTLE.*

Hear me, Powers divine!
O, in pity hear me!
Take aught else of mine,
But my Chloris spare me!
Long, &c

THEIR GROVES O' SWEET MYRTLE.

Tune—"Humours of Glen."

THEIR groves o' sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume,
Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green breckan,
Wi' the burn stealing under the lang yellow broom.

Far dearer to me are yon humble broom bowers,
Where the bluebell and gowan lurk lowly unseen;
For there, lightly tripping among the wild flowers,
A-listening the linnet, aft wanders my Jean.

Though rich is the breeze in their gay sunny valleys,
And cauld Caledonia's blast on the wave;
Their sweet-scented woodlands that skirt the proud palace,
What are they? The haunt of the tyrant and slave!

The slave's spicy forests, and gold-bubbling fountains,
The brave Caledonian views wi' disdain;
He wanders as free as the winds of his mountains,
Save Love's willing fetters, the chains o' his Jean.

'T WAS NA HER BONNIE BLUE E'E.

Tune—"Laddie, lie near me."

'T WAS na her bonnie blue e'e was my ruin;
Fair though she be, that was ne'er my undoing:
'T was the dear smile when naebody did mind us,—
'T was the bewitching, sweet, stown glance o' kindness.

Sair do I fear that to hope is denied me,
Sair do I fear that despair maun abide me;
But though fell fortune should fate us to sever,
Queen shall she be in my bosom for ever.



HOW CRUEL ARE THE PARENTS.

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Mary, I'm thine wi' a passion sincerest,
And thou hast plighted me, love, the dearest !
And thou 'rt the angel that never can alter, —
Sooner the sun in his motion would falter.

HOW CRUEL ARE THE PARENTS.

[Altered from an old English song.]

Tune—"John Anderson my jo."

How cruel are the parents,
Who riches only prize,
And to the wealthy booby
Poor woman sacrifice.
Meanwhile the hapless daughter
Has but a choice of strife;
To shun a tyrant father's hate,
Become a wretched wife.

The ravening hawk pursuing,
The trembling dove thus flies,
To shun impelling ruin
A while her pinions tries;
Till of escape despairing,
No shelter or retreat,
She trusts the ruthless falconer,
And drops beneath his feet.

MARK YONDER POMP.

Tune—"De'il tak' the wars."

MARK yonder pomp of costly fashion,
Round the wealthy titled bride;
But when compared with real passion,
Poor is all that princely pride.
What are the showy treasures ?
What are the noisy pleasures ?
The gay gaudy glare of vanity and art ?
The polished jewel's blaze
May draw the wondering gaze,
And courtly grandeur bright
The fancy my delight,
But never, never can come near the heart.

MY AIN LASSIE.

But did you see my dearest Chloris
 In simplicity's array?^p
 Lovely as yonder sweet opening flower is,
 Shrinking from the gaze of day.
 O, then, the heart alarming,
 And all resistless charming,
 In Love's delightful fetters she chains the willing soul!¹
 Ambition would disown
 The world's imperial crown,—
 Even Avarice would deny
 His worshipped deity,
 And feel through every vein Love's raptures roll.

MY AIN LASSIE.

Tune—"This is no my ain house."

CHORUS.

O, THIS is no my ain lassie,
 Fair though the lassie be;
 O, weel ken I my ain lassie,—
 Kind love is in her e'e.

I see a form, I see a face,
 Ye weel may wi' the fairest place:
 It wants, to me, the witching grac
 The kind love that's in her e'e.
 O, this is no, &c.

She's bonnie, blooming, straight, and tall,
 And lang has had my heart in thrall;
 And aye it charms my very saul,
 The kind love that's in her e'e.
 O, this is no, &c.

A thief sae pawkie¹ is my Jean,
 To steal a blink, by a' unseen;
 But gleg² as light are lovers' een,
 When kind love is in the e'e.
 O, this is no, &c.

It may escape the courtly sparks,
 It may escape the learned clerks;
 But weel the watching lover marks
 The kind love that's in her e'e.
 O, this is no, &c.

¹ Sly.

² Sharp.



NOW SPRING HAS CLAD THE GROVE IN GREEN.

Now spring has clad the grove in green,
And strewed the lea wi' flowers;
The furrowed waving corn is seen
Rejoice in fostering showers;
While ilka thing in nature join
Their sorrows to forego,
O, why thus all alone are mine
The weary steps of woe?

The trout within yon wimpling burn
Glides swift, a silver dart,
And safe beneath the shady thorn
Defies the angler's art:
My life was ance that careless stream,
That wanton trout was I;
But Love, wi' unrelenting beam,
Has scorched my fountains dry.

The little floweret's peaceful lot,
In yonder cliff that grows,
Which, save the linnet's flight, I wot,
Nae ruder visit knows,
Was mine; till Love has o'er me past,
And blighted a' my bloom,
And now beneath the withering blast
My youth and joy consume.

The wakened laverock warbling springs,
And climbs the early sky,
Winnowing blithe her dewy wings
In morning's rosy eye;
As little reckt I sorrow's power,
Until the flowery snare
O' witching Love, in luckless hour,
Made me the thrall o' care.

O, had my fate been Greenland snows,
Or Afric's burning zone,
Wi' man and nature leagued my foes,
So Peggy ne'er I'd know!
The wretch whose doom is, "Hope nae mair,"
What tongue his woes can tell!
Within whose bosom, save Despair,
Nae kinder spirits dwell!

**O, BONNIE WAS YON ROSY BRIER.**

O, BONNIE was yon rosy brier,
That blooms sae far frae haunt o' man;
And bonnie she, and ah, how dear!
It shaded frae the e'enin' sun.

Yon rosebuds in the morning dew,
How pure amang the leaves sae green;
But purer was the lover's vow
They witnessed in their shade yestreen.

All in its rude and prickly bower,
That crimson rose, how sweet and fair!
But love is far a sweeter flower
Amid life's thorny path o' care.

The pathless wild and wimpling burn,
Wi' Chloris in my arms, be mine;
And I the world, nor wish nor scorn,
Its joys and griefs alike resign.

FORLORN, MY LOVE, NO COMFORT NEAR.

Tune—"Let me in this ae night."

FORLORN, my love, no comfort near,
Far, far from thee, I wander here;
Far, far from thee—the fate severe
At which I most repine, love.

CHORUS.

O, wert thou, love, but near me,
But near, near, near me;
How kindly thou wouldst cheer me,
And mingle sighs with mine, love!

Around me scowls a wintry sky,
That blasts each bud of hope and joy;
And shelter, shade, nor home have I,
Save in those arms of thine, love.
O, wert, &c.

Cold, altered Friendship's cruel part,
To poison Fortune's ruthless dart—
Let me not break thy faithful heart,
And say that fate is mine, love.
O, wert, &c.



LAST MAY A BRAW WOOER.

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But, dreary though the moments fleet,
O, let me think we yet shall meet!
That only ray of solace sweet
Can on thy Chloris shine, love.
O, wert, &c.

LAST MAY A BRAW WOOER.

Tune—"The Lothian lassie."

LAST May a braw wooer cam' down the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did deave¹ me;
I said there was naething I hated like men,—
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me, believe me!
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me!

He spak' o' the darts in my bonnie black een,
And vowed for my love he was dying;
I said he might die when he likèd, for Jean,—
The Lord f'rgi'e me for lying, for lying!
The Lord forgi'e me for lying!

A weel-stockèd mailen,² himsel' for the laird,
And marriage aff-hand, were his proffers:
I never loot on that I kenned it, or cared,
But thought I might ha'e waur offers, waur offers,
But thought I might ha'e waur offers.

But what wad ye think? in a fortnight or less—
The de'il tak' his taste to gae near her!
He up the lang loan³ to my black cousin Bess,—
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her, could bear her,
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her.

But a' the niest week, as I fretted wi' care,
I gaed to the tryste o' Dalgarnock,
And wha but my fine fickle lover was there!—
I glow'ed as I'd seen a warlock, a warlock,
I glow'ed as I'd seen a warlock.

But owre my left shouther I ga'e him a blink,
Lest neebors might say I was saucy;
My wooer he capered as he'd been in drink,
And vowed I was his dear lassie, dear lassie,
And vowed I was his dear lassie.

¹ Deafen.

² Farm.

³ Long lane: in the original MS. Gateslack—a passage among the Lowther hills.



I spiered¹ for my cousin fu' couthy and sweet,
Gin she had recovered her hearin',
And how my auld shoon² suited her shauckled feet,—
Gude save us! how he fell a-swearin', a-swearin'
Gude save us! how he fell a-swearin'!

He begged, for Gudesake, I wad be his wife,
Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow:
So, e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow.

CHLORIS.

[A FRAGMENT.]

Tune—"The Caledonian Hunt's Delight."

WHY, why tell thy lover
Bliss he never must enjoy?
Why, why undeceive him,
And give all his hopes the lie?

O, why, while Fancy, raptured, slumbers,
Chloris, Chloris all the theme,
Why, why wouldst thou, cruel,
Wake thy lover from his dream?

O, WHISTLE, AND I'LL COME TO YOU.

O, WHISTLE, and I'll come to you, my lad,
O, whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad;
Though father and mither and a' should gae mad,
O, whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad.
But warily tent when you come to court me,
And come na unless the back-yett be a-jee;
Syne up the back-stile, and let naeboddy see,
And come as ye were na comin' to me,
And come as ye were na comin' to me.

At kirk, or at market, whene'er ye meet me,
Gang by me as though that ye cared na a flie;
But steal me a blink o' your bonnie black e'e,
Yet look as ye were na lookin' at me,
Yet look as ye were na lookin' at me.

Inquired.

² Old shoe (*i.e.* slang for an old lover).



ADOWN WINDING NITH.

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Aye vow and protest that ye care na for me,
And whyles ye may lightly my beauty a wee:
But court na anither, though jokin' ye be,
For fear that she wyle your fancy frae me,
For fear that she wyle your fancy frae me.
O, whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad,
O, whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad;
Though father and mither and a' should gae mad,
O, whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad.

ADOWN WINDING NITH.

Tune — "The muckin of Geordie's byre."

ADOWN winding Nith I did wander,
To mark the sweet flowers as they spring;
ADOWN winding Nith I did wander,
Of Phillis to muse and to sing.
Awa' wi' your belles and your beauties!
They never wi' her can compare:
Whaever has met wi' my Phillis'¹
Has met wi' the queen o' the fair.

The daisy amused my fond fancy,
So artless, so simple, so wild;
Thou emblem, said I, o' my Phillis,
For she is simplicity's child.

The rosebud's the blush o' my charmer,
Her sweet balmy lip when 'tis prest;
How fair and how pure is the lily,
But fairer and purer her breast!

Yon knot of gay flowers in the arbour,
They ne'er wi' my Phillis can vie:
Her breath is the breath o' the woodbine,
Its dewdrop o' diamond her eye.

Her voice is the song of the morning,
That wakes through the green-spreading grove
When Phœbus peeps over the mountains,
On music, and pleasure, and love.

But beauty, how frail and how fleeting!
The bloom of a fine summer's day!
While worth in the mind o' my Phillis
Will flourish without a decay.

¹ Miss Philadelphia McMurdo, his "Phillis the Fair."



THE RUINED MAID'S LAMENT.

Awa' wi' your belles and your beauties!
They never wi' her can compare:
Whae'er has met wi' my Phillis
Has met wi' the queen o' the fair.

THE RUINED MAID'S LAMENT.

O, MEIKLE do I rue, fause love,
O, sairly do I rue
That e'er I heard your flattering tongue,
That e'er your face I knew.

O, I ha'e tint¹ my rosy cheeks,
Likewise my waist sae sma';
And I ha'e lost my lightsome heart,
That little wist a fa'.

Now I maun thole² the scornful sneer
O' mony a saucy quean;
When, gin the truth were a' but kent,³
Her life's been waur than mine.

Whene'er my father thinks on me,
He stares into the wa';
My mither, she has ta'en the bed
Wi' thinking on my fa'.

Whene'er I hear my father's foot,
My heart wad burst wi' pain;
Whene'er I meet my mither's e'e
My tears rin down like rain.

Alas! sae sweet a tree as love
Sic bitter fruit should bear!
Alas! that e'er a bonnie face
Should draw a sauty tear!

But Heaven's curse will blast the man
Denies the bairn he got;
Or leaves the painfu' lass he loved
To wear a ragged coat.

¹ Lost.² Bear, endure.³ Knowl.

SONG.

Tune—"Maggy Lauder."

WHEN first I saw fair Jeanie's face
 I couldna tell what ailed me;
 My heart went fluttering pit-a-pat,
 My een they almost failed me.
 She's aye sae neat, sae trim, sae tight,
 All grace does round her hover,
 Ae look deprived me o' my heart,
 And I became a lover.
 She's aye, aye sae blithe, sae gay,
 She's aye sae blithe and cheerie;
 She's aye sae bonnie, blithe, and gay,
 O, gin I were her dearie!

Had I Dundas's whole estate,
 Or Hopetoun's wealth to shine in—
 Did warlike laurels crown my brow,
 Or humbler bays entwining—
 I'd lay them a' at Jeanie's feet,
 Could I but hope to move her,
 And, prouder than a belted knight,
 I'd be my Jeanie's lover.
 She's aye, aye sae blithe, sae gay, &c.

But sair I fear some happier swain
 Has gained sweet Jeanie's favour
 If so, may every bliss be hers,
 Though I maun never have her!
 But gang she east, or gang she west,
 'Twixt Forth and Tweed all over,
 While men have eyes, or ears, or taste,
 She'll always find a lover.
 She's aye, aye sae blithe, sae gay, &c.

HER FLOWING LOCKS.

HER flowing locks, the raven's wing,
 Adown her neck and bosom hing;
 How sweet unto that breast to cling,
 And round that neck entwine her!
 Her lips are roses wat wi' dew,
 O, what a feast her bonnie mou'!
 Her cheeks a mair celestial hue,
 A crimson still diviner.



THE DISCREET HINT.

Tune unknown.

“LASS, when your mither is frae hame,
May I but be sae bauld
As come to your bower window,
And creep in frae the cauld?
As come to your bower window,
And when it's cold and wat,
Warm me in thy fair bosom,—
Sweet lass, may I do that?”

“Young man, gin ye should ba sae kind,
When our gudewife's frae hame,
As come to my bower window,
Whare I am laid my lane,
To warm thee in my bosom,—
Tak' tent, I'll tell thee what,
The way to me lies through the kirk,—
Young man, do ye hear that?”



DELUDED SWAIN, THE PLEASURE.

Tune—“The Collier's Bonnie Lassie.”

DELUDED swain, the pleasure
The fickle Fair can give thee,
Is but a fairy treasure,
Thy hopes will soon deceive thee.

The billows on the ocean,
The breezes idly roaming,
The clouds' uncertain motion,
They are but types of women.

O! art thou not ashamed
To doat upon a feature?
If man thou wouldst be named,
Despise the silly creature.

Go, find an honest fellow;
Good claret set before thee;
Hold on till thou art mellow,
And then to bed in glory.

**FAREWELL, THOU STREAM!**

Tune—"Nanny's to the greenwood gane."

FAREWELL, thou stream that winding flows
Around Eliza's dwelling!
O Mem'ry! spare the cruel throes.
Within my bosom swelling:
Condemned to drag a hopeless chain,
And yet in secret languish,
To feel a fire in every vein,
Nor dare disclose my anguish.

Love's veriest wretch, unseen, unknown,
I fain my griefs would cover:
The bursting sigh, th' unweeting groan,
Betray the hapless lover.
I know thou doom'st me to despair,
Nor wilt, nor canst relieve me;
But oh! Eliza, hear one prayer,—
For pity's sake forgive me!

The music of thy voice I heard,
Nor wist while it enslaved me;
I saw thine eyes, yet nothing feared,
Till fears no more had saved me:
Th' unwary sailor, thus aghast,
The wheeling torrent viewing,
'Mid circling horrors sinks at last
In overwhelming ruin.

HEY FOR A LASS WI' A TOCHER!

Tune—"Balinamona ora."

Awa' wi' your witchcraft o' beauty's alarms,
The slender bit beauty you grasp in your arms!
O, gi'e me the lass that has acres o' charms,
O, gi'e me the lass wi' the weel-stockit farms.

CHORUS.

Then hey for a lass wi' a tocher! then hey for a
lass wi' a tocher!
Then hey for a lass wi' a tocher! the nice yellow
guineas for me.



Your beauty 's a flower in the morning that blows,
And withers the faster the faster it grows;
But the rapturous charm o' the bonnie green knowes,
Ilk spring they 're new deckit wi' bonnie white yowes.
Then hey, &c.

And e'en when this beauty your bosom has blest,
The brightest o' beauty may cloy, when possessit;
But the sweet yellow darlings wi' Geordie imprest,
The langer ye ha'e them, the mair they 're carest.
Then hey, &c.

MY AIN KIND DEARIE, O!

Tune—"The Lea-rig."

WHEN o'er the hill the eastern star
Tells bughtin'-time¹ is near, my jo;
And owsen² frae the furrowed field
Return sae dowf³ and weary, O!
Down by the burn, where scented birks⁴
Wi' dew are hanging clear, my jo,
I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O!

In mirkest glen, at midnight hour,
I'd rove, and ne'er be eerie, O,
If through that glen I gaed to thee,
My ain kind dearie, O!
Although the night were ne'er sae wild,
And I were ne'er sae wearie, O,
I'd meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O!

The hunter lo'es the morning sun,
To rouse the mountain deer, my jo;
At noon the fisher seeks the glen,
Along the burn to steer, my jo;
Gi'e me the hour o' gloaming⁵ grey,—
It makes my heart sae cheery, O,
To meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O!

¹ Time of collecting the sheep in the pens to be milked.² Oxen.³ Weak.⁴ Birches.⁵ Twilight.

MY LOVELY NANCY.

Tune—"The Quaker's wife."

THINE am I, my faithful fair,
 Thine, my lovely Nancy;
 Every pulse along my veins,
 Every roving fancy.

To thy bosom lay my heart,
 There to throb and languish:
 Though despair had wrung its core,
 That would heal its anguish.

Take away those rosy lips,
 Rich with balmy treasure:
 Turn away thine eyes of love,
 Lest I die with pleasure.

What is life when wanting love?
 Night without a morning:
 Love's the cloudless summer sun,
 Nature gay adorning.

CA' THE YOWES TO THE KNOWES.

CHORUS.

Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
 Ca' them whare the heather growes,
 Ca' them whare the burnie rowes,
 My bonnie dearie.

Hark, the mavis' evening sang
 Sounding Clouden's' woods amang;
 Then a-faulding let us gang,
 My bonnie dearie.
 Ca' the, &c.

We'll gae down by Clouden side,
 Through the hazels spreading wide,
 O'er the waves that sweetly glide
 To the moon sae clearly.
 Ca' the, &c.

The River Clouden, or Cluden, a tributary stream to the Nith.

*JESSY.*

Yonder Clouden's silent towers,
Where at moonshine midnight hours,
O'er the dewy bending flowers,
Fairies dance sae cheery.
Ca' the, &c.

Ghaist nor bogle shalt thou fear;
Thou 'rt to love and heaven sae dear,
Nocht of ill may come thee near,
My bonnie dearie.
Ca' the, &c.

Fair and lovely as thou art,
Thou hast stown my very heart;
I can die—but canna part,
My bonnie dearie.
Ca' the, &c.

*JESSY.¹*

CHORUS.

HERE's a health to ane I lo'e dear,
Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear;
Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet,
And soft as their parting tear—Jessy!

Although thou maun never be mine,
Although even hope is denied;
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than aught in the world beside—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

I mourn through the gay, gaudy day,
As, hopeless, I muse on thy charms;
But welcome the dream o' sweet slumber,
For then I am locked in thy arms—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

I guess by the dear angel smile,
I guess by the love-rolling e'e:
But why urge the tender confession
'Gainst fortune's fell cruel decree—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

¹ Jessy Lewars, who nursed him during his last illness.



A RED, RED ROSE.

[This song was an improvement of a street ballad, which is said to have been written by a Lieutenant Hinchey, as a farewell to his betrothed.]

Tune—"Graham's Strathspey."

O, my luv'e's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
O, my luv'e's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luv'e am I;
And I will luv'e thee still my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
I will luv'e thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luv'e!
And fare thee weel a while!
And I will come again, my luv'e,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

FAIREST MAID ON DEVON BANKS.¹

Tune—"Rothemurche."

CHORUS.

FAIREST maid on Devon banks,
Crystal Devon, winding Devon,
Wilt thou lay that frown aside,
And smile as thou were wont to do?

Full well thou know'st I love thee dear,
Couldst thou to malice lend an ear!
O, did not love exclaim, "Forbear,
Nor use a faithful lover so."
Fairest maid, &c.

¹ The last song composed by Burns. It was sent to Thomson, July 12, 1796. The Poet died the 21st of the same month.



CRAIGIE-BURN WOOD

Then come, thou fairest of the fair,
Those wonted smiles, O let me share;
And by thy beauteous self I swear,
No love but thine my heart shall know.
Fairest maid, &c.¹

CRAIGIE-BURN WOOD.²

SWEET fa's the eve on Craigie-Burn,
And blithe awakes the morrow,
But a' the pride o' spring's return
Can yield me nocht but sorrow.

I see the flowers and spreading trees,
I hear the wild birds singing;
But what a weary wifft can please,
And care his bosom wringing?

Fain, fain would I my griefs impart,
Yet dare na for your anger;
But secret love will break my heart
If I conceal it langer.

If thou refuse to pity me,
If thou shalt love anither,
When yon green leaves fade frae the tree,
Around my grave they'll wither.

¹ These verses, and the letter enclosing them, are written in a character that marks the very feeble state of Burns's bodily strength. He was, in fact, dying. "In this song," says Alan Cunningham,—the last he was to measure in this world—"his thoughts wandered to Charlotte Hamilton and the banks of the Devon."

² Craigie-Burn Wood is situated on the banks of the River Moffat, and about three miles distant from the village of that name, celebrated for its medicinal waters. The woods of Craigie-Burn and of Dumcrief were at one time favourite haunts of Burns. It was there he met the "lassie wi' the lint-white locks," and where he conceived several of his beautiful lyrics.



Satires.

THE HOLY FAIR.

“A robe of seeming truth and trust
Hid crafty Observation ;
And secret hung, with poisoned crust,
The dirk of Defamation :
A mask that like the gorget showed,
Dye-varying on the pigeon ;
And for a mantle large and broad,
He wrapt him in Religion.”—*Hypocrisy à la Mode*

UPON a simmer Sunday morn,
When Nature's face is fair,
I walkèd forth to view the corn,
And snuff the caller¹ air.
The rising sun owre Galston² muirs,
Wi' glorious light was glintin'³ ;
The hares were hirplin'⁴ down the furs ;⁵
The laverocks they were chantin'
Fu' sweet that day.

As lightsomely I glowred⁶ abroad,
To see a scene sae gay,
Three hizzies, early at the road,
Cam' skelpin' up the way ;
Twa had manteeles o' dolefu' black,
But ane wi' lyart⁷ lining ;
The third, that gaed a-wee aback,
Was in the fashion shining,
Fu' gay that day.

The twa appeared like sisters twin,
In feature, form, an' claes ;⁸
Their visage withered, lang, an' thin,
An' sour as ony slaes :

¹ Fresh.

³ Glancing.

⁴ Looked.

² Adjoining parish to Mauchline.

⁴ Limping.

⁷ Grey.

⁵ Furrows.

⁸ Clothes.



The third cam' up, hap-step-an'-lowp,
As light as ony lambie,
An' wi' a curchie low did stoop,
As soon as e'er she saw me,
Fu' kind that day.

Wi' bonnet aff, quoth I, "Sweet lass,
I think ye seem to ken me;
I'm sure I've seen that bonnie face,
But yet I canna name ye."
Quo' she, an' laughin' as she spak',
An' tak's me by the hands,
"Ye, for my sake, ha'e gi'en the feck¹
Of a' the Ten Commands
A screed² some day.

"My name is Fun—your cronie dear,
The nearest friend ye ha'e;
An' this is Superstition here,
An' that's Hypocrisy.
I m gaun to Mauchline Holy Fair,
To spend an hour in daffin':³
Gin ye'll go there, yon runkled pair,
We will get famous laughin'
At them this day."

Quoth I, "With a' my heart I'll do 't,
I'll get my Sunday's sark⁴ on,
An' meet you on the holy spot;
Faith, we'se ha'e fine remarkin'!"
Then I gaed hame at crowdie⁵-time
An' soon I made me ready;
For roads were clad, frae side to side,
Wi' monie a wearie body,
In droves that day.

Here farmers gash,⁶ in ridin' graith,⁷
Gaed hoddin'⁸ by their cotters;
There, swankies⁹ young, in braw braid-claith,
Are springin' o'er the gutters.
The lasses, skelpin' barefit, thrang,
In silks an' scarlets glitter;
Wi' sweet-milk cheese, in monie a whang,
An' farls¹⁰ baked wi' butter,
Fu' crump¹¹ that day.

¹ Most.⁴ Shirt.⁷ Dress.⁸ Oaten cakes.² A rent.⁵ Breakfast.⁸ Jogging.¹¹ Crisp.³ Sporting.⁶ Sensible.⁹ Striplings.



THE HOLY FAIR.

439

When by the plate we set our nose,
Weel heapèd up wi' ha'pence,
A greedy glower Black Bonnet throws,
An' we maun draw our tippence.
Then in we go to see the show,
On every side they're gatherin',
Some carrying dales,¹ some chairs an' stools,
An' some are busy blethin',²
Right loud that day.

Here stands a shed to fend the showers,
An' screen our countra gentry,
There, racer Jess,³ an' twa—three whores,
Are blinkin' at the entry.
Here sits a raw of tittlin'⁴ jades,
Wi' heaving breast and bare neck,
An' there a batch of wabster lads,
Blackguarding frae Kilmarnock,
For fun this day.

Here some are thinkin' on their sins,
An' some upo' their claes;
Ane curses feet that fyled⁵ his shins,
Anither sighs an' prays:
On this hand sits a chosen swatch,⁶
Wi' screwed-up grace-proud faces;
On that a set o' chaps at watch,
Thrang winkin' on the lasses
To chairs that day.

O, happy is that man an' blest!
Nae wonder that it pride him!
Whase ain dear lass, that he likes best,
Comes clinkin' down beside him!
Wi' arm reposed on the chair-back,
He sweetly does compose him;
Which, by degrees, slips round her neck,
An's loof⁷ upon her bosom,
Unkenned that day.

Now a' the congregation o'er
Is silent expectation;
For Moodie⁸ speels⁹ the holy door,
Wi' tidings o' damnation.

¹ Planks for seats.

² Chatting.

³ She was the daughter of "Poesie Nansie," who figures in "The Jolly Beggars." She was remarkable for her pedestrian powers, and sometimes ran long distances for a wager.

⁴ Whispering.

⁵ Soiled.

⁶ Example.

⁷ Hand.

⁸ Minister of Riccarton, and one of the heroes of the "Twa Herds."

⁹ Climbs.



Should Hornie,¹ as in ancient days,
'Mang sons o' G— present him,
The vera sight o' Moodie's face,
To 's ain het hame had sent him
Wi' fright that day.

Hear how he clears the points o' faith
Wi' rattlin' an' thumpin'!
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He 's stampin' an' he 's jumpin'!
His lengthened chin, his turned-up snout,
His eldritch² squeel and gestures,
O, how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantharidian plaisters,
On sic a day!

But hark! the tent has changed its voice;
There 's peace an' rest nae langer:
For a' the real judges rise,
They canna sit for anger.
Smith³ opens out his cauld harangues
On practice and on morals;
An' aff the godly pour in thrangs,
To gi'e the jars an' barrels
A lift that day.

What signifies his barren shine
Of moral powers and reason?
His English style, an' gesture fine,
Are a' clean out o' season.
Like Socrates or Antonine,
Or some auld Pagan heathen,
The moral man he does define,
But ne'er a word o' faith in,
That 's right that day.

In guid time comes an antidote
Against sic poisoned nostrum;
Fo' Peebles,⁴ frae the water-fit,
Ascends the holy rostrum:
See, up he 's got the Word o' God,
An' meek an' mim⁵ has viewed it,
While Common Sense has ta'en the road,
An' aff, an' up the Cowgate,⁶
Fast, fast that day.

¹ A name for the devil.

² Unearthly.

³ Minister of Galston.

⁴ Minister of Newton-upon-Ayr, named the Water-fit.

⁵ Prim.

⁶ A street so called.



THE HOLY FAIR

441

Wee Miller, niest, the guard relieves,
An' orthodoxy raibles,¹
Though in his heart he weel believes,
An' thinks it auld wives' fables :
But, faith ! the birkie wants a manse,
So cannily he hums them ;
Although his carnal wit an' sense
Like haflins-ways² o'ercomes him
At times that day.

Now butt an' ben,³ the change-house fills,
Wi' yill-caup⁴ commentators :
Here 's crying out for bakes⁵ and gills,
An' there the pint-stowp clatters ;
While thick an' thrang, an' loud an' lang,
Wi' logic an' wi' Scripture,
They raise a din, that in the end,
Is like to breed a rupture
O' wrath that day.

Leeze me on drink ! it g'ies us mair
Than either school or college :
It kindles wit, it wankens lair,
It pangs⁶ us fu' o' knowledge :
Be 't whisky gill, or penny wheep,
Or ony stronger potion,
It never fails, on drinking deep,
To kittle⁷ up our notion
By night or day.

The lads an' lasses, blithely bent
To mind baith saul an' body,
Sit round the table, weel content,
An' steer about the toddy.
On this ane's dress, an' that ane's leuk,
They're making observations ;
While some are cozie i' the neuk,
An' formin' assignations
To meet some day.

But now the Lord's ain Trumpet touts,
Till a' the hills are rairin',
An' echoes back return the shouts :
Black Russell⁸ is nae spairin' :

¹ Rattles.

⁴ Ale cup.

⁷ Rouse.

² Almost.

⁵ Biscuits.

⁸ Minister of the chapel of ease, Kilmarnock.

³ Back and front.

⁶ Crams.



His piercing words, like Highland swords,
Divide the joints an' marrow;
His talk o' hell, where devils dwell,
Our vera sauls does harrow¹
Wi' fright that day.

A vast, unbottomed, boundless pit,
Filled fu' c' lowin' brunstane,²
Whase ragin' flame, an' scorchin' heat,
Wad melt the hardest whunstane!
The half-asleep start up wi' fear,
An' think they hear it roarin',
When presently it does appear,
'Twas but some neebor snorin',
Asleep that day.

'Twad be owre-lang a tale to tell
How monie stories past,
An' how they crowded to the yill³
When they were a' dismiss:
How drink gaed round, in cogs an' caups,
Amang the furms an' benches:
An' cheese an' bread, frae women's laps,
Was dealt about in lanches,
An' dawds⁴ that day.

In comes a gancie, gash⁵ guidwife,
An' sits down by the fire,
Syne draws her kebbuck⁶ an' her knife,—
The lasses they are shyer.
The auld guidmen, about the grace,
Frae side to side they bother,
Till some ane by his bonnet lays,
An' gi'es them 't like a tether,
Fu' lang that day.

Waesucks!⁷ for him that gets nae lass,
Or lasses that ha'e naething!
Sma' need has he to say a grace,
Or melvie⁸ his braw claiting!
O wives be mindfu', ance yoursel'
How bonnie lads ye wanted,
An' dinna, for a kebbuck-heel,⁹
Let lasses be affronted
On sic a day!

¹ Shakspeare's *Hamlet*.—BURNS.

³ Ale.

⁴ Lumps.

⁶ Cheese.

⁷ Alas!

⁹ Cheese-paring.

² Blazing brimstone.

⁵ Fat, sagacious.

⁸ Soil.



DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK

43

Now Clinkumbell, wi' rattlin' tow,
Begins to jow an' croon;¹
Some swagger hame, the best they dow,²
Some wait the afternoon.
At slaps³ the billies⁴ halt a blink,
Till lasses strip their shoon:
Wi' faith an' hope, an' love an' drink,
They're a' in famous tune
For crack that day.

How monie hearts this day converts
O' sinners and o' lasses!
Their hearts o' stane, gin night are gan,
As saft as ony flesh is.
There's some are fu' o' love divine;
There's some are fu' o' brandy;
An' monie jobs that day begun,
May end in houghmagandie
Some ither day.

[The names in the text of this poem are supplied from a copy of the first edition, in which they were written by the Poet himself; and the variations are from a copy in his own handwriting. The scene is laid in the churchyard of Mauchline: the clergyman of the parish, with his assistants, are exhibited on the stage, while the lay members of the congregation, swelled by auxiliary weavers from Kilmarnock, compose the numerous persons of the underplot of the piece.

Fergusson, in his "Hallow Fair of Edinburgh," I believe, furnished a hint of the title and plan of the "Holy Fair." The farcical scene the Poet there describes was often a favourite field of his observation; and most of the incidents he mentions had actually passed before his eyes.—
GILBERT BURNS.]

DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK.⁵

[A TRUE STORY.]

SOME books are lies frae end to end,
And some great lies were never penned:

¹ Sing and groan. ² Can. ³ Openings in hedges. ⁴ Lads.

⁵ John Wilson, schoolmaster in Tarbolton, who practised as a quack doctor. "Death and Doctor Hornbook," though not published in the Kilmarnock edition, was produced early in the year 1785. The schoolmaster of Tarbolton parish, to eke out the scanty subsistence allowed to that useful class of men, set up a shop of grocery goods. Having accidentally fallen in with some medical books, and become most hobby-horsically attached to the study of medicine, he had added the sale of a



Ev'n ministers, they ha'e been kened,
In holy rapture,
A rousing whid' at times to vend,
And nail 't wi' Scripture.

But this that I am gaun to tell,
Which lately on a night befell,
Is just as true 's the De'il 's in hell
Or Dublin city:
That e'er he nearer comes oursel'¹
'S a muckle pity.

The Clachan yill² had made me canty,
I was na fou, but just had plenty;
I stachered³ whyles, but yet took tent⁴ aye
To free the ditches;
An' hillocks, stanes, and bushes, kened aye
Frae ghaists an' witches.

The rising moon began to glower
The distant Cumnock hills out-owre:
To count her horns, wi' a' my power,
I set mysel';
But whether she had three or four,
I could na tell.

I was come round about the hill,
And todlin' down on Willie's mill,
Setting my staff wi' a' my skill,
To keep me sicker:⁵
Though leeward whyles, against my will,
I took a bicker.⁶

I there wi' Something did forgather,⁷
That put me in an eerie swither;⁸

few medicines to his little trade. He had got a shop-bill printed, at the bottom of which, overlooking his own incapacity, he had advertised that advice would be given, in common disorders, at the shop, gratis. Robert was at a mason-meeting in Tarbolton, when the Dominie made too ostentatious a display of his medical skill. As he parted in the evening from this mixture of pedantry and physic, at the place where he describes his meeting with Death, one of those floating ideas of apparitions mentioned in his letter to Dr. Moore, crossed his mind; this set him to work for the rest of his way home. These circumstances he related when he repeated the verses to me the next afternoon, as I was holding the plough, and he was letting the water off the field beside me.—GILBERT

BURNS

¹ Fib.

⁴ Care.

⁷ Meet.

² Ale.

⁵ Steady.

⁸ Frightened shaking.

³ Staggered.

⁶ Lunge.



An awfu' scythe, out-owre ae shouter,
Clear-dangling, hang;
A three-taed leister¹ on the ither
Lay, large an' lang.

Its stature seemed lang Scotch ells twa,
The queerest shape that e'er I saw,
For fient a wame² it had ava;
And then, its shanks,
They were as thin, as sharp an' sma'
As cheeks o' branks.³

"Guid-e'en," quo' I; "Friend! ha'e ye been mawin'
When ither folk are busy sawin'?"⁴
It seemed to mak' a kind o' stan',
But naething spak';
At length, says I, "Friend, whare ye gaun,
Will ye go back?"

It spak' right howe,⁵—"My name is Death,
But be na fleyed."⁶ Quoth I, "Guid faith,
Ye're maybe come to stap my breath;
But tent me billie;⁷
I red ye weel, tak' care o' skaith,⁸
See, there's a gully!"⁹

"Guidman," quo' he, "put up your whittle,
I'm no designed to try its mettle;
But if I did, I wad be kittle¹⁰
To be misled; ¹¹
I wad na mind it, no, that spittle
Out-owre my beard."

"Weel, weel!" says I, "a bargain be't;
Come, gie's your hand, an' sae we're gree't;
We'll ease our shanks an' tak' a seat,
Come, gie's your news;
This while ye ha'e been mony a gate,
At mony a house."¹²

"Ay, ay!" quo' he, an' shook his head,
"It's e'en a lang, lang time indeed

¹ Three-pronged dart

² Stomach.

³ A kind of wooden curb.

⁴ This rencounter happened in seed-time, 1785.—BURNS.

⁵ Hollow.

⁶ Affrighted.

⁷ Beware of me, brother.

⁸ Harm.

⁹ A large knife.

¹⁰ Difficult.

¹¹ Hindered in my vocation.

¹² An epidemical fever was then raging in that country.—BURNS.



DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK.

Sin' I began to nick the thread,
An' choke the breath;
Folk maun do something for their bread,
An' sae maun Death.

"Sax thousand years are near hand fled
Sin' I was to the butching bred,
An' mony a scheme in vain 's been laid,
To stap or scar' me;
Till ane Hornbook 's ' ta'en up the trade,
An' faith, he 'll waur me.²

"Ye ken Jock Hornbook i' the clachan,³
De'il mak' his king's-hood in a spleuchan!⁴
He 's grown sae weel acquaint wi' Buchan⁵
An' ither chaps,
The weans haud out their fingers laughin'
And pouk my hips.

"See, here 's a scythe, and there 's a dart,
They ha'e pierced mony a gallant heart;
But Doctor Hornbook, wi' his art
And cursèd skill,
Has made them baith no worth a —
D——d haet they 'll kill.

"'Twas but yestreen, nae farther gaen,
I threw a noble throw at ane;
Wi' less, I 'm sure, I 've hundreds slain;
But de'il-ma-care,
It just played dirl⁶ on the bane,
But did nae mair.

"Hornbook was by, wi' ready art,
And had sae fortified the part,
That when I lookèd to my dart,
It was sae blunt,
Fient haet o't wad ha'e pierced the heart
O' a kail-runt.⁷

"I drew my scythe in sic a fury,
I nearhand cowpit⁸ wi' my hurry,
But yet the bauld Apothecary
Withstood the shock;
I might as weel ha'e tried a quarry
O' hard whin-rock.

¹ This gentleman, Doctor Hornbook, is, professionally, a brother of the Sovereign Order of the Ferula; but, by intuition and inspiration, is at once an apothecary, surgeon, and physician.—BURNS.

² Do me harm.

³ Small village.

⁴ Tobacco-pouch.

⁵ Buchan's "Domestic Medicine."

⁶ Lightly.

⁷ Cabbage-stump.

⁸ Tumbled.



“Even them he canna get attended,
Although their face he ne’er had kened it,
Just — in a kail-blade, and send it,
As soon he smells ’t,
Baith their disease, and what will mend it,
At once he tells ’t.

“And then a’ doctor’s saws and whittles,
Of a’ dimensions, shapes, an’ mettles,
A’ kinds o’ boxes, mugs, an’ bottles,
He’s sure to ha’e;
Their Latin names as fast he rattles
As A, B, C.

“Calces o’ fossils, earth, and trees;
True sal-marinum o’ the seas;
The farina o’ beans and pease,
He has ’t in plenty;
Aqua-fortis, what you please,
He can content ye.

“Forbye some new, uncommon weapons,
Urinus spiritus of capons;
Or mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings;
Distilled *per se*;
Sal-alkali o’ midge-tail clippings,
And mony mae.”

“Wae’s me for Johnnie Ged’s Hole¹ now,”
Quo’ I, “if that the news be true!
His braw calf-ward whare gowans² grew,
Sae white and bonnie.
Nae doubt they ’ll rive it wi’ the plow;³
They ’ll ruin Johnnie!”

The creature grained an eldritch laugh,
And says, “Ye need na yoke the pleugh,
Kirk-yards will soon be tilled enugh,
Tak’ ye nae fear:
They ’ll a’ be trenched wi’ mony a sheugh⁴
In twa-three year.

“Whare I killed ane a fair strae death,⁵
By loss o’ blood or want o’ breath,
This night I ’m free to tak’ my aith,⁶
That Hornbook’s skill
Has clad a score i’ their last claiht,⁷
By drap an’ pill.

¹ The grave-digger.—BURNS.

³ Turn it up with the plough.

⁵ Death in bed.

⁶ Oath.

² Daisies.

⁴ Ditch.

⁷ Shroud.



“An honest wabster¹ to his trade,
Whase wife’s twa nieves² were scarce weel-bred,
Gat tippence-worth to mend her head,
When it was sair;
The wife slade³ cannie to her bed,
But ne’er spak’ mair.

“A countra laird had ta’en the batts,
Or some curmurring⁴ in his guts,
His only son for Hornbook sets,
An’ pays him well.
The lad, for twa guid gimmer pets,⁵
Was laird himsel’.

“A bonnie lass, ye kened her name,
Some ill-brewn drink had hoved her wame;
She trusts hersel’, to hide the shame,
In Hornbook’s care;
Horn sent her aff to her lang hame,
To hide it there.

“That’s just a swatch⁶ o’ Hornbook’s way;
Thus goes he on from day to day,
Thus does he poison, kill, an’ slay,
An’s weel paid for’t;
Yet stops me o’ my lawfu’ prey
Wi’ his d——d dirt:

“But, hark! I’ll tell you of a plot,
Though dinna ye be speaking o’t;
I’ll nail the self-conceited sot,
As dead’s a herrin’;
Neist time we meet, I’ll wad⁷ a groat,
He’s got his fairin’!”

But just as he began to tell,
The auld kirk-hammer strak the bell
Some wee short hour ayont the twal,⁸
Which raised us baith:
I took the way that pleased mysel’,
And sae did Death.

¹ Weaver.

² Fists.

³ Slid.

⁴ Rumbling.

⁵ Two-year-old sheep.

⁶ Specimen.

⁷ Bet.

⁸ Beyond twelve.

THE ORDINATION.¹

“For sense they little owe to frugal Heaven—
To please the mob they hide the little given.”

KILMARNOCK wabsters ² fidge an’ claw,
An’ pour your creeshie ³ nations;
An’ ye wha leather rax ⁴ an’ draw,
Of a’ denominations,
Swith ⁵ to the Laigh ⁶ Kirk, ane an’ a’,
An’ there tak’ up your stations;
Then aff to Begbie’s in a raw,⁷
An’ pour divine libations
For joy this day.

Curst Common Sense, that imp o’ hell,
Cam’ in wi’ Maggie Lander;⁸
But Oliphant aft made her yell,
An’ Russell sair misca’d her;
This day M’Kinlay tak’s the flail,
An’ he’s the boy will blaud⁹ her!
He’ll clap a shangan¹⁰ on her tail,
An’ set the bairns to daud¹¹ her
Wi’ dirt this day.

Mak’ haste and turn King David owre,
And lit ¹² wi’ holy clangor;
O’ double verse come gi’e us four,
An’ skirl ¹³ up the Bangor:
This day the Kirk kicks up a stoure,¹⁴
Nae mair the knaves shall wrang her,
For Heresy is in her power,
And gloriously she’ll whang her
Wi’ pith this day.

¹ This Satire was written on the admission of the Rev. Mr. M’Kinlay as one of the ministers of the Parochial Kirk of Kilmarnock. He was a good and venerable man, but disliked by Burns because he was a High Calvinist, or one of the Auld-Light preachers of the Kirk.

² Weavers.

³ Greasy.

⁴ Stretch.

⁵ Get away.

⁶ Parochial.

⁷ Row.

⁸ Alluding to a scoffing ballad which was made on the admission of the late Reverend and worthy Mr. L. to the Laigh Kirk.—BURNS.

⁹ Slap.

¹⁰ A cleft stick.

¹¹ Pelt.

¹² Sing.

¹³ Shriek.

¹⁴ Dust.



Come, let a proper text be read,
An' touch it aff wi' vigour,
How graceless Ham¹ leugh at his dad,
Which made Canaan a nigger;
Or Phineas² drove the murdering blade,
Wi' whore-abhorring rigour;
Or Zipporah,³ the scauldin' jade,
Was like a bluidy tiger
I' th' inn that day.

There, try his mettle on the creed,
And bind him down wi' caution,—
That stipend is a carnal weed
He tak's but for the fashion;
And gi'e him o'er the flock, to feed,
And punish each transgression;
Espesial rams that cross the breed,
Gi'e them sufficient threshin',
Spare them nae day

Now, auld Kilmarnock, cock thy tail,
And toss thy horns fu' canty;
Nae mair thou 'lt rowte⁴ out-owre the dale,
Because thy pasture 's scanty;
For lapfu's large o' gospel kail
Shall fill thy crib in plenty,
An' runts o' grace, the pick and wale,⁵
No gi'en by way o' dainty,
But ilka day.

Nae mair by Babel's streams we 'll weep,
To think upon our Zion;
And hing our fiddles up to sleep,
Like baby-clouts a-dryin':
Come, screw the pegs wi' tunefu' sheel,⁶
And o'er the thairms⁷ be tryin'.
O, rare! to see our elbucks wheep,⁸
An' a' like lamb-tails flyin'
Fu' fast this day.

Lang Patronage, wi' rod o' air,⁹
Has shored the Kirk's undom,¹⁰
As lately Fenwick, sair forlairn,
Has proven to its ruin:

¹ Genesis, ch. ix. ver. 22.—BURNS

² Numbers, ch. xxv. ver. 8.—BURNS.

³ Exodus, ch. iv. ver. 25.—BURNS.

⁴ Choice.

⁵ Chirp.

⁶ Elbows jerk.

⁷ Iron

⁸ Bellow.

⁹ Strings.

¹⁰ Distressed.



THE ORDINATION.

451

Our patron, honest man ! Glencairn,
He saw mischief was brewin':
And, like a godly elect bairn,
He's waled ¹ us out a true ane,
And sound, this day.

Now, Robinson, harangue nae mair,
But steek ² your gab for ever:
Or try the wicked town of Ayr,
For there they'll think you clever;
Or, nae reflection on your lear,³
Ye may commence a shaver;
Or to the Netherton repair,
And turn a carpet-weaver
Aff-hand this day.

Mutrie and you were just a match,
We never had sic twa drones;
Auld Hornie ⁴ did the Laigh Kirk watch,
Just like a winkin' baudrons:⁵
A ad aye he catch'd the tither wretch,
To fry them in his caudrons;
But now his honour maun detach,
Wi' a' his brimstone squadrons,
Fast, fast this day.

See, see auld Orthodoxy's faes,
She's swingein' through the city;
Hark, how the nine-tailed cat she plays!
I vow it's unco pretty:
There Learning, with his Greekish face,
Grunts out some Latin ditty;
And Common Sense is gaun, she says,
To mak' to Jamie Beattie
Her plaint this day.

But there's Morality himsel',
Embracing all opinions;
Hear how he gies the tither yell,
Between his twa companions;
See, how she peels the skin an' fell,⁶
As ane were peelin' onions!
Now there—they're packèd aff to hell,
And banished our dominions,
Henceforth this day.

¹ Chosen.

⁴ The devil.

⁵ Cat.

² Shut.

³ Learning.

⁶ The flesh immediately under the skin.



O happy day! rejoice, rejoice!
Come, bouse about the porter!
Morality's demure decoys
Shall here nae mair find quarter:
M'Kinlay, Russell, are the boys
That Heresy can torture:
They'll gi'e her on a rape a hoise,¹
And cove her measure shorter
By th' head some day.

Come, bring the tither mutchkin² in,
And here's, for a conclusion,
"To every New Light³ mother's son,
From this time forth, confusion!"
If mair they deave⁴ us with their din,
Or patronage intrusion,
We'll light a spunk,⁵ and, every skin,
We'll rin them aff in fusion
Like oil, some day.

THE CALF.⁶

[To the Rev. James Steven, on his text, Malachi, ch. iv. ver. 2,—
"And they shall go forth, and grow up like calves of the stall."]

RIGHT, Sir! your text I'll prove it true,
Though heretics may laugh;
For instance, there's yoursel' just now,
God knows, an unco calf!

¹ A pull upwards; a hoist.

² English pint.

³ New Light is a cant phrase, in the West of Scotland, for those religious opinions which Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, has defended so strenuously.—BURNS.

⁴ Deafen.

⁵ Match.

⁶ "The Poet," says Gilbert Burns, speaking of this poem, "had been with Mr. Hamilton in the morning (Sunday), who, being confined with the gout, could not accompany him, but said jocularly to him, when he was going to church (in allusion to the injunction of some parents to their children), that he must be sure to bring him a note of the sermon at tmiddy; this address to the reverend gentleman on his text was thus produced, for Burns, who appears to have been but little edified by the sermon, composed a rhyming satire on the minister from his own text, and repeated the same when he returned to dinner. The verses are clever, but certainly too severe. The Poet had no personal dislike to his victim, and desired his lampoon might be looked upon merely as a poetic sally. The appellation of 'The Calf,' however, seems to have stuck to the preacher, for in one of the letters to Burns from his younger



And should some patron be so kind
As bless you wi' a kirk,
I doubt na, sir, but then we 'll find
Ye're still as grawt a stirk.¹
But, if the lover's raptured hour
Shall ever be your lot,
Forbid it, every heavenly power,
You e'er should be a stot!²
Though, when some kind, connubial dear,
Your but-and-ben³ adorns,
The like has been that you may wear
A noble head of horns!
And in your lug,⁴ most reverend James,
To hear you roar and rowtwe,⁵
Few men o' sense will doubt your claims
To rank amang the nowtwe.⁶
And when ye're numbered wi' the dead,
Below a grassy hillock,
Wi' justice they may mark your head—
"Here lies a famous bullock!"

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID, OR THE RIGIDLY
RIGHTEOUS.⁷

"My son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them aye thegither;
The Rigid Righteous is a fool,
The Rigid Wise anither.
The cleanest corn that e'er was dight,
May ha'e some pyles o' caff⁸ in;
So ne'er a fellow-creature slight,
For random fits o' daffin."⁹
SOLOMON, Eccles. ch. vii. ver. 16.

O, YE wha are sae guid yoursel',
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neebours' faults and folly!

brother, who died in London, the following passage occurs, dated 21st March, 1790:—"We were at Covent Garden Chapel this afternoon, to hear "The Calf" preach. He is grown very fat, and is as boisterous as ever."

¹ Bullock of a year old.

² Ox.

³ Kitchen and parlour.

⁴ Ear.

⁵ Bellow.

⁶ Black cattle.

⁷ The title alone of this poem is a satire. It contains a lesson of perfect charity.

⁸ Chaff.

⁹ Sport.



Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water,
The heaped happer's¹ ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter.

Hear me, ye venerable core,²
As counsel for poor mortals,
That frequent pass douce Wisdom's door
For glaikit³ Folly's portals;
I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,
Would here propone defences,
Their donsie⁴ tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,
And shudder at the niffer,⁵
But cast a moment's fair regard,
What mak's the mighty differ;
Discount what scant occasion gave
That purity ye pride in,
And (what's aft mair than a' the lave?)
Your better art o' hiding.

Think, when your castigated pulse
Gies now and then a wallop,
What ragings must his veins convulse,
That still eternal gallop:
Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
Right on ye scud your sea-way;
But in the t' eth o' baith to sail,
It mak's an unco leeway.

See Social Life and Glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmugrified, they're grown
Debauchery and drinking:
O, would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences;
Or your more dreaded hell to state,
Damnation of expenses!

Ye high, exalted virtuous dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor Frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases:

¹ Heaped hopper.

² Corps.

³ Careless.

⁴ Unlucky.

⁵ Difference.

⁶ Rest.



A DREAM.

455

A dear-loved lad, convenience snug,
A treacherous inclination—
But, let me whisper i' your lug,
Ye're aiblins' nae temptation.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,
To step aside is human:
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving why they do it!
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far, perhaps, they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us,
He knows each chord—its various tone,
Each spring—its various bias:
Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted.

A DREAM.

“Thoughts, words, and deeds, the statute blames with reason;
But surely dreams were ne'er indicted treason?”

[On reading, in the public papers, the “Laureat's Ode,” with the other parade of June 4, 1786, the Author was no sooner dropped asleep, than he imagined himself transported to the Birthday Levée, and, in his dreaming fancy, made the following address.—BURNS.]

GUID-MORNIN' to your Majesty!
May Heaven augment your blisses,
On every new birtiday ye see,
A humble poet wishes!
My bardship here, at your levee,
On sic a day as this is,
Is sure an uncouth sight to see
Among the birtiday dresses,
Sae fine this day.

I see ye're complimented thrang,
By mony a lord and lady,
“God save the King!”'s a cuckoo sang
That's unco easy said aye;

¹ Maybe.

² Little.



The poets, too, a venal gang,
Wi' rhymes weel-turned and ready,
Wad gar¹ you trow ye ne'er do wrang,
But aye unerring steady,
On sic a day.

For me! before a monarch's face,
Ev'n there I winna flatter;
For neither pension, post, nor place,
Am I your humble debtor:
So, nae reflection on your grace,
Your kingship to bespatter;
There's mony waur been o' the race,
And aiblins² ane been better
Than you this day.

'Tis very true, my sov'reign king,
My skill may weel be doubted:
But facts are chieks that winna ding³
An' downa be disputed:
Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
Is e'en right reft an' clouted,⁴
And now the third part of the string,
An' less, will gang about it
Than did ae day.

Far be't frae me that I aspire
To blame your legislation,
Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire,
To rule this mighty nation!
But faith! I muckle doubt, my Sire,
Ye've trusted ministration
To chaps, wha, in a barn or byre
Wad better fill their station
Than courts youn day.

And now ye've gi'en auld Britain peace,
Her broken shins to plaster;
Your sair taxation does her fleece,
Till she has scarce a tester:
For me, thank God! my life 's a lease,
Nae bargain wearing faster,
Or, faith! I fear, that wi' the geese
I shortly boost⁵ to pasture
I' the craft⁶ some day.

¹ Make.

² Maybe.

³ Be put down.

⁴ Torn and patched. The American Colonies were lost.

⁵ Need.

⁶ Field.



A DREAM.

457

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
When taxes he enlarges,
(An' Will's a true guid fallow's get,¹
A name not envy spairges,²)
That he intends to pay your debt,
An' lessen a' your charges;
But, God-sake! let nae saving fit
Abridge your bonnie barges
An' boats this day.

Adieu, my Liege! may Freedom geck³
Beneath your high protection;
An' may ye rax⁴ Corruption's neck,
And gi'e her for dissection!
But since I'm here, I'll no neglect,
In loyal, true affection,
To pay your Queen, with due respect,
My fealty an' subjection
This great birthday.

Hail, Majesty Most Excellent!
While nobles strive to please ye,
Will ye accept a compliment
A simple poet gi'es ye?
Thae bonnie bairntime, Heaven has lent,
Still higher may they heeze⁵ ye
In bliss, till Fate some day is sent,
For ever to release ye
Frae care that day.

For you, young potentate o' Wales,
I tell your Highness fairly,
Down Pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
I'm tauld ye're driving rarely;
But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
An' curse your folly sairly,
That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
Or rattled dice wi' Charlie,⁶
By night or day.

Yet aft a ragged cowte's⁷ been known
To mak' a noble aiver;⁸
So, ye may doucely fill a throne,
For a' their clishmaclaver:

¹ Child.
⁴ Stretch.
⁷ Colt.

² Sullies.
⁵ Raise.
⁸ Cart-horse.

³ Exult.
⁶ C. J. Fox.



There, him at Agincourt wha shone,
Few better were or braver;
And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,²
He was an unco shaver³
For mony a day.

For you, right rev'rend Osnaburgh⁴
Name sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
Although a ribbon at you lug
Wad been a dress completer:
As ye disown yon paughty⁵ dog
That bears the keys of Peter,
Then, swith!⁶ an' get a wife to hug,
Or, trouth! ye'll stain the mitre
Some luckless day.

Young royal Tarry Breeks,⁷ I learn,
Ye've lately come athwart her;
A glorious galley⁸ stem an' stern,
Well rigged for Venus' barter;
But first hang out, that she'll discern
Your Hymeneal charter,
Then heave aboard your grapple-airn,
An', large upo' her quarter,
Come full that day.

Ye, lastly, bonnie blossoms a',
Ye royal lasses dainty,
Heaven mak' you guid as weel as braw,
An' gi'e you lads a-plenty!
But sneer nae British boys awa',
For kings are unco scant aye;
An' German gentles are but sma',
They're better just than want aye,
On onie day.

God bless you a'! consider now,
Ye're unco muckle dautet;⁹
But, ere the course o' life be through,
It may be bitter sautet;

¹ King Henry V.

² Sir John Falstaff, *vide* Shakespeare.

³ Wag.

⁴ Osnaburgh gave the title of Bishop to George the Third's second son.

⁵ Proud.

⁶ Get off, *i.e.* "make haste."

⁷ Duke of Clarence.

⁸ Alluding to the newspaper account of a certain royal sailor's amour.

—BURNS.

⁹ Caressed.



TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. OSWALD.

459

An' I ha'e seen their coggie¹ fou,
That yet ha'e tarrow't² at it;
But or the day was done, I trow,
The laggen³ they ha'e clautet⁴
Fu' clean that day.

ODE.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. OSWALD, OF AUCHINCUIVE.

DWELLER in yon dungeon dark,
Hangman of creation! mark
Who in widow-weeds appears,
Laden with unhonoured years,
Noosing with care a bursting purse,
Baited with many a deadly curse!

STROPHE.

View the withered beldam's face—
Can thy keen inspection trace
Aught of humanity's sweet melting grace?
Note that eye, 'tis rheum o'erflows,
Pity's flood there never rose.
See those hands, ne'er stretched to save,
Hands that took—but never gave.
Keeper of Mammon's iron chest,
Lo! there she goes—unpitied and unblest!
She goes, but not to realms of everlasting rest!

ANTISTROPHE.

Plunderer of armies, lift thine eyes,
(A while forbear, ye torturing fiends,)
Seest thou whose step unwilling hither bends?
No fallen angel, hurled from upper skies;
'Tis thy trusty quondam mate,
Doomed to share thy fiery fate,
She, tardy, hell-ward plies.

EPODE.

Are they of no more avail,
Ten thousand glittering pounds a year?
In other worlds can Mammon fail,
Omnipotent as he is here?
O, bitter mockery of the pompous bier,
While down the wretched vital part is driven!
The cave-lodged beggar, with a conscience clear,
Expires in rags, unknown, and goes to heaven.

¹ Little wooden dish.

³ The bottom and side.

² Murmured.

⁴ Scraped.

THE KIRK'S ALARM.¹

[A SATIRE.]

A ballad tune—"Push about the brisk bowl."

ORTHODOX, orthodox,
Wha believe in John Knox,
Let me sound an alarm to your conscience,
There's a heretic blast
Has been blawn i' the wast,
That what is not sense must be nonsense.

Doctor Mac,² Doctor Mac,
Ye should stretch on a rack,
To strike evil-doers wi' terror;
To join faith and sense,
Upon ony pretence,
Is heretic, damnable error.

Town of Ayr, town of Ayr,
It was mad I declare,
To meddle wi' mischief a-brewing;
Provost John³ is still deaf
To the church's relief,
And orator Bob⁴ is its ruin.

D'rymple mild,⁵ D'rymple mild,
Though your heart's like a child,
And your life like the new-driven snaw;
Yet that winna save ye,
Auld Satan must have ye,
For preaching that three's ane an' twa.

Rumble John,⁶ Rumble John,
Mount the steps wi' a groan,
Cry the book is wi' heresy crammed;
Then lug out your ladle,
Deal brimstone like adle,⁷
And roar every note of the damned.

¹ Written in behalf of Dr. M'Gill, who had been accused of heretical opinions. See note at the end of the poem.

² Dr. M'Gill.

³ John Ballantine, Esq., Provost of Ayr.

⁴ Mr. Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr. He defended Dr. M'Gill in the Synod.

⁵ The Rev. Dr. William Dalrymple, senior minister of the Collegiate Church of Ayr.

⁶ The Rev. John Russell.

⁷ Putrid water.



THE KIRK'S ALARM.

461

Simper James,¹ Simper James,
Leave the fair Killie dames,
There's a holier chase in your view;
I'll lay on your head,
That the pack ye'll soor lead,
For puppies like you there's but few.

Singet Sawney,² Singet Sawney.
Are ye herding the penny,
Unconscious what evil await!
Wi' a jump, yell, and howl,
Alarm every soul,
For the foul thief is just at your gate.

Daddy Auld,³ Daddy Auld,
There's a tod in the fauld,
A tod⁴ meikle waur than the clerk;⁵
Though ye can do little skaith,
Ye'll be in at the death,
And if ye canna bite, ye can bark.

Davie Bluster,⁶ Davie Bluster,
If for a saunt ye do muster,
The corps is no nice of recruits;
Yet to worth let's be just,
Royal blood ye might boast,

Jamie Goose,⁷ Jamie Goose,
Ye ha'e made but toom roose,⁸
In hunting the wicked lieutenant;
But the doctor's your mark,
For the L—d's haly ark;
He has coopered and ca'd a wrang pin in 't.

Poet Willie,⁹ Poet Willie,
Gi'e the Doctor a volley,
Wi' your "liberty's chain" and your wit;
O'er Pegasus' side
Ye ne'er laid a stride,
Ye but smelt, man, the place where he —.

¹ The Rev. James M'Kinlay.

² The Rev. Alexander Moodie, of Riccarton.

³ The Rev. Mr. Auld, of Mauchline.

⁵ Mr. Gavin Hamilton.

⁷ Mr. Young, of Cumnock.

⁹ The Rev. Dr. Peebles, of Newton-upon-Ayr.

⁴ A fox.

⁶ Mr. Grant, Ochiltree.

⁸ Empty praise.



THE KIRK'S ALARM.

Andro Gouk,¹ Andro Gouk,
Ye may slander the book,
And the book nane the waur, let me tell ye;
Though ye 're rich, and look big,
Yet lay by hat and wig,
And ye 'll ha'e a calf's head o' sma' value.
Barr Steenie,² Barr Steenie,
What mean ye, what mean ye?
If ye 'll meddle nae mair with the matter,
Ye may ha'e some pretence
To havins and sense,
Wi' people wha ken ye nae better.
Irvine side,³ Irvine side,
Wi' your turkey-cock pride,
O' manhood but sma' is your share,
Ye 've the figure, 'tis true,
Even your faes will allow,
And your friends they daur grant you nae mair.
Muirland Jock,⁴ Muirland Jock,
When the L—d makes a rock
To crush Common Sense for her sins,
If ill manners were wit,
There 's no mortal so fit
To confound the poor Doctor at ance.
Holy Will,⁵ Holy Will,
There was wit i' your skull,
When ye pilfered the alms o' the poor;
The timmer is scant,
When ye 're ta'en for a saunt,
Wha should swing in a rape for an hour.
Calvin's sons, Calvin's sons,
Seize your spiritual guns,
Ammunition you never can need;
Your hearts are the stuff,
Will be powther enough,
And your skulls are a storehouse o' lead.
Poet Burns, Poet Burns,
Wi' your priest-skelping turns,
Why desert ye your auld native shire?
Your Muse is a gipsie,
E'en though she were tipsie,
She could ca' us nae waur than we are.

¹ Dr. Andrew Mitchell, Monkton.² Rev. Stephen Young, Barr.³ Rev. Mr. George Smith, Galston.⁴ Mr John Shepherd, Muirkirk.⁵ The elder in Mauchline, William Fisher, whom Burns so often
tirized.



[In the second version the Poet adds the following Postscript:—

Afton's Laird,¹ Afton's Laird,
When your pen can be spared,
A copy o' this I bequeath,
On the same sicker score
I mentioned before,
To that trust auld worthy Clackleeth.]

"M'Gill and Dalrymple," says Lockhart, in his *Life of Burns*, "the two ministers of the town of Ayr, had long been suspected of entertaining heterodox opinions on several points, particularly the doctrine of Original Sin and the Trinity; and the former at length published an essay, which was considered as demanding the notice of the church courts. More than a year was spent in the discussions which arose out of this, and at last Dr. M'Gill was fain to acknowledge his errors, and promise that he would take an early opportunity of apologizing for them to his congregation from the pulpit, which promise, however, he never performed. The gentry of the county took, for the most part, the side of M'Gill, who was a man of cold, unpopular manners, but of unreproached moral character, and possessed of some accomplishments, though certainly not of distinguished talents. The bulk of the lower orders espoused, with far more fervid zeal, the cause of those who conducted the prosecution against this erring doctor. Gavin Hamilton, and all persons of his stamp, were, of course, on the side of M'Gill—Auld and the Mauchline elders, with his enemies. Robert Aiken, a writer in Ayr, a man of remarkable talents, particularly in public speaking, had the principal management of M'Gill's cause before the Presbytery and the Synod. He was an intimate friend of Hamilton, and through him had about this time formed an acquaintance, which soon ripened into a warm friendship, with Burns. Burns was, therefore, from the beginning, a zealous—as in the end he was, perhaps, the most effective—partisan of the side on which Aiken had staked so much of his reputation."

THE TWA HERDS;²

OR, THE HOLY TULZIE.

Blockheads with reason wicked wits abhor,
But fool with fool is barbarous civil war.—*POPE.*

O H, a' ye pious, godly flocks,
Weel fed on pastures orthodox,

¹ John Logan, Esq., of Afton.

² Shepherds.—They were, the minister of Riccarton, Moodie, and the assistant minister of Kilmarnock, Russell. A controversy between them, on their way home from a dinner, ended in blows.



Wha now will keep you frae the fox,
Or worrying tykes,
Or wha will tent the waves and crocks²
About the dykes?

The twa best herds in a' the wast,
That e'er ga'e gospel horn a blast,
These five-and-twenty simmers past,
O! dool to tell,
Ha'e had a bitter, black out-cast
Atween themsel'.

O, Moodie, man, and wordy Russell,
How could you raise so vile a bustle,
Ye'll see how New-Light herds will whistle,
And think it fine:
The Lord's cause ne'er gat sic a twistle
Sin' I ha'e min'.

O, sirs! whae'er wad ha'e expekit,
Your duty ye wad sae neglekit,
Ye wha were ne'er by lairds respekit,
To wear the plaid,
But by the brutes themselves eleckit,
To be their guide.

What flock wi' Moodie's flock could rank,
Sae hale and hearty every shank?
Nae poisoned sour Arminian stank,
He let them taste.
Frae Calvin's well, aye clear, they drank,—
O'sic a feast!

The thummart,³ wil'-cat, brock,⁴ and tod,⁵
Weel kenned his voice through a' the wood,
He smelt their ilka hole and road,
Baith out and in,
And weel he liked to shed their bluid,
And sell their skin,

What herd like Russell telled his tale?
His voice was heard through muir and dale,
He kenned the Lord's sheep, ilka tail,
O'er a' the height,
And saw gin they were sick or hale,
At the first sight.

¹ Dogs.⁴ Badger.² Stray sheep; old ewes.⁵ Fox.³ Polecat.



THE TWA HERDS.

465

He fine a mangy sheep could scrub,
Or nobly fling the gospel club,
And New-Light herds could nicely drub,
Or pay their skin;
Could shake them owre the burning dub,¹
Or heave them in.

Sic twa—O, do I live to see 't!—
Sic famous twa should disagreet,
An' names, like "villain," "hypocrite,"
Ilk ither g'ien,
While New-Light herds, wi' laughin' spite,
Say neither 's liein'!

A' ye wha tent the gospel fauld,
There 's Duncan deep, and Peebles shaul,²
But chiefly thou, apostle Auld,
We trust in thee,
That thou wilt work them, hot and cauld,
Till they agree.

Consider, sirs, how we're beset;
There 's scarce a new herd that we get
But comes frae 'mang that cursèd set
I winna name;
I hope frae heaven to see them yet
In fiery flame.

Dalrymple³ has been lang our fae,
M'Gill⁴ has wrought us meikle wae,
And that cursed rascal ca'd M'Quhae,⁵
And baith the Shaws,⁶
That aft ha'e made us black and blae
Wi' vengefu' paws.

Auld Wodrow⁷ lang has hatched mischief;
We thought aye death wad bring relief,
But he has gotten, to our grief,
Ane to succeed him,
A chiel wha'll soundly buff our beef;⁸
I meikle dread him.

¹ Pond.

² Shallow.

³ Rev. Dr. Dalrymple, one of the ministers of Ayr.

⁴ Rev. William M'Gill, one of the ministers of Ayr.

⁵ Minister of St. Quivox.

⁶ Dr. Andrew Shaw, of Craigie, and Dr. David Shaw, of Coylton.

⁷ Dr. Peter Wodrow, at Tarbolton.

⁸ Beat us. This was Mr. M'Math.

*HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER.*

And mony a ane that I could tell,
Wha fain would openly rebel,
Forbye turncoats amang oursel',
 There's Smith for ane;
I doubt he's but a grey-nick quill,
 An that ye'll fin'.

O! a' ye flocks o'er a' the hills,
By mosses, meadows, moors, and fells,
Come, join your counsel and your skills
 To cove the lairds,
And get the brutes the powers themsel's
 To choose their herds.

Then Orthodoxy yet may prance,
And Learning in a woody dance,
And that fell cur ca'd Common Sense,
 That bites sae sair,
Be banished o'er the sea to France:
 Let him bark there.

Then Shaw's and Dalrymple's eloquence,
M'Gill's close nervous excellence,
M'Quhae's pathetic, manly sense,
 And guid M'Math,
Wi' Smith, wha through the heart can glance,
 May a' pack aff.

HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER.¹

O THOU, wha in the heav'n's dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best thysel',
Sends ane to heaven and ten to hell,
 A' for thy glory,
And no for ony guid or ill
 They've done afore thee!

I bless and praise thy matchless might,
Whan thousands thou hast left in night,
That I am here, afore thy sight,
 For gifts an' grace,
A burnin' an' a shinin' light
 To a' this place.

¹“Holy Willie” was William Fisher, a hypocritical farmer, and leading elder of Mauchline parish. He had persecuted Gavin Hamilton, the Poet's friend, for setting a beggar to work on Sunday in his garden, forgetting the day. Burns thus revenged his patron.



HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER.

467

What was I, or my generation,
That I should get sic exaltation ?
I, wha deserve sic just damnation
 For broken laws
Five thousand years 'fore my creation,
 Through Adam's cause.

When frae my mither's womb I fell,
You might ha'e plunged me into hell,
To gnash my gums, to weep and wail,
 In burnin' lake,
Where damnèd devils roar and yell,
 Chained to a stake.

Yet I am here, a chosen sample,
To show thy grace is great and ample ;
I 'm here a pillar in thy temple,
 Strong as a rock,
A guide, a buckler, an example
 To a' thy flock.

O L—d ! thou kens what zeal I bear,
When drinkers drink, and swearers swear,
And singing there, and dancing here,
 Wi' great and sma' ;
For I am keepit by thy fear,
 Free frae them a'.

But yet, O L—d ! confess I must,
At times I 'm fashed wi' fleshly lust ;
And sometimes, too, wi' worldly trust,
 Vile self gets in ;
But thou remembers we are dust,
 Defiled in sin.

O L—d ! yestreen, thou kens, wi' Meg—
Thy pardon I sincerely beg,—
O, may it ne'er be a livin' plague
 To my dishonour !
And I 'll ne'er lift a lawless leg
 Again upon her

Besides, I further maun avow,
Wi' Lizzie's lass, three times I trow—
But, L—d ! that Friday I was fou'
 When I came near her,
Or else, thou kens, thy servant true
 Wad ne'er ha'e steered her.

*HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER.*

Maybe thou lets this fleshly thorn
Beset thy servant e'en and morn,
Lest he owre high and proud should turn,
'Cause he 's sae gifted!
If sae, thy han' maun e'en be borne
Until thou lift it.

L—d, bless thy chosen in this place,
For here thou hast a chosen race:
But G—d confound their stubborn face,
And blast their name,
Wha bring thy elders to disgrace
And public shame!

L—d, mind Gawn Hamilton's deserts!
He drinks, and swears, and plays at cartes,
Yet has sae mony takin' arts
Wi' great and sma',
Frae G—d's ain priests the people's hearts
He steals awa'.

An' whan we chastened him therefore,
Thou kens how he bred sic a splore,¹
As set the warld in a roar
O' laughin' at us;
Curse thou his basket and his store,
Kail and potatoes!

L—d, hear my earnest cry and prayer,
Against the presbyt'ry of Ayr;
Thy strong right hand, L—d, mak' it bare
Upo' their heads!
L—d, weigh it down, and dinna spare,
For their misdeeds!

O L—d, my G—d! that glib-tongued Aiken,—
My very heart and soul are quakin',
To think how we stood groanin', shakin',
And swat wi' dread,
While Auld wi' hinging lip gaed snakin',
And hid his head.

L—d, in the day of vengeance try him!
L—d, visit them wha did employ him!
And pass not in thy mercy by 'em,
Nor hear their prayer;
But, for thy people's sake, destroy 'em,
And dinna spare!

¹ Riot.



EPITAPH ON HOLY WILLIE.

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But, L—d, remember me and mine
Wi' mercies temp'ral and divine,
That I for gear and grace may shine,
Excell'd by nane,
An' a' the glory shall be thine,
Amen, amen!

“‘Holy Willie’s Prayer’ is a piece of satire more exquisitely severe than any which Burns ever afterwards wrote.”—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

EPITAPH ON HOLY WILLIE.¹

HERE Holy Willie’s sair-worn clay
Tak’s up its last abode;
His saul has ta’en some other way,—
I fear the left-hand road.

Stop! there he is, as sure’s a gun,—
Poor silly body, see him!
Nae wonder he’s as black’s the grun,—
Observe wha’s standing wi’ him!

Your brunstane devilship, I see,
Has got him there before ye;
But haud your nine-tail cat a wee,
Till ance ye’ve heard my story.

Your pity I will not implore,
For pity ye ha’e nane;
Justice, alas! has gi’en him o’er,
And mercy’s day is ganē

But hear me, sir, de’il as ye are,—
Look something to your credit;
A coof² like him wad stain your name,
If it were kenned ye did it.

¹ This man was a great hypocrite, a drunkard, and a robber of the poor. He died drunk in a ditch.

² Fool.



ADDRESS OF BEELZEBUB

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY.

[The "Address of Beelzebub" made its first appearance in the *Scots Magazine* for February, 1818, printed from the manuscript of Burns, and headed thus:—"To the Right Honourable the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Right Honourable the Highland Society, which met on the 23rd of May last, at the Shakspeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways and means to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders, who, as the society were informed by Mr. M—, of A—, were so audacious as to attempt an escape from their lawful lords and masters, whose property they were, by emigration from the lands of Mr. M'Donald, of Glengarry, to the wilds of Canada, in search of that fantastic thing, LIBERTY."]

LONG life, my lord, and health be yours,
Unscathed by hungered Highland boors!
Lord, grant nae duddie,¹ desperate beggar,
Wi' dirk, claymore, or rusty trigger,
May twin² auld Scotland o' a life
She likes—as lambkins like a knife.
Faith, you and A—s were right
To keep the Highland hounds in sight.
I doubt na, they wad bid nae better;
Then let them ance out owre the water;
Then up amang thae lakes and seas
They 'll mak' what rules and laws they please;
Some daring Hancock, or a Franklin,
May set their Highland bluid a-ranklin';
Some Washington again may head them,
Or some Montgomery fearless lead them,
Till God knows what may be effected
When by such heads and hearts directed.
Poor dunghill sons of dirt and mire
May to patrician rights aspire!
Nae sage North, now, nor sager Sackville,
To watch and premier o'er the pack vile;
And whare will ye get Howes and Clintons
To bring them to a right repentance,
To cove the rebel generation.
And save the honour o' the nation?
They and be —! what right ha'e they
To meat or sleep or light o' day?
Far less to riches, power, or freedom,
But what your lordship likes to gi'e them^o
But hear, my lord! Glengarry, hear!
Your hand's owre light on them, I fear.

¹ Ragger d.² Deprive.

Your factors, grieves, trustees, and bailies,
 I canna say but they do gaylies;¹
 They lay aside a' tender mercies,
 And tirl the hallions to the birses;²
 Yet while they're only poind't and herriet,³
 They'll keep their stubborn Highland spirit;
 But smash them—crash them a' to spails!⁴
 And rot the dyvors⁵ i' the jails!
 The young dogs, swinge⁶ them to the labour;
 Let wark and hunger mak' them sober!
 The hizzies, if they're aughtlins awson't,⁷
 Let them in Drury Lane be lessoned!
 And if the wives and dirty brats
 E'en thigger⁸ at your doors and yetts,⁹
 Flaffan wi' duds¹⁰ and gray wi' beas',¹¹
 Frightin' awa' your deuks and geese,
 Get out a horsewhip or a jowler,
 The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
 And gar¹² the tattered gipsies pack
 Wi' a' their bastards on their back!
 Go on, my lord! I lang to meet you,
 And in my house at hame to greet you!
 Wi' common lords ye shanna mingle,—
 The benmost neuk beside the ingle,
 At my right han', assigned your seat,
 'Tween Herod's hip and Polycrate,—
 Or if you on your station tarrow,¹³
 Between Almagro and Pizarro,
 A seat, I'm sure ye're well deservin't;
 And till ye come—Your humble servant,

BEELZEBUB.

June 1, Anno Mundi 5790 [A.D. 1786].

STANZAS ON THE DUKE OF QUEENSBERRY.

How shall I sing Drumlanrig's Grace—
 Discarded remnant of a race
 Once great in martial story?
 His forbears' virtues all contrasted—
 The very name of Douglas blasted—
 His that inverted glory.

¹ Pretty well.

³ Sold out and despoiled.

⁶ Whip.

⁸ Crowd.

¹¹ Vermin.

² And strip the clowns to the skin.

⁴ Chips.

⁷ The girls, if they be at all handsome.

⁹ Gates.

¹² Make.

⁵ Bankrupts.

¹⁰ Fluttering with rags

¹³ Murmur.



Hate, envy, oft the Douglas bore;
But he has superadded more,
And sunk them in contempt;
Follies and crimes have stained the name;
But, Queensberry, thine the virgin claim,
From aught that's good exempt.

SKETCH OF A CHARACTER.

[“This fragment,” says Burns to Dugald Stewart, “I have not shown to man living till I now send it to you. It forms the postulata, the axioms, the definition of a character, which, if it appear at all, shall be placed in a variety of lights. This particular part I send you merely as a sample of my hand at portrait-sketching.”]

A LITTLE, upright, pert, tart, tripping wight,
And still his precious self his dear delight;
Who loves his own smart shadow in the streets
Better than e'er the fairest she he meets:
A man of fashion, too, he made his tour,
Learned *Vive la bagatelle!* et *Vive l'amour!*
So travelled monkeys their grimace improve,
Polish their grin—nay, sigh for ladies' love.
Much specious lore, but little understood;
Veneering oft outshines the solid wood:
His solid sense by inches you must tell,
But mete his cunning by the old Scot's ell;
His meddling vanity, a busy fiend,
Still making work his selfish craft must mend.

MONODY ON A LADY FAMED FOR HER CAPRICE.

How cold is that bosom which folly once fired!
How pale is that cheek where the rouge lately glistened!
How silent that tongue which the echoes oft tired!
How dull is that ear which to flattery so listened!

If sorrow and anguish their exit await,
From friendship and dearest affection removed;
How doubly severer, Eliza, thy fate,—
Thou diedst unwept as thou livedst unloved.

Loves, Graces, and Virtues, I call not on you;
So shy, grave, and distant, ye shed not a tear:
But come, all ye offspring of Folly so true,
And flowers let us cull for Eliza's cold bier.



MONODY ON A LADY.

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We'll search through the garden for each silly flower,
We'll roam through the forest for each idle weed;
But chiefly the nettle, so typical, shower,
For none e'er approached her but rued the rash deed

We'll sculpture the marble, we'll measure the lay,
Here Vanity strums on her idiot lyre;
There keen Indignation shall dart on her prey,
Which spurning Contempt shall redeem from his ire.

THE EPITAPH.

Here lies, now a prey to insulting neglect,
What once was a butterfly gay in life's beam;
Want only of wisdom denied her respect,
Want only of goodness denied her esteem.



Epitaphs, Epigrams, Extempore Poems, &c. &c.

EPITAPH ON MY FATHER.

O YE, whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
Draw near with pious reverence and attend!
Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
The tender father, and the generous friend.
The pitying heart that felt for human woe;
The dauntless heart that feared no human pride;
The friend of man, to vice alone a foe;
"For ev'n his failings leaned to virtue's side."¹

EPITAPH ON JOHN DOVE,

INNKEEPER, MAUCHLINE.

HERE lies Johnny Pidgeon:
What was his religion?
Whae'er desires to ken,
To some other war!
Maun follow the car,
For here Johnny Pidgeon had name!
Strong ale was ablution,—
Small beer persecution,—
A dram was *memento mori*;
But a full flowing bowl
Was the saving his soul,
And port was celestial glory.

EPITAPH ON JOHN BUSHBY,

WRITER IN DUMFRIES.

HERE lies John Bushby, honest man!
Cheat him, Devil, if you can.

¹ Goldsmith—"Deserted Village."

**EPITAPH ON A WAG IN MAUCHLINE.**

LAMENT him, Mauchline husbands a',
He aften did assist ye;
For had ye staid whole weeks awa',
Your wives they ne'er had missed ye.

Ye Mauchline bairns, as on ye pass
To school in bands thegither,
O, tread ye lightly on his grass,
Perhaps he was your father.

EPITAPH ON A CELEBRATED RULING ELDER.

HERE Souter Hood in death does sleep;
To Hell, if he's gane thither,
Satan, gi'e him thy gear to keep,
He'll haud it well thegither.

EPITAPH FOR ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.

Know thou, O stranger to the fame
Of this much-loved, much-honoured name,
(For none that knew him need be told)
A warmer heart Death ne'er made cold.

EPITAPH FOR GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

THE poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blamed:
But with such as he, where'er he be,
May I be saved or damned!

A BARD'S EPITAPH.

Is there a whim-inspirèd fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate¹ to seek, owre proud to snool?²
Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,³
And drap a tear.

¹ Shame-faced.² Cringe.³ Sadly.



ON A FRIEND.

Is there a bard of rustic song
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
That weekly this area throng?
O, pass not by!
But, with a frater-feeling strong,
Here heave a sigh.

Is there a man, whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs, himself, life's mad career
Wild as the wave?
Here pause—and, through the starting tear,
Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame,
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stained his name!

Reader, attend! Whether thy soul
Soars Fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole
In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control
Is wisdom's root.

—
EPITAPH ON A FRIEND.

AN honest man here lies at rest,
As e'er God with His image blest;
The friend of man, the friend of truth;
The friend of age, and guide of youth:
Few hearts like his, with virtue warmed,
Few heads with knowledge so informed:
If there 's another world, he lives in bliss;
If there is none, he made the best of this.

—
A GRACE BEFORE DINNER.

O THOU, who kindly dost provide
For every creature's want!
We bless Thee, God of Nature wide,
For all Thy goodness lent:





ON TAM THE CHAPMAN.

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And, if it please Thee, Heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent ;
But whether granted or denied,
Lord, bless us with content !
Amen.

ON TAM THE CHAPMAN.¹

As Tam the Chapman on a day
Wi' Death forgathered by the way,
Weel pleased, he greets a wight sae famous,
And Death was nae less pleased wi' Thomas,
Wha cheerfully lays down the pack,
And there blows up a hearty crack ;
His social, friendly, honest heart
Sae tickled Death, they could na part :
Sae, after viewing knives and garters,
Death takes him hame to gi'e him quarters.

A FAREWELL.²

FAREWELL, dear friend ! may Guid-Luck hit you,
And 'mang her favourites admit you !
If e'er Detraction shore³ to smit you,
May nane believe him !
And ony de'il that thinks to get you,
Good Lord deceive him !

ON BURNS'S HORSE BEING IMPOUNDED BY
THE MAYOR OF CARLISLE.

Was e'er puir poet sae befitted ?
The maister drunk,—the horse committed :
Puir harmless beast ! tak' thee nae care,
Thou 'lt be a horse when he's nae mair (mayor).

¹ Mr. Kennedy, an agent to a mercantile house in the neighbourhood of Ayr. The lines were composed impromptu by Burns on meeting his friend after his recovery from a severe illness.

² Addressed to Mr. John Kennedy.

³ Threaten.

ON WEE JOHNNY.¹

HIC JACET WEE JOHNNY.

WHOE'ER thou art, O reader, know
That Death has murdered Johnny!
An' here his body lies fu' low—
For saul—he ne'er had ony.

EPIGRAM ON BACON.²

AT Brownhill we always get dainty good cheer,
And plenty of Bacon, each day in the year;
We've all things that's neat, and mostly in season;
But why always Bacon?—come, give me a reason?

VERSES TO J. RANKINE.

AE day, as Death, that grusome carl,
Was driving to the tither warl'
A mixtie-maxtie motley squad,
And mony a guilt-bespotted lad;
Black gowns of each denomination,
And thieves of every rank and station,
From him that wears the star and garter,
To him that wintles in a halter;
Ashamed himsel' to see the wretches,
He mutters, glow'rin' at the bitches,
"By G—! I'll not be seen behint them,
Nor 'mang the sp'ritual core present them,
Without at least ae honest man
To grace this damned infernal clan."
By Adamhill a glance he threw,
"L— G—!" quoth he, "I have it now:
There's just the man I want, i' faith!"
And quickly stoppit Rankine's breath.

¹ John Wilson, printer of the Kilmarnock edition of the Poet's works.

² Bacon was the name of the landlord of an inn at Brownhill, who had intruded himself on the Poet and a fellow-guest.

VERSES TO JOHN RANKINE.

I AM a keeper of the law
 In some sma' points, although not a':
 Some people tell me gin I fa'
 Ae way or ither,
 The breaking of ae point, though sma',
 Breaks a' thegither.

I ha'e been in for 't ance or twice,
 And winna say o'er far for thrice,
 Yet never met with that surprise
 That broke my rest,
 But now a rumour's like to rise—
 A whaup's i' the nest

ON A NOISY POLEMIC.¹

BELOW thir stanes lie Jamie's banes;
 O Death! it's my opinion,
 Thou ne'er took such a bleth'rin' b—h
 Into thy dark dominion!

ON A NOTED COXCOMB.

LIGHT lay the earth on Billy's breast,
 His chicken heart so tender;
 But build a castle on his head,
 His skull will prop it under.

ON MISS JEAN SCOTT, OF ECCLEFECHAN.

O, HAD each Scot of ancient times
 Been, Jeanny Scott, as thou art,
 The bravest heart on English ground
 Had yielded like a coward.

¹ James Humphrey, by trade a mason.



ON A HEN-PECKED COUNTRY SQUIRE.

As father Adam first was fooled,
A case that's still too common,
Here lies a man a woman ruled—
The Devil ruled the woman.

ON THE SAME.

O DEATH! hadst thou but spared his life
Whom we this day lament,
We freely wad exchanged the wife,
An' a' been weel content!

E'en as he is, cauld in his graff,¹
The swap we yet will do't;
Tak' thou the carlin's² carcass aff,
Thou 'se get the saul to boot.

ON THE SAME.

ONE Queen Artemisia, as old stories tell,
When deprived of her husband she loved so well,
In respect for the love and affection he'd shown her,
She reduced him to dust and she drank up the powder.

But Queen Netherplace, of a different complexion,
When called on to order the funeral direction,
Would have ate her dead lord, on a slender pretence,
Not to show her respect, but—to save the expense!

THE HIGHLAND WELCOME.

WHEN death's dark stream I ferry o'er,—
A time that surely shall come;
In heaven itself I'll ask no more
Than just a Highland welcome.

¹ Grave.

² Old woman.



VERSES,

WRITTEN ON A WINDOW OF THE INN AT CARROW.

WE cam' na here to view your warks,
In hopes to be mair wise,
But only, lest we gang to hell,
It may be nae surprise;

But whan we tirl'd at your door,
Your porter dought na hear us;
Sae may, should we to hell's yetts come,
Your billy Satan sair us!

LINES ON VIEWING STIRLING PALACE.

HERE Stuarts once in glory reigned,
And laws for Scotland's weal ordained;
But now unroofed their palace stands,
Their sceptre 's swayed by other hands:
The injured Stuart line is gone,
A race outlandish fills their throne—
An idiot race, to honour lost;
Who know them best, despise them most.

THE POET'S SELF-REPROOF.

RASH mortal, and slanderous Poet! thy name
Shall no longer appear in the records of Fame;
Dost not know, that old Mansfield, who writes like the
Bible,
Says, The more 'tis a truth, sir, the more 'tis a libel?

LINES

WRITTEN UNDER THE PICTURE OF THE CELEBRATED MISS BURNS.

CEASE, ye prudes, your envious railing,
Lovely Burns has charms—confess:
True it is, she had one failing—
Had a woman ever less?

REPLY TO THE MINISTER OF GLADSMUIR.

The minister of Gladsmuir had written a reproof of the "Lines on viewing Stirling Palace." Burns dashed out the pane of glass containing them, and wrote as follows:—

LIKE Æsop's lion, Burns says, sore I feel
All others' scorn—but damn that ass's heel!

JOHNNY PEEP.

HERE am I, Johnny Peep:
I saw three sheep,
And these three sheep saw me;
Half-a-crown a-piece
Will pay for their fleece,
And so Johnny Peep gets free.¹

THE HEN-PECKED HUSBAND.

CURSED be the man, the poorest wretch in life,
The crouching vassal to the tyrant wife!
Who has no will but by her high permission;
Who has not sixpence but in her possession;
Who must to her his dear friend's secret tell;
Who dreads a curtain lecture worse than hell!
Were such the wife had fallen to my part,
I'd break her spirit, or I'd break her heart;
I'd charm her with the magic of a switch,
I'd kiss her maids, and kick the perverse bitch.

¹ Burns was one day at a cattle market, held in a town in Cumberland, and, in the bustle that prevailed, he lost sight of some of the friends who accompanied him. He entered a tavern, opened the door of every room, and merely looked in, till at last he came to one in which three jolly Cumberland men were enjoying themselves. As he withdrew his head, one of them shouted, "Come in, Johnny Peep." Burns obeyed the call, seated himself at the table, and, in a short time, was the life and soul of the party. In the course of their merriment, it was proposed that each should write a stanza of poetry, and put it, with half-a-crown, below the candlestick, with this stipulation, that the best poet was to have his half-crown returned, while the other three were to be expended to treat the party. What the others wrote has now sunk into oblivion. The stanza of the Ayrshire ploughman being read, a roar of laughter followed, and while the palm of victory was unanimously voted to Burns, one of the Englishmen exclaimed, "Who are you?" An explanation ensued, and the happy party did not separate the day they met.

ON INCIVILITY SHOWN HIM AT INVERARY.

WHOE'ER he be that sojourns here,
 I pity much his case,
 Unless he come to wait upon
 The lord their god, his Grace.

There's naething here but Highland pride,
 And Highland cauld and hunger;
 If Providence has sent me here,
 'Twas surely in His anger.

ON ELPHINSTONE'S TRANSLATIONS OF
MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS.¹

O THOU whom Poesy abhors!
 Whom Prose has turnèd out of doors!
 Heardst thou that groan?—proceed no further—
 'Twas laurellèd Martial roaring "Murther!"

ON A SCHOOLMASTER.

HERE lie Willie Michie's banes;
 O Satan! when ye tak' him,
 Gi'e him the schoolin' o' your weans,
 For clever de'ils he'll mak' 'em!²

ON ANDREW TURNER.

IN se'enteen hunder an' forty-nine
 Satan took stuff to mak' a swine,
 And cuist it in a corner;
 But willy he changed his plan,
 And shaped it something like a man,
 And ca'd it Andrew Turner.

¹ "Stopping at a merchant's shop in Edinburgh," says Burns, "a friend of mine, one day, put 'Elphinstone's Translation of Martial' into my hand, and desired my opinion of it. I asked permission to write my opinion on a blank leaf of the book, which, being granted, I wrote this epigram."

² Willie Michie was schoolmaster of Cleish parish, in Fifeshire.

ON MR. W. CRUIKSHANKS.

HONEST Will 's to heaven gane,
 And mony shall lament him,
 His faults they a' in Latin lay,
 In English nane e'er kent them.

ON WAT.

Sic a reptile was Wat,
 Sic a miscreant slave,
 That the very worms damned him,
 When laid in his grave.
 "In his flesh there 's a famine,"
 A starved reptile cries;
 "An' his heart is rank poison,"
 Another replies.

ON CAPTAIN FRANCIS GROSE.

THE Devil got notice that Grose was a-dying,
 So, whip! at the summons old Satan came flying
 But when he approached where poor Francis lay moaning,
 And saw each bed-post with its burden a-groaning,
 Astonished, confounded, cried Satan, "By God!
 I'll want him, ere I take such a damnable load!"

ON THE KIRK OF LAMINGTON,

IN CLYDESDALE.

As cauld a wind as ever blew,
 A caulder kirk, and in 't but few;
 As cauld a Minister 's e'er spak',—
 Ye'se a' be het ere I come back.¹

¹ Burns left this epigram in his pew at Lamington Kirk one Sunday.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A PANE OF GLASS, IN THE INN AT MOFFATT, ON
BEING ASKED WHY GOD HAD MADE THE BEAUTIFUL MISS
DAVIES SO LITTLE AND THE FRIEND WHO WAS WITH HER SO
TALL.

ASK why God made the gem so small,
And why so huge the granite?
Because God meant mankind should set
The higher value on it.

LINES SPOKEN EXTEMPORE,

ON BEING APPOINTED TO THE EXCISE.

SEARCHING auld wives' barrels,
Och, hon! the day!
That clarty barm should stain my laurels;
But—what 'll ye say?
These movin' things ca'd wives and weans
Wad move the very hearts o' stanes!

VERSES

ADDRESSED TO THE LANDLADY OF THE INN AT ROSSLYN.

MY blessings on you, sonsie wife!
I ne'er was here before;
You've gi'en as walth for horn and knife,
Nae heart could wish for more.
Heaven keep you free frae care and strife,
Till far ayont fourscore;
And, while I toddle on through life,
I'll ne'er gang by your door.

EPITAPH ON W—.

STOP, thief! dame Nature cried to Death,
As Willie drew his latest breath;
You have my choicest model ta'en,—
How shall I make a fool again?

ON MRS. KEMBLE.

[WRITTEN EXTEMPORE ON SEEING HER ACT IN THE PART OF
YARICO, 1794.]

KEMBLE, thou cur'st my unbelief
Of Moses and his rod ;
At Yarico's sweet notes of grief
The rock with tears had flow'd.

INSCRIPTION ON A GOBLET.

THERE 's death in the cup—sae beware !
Nay, more—there is danger in touching ;
But wha can avoid the fell snare ?
The man and his wine 's sae bewitching !¹

POETICAL REPLY TO AN INVITATION.

SIR,
Yours this moment I unseal,
And, faith, I 'm gay and hearty !
To tell the truth an' shame the de'il,
I am as fou' as Bartie :²
But fooraday, sir, my promise leal,
Expect me o' your party,
If on a beastie I can speel,
Or hurl in a cartie.—R. B.

Mossiel, 1786.

ANOTHER.

THE King's most humble servant, I
Can scarcely spare a minute ;
But I 'll be wi' you by-and-by,
Or else the devil 's in it.

¹ One day, after dinner at Ryedale, Burns wrote these lines on a goblet with his diamond. Syme would seem to have been less affected with the compliment than with defacing his crystal service, for he threw the goblet behind the fire. We are not told what the Poet thought, but it is said that Brown, the clerk of "Stamp-office Johnny," snatched the goblet out of the fire uninjured, and kept it as a relique till his death.—CUNNINGHAM.

² A Kyle proverbial saying.

**A MOTHER'S ADDRESS TO HER INFANT.**

My blessin's upon thy sweet wee lippie !
My blessin's upon thy bonnie e'e brie !
Thy smiles are sae like my blithe sodger laddie,
Thou's aye the dearer and dearer to me !

**THE CREED OF POVERTY.**

In politics if thou wouldst mix,
And mean thy fortunes be ;
Bear this in mind,—“ Be deaf and blind ;
Let great folks hear and see.”

**WRITTEN IN A LADY'S POCKET-BOOK.**

GRANT me, indulgent Heaven ! that I may live
To see the miscreants feel the pain they give ;
Deal freedom's sacred treasures free as air,
Till slave and despot be but things which were !

**THE PARSON'S LOOKS.**

THAT there is falsehood in his looks
I must and will deny ;
They say their master is a knave—
And sure they do not lie.

**EXTEMPORE.****PINNED TO A LADY'S COACH.**

If you rattle along like your mistress's tongue,
Your speed will outrival the dart ;
But a fly for your load, you'll break down on the road,
If your stuff be as rotten's her heart.

ON ROBERT RIDDEL.¹

To Riddel, much-lamented man,
This ivied cot was dear:
Reader, dost value matchless worth?
This ivied cot revere.

IMPROMPTU,

ON MRS. RIDDEL'S BIRTHDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1793.

OLD Winter with his frosty beard,
Thus once to Jove his prayer preferred:
What have I done, of all the year,
To bear this hated doom severe?
My cheerless suns no pleasure know;
Night's horrid car drag dreary, slow;
My dismal months no joys are crowning,
But spleeny English, hanging, drowning.
Now, Jove, for once be mighty civil,
To counterbalance all this evil;
Give me,—and I've no more to say,—
Give me Maria's natal day!
That brilliant gift will so enrich me,
Spring, Summer, Autumn cannot match me.
'Tis done! says Jove. So ends my story,
And winter once rejoiced in glory.

EXTEMPORE,

ON THE LATE MR. WILLIAM SMELLIE,

Author of "The Philosophy of Natural History," and member of the
Antiquarian and Royal Societies of Edinburgh.

To Crochallan came²
The old cocked-hat, the grey surtout the same;
His bristling beard just rising in its might,
'Twas four long days and nights to shaving-night;
His uncombed grizzly locks wild-staring, thatched
A head for thought profound and clear unmatched;
Yet though his caustic wit was biting, rude,
His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.

¹ Traced on the window of Friar's Carse Hermitage by the diamond of Burns, after his friend's death.

² Mr. Smellie and our Poet were both members of a club in Edinburgh, under the name of Crochallan Fencibles.

EXTEMPORE.

TO MR. SYME,

On refusing to dine with him, after having been promised the first of company and the first of cookery, December 17, 1785.

No more of your guests, be they titled or not,
And cook'ry the first in the nation;
Who is proof to thy personal converse and wit,
Is proof to all other temptation.

TO MR. SYME.

[With a present of a dozen of porter.]

O, HAD the malt thy strength of mind,
Or hops the flavour of thy wit;
'Twere drink for first of humankind,
A gift that e'en for Syme were fit!

Jerusalem Tavern, Dumfries.

ON A PERSON NICKNAMED "THE MARQUIS."¹

THE LANDLORD OF A PUBLIC-HOUSE IN DUMFRIES.

HERE lies a mock Marquis, whose titles were shammed:
If ever he rise, it will be to be damned.

ON EXCISEMEN.¹

[LINES WRITTEN ON A WINDOW IN DUMFRIES.]

YE men of wit and wealth, why all this sneering
Gainst poor Excisemen? Give the cause a hearing.
What are your landlord's rent-rolls—taxing ledgers;
What Premiers—what?—even monarchs' mighty gaugers:
Nay, what are priests, those seeming godly wise men?
What are they, pray, but spiritual Excisemen?

¹ One day, while in the King's Arms tavern, Dumfries, Burns overheard a country gentleman talking sneeringly of excisemen. The Poet went to a window, and on one of the panes wrote this rebuke with his diamond.

LINES WRITTEN ON A PANE OF GLASS,
ON THE OCCASION OF A NATIONAL THANKSGIVING FOR A NAVAL
VICTORY.

YE hypocrites! are these your pranks?
To murder men, and gi'e God thanks!
For shame! gi'e o'er,—proceed no further—
God won't accept your thanks for murther!

VERSE

WRITTEN ON A WINDOW OF THE GLOBE TAVERN, DUMFRIES.

THE greybeard, old Wisdom, may boast of his treasures,—
Give me with gay Folly to live;
I grant him calm-blooded, time-settled pleasures,
But Folly has raptures to give.

INVITATION TO A MEDICAL GENTLEMAN

TO ATTEND A MASONIC ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

FRIDAY first's the day appointed,
By our Right Worshipful anointed,
To hold our grand procession;
To get a blade o' Johnnie's morals,
And taste a swatch o' Manson's barrels,
I' the way of our profession.
Our Master and the Brotherhood
Wad a' be glad to see you;
For me I would be mair than proud
To share the mercies wi' you.
If Death, then, wi' scaith, then,
Some mortal heart is hechtin,
Inform him, and storm him,
That Saturday ye'll fecht him.

ROBERT BURNS.

WAR.

I MURDER hate, by field or flood,
Though glory's name may screen us;
In wars at hame I'll spend my blood,
Life-giving wars of Venus.



DRINKING.

491

The deities that I adore
Are social peace and plenty;
I 'm better pleased to make one more
Than be the death o' twenty.

DRINKING.

My bottle is my holy pool,
That heals the wounds o' care an' dool;
And Pleasure is a wanton trout.—
An' ye drink it dry, ye 'll find him out.

THE SELKIRK GRACE.

When Burns was on a visit to St. Mary's Isle, the Earl of Selkirk requested him to say grace. He obeyed in the following words:—

SOME ha'e meat, and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we ha'e meat and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thankit.

INNOCENCE.

INNOCENCE

Looks gaily smiling on; while rosy Pleasure
Hides young Desire amid her flowery wreath,
And pours her cup luxuriant: mantling high
The sparking heavenly vintage, Love and Bliss!

ON THE POET'S DAUGHTER,

WHO DIED 1795.

HERE lies a rose, a budding rose,
Blasted before its bloom;
Whose innocence did sweets disclose
Beyond that flower's perfume.

To those who for her loss are grieved,
This consolation's given—
She's from a world of woe relieved,
And blooms, a rose, in Heaven.



ON GABRIEL RICHARDSON,

BREWER, DUMFRIES.

[Written on a goblet.]

HERE brewer Gabriel's fire 's extinct,
And empty all his barrels:
He 's blest—if, as he brewed, he drink—
In upright honest morals.



ON THE DEATH OF A LAP-DOG.

NAMED "ECHO."

IN wood and wild, ye warbling throng,
Your heavy loss deplore;
Now half-extinct your powers of song,
Sweet Echo is no more.

Ye jarring, screeching things around,
Scream your discordant joys;
Now half your din of tuneless sound
With Echo silent lies.

ON SEEING THE BEAUTIFUL SEAT OF LORD
GALLOWAY.

WHAT dost thou in that mansion fair?
Flit, Galloway, and find
Some narrow, dirty dungeon cave,
The picture of thy mind!



ON THE SAME.

No Stewart art thou, Galloway,—
The Stewarts all were brave;
Besides, the Stewarts were but fools,
Not one of them a knave.

-ON THE SAME.

BRIGHT ran thy line, O Galloway!
 Through many a far-famed sire;
 So ran the far-famed Roman way,—
 So ended—in a mire!

TO THE SAME.

[ON THE AUTHOR BEING THREATENED WITH HIS RESENTMENT.]

SPARE me thy vengeance, Galloway,—
 In quiet let me live:
 I ask no kindness at thy hand,
 For thou hast none to give.

ON A COUNTRY LAIRD.

[AN ELECTION SQUIB.]

BLESS the Redeemer, Cardoness,
 With grateful lifted eyes,
 Who said that not the soul alone,
 But body too, must rise;

For had He said, "The soul alone
 From death I will deliver;"
 Alas! alas! O Cardoness,
 Then thou hadst slept for ever!

THE TRUE LOYAL NATIVES.

YE true "Loyal Natives," attend to my song;
 In uproar and riot rejoice the night long;
 From envy and hatred your corps is exempt,
 But where is your shield from the darts of contempt?

The origin of these lines is related by Cromek. When politics ran high, the Poet happened to be in a tavern, and the following lines—the production of one of "The True Loyal Natives,"—were handed over the table to Burns:



“Ye sons of sedition, give ear to my song,
Let Syme, Burns, and Maxwell pervade every throng;
With Cruken the attorney, and Mundell the quack,
Send Willie the monger to hell with a smack.”

The Poet took out a pencil and instantly wrote the above reply.—
CUNNINGHAM.

ON A SUICIDE.

EARTHED up here lies an imp o' hell,
Planted by Satan's dibble:
Poor silly wretch! he's damned himself
To save the Lord the trouble.

TO MRS. C—,

ON RECEIVING A WORK OF HANNAH MORE.

THOU flattering mark of friendship kind,
Still may thy pages call to mind
The dear, the beauteous donor!
Though sweetly female every part,
Yet such a head, and more the heart,
Does both the sexes honour
She showed her taste refined and just
When she selected thee,
Yet deviating, own I must,
For so approving me.
But kind still, I mind still
The giver in the gift;
I'll bless her, and wiss her
A friend above the Lift.

TO MISS JESSY LEWARS.¹

TALK not to me of savages
From Afric's burning sun;
No savage e'er could rend my heart
As, Jessy, thou hast done.

¹ Jessy Lewars was the young friend whose tender care soothed the last illness of Burns. His surgeon came in one day while she was with him, and offered her a list of wild beasts belonging to a menagerie just arrived in the town. Burns caught the paper from his hand, and wrote on the back of it the above verses.



THE TOAST.

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And Jessy's lovely hand in mine,
A mutual faith to plight,
Not even to view the heavenly choir
Would be so blest a sight.

THE TOAST.

FILL me with the rosy wine;
Call a toast—a toast divine;
Give the Poet's darling flame,—
Lovely Jessy be the name;
Then thou mayest freely boast
Thou hast given a peerless toast.

ON THE SICKNESS OF MISS JESSY LEWARS.

SAY, sages, what's the charm on earth
Can turn Death's dart aside?
It is not purity and worth,
Else Jessy had not died.—R. B.

ON THE RECOVERY OF JESSY LEWARS.

BUT rarely seen since Nature's birth,
The natives of the sky,
Yet still one seraph's left on earth,
For Jessy did not die.—R. B.

THE BLACK-HEADED EAGLE.

A FRAGMENT,

On the defeat of the Austrians by Dumourier, at Gemappe, Nov. 1792

THE black-headed eagle,
As keen as a beagle,
He hunted o'er height and owre howe;
But fell in a trap
On the braes o' Gemappe:
E'en let him come out as he dowe.

**A BOTTLE AND AN HONEST FRIEND.¹**

“There’s nane that’s blest of humankind,
But the cheerful and the gay, man.
Fal lal,” &c.

HERE’S a bottle and an honest friend!
What wad you wish for mair, man?
Wha kens, before his life may end,
What his share may be of care, man?

Then catch the moments as they fly,
And use them as ye ought, man:
Believe me, Happiness is shy,
And comes not aye when sought, man.

GRACE AFTER DINNER.

O THOU, in whom we live and move,
Who mad’st the sea and shore;
Thy goodness constantly we prove,
And, grateful, would adore.

And if it please Thee, Power above,
Still grant us, with such store,
The friend we trust, the fair we love,
And we desire no more.

ANOTHER GRACE.

LORD, we thank an’ Thee adore,
For temp’ral gifts we little merit;
At present we will ask no more,—
Let William Hyslop give the spirit!

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE STAR.”

DEAR Peter, dear Peter,
We poor sons of metre
Are aften negleckit, ye ken:
For instance, your sheet, man,
(Though glad I’m to see ’t, man,)
I get no ae day in ten.

¹ These lines are ascribed to Burns, but his brother Gilbert doubts their being written by him.

TO DR. MAXWELL,

ON MISS JESSY STAIG'S RECOVERY.

MAXWELL, if merit here you crave,
That merit I deny :
You save fair Jessy from the grave!
An angel could not die.

THE PIPER.

[A FRAGMENT.]

THERE came a piper out o' Fife,
I wat na what they ca'd him ;
He played our cousin Kate a spring
When fient a body bade him ;
And aye the mair he hotched and blew
The mair that she forbade him.

JENNY M'CRAW.

[A FRAGMENT.]

JENNY M'CRAW, she has ta'en to the heather,—
Say, was it the Covenant carried her thither?
Jenny M'Craw to the mountains is gane,
Their leagues and their covenants a' she has ta'en ;
My head and my heart now, quo' she, are at rest,
And as for the lave, let the de'il do his best.

THE BOOK-WORMS.¹

THROUGH and through the inspirèd leaves,
Ye maggots, make your windings ;
But, oh ! respect his lordship's taste,
And spare his golden bindings.

¹ Written in a splendid library, where he found an uncut and worm eaten, but splendidly bound, copy of Shakspeare lying on the table.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.¹

The Solemn League and Covenant
Now brings a smile, now brings a tear;
But sacred Freedom, too, was theirs;
If thou 'rt a slave, indulge thy sneer.

LINES WRITTEN AT LOUDON MANSE.

The night was still, and o'er the hill
The moon shone on the castle wa';
The mavis sang, while dewdraps hang
Around her, on the castle wa'.

Sae merrily they danced the ring,
Frae e'enin' till the cock did craw;
And aye the o'erword o' the spring
Was, Irvine's bairns are bonnie a'.

THE TWO LAWYERS.

[A SKETCH MADE IN 1787.]

LORD ADVOCATE.²

He clenched his pamphlets in his fist,
He quoted and he hinted,
Till in a declamation mist
His argument he tint³ it;
He gapèd for 't, he grapèd⁴ for 't,
He found it was awa', man;
But what his common sense cam' short,
He ekèd out wi' law, man.

Collected Harry⁵ stood a wee,
Then opened out his arm, man;
His lordship sat, wi' ruefu' e'e,
And eyed the gath'ring storm, man:
Like wind-driven hail, it did assail,
Or torrents o'er a linn, man;
The Bench sae wise, lift up their eyes,
Half-wakened wi' the din, man.

¹ Spoken in reply to a gentleman who sneered at the sufferings of the Covenant for conscience' sake.

² Mr. Hay Campbell.

³ Lost.

⁴ Groped.

⁵ The celebrated Harry Erskine, Dean of Faculty.



TO A PAINTER,

WHOM HE FOUND PAINTING A PICTURE OF JACOB'S DREAM.

DEAR —, I'll gi'e ye some advice,
You'll tak' it no uncivil:
You shouldna paint at angels mair,
But try and paint the devil.
To paint an angel's kittle wark,
Wi' Auld Nick there's less danger;
You'll easy draw a weel-kent face,
But no sae weel a stranger.

TO JOHN M'MURDO, ESQ.

O, COULD I give thee India's wealth
As I this trifle send!
Because thy joy in both would be
To share them with a friend.
But golden sands did never grace
The Heliconian stream;
Then take what gold can never buy—
An honest Bard's esteem.

TO THE SAME.

BLEST be M'Murdo to his latest day!
No envious cloud o'ercast his evening ray;
No wrinkle furrowed by the hand of Care,
Nor ever Sorrow add one silver hair!
O, may no son the father's honour stain,
Nor ever daughter give the mother pain!

ON A SHEEP'S HEAD.

Dining at the Globe Tavern, Dumfries, when a sheep's head happened to be provided, Burns was asked to say grace, and instantly replied:—

O LORD! when hunger pinches sore,
Do Thou stand us in stead,
And send us from Thy bounteous store
A tup or wether head!—Amen.

John M'Murdo, steward to the Duke of Queensberry, was the faithful friend of Burns during the whole period of his residence in Nithsdale.



When dinner was over, he repeated the following lines:—

O LORD ! since we have feasted thus,
Which we so little merit,
Let Meg now take away the flesh,
And Jock bring in the spirit!—Amen.

TO A LADY,¹

WHO WAS LOOKING UP THE TEXT DURING SERMON.

FAIR Maid, you need not take the hint,
Nor idle texts pursue :
'Twas guilty sinners that he meant—
Not angels such as you !

ON THE ILLNESS OF A FAVOURITE CHILD.

Now health forsakes that angel face,
Nae mair my dearie smiles ;
Pale sickness withers ilka grace,
And a' my hopes beguiles.

The cruel Powers reject the prayer
I hourly mak' for thee !
Ye heavens, how great is my despair !
How can I see him die !

EPITAPH ON ROBERT FERGUSSON, POET.

Born, September 5th, 1751 ; died, 16th October, 1774.

No sculptured marble here, nor pompous lay,
"No storied urn nor animated bust ;"
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrows o'er her Poet's dust.

¹ Miss Ainslie. The text contained a heavy denunciation against impenitent sinners. Burns took a slip of paper and wrote on it the above lines.



VERSES

WRITTEN UNDER THE PORTRAIT OF FERGUSSON, THE POET, IN A
COPY OF THAT AUTHOR'S WORKS PRESENTED TO A YOUNG LADY
IN EDINBURGH, MARCH 17, 1787.

CURSE on ungrateful man! that can be pleased,
And yet can starve the author of the pleasure!
O thou, my elder brother in misfortune!
By far my elder brother in the Muses,
With tears I pity thy unhappy fate!
Why is the bard unpitied by the world,
Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures?

LINES WRITTEN ON A TUMBLER.

YOU'RE welcome, Willie Stewart;
You're welcome, Willie Stewart;
There's ne'er a flower that blooms in May,
That's half sae welcome's thou art.

Come, bumpers high, express your joy,—
The bowl we maun renew it;
The tappit-hen, gae bring her ben,
To welcome Willie Stewart.

May foes be strang, and friends be slack,—
Ilk action may he rue it;
May woman on him turn her back,
That wrangs thee, Willie Stewart!

EPITAPH ON WILLIAM NICOL.

YE maggots, feast on Nicol's brain,
For few sic feasts ye've gotten;
And fix your claws in Nicol's heart,
For de'il a bit o't's rotten.

TO SOME PEOPLE WHO WERE BOASTING OF
THEIR GRAND ACQUAINTANCES.

No more of your titled acquaintances boast,
And in what lordly circles you've been;
An insect is still but an insect at most,
Though it crawl on the head of a queen!

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RUISSEAU.

[This fragment was found by Cromek among the Poet's manuscripts. Ruisseau is a translation into French of his own name—*i. e.*, Burns, or rivulets.]

Now Robin lies in his last lair,
 He'll gabble rhyme nor sing nae mair;
 Cauld Poverty, wi' hungry stare,
 Nae mair shall fear him;
 Nor anxious Fear, nor cankert Care,
 E'er mair come near him,

To tell the truth, they seldom fasht him,
 Except the moment that they crusht him:
 For sune as Chance or Fate had husht 'em,
 Though e'er sae short,
 Then wi' a rhyme or song he lasht 'em,
 And thought it sport.

Though he was bred to kintra wark,
 And counted was baith wight and stark,
 Yet that was never Robin's mark
 To mak' a man;
 But tell him he was learned and clark,
 He roosed him than!

 LINES TO JOHN RANKINE.

[Written by Burns on his death-bed, and sent to Adamhill after his death.]

HE who of Rankine sang lies stiff and dead,
 And a green grassy hillock haps his head;
 Alas! alas! a devilish change indeed!



REMARKS ON
Scottish Songs and Ballads,
ANCIENT AND MODERN ;
WITH ANECDOTES OF THEIR AUTHORS ;
BY
ROBERT BURNS.

There needs na' be so great a phrase,
Wi' dringing dull Italian lays,
I wad na gi'e our ain Strathspeys
For half a hundred score o' 'em ;
They're douff and dowie at the best,
Douff and dowie, douff and dowie,
They're douff and dowie at the best,
Wi' a' their variorum :
They're douffe and dowie at the best,
Their Allegroes, and a' the rest ;
They cannot please a Scottish taste,
Compared wi' Tullochgorum.

REV. JOHN SKINNER.

[THE Remarks on Scottish Songs were written by Burns in an interleaved copy of the first four volumes of Johnson's "Musical Museum," which he presented to Captain Riddel, of Friar's Carse. On the death of Mrs. Riddel, these volumes passed into the hands of her niece, Eliza Bayley, of Manchester, who permitted Mr. Cromek to transcribe and publish them in his volume of the Reliques of Burns.—CUNNINGHAM.]

THE HIGHLAND QUEEN.

The "Highland Queen," music and poetry, was composed by Mr M'Vicar, purser of the *Solebay* man-of-war. This I had from Dr. Blacklock.



"The Highland King," intended as a parody on the former, was the production of a young lady, the friend of Charles Wilson, of Edinburgh, who edited a collection of songs entitled "Cecilia," which appeared in 1779.

The following are specimens of these songs:—

THE HIGHLAND QUEEN.

How blest that youth whom gentle fate
Has destined for so fair a mate!
Has all these wondering gifts in store,
And each returning day brings more;
No youth so happy can be seen,
Possessing thee, my Highland Queen.

THE HIGHLAND KING.

Jamie, the pride of a' the green,
Is just my age, e'en gay fifteen:
When first I saw him, 'twas the day
That ushers in the sprightly May;
Then first I felt Love's powerful sting,
And sighed for my dear Highland King.

THE HIGHLAND QUEEN.

No sordid wish, nor trifling joy,
Her settled calm of mind destroy;
Strict honour fills her spotless soul,
And adds a lustre to the whole:
A matchless shape, a graceful mien,
All centre in my Highland Queen.

THE HIGHLAND KING.

Would once the dearest boy but say,
Tis you I love; come, come away—
Unto the kirk, my love, let's hie—
O, me! in rapture, I'd comply:
And I should then have cause to sing
The praises of my Highland King.

BESS THE GAWKIE.¹

THIS song shows that the Scottish Muses did not all leave us when we lost Ramsay and Oswald;² as I have good reason to

¹ Written by the Rev. James Muirhead.

² Oswald was a music-seller in London, where he published a collection of Scottish^h tunes, called "The Caledonian's Pocket Companion."



O, OPEN THE DOOR, LORD GREGORY. 505

believe that the verses and music are both posterior to the days of these two gentlemen. It is a beautiful song, and in the genuine Scots taste. We have few pastoral compositions—I mean the pastoral of Nature—that are equal to this.

Blithe young Bess to Jean did say,
Will ye gang to yon sunny brae,
Where flocks do feed and herds do stray,
And sport awhile wi' Jamie?
Ah, na, lass, I'll no gang there,
Nor about Jamie tak' nae care,
Nor about Jamie tak' nae care,
For he's ta'en up wi' Maggy!

For hark, and I will tell you, lass:
Did I not see your Jamie pass,
Wi' meikle gladness in his face,
Out o'er the muir to Maggy?
I wat he ga'e her mony a kiss,
And Maggy took them ne'er amiss;
'Tween ilka smack, pleased her with *this*,—
That Bess was but a gawkie.

But whisht!—nae mair of this we'll speak,
For yonder Jamie does us meet;
Linstead of Meg he kissed sae sweet,
I trow he likes the gawkie.
O dear Bess, I hardly knew,
When I came by, your gown's sae new,
I think you've got it wet wi' dew;
Quoth she, That's like a gawkie.

The lasses fast frae him they flew,
And left poor Jamie sair to rue
That ever Maggy's face he knew,
Or yet ca'd Bess a gawkie.
As they went o'er the muir they sang,
The hills and dales with echoes rang,
The hills and dales with echoes rang,—
Gang o'er the muir to Maggy.

O, OPEN THE DOOR, LORD GREGORY.

It is somewhat singular that in Lanark, Renfrew, Ayr, Wigton, Kirkcudbright, and Dumfries-shires, there is scarcely an old song or tune which, from the title, &c., can be guessed to belong to, or be the production of, these counties. This, I conjecture, is one of these very few; as the ballad, which is a



long one, is called, both by tradition and in printed collections, "The Lass of Lochroyan," which I take to be Lochroyan in Galloway.

O, open the door, Lord Gregory,
O, open and let me in;
The wind blows through my yellow hair,
The dew draps o'er my chin.
If you are the lass that I loved once,
As I trow you are not she,
Come; gi'e me some of the tokens
That pass'd 'tween you and me.

Ah, wae be to you, Gregory!
An ill death may you die:
You will not be the death of one,
But you 'll be the death of three.
O, don't you mind, Lord Gregory,
'Twas down at yonder burn-side
We chang'd the ring off our fingers,
And I put mine on thine?

THE BANKS OF THE TWEED

THIS song is one of the many attempts that English composers have made to imitate the Scottish manner, and which I shall, in these strictures, beg leave to distinguish by the appellation of "Anglo-Scottish" productions. The music is pretty good, but the verses are just above contempt.

For to visit my ewes, and to see my lambs play,
By the banks of the Tweed and the groves I did stray;
But my Jenny, dear Jenny, how oft have I sighed,
And have vowed endless love if you would be my bride.

To the altar of Hymen, my fair one, repair,
Where a knot of affection shall tie the fond pair,
To the pipe's sprightly notes the gay dance will we lead,
And will bless the dear grove by the banks of the Tweed.

THE BEDS OF SWEET ROSES.

THIS song, as far as I know, for the first time appears here in print. When I was a boy, it was a very popular song in Ayrshire. I remember to have heard those fanatics, the Buchanites, sing some of their nonsensical rhymes, which they dignify with the name of hymns, to this air.



ROSLIN CASTLE.

507

The song of "The Beds of Sweet Roses" is as follows:--

As I was a-walking one morning in May,
The little birds were singing delightful and gay;
The little birds were singing delightful and gay,
When I and my true love did often sport and play
Down among the beds of sweet roses,
Where I and my true love did often sport and play
Down among the beds of sweet roses.

My daddy and my mammy, I oft have heard them say,
That I was a naughty boy, and did often sport and play;
But I never liked in all my life a maiden that was shy,
Down among the beds of sweet roses.

ROSLIN CASTLE.

THESE beautiful verses were the production of a Richard Hewit, a young man that Dr. Blacklock (to whom I am indebted for the anecdote) kept for some years as an amanuensis.' I do not know who is the author of the second song to the same tune. Tytler, in his amusing History of Scottish Music, gives the air to Oswald; but in Oswald's own collection of Scots tunes, when he affixes an asterisk to those he himself composed, he does not make the least claim to the tune.

'Twas in that season of the year,
When all things gay and sweet appear,
That Colin, with the morning ray,
Arose and sung his rural lay.
Of Nanny's charms the shepherd sung,
The hills and dales with Nanny rung;
While Roslin Castle heard the swain,
And echoed back the cheerful strain.

¹ Richard Hewit was taken, when a boy, to lead Dr. Blacklock (who was blind). He addressed a copy of verses to the Doctor, on quitting his service. They contain the following lines:—

"How oft these plains I've thoughtless prest,
Whistled or sung some fair distrest,
When fate would steal a tear."

"Alluding to a sort of narrative songs, which make no inconsiderable part of the innocent amusements with which the country people pass the wintry nights, and of which the author of the present piece was a faithful rehearser."

Mackenzie, in his edition of Blacklock's Poems (Edinburgh, 1793), informs us that Richard Hewit subsequently became secretary to Lord Milton (then Lord Justice Clerk and Sub-Minister for Scotland, under the Duke of Argyll), but that the fatigue of that employment hurt his health, and he died in 1794.



Awake, sweet Muse! the breathing Spring
With rapture warms; awake and sing!
Awake and join the vocal throng
Who hail the morning with a song;
To Nanny raise the cheerful lay,
O, bid her taste and come away;
In sweetest smiles herself adorn,
And add new graces to the morn!

O, hark! my love; on every spray
Each feathered warbler tunes his lay;
'Tis beauty fires the ravished throng,
And love inspires the melting song:
Then let my raptured notes arise,
For beauty darts from Nanny's eyes;
And love my rising bosom warms,
And fills my soul with sweet alarms.

SECOND VERSION.

From Roslin Castle's echoing walls,
Resound my shepherd's ardent calls;
My Colin bids me come away.
And love demands I should obey.
His melting strain and tuneful lay,
So much the charms of love display,
I yield—nor longer can refrain,
To own my love, and bless my swain.

No longer can my heart conceal
The painful-pleasing flame I feel:
My soul retorts the am'rous strain,
And echoes back in love again.
Where lurks my songster? from what grove
Does Colin pour his notes of love?
O, bring me to the happy bower
Where mutual love my bliss secure!

Ye vocal hills, that catch the song,
Repeating as it flies along,
To Colin's ears my strain convey,
And say, I haste to come away.
Ye zephyrs soft, that fan the gale,
Waft to my love the soothing tale:
In whispers all my soul express,
And tell I haste his arms to bless!
O! come, my love! thy Colin's lay
With rapture calls, O, come away!
Come while the Muse this wreath shall twine
Around that modest brow of thine;



SAW YE JOHNNIE CUMMIN? QUO' SHE. 509

O, hither haste, and with thee bring
That beauty blooming like the Spring;
Those graces that divinely shine,
And charm this ravished breast of mine!

SAW YE JOHNNIE CUMMIN? QUO' SHE.

THIS song, for genuine humour in the verses, and lively originality in the air, is unparalleled. I take it to be very old

Saw ye Johnnie cummin? quo' she,
Saw ye Johnnie cummin,
O, saw ye Johnnie cummin? quo' she;
Saw ye Johnnie cummin,
Wi' his blue bonnet on his head,
And his doggie runnin', quo' she;
And his doggie runnin'?
Fee him, father, fee him, quo' she;
Fee him, father, fee him:
For he is a gallant lad,
And a weel doin';
And a' the wark about the house
Gaes wi' me when I see him, quo' she;
Wi' me when I see him.

What will I do wi' him, hussy?
What will I do wi' him?
He's ne'er a sark upon his back,
And I ha'e nane to gi'e him.
I ha'e twa sarks into my kist,
And ane o' them I'll gi'e him,
And for a mark of mair fee,
Dinna stand wi' him, quo' she;
Dinna stand wi' him.

For weel do I lo'e him, quo' she:
Weel do I lo'e him:
O, fee him, father, fee him, quo' she:
Fee him, father, fee him:
He'll haud the plough, thrash i' the barn,
And lie wi' me at e'en, quo' she;
Lie wi' me at e'en.

CLOUT THE CALDRON.

A TRADITION is mentioned in the *Bee*, that the second Bishop Chisholm, of Dunblane, used to say that, if he were going to



be hanged, nothing would soothe his mind so much by the way as to hear "Clout the Caldron" played.

I have met with another tradition, that the whole song to this tune,—

"Ha'e ye ony pots or pans,
Or ony broken chanlers?"

was composed on one of the Kenmure family, in the Cavalier times; and alluded to an amour he had, while under hiding, in the disguise of an itinerant tinker. The air is also known by the name of

"The blacksmith and his apron,"

which, from the rhythm, seems to have been a line of some old song to the tune.

Ha'e ye ony pots or pans,
Or ony broken chanlers?
For I'm a tinker to my trade,
And newly come frae Flanders,
As scant o' siller as o' grace,
Disbanded, we've a bad run;
Gang, tell the lady o' the place
I'm come to clout her caldron.

Madam, if ye ha'e wark for me,
I'll do't to your contentment,
And dinna care a single flie
For ony man's resentment:
For, lady fair, though I appear
To every ane a tinker,
Yet to yoursel' I'm bauld to tell
I am a gentle jinker.

Love, Jupiter into a swan
Turned for his lovely Leda;
He, like a bull, o'er meadows ran
To carry off Europa.
Then may not I, as well as he,
To cheat your Argus blinker,
And win your love, like mighty Jove,
Thus hide me in a tinker?

"Sir, ye appear a cunning man,
But this fine plot ye'll fail in,
For there is neither pot nor pan
Of mine ye'll drive a nail in.
Then bind your budget on your back
And nails up in your apron,
For I've a tinker under tack
That's used to clout my caldron."



SAW YE NAE MY PEGGY?

THIS charming song is much older, and indeed superior to Ramsay's verses, "The Toast," as he calls them. There is another set of the words, much older still, and which I take to be the original one, but though it has a very great deal of merit, it is not quite ladies' reading.

The original words, for they can scarcely be called verses, seem to be as follows—a song familiar from the cradle to every Scottish ear:—

Saw ye my Maggie,
Saw ye my Maggie,
Saw ye my Maggie
Linkin' o'er the lea?

High kilted was she,
High kilted was she,
High kilted was she,
Her coat aboon her knee.

What mark has your Maggie,
What mark has your Maggie,
What mark has your Maggie,
That ane may ken her be? (by).

Though it by no means follows that the silliest verses to an air must, for that reason, be the original song, yet I take this ballad, of which I have quoted part, to be the old verses. The two songs in Ramsay, one of them evidently his own, are never to be met with in the fireside circle of our peasantry; while that which I take to be the old song is in every shepherd's mouth. Ramsay, I suppose, had thought the old verses unworthy of a place in his collection.

Saw ye nae my Peggy,
Saw ye nae my Peggy,
Saw ye nae my Peggy
Coming o'er the lea?
Sure a finer creature
Ne'er was formed by Nature,
So complete each feature,
So divine is she.

O, how Peggy charms me!
Every look still warms me!
Every thought alarms me,
Lest she love nae me.
Peggy doth discover
Naught but charms all over;
Nature bids me love her,—
That's a law to me.



Who would leave a lover
To become a rover?
No, I'll ne'er give over,
Till I happy be!
For since love inspires me,
As her beauty fires me,
And her absence tires me,
Nought can please but she.

When I hope to gain her,
Fate seems to detain her;
Could I but obtain her,
Happy would I be!
I'll lie down before her,
Bless, sigh, and adore her,
With faint look implore her,
Till she pity me!

THE FLOWERS OF EDINBURGH.

This song is one of the many effusions of Scots Jacobitism. The title, "Flowers of Edinburgh," has no manner of connection with the present verses, so I suspect there has been an older set of words, of which the title is all that remains.

By the by, it is singular enough that the Scottish Muses were all Jacobites. I have paid more attention to every description of Scots songs than perhaps anybody living has done, and I do not recollect one single stanza, or even the title of the most trifling Scots air, which has the least panegyric reference to the families of Nassau or Brunswick; while there are hundreds satirizing them. This may be thought no panegyric on the Scots poets, but I mean it as such. For myself, I would always take it as a compliment to have it said that my heart ran before my head; and surely the gallant though unfortunate House of Stuart, the kings of our fathers for so many heroic ages, is a theme much more interesting than!

My love was once a bonnie lad;
He was the flower of a' his kin;
The absence of his bonnie face
Has rent my tender heart in twain.
I day nor night find no delight—
In silent tears I still complain;
And exclaim 'gainst those, my rival foes,
That ha'e ta'en frae me my darling swain.

A pen has been passed through the close of this sentence.



MY DEAR JOCKEY.

513

Despair and anguish fill my breast
Since I have lost my blooming rose:
I sigh and moan while others rest;
His absence yields me no repose.
To seek my love I'll range and rove
Through every grove and distant plain;
Thus I'll never cease, but spend my days
T' hear tidings from my darling swain.

There's nothing strange in Nature's change,
Since parents show such cruelty;
They caused my love from me to range,
And know not to what destiny.
The pretty kids and tender lambs
May cease to sport upon the plain;
But I'll mourn and lament, in deep discontent,
For the absence of my darling swain!

JAMIE GAY.

"JAMIE GAY" is another and a tolerable Anglo-Scottish piece.

MY DEAR JOCKEY.

ANOTHER Anglo-Scottish production.

My laddie is gane far away o'er the plain,
While in sorrow behind I am forced to remain;
Though blue-bells and violets the hedges adorn,
Though trees are in blossom and sweet blows the thorn,
No pleasure they give me, in vain they look gay;
There's nothing can please me now Jockey's away:
Forlorn I sit singing, and this is my strain,—
"Haste, haste, my dear Jockey, to me back again."

When lads and their lasses are on the green met,
They dance and they sing, and they laugh and they chat;
Contented and happy, with hearts full of glee,
I can't without envy their merriment see:
Those pleasures offend me, my shepherd's not there!
No pleasure I relish that Jockey don't share;
It makes me to sigh, I from tears scarce refrain,
I wish my dear Jockey returned back again.



FYE, GAE RUB HER O'ER WI' STRAE.

It is self-evident that the first four lines of this song are part of a song more ancient than Ramsay's beautiful verses which are annexed to them. As music is the language of Nature, and poetry, particularly songs, are always less or more localized (if I may be allowed the verb) by some of the modifications of time and place, this is the reason why so many of our Scottish airs have outlived their original, and perhaps many subsequent sets of verses; except a single name, or phrase, or sometimes one or two lines, simply to distinguish the tunes by.

To this day, among people who know nothing of Ramsay's verses, the following is the song, and all the song that ever I heard:—

Gin ye meet a bonnie lassie,
Gi'e her a kiss and let her gae;
But gin ye meet a dirty hizzie,
Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' strae.

Fye, gae rub her, rub her, rub her,
Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' strae;
And gin ye meet a dirty hizzie,
Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' strae.

“Ramsay's spirited imitation,” says Cromek, “of the *Vides, ut alta stet nive candidum Soracte*, of Horace, is considered as one of the happiest efforts of the author's genius.” For a critique on the poem the reader is referred to Lord Woodhouselee's “Remarks on the Writings of Ramsay.”

Look up to Pentland's tow'ring tap,
Buried beneath great wreaths of snaw,
O'er ilka cleugh, ilk scar, and slap,
As high as ony Roman wa'.

Driving their baws frae whins or tee,
There are nae gowfers to be seen;
Nor dousser fowk wysing a-jee
The byass-bouls on Tamson's Green.

Then fling on coals, and ripe the ribs,
And beek the house baith but and ben;
That mutchkin stoup it hauds but dlibs,
Then let's get in the tappit-hen.

Good claret best keeps out the cauld,
And drives away the winter soon;
It makes a man baith gash and bauld,
And heaves his soul beyond the moon.



THE LASS OF LIVINGSTON.

515

Let next day come as it thinks fit,
The present minute 's only ours;
On Pleasure let 's employ our wit,
And laugh at Fortune's fickle powers.

Be sure ye dinna quit the grip
Of ilka joy, when ye are young,
Before auld age your vitals nip,
And lay ye twafald o'er a rung.

Now to her heaving bosom cling,
And sweetly tastie for a kiss;
Frae her fair finger whoop a ring,
As token of a future bliss.

These benisons, I'm very sure,
Are of the gods' indulgent grant;
Then, surly carles, whisht, forbear
To plague us wi' your whining cant.

Sweet youth 's a blithe and heartsome time;
Then, lads and lasses, while 'tis May,
Gae, pu' the gowan in its prime,
Before it wither and decay.

Watch the saft minutes of delight,
When Jenny speaks beneath her breath,
And kisses, laying a' the wyte
On you, if she kepp ony skaith.

"Haith, ye 're ill-bred," she 'll smiling say;
"Ye 'll worry me, ye greedy rook;"
Syne frae your arms she 'll rin away,
And hide hersel' in some dark nook.

Her laugh will lead you to the place
Where lies the happiness you want,
And plainly tells you, to your face,
Nineteen nay-says are half a grant.

The song of "Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' strae" is composed of the first four lines mentioned by Burns, and the seven concluding verses of Ramsay's spirited and elegant Scottish version of Horace's ninth Ode, given above.—CUNNINGHAM.

THE LASS OF LIVINGSTON.

THE old song, in three eight-line stanzas, is well known, and has merit as to wit and humour; but it is rather unfit for insertion. It begins,—



The bonnie lass o' Livingston,
Her name ye ken, her name ye ken,
And she has written in her contract,
To lie her lane, to lie her lane.
&c. &c. &c.

The version by Allan Ramsay is as follows :—

Pained with her slighting Jamie's love,
Bell dropt a tear, Bell dropt a tear;
The gods descended from above,
Well pleased to hear, well pleased to hear.
They heard the praises of the youth
From her own tongue, from her own tongue,
Who now converted was to truth,
And thus she sung, and thus she sung :
Blessed days, when our ingenuous sex,
More frank and kind, more frank and kind,
Did not their loved adorers vex,
But spoke their mind, but spoke their mind.
Repenting now, she promised fair,
Would he return, would he return,
She ne'er again would give him care,
Or cause to mourn.
Why loved I the deserving swain,
Yet still thought shame, yet still thought shame,
When he my yielding heart did gain,
To own my flame, to own my flame?
Why took I pleasure to torment,
And seem too coy, and seem too coy,
Which makes me now, alas ! lament
My slighted joy, my slighted joy ?
Ye Fair, while beauty's in its spring,
Own your desire, own your desire,
While Love's young power, with his soft wing,
Fans up the fire, fans up the fire ;
O, do not, with a silly pride
Or low design, or low design,
Refuse to be a happy bride,
But answer plain, but answer plain.
Thus the fair mourner 'wailed her crime,
With flowing eyes, with flowing eyes ;
Glad Jamie heard her all the time
With sweet surprise, with sweet surprise.
Some god had led him to the grove,
His mind unchanged, his mind unchanged ;
Flew to her arms, and cried, My love,
I am revenged, I am revenged.



THE LAST TIME I CAME O'ER THE MOOR.

RAMSAY found the first line of this song, which had been preserved as the title of the charming air, and then composed the rest of the verses to suit that line. This has always a finer effect than composing English words, or words with an idea foreign to the spirit of the old title. Where old titles of songs convey any idea at all, it will generally be found to be quite in the spirit of the air.

The last time I came o'er the moor,
I left my love behind me;
Ye powers! what pain do I endure,
When soft ideas mind me.
Soon as the ruddy morn displayed
The beaming day ensuing,
I met betimes my lovely maid
In fit retreats for wooing.

Beneath the cooling shade we lay,
Gazing and chastely sporting;
We kissed and promised time away,
Till Night spread her black curtain.
I pitied all beneath the skies,
Ev'n kings, when she was nigh me;
In rapture I beheld her eyes,
Which could but ill deny me.

Should I be called where cannons roar,
Where mortal steel may wound me;
Or cast upon some foreign shore,
Where danger may surround me;
Yet hopes again to see my love,
And feast on glowing kisses,
Shall make my cares at distance move,
In prospect of such blisses.

In all my soul there 's not one place
To let a rival enter;
Since she excels in every grace,
In her my love shall centre:
Sooner the seas shall cease to flow,
Their waves the Alps shall cover,
On Greenland ice shall roses grow,
Before I cease to love her.

The next time I go o'er the moor,
She shall a lover find me;
And that my faith is firm and pure,
Though I left her behind me:



Then Hymen's sacred bonds shall chain
My heart to her fair bosom ;
There, while my being does remain,
My love more fresh shall blossom.

JOHNNIE'S GREY BREEKS.

THOUGH this has certainly every evidence of being a Scottish air, yet there is a well-known tune and song in the North of Ireland, called "The Weaver and his Shuttle, O," which, though sung much quicker, is every note the very tune.

When I was in my se'enteenth year,
I was baith blithe and bonnie, O ;
The lads lo'ed me baith far and near,
But I lo'ed name but Johnnie, O.
He gained my heart in twa three weeks
He spak' sae blithe and kindly, O ;
And I made him new grey breeks,
That fitted him maist finely, O.

He was a handsome fellow ;
His humour was baith frank and free ;
His bonny locks sae yellow,
Like gowd they glittered in my e'e ;
His dimpled chin and rosy cheeks,
And face sae fair and ruddy, O ;
And then a-day his grey breeks
Were neither auld nor duddy, O.

But now they are threadbare worn,
They're wider than they wont to be ;
They're a' tashed-like, and unco torn,
And clouted sair on ilka knee.
But gin I had a simmer's day,
As I ha'e had right mony, O,
I'd make a web o' new grey,
To be breeks to my Johnnie, O.

For he's weel worthy o' them,
And better than I ha'e to gi'e ;
But I'll take pains upo' them,
And strive frae fauts to keep them free.
To clead him weel shall be my care,
And please him a' my study, O ;
But he maun wear the auld pair
A wee, though they be duddy, O.

THE HAPPY MARRIAGE.¹

ANOTHER, but very pretty, Anglo-Scottish piece.

How blest has my time been, what joys have I known,
Since wedlock's soft bondage made Jessie my own!
So joyful my heart is, so easy my chain,
That freedom is tasteless, and roving a pain.

Through walks grown with woodbines, as often we stray,
Around us our boys and girls frolic and play:
Fow pleasing their sport is the wanton ones see,
And borrow their looks from my Jessie and me.

To try her sweet temper, oft-times am I seen,
In revels all day with the nymphs on the green;
Though painful my absence, my doubts she beguiles,
And meets me at night with complaisance and smiles.

What though on her cheeks the rose loses its hue,
Her wit and her humour bloom all the year through:
Time still, as he flies, adds increase to her truth,
And gives to her mind what he steals from her youth.

Ye shepherds so gay, who make love to ensnare,
And cheat with false vows the too credulous fair,
In search of true pleasure how vainly you roam;
To hold it for life, you must find it at home.



THE LASS OF PATIE'S MILL.

In Sinclair's "Statistical Account of Scotland," this song is localized (a verb I must use for want of another to express my idea) somewhere in the North of Scotland, and likewise is claimed by Ayrshire. The following anecdote I had from the present Sir William Cunningham, of Robertland, who had it from the last John, Earl of Loudon. The then Earl of Loudon, and father to Earl John before mentioned, had Ramsay at Loudon, and one day walking together by the banks of Irvine Water, near New Mills, at a place called Patie's Mill, they were struck with the appearance of a beautiful country girl. His lordship observed that she would be a fine theme for a song. Allan lagged behind in returning to Loudon Castle, and at dinner produced this identical song.

¹ Composed by Edward Moore, author of "Fables for the Female Sex."

*THE TURNIMSPIKE.*

The Lass of Patie's Mill,
So bonnie, blithe, and gay,
In spite of all my skill,
Hath stole my heart away.
When tedding of the hay,
Bare-headed on the green,
Love midst her locks did play,
And wantoned in her een.

Her arms white, round, and smooth,
Breasts rising in their dawn,
To Age it would give youth
To press them with his hand:
Through all my spirits ran
An ecstasy of bliss,
When I such sweetness fand,
Wrapt in a balmy kiss.

Without the help of art,
Like flowers which grace the wild,
She did her sweets impart
Whene'er she spoke or smiled.
Her looks they were so mild,
Free from affected pride,
She me to love beguiled:
I wished her for my bride.

O! had I all that wealth
Hopetoun's high mountains fill,
Insured long life and health,
And pleasure at my will,
I'd promise and fulfil
That none but bonnie she,
The Lass o' Patie's Mill,
Should share the same wi' me.

The heroine of this song was the only daughter of John Anderson, Esq., of Patie's Mill, in the parish of Keith-Hall, and county of Aberdeen.

THE TURNIMSPIKE.¹

THERE is a stanza of this excellent song for local humour, omitted in this set.

¹ Burns says nothing about the authorship of this humorous song, but we may mention that it, and its counterpart, "John Hielandman's Remarks on Glasgow," are from the pen of Dougald Graham, bellman in



THE TURNIMSPIKE.

521

They tak' te horse then by te head,
And tere tey mak' her stan', man;
Me tell tem, me ha'e seen te day
Tey no had sic comman', man.

A Highlander laments, in a half-serious and half-comic way, the privations which the Act of Parliament anent kilts has made him endure, and the miseries which turnpike-roads and toll-bars have brought upon his country:—

Hersell pe Highland shentleman,
Pe auld as Pothwell Frig, man;
And mony alterations seen
Amang te Lawland whig, man.

First when her to the Lawlands came,
Nainsell was driving cows, man;
There was nae laws about him's nerse,
About the preeks or trews, man.

Nainsell did wear the philabeg,
The plaid prick't on her shoulder,
The guid claymore hung pe her pelt,
De pistol sharged wi' powder.

But for whereas these cursèd preeks,
Wherewith her nerse be lockit,
O-hon! that e'er she saw the day!
For a' her houghs be prokit.

Glasgow, and author of the facetious histories of "Lothian Tam," "Leper the Tailor," "Simple John and his Twelve Misfortunes," "Jocky and Maggie's Courtship," "John Cheap the Chapman," "The Comical Sayings of Paddy from Cork with his Coat Buttoned Behind," "John Falkirk's Carritches," "Janet Clinker's Orations in the Society of Clashin' Wives," and a "Metrical History of the Rebellion in 1745," in which he had a personal share, &c. His works, in the form of penny histories, have long formed staple articles in the hawker's basket; and while the classic presses of Paisley, Stirling, and Falkirk have groaned with them, the sides of the Scottish lieges have been convulsed with them for the greater part of a century.—MOTHERWELL.

Graham was born about 1724, and died in the year 1779. His "History of the Rebellion, 1745," was a favourite work of Sir Walter Scott, and was first printed under the following quaint title:—

"A Full, Particular, and True Account of the Rebellion in 1745-6.

"Composed by the Poet, D. GRAHAM.

"In Stirlingshire he lives at hame.

"To the tune of 'The Gallant Grahams,' &c. Glasgow, 1746."



Every ting in de Highlands now
Pe turned to alteration ;
The sodger dwall at our door-sheek,
And tat's te great vexation.

Scotland be turn't a Ningland now,
An' laws pring on de cadger ;
Nainsell wad durk him for his deeds,
But oh ! she fear te sodger.

Anither law came after that,
Me never saw te like, man ;
They mak' a lang road on te crund,
And ca' him Turnimspike, man.

An' wow ! she pe a pouny road,
Like louden corn-rigs, man ;
Where twa carts may gang on her,
An' no preak ither's legs, man.

They sharge a penny for ilka horse,
In troth she 'll no be sheaper,
For nought put gaen upo' the ground,
An' they gi'e me a paper.

Nae doubts, himsell maun tra her pursse,
And pay them what hims like, man ;
I 'll see a shugement on his toor,
That filthy Turnimspike, man.

But I 'll awa' to te Highland hills,
Where te'il a ane dare turn her,
And no come near your Turnimspike,
Unless it pe to purn her.

HIGHLAND LADDIE.

As this was a favourite theme with our later Scottish muses, there are several airs and songs of that name. That which I take to be the oldest is to be found in the "Musical Museum," beginning, "I ha'e been at Crookieden." One reason for my thinking so is, that Oswald had it in his collection by the name of "The auld Highland Laddie." It is also known by the name of "Jinglan Johnnie," which is a well-known song of four or five stanzas, and seems to be an earlier song than Jacobite times. As a proof of this, it is little known to the peasantry by the name of "Highland Laddie," while everybody knows "Jinglan Johnnie." The song begins,—



THE GENTLE SWAIN.

523

“Jinglan John, the meickle man,
He met wi’ a lass was blithe and bonnie.”

Another “Highland Laddie” is also in the “Museum,” Vol. v., which I take to be Ramsay’s original, as he has borrowed the chorus, “O, my bonnie Highland lad,” &c. It consists of three stanzas, besides the chorus; and has humour in its composition. It is an excellent but somewhat licentious song. It begins,—

As I cam’ o’er Cairney-Mount,
And down among the blooming heather,
Kindly stood the milking-shiel,
To shelter frae the stormy weather.

O, my bonnie Highland lad,
My winsome, weel-fared Highland laddie!
Wha wad mind the wind and rain,
Sae weel rowed in his tartan plaidie?

Now Phœbus blinkit on the bent,
And o’er the knowes the lambs were bleating;
But he wan my heart’s consent
To be his ain at the neist meeting.

O, my bonnie Highland lad,
My winsome, weel-fared Highland laddie!
Wha wad mind the wind and rain,
Sae weel rowed in his tartan plaidie?

This air, and the common “Highland Laddie,” seem only to be different sets.

Another “Highland Laddie,” also in the “Museum,” Vol. v., is the tune of several Jacobite fragments. One of these old songs to it only exists, as far as I know, in these four lines:—

Whare ha’e ye been a’ day,
Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie?
Down the back o’ Bell’s brae,
Courtin’ Maggie, courtin’ Maggie.”

Another of this name is Dr. Arne’s beautiful air, called the new
“Highland Laddie.”

THE GENTLE SWAIN.

To sing such a beautiful air to such execrable verses is downright prostitution of common sense! The Scots verses, indeed, are tolerable.



524 *HE STOLE MY TENDER HEART AWAY.*

SCOTTISH VERSION.

Jeanny's heart was frank and free,
And wooers she had mony yet;
Her sang was aye, I fa' I see,
Commend me to my Johnnie yet.
For air and late, he has sic a gate
To mak' a body cheery, that
I wish to be, before I die,
His ain kind dearie yet.

HE STOLE MY TENDER HEART AWAY.

THIS is an Anglo-Scottish production, but by no means a *bad* one. The following is a specimen:—

“The fields were green, the hills were gay,
And birds were singing on each spray,
When Colin met me in the grove,
And told me tender tales of love.
Was ever swain so blithe as he,
So kind, so faithful, and so free?
In spite of all my friends could say,
Young Colin stole my heart away.”

FAIREST OF THE FAIR.

It is too barefaced to take Dr. Percy's charming song, and, by means of transposing a few English words into Scots, to offer to pass it for a Scots song. I was not acquainted with the editor until the first volume was nearly finished, else, had I known in time, I would have prevented such an impudent absurdity.

DR. PERCY'S SONG.

O Nancy! wilt thou go with me,
Nor sigh to leave the flaunting town?
Can silent glens have charms for thee,
The lowly cot and russet gown?
No longer drest in silken sheen,
No longer decked with jewels rare,
Say, canst thou quit each courtly scene,
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?
O Nancy! when thou'rt far away,
Wilt thou not cast a wish behind?



THE BLAITHRIE O'T.

525

Say, canst thou face the parching ray,
Nor shrink before the wintry wind?
O, can that soft and gentle mien
Extremes of hardship learn to bear;
Nor, sad, regret each courtly scene,
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

O Nancy! canst thou love so true,
Through perils keen with me to go,
Or, when thy swain mishap shall rue,
To share with him the pang of woe?
Say, should disease or pain befall,
Wilt thou assume the nurse's care,
Nor, wistful, those gay scenes recall
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

And when at last thy love shall die,
Wilt thou receive his parting breath?
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,
And cheer with smiles the bed of death?
And wilt thou o'er his breathless clay
Strew flowers, and drop the tender tear,
Nor then regret those scenes so gay
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

"This," writes Burns, "is perhaps the most beautiful ballad in the English language."

THE BLAITHRIE O'T.

THE following is a set of this song, which was the earliest song I remember to have got by heart. When a child, an old woman sang it to me, and I picked it up, every word, at first hearing:—

O Willy! weel I mind I lent you my hand
To sing you a song which you did me command;
But my memory's so bad, I had almost forgot
That you called it "The gear and the blaithrie o't."

I'll not sing about confusion, delusion, nor pride,
I'll sing about a laddie was for a virtuous bride;
For virtue is an ornament that time will never rot,
And preferable to gear and the blaithrie o't.

Though my lassie ha'e nae scarlets nor silks to put on,
We envy not the greatest that sits upon the throne;
I wad rather ha'e my lassie, though she cam' in her smock,
Than a princess wi' the gear and the blaithrie o't.

Though we ha'e nae horses nor menzie' at command,
 We will toil on our foot, and we'll work wi' our hand;
 And when wearied without rest, we'll find it sweet in any spot,
 And we'll value not the gear and the blathrie o't.

If we ha'e ony babies, we'll count them as lent;
 Ha'e we less, ha'e we mair, we will aye be content;
 For they say they ha'e mair pleasure that wins but a groat
 Than the miser wi' his gear and the blathrie o't.

I'll not meddle wi' the affairs o' the Kirk or the Queen;
 They're nae matters for a sang, let them sink, let them swim;
 On your Kirk I'll ne'er encroach, but I'll hold it still remote:
 Sae tak' this for the gear and the blathrie o't.

MAY EVE; OR, KATE OF ABERDEEN.

"KATE OF ABERDEEN" is, I believe, the work of poor Cunningham, the player; of whom the following anecdote, though told before, deserves a recital. A fat dignitary of the Church coming past Cunningham one Sunday, as the poor poet was busy plying a fishing-rod in some stream near Durham, his native county, his reverence reprimanded Cunningham very severely for such an occupation on such a day. The poor poet, with that inoffensive gentleness of manners which was his peculiar characteristic, replied, that he hoped God and his reverence would forgive his seeming profanity of that sacred day, "as he had no dinner to eat but what lay at the bottom of that pool!" This Mr. Woods, the player, who knew Cunningham well, and esteemed him much, assured me was true.

The silver moon's enamoured beam
 Steals softly through the night,
 To wanton with the winding stream,
 And kiss reflected light.
 To beds of state go, balmy Sleep,
 Where you've so seldom been,
 Whilst I May's wakeful vigils keep
 With Kate of Aberdeen!

The nymphs and swains, expectant, wait,
 In primrose chaplets gay,
 Till Morn unbars her golden gate,
 And gives the promised May.

¹ Retinue.



TWEED-SIDE.

527

The nymphs and swains shall all declare
The promised May, when seen,
Not half so fragrant, half so fair,
As Kate of Aberdeen!

I'll tune my pipe to playful notes,
And rouse yon nodding grove;
Till new-waked birds distend their throats,
And hail the maid I love.
At her approach the lark mistakes,
And quits the new-dressed green:
Fond bird! 'tis not the morning breaks,
'Tis Kate of Aberdeen!

Now blithesome o'er the dewy mead,
Where elves disportive play;
The festal dance young shepherds lead,
Or sing their love-tuned lay.
Till May, in morning robe, draws nigh,
And claims a Virgin Queen;
The nymphs and swains, exulting, cry,
Here's Kate of Aberdeen!

TWEED-SIDE.

IN Ramsay's "Tea-table Miscellany," he tells us, that about thirty of the songs in that publication were the works of some young gentlemen of his acquaintance; which songs are marked with the letters D., C., &c. Old Mr. Tytler, of Woodhouselee, the worthy and able defender of the beautiful Queen of Scots, told me that the songs marked C. in the "Tea-table" were the composition of a Mr. Crawford, of the house of Achname, who was afterwards unfortunately drowned coming from France. As Tytler was most intimately acquainted with Allan Ramsay, I think the anecdote may be depended on. Of consequence, the beautiful song of "Tweed-Side" is Mr. Crawford's, and indeed does great honour to his poetical talents. He was Robert Crawford; the Mary he celebrates was a Mary Stewart, of the Castle-Milk family,¹ afterwards married to a Mr. John Ritchie.

¹ In a copy of Cromek's "Reliques of Burns," there is the following note on this passage, in Sir Walter Scott's handwriting:—"Miss Mary Lillias Scott was the eldest daughter of John Scott, of Harden, and well known, in the fashionable world, by the nickname of *Cadie* Scott—I believe because she went to a masked ball in such a disguise. I remember her, an old lady, distinguished for elegant manners and high spirit, though struggling under the disadvantages of a narrow income, as her father's estate, being entailed on heirs male, went to another branch of



I have seen a song, calling itself the original "Tweed-Side," and said to have been composed by a Lord Yester. It consisted of two stanzas, of which I still recollect the first :—

When Maggie and I was acquaint,
I carried my noddle fu' high ;
Nae lintwhite on a' the green plain,
Nor gowdspink sae happy as me :
But I saw her sae fair, and I lo'ed ;
I wooed, but I cam' nae great speed ;
So now I maun wander abroad,
And lay my banes far frae the Tweed.¹

CRAWFORD'S SONG.

What beauties doth Flora disclose !
How sweet are her smiles upon Tweed !
Yet Mary's, still sweeter than those,
Both Nature and fancy exceed.
Nor daisy, nor sweet blushing rose,
Nor all the gay flowers of the field,
Nor Tweed gliding gently through those,
Such beauty and pleasure do yield.

The warblers are heard in the grove,
The linnet, the lark, and the thrush,
The blackbird, and sweet-cooing dove,
With music enchant every bush.
Come, let us go forth to the mead,
Let us see how the primroses spring ;
We 'll lodge in some village on Tweed,
And love while the feathered folks sing.

the Harden family, then called the High Chester family. I have heard an hundred times, from those who lived at the period, that 'Tweed-Side,' and the song called 'Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow,' were both written upon this much-admired lady, and could add much proof on the subject, did space permit."

¹ The following is the other stanza :—

To Maggie my love I did tell,—
Saut tears did my passion express ;
Alas! for I lo'ed her o'er well,
And the women lo'e sic a man less.
Her heart it was frozen and cauld,
Her pride had my ruin decreed ;
Therefore I will wander abroad,
And lay my banes far frae the Tweed.

John, Lord Yester, second Marquis of Tweeddale, died in 1713. He was a man of considerable poetic talent



THE POSIE.

529

How does my love pass the long day?
Does Mary not tend a few sheep?
Do they never carelessly stray
While happily she lies asleep?
Tweed's murmurs should lull her to rest,
Kind Nature indulging my bliss—
To ease the soft pains of my breast,
I'd steal an ambrosial kiss.

'Tis she does the virgin excel,
No beauty with her may compare;
Love's graces around her do dwell,
She's fairest, where thousands are fair
Say, charmer, where do thy flocks stray?
O! tell me at noon where they feed;
Is it on the sweet-wending Tay,
Or pleasanter banks of the Tweed?

THE POSIE.

It appears evident to me that Oswald composed his "Roslin Castle" on the modulation of this air.¹ In the second part of Oswald's, in the first three bars, he has either hit on a wonderful similarity to, or else he has entirely borrowed, the first three bars of the old air; and the close of both tunes is almost exactly the same. The old verses to which it was sung, when I took down the notes from a country girl's voice, had no great merit. The following is a specimen:—

There was a pretty May,² and a-milkin' she went;
Wi' her red rosy cheeks, and her coal black hair;
And she has met a young man a-comin' o'er the bent,
With a double and adieu to thee, fair May!

O, where are ye goin', my ain pretty May,
Wi' thy red rosy cheeks, and thy coal black hair?
Unto the yowes a-milkin', kind sir, she says,—
With a double and adieu to thee, fair May!

What if I gang along wi' thee, my ain pretty May,
Wi' thy red rosy cheeks and thy coal black hair?
Wad I be aught the warse o' that, kind sir, she says,—
With a double and adieu to thee, fair May!

¹ Oswald was not the composer of "Roslin Castle."

² Maiden.



MARY'S DREAM.

THE Mary here alluded to is generally supposed to be Miss Mary Macghee, daughter of the Laird of Airds, in Galloway. The poet was a Mr. John Lowe,¹ who likewise wrote another beautiful song, called "Pompey's Ghost." I have seen a poetic epistle from him in North America, where he now is, or lately was, to a lady in Scotland. By the strain of the verses, it appeared that they allude to some love affair.

The moon had climbed the highest hill
Which rises o'er the source of Dee,
And from her eastern summit shed
Her silver light on tower and tree;
When Mary laid her down to sleep,
Her thoughts on Sandy far at sea;
When, soft and low, a voice was heard,
Saying, "Mary, weep no more for me!"

She from her pillow gently raised
Her head, to ask who there might be;
She saw young Sandy shivering stand,
With visage pale and hollow e'e:
"O Mary dear! cold is my clay,—
It lies beneath a stormy sea;
Far, far from thee, I sleep in death,—
So, Mary, weep no more for me!

"Three stormy nights and stormy days
We tossed upon the raging main,
And long we strove our bark to save,
But all our striving was in vain.
Even then, when horror chilled my blood,
My heart was filled with love for thee:
The storm is past, and I at rest,
So, Mary, weep no more for me!

"O maiden dear, thyself prepare,
We soon shall meet upon that shore
Where love is free from doubt and care,
And thou and I shall part no more."
Loud crowed the cock, the shadow fled,
No more of Sandy could she see;
But soft the passing spirit said,
"Sweet Mary, weep no more for me!"

¹He was tutor in her father's family. Her betrothed being lost at sea, Lowe composed this beautiful ballad in memory of her grief.



THE MAID THAT TENDS THE GOATS.

BY MR. DUDGEON.

THIS Dudgeon is a respectable farmer's son in Berwickshire.

Up amang yon clifly rocks
Sweetly rings the rising echo,
To the maid that tends the goats,
Lilting¹ o'er her native notes.
Hark! she sings, Young Sandie's kind,
And he's promised aye to lo'e me,
Here 's a brooch I ne'er shall tine²
Till he's fairly married to me.
Drive away, ye drone, Time,
And bring about our bridal day.

Sandy herds a flock o' sheep;
Aften does he blaw the whistle,
In a strain sae vastly sweet,
Lam'ies listening dare na bleat;
He's as fleet 's the mountain roe,
Hardy as the Highland heather,
Wading through the winter snow,
Keeping aye his flock together.
But, wi' plaid and bare houghs,³
He braves the bleakest northern blast.

Brawly he can dance and sing,
Canty glee or Highland cronach:
Nane can ever match his fling,
At a reel, or round a ring;
Wightly⁵ can he wield a rung,⁶—
In a brawl he's aye the baughter;⁷
A' his praise can ne'er be sung
By the langest-winded sangster!
Sangs that sing o' Sandy
Seem short, though they were e'er sae lang.

I WISH MY LOVE WERE IN A MIRE.

I NEVER heard more of the words of this old song than the title.

¹ Singing.⁵ Stoutly.² Lose.⁶ Cudgel.³ Legs.⁷ Winner.⁴ Lament.

ALLAN WATER.¹

THIS Allan Water, which the composer of the music has honoured with the name of the air, I have been told is Allan Water in Strathallan.

What numbers shall the Muse repeat,—
What verse be found to praise my Annie!
On her ten thousand graces wait,
Each swain admires and owns she's bonnie.
Since first she strode the happy plain,
She set each youthful heart on fire;
Each nymph does to her swain complain,
That Annie kindles new desire.

This lovely, darling, dearest care,
This new delight, this charming Annie,
Like summer's dawn she's fresh and fair,
When Flora's fragrant breezes fan ye.
All day the am'rous youths convene,
Joyous they sport and play before her;
All night, when she no more is seen,
In joyful dreams they still adore her.

Among the crowd Amyntor came,
He looked, he loved, he bowed to Annie;
His rising sighs express his flame,
His words were few, his wishes many.
With smiles the lovely maid replied,
"Kind shepherd, why should I deceive ye?
Alas! your love must be denied,
This destined breast can ne'er relieve ye."

Young Damon came, with Cupid's art,
His wiles, his smiles, his charms beguiling;
He stole away my virgin heart:
Cease, poor Amyntor! cease bewailing.
Some brighter beauty you may find;
On yonder plain the nymphs are many;
Then choose some heart that's unconfined,
And leave to Damon his own Annie.

¹ By Robert Crawford, of Auchnames.

THERE'S NAE LUCK ABOUT THE HOUSE.¹

THIS is one of the most beautiful songs in the Scots or any other language. The two lines,—

And will I see his face again!
And will I hear him speak!

as well as the two preceding ones, are unequalled almost by anything I ever heard or read; and the lines,—

The present moment is our ain,
The niest we never saw—

are worthy of the first poet. It is long posterior to Ramsay's days. About the year 1771, or '72, it came first on the streets as a ballad; and I suppose the composition of the song was not much anterior to that period.

There's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house,
When our guidman's awa'.

And are you sure the news is true?
And do you say he's weel?
Is this a time to speak of wark?
Ye jades, lay by your wheel!
Is this a time to spin a thread,
When Colin's at the door?^p
Reach me my cloak—I'll to the quay,
And see him come ashore.

And gi'e to me my bigonet,
My bishop's satin gown,
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
That Colin's in the town.
My turken slippers maun gae on,
My stockings pearly blue;
'Tis a' to pleasure my guidman,
For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass! and mak' a clean fireside,
Put on the muckle pot;
Gi'e little Kate her button gown,
And Jock his Sunday coat;
And mak' their shoon as black as slacs,
Their hose as white as snaw;
'Tis a' to pleasure my guidman,
For he's been lang awa'.

There's twa fat hens upo' the coop,
Been fed this month and mair;

¹ Written by William Julius Mickle, of Langholm.



TARRY WOO'.

Mak' haste and thraw their necks about,
That Colin weel may fare;
And mak' the table neat and trim;
Let every thing be braw;
For who kens how my Colin fared
When he was far awa'?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,¹
His breath like caller air,—
His very foot hath music in 't
As he comes up the stair.
And shall I see his face again!
And shall I hear him speak!
I'm downright giddy wi' the thought,—
In truth I'm like to greet.

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
I ha'e nae mair to crave;
And gin I live to mak' him sae,
I'm blest aboon the lave.
And shall I see his face again, &c.

TARRY WOO'.

THIS is a very pretty song; but I fancy that the first half-stanza, as well as the tune itself, are much older than the rest of the words.

O, Tarry woo' is ill to spin;
Card it weel ere ye begin;
Card it weel and draw it sma',
Tarry woo's the best of a'.

GRAMACHREE.

THE song of "Gramachree" was composed by Mr. Poe, a counsellor-at-law in Dublin. This anecdote I had from a gentleman who knew the lady, the "Molly," who is the subject of the song, and to whom Mr. Poe sent the first manuscript of his most beautiful verses. I do not remember any single line that has more true pathos than—

How can she break the honest heart
That wears her in its core!

But as the song is Irish, it has nothing to do with this collection.²

¹ This verse was written by Dr. Beattie.

² We give the words of this song.



GRAMACHREE.

535

As down on Banna's banks I strayed,
One evening in May,
The little birds, in blithest notes,
Made vocal every spray:
They sang their little notes of love;
They sang them o'er and o'er,—
Ah! gramachree, mo challie nouge,
Mo Molly astore!

The daisy pied, and all the sweets
The dawn of nature yields;
The primrose pale, the violet blue,
Lay scattered o'er the fields.
Such fragrance in the bosom lies
Of her whom I adore,—
Ah! gramachree, mo challie nouge,
Mo Molly astore!

I laid me down upon a bank,
Bewailing my sad fate,
That doomed me thus the slave of love,
And cruel Molly's hate.
How can she break the honest heart
That wears her in its core!
Ah! gramachree, mo challie nouge,
Mo Molly astore!

You said you loved me, Molly dear;
Ah, why did I believe!
Yes, who could think such tender words
Were meant but to deceive?
That love was all I asked on earth,
Nay, Heaven could give no more;
Ah! gramachree, mo challie nouge,
Mo Molly astore!

O! had I all the flocks that graze
On yonder yellow hill;
Or lowed for me the numerous herds
That yon green pastures fill:
With her I love I'd gladly share
My kine and fleecy store,
Ah! gramachree, mo challie nouge,
Mo Molly astore!

Two turtle-doves above my head
Sat courting on a bough;
I envied them their happiness,
To see them bill and coo.



Such fondness once for me she showed,
But now, alas! tis o'er;
Ah! gramachree, mo challie nouge,
Mo Molly astore!

Then fare thee well, my Molly dear!
Thy loss I still shall moan;
Whilst life remains in Strephon's heart,
'Twill beat for thee alone.
Though thou art false, may Heaven on thee
Its choicest blessings pour!
Ah! gramachree, mo challie nouge,
Mo Molly astore!



THE COLLIER'S BONNIE LASSIE.

THE first half-stanza is much older than the days of Ramsay.
The old words began thus:—

The collier has a dochter, and O! she's wonder bonnie;
A laird he was that sought her, rich baith in lands and
money.

She wad nae ha'e a laird, nor wad she be a lady;
But she wad ha'e a collier, the colour o' her daddie.

The verses in Johnson's "Museum" are pretty: Allan Ramsay's songs are always true to nature.

The collier has a daughter,
And O, she's wonder bonnie!
A laird he was that sought her,
Rich baith in land and money.
The tutors watched the motion
Of this young honest lover;
But love is like the ocean—
Wha can its deeps discover?

He had the heart to please ye
And was by a' respected;
His airs sat round him easy,
Genteel, but unaffected.
The collier's bonnie lassie,
Fair as the new-blown lily,
Aye sweet and never saucy,
Secured the heart of Willie.



MY AIN KIND DEARIE, O.

537

He loved, beyond expression,
The charms that were about her,
And panted for possession—
His life was dull without her.
After mature resolving,
Close to his breast he held her,
In safest flames dissolving,
He tenderly thus telled her:—

“My bonnie collier’s daughter,
Let naething discompose ye;
’Tis no your scanty tocher
Shall ever gar me lose ye.
For I have gear in plenty,
And love says ’tis my duty,
To ware what Heaven has lent me
Upon your wit and beauty.”



MY AIN KIND DEARIE, O.

THE old words of this song are omitted here, though much more beautiful than these inserted, which were mostly composed by poor Fergusson, in one of his merry humours. They began thus:—

I’ll rowe thee o’er the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O,
I’ll rowe thee o’er the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O,
Although the night were ne’er sae wat,
And I were ne’er sae weary, O,
I’ll rowe thee o’er the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O.

Fergusson’s song:—

Nae herds wi’ kent, and collie there,
Shall ever come to fear ye, O,
But laverocks whistling in the air,
Shall woo, like me, their dearie, O!

While others herd their lambs and ewes,
And toil for world’s gear, my jo,
Upon the lea my pleasure grows
Wi’ you, my kind dearie, O!



538 *MARY SCOTT, THE FLOWER OF YARROW.*

Will ye gang o'er the lea-rig?
My ain kind dearie, O!
And cuddle there sae kindly wi' me?
My kind dearie, O!

At thorny dyke, and birkin tree,
We'll daff, and ne'er be weary, O!
They'll sing ill e'en frae you and me,
Mine ain kind dearie, O!

MARY SCOTT, THE FLOWER OF YARROW.

MR. ROBERTSON, in his "Statistical Account of the Parish of Selkirk," says, that Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow, was descended from the Dryhope and married into the Harden family. Her daughter was married to a predecessor of the present Sir Francis Elliot, of Stobbs, and of the late Lord Heathfield.

There is a circumstance in their contract of marriage that merits attention, and it strongly marks the predatory spirit of the times. The father-in-law agrees to keep his daughter for some time after the marriage, for which the son-in-law binds himself to give him the profits of the first Michaelmas moon.

Allan Ramsay's version is as follows:—

Happy's the love which meets return,
When in soft flame souls equal burn;
But words are wanting to discover
The torments of a hapless lover.
Ye registers of Heaven, relate,
If looking o'er the rolls of Fate,
Did you there see me marked to marrow
Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow?

Ah, no! her form's too heavenly fair,—
Her love the gods alone must share;
While mortals with despair explore her,
And at a distance due adore her.
O lovely maid! my doubts beguile,
Revive and bless me with a smile:
Alas! if not, you'll soon debar a'
Sighing swain on the banks of Yarrow.

Be hush, ye fears! I'll not despair,—
My Mary's tender as she's fair;
Then I'll go tell her all mine anguish;
She is too good to let me languish.



DOWN THE BURN, DAVIE.

339

With success crowned, I'll not envy
The folks who dwell above the sky;
When Mary Scott's become my marrow,
We'll make a paradise of Yarrow.



DOWN THE BURN, DAVIE.

I HAVE been informed that the tune of "Down the Burn, Davie," was the composition of David Maigh, keeper of the blood slough hounds belonging to the Laird of Riddel, in Tweeddale.



BLINK OVER THE BURN, SWEET BETTIE.

THE old words, all that I remember, are,—

Blink over the burn, sweet Betty,
It is a cauld winter night;
It rains, it hails, it thunders,
The moon she gi'es na light.
It's a' for the sake o' sweet Betty
That ever I tint my way;
Sweet, let me lie beyond thee
Until it be break o' day.

O, Betty will bake my bread,
And Betty will brew my ale,
And Betty will be my love,
When I come over the dale.
Blink over the burn, sweet Betty,
Blink over the burn to me,
And while I ha'e life, dear lassie,
My ain sweet Betty thou's be.



THE BLITHESOME BRIDAL.

I FIND "The Blithesome Bridal" in James Watson's collection of Scots poems, printed at Edinburgh in 1706. This collection, the publisher says, is the first of its nature which has been published in our own native Scots dialect. It is now extremely scarce.

*THE BLITHESOME BRIDAL.*

Come, fye, let us a' to the wedding,
For there will be liting there,
For Jock will be married to Maggie,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.
And there will be lang kail and castocks,
And bannocks o' barley-meal;
And there will be guid saut herring,
To relish a cog o' guid ale.

And there will be Sandy the sutor,
And Will wi' the meikle mou,
And there will be Tam the blutter,
With Andrew the tinkler, I trow;
And there will be bow-legged Robie,
With thumbless Katie's gudeman,
And there will be blue-cheeked Dobbie,
And Laurie, the laird of the lan'.

And there will be sow-libber Patie,
And plookie-faced Wat i' the mill;
Capper-nosed Francis and Gibbie,
That wons i' the howe o' the hill;
And there will be Alister Sibbie,
Wha in wi' black Bessie did mool,
With snivelling Lillie and Tibbie,
The lass that stands aft on the stool.

And there will be fadges and brochan,
Wi' rowth o' guid gabbocks o' skate;
Powsowdie and drammock and crowdie,
And caller nout feet on a plate;
And there will be partans and buckies,
And whittings and speldings anew;
With singèd sheep-heads and a haggis,
And scadlips to sup till ye spue.

And there will be lappered milk kebbuck,
And sowens, and carles, and laps;
With swats and well-scrapèd paunches,
And brandy in stoups and in caps;
And there will be meal-kail and porrage,
Wi' skirk to sup till ye reve,
And roasts to roast on a brander,
Of flewks that were taken alive.

Scrap't haddock, wilks, dulse, and tangle,
And a mill o' guid snishing to prie:
When weary wi' eating and drinking,
We'll rise up and dance till we die.



JOHN HAY'S BONNIE LASSIE.

541

Then, fye, let's a' to the bridal,
For there will be liting there,
For Jock'll be married to Maggie,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

Lord Napier, in a letter to Mark Napier, dated Thirlestane, December 15, 1831, says of this song,—“Sir William Scott was the author of that well-known Scots song, ‘Fye, let us a’ to the Bridal’—a better thing than Horace ever wrote. My authority was my father.”

JOHN HAY'S BONNIE LASSIE.

JOHN HAY's “Bonnie Lassie” was daughter of John Hay, Earl or Marquis of Tweeddale, and the late Countess Dowager of Roxburgh. She died at Broomlands, near Kelso, some time between the years 1720 and 1740.

She's fresh as the spring, and sweet as Aurora,
When birds mount and sing, bidding day a good-morrow;
The sward o' the mead, enamelled wi' daisies,
Looks withered and dead when twinned of her graces.
But if she appear where verdures invite her,
The fountains run clear, and flowers smell the sweeter;
'Tis heaven to be by when her wit is a-flowing,
Her smiles and bright een set my spirits a-glowing.

THE BONNIE BRUCKET LASSIE.

THE first two lines of this song are all of it that is old. The rest of the song, as well as those songs in the “Museum” marked T., are the works of an obscure, tippling, but extraordinary body of the name of Tytler, commonly known by the name of Balloon Tytler, from his having projected a balloon—a mortal who, though he drudges about Edinburgh as a common printer, with leaky shoes, a sky-lighted hat, and knee-buckles as unlike as George-by-the-grace-of-God and Solomon-the-son-of-David; yet that same unknown drunken mortal is author and compiler of three-fourths of Elliot's pompous “Encyclopædia Britannica,” which he composed at half-a-guinea a week.

The bonnie brucket lassie,
She's blue beneath the een;
She was the fairest lassie
That dancèd on the green.



542 *SAE MERRY AS WE TWA HA'E BEEN.*

A lad he lo'ed her dearly,—
She did his love return;
But he his vows has broken,
And left her for to mourn.

“My shape,” says she, “was handsome,
My face was fair and clean;
But now I'm bonnie brucket,
And blue beneath the een.
My eyes were bright and sparkling
Before that they turned blue;
But now they're dull with weeping,
And a', my love, for you.

“O! could I live in darkness,
Or hide me in the sea,
Since my love is unfaithful,
And has forsaken me.
No other love I suffered
Within my breast to dwell;
In nought have I offended,
But loving him too well.”

Her lover heard her mourning,
As by he chanced to pass;
And pressed unto his bosom
The lovely brucket lass.

“My dear,” said he, “cease grieving,
Since that your love is true,—
My bonnie brucket lassie,
I'll faithful prove to you.”



SAE MERRY AS WE TWA HA'E BEEN.

This song is beautiful. The chorus in particular is truly pathetic. I never could learn anything of its author.

CHORUS.

Sae merry as we twa ha'e been,
Sae merry as we twa ha'e been;
My heart it is like for to break,
When I think on the days we ha'e seen.

A lass that was laden wi' care
Sat heavily under a thorn;
I listened awhile for to hear,
When thus she began for to mourn:



THE BANKS OF FORTH.

543

“Whene’er my dear shepherd was there,
The birds did melodiously sing,
And cold nipping winter did wear
A face that resembled the spring.
“Our flocks feeding close by his side,
He gently pressing my hand,
I viewed the wide world in its pride,
And laughed at the pomp of command.
‘My dear,’ he would oft to me say,
‘What makes you hard-hearted to me?
O! why do you thus turn away
From him who is dying for thee?’
“But now he is far from my sight,—
Perhaps a deceiver may prove,
Which makes me lament day and night,
That ever I granted my love.
At eve, when the rest of the folk
Were merrily seated to spin,
I sat myself under an oak
And heavily sighèd for him.”

THE BANKS OF FORTH.

THIS air is Oswald’s.

[“Here’s anither—it’s no a Scots tune, but it passes for ane. Oswald made it himsel’, I reckon. He has cheated mony a ane, but he canna cheat Wandering Willie.”—SIR WALTER SCOTT.]

Ye sylvan powers that rule the plain,
Where sweetly winding Fortha glides,
Conduct me to those banks again,
Since there my charming Mary bides.
Those banks that breathe their vernal sweets
Where every smiling beauty meets,
Where Mary’s charms adorn the plain,
And cheer the heart of every swain.
Oft in the thick embowering groves,
Where birds their music chirp aloud,
Alternately we sung our loves,
And Fortha’s fair meanders viewed.
The meadows wore a general smile;
Love was our banquet all the while;
The lovely prospect charmed the eye,
To where the ocean met the sky.



Once, on the grassy bank reclined,
Where Forth ran by in murmurs deep,
It was my happy chance to find
The charming Mary lulled asleep;
My heart then leaped with inward bliss,
I softly stooped, and stole a kiss;
She waked, she blushed, and gently blamed,
“Why, Damon! are you not ashamed?”
Ye sylvan powers, ye rural gods,
To whom we swains our cares impart,
Restore me to those blest abodes,
And ease, oh, ease my love-sick heart!
Those happy days again restore,
When Mary and I shall part no more;
When she shall fill these longing arms,
And crown my bliss with all her charms.

THE BUSH ABOON TRAQUAIR.

THIS is another beautiful song of Mr. Crawford's composition. In the neighbourhood of Traquair, tradition still shows the old “Bush;” which, when I saw it in the year 1787, was composed of eight or nine ragged birches. The Earl of Traquair has planted a clump of trees near by, which he calls “The New Bush.”

Hear me, ye nymphs, and every swain!
I'll tell how Peggy grieves me;
Though thus I languish and complain,
Alas! she ne'er believes me.
My vows and sighs, like silent air,
Unheeded, never move her,
The bonny bush aboon Traquair,
Was where I first did love her.
That day she smiled and made me glad,
No maid seemed ever kinder;
I thought mysel' the luckiest lad,
So sweetly there to find her.
I tried to soothe my am'rous flame
In words that I thought tender;
If more there passed, I'm not to blame,
I meant not to offend her.
Yet now she scornful flees the plains,
The fields we then frequented;
If e'er we meet she shows disdain,
She looks as ne'er acquainted.



CROMLECK'S LILT.

545

The bonnie bush bloomed fair in May,—
Its sweets I'll aye remember;
But now her frowns make it decay;
It fades as in December.

Ye rural powers, who hear my strains,
Why thus should Peggy grieve me?
O! make her partner in my pains;
Then let her smiles relieve me.
If not, my love will turn despair,
My passion no more tender;
I'll leave the bush aboon Traquair,
To lonely wilds I'll wander.

CROMLECK'S LILT.

THE following interesting account of this plaintive dirge was communicated to Mr. Riddel by Alexander Fraser Tytler, Esq., of Woodhouselee:—

“In the latter end of the sixteenth century, the Chisholms were proprietors of the estate of Cromlecks (now possessed by the Drummonds). The eldest son of that family was very much attached to the daughter of Stirling of Ardoch, commonly known by the name of Fair Helen of Ardoch.

“At that time the opportunities of meeting between the sexes were more rare, consequently more sought after, than now; and the Scottish ladies, far from priding themselves on extensive literature, were thought sufficiently book-learned if they could make out the Scriptures in their mother-tongue. Writing was entirely out of the line of female education. At that period the most of our young men of family sought a fortune, or found a grave, in France. Cromleck, when he went abroad to the war, was obliged to leave the management of his correspondence with his mistress to a lay brother of the monastery of Dumblain, in the immediate neighbourhood of Cromleck, and near Ardoch. This man, unfortunately, was deeply sensible of Helen's charms. He artfully prepossessed her with stories to the disadvantage of Cromleck; and, by misinterpreting or keeping back the letters and messages intrusted to his care, he entirely irritated both. All connection was broken off betwixt them: Helen was inconsolable; and Cromleck has left behind him, in the ballad called ‘Cromleck's Lilt,’ a proof of the elegance of his genius, as well as the steadiness of his love.

“When the artful monk thought time had sufficiently softened Helen's sorrow, he proposed himself as a lover. Helen was obdurate; but at last, overcome by the persuasions of her brother, with whom she lived—and who, having a family of



thirty-one children, was probably very well pleased to get her off his hands—she submitted rather than consented to the ceremony: but there her compliance ended; and, when forcibly put into bed, she started quite frantic from it, screaming out, that after three gentle raps on the wainscot, at the bed-head, she heard Cromleck's voice, crying, 'O Helen, Helen, mind me!' Cromleck soon after coming home, the treachery of the confidant was discovered, her marriage annulled, and Helen became Lady Cromleck."

N.B.—Margaret Murray, mother of these thirty-one children, was daughter of Murray of Strewn, one of the seventeen sons of Tullybardine, and whose youngest son, commonly called the Tutor of Ardoch, died in the year 1715, aged 111 years.

CROMLECK'S LILT.

Since all thy vows, false maid,
Are blown to air,
And my poor heart betrayed
To sad despair,
Into some wilderness,
My grief I will express,
And thy hard-heartedness,
O cruel fair!
Have I not graven our loves
On ev'ry tree
In yonder spreading groves,
Though false thou be?
Was not a solemn oath
Plighted betwixt us both—
Thou thy faith, I my troth,—
Constant to be?
Some gloomy place I'll find,
Some doleful shade,
Where neither sun nor wind
E'er entrance had:
Into that hollow cave,
There will I sigh and rave,
Because thou dost behave
So faithlessly.
Wild fruit shall be my meat,
I'll drink the spring,
Cold earth shall be my seat;
For covering
I'll have the starry sky
My head to canopy,
Until my soul on high
Shall spread its wing.



MY DEARIE, IF THOU DIE.

547

I'll have no funeral fire,
Nor tears for me;
No grave do I desire
Nor obsequie.
The courteous redbreast he
With leaves will cover me,
And sing my elegy,
With doleful voice.

And when a ghost I am
I'll visit thee,
O thou deceitful dame!
Whose cruelty
Has killed the fondest heart
That e'er felt Cupid's dart,
And never can desert
From loving thee.

MY DEARIE, IF THOU DIE.

ANOTHER beautiful song of Crawford's.

Love never more shall give me pain,
My fancy's fixed on thee;
Nor ever maid my heart shall gain,
My Peggy, if thou die.
Thy beauty doth such pleasure give,
Thy love's so true to me,
Without thee I can never live,
My dearie, if thou die.

If fate shall tear thee from my breast,
How shall I lonely stray!
In dreary dreams the night I'll waste,
In sighs the silent day.
I ne'er can so much virtue find,
Nor such perfection see;
Then I'll renounce all womankind,
My Peggy, after thee.

No new-blown beauty fires my heart
With Cupid's raving rage;
But thine, which can such sweets impart,
Must all the world engage.
'T was this that, like the morning sun,
Gave joy and life to me;
And when its destined day is done,
With Peggy let me die.



Ye powers, that smile on virtuous love,
And in such pleasure share;
You, who its faithful flames approve,
With pity view the fair:
Restore my Peggy's wonted charms,
Those charms so dear to me!
O, never rob them from these arms!
I'm lost if Peggy die.

SHE ROSE AND LET ME IN.¹

THE old set of this song, which is still to be found in printed collections, is much prettier than this; but somebody—I believe it was Ramsay—took it into his head to clear it of some seeming indelicacies, and made it at once more chaste and more dull.

The version in the "Museum" is as follows:—

The night her silent sables wore,
And gloomy were the skies,
Of glittering stars appeared no more
Than those in Nelly's eyes,
When to her father's door I came,
Where I had often been,—
I begged my fair, my lovely dame,
To rise and let me in.

But she, with accents all divine,
Did my fond suit reprove,
And while she chid my rash design,
She but inflamed my love.
Her beauty oft had pleased before,
While her bright eyes did roll:
But virtue only had the power
To charm my very soul.

These, who would cruelly deceive,
Or from such beauty part?
I loved her so, I could not leave
The charmer of my heart.
My eager fondness I obeyed,
Resolved she should be mine,
Till Hymen to my arms conveyed
My treasure so divine.

¹ Francis Semple, of Belltrees, was the writer of this song.



WILL YE GO TO THE EWE-BUGHTS, MARION? 549

Now happy in my Nelly's love,
Transporting is my joy,
No greater blessing can I prove,
So blest a man am I.
For beauty may a while retain
The conquered flatt'ring mart,
But virtue only is the chain
Holds, never to depart.

WILL YE GO TO THE EWE-BUGHTS,¹ MARION?

I AM not sure if this old and charming air be of the south, as is commonly said, or of the north of Scotland. There is a song apparently as ancient as "Ewe-bughts, Marion," which sings to the same tune, and is evidently of the north: it begins thus:—

The Lord o' Gordon had three dochters,
Mary, Marget, and Jean,
They wad na stay at bonnie Castle-Gordon,
But awa' to Aberdeen.

The first two verses run thus:—

Will ye go to the ewe-bughts, Marion,
And wear in the sheep wi' me?
The sun shines sweet, my Marion,
But nae half sae sweet as thee.

O, Marion's a bonnie lass,
And the blithe blinks in her e'e;
And fain wad I marry Marion,
Gin Marion wad marry me.

LEWIS GORDON.

THIS air is a proof how one of our Scots tunes comes to be composed out of another. I have one of the earliest copies of the song, and it has prefixed,—

"Tune of Tarry Woo',"

of which tune a different set has insensibly varied into a different air. To a Scots critic, the pathos of the line—

"Though his back be at the wa',"

must be very striking. It needs not a Jacobite prejudice to be affected with this song.

¹ Sheepfolds.



The supposed author of "Lewis Gordon" was a Mr. Geddes, priest, at Shenval, in the Ainzie.

O! send Lewie Gordon hame,
And the lad I maunna name;
Though his back be at the wa',
Here 's to him that's far awa'!
O-hon! my Highland man!
O, my bonnie Highland man;
Weel would I my true-love ken
Amang ten thousand Highland men.

O! to see his tartan trews,
Bonnet blue, and laigh-heeled shoes;
Philabeg aboon his knee;
That 's the lad that I'll gang wi'!
O-hon! &c.

The princely youth that I do mean,
Is fitted for to be a king;
On his breast he wears a star;
You 'd take him for the god of war.
O-hon! &c.

O! to see this princely one
Seated on a royal throne!
Disasters a' would disappear,—
Then begins the Jub'lee year!
O-hon! &c.

Lord Lewis Gordon, younger brother to the Duke of Gordon, commanded a detachment for Prince Charles Edward, in the affair of 1745-6, with great gallantry and judgment. He died in 1754.

THE WAUKING O' THE FAULD.

THERE are two stanzas still sung to this tune, which I take to be the original song whence Ramsay composed his beautiful song of that name in the "Gentle Shepherd." It begins,—

"O, will ye speak of our town,
As ye come frae the fauld," &c.

I regret that, as in many of our old songs, the delicacy of this old fragment is not equal to its wit and humour.

ALLAN RAMSAY'S VERSION.

My Peggie is a young thing,
Just entered in her teens;
Fair as the day, and sweet as May,
Fair as the day, and always gay.



OH ONO CHRIO!

551

My Peggie is a young thing,
And I'm not very auld;
Yet well I like to meet her at
The waiking o' the fauld.

My Peggie speaks sae sweetly,
Whene'er we meet alane;
I wish nae mair to lay my care,
I wish nae mair of a' that's rare.
My Peggie speaks sae sweetly,
To a' the lave I'm cauld;
But she gars a' my spirits glow,
At waiking o' the fauld.

My Peggie smiles sae kindly,
Whene'er I whisper love,
That I look down on a' the town,
That I look down upon a crown.
My Peggie smiles sae kindly,
It makes me blithe and bauld;
And naething gi'es me sic delight
As waiking o' the fauld.

My Peggie sings sae saftly,
When on my pipe I play;
By a' the rest it is confessed,
By a' the rest, that she sings best:
My Peggie sings sae saftly,
And in her songs are tauld,
With innocence, the wale o' sense,
At waiking o' the fauld.

OH ONO CHRIO!'¹

DR. BLACKLOCK informed me that this song was composed on the infamous massacre of Glencoe.²

O! was not I a weary wight!
Maid, wife, and widow in one night!
When in my soft and yielding arms,
O! when most I thought him free from harms;
Even at the dead time of the night,
They broke my bower, and slew my knight.

¹ A mis-pronunciation of "Ochoin och rie!" a Gaelic exclamation expressive of deep sorrow and affliction, similar to that of "Oh! my heart!"

² This atrocious butchery happened in 1691, in the reign of, and by order, it is believed, of Dutch William, or, at least, with his knowledge.

*I'LL NEVER LEAVE THEE.*

With ae lock of his jet-black hair
I'll tie my heart for evermair;
Nae sly-tongued youth, nor flattering swain,
Shall e'er untie this knot again:
Thine still, dear youth, that heart shall be,
Nor pant for aught save heaven and thee!

I'LL NEVER LEAVE THEE.

THIS is another of Crawford's songs, but I do not think in his happiest manner. What an absurdity to join such names as Adonis and Mary together!

One day I heard Mary say,
How shall I leave thee?
Stay, dearest Adonis, stay,
Why wilt thou grieve me?

CORN-RIGS ARE BONNIE.

ALL the old words that ever I could meet to this air were the following, which seem to have been an old chorus:—

O, corn-rigs and rye-rigs,
O, corn-rigs are bonnie;
And where'er you meet a bonnie lass,
Preen up her cockernony.

THE MUCKING O' GEORDIE'S BYRE.

THE chorus of this song is old; the rest is the work of Balloon Tytler.

BIDE YE YET.

THERE is a beautiful song to this tune, beginning—
"Alas, my son, you little know,"
which is the composition of Miss Jenny Graham, of Dumfries.



Alas! my son, you little know
The sorrows that from wedlock flow;
Farewell to every day of ease,
When you have got a wife to please.

Sae bide ye yet, and bide ye yet,
Ye little ken what 's to betide ye yet;
The half of that will gane ye yet,
Gif a wayward wife obtain ye yet.

Your hopes are high, your wisdom small,
Woe has not had you in its thrall;
The black cow on your foot ne'er trod,
Which gars you sing along the road.

Sae bide ye yet, &c.

Sometimes the rock, sometimes the reel,
Or some piece of the spinning-wheel,
She'll drive at you, my bonnie chiel,
And send you headlang to the de'il.

Sae bide ye yet, &c.

When I, like you, was young and free,
I valued not the proudest she;
Like you, my boast was bold and vain,
That men alone were born to reign.

Sae bide ye yet, &c.

Great Hercules, and Samson, too,
Were stronger far than I or you;
Yet they were baffled by their dears,
And felt the distaff and the shears.

Sae bide ye yet, &c.

Stout gates of brass and well-built walls
Are proof 'gainst swords and cannon-balls;
But naught is found, by sea or land,
That can a wayward wife withstand.

Sae bide ye yet, &c.

Here the remarks on the first volume of the "Musical Museum" conclude: the second volume has the following preface from the pen of Burns:—

"In the first volume of this work, two or three airs, not of Scots composition, have been inadvertently inserted; which, whatever excellence they may have, was improper, as the collection is solely to be the music of our own country. The songs contained in this volume, both music and poetry, are all of them



the work of Scotsmen. Wherever the old words could be recovered, they have been preferred; both as suiting better the genius of the tunes, and to preserve the productions of those earlier sons of the Scottish Muses, some of whose names deserved a better fate than has befallen them,—‘buried’ midst the wreck of things which were.’ Of our more modern songs, the Editor has inserted the authors’ names as far as he can ascertain them; and, as that was neglected in the first volume, it is annexed here. If he have made any mistakes in this affair, which he possibly may, he will be very grateful at being set right.

“Ignorance and prejudice may perhaps affect to sneer at the simplicity of the poetry or music of some of these poems; but their having been for ages the favourites of Nature’s judges—the common people—was to the Editor a sufficient test of their merit.—Edinburgh, March 1, 1788.”



TRANENT-MUIR.

“TRANENT-MUIR” was composed by a Mr. Skirving, a very worthy, respectable farmer near Haddington.¹ I have heard the anecdote often, that Lieut. Smith, whom he mentions in the ninth stanza, came to Haddington after the publication of the song, and sent a challenge to Skirving to meet him at Haddington, and answer for the unworthy manner in which he had noticed him in his song. “Gang awa’ back,” said the honest farmer, “and tell Mr. Smith that I ha’e nae leisure to come to Haddington; but tell him to come here, and I’ll tak’ a look o’ him, and if he think I’m fit to fecht him, I’ll fecht him; and if no, I’ll do as he did—I’ll rin awa’.”

Stanza ninth, as well as tenth, to which the anecdote refers, shows that the anger of the Lieutenant was anything but unreasonable.

And Major Bowle, that worthy soul,
Was brought down to the ground, man;
His horse being shot, it was his lot
For to get mony a wound, man:
Lieutenant Smith, of Irish birth,
Frae whom he called for aid, man,
Being full of dread, lap o’er his head,
And wadna be gainsaid, man!

¹ Mr. Skirving was tenant of East Garleton, about a mile and a half to the north of Haddington.



POLWART, ON THE GREEN.

555

He made sic haste, sae spurred his baist,
'T was little there he saw, man ;
To Berwick rade, and falsely said,
The Scots were rebels a', man :
But let that end, for well 'tis kenned,
His use and wont to lie, man ;
The teague is naught,—he never faught,
When he had room to flee, man.

POLWART, ON THE GREEN.¹

THE author of "Polwart, on the Green," is Captain John Drummond M'Gregor, of the family of Bochalddie.

At Polwart, on the Green,
If you 'll meet me the morn,
Where lasses do convene
To dance about the thorn,
A kindly welcome ye shall meet
Frae her wha likes to view
A lover and a lad complete—
The lad and lover you.

Let dorty dames say na,
As lang as e'er they please,
Seem caulder than the snaw,
While inwardly they bleeze.
But I will frankly shaw my mind,
And yield my heart to thee ;
Be ever to the captive kind
That langs na to be free.

At Polwart, on the Green,
Amang the new-mown hay,
With sangs and dancing keen,
We 'll pass the heartsome day.
At night, if beds be o'er thrang laid,
And thou be twined of thine,
Thou shalt be welcome, my dear lad,
To take a part of mine.

STREPHON AND LYDIA.

THE following account of this song I had from Dr. Blacklock :—
The "Strephon and Lydia" mentioned in the song were perhaps

¹ Chalmers says "Polwart, on the Green," was written by Allan Ram :
say.



the loveliest couple of their time. The gentleman was commonly known by the name of Beau Gibson. The lady was the "Gentle Jean," celebrated somewhere in Hamilton of Bangour's poems. Having frequently met at public places, they had formed a reciprocal attachment, which their friends thought dangerous, as their resources were by no means adequate to their tastes and habits of life. To elude the bad consequences of such a connection, Strephon was sent abroad with a commission, and perished in Admiral Vernon's expedition to Carthage.

The author of the song was William Wallace, Esq., of Cairn-hill, in Ayrshire.

All lonely on the sultry beach,
Expiring Strephon lay,
No hand the cordial draught to reach,
Nor cheer the gloomy way.
Ill-fated youth! no parent nigh,
To catch thy fleeting breath,
No bride to fix thy swimming eye,
Or smooth the face of death!

Far distant from the mournful scene,
Thy parents sit at ease,
Thy Lydia rifles all the plain,
And all the spring, to please.
Ill-fated youth! by fault of friend,
Not force of foe depressed,
Thou fall'st, alas! thyself, thy kind,
Thy country unredressed!

MY JO, JANET.

[OF THE "MUSEUM,"]

JOHNSON, the publisher, with a foolish delicacy, refused to insert the last stanza of this humorous ballad.

"O, sweet sir, for your courtesie,
When ye come by the Bass, then,
For the love ye bear to me,
Buy me a keeking-glass then."
Keek into the draw-well,
Janet, Janet;
And there ye'll see your bonnie sel',
My jo, Janet.



LOVE IS THE CAUSE OF MY MOURNING. 557

“Keeking in the draw-well clear,
What if I should fa’ in then?
Syne a’ my kin will say and swear
I drowned mysel’ for sin, then.”
Had the better by the brae,
Janet, Janet;
Had the better by the brae,
My jo, Janet.

“Good sir, for your courtesie,
Coming through Aberdeen, then,
For the love ye bear to me,
Buy me a pair of sheen¹ then.”
Clout the auld, the new are dear,
Janet, Janet;
A pair may gain ye half a year,
My jo, Janet.

“But what, if dancing on the green,
An’ skipping like a maukin,²
If they should see my clouted sheen,
Of me they will be taunking.”
Dance aye laigh,³ and late at e’en,
Janet, Janet;
Syne a’ their fauts will no be seen,
My jo, Janet.

“Kind sir, for your courtesie,
When ye gae to the Cross, then,
For the love ye bear to me,
Buy me a pacing horse, then.”
Pace upo’ your spinning-wheel,
Janet, Janet;
Pace upo’ your spinning-wheel,
My jo, Janet.

“My spinning-wheel is auld and stiff,
The rock o’ t winna stand, sir;
To keep the temper-pin in tiff,
Employs right aft my hand, sir.”
Make the best o’ that ye can,
Janet, Janet;
But like it, never wale⁴ a man,
My jo, Janet.

LOVE IS THE CAUSE OF MY MOURNING.

THE words by a Mr. R. Scott, from the town or neighbourhood of Biggar.

¹ Shoes.

² Hare.

³ Low.

⁴ Choose.



558 FIFE, AND ALL THE LANDS ABOUT IT.

By a murmuring stream a fair shepherdess lay :
Be so kind, O ye nymphs ! I oft heard her say,
Tell Strephon I die, if he passes this way,

And love is the cause of my mourning.
False shepherds that tell me of beauty and charms,
Deceive me, for Strephon's cold heart never warms ;
Yet bring me this Strephon, I'll die in his arms ;

O Strephon ! the cause of my mourning.

But first, said she, let me go

Down to the Shades below,

Ere ye let Strephon know

That I have loved him so :

Then on my pale cheek no blushes will show

That love is the cause of my mourning.



FIFE, AND ALL THE LANDS ABOUT IT.

THIS song is Dr. Blacklock's. He, as well as I, often gave Johnson verses, trifling enough, perhaps, but they served as a vehicle to the music.

Allan, by his grief excited,

Long the victim of despair,

Thus deplored his passion slighted,

Thus addressed the scornful fair :—

“ Fife and all the lands about it,

Undesiring I can see ;

Joy may crown my days without it,—

Not, my charmer, without thee.

“ Must I then for ever languish,

Still complaining, still endure ?

Can her form create an anguish,

Which her soul disdains to cure ?

Why by hopeless passion fated,

Must I still those eyes admire,

Whilst unheeded, unregretted,

In her presence I expire ?

“ Would thy charms improve their power ?

Timely think, relentless maid ;

Beauty is a short-lived flower,

Destined but to bloom and fade !

Let that Heaven, whose kind impression

All thy lovely features show,

Melt thy soul to soft compassion

For a suffering lover's woe.”



WERE NA MY HEART LIGHT I WAD DIE.

LORD HAILES, in the notes to his collection of ancient Scottish poems, says that this song was the composition of Lady Grisel Baillie, daughter of the first Earl of Marchmont, and wife of George Baillie, of Jerviswood.

There was ance a May, and she lo'ed na men,—
She biggit her bonnie bower down in yon glen;
But now she cries dool! and a-well-a-day!
Come down the green gate, and come here away.

When bonnie young Johnny came o'er the sea,
He said he saw naithing sae lovely as me;
He hecht me baith rings and mony braw things:
And were na my heart light I wad die.

He had a wee titty that lo'ed na me,
Because I was twice as bonnie as she;
She raised such a pother 'twixt him and his mother,
That were na my heart light I wad die.

The day it was set and the bridal to be,
The wife took a dwam and lay down to die;
She mained and she grained out of dolour and pain,
Till he vowed he never wad see me again.

His kin was for ane of a higher degree,—
Said, "What had he to do with the like of me?"
Albeit I was bonnie, I was na for Johnny:
And were na my heart light I wad die.

They said I had neither cow nor caff,
Nor dribbles of drink rins through the draff,
Nor pickles of meal rins through the mill e'e;
And were na my heart light I wad die.

His titty she was baith wylie and slee,
She spied me as I came o'er the lea;
And then she ran in and made a loud din,—
Believe your ain een an' ye trow na me.

His bonnet stood ance fu' round on his brew;
His auld ane looks aye as weel as some's new;
But now he lets 't wear ony gate it will hing,
And casts himself dowie upon the corn-bing.

And now he gaes drooping about the dykes,
And a' he dow do is to hund the tykes:
The live-lang night he ne'er steeks his e'e;
And were na my heart light I wad die.



Were I young for thee as I ance ha'e been,
We should have been galloping down on yon green,
And linking it on the lily-white lea;
And wow, 'gin I were but young for thee!

THE YOUNG MAN'S DREAM.

THIS song is the composition of Balloon Tytler.

One night I dreamed I lay most easy,
By a murm'ring river's side,
Where lovely banks were spread with daisies,
And the streams did smoothly glide;
While around me and quite over,
Spreading branches were displayed,
All interwoven in due order,
Soon became a pleasant shade.

I saw my lass come in most charming,
With a look and air so sweet;
Every grace was most alarming,
Every beauty most complete.
Cupid with his bow attended;
Lovely Venus too was there:
As his bow young Cupid bended.
Far away flew carking Care.

On a bank of roses seated,
Charmingly my true-love sung;
While glad Echo still repeated,
And the hills and valleys rung:
At the last by sleep oppressed,
On the bank my love did lie,
By young Cupid still caressed,
While the Graces round did fly.

The rose's red, the lily's blossom,
With her charms might not compare;
To view her cheeks and heaving bosom,
Down they drooped as in despair.
On her slumber I encroaching,
Panting, came to steal a kiss;
Cupid smiled at me approaching,
Seemed to say, "There's naught amiss."

With eager wishes I drew nigher,
This fair maiden to embrace;
My breath grew quick, my pulse beat higher,
Gazing on her lovely face.

.



THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

561

The nymph awaking, quickly checked me,
Starting up with angry tone;
"Thus," says she, "do you respect me?
Leave me quick, and hence begone!"
Cupid for me interposing,
To my love did bow full low;
She from him her hands unloosing,
In contempt struck down his bow.

Angry Cupid from her flying,
Cried out, as he sought the skies,
"Haughty nymphs their love denying,
Cupid ever shall despise."
As he spoke, old Care came wandering,
With him stalked destructive Time;
Winter froze the streams meandering,
Nipped the roses in their prime.

Spectres then my love surrounded,—
At their back marched chilling Death;
Whilst she, frightened and confounded,
Felt their blasting pois'nous breath:
As her charms were swift decaying,
And the furrows seized her cheek;
Forbear, ye fiends! I vainly crying,
Waked in the attempt to speak.

THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

DR. BLACKLOCK told me that Smollett, who was at the bottom
a great Jacobite, composed these beautiful and pathetic verses
on the infamous depredations of the Duke of Cumberland after
the battle of Culloden.

Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banished peace, thy laurels torn!
Thy sons, for valour long renowned,
Lie slaughtered on their native ground:
Thy hospitable roofs no more
Invite the stranger to the door;
In smoky ruins sunk they lie,
The monuments of cruelty.

The wretched owner sees, afar,
His all become the prey of war;
Bethinks him of his babes and wife,
Then smites his breast and curses life.



Thy swains are famished on the rocks
Where once they fed their wanton flocks ;
Thy ravished virgins shriek in vain ;
Thy infants perish on the plain.

What boots it, then, in every clime,
Through the wide-spreading waste of time,
Thy martial glory crowned with praise,
Still shone with undiminished blaze ?
Thy towering spirit now is broke,
Thy neck is bended to the yoke :
What foreign arms could never quell
By civil rage and rancour fell.

The rural pipe and merry lay
No more shall cheer the happy day ;
No social scenes of gay delight
Beguile the dreary winter night :
No strains but those of sorrow flow,
And nought be heard but sounds of woe :
While the pale phantoms of the slain
Glide nightly o'er the silent plain.

O baneful cause ! O fatal morn !
Accursed to ages yet unborn !
The sons against their father stood ;
The parent shed his children's blood !
Yet when the rage of battle ceased,
The victor's soul was not appeased ;
The naked and forlorn must feel
Devouring flames and murd'ring steel.

The pious mother, doomed to death,
Forsaken, wanders o'er the heath ;
The bleak wind whistles round her head,
Her helpless orphans cry for bread ;
Bereft of shelter, food, and friend,
She views the shades of night descend ;
And stretched beneath th' inclement skies,
Weeps o'er her tender babes, and dies.

Whilst the warm blood bedews my veins,
And unimpaired remembrance reigns,
Resentment of my country's fate
Within my filial breast shall beat ;
And, spite of her insulting foe,
My sympathizing verse shall flow :
Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banished peace, thy laurels torn !

AH! THE POOR SHEPHERD'S MOURNFUL FATE.¹

THE old title, "Sour Plums o' Gallashiels," probably was the beginning of a song to this air, which is now lost.

The tune of "Gallashiels" was composed about the beginning of the present century by the Laird of Gallashiels' piper.

Tune—"Gallashiels."

Ah! the poor shepherd's mournful fate,
 When doomed to love and languish,
 To bear the scornful fair one's hate,
 Nor dare disclose his anguish!
 Yet eager looks and dying sighs
 My secret soul discover;
 While rapture, trembling through mine eyes,
 Reveals how much I love her.
 The tender glance, the reddening cheek,
 O'erspread with rising blushes,
 A thousand various ways they speak
 A thousand various wishes.

For oh! that form so heavenly fair,
 Those languid eyes so sweetly smiling,
 That artless blush and modest air,
 So fatally beguiling!
 The every look and every grace,
 So charm whene'er I view thee;
 'Till death o'ertake me in the chase,
 Still will my hopes pursue thee:
 Then when my tedious hours are past,
 Be this last blessing given,
 Low at thy feet to breathe my last,
 And die in sight of heaven.

MILL, MILL, O!

THE original, or at least a song evidently prior to Ramsay's is still extant. It runs thus:—

As I cam' down yon waterside,
 And by yon shellin'-hill, O!
 There I spied a bonnie, bonnie lass,
 And a lass that I loved right weel, O!

¹ By William Hamilton, of Bangour.



WE RAN AND THEY RAN.

CHORUS.

The mill, mill, O, and the kill, kill, O,
And the coggin o' Peggy's wheel, O,
The sack and the sieve, and a' she did leave,
And danced the miller's reel, O.

WE RAN AND THEY RAN.

THE author of "We ran and they ran" was a Rev. Mr. Murdoch M'Lennan, minister at Crathie, Dee-side.

WALY, WALY.

IN the west country I have heard a different edition of the second stanza. Instead of the four lines beginning with "When cockle-shells," &c., the other way ran thus:—

O, wherefore need I busk my head,
Or wherefore need I kame my hair,
Sin' my fause luvè has me forsook,
And says he'll never luvè me mair?

O waly, waly, up yon bank,
And waly, waly, down yon brae,
And waly by yon burn-side,
Where I and my love were wont to gae.

O waly, waly, love is bonnie
A little while, when it is new;
But when it's auld it waxeth cauld,
And fades away like morning dew.

When cockle-shells turn siller bells,
And mussels grow on every tree;
When frost and snaw shall warm us a',
Then shall my love prove true to me.

I lent my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trustie tree;
But first it bowed, and syne it brake,
And sae did my fause love to me.

Now Arthur-seat shall be my bed,
The sheets shall ne'er be fyled by me:
Saint Anton's well shall be my drink,
Since my true love's forsaken me.

O Mart'mas wind! when wilt thou blaw,
And shake the green leaves aff the tree?
O gentle Death! when wilt thou come,
And tak' a life that wearies me?



DUMBARTON DRUMS.

565

'Tis not the frost that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie;
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we cam' in by Glasgow town,
We were a comely sight to see;
My love was clad in velvet black,
And I mysel' in cramasie.
But had I wist before I kist,
That love had been sae ill to win,
I had lockt my heart in a case of gowd,
And pinned it wi' a siller pin.
Oh, oh! if my young babe were born,
And set upon the nurse's knee,
And I mysel' were dead and gone;
For a maid again I 'll never be.

DUNCAN GRAY.

DR. BLACKLOCK informed me, that he had often heard the tradition that this air was composed by a carman in Glasgow.

DUMBARTON DRUMS.

THIS is the last of the West Highland airs; and from it, over the whole tract of country to the confines of Tweed-side, there is hardly a tune or song that one can say has taken its origin from any place or transaction in that part of Scotland. The oldest Ayrshire reel is "Stewarton Lasses," which was made by the father of the present Sir Walter Montgomery Cunningham, *alias* Lord Lysle; since which period there has indeed been local music in that country in great plenty. "Johnnie Faa" is the only old song which I could ever trace as belonging to the extensive county of Ayr.

Dumbarton drums beat bonnie, O,
When they mind me of my dear Johnnie, O:
How happy am I
When my soldier is by,
While he kisses and blesses his Annie, O!
'Tis a soldier alone can delight me, O,
For his graceful looks do unite me, O;
While guarded in his arms,
I 'll fear no war's alarms,
Neither danger nor death shall e'er fright me, O.



CAULD KAIL IN ABERDEEN.

My love is a handsome laddie, O,
Genteel but ne'er foppish nor gaudie, O;
Though commissions are dear
Yet I'll buy him one this year,
For he shall serve no longer a caddie, O.
A soldier has honour and bravery, O;
Unacquainted with rogues and their knavery, O,
He minds no other thing
But the ladies or the King,
For every other care is but slavery, O.

Then I'll be the Captain's lady, O;
Farewell all my friends and my daddy, O!
I'll wait no more at home,
But I'll follow with the drum,
And whene'er that beats I'll be ready, O.
Dumbarton drums sound bonnie, O;
They are sprightly, like my dear Johnnie, O:
How happy shall I be
When on my soldier's knee,
And he kisses and blesses his Annie, O!

CAULD KAIL IN ABERDEEN.

THIS song is by the Duke of Gordon.¹ The old verses are,—

There's cauld kail in Aberdeen,
And castocks in Strathbogie;
When ilka lad maun ha'e his lass,
Then fye, gi'e me my coggie.

There's Johnnie Smith has got a wife,
That scrimps him o' his coggie;
If she were mine, upon my life
I wad douk her in a boggie.

CHORUS.

My coggie, sirs, my coggie, sirs,
I cannot want my coggie;
I wadna gi'e my three-girred cup
For'er a quean in Bogie.—

“The Cauld Kail” of his Grace of Gordon has long been a favourite in the North, and deservedly so, for it is full of life and manners. It is almost needless to say that kail is colewort, and much used in broth; that castocks are the stalks of a

¹ Born, 1743; died, 1827.



common cabbage; and that coggie is a wooden dish for holding porridge: it is also a drinking vessel.

There 's cauld kail in Aberdeen,
And castocks in Stra'bogie;
Gin I but ha'e a bonnie lass,
Ye 're welcome to your coggie:
And ye may sit up a' the night,
And drink till it be braid daylight;
Gi'e me a lass baith clean and tight,
To dance the reel o' Bogie.

In cotillons the French excel;
John Bull loves countra dances;
The Spaniards dance fandangos well;
Mynheer an allemande prances:
In foursome reels the Scots delight,
At threesome they dance wond'rous light:
But twasome ding a' out o' sight,
Danced to the reel o' Bogie.

Come, lads, and view your partners well,
Wale each a blithesome rogie;
I'll tak' this lassie to mysel',
She looks sae keen and vogie!
Now, piper lad, bang up the spring;
The countra fashion is the thing,
To prie their mou's e'er we begin
To dance the reel o' Bogie.

Now ilka lad has got a lass,
Save yon auld doited fogie,
And ta'en a fling upo' the grass,
As they do in Stra'bogie:
But a' the lasses look sae fain,
We canna think oursel's to hain,
For they maun ha'e their come-again
To dance the reel o' Bogie.

Now a' the lads ha'e done their best,
Like true men o' Stra'bogie;
We'll stop awhile and tak' a rest,
And tippie out a coggie:
Come, now, my lads, and tak' your glass,
And try ilk other to surpass,
In wishing health to every lass
To dance the reel o' Bogie.



FOR LACK OF GOLD.

THE country girls in Ayrshire, instead of the line—

“She me forsook for a great duke.”

say,

“For Athole’s duke she me forsook.”

which I take to be the original reading.

This song was written by the late Dr. Austin, physician, at Edinburgh. He had courted a lady, to whom he was shortly to have been married; but the Duke of Athole, having seen her, became so much in love with her, that he made proposals of marriage, which were accepted of, and she jilted the Doctor.

For lack of gold she’s left me, O!
And of all that’s dear bereft me, O!
For Athole’s duke she me forsook,
And to endless care has left me, O!
A star and garter have more art
Than youth, a true and faithful heart;
For empty titles we must part,
And for glittering show she’s left me, O!

No cruel fair shall ever move
My injured heart again to love;
Through distant climates I must rove,
Since Jeannie she has left me, O!
Ye powers above, I to your care
Resign my faithless lovely fair:
Your choicest blessings be her share,
Though she’s for ever left me, O!

HERE’S A HEALTH TO MY TRUE LOVE, &c.

THIS song is Dr. Blacklock’s. He told me that tradition gives the air to our James IV. of Scotland.

To me what are riches encumbered with care!
To me what is pomp’s insignificant glare!
No minion of fortune, no pageant of state,
Shall ever induce me to envy his fate.

Their personal graces let fops idolize,
Whose life is but death in a splended disguise;
But soon the pale tyrant his right shall resume,
And all their false lustre be hid in the tomb.



TAK' YOUR AULD CLOAK ABOUT YE. 569

Let the meteor Discovery attract the fond sage,
In fruitless researches for life to engage ;
Content with my portion, the rest I forego,
Nor labour to gain disappointment and woe.

Contemptibly fond of contemptible self,
While misers their wishes concentre in pelf ;
Let the god-like delight of imparting be mine,—
Enjoyment reflected is pleasure divine.

Extensive dominion and absolute power
May tickle ambition, perhaps, for an hour ;
But power in possession soon loses its charms,
While conscience remonstrates, and terror alarms.

With vigour, O teach me, kind Heaven, to sustain
Those ills which in life to be suffered remain ;
And when 'tis allowed me the goal to descry,
For my species I lived, for myself let me die.

HEY TUTTI TAITL.

I HAVE met the tradition universally over Scotland, and particularly about Stirling, in the neighbourhood of the scene, that this air was Robert Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn.¹

TAK' YOUR AULD CLOAK ABOUT YE.

A PART of this old song, according to the English set of it, is quoted in Shakespeare. In the drinking scene in "Othello,"—

Iago.—King Stephen was a worthy peer,
His breeches cost him but a crown ;
He held them sixpence all too dear,—
With that he called the tailor loun ;
He was a wight of high renown,
And thou art but of low degree :
'Tis pride that pulls the country down,
Then take thine auld cloak about thee.

Old Song.

In winter, when the rain rained cauld,
And frost and snow on ilka hill,
And Boreas, with his blasts sae bauld,
Was threatening a' our kye to kill :
Then Bell, my wife, wha loves na strife,
She said to me richt hastily,
"Get up, guidman, we Cromie's life,
And tak' your auld cloak about ye."

¹ Burns has made the air immortal by writing to it the words of "Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled."



570 *YE GODS! WAS STREPHON'S PICTURE BLEST?*

My Cromie is a useful cow,
And she is come of a good kyne;
Aft has she wet the bairns' mou',
And I am laith that she should tyne.
Get up, guidman, it is fu' time,
'The sun shines in the lift sae hie;
Sloth never made a gracious end,—
Go tak' your auld cloak about ye.

My cloak was ance a good grey cloak,
When it was fitting for my wear;
But now it's scanty worth a goat,
For I have worn 't this thirty year.
Let's spend the gear that we have won,
We little ken the day we'll die;
Then I'll be proud, since I have sworn
To have a new cloak about me.

In days when our King Robert rang,
His trews they cost but haff a crown;
He said they were a goat o'er dear,
And called the tailor thief and loun.
He was the king that wore a crown,
And thou the man of laigh degree,—
'Tis pride puts a' the country down,
Sae tak' thy auld cloak about thee.

YE GODS! WAS STREPHON'S PICTURE BLEST?¹

Tune—"Fourteenth of October."

THE title of this air shows that it alludes to the famous king Crispin, the patron of the honourable corporation of shoemakers. St. Crispin's day falls on the 14th of October, old style, as the old proverb tells,—

"On the fourteenth of October,
Was ne'er a Sutor² sober."

Ye gods! was Strephon's picture blest
With the fair heaven of Chloe's breast?
Move softer, thou fond fluttering heart!
O, gently throb, too fierce thou art!
Tell me, thou brightest of thy kind,
For Strephon was the bliss designed?
For Strephon's sake, dear charming maid,
Did'st thou prefer his wandering shade?

¹ Composed by William Hamilton, of Bangour, on hearing that a well-born and beautiful girl wore his portrait in her bosom.

² Sutor, a shoemaker.



ROBBED OF ALL THAT CHARMED MY VIEW. 571

And thou, blessed shade, that sweetly art
Lodged so near my Chloe's heart,
For me the tender hour improve,
And softly tell how dear I love.
Ungrateful thing! it scorns to hear
Its wretched master's ardent prayer;
Ingrossing all that beauteous heaven
That Chloe, lavish maid, has given.

I cannot blame thee: were I lord
Of all the wealth these breasts afford,
I'd be a miser too, nor give
An alms to keep a god alive.
O! smile not thus, my lovely fair,
On these cold looks that lifeless are:
Prize him whose bosom glows with fire,
With eager love and soft desire.

'Tis true thy charms, O powerful maid!
To life can bring the silent shade:
Thou canst surpass the painter's art,
And real warmth and flames impart.
But, oh! it ne'er can love like me,—
I ever loved, and loved but thee.
Then, charmer, grant my fond request,
Say, thou canst love, and make me blest.

SINCE ROBBED OF ALL THAT CHARMED MY
VIEW.

THE old name of this air is "The Blossom o' the Raspberry."
The song is Dr. Blacklock's. These are the first and last verses
of it:—

Since robbed of all that charmed my view,
Of all my soul e'er fancied fair,
Ye smiling native scenes, adieu,
With each delightful object there!
O! when my heart revolves the joys
Which in your sweet recess I knew,
The last dread shock, which life destroys,
Is Heaven compared with losing you!

Ah me! had Heaven and she proved kind,
Then, full of age and free from care,
How blest had I my life resigned,
When first I breathed this vital air.



But since no flattering hope remains,
Let me my wretched lot pursue;
Adieu! dear friends and native scenes!
To all but grief and love, adieu!

YOUNG DAMON.¹

THIS air is by Oswald.

Tune—"Highland Lamentation."

Amidst a rosy bank of flowers,
Young Damon mourned his forlorn fate;
In sighs he spent his languid hours,
And breathed his woes in lonely state.
Gay joy no more shall ease his mind,
No wanton sports can soothe his care,
Since sweet Amanda proved unkind,
And left him full of black despair.

His looks, that were as fresh as morn,
Can now no longer smiles impart;
His pensive soul, on sadness borne,
Is racked and torn by Cupid's dart.
Turn, fair Amanda, cheer your swain,
Unshroud him from this vale of woe;
Range every charm to soothe the pain
That in his tortured breast doth grow.

KIRK WAD LET ME BE.

TRADITION, in the western parts of Scotland, tells that this old song, of which there are still three stanzas extant, once saved a covenanting clergyman out of a scrape. It was a little prior to the Revolution, a period when being a Scots covenanter was being a felon, that one of their clergy, who was at that very time hunted by the merciless soldiery, fell in, by accident, with a party of the military. The soldiers were not exactly acquainted with the person of the reverend gentleman of whom they were in search; but, from suspicious circumstances, they fancied that they had got one of that cloth and opprobrious persuasion among them in the person of this stranger. "Mass John," to extricate himself, assumed a freedom of manners very unlike the gloomy strictness of his sect; and, among other convivial exhibitions,

¹ Written by Robert Fergusson.



sung (and some traditions say composed, on the spur of the occasion) "Kirk wad let me be," with such effect, that the soldiers swore he was a d—d honest fellow, and that it was impossible *he* could belong to those hellish conventicles; and so gave him his liberty.

The first stanza of this song, a little altered, is a favourite kind of dramatic interlude, acted at country weddings in the south-west parts of the kingdom. A young fellow is dressed up like an old beggar. A peruke, commonly made of carded tow, represents hoary locks; an old bonnet; a ragged plaid, or surtout, bound with a straw rope for a girdle; a pair of old shoes, with straw ropes twisted round his ankles, as is done by shepherds in snowy weather. His face they disguise as like wretched old age as they can. In this plight he is brought into the wedding-house, frequently to the astonishment of strangers, who are not in the secret, and begins to sing,—

"O, I am a silly auld man,
My name is auld Glenae,"¹ &c.

He is asked to drink, and by-and-by to dance, which, after some uncouth excuses, he is prevailed on to do, the fiddler playing the tune, which here is commonly called "Auld Glenae:" in short, he is all the time so plied with liquor, that he is understood to get intoxicated, and, with all the ridiculous gesticulations of an old drunken beggar, he dances and staggers until he falls on the floor; yet still, in all his riot—nay, in his rolling and tumbling on the floor, with some or other drunken motion of his body—he beats time to the music, till at last he is supposed to be carried out dead drunk.

I am a silly puir man,
Gaun hirplin' owre a tree;
For courting a lass in the dark,
The kirk came haunting me.
If a' my rags were off,
And nought but hale claes on,
O, I could please a young lass
As well as a richer man.

The parson he ca'ed me a rogue,
The session and a' thegither:
The justice he cried, You dog,
Your knavery I'll consider.
Sae I drapt down on my knee,
And thus did humbly pray,—
O, if ye'll let me gae free,
My hale confession ye'se ha'e.

¹ Glenae, on the small river Ae, in Annandale; the seat and designation of an ancient branch, and the present representative, of the gallant and unfortunate Dalzels of Carnwath.—*BURNS*.



574 JOHNNY FAA, OR THE GYPSIE LADDIE.

'Twas late on Tysday at e'en,
When the moon was on the grass,
O, just for charity's sake,
I was kind to a beggar lass.
She had begged down Annan-side,
Lochmaben and Hightae;
But de'il an awmcus she got,
Till she met wi' auld Glenac.

JOHNNY FAA, OR THE GYPSIE LADDIE.

THE people in Ayrshire begin this song—

“The gypsies cam' to my Lord Cassilis' yett.”

They have a great many more stanzas in this song than I ever yet saw in any printed copy. The castle is still remaining at Maybole, where his lordship shut up his wayward spouse, and kept her for life.

The gypsies came to our lord's gate,
And wow, but they sang sweetly;
They sang sae sweet, and sae complete,
That down came the fair ladie.

When she came tripping down the stair,
And a' her maids before her;
As soon as they saw her weel-fared face,
They coost the glamour o'er her.

“Gae tak' frae me this gay mantle,
And bring to me a plaidie;
For if kith and kin and a' had sworn,
I'll follow the gypsie laddie.

“Yestreen I lay in a weel-made bed,
And my good lord beside me;
This night I'll lie in a tenant's barn,
Whatever shall betide me.”

O! come to your bed, says Johnny Faa,
O! come to your bed, my dearie;
For I vow and swear by the hilt of my sword,
That your lord shall nae mair come near ye.

“I'll go to bed to my Johnny Faa,
And I'll go to bed to my dearie;
For I vow and swear by what past yestreen,
That my lord shall nae mair come near me.



TO DAUNTON ME.

575

“I’ll mak’ a hap to my Johnny Faa,
And I’ll make a hap to my dearie;
And he’s get a’ the coat gaes round,
And my lord shall nae mair come near me.”

And when our lord came hame at e’en,
And speired for his fair lady,
The tane she cried, and the other replied,
“She’s away wi’ the gysie laddie.”

“Gae saddle to me the black, black steed,
Gae saddle and mak’ him ready;
Before that I either eat or sleep,
I’ll gae seek my fair lady.”

And we were fifteen well-made men,
Although we were nae bonnie;
And we were a’ put down for ane,
A fair young wanton lady.¹

The following verse has been added:—

My lady’s skin, like the driven snaw,
Looked through her satin cleedin’,
Her white hause, as the wine ran down,
It like a rose did redden.

TO DAUNTON ME.

THE two following stanzas to this tune have some merit:—

To daunton me, to daunton me,
O, ken ye what it is that’ll daunton me?
There’s Eighty-eight and Eighty-nine,
And a’ that I ha’e borne sinsyne,
There’s cess and press,² and Presbytrie,
I think it will do meikle for to daunton me.

But to wanton me, to wanton me,
O, ken ye what it is that would wanton me?
To see guid corn upon the rigs,
And banishment amang the Whigs,
And right restored where right sud³ be,
I think it would do meikle for to wanton me.

¹ The Earl of Cassilis’ lady.

² Scot and lot.

³ Should.



ABSENCE.

A SONG in the manner of Shearstone. This song and air are both by Dr. Blacklock.

Ye harvests that wave in the breeze,
As far as the view can extend ;
Ye mountains umbrageous with trees,
Whose tops so majestic ascend ;
Your landscape what joy to survey,
Were Melissa with me to admire !
Then the harvests would glitter how gay,
How majestic the mountains aspire !
Ye zephyrs that visit my fair,
Ye sunbeams around her that play,
Does her sympathy dwell on my care ?
Does she number the hours of my stay ?
First perish ambition and wealth,
First perish all else that is dear,
Ere one sigh should escape her by stealth,
Ere my absence should cost her one tear.

I HAD A HORSE, AND I HAD NAE MAIR.

THIS story is founded on fact. A John Hunter, ancestor of a very respectable farming family, who live in a place in the parish, I think, of Galston, called Bar-mill, was the luckless hero that "had a horse and had nae mair." For some little youthful follies he found it necessary to make a retreat to the West Highlands, where "he feed himself to a Highland laird," for that is the expression of all the oral editions of the song I ever heard. The present Mr. Hunter, who told me the anecdote, is the great-grandchild of our hero.

I had a horse, and I had nae mair,
I gat him frae my daddy ;
My purse was light, and heart was sair,
But my wit it was fu' ready.
And sae I thought me on a time,
Outwittens of my daddy,
To fee mysel' to a Lawland laird,
Wha had a bonnie lady.
I wrote a letter, and thus began,—
"Madam, be not offended,
I'm o'er the lugs in love wi' you,
And care not though ye ken'd it :



UP AND WARN A', WILLIE.

577

For I get little frae the laird,
And far less frae my daddy,
And I would blithely be the man
Would strive to please my lady."

She read my letter, and she leugh,
"Ye needna been sae blate, man ;
You might ha'e come to me yoursel',
And tauld me o' your state, man :
You might ha'e come to me yoursel',
Outwittens o' ony body,
And made John Gowkston of the laird,
And kissed his bonnie lady."

Then she pat siller in my purse, —
We drank wine in a coggie ;
She feed a man to rub my horse,
And wow, but I was vogie !
But I gat ne'er sae sair a fleg
Since I came frae my daddy,
The laird came, rap, rap, to the yett,
When I was wi' his lady.

Then she pat me below a chair,
And happed me wi' a plaidie ;
But I was like to swarf wi' fear,
And wished me wi' my daddy.
The laird went out, he saw na me,
I went when I was ready ;
I promised, but I ne'er gaed back
To kiss my bonnie lady.

UP AND WARN A', WILLIE.

THIS edition of the song I got from Tom Niel, of facetious fame, in Edinburgh. The expression "Up and warn a', Willie," alludes to the Crantara, or warning of a Highland clan to arms. Not understanding this, the Lowlanders in the west and south say, "Up and waur them a'," &c.

AULD ROB MORRIS.

It is remarkable that the song of "Hooly and Fairly," in all the old editions of it, is called "The Drunken Wife o' Gallo-way," which localizes it to that county.



AULD ROB MORRIS.

MITHER.

There's auld Rob Morris, that wins in yon glen,
He's the king o' gude fallows, and wale o' auld men,
Has fourscore o' black sheep, and fourscore too,
And auld Rob Morris is the man ye maun loo.

DOCHTER.

Hand your tongue, mither, and let that abee,
For his eild and my eild can never agree;
They'll never agree, and that will be seen,
For he is fourscore, and I'm but fifteen.

MITHER.

Hand your tongue, dochter, and lay by your pride,
For he's be the bridegroom, and ye's be the bride;
He shall lie by your side, and kiss ye too,
Auld Rob Morris is the man ye maun loo.

DOCHTER.

Auld Rob Morris, I ken him fu' weel;
His back sticks out like ony peet-creel;
He's out-shinned, in-kneed, and ringle-e'ed too,—
Auld Rob Morris is the man I'll ne'er loo.

MITHER.

Though auld Rob Morris be an elderly man,
Yet his old brass it will buy a new pan;
Then, dochter, ye shouldna be sae ill to shoo,
For auld Rob Morris is the man ye maun loo.

DOCHTER

But auld Rob Morris I never will ha'e,
His back is sae stiff, and his beard is grown grey;
I had rather die than live wi' him a year,
Sae mair of Rob Morris I never will hear.

The "Drunken Wife o' Galloway" is in another strain: the idea is original, and it cannot be denied that the author, whoever he was, has followed up the conception with great spirit. A few verses will prove this.

O! what had I ado for to marry?
My wife she drinks naething but sack and canary;
I to her friends complained right early,
O! gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!

Hooly and fairly; hooly and fairly,
O! gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!



NANCY'S GHOST.

579

First she drank Crommie, and syne she drank Garie,
Then she has drunken my bonnie grey mearie,
That carried me through the dub and the lairie,—
O! gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!
The very grey mittens that gaed on my han's,
To her ain neibour wife she has laid them in pawns,
Wi' my bane-headed staff that I lo'ed sae dearly,—
O! gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!
I never was given to wrangling nor strife,
Nor e'er did refuse her the comforts of life;
E'er it come to a war, I'm aye for a parley,—
O! gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!
A pint wi' her cummers I wad her allow;
But when she sits down she fills hersel' fou;
And when she is fou' she's unco' camstrarie,—
O! gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!
An' when she comes hame, she lays on the lads,
And ca's a' the lasses baith limmers and jads,
And I my ain sell an auld cuckold carlie,—
O! gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!

NANCY'S GHOST.

THIS song is by Dr. Blacklock.

“Ah! hapless man, thy perjured vow
Was to thy Nancy's heart a grave!
The damps of death bedewed my brow,
Whilst thou the dying maid could save!”
Thus spake the vision, and withdrew;
From Sandy's cheeks the crimson fled;
Guilt and Despair their arrows threw,
And now behold the traitor dead!
Remember, swains, my artless strains:
To plighted faith be ever true;
And let no injured maid complain
She finds false Sandy live in you.

TUNE YOUR FIDDLES, &c.

THE song was composed by the Rev. John Skinner, Nonjuror clergyman at Linshart, near Peterhead. He is likewise author of “Tulbochorum,” “Ewie wi' the Crooked Horn,” “John o'



Badenyond," &c., and, what is of still more consequence, he is one of the worthiest of mankind. He is the author of an ecclesiastical history of Scotland. The air is by Mr. Marshall, butler to the Duke of Gordon, the first composer of strathspeys of the age. I have been told by somebody, who had it of Marshall himself, that he took the idea of his three most celebrated pieces—"The Marquis of Huntley's Reel," his "Farewell," and "Miss Admiral Gordon's Reel"—from the old air, "The German Lairdie."

Tune your fiddles, tune them sweetly,
Play the Marquis' Reel discreetly;
Here we are a band completely
Fitted to be jolly.
Come, my boys, be blithe and gaudie;
Every youngster choose his lassie;
Dance wi' life, and be not saucy,
Shy, nor melancholy.

Lay aside your sour grimaces,
Clouded brows, and drumlie faces;
Look about and see their graces,
How they smile delighted.
Now 's the season to be merry;
Hang the thoughts of Charon's ferry!
Time enough to turn camstrarie
When we 're old and doited.

GIL MORICE.¹

This plaintive ballad ought to have been called "Child Maurice," and not "Gil Morice." In its present dress it has gained immortal honour from Mr. Home's taking from it the groundwork of his fine tragedy of *Douglas*. But I am of opinion that the present ballad is a modern composition; perhaps not much above the age of the middle of the last century; at least I should be glad to see or hear of a copy of the present words prior to 1650. That it was taken from an old ballad called "Child Maurice," now lost, I am inclined to believe; but the present one may be classed with "Hardyknute," "Kenneth," "Duncan, the Laird of Woodhouselee," "Lord Livingston," "Binnorie," "The Death of Monteith," and many other modern productions, which have been swallowed by many readers as ancient fragments of old

¹ Mr. Pinkerton remarks that, in many parts of Scotland, "Gil" at this day signifies "Child," as is the case in the Gaelic; thus "Gilchrist" means the "Child of Christ." "Child" was the customary appellation of a young nobleman, when about fifteen years of age.



WHEN I UPON THY BOSOM LEAN. 581

poems. This beautiful plaintive tune was composed by Mr. M'Gibbon, the selector of a Collection of Scots tunes.

In addition to the observations on "Gil Morice," I add that, of the songs which Capt. Riddel mentions, "Kenneth" and Duncan" are juvenile compositions of Mr. M'Kenzie, "The Man of Feeling." M'Kenzie's father showed them in MS. to Dr. Blacklock, as the productions of his son, from which the Doctor rightly prognosticated that the young poet would make, in his more advanced years, a respectable figure in the world of letters.

This I had from Blacklock.

WHEN I UPON THY BOSOM LEAN.

THIS song was the work of a very worthy facetious old fellow, John Lapraik, late of Dalfram, near Muirkirk, which little property he was obliged to sell in consequence of some connection as security for some persons concerned in that villanous bubble, the Ayr Bank. He has often told me that he composed this song one day when his wife had been fretting over their misfortunes.

[Burns thus alludes to this song in his Epistle to Lapraik] :—

There was ae sang among the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleased me best,
That some kind husband had address
To some sweet wife:
It thrilled the heart-string through the breast,
A' to the li'.

WHEN I UPON THY BOSOM LEAN.

When I upon thy bosom lean,
And fondly clasp thee a' my ain,
I glory in the sacred ties
That made us ane wha ance were twain:
A mutual flame inspires us baith,
The tender look, the melting kiss:
Even years shall ne'er destroy our love,
But only gi'e us change o' bliss.

Had I a wish?—it's a' for thee;
I ken thy wish is me to please:
Our moments pass sae smooth away,
That numbers on us look and gaze.
Well pleased, they see our happy days,
Nor Envy's sel' find aught to blame;
And aye when weary cares arise,
Thy bosom still shall be my hame.



I'll lay me there, and take my rest,
And if that aught disturb my dear,
I'll bid her laugh her cares away,
And beg her not to drap a tear:
Ha'e I a joy?—it's a' her ain;
United still her heart and mine;
They're like the woodbine round the tree,
That's twined till death shall them disjoin.

THE HIGHLAND CHARACTER.

OR, GARB OF OLD GAUL.

THIS tune was the composition of General Reid, and called by him "The Highland, or 42nd Regiment's March." The words are by Sir Harry Erskine.

In the garb of old Gaul, with the fire of old Rome,
From the heath-covered mountains of Scotia we come,
Where the Romans endeavoured our country to gain;
But our ancestors fought, and they fought not in vain.
No effeminate customs our sinews unbrace,
No luxurious tables enervate our race;
Our loud-sounding pipe bears the true martial strain,
So do we the old Scottish valour retain.
We're tall as the oak on the mount of the vale,
As swift as the roe which the hound doth assail;
As the full moon in autumn our shields do appear,—
Minerva would dread to encounter our spear.
As a storm in the ocean when Boreas blows,
So are we enraged when we rush on our foes:
We sons of the mountains, tremendous as rocks,
Dash the force of our foes with our thundering strokes.

LEADER-HAUGHS AND YARROW.

THE is in several collections the old song of "Leader-Haugh and Yarrow." It seems to have been the work of one of our finest minstrels, as he calls himself, at the conclusion of his song, "Minstrel Burn."¹

When Phœbus bright the azure skies
With golden rays enlight'neth,
He makes all Nature's beauties rise,
Herbs, trees, and flowers he quick'neth;

¹ Nicol Burn, one of the old Border minstrels.



LEADER-HAUGHS AND YARROW.

583

Amongst all those he makes his choice,
And with delight goes thorow,
With radiant beams and silver streams
O'er Leader-Haugh and Yarrow.

When Aries the day and night
In equal length divideth,
Auld frosty Saturn takes his flight,
Nae langer he abideth ;
Then Flora Queen, with mantle green,
Casts aff her former sorrow,
And vows to dwell with Ceres' sel',
In Leader-Haugh and Yarrow.

Pan, playing on his aiten reed,
And shepherds him attending,
Do here resort their flocks to feed,
The hills and haugh commending.
With cur and kent upon the bent,
Sing to the sun, guid-morrow,
And swear nae fields mair pleasure yields
Than Leader-Haugh and Yarrow.

A house there stands on Leaderside,¹
Surmounting my describing,
With rooms sae rare, and windows fair,
Like Dedalus' contriving ;
Men passing by, do aften cry,
In sooth it hath nae marrow ;
It stands as sweet on Leaderside,
As Newark does on Yarrow.

A mile below wha lists to ride,
They'll hear the mavis singing ;
Into St. Leonard's banks she'll bide,
Sweet birks her head o'erhinging ;
The lintwhite loud and Progne proud,
With tuneful throats and narrow,
Into St. Leonard's banks they sing
As sweetly as in Yarrow.

The lapwing lilteth o'er the lea,
With nimble wing she sporteth ;
But vows she'll flee far frae the tree
Where Philomel resorteth :
By break of day the lark can say,
I'll bid you a good-morrow,
I'll streak my wing, and, mounting, sing
O'er Leader-Haugh and Yarrow.

¹ Thirlstane Castle, an ancient seat of the Earl of Lauderdale.

*LEADER-HAUGHS AND YARROW.*

Park, Wanton-waws, and Wooden-cleugh,
The East and Western Mainses,
The wood of Lauder's fair enough,
The corns are good in Blainshes;
Where aits are fine, and sold by kind,
That if ye search all thorow
Mearns, Buchan, Mar, nane better are
Than Leader-Haughes and Yarrow.

In Burmill Bog, and Whiteslade Shaws,
The fearful hare she haunteth;
Brig-haugh and Braidwoodshiel she knaws,
And Chapel-wood frequenteth;
Yet when she irks, to Kaidslly birks
She rins, and sighs for sorrow,
That she should leave sweet Leader-Haughes,
And cannot win to Yarrow.

What sweeter music wad ye hear
Than hounds and beagles crying?
The started hare rins hard with fear,
Upon her speed relying:
But yet her strength it fails at length,
Nae biolding can she burrow,
In Sorrel's field, Cleckman, or Hag's,
And sighs to be in Yarrow.

For Rockwood, Ringwood, Spoty, Shag,
With sight and scent pursue her,
Till, ah! her pith begins to flag,
Nae cunning can rescue her:
O'er dub and dyke, o'er seugh and syke,
She'll rin the fields all thorow,
Till failed, she fa's in Leader-Haughes,
And bids farewell to Yarrow.

Sing Erslington and Cowdenknows,
Where Homes had ance commanding:
And Drygrange with the milk-white ewes,
'Twi' Tweed and Leader standing;
The birds that flee thro' Reedpath trees,
And Gledswood banks ilk morrow,
May chant and sing—Sweet Leader-Haughes,
And bonnie holms of Yarrow.

But Minstrel Burn cannot assuag
His grief, while life endureth,
To see the changes of this age
That fleeting time procureth:



THIS IS NO MY AIN HOUSE.

585

For mony a place stands in hard case,
Where blithe folk kend nae sorrow,
With Homes that dwelt on Leaderside,
And Scots that dwelt on Yarrow.

THIS IS NO MY AIN HOUSE.

THE first half-stanza is old, the rest is Ramsay's. The old words are—

O, this is no my ain house,
My ain house, my ain house;
This is no my ain house,
I ken by the biggin' o't.
Bread and cheese are my door-cheeks,
My door-cheeks, my door-cheeks;
Bread and cheese are my door-cheeks,
And pancakes the riggin' o't.
This is no my ain wean,
My ain wean, my ain wear
This is no my ain wean,
I ken by the greetie o't.
I'll tak' the curchie aff my head,
Aff my head, aff my head;
I'll tak' the curchie aff my head,
And row 't about the feetie o't.

The tune is an old Highland air called "Shuan truish willighan."

LADDIE, LIE NEAR ME.

THIS song is by Dr. Blacklock.

Hark! the loud tempest shakes the earth to its centre!
How mad were the task on a journey to venture!
How dismal 's my prospect! of life I am weary:
O, listen, my love! I beseech thee to hear me.
Hear me, hear me, in tenderness hear me;
All the long winter night, laddie, lie near me.
Nights though protracted, though piercing the weather,
Yet summer was endless when we were together;
Now since thy absence I feel most severely
Joy is extinguished and being is dreary,—
Dreary, dreary, painful and dreary;
All the long winter night, laddie, lie near me.

THE GABERLUNZIE MAN.¹

THE "Gaberlunzie Man" is supposed to commemorate an intrigue of James V. Mr. Callander, of Craigforth, published, some years ago, an edition of "Christ's Kirk on the Green," and the "Gaberlunzie Man," with notes critical and historical. James V. is said to have been fond of Gosford, in Aberlady parish, and that it was suspected by his contemporaries that, in his frequent excursions to that part of the country, he had other purposes in view besides golfing and archery. Three favourite ladies, Sandilands, Weir, and Oliphant (one of them resided at Gosford, and the others in the neighbourhood) were occasionally visited by their royal and gallant admirer, which gave rise to the following satirical advice to his Majesty, from Sir David Lindsay, of the Mount, Lord Lyon.²

Sow not yere seeds on Sandilands,
Spend not yere strength in Weir,
And ride not on yere Oliphants,
For gawing o' yere gear.

The pawky auld carle came o'er the lea,³
Wi' many good e'ens and days to me,
Saying, Guidwife, for your courtesie,
Will ye lodge a silly poor man?
The night was cauld, the carle was wat,
And down ayont the ingle he sat:
My daughter's shoulders he 'gan to clap,
And cadgily ranted and sang.

O wow! quo' he, were I as free,
As first when I saw this countrie,
How blithe and merry wad I be!
And I wad never think lang.
He grew canty,⁴ and she grew fain;⁵
But little did her auld minny ken
What thir slee twa together were say'n,⁶
When wooing they were sae thrang.

And O! quo' he, and ye were as black
As e'er the crown of my daddy's hat,
'Tis I wad lay thee on my back,
And awa' wi' me thou should gang.
And O! quo' she, an' I were as white,
As e'er the snaw lay on the dike,
I'd cleed me braw and lady-like,
And awa' with thee I'd gang.

¹ A wallet-man, or tinker, who appears to have been formerly a jack-of-all-trades.

² Sir David was Lion King-at-Arms under James V.

³ Composed by James V. of S

⁴ Merry.

⁵ Glad.



THE GABERLUNZIE MAN.

587

Between the twa was made a plot;
They raise awee before the cock,
And wilyly they shot the lock,
 And fast to the bent are they gane.
Up in the morn the auld wife raise,
And at her leisure put on her claise;
Syn'e to the servant's bed she gaes,
 To speer for the silly poor man.

She gaed to the bed where the beggar lay,
The strae was cauld, he was away,
She clapt her hand, cried, Dulefu' day!
 For some of our gear will be gane.
Some ran to coffer, and some to kist,
But naught was stown that could be mist;
She danced her lane, cried, Praise be blest!
 I have lodged a leal poor man.

Since naething 's awa', as we can learn,
The kirn 's to kirn and milk to earn;
Gae but the house, lass, and wauken my bairn,
 And bid her come quickly ben.
The servant gaed where the daughter lay,
The sheets were cauld, she was away;
And fast to her guidwife did say,
 She's aff with the Gaberlunzie man.

O fye! gar ride, and fye! gar rin,
And haste ye find these traitors again;
For she's be burnt, and he's be slain,
 The wearifu' Gaberlunzie man.
Some rade upo' horse, some ran afoot,
The wife was wud, and out o' her wit;
She could na gang, nor yet could she sit,
 But aye did curse and did ban.

Meantime far hind out o'er the lea,
Fu' snug in a glen where nane could see,
The twa, with kindly sport and glee,
 Cut frae a new cheese a wang.
The priving was good, it pleased them baith;
To lo'e for aye, he gae her his aith:
Quo' she, To leave thee I will be laith,
 My winsome Gaberlunzie man.

O, kened my minnie I were wi' you,
Ill-fardly wad she crook her mou';
Sic a poor man she'd never trow,
 After the Gaberlunzie man.



THE BLACK EAGLE.

My dear, quo' he, ye're yet o'er young,
And ha' nae learned the beggar's tongue,
To follow me frae town to town,
And carry the gaberlunzie on.

Wi' cauk and keel I'll win your bread,
And spindles and whorles for them wha need;
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed,
To carry the gaberlunzie on.
I'll bow my leg, and crook my knee,
And draw a black clout o'er my e'e;
A cripple, or blind, they will ca' me,
While we shall be merry and sing.

THE BLACK EAGLE.

THIS song is by Dr. Fordyce, whose merits as a prose writer
are well known.

Hark! yonder eagle lonely wails;
His faithful bosom grief assails;
Last night I heard him in my dream,
When death and woe were all the theme.
Like that poor bird, I make my moan,
I grieve for dearest Delia gone;
With him to gloomy rocks I fly,
He mourns for love, and so do I.

'Twas mighty love that tamed his breast,
'Tis tender grief that breaks his rest;
He droops his wings, he hangs his head,
Since she he fondly loved was dead.
With Delia's breath my joy expired;
'Twas Delia's smiles my fancy fired;
Like that poor bird, I pine, and prove
Naught can supply the place of love.

Dark as his feathers was the fate
That robbed him of his darling mate;
Dimmed is the lustre of his eye,
That wont to gaze the sun-bright sky.
To him is now for ever lost
The heart-felt bliss he once could boast.
Thy sorrows, hapless bird, display
An image of my soul's dismay.

JOHNNIE COPE.

THIS satirical song was composed to commemorate General Cope's defeat at Preston Pans, in 1745, when he marched against the Clans.

The air was the tune of an old song, of which I have heard some verses, but now only remember the title, which was,

“Will ye go the coals in the morning?”

Cope sent a challenge frae Dunbar—
Charlie, meet me, an ye daur,
And I'll learn you the art of war,
If ye'll meet me in the morning.

CHORUS.

Hey, Johnnie Cope, are ye wakin yet?
Or are your drums a-beatin yet?
If ye were wakin I would wait
To gang to the coals i' the morning.

When Charlie looked the letter upon,
He drew his sword the scabbard from,—
Come, follow me, my merry, merry men,
To meet Johnnie Cope i' the morning.

Now, Johnnie Cope, be as good's your word,
And try our fate wi' fire and sword,
And dinna tak' wing like a frightened bird,
That's chased frae its nest i' the morning.

When Johnnie Cope he heard of this,
He thought it wadna be amiss
To ha'e a horse in readiness
To flee awa' i' the morning.

Fye, Johnnie, now get up and rin,
The Highland bagpipes make a din,
It's best to sleep in a hale skin,
For 'twill be a bludie morning.

Yon's no the tuck o' England's drum,
But it's the war-pipes' deadly strum;
And poues the claymore and the gun—
It will be a bludie morning.

When Johnnie Cope to Dunbar came,
They spiered at him, “Where's a' your men?”
“The de'il confound me gin I ken,
For I left them a' i' the morning.”



Now, Johnnie, trowth ye was na blate,
To come wi' the news o' your ain defeat,
And leave your men in sic a strait,
Sae early in the morning.

Ah, faith ! quo' Johnnie, I got a fleg,
With their claymores and philabeg ;
If I face them again, de'il break my leg,—
Sae I wish you a good morning.

Hey Johnnie Cope, are ye waking yet ?
Or are your drums a-beating yet ?
If ye were waking I would wait
To gang to the coals i' the morning.

CEASE, CEASE, MY DEAR FRIEND, TO EXPLORE.

THE song is by Dr. Blacklock, I believe ; but I am not quite certain that the air is his too.

Cease, cease, my dear friend, to explore
From whence and how piercing my smart ;
Let the charms of the nymph I adore
Excuse and interpret my heart.
Then how much I admire ye shall prove,
When like me ye are taught to admire,
And imagine how boundless my love,
When you number the charms that inspire.

Than sunshine more dear to my sight,
To my life more essential than air ;
To my soul she is perfect delight,
To my sense all that's pleasing and fair.
The swains, who her beauty behold,
With transport applaud every charm,
And swear that the breast must be cold
Which a beam so intense cannot warm.

Does my boldness offend my dear maid ?
Is my fondness loquacious and free ?
Are my visits too frequently paid ?
Or my converse unworthy of thee ?
Yet when grief was too big for my breast,
And laboured in sighs to complain,
Its struggles I oft have suppress,
And silence imposed on my pain.



AULD ROBIN GRAY.

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Ah, Strephon, how vain thy desire!
Thy numbers and music how vain!
While merit and fortune conspire
The smiles of the nymph to obtain.
Yet cease to upbraid the soft choice,
Though it ne'er should determine for thee;
If my heart in her joy may rejoice,
Unhappy thou never canst be.

AULD ROBIN GRAY.

THIS air was formerly called "The bridegroom greets when the sun gangs down." The words are by Lady Ann Lindsay, of the Balcarras family.

When the sheep are in the fauld, and a' the kye at hame,
And a' the weary warld to sleep are gane:
The waes of my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
When my guidman sleeps sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel, and he sought me for his bride,
But saving a crown he had naething else beside;
To make that crown a pound, my Jamie gaed to sea,
And the crown and the pound were baith for me.

He hadna been gane a year and a day,
When my father brak his arm, and my Jamie at the sea,
My mither she fell sick, and our cow was stown away;
And auld Robin Gray came a courting to 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 e'e,
Said, "Jenny, for their sakes, O, marry me."

My heart it said nae, for I looked for Jamie back,
But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a wrack;
The ship it was a wrack, why didna Jenny die?
And why do I live to say, Wae's me!

My father argued sair, though my mither didna speak,
She lookit in my face till my heart was like to break;
Sae they gi'ed him my hand, though my heart was in the sea,
And auld Robin Gray is guidman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
When, sitting sae mournfully at the door,
I saw my Jamie's wraith, for I couldna think it he,
"Till he said, "I'm come back for to marry thee."



O, sair did we greet, and mickle did we say,
We took but ae kiss, and we tore ourselves away :
I wish I were dead ! but I 'm no like to die,
And why do I live to say, Wae 's me !

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin,
I darena think on Jamie, for that wad be a sin ;
But I 'll do my best a guidwife to be,
For auld Robin Gray is kind unto me.

DONALD AND FLORA.¹

THIS is one of those fine Gaelic tunes, preserved from time immemorial in the Hebrides ; they seem to be the groundwork of many of our finest Scots pastoral tunes. The words of this song were written to commemorate the unfortunate expedition of General Burgoyne in America, in 1777.

When merry hearts were gay,
Careless of aught but play
Poor Flora slipt away,
Sadd'ning, to Mora ;²
Loose flowed her coal black hair,
Quick heaved her bosom bare,
As thus to the troubled air
She vented her sorrow :—

“ Loud howls the northern blast,
Bleak is the dreary waste ;
Haste thee, O Donald, haste,
Haste to thy Flora !
Twice twelve long months are o'er
Since, on a foreign shore,
You promised to fight no more,
But meet me in Mora.

“ ‘ Where now is Donald dear ? ’
Maids cry with taunting sneer ;
‘ Say, is he still sincere
To his loved Flora ? ’
Parents upbraid my moan,
Each heart is turned to stone ;
Ah ! Flora, thou 'rt now alone,
Friendless in Mora !

¹ Composed by Hector McNeil. Donald was Captain Stewart, who fell at Saratoga. Flora, his betrothed wife, a lady of Athole.

² A small valley in Athole.



DONALD AND FLORA.

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“Come, then, O come away!
Donald, no longer stay!
Where can my rover stray
From his loved Flora?
Ah! sure he ne'er can be
False to his vows and me—
O Heaven! is not yonder he
Bounding o'er Mora?”

“Never—ah! wretched fair!
(Sighed the sad messenger,)
Never shall Donald mair
Meet his loved Flora!
Cold, cold, beyond the main,
Donald, thy love, lies slain:
He sent me to soothe thy pain,
Weeping in Mora.

“Well fought our gallant men,
Headed by brave Burgoyne,
Our heroes were thrice led on
To British glory;
But ah! though our foes did flee,
Sad was the loss to thee,
While every fresh victory
Drowned us in sorrow.

“Here, take this trusty blade,
(Donald expiring said,)
Give it to yon dear maid,
Weeping in Mora.
Tell her, O Allan! tell,
Donald thus bravely fell,
And that in his last farewell
He thought on his Flora.”

Mute stood the trembling fair,
Speechless with wild despair;
Then, striking her bosom bare,
Sighed out, ‘Poor Flora!
O Donald! oh, well-a-day!’
Was all the fond heart could say;
At length the sound died away,
Feebly, in Mora.





THE CAPTIVE RIBAND.

THIS air is called "Robie donna Gorach."

Dear Myra, the captive riband's mine,
'Twas all my faithful love could gain;
And would you ask me to resign
The sole reward that crowns my pain?

Go, bid the hero who has run
Through fields of death to gather fame,
Go, bid him lay his laurels down,
And all his well-earned praise disclaim.

The riband shall its freedom lose,
Lose all the bliss it had with you,
And share the fate I would impose
On thee, wert thou my captive too.

It shall upon my bosom live,
Or clasp me in a close embrace;
And at its fortune if you grieve,
Retrieve its doom, and take its place.



THE BRIDAL O'T.

THIS song is the work of a Mr. Alexander Ross, late school-master at Lochlee, and author of a beautiful Scots poem, called "The Fortunate Shepherdess."

They say that Jockey 'll speed weel o't,
They say that Jockey 'll speed weel o't,
For he grows brawer ilka day—
I hope we 'll ha'e a bridal o't:
For yesternight, nae farder gane,
The backhouse at the side wa' o't,
He there wi' Meg was mirden seen—
I hope we 'll ha'e a bridal o't.

An we had but a bridal o't,
An we had but a bridal o't,
We 'd leave the rest unto guid-luck,
Although there should betide ill o't:
For bridal days are merry times,
And young folks like the coming o't,
And scribblers they bang up their rhymes,
And pipers they the bumming o't.



The lasses like a bridai o't,
The lasses like a bridal o't,
Their brows maun be in rank and file,
Although that they should guide ill o't:
The boddom o' the kist is then
Turned up unto the inmost o't,
The end that held the kecks sae clean
Is now become the teemest o't.

The bangster at the threshing o't,
The bangster at the threshing o't,
Afore it comes is fidgin' fain,
And ilka day's a-clashing o't:
He'll sell his jerkin for a groat,
His linder for anither o't,
And ere he want to clear his shot,
His sark'll pay the tither o't.

The pipers and the fiddlers o't,
The pipers and the fiddlers o't,
Can smell a bridal unco' far,
And like to be the middlers o't;
Fan' thick and threefold they convene,
Ilk ane envies the tither o't,
And wishes nane but him alane
May ever see anither o't.

Fan than ha'e done wi' eating o't,
Fan they ha'e done wi' eating o't,
For dancing they gae to the green,
And aiblins to the beating o't:
He dances best that dances fast,
And louns at ilka reeing o't,
And claps his hands frae hough to hough,
And furls about the feezings o't.

TODLEN HAME.²

THIS is perhaps the first bottle-song that ever was composed.
The author's name is unknown.

When I've a saxpence under my thumb,
Then I'll get credit in ilka town;
But aye when I'm poor they bid me gae by;
O! poverty parts good company.
Todlen hame, todlen hame,
Coudna my love come todlen hame?

¹ Fan, when—(the dialect of Angus).

² This song exists in Gloucestershire, as an old and popular ballad, in the *patois* of the county.

*THE SHEPHERD'S PREFERENCE.*

Fair fa' the guidwife, and send her good sale,
She gi'es us white bannocks to drink her ale,
Syne if her tippeny chance to be sma',
We'll tak' a good scour o't, and ca't awa'.
 Todlen hame, todlen hame,
 As round as a neep come todlen hame.

My kimmer and I lay down to sleep,
And twa pint-stoups at our bed-feet;
And aye when we wakened we drank them dry:
What think ye of my wee kimmer and I?
 Todlen but, and todlen ben,
 Sae round as my love comes todlen hame.

Leeze me on liquor, my todlen dow,
Ye're aye sae good-humoured when weeting your mou';
When sober sae sour, ye'll fight wi' a flea,
That 'tis a blithe sight to the bairns and me,
 When todlen hame, todlen hame,
 When round as a neep ye come todlen hame.

THE SHEPHERD'S PREFERENCE.

THIS song is Dr. Blacklock's. I don't know how it came by the name, but the oldest appellation of the air was, "Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad."

It has little affinity to the tune commonly known by that name.

In May, when the daisies appear on the green,
And flowers in the field and the forest are seen;
Where lilies bloomed bonnie, and hawthorns up-sprung,
A pensive young shepherd oft whistled and sung;
But neither the shades nor the sweets of the flowers,
Nor the blackbirds that warbled in blossoming bowers,
Could brighten his eye or his ear entertain,
For love was his pleasure, and love was his pain.

The shepherd thus sung, while his flocks all around
Drew nearer and nearer and sighed to the sound;
Around as in chains lay the beasts of the wood,
With pity disarmed and with music subdued:—
Young Jessy is fair as the Spring's early flower,
And Mary sings sweet as the bird in her bower;
But Peggy is fairer and sweeter than they,
With looks like the morning—with smiles like the day.



JOHN O' BADENYOND.

THIS excellent song is the composition of my worthy friend,
Old Skinner, at Linshart.

When first I cam' to be a man
Of twenty years or so,
I thought myself a handsome youth,
And fain the world would know;
In best attire I stepped abroad,
With spirits brisk and gay,
And here, and there, and everywhere,
Was like a morn in May.
No care had I, nor fear of want,
But rambled up and down,
And for a beau I might have passed
In country or in town;
I still was pleased where'er I went,
And when I was alone,
I tuned my pipe, and pleased myself
Wi' John o' Badenyon'.

Now in the days of youthful prime,
A mistress I must find,
For love, they say, gives one an air,
And ev'n improves the mind:
On Phillis fair, above the rest,
Kind fortune fixed my eyes;
Her piercing beauty struck my heart,
And she became my choice.
To Cupid then, with hearty prayer,
I offered many a vow;
And danced and sang, and sighed and swore
As other lovers do:
But when at last I breathed my flame,
I found her cold as stone;
I left the jilt, and tuned my pipe
To John o' Badenyon'.

When love had thus my heart beguiled
With foolish hopes and vain;
To friendship's port I steered my course,
And laughed at lovers' pain;
A friend I got by lucky chance,
'Twas something like divine,—
An honest friend's a precious gift,
And such a gift was mine:



And now, whatever might betide,
A happy man was I,
In any strait I knew to whom
I freely might apply :
A strait soon came, my friend I tried ;
He heard and spurned my moan ;
I hied me home, and pleased myself
With John o' Badenyon'.

I thought I should be wiser next,
And would a patriot turn,
Began to doat on Johnny Wilkes,
And cry up Parson Horne.
Their manly spirit I admired,
And praised their noble zeal,
Who had with flaming tongue and pen
Maintained the public weal ;
But e'er a month or two had past,
I found myself betrayed,
'Twas self and party, after all,
For all the stir they made :
At last I saw these factious knaves
Insult the very throne ;
I cursed them a', and tuned my pipe
To John o' Badenyon'.

And now, ye youngsters, everywhere,
Who want to make a show,
Take heed in time, nor vainly hope
For happiness below ;
What you may fancy pleasure here
Is but an empty name,
For girls and friends, and books and so,
You'll find them all the same.
Then be advised, and warning take
From such a man as me,
I'm neither pope nor cardinal,
Nor one of high degree :
You'll find displeasure everywhere ;
Then do as I have done—
E'en tune your pipe, and please yourself
With John o' Badenyon'.

A WAUKRIFE MINNIE.¹

I PICKED up this old song and tune from a country girl in Nithsdale. I never met with it elsewhere in Scotland:—

¹ A watchful mother.



TULLOCHGORUM.

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Whare are you gaun, my bonnie lass?
Whare are you gaun, my hinnie?
She answered me right saucilie—
An errand for my minnie.

O, whare live ye, my bonnie lass?
O, where live ye, my hinnie?
By yon burn-side, gin ye maun ken,
In a wee house wi' my minnie.

But I foor up the glen at e'en,
To see my bonnie lassie;
And lang before the grey morn cam'
She was na hauf sae saucie.

O, weary fa' the waukrife cock,
And the founmart lay his crawin'!
He waukened the auld wife frae her sleep,
A wee blink or the dawin.

An angry wife I wat she raise,
And o'er the bed she brought her;
And with a mickle hazel rung
She made her a weel-payd dochter.

O, fare thee weel, my bonnie lass,
O, fare thee weel, my hinnie!
Thou art a gay and a bonnie lass,
But thou hast a waukrife minnie.

The Editor thinks it respectful to the Poet to preserve the verses he thus recovered.—E. B.

TULLOCHGORUM.

THIS first of songs is the masterpiece of my old friend Skinner. He was passing the day at the town of Cullen, I think it was, in a friend's house, whose name was Montgomery. Mrs. Montgomery observing, *en passant*, that the beautiful reel of "Tullochgorum" wanted words, she begged them of Mr. Skinner, who gratified her wishes, and the wishes of every lover of Scottish song, in this most excellent ballad.

These particulars I had from the author's son, Bishop Skinner, at Aberdeen.

Come, gi'e's a sang, Montgomery cried,
And lay your disputes all aside;
What signifies 't for folks to chide
For what was done before them?



TULLOCHGORUM.

Let Whig and Tory all agree,
Whig and Tory, Whig and Tory,
Whig and Tory all agree
To drop their whig-mig-morum.
Let Whig and Tory all agree
To spend the night in mirth and glee,
And cheerful sing, along wi' me,
The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

O, Tullochgorum 's my delight,
It gars us a' in ane unite;
And ony sumph that keeps up spite,
In conscience I abhor him.
For blithe and cheerie we'll be a',
Blithe and cheerie, blithe and cheerie,
Blithe and cheerie we'll be a',
And mak' a happy quorum.
For blithe and cheerie we'll be a',
As lang as we ha'e breath to draw,
And dance, till we be like to fa',
The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

What need there be sae great a fraise,
Wi' dringing dull Italian lays?
I wadna gi'e our ain strathspeys
For half a hunder score o' 'em.
They're dowf and dowie at the best,
Dowf and dowie, dowf and dowie,
Dowf and dowie at the best,
Wi' a' their variorum.
They're dowf and dowie at the best,
Their *allegros* and a' the rest,—
They canna please a Scottish taste,
Compared wi' Tullochgorum.

Let warldly worms their minds oppress
Wi' fears o' want and double cess,
And sullen sots themsel's distress
Wi' keeping up decorum:
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Sour and sulky, sour and sulky,
Sour and sulky shall we sit
Like old philosophorum?
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Wi' neither sense, nor mirth, nor wit,
Nor ever try to shake a fit
To the Reel o' Tullochgorum?



THE EWIE WI' THE CROOKIT HORN. 601

May choicest blessings e'er attend
Each honest, open-hearted friend,
And calm and quiet be his end,
 And all that's good watch o'er him!
May peace and plenty be his lot!
 Peace and plenty, peace and plenty,
 Peace and plenty be his lot,
 And dainties a great store o' 'em!
May peace and plenty be his lot,
Unstained by any vicious spot,
And may he never want a groat,
 That's fond o' Tullochgorum!

But for the sullen frampish fool,
That loves to be oppression's tool,
May envy gnaw his rotten soul,
 And discontent devour him!
May dool and sorrow be his chance,
 Dool and sorrow, dool and sorrow,
 Dool and sorrow be his chance,
 And nane say, Wae's me for him!
May dool and sorrow be his chance,
Wi' a' the ills that come frae France,
Whae'er he be that winna dance
 The Reel o' Tullochgorum!

THE EWIE WI' THE CROOKIT HORN

ANOTHER excellent song of old Skinner's.

O, were I able to rehearse
My Ewie's praise in proper verse,
I'd sound it out as loud and fierce
 As ever piper's drone could blaw.
The Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Weel deserved baith garse and corn;
Sic a Ewie ne'er was born
 Hereabout, nor far awa'.
Sic a Ewie ne'er was born
 Hereabout, nor far awa'.

I never needed tar nor keil
To mark her upo' hip or heel;
Her crookit horn did just as weel
 To ken her by amo' them a'.

She never threatened scab nor rot,
 But keepit aye her ain jog trot,
 Baith to the fauld and to the cot,
 Was never sweir to lead nor ca'.
 Baith to the fauld and to the cot,
 Was never sweir to lead nor ca'.

Cauld nor hunger never dang her,
 Wind nor rain could never wrang her;
 Ance she lay an ouk¹ and langer
 Out aneath a wreath o' snaw.
 When ither Ewies lap the dyke,
 And ate the kail for a' the tyke,
 My Ewie never played the like,
 But tyced about the barn-yard wa';
 My Ewie never played the like,
 But tyced about the barn-yard wa'.

A better nor a thriftier beast
 Nae honest man could weel ha'e wist:
 Puir silly thing, she never missed
 To ha'e ilk year a lamb or twa.
 The first she had I ga'e to Jock,
 To be to him a kind of stock,
 And now the laddie has a flock
 Of mair nor thirty head to ca';
 And now the laddie has a flock
 Of mair nor thirty head to ca'.

The neist I ga'e to Jean; and now
 The bairn's sae braw, has fauld sae fu',
 That lads sae thick come here to woo,
 They're fain to sleep on hay or straw.
 I lookit aye at ev'n for her,
 For fear the foumart² might devour her,
 Or some mischanter had come o'er her,
 Gin the beastie bade awa';
 Or some mischanter had come o'er her,
 Gin the beastie bade awa.

Yet last ouk, for a' my keeping,
 (Wha can speak it without weeping?)
 A villain cam' when I was sleeping,
 And sta' my Ewie, horn and a';

¹ Night.² Polcoat.



HUGHIE GRAHAM.

603

I sought her sair upo' the morn,
And down aneath a buss o' thorn
I got my Ewie's crookit horn,
But ah, my Ewie was awa';
I got my Ewie's crookit horn,
But ah, my Ewie was awa'.

O! gin I had the loun that did it,
Sworn I have as weel as said it,
Though a' the warld should forbid it,
I wad gi'e his neck a thra':
I never met wi' sic a turn
As this sin' ever I was born,
My Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Puir sillie Ewie, stown awa';
My Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
Puir silly Ewie, stown awa'.

HUGHIE GRAHAM.

THERE are several editions of this ballad. This, here inserted, is from oral tradition in Ayrshire, where, when I was a boy, it was a popular song. It originally had a simple old tune, which I have forgotten.

Our lords are to the mountains gane.
A-hunting o' the fallow deer,
And they have grippet Hughie Graham,
For stealing o' the bishop's mare.

And they ha'e tied him hand and foot,
And led him up through Stirling toun;
The lads and lasses met him there,
Cried, Hughie Graham, thou art a loon.

"O, lowse my right hand free," he says,
"And put my braid sword in the same;
He's no in Stirling toun this day
Daur tell the tale to Hughie Graham."

Up then bespake the brave Whitefoord,
As he sat by the bishop's knee,
"Five hundred white stots I'll gi'e you,
If ye'll let Hughie Graham gae free."

"O, haud your tongue," the bishop says,
"And wi' your pleading let me be;
For though ten Grahams were in his coat,
Hughie Graham this day shall die."



Up then bespake the fair Whitefoord,
As she sat by the bishop's knee;
"Five hundred white pence I'll gi'e you,
If ye'll gi'e Hughie Graham to me."

"O, haud your tongue now, lady fair,
And wi' your pleading let it be;
Although ten Grahams were in his coat,
It's for my honour he maun die."

They've ta'en him to the gallows knowe,
He lookèd to the gallows tree;
Yet never colour left his cheek,
Nor ever did he blink his e'e.

At length he lookèd round about,
To see whatever he could spy:
And there he saw his auld father,
And he was weeping bitterly.

"O, haud your tongue, my father dear
And wi' your weeping let it be;
Thy weeping's sairer on my heart
Than a' that they can do to me.

"And ye may gi'e my brother John
My sword that's bent in the middle clear;
And let him come at twelve o'clock,
And see me pay the bishop's mare.

"And ye may gi'e my brother James
My sword that's bent in the middle brown;
And bid him come at four o'clock,
And see his brother Hugh cut down.

"Remember me to Maggie, my wife,
The neist time ye gang o'er the moor.
Tell her she staw the bishop's mare,—
Tell her she was the bishop's whore.

"And ye may tell my kith and kin,
I never did disgrace their blood;
And when they meet the bishop's cloak
To mak' it shorter by the hood."¹

¹ Burns did not choose to be quite correct in stating that this copy of the ballad of "Hughie Graham" is printed from oral tradition in Ayrshire. The fact is, that four of the stanzas are either altered or super-added by himself.

Of this number the third and eighth are original; the ninth and tenth have received his corrections. Perhaps pathos was never more touching than in the picture of the hero singling out his poor aged father from the crowd of spectators; and the simple grandeur of preparation for this



A SOUTHLAND JENNY.

THIS is a popular Ayrshire song, though the notes were never taken down before. It, as well as many of the ballad tunes in this collection, was written from Mrs. Burns's voice.

A Southland Jenny that was right bonnie,
 She had for a suitor a Norlan' Johnnie;
 But he was siccan a bashfu' wooer
 That he could scarcely speak unto her.
 But blinks o' her beauty, and hopes o' her siller,
 Forced him at last to tell his mind till 'er:
 My dear, quo' he, we'll nae longer tarry,
 Gin ye can love me, let's o'er the muir and marry.

MY TOCHER'S' THE JEWEL.

THIS tune is claimed by Nathaniel Gow. It is notoriously taken from "The Muckin' o' Geordie's Byre." It is also to be found, long prior to Nathaniel Gow's era, in Aird's "Selection of Airs and Marches," the first edition, under the name of "The Highway to Edinburgh."

THEN, GUIDWIFE, COUNT THE LAWIN'.

THE chorus of this is part of an old song, one stanza of which I recollect:—

Every day my wife tells me
 That ale and brandy will ruin me;
 But if guid liquor be my dead,
 This shall be written on my head—
 O, guidwife, count the lawin'.

afflicting circumstance, in the verse that immediately precedes it, is matchless.

That the reader may properly appreciate the value of Burns's touches, I here subjoin two verses from the most correct copy of the ballad, as it is printed in the "Border Minstrelsy."

He lookèd over his left shoulder
 And for to see what he might see;
 There was he aware of his auld father
 Came tearing his hair most piteouslie.
 "O haud your tongue, my father," he says,
 "And see that ye dinna weep for me!
 For they may ravish me o' my life,
 But they canna banish me from heaven hie."—CROMIE
¹ Dowry.



THE SOGER LADDIE.

THE first verse of this is old; the rest is by Ramsay. The tune seems to be the same, with a slow air, called "Jacky Hume's Lament"—or, "The Hollin Buss"—or, "Ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?"

My soger laddie is over the sea,
And he'll bring gold and silver to me,
And when he comes hame he will make me his lady;
My blessings gang wi' him, my soger laddie!

My doughty laddie is handsome and brave,
And can as a soger and lover behave;
He's true to his country, to love he is steady;
There's few to compare wi' my soger laddie.

O, shield him, ye angels, frae death in alarms!
Return him, with laurels, to my longing arms!
Syn'e frae all my care ye'll pleasantly free me,
When back to my wishes my soger ye gi'e me.

O, soon may his honours bloom fair on his brow!
As quickly they must, if he get but his due;
For in noble actions his courage is ready,
Which makes me delight in my soger laddie.

WHERE WAD BONNIE ANNIE LIE?

THE old name of this tune is—

"Whare'll our guidman lie?"

A silly old stanza of it runs thus:—

O, whare'll our guidman lie,
Guidman lie guidman lie,
O, whare'll our guidman lie,
Till he shute o'er the simmer?

Up amang the hen-bawks,
The hen-bawks, the hen-bawks,
Up amang the hen-bawks,
Amang the rotten timmer.

Ramsay's song is as follows:—

O, where wad bonnie Annie lie?
Alane nae mair ye maunna lie;
Wad ye a guidman try,—
Is that the thing ye're lacking?



GALLOWAY TAM.

607

O, can a lass sae young as I
Venture on the bridal tie?
Syne down wi' a guidman lie,—
I'm fleyed he'd keep me waukin.

Never judge until ye try:
Mak' me your guidman—I
Shanna hinder you to lie
And sleep till ye be weary.
What if I should wauking lie,
When the ho boys are gaun by,
Will ye tent me when I cry,
My dear, I'm faint and eiry?

In my bosom thou shalt lie,
When thou waukrife art, or dry,
Healthy cordial standing by
Shall presently revive thee.
To your will I then comply;
Join us, priest, and let me try,
How I'll wi' a guidman lie,
Wha can a cordial gi'e me.

GALLOWAY TAM.

I HAVE seen an interlude (acted at a wedding) to this tune, called "The Wooing of the Maiden." These entertainments are now much worn out in this part of Scotland. Two are still retained in Nithsdale, viz., "Silly Puir Auld Glenae," and this one, "The Wooing of the Maiden."

O, Galloway Tam cam' here to woo,—
We'd better ha'e gi'en him the bawsent cow,
For our lass Bess may curse and ban
The wanton wit o' Galloway Tam.
A cannie tongue and a glance fu' gleg,
A boordly back and a lordly leg,
A heart like a fox, and a look like a lamb—
O, these are the marks o' Galloway Tam.

O, Galloway Tam came here to sheare,—
We'd better ha'e gi'en him the guid grey meare,
He kissed the guidwife and he danged the guidman,
And these are the tricks o' Galloway Tam.
He owed the kirk a twalmonth's score,
And he doffed his bonnet at the door;
The loon cried out, wha sung the psalm,
"There's room on the stool for Galloway Tam!"



608 AS I CAM' DOWN BY YON CASTLE WA'.

Ye lasses o' Galloway, frank and fair,
Tak' tent o' your hearts and something mair;
And bar your doors, your windows steek,
For he comes stealing like night and sleep:
O, naught frae Tam but wae ye'll win,
He'll sing ye dumb and he'll dance ye blin';
And aff your balance he'll cowp ye then:
Tak' tent o' the de'il and Galloway Tam.

"Sir," quoth Mess John, "the wanton de'il
Has put his birn 'boon gospel kiel,
And bound yere cloots in his black ban':"
"For mercy loo'st!" quo' Galloway Tam;
"In our kirk-fauld we maun ye bar,
And smear your fleece wi' Covenant tar,
And pettle ye up a dainty lamb:"
"Among the yowes," quo' Galloway Tam.

Eased of a twalmonth's graceless deeds,
He gaily doffed his sackcloth weeds;
An' 'mang the maidens he laughing cam'—
"Tak' tent o' your hearts," quo' Galloway Tam.
A cannie tongue and a glance fu' gleg,
A boordly back and a lordly leg,
A heart like a fox, and a look like a lamb—
O, these are the marks o' Galloway Tam.

AS I CAM' DOWN BY YON CASTLE WA'

THIS is a very popular Ayrshire song.

As I cam' down by yon castle wa',
And in by yon garden green,
O, there I spied a bonnie, bonnie lass,
But the flower-borders were us between.

A bonnie, bonnie lassie she was,
As ever mine eyes did see;
O, five hundred pounds would I give
For to have such a pretty bride as thee.

To have such a pretty bride as me!
Young man, ye are sairly mista'en;
Though ye were king o' fair Scotland,
I wad disdain to be your queen.

Talk not so very high, bonnie lass,
O, talk not so very, very high;
The man at the fair, that wad sell,
He maun learn at the man that wad buy.



LORD RONALD, MY SON.

609

I trust to climb a far higher tree,
And herry a far richer nest :
Tak' this advice o' me, bonnie lass,—
Humility wad set thee best.

LORD RONALD, MY SON.

THIS air, a very favourite one in Ayrshire, is evidently the original of "Lochaber." In this manner most of our finest more modern airs have had their origin. Some early minstrel, or musical shepherd, composed the simple artless original air; which being picked up by the more learned musician, took the improved form it bears.

O'ER THE MOOR AMANG THE HEATHER.

THIS song is the composition of Jean Glover, a girl who was not only a whore, but also a thief; and in one or other character has visited most of the Correction Houses in the West. She was born, I believe, in Kilmarnock. I took the song down from her singing, as she was strolling through the country with a sleight-of-hand blackguard.

Comin' through the craigs o' Kyle,
Amang the bonnie blooming heather,
There I met a bonnie lassie
Keeping a' her yowes thegither.

O'er the moor amang the heather,
O'er the moor amang the heather,
There I met a bonnie lassie
Keeping a' her yowes thegither.

Says I, My dearie, where's thy hame,
In moor or dale, pray tell me whether?
She says, I tent the fleecy flocks
That feed amang the blooming heather.
O'er the moor, &c.

We laid us down upon a bank,
Sae warm and sunny was the weather,
She left her flocks at large to rove
Amang the bonnie blooming heather.
O'er the moor, &c.



TO THE ROSEBUD.

While thus we lay she sang a sang,
Till echo rang a mile and farther,
And aye the burden o' the sang
Was, O'er the moor among the heather.
O'er the moor, &c.

She charmed my heart, and aye sinsyne
I could na think on any ither;
By sea and sky she shall be mine!
The bonnie lass among the heather.
O'er the moor, &c.

TO THE ROSEBUD.

THIS song is the composition of one Johnson, a joiner in the neighbourhood of Belfast. The tune is by Oswald, altered evidently from "Jockie's Grey Breeks."

All hail to thee, thou bawmy bud!
Thou charming child o' simmer, hail!
Ilk fragrant thorn and lofty wood
Does nod thy welcome to the vale.

See, on thy lovely faulded form
Glad Phœbus smiles wi' cheering eye,
While on thy head the dewy morn
Has shed the tears o' silent joy.

The tuneful tribes frae yonder bower,
Wi' sangs of joy thy presence hail;
Then haste, thou balmy, fragrant flower,
And gi'e thy bosom to the gale.

And see the fair industrious bee,
With airy wheel and soothing hum,
Flies ceaseless round thy parent tree,
While gentle breezes trembling come.

If ruthless Liza pass this way,
She'll pu' thee frae thy thorny stem;
Awhile thou'lt grace her virgin breast,
But soon thou'lt fade, my bonnie gem.

Ah! short, too short, thy rural reign,
And yield to fate, alas! thou must:
Bright emblem of the virgin train,
Thou blooms, alas! to mix wi' dust.

Sae bonnie Liza hence may learn,
Wi' every youthfu' maiden gay,
That beauty, like the simmer's rose,
In time, shall wither and decay.



THE TEARS I SHED MUST EVER FALL.

THIS song of genius was composed by a Miss Cranston.¹ It wanted four lines, to make all the stanzas suit the music which I added, and are the first four of the last stanza.

The tears I shed must ever fall;
I weep not for an absent swain,
For time can past delights recall,
And parted lovers meet again.
I weep not for the silent dead,—
Their toils are past, their sorrows o'er,
And those they loved their steps shall tread,
And death shall join to part no more.

Though boundless oceans roll between,
If certain that his heart is near,
A conscious transport glads the scene,
Soft is the sigh and sweet the tear.
E'en when by Death's cold hand removed,
We mourn the tenant of the tomb,
To think that even in death he loved,
Can cheer the terrors of the gloom.

But bitter, bitter is the tear
Of her who slighted love bewails;
No hopes her gloomy prospect cheer,
No pleasing melancholy hails.
Hers are the pangs of wounded pride,
Of blasted hope, and withered joy;
The prop she leaned on pierced her side,—
The flame she fed burns to destroy.

In vain does memory renew
The scenes once tinged in transport's dye
The sad reverse soon meets the view,
And turns the thought to agony.
Even conscious virtue cannot cure
The pangs to every feeling due;
Ungenerous youth, thy boast how poor,
To steal a heart, and break it too!

No cold reproach—no altered mien—
Just what would make suspicion start;
No pause the dire extremes between,—
He made me blest—and broke my heart!

¹ She married Dugald Stewart, and died in 1838.



Hope from its only anchor torn,
Neglected and neglecting all,
Friendless, forsaken, and forlorn,
The tears I shed must ever fall.

DAINTY DAVIE.

THIS song, tradition says—and the composition itself confirms it—was composed on the Rev. David Williamson's begetting the daughter of Lady Cherrytrees with child, while a party of dragoons were searching her house to apprehend him for being an adherent to the Solemn League and Covenant. The pious woman had put a lady's nightcap on him, and had laid him abed with her own daughter, and passed him to the soldiery as a lady, her daughter's bedfellow. A mutilated stanza or two are to be found in Herd's collection, but the original song consists of five or six stanzas, and were their delicacy equal to their wit and humour, they would merit a place in any collection. The first stanza is as follows:—

Being pursued by the dragoons,
Within my bed he was laid down;
And weel I wat he was worth his room,
For he was my daintie Davie.

Ramsay's song, "Luckie Nansy," though he calls it an old song with additions, seems to be all his own, except the chorus,—

I was a-telling you,
Luckie Nansy, luckie Nansy,
Auld springs wad ding the new,
But ye wad never trow me;

which I should conjecture to be part of a song prior to the affair of Williamson.

LUCKY NANSY.

While fops in soft Italian verse,
Ilk fair ane's een and breast rehearse,
While sangs abound and sense is scarce,
These lines I have indited.
But neither darts nor arrows here,
Venus nor Cupid shall appear,
And yet with these fine sounds, I swear,
The maidens are delighted.



DAINTY DAVIE.

613

I was aye telling you,
Luckie Nansy, luckie Nansy,
Auld springs wad ding' the new,
But ye wad never trow me.

Nor snaw with crimson will I mix,
To spread upon my lassie's cheeks;
And syne th' unmeaning name prefix,
Miranda, Chloe, Phillis.

I'll fetch na simile frae Jove,
My height of extacy to prove,
Nor sighing—thus—present my love
With roses eke and lilies.

I was aye telling you, &c.

But stay—I had amaist forgot
My mistress and my sang to boot,
But that 's an unco' faut, I wot—

But Nansy, 'tis nae matter.
Ye see I clink my verse wi' rhyme,
And, ken ye, that atones the crime;
Forbye, how sweet my numbers chime,
And slide away like water!

I was aye telling you, &c. .

Now ken, my reverend sonsy fair,
Thy runkled² cheeks and lyart³ hair,
Thy haff-shut een and hodling air,
Are a' my passion's fuel.

Nae skyring gowk, my dear, can see
Or love, or grace, or heaven in thee,
Yet thou hast charms enow for me,—
Then smile, and be na cruel.

Leeze me on thy snawy pow.
Luckie Nansy, luckie Nansy;
Driest wood will eithest low,⁴
And Nansy, sae will ye now.

Troth, I have sung the sang to you
Which ne'er anither bard wad do;
Hear, then, my charitable vow,
Dear, venerable Nansy;
But if the world my passion wrang,
And say, Ye only live in sang,
Ken, I despise a slandering tongue,
And sing to please my fancy.
Leeze me on thy, &c.

¹ Excel.

² Wr:

³ Grey.

⁴ Soonest burn.



BOB O' DUMBLANE.

RAMSAY, as usual, has modernized this song. The original, which I learned on the spot, from my old hostess in the principal inn there, is,—

Lassie, lend me your braw hemp-heckle,
And I'll lend you my thrippin'-kame;
My heckle is broken, it canna be gotten,
And we'll gae dance the bob o' Dumblane.

Twa gaed to the wood, to the wood, to the wood,
Twa gaed to the wood—three came hame:
An' it be na weel bobbit, weel bobbit, weel bobbit,
An' it be na weel bobbit, we'll bob it again.

I insert this song to introduce the following anecdote, which I have heard well authenticated:—In the evening of the day of the Battle of Dumblane (Sheriff-Muir), when the action was over, a Scots officer, in Argyll's army, observed to his Grace that he was afraid the rebels would give out to the world that *they* had gotten the victory. "Weel, weel," returned his Grace, alluding to the foregoing ballad, "if they think it be na weel bobbit, we'll bob it again."

The battle of Dumblane, or Sheriff-Muir, was fought on the 13th of November, 1715, between the Earl of Mar, for Prince Charles Edward, and the Duke of Argyll, for the Government. Both sides claimed the victory, the left wing of each army being routed.







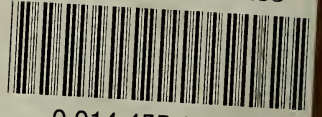
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